

LEGO Artist Depicts Historic R.I. Buildings

BY GRACE ALLEN

Andy Grover taught physics at King Philip High School for 19 years. By most accounts, he was a popular, quirky teacher who had a knack for making a difficult subject fun and interesting. Former students, then, might not be surprised to learn that his next chapter involves LEGO bricks, the ubiquitous multicolored building toy.

Grover has been using the bricks to construct models of older buildings in the Providence area in a quest to preserve and draw attention to their histories. While the state is full of significant architecture like the Newport mansions, Grover believes that many of Rhode Island's public schools and libraries, among other structures, are just as beautiful but are often overlooked and underappreciated by the public. His goal is to change that, one brick at a time.

"These buildings, especially the public schools, are absolutely gorgeous and historic



Former KPHS physics teacher Andy Grover recreates historic buildings with LEGO bricks.

too yet they are not considered landmarks," said Grover, a Providence resident. "When these buildings were built, I guess the values at the time were different. Because something built for the American public back then was meant to convey importance, strength, and beauty. And they did a great job of that."

Grover, 41, is a product of Rhode Island public schools. He went to Brown University to study math and science and then Fitchburg State University for a master's in science education. He also took classes at the Rhode Island

LEGO

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Veelenturf, center, with Juan Diego Vasquez's Legal Cabinet.

Norfolk Native Helps Draft "Rights of Nature" Law in Panama

BY GRACE ALLEN

Does nature have legal rights? Activists in a fast-growing global movement believe so, and thanks to a Norfolk native, Panama is poised

to become just the third country in the world to recognize the Rights of Nature in its constitution.

PANAMA

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Your Money, Your Independence

Yes, Backdoor Roth and Roth conversions are still open to all

Recall the news about Congress limiting retirement savings strategies including eligibility for Roth IRA conversions and eliminating Backdoor Roth?

Never mind.

Those were “proposals” in failed Build Back Better (BBB) legislation by the House of Representatives.

Does a revised BBB include the same proposals? Could the Senate remove during negotiations? Possible.

If passed, would it be retroactive for 2022? Very unlikely as a logistical nightmare for HR depts, administrators, IRS, and accountants.

In short, proceed as you were.

Why Roth IRAs?

Roth accounts are comprised of after-tax money and contributions offer no tax deductions.

A Roth offers tax-free growth potential, tax-free income distributions, and has no Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs). Recall the government requires Traditional IRAs to have a percentage withdrawn each year after age 72 and made taxable, regardless of need for funds.

A Roth should be the last account withdrawn in retirement. Therefore it has the longest

investment time horizon and should hold more growth-oriented investments than Traditional IRAs or taxable accounts.

What is a Backdoor Roth IRA?

A legal way around the income limits (\$144K Single or Head of Household, \$214K Married, Filing Jointly for 2022) preventing contributions to Roth accounts. One contributes to a Traditional IRA, then converts to a Roth with tax implications.

What is a Roth conversion?

In moving savings from a traditional IRA into a Roth IRA, the conversion amount is taxed as ordinary income in the year of conversion.

Initially, only incomes (AGI) under \$100K were allowed to do Roth conversions, but in 2010 Congress removed income limits, allowing anyone to do Roth conversions. Ironically, Build Back Better proposed income levels to be put back in place.

Should you do a Roth conversion?

It depends. Beyond your current tax situation, age, goals, and cash to pay taxes, there are several future considerations for analysis:



Glenn Brown

- Will there be future years of lower taxable earnings to more favorably convert?
- Have you projected your RMDs at age 72 and the resulting new tax bracket?
- Will your state of residence change, if so what changes in taxation?
- Your philosophy of future taxation by governments?
- What are your estate planning wishes?

Other considerations:

The pro-rata rule and taxes.

When converting, IRS combines all traditional IRA balances and asks which was nondeductible contributions, to determine what portion will not be taxable. The IRS doesn't allow for choosing to convert only after-tax money.

Best to convert at year-end.

Reduces range of Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) variables and improves converting to the top of the current tax bracket.

Not all-or-nothing. You can develop a plan to spread conversions over several years, even skip a year or two as needed pending MAGI levels and ability to pay taxes with non-IRA assets.

Before moving forward, work with your Certified Financial Planner to build your analysis. Once a Roth Conversion is done, it's done, as IRS no longer lets you unwind (recharacterize).

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

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

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Dogs Now Prohibited from Norfolk's Playing Fields

Effective immediately, dogs are prohibited on or at Norfolk's playing fields at any time under the jurisdiction of the Norfolk Recreation Commission. This includes the fields at the Freeman-Kennedy School and the Pond Street Recreation Complex. Dogs are already prohibited on playgrounds.

Dogs on a leash will be permitted on the walking track that encircles the fields at the Pond Street Recreation Complex.

This decision was made after an incident was reported to the Recreation Commission by Norfolk Animal Control Officer Hilary Cohen, involving a young

child who was harmed by a dog on Norfolk's playing fields.

After lengthy discussion by the Recreation Commission, along with input from Animal Control Officer Cohen and other towns, the Commission agreed that the decision to prohibit dogs comes down to protecting the health and safety of all residents and field users, especially the children who are most vulnerable. This decision was made while recognizing that many conscientious dog owners obey the rules.

Violations are ticketable offenses with fines up to \$100 and will be enforced.

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LEGO

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School of Design during summer breaks, something he said was “a real treat.” He considers himself a creator, not an artist, although he is quite talented in drawing. He calls the decision to use LEGO bricks to depict cultural landmarks a “kooky idea” that works.

“It’s the right medium, I think,” he said. “It’s part of all of our childhoods and is accessible to everybody. While it seems whimsical, you can make very serious points with it at the same time and I think that’s the best way to generate discussion and appeal to people. Maybe that’s what I got from my time as a teacher, that the best way to teach serious stuff is to have an element of play to it.”

Grover has built models of Warwick’s recently-closed Aldrich and Gorton junior high schools, Cranston high schools, Providence’s Asa Messer school, and the Providence Public Library, among others. He notes that many of the schools he depicts were built to accommodate the burgeoning immigrant population of the late 19th century, and their aesthetic and cultural value should be acknowledged, celebrated, and preserved.

His works have been displayed at libraries, schools, and PVDFest, the annual arts event that takes place throughout the streets of Providence every summer. He has won Rhode Island State Council for the Arts (RISCA) grants to purchase LEGO bricks, which can run into hundreds of dollars. But Grover has also received donations of bricks from the basements of people who have seen his work and attended the schools he builds, and those donations are especially meaningful because people will share their recollections of the schools with him.

“That’s exactly what I am trying to do, connect with people’s shared histories of these cultural landmarks,” he said.

In January, Grover was chosen to be the LEGO Artist in Residence at the Warrior Run School District in Turbotville, PA. The district is constructing a new elementary school and Grover was commissioned to construct a model of the building. He will also be working with the students and teachers via Zoom to incorporate lesson plans around the LEGO project.

“I was touched when this district reached out to me,” said Grover. “I’d never heard of this

town before but I immediately got a sense of their values. The school building will really be very nice. It has some classic features and shows you can build something in the 21st century that makes a powerful, strong statement.”

Grover hopes his LEGO projects get people to think about the public buildings that are a defining characteristic of the state. He wants people to appreciate the cultural value of these structures, noting that some of the schools, in particular, have educated over 100,000 students each over the years.

“The Newport mansions are considered a symbol of Rhode Island, but why?” he asked. “I don’t have any connection to them. They’re not important to me. The same could be said for other buildings we consider landmarks. Why are they important? What’s the difference between a brownstone in New York City and a triple decker in Woonsocket? To me, nothing except what we project onto them because we tend to look at them with classist eyes. I’m asking people to rethink that a little bit. Maybe some places we don’t think are important, well, maybe they actually are.”

To learn more about Grover’s LEGO projects, visit his website



Andy Grover working on a model of Cranston High School East.

(<https://groverlicious.me>) or follow him on Instagram (rile-goartist) or Facebook (Rhode Island Lego Artist). Contact him at rilegoartist@gmail.com with any questions or to discuss commissioning a LEGO building.

Visit the Providence Public Library to see Grover’s LEGO depiction of that structure, currently the only one of his models on public display. It’s located on the third floor of the library.

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Local Road Deaths Dipped even as State Saw Spike

The 19% increase in traffic deaths state-wide last year, revealed in recently updated state data, caught Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey by surprise.

His office has seen a decrease of more than 22% during the same time frame.

"The Department of Transportation made public that there were 409 road fatalities state-wide last year, up from 343 in 2020. That is also 14% above their 5-year average of 358 deaths a year," District Attorney Morrissey said. "On Norfolk County roads, we saw 36 fatalities, down from 44 in 2020."

The county has averaged 36 fatalities a year since 2017, he said.

District Attorney Morrissey has a team of 11 attorneys with advanced training in motor vehicle homicide and crash investigation. They respond to the scenes of major collisions to assist police in those investigations. "Having the attorney who will prosecute a case involved from the very beginning has proven very productive," Morrissey said.

Traffic safety and the prevention of impaired and distracted driving have been central efforts of Morrissey's terms as District Attorney. His office has sponsored TIPS training for alcohol servers around the region and underwritten ACTAR crash reconstruction training for municipal police.

He has provided prevention programming to 31 Norfolk County high schools, including grants for substance-free post-prom and post-graduation celebrations, partnering with AAA to bring in their Shifting Gears education program for new drivers on marijuana impairment, and bringing the Arbella Insurance Distractology safe-driving program to Norfolk County High Schools through his peer leadership program, among other initiatives.

"It is hard to attribute the disparity to any single factor," District Attorney Morrissey said. "We are going to continue to work with our partners in the schools and local police departments to prevent every death we can."

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PANAMA

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Callie Veelenturf is an award-winning scientist and the founder of the Leatherback Project, an organization dedicated to the study and preservation of the leatherback sea turtle, a critically endangered species. The 29-year-old conservationist is already making her mark on the world, but it was a personal experience that set her on her current path.

After reaching a settlement in a sexual harassment suit against her employer in 2019, Veelenturf found herself with time to reflect on the experience. She came to realize that what she had been through could also be applied to her conservation efforts. She had legal rights and had exercised them. But what about nature, she wondered? Why doesn't nature have legal rights, too? As it turns out, she's not the first person to ask that question.

In 1972, the radical idea that nature has rights was introduced via the seminal law review essay, "Should Trees Have Standing." Under most laws, nature is considered property and as such can be damaged or destroyed by the property owner. Fifty years later, the idea that an ecosystem, plant, or animal species is entitled to legal status as a rights-bearing entity is no longer an unusual concept. Activists note that the doctrine is rooted in traditional Indigenous philosophies, which teach respect for nature by viewing humans and nature as part of the same family.

Currently in Panama studying leatherback turtle nesting grounds, Veelenturf has seen first-hand how the turtles are being illegally harvested for human consumption and trade of their parts for medicinal remedies, or to make spurs for cockfighting events. With her own experience weighing on her mind, she pondered the environmental injustices she was witnessing almost daily.



Norfolk native Callie Veelenturf.

"I was trying to process my own negative experience and figuring out how to grow from it," she said. "I did a lot of reading and learned about the Rights of Nature movement and found it fascinating. We have this anthropocentric perspective and nature simply does not have any rights within our legal system. What I saw specifically with the sea turtles made me wonder how challenging it would be to draft a Rights of Nature law here and present it. How open would the people of Panama be to this? I thought I would try."

A colleague facilitated a meeting between Veelenturf and Senator Juan Diego Vasquez and Panama's First Lady, Yazmin Colon de Cortizo, to propose her idea. They were supportive, so Veelenturf worked with the senator's legal advisors and the Minister of the Environment to draft articles of the proposed law, which recognizes the rights of nature to exist, persist and regenerate. She also worked with the U.S.-based Earth Law Center, experts in advocating for the rights of nature around the world.

"They were really instrumental in making the law as strong as it is," Veelenturf said. "I knew I didn't have the expertise needed to flesh out a law that had all these principles in it. There are some really exciting clauses in the law that say that if there's any doubt that a certain action might affect nature or a species, the ruling has to be

in favor of nature. That makes this law just so much more enforceable."

While there are many environmental protection laws in the U.S., they are often structured in a way that simply puts limits on destructive activities by regulating how much damage can legally occur, notes Veelenturf. The Clean Water Act, for example, exempts urban and agricultural runoff into U.S. waters.

"These laws are still allowing you to do damage," she said. "A Rights of Nature law is actually more enforceable than other environmental laws because it always comes down to the fact that the species has rights. All you have to do is prove that the actions of the individuals or corporation are endangering the rights of the species and it becomes illegal. The species is then entitled to legal representation in a court of law by someone who will act on its behalf."

In 2008, Ecuador became the first country to formally recognize and implement the Rights of Nature in its constitution, and Bolivia followed suit in 2010. Other countries, including the United States, have local ordinances that recognize the Rights of Nature at some level, but until now, no other country has implemented such sweeping ecological governance.

Veelenturf has been so inspired by the movement that she has started a campaign called Rights for Nature, hoping to connect and work with scientists around the world to propose similar legislation in other countries. The international initiative includes environmentalists from Guinea, Ghana, Cameroon, Uruguay, and the United States.

Local Town Pages first profiled Veelenturf in the October 2019 Norfolk Wrentham edition. The young biologist, a 2010 King Philip graduate, studied marine biology at the University of Rhode Island and then earned a master's degree in biology at Purdue



University. She is a National Geographic grant recipient and has earned the designation of National Geographic Explorer. Her quest to protect the earth's oceans and the leatherback sea turtle has taken her to Latin America, the Caribbean, and West Africa. She has spoken three times at the United Nations. In addition to managing the Leatherback Project, the Rights for Nature campaign, and other conservation projects, Veelenturf is currently applying to PhD programs in conservation biology.

Most people agree that climate change can no longer be ignored. Veelenturf and other conservationists are at the forefront of radical action that they hope will tip the scales in favor of nature and the planet before it's too late.

"Acknowledging the Rights of Nature in a legal sense could create a cascading system change," said Veelenturf. "If everyone, from private citizens to governments, had to consider the rights of the natural world in all decision-making, this could be revolutionary."

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Annual Bubba Strong Bowling Tournament set for February 27

The 7th annual Bubba Strong Bowling Tournament will be held on Sunday, February 27 from 6 to 8 p.m. at North Bowl Lanes in N. Attleboro.

The event's proceeds help fund scholarships for graduating

King Philip High School seniors impacted by a serious illness, as well as for the Bubba's Bus initiative which provides pediatric cancer families transportation gift cards for travel to and from Mass General Hospital.

This year, all 40 lanes at North Bowl will be open. Teams of six players are welcome. Awards will be given out in several categories.

Register at www.bubbastrong.com. Bubba Strong is a 501c3 charity.

Mid-Session Beacon Hill Review

BY SENATOR BECCA RAUSCH

As your voice and advocate in the State Senate, I am very proud to share several 2021 accomplishments, including a robust COVID-19 response, billions of dollars invested into our communities, and the advancement of critically needed reforms through the legislative process on Beacon Hill.

Safety for You and Your Family: My top priority has been advocating for measures that keep you and your family safe and stable throughout this public health crisis. Last year alone, my team and I helped more than 500

constituents access government benefits and supports, including unemployment assistance and food security. I also hosted monthly virtual office hours, senior coffees, and two youth legislative forums to remain accessible to constituents through the ups and downs of this pandemic.

In addition to crafting and advocating for school masking legislation and the COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Act, I also worked in partnership with public health experts, community organizations, and my legislative colleagues to pressure the Baker Administration to implement

policies to keep our communities safe and local economy afloat through this crisis. Our achievements included universal masking in all K-12 schools, paid time off for families and caregivers taking children to COVID-19 vaccination appointments, implementing a COVID vaccine pre-registration system for mass vaccination sites, and delivering a multi-pronged COVID-19 Action Plan to the Governor.

Safety during these difficult times also means addressing violence and discrimination. Amid the rise of conspiracy theories and disinformation about vaccines and COVID-19, we have also seen an alarming spike in antisemitism, racism, and xenophobia on social media, in our public schools, and from elected officials. It is our collective responsibility to call out hate and injustice whenever we see it. I collaborated with Robert Trestan, Executive Director of ADL New England, to pen a GBH commentary piece explaining the rise in antisemitism within the antivax movement here in Massachusetts and across our nation. As your State Senator, I have publicly condemned abject acts of hate, offered to engage in constructive dialogue in communities, secured tens of thousands of dollars to fund diversity, equity, and inclusion work in our district, and voted to support the Genocide Education Act, now law, which requires that genocide education be taught in Massachusetts public schools before the end of high school. Unfortunately, COVID-19 is not the only pandemic we're up against.

Funding Our Communities' Recovery: The Legislature passed a \$4 billion bill to allocate federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to equitably invest in our continued recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. This bill delivers broad spectrum supports for our communities' health, including mental and behavioral health, housing security, our environment, and workforce development. I secured numerous amendments to support our

district and the Commonwealth at large, including targeted funding to assist women re-entering the workforce, providing post-traumatic stress care for medical personnel, and \$1,000,000 in investments for local housing, transportation, water infrastructure, and other projects in our district.

I secured several victories in the FY 2022 budget as well, including \$500,000 for local projects across our district, a pilot program for a statewide youth mental health support text line, funding for the Department of Public Health to hire personnel with expertise in combatting vaccine hesitancy, and funding for New Hope's new domestic violence shelter and an updated facility for the Attleboro Center for Children.

Legislative Victories: The gears of the legislative process are turning, and many bills are moving through their respective committees. Committees must take action on every timely filed bill by February 2, 2022, so we can expect an increase in floor votes and legislation headed to the governor's desk in the coming months.

My Senate colleagues and I have already advanced some game-changing bills. In October, we passed comprehensive election reform legislation, strengthened by adoption of several amendments I filed. The bill provides election day voter registration, permanent mail-in voting, improved jail-based voting access, and upgrades to our elections infrastructure. My amendment work also elevated issues still left to address, like ballot drop box ratios and paid time off for voting. We also passed the Mental Health ABC Act to improve access to culturally competent care, support and boost our Commonwealth's mental health care workforce, reduce barriers to emergency treatment, and more. This month, we again passed a bill to make government-issued IDs more accessible to people experiencing homelessness to facilitate access to critically needed

services across our Commonwealth. These bills now await action by the House.

As Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture (ENRA), I also worked to pass the law that improves conditions for egg-laying hens while keeping our egg supply available and affordable.

Moving Forward: There is still so much work to be done. This session I filed more than 40 bills designed to advance election reform, good governance, public health, reproductive justice, climate action, and intersectional justice and equity. This month, my lead climate action legislation cleared the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy, and I anticipate more favorable reports on my bills in the coming weeks. My team and I continue working hard on your behalf to shepherd these bills through the legislative process.

It is my great honor to represent the Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex District in the Massachusetts State Senate, and I'll continue putting my proven leadership to work for you. Please reach out to me if you need assistance, have thoughts on policy, or want to check in. My office phone number is 617-722-1555, my email is becca.rausch@masenate.gov, and you can sign up for a personal office hours appointment at beccarauscha.com/office-hours.

As we begin 2022, I wish you and your loved ones strength, health, resilience, and joy. I look forward to everything we will accomplish together this year.

Senator Becca Rausch represents the Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex District, comprised of Attleboro, Franklin, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, North Attleborough, Plainville, Sherborn, Wayland, Wellesley, and Wrentham. Senator Rausch serves as the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture and the Senate Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight.



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KP DECA Earns International DECA Honors



King Philip High School's business program known as DECA was recently awarded the DECA Member & Chapter Campaign Awards for the 2021-2022 school year. The results were announced on decadirect.org.

Each year, DECA recognizes leading chapters that have built strong local programs focused on serving an exceptional number of members, advisors, alumni and business partners. These chapters and individuals dedicate their year to academic and career preparation, community service projects, membership recruitment, school outreach activities and other DECA-related endeavors. The chapter's advisor and student leaders have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to DECA.

DECA's membership campaign is designed to help chapters grow by making the DECA experience available to more student members, keeping alumni

involved and engaging professional members such as administrators, teachers, parents, and business partners.

DECA's promotional campaign provides chapter members an opportunity to share with their school and community what DECA is all about and how their chapter is making a positive impact on its members and community.

In DECA's community service campaign, chapters held a community service activity, engaged at least 75% of its members, and created at least one form of publicity or promotion.

"I am very proud of our chapter for being awarded Thrive level for both of these honors," said Mr. Dow, KP DECA Advisor.

Of the 3,000 DECA chapters, only 450 chapters earned recognition in DECA's chapter campaigns and only 775 chapters earned recognition in DECA membership campaign.

Guest Column

The Homework of Democracy

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

It is sad to have to put it in such blunt terms, but our democracy is on a slippery slope because of ignorance and apathy. In school, if you don't do your homework, you predictably will choose the wrong answer when exams roll around. In politics, it works the same way.

Nurturing a democracy requires serious study. The elementary work begins at the local level. The correct "answers," i.e., qualified candidates, must be carefully selected lest a bad seed germinate and take root. Problem is, many voters consider local elections too elementary and focus instead on the state and national contests. Voter turnout for local elections is abysmally low. Many an autocrat with dictatorial inclinations gained a foothold that was likely facilitated by supporters who failed to do their homework. This provided the gateway to an eventual stranglehold on democratic principles.

Voter apathy is understandable if our younger citizens are fed an educational diet deficient in knowledge needed to create informed, involved citizens. Often, civics classes at the elementary level are either absent or lack needed emphasis to get the job done. An understanding of how government works in a democracy, at all levels, should be one of the requirements for graduation. Teachers should encourage mock elections and motivate promising

students with leadership qualities to consider a public career.

The midterm elections are rapidly approaching and the impact of the results could endanger our democracy if the electorate is not awakened to that possibility. When Ben Franklin

left the hall in which the Constitutional Convention was held in 1787, he was asked, "What kind of government have you given us, Dr. Franklin?" His reply was, "A republic, if you can keep it." That challenge has never been more apparent.

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Metacomet Public Health Alliance: Expanding Public Health Services

BY GRACE ALLEN

The Metacomet Public Health Alliance was formed in the spring of 2021 as a new regional health department serving the towns of Norfolk, Wrentham and Franklin. Thanks to a shared services grant, the initiative is expanding public health services in all three towns.

According to Jeanine Murphy, the Regional Senior Public Health Nurse, initial alliance efforts have been concentrated on providing expanded inspectional services, public health nursing services, and emergency preparedness coordination for the three towns.



Jeanine Murphy, left, and Lauren Hewitt, Metacomet Public Health Alliance Nurses.

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“The three contiguous communities recognize that working together on some public health challenges can be more effective than addressing them alone as individuals,” said Murphy.

Blythe Robinson, Norfolk’s town administrator, says the alliance has allowed the town to greatly expand its public health services. The arrangement means Norfolk now has access to Wrentham’s public health nurses, which made it possible to hold both a COVID vaccine clinic and a flu clinic last fall, as well as the weekly “Ask the Nurse” clinics in the senior center. In the past, Norfolk had to contract with the Visiting Nurses Association for public health nursing services.

The medical equipment loan program has also greatly expanded for all three towns.

The alliance also means that Norfolk now shares a dedicated public health agent to handle mandated food inspections and housing code issues, among other things. In the past, the role was a contracted, very part-time position.

“With technology, our food inspections are better tracked and managed, and we can follow up

on other matters that arise in a timelier manner,” noted Robinson.

Franklin has hired a public health nurse and an epidemiologist to assist with contract tracing, and the towns are working collaboratively to provide not only public health nursing services but expanded disease surveillance as well because of the overwhelming number of positive COVID cases.

Public Health Nurse Murphy says the pandemic and state funds for the grant expedited the formation of the alliance but plans for its formation had already been in the works. The Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health is overseeing the grant, along with Kevin Sweet, Wrentham’s town administrator. Wrentham serves as the lead community for the alliance.

Prior to the formation of the alliance, Wrentham’s public health nurses were focused on community outreach and education. The onset of the pandemic in March of 2020, however, drastically changed their job. Their primary focus now is to

disseminate constantly changing quarantine and isolation information to the public, as well as run COVID clinics in a quest to get all residents vaccinated.

“We still keep in touch with our vulnerable population and we assist with referrals to appropriate resources,” explained Murphy. “We will make home visits if needed but we are encouraging families to take a more active role in the care of their loved ones.”

She added that the nurses continue to work with Wrentham’s Housing Authority as well as the Senior Center to make sure the town’s seniors are getting the care they need. Residents are encouraged to contact the nurses’ office for loans of electronic pill dispensers, made available by a grant from the Sweatt Fund. The Sweatt Fund, intended for the care of Wrentham’s town common and trees, is also used for expenditures not covered by the town budget.

The Metacomet Public Health Alliance will soon have a website up and running, noted Murphy.

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Fire Departments Receive Safety Grants

Norfolk and Wrentham Each Awarded \$19,000

The Baker-Polito Administration announced \$5 million in grant funding awarded to 306 Massachusetts fire departments from the FY22 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program.

This program enables fire departments, including Norfolk and Wrentham's, to purchase a variety of equipment that will make firefighters' jobs safer.

This is the second year that funding has been awarded for this purpose as part of a \$25 million bond bill filed by the Baker-Polito Administration to support firefighter safety and health in the coming years.

"Our communities and families depend on firefighters in difficult and dangerous moments," said Governor Charlie Baker. "This program is an opportunity to show our deep appreciation

for their work by ensuring they have the tools they need to stay safe and healthy."

"While the last two years have been so difficult for all of us, firefighters and first responders throughout the Commonwealth have courageously continued to serve the public," said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. "We are grateful for their efforts and proud to be able to provide them with critical equipment and support."

Fire departments in Massachusetts were able to apply to this program for 118 different types of eligible equipment, including personal protective clothing, gear washers and dryers, thermal imaging cameras, assorted hand tools and extrication equipment, communications resources, hazardous gas meters, fitness equip-

ment, and more. In many cases, the purchase of this equipment will help departments attain compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration or National Fire Protection Association safety standards.

"The toll that occupational cancer has taken on the fire service is unfortunately immense," said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrence Reidy. "We often see and hear about heroic rescues in the face of obvious and overwhelming danger, but the risks firefighters face go well beyond those events. I am thrilled that we can provide so many fire departments with this funding for equipment that will reduce firefighters' long-term exposure to the cancer-causing materials they encounter every day at work."

"While many of our firefight-

ers dedicate their entire careers to the fire service, countless others who have full-time jobs in different fields spend their spare time responding to emergencies for on-call and volunteer fire departments across the state," said Undersecretary of Homeland Security Jeanne Benincasa Thorpe. "They all deserve the best equipment we can get them, and we are so grateful for everything that they do."

"Best practices for firefighter safety are constantly evolving as technology advances and our understanding of the short- and long-term health impacts of the work improves," said State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey. "This program is so important to help fire departments modernize their equipment and get firefighters the protection they need. The

long-term health outcomes realized from these grant awards will have a truly immeasurable benefit."

"The job of the modern firefighter takes countless forms. At any given moment, they could be asked to respond to a fire, a hazardous materials leak, a car accident, or a medical call. Equipping them for safety in each of these situations is a significant financial burden for every department," said Centerville-Osterville-Marston Mills Fire Chief Michael Winn, President of the Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts. "We are so thankful that funding was made available to help with this challenge, especially at a time when so many departments are facing budget issues due to COVID-19."

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Paying For College CAN Be Less Taxing

Education Tax Rules

Parents facing college expenses have several provisions in the tax law to consider. The benefits don't apply to all, but there is something of interest for many families.

Tax credits

The *American Opportunity Tax Credit* (formerly The Hope Credit) is available for certain tuition and fees, and it allows you to reduce taxes annually up to \$2,500 per student for four years of college. The credit is equal to 100% of the first \$2,000 of qualified expenses and 25% of the next \$2,000, per student.

The *Lifetime Learning Credit* covers any year of post-secondary education, with a maximum credit of \$2,000, no matter how

many students in the family are eligible.

Both the American Opportunity Tax Credit and lifetime learning credits phase out for taxpayers with higher incomes.

Other Education Tax Incentives

Education savings accounts. You may establish an education savings account (previously called an education IRA) with a nondeductible contribution for any child under 18. The annual contribution limit is \$2,000. Funds can accumulate and be paid out tax-free for qualified college expenses, including tuition, fees, books, supplies, equipment, and certain room and board costs. The funds can also be used to pay for elementary and sec-

ondary (K-12) school expenses at public, private, or religious schools. Eligibility for an education savings account starts phasing out at \$110,000 of AGI for single taxpayers and \$220,000 for married folks.

Individual retirement accounts (IRAs). Existing IRAs can also be a source of college funds. You may make withdrawals before age 59½ without penalty for amounts paid for college or graduate school tuition, fees, books, room and board, supplies, and equipment.

Education savings bonds. Interest on Series EE and Series I bonds issued after 1989 is non-taxable when used to pay tuition and fees for you or your dependents. This tax break begins to phase out once income reaches certain levels.

Section 529 plans allow individuals to set up an account on behalf of someone else (say a child or grandchild) that can be used to pay college expenses. There are two types of plans:

Prepaid tuition plans are designed to hedge against inflation. You can purchase tuition credits, at today's rates, that your child can redeem when he or she attends one of the plan's eligible colleges or universities. Both state and private institutions can offer



prepaid tuition programs. Using tuition credits from these programs is tax-free.

College savings plans are state-sponsored plans that allow you to build a fund to pay for your child's college education. Your contributions are not tax-deductible, but once in the plan, your money grows tax-free. Provided the funds are used to pay for qualified college expenses, withdrawals are tax-free. Qualified expenses include tuition, fees, books, supplies, and certain room and board costs. Private institutions are not allowed to set up college savings accounts.

If you are looking for an alternative to 529 Plans to save for college education, something that will not be

reported on FAFSA, please contact me to discuss.

Student loan interest deduction. Interest on certain student loans can be deducted whether or not you itemize your deductions. The maximum deduction is \$2,500 per year over the loan repayment period and income phase out rules apply here as well.

Other tax benefits. Most scholarships remain tax-free, nontaxable employer-paid tuition may be available, and education expenses related to your job still may be deductible.

When you start examining your situation, remember that many of these provisions are designed so that you can't benefit from more than one in any given year. We can help guide you through the maze and help ensure that you receive the maximum possible benefit.

Jeffrey Schweitzer can be found at Northeast Financial Strategies Inc (NFS) at Wampum Corner in Wrentham. NFS works with individuals and small businesses providing financial and estate planning, insurance, investments and also offers full service accounting, bookkeeping, payroll, income tax preparation, and notary public services. For more information, stop by the office, call Jeffrey at 800-560-4NFS or visit online - www.nfsnet.com



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Norfolk and Wrentham Students Make Honor Roll at Tri-County Voke

The following students made the Trimester 1 honor roll:

Grade 9 High Honors: Noah Gable (Wrentham); Amiyah Sullivan (Norfolk).

Grade 9 Honors: Vincenzo Cotillo (Wrentham); Cameron Cummings (Norfolk); Noah Fitzgerald (Wrentham); William Ford (Norfolk); Thomas Genereux (Wrentham); Hannah Knust Graichen (Wrentham); Martin McCrave (Wrentham); Jacqueline Mullen (Norfolk); Caroline Russell (Norfolk); Ethan Scarsciotti (Wrentham).

Grade 10 High Honors: Molly McDermott (Wrentham); Andrew Nelson (Norfolk); Callie Schweitzer (Wrentham); Abigail Tranquillino (Wrentham); Ryan Zagrodny (Wrentham).

Grade 10 Honors: Joseph Garofalo (Wrentham); Caitlyn McLaughlin (Wrentham); Vincent Palmieri (Wrentham); Amelia Rietz (Wrentham); Nova Sheerin (Wrentham); Vera Tyo (Wrentham); Sean Wilcox (Wrentham).

Grade 11 High Honors: Teddy Connors (Wrentham); William Redfearn (Wrentham).

Grade 11 Honors: Joseph Bobulis (Norfolk); Aidan Fitzpatrick (Wrentham); Cole King (Wrentham); Derek McLeod (Wrentham); Jenna Moore (Norfolk); Joshua Shockley (Wrentham); Jacob Sullivan (Norfolk); Trevor Vinson (Norfolk).

Grade 12 High Honors: Nicholas Bartlett (Wrentham); Camryn Cooper-Noyes (Wrentham).

Grade 12 Honors: Matthew Brangiforte (Wrentham); Jack Forde (Wrentham); Rebekah Gable (Wrentham); Cali Hagstrom (Wrentham); Piper Swenson (Norfolk); Harrison Tartaglia (Wrentham); Alexander Tatten (Norfolk); Francis Vitkosky (Wrentham); Lukas Williams (Wrentham).



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Korean War Veteran Families Engage Online

Fight to Preserve Legacy

Over 70 years ago, war broke out on the Korean peninsula. Twenty-two United Nations allies, including the United States, came to South Korea's aid and fought to defend its people, freedom, and democracy.

Often referred to as the Forgotten War, the Korean War stands as a testament to the ability of nations to stand alongside one another and fight for a common good. From the ashes of war, South Korea, today, is the 10th largest economic power in the world and a model of democracy. This significant progress is the legacy of those who fought to defend South Korea and should not be ignored. Now, Korean War veteran families, friends, and educators from around the world are fighting to preserve the legacy of those who served before it's too late.

Designed by the Korean War Legacy Foundation and sponsored by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs of South Korea, THE 22: Korean War International Legacy (<https://the22koreanwar.org>) is a global community honoring veterans from the 22 countries that took part in the forgotten victory of the Korean War. Created to house veteran profiles, the website showcases submissions from around the world which include hundreds of photos and offer



The 22: Korean War International Legacy

a unique and shared historical account of lived experiences throughout the war.

As we approach the 70th Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice which took place on July 27, 1953, fewer and fewer Korean War veterans remain with us to tell the story. THE 22 offers a means of preserving their personal accounts of sacrifice for future generations. Dr. Jongwoo Han, President of Korean War Legacy Foundation, encourages communities to preserve the memories of local heroes, "Please join people from across the world in honoring those who served in the Korean War, a chance to ensure that their legacy is not forgotten."

The growing collection of profiles offers stories of enlistment, experiences on the front lines, triumphs, losses, and more. Daughter of Joseph Farliano, United States Army, created a profile to honor her father and shared the reasons why he en-

listed: "My dad enlisted in the US Army for two reasons; 1) to get three square meals a day and 2) to serve his country as a first generation American." An international profile submitted from South Africa describes the pilot being shot down and taken POW by the Chinese while one from Colombia details being surrounded by a Chinese counterattack that resulted in only a few escaping capture or death. The winter campaigns are remembered and described in several profiles, including Francis Wenthold's, United States Army: "He spent November and December at the front line in frigid temperatures with only one pair of socks and without insulated boots. His feet turned black from frostbite."

With each passing year, fewer Korean War veterans remain to share their memories of the forgotten war that led to the success story South Korea is today. The fight to preserve their legacy is ongoing, and THE 22 urges

families to share Korean War veteran stories from loved ones in its growing global community by registering and creating a FREE profile on <https://the22koreanwar.org>. May we never forget those who served and fought to defend democracy around the world.

About THE 22: Korean War International Legacy

THE 22: Korean War International Legacy is a global community of Korean War veterans, their family members, scholars, historians, and educators intent on honoring veterans from the 22 countries that took part in the

forgotten victory of the Korean War. As heirs of their legacy, our goal is to preserve and share Korean War veteran stories, educate the public about the War, and come together to recognize the importance of the Korean War in our contemporary history as well as the legacy of the Korean War. Join us. Share educational resources about the War, explore the memories of the people who served, and create a free profile to honor a veteran who's close to you.

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Franklin Performing Arts Company to Stage NYC Cabaret

The Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC), Franklin's own professional theater company, will stage a cabaret performance on February 21st at The Green Room 42, one of New York City's most beloved venues, at 7 p.m.

The evening will feature FPAC performers, alums, and guests including Broadway stars Tyler Hanes, Sara Jean Ford, Emily Koch, Jim Hogan, Clay Rice-Thomson, Nyla Watson, Audrey Cardwell, Liz Byrne, and more as they celebrate the Franklin Performing Arts Company at The Green Room 42 in NYC, hosted by Your Broadway Buddy Ben Cameron and directed by FPAC Artistic/Executive Director Raye Lynn Mercer. In-person and live-stream tickets available.

FPAC has a long history of bringing Broadway talent to Franklin for roles in musicals

and plays, special concerts, and more. The February 21st show brings the Franklin Performing Arts Company to New York City. The Broadway stars featured in the lineup have all graced THE BLACK BOX stage in Franklin. Tyler Hanes, with 10 Broadway credits, brought his solo show to THE BLACK BOX in 2018 and has frequently taught at the Franklin School for the Performing Arts.

Sara Jean Ford, who starred as Christine in The Phantom of the Opera, also brought a solo show to Franklin and headlined FPAC's "Broadway in Franklin Weekend." Emily Koch (Elphaba in WICKED on Broadway) and Jim Hogan (of viral a cappella sensation T.3) starred in THE BLACK BOX Sings... WICKED with Hogan also bringing his group T.3 to perform multiple concerts.

Clay Rice-Thomson, cur-

rently in Moulin Rouge, choreographed FPAC's productions of Mary Poppins and Matilda and performed in Legally Blonde and Christopher Rice's The Tappy Christmas Special: LIVE! alongside fellow February 21st headline Liz Byrne (Baby It's You). Nyla Watson, most recently seen on Broadway in Waitress, visited Franklin last spring to sing Medda Larkin in THE BLACK BOX Sings... Newsies. Audrey Cardwell, currently in the revival of The Music Man starring Sutton Foster and Hugh Jackman, starred as Vivienne in FPAC's production of Legally Blonde.

For in-person and live-stream tickets, visit FPAConline.com. Follow the Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC) on social media for updates on upcoming performances. FPAC's home-venue is THE BLACK BOX, located at 15 W. Central Street in downtown Franklin.



Photos of Norfolk Wanted for Town Website

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Happy Valentines Day to Me!

By GINA WOELFEL

It's Valentine's month... Cue the roses, the heart shaped candies and those creepy, last minute, gas station teddy bears.

Whether you're single, taken, married or dating, we all have a Valentine's Day tale to tell. Some are romantic and some are too catastrophic to talk about. I remember one particularly cute Valentine's Day early in my marriage. Our young son was just starting to walk and my husband was working two jobs to get his degree at night. We celebrated late in the evening when he got home with a decadent meal of mac and cheese and a bottle of white zin. This will be our 30th Valentine's Day together. Some have been amazing and a few have fallen flat.

I think it's difficult for two people, on one specific day of the year, to feel so romantically in sync they create a rom-com worthy event. Am I right? Life and circumstance often stand in the way, and quite frankly, the pressure for this day to be perfect is a bummer. A great example is the Valentine's Day dinner. You've made reservations, but you still wait for your table. It's clown-car packed, your dinner arrives cold and dessert is a "molten lava" hockey puck. Your romantic evening's been lost to

the utopian idea of how the evening was supposed to unfold.

Let's also not forget that many people love their uncoupled existence and aren't racing to change their Facebook status to "in a relationship". Shouldn't we have the option to choose "In a relationship with myself"? Shouldn't that be the most important relationship in our lives?

I think the Valentine's Day message for 2022 should be "Love Yourself". I know, totally corny (but soo true)!

Here's something to ponder... If you don't love and respect yourself first, how can you give love to others? How can you receive affection and take in all the wonderful things it has to offer if you don't believe you deserve it in the first place?

Let's flip the narrative on this Hallmark Holiday and fall head over heels in love with ourselves! Make a list of your favorite things and GO! Mani/pedi - Check. Movie and takeaway - Check. Luxurious spa facial and lash extensions - Check, check! Go on, kick up your heels with your besties and laugh till it hurts! Soak up the love from all who make you feel warm and fuzzy inside! Valentine's Day shouldn't only exalt romantic love. All love is powerful and poignant and deserves a creepy gas station teddy bear, too. Remind yourself how



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fab you really are and that your special someone is facing you in the mirror!

Treat yourself this month! You're worth it!

*We've decided to extend the Golden Ticket Giveaway through February! January was a challenging month and many of you had to reschedule. You can fill out a ticket at the salon and enter for your chance to win! Winner announced on March 1st. Good luck!

Happy Valentine's Day, everyone!

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Living Healthy

Glaucoma Treatment: GONIOTOMY

Commonly Asked Questions

BY: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

When eye drops or laser treatment are unable to adequately lower eye pressure, goniotomy can be considered. Goniotomy may allow for eye pressure control with or without the use of glaucoma medications. For patients who qualify for the procedure, goniotomy provides an alternative to bleb-forming glaucoma surgeries or tube shunts.

How does goniotomy work?

Goniotomy cuts the first layer of the natural drain system (trabecular meshwork). This allows the fluid to leave the eye more easily, and lowers the eye pressure.

What are the steps of surgery?

The surgery is performed in the operating room under anesthesia. The eye is cleaned and

numbing medication is applied. An instrument then opens the eyelids. Tiny incisions are made in the front of the eye, and a special lens is placed on the eye to visualize the eye's natural drain. A portion of the wall blocking the drain is removed. An open channel is created, allowing fluid to leave the eye. The goniotomy procedure takes about 20 minutes, but will take longer if performed along with cataract surgery.

What will I feel during and after the surgery?

You may see bright lights during the surgery, but should not feel any pain. You will be discharged with a clear plastic shield over the operated eye. An adult will need to drive you home since you received sedative medications.

What happens to the eye after surgery?

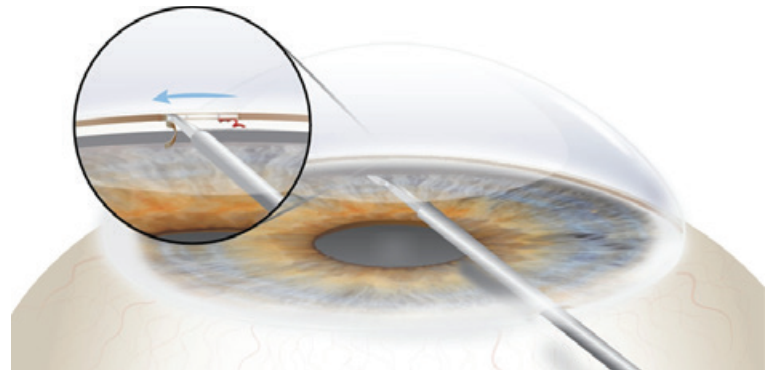
Fluid leaves the eye through the open channel that is created in the eye's natural drain. This lowers the eye pressure, and one or more glaucoma medications may be stopped after surgery.

How often will I be seen after surgery?

You will see your doctor the first day after surgery, about a week later, and a few weeks after that. Depending on how your eye heals, additional or fewer visits may be needed.

What eye drops will I use after surgery?

Most patients will be asked to use a steroid and antibiotic eye drops. The frequency of the taking the steroid eye drops depend on the amount of the eye inflammation.



Can I stop my glaucoma drops after surgery?

Your doctor will tell you which drops to continue using and how often at each visit depending on how your eye is doing. Sometimes patients are able to reduce the number of eye drops they are taking. Even if you are taking the same glaucoma medications after the procedure, the surgery is a success if your pressure is lower. The need for eye drops long-term after this treatment varies greatly and depends on your type of glaucoma and the rate at which it is progressing.

Will goniotomy cure my glaucoma?

The simple answer is no. Glaucoma is a chronic disease that requires constant monitoring and treatment. The goniotomy procedure will help to lower your eye pressure. However, it will not reverse any loss of vision that has already occurred.

What happens if goniotomy does not work?

Whether or not medications or an additional procedure will be needed after GATT depends

on what is considered a "safe" pressure for your eye, how much your eye scars, the type of glaucoma you have, and more. After surgery, we will continue to monitor you closely so we can adjust therapy if needed.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, Dr. Kaldawy was among the first surgeons in the area to offer Goniotomy. We perform the procedure in a state-of-the-art surgery center in Milford and closer to home. With this center available to you here in your backyard there is no reason to travel hours to have eye surgery and laser glaucoma surgery. If your eye provider is still recommending you travel far away to have eye surgery, we are available for a second opinion. We are proud to offer excellence in glaucoma management and surgery with world class outcomes and here is the great news: In Milford, and closer to home than ever before!

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Living Healthy

Bringing Mobility to Those Who Need It

Local Company Partners with Wheels for the World™ Program

By J.D. O'GARA

Right around Thanksgiving, the Franklin-based branch of National Seating and Mobility took steps to improve the lives of strangers around the world. The company, which provides complex rehabilitation equipment, partnered with Wheels for the World, a subset of the Joni & Friends ministry, to donate specialized wheelchairs to those who need them.

Wheels for the World™ Program provides life-changing mobility for people in developing countries who are excluded from their communities. Through the ministry, used wheelchairs are collected across the United States, refurbished, and delivered to people with disabilities in developing nations where wheelchairs are scarce or financially out of reach.

“Our relationship with National Seating and Mobility is very special, because when we distribute overseas, the need for specialty chairs is great,” says Maria DeGenova, Program Manager for Joni & Friends. “We’ll take any manual chair, but it’s really unique to have a partner where everything that’s coming in is specialty chairs.”

Joni and Friends was founded by Joni Earackson Tada, who herself became quadriplegic after a diving accident in 1967. The California-based organization is dedicated to meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of people impacted by disability around the globe.

“Joni traveled overseas and saw a need for those who don’t have mobility,” says DeGenova. “Wheels for the World is one of the branches of the ministry. We collect used wheelchairs all over the country. Nothing goes to waste, and we partner with prisons around the U.S.”

Volunteers in work programs at the prisons take apart, clean and restore the wheelchairs, making them like new.

“It’s a second chance for the prisoners as well. They’re learning a trade and getting a

chance at redemption with opportunity to do good work,” said DeGenova.

“It’s a meaningful partnership,” says Jennifer Gibbons, LicSW, General Manager of the Franklin, MA branch of National Seating and Mobility, which provides complex rehabilitation equipment. “It will provide another journey for these chairs to help others who are less fortunate.”

National Seating and Mobility provides specialized, fit and measured chairs customized by assistive technology professionals to work with a client’s mobility needs, living arrangements, family support and other day-to-day needs. On occasion, however, client conditions change before they are delivered, that render the chair unusable for the client.

“When this happens, we need to get them a chair that works for them but need to find a place for the old chair,” says Gibbons. November’s donation was the second the Franklin branch has made.

“I love the whole idea of the chairs being rehabilitated at local prisons,” says Amy O’Brien

Marketing Development manager at of National Seating and Mobility. “It’s an opportunity to turn something around in their personal life and learn a trade. I think it’s a nice way to give back.”

Refurbished wheelchairs are loaded onto ocean containers by volunteers.

“We have partnerships all over the world,” says DeGenova. “Each office partners with a different country.”

The destination for the wheelchairs donated by National Seating and Mobility will go to Thailand. Once overseas, Wheels for the World™ volunteers work alongside local physical therapists and churches to provide outreach in the community.

“My first outreach was a 14-year-old boy, ‘Pan,’ who was being carried by his grandmother. The mechanic and therapist worked for six hours on his pediatric chair, made some



On November 23, National Seating and Mobility, in Franklin, donated specialty wheelchairs to Joni & Friends’ Wheels for the World™ Program, which collects and refurbishes wheelchairs for those who need them in developing countries.

adjustments and showed the grandmother how she could adjust the chair,” says DeGenova. “When we put him in that chair, that was the first time he was able

to look eye-to-eye with someone. All his life he’d been looking up. We were not only able to meet his physical needs, but also emotional and spiritual needs.”

Every wheelchair, says DeGenova, opens the door to give hope and independence for the entire family.

“In some of the countries we go, there is shame associated, (a belief that) someone with a disability did something wrong to deserve that disability, and so it’s hidden,” says DeGenova, “But we believe God has a plan for that person, and he makes no mistakes. We’re able to share with people that they have an incredible purpose, and they have value.”

This year, Wheels for the World™ has collected over 1,000 wheelchairs, “a record for us,” says DeGenova.

In addition to Wheels for the World™, Joni & Friends also provides practical care and hope through life-affirming programs and resources for special needs

MOBILITY

continued on page 18

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Living Healthy

MOBILITY

continued from page 17

families, churches and communities.

In fact, Daniel Rivera, a chair corps volunteer who helped receive the Franklin donation, says his family has personally benefited from the camp. He and his wife have three sons, aged 20, 10 and 7, the older two with significant disabilities and special needs.

“The church I belong to here in Cranston, Hope Church, surprised us the year the pandemic hit, asking us if we wanted to be sponsored by them to go to a Joni & Friends retreat in New England. We had never taken a family vacation.”

After participating in the program, Rivera says, “We absolutely fell in love with Joni & Friends, and we became a part of it.”



A chair corps volunteer loads donated wheelchairs, headed to be refurbished by inmates in a volunteer work program and then distributed to those who need them.

March is wheelchair collection month. Wheels for the world accepts donations of the following mobility devices, with tax-deductible receipts available:

- Manual wheelchairs, all types and sizes

- Aluminum walkers, crutches, and canes
- Wheelchair footrests
- Other wheelchair parts and trays
- Wheelchair seat cushions
- New crutch and armpit pads, hand grips, and foot tips

If you have an unused wheelchair you would like to donate, visit <https://www.joniandfriends.org/support-us/donate-a-wheelchair/#drop-off> to find a local drop-off.

It May Be the Flu, but It May Be Lyme Disease

Lyme Disease often goes undiagnosed as the symptoms often mimic the flu. When symptoms last several weeks, those signs should be followed up with a blood test. Lyme Disease is typically treated with doxycycline. This antibiotic, however, is not always effective, especially with the many co-infections of Lyme, such as Borellia, Bartonella, Babesia, Rickettsia and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), an estimated 300,000 Americans are diagnosed with Lyme Disease each year, and the numbers are rising. Although it is believed that Lyme is a result of a tick bite, the infectious bacteria can be spread by other biting or blood-sucking insects, including mosquitoes, spiders, fleas and mites.

Common effects of tick bites include an itchy “bull’s-eye,” but this rash only occurs in about half of those infected. Other symptoms include unrelenting fatigue, recurring fever, headaches/ migraines and achy muscles and joints.

For six years Pauline suffered with various ailments, including muscle aches, joint pains, brain fog, extreme fatigue and unrelenting headaches. Her primary care physician diagnosed Lyme

Disease, prescribed doxycycline, and notified her several weeks later she was successfully treated for Lyme. An appoint-



Dr. Rochelle Bien & Dr. Michael Goldstein

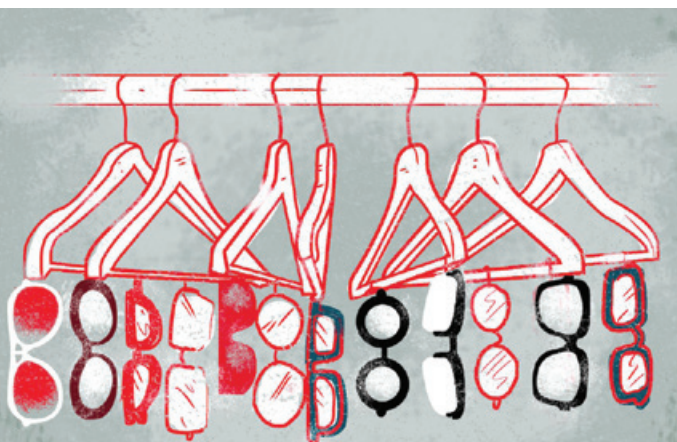
ment with a Rheumatologist for her “arthritic” condition resulted in a prescription for antidepressants, a side effect of dealing with the pain. Pauline felt her life was slowly slipping away. A referral to the Holistic Center at Bristol Square set her on a new path. At the center Pauline was diagnosed with Bartonella, a co-infection of Lyme, and was treated homeopathically for the strain as well as for her other related health issues. Within three months, Pauline’s life started to return. Today, she is virtually symptom free and enjoying her life free of pain and fatigue.

If you suffer from Lyme Disease, don’t delay, call the Holistic Center at Bristol Square today (508) 660-2722 and schedule an appointment with Dr. Bien or Dr. Goldstein.

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Obituary

Charles F. Pyne

(born January 29, 1944) of Norfolk, MA died at home after a brief illness on the evening of December 21, 2021.

He is survived by his wife of over 50 years, Betsy Pyne; his son, Charles C Pyne, and daughter-in-law, Wendy Pyne of Ashland, MA; his daughter, Sarah (Pyne) Harvey and son-in-law, Zack Harvey of Peace Dale, RI; three grandchildren, William Pyne, Evelyn Pyne, and Kaya Harvey; as well as his two sisters, Carol Schreiber of Laguna Niguel, CA, and Anne Cowley of Victoria, British Columbia.

Charles grew up in Marblehead, MA, graduated from Governor Dummer Academy, then Harvard University, in 1967. Thereafter, Pyne served in the US Navy, including a post at Iceland's Keflavik Air Station during the Vietnam War.

Charles went on to serve as vice president of Autex Corp in the 1970s and later ran his own financial services consulting company in Boston and New York City, through the 1980s.

Later in his retired years, Charles dedicated untold thousands of hours to raising and training service/seeing-eye dogs for the non-profit Guiding Eyes for the Blind.



Pyne has also, in recent years, been acknowledged as an early pioneer in "Phone Phreaking", (telephone hacking). A recent book, "Exploding the Phone: The Untold Story of the Teenagers and Outlaws who Hacked Ma Bell," by Phil Lapsley, documents these experiences.

Charles received patents for multiple pieces of software related to remote-access technology, including LapLink.

Charles, Betsy and their children summered happily on Block Island, off the coast of RI, from the 1970s onward.

A memorial service was held on Thursday, December 30 at 11 a.m. at the Federated Church, One Union Street, Norfolk, MA.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Guiding Eyes for the Blind, 611 Granite Springs Road, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598. For further information, visit www.guidingeyes.org.

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FSPA Students Learn from Broadway Stars

Over MLK Weekend, students from the Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) were visited by Broadway professionals. FSPA Musical Theater students of all ages took Song Interpretation, Monologue and Scene Work, and Theater Dance classes with Broadway stars at their very own campus in downtown Franklin.

The instructors for this year's Intensive were Carrie St. Louis (*WICKED*, *Kinky Boots*, *Rock of Ages*), Tyrick Wiltez Jones (*Hairspray*, *Finian's Rainbow*, *Bat Out of Hell*), Christopher Rice-Thomson (*Hamilton on tour*, *Book of Mormon*, *Pretty Woman*), Tyler Hanes (*CATS*, *Oklahoma!*, *A Chorus Line*, *Fosse*, and many more). Additionally, the students had a virtual Q and A session with NYC casting director Bob Cline.

The weekend concluded with a showcase for the Guest Teachers and FSPA Faculty which was live-streamed to students' families, FSPA alumni, as well as a panel of staff from Broadway Artists Alliance in NYC. From this showcase, some FSPA students will be selected to go to NYC in February to study at the Broadway Artists Alliance Winter Workshop.

"It's a really special place," says frequent FSPA Guest Teacher and Broadway Faculty Member Tyler Hanes who most recently starred on Broadway as The Rum Tum Tugger in the revival of *CATS*. "What is happening here is so unique and really is paving the way for the next generation of artists. It is an honor any time I get to come here and work with these talented students."

The Franklin School for the Performing Arts currently has alumni working on Broadway, off-Broadway, in National Tours, on film, TV, professional opera, ballet and dance companies, cruise ships, and regional theater across the country. In addition to frequently bringing in new industry guests for master classes and intensives, FSPA boasts a year-round roster of FSPA Broadway Faculty. Nine Broadway professionals are available to enrolled students for private coaching via Zoom. Coachings are available for singing, acting, dance, and self-marketing in the theater industry. The FSPA Broadway Faculty includes Ben Cameron, Sara Jean Ford, Tyler Hanes, Jim Hogan, Emily Koch, Kara Lindsay, Kevin Massey, Christopher

Rice-Thomson, and Clay Rice-Thomson.

For more information on programs at the Franklin School for

the Performing Arts, visit www.fspaonline.com, call 508-528-8668, or stop by 38 Main Street in Franklin, MA. Enrollment is

ongoing and new students are invited to take a complimentary trial class. Follow FSPA on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.



TOP - the Guest Teachers give notes at the showcase, BOTTOM L TO R: Carrie St. Louis, Tyrick Wiltez Jones, Tyler Hanes, Christopher Rice-Thomson

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Sports

KP Girls Quintet Heading in the Right Direction

Warriors Adapting to New Coach

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Jeff Miskiewicz is the third coach the King Philip girls basketball team has had in the last four years. And, although the transition to a new coach has been frequent, it doesn't necessarily translate to disruption or confusion. At least not with Miskiewicz.

"The girls are very coachable and willing to learn," said the 31-year-old Miskiewicz, who was the girls junior-varsity coach for the last two years at LaSalle Academy in Providence, R.I. "They're good listeners and they're all on the same page. And when that occurs, it leads to improvement."

The Warriors definitely are improved.

At Local Town Pages deadline, the girls had compiled an impressive 5-1 record.

"We're off to a good start and our opening-game win over Foxboro was great for the program and great for building confidence," Miskiewicz said. "The girls are working hard and our offense and defense are meshing well."

The team has a plethora of strengths and Miskiewicz is banking on those assets for the squad to achieve its goals for the 2021-22 campaign.

"The girls rely on effort and energy," Miskiewicz said. "Their attitudes are positive and they're eager to improve. We don't have a lot of players with varsity experience but we have depth, athleticism, speed, quickness and height."

The players and Miskiewicz have listed four goals and they all seem like they can be achieved.

"We want communication and that means on defense," he said. "Communication also leads to being positive and supportive. We also want good team chemistry — where everyone is working for the greater good of the team. We also want to be better than



Jeff Miskiewicz is in his first year as KP's girls basketball coach.

.500. If all those things happen, then we can qualify for the state tourney."

KP's trademark will be an up-tempo style on offense with on and off pressure on the defensive end. "We want to push transition, fast break and apply defensive pressure at strategic junctures," Miskiewicz emphasized.

Three players who've worked diligently to ensure that style and approach are the senior captains — forward Olivia LaFond, guard-forward Julia Marsden and guard Elizabeth Molla.

"All three have been fantastic in the leadership department," Miskiewicz said. "They're open and positive about what our staff is striving to achieve."

As far as their strengths go, LaFond is athletic, Marsden knows how to run the offense and Molla is a good shooter. LaFond is averaging 7 points and 9 rebounds a game.

"Olivia is best at attacking the rim," Miskiewicz noted. "She's capable at scoring inside and her mid-range shot is effective. A physical player, she's tall (6-feet) and can rebound. Julia is an excellent passer who can score inside, outside or mid-range. She's got good court vision and she's



KP's captains are, from left, Elizabeth Molla, Olivia LaFond, and Julia Marsden.

athletic. An off-guard, Elizabeth is our best shooter, especially from three-point range. She's got a high hoop IQ, has experience and can drive and pass."

Senior Devyn Dugan, a 5-foot-10 guard, is an effective knock-down shooter. "Devyn is a great shooter who can hit threes or shoot from mid-range," Miskiewicz said. "She's got good count sense and her length is a plus on offense and defense."

Senior Mia Bennett can play either point guard or on the wing. "Mia is versatile," Miskiewicz said. "She's a high-energy player on defense and her quick hands and feet help her to be aggressive on that end. A strategic offensive competitor, she's a capable passer."

A pair of juniors are playing key roles for the Warriors. Jaclyn Bonner is a guard and Miskiewicz calls her "our best pure shooter." Emily Sawyer, a 6-4 center, was KP's most dominant player last year. Bonner is averaging 15 points a game and Sawyer is averaging 12 points, 13 rebounds and one block.

assistant. "All of us strive to be teachers of the game," Miskiewicz said. "We emphasize basics and our drills are game-based."

Miskiewicz is acutely aware of the high caliber of play in the Hockomock League. "From top to bottom, it's the most competitive league in the state," he said. "The teams are talented and the coaching is top-notch."

A former combo guard at Cumberland High School in Rhode Island, Miskiewicz graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 2013, getting degrees in English and Secondary Education. After a year of teaching at the middle school level in Central Falls, he joined the faculty at LaSalle Academy where he's taught English for the last eight years.

A quality coach is a teacher first and Miskiewicz displays that aspect when he's defining his competitive philosophy. "I want our players to have a positive experience," he emphasized. "And, I want them to improve and reach their potential. When those two things are occurring, then winning will follow."

As far as basketball helping his players learn valuable life lessons, Miskiewicz lists three. "Sports should help players develop positive relationships," he noted. "And, athletics can help players become good leaders and good teammates. It's a place where they can use their voices effectively."

So far, the KP girls have displayed an ability to adapt, adjust and be flexible. Their record has matched their energy and effort and it's obvious the Warriors are on the right track to make good things happen.

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Norfolk Police Warn Residents about Jury Duty Scam

Police Chief Charles Stone and the Norfolk Police Department have a warning for the community about a recent jury duty scam and other common scams.

A few weeks ago, Norfolk Police received a report from a resident that a person had called and claimed that they were a Sheriff. The caller told the resident that they would be arrested for failing to report to Federal Jury Duty unless they paid a fine. The caller demanded gift cards in restitution from the resident or stated that an arrest warrant would be filed. The individual lost \$3,400 before realizing the call was a scam.

Chief Stone would like to make residents aware that members of the public will not be contacted initially by email or phone for jury service and that restitution will never be demanded for failure to appear for jury duty. If you don't respond to your jury summons and miss your jury duty date, you will be considered a delinquent juror and the Office of Jury Commissioner (OJC) will first send a Failure to Appear Notice in the mail, then a Notice of Delinquency by mail before taking further action.

Anyone who has questions regarding jury duty should contact the OJC at 800-843-5879. Residents can also respond to a summons or check their status at the MA Court System website: <https://juryduty.majury.gov/ojweb/public/start>.

"Scammers often target vulnerable individuals, such as the elderly, to exploit them through the purchase of pre-paid gift cards or wire transfers," Chief Stone said. "Once pre-paid gift cards or wire transfers are sent, it's extremely hard to recover that money once you realize you've fallen victim to a scam. In an effort to prevent those situations from happening, we would like to make residents aware of common scams."

Common scams that target residents – specifically senior citizens – include:

- **Social Security Scams:** Scammers pretend to be from the U.S. Social Security Administration and try to get your Social Security Number or money.
- **IRS Scams:** Scammers call, pretending to be from the IRS, and say they're filing a lawsuit against your back taxes.

- **Phishing Scams:** Scammers use email or text messages to trick you into giving them your personal information.

- **Fake Check Scams:** Scammers ask you to deposit a check for more than you are owed and send some of the money to another person.

- **Utility Scams:** Scammers pose as bill collectors from utility companies and threaten to shut off service if you do not pay.

- **Sweepstakes:** Someone calls to notify you that you have won a contest or sweepstakes and must send money to collect any winnings.

Often, the scammer will demand payment via electronic money order or pre-paid debit card. This should be an immediate red flag. No legitimate vendor will ever demand money via these means.

As a reminder, residents should NEVER give personal information, social security numbers, money or credit card numbers to people they don't know.

If you are ever unsure about a potential scam, or if you believe you are a victim of a scam, contact the Norfolk Police Department at 508-528-3206.

For more information about scams, visit the Federal Trade Commission's website (<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-avoid-scam>) or the state's Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation website (<https://www.mass.gov/guides/a-consumer-guide-to-scams>).

This Month at the Wrentham Senior Center

For a complete list of programs, visit www.wrentham.ma.us or call 508-384-5425. The Wrentham Senior Center is located at 400 Taunton Street and is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Free COVID Tests Available through www.covidtests.gov. Senior Center can assist in ordering.

Minds in Motion February 1, 8, and 15 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Award-winning program to challenge your outlook. Registration required.

SHINE February 2, 9, 16, 23 at 9 a.m. to noon. Meet one-on-one with a SHINE counselor. Call to schedule an appointment.

Podiatrist February 7. Call to schedule an appointment.

Manicures & Pedicures February 3 and 17 at 10 a.m. Call to schedule an appointment.

Book Group February 10 at 3:30 p.m. Signup required.

AARP Tax Assistance February 11 from 9 a.m. to noon. Call to schedule an appointment.

Blood Pressure Clinic/Ask the Nurse February 15 at 9:30 a.m. Public health nurses will hold a blood pressure clinic and "Ask the Nurse" session.

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Saturday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. CLOSED Sunday**

Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sales in Norfolk

Date	Address	Amount
Dec. 21	11 Avery Way	\$672,509
Dec. 21	47R Medway Street	\$570,000
Dec. 22	4 Ferndale Avenue	\$710,000
Dec. 23	34 Sumner Street	\$713,290
Dec. 30	46 Fruit Street	\$255,000
Dec. 30	34 Priscilla Avenue	\$640,000
Jan. 4	30 Campbell Street	\$700,333
Jan. 4	2 Mountain Rock Lane	\$805,000
Jan. 5	45 Park Street	\$545,000
Jan. 5	8 Pondview Road	\$500,000
Jan. 7	84 Grove Street	\$537,000
Jan. 12	2 Eric Road	\$775,000
Jan. 18	11 Boydes Xing	\$734,000

Source: www.zillow.com

Compiled by Local Town Pages



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- Melissa Fowler




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Real Estate Corner

December Real Estate Activity in Norfolk County

According to Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell, December real estate numbers relative to Norfolk County real estate activity were down. However, there were a few aspects of the real estate activity to be hopeful about.

"The Norfolk County real estate market has continued to slow entering into the winter months," said Register O'Donnell. "There were 14,794 documents recorded at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, a 24% decrease over last year's December document volume but slightly more than last month."

The number of deeds which evidence real estate sales and transfers, both commercial and residential, decreased by 17% in December, reported O'Donnell. However, the average sales price during the month was \$1,501,882, a 43% increase compared to December 2021. Total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales also showed solid gains, increasing 19% to over \$1.5 billion.

Despite the deeds figure holding its own, overall lending activity showed a decrease again for the month of December. A total of 2,972 mortgages were recorded during the month, a 40% decrease compared to December 2020. "It appears that many consumers have already refinanced given the past low interest rate environment," noted O'Donnell.

One continuing cause for concern, however in Norfolk County, was foreclosures. A moratorium on foreclosures enacted on April 20, 2020 due to the COVID-19



pandemic expired on October 17, 2020. The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has been closely watching the foreclosure market. During December 2021 there were 7 foreclosure deeds recorded as a result of foreclosure processes taking place in Norfolk County. In addition, there were 19 Notices to Foreclosure Mortgages, the first step in the foreclosure process, recorded here in Norfolk County in December 2021. In December 2020 there were 3 Foreclosure Deeds and 16 Notices to Foreclosure Mortgages filed.

"These numbers remind us that some of our neighbors continue to face financial challenges," said O'Donnell. "We will continue to monitor these numbers."

For the past several years, the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has partnered with Quincy Community Action Programs, 617-479-8181 x376,

and NeighborWorks Housing Solutions, 508-587-0950 to help anyone facing challenges paying their mortgage. Another option for homeowners is to

contact the Massachusetts Attorney General's Consumer Advocacy and Response Division (CARD) at 617-727-8400. Register O'Donnell stated, "If you are having difficulty paying your monthly mortgage, please consider contacting one of these non-profit agencies for help and guidance."

Homestead recordings by owners of homes and condominiums decreased this year at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds in October. There was a 15% decrease in homestead recordings in December 2021 compared to December 2020. A recorded Declaration Homestead provides limited protection against the forced sale of an individual's primary residence to satisfy unsecured debt up to \$500,000.

The Registry of Deeds is on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Search NorfolkDeeds to follow the office to learn about events and initiatives,

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is located at 649 High Street 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 register-odonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

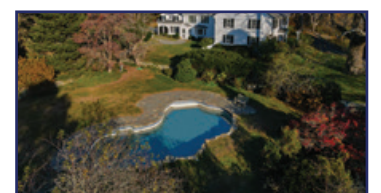
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February Program Highlights at the Norfolk Public Library

Visit the library's website at <https://norfolkpl.org> for a complete list of all adult and children's programs, as well as registration links.

Tips, Tricks and Trade Secrets for Gardening February 2 from 7 to 8 p.m. Award-winning container garden designer Deborah Trickett will present over 100 tips garden tips for all levels of gardeners. Virtual presentation, registration required.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde February 9 from 4 to 6 p.m. Monthly "Book to Film" classic movie series. Held in the Community Room, no registration required.

Memoir Writing Workshop February 10 from 2 to 4 p.m. Participants will write segments about their life and read them aloud to others to receive feedback on each piece. Program will be held on the second Thursday of the month, February through May. Held in the Schoolhouse, registration required.

Storytelling Through Edgar Allen Poe February 12 from 2 to 3:00 p.m. Storyteller Carol Mon will recite three Poe stories: "The Black Cat," "The Pit," and "The Tell Tale Heart." Program is rated PG13 and not suitable for young children. Held in the Community Room. Registration required.

Blind Date with a Book February 14, all day. Let a librarian match you up with a book after completing an online profile. Book pickup plus goodies will be available Feb. 14-19. Registration required.


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Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sales in Wrentham

Date	Address	Amount
Dec. 20	136 Lakeside Avenue	\$410,000
Dec. 23	4-6 West Street	\$1.33M
Dec. 29	600 Madison Street	\$475,000
Dec. 29	93 Hamilton Road	\$335,000
Dec. 30	40 Weber Farm Road	\$717,966
Dec. 30	135 Creek Street, Apt. 4	\$190,000
Dec. 30	326 Hancock Street	\$740,000
Dec. 30	85 Acorn Road	\$568,000
Jan. 3	5 Hillcrest Road	\$382,000
Jan. 4	38 Weber Farm Road	\$733,684
Jan. 5	296 Creek Street, #296	\$272,500
Jan. 7	40 Cobb Road	\$350,000
Jan. 14	2680 West Street	\$850,000
Jan. 14	115 King James Way	\$530,000

Source: www.zillow.com
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