

# localtownpages Natick

Vol. 11 No. 10

Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

October 1, 2026

## Scary stuff planned for Halloween

BY MAUREEN SULLIVAN

Halloween is hauntingly close and we've scared up some activities to celebrate, if you dare....

**Pumpkin Fest** – Oct. 18, 2-5 p.m., Tilly and Salvy's Bacon Street Farm. Includes music, bounce houses, face painting, and about 20-30 local food vendors. Proceeds from pumpkin sales that day will be donated to Natick Public Schools.

**Spooktacular** – Oct. 24, noon-3 p.m., downtown Natick. Sponsored by the Recreation and Parks Department. Enjoy an afternoon of free fun events on the Common including music, balloon twisting and pumpkin painting. The costume parade to visit local businesses (and get in some early trick-or-treating) will



Jack and another skeleton friend occupy a yard in the Madison Street area. Photo by Maureen Sullivan

take place from 2:15-3 p.m.

**Jack O'Lantern Competition** – Oct. 30, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Eliot Church, South Natick.

**At the libraries**  
**MORSE INSTITUTE LIBRARY**

**Teen & Tween: Halloween Perler Bead Magnets**, Oct. 17, 3-4 p.m.

For teens and tweens (ages

**HALLOWEEN**  
continued on page 6

## Beautiful plantings are always in season for Garden Club

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

"To everything," the famous song by "The Byrds" tells us, "There is a season."

For the Natick Garden Club, every season is a time to plant.

On the cusp of autumn, the group gathered in downtown Natick to put their green thumbs to work.

On that Wednesday morning in mid-September, a lingering hint of summer heat and sunshine shone upon the pavement. From a makeshift workstation on the corner of Court and Main streets, members and volunteers of NGC pulled from a supply of plants arrayed on the sidewalk.

Sconce planters already affixed to brick facades of buildings would soon become hosts for the flora awaiting their forever homes.

"We design it; we plant it,"



Couple doubles the effort at Garden Club work. Photo by Sean Sullivan

said Elizabeth Carroll. She is Chairperson for the NGC's fall planting season, and also serves as Co-Chair for the town's "Art In

**GARDEN CLUB**  
continued on page 3

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**Health & Wellness  
Fall Show 2026**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

See Vendor List & Location on page 2

**LOOK  
INSIDE!**

# A somber remembrance, 25 years later

On the early morning hours of Sept. 11, 2001, the steel beam went unnoticed, a silent stalwart helping to keep the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center standing.

Hours later, the beam, and the buildings around it, collapsed as two hijacked planes crashed into and destroyed the landmark, killing thousands in the process.

Today, that beam sits outside the Natick Center Police Station, a silent but powerful reminder of a day when America changed.

The Natick Police and Fire departments, along with the Natick Soldiers System Center, local and state official and residents gathered Sept. 11, 2026 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of that dark day.

The group paused at 8:46



The community gathered to remember. Courtesy photo



Placing flowers in memory. Courtesy photo



The steel beam that once held up the World Trade Center. Courtesy photo



First responders salute. Courtesy photo

REMEMBRANCE  
continued on page 6

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GARDEN CLUB

continued from page 1

Bloom” event.

“To keep everything alive,” said Carroll, representatives from the Natick Center Cultural District take on the task of watering the plants.

Located on Court Street, the cultural district office is within a garden stone’s throw of the arrangements.

The organization has other ties to the Natick Garden Club, including supplementing its funding from time to time. The two groups have a shared mission: To enrich Natick’s cultural and commercial spaces.

To keep membership flourishing, the NGC holds evening meetings. That makes it workable for volunteers who work during the day. “That makes it more accessible to people,” said Carroll.

The club has been around since 1998, and includes about 140 members. Most of NGC’s funding comes from dues paid by members.

In exchange, those members find community and learn more about the planting process.

“I knew nobody,” said Natick resident Linda Lentz. For her,

the town was a place where she slept and commuted to and from work, with little opportunity in between to socialize. “It’s been a great way to meet new friends.”

Across Main Street, volunteer Laurie Adelstein was helping the club’s current president steady a sconce that slipped its fastenings and was now askew. The fixture adorned the façade of the Debsan paint and wallpaper store.

Adelstein agreed that the club was a fun and informative way to meet like-minded people and learn new skills.

The NGC maintains 35 planters in the downtown area, bringing a flourish of living color to the community. An additional six containers make up the constellation around the Morse Institute Library.

In addition to collection dues, the club hosts a plant sale every spring to finance its efforts. As part of its mission, the NGC also offers funds scholarships for Natick High School students.

The club does a mass planting for each season, and flora are carefully selected by the group to survive and thrive in those elements.

Spring brings pansies and daffodils, summer sees an assortment of geraniums. Dog-



Flowers and friendships bloom from garden club beautification. Photo by Sean Sullivan

wood is favored for its flourish of color during gray and dark winter months.

Natick merchants pitch in to help the NGC purchase plants and flowers, and in return see their brick storefronts blossom year-round.

“It really keeps the downtown looking vibrant,” said Carroll.



Ready for the next season. Photo by Sean Sullivan



The results add color to the sidewalks. Photo by Sean Sullivan



Mum’s the word. Photo by Sean Sullivan

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# Natick man honored as Myra Kraft Community MVP

Natick resident Harry Nesbitt has been named a 2026 Myra Kraft Community MVP award winner.

He was presented with a \$10,000 donation for Path for Adaptive Opportunities.

During the Sept. 15 luncheon, the Kraft family, the Patriots Foundation and Gillette awarded \$275,000 in grants to 26 New England nonprofits. “I’m honored and thrilled to be selected for this award,” Nesbitt said. “I get more out of volunteering and seeing the athletes and individuals improve at every session. Their smiles of happiness and laughter are addictive.”

Nesbitt has been a dedicated volunteer, advocate, and leader for individuals with disabilities in the Natick community for more than two decades.

He supports people with disabilities in multiple capacities, including serving as a Special Olympics softball and basketball coach, where he worked directly with athletes to build skills, confidence, teamwork, and joy through sports.

In that role, Nesbitt interacted closely with athletes, families, fellow coaches, and volunteers, creating an encouraging environment where every participant felt valued and supported.

For the past five years, Nesbitt has served as both President and Treasurer of Path for Adaptive Opportunities, the nonprofit organization that raises funds to support Camp Arrowhead, Skyline, and related adaptive recreation programs.

In these roles, Nesbitt has taken on enormous responsibility, helping guide the organization’s mission, manages financial oversight, working with board members and community partners, supports fundraising events, communicating with donors, and ensuring that money raised is directed toward the programs and families who need it most.

Under Nesbitt’s leadership, PATH has dramatically increased its fundraising impact, tripling donations to the organization. That growth has allowed PATH to increase support across all programs, especially Camp Arrowhead.

Because of Nesbitt’s volunteer leadership, PATH has been able to provide larger program offsets to the Town of Natick, helping keep participation costs lower for campers and families.

PATH has also increased financial aid for all who apply, expanded funding for specialty equipment, supported program activities, helped pay for special events and guest experiences, and funded countless other needs that improve the quality, accessibility, and safety of the programs.

Since 1998, the Kraft family and the New England Patriots Foundation have been recognizing volunteers for going above and beyond to give back to their communities through the Myra Kraft Community MVP Awards program.

“Throughout New England, extraordinary individuals are strengthening their communities through selfless acts of service,” said Robert Kraft, Chairman and CEO of the Patriots. “My late wife, Myra, of blessed memory, believed that each of us has a responsibility to help others and leave our communities better than we found them. This year’s honorees embody that spirit through their compassion, generosity and unwavering commitment to those they serve. We are proud to recognize them with the Myra Kraft Community MVP Awards and celebrate the meaningful difference they make every day.”

Gillette, a longtime supporter of the New England Patriots and a cornerstone partner of the Patriots Foundation, served as the presenting sponsor for this year’s program.

On hand to congratulate the award winners were Patriots, College and Pro Football



Patriots Pro Football Hall of Famer Andre Tippett, far left, and Gillette’s VP of Communications & Community Affairs, Global Grooming, Kara Buckley, congratulate Harry Nesbitt from the Path for Adaptive Opportunities for being selected as a 2026 Myra Kraft Community MVP Award winner. Photo courtesy Lexi Ehle/New England Patriots

Hall of Famer Andre Tippett and Gillette’s VP of Communications & Community Affairs, Global Grooming, Kara Buckley.

“We are honored to recognize this year’s Myra Kraft Community MVPs, whose generosity, dedication, and leadership help create stronger, more connected communities,” said Kara Buckley, Vice President of Community Affairs at P&G Gillette.

“Each honoree reflects the spirit of service that Myra Kraft championed and demonstrates how one person’s actions can positively impact countless others. At Gillette, we are proud to support and celebrate those who bring out the best in people, and we thank the Kraft family and the New England Patriots Foundation for continuing this meaningful tradition.”

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# Stay one step ahead of cybercriminals



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Your financial security is only as strong as your digital security. A single stolen password, convincing scam or fraudulent investment offer can lead to lost savings, damaged credit or hours spent recovering compromised accounts. As our financial lives move increasingly online, protecting your personal information is part of protect-

ing your financial future. Cybercriminals are getting smarter, and technology like AI is making their job easier. But fortunately, some consistent habits can help protect you from many of today's common threats.

**Watch out for phishing.** Phishing is a common way criminals break into accounts and steal money. These attacks often arrive as emails, texts or phone calls that appear to come from your bank, employer or another trusted organization. Fake websites can trick you into typing in your password or financial details.

To protect yourself, verify unexpected requests through a separate channel, such as calling a company directly using a number from its official website rather than one provided in a suspicious message. Avoid clicking unexpected links and consider using a password manager which auto-fills your login information only on legitimate websites.

**Strengthen your accounts.** Stolen passwords give criminals easy access to your email, banking and social media accounts. Try using a unique password for every account and enable multifactor authentication whenever it's offered. When possible, choose phishing-resistant options like passkeys or security keys; they're harder for scammers to bypass than basic text message codes.

**Be skeptical of urgency.** Scammers increasingly use deepfakes, which leverage AI-generated voices, videos and images to convincingly impersonate trusted people, including company executives, advisors and even family members. These messages often create pressure to send money or share sensitive information immediately.

If you receive an urgent request that feels off, slow down. Hang up and try calling back to the person or organization using a known phone number. Many successful scams rely on

emotional pressure rather than technical tricks, so a moment of skepticism can go a long way.

**Protect your money and identity.** Fraudulent investment platforms and cryptocurrency schemes continue to cost Americans billions of dollars each year. Be cautious of investment opportunities promoted through unsolicited messages or social media contacts, and always verify a platform independently before sending money. If you're unsure whether an opportunity is legitimate, a financial advisor can help evaluate it before you invest.

Data breaches can also put your information at risk, even when you've done everything right. It's smart to check your bank and credit card statements regularly for unfamiliar charges, and to freeze your credit if you suspect your information has been compromised. You may also choose to freeze your credit preemptively.

**Keep your devices up-dated.** Software updates often

fix security weaknesses that criminals could otherwise exploit. Backing up important files, whether to the cloud or an external drive, also protects you if ransomware ever locks you out of your own data.

Small habits matter. Unique passwords, multifactor authentication and skepticism help stop many scams before they start. Take steps to help safeguard your money, identity and long-term financial goals.

Contact Gary Shilman to discuss your financial needs, wants, and wishes.  
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## REMEMBRANCE

*continued from page 2*

a.m. to honor the innocent lives lost, the extraordinary sacrifice of first responders, and the enduring strength of a united community.

As the day continues, the community encouraged everyone to take a moment to reflect, reach out to a neighbor, and express gratitude to the brave men and women who serve and protect us every day.



The honor guard stands at attention. *Courtesy photo*

## HALLOWEEN

*continued from page 1*

11-18), registration required. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Morse Institute Library.

**Haints, Haunts and Hollers: A Spooky Storytelling Adventure with Rona Leventhal, Oct. 19, 7-8 p.m.**

Join Rona for an evening of c-r-e-e-p-y stories. Will Jack survive the haunted house? What do you do with screams in the night? A skeleton that won't die? A dead man in the road? Are YOU afraid of the Bell Witch? Or the Mujina? What does the dead man want from Mary Culhane? In this show you will find all manner of haints, dead folk, shape shifters and mysterious players. This program is best suited for families with children ages 5 and up. Drop in, no registration required.

**Natick's Oldest Burial Grounds: Gravestone Carvers and Their Symbols, Oct. 27, 7-8:15 p.m.**

If you've driven past the South Natick Burial Ground or North Natick Cemetery without stopping, this talk is a reason to

change that. Established in 1731 and 1744, these are the town's two oldest burial grounds and hold gravestones cut by hand by carvers whose work can be identified and traced across eastern Massachusetts.

We'll look at who carved Natick's earliest stones and at the symbolism they used — death's heads, cherubs, urns, and willows — which was designed to be read and understood by anyone who passed by. Natick's other cemeteries appear along the way, as a way of tracing how burial grounds evolved into cemeteries over three centuries.

Registration for this event is suggested, but not required. Patrons who register will receive an event reminder and any updates about the event. Registration also helps organizers prepare ample seating.

### FOR ADULTS

**Creativebug: Spooky Mono-prints, Oct. 28, 3-4:30 p.m.**

Supplies are limited, and registration is required.

Join librarian Suzanne, for a brief overview of Creativebug. This resource has unlimited access to thousands of online art and craft classes, and it's all free with your library card. Then, we'll

use Creativebug's Spooky Mono-prints course which will walk us through the very same process that Andy Warhol made famous using simple materials: a nib pen, acrylic ink, images to trace, and transparency film. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

### BACON FREE LIBRARY

**Harvest Pumpkin Party Concert, Oct. 9, 11 a.m.-noon**

Join Elijah T. Grasshopper & Friends for a fun-filled Harvest Pumpkin Party Concert! Keep an eye on the library's Facebook page for weather updates.

### VIRTUAL

**Even More Haunted Lighthouses of New England with Author Jeremy D'Entremont, Oct. 26, 7-8:15 p.m.**

Registrants will receive a link to access the Zoom webinar via email. Lighthouses and ghost stories often seem to go hand in hand. In the past, Jeremy has discussed the lovelorn spirit known as Ernie at Connecticut's New London Ledge Light and the piano-playing ghost of Maine's Seguin Light, among others as well as about the mysterious Woman in White in the Isles of Shoals and the spirit of a drowned lighthouse keeper at Penfield Reef in Connecticut.

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# The Allain Group puts local knowledge at the heart of real estate

BY JENNIFER RUSSO

For Jessica Allain, real estate has always been about more than houses. It is about neighborhoods, relationships, and understanding what makes a community feel like home.

After 20 years in the real estate business, Allain has built The Allain Group into a long-standing team of professionals who bring their own specialties and perspectives to every transaction. The team, established eight years ago, works diligently to help clients navigate the often-complicated process of buying or selling a home.

Now, the team has put down an even stronger local footprint with its own office at 33 West Central St. in downtown Natick, along the Boston Marathon route. The location is particularly fitting for a group whose agents live in Natick or nearby communities and have spent years getting to know the people and neighborhoods they serve and the value of helping people find their place.

The new space puts that philosophy quite literally at the center of its work.

"We care deeply for this area, being locals ourselves. Creating an even stronger community is something we are all very enthusiastic about," Allain said.

That local connection is central to the group's approach. The agents know the neighborhoods firsthand, but they also understand the people who are considering moving into them. In a market where buyers may be weighing everything from commute times and schools to the character of a particular

**Business  
spotlight**

neighborhood, that knowledge can make a meaningful difference.

The team works directly with clients rather than relying on a hands-off, online-only approach. Each agent maintains their own clients and accounts, while the team shares knowledge and supports one another behind the scenes. Currently, the entire team is made up of women, each bringing a different specialty and perspective to the group.

The result is a full-service experience that extends well beyond putting a house on the market. The Allain Group offers listing preparation, staging consultations, and extensive marketing as part of its standard service, with no additional fees.

The current market is also bringing some interesting shifts. While it remains a seller's market, increased inventory this year is creating more balance. Allain said the team is seeing continued interest from families moving out of the bigger cities and into suburban communities, as well as families looking for homes to accommodate their parents and grandparents moving in.

For buyers, the team takes a practical approach to finding the right fit. That means looking at the must-haves, the wish list, and collaborating with



THE ALLAIN  
GROUP

the client to see where there is flexibility, particularly when it comes to location or property features. With real estate being a significant long-term investment, finding the right property in the right neighborhood is an important part of the equation.

For eight consecutive years, Allain has been the number one agent in Natick, a distinction that reflects both her individual experience and the strength of the team around her. Beyond the numbers, Jessica feels things ultimately come back to something much more personal: knowing the community and being there for the people who call (or want to call) it home.



The Allain Group recently opened its beautiful new office on West Central Street in Natick.

For clients, that expertise translates into something that can sometimes be hard to find in real estate: confidence without pressure. Reviews of The Allain Group repeatedly point to the team's responsiveness, straightforward advice, and ability to make complicated transactions feel manageable. It's that combination of strat-

egy and personal attention that can make a significant difference when a home represents one of the biggest financial decisions a person will make.

To learn more about the Allain Group, visit their website at [www.allaingroupre.com](http://www.allaingroupre.com) or call them at 617-820-8114.

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# Natick Days united community for fun, information



The community could learn about ways to serve. Courtesy photo

The community gathered Saturday, Sept. 26 for Natick Days. This annual event celebrates the community and offers greater visibility for the town’s youth groups and non-profit organizations. Organizers report that this year was another success, with great weather and an enthusiastic response.

**NATICK DAYS**  
*continued on page 9*



The bounce house kept things hopping. Courtesy photo



Children explored the game choices. Courtesy photo



Bobbing for apples is a fall tradition. Courtesy photo



Plenty of games meant plenty of fun. Courtesy photo

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Your Money, Your Independence

# Beyond medical bills: Using an HSA to fuel your retirement



Glenn Brown, CFP

Open enrollment for work benefits is coming. One critical choice often causes confusion: deciding between a PPO medical plan and a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) paired with a Health Savings Account (HSA). Understanding how these work can help you make smarter choices for 2027 and your future.

- Choosing the Right Medical Plan**
- Selecting the right health plan comes down to three primary factors:
- 1. Provider Access:** Ensure your preferred doctors, specialists, and hospitals are in-network. No amount of tax savings offsets losing access to your trusted care team.
  - 2. Total Annual Cost:** Compare

the guaranteed cost (monthly premiums) against potential care costs (deductible and out-of-pocket maximum). Look at historical medical expenses, but also plan for expected upcoming care.

**3. Tax & Savings Strategy:** An HDHP paired with an HSA offers triple tax savings. While popular for those with low healthcare needs, HDHPs can also be cost-effective for heavy users—provided you have the cash flow to handle higher up-front expenses before insurance kicks in.

- Unlocking the "Triple Tax Advantage"**
- An HSA provides three distinct layers of tax savings that no other financial account can match:
- Tax-Deductible Contributions:** Funds contributed directly or via payroll deduction reduce your taxable income for the year (saving federal, state, and FICA taxes).
  - Tax-Free Growth:** Earnings, interest, dividends, and investment gains grow compoundingly without triggering annual taxes.
  - Tax-Free Withdrawals:** Withdrawals used for qualified medical expenses—such as doctor visits, prescriptions,

dental care, and vision—are completely federal tax-free.

**Real-World Tax Savings**

Consider a family in the 24% federal tax bracket spending \$4,000 annually on routine healthcare. By funding those out-of-pocket costs through an HSA, they can save roughly \$1,480 in taxes (federal, state, and FICA).

A household in the 32% bracket maxing out the \$9,000 family contribution can save between \$3,500 and \$4,100 in taxes, depending on whether their individual earnings exceed the Social Security wage cap.

- Don't Leave "Free Money" on the Table**
- Surprisingly, more than half of eligible employees never open or fund an HSA.
- This is a costly oversight because many employers offer \$500 to \$2,000 per year in seed contributions or wellness incentives (such as completing an annual physical) to jump-start accounts. Contributing even a small amount per pay period ensures you capture these employer matches.
- 2027 IRS Contribution Limits & HDHP Requirements**
- The IRS has released limits for 2027:
- Individual: \$4,500

- Family: \$9,000
- Catch-Up (55+): \$1,000

Remember, employer contributions count toward the annual contribution caps.

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Unlike Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), your HSA balance belongs entirely to you. Unused funds never expire, thus any account balance rolls over and continues growing.

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- This becomes a secondary tax-deferred retirement bucket. How?
- After age 65, the non-medical withdrawal penalty of 20% disappears. Thus, your HSA effectively functions like a Traditional IRA:
- Pull funds for healthcare (Medicare Part B/D, dental, long-term care) tax-free.
  - Pull funds for general living expenses, paying standard in-

come tax with zero penalty. Plus, HSAs have no Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs), giving you total control over your withdrawal schedule.

**The Bottom Line**

Whether managing immediate healthcare expenses or building a tax-free nest egg for retirement, an HSA remains one of the most versatile financial wellness tools available. Take time during open enrollment to review your options, calculate your savings, and secure employer contributions.

*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](http://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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## NATICK DAYS

*continued from page 8*

The event is held at the Natick Common in the heart of the Natick Center Cultural District.



The Common was busy. Courtesy photo

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

By CHRISTIE VOGT  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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

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

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

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store,



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**Business  
spotlight**

Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved"

in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life



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

balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Natick in particular, the Schadlers say they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. Christine was born in Natick, and Jason grew up next door in Framingham and spent much of his youth in Natick. "We also enjoy bringing our little girls to the mall there,"

Christine says. "Our 8-year-old calls it 'the best mall in the whole world.'"

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

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit [affordablejunkremoval.com](http://affordablejunkremoval.com).

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## Program to help youngsters develop better study habits

Spark Kindness will host an evening with nationally recognized executive function expert, educator, and speaker Sarah Ward at Kennedy Middle School from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 26.

The program is designed for parents, caregivers, educators, and community members who support children and teens of all ages.

Participants will leave with

tools to help young people build effective study habits and homework routines; organize materials and manage tasks; better understand time and plan ahead; initiate and complete assignments more independently and develop confidence and self-advocacy skills.

To register, visit <https://www.sparkkindness.org/events/building-executive-functioning-skills-with-sarah-ward>.

# Natick resident named among top lawyers



Cornelius "Con" Chapman. Courtesy photo

Cornelius "Con" Chapman of Natick has been selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America 2027 Edition for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights/Insolvency and Reorganization Law. Chapman is Counsel in the Business Group at Mirick Law based in the Boston office. He has extensive experience in commercial lending, banking and consumer finance regulation, loan workouts and bankruptcies, tax-exempt bonds, commercial contract drafting and negotiation, and non-profit governance.

# Drug takeback day Oct. 24

The Natick Police will host drug takeback day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 24 at the rear of the Natick Police Department, 20 E. Central St. Those attending can bring drugs for safe disposal, anonymously. Items accepted include tablets, capsules, patches, liquids, prescription drugs, and vape pens/e-cigarettes. Do not bring syringes, sharps, thermometers, or illegal drugs.



# Free flu clinic Oct. 22



A Community Flu Clinic will take place from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Oct. 22 at the Natick Community Senior Center, 117 E. Central St. Registration is required at <https://rb.gy/xrfda2>. The clinic is free to Natick residents six months and older, regardless of insurance. High-dose variations available for those 65 and older while supplies last. For more information, call 508-647-6460.



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# Opt into for October at the Morse Institute Library

No tricks, all treats at Morse Institute Library in October.

**CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**  
**Elementary Explorers: Art Science, Thursday, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m.** Join us for an afternoon experimenting with art and science! This program is for children in grades K-3. Registration is required.

**Project ABC, Friday, Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30.** Project ABC's playgroup in collaboration with the library offers a variety of activities for children infant to six and their families. Join us as we explore a new theme each week based on one of our favorite books. We have STEAM, ELA, and SEL activities, and a circle time with songs and stories. We will play, learn, and grow together. No registration required.

**Hispanic Heritage Month Children's Movie: Vivo! Saturday, Oct. 3, 2 to 3:30 p.m.** Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month with a presentation of Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. "Vivo!" A Children's film highlighting Hispanic Culture. Rated PG, film is 99 minutes. No registration required.

**Banned Books Week: Challenged Books on the Big Screen-Captain Underpants, Monday, Oct. 5, 4 to 5:30 p.m.** We present a challenged book made into a movie. Universal Pictures presents "Captain Underpants." Rated PG, 84 minutes.

**Play Nights, Monday, Oct. 5, 26, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.** We will have select themed play items for littles and their grownups to explore. Some nights it could be a coffee shop, an art store, or even a vet's office. Play nights

are for everyone, but are geared to the preschool set and their adventuresome grownups. No registration required.

**Toddler Time, Wednesday, Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28, 10 to 10:30 a.m.** This program will feature stories, songs, and stretches for the first half and special play activities for the second half for toddlers (walkers through age 2) and their special grownups. Registration is required.

**Pajama Time Stories, Wednesday, Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28. 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.** Join Miss Susan for a few songs and lots of stories in the Children's Library. 45 minutes of stories and songs. No registration required.

**Harvest Stroll: Haunted Houses, Thursday, Oct. 15, 4 to 5 p.m.** Join us for a spooky stroll! Make some crafts, eat snacks, and hunt spooky creatures throughout the library at this fun family event. We'll also be featuring community made haunted houses. Want to make a haunted house yourself? Haunted house bases will be available starting Thursday, Oct. 1 as supplies last. Families are encouraged to come to the children's desk and "check out" a base, make their haunted house at home, and bring it back to the library by Oct.14 to be a part of the stroll. No registration is required

**Elementary Explorers: Creepy Creatures, Thursday, Oct. 22, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m.** An afternoon experimenting with art and science. This week we are making creepy cardboard creatures. Registration is required.

**Game On! Saturday, Oct. 31, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Join us for a

day of board games in the children's department. We'll have games out on our tables for families with children of any age. No registration required.

**ALL AGES PROGRAMS**  
**Genealogy Group, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.** Join a Morse Research Librarian to learn about library and other online resources to start researching your family history. Stop by with your questions, or if you have started your research, let us know how it's going. This is a great space to share ideas and strategies to help you start, and grow your family tree. Registration is required.

**TEEN PROGRAMS**  
**Teen Puzzle Weekend, Saturday and Sunday Oct. 3 & 4, all day.** Help put together a puzzle in the teen room. For teens and tweens (ages 11-18, stop by anytime the library is open.

**Teen Take & Make: Halloween Slime, Monday, Oct. 5, 2 to 9 p.m.** Stop by the Teen Room starting at 2 p.m. for a take home make-your-own Halloween slime kit. For teens and tweens, ages 11-18. Available until kits run out.

**Teen & Tween Drop-In: Mini Fuzzy Pumpkins - Wednesday, 10/7, 2 to 4 p.m.** - Teens & tweens are welcome to stop by to make a mini fuzzy pumpkin. No registration needed.

**YAB: Youth Advisory Board (Tweens & Teens), Wednesday, Oct. 7, 7 to 8 p.m.** The YAB is the Teen Room's Youth Advisory Board for tweens and teens ages 11-18. The YAB members meet approximately once a month to hang out, have



Morse Institute Library. Photo supplied by the Library

their voice heard about library programs, suggest books and other materials for the teen collection, write book reviews, help with special projects and do fun activities. Yabbers should sign up for each meeting they plan to attend so that materials can be planned. To apply to the YAB you can sign up online in the Teen Room.

**Tween Explorers: DIY Kaleidoscopes - Thursday, Oct. 8, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m.** Join us for an

afternoon making DIY kaleidoscopes This program is for children in grades 3-5. Registration is required.

**Teens & Tweens: Pet Ghosts. Monday, Oct. 19, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.** It's spooky season! Come make your own pet ghost in a mini terrarium. For teens and tweens ages 11-18, registration required.

MORSE  
continued on page 13

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Early Voting Schedule

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| SATURDAY, OCT 17.....  | 9:00AM-1:00PM  |
| SUNDAY, OCT 18.....    | 1:00PM-5:00PM  |
| MONDAY, OCT 19.....    | 8:00AM-4:30PM  |
| TUESDAY, OCT 20.....   | 8:00AM-4:30PM  |
| WEDNESDAY, OCT 21..... | 8:00AM-4:30PM  |
| THURSDAY, OCT 22.....  | 8:00AM-6:00PM  |
| FRIDAY, OCT 23.....    | 8:00AM-12:30PM |
| SATURDAY, OCT 24.....  | 9:00AM-5:00PM  |
| SUNDAY, OCT 25.....    | 1:00PM-5:00PM  |
| MONDAY, OCT 26.....    | 8:00AM-4:30PM  |
| TUESDAY, OCT 27.....   | 8:00AM-4:30PM  |
| WEDNESDAY, OCT 28..... | 8:00AM-4:30PM  |
| THURSDAY, OCT 29.....  | 8:00AM-6:00PM  |
| FRIDAY, OCT 30.....    | 8:00AM-12:30PM |

ANY REGISTERED VOTER MAY VOTE EARLY.  
NO APPLICATIONS ARE NECESSARY FOR EARLY VOTING. JUST COME IN AND VOTE!

## MORSE

*continued from page 12*

**Teen Silent Book Group. Wednesday, Oct. 28, 7 to 8 p.m.** All the book club fun, none of the pressure! We will start with 15 minutes of hang out time including book chat and then find a comfy spot in the Teen Room for 45 minutes of silent reading. Teens can bring their own book (or silent reading device like a Kindle or audiobook with headphones) or pick one from our shelves. Light snacks will be provided for book club participants. For teens and tweens ages 11-18. Registration is suggested.

**Tween Explorers: Monster Frames, Thursday, Oct. 29, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m.** Join us for an afternoon making monster frame. This program is for children in grades 3-5. Registration is required.

**ADULT PROGRAMS**  
**Flamenco Performance, Thursday, Oct. 1, 7 to 8:15 p.m.** Flamenco Boston presents a live performance featuring special guest artist Elisabet Torras from Barcelona on dance. Flamenco is a vibrant and deeply expressive art form born from the cultural crossroads of southern Spain, shaped by Andalusian, Moorish, Sephardic Jewish, Romani, and Indian influences. Combining dynamic footwork, intricate guitar playing, and powerful emotional singing, flamenco brings together music, dance, and storytelling in a uniquely captivating way. Registration for this event is suggested, but not required.

**MIL Stitches - Saturday, Oct. 3, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Morse Institute Library Stitches is a service oriented knitting and crocheting group that meets one Saturday a month working collaboratively to create handmade items for various nonprofit organizations as well as some "out of the box" projects. No registration required; new members are always welcome.

**Art for All Club: Recycled T-Shirt Tote Workshop, Sunday, Oct. 4, 2 to 3 p.m.** Join Walnut Hill School for the Arts students to learn various art techniques. Teens and Adults with all levels of experience are welcome. Registration is required.

**Cookbook Club, Tuesday,**

**Oct. 6, 6:30 to 8 p.m.** Do you enjoy cooking, sharing ideas, and kitchen tips, while enjoying great food? Sign up for Cookbook Club. This month we are using two cookbooks, but you will choose one to make food from. The books are: "Food to die for: recipes and stories from America's most legendary haunted places" by Amy Bruni or "To die for : a cookbook of gravestone recipes : food legacies of the people who left behind recipes, etched in stone by Rosie Grant." The cookbook is available for check out after you're registered) at the Circulation desk on the main floor. There is a copy of each on display at the Reference Desk on the second floor for in-library use. Pick and prepare a recipe from the featured cookbooks and bring it to the library where we will eat, share, chat, and connect over food! Registration required.

**Banned Books Bingo, Wednesday, Oct. 7, 3 to 4 p.m.** Join us for an adults-only program of banned books-themed bingo. The winner of each bingo game will be able to select a prize. Each bingo card will feature titles from the Top 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books: 2010-2019 & Top 10 Most Challenged Books from 2025 (American Library Association). Light refreshments will be provided. Supplies are limited and registration is required.

**Chocolate Discovery Tasting, Thursday, Oct. 8, 6:30 to 8 p.m.** Join local chocolatier Viviane Gontijo of Vivilicious Chocolates for a delicious journey into the world of fine chocolate. Discover how cacao becomes chocolate, learn what makes craft chocolate so unique, and explore the art of tasting with intention. Along the way, you'll sample a curated selection of chocolates while learning how origin, ingredients, and craftsmanship influence flavor. Whether you're a devoted chocolate lover or simply curious, this relaxed and interactive experience offers a fresh appreciation for one of the world's favorite treats. This program is for adults. Supplies are limited and registration is required.

**Diamond Art Painting: Spooky Keychains, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 3 to 4 p.m.** Like a combination of cross-stitch and paint-by-numbers, diamond painting is a new creative hobby that's taking the crafting world

by storm. You simply apply colorful resin rhinestones to richly-pigmented canvas paintings. The result? Visually dazzling, mosaic diamond artworks that sparkle, shimmer and shine. Registration required.

**Team Puzzle Race, Thursday, Oct. 15, 6:30 to 8 p.m.** Teams of up to four people will compete to finish a 500 piece puzzle. Teams will be given up to 90 minutes to complete the puzzle; the first team to complete the puzzle wins. If no team completes the puzzle, the team closest to completing it will win. Winning team gets a new puzzle. Registration required as a team or as an individual.

**Natick's Oldest Burial Grounds: Gravestone Carvers and Their Symbols, Thursday, Oct. 22, 7 to 8:15 p.m.** If you've driven past the South Natick Burial Ground or North Natick Cemetery without stopping, this talk is a reason to change that. Established in 1731 and 1744, these are the town's two oldest burial grounds and hold grave-stones cut by hand by carvers whose work can be identified and traced across eastern Massachusetts. Marian Pierre-Louis, an educator who specializes in house history research, southern New England genealogy and historic cemetery research, will talk about who carved Natick's earliest stones and at the symbolism they used, such as death's heads, cherubs, urns, and willows, which was designed to be read and understood by anyone who passed by. Natick's other cemeteries appear along the way, as a way of tracing how burial grounds evolved into cemeteries over three centuries. Registration for this event is suggested, but not required.

**Art for All Club: Air Dry Clay Workshop, Sunday, Oct. 25, 2 to 3 p.m.** Join Walnut Hill School for the Arts students to learn various art techniques. Teens and Adults with all levels of experience are welcome.

**Qi Gong for Self Healing, Thursday, 10/29, 7 to 8 p.m.** Qi Gong is a centuries-old system of coordinated body-posture and movement, breathing, and meditation used for the purposes of health, spirituality, and martial-arts training. These practices help cultivate concentration, peace of mind, strengthen and tone your body all at once. This class is suitable for beginners as well as those with previous



Morse Institute Library. Photo by Theresa Knapp

experience. Movements are gentle, easy to learn, and can be adapted to individual abilities. This program is for adults and registration is required.

*The Morse Institute Library is open*

*9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. The library will be closed Oct. 11 and 12. For more information and to register for programs, visit morseinstitute.org*

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# Check out what the Natick Senior Center is doing in October

The Natick Senior Center has a variety of interesting, informative activities planned in October.

**Expressive Arts Therapy**  
**Oct. 13, 11 a.m.**

A monthly interactive program for adults with cognitive decline and their care partners, featuring creative activities that foster expression and social connection led by a Registered Art Therapist Kasey Larsen.

**Parkinson's Disease and Deep Brain Stimulation, Oct. 13, 11 a.m.**

This presentation, sponsored by Boston Scientific, will discuss general information about Parkinson's Disease and available treatment options. It will specifically dive into Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) as a treatment option, including what is DBS, when to consider DBS, and who is a candidate for this treatment.

**Meaningful Connections Memory Café, Oct. 15, 11:30 a.m.**

The memory café is a welcoming and supportive gathering for individuals with memory loss and their care partners. Join us for companionship, entertainment, resources and a light lunch. On Oct. 15, the café welcomes Ken DoRosario, an acoustic singer-songwriter and

board-certified music therapist. Call Katie Stanganelli at 508-647-6540, ext. 1908 to reserve your spot no later than the Monday, Oct. 12.

**Take Charge: 5 Steps to Safer Healthcare, Oct. 20. 11 a.m.**

Navigating health care is rarely simple, but a little preparation goes a long way. Join us for a practical, empowering session where you'll walk away with five clear steps to improve health care for you and your family. Over 250,000 people die in the United States each year from preventable medical errors, making it the third leading cause of death in the U.S. By becoming an informed and active participant in your care, you can achieve better outcomes and reduce the risk of preventable errors.

**Getting Your Affairs Together for Your Loved Ones, Oct. 20, 1 p.m.**

This presentation will cover the financial and legal considerations you should have in place as you age. We will discover living confidently by looking at your financial well-being, tax diversification strategies, charitable distributions, and leaving a lasting legacy. We will discuss legal structures and how



Natick Senior Center. Photo by Theresa Knapp

they serve to protect your assets and will review best practices for daily money management. Dabney Baum, CFP, Samantha Gentel, Esq and Elizabeth Payne, CPA lead the discussion.

**What's New: Medicare Open Enrollment, Oct. 22, 5:30 p.m.**

Each January, Medicare health insurance premiums change, health care and drug coverage changes, providers contract with different plans, and new benefits are introduced. Join representatives from MetroWest SHINE for an unbiased overview of what's new in Medicare for 2027 and about the importance of reviewing your Medicare coverage each fall during Medicare Open Enrollment, which runs from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7.

**The Empowered Caregiver: Building Foundations of Caregiving Oct. 27, 11 a.m.**

Caring for someone living with dementia can be rewarding, challenging, and sometimes overwhelming. Join us for this Alzheimer's Association introductory program to learn practical strategies, build confidence in your caregiving role,

and discover resources to help you navigate the journey ahead. Whether you are new to caregiving or looking for support, this program will provide a strong foundation for the road ahead.

**Lunch with Friends, Wednesday, Oct. 7, noon, \$7**

Enjoy food and great company. For lunch we will have grilled chicken (sweet barbecue) with fried rice and mixed vegetables, plus dessert. Dine-in only. Lunch is provided by Ruby Thai Kitchen.

**Sparkle Into Winter, Diamond Art Ornament Workshop, Friday, Oct. 9, 12:30 p.m.**

Participants will create beautiful, sparkling winter-themed ornaments using colorful diamond gems. No experience is necessary, all materials will be provided. Enjoy a relaxing afternoon of crafting and leave with unique handmade ornaments ready to display.

**History of Halloween, Monday Oct. 19, 1:30 p.m.**

Discover the origins of this ancient celebration, how it has evolved over the centuries, and the many ways it is celebrated

around the world. Explore everything from the ancient Roman festival honoring Pomona, the goddess of harvest and abundance, to the "Jack" behind jack-o'-lanterns. Learn how bobbing for apples was once thought to predict your future spouse, how Halloween costumes have changed through the decades, how many Americans celebrate Halloween today, and which candy tops the list of trick-or-treat favorites. Join us to learn something new, share a few laughs, and reminisce about your favorite Halloween memories.

**Design and Paint Your Own Silk, Monday, Oct. 26, 1:30 p.m., \$5**

Learn simple silk-painting techniques and create a beautiful, one-of-a-kind silk scarf to wear or give as a gift. No prior art experience is needed, all materials will be provided. Leave with a unique wearable work of art and new artistic skills.

*The Natick Community Senior Center is located at 117 E. Central St. For more information, call 508-647-6540.*

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# Artists open their doors to the community

The Natick Art Association will hold its annual Open Studios on Saturday and Sunday Oct. 17 and 18.

This time-honored tradition gives the public the opportunity to meet artists at numerous locations across Natick, to view and ask questions about their work, and to purchase original art directly from the makers.

Held traditionally on the third weekend in October, the event takes place from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. This year's event marks the 24th annual Natick Artists Open Studios.

Formed under the auspices of the non-profit Natick Center Cultural District, the Natick Art Association is currently comprised of over 100 artists and artisans. This year's open studios participants will include painters, printmakers, sculptors, potters, jewelry makers, fiber artists, photographers, and art-

ists working in mixed media.

Attendees will be able to explore and learn about art at exhibiting sites all across town.

Locations in Natick Center will include group sites at The Studios at 3 Adams Street, 43 Main Street and the Congregational Church at 2 E. Central Street.

This year's Open Studios will include multiple locations in South Natick. They include painter Ryan Black's studio at 203 Union Street, painter Julianne Strom Brill's studio at 199 Union Street, ceramic artist Suzanne Stumpf's Barn Showroom at 62 Farwell Street, painter Barbara Levine's show space at 30 South Street and the Page-Waterman Gallery at 57 Eliot Street.

In conjunction with open studios, the annual Old Time Calendar photography competition will take place at the Eliot Church at 45 Eliot Street in

South Natick on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Many of the organization's artists have garnered wide recognition in their respective fields. Most recently, painter Jason Cheeseman-Meyer had a painting included in the Copley Society's Juried National

Show and Barbara Levine had a painting accepted by the American Impressionist Society to their Annual Online Exhibition.

Suzanne Stumpf's porcelain sculpture, "Resting Place," was awarded First Prize in Sculpture at the South Shore Art Center's annual arts festival in Cohasset.

In addition to viewing and discussing art with the creators, visitors will be able to see live demonstrations about artistic processes at some locations. Most sites will have refreshments available for patrons to enjoy while mingling with the artists and other visitors.



Open studio attendees learn about his silversmithing from jewelry-maker John Holz at 43 Main St. Photo by Lilianna Glenn



Ceramic artist Suzanne Stumpf, left, discusses her work with visitors at her historic barn showroom at 62 Farwell St. Photo by Daniel Ryan



Natick Art Association members. Photo by Conrad Gees of What Now Photography

## MERCURY RECOVERY PROGRAM

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# Bacon Free Library has colorful October ahead

Fall into fun staff at the Bacon Free Library in October.

**CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**  
**All Together Preschool Storytime, Mondays and Tuesdays at 10 a.m.** Join us for stories and songs! Outdoors, weather permitting. Bring along a blanket to get comfy. If the weather is wet or below 55 degrees, we'll move this storytime indoors.

**Special Firefighter Storytime, Monday, Oct. 5 at 10 a.m.** Join us for a special Firefighter Storytime with Fire Chief Jason Freschke of the Natick Fire Department! Meet Fire Chief Freschke and learn about fire safety. This family-friendly event helps children become comfortable with firefighters, gives kids and families the opportunity to learn important fire safety tips, and strengthens community connections.

**Lapsit Storytime, Wednesdays at 10 a.m.** Stories, bounces, and songs for babies



newborn to 24 months and their grownups.

**Jammin with You at the BFL, Fridays Oct. 16 and 30, 10:30 a.m.** Be prepared to laugh, dance, sing, and jam your way through 30 minutes of non-stop family fun. This program will be held outside, weather permitting. If it is wet or below 55 degrees, we'll move this program indoors and registration will be required.

**Harvest Pumpkin Party Concert, Friday, Oct. 9 at 11 a.m. (outside)** Join Elijah T. Grasshopper and Friends for a fun-filled Harvest Pumpkin Party Concert!

**ALL AGES PROGRAMS**  
**Featured Art Exhibit through Oct. 21.**

**Sept. 9 - Oct. 21: David Parish:** David Parish: Thoughtful Animals, photography exhibit. Adult virtual programs, sign up through the website.

**Cooking Demo with Heidi McIndoo: One-Pot BBQ Chicken Mac and Cheese** Monday, Oct. 5 at 7 p.m.

**Romance Author Julie Hall Discusses "The Secrets of Everlight"** Thursday, Oct. 8, 7 p.m.

**Author and Historian Helen Fry discusses "The White Lady: The Story of Two Key British Secret Service Networks Behind German Lines."** Saturday, Oct. 17 at 2 p.m.

**A Book Birthday with Horror Writer Robert Ottone** in conversation with Lauren Bolger. Monday, Oct. 19 at 7 p.m.

**Author Leslye Penelope Discusses "The Inevitable Undoing of Zahara Douglass."** Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m.

**Even More Haunted Lighthouses of New England** with

author Jeremy D'Entremont. Monday, Oct. 26, 7 p.m.

*The library is open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with extended hours on Tuesday until 8 p.m., and Saturdays: 9:30*

*a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Closed for the holiday Monday Oct. 12.*

Check the website for the most up-to-date information and to register for programs: <https://baconfreelibrary.org>

## Hondo gets ruff assignment as new police K9



**Officer Christopher Keenan and Hondo already appear in step.** Courtesy photo



**Officer Christopher Keenan was selected to serve as Hondo's partner.** Courtesy photo

The Natick Police Department has a new member and he has four paws and an important mission.

K9 Hondo marks the return of the Natick Police Department's K9 program!

Hondo is a 1½-year-old German Shepherd who will be partnered with his handler, Officer Christopher Keenan.

Keenan was selected for this assignment following a competitive selection process that included a group of very talented officers, the department reports.

Each candidate brought qualities that would have served them well as a K9 handler, and the department reports they have no doubt they would have done an outstanding job.

Ultimately, Keenan was de-

termined to be the best fit for the position at this time and was selected to take on this important assignment.

Officer Keenan and Hondo have begun a 15-week training program with the Boston Police K9 Academy.

The training will prepare them to work together as a Patrol Dog Team and will include areas such as tracking, area and building searches, evidence searches, handler protection, suspect apprehension, agility, and obedience.

The training is designed not only to develop Hondo's skills, but also to build the strong working relationship between Hondo and Keenan that will be essential when they return to Natick and begin working together in the field.

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## SPORTS

# Commitment, respect, unity, and trust lead growing field hockey team

By MATT HYLEN

The Natick Field Hockey team has improved every year under Head Coach Meghan Pini.

According to a previous article from Local Town Pages written by Ken Hamwey, Pini's first season as coach of the Redhawks ended at 6-7-5 with a first-round playoff exit, and last year the Redhawks jumped to 11-4-3, a No. 12 power ranking, and their third straight state tournament berth.

Ask Pini what's behind that climb, though, and she won't point to X's and O's first.

"A positive team culture is the most important thing," Pini said. "If the athletes don't feel supported and safe, then they will never feel comfortable to be themselves and take risks. We want the athletes to feel connected to the community we have built and cared for. I

strongly believe if this happens then the results will come."

Pini's connection to Natick goes back long before she ever coached there. A physical education teacher at Natick's Kennedy Middle School, she grew up in town and found the sport almost by accident.

"I always had a love of sports and fitness," she said. "I grew up playing all the sports I could and found field hockey in fifth grade and loved it instantly. I was so grateful when I was able to join the Natick coaching staff as one of the assistant coaches in 2021. I love the Natick community, especially the sports community."

Pini doesn't run the program alone, and she's quick to credit the staff around her, Erin Quirk, Lizzie Mazzola, and Shelley Why, for shaping its foundation.

"I feel very grateful for my coaching staff and the unit we are," she said. "We share very similar values, one being: people first, athletes second."

That mindset extends to how the staff frames outcomes on the scoreboard. "We strongly believe in 'sometimes you win and sometimes you learn.' If we haven't won, then it is an opportunity to learn and grow."

You can see the direct correlation between Pini's words and the track record of the team since her arrival. The continuous improvement and the momentum gained from last season is exactly what Pini wants her current group to carry forward into this year.

"We had a very successful regular season last year," she explained. "We had an incredible group of upperclassmen leading the way on and off the field. It is such a positive and connected group of athletes and that shows on the field."

Much of that player-to-player connection, Pini said, runs through this year's senior leadership. The team's four captains, Ally Flynn, Jo Flynn, Caylee Lynch, and Ella Tarka, are setting the tone for the rest of the roster.

"We have four incredible leaders as our senior captains



Teamwork is a crucial element to their success. Courtesy photo

this year," Pini said. "They are all selfless, approachable, dependable young women that have already done an amazing job leading the team and setting the tone of what Natick Field Hockey is all about."

Pini also was not shy to emphasize the importance of the impact all the upperclassmen make on the team. "The coaching staff is very grateful for this group of seniors and the way they are committed to the mission of the team and how inclusive they have been with everyone on the team. They have helped the team grow close so quickly."

Looking at this season, of course talent matters, but it isn't what Pini and her staff prioritize when evaluating who fits the program they've built.

"Talent is important, but our coaching staff always is looking for athletes that have positive attitudes, respectful, and committed to the team," she said. "We appreciate athletes that are hard-working, coachable, and have grit. We are hoping to build a team that is one solid unit that trusts and supports each other on and off the field."

That standard is written into the program itself this season, distilled into four words the team chose together.

"We have team expectations but as a team we have chosen four core values that will help

guide us this season," Pini stated. "Commitment, respect, unity, and trust are the guiding principles for our team this year. We hope we can use these values to help us stay connected and a

supportive unit."

The Redhawks open up the October slate with matchups against Hopkinton on Oct. 2, Milton on Oct. 5 and Framingham on Oct. 7.



Coach Meghan Pini gives her team advice. Courtesy photo



A player runs down the field. Courtesy photo

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# Should you sell this fall or wait until spring?

Why fall can be an ideal time to sell your home



Nina Sable

## REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

When homeowners think about selling, spring often gets most of the attention. But here in New England, fall can offer sellers a strong and sometimes overlooked window of opportunity.

With motivated buyers, potentially less competition, and some of the most beautiful curb

appeal of the year, September through November may be an ideal time to make a move.

### Fall buyers tend to be motivated

People searching for homes in the fall often have a specific reason for moving. They may be relocating for work, downsizing, purchasing their first home, or hoping to settle into a new home before the holidays and winter weather arrive.

That sense of timing can create a focused buyer pool. While spring typically brings more buyers into the market, fall buyers may be particularly prepared to make decisions when the right property becomes available.

For sellers, that can mean attracting buyers who aren't simply browsing—they're actively looking for their next home.

### Less competition can help your home stand out

Spring traditionally brings a surge of new listings. More

inventory gives buyers more choices, but it also means sellers face more competition.

By fall, the number of available homes may begin to decline in some markets. When fewer comparable properties are competing for attention, a well-priced and beautifully presented home has an opportunity to stand out.

The goal isn't simply to put a house on the market. It's to position it so buyers recognize its value from the moment they see it.

### New England homes shine in autumn

Few seasons showcase New England homes quite like fall. Colorful foliage, crisp landscaping, seasonal flowers, and welcoming front entrances can create tremendous curb appeal.

Inside, simple touches such as warm lighting, fresh flowers, textured pillows, and cozy throws can make a property feel inviting without overwhelming buyers with seasonal decor.

Fall is also an excellent time to highlight features that make a home comfortable, such as a fireplace, updated kitchen, finished lower level, dining room, or cozy reading nook.

Buyers aren't only evaluating bedrooms, bathrooms, and square footage. They're imagining what their lives might look like inside the home.

### First impressions still matter

Professional photography and thoughtful presentation are important in every season. In autumn, New England Colonials, Capes, cottages, and other traditional homes can look especially appealing against fall foliage.

Simple exterior improvements—fresh mulch, trimmed shrubs, colorful mums, and clean walkways—can also make a noticeable difference.

Remember, your home's first showing often happens online. Strong presentation can determine whether a buyer scrolls past or schedules a showing.

### So, should you sell now or wait?

There isn't one perfect month to sell every home. Timing depends on your local market, competition, price range, property condition, personal goals, and where you're going next.

Homeowners shouldn't automatically assume waiting until spring is the better strategy. A home that is properly priced, prepared, and strategically marketed can attract serious buyers in any season.

For some sellers, fall may offer exactly the combination of timing, presentation, and buyer motivation they've been waiting for.

Nina Sable is Team Lead of the Sable Homes Metro-West Team at William Raveis Real Estate. Contact Nina at 508-733-8935 or [Nina.Sable@raveis.com](mailto:Nina.Sable@raveis.com).

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# New veterans service officer prepares for Veterans Day and beyond

By Maureen Sullivan

John Martin is preparing for his first Veterans Day as the town's Veterans Services officer.

On Nov. 11, the parade will start at 9:30 a.m. at the corner of Clarendon and East Central streets, and follow the tradi-

tional route, East Central to West Central, left onto Forest, left onto Pond, left onto Main Street, right onto East Central

to the Morse Institute Library, where ceremonies will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Following the ceremonies, there will be a lunch at the Community-Senior Center, 117 East Central St., sponsored by the Charles River Rotary Club, with the support of the Natick Fire Department.

Registration for lunch is encouraged; sign up via the Veterans Services Office website, <https://www.natickma.gov/591/Veterans-Services>. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m.; the guest speaker will be Eric Olsen, and there will be information about the Natick Veterans Oral History Project.

Since taking over as VSO last spring, Martin has initiated

programs to better communicate with local veterans. He started a monthly Coffee Hour, which runs on the second Tuesday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Community-Senior Center, 117 East Central St.

Different topics are presented each month. For October, it's Healthy Living.

The event is free and open to veterans of all eras.

For information on these and other programs, contact Veterans Services at 508-647-6540, ext. 1900, or [jmartin@natickma.org](mailto:jmartin@natickma.org).

Office hours are Mondays - Thursdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

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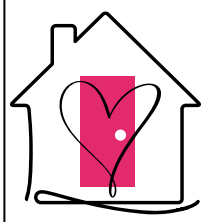
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| Date       | Natick                  | Amount      |
|------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 09/15/2026 | 11 River St.            | \$1,650,000 |
| 09/11/2026 | 48 Bradford Rd.         | \$1,140,000 |
| 09/11/2026 | 292 N. Main St.         | \$675,000   |
| 09/10/2026 | 14 Oxbow Rd.            | \$873,500   |
| 09/10/2026 | 3 Joshua Path           | \$1,670,000 |
| 09/09/2026 | 17 Upland Rd.           | \$1,830,000 |
| 09/08/2026 | 6 Nokomis Way           | \$2,100,000 |
| 09/04/2026 | 17 Lanes End            | \$700,000   |
| 09/03/2026 | 21 Wyndemere Ln.        | \$2,950,000 |
| 09/04/2026 | 2 Village Way. #6       | \$350,000   |
| 09/01/2026 | 7 Foley Dr.             | \$833,000   |
| 09/01/2026 | 25 Village Rock Ln. #12 | \$279,000   |
| 09/01/2026 | 5 Silver Hill Ln. #8    | \$429,000   |
| 08/31/2026 | 22 Westview Rd.         | \$945,000   |
| 08/31/2026 | 36 Village Hill Ln.     | \$402,000   |
| 08/28/2026 | 4 Colburn St.           | \$1,080,000 |
| 08/28/2026 | 48 Beacon St.           | \$950,000   |
| 08/28/2026 | 19 Eliot St. #2         | \$815,000   |
| 08/28/2026 | 108 Glen St.            | \$3,030,000 |
| 08/28/2026 | 8 N. Pleasant St.       | \$1,130,000 |
| 08/28/2026 | 8 Charles St.           | \$1,430,000 |
| 08/21/2026 | 164 E. Central St. #B   | \$670,000   |
| 08/20/2026 | 18 Centre St.           | \$1,350,000 |
| 08/20/2026 | 2 Hunters Ln.           | \$2,250,000 |
| 08/18/2026 | 62 Bacon St.            | \$875,000   |
| 08/18/2026 | 15 Village Rock Ln. #10 | \$294,200   |
| 08/18/2026 | 9 Silver Hill Ln. #19   | \$415,000   |
| 08/18/2026 | 0 Cider Mill Ln.        | \$2,250,000 |
| 08/17/2026 | 34 Bacon St.            | \$1,800,000 |
| 08/17/2026 | 10 Nouvelle Way #S711   | \$775,000   |

Source: zillow.com

Compiled: by Local Town Pages

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The 7-bed, 8-bath, 7,200-square-foot house at 108 Glen Street in Natick recently sold for \$3,025,000.

Image credit: www.zillow.com

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