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January 2021

*The Voice of Your Community*



NHS sophomore Ella O'Connor



Love 01760



Sam Gloyd

## Looking Back at 2020

BY SUSAN MANNING  
 STAFF WRITER

The past year has been one like no other. With a pandemic in full swing, people everywhere around the globe or forced to alter their lives. From masks and social distancing, to remote working and learning, people have forged forward and finish the year they will likely never forget. Natick, despite the

COVID-19 pandemic, saw a lot of good deeds done by a lot of good people this year.

Let's take a look back at some of the stories we covered in 2020:

### NHS student creates Covid website

NHS sophomore Ella O'Connor created a website and Instagram account—Redhawk Memories—dedicated to

memorializing those lost to the coronavirus or from something else during the pandemic.

O'Connor said the idea came to her during one of her early remote learning courses

"During one of our very first online English classes, my classmates and I were discussing some of our many concerns

**LOOKING BACK**  
*continued on page 2*

## Connecting People with the Past: Natick Historical Society Plans a Busy 2021

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Niki Lefebvre has been the Natick Historical Society's (NHS) director for nearly three years. During the pandemic, she has pivoted the nonprofit organization from one that offered an in-person experience to a virtual one, continuing to fulfill its mission: Build community by inspiring connections to local history.

### Research Requests Have Increased

"In-person experiences were central to our work—and they will be again soon—but we have found new footing by sharing more content online and on social media," Lefebvre said. "We've also partnered with our neighbors at the Bacon Free Li-

brary to bring the history book club online, and we've developed other successful programs to help people connect with the past. Although we can no longer welcome in-person research visits, we have fulfilled a record number of research requests. I think a lot of people have used an abundance of time at home to read and learn more, and we're working hard to provide opportunities for everyone to connect with the past from the safety and comfort of their homes. We've learned a lot about how to bring history to our community even when they can't come visit us."

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
*continued on page 5*

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**LOOKING BACK**

*continued from page 1*

about schools being closed. My teacher shared with us that students' families won't be able to hold funerals if they lose a loved one during the pandemic, and I was completely shocked!

"In all the time I'd spent thinking about the virus and the many ways it was going to affect our world, it had not yet occurred to me that social distancing would disrupt the grieving process. I immediately knew that I wanted to do something to help those people in our community who might end up experiencing loss and pain in isolation," she said.

**Love 01760**

The Natick Center Cultural District (NCCD) is available to support the community, in every way they can. They miss seeing folks at events, but cherish the memories they have and hope to come together soon.

LOVE 01760! Connect While Apart is a program that brings community members together despite the physical distancing. This project was a chance to put your love on paper and work to-



**Emily Arthur**

gether, while we are physically apart.

Everyone was invited to join Natick Center Cultural District, Spark Kindness, local artists, businesses and organizations – to create a piece for a community-wide art project – LOVE 01760!

These individual pieces were brought together to form one giant installation (think Tunnel of Love) to be displayed at a public event at a date TBD. This project is for everyone and a symbol of our connectedness our resilience, and our unstoppable community spirit!

**Girl Scout girls gold**

Emily Arthur saw a need and found a way to fill it.

The Natick High School junior is a Girl Scout who is a volunteer at the Maryann Morse Health Care Center's memory impaired floor for the last two summers. In charge of running the residents' fitness classes, she noticed there wasn't a lot of participation except when music was involved.

There, she found the need. To fill it, she created a chair dance exercise class so that residence could be safe, but active.

Arthur, who has been a part of Girl Scout Troop 72293 since first grade, said she wanted to use her lifelong love of dancing to help the residents.

**Riding for a cause**

Sam Gloyd, a van driver for Family Promise Metrowest and resident of Natick, began a cross-country cycling trip on June 11, to learn more about challenges facing our country and to bring awareness to the issue of family homelessness. He started in Massachusetts and will be ending somewhere along the West Coast—wherever the road leads him!

Sam has been an avid cyclist since he made his first cross-country ride with a group of young



**Dignity matters Natick chapter**

men after college. On this trip, Sam will travel solo, camping out along the way. He plans to visit several of the 200+ Family Promise affiliates operating across the United States to learn about the families they serve and the various challenges faced in different regions of the country.

"This trip is really something of a quest for me," Sam said. "In part, I'm hoping to reconnect with family in Indiana and will be visiting with a retired minister in Michigan, who played a particularly inspirational role in my life."

But beyond reconnecting with family and friends, Sam was looking to meet and engage with people he doesn't know, both through

daily interactions along his route and through the connections he makes as he visits other affiliates in the Family Promise network.

"There are so many things tearing our country apart right now," Sam said. "I see this trip as a great opportunity to meet people, engage in conversations around what separates us as humans, contemplate what role I might be playing in that, and to report on what I discover."

**Dignity matters**

Kate Sanetra-Butler had an unexpected request from a home-

**LOOKING BACK**

*continued on page 5*

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# 2020 - The Worst Year Ever... Really?

Time magazine declared 2020 the “worst year ever”, drawing a red “X” over the year. If you lost a loved one, had to close your business or a job loss, I understand it was a bad year.

We, like many, were fortunate to only have to balance the stress of the unknown, care for aging parents and school-age kids, ensure continued growth of a business and minimize distractions for work to avoid job loss. Yet, 2020 created several opportunities in areas of financial planning.

**Here are a few positive realizations:**

**Refinancing Boom.** Whether it was your house, car or student loans, a prominent theme was refinancing to lower rates and shorter terms. Even if refinanced in 2019, the drop in 15-year mortgage rates was something to be thankful for.

**You Can Save More.** Notice you weren’t spending as much each month? You weren’t alone, many decided to revisit (or make) a budget, find frivolous expenses and where to cut for good.

**Experience Spending.** “You don’t know what you’ve got, til it’s gone”, wrote Joni Mitchell (and later hair-metal band Cin-

derella). Miss travel, concerts, shows, sporting events and kids activities?

Use this as an opportunity to prioritize your experience spending and thoughtfully plan the vacations, family time and/or seasons for when the time comes.

**Planning For The Unexpected.** A global pandemic makes people see gaps in estate planning, insurance and access to emergency funds. Add job loss or health changes, updating a trust/will, qualifying for term insurance or obtaining a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) can be difficult, thus why critical to execute when times are good.

Still, witnessed estate planning attorneys, insurance agents, local banks and credit unions take proactive measures to help people access, do it safely and gain peace of mind.

**Investing.** Remember March? Stick with your plan? Or waiting for a crash to invest? What did you do?

As of 12/21/20, US stock market (S&P 500 Index) is over +15% and US Aggregate Bond Index about +7% for 2020, a very good year for those who knew their risk tolerance, what they owned and why they owned it.

**Work From Home (WFH).** Something previously available to road warriors and trusted few, WFH was a blessing or curse, pending your child’s school or daycare status. It has led to greater appreciation for our teachers and childcare workers, better technology management and desire for housing with outdoor space as a priority over length of commute.

**What will 2021 bring? Who knows.**

Focus on treating your family and yourself by developing plans and then be willing to make them evolve.

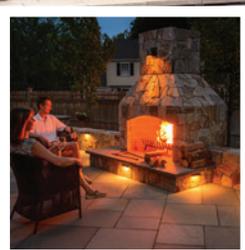
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*Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, [www.PlanDynamic.com](http://www.PlanDynamic.com). Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.*



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# Community Ties and a Commitment to Customer Service: Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe you're planning to move and need to clear out the basement and attic before your open house. Maybe you've spent way too much time at home lately and are feeling the need to declutter.

But figuring out who to call can be a pain. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

Or you can call Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business with deep community roots take care of everything.

Jay Schadler started his business in 2003. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends

when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with ten trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And

## Business spotlight



they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard

dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger, then you can point at the items, and the team will fill

up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.

Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing your costs before you call for an appointment. There aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston as well as Resellables, a thrift store in Bellingham. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

For more information, contact Jay Schadler at (774) 287-1133 or visit Affordable Junk Removal online at [www.takeawayjunk.com](http://www.takeawayjunk.com).



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**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*continued from page 1*

**New: Natick History Timeline**

A new project this past year is the Natick History Timeline. “I’m very proud of our new Natick History Timeline,” Lefebvre said. “It chronicles nearly 100 stories about Natick and our region over 12,000 years. We had the support of two incredible researchers: Rebecca Sgouros, an archaeologist, and Rachel Speyer Besancon, who is now the Marg M. Balcom Archival Fellow at the Natick Historical Society. What’s really cool about the timeline is that it’s also a living document. We encourage everyone who takes a look to tell us about an event or moment in our local history that they think should be represented in the timeline. We’re hoping to learn from our community, too!”

**2021: Underrepresented Voices and Other Projects**

In the coming year Lefebvre has plans to gather and share underrepresented voice. “In 2021 we plan to do more to gather and share underrepresented voices from Natick’s history,” she said. “For most of the 20th century, small historical societies like ours focused on collecting artifacts and documents that told stories about

# Scroll through 10,000 years of Natick history in our new timeline

wealthy and influential white people. Those stories are important, but there is so much more to tell about Natick’s past. We have a lot of ground to make up in earning the trust of and collecting artifacts and stories from indigenous people, people of color, people with less privilege, and other long-overlooked groups.”

Several other projects are in the works for 2021. “We are excited to work with the Shirley Brown Collection, which was recently donated to us and will help tell a story about Civil War veterans and the women who helped care for them and their families in Natick. Although our plans for a physical exhibition were

interrupted and we are working on how best to share those materials virtually, we would also like to see a physical exhibition move forward for some time next fall. Fingers crossed!” “I’m also eager to share with the community some collaborative work we are doing with Historic Newton to tell the story that

ties our town’s histories together in the middle of the seventeenth century. And, finally, we are looking forward to building and continuing to build relationships with communities that have been underrepresented in Natick’s past and present. Certainly, 2021 promises to be a busy and exciting year!”

**LOOKING BACK**

*continued from page 2*

less woman in Boston in 2016: a spare tampon.

According to Liz Henderson, Natick chapter coleader of Dignity Matters, “The unexpected request started Sanetra-Butler uncovering a desperate need among homeless women and girls for sanitary products and underwear. Ultimately, she established Dignity Matters to meet that need.”

Henderson said Sanetra-Butler started small, with local donation drives and running the organization in her basement.

“But it quickly evolved into Dignity Matters, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that collects, purchases and supplies thousands of feminine hygiene products, bras and underwear to disadvantaged women and girls each month.

The organization partners with food pantries, public schools, homeless shelters, domestic vi-



**Dignity matters Natick chapter**

olence centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA’s and medical clinics,” she explained.

Bringing smiles in a pandemic 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 Car-

ter, who has been with the department for 19 years and started out as a volunteer when she was in high 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.

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# Info on 2021 Natick Annual Town Election

The Natick Annual Town Election is March 30, 2021. Nomination papers are available for the Annual Town Election currently.

Natick voters will elect the following officials:

- One member to the Select Board for a 3 year term
- Two members to the School Committee for 3 year terms
- One member to the Planning Board for a 5 year term
- One member to the Board of Assessors for a 3 year term
- One member to the Board of Health for a 3 year term
- One member to the Recreation and Parks Commission for a 3 year term
- One member to the Natick Housing Authority for a 5 year term
- One member to the Morse Institute Library Trustees for a 2 year term



- One Constable for a 1 year term
- 72 Town Meeting Members

Nomination papers for town-wide offices must be returned no later than 5PM on Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2021, with signatures from at least 25 registered voters.

Nomination papers for Town

Meeting members are also available.

Nomination papers for new Town Meeting members are due by Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2021.

Please check the town website at [www.natickma.gov](http://www.natickma.gov) for listings of available offices or call the Town Clerk's office for more information.

The Clerk's office is open by appointment only. For more information, call 508-647-6430 X4 or e-mail [townclerk@natickma.org](mailto:townclerk@natickma.org).

# First Covid Vaccine Administered at MetroWest Medical Center

MetroWest Medical Center administered the COVID-19 vaccine to its first recipients last month.

Clinical employees on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic were the first to receive the vaccine. Nicole Nelson, ICU RN, was the first employee the vaccine was given to. Following her were Dr. Lisa Sotir, ER Physician and Thomas Murphy, Respiratory Therapist. Pharmacist Neil Wallis administered the shots.

According to MWMC Public Relations Manager Rhiana Sherwood, more vaccinations are on the horizon.

"I cannot disclose the number of vaccines, but we are

hopeful that we will be able to immunize all healthcare workers working in areas that are high risk for COVID exposures in the first few weeks of immunizations," she said.




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# Foundation for MetroWest Grants \$150,000 to Arts & Culture Nonprofits

The Foundation for MetroWest, the only community foundation serving the 33 cities and towns of MetroWest, announced it has awarded grants totaling \$150,000 to nine arts and culture nonprofits serving the region. The 2020 Arts and Culture Grant Program thus resulted in the largest sum ever awarded by the Foundation to arts and cultural institutions in a single year. The grants of up to \$25,000 each are intended for general operating support, program support, and capacity building efforts, enabling each nonprofit to pursue opportunities that will help improve the quality of life across MetroWest.

“Throughout this most challenging year, the needs of our community have been unprecedented,” said Judy Salerno, Executive Director of the Foundation for MetroWest. “While hunger relief efforts and other urgent needs have required intense focus and support, we must also recognize the critical role that arts and culture organizations play in



our communities. They help define our collective character and distinguish MetroWest as a desirable place to live. These grants will help these groups continue to enrich our region for years to come.”

The nine organizations receiving grants will use the funding to add staff members, grow programming capabilities, recoup operating costs impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, fund new art installations and expand ex-

isting exhibits. Several organizations also plan to use the financial support to begin or expand diversity-centric initiatives, including exhibitions aimed at celebrating diversity, incorporating the stories of enslaved individuals, and a speaker series that will tackle race and identity issues.

Following this latest round of grant making, the Foundation has now distributed a total of \$4.75 million to MetroWest organizations in 2020. All funds awarded

through its grant-making programs help to create strong, vibrant communities, now and in the future.

“Every year, we see new ideas, projects and programs proposed by arts and culture nonprofits that we know will improve and inspire our communities,” said Susan Kavoojian, Foundation Trustee and Chair of the Distribution Committee. “While we’re excited by how these organizations plan to use their grants, we also know there is still a great need for additional support. Despite this tumultuous year, we hope this funding helps remind our communities just how important arts and cultural institutions are to MetroWest.”

The Foundation’s Distribution Committee reviewed and carefully considered 45 applications totaling more than \$780,000 in need from arts and culture organizations serving MetroWest over the past several months. You can learn more about each Arts and Culture Grant here.

## 2020 Arts and Culture Grant Program Recipients:

The Center for Arts in Natick \$15,000

*About Foundation for MetroWest*  
Established in 1995, the Foundation for MetroWest is the only community foundation serving the cities and towns in the region, encompassing 700,000 residents from Westborough to Waltham and Acton to Walpole. 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 is supported by a wide range of businesses, individuals, community groups and other philanthropic organizations. 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, visit <http://www.foundationmwx.org/> or call 508-647-2260.

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# Brack Career Center Director: Now Is the Time to Ramp Up a Job Search

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Unemployment is one of the most critical economic issues facing the country today as it balances re-opening with safety months into the pandemic, according to [thebalance.com](http://thebalance.com). In April, after governments shut down the economy, the unemployment rate reached 14.7 percent, the highest since the Great Depression. Since then, it's gradually improved as businesses have attempted to reopen safely.

Natick Local Town Pages recently interviewed Rachel Vingsness, director of career development for the Joan H. Brack Career Development Center, to find out what resources are available for residents who need employment support. The Brack Center, run out of the Natick Service Council, helps Natick residents, free of charge, in any stage of their job search.

## Whitty: Can you describe your job and what you do as director?

As the Director of Career Development for the Joan H. Brack Career Development Center, I meet with clients one on one to support them with their job search and achieving their career goals. I discuss and help define what clients are trying to accomplish and craft an individualized plan to help get them there. During periodic follow up conversations, we work through strat-



**Brack Center Director Rachel Vingsness helps residents with all aspects of their job search.**  
(Photo/supplied)

egies and tips for different phases of their job search and how to overcome any barriers they may encounter. Additionally, I oversee the strategy and execution for the center, which includes crafting a long-term plan, measuring success, and managing volunteers.

I started with the Brack Center in October 2020, and previously spent over 15 years in human resources, recruiting, and career development. I truly believe that everyone deserves and can find fulfillment and satisfaction in their work life, and I am passionate about helping people do that.

## Whitty: What kind of demand are you seeing for your services?

Currently, the job market is in a challenging place and competition amongst applicants is real.



Often candidates are applying to hundreds of jobs with little response. The ongoing pandemic has not only impacted the volume of job opportunities but has also added another layer of complexity to the job search for people who have underlying health issues or are in close contact with someone who is. Additionally, guardians of school-age children are grasping with balancing work and childcare, which sometimes put limitations on the type of work and job opportunities they might be able to perform.

Job seekers are turning to the Brack Center for help in all stages of their search: resume and cover letter preparation, interviewing support, networking strategies, offer negotiations, and more.

Prior to March 2020 the Brack Center, located on the third floor of the Natick Service Council building, had an open door policy inviting clients to drop in to use its computers and printers or have a quiet space to concentrate on their job search, includ-

ing taking phone interviews. We had a representative available for face-to-face career coaching, answering general questions, and helping with online applications. Currently, all engagement is over the phone or video. I'm looking forward to when we can safely open the center and return to a buzz of activity.

All that said, there are still many employers hiring, and some industries are doing well, if not great. Now is the time to ramp up a job search when companies are often reopening their budgets for the new calendar year.

## Whitty: What kinds of programs do you have to meet the needs of residents?

From a strictly career services perspective, our Brack Center clients primarily participate in one-on-one career coaching. They engage in a process that starts with self-reflection and assessment and takes them through every step of their job search, up to accepting an offer. However, if a particular client only needs help in a specific area, such as mock interviewing, then I tailor the program to meet their individual needs. Additionally, through partnerships with other organizations, Brack Center clients are kept abreast of other related external opportunities, such as career training workshops and job openings.

## Whitty: Who are the people who use your services?

The Brack Center is available free of charge to all Natick residents. We work with a large variety of clients, including people who are interested in making a career change, the unemployed, those looking for their first job out of school, and those who are reentering the workforce. Clients come from diverse backgrounds and are all ages, professional level, and across multiple industries and roles.

## Whitty: What are your plans for 2021?

Aside from helping as many people as I can make progress toward their career goals and find professional satisfaction, I am eager to launch additional career service programs, such as training workshops, small networking groups, and mentoring.

As I mentioned, all coaching is happening over the phone or video so I'm looking forward to having clients back in the Brack Center, using our computer lab and meeting space, and meeting with them face to face.

## Whitty: How is the center funded?

The Natick Service Council and the Brack Center are not publicly funded or part of the town of Natick budget. When the Brack Center started in 2011, Bob Brack, in honor of his late wife Joan, was the primary funder, and he continues to be an incredible supporter and advocate. Additionally, we have many generous individual donors and grants to ensure we can continue to meet the career development needs of our neighbors in Natick.

For more information, contact Vingsness by calling 508-655-1791 or visiting [natickservice-council.org/brack-career-center](http://natickservice-council.org/brack-career-center).



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# A Window into Creativity

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

The window display has assumed new prominence and importance as a means of expression. With passersby more reluctant to venture and gather indoors during the uptick in Covid-19 cases, looking on and in from a distance outdoors has morphed into a convenient mode of exhibition and advertising.

To that end, enterprising and imaginative students at Natick High School have come up with a way to bypass limitations imposed by the pandemic, a solution that will export the creativity from within the school's walls and out into the community beyond.

The "Redhawk Walk" is an inventive variation of the town's well-established Artwalk exhibition, but with a notable twist. Instead of artists' work being set on display along sidewalks, downtown businesses will instead offer space within the shops themselves, stages-in-miniature behind the glass to host students' creativity.

Several downtown stores have expressed interest in hosting the students' displays, and the weeklong event is planned to run beginning January 23rd. The exhibitions will in some measure follow the flow of its Artwalk cousin, being centered at shops along the Main Street and Rte. 135 intersection.

The Redhawk Walk also follows Natick's annual holiday window display contest, an event in which local businesses deck their windowsills with scenes of yuletide sentiment. QR codes were affixed to the windows, allowing passersby to quickly link to a site



where they could cast a vote for their favored display.

Anna Victor is a Natick High School senior, part of a crew of stage managers who came up with and spearheaded the project. NHS seniors Allie Conwell and Daniel Zogby are Victor's partners, helping usher the event into being.

They are members of the drama department that literally works behind the scenes to put on productions at the school. It seems a natural evolution then, that the three would alight upon the idea to stage artwork out in

the public in such a clever way.

"It's kind of a warm community event," said Victor. "Something that theater could do to get engaged in the community."

Yet the theater crew reached out far from behind the curtain to a wide variety of Natick High School clubs and groups, offering them a venue to participate in the event also. In what promises to be a cold winter in terms of social connection during the pandemic, the event is viewed as way to foster community, a means of artistic expression when such venues are in



short supply.

The theater crew's contribution will be dioramas of a musical they produced last month. The miniature replicas of rooms and offices served as transitions between scenes in the show, which audiences could sign up for and view remotely through a streaming service.

The dioramas were projects that the theater crew could work on at home, downsized versions of the sets they would build on stage in years past. They are just one example of the resourceful ways in which schools, art and expression have shifted shape (and size) to accommodate extraordinary circumstances.

The shop windows will feature forms of expression such

as paintings, drawings and other such "static" forms of art. But all clubs were invited to participate in the project, including dance, choir and various culture groups.

QR codes will again be put to use on the storefront windows, and will lead interested parties to sites where they can view past performances and concerts by certain creative clubs. Via technology, these artists will still be able to showcase their talents, the fruits of those many hours of practice and rehearsal.

"A bunch of students reached out," said Victor. "It's a pretty diverse group of clubs. We are learning and excited to see what people will come up with."

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# SPARK Kindness Programming and Thank You

SPARK Kindness is so grateful to the thousands of community members that attended our free online programs last year. Though we are physically distant, we have stayed connected and offered support, comfort and kindness to one another during this challenging time. We hope to see you back at our programs in 2021! Because of community support, these programs remain free and open to all! Go to [SPARKKindness.org/programs](http://SPARKKindness.org/programs) to register for a program and to [SPARKKindness.org/volunteer](http://SPARKKindness.org/volunteer) to get involved! And remember always, be kind to yourself!



**Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration**

Monday, 1/18/21 -- 10-11am  
Virtual - Live + Pre-recorded Programming

Everyone is Welcome to join us for this special virtual event, featuring students and community partners! Check community partner websites for more information and event links, coming soon!

Special Thanks to Our Event Sponsors!




We hope you will join us for our Spring 2021 Resilient Community Program Series! visit [SPARKKindness.org](http://SPARKKindness.org) to learn more

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## FOR THE LOVE OF NATICK CREATIVE PLACEMAKING CALL FOR CREATIVES - 2020

Natick Center Cultural District and the Public Art Committee seek proposals for Traffic Calming Public Art (TCPA) projects at the intersection of Rt. 27 and Rt. 135 for \$500 - \$1,200 stipends.

Apply by January 15, 2021. Find more details at [www.natickcenter.org](http://www.natickcenter.org)

		
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Site dimensions</b>
The artwork should be bold, bright and respectful	Acrylic spray paint and markers, mural paint	A - 16' x 72' = \$ 1,200 B - 7' x 20' = \$ 500 C - 7' x 35' = \$ 500 D - 10' x 30' = \$ 600 E - 24' x 7' = \$ 500 F - 10' x 30' = \$ 500



## For the Love of Natick

Natick Center Cultural District and the Public Art Committee seek proposals for Traffic Calming Public Art (TCPA) projects at the intersection of Rt. 27 and Rt. 135 for \$500 - \$1,200 stipends. Application deadline - Jan. 15.



Projects may include street paintings and murals that are bold and bright in design while still being respectful of the place.

All projects must abide by the Town of Natick's traffic rules and regulations found online.

Project proposals must include the project description, budget outline, and goal statement. Artists are welcome to submit artwork for up to three designs for the TCPA project. Please draw to scale for your chosen TCPA's. Measurements of areas are found below and on accompanying map. Proposals should be based on the dimensions of the TCPA area.

Each of the six areas will be provided a stipend for supplies and time. You may apply to more than one location but to no more than 3 in one submission.

- Area Dimensions:
- A - 16' x 72' = \$ 1,200
  - B - 7' x 20' = \$ 500
  - C - 7' x 35' = \$ 500
  - D - 10' x 30' = \$ 600
  - E - 24' x 7' = \$ 500
  - F - 10' x 30' = \$ 500

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# It's Never Been More Important or Easier to Create or Update Your Estate Plan

Estate Planning is more important now than ever before, and luckily it's never been easier to implement an estate plan.

Do you know who would make healthcare or financial decisions for you if you lost capacity? Who would care for your children? These are some of the important decisions an estate planning attorney can help you navigate. And for the first time in Massachusetts, you can complete your estate plan with an attorney virtually, from home.

Under emergency orders issued this spring, law firms in Massachusetts have the ability to witness and notarize estate planning documents virtually, so you can stay warm, safe and healthy and gain the peace of mind that comes with providing guidance, direction and securing your legacy for your family.

After you've reached the age of 18, no one automatically has the authority to make health or financial decisions for you, not even a spouse. It is essential that you have the legal documents in

place naming a person or people who can make decisions on your behalf. These disability planning documents, the Durable Power of Attorney, the Health Care Proxy/Living Will, the HIPAA Authorization form an essential part of your estate plan.

Almost half of Americans 55+ don't have a will, and data shows that these Americans are at the greatest risk for serious complications and death from COVID-19. Younger Americans are less likely to have a will,

but because the pandemic has impacted people of all ages, its essentials for everyone to create or update their estate plan, no matter your age. Estate planning is essential whether or not there is a pandemic, but they are critical to have now.

Having a will and or trust in place allows you to control who manages your assets and cares for your loved ones if you lose capacity or pass away. You're able to designate guardianship for minor children and provide guidance for their care.

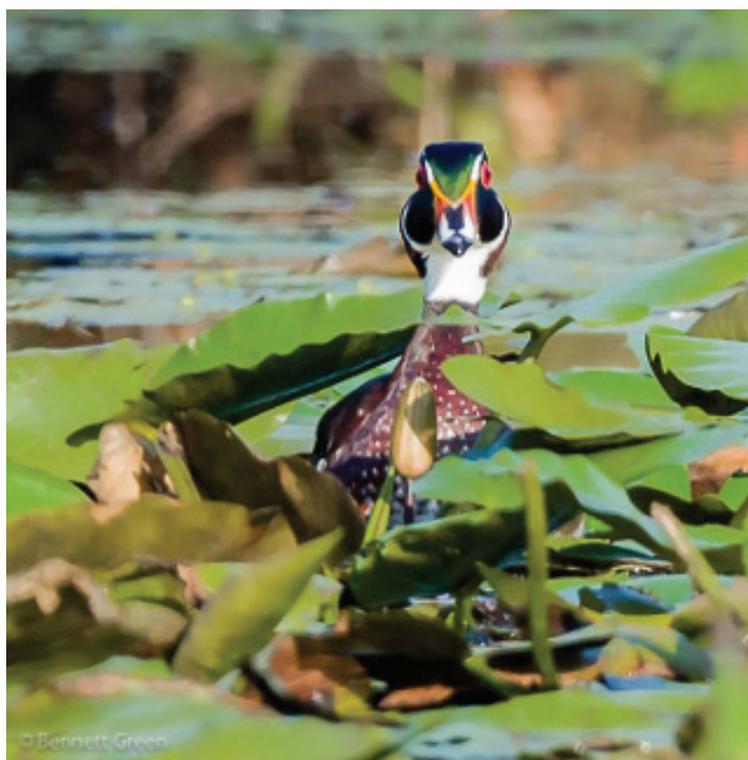
If you have an estate plan in place, it's essential that you review it and update it to reflect your current wishes and the current law. 86% of estate plans don't work when you need them

to. Common reasons are that the plans are outdated, failing to keep up with the law, or failing to have the right people in positions of authority. If your will or trust is 15 years old, just think about all the things that have changed in your life in the last 15 years! Add to that changes in the law and you're in need of an update for sure.

Our office is offering virtual webinars to learn more about estate planning and how it can help you meet your goals and objectives, protect your legacy and help your family. We also offer virtual (and limited in-person) consultations to understand more about your goals and objectives and implement or update your estate plan.



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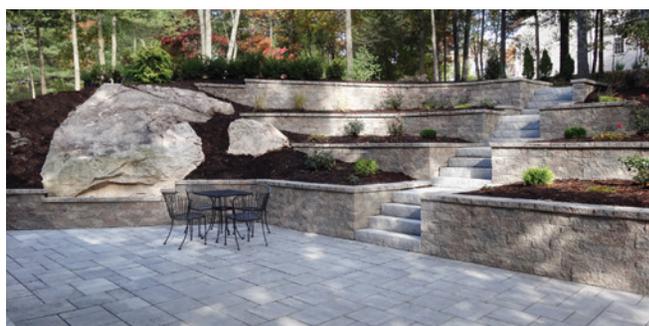
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# Senior Center News

January

## In-Person Exercise Classes at Natick Community Senior Center starting in January 2021!

Muscle Building Class: session 1- 1/9-2/11 and session 2-2/23-3/18, \$24 per session

Chair Yoga with Mala: 1/15-2/19, \$18 for 6 weeks

Walking in the Gym Begins 1/11: Monday 9:00, 10:00 and 11:00 am; Wednesday 1:00, 2:00, and 3:00 pm

& Fridays 12 noon and 1:00 pm. Pre-register for a 45-minute session.

## Mondays at a Museum-zoom program

Join us on Monday, 11am-noon, as we preview video highlights from a range of Museums

Jan 4- The National Gallery in London with a curator talk on

Van Gogh's Sunflowers painting and then zoom to the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia with a look at two Cezanne paintings in their collection.

Jan 11- William Merritt Chase-Master of Pastel, MFA, Boston

Jan 18- NO Monday at a Museum- MLK Day

Jan 25- Harvard Art Museum and paintings of Norman Rockwell

## Mindfulness Meditation-Zoom program

Every Thursday with Sharon 1:00-1:40 pm. This meditation is audio only and participants are muted during the meditation portion. Everyone is welcome to join for some guided meditation, some quiet sitting and some reflection with Q & A and sharing.

## Art Matters- Monet & Renoir- A Zoom program

Wednesday, January 6, 1:30-2:30 pm, free

They were fast friends at the very heart of the most radical revolution in art since the Renaissance. Join us for a tour through the life and works of Claude Monet and Auguste Renoir, two of the most beloved of the Impressionist



artists. Made possible by a grant from the Natick Cultural Council.

## Watercolor Techniques with Cecilia Sharma - Zoom program

Thursdays, 10:00 am-12:30 pm for Jan 7, 14, 21, 28; \$75.00

Register online through Community Pass, call 508-647-6540 for assistance if needed.

Learn to paint in watercolors with an emphasis on techniques and design. This step-by-step instruction will introduce you to the spontaneity of the medium as you create glazes, highlights, textures, and the final artwork. Cecilia will provide a reference photo, in advance, that the class works from and each class you will have a completed artwork. During the class, there will be demonstration of techniques by Cecilia and individual help. Supply list will be sent in advance. All levels welcome! Min: 8/Max: 14. Below are sample works from

other classes Cecilia has taught in the area.

## The Golden Age of Hollywood Fashion- A Zoom Program

Tuesday, Jan 12, 1:30pm, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Fashion on the silver screen was not only glamorous and influential, but also was enjoyed as an "escape" from the problems of each decade. In the depression era, folks could attend the movies as a way to forget their current circumstances, while the films served as both escapism and news reporting during the long years of World War II. The 1950s movies continued to show elegant fashions but the advent of television

## Elder Law Updates with Tim Loff- zoom program

Monday, January 11, 1:30-2:30 pm, free call 508-647-6540 to register.

Join Elder Law Attorney Timothy Loff in this overview of updates and changes for 2020 on many legal issues important to seniors, including updates that may apply to Estate and Healthcare Planning, Estate Administration, Medicaid rules for both nursing home and community care, Medicare, Social Security, Long-Term Care Insurance, Special Needs Planning; and Reverse Mortgages, and more. General questions are welcome. Bring yourself up to date for the New Year!

## SENIOR CENTER NEWS

continued on page 14

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# What Is a Revocable Living Trust?

A Revocable Living Trust is a legal document that allows the grantor (the person who creates the trust) to take personal assets and transfer them to the ownership of the trust during his or her lifetime. While the trust technically owns the assets, the grantor can continue to use them as he or she normally would.

Generally, it is a good idea to place as many assets as possible into the trust to maximize its benefits. However, certain assets, such as life insurance and Individual Retirement Accounts, are not owned by the Revocable Living Trust during the grantor's lifetime (although the Revocable Living Trust may be a beneficiary of such an asset).

When a Revocable Living Trust is established, the grantor is normally the beneficiary during his or her lifetime. The grantor names a trustee to manage the assets in the trust. Most grantors name themselves as trustee, giving them complete control over the trust's assets. A successor trustee should also be named to take over management of the trust after the grantor passes away or if the grantor is incapacitated. The grantor can specify when heirs will receive their inheritances from the trust. This can prevent an heir from squandering an inheritance if he or she is not ready to manage money on his or her own.

## What Is Trust Funding And Why Is It Essential?

What do we mean by the term "funding" a Revocable Living



Trust? Essentially, it involves retitling your assets into the name of the trust, as well as making sure that the beneficiaries of any life insurance policies or retirement accounts coincide with the provisions of the trust. If you fail to fund your Revocable Living Trust, your estate plan won't work as you intended.

The consequences of not properly funding your trust include:

- Assets held outside the trust could be subject to probate,

defeating one of the main benefits of creating the trust in the first place

- Assets held outside the trust may not go to your intended beneficiaries

The bottom line is this: Make sure your Revocable Living Trust is properly funded. And, be sure to keep it up to date so that any changes in your personal and financial situation, together with those of your loved ones, can be taken into account. In this way you can be sure your Revocable

## Business spotlight

Living Trust is helping you to accomplish all of your goals and maintain complete control over your affairs.

### Is a Revocable Living Trust Right for Me?

Not everyone needs a Revocable Living Trust. It can, however, be an important part of your estate plan. Why might a Revocable Living Trust be right for you? On the most basic level, it allows you to keep complete control of your affairs and make sure you are taken care of if you are ever incapacitated. Upon your passing, a Revocable Living Trust can help make sure that your assets will go to the people you want, when you want, and in the manner you want.

Depending on your particular needs and goals, a Revocable Living Trust can help:

- Avoid probate if your assets are appropriately aligned with the trust
- Pass your values, work ethic, and sense of responsibility on to heirs
- Reduce estate taxes
- Keep your financial affairs and family information private
- Protect the inheritances of your heirs and make sure your heirs are taken care of in the way you want
- Leave an enduring legacy

In our crazy, scary world...especially right now, if you haven't looked into a Revocable Living Trust, please consider doing so. If you have a Revocable Living Trust, has it been updated? If you are all set, do you have a family member who should be getting documents in place? Help spread the word – Getting an estate plan done (whether it is a Revocable Living Trust or only a Will) does not need to be painful or scary. It's something we all need to do, and something we need to keep updated.

# 2021 Dog Licenses are Now Available

All dogs 6 months of age or older must be licensed with the Town Clerk's Office (MGL Chapter 137). Licenses must be renewed annually by March 1, failure to do so will result in a \$50 late fee. Failure to license a dog shall be punishable by a fine of \$100 (Town of Natick By-Laws, Article #50, Sec. 16-7).

2021 Information Please note that due to COVID-19, Town Hall is not open to the public. The Town Clerk's office will be processing 2021 dog licenses.

Dog license applications were mailed to all current dog owners.

### You can register your dog by:

- Going on line at the following link: <https://www.doglicenses.us/MA/Natick/>
- Mailing in the application, current rabies information, payment and a self-addressed stamped envelope
- You may also drop off the application and current rabies information, payment and a self-addressed stamped envelope in the payment drop box to the

right of the front door of Town Hall. The license will be processed and a 2021 dog tag will be mailed to you.

### Dog License Fee Exemption

The license fee is waived for residents over age 70 and for service dogs. Those licenses may not be renewed using the on-line option. To have the fee waived (over age 70) you must provide proof of age. If you are unable to come into the office you may send a copy of your license or call the office and talk to a member of the staff (508) 647-6430

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## SENIOR CENTER NEWS

*continued from page 12*

caused fashion influence to be split between the silver screen and the smaller TV in America's homes. Join us as we travel through these fascinating decades and enjoy a glimpse into the glamour of that golden age. Our presenter is Karen (Ren) Antonowicz, who has a Master's Degree in Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design, with a concentration in Historic Costume & Textiles from the University of RI.

### Home Fit AARP – zoom program

Wednesday, January 13, 1:30-2:30pm, Click on this link to join <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89258494264?pwd=SVZiOFR4djhJEUURCM-lhnSTVMOGxlZz09>

Join AARP volunteer Beth Gray-Nix for this wonderfully thoughtful overview of all the aspects on creating a 'senior-friendly' home, from easier to use door knobs to bathroom fixtures, lighting, décor and more!

### Mystery/Fiction Book Group with Karen Mallozzi- zoom program

Friday, January 22, 1:00-2:00 pm, free. RSVP call 508-647-6540. Click on this link to join <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88980141528?pwd=ZTluajZJMDhNUUZVK244Qlhza-3dYUT09>

We'll talk about Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng. "To say I love this book is an understatement. It's a deep psychological mystery about the power of motherhood, the intensity of teenage love, and the danger of perfection. It moved me to tears." —Reese Witherspoon

### Fraud Watch- zoom program

Monday, January 25, 1:30-2:30, free

Join Dennis Hohengasser, speaker from AARP and learn how to protect yourself against scams, fraud, and identity theft. Con artists don't care how hard you have worked. They steal billions from Americans each year. AARP Massachusetts is fighting back with the AARP Fraud Watch Network, an education effort to help people protect themselves from scams and fraud. We discuss how to spot and avoid identity theft and fraud and we'll log into the AARP Fraud Watch website and explore some of the resources so you can protect yourself and your family. We will cover:

- What fraud and scams are out there including recent COVID 19 and Medicare scams
- Behaviors that put you at risk
- Why are these con artists so good at taking your money
- Prevention and Resources

### Life Aboard a Whaling Ship- Zoom program

Tuesday, January 26, 1:30-2:30, free

Feel the sea spray and hear the sailors' sea chanteys as you follow the sailing adventures of 19th century whaling wife Mary Chipman Lawrence, based upon her journals! Presented by performer and historian, Anne Barrett.

### Downsizing- A Zoom program

Wednesday, Jan 27, 11am-noon, free, call Natick Community Senior Center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Realtor Daryl Lipman as she brings her years of expertise on how to navigate the 3 keys to downsizing. This program is geared to Seniors and adult children of Seniors looking to explore their options for a move.

### UCLA Memory Training Class- zoom program

Wednesdays, January 27-February 24, 3:00-5:00 pm \$10 fee for all 5 classes.

Session 1 will be an introduc-

tion to the course and a review of how to use Zoom in a classroom environment. Sessions 2-5 will focus on the innovative class curriculum, developed by UCLA, which is designed to help improve your memory so you can: remember names and faces; recall appointments, messages and plans; avoid misplacing objects; & overcome "tip of the tongue" slips, by teaching you everyday memory techniques you practice in the comfort of your home. A pre-registration questionnaire by phone is required; please call our front desk at 508-647-6540 and ask to speak with Karen or Lorraine. Fee covers cost of materials.

## February

### Mondays at a Museum- zoom program

Join us on Monday, 11am-noon, as we preview video highlights from a range of Museums

Feb 1- A tour of Massachusetts authors homes -Alcott House, Emily Dickinson House, John Greenleaf Whittier House

Feb 8- President's Day special- Monument Man: The Life and Art of Daniel Chester French – sculptor of the Lincoln Memorial and Minuteman Statue

Feb 15- NO Mondays at a Museum, President's Day

Feb 22- Canaletto, Tiepolo and Monet

### GREAT COURSES: THE GREAT TOURS: AFRICAN SAFARI

Tuesdays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm January 19-April 6

### Mindfulness Meditation- Zoom program

Every Thursday with Sharon 1:00-1:40 pm. This meditation is audio only and participants are muted during the meditation portion. Everyone is welcome to join for some guided meditation, some quiet sitting and some reflection with Q & A and sharing.

### Art Matters- Art Keeps Us Human- zoom program

Wednesday, February 3, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Art teaches. Art communicates. Art has humor, adventure and passion. Art matters! People are the only living creatures who make art. It is a uniquely human activity, and the sole reason we have an advanced civilization. We use visual images to communicate with one another

as a species. Art transcends language, different cultures, time and distance. It keeps us connected to one another. It keeps us human.

Join us for a mini-history of western civilization through art, from the caves to the shuttle, to see and understand how art and civilization depend upon each other. Be sure to bring your sense of humor and your sense of Human.

Made possible by a grant from the Natick Cultural Council.

### Powerful Tools for Caregivers- zoom program

Tuesdays, February 9 – March 16, 2:00-3:30, free

This class helps caregivers learn to take better care of themselves while caring for a friend or relative. This six-week class series will give you the tools to: reduce caregiver stress, improve self confidence in caregiving, manage your time, set goals and problem solve; better communicate your feelings; make tough caregiving decisions; and locate helpful resources. If you are planning to attend the program or would like to learn more about it, please plan to attend a pre-program Zoom information session on Tuesday, January 19, 2:00pm.

For questions or to register, please call Debbie or Karen at 508-647-6540. Pre-registration is required as space is limited.

This program is offered free of charge and is made possible in part by funding from the Older Americans Act as granted by BayPath Elder Services, Inc.

### Pranayama- The Art of Yogic Breathing- zoom program

Wednesday, February 10, 11:00am-12:00pm, free

Experience pranayama, the art and science of yogic breathing. Pranayama's health benefits include reduced anxiety, lower/stabilized blood pressure, increased energy, muscle relaxation, improved concentration, and more. Join Anjana Bhargava, an Ayurvedic Wellness Counselor has bachelor's degree in Science and Mathematics and master's degree in Electronics from India. Note: this is best done on an empty stomach, hence the scheduling of this program.

### Starting Your Genealogy with Seema- Zoom programs

Thursday, 10:30am-11:30am,

free on February 11, 18, 25. RSVP call 508-647-6540 to register.

First Class will be Basic Genealogical Forms, where to research, tracking your research, and continuing your education.

Focusing Your Research is second. You don't have to be a professional to work like one. Discover how organization, questions, and knowledge of records can help you become a better genealogist.

Third class is- Following the Trail of Shared Matches- DNA test results can be overwhelming. This case study shows how I used the shared matches in my DNA test results to narrow in on my maternal grandfather & fill in many holes in my family tree.

Made possible by a grant from the Natick Cultural Council.

### Financial Basics for 50+ presented by AARP- zoom program

Monday, February 22, 1:30-2:30pm, free

It's never too late to take charge of your financial future! In this hour-long session you will learn how to build upon your smart money habits and make the most of your financial resources. We'll discuss budgeting and setting goals, managing credit and debt, building your savings and protecting your assets from fraud. Hosted by Michael Fallica, a retired engineer and AARP member, a graduate of Boston University's Financial Planning Program and a member of the Financial Planning Association.

### FACT Tracker presented by AARP- zoom program

Wednesday, February 24, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Do you believe everything you see online? The obvious answer is no, but there are plenty of sensationalized headlines, misleading stories and even complete falsehoods circulating on the Internet, making it hard for even the most discerning reader to sort fact from fiction.

Disinformation online is a key tool for scammers. Luckily AARP has a new online resource to arm you with the skills to decipher what's real and what isn't on the web. Hosted by Ruth Livitsky, AARP speaker.

For more information go to [aarp.org/facttracker](http://aarp.org/facttracker).



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**Rents & Income Limits:**

Type	# of Apts.	Gross Rent	Income Limit
1BR	24	\$1,440	60%
1BR	24	\$1,200	50%
1BR	1	**	50%
1BR	15	**	30%

\*\*Rent determined by PHA based on income of applicant.

#HH	30% AMI	50% AMI	60% AMI
1	\$26,850	\$44,800	\$53,760
2	\$30,700	\$51,200	\$61,440

  \*Income limits apply. Preference for current residents and current employees of the Town of Ashland. Rents, Income limits & utility allowances based on HUD guidelines. Information contained herein subject to change without notice. For more info, language assistance, or reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please call or email.

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# Library News

Due to rising cases of COVID-19 within our Community and the surrounding areas, the Library and Board of Health have decided to scale back service and close for in-person browsing. We are very excited to announce a new point of service that will allow you to get your holds without an appointment, with our brand new, Walk-up Window!

## Walk-Up Window for Holds Pickup

What is the Walk-up Window? The Walk-up Window allows you to pick up your holds with no appointment necessary! Come to the library and line up outside along the ramp, where you will be protected from the elements with our exciting new Holiday Window Display. This exciting initiative will give you the flexibility to pick up your items on your time, with expanded hours during the week and on weekends.

If you have holds to pickup, please use the Walk-up Window! This window is located in our interior entryway.

- One person may enter at a time
- Please enter at the bottom of the ramp, and wait on the marked spots to keep physically distant

- An exterior light indicator will go from red to green when it is your turn to enter the Walk-up Window.
- Scan your library card once inside, and we will grab your items for you!
- Don't have anything on hold? Give us a call at 508-647-6520 and we will assist you! Or head to "my account" and browse our catalog!

## Walk-Up Window Hours

Monday – Thursday : 9am-8pm  
Friday & Saturday : 9am-4:30pm  
Sunday : 1pm-4:30pm

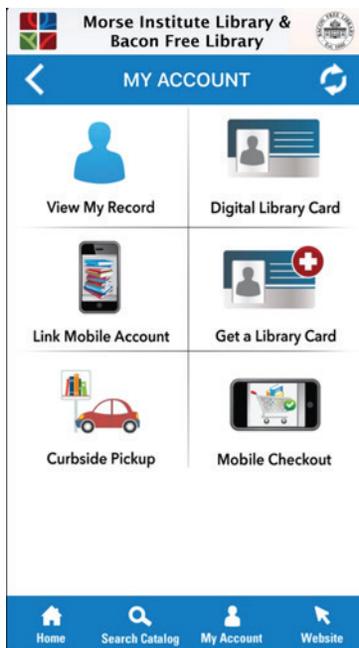
## Can I still do Contactless Holds Pickup?

Yes! We encourage everyone who cannot stand outside or may not want to wait because of children or pets in their car to still book an appointment online or via the Minuteman Library App.

## Contactless Pickup

We will still have contactless pickup appointments available for your convenience and safety.

- Pickup appointments are available from 9am-10am daily from Monday through Friday, and 9am-10am on Saturday. We also have appointments from 7pm-8pm Monday



through Thursday.

- You may only book a pickup appointment AFTER receiving a request pickup notice from the Library that your items are ready.
- If you miss your appointment, please call us to schedule another. Because we only have so many slots per appointment, we are unable to reschedule pickup for the same day.
- Puzzles and items from the "Library of Things" are not available during contactless pickup.

## 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 using our online pickup calendar OR give us a call at 508-647-6520
- Step 4: Come to the Contactless Pickup area outside 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.

## Can I Browse Books?

Not at this time. However, staff are hard at work making solutions to give you browse-ability while we are closed. If you would like a recommendation give us a call 508-647-6520 or join Morse Book Match!

## Delivery Service

Delivery Service is available for our patrons who cannot safely come to the library, to see if you qualify for delivery click here.

## What Stays Virtual

- All programming and events will continue to be hosted online.
- Reference assistance by email, chat, text message, appointment, or phone through our Digital Branch
- Virtual Reference hours: Monday-Friday 9am-6pm, Saturday 10am-2pm
- Access to all the great digital content like e-Books, e-Audiobooks, movies, magazines, and music from MorseInstitute.org website and our Virtual Reading Room
- Remote access to research resources like databases

## Holiday hours

1/1: closed  
1/2: closed

## Express bundles

The new Express Bundles for adults, DVD, teens, and children have launched! Also, we have a new Book-Fix program, that is similar to Stitch-Fix (book bundles curated to fit your taste).

You can use the Walk up window to pick up an Express Bundle on demand.

## LIBRARY NEWS

continued on page 18



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# Sports

## Natick Boys Quintet Aiming For Another Successful Season

By KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Mike Masto's first year as the Natick High boys basketball coach turned out to be a marvelous trifecta.

The Redhawks finished the regular season at 16-4, tied for the Carey Division crown in the Bay State Conference with Newton North and Brookline, and qualified for the Division 1 South Sectional Tournament where it was eliminated by Franklin.

"The 2019-20 team was special," said Masto, who previously was head coach at Walpole High. "The kids were talented and they were eager to learn. Co-captain Alex Cohen was a tremendous leader at point guard. He relied on great instincts and a high hoop IQ."

Cohen has graduated along with three other seniors but Masto has nine returnees who should enable the Redhawks to continue as a formidable force in the Carey Division.

"We've got experience and we should have more depth than last year," Masto noted. "Our other strengths are players who are athletic, coachable and have height."

The captains are all seniors and they include Jake Dunlap (6-foot, guard/forward), Nick Ofodile (6-3 wing), and Joe Connolly (6-5 forward). Dunlap was a BSC honorable-mention all-star last year; Connolly averaged 12 points and 10 rebounds a game; and Ofodile managed eight points per contest.

"Jake is the hardest-working player I have coached or ever seen," Masto said. "He's extremely coachable, physically and mentally tough, and a very capable all-around player. Nick is a superior athlete who's a terrific on-ball defender. He's outstanding attacking and driving to the rim. Joe is very versatile, able to play forward or center. He's a great rebounder, has a soft shooting touch and can also play on the perimeter. All three are developing solid leadership qualities."

Four other seniors bring a variety of assets to the table. They include Eliot Woessner (6-5 center), Sam Gordon (6-2 guard), Tom O'Keefe (5-9 guard), and Anton Bownes-Ciccarelli (6-3 wing).

"Eliot is an amazing person and a hard-worker," Masto said. "Sam is a capable scorer who relies on a slashing style. Tom is a capable shooter who's disciplined, always following the game plan. Anton is a talented scorer with a high basketball IQ. Able to get to the rim effectively, he returns after missing some games last year because of an ankle injury."

Junior Colby LeBlanc (6-4 forward) and sophomore Ryan Mela (6-6 guard) are very capable underclassmen. Mela, a BSC all-star as a freshman, averaged 16 points, 8 rebounds and 3 steals a game.

"Ryan can play the point or the wing," Masto said. "His instincts and court vision are excellent and he's a smart play-maker who's smooth with the ball. Colby is versatile, athletic and hard-working."

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, some sports have been modified to prevent the spread of covid-19. Masto fully understands that the 2021 season will be like no other. He knows that masks must be worn on the court and that social distancing will be required on the bench. Other changes include no locker-room presence, limits on crowd size, no handshakes after games, hand sanitizing, and no jump ball. Also, only four players are allowed in the lane for free throws, and all in-bound plays must be on the sideline. As for post-season tournaments, there will be no Sectional or State playoff games.

"I was glad to see that the modifications don't drastically affect our sport," Masto said. "There are bigger problems than us not having Sectional or State games. We're fortunate to be able to do what the town of Natick will allow. This is the most adverse situation we've all faced



Natick's captains this season are, from left, Jake Dunlap, Nick Ofodile, and Joe Connolly. Photos Courtesy of Andrew Dummer



Natick's 2019-2020 team was a close-knit unit that tied for the Carey Division title.

and it'll be exciting to see how we come through it. The top priority, however, is the health and safety of everyone."

The 32-year-old Masto, who lives in Franklin with his wife Lauren and seven-month old daughter (Brooke), has a disciplined competitive philosophy that focuses on the attributes he admires in prospective players. His approach and his desire are to instill top-quality values in his players.

"Three core values I stress are that every situation in life is a learning opportunity," he emphasized. "Also, that it's imperative to control what's controllable and that hard work is the price of admission. Attributes I prefer in players are a strong work ethic, resilience, passion and good decision-making. Resilience means reacting to adversity in a positive fashion. I

want our team to be successful on and off the court and success occurs when strong relationships are built, when potential is reached and when players enjoy their athletic experience."

A reduced schedule will limit Natick's competition to Carey Division teams and Masto believes his Redhawks will be in a pennant race with Newton North and Brookline. "They're both traditionally strong and well-coached," he noted. "We've got the talent and the attributes to be in the mix and I hope we have some format for a post-season."

Assisting Masto will be Alex Giangregorio, who was on his staff at Walpole, and Ben Westerman. A Natick teacher, Ben Maki, will direct the jayvees and Rod Spinazola will coach the freshmen.

Before taking the coaching

reins at Walpole, Masto was an assistant for six years at Franklin High where he's taught health and physical education for 11 years. A native of East Haven, Conn., he was a high school all-star in football and track before enrolling at Springfield College where he earned a bachelors degree in physical education. He has two masters degrees — one from Endicott College in athletic administration and the other from West Virginia University in physical education.

Masto had a very successful first year at the helm in Natick. The 2021 season, however, will be different because of covid-19, but imparting his competitive philosophy and teaching real-life lessons will still be a high priority.

Mike Masto has tremendous perspective and he's a coach for all the right reasons.

LIBRARY NEWS

continued from page 16

OR, you can fill out an online form to request:

1. Express Bundle(s) to pick up later at the walk up window (within 1 day!)
2. Express Bundle(s) to pick up via contactless holds
3. Book-Fix curated collection based on your preferences within the categories of adult, teen, or children.

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 three 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!

MIL Virtual Programming Childrens:

Program Videos

Premiering on our Facebook and website, no registration needed!

Rhyme Time

Posted Wednesdays 10:00am short stories, songs and playtime extension activities geared for infants and toddlers and their grownups.

Preschool Play

Posted Fridays 10:00am

weekly program of stories, songs and games designed especially for the preschool set.

BedTime Buddies

Posted Wednesday nights 7pm A fun pre-bedtime program full of songs, skits, reading and more! A family program for younger listeners and the young at heart

Teen and tween Dungeons & Dragons Online Gaming

Friday evenings, 6:00-8:00pm Play a Dungeons & Dragons adventure online over 5 weeks! It will be 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. Beginners welcome! Open to Teens ages 13-18.

Free Online Stress Relief

Cindy Gittleman, Certified Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) teacher and Founder of Sunrise Mindfulness, has been leading mindfulness-based programs in the Boston area for the past 12 years. She usually teaches at Roots and Wings in Natick, but is temporarily teaching online due to the pandemic.



Free Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Info Sessions

Online via Zoom Wednesdays Jan. 6 and 13 6:30-8:30pm Registration at www.sunrise-mindfulness.com

9-Session Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Online via Zoom Wednesday Evenings 8 weeks, 9 sessions Jan. 20 - March 10 6:30-9pm with an extended practice session on Sunday, February 28, 9:00am-4:00pm Registration at www.sunrise-mindfulness.com



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Applications accepted: Through January 14, 2020

**Housing Lottery: January 18, 2021 @ 7PM via Zoom Please call Susan Jacobson @ 508-440-2812 for Zoom Information or see Zoom Links on application**  
Household of 1 - \$64,700, Household of 2 - \$77,000, Household of 3 - \$86,650, Household of 4 - \$96,250

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Application can be found at [www.norfolk.ma.us](http://www.norfolk.ma.us), under "What's New"  
Application can be sent via scan, fax or can be picked up by contacting Susan Jacobson and making an appointment to pick up at Norfolk Town Hall by appointment only

email contact: [sjacobson@norfolk.ma.us](mailto:sjacobson@norfolk.ma.us)  
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# Real Estate Corner

## Baker-Polito Administration Awards Natick and Sherborn Community Compact Grant



Fifth Middlesex grant funding is as follows:

Natick - \$73,000 to implement an e-permitting system.

Sherborn - \$55,000 to implement an e-permitting system.

Formed in January 2015, the Community Compact Cabinet is chaired by Lt. Governor Polito and is composed of the Secretaries of Housing and Economic Development, Education, Transportation, Energy and Environmental Affairs, and Technology Services and Security, along with the Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services and the Assistant Secretary of Operational Services. The Community Compact Cabinet elevates the Administration's partnerships with cities and towns, and allows the Governor's Office to work more closely with leaders from all municipalities. The Cabinet champions municipal interests across all executive secretariats and agencies, and develops, in consultation with cities and towns, mutual standards and best practices for both the state and municipalities. The creation of Community Compacts creates clear standards, expectations and accountability for both partners.

Rep. David Linsky (D-Natick) today announced \$3,709,438 in grants to Natick, Sherborn and 54 other municipalities through the Community Compact Cabinet (CCC) Information Technology grant program.

"Over the past year the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us the importance of improving our information technology operations. These grants will help Natick, Sherborn and the Commonwealth innovate around our changing landscape" said Linsky. "I want to thank the CCC Information technology grant program for awarding Natick and Sherborn with these grants that will help continue to modernize our technology services."

### New Year, New Home! Coming Soon!

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**27 Fisher Street**  
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**SOLD**

**36 Stratford Road**  
Natick - \$819,900

**SOLD**

**80 Adams Street**  
Holliston - \$649,000

**SOLD**

**79 Farm Street**  
Millis - \$369,000

**NEW LISTING**

**166 Village Street**  
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**NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**163 Village Street**  
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**SOLD**

**163 Village Street**  
Millis - \$499,900

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The Condominiums  
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Natick



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14 New Hampshire Ave, Natick

## New Natick Featured Listings



15 Sheffield Rd, Natick  
4 BD | 2F 1H BA | 2016 Renovations  
Wethersfield Neighborhood



62 Washington Ave, Natick  
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