

## Backpack Project Fills Need

By SEAN SULLIVAN

This summer, the NSC's annual Backpack Project has become more pointed and poignant than ever in the time of the pandemic.

The annual outreach effort seeks to provide backpacks and school supplies to students in need.

Carol Gloff is the Natick Service Council's board president, and said that new measures likely adopted by schools to combat the coronavirus could complicate even something as non-controversial as school supplies.

For students, the summer season can seem less a matter of dates on a calendar than a destination. The school year's end is anticipated, arrived at. They leave earth for while, bound for Summerland, a place renowned for its relative freedom and remove from structure.



It's an excursion of exploration, reflection, sometimes boredom.

But this summer has been a trip defined by turbulence, marked by uncertainty.

New and disruptive ways of living have been taken on board, have necessitated a new species of speech to describe them. Social distancing, the bending of curves, and PPE are now phrases of frequency.

Soon for students, parents and educators, the start of a

most extraordinary school year is visible on the horizon.

Now we must bring this thing in for a landing, a process that promises to be among the most fraught of our public flight from the pandemic. Preparations have been well underway, procedures checked and plans put in place to make the transition as safe and smooth as possible.

**BACKPACK**

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## Open Space Plan Sent to State

By SUSAN MANNING  
STAFF WRITER

Every seven years, the town's Open Space And Recreation plan expires. Natick's expired in June 2019 and an updated plan is currently with the state waiting for feedback.

According to Marianne Iarossi, AICP Open Space Planner & Conservation Agent in Natick's Community & Economic Development Office, the Town of Natick and Open Space Advisory Committee started working on the update at the end of last year.

At press time, the draft of the new plan was with the State's Department of Conservation Services. Iarossi didn't expect too much feedback, but said there's always a chance.

"In my experience, the state usually has some sort of comments but I am not expecting any high level issues," she said.

The plan, which was a revised version of the official 2012 plan, include specific actionable proj-

ects that need to be addressed. Feedback was provided by the town as well as community members.

Iarossi said, "We asked the community and ourselves 'What projects do we want to see come to fruition? What improvements are a priority?' Those projects that were frequently mentioned and were priorities were included in the Action Plan."

Thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, that feedback was sought and given in slightly different forms this year.

"Normally we would have had in-person public meetings, but due to social distancing requirements, we had to be creative here. A self-running powerpoint was created in lieu of a presenter, and we utilized multiple channels (social media, Zoom online meetings with various entities,

**OPEN SPACE**

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BACKPACK

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For students in particular, it will be remembered as a most unusual summer, one that will frame their return to school in the fall and color the memory of childhood. Summer’s encroaching end has always occasioned a mixed bag of emotions. Now, constraints of the coronavirus will act as catalyst to those conflicting feelings.

Even still, school life may be a welcome change after this socially-distanced summer, a return to some semblance of normal. It’s traditionally a time to catch up with friendly acquaintances outside one’s close circle of friends, to tell them of trips taken and adventures had. But beaches were banned, camps closed, and travel largely

taboo. It’s been a summer of sequestration, a season of staying at home, which will make for a whole new genre of September storytelling when students are reunited with classmates. And carried along with that mixed bag of emotions are those often-weighty backpacks laden with school supplies. The coming start of classes commences back-to-school shopping sprees, a recurring, return-to-school ritual that vexes so many young summer vacationers. Yet even that tame tradition will require some tweaking in this new era of distance-conscious learning and shopping. As in years prior, the Natick Service Council is working to ease that burden for local schools and students.

For the time being, an ethic of sharing will likely be suspended in schools. The swapping of items like pencils, rulers and other im-

plements will probably be discouraged. The use of lockers is also being looked at as a potential trouble spot in the arena of social-distancing efforts. Hallway lockers have long been that rare patch of sovereign real estate in schools, modest closet-like spaces that students can claim and curate as their own for a time. Hallway harbors in a sea of shared social spaces, lockers can be little alcoves of anonymity, ports of calm where students can steal a precious few seconds of relative seclusion, places to briefly confer with friends between bells. That’s cause for scrutiny in an environment where students will be encouraged to maintain distance from one another. Should lockers be deemed off limits or their usage curtailed, backpacks could become a de-facto source of storage for student’s supplies. Natick educator with three



sons aged 9 to 12 years, Paul Power has gotten a rare view of remote schooling from both sides of the equation. He teaches science at Kennedy Middle School, and held classes over video chat during the final few months of the school year. Equipped with that hindsight and thinking through what’s to come, Power wrote up a wishlist of some essentials - items he saw and envisions as integral and perhaps in short supply in students’ homes. Among the list are the usual staples of school, though things that Power discovered many of students didn’t have on hand. Colored pencils, sharpeners and

markers made the list, as well as a good metric ruler. Teaching remote classes last spring, Power found that ingenuity and resourcefulness were indispensable tools during uncertain times. He marshaled common household items for science experiments and enlisted his sons to take part in science videos for his students. “Now if we are talking at-home science, then they may need to be flexible to get shopping for some lab materials,” advised Power. “This would depend on the curriculum and lab lessons being taught.”

BACKPACK

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Your Money, Your Independence

# Experience Your Spending

With shifting limitations, 2020 has brought clarity to essential spending and a renewed value for experiences.

A creative exercise to determine a family’s efficiency of spending is to allocate monthly expenditures into 4 categories - Needs (essentials), Seeds (savings), Wants (desires) and “What Were We Thinking?!”

Proper ratios will vary based on financial independence goals. Regardless, it is important to treat yourself and those you love along the way. As opportunities and their impact may not be present later.

To maximize joy and spending impact consider:

**Value of experiences versus things.** Studies find people misjudge what purchases will make them happy, how happy they will feel and how long that happiness lasts.

Spending money on experiences creates more and longer lasting happiness than spending on material goods, which people are more prone to compari-



Glenn Brown

**Many small pleasures over a few big ones. Saving up for a big purchase is admirable.** But in terms of your happiness, is this the best way to allocate finite resources? For many, happiness is more closely aligned to the frequency and variations as opposed to intensity.

Ask yourself if you’d be happier with a few big-ticket items, such as a luxury car, or rather indulge frequently in small purchases, such as cooking clubs, memberships, kid’s activities and spa days?

**For big purchases ask, ‘What am I not thinking about?’** A powerful question to socialize with friends, your spouse and trusted advisors.

For example, you want to buy a summer camp focusing on hosting, sunsets, fishing and kids playing in the lake. Overlooked is the 2½ hour drive, 2 bedrooms and 1 bath. This impacts friends and family staying over, or creates a 5-hour drive for a day trip. Plus, the camp is 70 years old, thus repairs will

sons and buyer’s remorse. Also, objects tend to deteriorate with time, while experiences can create lasting memories and become part of your identity.

Additionally, timing of experiences is critical. Consider the family vacation to Disney, it is a different shared experience for all going when kids are 6 & 8 rather than 16 & 18.

take your time away from family, leading to an exasperated spouse once the kids say, “I’m bored.”

For likely less money and similar ROI over a 15-year period (factoring taxes, interest, repairs, boats) you could build an outdoor space at your house and rent a camp for a week with a different family at a different location every year. You’d accomplish greater access, frequency, variances and joy of hosting friends, neighborhood kids and family.

Use money as a tool as over time you’re viewed from the sum

of their experiences, not your possessions.

*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 Certified Financial Planner™, Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor and fee-only fiduciary helping clients take control of planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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# Sid Tilak Has a Heart for Frontline Workers

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

As the COVID-19 shutdown came to Metrowest in mid-March, Ashland High student Sidarth "Sid" Tilak watched his mom prepare a care package for her overworked friend who is a nurse.

Sid said he asked his mom, "Why don't we do this for others, too?" She asked him, "Why don't you do it?" "I thought that was a great idea," Sid said, and proceeded to create Snackz for Health.

"We decided to start right away and help hospitals that Ashland-based healthcare workers were associated with," Sid explained. "We were not allowed inside hospitals, but the healthcare workers in Ashland were really helpful. My dad would drive me and I would deliver the care baskets to their homes the night before their shift. The next morning, they would take them to their hospitals and deliver them to various departments. We focused on COVID units and emergency room and house-keeping staff,



Sid prepared care packages for frontline workers during the COVID-19 shutdown. (Photo/supplied)

who had the very difficult job of sanitizing and keeping the place hygienic."

Support for the project came from family and friends, who Sid contacted via email and social media asking them to help. To cover costs of his project, he set up a fundraising page (<https://bit.ly/32iMq2v>) and raised about \$700 in cash donations from friends and family and \$300 from his parents.

"My 11-year-old sister, who is a good artist, helped out by doing an illustration for the card that I gave with each care basket," Sid said. "Everyone was very supportive, and I am grateful for that."

"I never knew there were so many healthcare workers in Ashland. We have delivered baskets to MGH, Newton Wellesley, Boston Children's, Boston Medical Center, Metrowest Medical Center (both branches), UMass Worcester, some nursing homes and other frontline EMT and fire department workers. We also delivered to Ashland police and fire departments."

what I learned to use."

Sid, who will be a junior at Ashland High School in the fall, enjoys science, history, and math and playing tennis. He is in the Model UN Club at school as well. "In my free time, I like listening to music, watching sports, and playing basketball and other sports—before COVID-19—and video games with my friends."

"Though I really miss interacting with my friends and teachers, I have had a good year of remote learning. I am also thankful that the administration and staff have made this happen, allowing us to finish out the school year."

Sid has put his project on hold for the summer since the health care workers have told him that things are getting better.

"We are hoping it stays this way. If cases increase (fingers



Sid Tilak is putting his philanthropy leadership skills to work making care packages for COVID frontline workers. (Photo/supplied)

crossed that does not happen), we will plan to activate this [project] once again. I want to re-evaluate how we can resume helping in September based on what the situation looks like," Sid said.



Hospital workers are grateful for Sid's care packages during the shutdown. (Photo/supplied)

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# Local Chiropractor Tips on Ergonomics While Working from Home

BY SUSAN MANNING  
STAFF WRITER

Working from home sounds enticing — you get to work on your own time, curled up on your couch with your laptop and a cup of coffee. But it's not all fun and games, according to Natick chiropractor Dr. Bradley Weiss.

"As more people adjust to an at-home work life of lengthy virtual meetings, or regularly sneak back into the spare bedroom-turned-office after dinner, the right furniture and posture are critical," noted Weiss, the founder of Performance Health Center in Natick. "They can prevent everything from headaches to eye strain, and free everyone to enjoy the many positives of home-based employment."

Weiss, who grew up in Brooklyn, NY, earned his Doctor of Chiropractic degree from New York Chiropractic College, then practiced in Williston, VT, for 18 years before moving to Massachusetts and opening his Natick practice in 2002.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, his practice is seeing more and more complaints related to home offices.

"We are seeing all types of complaints depending on where and how they are sitting at home. I've heard almost every possible bad example of ergonomics, from sitting on a soft couch all day on a laptop, to standing over a bar in a damp, dark basement. The most common complaint is neck and upper back pain, often with pain into the shoulders," he said.



Dr. Weiss with Roger Daltrey of the band The Who.

## Business spotlight

So common, in fact, are these complaints that Weiss put together a free guide: "Ergonomics Tips for Working at Home," which people can access from his homepage ([performancehealth-center.com](http://performancehealth-center.com)) and that has multiple images and videos.

But are these aches and pains limited to those working from home during the pandemic?

"If someone has a dedicated office with a desk, desktop computer and ergonomic task chair they are ahead of the game. Too often I'm seeing people with 'real offices' in their homes, but they are working on a laptop. Laptops are a real issue. You just can't win. Your head is always looking down at the screen putting stress on the neck," said Weiss, who has treated Grammy-winning musicians, executives and athletes.

His solution?



Dr. Weiss with Paul Stanley of the band KISS.

"There are two solutions which are reasonably inexpensive. One is a docking station and the other is an extra monitor which is placed at the correct height, meaning the eyes looking at the upper 1/3 of the screen," said the doctor.

What about children who are remote learning? Are there issues that they have or are they too young to start experiencing the pains like the adults?

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Dr. Bradley Weiss

"No, they are not too young. We are seeing many students suffering from neck and back pain due to long periods of time on their laptops sitting in compromised positions from the couch, to the kitchen table or their bed. Just like any good habit, it is best for children to learn good ergonomics when they are young," he urged.

But there are solutions to these health issues.

"Fit is the key. Having a desk that is adjustable is preferred. I am a fan of active sitting, which is a new concept and what I believe is the 'future of sitting,'" he said.

In fact, he believes this so much that he's become the Massachusetts Sales Manager for the QOR360 Ariel—a special kind of chair with a unique patented seat rocker that keeps you moving, engages your core and puts you in good posture with your head over your shoulders and a slight tilt of the spine.

If you're not inclined to try the new style of chair, Weiss had suggestions for your standard chair.

"Those who prefer a traditional office task chair should ensure it has at least the following four features: 1) adjustable height;



Dr. Weiss shows Wayland middle school students how to be ergonomically correct.

2) adjustable lumbar support; 3) a seat back that can be moved, and preferably in a vertical position; and 4) a seat pan that tilts, and should be tilted a little forward," he said.

Weiss believes it's not all up to the employee to take care of these issues. Companies should shoulder some of the responsibility.



Dr. Weiss with Justin Timberlake.

"Companies such as Google gave their employees \$1000 to spend on furnishing their home office. It should be the responsibility of employers to optimize their employees' home offices since that is where many will be working for the foreseeable future. Good ergonomics with the

right office environment have been shown to increase production, decrease mistakes and reduce musculoskeletal pain," he said.

Anyone interested in the active sitting chair mentioned above can take 10% off at [qor360.com](http://qor360.com) when they use the PHC code at checkout.

For additional information, please email [info@performance-healthcenter.com](mailto:info@performance-healthcenter.com) or call 508-655-9008.

About Performance Health Center

Founded in 2002 by Dr. Bradley (Brad) Weiss, Performance Health Center is a multifaceted chiropractic healthcare facility in Natick. They meet the health care needs of those who want to perform better in their lives—including active families, home-office workers, athletes and even Grammy-winning musicians. Their chiropractic doctors and staff use natural and state-of-the-art techniques that optimize patients' health, improve function and decrease/eliminate pain without drugs or surgery.

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# The Dangers of Do-It-Yourself Wills and Living Trusts

In light of the current pandemic, many Americans are becoming aware of the importance of creating or updating their estate planning documents. If you are considering writing your own will or using an online "do it yourself" (DIY) document creator, there are many reasons why this is one project you shouldn't undertake without the help of a professional.

It is very easy to overlook important legal and technical planning points that can cause your estate to go to the wrong beneficiaries, or your beneficiaries to pay unnecessary higher taxes and/or expensive fees to attorneys or probate court. What may

seem like a great deal could cost your family significantly in the long-run.

A notable case reflecting this is that of a successful Washington businessman who wrote his own Will assuming his assets would be free of estate tax. However, due to the language he used, the IRS interpreted the law differently and claimed all the assets he passed to his wife were subject to \$800,000 in estate tax plus \$130,000 in back interest. His family went to court and eventually won, but only after nearly ten years of costly litigation and years of turmoil. One of the biggest problems with do-it-yourself plans is the

lack of personal advice. You need a customized plan based on in-depth discussions about your family, their future and your legacy. In fact, many of the do-it-yourself resources have a strong disclaimer that says they are not a substitute for legal advice and to consult an attorney for help in understanding how the law may apply to your particular situation.

A comprehensive plan is based on knowing what questions to ask to understand your individual needs. Some examples:

- Owning real estate or a share in a small business
- Leaving money to your grandchildren separate of your children
- Having children from a previous marriage
- Wishing to arrange long-term care for a disabled beneficiary
- Having minor children
- Updates in laws that affect retirement investments
- Protecting beneficiaries from foolish financial decisions
- Potential taxes that will be paid or avoided

- Creditor or divorce protection for your children

We have had distraught clients come in after they used software. In one case, a grandfather used software he purchased to name his grandchildren as heirs instead of his children. Skipping a generation allowed the IRS to tax his assets twice, and the grandchildren only received 20% of the estate. Even a simple estate plan can run into trouble if not executed properly. For example, Massachusetts requires two witnesses for a Will who must be present at the time the Will is signed. If one of those witnesses is also a beneficiary (like, for example, your spouse), that witness could be disqualified from receiving any assets from your Will or Trust. Some states allow handwritten wills, while others (including Massachusetts) do not recognize them.

Tax planning of your estate is especially complicated. Most people don't know how much money they can pass, without paying taxes. While the 2020, federal estate tax exemption is

\$11.58 million, in Massachusetts it is \$1 million. A married couple does not automatically get \$2 million tax free. Our office has seen too many DIY plans that do not plan for taxes, which can cost your family \$100,000 in unnecessary taxes to Massachusetts. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg of things an estate planning attorney will help you consider. Do-it-yourself kits are simply not designed to cover all possible financial and taxation situations. Every person has their own unique goals and objectives, and an estate plan should reflect that.

An effective estate plan will provide financial stability to your spouse, children, or other beneficiaries, protect your assets for future generations, ensure your wishes are carried out, and protect the privacy of your loved ones. We are currently offering free personal estate planning consultations, call today to schedule yours (781) 237-2815.

*This article was provided by the Estate Planning & Asset Protection Law Center of Dennis Sullivan & Associates.*

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## OPEN SPACE

*continued from page 1*

digital newsletters, website, email outreach, online survey, flyers around town, etc.) to educate the public on the project and solicit feedback," she explained.

Iarossi also noted that community feedback was not just limited to text.

"Additionally, we asked the public to send us their open space and recreation photos in Natick which as you will see have been disbursed throughout the plan. We love this because it adds more visual interest to the plan while also providing a way for the community to be directly involved in the plan development," she said.

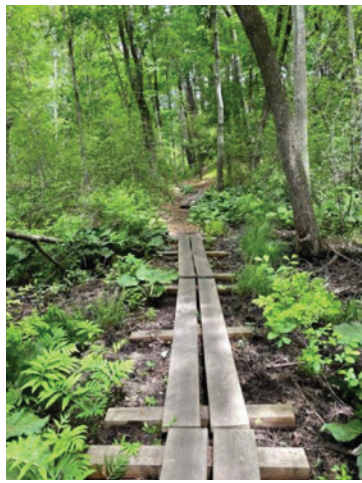
The plan submitted to the state includes five goals:

**Goal 1:** Protect Natick's open spaces, including waterbodies, woodlands, farms, and parks, that can be enjoyed by future generations

**Goal 2:** Enhance, steward, and restore existing natural resources, open spaces and recreational facilities.

**Goal 3:** Preserve and protect the town's water supply, wildlife, and other natural resources.

**Goal 4:** Provide a system of walking and bicycle trails that connect our open spaces and provide a way to travel throughout the town.



**Goal 5:** Increase awareness, appreciation, and use of the town's open spaces, trails, natural resources, and recreational opportunities.

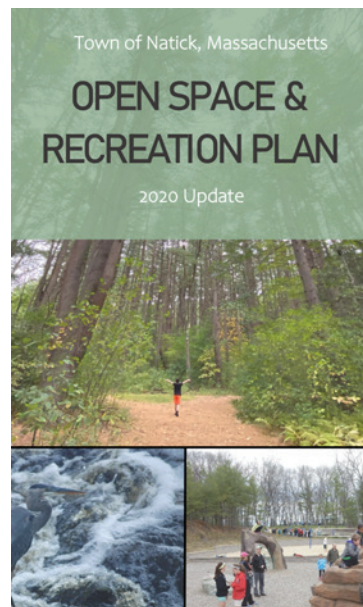
So what's the next step in the process after it goes to the state?

"The state will review and provide comments back to finalize the plan. Once the plan is finalized, we can work towards implementation of the Action Plan," said Iarossi.

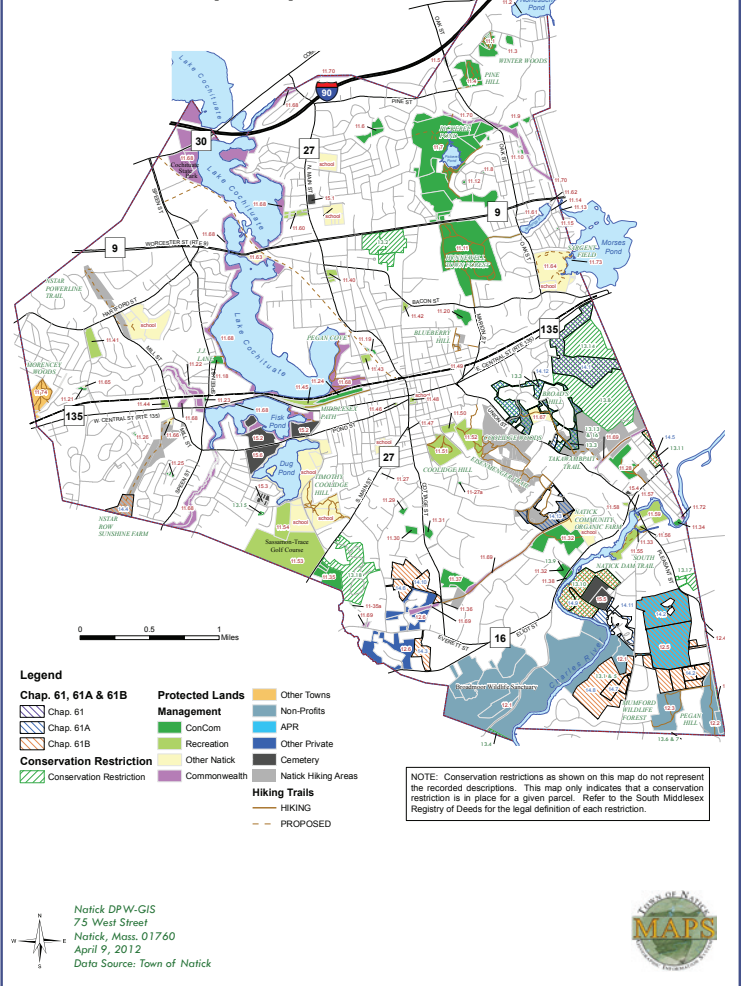
While the process is a long one, Iarossi said it is key financially for the town.

"Undertaking this process will make the town eligible for grants related to open space and recreation," she said.

More information on the process and the plan can be found at [https://www.natickma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10030/DRAFT-Natick-2020-OSRP\\_06112020](https://www.natickma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10030/DRAFT-Natick-2020-OSRP_06112020).



**Map 12: Protected and Recreational Open Space**



**Map 12: Protected and Recreational Open Space**

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**BACKPACK***continued from page 2*

Toward the middle of last month, the implements of art, writing and arithmetic were already being amassed at the Natick Service Council location just off South Main Street. Its upper conference room was doing double duty as a storage and sorting area for school supplies. Bins of colored markers and binders lined the tables, overlooked by boxes of the backpacks that will corral the items and better equip students to shlep them to and from class.

Families in need of school supplies let the NSC know how many children they have, their ages, and what school they will be attend-

ing. Based on the curriculum and calendar, schools let the Natick Service Council know what kind and quantity of supplies will be needed. Working largely from those two data points, backpacks are stocked with most of the supplies students will need during the school year.

Formerly, the NSC has run the program with the aid of local businesses and groups - partners that would acquire and fill backpacks with the requested supplies and then deliver them to the NSC to be distributed as part of the program.

Natick's Mathworks has been among the companies that have participated in the past, sometimes procuring and stocking 50 backpacks in-house with school supplies for students.



But to protect staff and the public during the pandemic, the Natick Service Council has largely shut its doors to visitors. In this new reality of social distancing, those companies and the public are being asked to donate funds in lieu of such hands-on efforts.

The NSC this year is instead hosting a fundraiser, the proceeds of which will be used to purchase the needed backpacks and supplies directly. A "Go-fundme" page was created for the Backpack Project, an online effort to raise funds required to purchase supplies. As of mid-July, the site was well on its way (about \$17,000) toward meeting a \$20,000 target.

"We're confident we'll get there," said Dan Shea. He is the Natick Service Council's new Executive Director, and added that a big part of the process for schools will be confronting unexpected issues and unknowns that will undoubtedly arise with students returning during the pandemic.

"That's part of solving the overall equation."

That kind of accommodation to the current moment mirrors the Natick Service Council's longtime and ongoing food drives, which have also switched gears to sustain their efforts during the pandemic. Like school supplies, The NSC pressed pause on in-person donations of food last spring when the pandemic

started becoming more salient.

Those personal donations of non-perishable food items have traditionally been a tangible staple of the organization's collection efforts. In the current environment, the group now solicits monetary donations only, and uses these to purchase food that lines the shelves of their Webster Street location.

Gloff is the Natick Service Council's board president, and said about 240 families are currently getting food from the Natick Service Council per month, but that there are likely more out there that don't know about the service, or choose not to take advantage of it. People in need make appointments to visit the center, vying for about 50 time slots allotted per week. Those reservation blocks, she added, have of late been consistently full.

But whether backpacks and school supplies, or baby formula and canned goods, Gloff said more people are reaching out for (and with) a helping hand during the pandemic.

"Folks are struggling more than usual," she said. "The public has been very generous."

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# Living Healthy

## Nirvana Tea House & Cafe – Inviting the World to Tea

Trekking in the Himalayas — over 5,000 miles away from his birthplace in Ireland — Ed Williamson was offered something that reminded him of home: a cup of tea.

“My mother was always putting a pot of tea on,” says Williamson, owner of the newly opened Nirvana tea house and cafe in Millis. Tea, he says, was a door to open conversation. He found it was no different at 13,000 feet in the mountains of Bhutan. It was starting to storm when Williamson and his guide, Kencho Dorjee of Noble Dreams Tours and Treks, encountered three yak farmers — grandmother, mother, and daughter — who invited them into their tent-like home.

“There we were,” Williamson says, “sitting on a dirt floor, and they’re making us tea. Honestly, holding that cup, I teared up.”

The welcoming nature of these strangers is what inspired Williamson, months later, to open the tea house. Nirvana is a gathering place where tea can serve as a doorway to create community. The result is an experience like nothing else in Millis, or anywhere in the surrounding area. A rustic, peaceful space with an international character, Nirvana is a place where everyone is welcome. Williamson’s experience in Bhutan comes through in the

### Business spotlight

colors, design, and feel of the space. Nirvana’s benches are upholstered with Bhutanese fabric, the walls bear photos and paintings from Bhutan and leaves from a Bodhi tree in India, and even the rugs hail from the office of the king of Bhutan. Tying it together is a mural, hand-painted by Jason Sawtelle of BlackBeak studios, depicting the rolling hills of a tea field.

Along with creating community, the focus of the tea house is to support the environment and farmers, both locally and globally. Choosing teas from responsible farms and putting together a plant-based menu was the first step.

“Part of our mission is people understanding the story of where these teas come from,” says Kelly Harris, one of Nirvana’s managers. During the selection process, the startup team tasted nearly 100 teas, narrowing it down to the 41 the tea house now offers. “We were very conscious of the farms we chose,” says Harris. “We wanted to know about the people growing it. We



chose them for a reason. We have teas from Indonesia, China, India, Nepal, Taiwan, Colombia, Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda — a broad range.” One source in China boasts a 2,700-year-old tea bush; another in India is elephant-friendly certified, leaving a path for wild elephants to cross its estate. Most of the teas are hand-picked by eco-friendly, small-scale farmers.

Williamson explains that all tea leaves come from the same plant, but flavors differ “depending on the climate, elevation, rainfall, humidity, and season. It also varies based on how and when the leaves are picked, and the different ways it’s hand-processed.” Nirvana’s tea offerings include 11 types of loose-leaf tea: black, green, white, oolong, yellow, purple, Puer, Earl Grey, chai, Rooibos, and herbal. It also offers an array of iced teas and lattes.

The food menu includes a hearty, flavorful variety of sweet and savory bowls, salads and wraps, and a build-your-own Mediterranean platter. For a

sweet treat, Nirvana offers tea-soaked dried fruits, tea cakes, and scones. On the weekend, visitors can enjoy light breakfast fare, including Nirvana’s signature banana malpua pancakes. The menu is fully plant-based and all but the baked goods are made in-house. “And everything tastes really good!” Williamson says. “[The managers] have done tremendous work. They make all the dressings and the baba ghanoush — we cook everything here.”

General manager Keith Maher says he, Harris, and manager Tamra Saegh worked to take the cafe where Ed wanted it to go. Making a positive global impact is integral to Nirvana’s vision, including the use of compostable and recyclable materials. The tea house partners with City Compost, which picks up its biodegradable waste each week, and with Tangerini’s Farm for its tea treats and fresh veggies. Williamson pays generous wages to his employees, so all tips will be donated to organizations that



support human rights, the environment, and hunger relief.

“Most importantly,” says Williamson, “tea is what opens the door.”

Nirvana tea house & cafe is located at 969 Main Street, Millis. You can reach them at (508) 376-2333. Visit them from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, Saturday 8 a.m.-9 p.m., and Sunday 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Find them online at [Nirvanateahousecafe.com](http://Nirvanateahousecafe.com).

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# Living Healthy

## Does Sun Cure Acne?

By LISA MASSIMIANO, LICENSED ESTHETICIAN, CERTIFIED ACNE SPECIALIST  
OWNER SKIN SMART SALON

Many acne sufferers believe baking in the sun cures their acne. Although sun exposure can dry out oily skin, it also damages the follicles, exacerbates hyperpigmentation (dark spots), and causes skin cancer and premature aging of the skin. In fact, heat and humidity often make acne worse. Here are some tips on how to protect acne prone skin from the sun.

### Use the right sunscreen.

I always recommend to my acne clients to use a mineral sunscreen. Mineral sunscreen does not contain any irritating chemicals. It is made up of zinc and or titanium oxide and protects the skin by physically blocking both the UVB and UVA rays. Zinc and titanium do not clog pores and are soothing on the skin, perfect for acne and rosacea prone skin.

### A little does not go a long way.

Don't skimp when applying your sunscreen. Most people don't apply enough to get the protection indicated on the label. Apply two coats to make sure you cover what you missed with the first application. And, don't forget to reapply if you sweat a lot during the day or go swimming.

### Think outside the beach.

Everyday exposure contributes more to sun damage than the occasional burn you get at the beach. Use an SPF daily. Make applying sunscreen part of your morning skin care routine like shaving or applying makeup. Once it becomes a habit you will never forget.

There is no quick fix for acne. The best way to clear your skin and keep your acne under control is with the correct home care, modified life style choices and the guidance of an experienced acne specialist.

Questions about acne? Call me at (508) 881-1180 or email me at [skinsmartsalon@aol.com](mailto:skinsmartsalon@aol.com). Visit my website [skinsmartsalon.com](http://skinsmartsalon.com) for information on my acne program and other services.

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# Lottery Underway for New Mixed Income Community

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Looking for luxurious living without the maintenance? The Ledges can bring you that and more at its Ashland location. Age in place gracefully at this beautiful new complex.

The Ledges, a new mixed-income community in Ashland of 64 apartment homes designed for those age 62 and over, is now accepting lottery applications. The Ledges project, which began in 2010 in response to a Town of Ashland-issued Request for Proposals, is a joint-venture of EA Fish Development LLC and The Planning Office for Urban Affairs, two local developers with a history of collaboration on the creation of community-responsive, high-quality affordable senior rental housing.

Lined with trees in a residential area, the Ledges offers convenience and beauty to those over 62. The Ledges, is now accepting lottery applications. Just 20 minutes west of Boston, the Ledges sits on an 8-acre parcel of land. It is close to major highways such as 495, 128, and route 9, so getting around is not a chore. And when you return home, there is plenty of free parking on site.

A housing lottery for The Ledges at One Robert Hill Way, a new mixed income housing community of 64 one-bedroom apartment homes designed for those 62 and older, is ongoing through mid-August.

The Ledges is described as open and airy living spaces with abundant natural light, a fitness center, resident community space, a laundry care center on every floor, an elevator, on-site parking, a smoke-free and pet-friendly community, and professional, on-site management with 24-hour emergency maintenance.

Each spacious apartment boasts sleek custom kitchens with



## Business spotlight

access to a lounge retreat that offers shuffleboard, a fireplace, and a crafting area. Each apartment comes wired for Internet, cable and phone.

The Ledges has on-site resident services and activities that will keep everyone busy as much as I'd like to be, and if getting out of your space is what you desire, the Ledges also has you covered.

The complex is near parks and walking trails. No matter your love, you'll find it near the Ledges. There are apartments homes that have handicapped accessible features, so everyone

has the chance to enjoy life at this new complex.

The town has received "local preference standing" within this development, which will reserve 34 units at the 50 and 60 percent AMI level (Area Median Income) for current Ashland residents and municipal employees. The remaining 30 units will be filled with applicants from the general public. Rents will be \$1200 for the 50% AMI units and \$1440 for the 60% AMI units. A small utility allowance will be deducted from the rent.

There are also 15 rental assisted units with income at 30% AMI. Rent is based on 30% of the household adjusted income.

Lottery applications are available through Aug. 13, and ongoing. The lottery process is scheduled to take place in early



September. They will continue to take applications after this date and will add them to the post lottery waitlist.

Applicants are encouraged to apply online at <http://ledgesashland.com/>, by phone, 781- 664-4029 or email, [ledges@peabodyproperties.com](mailto:ledges@peabodyproperties.com).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, informational sessions are available virtually. These sessions (link is available online at [ledgesashland.com](http://ledgesashland.com)) discuss information about the project, application process and lottery. It

will also be available on the local Ashland cable channel.

Paper applications may be picked up at the Ashland Senior Center, 162 W Union St. (Rt. 135). To request a paper application, contact Peabody Properties.

Completed paper applications may be mailed to Peabody Properties c/o The Ledges Lottery, 536 Granite Street, Braintree, MA 02184 or emailed, [ledges@peabodyproperties.com](mailto:ledges@peabodyproperties.com). The last day for paper application distribution is Aug. 13, with a post-mark date for of Aug. 15.

For questions or more information,

Peabody Properties, (781) 664-4029, [ledges@peabodyproperties.com](mailto:ledges@peabodyproperties.com). Additional information is also available on the website, <http://ledgesashland.com/>

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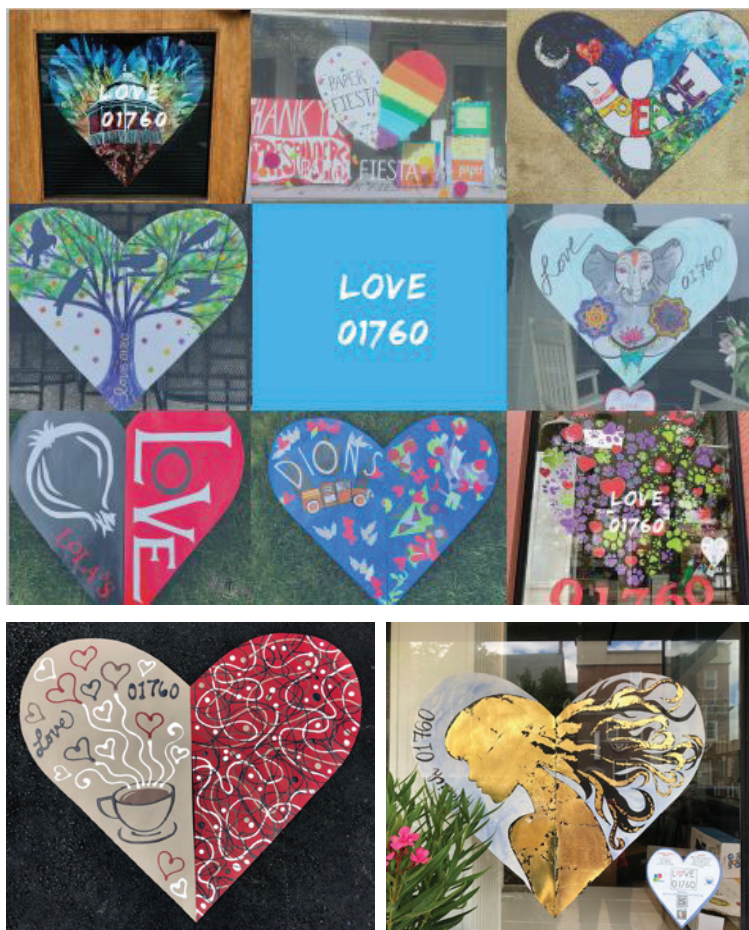
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## A large group of people, including children and adults, are gathered on a paved street. The street is lined with walls covered in thousands of colorful heart-shaped memorial cards. A woman in the foreground is taking a photo of the display. The scene is outdoors, with trees and buildings in the background.



## A man wearing a cycling jersey with the text 'BIKE NOT BOAST' and a helmet stands in a garden. He is leaning on his bicycle. A yellow flag is on a pole behind him.

follow his journey here: <https://www.family-promisemetrowest.org/news-events/cycling-with-sam.html>.



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## 2020 Annual Town Election Results

BY SUSAN MANNING  
STAFF WRITER

Much like everything else in 2020, the Natick Annual Town Elections were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Held three months later than scheduled—on June 30—the elections had no contested races.

Of the town's 23,572 registered voters, 2,534 cast ballots—or 10.8 percent. Precinct 1 had the lowest turn out at 3.5 percent; precinct 8 had the highest turn-out at 14.7 percent.

For the Board of Selectmen, two incumbents will each serve another three-year term: Karen Adelman-Foster and Michael Hickey. Adelman-Foster received 1998 votes; Hickey received 1945 votes.

For the three-year terms on the School Committee, both incumbents Donna McKenzie and Haley Sonneborn will return. McKenzie earned 1926 votes, while Sonneborn earned 1863.

Shai Fuxman ran for a one-year School Committee term. Fuxman replaced former School Committee Chairwoman Lisa Tabenkin last summer, who resigned with two years left on her three-year term. Fuxman brought in 1994 votes.

Glenn Glater will serve the five-year Planning Board term after getting 1911 votes.

Michael Fair and Barbara Fahey Sanchez both earned three-year terms on Recreation and Parks Commission. Fair received 1927 votes; Sanchez re-



ceived 1889 votes.

The three-year Board of Assessors term went to Kathryn Peirce, who received 1921 votes.

Karla Hope Sangrey received 1931 votes and secured her three-year term to replace the outgoing chairman of the Board of Health, Ian Wong, who opted out of running for another term.

With 1860 votes, William Hamlin Grogan was elected to the Housing Authority with a five-year term.

Both questions on the ballot were approved with wide margins.

Question 1 was approved with a 2168 to 221 margin. It allows any Natick resident or taxpayer to attend Town Meeting and be able to speak. Motions and voting are still not allowed unless you are an elected Town Meeting member.

Question 2, which was approved with a 1887 to 251 margin, changes Selectmen to Select Board.

More information and Town Meeting member election results can be found here: <https://www.natickma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10115/election-results-3-31-20>.

## New Mosaic Art Display

There is a new addition to Carol Krentzman's public art mosaics on Court Street in Natick Center. "We the People" was installed during the weekend of June 11-13, and now joins her other mosaics on the Fair & Yeager Insurance building's right side brick wall.

The theme of "We the People" is inclusion, justice and appreciation for all people. The saying that arches over the tall mosaic reads: "We the People Have a Dream of Life Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness with Kindness Equality Respect Tolerance Education Freedom and Justice for All." It was created in blended skin tones with the words moving from dark to light, and the background blending from light to dark.

The new mosaic includes over fifty of Krentzman's unique hand-made tiles made of multi-colored and layered fused glass. She also used three different sizes of thousands of colorful square glass tiles, originally manufactured in Turkey from recycled glass.

The uplifting words of "Courage, Trust, Cooperation, Family, Patience, Acceptance, Equity, Care, Community, Love, Honor, Unity, Peace, Truth and Hope," are interspersed throughout the colors of the rainbow in the center of the mosaic. The design was conceived in fall 2019. Krentzman is pleased and touched to know that by the time of completion, the messages have become even more relevant to current events.

Before finishing all the tiling, Krentzman was able to add a few more fused glass tiles that she



made specifically to reflect the world-wide pandemic that is affecting all of us. The topical fused glass tiles include these messages: "Thank You to all Covid-19 Essential Workers & Heroes; Love 01760 Stronger Together; Appreciation for all who helped Flatten the Curve; and In Memory - All of Those We Have Loved and Lost." There is a lot to read and absorb when you get up close to "We the People."

Krentzman would like to thank the many donors who participated in the Rotary Club of Natick Crowdfunding Grant process. In addition, she is very grateful to her other wonderful community sponsors: Natick Cultural Council, Rotary Club of Natick, Middlesex Savings Bank, MetroWest Subaru, Tiles Plus More, Spark Kindness, Libby Construction, Jeff Olsen, Fair & Yeager Insurance, Cross Insurance, Leese Foundation, Greenberg Family, Kit Cunningham, Beth Byrne, Natick Center Cultural District, Don Porter and



many other generous individuals and volunteers, all of whose names are included in the gently falling fused glass leaves dispersed throughout the mosaic.

To honor all the sponsors and others involved in the project, there will be a public dedication on Court Street in front of the new mosaic on Saturday Aug. 29, at 2pm. The event will be filmed by Natick Pegasus and all are invited to attend in person wearing a face mask. In case gathering in a large group is not possible, the dedication will take place virtually.

More of Krentzman's stained glass and mosaic artwork can be viewed on her website: [www.carolkrentzman.com](http://www.carolkrentzman.com).



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## Call for Participants in Multicultural Day Event



Natick Center Cultural District is pleased to announce that the planning for Multicultural Day 2020 on Aug. 29, is underway.

Presently, we do not know what the Board of Health guidelines will look like in August and therefore we will be curating a virtual event to celebrate the diverse cultures that call Natick their home.

The virtual platform allows us to broaden the scope of our event and this year we are looking for participants who can share their cultural heritage through 5-minute video demonstrations of ethnic arts and crafts, cultural story and poetry readings, cooking demonstrations of foods from different cultures as well as music and dance performances.

If you would like to participate, kindly us an email at [athena@natickcenter.org](mailto:athena@natickcenter.org) with the following information:

- Name of participant/group
- Picture of participant/group
- Brief description of the demonstration/ performance and the region it represents
- 5-minute video of the demonstration/performance

## Thank you from Family Promise MetroWest

Have you ever had a front row seat to enthusiastic generosity? We've been sitting in that seat for the past few weeks, and it has been incredible to watch the story unfold. Several weeks ago, we offered up an opportunity to our volunteers to sign up to fill Summer Fun Bags for each of our families. The challenge was to be creative and include something for everyone in the family, while also providing some encouragement and practical support. We were astounded when the sign-up slots for 24 bags were not only filled in a couple of hours, but offers to provide help continued to come in even after the slots were filled!

Over-the-top generosity and creativity abounded. Volunteers chose items to fill bags specific for the family with whom they'd been matched. There were outdoor games, craft activity sets, art supplies, journals, stuffed animals, balls, bubbles, books, educational supplies, cleaning products, personal care items, gift cards, sunscreen, beach towels, tote bags, and so much more! The bags were topped off with beautiful and



hope-inspiring hearts from LOVE 01760, a Natick-based public art project designed to help people "connect while apart."

Family Promise also recently received a large donation of Bombas socks, which we were able to offer to our families to go with their bags (for every Bombas item that a customer purchases, Bombas donates an item to those affected by homelessness). We are so grateful to be a recipient of their generosity!

Families picked up their Summer Fun Bags and socks this week, expressing tremendous gratitude for the generosity of our community of volunteers who made these special Summer Fun Bags possible! We have started to receive notes of thanks:

"Thank you so much for everyone who participated in donating to my family. We are very grateful and my son said 'it feels like Christmas. It was amazing to bring home a bunch of stuff for my kids



to enjoy! A million thanks to everyone."

"Words alone cannot express my heartfelt gratitude to you and everyone at Family Promise. What you all have done for me and my boys over these few months is indescribable. It just wasn't expected. The summer bag (huge bag!) donation came at a much-needed time. Because of all the help, services, resources, and kindness we have received from Family Promise we have the one thing that we need the most: support and understanding."

We truly feel so blessed to have had a front row seat to watch you put smiles on the faces of our families as you've provided tremendous encouragement through your acts of generosity and kindness.

Kathy Rodman, Volunteer Program Assistant

## July Was National Sandwich Generation Month –

### Here are Five Estate Planning Tips for the Sandwich Generation

July was National Sandwich Generation Month. The term "sandwich generation" refers to people who are raising their own children while simultaneously trying to care for aging parents. If you are "sandwiched" between these two roles, the stress can seem overwhelming. Tiff O'Connell, principal of O'Connell Law LLC states that there are certain things you can do to help you manage the challenge.

Talk to your parents about their wishes regarding long-term care and who will be able to make decisions on their behalf in the event of incapacity as soon as possible. By addressing these issues early and openly, you can then take steps to create legal documents to ensure your parents' care will reflect their wishes.

#### • Determine How to Pay for Long-Term Care Before It's Needed

Long-term care is expensive. The national average for a private room in a nursing home was \$8,365 per month in 2019. With proper planning, it is possible to protect your parents' assets while at the same time ensuring they receive the care they need.

#### • Have an Estate Plan Created for Your Parents

Assuming the role of caregiver for one's parents

can be extraordinarily difficult without the help of proper legal documents that authorize you to act on their behalf. These documents include a Durable Power of Attorney, a Living Will, a Healthcare Proxy, a HIPAA Medical Release, and a Will.

#### • Compile Emergency Information About Your Parents Before It's Needed

The last thing anyone wants in an emergency is to run around hysterically searching for important medical and financial information. You should have your parents' insurance cards, physician phone numbers, lists of medications and dosages, lists of financial accounts, and estate planning documents readily available.

#### • Involve Your Children in Your Parents' Care

One advantage of being in the sandwich generation is that your older children can help with your parents' care. Take advantage of this opportunity whenever possible.

Ms. O'Connell concludes by saying that while being a member of the sandwich generation isn't easy, planning in advance can help lighten the load and ensure your parents receive the care they need.

*O'Connell Law LLC is an estate planning and elder care law firm offering quality representation to clients throughout Massachusetts. Additional information on O'Connell Law LLC can be found at: [www.OConnellLawGroup.com](http://www.OConnellLawGroup.com).*



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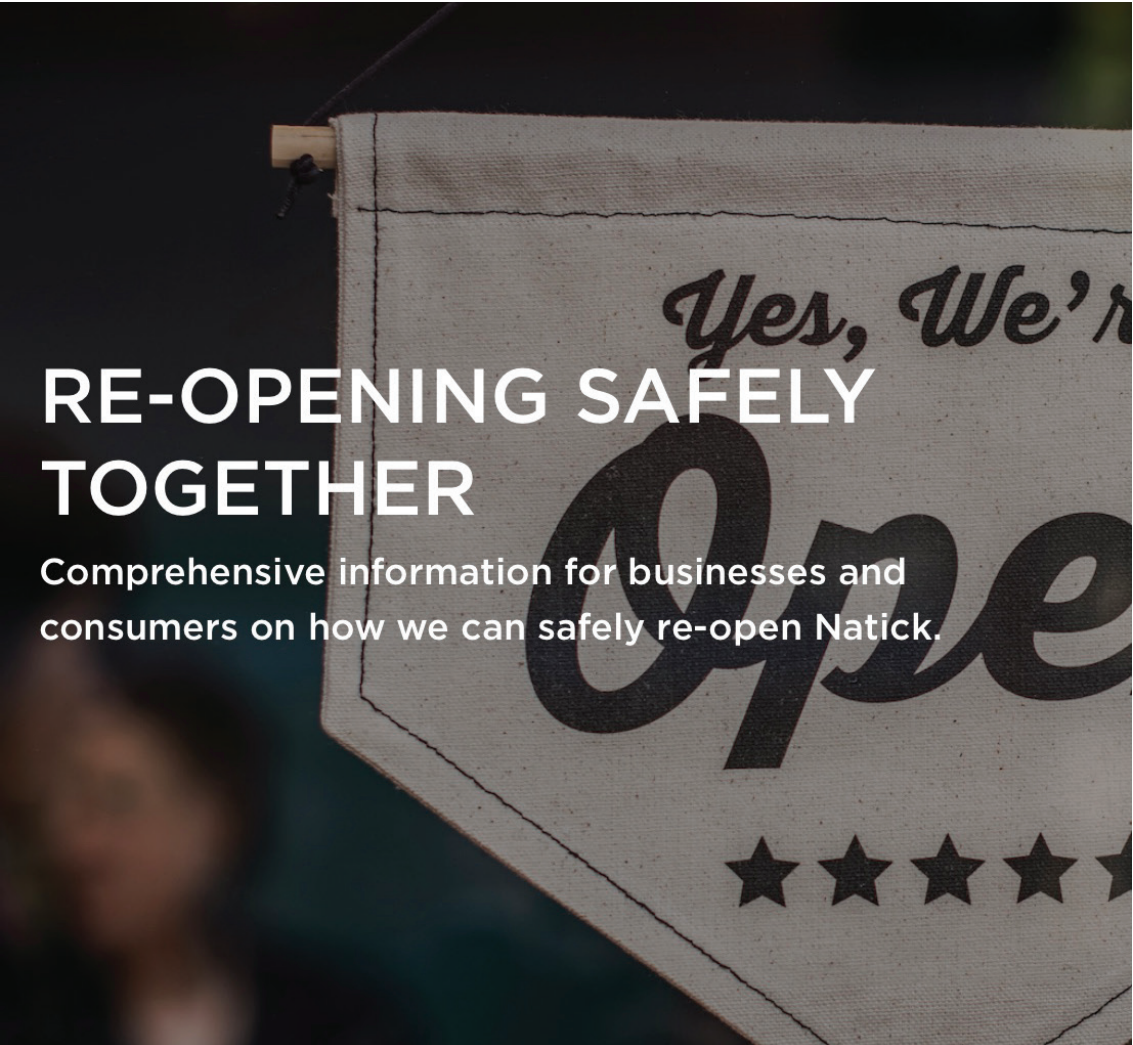


# Launching Natick Business

Through a collaboration of volunteers, the Town of Natick, MA, and Natick Center Cultural District & Natick Center Merchants Group, Natick.Business, a website, has recently been launched to aggregate local, state, and federal guidelines for re-opening businesses. A “One Stop Shop” for re-opening information available for all businesses located in Natick.

Additionally, a group of local volunteers have agreed to serve as “point contacts” for businesses inquiring about what they might need to do to re-open (and/or as they continue to re-open more fully).

Please use the website as your first step to find answers to your questions. Then, secondarily, please contact the individual advisor identified on the site who is responsible for your industry sector. If/as you require more specific information, your third step should be to reach out to the appropriate Town Board or Department responsible for supporting your particular business.



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# Sales Tax Holiday This Month

The Baker-Polito Administration announced that the annual sales tax-free weekend will take place the weekend of Aug. 29-30. This marks the second sales tax holiday held under the new law signed by Gov. Baker in 2018 that made the weekend an annual occurrence.

“The annual sales tax holiday is an opportunity for us to support small businesses and consumers, and this year, it’s a great way to support our economy that’s been impacted by COVID-19,” said Baker. “This pandemic has created enormous challenges for the Commonwealth’s small businesses, and the sales tax-free weekend is one way that we can encourage more economic activity to help Main Street businesses and local economies.”

“As the Commonwealth continues its phased reopening process, we recognize that many small businesses continue to face difficulties,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We are proud that

our Administration worked with the Legislature to enact legislation making the sales tax holiday permanent and look forward to this year’s tax free weekend and the economic activity that will come with it.”

We are proud to continue supporting local businesses and consumers as we work with our colleagues in the Legislature to navigate the evolving COVID-19 environment while adhering to public health guidelines,” said Secretary for Administration and Finance Michael J. Heffernan. “The upcoming sales tax holiday will be an opportunity for people throughout Massachusetts to help support local companies and generate much needed economic activity.”

In 2018, Gov. Baker signed legislation that makes the annual sales tax holiday permanent.



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# Tax Assistance Information

You may be eligible to receive assistance in paying a portion of the real estate taxes assessed on your residence if you meet the criteria and if adequate funding is available. Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 60 Section 3D authorizes voluntary contributions by citizens to a Tax Relief Fund. The purpose of the fund is to provide tax relief for elderly and disabled low-income citizens. The Town of Natick Elderly and Disabled Taxation Fund Taxation Committee (“The Committee”) is responsible for overseeing the Fund and its distribution.

The time-frame for applications to be submitted to the Elderly and Disabled Fund Committee is between July 1st and November 15th each fiscal year.

Please refer to the Tax Assistance and Deferral Programs tab on the assessor’s web site. Guidelines and the application form is available in the “other assistance programs” section.

<https://www.natickma.gov/1649/Tax-Assistance-and-Deferral-Programs>

Please contact the Assessors Office at [assessors@natickma.org](mailto:assessors@natickma.org) or call 508-647-6420 with any questions.

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# Library Notes

Though the Library remains closed until further notice, we are working on a path to reopening with guidance from Town Administration, the Board of Health, and our own state agencies (Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners & Massachusetts Library Association). We will update everyone on social media as soon as we know the day we will be able to reopen. We will only be opening the first floor to start, and services will look a little different in our first phase of opening for the safety of our patrons and staff.

In the meantime, we are working hard behind the scenes to offer virtual programming, storytimes, classes, and increasing our database subscriptions to connect you to content that you can access from the safety of your own home! Head to our website, [morseinstitute.org](http://morseinstitute.org) to keep up to date!

**Contactless pickup**

The Morse Institute Library is dedicated to providing access to materials in the safest possible way. The health and safety of our patrons and staff is of the utmost importance. Contactless pickup

allows us to honor both our dedication to access, and the well being of our staff and community. We are excited to offer this service!

At this time, we are only able to process holds on Natick-owned items.

**How does it work?**

**Step 1:** Put items on hold using your Minuteman account

**Step 2:** Wait for an email, text, or phone call that your items are ready to be picked up

**Step 3:** Book a pickup appointment window (one appointment for each barcode)

**Step 4:** Come to the main entrance of the library during your appointment window and grab your items off the contactless pickup shelf. Items will be checked out and bagged with your name on it!

For more information and to book your appointment head to [morseinstitute.org/contactless](http://morseinstitute.org/contactless).

**Summer reading**

We have your School Summer Reading books! Questions? Call the Children's Dept. at 508-647-6522 or email [Natkids@minlib.net](mailto:Natkids@minlib.net).



**STORYTIMES: Premiere on our Library's Facebook page!**

**Rhyme Time for Littles**  
**9:30 am on Tuesdays**  
Songs, rhymes and fingerplays for infants, toddlers and their grown-ups.  
Summer schedule: Aug. 4.

**Preschool Play**  
**10 am on Fridays**  
Together we'll visit favorite summer places through stories, songs & more.  
Summer schedule: August 7

**Bedtime Buddies**  
**7 pm on Wednesdays**  
Join us for stories and songs chosen specifically for the quiet part of our day as we get ready for bedtime. Summer Schedule: Aug. 5.  
Free programs via zoom  
We've got a great line up of fun, free programs that we'll be offering via Zoom! Some of these program have free take-home kits\* to give you an enriched program experience!  
\*Please note: all Program Kits are for you to take home and keep. Contactless pick up will be available for a week prior to the program so you can let the kit sit for a few days before opening it.

**Minecraft Gaming with Zoom chat**  
**Monday – Thursday, 2:30pm-4pm**  
**July 7 – Aug. 14**  
No registration required!  
Join us for a Minecraft Gaming session on the library's 24/7 Minecraft Server for Natick Teens & Tweens in Grades 4-12! No registration required – if you have server access, just jump online & join us! Robin will share the Zoom meeting ID & password in the game each day.

**Dungeons & Dragons: Wednesday Group**  
**Wednesdays, 6-8pm**  
**Aug. 5 & 12**

**Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday Group**  
**Thursdays, 6-8pm**  
**Aug. 6 & 13**  
Play a Dungeons & Dragons adventure online over several weeks! Both groups will experience a fifth edition standard fantasy D&D campaign set in Faerun. Players will be able to choose from a variety of pre-generated first level characters. It's not a homebrew adventure, but all campaign info is top secret until it begins! Beginners welcome!

Since we're playing virtually, you'll need the following: laptop/computer with earbuds/mic, a Roll20.net account, and a Discord account (both accounts are free).

**Relaxing Coloring**  
**Thursdays, 11 am to noon**  
**August 6: Landscapes**  
**August 13: Pokémon**  
Sign up for each individual session you'd like to attend. Robin will email the coloring sheets and Zoom info the day before each program.


**Mug Meals**  
**Fridays, 11 -11:30am**  
**August 7: Egg Fried Rice**  
**August 14: Chocolate Lava Cake**  
Learn how to make yummy recipes in a mug step by step – right from your own kitchen! All you need is a mug, microwave, appetite, and the list of ingredients from the event listing! Robin will email the Zoom info the day before each program.

**LIBRARY**  
*continued on page 19*



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# Contactless Hold Pickup

STEP 1




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STEP 2



Get an email, text or phone call that your items are ready to be picked up

STEP 3



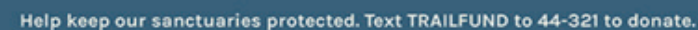
Book a pickup appointment window on our website or by heading to [morseinstitute.org/contactless](http://morseinstitute.org/contactless)

STEP 4



Come to the Main Entrance of the library during your appointment and grab your items!





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# Sports

## Natick High's Grid Squad Gearing Up For 2020 Campaign

**Editor's note:** At *Local Town Pages* deadline, neither Gov. Charlie Baker nor the Department of Education had announced the status of interscholastic sports for the fall.

By KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The start of Mark Mortarelli's second decade as Natick High's football coach will be vastly different than any of his previous 10 years.

Words like coronavirus or a phrase like covid-19 were probably never uttered on any high school gridiron during the last 10 years. And, if anyone used those words, they were most likely confined to research laboratories. If social distancing was part of anyone's vocabulary, they probably were taking dance lessons.

The coronavirus pandemic that impacted the U.S. in mid-March wiped out State championship games in the winter; then it erased interscholastic spring sports. All Massachusetts public and private schools were closed for 3½ months as academics were handled on a remote basis. But, as summer arrived, school officials awaited a decision on re-opening this fall and whether

athletics would be in the mix.

"As we await Gov. Baker's decision, all we can do is prepare for a season by getting into top-notch shape," Mortarelli said. "Our staff and players are hopeful we'll be competing and participating in a sport we all feel passionately about."

As the Redhawks gear up for what they hope is the opening of pre-season practice on Aug. 21, Mortarelli, his assistants and his players are acutely aware there'll be changes in the way games and practices are conducted. Numbers will be lowered for locker-room use and fans attending games will need space. Players likely will abstain from post-game handshakes, individual water bottles will be mandatory and hand-sanitizing stations may become a staple at games and practices.

One thing that won't change, however, is Natick High's spirited gridiron style. To play foot-



ball for Natick means being part of a long-standing tradition. It's also about desire and devotion to a task. Last year's team went 10-1 and this year's squad seems eager to match or surpass that record. The 2020 Redhawks have strengths that far outweigh concerns.

"We've got lots of experience at the skill positions," said Mortarelli, who played tight end at Ithaca College and excelled as a tight end/linebacker at Natick High. "We're athletic and our kids have a high football IQ. I like our team chemistry. The seniors have been together for a long time and have posted many wins. I like our mental toughness and resilience. Our depth at the skill positions is good but our depth on both lines is thin."

The 46-year-old Mortarelli, who's guided Natick to eight playoff appearances in 10 years, has four goals he'll be stressing. "We want to improve every day and that starts in the pre-season," he emphasized. "That's where

we develop a team edge — like sharpening our intensity, our attitude and our physical style. Our second goal is to open the season by beating Needham on Sept. 11. We also want to win the Bay State Conference's Carey Division title for the fourth straight year. And finally, we want to qualify for the playoffs."

The Redhawks, who will play two non-league powerhouses (Brockton on Oct. 2 and Acton-Boxboro on Sept. 25), have two pre-season scrimmages scheduled — Holliston at home on Aug. 29 and Shrewsbury away on Sept. 4.

Following is a capsule look at the Redhawks by position with comments supplied by Mortarelli, whose career record at NHS is 82-29.

### QUARTERBACK

Senior captain Will Lederman (5-10, 190), one of the top players in the state, is a three-year starter and has been a BSC all-star twice. "Will runs the ball like a talented tailback and also has a very strong arm. He can truly beat an opponent with his arm or his legs. Will is a terrific leader and one of the hardest workers in the program. He should have a huge year for us."

Junior Colby Leblanc (6-2, 200) Colby is a tremendous athlete in his own right. He started three games as a sophomore last year and was 3-0 (including two playoff wins). "A tremendous athlete, Colby has a strong arm and is a tough runner. Colby will play somewhere in addition to being the back-up QB. He could play tight end, defensive end or linebacker."

### RUNNING BACK

Senior Jalyn Aponte (5-9, 210), a Boston Herald all-scholastic and BSC all-star last year, is one of the top backs in the state. "Jalyn carried us through our playoff run when Will was out with an injury. He's very physical and runs very well, both on the perimeter and between the tackles. Jalyn is explosive and is at his best in the fourth quarter when teams simply get tired of tackling him."

Junior Nizayah Montas (5-7, 210) creates lots of excitement. Called "Izzy," he's a powerful runner with "great" footwork. He saw some varsity action last year and was a standout when he played in jayvee games. "Izzy can catch the ball and is a great blocker. He should be a great complement to Jalyn."

Senior Sam Assenchoa (6, 210) "Sam's primary role will be at middle linebacker, but when we're in short yardage situations, he will definitely help. A starter last year on defense, Sam is explosive and very physical."

Justin Dejesus (5-9, 175) "has great vision, a good burst and he catches the ball well out of the backfield."

### UTILITY

Senior captain Jake Dunlap (6-1, 195) is extremely versatile. "Jake can step in and run the ball, but he's also an outstanding receiver. We'll use him all over the field to try to create mismatches. Jake has a great rapport with Will and we'll need to add him to our offense in some way. Jake is also a returning BSC all-star at linebacker."

Junior Jake Adelman (5-7, 165) A slot receiver or running

### FOOTBALL

continued on page 21

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**The deadline is the 15th of the month.**



# Sports

## FOOTBALL

*continued from page 20*

back, he'll also play linebacker. "Jake is very quick and aggressive. He's an outstanding wrestler, which makes him a terrific blocker/tackler. He's tough as nails."

Senior captain TJ Dalicandro (5-10, 170) can play running back, quarterback or wide receiver. An instinctive player, he started every game on defense last year. "TJ has really good hands and is like having another coach on the field."

## WIDE RECEIVER

Senior Nick Ofodile (6-1, 180) could be the premier receiver in the BSC. "Nick was voted all-league last year and has the potential to be very special. He's a gifted athlete with great speed and ball-tracking ability. Nick was our leading receiver last year and he should have a terrific senior season."

Senior Avery Lemieux (5-11, 175) was a starting defensive back the last two years but both seasons were cut short because of injury. "Avery is one of the fastest players on our team and is a very talented athlete. A terrific leader, I expect him to have a great senior season."

Senior Jeremy Rojas (5-10, 165) "is a very reliable receiver who's got great hands. He started at defensive back last year, but may see time in the slot this fall."

Junior David Seiche (6, 170) played some offense last year before "cementing himself in our defensive backfield. David has terrific instincts and ball skills. He'll be tough to keep off the field when we have the ball, and will also start at safety."

Junior Jayson Little (6-, 170) is "a great natural athlete with good length and ball skills. Jayson will see time at both receiver and defensive back. He also has played some QB and we love his versatility."

Senior Steven Schneekloth (5-10, 170) is "a very reliable receiver who should also see time on special teams."



## TIGHT END

Senior Christian Lederman (6, 220) played center as a sophomore on the varsity and started at tight end last year. "Christian is very physical and plays every snap to the whistle. He's one of the hardest-working players on the team. Leblanc and Dunlap will also see time at tight end."

## OFFENSIVE LINE

Senior captain Luke Radar (5-11, 245) returns at guard after being voted a BSC all-star as a junior. "Luke is a tremendous athlete who has great footwork and toughness. He should be one of the best linemen this fall."

Senior Joe Babson (6, 250) returns as the starting center after having a "great junior year." Luke is very dependable and is a very smart player, who will be asked to make many of our offensive line calls."

Junior Jacob Snoeyink (6-2, 240) saw a lot of playing time on both sides of the ball last year. "We're very excited about Jacob and he probably won't come off the field much this fall. He's one of our strongest players and has terrific instincts and toughness."

Junior Aaron Becker (6-1, 210) "came on late last season and is ready to play varsity with a great edge. He's very athletic and phys-

ical and should see time on both sides of the ball."

Junior Ryan LeBrun (6-1, 200) is "a terrific all-around athlete and could play tight end or guard. We love his athleticism and he pulls very well from the guard spot. Ryan earned his letter last year and is ready to contribute more."

Junior Liam Ryan (5-9, 240) is very aggressive and plays with great intensity. "Liam will push for time at nose guard on defense, but will also compete for a spot on the offensive line."

Junior Esteban Garcia (6-0, 240) had a "great year with the jayvees last year and will compete at tackle this fall. Esteban is a natural athlete who relies on good footwork and quickness."

Senior Drew Lawrence (5-11, 250) started last year on the jayvees and "is a very dedicated member of our team. Drew has worked very hard to improve his overall strength and will compete for a spot on the offensive line."

## DEFENSIVE LINE

Christian Lederman, Ryan, LeBrun, Snoeyink, Radar and Becker will all compete for time on the defensive line. "We lost three starters on the defensive front to graduation," Mortarelli said, "but this group is in great

shape and I'm hoping they're able to utilize the skills they demonstrated on offense to shape our defense."

will be the mainstay in the middle. He played excellent last year during our playoff run and will be tough and physical in the middle of our defense this year."

Junior Nick Burgoyne (5-9, 175) will also compete atlinebacker along with senior Christian Popp (6-0, 185) and junior Justin Chen (5-7, 165). "Popp played special teams last year and will compete for our strong side spot while Chen and Burgoyne are both tough players who work really hard in the weight room."

## DEFENSIVE BACK

Seiche returns at safety while Rojas returns and will compete at cornerback with junior Derek Ghilani (5-10, 160) and senior Patrick St. George (5-11, 175). "Ghilani has great instincts and good ball skills while St. George is very fast and physical. Jayson Little will also be in the mix."

## SPECIAL TEAMS

Christian Lederman returns as the long snapper and senior Josh Christensen (6, 170) returns as the punter. "Josh did a terrific job for us last year and has worked to improve for this year. Josh is an excellent athlete who could help at linebacker or defensive end. We'll have competition for place-kicking with Christensen, senior Joe Galea (6-1, 185) and junior Aidan Hatt (5-11, 175). All three have very strong legs and are all great candidates."

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# Parenting Series

SPARK Kindness is hosting for parent zoom events:

Hope & Healing: The Power of Protest Poetry

Tuesday, August 4 | 7pm via Zoom — For community members of all ages

Community members are invited to join author Zetta Elliott, PhD, for a conversation about the power of poetry to respond to the trauma of racism. Dr. Elliott will also offer guidance on how to build a more diverse book collection for your family.

## Train Your Brain to Get Unstuck

Thursday, August 6 | 7pm via Zoom — For community members of all ages

Join Core Energy Coach Renata Bertelli for a conversation on how to begin to change your inner conversations and thinking patterns in order to move consciously and intentionally beyond resistance and fear so that you can achieve your goals and dreams.

## Kids, Race, and Racism: Where to Start

Tuesday, August 11 | 7pm via Zoom — For parents and caregivers of children of all ages

A Q&A discussion with anti-racist educator and parent Melissa Patrick, MSW. For parents and caregivers who are curious about how to talk to their kids about race and racism.

### Train Your Brain To Get Unstuck

With Renata Bertelli



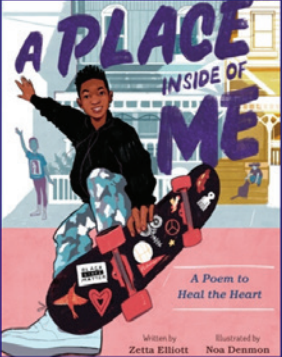

FREE program for community members of all ages  
Thursday, August 6th at 7pm via Zoom  
learn more and register at [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org)




### HOPE & HEALING

The Power of Protest Poetry

With Zetta Elliott, PhD





FREE program for community members of all ages  
Tuesday, August 4th at 7pm via Zoom  
learn more and register at [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org)




### Don't Worry Alone: Back to School

With Richard Kadison, MD



FREE program for parents/caregivers  
Thursday, August 13th at 7pm via Zoom  
learn more and register at [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org)



### KIDS, RACE, AND RACISM: WHERE TO START

with Melissa Patrick, MSW



FREE program for parents/caregivers  
Tuesday, August 11th at 7pm via Zoom  
learn more and register at [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org)





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## Don't Worry Alone: Back to School

Thursday, August 13 | 7pm via Zoom — For parents and caregivers of children of all ages

During this challenging time, let's stay interconnected and support one another. This is an on-line conversation co-facilitated by Dr. Richard Kadison and SPARK team members on how we can stay sane during the often stressful transition back to school.

More information and links to register for these free programs can be found at [www.SPARK-Kindness.org](http://www.SPARK-Kindness.org).

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# Real Estate Corner



**Our Ad & Editorial Deadline is the 15th of each month, for the following month's issue.**

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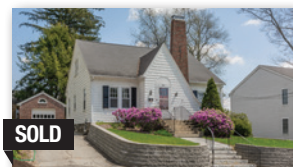
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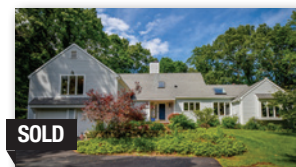
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