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The Voice of Your Community

Goodbye to Our Friend, Bernie Cooper ... The Absolute Best a Human Being Could Be!

By DONNA LANE

The tower at the Memorial Municipal Building (Town Hall) contains a 50-bell carillon. The carillon was a gift to the town by Walter F. Tilton given at the time of the original building construction in 1928. Quoting from the original deed of gift, Walter F. Tilton said, "It is my wish that this carillon may for all time serve as a memorial to and a reminder of the patriotic service and devotion of all Citizens of Norwood who have given of their lives, their health, their strength, their thought, their comfort and means that this nation might live. It is my wish that these bells may keep fresh the memory of that sacrifice and service, and by such reminder, ever sound the call of Good Citizenship."

Norwood Assistant Town Manager Bernard S. Cooper, better known to all as Bernie, passed away on Sunday, January 24 after a brief bout with cancer. Bernie was a man who took that call of good citizenship to heart every day of his adult life. Born February 24, 1948, Bernie graduated from Norwood High,



class of 1965 and Tufts University. He subsequently served the Town of Norwood, all of its citizens and three town managers for 49 years as Assistant Town Manager and Civil Defense Director.

Former superintendent of the Recreation Department, Jerry Miller, attended high school with Bernie.

"He was very studious and voted most likely to succeed," Miller said. "And he did! He would come to school carrying a briefcase and wearing a bow tie every day, and being high school boys some of us used to tease him a little. When I came in to be interviewed for the job for the rec department, I had to interview with Bernie. I said to myself, 'Oh boy, this is a kid I used to tease in high school and he's now in a position to hire me.'"

Obviously, Bernie was not one to hold a grudge because he hired Miller.

Miller said that Bernie was always supportive.

"He was a tremendous guy ... whenever you needed anything, he would be there to help you out," Miller commended. "Whatever we did together – the parades, Norwood Day, The Last Hurrah, the

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Norwood's COVID Cases, Percent Positivity Dropping; Vaccines Rolling Out Slowly

By LIZ TAURASI

Norwood is seeing some good trends in the fight against COVID-19 with cases decreasing and the percent positive rate also going down, according to General Manager Tony Mazzucco in his weekly update to residents on Feb. 5. Yet on the vaccination front, things are going at a much slower pace than expected.

Each week, Mazzucco updates residents on the town's ongoing response to the pandemic through Facebook Live on the Town of Norwood's Facebook page.

As of Feb. 5, Mazzucco said there was some positivity which he said was a good thing.

"Overall our numbers are looking good," Mazzucco said. "Testing is up, total cases are down. The percent positive rate is down."

Norwood's total case count for the 14 days prior to Feb. 5 was 284, and the average daily rate is around 67, which puts the town's percent positive rate for those two weeks at 6.3%.

"What's particularly good about that 6.3% positivity rate is it's the fourth week in a row it's been below 7%," Mazzucco said. "For four weeks in a row we've had a positivity rate below 7% and we'd like to continue to see that decline."

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GOODBYE*continued from page 1*

road races – he would be there. He had Norwood's interest at heart all the time. We used to joke about the fact that as a Jewish fellow, he was the one who ran the Christmas program for the town.

And he was so knowledgeable – he was like the shell answer-man. He knew everything and if he didn't know, he knew how to get the answer. I'm shocked that he is gone. I went to school with him ... worked with him for 45 years ... In fact, we were working on the 150th year anniversary for the town when he was sick. Even then, he was still working to help the town. He never took a day off, he was always there. I'll really miss him," Miller said sadly.

When contacted for comment, former Town Manager John Carroll reminisced fondly of his former colleague and friend.

"I am just heartbroken," Carroll said. "I was just thinking about Bernie. He was a great husband to Connie, a great father to Sam, Alisha, Josh and

Amelia, a great assistant to me – even though I had to get after him about his desk a few times – and a great friend. He really cared about the town and its people. We had lunch together nearly every day for 39 years. That's over 9000 lunches. You really get close to someone when you eat together that often."

When Mazzucco was first hired, Carroll advised him to have lunch in public every day as a way of connecting with the community as well as forging relationships with staff. He has followed that advice. And while he hasn't had as many lunches with Bernie as John did, he's had quite a few.

"Bernie never met a vegetable that he liked!" Mazzucco said. "If there was even a piece of lettuce on his plate, he would scrunch up his face in distaste.

Bernie and I became fast friends. We were attached at the hip six days a week. We spoke many times each day ... in the evening, early morning, every weekend and most holidays. During all of the storms, all of the meetings, and the lunches with Tom (McQuaid), Bernie was always there. I'll miss his smile, his advice and his knowledge, but most of all, his good nature. Bernie simply was the absolute best a human being could be!"

The amount of institutional knowledge that Bernie carried with him was phenomenal. He was always willing to share that knowledge, and to dive in to help resolve any issue that the town or its citizenry faced. He was truly a dedicated public servant.

Cathy Carney, Norwood's Director of Administrative Services, began working for the town in 1984 reporting directly

to Bernie. She said she always considered him more as a mentor than a co-worker.

"He was really great in that role," Carney said. "Bernie taught me so much ... about government ... about town meeting ... and how to deal with people in general. He was very kind and he had such a calm way about him ... mellow ... easy going. He was also great as a sounding board and was a calming influence on many people who visited town hall, both employees and residents. I've never seen Bernie get angry with anyone and I've only ever heard him say good things about people.

He was great with budgets and great with numbers and he did the insurance and workers comp. But, I saw his most important and impressive role as the 'man of the community' – he did the outreach, worked with all of the community groups, and dealt with any issues that came up. He made people feel that they and their issues were important. To the department heads and anyone who wanted to get something done, Bernie was the go-to guy. And he knew how to talk you off the ledge.

He was also one of the smartest guys I know. He had a great institutional knowledge, but also knowledge of many different things. It was mind-boggling to me that he knew so much about so many things."

So, Bernie had no flaws? No quirks or foibles that people chided him about except that he didn't like vegetables? That question brought a chuckle from more than one person. Remember the comment John Carroll made about having to get after him about his desk? It turns out it was more than one desk.

Carney gave the most interesting response.

"Do you remember the fire in the General Manager's office on Good Friday about 10 years ago?" she asked. "It required that certain offices be redone and Bernie's was one of them. I asked where he wanted his desk and Bernie said, 'I have to have 2 desks, 2 computers and 2 phones.' Within a month, the two desks were covered with paper, the file cabinets were filled with paper, and there was no room to sit on any of the chairs because each was stacked high with papers."

"Bernie kept physical copies of everything," Carney continued. "Sometimes the paper would be piled 2-3 feet high and we'd joke and say we had to check on Bernie because we haven't heard from him in a while – he might be buried under all the paper."

Miller corroborated her story. Bernie would call him to his office for a meeting but there would be nowhere to sit, so Bernie would pick up a 3-foot stack of paper and put it on top of another stack so Miller could sit down.

"Bernie was a collector of things – not just physical things," Carney said. "His mind just absorbed all kinds of information. I don't think there are many people out there that could do that ... that could recall everything they learned or things that they were told or people they met. Someone would walk in and he would say, 'That's Mr. so and so ... he used to come into my father's store.' Bernie was just an unbelievable man when it came to his knowledge and capability to teach you."

Carney said she worked on the budget with Bernie for 25-28 years. He was responsible for the carillon.



"He loved those bells and could tell you everything about them," Carney said. "Restoration and maintenance of the carillon was his pet project. Every now and then when John Carroll was at Town Meeting, if Bernie wasn't there yet, John would say, 'Cath, watch this! Zero out or give \$100 to the carillon account and see what Bernie does.'"

She recalled with a chuckle: "Bernie would come in, look at the budget and say, 'Cut the crap, John.' and put down what he thought was needed for the carillon. John would try to get him going sometimes, but Bernie never got upset. He would just chastise John and put the money in the budget that he thought was needed to take care of it."

Most of the carillon is in Virginia being refurbished, but Tony Mazzucco rang a bell for Bernie the day of his funeral.

"Bernie was the champion of the bells," Mazzucco said. "If it hadn't been for him over the past 30-40 years, people in the town would have just forgotten about

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Advertising Department

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jenschofield@localtownpages.com

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GOODBYE

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the carillon – and it would have just sat up there and deteriorated. It is fitting that Bernie Cooper's name will be inscribed on one of the bells in his honor!

It turns out a lot of the work Bernie did for the town was behind the scenes. Norwood Selectmen and department heads echoed many of the words that those quoted here have said in one way or another. Smart. Kind. Unassuming. Accommodating. A people person.

George Usevich, long-time former principal of Norwood High School, remembers Bernie this way:

"Bernie was always seen around town wearing a baseball cap," Usevich recalled. "Under that hat he might have been short in stature, but he was a person who had a very big heart. He was willing to do anything to help those in need. He would most often shun the spotlight and remain behind the scenes. He was a mild-mannered, soft spoken, kind, compassionate individual who worked tirelessly to get things done. He was that go-to person if you had a particular problem or concern. He always gave solid advice and would always steer you in the right direction. He and Connie would often be seen with their four talented children participating in various school activities and events. A proud graduate of 'the school on the hill' and a true son of Norwood, Bernie Cooper will forever be remembered as someone who made a difference in his beloved town. He bled Norwood blue!"



Carney summed up her many years working with Bernie:

"Bernie wasn't just a bureaucrat who pushed paper," Carney said. "He was somebody who was really involved in the town and really took an interest in what was going on. His hands were in everything. Taking care of the town and being there for whatever the town needed him to do... that was his life."

In addition to his name being inscribed on one of the carillon bells, the town is preparing a tribute video, and a scholarship will be established in his name. According to Mazzucco, there's sure to be more to come.

"We are just beginning to celebrate his life and his legacy," Mazzucco said.

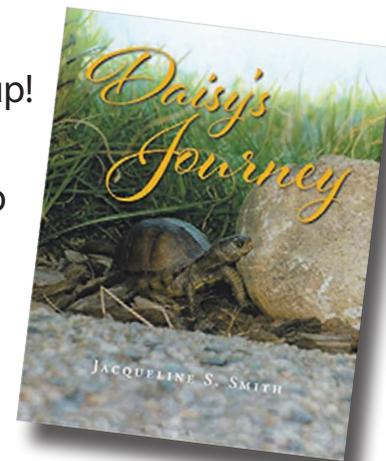
To Connie, Sam, Alisha, Josh, Amelia and Michael, we grieve with you in the loss of your husband and father. Bernie was an important part of so many of our lives and has impacted so many people. We are grateful that you shared him with us and with Norwood. Our whole community shares in your sorrow, and we hope we can comfort and strengthen you during this difficult time.

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22 Lenox St	\$465,000
64 Oak Road	\$477,000
69 Adams St	\$462,300
64 Concord Ave	\$515,000
81 Pellana Rd	\$525,000
12 Mayfair Cir	\$552,000
55 Brookfield Rd	\$590,000
48 Cross St	\$545,000
17 Merrifield Place	\$535,000
83 Azalea Dr	\$607,500
53 Florence Ave.	\$600,000
27 Alpine Rd	\$665,000
77 Deerfield Rd	\$630,000
16 Croydon Rd	\$715,000
8 Hickory Rd	\$735,000
75 Old Farm Road	\$775,000
24 Surrey Rd	\$985,000
251 Rock St U:B6	\$272,000
315 Neponset St U:53	\$267,900
315 Neponset St U:54	\$275,000
140 Railroad Ave U:B312	\$292,500
785 Washington St:301	\$325,000
65 Winslow Ave U:3	\$330,000
16 ROSE CT. U:16	\$350,000
391 Neponset U:F	\$415,000
1 Lenox St U:205	\$459,000
36 Saint George Ave U:2-2	\$499,900
99A Day St U:1	\$511,500
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Facebook Group Trying to Save Local Restaurants

By GRACE ALLEN

Larry Curran and Ed Tocci are on a mission. The two long-time friends are helping drive business to scores of local restaurants hurt by the restrictions and shutdowns of the past year.

In January of 2020, the men started the Facebook Group “Norfolk County Eats” as a way to share recipes with friends and family and review local restaurants. The membership grew,

fueled by fellow foodies inviting their own family and friends.

And then the pandemic hit. People were stuck at home and cooking more than ever. The social media group became even more active as members posted photos of their own culinary creations—however humble—and were cheered on by other group members.

“The group has really helped people during the pandemic be-



Larry Curran, left, and Ed Tocci are the founders of Norfolk County Eats.

Larry Curran with Lidia Bastianich, an Emmy award-winning television host, best-selling cookbook author, and restaurateur. Curran met Bastianich at a book signing.

cause everyone was sharing and becoming friends,” said Tocci, a Needham resident. “It’s made everyone feel closer to one another.”

But at the same time, the state’s restrictions on restaurants were taking a toll. Thousands of restaurant employees were forced out of work and businesses were in danger of closing permanently. Tocci and Curran, a Norwood resident, decided they would try to help.

“We encouraged people in the group to try different restaurants that were open, place takeout orders, or buy gift cards,” explained Tocci. “Anything just to keep them going. Because when this is over, we want to go back to these places and we want them to still be there.”

Tocci used to be in the restaurant business himself so he understands their struggles right now.

“I know what it’s like. It’s not easy,” he said.

By harnessing the help of the group’s members—over 10,000 at last count—both Tocci and Curran have started to make some impact. They have spotlighted eateries like Rhapsody’s Victorian Coffeehouse and Alumni Restaurant in Franklin, Vico Ristorante Italiano and Tasos Euro Café in Norwood, Café Assisi and Parker’s Pub, both in Wrentham, and Horse n’ Carriage in Norfolk.

Curran in particular will visit and post photos of his restaurant meals, and then encourage other members to visit and post their orders, too. After all, people eat with their eyes, says Tocci.

On January 2, Curran posted about Cilla’s Coffeehouse in Norfolk, noting the coffeehouse was experiencing financial difficulties and encouraging members to visit. The post caught the attention of the region’s SWAT team and over 50 members arrived one morning to place orders and support the establishment. That surprise visit by law enforcement made the news, further driving more business to the coffeehouse.

Similarly, Norfolk County Eats members have championed the Primavera in Millis after learning the Italian eatery was also struggling. In January, owner Jerry Gaita posted his thanks on the group’s page.

“This past Friday and Saturday were SUPER BUSY... we have not been this busy in many months. It’s felt like the old days...better days are coming. Larry and team are doing a great job spotlighting small businesses.”

Norfolk County Eats is a very active group. Members respond to posts within minutes, and the discussions are upbeat and respectful. After a prime rib recipe post by Curran went viral and people from all over the U.S. and from as far away as Italy and France asked to join, the ad-

ministrators decided to limit new membership to Massachusetts residents only.

There are a few rules in the group, mostly centering on kindness and courtesy towards others. Members have messaged the administrators and expressed thanks for the positive atmosphere fostered by Tocci and Curran, along with fellow administrator Tamara Cullen and moderator Lois Kleberg Bertolino Arena.

When the pandemic is finally over, Tocci says the group will try to have a meet-and-greet for members. If the number of daily posts is any indication of interest, they’d better find a very big venue for the event.

Whether this grassroots effort by area food fans will help prop up struggling establishments in the long-term remains to be seen. But the evolution of the group, with its love of food and the fellowship of other like-minded gastronomes, has gratified Tocci and Curran.

“When we started this group, we thought this would be a nice little platform to discuss our passion for food and we hoped people would be interested and want to join,” said Tocci. “And it’s grown into being so much more than we ever expected.”

For more information about the group or to join, visit Norfolk County Eats on Facebook.

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CASES

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Mazzucco highlighted what he called two interesting data points while looking at those current numbers: the testing rate and total cases.

For the 14 days prior to the Feb. 5 update, 5,100 residents were tested, bringing the total number of Norwood residents tested over the past year to just over 50,000.

“That is absolutely incredible for the amount of testing going on in Norwood,” Mazzucco said. “Obviously some had multiple tests ... 50,000 tests, that’s about a test and a half for every resident in Norwood. It shows we still have a very heavy, very aggressive testing program both locally and throughout the state. The fact we did so many tests and the positivity rate went down is an indication the data is much more valid. We are very happy to see that.”

Mazzucco noted he is seeing as we head into the first winter with COVID that the type of ac-

tivity doesn’t make a difference. He said right now we are seeing businesses slowly reopening, as well as the governor changing business practices and increasing capacity limits, but it’s the time of year that’s been most beneficial.

On Monday, Feb. 8, Governor Charlie Baker increased the 25% capacity limits for restaurants, gyms and other businesses to 40% following recent virus declines in hospitalizations and case counts statewide.

“Things like snowstorms actually help stop the spread of COVID because people are actually home that day. Indoor activities are generally more risky than outdoor activities. We think right now there are a lot less indoor activities available.

Mazzucco urged residents to continue to have good practices: avoid large gatherings, reduce gatherings if you happen to be out with other people, continue to wear masks and stay home if you are sick.

Vaccinations Off to a Slow Start

Vaccinations are happening

at a much slower pace than expected on the local level, Mazzucco told residents.

“We are still frustrated at the local level with the overall rollout of the vaccine,” Mazzucco said. “It’s a federal program and the state’s command center is not relying as much on local public health as we would prefer.”

On the local level, Norwood is still limited to 100 doses per week from the state. At his Feb. 5 update, Mazzucco stated the town has conducted 280 doses with 70 more scheduled the week following his update and 110 second doses the next week.

He also addressed the issue with the difficulties local seniors are having trying to schedule appointments on the state website. For those living in Norwood and having trouble registering online and working their way through the system, Mazzucco said residents can call the senior center and their staff can help them through the process.

Additionally, if residents don’t want to wait for vaccination appointments in town, appointments are available at Gillette

Stadium. Residents needing help with registering for these appointments can dial 211 and get help through the state in scheduling appointments.

“It’s a long march for the vaccine and it’s going to take time,” the Norwood Town Manager said

Mazzucco also addressed questions he’s received from residents as to why vaccinations aren’t being offered at the senior center or the civic center rather than town hall. The reason is the fragility of the vaccine and how once it’s defrosted it’s very susceptible to breakage or damage and they don’t want to take the risk by moving it to another location. But as the town gets more doses and clinics expand they’ll be able to look at using the senior center, the high school, and/or the civic center for vaccinations.

As for when teachers will be vaccinated, he said he expected to be doing it sooner than what’s expected.

“The day we get 500 doses we can do the school department in a day,” he said. “We’re just anxiously awaiting these.”

Mazzucco stressed the importance that everyone takes the opportunity to get vaccinated when it’s their turn and be sure to get their second dose of the vaccine.

“One of the challenges we are starting to see is that you’re going to need to go back for that second dose,” Mazzucco said. “Pay attention to it. Bring your card — consider it your civic duty, your role to play in the battle we as a community and as a country are facing with COVID. We need everyone to be hypersensitive to go get that second shot, bring that card, get it, and get it on time.”

Become A Hydrant Hero!

BY MICHELE TARANTO

While winter officially ends on Saturday, March 20, any seasoned New Englander knows that Mother Nature does not always pay adhere to dates on the calendar. There can be snow in March and those white flakes have sometimes made an appearance in April! In preparation of those late season storms, it’s not

too late to become a Norwood Hydrant Hero! The adoption is relatively easy; simply assume responsibility for the fire hydrant closest to your home!

This act of civic contribution will assist the Norwood Fire Department (NFD) may unfortunately need that hydrant to help you or your neighbor.

According to NFD, a typical fire engine carries just over 700 gallons of water; an amount that only lasts a matter of minutes when combating a fire. Once that supply is drained, the resource of a fire hydrant is needed. Should that hydrant be buried under a mound of snow, the time to shovel out the hydrant could cause a catastrophic delay in extinguishment costing property damage and even lives.

Norwood has 980 fire hydrants, yes, almost 1,000 hydrants to facilitate water supply to all the homes and businesses in town. An almost impossible feat for NFD to address while also servicing residents with other emergencies.

Hydrant Heroes will also be commended for their sponsorship in a drawing! Simply submit a picture of “digging out” your hydrant and send it to the Norwood Fire Department. You will be entered into a drawing in early spring!

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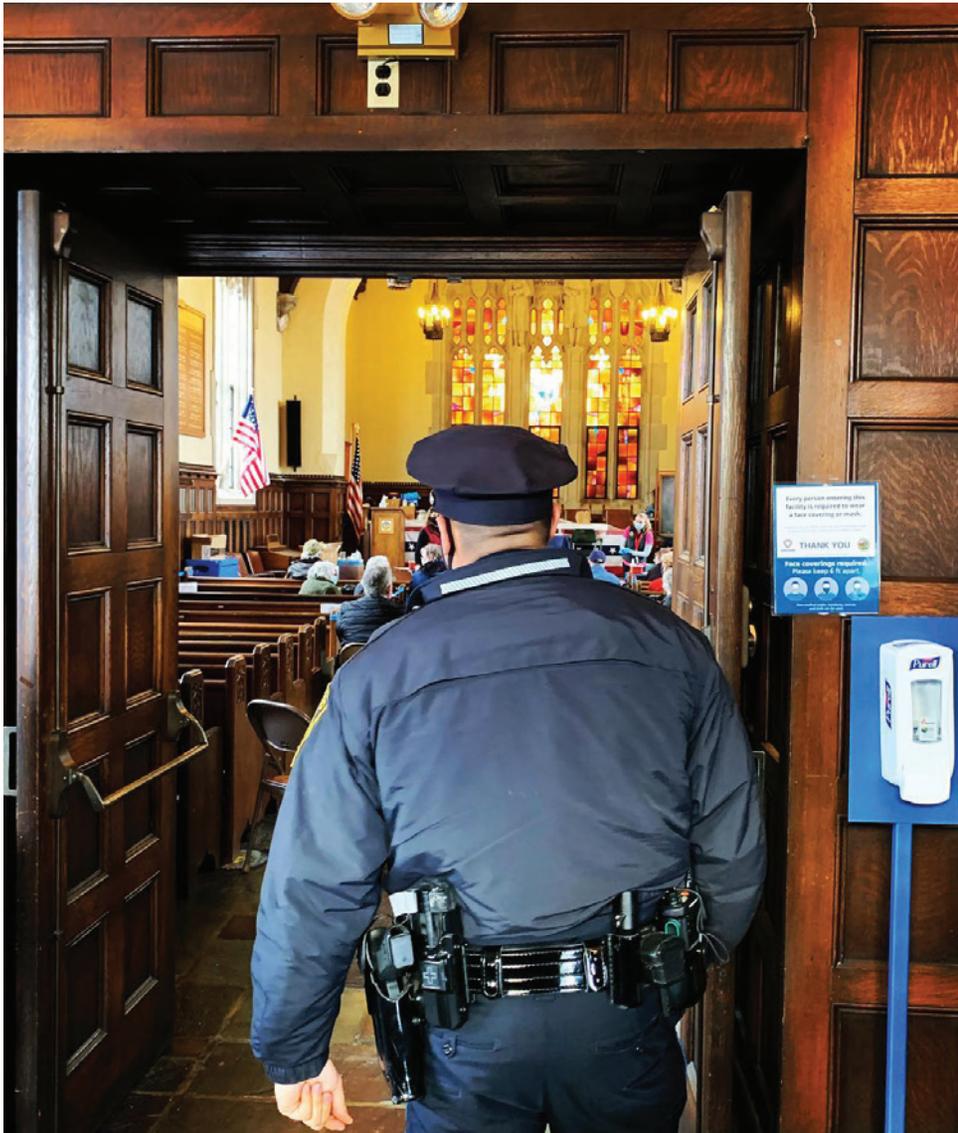
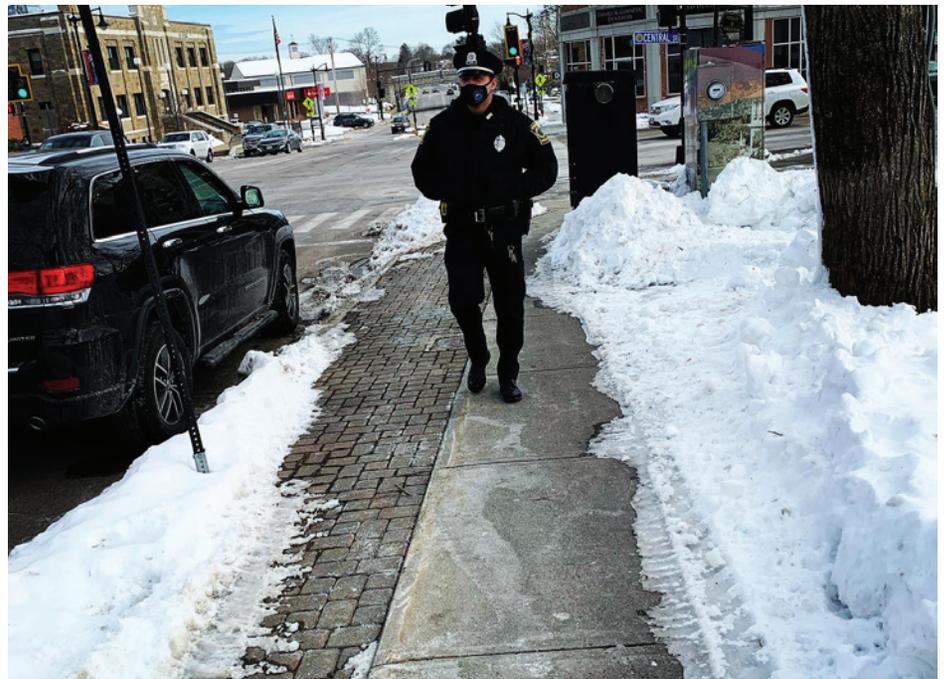
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Officer Baez

Walking the Beat!

The frigid temperatures in February didn't stop Officer Baez from walking the beat. The @norwood_dpw did a great job (as usual) removing snow from the uptown area.

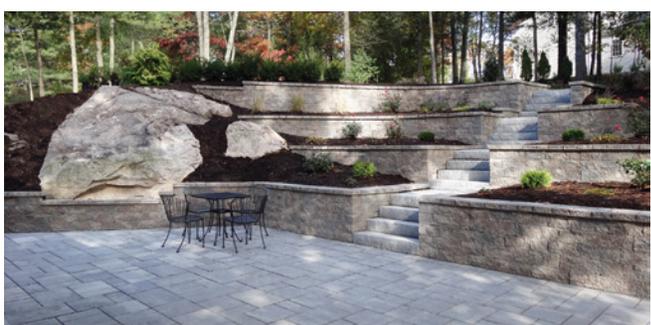
Officer Baez also checked in on the Norwood Town Hall as it serves as a vaccination site for eligible town residents. The Norwood Health Department was hard at work ensuring eligible residents received their vaccine.



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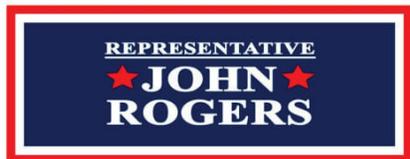
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12th Norfolk District Awarded S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE Grants

12TH NORFOLK DISTRICT AWARDED FY21 SAFE GRANTS

The Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE Grants are awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services to provide local fire departments with resources to teach fire safety to children in schools and seniors throughout the Commonwealth.

Fire Department Name	FY 21 S.A.F.E. Grant	FY 21 Senior SAFE Grant
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Will It Ever Go Away?

Just as Covid-19 itself can come with a range of symptoms, so too, can post Covid syndrome. The most common symptoms that can linger include: fatigue, shortness of breath, joint pain, chest pain, headaches, dizziness, long lasting loss of taste and/or smell, muscle weakness, sleep issues and brain fog, including an inability to concentrate and impaired memory.

Recently we have had an influx of patients recovering from Covid-19 that are complaining

of these symptoms. Abby G entered our office complaining of shortness of breath, headaches and brain fog. She wasn't sleeping well and felt defeated as well as becoming depressed wondering if she would ever be herself again. Although testing negative it was clear that the virus was still causing issues in her brain, lungs, muscles and tissues.

Abby started a program of care in our office including changes in diet, chiropractic adjustments and Neurologic Inte-

grative Systems work opening up channels in the nervous system for healing. Abby is reporting restful nights, decreased headaches and she is breathing easier. Her brain fog is clearing up and she is more hopeful of getting her life back.

If you or someone you know is a "long hauler" of Covid-19 and would like to make an appointment with Dr Michael Goldstein or with Dr Rochelle Bien call the Holistic Center at Bristol Square at (508)660-2722.



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A Voice for Women in the Metrowest

Metrowest Commission on the status of women serves to make sure women are heard

By J.D. O'GARA

"Our job is to basically amplify the voices of those who identify as female in our community, to make sure our community partners, our elected and appointed officials are making decisions with those peoples' needs in mind," Heather Panahi said. Panahi is in her third year as chair of the Metrowest Commission on the Status of Women.

"Our Commission was founded in 2015," Panahi said. "We represent 26 towns and two cities and are actually one of 11

regional commissions throughout the state. There is also a state commission."

Panahi explained that the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, the state commission, was created in the mid-1990s, after a UN Conference on Women

"The goal was to give a voice to Massachusetts women and girls," Panahi said of the non-partisan commission. "Over the last several decades, the state has created these regional commissions to be able to better reach

women throughout the state.

The Metrowest Commission covers Ashland, Bellingham, Dover, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Northborough, Norwood, Sherborn, Southborough, Stow, Sudbury, Walpole, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, Weston and Wrentham, and Marlborough. Our nine commissioners are basically appointed to their positions; there's no election. You apply, and then they're appointed based on experience. You can serve two terms, and each term is three years."

To get a handle on what women want and need, the Metrowest Commission on the Status of Women hosts public hearings, panel discussions, engages in community outreach programs, and hosts awareness campaigns, as well as works with local community organizations and nonprofits. Members of the commission have also given testimony on behalf of women in the Metrowest region, which is very diverse.

"You have rural towns, you have metropolitan towns, you have towns that are higher on the socioeconomic ladder than others," Panahi said. "When we are bringing on new commissioners, one of the things we try to be mindful of is bringing in commissioners as representative of our region if possible."

Areas of focus the Metrowest Commission has focused on and included a focus on reproductive issues last year, from improving access to feminine hygiene prod-

ucts in schools and jails to maternal health after having children. The group has also spent a lot of time on domestic violence and sexual assault prevention.

"Domestic violence prevention and sexual assault prevention are big items for us and continue to be for us, and Covid has exacerbated the problem, where women are in their homes trapped with their abusers," Panahi said. "We've also done work talking about the experiences of incarcerated women in the region, making sure they have appropriate access to the resources they need, that they're safe, and that their health needs are being taken care of. We've also looked at economic empowerment, job placement after incarceration, and helping to protect immigrant families, particularly immigrant women and their children.

This past year, the Commission decided to focus on racial equity, hosting a Zoom public hearing on "Racial Inequality Affecting Women and Families of Color in the Metrowest" in late February.

"The public hearing was really our first step before we start to develop a plan of action," Panahi said. "The Commission will use the feedback they've gained from BIPOC women in the region to help identify issues to prioritize, and support and raise awareness. We recognized we needed to hold ourselves accountable, to make sure all of the girls and women in our region were adequately supported and have access to the services they need."

Panahi added that the commission itself is also a major-

ity (75%) white, and the group would like to attract a more diverse panel of commissioners. She suggested that Covid has also highlighted where inequities lie.

"Whether or not people can access Wifi so that their children can learn – those things have become much more accentuated as a result of the pandemic," Panahi noted. "In particular, the many immigrant families in the Metrowest face enormous barriers because of Covid. The Commission also endeavors to listen to Metrowest's youngest women constituents. It has created the Athena Council, and internship and advocacy for women aged 14-19 to channel their passions into energy and action. The 12 members of the Athena Council are girls who've applied from all over the Metrowest."

All meetings of the Metrowest Commission on the Status of Women are open to the public and "any women who want to come and listen and share their questions."

The best way to stay apprised of when the next meeting is to visit the Metrowest Commission on the Status of Women's Facebook Page (you can also find them on Instagram (@metrowestcsw) and Twitter (@MassCSW). You can also find out more at the state website, <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/metrowest-commission-on-the-status-of-women>.

"We are a nonpartisan group," Panahi concluded. "We want to emphasize that. To us, gender does not belong to a political platform. We want all women in the Metrowest to know we are here to advocate for them, and to listen."

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Planning, Prevention and Preparation Help Families Maintain Dignity and Control

BY DENNIS SULLIVAN & ASSOCIATES

Our team had a recent experience with our client, “Mrs. Cronin” a member of our Lifetime & Legacy Protection Program (LLP Program). Mrs. Cronin and her late husband, Mr. Cronin attended a seminar we held over 20 years ago with the AARP Legal Services Network. We helped the Cronins establish their estate plan and they kept it up to date with their membership in the LLP Program at Dennis Sullivan & Associates.

Mr. Cronin passed in his 80s, and Mrs. Cronin eventually had to go to a nursing home at age 93. We kept in touch visiting her to update her plan.

We learned Mrs. Cronin was having difficulties paying some bills for real estate taxes; we investigated to determine her health and medical needs and ensure her wishes were being met. Although it took considerable effort and coordination, due to COVID-19 protocols we were able to coordinate services on Mrs. Cronin’s behalf.

Unfortunately, we were rebuffed by nursing home personnel numerous times., nevertheless we persevered on her behalf all while Mrs. Cronin was locked in



her room because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Hard Work & Mrs. Cronin’s Diligence & Dedication Pays Off

Despite numerous challenges, we were able to work with the bank regarding Mrs. Cronin’s Trust and the Power of Attorney as well as coordinating with the nursing home physician. Persistence, passion, perseverance, compassion, care and commitment by our team prevailed and eventually all of Mrs. Cronin’s goals and objectives (financial, health, tax), as well as her choices for health care were honored. She was even successful avoiding the time delay and the cost of two

probate court proceedings (one for disability and one after death).

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We accomplished Mrs. Cronin’s efforts to exercise her legal rights to retain control of not only financial decisions, but also health decisions regarding end of life treatment made by trusted individuals, rather than having to go to court. Disability court proceedings are long and expensive and result in ongoing court involvement, expense and can mean unmet health and financial objectives.

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was left up to the state, courts, and nursing home? Our team ensured that Mrs. Cronin’s choices were written into her documents, honoring that no unwanted extreme end of life measures were taken when the time came that she was at the end of life. We and her family were relieved that these goals were met.

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Norwood Sports

Norwood Gymnastics in the Gym Again

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY

Almost a year later and Covid-19 is still causing havoc with the high school sports schedules, however teams are making do with the cards they have been dealt. It's been crazy but the Norwood gymnastic team, like so many squads, are glad to just having some sort of season. The Mustangs will take part in a home and an away schedule with the three other teams in the league: Norton, MADS (Medfield, Ashland, Dover-Sherborn) and MHM (Medway, Holliston, Millis).

"The girls have been working out in private gyms under COVID-19 regulations since last June," Norwood Coach Karen Broderick said. "Luckily, the Tri-Valley League decided that the meets would be held in person, so we've got somewhat of a regular season. There will also be limited spectators only at your home meet and the girls will be wearing masks while not participating."

The Mustangs will have a strong senior presence on the mats this winter as well as a talented group of freshmen looking to help the team succeed. Taking the lead will be senior tri-captains Rose Donovan, Jillian Olbrys and Elizabeth Broderick. Olbrys and Broderick, along with junior Marion Pastore, are all capable

of participating as all arounds for the squad, but unfortunately the Norwood Coach can only use two of the three per meet. Although the Coach has to make decisions as to who competes in all four events, she believes it's not a bad thing having three solid all arounds to choose from.

"All three captains take part in different roles and blend nicely together," Broderick said. "They all have a great work ethic and will be setting the tone for the younger gymnasts. It will be tough for me to decide who to use where, but the girls are all supportive despite not wanting to take an event off."

Although the three all around gymnasts can take part in all four events, Broderick excels at the beams, while Olbrys and Pastore in floor routines. Donovan will provide the team with top scores in vault and floor and will be a positive individual that will also provide influence and motivation to the rest of the team.

Junior Shayla Wynne is another gymnast who can participate in all four events but is a gymnast that Broderick can move around with each competition. According to the Mustang coach, Wynne's a very versatile athlete that is well rounded and she can put her wherever the team needs her depending on the opposition.



One thing Coach Broderick knows is that she only has six athletes who can take part on the bars, so that event will never change. With balance beam and floor exercises being a high-level event, the Coach is more likely to fill in on the vault. With that said, it will be very hard for the underclassmen to fill in one of the older girls' spots.

Two other juniors who will see competing time will be Cee Cee Frawley and Annie Sisk. Frawley can take part in all four events, but primarily does the floor and bars and occasionally may see some action on the balance beams, while Sisk will focus on the vault and balance beam and

is working on her floor routine.

With a group of talented incoming freshmen, Broderick sees them all rather similar in stature for the time being. However, Lucy Scafati has shown to be the strongest of the bunch at this time. The freshman is working on all four events and with more experience on the high school level the Coach believes that Scafati will become more competitive in the years to come.

Three other teammates who will see action are Emily Mace and Lindsey Naychay, who are competing in their fourth Mustang season and Kendra DiTullio will be participating in her second year. DiTullio was a member of

the gymnastic team as a freshman and is returning as a senior this year.

While Covid has continued to interrupt high school sports, the girls are overall thankful just to have some kind of season.

"We are grateful that we will be having a season, but the girls are a little bummed out not having any season ending tournaments especially having some strong gymnasts who would have been taking part in the post-season," Broderick said. "The abbreviated season is bittersweet having a daughter who is a senior on the team; you always want your senior year to be a positive remembrance."

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Norwood Sports

Senior Jake Russo Still Lives and Breathes Hockey

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY

The year 2020 is one most athletes in general would like to forget, but high school athletes are really being affected by the pandemic that has been running rampant throughout the country. While professional athletes are still being paid portions of their million-dollar salaries, high school competitors are just looking to play their sport in some capacity.

Norwood hockey player Jake Russo is a senior captain for the Mustangs in an abbreviated season where there will be no tournament play. Not exactly the way he was hoping to end his high school hockey career, especially after the Mustangs had some unfinished business in the Division 2 South Tournament.

After completing the regular season with a 14-3-3 record, Norwood was awarded the three seed in the tournament only to be knocked out by Westwood, a team they had beaten twice during the regular season, 3-2 in double overtime. It was a tough way for the seniors to have their season end, but the rest of the team was looking toward the next term and avenging that upset loss. Unfortunately, Covid-19 would have something to say about that.

As the season neared, Russo was still playing for his club team to get ready for the season; looking forward to getting on the ice with his teammates and help contribute to a winning campaign.

“After the way our season ended last year, we really wanted to come back strong and prove that was not us, but for the longest time we didn’t even know if we were going to have a season,” the Norwood captain said. “Once we found out we were having a season, we were excited but then we were told there would be no tournament. That was really tough to be told. We knew when our season would definitely be over, and we couldn’t do anything about it.”

Prior to skating with his Mustang teammates, Russo had attended Catholic Memorial during his freshman year but decided to transfer to Norwood the

following year. Russo, who also played lacrosse up until last season, began playing hockey in the Norwood Youth Hockey Leagues and at the age of 13 joined the Boston Junior Huskies. It was around the eighth grade when he started to receive phone calls from schools looking for him to come play hockey for their programs.

If this wasn’t enough to prove to himself that he could play the game, he was then selected to play for Team Massachusetts in a four-game, seven state round robin tournaments in Minnesota.

“Playing for Team Massachusetts was the best hockey that I have ever experienced,” Russo said. “The game was a little faster than I was used to, but I was able to keep up and play well. It gave me the confidence in my game.”

As an incoming sophomore trying out for the team, Russo



found that he knew a lot of the kids on the squad, but still entered the tryouts with some trepidation and was unsure how he would be accepted. Ultimately, he found that he would get some ice time on the first line that year and would lead the team in goals.

After concluding the season 11-3-6, Norwood made its way into the divisional tournament only to see their run stopped short by Canton, the eventual champion, in the Semi-Finals. While it was not the ending he was looking for, Russo did contribute to the team’s first round

victory over Scituate scoring the game winning goal to give the Mustangs a 3-2 win.

Following his sophomore campaign, Russo found himself taking part in a lot of hockey showcase games, attending hockey camps, skated every morning and working out with good friend and teammate Anthony Marchant. All the preparation helped as the then junior was the team’s second leading scorer with 15 goals and 10 assists for 25 points.

As a senior through eight games this year, Russo is continuing the pace once again leading

the Mustangs in scoring as Norwood sits at 5-3 at the time of this writing.

“Jake is a three-year player who has improved on a yearly basis,” Norwood Coach Chuck Allen said. “He’s one of those kids who knows that he is supposed to score and if we are going to be successful, he needs to put the puck in the net.”

According to Allen, Russo is a leader on and off the ice while his best attribute is the way that he carries himself. The senior does it all as he loves the game and breathes hockey. And although his senior year wasn’t the way he had hoped it would go, he knows that he still has three games yet to be played and plans on giving it everything that he has.

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Feb 18, 2021

Norwood case & testing data:

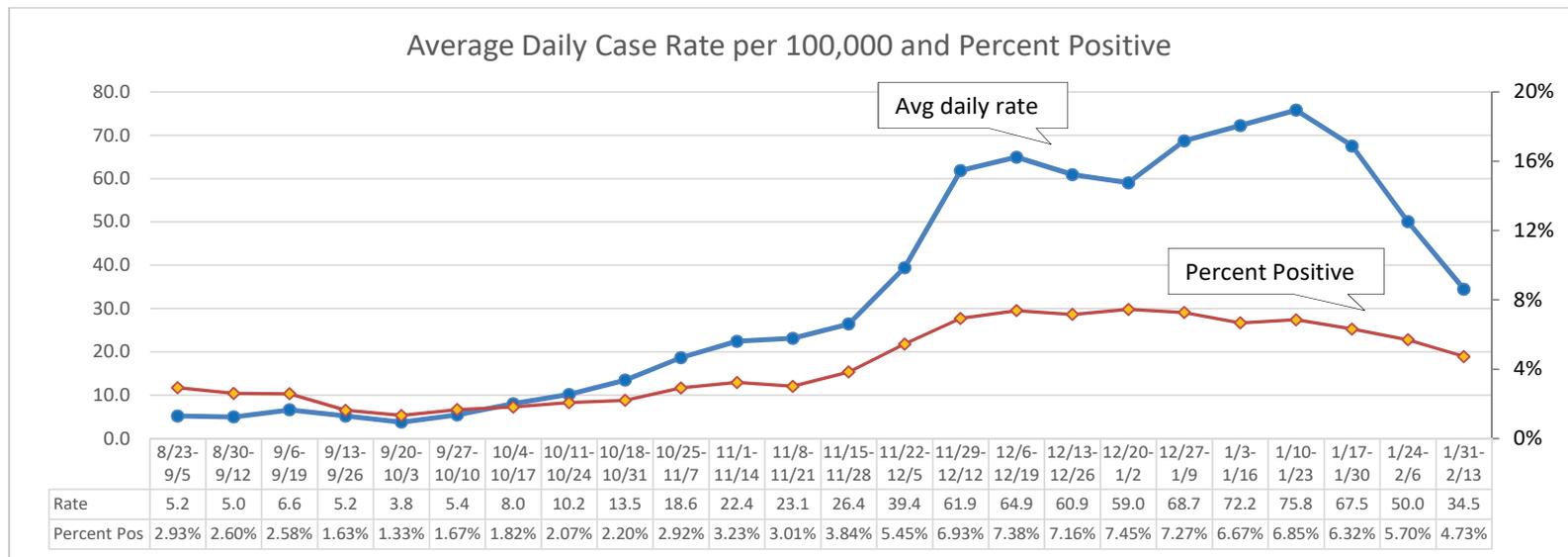
- Total Confirmed Case count: 2,430
- Case count in the last 14 days: 146
- Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 (Last 14 days)^: 34.5
- Total tests: 53,366
- Total Test in last two weeks: 3,614
- Two week Testing Rate per 100,000 (Last 14 days)^: 11,944.2
- Total positive tests performed last 14 days: 171
- Percent Positive last 14 days: 4.73%

Vaccine Data as of 2/17/2021

1st Doses administered: 566
 2nd doses administered: 125
 Total Clinics: 24

^Current two-week period (1/31/21-2/13/21) as of 2/17/2021

*Number of new cases occurring over the current two-week period (1/31/21-2/13/21) compared to the previous two-week period (1/24/21-2/6/21)





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All-Night Parking Ban Effective Through March

Just a friendly reminder that the Town of Norwood All-Night Parking Ban remains in effect through March 31, 2021

It shall be unlawful for the driver of any vehicle, other than one acting in an emergency, to park said vehicle for a period of time longer than two (2) hours between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 6:00 AM of any day on any street or in or upon any Town-owned off-street parking facility, from November 15 through April 1 of each year without authorization from the Board of Selectmen or their designee.

It shall be unlawful for commercial vehicles over 2.5 tons carrying capacity from parking for longer than one hour on the street in residentially zoned neighborhoods between the hours of 12:00 midnight on one day until 8:00 AM the following day, except when making or picking up a delivery.



Happy Anniversary Norwood PD!

There are still 125th NPD anniversary commemorative available! To purchase a patch, visit the Norwood PD Facebook page for links for PayPal payment. Be sure to include which patch you're interested in when paying and include a mailing address. Patches are \$5.



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**Hours: Monday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Friday: 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. CLOSED Sunday**

The Community Calendar was prepared a few weeks before the March 1 publish date. In consideration with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and state and federal guidelines regarding public gatherings, some of these events may have been postponed or cancelled. It is recommended to call to confirm the event status before attending.

The South Norfolk Mental Illness Family and Friends Support Group will NOT hold its March monthly meeting. The tighter procedures governing the uptick in reported COVID-19 cases.

Mental illness is a label for a variety of diseases of the brain. Often it strikes in late adolescence, devastating the afflicted person and the family. The South Norfolk Mental Illness Family and Friends Support Group is composed of such families who find mutual support and join together to advocate for their loved ones.

For further information call Ray at 508-668-2941.

Calendar of Events

Mar. 1

Alphabits (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
10 a.m.

Join Miss Nicole for this weekly program focused on learning the letters of the alphabet! Kids will listen to stories and do activities based on a new letter each week. Register for each week and pick up your Alphabits craft kit by Friday so you can follow along every Monday! Please remember to register each week and pick up your kit BEFORE the following Monday. For preschoolers. To register, visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/. Questions? Email the staff at norchild@minlib.net for call 781-769-0200.

Mar. 2

Virtual BINGO

Norwood Recreation Department
4 p.m.

For all ages. FREE. Prizes for winners. For more information, email cgrande@norwoodma.gov or visit the Norwood Recreation Department Facebook page.

Mar. 4

Zoom Family Story Time

Morrill Memorial Library
4 p.m.

Join Miss Kate for an afternoon story time! Read stories, sing songs and try a few unique activities. This program is geared to ages 0-5 but all ages are welcome to join in! Register each week at www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/.

Virtual Craft Connection

Morrill Memorial Library-Zoom
7 p.m.

The Virtual Craft Connection now meets twice per month, the first and third Thursdays of the month. Get together to video chat while crafting and show off

your latest projects and stay in touch. www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/. For more information, email Liz at lreed@minlib.net, or call 781-769-0200, X2.

Mar. 7

American Red Cross Blood Drive

VFW Norwood, 193 Dean St.
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

To make an appointment, visit www.redcrossblood.org.

Mar. 8

Alphabits (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
10 a.m.

Join Miss Nicole for this weekly program focused on learning the letters of the alphabet! Kids will listen to stories and do activities based on a new letter each week. Register for each week and pick up your Alphabits craft kit by Friday so you can follow along every Monday! Please remember to register each week and pick up your kit BEFORE the following Monday. For preschoolers. To register, visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/. Questions? Email the staff at norchild@minlib.net for call 781-769-0200.

Mar. 9

Women's Business Networking Meeting (Zoom)

8 a.m.

The Women's Business Networking (WBN) group is a non-profit organization for women in business or residents of Norwood and surrounding towns. The group meet two mornings per month and in addition to providing referral business, the women share and support business ideas and community events/fundraisers. If you would like more information about the organization, call 781-799-7068, or email wbnofnorwood@gmail.com.

Norwood Toastmasters

Zoom Meeting
6:45 p.m.

The Norwood Toastmasters is dedicated to improving public speaking and leadership skills. They are currently meeting online via ZOOM. For log in, contact-3926@toastmastersclubs.org. For more information, visit <https://norwoodtoastmastersclubs.org/>.

Mar. 11

Zoom Family Story Time

Morrill Memorial Library
4 p.m.

Join Miss Kate for an afternoon story time! Read stories, sing songs and try a few unique activities. This program is geared to ages 0-5 but all ages are welcome to join in! Register each week at www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/.

Mar. 15

Alphabits (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
10 a.m.

Join Miss Nicole for this weekly program focused on learning the letters of the alphabet! Kids will listen to stories and do activities based on a new letter each week. Register for each week and pick up your Alphabits craft kit by Friday so you can follow along every Monday! Please remember to register each week and pick up your kit BEFORE the following Monday. For preschoolers. To register, visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/. Questions? Email the staff at norchild@minlib.net for call 781-769-0200.

Mar. 16

Virtual BINGO

Norwood Recreation Department
4 p.m.

For all ages. FREE. Prizes for winners. For more information,

email cgrande@norwoodma.gov or visit the Norwood Recreation Department Facebook page.

Mar. 17

Virtual Turn the Page Book Group: (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
6:30 p.m.

This month's book selection is "The Swans of Fifth Avenue" by Melanie Benjamin. To learn of available reading resources, register or view discussions, visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/.

Mar. 18

Zoom Family Story Time

Morrill Memorial Library
4 p.m.

Join Miss Kate for an afternoon story time! Read stories, sing songs and try a few unique activities. This program is geared to ages 0-5 but all ages are welcome to join in! Register each week at www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/.

Virtual Craft Connection

Morrill Memorial Library-Zoom
7 p.m.

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Middle School Building Project community Forum (Remote-online)

7 p.m.

Mar. 20

Blood Drive

Norwood Fire & Police Station, 137 Nahatan St.
8 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

To schedule an appointment, login to tinyurl.com/NorwoodP2021. For eligibility questions, BloodDonor@partners.org or call 617-632-3206. Appointments recommended, but walk-ins taken as time allows. Photo id required. As a thank you, donors will receive a Kraft Family Blood Donor Center \$5 Dunkin Donuts gift card.

Mar. 22

Alphabits (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
10 a.m.

Join Miss Nicole for this weekly program focused on learning the letters of the alphabet! Kids will listen to stories and do activities based on a new letter each week. Register for each week and pick up your Alphabits craft kit by Friday so you can follow along every Monday! Please remember to register each week and pick up your kit BEFORE the following Monday. For preschoolers. To register, visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/. Questions? Email the staff at norchild@minlib.net for call 781-769-0200.

Mar. 23

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8 a.m.

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CALENDAR

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Norwood Toastmasters

Zoom Meeting
6:45 p.m.

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<https://norwoodtoastmaster.toastmastersclubs.org/>.

Titles on Tap Book Group (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
7:30 p.m.

Titles on Tap is a social book group for readers in their 20s and 30s and for the young at heart. We go in for stories that are shaken, not stirred, and we don't mind taking our love of lit outside the library walls. Titles on Tap typically meets once a month in the left-hand bar of Napper Tandy's

to eat, however, the meetings are currently virtual during COVID health restrictions. The March title had yet to be announced at press time; stay tuned at www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/.

Mar. 25

Zoom Family Story Time

Morrill Memorial Library
4 p.m.

Join Miss Kate for an afternoon story time! Read stories, sing songs and try a few unique activities. This program is geared to ages 0-5 but all ages are welcome to join in! Register each week at www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/.

Mar. 29

Alphabits (Virtual)

Morrill Memorial Library
10 a.m.

Join Miss Nicole for this weekly program focused on learning the letters of the alphabet! Kids will listen to stories and do activities based on a new letter each week. Register for each

week and pick up your Alphabits craft kit by Friday so you can follow along every Monday! Please remember to register each week and pick up your kit BEFORE the following Monday. For preschoolers. To register, visit www.norwoodlibrary.org/morrillcalendar/. Questions? Email the staff at norchild@minlib.net for call 781-769-0200.

Mar. 30

Virtual BINGO

Norwood Recreation Department
4 p.m.

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Outdoor Dining Returning This Spring

BY MICHELE TARANTO

While outdoor dining last year was basically forced upon restaurants and their patrons in order to adhere to indoor COVID health regulations, it rejuvenated the thrill of the al-fresco experience, an option often reserved for tables with water views. Norwood residents embraced the change and restaurant owners revamped their dining rooms onto parking lots and town sidewalks.

As the warmer weather approaches, Selectmen addressed the necessary accommodations again with Norwood Town Manager Tony Mazzucco at the February 9 meeting. In order for local diners to eat to under Norwood's sunny and starry skies, restaurant owners are encouraged to notify town officials of their intentions to offer these services in 2021.

"They [restaurant owners] need to have their license formally approved and extended and they may want to start that process," Mazzucco said. "Some in March may want to get outside."

While indoor occupancy restrictions made it difficult for restaurants to even break even in 2020, the Massachusetts State

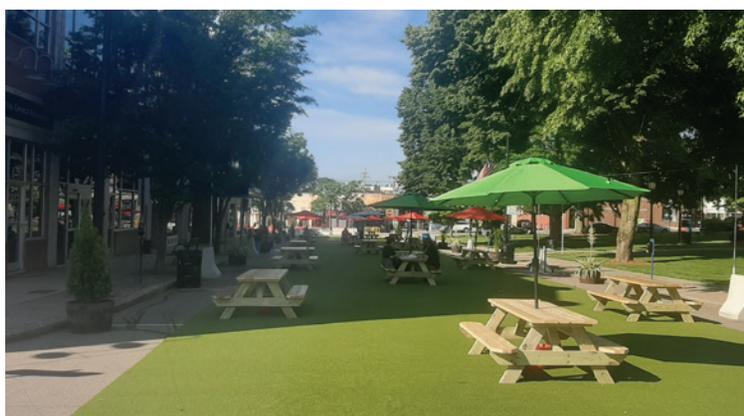
Legislature, under Economic Development Bills, gave easements on state bylaws to the town levels and Mazzucco is hoping this year Norwood will again be able to license and assist local businesses.

"We would certainly hope the legislature would have the wisdom to do something along those lines again," Mazzucco said. Under current state emergency guidelines, it has been pretty easy for us to do [license] and if the state changes that, it is much more complicated process and a much more administrative headache."

Last year, many local residents were able to enjoy a change of scenery after being locked away in their homes with the creation of 'Summer on Central'. Central

St., between Cottage St. E. and Nahatan St., was closed off and transformed into a charming pedestrian zone equipped with picnic tables, chairs, umbrellas, and artificial grass. At any time during the day, it was utilized for a wide range of uses, from informal meetings, to morning coffee, lunch, and even an occasional ice indulgence. Norwood residents will be happy to hear that plans are underway to provide that welcoming destination to grab a few rays as they emerge from the cold, snowy winter.

"We are looking forward to a return of Central St. sometime in the April time frame once we are certain we are through the winter and all the snow is melted," Mazzucco said.





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Wednesday, March 24, 2021

7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

If you have the time and desire to help adult learners improve their literacy skills, we have an opportunity for you. All you need is a high school diploma and sensitivity to the struggles of adult students. Join us for the orientation session to learn more about this opportunity.

COMMITMENT

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LOCATION

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Weekend Commuter Services Suspended on Franklin Line

By BELLA CAGGIANO

For those who have not ridden the Franklin line commuter rail recently should note that a reduced schedule was implemented in January. These changes have been fluid due to changes in ridership to maintain access for transit-critical communities.

These changes vary for different lines to accommodate the changing needs. For Norwood's Franklin line, there is no weekend service available. Schedules are available at MBTA.com and print copies will be available at major stations.

Weekend schedules are not only offered on the Newburyport/Rockport, Framingham/Worcester, Fairmount, Providence, and Middleborough Lines. Throughout the winter, these lines have experienced gains in ridership while other lines, such as Franklin, have remained low throughout the pandemic with approximately 8% of regular weekender ridership during the morning rush hours.

According to the MBTA, new technologies for enhanced cleaning, such as electrostatic sprayers have been implemented to help sanitize passenger areas quickly

while added attention is given to touch surfaces, employee areas and air filtration systems. Coach cars continue a thorough cleaning every 24 hours.

The public's input was solicited with more than 7,000 comments from riders and stakeholders to shape this plan to continue to accommodate demand for commuters which is approximately 10% of pre-COVID levels.

For access to the current MBTA schedule and learn about future changes to timetables, visit MBTA.com.

Increased Real Estate Numbers in Norfolk County

By MICHELE TARANTO

While many industries are still facing financial challenges with COVID-19 restrictions, real estate sales continue to post increases within Norfolk County. According to the Norfolk Registry of Deeds, 1,285 deeds were recorded in January, a 2% in-

crease over last year's January document volume. Average sale price also rose in residential and commercial sales, increasing by 6% over 2019, to \$951,679.85.

"The Norfolk County real estate market has continued to be busy," Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell noted. "Histori-

cally, January is one of the winter months that does not see as much real estate activity. The real estate numbers are robust, especially considering that last year's January real estate numbers were prior to the onset of COVID-19 and the COVID-19 emergency declarations."

The Norfolk County lending market also displayed a busy month with 4,189 mortgages recorded during the January, a 75% increase over 2019. Total amount of money borrowed was over 1.8 billion, a 42% increase compared to January 2019.

"While some of the mortgages are due to purchases and sales of real estate, there are a large number of individuals and families taking advantage of historically low interest rates by refinancing existing mortgages," Register O'Donnell said. "Individuals have different motivations to refinance. Some refinance to reduce their monthly payments, others to take some years off their debt while still others are using the money to pay for home improvements and other capital expenditures."

There are many factors that are contributing to the drastic rise in lending activity; continued high demand, limited inventory,



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NUMBERS
continued on page 22

Real Estate Corner

Register O'Donnell Reminds Homeowners of Need to File Mortgage Discharges

The Norfolk Registry of Deeds, even during this Covid-19 pandemic, has been very busy recording land documents. In calendar year 2020, there were over 179,000 documents recorded at the Norfolk Registry of Deeds. A sizeable portion of this document volume were the 45,669 mortgages recorded representing a 54 (54%) percent increase in calendar year 2020 over 2019.

Given this huge increase in mortgage activity, Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell advises Norfolk County homeowners about the need to file a mortgage discharge after their mortgage has been paid off.

"As consumers, we all need to borrow money," Register O'Donnell stated. "There are many reasons why consumers borrow money- to purchase a house, to make home improvements, or to help pay for ever increasing tuition payments of our children. The borrowing of money involving real estate leads to a mortgage being recorded against the title of that real estate.

When a mortgage has been paid off, a mortgage discharge document needs to be recorded with the Registry of Deeds to clear a homeowner's property title relative to that loan. This is particularly important in light of the thousands of homeowners who have been taking advantage of historically low interest rates to refinance their mortgages. It should be noted a discharge is a document (typically one-two pages) issued by the lender, usually with a title such as "Discharge of Mortgage" or "Satisfaction of Mortgage." During this busy period of refinancing, your old mortgages are being paid off. As a consumer, you want to make sure a discharge has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds which tells the world that that mortgage has been paid off.

"In some instances, mortgage discharges are filed directly by banks or settlement closing attorneys with the Registry as part of a property sale or as a result of a refinancing transaction. In other

cases, the mortgage discharge is sent to the property owner who then becomes responsible for making sure the document is recorded. Whether or not the mortgage discharge is recorded by the lending institution or the individual property owner, it is imperative that the property owner makes sure all necessary documents have been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

If you are looking to check your title, and make sure all your mortgages have been properly discharged. Norfolk County homeowners can access the Registry's online records at www.norfolkdeeds.org. By going to the Online Research section of our website, you can verify that all mortgages associated with the property have been discharged. Please remember not having a mortgage discharged will result in a title issue and thereby impact the process of selling one's home."

The Register further noted that there have been cases where no discharge has been recorded against a long paid off mortgage.

"Unfortunately, some of the lending institutions that provided funds for these mortgages are no longer in existence," Register O'Donnell stated. "In other cases, financial entities have merged with another lending institution."

If a property owner needs to retrieve an original discharge of a mortgage and is unclear which lending institution is now responsible for providing the document, an option is to contact the Massachusetts Division of Banks at 1-800-495-2265, x-1, and then x-61501. Another option is to access the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation website, www.fdic.gov; then find the BankFind tab approximately half way down the home page, put in the lending institution in question, then click on the lending institution link and you will be able to determine who has responsibility for the mortgage.

When recording a mortgage discharge, the original docu-

ment is required. The Registry of Deeds by law cannot accept photo copies or faxed copies of documents. The filing fee, set by state statute, is \$106.

"After paying off all the mortgages on their property, homeowners want to know they have clear title to their property, especially if they are contemplating selling," Register O'Donnell concluded. "Knowing what steps need to be taken to ensure all paid off mortgages have been properly discharged will go a long way in giving the homeowner assurances that they have clear title to their property. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is that homeowners make sure their mortgage discharge has been filed with the Registry of Deeds once their mortgage has been paid off."

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is staffed with a team of customer service representatives who can be reached Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at 781-461-6101. These representatives have been trained in researching documents and are well versed on the subject of mortgage discharges and what, if necessary, needs to be done to clear title to a property.

To learn more about these and other Registry of Deeds events and initiatives like them at facebook.com/NorfolkDeeds or follow on twitter.com/NorfolkDeeds and instagram.com/NorfolkDeeds.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is located at 649 High St., in Dedham. The Registry is a resource for homeowners, title examiners, mortgage lenders, municipalities and others with a need for secure, accurate, accessible land record information. All land record research information can be found on the Registry's website www.norfolkdeeds.org. Residents in need of assistance can contact the Registry of Deeds Customer Service Center via telephone at (781) 461-6101, or email us at registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

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Real Estate Corner

A Good Deed by Neighboring Dedham Fire Department

The Norfolk Registry of Deeds “Good Deeds” articles often deal with real estate and home ownership issues. Other times, a current event, a matter involving history, or just something of interest. With this article due I started looking at and writing about Groundhog Day which occurred on February 2, 2021. This is the day a groundhog, most notably Punxsutawney Phil, comes out of his home and predicts how much time is left of winter. There is even a movie film entitled “Groundhog Day” starring Bill Murray where everyday he wakes up reliving the same day over and over again. How many of us have felt that this is what has been taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic?

There is a saying “Life is what happens as you are making plans.” My plan and words for the “Good Deeds” article went right out the door when I received a call at 6:50 A.M. on Saturday morning February 6, 2021. I will get into what happened – but this “Good Deeds” message first and foremost is “Thank you to the Dedham Fire Department for responding to and knocking down a fire that took place at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Building.”

That early Saturday morning call I received was to get to the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds building in Dedham. There was not only a fire alarm sounding but there was a fire in the building. The fast and timely

response of the Dedham Fire Department was crucial in preventing what could have been a disastrous fire at the beautiful and historic Registry building in Dedham square. No one got hurt in the fire. No firefighter nor other first responders got hurt. Property can be replaced but individuals not getting hurt or worse is what is most important.

How many times do firefighters respond to fire alarms going off and it was nothing? Not in the case of this call to the Registry building during the early hours of a Saturday morning. Firefighters, police officers, and all first responders have to be ever vigilant and on top of these calls because the situations they walk in to may not be “false” or “routine.” In



this case, what was later to be determined to be an electrical fire caused by a light fixture ballast was taking place in a first-floor basement area of the Registry building. The firefighters of the Dedham Fire Department were on top of things as they came into the Registry Building using their training and skills. The fire personnel did a wonderful job in containing the fire and putting the fire out. You also see the work the Fire department does after a fire is put out. The firefighters start sorting through debris, putting items on a separate tarp while other fire personnel as well as police personnel start review-

ing evidence left behind by the fire. Thank you to Dedham Deputy Police Chief Mike Buckley and Massachusetts State Police Detective Sergeant Tom Berletti of the Office of the State Fire Marshall for their admirable professionalism and thoroughness after the fire was put out.

The words I kept repeating when I was at the Registry the morning of the fire was “It could have been worse.” These are the words I continue to repeat when asked since about the fire. Some might say what is the big deal of

GOOD DEED
continued on page 21



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Real Estate Corner

GOOD DEED

continued from page 20

putting out a fire at the Registry of Deeds Building. As Register of Deeds with a responsibility to make sure land records get recorded and preserved, that deal with the biggest asset most of us have, our homes, my biggest concern and fear over the years has been the Registry of Deeds due to fire burning down. Many hours of staff time have been spent looking at disaster recovery and business continuity planning.

This beautiful and historic edifice built in 1903 has received extensive repairs and renovations culminating with a building rededication in 2019. A fire that destroyed this building would be a loss from a historical and preservationist perspective. But what about the records, indexes, and

land information dating back to Norfolk County's founding in 1793? What about the modernization initiatives that have brought computers, servers and other technological equipment into the Registry Building? Be assured the records have been backed up on off-site computers as well as put on microfilm that is also stored at off-site facilities. However, the business impact of not having a Registry of Deeds Building in a key component of our economy, the real estate sector, would be incalculable. Buyers of homes, sellers of homes, lenders and banks, carpenters, developers, house builders, real estate brokers, attorneys, title examiners, engineers, house appraisers, home inspectors, tradesman, and so many others have livelihoods that depend on what takes place at the Registry of Deeds Building. So, to me putting out a fire

at the Registry of Deeds Building is a real big deal as it saved the Registry of Deeds Building and all that takes place, as well as the ripple effects of what takes place, in that building.

My thanks to all first responders everywhere for what you do everyday especially with the difficulties the Coronavirus pandemic has brought on. I am so grateful to the Dedham Fire Department for their professionalism in putting out this fire. In thanking these first responders that morning I could tell that they felt they were "Just doing their job." For the Dedham firefighters it may be just doing their jobs, but the effect of what they prevented is so much more. The firefighters of Dedham did and do their jobs exceptionally well. **THANK YOU DEDHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT.**



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| 32 Packard Road | 40 Florence Ave | 28 Abbey Road |
| 4 Lenox Street | 116 Oak Street | 33 Abbey Road |
| 64 Oak Road | 45 Maple Street | 29 Richardson Rd |
| 50 Monroe St | 113 Webster St | 1 Cannonball St |
| 299 Railroad | 30 Driftwood Dr | 73 Spring Street |
| 57 Westminster St | 117 Walnut Ave | 56 Augustus Ave |
| 1521 Washington St | 45 Lyons Drive | 99 Clear Pond Dr |
| 17 Second St | 85 Springdale Ave | 1025 Hancock St |
| 102 Rosemary St | 7 Pettees Pond | 130 University Ave |
| 32 Nottingham Dr | 159 Cottage St | 1 Lenox Street |
| 14 Walters Road | 45 Winter Street | 145 High Street |
| 21 Cushing Rd | 55 Winter Street | 35 Abbey Road |



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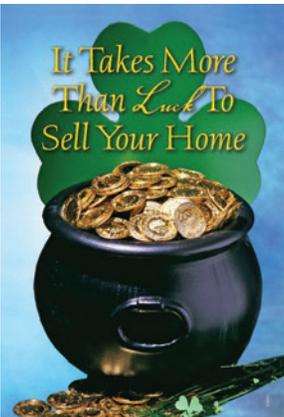
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NUMBERS

continued from page 18

and historically low interest rates. Those in the real estate market, however, may see some changes in 2021.

“There has been a strong demand for housing, single family housing particular, coupled with a limited supply of available housing stock and historically low interest rates which could be motivating buyers to do what is necessary to secure housing,” Register O’Donnell said. “The growth in numbers seen in 2020 continues into 2021. However, there are expectations that for 2021 many of the numbers may not be as expansive as what took place in 2020.”

Register O’Donnell is watching the foreclosure market very closely as the moratorium on foreclosures during the pandemic in 2020 was lifted on October, 17, 2020.

“During January of 2021, there was only 1 foreclosure deed recorded as a result of foreclosure processes taking place in Norfolk County,” Register O’Donnell said. “Additionally, there were 7 Notices to Foreclosure Mortgages, the first step in the foreclosure process, recorded here in Norfolk County. A foreclosure recording is very impactful on those being foreclosed on. These numbers are extremely low especially when you consider in January of 2019, pre-COVID, there were 46 Notices to Foreclosure Mortgages and 15 foreclosure Deeds. The foreclosure numbers in the future bear watching given

the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has also been working in close cooperation with Attorney General Maura Healey’s office to ensure there are no abuses being perpetrated against homeowners while the COVID-19 state of emergency is ongoing.”

In Norwood, the January, 2021 real estate numbers are very favorable for single family homes. There was a 45% increase in home sales from January, 2020, to January 2021. Average sale prices also rose by 12.5% and spent significantly less time on the open market.

For condominiums, the numbers vary with an increase in total sales, but the average sale price dipped by \$11,384.

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Norwood Year Over Year January Statistics

	2021	2020
Single Family		
Number of Sales	22	12
Average Sale Price	\$569,059	\$497,628
Average Days on Market	24	38
Condominiums		
Number of Sales	15	7
Average Sale Price	\$424,187	\$435,571
Average Days on Market	65	79



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