

New Task Force Addresses Racial Injustice

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

The Natick Select Board appointed the following members on Oct. 14 to its newly formed Equity Task Force: Melissa Malone, Town Administrator; Dr. Anna Nolin Superintendent of Schools; Dorothy Blondiet, Human Resources Director; Nora Elbasha, Student Leader School Committee designee; Karen Adelman-Foster Select Board Vice Chair; and Sue Salamoff, Select Board member. The following citizens at large were also appointed: Guimel DeCarvalho, Eric Nguyen, Dr. Tina Opie, Dr. Marilyn Park, and Christine Robinson.

Salamoff was appointed acting chair to organize the first meeting. The Select Board voted "to strongly endeavor to ensure" that the at-large appointees are members of historically marginalized communities, she said.



tees are members of historically marginalized communities, she said.

"A governmental response to racism was something I brought up a few years ago, but the time wasn't right," Salamoff explained. "The heightened attention to racial injustice after the death of George Floyd made it clear to both Select Board Vice Chair Karen Adelman-Foster and me that now

was the moment to make it happen. The Natick community is ready to look at employment practices and challenges, representation in elected and appointed volunteer committees, recruitment practices, and how welcome and safe marginalized community members feel in Natick."

Salamoff added, "We are

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Coronavirus Could Not Steal all of the Summer Fun

By SUSAN MANNING
 STAFF WRITER

Adapting to a global pandemic doesn't mean restricting summer fun. The folks at the Natick Recreation And Parks Department found a way to keep some joy in the lives of some Natick residents.

One of its program — Skyline — has been around for

decades, according to Karen Partanen, Director, Natick Recreation And Parks Department. Melissa Carter, who has been with the department for 19 years and started out as a volunteer when she was in high

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TASKFORCE

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fortunate in Natick to have very strong grassroots organizations working on issues of equity, but it takes governmental leadership to tackle structural racism. It's one thing, however, to say we need governmental leadership, and another thing to determine exactly what form that leadership should take. Ms. Adelman-Foster and I realized that the best approach to government equity could only be understood after a great deal of community input. For that reason, we proposed the Task Force."

The purpose of the Equity Task Force is to develop a framework to advance equity in Natick, Salamoff said. "The charge of the Task Force will be to recommend to the Select Board the mission, scope, charge, composition, term of service, and authority of a town an entity to advance equity in the Natick community and town government, and to recommend a set of responsibilities for any professional staff needed to help the town pursue this aim. The Task Force will work with a professional consultant that the town

Mixing Outdoor Dining with Art

As more restaurants in Natick Center are permitted to have outdoor dining, the Public Art Committee - a part of the Natick Center Cultural District, received a generous grant from the Lawrence & Lillian Solomon Foundation and the Barr Foundation to incorporate art into this new venture.

It was decided to cover the steel barricades with pictures of public art found in and around the downtown area. In addition, Natick Public Works Department helped with the installation of lights on Washington St. which will enhance the outdoor dining experience there. Thank you to the Natick Center Cultural District Public Art Committee and Town of Natick Department of Community and Economic Development for helping coordinate this project.



engages, if feasible, for the purpose."

The Task Force will research the experience of other municipalities' equity-related government entities, as well as what the town and community are doing in the equity sphere.

Salamoff said she hopes the committee will conduct "extensive outreach and listening in order to understand our community's needs, research into what other municipalities are doing, and [make] recommendations based on that outreach and re-

search. Those recommendations should outline the actions, personnel, and government entity organizational structure that are necessary to address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in Natick's town government and the Natick community."

Everybody's input will be very important to the work of the task force. The Equity Task Force intends to keep the Natick community informed and engaged throughout the process, she added.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Your HS Junior know EFC, NPC or Merit? They should.

As if there isn't enough going on, now is the time for your high school junior to start their financial aid process for college.

Each year, October 1 is a critical date as high school seniors can apply for FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form. So why the focus on junior year?

While many look at deadlines, when it comes to college planning and maximizing opportunity for "first come, first serve" grants and merit scholarships, completing the FAFSA on October 1 should be a data entry formality.

Especially if a student is leveraging binding Early Decision (ED) or non-binding Early Action (EA) admission processes, as those applications are due as early as November 1. Schools will ask if you need financial assistance, and if so, the amount

not covered by financial aid.

But let's back up, as getting ahead of ourselves.

To build your teenager's school "wish list" during junior year, you need to understand a student's true costs and analyze return on investment (ROI) per degree and school. Beyond expectation setting, this seeks to avoid your kid graduating with a mountain of debt and entering a profession challenged to pay back.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC), used in FAFSA, is a calculation to estimate how much the student's family will be expected to contribute. EFC changes each year, given that incorporates family tax returns 2 years prior along with assets, titling, income, debts and other factors.

Equipped with EFC, now your student can use a school's

Net Price Calculator (NPC). This incorporates many factors, including for merit scholarship purposes, GPA, test scores, class rank and activities. Comparing NPCs of various schools is an outstanding practice in selecting colleges for application.

As a parent, by understanding how EFC is calculated, you can take action to potentially reduce EFC and increase financial aid eligibility or greater merit. There are trade-offs and implications to asset titling, control, gifting and taxes. However, as a parent of a high school junior now, you have until December 31 to impact your student's sophomore year college FAFSA application. Wait until this January, any actions won't make an impact until junior year college. For the real go-getters, parents of high school sophomores, you can act now to reduce EFC for

FAFSA freshman year college.

Consider the government's collegecost.ed.gov, fee services like College Board's [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org), or a coach, counselor and certain Certified Financial Planners who specialize in helping clients through the college admissions and financial aid processes.

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

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so

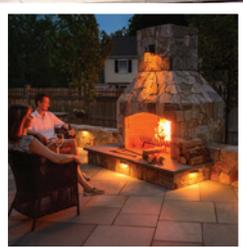


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SUMMER FUN

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school, is the adaptive program coordinator and runs the Skyline program

“It is adaptive programming for individuals with special needs. They participate to gain independence as well as work on social skills or fundamentals of a skill. The programming has been running for decades and has evolved over time but is really popular with our teens and adults,” she said.

Partanen said her team worked hard to adapt to the new normal under COVID-19, as easily as possible for these individuals.

“Along with the rest of the world we are working hard to create ways to stay in touch with our participants and think creatively to come up with ways to reach people at home. What is it that we all are looking for in this time of need? Some type of normalcy. So we brought back our very popular Coffee House, which is karaoke, and turned it virtual. The first one went amaz-



ing and everyone (including the staff) signed off with a full heart and huge dose of fun! So we are trying to adjust our already popular programming and make it virtual,” she said.

The ever-popular Coffee House, however, is not the only program that the department was able to bring back safely.

“We started off with tak-

ing to the internet and doing free Storytime and free fitness classes. We had people from around town stopping our employees on walks to ask them if they read for the Recreation Department because they recognized their voice.

“As summer approached we were trying to figure out how to make in person program-

ming work. Our Skyline Summer program is mainly Camp Arrowhead and we knew we couldn't have our typical Camp programming. In a typical summer, campers age 5 and up go to our Camp Arrowhead site and enjoy a typical summer camp experience. We train high school aged volunteers to be 1:1 with participants throughout the camp day. This summer we adapted to have parents become the 1:1 since we could not have volunteers assist hands on.

“We took the volunteers to a virtual program and we had about 35 dedicated volunteers spend an afternoon online hanging out with our participants and volunteer coordinator. The program went great. Our participants grew so close to the few who were able to work or volunteer in the programming. It was definitely a different summer however it was still fun and social!” she said.

The importance of making their programming accessible despite the pandemic was not lost on the department or the families.

“I have parents telling me their kids are going to be talking about the program they just participated in for days or weeks! Doesn't matter what the program is that the individual participates in, it is typically followed up with a huge thank you and that is how we know we are doing something very important. It is important for our participants, but also for their family to be able to see them thrive even in the world the way it is right now,” Partanen said.

Programming for special needs individuals through the Natick Recreation And Parks Department is open to anyone interested.

“We feel everyone deserves a chance to experience a welcoming group,” said Partanen.

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Framingham, Natick-Cochituate Rail Trail (CRT) Installs Pedestrian Bridges over Routes 9 and 30

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Work on the Natick section of the Cochituate Rail Trail (CRT) continues to progress. Overnight on Oct. 11 and 12, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) contractor (MAS Building & Bridge) installed the Route 9 Truss Bridge. At the time of this writing, concrete is scheduled to be poured and cured the week of Oct. 19.

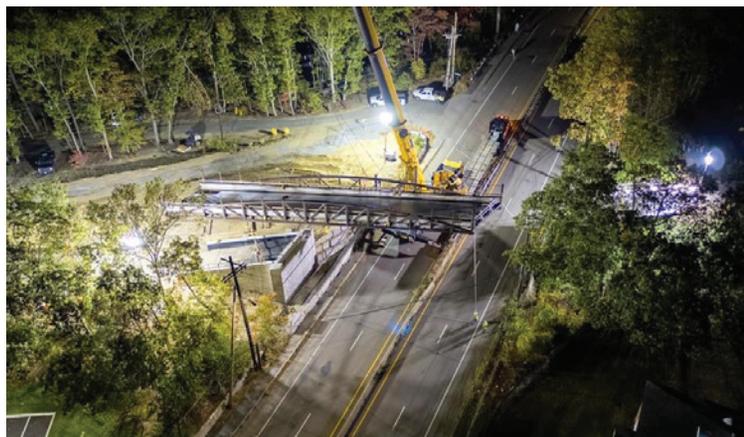
The Route 30 bridge is scheduled to be erected on the night of Nov. 1. The pouring of the Route 30 concrete deck is scheduled for Nov. 9. This schedule is dependent on the weather.

replaced a 100-year old railroad bridge, which was demolished last December. The new bridge is longer, allowing for sidewalks along Route 9, and set about 3 feet higher from the roadway for added safety. It's strong enough to support an ambulance if it is ever needed.

At this time, approximately 85 percent of the bike path has been graded and the intermediate course of asphalt has been placed. The top course is tentatively scheduled for this fall. Loaming and seeding is currently taking place, as well as the installation of three-rail fencing,



Bridge Design by BETA Group, Inc.



“A few dozen hardy residents stayed up late to watch the Route 9 bridge—weighing over 50,000 pounds—be craned into position. The Natick GIS Division was on site to take drone videos and pictures, which can be enjoyed on the Natick GIS Facebook page,” Josh Ostroff said. Ostroff is chair of Natick’s Cochituate Rail Trail Advisory Committee and vice chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee.

The new bridge over Route 9

and handrails on the bridge approaches at Routes 9 and 30.

After the placement of the top asphalt course and striping (late November/early December 2020), the contractor plans to suspend operations for the winter until the Spring of 2021.

Work set for the 2021 construction season will include Rte. 9 median work, curbing, sidewalks, milling and paving as well as milling and paving Rte. 30. Curbing and sidewalks are already completed. The contrac-

tor will place the amenities, such as benches, signs, bike racks, and plaques, in the coming months.

Construction of the CRT is paid for by federal and state funding set aside for bicycle and pedestrian projects. When the CRT is completed, it will run about 4 miles from Saxonville to the new Natick center commuter rail station, now under reconstruction to be fully accessible.

Details and progress on the Natick CRT project are at NatickMA.gov/crt.



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Despite Pandemic, Farmers Market Marches On

BY SUSAN MANNING
STAFF WRITER

After serving the community for 20 years, the Natick Farmers Market was not about to let a pandemic stop them now.

Certainly, there have been changes to protocol, but for the most part customers have been understanding and compliant.

According to Debra Sayre, Market Manager, "Covid has had us rethinking traffic patterns, requiring masks and social distancing. Our customers have been wonderful following the rules to keep everyone safe at the outside market and we expect they will continue to do so inside."

Sayre said the market has had an indoor presence for the past 10 years, with the past few years being held in the Common Street Spiritual Center.

"The ... market has been a success because the community appreciates having continued access to our vendors, eating well and supporting small businesses.



"Many of our customers have become friends over the years and new attendees appreciate the friendliness of the market when they discover us," said Sayre.

The market will switch from an outdoor venue to indoor one as of Nov. 7. As usual, this year-round market will be open every Saturday from 9 AM to 1 PM. A listing of each week's vendors can be found at www.natick-farmersmarket.org. The list is updated every week, usually by Tuesday. Included in the items for sale will be: produce, meat, fish, bread, mushrooms, microgreens and much more.

COVID-19 precautions include changes to the traffic patterns inside the market.

"The front door will be for

entering and the side door for exiting. The stairs to the lower level will be one way and vendors are spaced out for social distancing. We also plan to open windows so everyone knows to keep their coats on," said Sayre.

She added, masks and social distancing will be expected.

"Everyone wears a mask and recognize that safety is paramount to keeping the market open," she said.

While most of the vendors will stay on for the indoor season, some of them have chosen to withdraw until it is an outdoor market again in the spring.

"Some vendors have opted out of the indoor market and others have agreed to attend every other week or even less frequently in order to allow as



many different vendors to be involved," she said

"We have been serving the community for 20 years and

have enjoyed every minute of it...challenges and all," said Sayre.




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Council on Aging events

Using E-Resources from the Library

Monday, November 9 at 10:00-11:30, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Casey Stirling and Karen Kassel from Bacon Free Library for a Zoom presentation on how to access library e-resources including Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy and how to sign up for a Boston Public Library card. These resources are available for anyone with a current Minuteman library card.

Curbside Composting-Zoom session

Monday, November 9, 1:00-2:00 pm free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Karen Mallozzi, a Task Force Member of the Natick Curbside Composting Program to learn how you can do it. Keep biodegradable matter out of our landfills and save the town money.

Net Zero w/Jillian

Tuesday, November 10, 1:30-2:30pm, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Jillian Wilson-Martin, Sustainability Coordinator, for a talk about Natick's Net Zero Climate Action plan. The plan seeks to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that originate in Natick and set a course to being carbon neutral by 2050.

Books for the Booklovers on your Gift List

Monday, November 16, 1:30-2:30 pm, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Lorna Ruby, book buyer at Wellesley Books for a look at new fiction, non-fiction, coffee table books and seasonal books for gift giving or to put on your own list!

How to Zoom

Tuesday, November 17, 1:30-2:30, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Are you wondering how to zoom and participate in programs? Do you want to gain some new zoom skills as you zoom with family and friends for the upcoming holidays? We will cover a quick overview of zoom

and some tips/tricks you may not know about.

Balance and Falls Prevention

Wednesday, November 18, 1:30-2:30pm, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Cheryl S. Abelow, Doctor of Physical Therapy, Co-Owner, FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers of MetroWest for a look at how you can prevent falls and improve your balance. This talk will highlight home modifications, ways to increase your confidence and treatments.

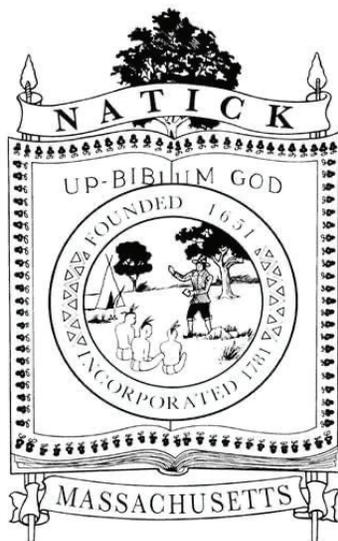
Scams

Monday, November 23, 1:30-2:30 pm, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian for a presentation on scam prevention and awareness. There are so many new scams happening during this uncertain time and you should be aware of the techniques and tricks scammers may try to use on you.

Before the Mayflower: The History of New England Prior to the Arrival of the Pilgrims and What Happened After They Arrived- A Zoom Talk with Paolo DiGregorio

Tuesday, November 24, 2020, at 1:30-2:30 pm, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540. Paolo Di Gregorio is an historian, ar-



chaeologist, and educator with a passion for telling the stories of our past and is a Visiting Lecturer in the History Department at Bridgewater State University

(Bridgewater, MA) and an Instructor in the Anthropology Department at Wheaton College (Norton, MA).

Fire Safety

Monday, November 30, 1:30-2:30 pm, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Kenneth Doucette, Director of Community Affairs, Middlesex Sheriff's Office as he reviews common fire safety precautions you should take at home. He will also demo the Hazard Kitchen Educational Prop, which has received accolades from the Mass Department of Fire Services.

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UnconVENTional Mural Unveiled in Center

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

We're all perpetually bedeviled by some item or two on our personal to-do list.

Cleaning out a car or clogged gutters. Weatherizing the house against encroaching winter. These are nagging itches, triggered when we see the mess, the un-mowed lawn, the email inbox stretching its digital seams.

Such things can occupy our headspace like squatters, living there rent-free until we sweep them out in a fit and flurry of productivity. Putting off until tomorrow what can be done today is a peculiar peccadillo, one seemingly specific to our species. And writing on it brings to mind a poem on the subject.

*It hits three times, this procrastination!
First, in causing so much consternation
The second in sullyng one's reputation
And lastly in the act of self-flagellation*

For artists and creative types, that to-do list is also popu-

lated with ideas that must be expressed, a folder of work that wants to get out into the world. And like an unpainted fence or unkempt living space, the dull disappointment of things undone darken our thoughts when we glimpse the dry paint brushes, clay stored in saran wrap, a blank computer screen. The empty canvas.

The final, finished product of these creative impulses is often unknown, and this can layer a veneer of vexing uncertainty and trepidation over a process already piqued by procrastination.

But maybe that's just me.

From the vantage point of her studio entrance overlooking Adams Street, Ginger McEachern often found herself in some semblance of this state of being. Upon that landing before descending a few steps to street level, the Natick artist had been constantly confronted with a certain item on her artistic to-do list.

In the shade of relative seclusion, Adams Street is a one-way byway seemingly from another era, largely unchanged from its

original form. With minimal digital editing, one might shoot a scene of 1950s noir between its high, red-bricked facades. Windows connected by a zigzagging network of black, metal fire escapes suggest a West Side Story set.

The street has for many years sustained the unseen, unsung (but essential) busywork of business. There, the deliveries, maintenance and trash collection for a variety of small shops and restaurants commence largely out of sight of passersby.

And so the large, metal air exchange vent on Adams Street's south end seemed to fit right in. A necessity, yes, but a thing better situated out of sight. Yet McEachern saw it, some something in it. A secondary potential.

As most artists might attest, it's often not easy to see the overlooked possibility within things banal, to envision the diamond in the rough. Though once that thing is seen, it's nearly impossible to put out of mind. It gets copied and pasted onto the creative to-do



list, those unexpected glimpses of the thing reminders of what needs to be done - of what could be.

Just so, the inconspicuous vent that once blended into its brick

MURAL
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MURAL

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backdrop became a beacon that might beckon from across the street whenever McEachern exited her studio. The unit emerges from the backside base of the building, rising about ten feet against the brickwork before inverting in a downward scoop.

“I had thought about painting that vent for years,” said McEachern.

She applied for and was awarded a grant from the town and the Natick Center Cultural District last year, and also secured permission from the building’s owner, who also owns Fair & Yeager Insurance Agency. McEachern began painting in July of 2019.

The mural mimics and complements the concept of public art that’s been adopted elsewhere in the town, like the painting of electrical boxes and other such mundane municipal minutiae situated throughout Natick. For those works of art on town property, permission must be obtained from the Board of Selectmen.

McEachern also co-owns and operates Five Crows, a Natick shop that sells the work of local artists and artisans. That business, along with her own artistic endeavors, uncooperative New England weather, road work and adjacent building construction all conspired to stretch the new Adams Street mural into more than a year-long project.

“It’s taken a lot longer than it probably would have. It was a huge learning process. I just kept plugging along.”

Titled “The Unconventional Garden,” the mural is a flourish of plants and flowers

native to Massachusetts, and is rendered using conventional, water-based, exterior house paint.

On a warm and sun-soaked Wednesday last month, when turning autumn foliage began mirroring the vivid petals of McEachern’s mural, the artist balanced on a step ladder, paintbrush in hand. A few protective coats of varnish had been applied and long since dried, and McEachern was brushing on a final, special finish.

While the underlying varnish sealed the artwork from sun and rain, the topcoat acts a guard against graffiti. If the mural comes to be marred in that way, the top coat can be removed, and the uninvited graffiti along with it.

During those many hours working on the mural, McEachern recalled more than a few interested onlookers who’d been pulled onto Adams Street to watch and learn more about the project and its process.

“I’ve had the most wonderful conversations with people. It’s been really interesting.”

The once-unassuming vent now blooms with flowers from McEachern’s imagination, paint brush and meticulous work. Like the red rose emerging from Ben E. King’s Spanish Harlem, rising in the street, right up through the concrete.

In this era when people are encouraged to spend more time outdoors, more thought and imagination is being given and applied to those surroundings.

“There will definitely be more public art in 2021,” said McEachern.

An official dedication for the piece will be held at 1pm on Adams Street, Saturday, Nov. 7.

Celebrate World Kindness Day

You Belong: A Call to Connection
Thursday, Nov. 12 | 7pm via Zoom -
For community members



SPARK Kindness invites community members to join us for a presentation by author and mindfulness expert, Sebene Selassie. In this program, Sebene Selassie shares that accepting our belonging is the key to facing the many challenges currently impacting our world. Using principles of ancient philosophy, multidisciplinary research, and antiracism, Selassie leads us in an exploration of all the ways we separate (and thus suffer) and offers a map back to belonging.

Visit www.SPARKKindness.org for more information and to register for this and other upcoming FREE virtual programs in the SPARK Kindness Resilient Community Fall 2020 Program Series.

World Kindness Day

Nov. 13 is World Kindness Day. How do you SPARK Kindness in our community? Help us inspire kindness with small, everyday ways on November 13th in celebration of World Kindness Day. Today (and every day!) is a time to practice kindness to yourself, kindness to others, and kindness to the earth. Visit SPARKKindness.org for resources, inspiration, and ways to connect. Kindness Connects Us.

November 13th is World Kindness Day

How do you **SPARK** Kindness in our community? Help us inspire kindness with small, everyday ways on November 13th in celebration of World Kindness Day.

Today (and every day!) is a time to practice kindness to yourself, kindness to others, and kindness to the earth. We invite you to visit us at SPARKKindness.org for resources, inspiration, and ways to connect.

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Top 10 Health Concerns of Baby Boomers, Part 2

BY DENNIS SULLIVAN & ASSOCIATES

As baby boomers navigate aging, caregiving and trying to stay healthy, common health concerns arise. Top Concerns 10-6 were covered last issue and can also be found on our blog: www.DSullivan.com/blog.

Research has shown that people who stay active, eat healthy and avoid tobacco can lower their risk of developing chronic health conditions. Baby boomers are more health-conscious than the generations that came before them. Nevertheless, they face significant health challenges. Here are the top five:

1. Type 2 Diabetes

According to the CDC, the population of adults with Diabetes has more than tripled in the last 20 years. Diabetes increases the risk

of serious health problems, including high blood pressure, vision loss, kidney disease, nerve damage, foot problems, amputation and cardiovascular disease. Lifestyle changes and proper medical care can manage diabetes and its associated risks.

2. Heart Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for those over 60. After age 45, the risk of developing heart disease increases significantly. Some risk factors (age or family history) are not in your control, but lifestyle changes and medical intervention can help you lower your risk. Exercise, diet and tobacco-free living will help limit your heart disease risk

3. Cancer

Cancer affects everyone at any time of life, but for most cancers, aging is the most important risk factor according to the CDC. Cancer screenings are crucial as we age, they are routinely used to detect cancers at early stages, possibly before you can feel symptoms. Cancer-related deaths are declining, and if you contract cancer, your chances of surviving are now higher than they were in the past.

4. Depression

Depression can happen at any age, but often begins in adulthood, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Depression, particularly in adults can co-occur with other medical illness, including cancer, heart

disease, diabetes and Parkinson's. Depression often causes the other conditions to worsen. Dr. Reyzan Shali of Scripps Coastal Medical Center Vista says, "It is important for both physicians and patients to recognize that depression is not a normal process of aging. Unfortunately, many patients feel uncomfortable with the subject of depression. Many feel that seeking help is a sign of weakness. It is very important for you to accept that you need help. Your primary care physician is a great start for help."

5. Eye Problems

Get your annual vision screening. Over 20.5 million Americans are affected by cataracts, this number grows every year. Advance-

ments in the safety and precision of cataract surgery result in faster surgeries, shorter and easier recoveries, and improved vision.

Many baby boomers feel the stress of being the sandwich generation, as well as the host of medical issues that come with aging. Don't struggle through this alone, reach out to your doctor for support and guidance. As you tackle the medical issues, make sure you also consider who can make medical decisions for you and speak with your friends and families about decision-making.

Dennis Sullivan & Associates has been assisting families in Massachusetts to protect their homes, families, health, legacy and life savings, for over 27 years to discover more, attend a free online discovery seminar and find more information at DSullivan.com.

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Election information

The Presidential election will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020.

There are two ways to vote in this election. The third option, voting early in person, ended last month.

- By mail using an early voting/absentee ballot (requires an application)
- Vote in person on Election Day. All polling locations will be open from 7AM-8PM

VOTE BY MAIL

Voting by mail is available to all Massachusetts voters for all elections in 2020. You do not need an excuse/reason to vote by mail this year. If you requested one of these ballots,

when you receive the ballot fill it out following the directions provided. Insert the completed ballot in the inner envelope and sign the envelope. If the ballot is not in the envelope or the envelope is not signed they are not able to accept the ballot.

RETURNING COMPLETED BALLOTS: The white envelope that comes with your absentee/early ballot is postage prepaid. You may mail back your ballot or drop it in the ballot box which is located by the front door of Town Hall. There is also a mail slot to the right of the front door of Town Hall.

Town of Natick Precinct Polling Locations

Precinct 1	Natick High School 15 West St.
Precinct 2	Natick High School 15 West St.
Precinct 3	Natick High School 15 West St.
Precinct 4	Wilson Middle School 22 Rutledge Road
Precinct 5	Wilson Middle School 22 Rutledge Road
Precinct 6	Lilja School 41 Bacon Street
Precinct 7	Community Senior Center 117 East Central Street
Precinct 8	Morse Institute Library 14 East Central Street
Precinct 9	Community Senior Center 117 East Central Street
Precinct 10	Community Senior Center 117 East Central Street

Vote by mail ballots may not be accepted at your polling location on Election Day. They must be brought to Town Hall.

The Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office has a tool which allows you to track your ballot. You can check to see when your ballot was mailed out and when it is received in the Town Clerk's office. Please note that ballots are not recorded as "received" until they are scanned into the system. All ballots received will be scanned in prior to Election Day, but the current priority is to make sure that all ballots get mailed out in a timely manner. Here is the link to track your ballot: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/where-doivotema/track/trackmyballot.aspx>

ELECTION DAY- NOV. 3, 2020

The polls will be open on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020, from 7AM - 8 PM. All polls will follow COVID -19 procedures. Voters are requested to wear masks and follow social distancing protocols.

Please note Precincts 1, 2 and 3 have been moved to the gym at Natick High School. (Precincts 1 and 3 previously voted at Brown Elementary School and Precinct 2 at the Cole Center). The high school space is considerably larger and allows for improved social distancing and accessibility.

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Foundation for MetroWest Launches ONEmetrowest

For 25 years, the Foundation for MetroWest has served as a connector, partner, and resource for the 33 cities and towns that make up the region. Today, the Foundation launched ONEmetrowest, its most ambitious year-end campaign to date aimed at engaging 1,000 donors who are “all in” for the Foundation’s mission by December 31.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation quickly pivoted its work and efforts to address the pressing needs in MetroWest. From food insecurity to personal hygiene to basic needs, the Foundation was there for its neighbors during the most critical time in its history, granting nearly \$3.5 million in emergency relief funding to date. Though the Foundation was able to mobilize resources and quickly distribute funding to the region’s most vulnerable neighbors, there is still more work that lies ahead, as we move into the fall and beyond. Donors to the ONEmetrowest

est campaign can show they stand by their neighbors in need and understand the importance of their community foundation during this challenging time.

“MetroWest is comprised of many distinct towns and cities, yet we all walk the same streets, share the same soccer fields, and shop at the same stores,” said Judy Salerno, executive director, Foundation for MetroWest. “Our community has turned to the Foundation for support during the good times and the unprecedented ones. Now, we’re leaning on our community to ensure we can sustain our work for many years to come. ONEmetrowest is about more than raising dollars for our annual fund—it is about ensuring everyone in this region feels united, responsible for each other’s well-being, and vested in the vitality of our communities because we are stronger together.”

ONEmetrowest will engage the Foundation’s longstanding supporters as well as community

members who are new to the organization’s mission by collectively exploring the issues, opportunities, and voices that unite the 33 cities and towns of the region. The campaign will mobilize neighbors to increase engagement throughout the region, create new connections to foster important discussion and debate, and strengthen support for the organizations and nonprofits that contribute to MetroWest’s unique community and character.

The campaign is an extension of the Foundation’s 2020 key initiatives, including emergency relief efforts, celebrating its 25th anniversary, and revitalizing Impact MetroWest with additional data on race and equity indicators in the region. Additionally, the Foundation’s new series, “Voices of MetroWest,” will amplify diverse voices with unique perspectives and convene community members in a series of virtual town hall events aimed at elevating meaningful and

impactful discourse.

“As a community foundation, we have proven the importance of our existence over the past 25 years, especially through our recent emergency relief work,” said Jay Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Foundation for MetroWest. “While this has certainly been a highlight in our history, it is important that we are around for the next 25 years and beyond to continue this important work for our friends, families, and neighbors who rely most on the resources we provide. We are asking our community to show that it is ‘All in for ONEmetrowest’ by giving to our annual fund by December 31.”

For more on ONEmetrowest and information on how to donate, visit www.foundationmw.org/onemetrowest-campaign.

About Foundation for MetroWest Celebrating 25 years of service to the MetroWest region of Boston, the Foun-

ation for MetroWest, the only community foundation serving the region, is embarking on its most ambitious annual fund campaign yet—ONEmetrowest. Though the region is comprised of a multitude of towns and cities, we are stronger when we come together as one. The Foundation promotes philanthropy across the area, helps donors maximize the impact of their local giving, serves as a resource for local nonprofits and enhances the quality of life for all our residents. The Foundation wants to ensure it can continue doing this work for 25 more years and beyond. Since inception, the Foundation has granted \$23 million to its nonprofit partners and currently stewards more than \$26 million in charitable assets for current needs and future impact. To learn more, please visit <http://www.foundationmw.org/> or call 508-647-2260.

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O'Connell Law Puts the Person First

Business spotlight

BY SUSAN MANNING
STAFF WRITER

These are challenging times and people's needs are changing constantly. To keep up with these changing times and needs, O'Connell Law firm spends extra time getting to know its clients better than most.

The firm focuses on Estate Planning (Wills & Trusts), Probate/Trust Administration, Elder Law, Alzheimer's planning, and Veterans Benefits. Most of these areas are ones that people don't want to think about when they're young and healthy. But those who do — and their families — will be grateful they did the planning before something happens.

With the current pandemic, the firm is offering two special plans: The KeyThree Plan and the Frontliner Essentials Plan.

The KeyThree plan allows people to get critical basic healthcare documents in place quickly and affordably during the pandemic. The three documents covered in this plan include: a Living Will, a Healthcare Proxy, and a HIPAA medical release form. This is the perfect plan for those who kept putting off filling out the forms,

but are now concerned about getting them done on time and within their budget constraints.

The Frontline Essentials plan is pretty straightforward. O'Connell Law is grateful to the Frontline workers, first responders, educators, and essential workers who are required to put themselves and their families at risk by working outside their homes. Because of that, the firm has created a basic planning package that allows you to get a Massachusetts Will, Power of Attorney, and Healthcare documents in place efficiently and at a highly discounted rate.

And speaking of COVID-19, O'Connell Law LLC has safety precautions at their forefront. In fact, even before the pandemic, the staff at O'Connell Law was offering remote options and other flexible terms so clients didn't have to choose between their needs and their availability.

The firm, which includes Tiffany A. O'Connell (Tiff), Lynda Furash, Faiza Z. Chaudhry, Carol Nahass, Olga Klebanova, and Nicole Woodward, has strong ties to Natick. Tiff grew up in Natick and still lives there; Olga also lives in town.

According to Tiff, "We were set up prior to Covid to be able to work remotely. We are doing daily virtual meetings with clients and the feedback is very positive. We can still fully service clients remotely and then (unless they need to stay in their homes) do a 'drive-through sign-



ing meeting' with a client, where they come to the office, stay in the comfort of their car, and we assist with notarizing and witnessing their documents outside at their car. It works like a charm. We do have a beautiful office — we miss it, but we will be able to return to it one day," she said.

Even if you're not able to be in the office physically, you can see how easy it is to still work with staff at O'Connell Law. You'll never have to worry about

being intimidated by the prospect of meeting with a lawyer. No one will speak to you in a way that you can not under-

stand or expect you to sign a pile of unexplained complicated papers, and then send you on your way.

The more relaxed atmosphere/feeling is also a reflection of who they are. They believe estate planning and related practice areas are not just about properly filling out paperwork, but also about getting to know clients on a personal level, working closely with them to understand their concerns and goals, and taking the time to explain options in clear, easy to comprehend language.

In short, they believe that the essence of estate planning is establishing strong, personal relationships. They hope to serve as your counselors for life.

O'Connell Law LLC places family at the heart of everything they do. In their own families, their work family, and their client families, they endeavor to make all feel comfortable and understood. Their ongoing goal is to make a positive impact through personal touch and their warmth.

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Changes at Family Promise MetroWest

While the COVID crisis has required all of our staff to adjust to new workflows and priorities, the impact of the pandemic has been felt most acutely by our program managers, Eliz and

Stephanie. As our “boots on the ground,” they’ve completely reimaged how to support our families, build relationships from afar, and find the resources they need to meet new challenges. At the same time, their caseloads have been steadily ticking upward.

To help them as they help our families, we’ve been busily reconfiguring some of our other staffing roles behind the scenes over the last month. Kathy, our Volunteer Program Assistant, has transitioned into a new role as Family Program Assistant. She is now our first responder for all incoming calls for support, assessing callers for program eligibility, connecting them to program coordinators, and providing alternate referrals to other community resources and programs. She is also now coordinating all donation drives and volunteer services for families, such as academic tutoring or moving support. Her new responsibilities have lightened the load for our program coordinators, enabling them to continue serving more families.

Our inspirational van driver Sam, now home from his cycling journey across the eastern U.S., has also assumed a vital new role at FPM. What you may not know is that, in addition to being a reliable driver and dedicated cyclist, Sam is a retired psychotherapist. In typical Family Promise fashion, it didn’t take us long to unearth this skillset and ask Sam if he’d be willing to reactivate this valuable experience to benefit not just our families, but also our staff.

As our new in-house “wellness consultant,” Sam is attuned and attending to the mental health needs of all of us as we navigate COVID’s bizarre landscape. He leads our staff in mindfulness exercises at the close of each staff meeting, and is on tap to help us stay grounded and focused in other ways. He also now attends a weekly meeting with the program coordinators to review the wellness needs of each family and help the coordinators develop ideas and resources to fill them. A monthly online so-



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FAMILY PROMISE

continued on page 15

FAMILY PROMISE

continued from page 14

cial meeting for the parents in our hotel shelter, where they can simply chat and have an opportunity to support each other, is one of these new ideas that Sam and Stephanie developed together, and the families can't wait to participate.

This pandemic has highlighted what we already knew so

well: our staff is skilled, resilient, and always ready to do whatever it takes to care for the families who have turned to us for help. Although everyone's willingness to flex and adapt and take on new challenges came as no surprise, we are filled with gratitude regardless.

With thanks to our team, and to all of you for your support,

Amanda Elkin, Assistant Director



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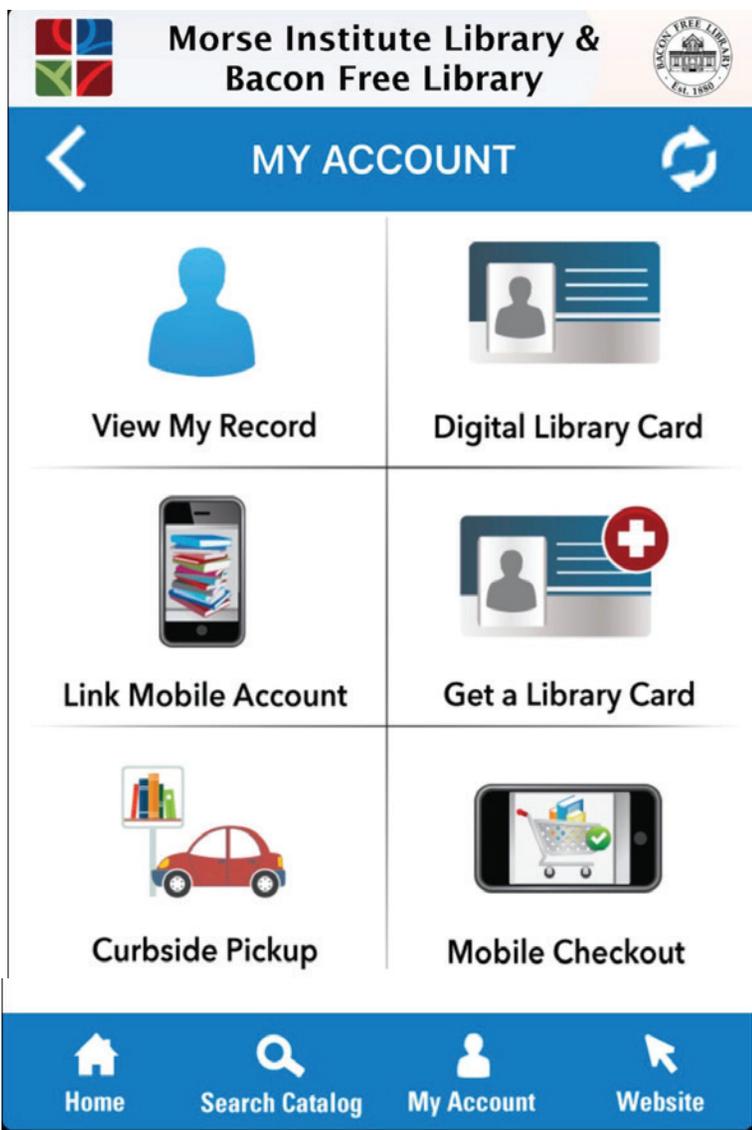
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Library Notes

Mobile Self-Checkout & Contactless Pickup now LIVE on the Minuteman App!



In order to make getting your materials as fast and safe as possible, we are excited to announce that you can now book a contactless pickup appointment directly from the Minuteman App available for both Apple IOS & Android devices!

Coming into the building to pickup materials? You now have a contactless option to check out your materials from within the library! Open the Minuteman Library App, select "Mobile Checkout" and scan the item barcodes to checkout. It is simple, fast, and safe!

Special Sunday Holds Pickups!

In order to help those who cannot safely come into the Library, we are opening 3 hours of Contactless Holds Pickup on Sundays. Times will be available at 1:30, 2:30, & 3:30. Visit the Contactless Holds Pickup webpage for all the information on picking up your holds without coming into the library!

Open for Browsing: Morse Express

We are very excited to have launched Morse Express, our first

phase of our reopening plan. We are taking many precautions when it comes to the safety of our staff and patrons.

Morse Express In-Person Library Hours: Monday – Friday: 9am-10am (senior & at-risk), 10am-6pm Saturday: 10am-2pm

Contactless Pickup will still be available for patrons who choose to use this service, and are also offering contactless delivery for those who cannot physically come to the building. For more information on this phase of reopening, please head to morseinstitute.org/express!

Genealogy

Are you interested in learning more about genealogy & family history? We've got a great place to start! Our MIL Librarians have curated resource lists on our Digital Branch to help you get started! Check out: Genealogy & Family History & Vital Records for Genealogy.

We also have remote access to many databases available to you for free from home using your library card number and PIN! Click here to see our genealogy databases and e-resources available with your library card. Our subscription to Ancestry.com has been made accessible through December 2020 from home with your Morse Institute Library card!

Interested to learn more? Register for our weekly, Thursday meet-up, "Exploring Genealogy & Family History," from 3-4pm on Zoom. It is a small group so you will have an opportunity to ask questions, and learn from others. Can't make it? Email Research Librarian Karol Bartlett and set-up an appointment to learn how to use some of the online family history and genealogy resources the library has to offer.



The new Digital Branch of MIL combines all of the wonderful resources that are available virtually. Get access to library staff and resources from home! Chat live with a MIL Librarian, get reading suggestions, borrow books and more digitally, get research help, and find out about virtual events. All of your choices for using the library remotely, collected in one place. Visit the

new Digital Branch of the Morse Institute Library! <https://morseinstitute.libguides.com/digital-branch>

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Sports

NHS Field Hockey Team Adjusting To Modifications

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Ann Burnes, who's in her sixth year as Natick High's varsity field hockey coach, is excited her sport is having a season this fall but she's acutely aware that it's different.

Much different.

"Because of the pandemic, I've approached the season with a new sense of appreciation," she noted. "What's important is to be in the moment and enjoy what you have because you could lose it. Our sport doesn't look the same as it usually does, primarily because of major modifications to the game and changes at practice."

Some of the changes include: masks on at all times; no penalty corners; seven versus seven instead of 11 players each; limited spectators; and social distancing.

"No penalty corners take away the advantage for the offense when a defensive foul occurs in the offensive circle," said Burnes, who has guided the Redhawks to four tourney berths in five seasons. "Typically, the offense is allowed a penalty corner where only five defenders are allowed in the circle. They have changed the play so that it is a free hit into the circle limiting the extent of the offensive advantage."

The seven-against-seven format on same-size fields with masks on puts an emphasis on conditioning. "Fitness will play a huge role and skill sets will be on full display," Burnes said. "It's difficult to hide a less skilled player when there are only six field players out there. There's strategy differences with fewer players, and coaches will need to manage frequent substitutions."

Burnes said that a seven-on-seven lineup reduces opportunities for playing time and coaches need to be "thoughtful about roster size." Limiting spectators translates to only two adults per player with no students attending. "Social distancing forces coaches to find ways to explain drills and concepts when players need to remain six feet apart," Burnes said. "And, team bonding is difficult since dinners and interactions are challenging under the new rules."



The Redhawks' captains include, from left, Alex McGrath, Emma Peck, Halle Berkowitz and Katherine Canty.

Two rule changes this season that are not related to covid-19 are four quarters instead of two halves and no time outs.

The Redhawks are playing an eight-game season with the following "pod" of schools in the Bay State Conference — Newton North, Brookline, Wellesley, and Needham. Natick will play each team twice, then have an inter-pod tournament that will end the season on Nov 13. Natick opened against Newton North and won, 4-0.

The Redhawks last year finished at 10-5-2 and bowed in the Division 1 Sectional semifinal to Andover after defeating Masconomet and Winchester. Although seven players have graduated, Burnes has 16 returnees with varying degrees of experience. "Our strengths this season are our work ethic, experience, athleticism, close-knit chemistry, and leadership," she said.

The Redhawks' captains include three seniors — forward Katherine Canty, defender Halle Berkowitz and midfielder Alex McGrath — and junior Emma Peck, who plays as a midfielder or defender. Burnes lauds the quartet's ability to work together

and admires their energy and enthusiasm for the game.

"Katherine is a high energy forward who's strong and plays a key role in team bonding," Burnes said. "We rely on Halle's experience. She's got a calm demeanor that helps to keep the back line communicating. Her work ethic and mature attitude are great. Alex is a versatile midfielder and defender, a natural athlete who's committed to play lacrosse at St Anselm. She gets better every year. Emma has been a varsity starter since her freshmen year. She's committed to UMass-Amherst for field hockey. She's worked hard and has gained a lot of confidence. Emma continues to impress as a player and a leader."

Burnes is upbeat about seniors Ella Gerrard, a goalie who had stellar performances in the state tourney games last year, and Angela White, who shared the goalkeeper role last season. "We're hoping Ella can build on last year's efforts. They push each other to be better."

Four seniors — Lily Kingdon (defense), Caitlin Collins (midfield), Molly O'Donoghue (midfield), and Georgian Young

(midfield) are playing more significant roles this year. "They have all demonstrated flexibility in playing different positions," Burnes said. "Hadley Green (defense) and midfielders Jessica Tallino and Emilia Morales, and forward Sammie Gondelman are juniors who made a lot of progress last year as sophomores and we're hoping for continued growth."

Sophomores Brooke Spiegel, who "has great speed as a forward," and Makenna Doucette, who "brings her physicality gleaned from her ice hockey skills" are competing at midfield.

Freshman forward Olivia Norchi and sophomore midfielder Katey Connolly are new additions to the varsity. "Olivia is strong physically with some great stick skills for a freshmen and Katey brings a high level of intensity to her play," Burnes said.

Burnes is no stranger to competitive field hockey. She played in high school in upstate New York and later became an all-American at William Smith College after leading the school to a Division 3 national championship. Working as an assistant at her collegiate alma mater, she later coached varsity teams at St. Marks and Rivers. She currently works as a speech pathologist at the Bennett-Hemingway School in Natick.

Because there are no sectional or state championships this fall, Burnes objectives for 2020 are focused more on the process than the product.

"Since there are no post-season sectionals or state tourneys, we're stressing the importance of enjoying the process," she emphasized. "It's more about loving field hockey, loving the opportunity of being with teammates and working as a unit, and also gaining satisfaction by improving one's skills."

The coronavirus pandemic created lots of tragedy and uneasiness, especially during the summer when student-athletes awaited word on whether they could compete this fall. That concern is now in their rear-view mirror.

"Our season is shortened but we'll do the best we can in our games against Wellesley, Newton North, Brookline and Needham," Burnes said. "Needham and Wellesley will be the strongest squads and they're our biggest challenge."

For Ann Burnes and her team, the prime worry during the summer was the unknown. But, now that they're competing in spite of changes to their sport, there's no doubt there's an appreciation for a return to some sense of normalcy.



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Broadmoor Notes

Broadmoor in Autumn

Trails are open Tuesdays–Sundays

Changing leaves, brisk breezes, and winding trails—there’s no better place to visit this fall than Broadmoor! The season will be over before we know it, so join us out on the boardwalk soon. Reservation required.



Grand reopening of Indian Brook Trail

You’re invited to a Do-It-Yourself Grand Re-opening of the Indian Brook Trail reroute which was recently completed on a beautiful, gentle slope above the vernal pool. The change moves the trail out of wetland habitat – disruptive for wildlife, muddy and uncomfortable for visitors – to a terrific viewpoint of the Indian Brook marsh. To visit, take the right hand trail branch from the nature center main trail along the field and into the woods past the vernal pool boardwalk overlook. The new trail rises upward from there. Be on the lookout for wood ducks in the wetland below. This is a favorite spot for them on fall migration.

Terra Corps Service Member Bea Oliva managed the staff

and volunteers who collectively worked more than 80 hours on this reroute. Big thanks to the volunteers from Appalachian Mountain Club, who put the finishing touches on this project. The result: it looks like it’s always been there and instead of watching your feet, you can enjoy the forest and wildlife.

Another beautiful option to explore was completed this summer and goes around the Mill Pond from Signpost 4 to Signpost 6. Most visitors cross the bridge, but for a new view of the sanctuary, give this different route a try.

More trail improvements will be continuing throughout the



year. Many thanks to the generous donors who contributed more than \$420,000 to make these improvements and created an endowment to ensure the trails will always be kept in top condition.



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Real Estate Corner

Home Repairs that Can Sink Budgets Fast

A home is the most substantial investment many people will ever make. Once down payments have been made and closing costs have been paid, homeowners may still be staring down sizable expenses as they begin to tackle any repairs that need to be made.

Home maintenance and renovations involve a certain measure of trepidation. Even after vetting contractors and establishing budgets, homeowners may worry that repairs will unearth problems that snowball into expensive fixes. Planning ahead for such projects and learning to recognize issues that tend to be costly can help homeowners weather any storms that may arise.

• Foundation issues: A strong foundation is key to any home. If there is a problem with the foundation, it can be unsafe to live in the house. The foundation repair company Foundation Experts advises that foundation fixes can range from \$4,000 to upward of \$100,000 depending on the scale of the job. Clogged gutters and water pooling around the foundation can contribute to damage, so water issues must be remedied first.

• Roof damage: A roof is a key barrier between the indoors and outdoors. Roofs must remain in tip-top shape. The home improvement resource HomeAdvisor says that a roof

repair or replacement can cost between \$3,000 and \$12,000. But homeowners also must budget for the cost of removing the old roofing materials and fixing any damage to the interior of the home. Inspecting the roof and making repairs as you go is key to avoiding a big headache.

• Siding replacement: Another costly project can be replacing the siding. Siding may need to be replaced if there is water/wind damage or penetration from insects. Spot repairs may be relatively inexpensive. However, the home improvement resource Modernize says the average siding installation project can cost between \$5,500 and \$15,000 depending on the materials homeowners choose.

• HVAC update: Keeping a home at a comfortable temperature is also a matter of safety. If a system gives out, homeowners may be scrambling for a solution. Yearly inspections and upkeep, which includes changing system filters regularly, can help identify potential problems. Neglect is one of the main contributors to the failure of heating and cooling equipment. Based on national averages, a whole-house HVAC system can cost between \$4,000 and \$12,000.

These are some of the more costly repairs homeowners can expect. Keeping on top of the home will help mitigate damage and could extend the life of major home components.



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