

localtownpages 1 Norwood

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Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

July 1, 2026



America turns 250: Norwood celebrates Independence Day

BY MICHELE TARANTO

Norwood is preparing for one of its most patriotic celebrations yet as the community gathers on July 4 to honor a historic milestone. The theme of this year's festivities is "Norwood Celebrates America's

250th Anniversary," recognizing the nation's upcoming semi quincentennial and the enduring spirit of independence that has united generations of Americans.

The annual Fourth of July celebration, one of the town's grandest celebrations, offers a

full day of family-friendly activities, music, history, tradition, and community pride, all culminating in Norwood's beloved parade through the center of town.

4TH OF JULY
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Ken Hamwey, in Memoriam

He wrote about the good

BY JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Ken Hamwey never missed a deadline, and he had a passion for telling a good story. Getting the word out about something or someone inspirational, conveying its importance, meant the world to him. That kind of drive, a level of investment scarcely seen in the world today, deserved your full attention. Our Town Publishing didn't just lose a sportswriter when we lost Ken Hamwey, we lost a lion-hearted wordsmith who cared deeply about the people he wrote about, and their moments of glory.

"Ken Hamwey was an amazing sportswriter and a consummate professional," said Jen Schofield, owner of Our Town Publishing, "He was someone I truly enjoyed



Ken Hamwey
October 14, 1943 - May 25, 2026

talking with, listening to his stories, and his passion and dedication for covering high school sports was

HAMWEY
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4TH OF JULY

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The day begins at 1 p.m. with the popular Children's Bicycle, Tricycle, Doll Carriage, and Historical Character Parade. More than 300 children typically participate by decorating their bicycles, tricycles, scooters, and doll carriages or dressing as historical figures such as Betsy Ross, Abraham Lincoln, and other notable Americans. The Colonial Boys lead the way for the youthful cavalcade that begins at the First Congregational Church at the corner of Walpole and Winter Streets and travels through town

to the Town Common. Every participating child will receive a commemorative T-shirt and participation ribbon, while winners selected for their creativity and decorations will earn the honor of riding on the float in the main event.

At 2 p.m., residents are invited to the Old Parish Cemetery for Norwood Reads Frederick Douglass Together. Sponsored by the Old Parish Preservation Volunteers, the program features members sharing excerpts from Douglass's powerful 1852 speech, What

to the Slave is the Fourth of July? The annual reading serves as a meaningful reminder of the nation's continuing journey toward liberty and equality.

For music lovers, the Independence Day Carillon Concert starts at 2:30 p.m., featuring carillonneurs Margaret Angelini of Wellesley College and Norwood's own Lee Leach. The



community Preservation Committee, the ceremony will revive a longstanding local tradition as attendees gather to ring the bell in honor of

ern Massachusetts Fire Truck Procession, featuring antique and modern fire apparatus, classic automobiles, and historic military reenactors. Immediately following the procession, Norwood's infamous Fourth of July Parade Spectacular will step off from the Coakley Middle School and proceed down Washington Street before concluding at Town Hall.

concert will be performed from the Town Hall Memorial Tower, and visitors will have the opportunity to tour the impressive 50-bell Memorial Carillon during the performance.

Independence Day, just as residents once did in South Dedham and early Norwood.

A new addition to this year's celebration takes place at 4 p.m., with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Norwood's Historic Washington No. 7 Fire Bell. Hosted by the Norwood Fire Department and the Com-

The excitement returns to Norwood Center Runners at 5 p.m. for the Annual Norwood Firecracker 5K Road Race. Known for its festive atmosphere and enthusiastic crowds, the race has become a favorite pre-parade tradition for participants of all ages.

Beginning at 5:30 p.m., the street come alive with the East-

Norwood's 4th of July celebration has earned quite a reputation as it continues to draw visitors from throughout the region and features marching bands, community organizations, entertainment groups, and patriotic displays. Many participants return year after year, citing the enthusiasm and support

4TH OF JULY continued on page 3

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HAMWEY

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unmatched. He genuinely cared about the athletes, teams, and communities he wrote about, which was evident in his work.”

“Ken was very dedicated in getting the stories,” added Chuck Tashjian, who worked with Ken for many years as former publisher of Our Town Publishing, “He went above and beyond, especially with championship games. He really loved what he did. He loved writing, and he loved sports.”

“He just cared about the kids. If there was anything that stood out about him it was his passion for what he did ... He cared so much about making everyone look good, and that was such a good trait, and the way he’d remember things,” said Bellingham High School Football Coach Dan Haddad, who added both he and Ken were motivated by “love of the kids.” Student athletes Ken interviewed would tell the coach that Mr. Hamwey was “probably the nicest guy I’ve ever met.”

“What was unique about Ken was how he wanted to learn about me personally and what



In 2010, Ken received the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Distinguished Friend Award.

life experiences led me to where I am rather than other reporters who would just ask about jobs and responsibilities listed on a resume,” says Bellingham Town Administrator Joseph Laydon, who says he truly appreciated this approach in Ken’s regular Municipal Spotlight column for the Bellingham Bulletin.

Just 24 in 1967 when he entered the field of journalism,

the young graduate of Natick High and Babson College began his career at *Framingham News*, now known as the *MetroWest Daily News*, covering the small-town beat of Millis. Ken would get the opportunity of a lifetime a year later, covering the Celtics’ defeat of the 76ers in Philadelphia to win the Eastern conference one day after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. In a lifelong story of his own he’d often tell, the late, great Celtics coach and general manager, Red Auerbach, in fact, held up the press corps bus so young Ken could call in that story. Ken would move on in 1973 to the Pulitzer Prize winning *Providence Journal*, and after 35-plus years as the Night Sports Editor, he received a citation from the Rhode Island State Senate honoring his excellence as a journalist.

For many years, Ken would follow the trajectory of local sports heroes’ stories in a *MetroWest Daily News* column called “Yesterday’s Heroes.” In semi-retirement, Ken would continue to cover high school sports for local papers such as *Bellingham Bulletin* and *Local*

Town Pages papers.

Ken was immensely proud of the recognition he received for his efforts. He was inducted into the Millis Athletic Hall of Fame in March 2022, and later, into the Bellingham Athletic Hall of Fame, and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association selected him for its Distinguished Friend Award in 2010.

“High school sports lost a legendary storyteller with the passing of Ken Hamwey,” wrote Millis Athletics on X, “For nearly six decades, Ken dedicated his life to highlighting the achievements of local student-athletes, beginning with his very first varsity football story in Millis back in 1967.” Dover Sherborn Basketball also lauded his “passion and dedication for covering sports in our area...RIP.”

Ken Hamwey once told Dan Haddad, “I want to write about the good.”

In his own life, Hamwey, the beloved husband for 36 years of Pauline A. (Allard) Hamwey and the late Martha (Loan) Hamwey, and the loving father of Travis M. Hamwey and his

wife, Katie, aspired himself to be the best person he could be, volunteering time as a coach and library trustee, devoting himself to his faith, and valuing each individual with whom he interacted. He once told me how much it meant to him that his coverage of young athletes might help them make it into college. He had an energy that drove him to weave a story of pride and potential that would shine a light on and lift up his subject. He offered such respect that you wanted to rise to be worthy of it.

“Ken was kind, dependable, and always willing to go above and beyond. Even shortly before his passing, while battling illness and facing deadline pressure, he completed his last three stories—a testament to his remarkable work ethic and commitment to journalism,” said Schofield, adding, “He was a one-of-a-kind colleague and friend, who will be deeply missed by everyone in his Our Town Publishing family. His legacy will live on through the countless stories he told and the many lives he touched.”

4TH OF JULY

continued from page 2

of Norwood residents as one of the highlights of their summer.

Residents planning to attend should note that Nahatan Street and Washington Street will close at 4 p.m. to accommodate parade activities and ensure public safety.

As Norwood celebrates America’s 250th Anniversary, organizers encourage residents to bring their families, decorate in red, white, and blue, and

take part in a day that honors both the nation’s history and the community traditions that have made Norwood’s Fourth of July celebration a treasured event for generations.

For many residents, the Fourth of July is more than a holiday. It is a chance to come together as neighbors, celebrate our shared history, and reflect on the values of freedom, service, and community that continue to define both Norwood and our nation.

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A summer of music

BY MICHELE TARANTO

Summer evenings in Norwood will once again be filled with music as four popular concert series return to the Town Common. From big band favorites, jazz, and classics to children's entertainment and the historic sounds of the carillon bells, residents and visitors have dozens of opportunities to enjoy free outdoor performances throughout July and August.

Whether you're looking for a family outing, a relaxing evening with neighbors, or a chance to enjoy live music under the stars, Norwood's 2026 summer concert season offers something for everyone.

Sunday Concerts on the Common Celebrates 32nd Season

The Town of Norwood Concert Committee will present the 32nd season of Sunday Concerts on the Common at the Walter J. Dempsey Memorial

Bandstand. Concerts take place Sundays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and feature traditional favorites including swing, jazz, big band, and concert band performances.

- The 2026 lineup includes:
- July 5 – Portrait in Jazz
 - July 12 – Roy Scott Big Band
 - July 19 – Westwood Swing Band
 - July 26 – Sharon Concert Band
 - August 2 – JBTS Big Band
 - August 9 – She Bop Swing Orchestra
 - August 16 – Compaq Big Band
 - August 23 – Dan Gabel and His Orchestra (Special Performance sponsored by Bank of Canton)
 - August 30 – Legacy of Paul Alberta Jazz Orchestra (Special Performance sponsored by One Bistro)
- Families, friends, and music lovers gather each week to enjoy a summer tradition that has become a staple of the community. The Sunday Concerts on the

Common series is supported by numerous local businesses and organizations, including 99 Restaurant & Pub, Acapulcos, Boston Tavern, Café Fresh Bagel, Castle Island Brewing, Conrad's, The Cove by Dune, D&G Deli, Daddy's Dairy, The Feisty Greek, Irish Brewing, Jake N Joe's, Lewis' Restaurant, Lustra Cleaners, Minas Café, Murphy's Place, Napper Tandy's, Shaw's, Side Door Café, The Sixties Diner, Smokehouse BBQ, Stop & Shop, and Washington No. 7.

Historic Carillon Concerts Return for Their 41st Season

The sounds of Norwood's historic Fifty-Bell Memorial Carillon will once again ring across town during the 41st Annual Carillon Concert Series. Concerts are held on Mondays, 6-7:30 p.m., with a special Independence Day performance on July 4, at 2:30 p.m. The 2026 schedule includes: July 4 – Christina Meyer, Lee Leach & Margaret Angelini



- July 6 – John Whiteside
- July 13 – Christina Meyer
- July 20 – Andrea McCrady
- July 27 – Anton Fleissner
- August 3 – Joey Brink
- August 10 – Jonathan Lehrer
- August 17 – Margaret Pan
- August 25 – Margot Lang & Jordan Scoville

All concerts are held rain or shine. The best listening locations are on the Town Common and in the upper parking lot behind Town Hall off Central Street. Bell tower tours are available following most performances.

Dedicated on Armistice Day, November 11, 1928, Norwood's Fifty-Bell Memorial Carillon was a gift from local banker and civic leader Walter F. Tilton.

Today, it remains one of the town's most distinctive landmarks and musical treasures.

The Carillon Concert Series is sponsored by the Town of Norwood, the Norwood Women's Community Committee, the family of Betsy Dobson, and private donations to the Town's Carillon Fund.

Kids Concert Series Returns for an 11th Summer

Families with young children will once again have a special reason to visit the Town Common as the Norwood Junior Woman's Club presents its 11th Annual Free July Kids Concert

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Quick thinking teens rescue kayaker from Willett Pond

By MAUREEN SULLIVAN

It was a good day for fishing on June 19. The waters at Willett Pond kicked up a bit because of a breeze, but the traffic along Brook Street was light, and the sun skirted between the clouds.

Sean Needham and Nick Serratore joined a bunch of fellow young fisherman along the guardrail, across the street from the North Walpole Fish & Game Club. The two sophomores from Norwood High School were close to the spot where, in late May, they and fellow sophomore Devin Dwyer helped rescue a man from an

overturned kayak.

Needham said he and the others were alerted by homeowners living along the shore about the kayak, which capsized close to the island on the Brook Street side. The three grabbed a johnboat from the club and made their way toward the man, who was wearing a life preserver, but kept slipping through it because of a poor fit. They were told by a woman who was with the man that he was autistic and nonverbal.

“He was tiring out,” Serratore said.



Sean Needham, left, and Nick Serratore stand across the street from Willett Pond, where they and Devin Dwyer (not shown) helped pull a kayaker out of the water to a nearby beach. Photo courtesy of Maureen Sullivan

With Dwyer balancing the boat, Needham and Serratore pulled in the man. Club members watching the rescue unfold then shouted to the three to bring the boat onto a nearby beach.

Once ashore, witnesses helped dry off the man and made sure he was OK, according to a report from CBS-Boston.

For their efforts, the three were honored at the club during its June meeting as well as their high school principal,

who interviewed them during morning announcements and presented each of them with a challenge coin.

“It definitely feels really good,” said Needham of the rescue. “Our parents are very proud. This is what we were raised to do.”

“I’m proud we were able to do that,” said Serratore, whose summer plans include a trip to the Cape and, of course, fishing before starting football season.

Fishing will also be part of Needham’s summer, especially at the Fish & Game Club, where his father is also a member.

CONCERTS

continued from page 4

Series.

Held on three consecutive Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Town Common Gazebo, the series features interactive performances designed to get children singing, dancing, and participating in the fun.

This year’s schedule includes:
July 14 – Evan with Music at the Blissful

July 21 – Small Singers & Shakers with Stacey Lynn

July 28 – Tiny Tunes Music with Nicole Candan

The family-friendly series is made possible through the support of One Local Bank, Poirier Sales & Service, Dempsey Insurance, and The Boch Fund.

Families are encouraged to bring blankets and lawn chairs and enjoy an evening of music and entertainment geared specifically toward younger audiences.

Summerfest Brings Variety to Wednesday Nights

The Norwood Arts Council’s popular Summerfest Concert Series returns to the Town Gazebo on Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Known for showcasing a variety of musical styles, Summerfest offers a different experience each week and has become a favorite summertime tradition for residents of all ages.

The 2026 lineup:

July 8 – Roundhouse (Special Performance sponsored by Dedham Savings)

- July 15 – Willie J. Laws Band
- July 22 – Love Dogs
- July 29 – Sweet Harmony
- August 5 – PanNeubean Steel
- August 12 – Boston’s Erin Og
- August 19 – Slapback
- August 26 – Squeezebox Stompers

Presented by the Norwood Arts Council, Summerfest is made possible through contributions from the Town of Nor-

wood, local businesses, private citizens, and dedicated volunteers committed to promoting the arts within the community.

A Community Tradition

Together, these four concert series provide residents with an opportunity to enjoy a variety of live entertainment throughout the summer. Additional infor-

mation about each performance can be found on the Town of Norwood Facebook page, @TownofNorwoodMA.

So grab a lawn chair, pack a picnic, and enjoy a summer filled with music, community, and tradition right in the heart of Norwood.

Photo courtesy of the Town of Norwood

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At Bay State Animal Cooperative, we have always made a promise to the animals in our care: once they become part of our family, we will be there for them for life.

Recently, two of our long-term foster cats, JR and Pete, have been facing the challenges that often come with advancing age. As their medical needs have increased, so have the costs associated with providing the care they deserve. While these expenses have placed a significant strain on our finances, we remain committed to them and to every ani-

mal that depends on us.

We knew this day would eventually come for many of our senior cats, and we would not have it any other way. They have given us years of companionship, and now it is our turn to ensure they remain comfortable, loved, and cared for.

We are asking our supporters to help us share our story and consider providing financial support. Even a small monthly donation through our website can make a meaningful difference (www.baystateanimals.org). Your support not only helps cover on-

going medical care for cats like JR and Pete, but also allows us to continue rescuing and helping other animals in need.

At the same time, we are working with an extended cat colony in Norwood. Thanks to the dedication of a wonderful neighborhood volunteer, ongoing trapping efforts are helping more cats receive the care they need. As a result, we are in urgent need of foster homes.

When people hear the term "cat colony," they often assume the cats are unsocialized, and many are. However, with patience, guidance, and time, these cats can learn to trust people and thrive in a home environment. We are happy to provide support and resources to anyone willing to learn. Speaking from experience, helping a frightened cat become comfortable with people can be one of the most rewarding experiences in animal rescue.

We would especially love to hear from individuals or families who feel they may be able to foster a cat needing socialization. While some cats adjust quickly, others require a longer commit-

ment. Every cat is different, but every success story begins with someone willing to give them a chance.

Thank you for your continued support of Bay State Animal Cooperative. Whether you donate, foster, volunteer, share our posts, or simply help spread the word, you play an important role in helping us continue our mission. We truly could not do this work without you.



Two Animal Nonprofits Team Up for Dog & Car Wash Fundraiser

Bay State Animal Cooperative is gearing up for one of its most popular annual fundraisers, the Dog and Car Wash, scheduled for Saturday, September 13.

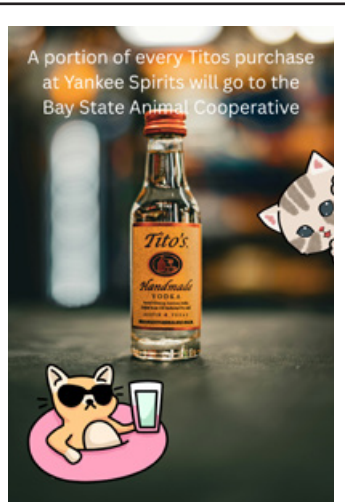
This year, the organization is excited to partner with Charley's Angels Pet Initiative, bringing together two local nonprofit animal welfare groups dedicated to helping pets and pet owners in need throughout the community. Proceeds from the event will support rescue efforts, medical care, foster programs, pet food assistance, and other services that benefit local animals.

To make the event a success, organizers are seeking volunteers to help with washing cars, bathing dogs, and assisting with event setup and cleanup. Whether you can donate a few hours or spend the day with the team, volunteer support is essential to helping both organizations continue their missions.

Anyone interested in volunteering or learning more about the event is encouraged to contact Bay State Animal Cooperative or Charley's Angels Pet Initiative at info@baystateanimals.org, info@charleysangelspetinitiative.org.

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Yankee Spirits in Norwood is partnering with Titos vodka and the Bay State Animal Cooperative for its annual fundraiser. For every 1L and 1.75L of Tito's Handmade Vodka Tito's will donate \$1 to the Bay State Animal Cooperative. While shopping at Yankee Spirits for those summer parties, please purchase Titos at Yankee Spirits to help raise money for this cat rescue group.



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Congratulations to the *class of* 2026

CLASS OF 2026

continued from page 8

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- The Director Award
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A little off the top

Fixin' up the First Fourth

BY STUART GREEN

They call me Sam, but you can call me Sam. I sweep up here at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, one of the grandest cities in the British Colonies. That's because it's part of the glorious British Empire, as in There will always be an England... or is that a Great Britain?

But there seems to be something brewing in the colonies, and I'm not just talking tea in the Boston Harbor. The year 1776 may be more than just a placeholder between 1775 and 1777. They may be talking about this year for four or five years – maybe more.

From my spot pushing a broom, I see all kinds of dirt in the Hall. There's plenty of mud slung at our ruler and protector on the throne overseas, and most of it is carried in from our rebels with a cause from the town of the bean in Boston yonder.

I lit a few oil lamps for Bostoner John Adams to burn some midnight oil with another Boston native, the part-time inventor, full-time publisher, and overtime petticoat pursuer Benjamin Franklin. I hear they recruited that young red-headed regal chap named Thomas Jefferson, and a couple of other guys to round out the Freedom Five, as they call themselves behind closed doors.

But being the guy who empties the buckets at night, I get to see just what was up their frock sleeves and under their powdered wigs. Why, one time, I found a draft when they let Adams write that document ask-

ing for, what do they call it - oh, yeah, independence:

"Listen here, King George, or should I say Despot to Us All, you had just let us be independent. We've had enough of your laws, your rules, your soldiers. Why, just the other day, one of your Redcoat blokes had the unmitigated gall to ask Abigail for her secret apple crumb cake recipe. Let me end this by simply saying - We gone."

I guess that's not making it into the final version.

Now Franklin was a man of action. Just ask the young ladies of France. His draft that found its way into the round bucket showed a man of mind, heart and head:

"Well done is better than well said."

"He that lies down with Dogs,

shall rise up with fleas."

"Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

He may be onto something with that last one.

But I think that Jefferson lad will get the final call. He knows how to grab your attention. I mean, I got a peek at this beauty:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

I mean, it has everything an historical document should have — poise, poetry, perceptive — and what penmanship! I'm sure the king will agree.



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LIVING HEALTHY

In Focus: Presbyopia

By GRAHAM R. STETSON, OD, MS

Whether you are reading a menu, checking a text, following a recipe, or helping with homework, clear near vision matters. Many adults begin noticing that small print looks blurrier, menus need to be held farther away, or phone font sizes get larger. This common change is called presbyopia, and it is a normal part of aging that eventually affects everyone.

Presbyopia is sometimes mistaken for hyperopia, or farsightedness. Hyperopia is usually related to the shape or length of the eye, while presbyopia happens because the eye's focusing system becomes less flexible over time. It's a normal part of aging, but that doesn't make it any less frustrating.

What it is

Inside the eye, a clear natural lens helps us focus, much like a camera adjusting from a road sign to words on a page. In our

youth, this lens is soft and flexible, allowing our eyes to shift focus easily from far away to up close. This is called accommodation.

The lens is one of the few structures that continues to grow throughout life. As we collect more birthdays, it gradually stiffens and has a harder time changing shape. For many people, this becomes noticeable in the early to mid-40s, when reading, using a phone, or working at a computer requires more effort.

At first, the changes may be subtle. Near vision can seem clear one day and frustrating the next, especially when you are tired or spending long hours on screens. Over time, seeing close-up becomes increasingly difficult.

How it affects vision

Presbyopia can cause blurry near vision, headaches, fatigue, and difficulty switching focus

between distances. Some people start holding books, menus, or medicine labels farther away. Others enlarge phone text size, turn on brighter lights, or take more breaks.

People already wearing glasses or contact lenses may find presbyopia especially confusing. Your distance prescription may still work for driving or television, while reading and computer work become challenging.

What can be done

The good news is that presbyopia is treatable. Options include reading glasses, bifocals, progressive lenses, office or computer glasses, multifocal contact lenses, and monovision contact lenses. Some patients may also be candidates for surgery.

The best solution depends on

your prescription, eye health, work demands, hobbies, and lifestyle. Talk to your eye doctor to determine the right approach for you and ensure no other eye conditions are contributing.

Presbyopia may be normal, but blurry near vision does not

have to be. With the right correction, everyday tasks can feel clear and comfortable again.

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LIVING HEALTHY

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

D. Over the past several years vitamin D deficiency has become more common due to being inside more and not getting enough sunlight. To gain the benefit from the sun you must have your face, chest and arms in direct sunlight with no sunscreen for 20 minutes per day. Living in the north east makes this is very challenging.

Most patients with vitamin D deficiency are asymptomatic, however if you're exhausted, your bones hurt, you have muscle weakness and or mood changes, that's an indication that something is abnormal in your body. Additional symptoms of vitamin D deficiency include: fatigue, not sleeping well, bone pain, depression or feelings of sadness, hair loss, loss of appetite and pale skin.

Michelle L came into our office complaining of exhaustion, muscle aches, depression and loss of appetite. Upon taking a history I was made aware that she hadn't been feeling well for several months and she works remote spending most of her time inside. Michelle was immediately sent for blood work. Blood work showed that her vitamin D was 12. Normal is 30-100. Michelle was started on a high dose regimen of vitamin D for 3 months and re-evaluated. She noticed significant changes in her symptoms very quickly and has returned to her normal self.

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NORWOOD SPORTS

School records on the horizon

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY

Upon entering Norwood High School, Kesegosetse Notlotle decided to try numerous sports: volleyball in the fall, swim in the winter, and track in the spring. Volleyball and swim would eventually fall by the wayside, and track would eventually be her go to sport.

Originally, she had to be enticed to try out for the track by friends already on the team. Once there, the then freshman found the sport to be cool and appealing, and the 400 hurdles jumped out at her. She would attempt to take on the 100 hurdles first and was inserted into relays during invitationals.

“Having been a gymnast, I thought that the hurdles were a graceful sport that I could excel at,” Notlotle said. “Boy was I wrong; I kept falling and the workouts were terrible. Thank God I was also doing the long jump and had something to fall back on.”

Taking part in the long jump Notlotle soon found out that she was rather good at the jumping event. She began the season jumping 13’ 8” and by the time her freshman campaign came to an end that spring she would have jumped 15’ 8” right into the Norwood freshman record books.

“It was at this point that I

knew jumping was for me and hurdling was definitely not,” she said. “I was inches away from qualifying that year, so it gave me the motivation to go out and work harder during the off-season.”

With motivation in hand, Notlotle began hitting the gym on a more frequent basis. Entering her sophomore season, she decided to drop both volleyball and swim and focus solely on track and field. In getting stronger during the off-season, she found herself jumping 16’ 7” by the end of the winter season.

Later that spring, the sophomore would add the triple jump to her repertoire with a suggestion from one of the captains.

“I really didn’t know much about it, the only thing I knew was that we only had one girl taking part in the event,” Notlotle said. “It was very complicated at first and I was scared that I was going to miss the pit. Luckily, I got the hang of it, and it wasn’t all that bad. I continued to do it consistently and got the steps (hop, skip, jump) down quickly and ran down the track into the sandpit.”

One of her first leaps into the pit resulted in a jump of 32-feet, and by the time the season closed out a few months later, Notlotle saw herself jump a remarkable 36’ 4” at the Tri Val-

ley League Meet.

As she entered her junior year at Norwood, Notlotle set high expectations for herself, but when the winter season didn’t go as planned, she was unsure of what was going to come in the spring. While participating in the triple jump, she continually saw her jumps go up and eventually found herself moving from the 28-foot board to the 32-foot board. By moving four feet backwards, she found herself a little nervous at first.

“Moving boards scared me – I didn’t want to land on my face and embarrass myself,” she said. “When you are looking down at the pit is looks much further than it really is, but again, once I got familiar with it everything was ok.”

Coming into her junior campaign Notlotle didn’t really expect much from herself, she just wanted to continually improve her leaps in both events. By the time the season concluded, the junior captain, who had scored the most points for the Mustangs this spring in dual meets, also found herself relatively close to not one but two school records.

“Kese jumped 17’ 1” in the long jump, which is just 3 inches short of the school record set by Sarah Meeks in 1993,” Mustang Track and Field Coach Aimee Worcester said. “She is also clos-



ing in on the triple jump record, and this past season jumped 36’ 1.5.” She is currently second in line behind the Meeks sisters, who hold both records.”

Worcester noted that during the TVL Meet Notlotle was leading in both events after the preliminaries when the rain washed out the rest of the afternoon, and eventually the Meet. It was never able to be rescheduled, and the junior missed out on possibly two TVL championships.

Notlotle was also able to qualify for both events in the Division 4 State Tournament where she placed fourth in the triple jump and did not participate in the long jump.

Coach Worcester also considers Notlotle to be a good sprinter and will use her in relays to help the team.

“I do it for the team,” Notlotle said. “Running distance is fun and I like being part of the DMR relay, which we finished second at the Division 4 States.”

As she gets ready for her final season with the Mustangs track team, Notlotle is planning on doing more strength training to get herself ready, and although she doesn’t really like sprinting, it’s the foundation of her events. She has also joined the Metro

Cobras, a club track team, in order to prepare herself for the run at the records.

“Honestly, it is not all about breaking the records, it’s about the numbers I am looking for (18’ in the long jump and 38’ in the triple jump),” she said. “If I hit those numbers, the records will come.”

Worcester believes that the now senior, without a doubt, will be raising her name to the gymnastic rafters come next year.

“She is a very reliable individual and with the season ending very abruptly with all the rain she was robbed,” the Norwood Coach said. “Come next year those records will be hers without a doubt.”

Following high school, Notlotle is looking to continue her jumping on the collegiate stage. Although it is still early in the process, she has been approached by a couple of schools in the New York area, but she also has other options on the horizon. However, having grown up in New Jersey and having cousins in New York, she would be open to attending college there.

Photo courtesy of Kesegosetse Notlotle

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NORWOOD SPORTS

Looking to bring competitiveness to Norwood

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY

Marcus McLaughlin had been coaching lacrosse on the club level over the past six years, but he really wanted to become a head coach for a varsity high school team. Luckily for him, Norwood happened to be looking.

Senior captain John Lynch was Norwood's top guy on offense and led the team in points and initiated things on the field for the Mustangs. According to McLaughlin, Lynch will do anything for the team, including dropping back to midfield to play defense. All his efforts didn't go unnoticed around the

an insane 65% save percentage (above 50% is noteworthy in lacrosse according to the coach). "He was a brick wall between the pipes and kept us in all our games giving us a chance," the Mustang Coach said. "He actually stole a few games for us singlehandedly. He was mentally and physical ready; as only a sophomore, it's exciting to watch him back there, he's electrifying."

Another sophomore who showcased his skill this past season was Jack Forbush, the team's long stick middle.

"Jack's an engine that really surprised me," McLaughlin said. "He runs up and down the field all game long and only comes out when it's beneficial for the team." He was very instrumental in his ability to push the ball in transition.

In addition to saying goodbye to the captains, Norwood will be without three more seniors when they take to the field next spring. Mark Trahon, a standout hockey player, was convinced to pick up a lacrosse stick this season and became a lock-down defensive mid-fielder for the Mustangs. The first-year player picked up the nuances of the game rather quickly and looked like a natural lacrosse player on the field. Despite only playing one season, he will be missed.

Another first-year senior was Jason Gillis, who led by example. Having played the sport years before on the youth level Gillis was not up to speed on the high school level, but was able to pick up where he left off many years ago and really inspired the younger athletes.

Last but not least, offensive mid-fielder Langston Coyle showed his speed with his downhill dodging and was one that was not afraid to be physical and make contact if necessary.

Having made the State Tournament was a big gain for the Mustangs and McLaughlin is hoping that these players all come back with that same tough and gritty play they exemplified this season.

"This team likes to prove others wrong; in the past teams liked to count Norwood out," the first-year coach said. "But

these guys showed up for work all year long and only care about what is in front of them. They are looking for the coach-

ing staff to show them more so that they can get better."

Photos courtesy of Coach Marcus McLaughlin



"I came to Norwood wanting to build a lacrosse culture, giving the guys the opportunity to be a real competitive lacrosse team," McLaughlin said. "After our first practice, I noticed that they were all hungry for lacrosse knowledge. They absorbed everything that we gave to them and implemented it into the game."

Under the first-year varsity coach, the Mustangs were able to go 9-6 during the regular season, and although not an overwhelming win to loss ratio, they did manage to earn a spot in the Division 2 State Tournament. Norwood was awarded a 30 seed and squared off against number three Reading Memorial, a team that went 15-3 during the regular season. Reading Memorial shut out the Mustangs and sent them home after a first-round loss.

"It is definitely huge to get that playoff experience under their belts," the Coach said. "It's not an easy task playing in the tournament, but this team is capable of doing so. We need to keep improving and show we can win a game. This is a gritty group where anything is possible."

league as the senior was named the Tri-Valley League MVP

Senior captain Billy Connolly also had himself a great campaign, and although it didn't show on the stat sheet, the younger players all looked up to his work ethic. The Mustangs other two captains, John Walenten and Mathew Kiklis, also made an impact. On defense, Walenten was a strong force in takeaways, while Kiklis put the ball in the back of the net on numerous occasions for the Mustangs while running through the opposition's defense like it was standing still.

"The captains were a big piece of this team," McLaughlin said. "It's difficult as a new coach stepping in with all the new personalities, but they were huge and instrumental in bridging that gap between the coaching staff and the players." They all had great work ethics and put us in a position to help lead this team and get the guys to all by win to what we were looking to do."


After the captains, a big part of the team's success was due to sophomore goalie Frank Fruci. McLaughlin noted that the sophomore goalkeeper posted

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



JULY 4 NORWOOD'S SPECTACULAR 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION!

CHILDREN'S BICYCLE, TRICYCLE, DOLL CARRIAGE & HISTORICAL CHARACTER PARADE

Norwood Center/Town Common
1 p.m.

Children are invited to show off their creations in a pre-parade procession down Washington St., to the Town Common. The fee is \$1 and each participant will receive a t-shirt and ribbon.

FOURTH OF JULY ADDRESS

Old Parish Cemetery (rear of 480 Washington St.)
2 p.m.

The address of Frederick Douglass, 'What to the Slave is the Fourth of July,' will be recited.

CARILLON CONCERT

Town Common
2:30 p.m.

Norwood's own Lee Leach and Margaret Angelini of Wellesley College will perform. A tour of the magnificent 50-bell Memorial Carillon will take place during the concert.

4 p.m.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Norwood's Historic Washington No. 7 Fire Bell.

The ceremony will revive a longstanding local tradition as attendees gather to ring the bell in honor of Independence Day.

NORWOOD FIRECRACKER 5K ROAD RACE

Town Common
5 p.m.

Enjoy participating or supporting this 5K race that starts just before Norwood's legendary independence parade!

FIRE TRUCK, ANTIQUE AND MILITARY PROCESSION

Washington St., South Norwood through Norwood Center
5:30 p.m.

Fire, emergency and military vehicles and antique cars make their way down the parade route just before the celebrations begin!

4TH OF JULY PARADE

Washington St., South Norwood to the Town Common
5:45 p.m.

Norwood's parade begins at the Coakley Middle School, in South Norwood, travels down Washington St., through Norwood Center and the Town Common and concludes at the Shaw's Plaza.

July 1

Sensory-Friendly Wednesday Movie Morrill Memorial Library 9:34 a.m.

The July movie in the Sensory-friendly Thursday Movie series is Universal Pictures' 'How to Train Your Dragon,' rated PG. This is the 2025 live action version.

July 3

Patriotic Rosary Norwood Town Common (Washington/Nahatan Sts.) 1 p.m.

Pray for the country. Pray for all the souls in each of the 50 states. Pray for the military, past and present, living and dead, police and firefighters, and government officials. Come and sing all of the favorite patriotic songs to honor God and country and give thanks for the American way of life. In case of rain, the Rosary will be prayed in St. Catherine of Siena Church. If outside, please bring a chair. For more information, call 781-762-4391.

July 5

Sunday Concerts on the Common Norwood Town Common 6:30 p.m.

The Portrait in Jazz will be kicking off the 2026 Concerts on the Common musical series! Bring chairs, blankets, even a picnic and enjoy!

July 6

Carillon Concert: John Whiteside, performing Norwood Town Hall 6:30 p.m.

All concerts are rain or shine. Best listening spots are on the Town Common or in the upper parking lot behind the Town Hall off Central Street. Tours of the bell tower are available after most concerts. Norwood's Fifty-Bell Memorial Carillon was cast by Gillett and Johnston, Bell-founders, Croydon, England, and, together with the Norwood Memorial Building and Tower, was dedicated on Armistice Day, November 11, 1928. The instrument was a gift to his fellow townspeople from the late Walter F. Tilton, a prominent local banker, and civic leader.

July 7

Norwood Farmers Market

Norwood Town Common 2-6 p.m.

The town common on Tuesdays is the place to be! This year's market offers more food vendors, more artisans, entertainment, and more! Meet your neighbors, purchase a fresh dinner, and have some fun!

July 9

Sensory-Friendly Thursday Movie Morrill Memorial Library 1 p.m.

The July movie in the Sensory-Friendly Thursday Movie series is Universal Pictures' 'How to Train Your Dragon,' rated PG. This is the 2025 live action version.

Teen Craft: Felted Carnivorous Plant with Pop Up Art School Morrill Memorial Library 2 p.m.

Using colorful wool and a special barbed needle, you will sculpt a fun green carnivorous plant complete with fangs and a bright red tongue, all rooted in a real terra-cotta pot. This playful needle felting project is a great introduction to a unique, tactile craft and results in a finished piece that's equal parts quirky, cute, and display-worthy. For grades 7-12.

Reverse Coloring for Adults: Relax and Create Morrill Memorial Library 6:30 p.m.

Unwind and tap into your creativity with Reverse Coloring, a fun and relaxing art activity designed for adults! Unlike traditional coloring books, reverse coloring starts with the colors already on the page — your job is to draw the lines. Let the watercolor-style backgrounds inspire your imagination as you add shapes, patterns, or outlines to bring each page to life. Whether you're an experienced artist or just looking for a mindful way to relax, this stress-free program is for you. All materials will be provided. No art skills needed — just bring your imagination! Open to all aged 18+.

July 10

Sensory-Friendly Art Classes for Adults Morrill Memorial Library 10:30 a.m.

Join the art instructor Stephanie Enloe for Sensory-Friendly Art Classes for Adults, a pro-

gram specially designed for adults with different levels of cognitive abilities. Each week, Ms. Stephanie will guide participants to create one-of-a-kind art projects, often utilizing recycled/repurposed materials and items found in nature.

Fandom Fridays Morrill Memorial Library 3 p.m.

Do you have a favorite fandom? Want to share your fandom with other teens? Join us every week on Friday afternoons for our Teen Fandom Friday program! Make crafts based around your favorite fandom or character, bring in a favorite piece of fandom memorabilia for show-and-tell, or use our projector to share a slideshow, playlist, piece of artwork, edit, or video from your fandom. Whether it's Kpop, Pokemon, anime, books, or even your own original characters, all fandoms are welcome here! For grades 7-12. No registration required.

July 11

Blessings Boutique Thrift Shop First Baptist Church, 71 Bond St. 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

The Boutique is the place to come to find your very own special treasures. It has great items at very reasonable prices. Come in and take a look. Their customers love shopping here!!!

Puzzle Race! Morrill Memorial Library 12:30 p.m.

Love doing puzzles? Want to test your speed against others? Join us for a friendly puzzle face-off against other teams!

How does the race work?

Up to 8 teams will compete, with a maximum of 4 people per team. Feel free to name your team!

Families are welcome to come as a team; children aged 10+ will count as a team member.

One puzzle per team.

Puzzles will be 500 pieces and the design will be the same.

Based on random luck of the draw, teams will get to choose their puzzles.

Race will kick off at 2:30pm and will end at 4pm. Please plan on arriving by 2:20 pm at the lat-

CALENDAR

continued on page 15

Registration is required for Morrill Memorial Library events unless otherwise noted: visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/, or call the reference desk at 781-769-0200, x2.

CALENDAR

continued from page 14

est, so we can start on time.

The team with the most completed puzzle by the end of the race will be the winner, but everyone gets the bragging rights!

This program is free and open to all, but note that the difficulty level of the puzzle design is most suitable for tweens, teens and adults.

July 12

**Concerts on the Common
Town Common
6:30-8:30 p.m.**

One of Norwood's favorite bands performs again on the common! Welcome back the Roy Scott Big Band! Bring chairs, blankets, even a picnic and enjoy!

July 13

**Monday Movie Matinee
Morrill Memorial Library
1 p.m.**

If you love movies and want to immerse yourself in unforgettable cinematic experiences, Morrill Memorial Library is the place to be! The movie today is Priscilla (113 mins), Rated R. After bumping into Elvis Presley at a party, teenager Priscilla Beaulieu becomes enamored with the musical icon. Their courtship and consequent marriage change Priscilla's life. What follows is a tantalizing, turbulent journey of love and fame. Based on the true story of the Presley family, the drama film chronicles Priscilla's relationship with Elvis Presley. (Source: Swank) Cast: Cailee Spaeny, Jacob Elordi, Dagmara Dominczyk, Ari Cohen.

**Carillon Concert: Christina Meyer, performing
Norwood Town Hall
6:30 p.m.**

All concerts are rain or shine. Best listening spots are on the Town Common or in the upper parking lot behind the Town Hall off Central Street. Tours of the bell tower are available after most concerts.

July 14

**Women in Business Networking Meeting
Norwood Civic Center
8 a.m.**

The Women's Business Networking (WBN) group is a non-profit organization for women in business or residents of Norwood and surrounding towns. The group meet two mornings per month and in addition to provid-

ing referral business, the women share and support business ideas and community events/fundraisers. If you would like more information about the organization or learn about joining, call 781-799-7068, or email womeninbusinessma@gmail.com.

**Norwood Farmers Market
Norwood Town Common
2-6 p.m.**

Haven't visited the Norwood Farmers Market yet? Don't wait any longer! The Norwood market gets bigger and better every year. No need to shop any further with friendly vendors eager to share and educate, including farm stands, bakeries, fish, baseball cards, non-profit organizations, specialty foods, artisans, and more! There will be games for the kids and music. Meet your neighbors, purchase a fresh dinner, and have some fun!

**True Local Crime Cases w/Author Wayne Miller
Morrill Memorial Library
7 p.m.**

The Morrill Memorial Library welcomes Wayne Miller, retired ATF Special Agent and author of Burn Boston Burn and Bang Boom Burn, for "Local True Crime Cases." This presentation provides an inside look at some significant criminal cases in New England history. Drawing from the real investigations behind his books, Burn Boston Burn and Bang Boom Burn, retired ATF Special Agent Wayne Miller reveals how federal, state, and local agencies unraveled complex arson conspiracies, bombing incidents, and highrisk gun cases. Audiences will learn about first-hand accounts, investigative strategies, and surprising twists from the "largest arson case in U.S. history."

**Norwood Toastmasters Meeting
Westwood Public Library, 660 High St.
7 p.m.**

The Norwood Toastmasters Club helps develop communication and leadership skills for its members and the community at every ability level. Guests are always welcome! Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. For more information, visit <https://norwoodtoastmaster.toastmastersclubs.org/>.

July 15

**Community Connections @ the Library
Morrill Memorial Library
12 p.m.**

Community Connections @

the Library is a monthly drop-in gathering hosted by Riverside Community Care on the third Wednesday of each month in the Morrill Memorial Library's Simoni Room. Each month highlights new ways to get connected, as well as focused help from a trusted local resource.

Community Connections @ the Library is designed to help residents learn about local resources, programs, and opportunities for personal growth and well-being. Meet with a community coach, enjoy friendly conversation, and discover ways to strengthen your connection to the people and supports around you. Drop in, bring your lunch or a coffee, and discover tools in your community that promote balance, resilience, and wellness. All are welcome, and all questions are welcome - regardless of each month's highlighted topic.

July 16

**Board Game Night
Morrill Memorial Library
6:30 p.m.**

Note, tonight's meeting will take place in the Trustees' Room.

If you've been looking for a casual group of fellow board gamers, the Morrill Memorial Library is your spot. Games will be provided, but feel free to bring any of your own! Please contact the library with any questions. For ages 18+.

July 17

**Sensory-Friendly Art Classes for Adults
Morrill Memorial Library
10:30 a.m.**

Join the art instructor Stephanie Enloe for a program specially designed for adults with different levels of cognitive abilities. Each week, Ms. Stephanie will guide participants to create one-of-a-kind art projects, often utilizing recycled/repurposed materials and items found in nature.

**Friends of the Norwood Council on Again Monthly Ballroom Dance
Norwood Senior Center, 275 Prospect St.
7 p.m.**

Music will be provided by Dave Valerio. Cost is \$12 per person. Coffee, tea, water & desserts will be served and there will also be door prizes. newcomers of all ages are welcome! To stay up to date on Friends news and events, visit their Facebook page at Friends Of The Norwood Council On Aging | Facebook

July 18

**Seed Packing Party!
Morrill Memorial Library
10 a.m.**

The Norwood Seed Library is having a seed packing party and you're invited! The seed library is in need of restocking since it has been so popular. The seed library needs to be stocked with a wide variety of seeds to last us through the planting season, so we figured we'd make it a social event. We will pack a variety of seeds, and have impromptu gardening conversations with our fellow seed packers.

July 19

**Concerts on the Common
Town Common
6:30-8:30 p.m.**

The Westwood Swing Band visits Norwood again to perform its big band sounds! Bring chairs, blankets, even a picnic and enjoy!

July 20

**Carillon Concert: Andrea McCrady, performing
Norwood Town Hall
6:30 p.m.**

All concerts are rain or shine. Best listening spots are on the Town Common or in the upper parking lot behind the Town

Hall off Central Street. Tours of the bell tower are available after most concerts.

July 21

**Norwood Farmers Market: Christmas in July
Norwood Town Common
2-6 p.m.**

It's Christmas in July at the Market! The vendors will be embracing this unofficial shopping holiday with holiday foods and handmade items. Get a jump on your Christmas shopping! There will even be holiday music on the common!

July 24

**Sensory-Friendly Art Classes for Adults
Morrill Memorial Library
10:30 a.m.**

Join the art instructor Stephanie Enloe for a program specially designed for adults with different levels of cognitive abilities. Each week, Ms. Stephanie will guide participants to create one-of-a-kind art projects, often utilizing recycled/repurposed materials and items found in nature.

Fandom Fridays

CALENDAR

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CALENDAR

continued from page 15

**Morrill Memorial Library
3 p.m.**

Do you have a favorite fandom? Want to share your fandom with other teens? Join us every week on Friday afternoons for our Teen Fandom Friday program! Make crafts based around your favorite fandom or character, bring in a favorite piece of fandom memorabilia for show-and-tell, or use our projector to share a slideshow, playlist, piece of artwork, edit, or video from your fandom. Whether it's Kpop, Pokemon, anime, books, or even your own original characters, all fandoms are welcome here! For grades 7-12. No registration required.

July 25

**Blessings Boutique Thrift Shop
First Baptist Church, 71 Bond St.
10 a.m.-12 p.m.**

Summer clothing and shoe sale. There will also be great bargains on jewelry, kitchen and decorative items, books, puzzles, and lots more. Don't miss out!

July 26

**Concerts on the Common
Town Common
6:30-8:30 p.m.**

The Sharon Concert Band crosses the border to share their wide variety of music, from

classical, to patriotic, Broadway, to jazz. Bring chairs, blankets, even a picnic and enjoy!

July 27

**Monday Movie Matinee
Morrill Memorial Library
1 p.m.**

If you love movies and want to immerse yourself in unforgettable cinematic experiences, Morrill Memorial Library is the place to be! On July 27, enjoy *The Whale* (117 mins) - Rated R. From Darren Aronofsky comes *The Whale*, the story of a reclusive English teacher who attempts to reconnect with his estranged teenage daughter. Starring Brendan Fraser and based on the acclaimed play by Samuel D. Hunter. (Source: Swank) Cast: Brendan Fraser, Sadie Sink, Ty Simpkins, Hong Chau.

**Carillon Concert: Anton Fleissner,
performing
Norwood Town Hall
6:30 p.m.**

All concerts are rain or shine. Best listening spots are on the Town Common or in the upper parking lot behind the Town Hall off Central Street. Tours of the bell tower are available after most concerts.

July 28

**Women in Business Networking
Meeting
Norwood Civic Center
8 a.m.**

The Women's Business Networking (WBN) group is a non-profit organization for women in business or residents of Norwood and surrounding towns. The group meet two mornings per month and in addition to providing referral business, the women share and support business ideas and community events/fundraisers. If you would like more information about the organization or learn about joining, call 781-799-7068, or email womeninbusinessma@gmail.com. **Norwood Farmers Market
Norwood Town Common
2-6 p.m.**

The Norwood Farmers Market is so much more than some tent stands. It's a place where shoppers learn and experience new foods, purchase unique items, and learn about local non-profits and organizations. Residents also meet up with neighbors and often make new friends! Come on down to experience the best market around, right here in Norwood! **Norwood Toastmasters Meeting
Walpole Public Library, 143
School St.
7 p.m.**

The Norwood Toastmasters Club helps develop communication and leadership skills for its members and the community at every ability level. Guests are always welcome! Meetings are

held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. For more information, visit <https://norwoodtoastmastersclubs.org/>. **Titles on Tap Book Group
Napper Tandy's
7:30 p.m.**

The group meets at Napper Tandy's in Norwood, in the left-hand-side bar. The July title had yet to be announced at press time. Check the library calendar periodically. Copies of the book will be available to pick up at the library's Reference desk. Titles on Tap is a social book group for readers in their 20s and 30s and for the young at heart. We go in for stories that are shaken, not stirred, and we don't mind taking our love of lit outside the library walls. Titles on Tap meets once a month in the left-hand bar of Napper Tandy's to eat, drink, be merry, and discuss the latest reading selection.

July 29

**Sensory-Friendly Lego Club for
Adults
Morrill Memorial Library
10:30 a.m.**

Join in this creative adventure. Just bring your imagination – the library will provide the Legos. The Club is free, inclusive, and open to anyone ages 18+. It is specially designed for adults with different levels of abilities.

July 30

**Sensory-Friendly Lego Club for
Adults
Morrill Memorial Library
1 p.m.**

Join in this creative adventure. Just bring your imagination – the library will provide the Legos. The Club is free, inclusive, and open to anyone ages 18+. It is specially designed for adults with different levels of abilities.

July 31

**Sensory-Friendly Art Classes for
Adults
Morrill Memorial Library
10:30 a.m.**

Join the art instructor Stephanie Enloe for a program specially designed for adults with different levels of cognitive abilities. Each week, Ms. Stephanie will guide participants to create one-of-a-kind art projects, often utilizing recycled/repurposed materials and items found in nature.

Aug. 3

**American Red Cross Blood Drive
Knights of Columbus, 572 Nichols
St.
1-6 p.m.**

Registration is required for Morrill Memorial Library events unless otherwise noted: visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/, or call the reference desk at 781-769-0200, x2.

Firecracker 5K ignites Fourth of July festivities

BY MICHELE TARANTO

For many runners, the annual Firecracker 5K has become as

much a Fourth of July tradition as the parade itself. Held just before Norwood's beloved Inde-

pendence Day Parade, the race draws runners of all ages who are eager to kick off the main

event with a burst of energy and community spirit.

The race begins promptly at 5 p.m. from the Norwood Town Common and follows a flat, fast 3.1-mile out-and-back course through town streets lined with enthusiastic spectators. Whether competing for a personal best or simply enjoying the festive atmosphere, participants can expect plenty of encouragement from the thousands of residents and visitors who gather to celebrate the holiday.

Awards will be presented to the top three overall male and female finishers, while medals will be awarded to the top three finishers in each age division. The first 100 registered runners will also receive a commemorative event t-shirt.

Race organizers remind participants that the course is designed for continuous forward movement, and runners should be prepared to maintain a reasonable pace throughout the

event. No prolonged stopping will be permitted unless in case of emergency.

Registration is \$25. Advance registration will end July 2 at 8 a.m. On-site registration begins 3:30pm July 4. Look for the marked tent on the Norwood Town Common. For those pre-registered, you can begin to pick up bibs and T-shirts 3:45 p.m., on July 4, at Norwood Town Common, adjacent to 566 Washington St. Race begins promptly at 5pm.

To register or learn more, visit www.runsignup.com.

As the final runners cross the finish line, attention quickly turns to the next highlight of the day. The Firecracker 5K passes a metaphorical baton into Norwood's Fourth of July Parade, making it the perfect way to begin an evening filled with patriotism, community pride, and celebration as Norwood commemorates America's 250th anniversary.

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 REAL ESTATE CORNER

Homebuyer's: What to do before you start house hunting

Buying your first home is one of life's most exciting milestones. This process, however, can also feel overwhelming. Between mortgage options, home inspections, down payments, and the competitive housing market, many buyers are unsure where to begin.

If homebuyers can resist the excitement of online house hunting, they will find a little preparation can make the process much smoother. Before scrolling through listings or attending open houses, adhering to this checklist could be the key for success.

Check Your Credit

Your credit score plays a significant role in determining mortgage options and interest rate. Before applying for a loan, review a credit report for accuracy and pay down any outstanding debts when possible. Even a small improvement in a credit score could save thousands of dollars over the life of a mortgage.

Understand The Budget

Just because a lender approves a certain lending amount does not necessarily mean that should be the top of the budget. Consider monthly comfort levels after accounting for utilities, insurance, property taxes, maintenance, groceries, and other living expenses.

A home should enhance a lifestyle, not strain your finances.

Save for More Than the Down Payment

Many first-time buyers focus solely on the down payment and overlook other up front expenses. Closing costs, moving expenses, home inspections, and immediate repairs or purchases can add up quickly.

Having a financial cushion can help reduce stress after moving into a new home.

Get Pre-Approved

A mortgage pre-approval helps all parties understand their purchasing power and shows sellers who are the serious buyers. In today's market, many sellers expect buyers to have financing lined up before submitting an offer.

Make a Wish List

Think about needs versus your wants. How many bedrooms? Is a home office important? Think about preferences, a shorter commute, a larger yard, or proximity to schools and parks?

Identifying priorities early can help all stay focused when viewing homes.



Learn About the Community
Buying a home means investing in a neighborhood as well as a property. Visit the area at different times of day, explore local businesses, parks, libraries, and community events, and consider how the location fits a desired lifestyle.

Build Your Team

Purchasing a home involves several professionals, including a lender, real estate agent, attorney, and home inspector. Working with experienced professionals will help navigate the process, avoid costly mistakes, and aid in making informed decisions.

Be Patient

The perfect home may not appear immediately. Many buyers discover that flexibility and

patience are just as important as preparation. The goal is not simply to buy a house but to find the right home for immediate needs and future plans.

Final Thoughts

Buying a home is a major financial and personal decision, but it does not have to be intimidating. By preparing in advance, understanding the budget, and assembling a knowledgeable team, the process can be approached with confidence.

A successful home purchase begins long before that initial walk through the front door. Taking the time to prepare today can help make one of the most important life investments tomorrow.

For those considering homeownership, Norwood continues to offer advantages that extend beyond the front door. The town benefits from a strong commercial tax base, helping to keep the FY2026 residential property tax rate at \$9.82 per \$1,000 of assessed value, while commercial properties are taxed at \$22.52 per \$1,000. In addition, homeowners enjoy the benefits of a municipal electric service through the Norwood Light Department, which has long been recognized for reliable service and competitive rates. Residents also have access to locally provided internet and streaming options through Norwood Light Broadband, offering an alternative to traditional providers. Combined with its convenient location, vibrant downtown, parks, schools, and active com-

munity organizations, these advantages continue to make Norwood an attractive place for

homebuyers to put down roots and invest not just in a house, but in a home."

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Client Testimonial

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Working with Michele made selling my Massachusetts home from out of state so much easier than I ever expected. What meant the most to me was how kind and respectful she was while working with my mother, who was still living in the home during the sale. She handled everything with patience, professionalism, and genuine care, which made a stressful situation feel manageable for everyone involved. She truly made the entire experience smooth and worry-free. I'm incredibly grateful for all of her help and would absolutely recommend her to anyone – especially if you're trying to sell a home from out of state.
-Posted by Kathleen Ribeiro (Seller), May 2026



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Norfolk County real estate slows in May 2026

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell recently released the real estate recording statistics for May, 2026, which indicate a slowdown in real estate activity across Norfolk County compared to May, 2025, with declines seen in several key indicators including sales volume, average sale prices, and mortgage activity.

The Registry of Deeds recorded 9,415 documents in May, 2026, a 2% decrease compared to the 9,628 documents recorded in May, 2025, and a slight 1% decrease from April, 2026.

"May, 2026 reflects a lower level of real estate activity compared to last year," Register of Deeds O'Donnell said. "While overall document recordings remained relatively stable, the year-over-year decline suggests a market that is adjusting to ongoing economic pressures and a limited inventory of available properties."

The total number of deeds recorded for May, 2026, representing both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 1,462, a 2% decrease from the 1,494 deeds recorded in May, 2025, but a 3% increase from April, 2026.

Looking at just real estate sales, 773 properties were sold in May, 2026, representing a 6% decrease compared to May, 2025.

"Although transaction volume improved over April of 2026, this spring market has not matched the level seen in May of 2025," Register O'Donnell stated. "Elevated interest rates and affordability challenges continue to restrict both buyers and sellers."

Lending activity also declined in May. A total of 1,511 mortgages were recorded in May, 2026, a 2% decrease from the 1,542 mortgages recorded in May, 2025, and an 8% decrease from April, 2026. Total mortgage indebtedness was approximately \$1.25 billion, a 14% decrease compared to May, 2025, but a 10% increase from April, 2026.

"The decrease in mortgage activity, along with a significant drop in total mortgage indebtedness compared to last year, reflects a more cautious lending environment," Register O'Donnell said. "Interest rates and overall borrowing costs remain key factors affecting financing decisions."

The total value of commercial and residential sales recorded in May, 2026, was approximately \$926 million, a 19% decrease from the \$1.14 billion recorded in May, 2025, but a 17% increase from April, 2026. The average sale price for all property types was approximately \$1.19 million, a 14% decrease compared to May, 2025, but a 4% increase from April, 2026.

"While overall property values remain historically elevated, the decrease appears to reflect a combination of fewer high-value transactions, softness in the commercial real estate sector, and increased sensitivity to affordability among buyers," Register O'Donnell explained. "According to Redfin, market data residential home prices have remained relatively stable year-over-year, with countywide data showing only minimal price

movement in May."

The Registry continues to closely monitor foreclosure activity. In May, 2026, there were 2 foreclosure deeds recorded as a result of mortgage foreclosures taking place in Norfolk County, unchanged from May, 2025.

Notices to foreclose, which represent the first step in the foreclosure process, increased to 28 in May, 2026, from 26 in May, 2025.


"While foreclosure deeds remain low, the increase in notices to foreclose is something we are watching closely," said Register O'Donnell. "Foreclosure activity has a real impact on families and communities, and we want residents to know that resources are available if they are facing financial hardship."

"Overall, the May, 2026, recording data shows a market that is moving at a slower pace than last year," Register O'Donnell concluded. "Affordability challenges, higher borrowing costs, and a limited supply of available properties are all continuing to weigh on activity. At the same time, the drop in total sales value and average sale price seems to be driven more by fewer high-end and commercial transactions, rather than any broad decline in residential home values, which have remained relatively steady. As we move into the summer months, we hope to see the homebuying season pick up steam."


The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is located at 649 High St., in Dedham. The Registry is a resource for homeowners, title examiners, mortgage lenders, municipalities and others with a need for secure, accurate, accessible land record information. All land record research information can be found on the Registry's website, www.norfolkdeeds.org. Residents in need of assistance can contact the Registry of Deeds Customer Service Center at (781) 461-6101, or email registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

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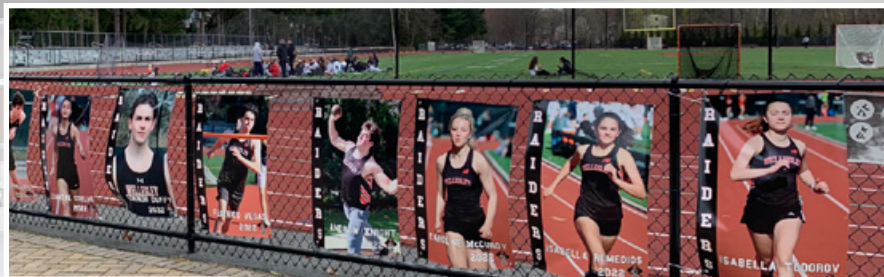


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