

localtownpages Natick

Vol. 11 No. 11

Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

November 1, 2026

Frosty 5K elicits warm feelings from runners at annual race

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Natick will host its fifth Frosty 5K race in few weeks. The annual fundraising run will be held on Sunday, Dec. 6 at 9 a.m.

The race is expected to attract about 600 runners, and all of its proceeds go toward supporting Natick High School's Cross Country and Track and Field athletes.

"We go big," said Amy Forte. She is co-chair of the race and also of the Natick Track Boosters. That non-profit's mission is to support students participating in those sports.

The race begins and ends in front of Natick High School itself, and features a diverse slate of participants. It's become



Frosty 5K runners show their enthusiasm. *Courtesy photo*

something of a local tradition, bringing family members of NHS students past and present to participate in the event.

Runners have been known to show up in costumes, while others come to add an-

other race to their numbers.

Natick's Frosty 5K is recognized by the USA Track and Field governing body, so

FROSTY 5K
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Natick native Maine man in education

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

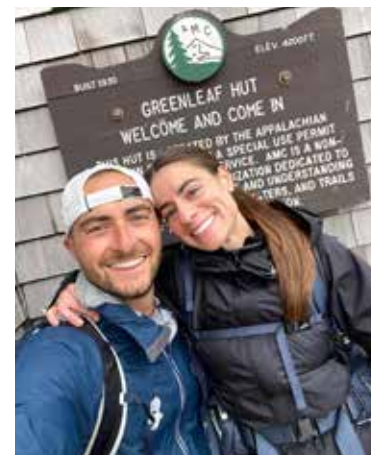
Sam Lenson was in the middle of showing would-be tenants their new home when I called. He'd have to get back to me, Lenson replied by text message.

Now a resident of Portland, Maine, the Natick native had bought a multifamily home there with his fiancé Lauren. Like many in this unforgiving housing market, the couple got creative. They plan to rent out the upper levels of their dwelling to make mortgage payments more manageable.

"We're in a good spot," he said.

A Natick native, Lenson had been a middle-school physical education teacher in Maine for about six years. He loves the work and believes it's the kind of occupation one can build a life around.

Then came the notice that his was among the departments that



Sam Lenson and his fiancé, Lauren. *Courtesy photo*

would be sacrificed due to budget cuts.

"I ended up kind of getting shocked," he said. "I thought I

EDUCATION
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Dear Readers and Valued Advertisers,

We're here to stay, and our commitment to the Natick community is stronger than ever!

Beginning with our December edition, **Local Town Pages Natick** will transition to a community distribution model due to rising postage, newsprint, and production costs.

These challenges face community newspapers across the country, and we believe this change is an important step toward ensuring our newspaper's long-term sustainability.

What does this mean for our readers? You can continue to enjoy your free community newspaper which will now be available for pickup at convenient locations throughout Natick, including local businesses, municipal buildings, restaurants and more. A complete list of pickup locations can be found below.

You can also read our free digital edition at naticktown-news.com and follow us on Facebook for more local news, updates, and exciting content coming soon!

While our distribution method is changing, our mission remains the same: to connect residents, support local businesses, and share the news, events, and stories that matter most to our community.

We sincerely appreciate the continued support of our readers, advertisers, and local businesses as we begin this next chapter together.

With gratitude and thanks,

Jennifer Schofield
Publisher of Local Town Pages Natick

Kids fired up over chief's visit for storytime

Fire Chief Jason Ferschke recently celebrated a new chapter in his career with a visit to the Bacon Free Library for storytime.

In addition to reading stories, the chief shared fire safety tips with his young audience.



Fire Chief Jason Ferschke shared stories and safety advice. Courtesy photo



Families relaxed on the lawn while listening to his stories. Courtesy photo

Where to find your next copy of localtownpages Natick



NATICK	
Mexicali Cantina Grill	148 East Central St.
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Fresh Café Natick	158 East Central St.
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Daily Mart	2 Mill St.
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Natick Cleaners	13 Watson St.
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CVS	137 West Central St.
Walgreens	148 West Central St.
Roche Brothers	150 West Central St.
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Reliable Cleaners	214 West Central St.
Pure Deluxe	217 West Central St.
Natick Village	250 West Central St./18 Village Road
VFW Post 1274	113 West Main St.
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Mandarin Café	4 Wethersfield/Rte 9/Enterprise
Strand Hair Studio	4 Wethersfield/Rte 9/Enterprise
TLC Nails	4 Wethersfield/Rte 9/Enterprise
Welcome Asian Market	4 Wethersfield/Rte 9/Enterprise
Greenhawk	30 Worcester St.
Amazing Intimate Essentials	64 Worcester St.
Landry's Bicycles	796 Worcester St.
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Gentle Dental	1322 Worcester St.
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Golf Tec	1400 Worcester St.
Solo Salon	1400 Worcester St.

Metrowest Academy Jiu Jitsu	61 Worcester St./Rte 9
Subway	189 Worcester St./Rte 9
Shaanxi Gourmet	256 Worcester St./Rte 9
Audi Natick	549 Worcester St./Rte 9
Hometown Center	591 Worcester St./Rte 9
Todos Fitness & Dance	677 Worcester St./Rte 9

SOUTH NATICK	
Natick Post Office	15 Common St.
Town Hall	13 East Central St.
Morse Library	14 East Central St.
Police Department	20 East Central St.
Fire Department	22 East Central St.
Excellent Cleaners	56 East Central St.
Fashion Nails	56 East Central St.
Bill's Pizzeria	58 East Central St.
Pizza Shop at South Natick	50 Elliot St.
Bacon Free Library	58 Elliot St.
Charles River Coffee House	59 Elliot St.
Middlesex Savings Bank	6 Main St.
Cilicia Mediterranean	7 Main St.
Adore Nail & Spa	11 Main St.
Bank of America ATM	17 Main St.

Le Belle Day Spa	26 Main St.
Dates & Olives	28 Main St.
Mutual One Bank	49 Main St.
Corrado's Subs	7 Middlesex Avenue
Pizza Plus	16 North Main St.
7-Eleven	172 North Main St.
J Convenience Store	229 North Main St.
Theo's House of Pizza	231 North Main St.
Fanon's Liquors	319 North Main St.
Mingaliens Trattoria	319 North Main St.
Muffin House	325 North Main St.
Stop & Shop	North Main St./Rte 9
Blue Pizza	1 South Main St.
The Bagel Table	9 South Main St.
Sweetwaters Coffee & Tea	31 South Main St.
Family Farms	61 South Main St.
Eastern Bank	2 South St.
Drink Dion Natick	4 South St.
Fitness Together	4 South St.
Bella Vida Salon	17 South St.
Pizza by Rocco	3 Union St.
Elder Well Adult Program	12 Washington St.
Eli's Breakfast	12 Washington St.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Spend it forward: In retirement 'someday' is the real risk



Glenn Brown, CFP

For anyone nearing retirement or just starting out in it, seeing the light at the end of the tunnel brings incredible excitement and gratitude. You worked decades for this moment.

Yet, as a Certified Financial Planner, I often witness a quiet paradox play out among diligent savers: they build a nest egg to secure their future, but when the day comes to actually enjoy it, their mindset doesn't change.

A recent *Bloomberg* article highlighted a trend: retired Americans are putting off fun out of fear of running out of money. Studies show over 60%

of retirees with substantial savings feel uncomfortable spending on pure enjoyment, while nearly 90% feel guilt over bucket-list purchases or travel.

Researchers call this the tension between FOMO (Fear of Missing Out on life) and FORO (Fear of Running Out of money). After decades of watching accounts grow, spending down principal triggers a loss reflex. But here's the truth many don't talk about: money delayed is often an opportunity denied.

The three phases of retirement

While gerontologists and planners traditionally stretch post-career phases out to age 75 and 85, my experience with clients shows these transitions happen sooner. Here is how those years typically unfold in practice:

- 1. "Go-Go" Years (ages 60 to 72):** You have the health, energy, and mobility to hike, travel, or explore demanding itineraries.
- 2. "Slow-Go" Years (ages 72 to 80):** Health slows you down slightly. Trips become simpler, closer to home, and less physically taxing.

3. "No-Go" Years (ages 80+): Life centers around home, routine, and medical care.

The biggest tragedy in retirement isn't spending a little extra in your early 60s, it's saving all your fun money for a phase when your body can no longer support the adventure. Spending it forward means funding your "Go-Go" years while you can fully experience them.

Cash flow analysis & scenario modeling

How do you overcome FORO without jeopardizing your future? Through interactive cash flow analysis and scenario modeling.

Instead of relying on static rules, dynamic modeling tests "what-if" scenarios side by side. For example, we can test adding an extra \$25,000 per year specifically for travel during your first 7 "Go-Go" years.

By modeling this \$175,000 front-loaded investment, you measure the actual delta on your total portfolio in your 80s and 90s. Because spending naturally dials back in the "Slow-Go" and "No-Go" phases, front-loading \$25K a year early on typically creates a surprisingly negligible

impact on long-term security. Seeing that tiny delta on paper provides the empirical proof (and emotional permission) to travel guilt-free.

Structured security: The strategic 3-bucket strategy

If scenarios make sense on paper but your stomach still churns, structure provides peace of mind. Segmenting wealth into 3 time-horizon buckets insulates your lifestyle:

- **BUCKET 1: Cash (Years 1 to 3).** This covers the income shortfall or gap between income sources (Social Security, pensions, rentals, dividends) and actual spending. Keeping this gap in liquid cash insulates your planned lifestyle from market swings.
- **BUCKET 2: Conservative Growth (Years 4 to 5).** Structured conservatively (like a 40/60 stock-to-bond allocation), this medium-term bridge earns modest returns while systematically replenishing Bucket 1.
- **BUCKET 3: Moderate to High Growth (Years 5+).** Positioned for capital appreciation, this bucket fuels long-term needs, healthcare

inflation, or legacy goals (like passing tax-free growth in a Roth IRA to heirs).

When your short-term cash flow gap is secured in Bucket 1 and your legacy is compounding in Bucket 3, taking that dream vacation isn't "depleting wealth," it's executing a well-designed plan.

Give yourself permission to shift from a mindset of accumulation to one of fulfillment. You worked hard to earn your independence, now make sure you're around to enjoy it..

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

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

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Free Thanksgiving meals available

The Curtis family of Framingham has offered to provide a traditional Thanksgiving dinner to those in Natick who are unable to prepare their own dinner or who will be unable to join their families for the holiday.

Volunteers will deliver the dinners on Thanksgiving Day Thursday Nov. 26. Those wanting meals must be home to accept them.

Call 508-647-6519 by Nov. 16 to request a dinner.



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EDUCATION

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was going to be there forever.”

Graduating from Natick High School in 2013, Lenson attended the University of Maine. He earned a master’s degree in educational leadership while minoring in disabilities studies.

During his journey in higher education, Lenson discovered some common themes kept calling to him.

“To move my body and help other people.”

That led him to follow a career in physical education.

Lenson recently learned that he was being honored for his dedication to that mission.

Ironically, it was for his work as a middle school teacher, the very role he’d recently been laid off from.

His award, Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year, was for the entire state

of Maine. Like receiving an Employee of the Month plaque after being laid off, the recognition must have been bittersweet. Still, it’s an accolade Lenson said he’s proud to add to his list of accomplishments.

Now a high school physical education teacher, Lenson is bringing the same passion for movement and people to an older class of students.

But regardless of age, gym class has traditionally tended to divide students into tribes of fans and foes.

For some, it’s a chance to get out of their heads, leave the books behind for a while and get lost in the flow of physical activity.

For others, the competitive and rigorous nature of Phys Ed has been less than welcoming. By definition, a one-size-fits-all design in gym class can’t live up to its promise.

The school’s “Fitness for Life,” program, said Lenson, is geared toward making movement more welcoming. And as

the name pledges, it’s designed to foster a love for fitness that will last long after graduation.

“I think it’s about creating an inclusive environment for every student.”

The program mimics the group exercise classes one would expect to find in a local gym.

Growing up, Lenson’s parents maintained a family membership at Longfellow Heath Club in Natick. There, he and his sister Ava spent many afternoons learning to swim and playing basketball.

Among the menu of offerings in “Fitness for Life” are yoga and spin classes. Lenson’s mission is a lofty one: To make gym class much more than merely tolerable for students.

“How can I make it the best class of the day for them?” is the question he seeks to answer when designing Phys Ed programming. Lenson said staying connected to students outside of class is a crucial and rewarding part of effecting teaching.

“They want to be there and



Sam Lenson with his fiancé Lauren, father Evan and mother Adrea. Courtesy photo

they want to be their best,” said Lenson.

Though that work is often a great reward alone, he added, being named teacher of the year

was gratifying.

“It’s pretty special and surreal. You put good energy out, and you might not see it in the moment. But good things happen.”

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Former Navy Seal turned Paralympian shares story



Dan Cnossen tackles the slopes. Photo from dancnossen.com

An IED explosion in Afghanistan took former Navy Seal Dan Cnossen’s legs but not his determination and grit.

He has since earned 7

paralympic medals.

He will share his story of resiliency in the face of adversity from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 16 at the Natick Community Senior Center, 117 East



He also participates in Nordic skiing. Photo from dancnossen.com

Central St.

The program is hosted by the Natick Health Department and

Natick Veterans Services.

Light refreshments will be served.

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A neighborly way to build friendships, support good causes



The pie-eating contest was a tasty treat for participants. *Courtesy photo*

These neighbors know how to party and support a good cause. For decades, neighbors from Beaver Dam, Kelsey, and Granby roads have gathered each year for a block party. The tradition dates back to before 1996. This year's celebration took place Sept. 19 with the goal of building new friendships and keeping the neighborhood's sense of community strong. Neighbors shared a pot-luck style feast and enjoyed activities for all ages, including a pie-eating contest, bike race, water balloon toss, hay ride, and bounce house, plus a foam party for the second year running. After expenses, all proceeds go directly to the American Cancer Society and Daniel's Table, a local non-profit that helps reduce hunger among families. This year, the neighborhood raised a total of \$1,100 for these two organizations.



The kids have a wheel-y good time. *Courtesy photo*



The block party gives neighbors a chance to bond. *Courtesy photo*



A hay ride had no horses but used horsepower. *Courtesy photo*



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FROSTY 5K
continued from page 6

runners' stats will be official. Many runners sign up for the event at Natick Days, where the Frosty 5K typically hosts a booth to market the race and raise funds. The event is also sponsored by local businesses and other groups. "It's incredible," said Forte. "It is super community-focused. It's all about supporting the athletes." Funds go toward purchasing equipment for cross country and track and field athletes, such as uniforms, footwear and other gear. The money is also used for



Runners brave the cold for the annual 5K. Courtesy photo

travel expenses and events. Dylan Jones coaches the NHS boys cross country team. "They're pretty involved," he said of his runners, who train in all kinds of conditions. "They get mud, they get rain, they get cold days." Still, he allowed, running through New England autumn has a special magic. The Frosty 5K exists in a kind of a seasonal limbo for competitive runners. "It's kind of a dead zone for races. It feels like a gift."

All veterans eligible for free turkey from Amvets

Natick Amvets Post 79 is once again sponsoring its annual turkey for vets program. Free turkeys and/or gift cards will be provided to local area veterans for the Thanksgiving holiday to say "thank you for your service." This offer is not based on economic needs, so veterans should not hesitate to respond. Veterans should respond before noon Thursday, Nov. 21 indicating whether they want a frozen turkey and/or a \$20 gift card to Roche Bros, Stop & Shop or Wegmans. Veterans that would like to receive a turkey and a gift card must come to Amvets Post 79, 79 Superior Drive, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 23.

Any current Veteran member of Post may request that a gift card be mailed to them. To reserve a turkey or gift card veterans should fill out the online form at www.natickamvets.org/turkeys4vets contact turkey4vets@gmail.com or call 508-960-9810 with your name, military status, branch, and best way to be contacted.

5th Annual Natick Frosty 5K to bring community together in support of student-athletes

Community race returns Dec. 6 with prizes, raffles, local vendors, music, and more to benefit Natick High School Cross Country and Track & Field. Runners, walkers, families, alumni, and community members are invited to the 5th Annual Natick Frosty 5K on Sunday, Dec. 6, 2026, at 9 a.m. at Natick High School. Hosted by the Frosty 5K Race Committee and Natick High School Cross Country & Track Boosters, the race is the organization's signature fundraiser, supporting over 320 student-athletes across cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track. Funds provide equipment, coaching support, scholarships, athlete recognition, team events, and need-based financial assistance so every athlete can participate and succeed. "This year marks an exciting milestone as we celebrate the fifth annual Frosty 5K," said Michaela Hava, parent and Assistant Coach, NHS XC and T&F. "It's about much more than running. It's an opportunity for students, families, alumni, local businesses, and the entire Natick community to come together, have fun, and support our student-athletes." Since launching in 2021, the Frosty 5K has become a beloved Natick tradition. The family-friendly event welcomes runners and walkers of all ages and abilities and continues its partnership with SPARK Kindness, reflecting our broader commitment to the Natick community and mental health. Organizers hope this fifth-anniversary race will be the largest yet! Community members can register to run or walk, volunteer, donate, cheer, or sponsor. Registration is open at <https://raceroster.com/events/2026/139479/frosty-5k> For sponsorship or more information, contact Natick.XCTFboosters@gmail.com. *About the Natick High School Cross Country & Track Boosters* The NHS Cross Country and Track Boosters is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit supporting student-athletes through financial and logistical support across Natick High's XC and track & field programs.

Celebrate Diwali Nov. 15

The public is invited to celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights, from 10:30 a.m. to noon Sunday, Nov. 15 at Common Street Spiritual Center, 13 Common St. Celebrated across the globe every autumn by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and many Buddhists, Diwali symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, and wisdom over ignorance. The event is open to everyone, whether they celebrate every year or are looking to learn more about this joyful tradition. The Open Circle at Common Street Spiritual Center is an inclusive, welcoming space for people of all faiths, backgrounds, and belief systems. Weekly gatherings aim to honor shared values, deepen spiritual connections, and build meaningful community.

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To reserve your pie kit, please call Virginia at 508-657-6703 by Friday, November 13.

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Natick Frosty 5K

Sunday, Dec 6th, 9am, Natick High School

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NatickXCandTrack.org/Frosty-5K

How to make the most of open enrollment this year



, Financial Advisor

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Provided by Edward Jones

Every fall, an email lands in Maya's inbox announcing open enrollment. And every year, she quickly clicks "renew" and moves on.

Open enrollment is when you choose your medical and other workplace benefits for the coming year. Most companies hold it in the fall. Once it closes,

you usually can't make changes unless there's a major life event, like marriage, divorce or a new child.

This year's decisions may carry more weight than usual. Many workers are facing higher health care costs, making it especially important to understand what you're paying for and what protection you're receiving in return.

It's tempting to renew last year's choices, but you owe your future self more. Your employer's plans, providers or costs may have changed, and your life might look different from a year ago, perhaps with a new dependent or new medical needs. A fresh look helps ensure your benefits match your life.

Compare health plans. Employers often offer more than one health, dental or vision option. Rather than simply glancing at the monthly premium, look at the total potential cost of each plan, including deduct-

ibles, copays, coinsurance and out-of-pocket maximums.

Check whether your doctors are in network, your prescriptions are covered and what you'd pay out of pocket for visits and medications. If you and your spouse both have coverage, compare the plans. Some employers charge a fee if you enroll a partner who has their own workplace coverage.

Check your life insurance. Many employers provide basic coverage, often one or two times your salary, with the option to buy more. If your family has grown or your responsibilities increased, make sure that amount still fits your needs. If you've maxed out employer coverage, consider supplementing it with an individual policy.

Consider disability coverage. Short-term disability coverage, along with paid sick leave and emergency savings, should help bridge income gaps

for up to six months during recovery from surgery, illness or childbirth. Long-term disability insurance should protect you if you can't work for an extended period, up to age 65. Ideally, it should replace up to 100% of your after-tax income.

Look for tax-friendly accounts. Flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and health savings accounts (HSAs) let you use pretax dollars for eligible medical expenses. If you have dependents, ask about a dependent care FSA to pay for care costs. Remember that FSAs are use-it-or-lose-it, so contribute only what you expect to spend. HSAs, available with high-deductible plans, allow unused funds to roll over and can help supplement retirement savings.

Consider your retirement plan. While your retirement plan usually isn't part of open enrollment, this is a good time to revisit it. Make sure that, at a

minimum, you're contributing enough to earn any employer's match.

Back to Maya. This year, she sets aside an hour, pours a cup of coffee and reads her options. She's adding more life insurance and increasing her HSA contribution. Open enrollment may never be thrilling, but time spent now can mean a more confident year for you and the people who count on you.

Contact Gary Shilman to discuss your financial needs, wants, and wishes.
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Public encouraged to explore boardwalk over Pickerel Pond for unique views



The boardwalk is ready for exploration. Courtesy photo



The boardwalk provides a closer look at Pickerel Pond. Courtesy photo

Here's a chance to walk on water without getting wet.

The Pickerel Pond Connector Boardwalk is officially open.

While a slight delay in handrail delivery pushed back the opening date slightly, the floating boardwalk is now ready to use.

Street parking is available on both sides of the pond along Harwood Road and Huron Drive/Erie Drive. Check posted signage for any timing limits.

As the area grows, local boards and committees may explore additional parking options on the south side of the pond.

The surrounding area is still recovering from construction. A temporary seed mix will be placed over exposed soil for protection through the winter.

Because colder temperatures prevent wetland plants from thriving, formal restoration plantings and the box stairs accessing the south end will be completed in the spring of 2027.



The bridge is made from black locust. Courtesy photo

Foundation event Nov. 7 helps students facing challenges

The Lawrence P. Cohen Memorial Scholarship Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting students who have persevered through significant challenges, will host its second annual Rocking the Cause fundraiser on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. at The Cape Club of Sharon.

Matthew Tobin of Natick

serves as a board member and scholarship chair of the organization.

For information about attending, donating, contributing an auction item, or supporting the event, contact the Lawrence P. Cohen Memorial Scholarship Foundation at 617-460-5600 or info@lpcohenfoundation.org. More information is available at lpcohenfoundation.org.

Bank offers hours to support those with dementia

Needham Bank, in partnership with Dementia Friendly Natick, has introduced dedicated dementia-friendly banking hours at its Natick branch.

As part of a pilot program, the branch at 17 West Central St. will open from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. on the third Satur-

day of each month, providing a quieter, more supporting banking environment for people living with dementia and their caregivers.

Appointments are not required. For questions, appointment requests or accessibility needs, contact the Natick branch at 508-647-4999.

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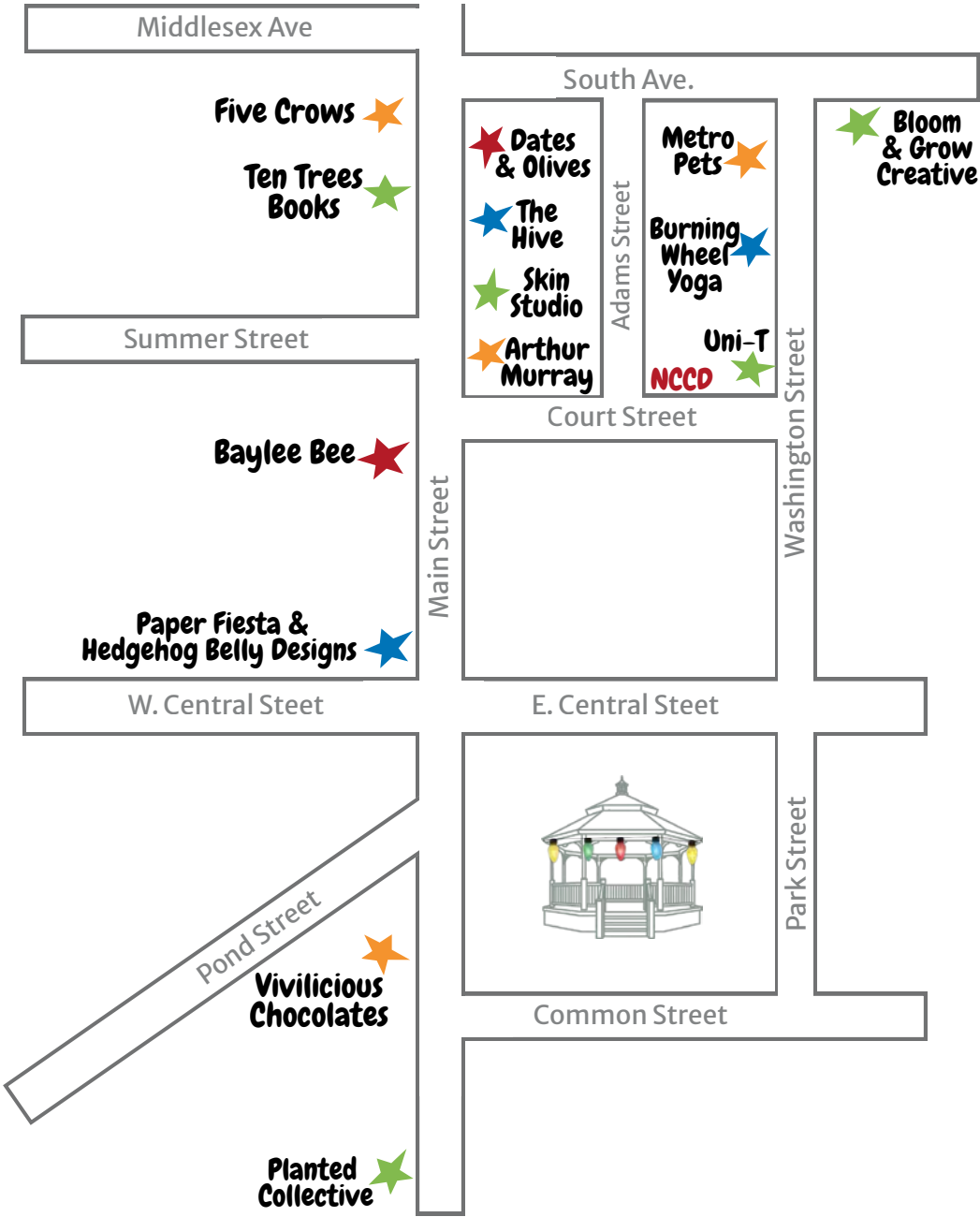
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December 13
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Scan for all event details

Halloween displays were boo-tiful



Holiday decorations may soon be going up but there's still time to scare up Halloween memories. Check out these spooky sights seen in and around Natick.
Photos by Maureen Sullivan



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A November to remember at Bacon Free Library

A cornucopia of events is scheduled this November at Bacon Free Library.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
All Together Preschool Storytime, Mondays and Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Stories & songs.
Lapsit Storytime, Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Stories, bounces, and songs for babies up to 24 months and their grownups.

Jammin with You at the Common Street Spiritual Center, Friday, Nov. 13, 10:30 a.m. An accessible location; at 13 Common St. in Natick center. Be prepared to laugh, dance, sing, and jam through 30 minutes of family fun. Registration is required.

Jammin with You @ the Bacon Free Library, Friday Nov 20 at 10:30 a.m. at the library, Be prepared to laugh, dance, sing, and jam through 30 minutes of family fun. Registration is required.

ALL AGES PROGRAMS
Featured Art Exhibit -through Dec. 8. Sharif Muhammad "View Faces in Color;" a vibrant exhibit of acrylics on canvas and canvas



prints. Sharif Muhammad's artistic purpose is to represent, empower, uplift, glorify and convey the emotions of Black and Brown people living in America.

Monday, Nov 16 at 7 p.m. Author and historian David Kruh discusses his new book "Little Mister Victory: A Daughter's Search for the Woman Who Abandoned Her Father on VJ Day" co-written by Tina Drzal. The book tells the story of Tina's decades-long search for the woman who abandoned her father on VJ Day. Using cutting-edge DNA analysis and good-old-fashioned detective work (burrowing into newspaper archives, ecclesiastic and government documents) David and Tina found the mother, along

with a surprise; abandoning her newborn baby was not the most shocking act of her life.

Monday, Nov 30 at 7 p.m. More Holiday Romance Book Recommendations with Booklist Reviewer, John Charles. With the holidays right around the corner, take a minute (or an hour) to relax and find some good holiday romance reads. John Charles will give us his "best of" list of 2026 that will have your TBR pile tipping over and your holidays spent cozying up to a good book. No need to bring papyrus and quill, we'll send out a list after the session.

Bacon Free Library, 58 Eliot St., is open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with extended hours until 8 p.m. Tuesdays. The library is open Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The library is closed for Veterans Day Nov. 11 and for Thanksgiving Nov. 26 and 27. For more information and to register for programs, visit baconfreelibrary.org

The historic nature of the building limits accessibility. This program is also offered in an accessible location at the Morse Institute Library, visit morseinstitute.org for more information.

Veterans Day parade will include Natick vets

Veterans Day salutes the nation's veterans and Natick is reaching out to encourage them to march in this year's Veterans Day parade,

The town would love to have as many veterans as possible participate and represent the community.

A new feature has been added this year. For veterans who are unable to march, the Natick Veterans Service Office will provide a trolley so they can still participate in the parade.

To reserve a seat on the trolley, call the Veterans Service Office at 508-647-6531.

Here is the day's line-up.

9 a.m. Trolley pick-up at 117 East Central St.

9:15 a.m. Parade staging, 20 E. Central St.

9:30 a.m. Parade step off from Central and Clarendon streets

10:15 a.m. Parade arrives back at Morse Institute Public Library.

10:30 a.m. Ceremony begins

11 a.m. Ceremony concludes

11:15 a.m. Trolley departs from 20 E Central St. to 117 E Central St.

11:30 a.m. Veterans Day lunch for veterans, friends, and family.

Registration is encouraged, to sign up visit <https://forms.gle/Kof3qYWqiVECA7Yq5>

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Veterans Day Ceremony



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Upcoming Events

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Give thanks for the November offerings at Morse Institute Library

There's a lot to be thankful for this November at Morse Institute Library.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Lapsit Storytime, Monday Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 10 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. - Stories, bounces, songs, and bubbles for babies up to 24 months and their grownups. Gather in the StoryCraft Room in the Children's Department on the Lower Level. No registration is required.

Play Nights! Monday Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Drop in and play 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 is required.

All Together Preschool Storytime, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24, 10 to 10:30 a.m. Join in for a morning of stories, songs, and end with a short play activity. This story hour is geared for children ages 3 to preK/5 and their grownup partner. Younger siblings are welcome as observers. Registration is required.

Toddler Time, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 18, 10 to 10:30 a.m. This program will feature stories, songs, and stretches for the first half and special play activities for the later half. Toddler Time is a fun program for toddlers (walkers through age 2) and their special grownups. Registration is required.

Baby Play, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 18, 11 to 11:30 a.m. A sweet program connecting babies and their special grownups with songs, rhymes, and socializing! Baby play is geared for non-walkers and

their grownups. This program is drop in - no registration required.

Pajama Time Stories, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 18, 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 is required.

Elementary Explorers: Clay Pop-tarts, Thursday, Nov. 5, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m. Join in for an afternoon experimenting with art and science! This week make clay pop-tarts. This program is for children in grades K-3. Registration is required.

Project ABC, Friday, Nov., 6, 13, 20, 10 to 11 a.m. Project ABC's playgroup in collaboration with the library offers a variety of activities for children up to age 6 and their families. Explore a new theme each week based on one of our favorite books with STEAM, ELA, and SEL activities, and a circle time with songs and stories. Play, learn, and grow together. No registration is required.

Saturday Storytime at the Farm, Saturday, Nov. 7, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. Stories, songs, and rhymes at the Natick Community Organic Farm. This is a drop in program and is geared toward preschool aged children and their grownups, but all ages are welcome. Meet in the barn, so this program will happen rain or shine. No registration is required.

Start with STEM Saturdays, Saturday, Nov. 14, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join in for some tabletop STEM activities in the children's department from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. No registration is required, all ages are welcome.

Can You Survive LEGO Disaster: Lost at Sea, Thursday, Nov. 19, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m. Join in for a LEGO lost at sea survival

program. This program is for children in grades K-5. Registration is required.

Winnie-the-Pooh Saturday Storytime Special, Saturday, Nov. 21, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. A special Saturday storytime celebrating the 100th anniversary of Winnie-the-Pooh with stories, songs, crafts, and snacks to share. No registration is required.

Puzzlemania, Saturday, Nov. 28, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join in for tabletop puzzles. This is a drop in program. All ages welcome, no registration required.

ALL AGES PROGRAMS
Open Mic Night, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Join in for an Open Mic Night at the Morse Institute Library the second Tuesday of the month. Singers, poets, musicians, writers, performance artists, all are welcome. Performers can sign up for a five-minute/10-minute time slot on a first come, first served basis. No registration is required.

TEEN PROGRAMS
Teen Make and Take, Paint-By-Sticker, Monday Nov. 2, 2 to 9 p.m. Stop by the Teen Room to pick up a paint-by-sticker kit, available until kits run out. For teens and tweens, ages 11-18. No registration is required.

YAB: Youth Advisory Board (Tweens & Teens), Wednesday, Nov. 4, 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 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 ma-

terials can be planned. To apply to the YAB, sign up online in the Teen Room.

Teens & Tweens: Retro Keychains, Saturday, Nov. 7, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Bedazzle your own retro style keychain with charms, gems, and letters. For teens and tweens ages 11 to 18, registration is required.

Teen & Tweens: No Sew Pillows, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Make your own no-sew pillow. All supplies are provided. For teens and tweens ages 11 to 18, registration is required.

Tween Explorers: Dinosaur Expedition, Thursday, Nov. 12, 3:45 to 4:30 p.m. Join in for a dinosaur expedition! This program is for children in grades 3-5. Registration is required.

Teen & Tweens: Perler Bead Granny Square Coasters, Wednesday, Nov. 18, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Make a granny-square inspired Perler Bead coaster. For teens and tweens ages 11-18, registration is required.

Teen MakerLab To Go: Thanksgiving Leftovers Edition, Monday, Nov. 23, all day. It's the season of celebrating leftovers so the library will offer a variety of Kiwi Kit "leftovers" from programs this year! Registrants will get a surprise kit (kit type cannot be requested) to pick up at the circulation desk starting on Monday, Nov. 23. All kits must be picked up by Thursday, Dec. 3. For teens and tweens ages 11 to 18, registration is required.

Teens & Tweens: Drop-In Coloring, Saturday, Nov. 28 through Monday, Nov. 30, all day Stop in anytime to color in the Teen Room. Coloring sheets and materials will be provided. For teens and tweens ages 11 to 18, no registration is required.

Teens & Tweens: Ceramic Tile Painting, Monday, Nov. 30, 2 to 3 p.m. Teens and tweens are invited to paint a ceramic floral tile on their day off. For teens and tweens ages 11 to 18, registration is required.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Walk-in Technology Help, Saturday, Nov. 7, 14, 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. and Monday, Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 3 to 5 p.m. and Thursday, Nov. 5, 12, 19, 3 to 5 p.m. Having trouble figuring out how to use your smartphone, tablet, or other devices? Unsure on how to use Libby/Hoopla/Kanopy with your device? The library can help. First come, first served session with an information services librarian for help on the second floor each Saturday morning except on holiday closures. Bring your questions and devices. Sessions are a maximum of 15 minutes. More complicated questions or longer help needed will require a later one-on-one appointment. No registration is required.

Cookbook Club, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 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's cookbook is "Padma's All American. Tales, Travels and Recipes From Taste the Nation and Beyond", by Padma Lakshmi. 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 participants will eat, share,

MORSE

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MORSE

continued from page 12

chat, and connect over food. Registration is required.

A Handmade Autumn: Japanese Chigiri-e Card-Making, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Bring a unique, personal touch to the holiday season with a relaxing workshop in mindful crafting. Participants will explore the traditional Japanese art of Chigiri-e, the process of “painting” with hand-torn Washi (artisan Japanese paper) to create rich, beautifully textured autumn designs. In this session, participants will craft a classic blank folded card (complete with an envelope) or a beautiful postcard. No prior art experience is necessary, just a gentle invitation to step away from screens, enjoy tactile materials, and create something beautiful around a shared table. This program is for adults; supplies are limited and registration is required.

Planning for Medicare, Thursday, Nov. 5, 7 to 8 p.m. This presentation is tailored for individuals approaching Medicare eligibility. Topics include an explanation of Medicare, the Medicare enrollment timeline, Medigap and Medicare Advantage plans, and programs available to early retirees. This session is ideal for individuals who may still be working and looking to transition. This class is for informational purposes only and will be led by a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts representative. Space is limited and registration is required.

MIL Stitchers, Saturday, Nov. 7, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Morse Institute Library Stitchers 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 is required; new members are always welcome!

Art for All Club: Watercolor Workshop, Sunday, Nov. 8, 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.

Mocktails 101 with a (literary) Twist!, Monday, Nov. 9, 3 to 3 p.m. Come join Kim Larkin, Commercial Chocolatier and NAHA Aromatherapist, of Klasic Kreations as she demonstrates how to create refreshing botanical-inspired mocktails. Come sample mocktails with a literary twist such as a Breath of Fresh Eyre (Bronte), the Mist and Fury (Maas) and The Handmaid’s Ale (Atwood). Talk will cover cheese board 101 basics and pair mocktails with both cheese and chocolate. This program is for adults and registration is required.

Qi Gong for Self-Healing, Thursday, Nov. 12, 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 the body all at once. This class is suitable for beginners as well as those with previous experience. Movements are gentle, easy to learn, and can be adapted to individual abilities. This program is for adults and registration is required.

Chat & Chew Book Club, Friday, Nov. 13, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Bring a lunch or snack and discuss books you’ve read recently. There’s no assigned reading, so read what you want. Drop in if

you have time, or register to get event reminders. Registration optional.

Art for All Club: Collage Making Workshop, Sunday, Nov. 15, 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.

Morning Book Discussion, Wednesday, Nov. 18, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Join in on the third Wednesday of the month for a discussion. This month’s selection is “Big Chief” by Jon Hickey. Copies of the book will be available at the Circulation desk of the library. Some titles are also available through Hoopla and Libby/Overdrive. New members welcome, no registration is required.

Scratch Art: Owl & Moon, Thursday, Nov. 19, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Using a scrapper tool, participants will follow the outlines of a 9x12 inch design to reveal the engraved picture beneath. This class is for adults. Space and supplies are limited and registration is required.

Genealogy Group, Tuesday, Nov. 24, 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 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.

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, located at 14 E. Central St., will be closed Nov. 11 for Veterans Day and for Thanksgiving Nov. 26 and 27. For more information, visit morseinstitute.org.

Struggling with acne?

BY LISA MASSIMIANO,
LICENSED ESTHETICIAN AND
CERTIFIED ACNE SPECIALIST

If you have been diagnosed with acne and haven’t been satisfied with drug store products or the suggested treatment from your doctor, consider seeing an Acne Specialist.

What is an Acne Specialist?

An Acne Specialist is a licensed skin care professional who is specially trained to treat acne using a combination of clinical treatments, home care protocols and regular follow-up during the process of clearing acne prone skin.

Most physicians don’t have the time to spend educating patients on the root cause of their acne. They often prescribe oral antibiotics and strong topical retinoids that can leave skin dry, red and irritated. Patients get frustrated with these side effects and stop using the products.

How an Acne Specialist can help you.

An Acne Specialist will assess your individual skin type, and the type of acne you have, to develop a plan of action

specifically for you. They will take the time to teach you about the root cause of acne and provide information on lifestyle, diet, medications, and ingredients in makeup and skin care products that exacerbate acne. They help you to get your skin clear and teach you how to keep your acne under control.

For people struggling with acne, it can be frustrating to try and communicate with their doctor on a timely basis. My clients tell me that the best part of working with an Acne Specialist is that we are there for them to answer their questions and provide support while they go through the process of getting their skin clear.

Questions about acne? Email Lisa Massimiano, owner Skin Smart Salon and Acne Clinic at skinsmartsalon@aol.com or call 508-881-1180. Visit the website skinsmartsalon.com for information about Skin Smart’s acne program and other services.

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Exercise mind, body at Council on Aging in November

The Natick Council on Aging has a range of educational activities scheduled for November.

Community Reiki Experience, Monday Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 11 a.m. \$10.

Relax into Reiki energy while seated comfortably in a chair; promoting mindfulness, gentle detoxification, and a strengthened immune system. This calming, supportive class helps rejuvenate body and mind. Registration required for each session.

Tech workshop with Natick High School's Robotic Club Monday Nov. 2, 3 p.m. Struggling with your computer or device? Join an in-person technology workshop led by students from

the Natick High School Robotics Club. This one-hour session offers simple, helpful guidance for older adults using their own technology. Bring your equipment.

The Beatles and Beyond, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2 p.m.

John Clark presents the Great American Music Experience, exploring how the Beatles and other groundbreaking groups transformed popular music in the 1960s. Beatles producer George Martin encouraged experimentation with orchestration, electronics, and unusual instrumentation. Songs like "Yesterday," "Tomorrow Never Knows" and "Eleanor Rigby" broke new ground, while George Harrison introduced East-

ern influences to their music. The Beach Boys' "Pet Sounds" helped inspire Sgt. Pepper's, and groups like Procol Harum and the Moody Blues brought classical elements into rock. These innovations paved the way for progressive rock, with bands such as Pink Floyd, Yes, and King Crimson pushing musical boundaries even further.

Try Weaving, Thursday Nov. 5 to Dec. 3, 3:30 p.m. Is weaving for you? Learn the basics of weaving on a floor loom as you create your own colorful sample of six weave structures. The instructor will provide lots of individual attention and help explore ideas for future weaving projects. No weaving experience is necessary.

Local hikes Hunnewell Forest, Natick, Thursday, Nov. 5, 10 a.m. The group will hike about 3.5 miles on trails through the town forest. The trails are by Little Jennings Pond open wetlands, Pine Forest, and up to the glacier formed drumlin known as Pleasant Hill. There are roots, rocks, and some elevation on this hike. Hiking poles are advised.

Acrylic painting, Friday Nov. 6 to Dec. 18, 12:15 p.m. \$70.

Learn about composition, light and shadow, and other key visual concepts while also learning how to mix colors, apply paint to different surfaces, and create texture and depth that will help in creating dynamic and engaging works of art. No experience is necessary. List of supplies given during registration.

Ukulele lessons, Friday, Nov. 6, 13, 20 and Dec. 4 10 a.m. \$40.

This class is designed for players who have mastered the basics of ukulele playing. In this class, students will enhance their rhythm skills and learn how to play chord progressions. Students need to bring their own instrument.

Guitar lessons, Friday Nov. 6, 13, 20 and Dec. 4 11 a.m. \$40.

Take guitar skills to the next level in this intermediate class for players who know the basics. Join Memo Rubio, musician, singer, composer, and producer, for fun, hands-on instruction. Students must bring their own instrument.

Sound healing, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 10:15 a.m. \$15. Discover the power of sound in a soothing 75-minute session of gentle movement and immersive vibrations. Join Leo Ryan for a relaxing practice where you simply settle in and let sound wash over you. Bring a yoga mat, and a pillow or blanket for extra comfort.

Expressive arts therapy, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 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. *Supported by Dementia Friendly NATICK COA*

Author book reading: The Eternal Pine with Laura Bellusci Tuesday, Nov. 10, 1:30 p.m.

Join local author Laura Bellusci for a reading and discussion of her historical novel, "The Eternal Pine." Set in 18th-century Naples, the story follows an orphaned girl on a journey of courage, resilience, and self-discovery after being abandoned with only a handful of pine seeds connecting her to her past. Experience the rich history and culture of Naples, meet the author, and learn about her writing process.

Four Stages of Change: Shifting from Autopilot to Intentional Living Thursday, Nov. 12, 2:30 p.m. \$5.

Feeling stuck and frustrated while trying to shift habits? All significant change happens on

the other side of awareness. So, step out of living on autopilot, gain awareness of which of the four stages of change you may be in, along with concrete strategies to grow momentum so you can make the changes you want to improve your life.

Morse Institute Mobile Digital Help, Monday, Nov. 16, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sign up for a 20-minute one-on-one session with a Morse Institute Librarian for help with a smartphone, tablet, or other devices. Bring your questions and your devices. Registration is required for each 20-minute appointment.

Energy bill check-up, Tuesday, Nov. 17, 11 a.m.

Learn how to read Eversource bills (electric and gas) and discover ways to make them more affordable. The first half hour will include a presentation and Q&A session led by Jillian Wilson Martin, Natick's Sustainability Director. One on-one assistance will be available during the remaining hour, and will be supported by staff and trained community volunteers. Bring your energy bills with you.

All About the Guide, A program for Individuals Living with Dementia and Their Care Partners Tuesday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m.

An informative session about the Medicare GUIDE program, a new benefit supporting individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. Eligible participants may receive up to 76 hours of respite care each year at no cost. Learn about available services, eligibility, enrollment, and how respite care can reduce caregiver stress and support independence and quality of life.

We the People: A Musical Fable for Grown Ups, Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2 p.m.

"We the People" is an original musical adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, "The Emperor's New Clothes." This version follows Andersen's story but with a topical plot twist. The production features two actors performing multiple roles in a staged reading accompanied by musicians on keyboard, percussion and guitar. The company is made up of semi-retired professional actors, musicians and production artists.

Wit, Wisdom and Garlic A Whole "Boot Full" of Folk Tales from Italia, Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2 p.m. \$3. Take a lively journey

COUNCIL ON AGING

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COUNCIL OF AGING

continued from page 14

through Italian culture and storytelling. Award-winning storyteller Norah Dooley brings to life zesty folk tales filled with humor, colorful characters, and the hard-earned wisdom of generations. From village traditions to the warmth and spirit of everyday Italian life, these stories offer a taste of Italy’s rich folklore and cultural heritage. Light refreshments will be served.

Lunch with Friends, Wednesday, Nov. 18, noon, \$7.

Enjoy good food and friendly faces. Today’s lunch features sausage, peppers and onions plus dessert. Dine-in only. Lunch is provided by Lola’s Italian Kitchen & Market.

Local hikes, Ashland Town Forest, Ashland, Thursday, Nov. 19, 10 a.m.

The group will hike for five miles through the Ashland Town Forest and Cowassock Woods meaning “place of the pines.” Rocky granite outcroppings, former quarry sites, streams and a hidden cave can be found here.

Grandparent with Purpose, Monday, Nov. 23, 2 p.m.

Grandparents play a unique and lasting role in a child’s life. This presentation looks at ways to build meaningful relationships across generations through practical ideas, memorable traditions, and everyday moments that matter. Discover the many ways to shape grandchildren’s lives, explore the different roles grandparents can embrace, and leave with a simple 30-day action plan to strengthen your connection. Above all, learn why being present, interested and willing to listen can be the greatest gift for any grandchild.

Arthritis, active aging and joint health, Monday, Nov. 30, 2:30 p.m.

Angela Powers of Rebound Physical Therapy will explore the connection between regular physical activity, arthritis management, and healthy aging. Discover how staying active can help ease joint pain and stiffness, build strength and balance, and maintain mobility and independence. The presentation will offer practical, safe approaches to incorporating movement into daily life while supporting joint health.

The Council on Aging is located at 17 E. Central St., Natick. For more information call 508-647-6540.

Nov. 7-14 will be ‘kind’ of special

Every week is a good week to be kind but Nov. 7-14 carries the official Kindness Week title.

Spark Kindness is hosting a variety of events are scheduled to focus on the importance of being kind and its impact on the world.

For nearly a decade, Spark Kindness has set aside a week to focus on their main message: Be kind.

The organization describes itself as a “nonprofit convener, educator, resource, and friend and the biggest fan of our community’s shared strengths.”

Spark Kindness hosts educational speakers, parenting/caregiver groups, belonging opportunities, community activities, and support whenever needed.

All Spark Kindness events and resources are free due to donors, businesses and philanthropic supporters.

Organizers describe the week as “a community celebration to shine the spotlight on the good that happens every day and inspire people to spread kindness through their own actions and connect with others.”



This all aims “to help us fulfill Spark’s mission of creating a community where no one feels alone, bullied, unsupported or unconnected.”

So what is on the agenda for Kindness Week?

On Saturday, Nov. 7 at the Ben Hem Elementary Soccer Fields. Celebrate Kindness Week with cake pops on the sidelines.

An open door meal will be served at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 9 at the Natick Elks Club. Volunteers will prepare and serve a meal. For more information on preparing, contact <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0949A4A92DA0FACF8-65499370-2026spark#/MOR>.

To serve, email enolangreer@sparkkindness.org.

People are often their own worst critics. An online event, Meeting Your Inner Critic:



Words to live by. Courtesy photo

Cultivating the Superpower of Self-Compassion will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12.

The program will include guided practices, reflection and an interactive question and answer period.

This will provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions and learn how self-compassion practices can be applied to everyday life.

The organization suggests several simple yet powerful ways to be kind.

Bring a meal to a neighbor. Give someone a ride. Participate in mutual aid projects.

Offer to help with child or pet care. Donate to a food pantry or community fridge.

And above all else, be kind.

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SPORTS

Boys soccer looking to keep success rolling

BY MATT HYLEN

Natick boys soccer entered the fall as the defending Division 1 champion and one of the top-regarded teams in the state, carrying the weight of the first state title in program history.

However, the Redhawks started 1-3-1 with a tough schedule ahead.

Head Coach Daniel Joseph saw the growing pains coming. "We lost 7 of our 11 starters, including our starting goalkeeper and two of our three center backs," he said. "We lost an All-American forward in Luke Dougherty. So there was a lot of turnover, a lot of new roles, a lot of new guys on the team, but others who were mostly bench players last year just waiting for their opportunity to shine."

The opener, he said, was a lesson delivered early. "It was just an uncharacteristic performance by us, and I think the boys were kind of disappointed in themselves," Joseph said.

"But honestly, it was a good lesson for us to have that happen right away."

The team then went on a 5-0-1 stretch in mid-October, showcasing the potential Joseph always knew was there. "I got to tell you, our guys were resilient," he said.

One key point of emphasis he told his players from the start was not to chase the success of last year's team. "We're not trying to replicate last year's team," he said. "That was a unique team with a unique roster and unique relationships. But we wanted to try to get back some of that off-field closeness."

This is where Joseph has relied heavily on the seniors, who he said have taken command. After the slow start, the players held players-only meetings, and the captains relayed what they heard to the staff.

"Instead of pointing fingers and complaining, they wanted to problem solve," Joseph said.



Winning is a team effort. Courtesy photo

"They're doing pasta dinners more often, hanging out together outside of practices and games, which is entirely on them."

Captain Luca Tavilla is the only player to make varsity as a freshman and has been there four straight years. "He plays a variety of positions, wherever we need him, and he never complains," Joseph said. "He

leads by example."

The same goes for captain Cole Boggis, who Joseph believes "should be an All-American" and is one of "the best forwards in the entire state."

Opponents have noticed, too. "He gets fouled a handful of times every game, pretty hard fouls," Joseph said. "He gets up and powers through and I think even those subtle signs to our younger players are huge."

On defense, captain Sam Fishman has steadied a backline that was trying to find its chemistry early on with a new goalkeeper and mostly new defenders.

"He's a little more vocal, which is exactly what you need on defense," Joseph said.

Knowing the strong leaders and initiative that the team will take, Joseph's approach to coaching this team has been hands-off by design. "My coaching style is not a micro-manager," Joseph said. "If I'm the one giving out all the commands, or if my players think it has to be my way or the highway right down to the last detail, it's not going to succeed."

With the playoffs approaching, Joseph likes where his team stands. "We definitely want to keep this positive momentum," he said. "But I think we're in good shape heading forward."

They also simplified the goal. "I think we were trying to look too far ahead or too big-picture earlier in the season," Joseph said.

"You've got to stay focused and you've got to stay disciplined for 80 minutes, whether you're on a soccer field or in



Head Coach Daniel Joseph has high hopes for his team. Courtesy photo

life... when we slowed it down and said, 'let's just take it one game at a time', that's when we got focused on the present moment and started to work together as a team."

Last year's title run didn't come easily, he reminded them. "Every single playoff game was either a one-goal game, went to overtime, or we were down," he said.

"The ups and downs we've had so far this season have been perfect for what I'm wanting for the playoffs."

Joseph is not only extremely proud of what this group has accomplished together so far, but he is also optimistic that this group has what it takes to make it far once again in the post season.

"I know the potential of this team. I said it on day one. I still think this is the most talented group of young men that had in my six years of coaching," Joseph said. "I really do believe that this team has everything that it takes to make a deep playoff run, if not win the championship again."

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Grasshoppers hop into library for pumpkin celebration



Elijah T. Grasshopper & Friends entertain. Courtesy photo

What says fall more than pumpkins? The musical group recently performed at Bacon Free Public Library. Maybe a harvest pumpkin party concert presented by Elijah T. Grasshopper & Friends. Attendees described the event as the ultimate fall celebration.



The audience listened in. Courtesy photo

Fire department trains at Lake Cochituate to access water

Water, of course, is a crucial ingredient to the work of the Natick Fire Department. That explains why department members spent a week in October at Lake Cochituate. The firefighters were practicing drafting and master stream operations. This process allows engines to pull water straight from the lake and use that water when big volumes are needed in large fires. Their practice created valuable training and some large streams of water lakeside.



The lake water could potentially save lives. Courtesy photo



The practice created graceful arcs. Courtesy photo



Climbing the ladder truck. Courtesy photo

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John McHugh

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

By JOHN MCHUGH

A home can look exactly as it did twenty years ago, yet feel entirely different to the people living there.

The dining room that once hosted lively holiday gatherings may now sit empty for months. Bedrooms once filled with children have become occasional guest rooms. A beautiful yard that provided years of enjoyment may now require more attention than its owners wish to give. These changes don't diminish a home's value or the

memories created there, but they can change how well it serves its occupants.

After nearly three decades in real estate, I've observed that homeowners often recognize their changing needs long before they're emotionally prepared to move. Leaving a longtime residence isn't simply a financial decision. It involves memories, familiar surroundings, and a sense of belonging that cannot be measured in square footage.

Visiting another property can reveal possibilities homeowners hadn't considered. A more accessible layout, fewer maintenance responsibilities, or proximity to everyday conveniences may highlight opportunities for a different lifestyle.

Evaluating whether a home remains suitable doesn't necessarily mean preparing to sell. Begin by considering how frequently each room is used, the annual cost of maintenance, and whether the layout will comfortably accommodate your needs over the next decade.

Look beyond the mortgage payment. Property taxes, insurance, utilities, repairs, and

Did you know?



A room can become unnecessary long before anyone admits it.



The easiest home to maintain isn't always the least expensive home to own.



A staircase may influence future comfort more than an additional bedroom.



Living closer to everyday destinations can matter more than having extra square footage.



The most useful question may be whether your home supports your present routines, not whether it remains attractive.

ongoing upkeep all contribute to the actual cost of ownership. A smaller property may reduce certain expenses, although condominium fees or higher taxes can offset those savings.

Accessibility also deserves consideration. Stairs, narrow doorways, bathroom configurations, and laundry locations can become increasingly important over time. Addressing these features before they become obstacles may allow homeowners to remain comfortably in place.

Sometimes relatively simple changes, such as converting an unused room, improving lighting, or arranging help with exterior maintenance, can make a meaningful difference.

As November brings families together, it's an opportunity to look around with fresh eyes. Does your home complement your current lifestyle? Are there adjustments that would make everyday living easier?

The goal isn't necessarily to find another house. It's to

recognize what makes a home comfortable, practical, and enjoyable today.

A home can be perfect for one chapter of life without needing to be perfect for every chapter that follows.

NATICK MARKET UPDATE

At the time of this writing, in Natick, 48 homes are currently on the market, 23 have accepted offers, and 34 have sold in the past 60 days.

Keep up to date with the latest market trends and statistics: it's always good to know the fair market value of your home. Reach out now for a complimentary pricing and market analysis.

John McHugh has been a Senior Agent with Coldwell Banker for over 25 years. He can be contacted at: JohnSellsNow@gmail.com 978-902-5646.

Visit his website for home-buying and home selling tips and to search all properties: JohnMcHughRealEstate.com

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Program launched to help renters

The Natick Affordable Housing Trust, in partnership with the Natick Service Council, Family Promise MetroWest, and the Natick Council on Aging/Human Services, has launched "Housing for All," a new program to help renters in Natick stay in their homes.

The program provides up to \$2,000, paid directly to a landlord, to cover unpaid rent or a security deposit for renters who live in or are moving to Natick and are at risk of losing their housing.

Housing for All is designed to help working people in Natick, meaning middle income households facing a hardship such as job loss, illness, injury, or unex-

pected medical or caregiving expenses who do not receive a housing subsidy like a Section 8 voucher and are not living in subsidized housing.

Eligible households must earn less than 100% of the area median income and have \$10,000 or less in assets. For example, a family of 4 earning up to \$165,400 a year, could qualify.

"So much of the assistance available in Massachusetts is designed for our lowest-income neighbors, which leaves a real gap for middle-income families who are struggling but don't qualify for other programs," said Sue Crossley, Board Member of the Natick Affordable

Housing Trust. "Housing for All was built specifically to reach those families, people working hard, paying their bills, until one setback puts their housing at risk. This partnership lets us step in quickly and keep Natick families in their homes."

Residents who believe they may qualify are encouraged to contact Family Promise MetroWest at www.family-promisemetrowest.org or by email at Stephanie@family-promisemetrowest.org.

For more information about the Natick Affordable Housing Trust and its programs, visit natickaffordablehousingtrust.org.

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10/07/2026	10 Forest Ave.	\$750,000
10/05/2026	26 Walden Dr. #1	\$324,500
10/05/2026	36 Silver Hill Ln. #15	\$310,000
10/01/2026	15 Fiske St.	\$760,000
09/30/2026	21 Greenleaf Rd.	\$760,000
09/30/2026	6 Ambler Ct.	\$2,240,000
09/30/2026	16 Willow St.	\$719,000
09/28/2026	5 Village Rock Ln. #15	\$319,900
09/28/2026	84 Middlesex Ave.	\$925,000
09/25/2026	9 Merifield Ln.	\$1,420,000
09/25/2026	6 Hovey Ave.	\$828,000
09/25/2026	93 E Central St. #10	\$670,000
09/24/2026	12 Beverly Rd.	\$1,990,000
09/24/2026	11 Fern St.	\$1,100,000
09/18/2026	10 Rockland St.	\$935,000
09/17/2026	42 Charles St.	\$750,000
09/17/2026	27 Village Rock Ln. #20	\$299,500
09/17/2026	124 Everett St.	\$1,470,000
09/16/2026	23 Russell Cir.	\$905,000
09/16/2026	26 Longfellow Rd.	\$2,140,000
09/16/2026	7 Village Rock Ln. #2	\$325,000

Source: zillow.com

Compiled: by Local Town Pages

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The 3-bed, 3-bath, 1,713-square-foot unit in the Castle Courtyard, 93 E. Central St., Unit 10, in Natick recently sold for \$670,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

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