

## A Long (and Lucrative) Haul for Natick Runners

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Rise early and fundraise often. That seems to be the winning formula for Natick residents participating in this year's Boston Marathon. Runners who don't qualify for the event in terms of speed are invited to participate if they can solicit sufficient funds for charities and nonprofit groups.

The Boston Athletic Association distributes a finite number of runner's bibs to a select group of organizations, and these in turn set their own fundraising goals - a minimum dollar amount each runner agrees to and must reach in order to run the race.

The fundraising gives added purpose to the "selfish pursuit" of running, said Ellen Banthin. "As long as I can continue raising the money, I do it."

Banthin is a Natick resident and regular runner. This month, she'll be pounding the pavement for Project Hope, a Boston-area resource that provides shelter and myriad ser-

vices for homeless women with children in Boston.

"They do so much work with women who are really down on their luck," said Banthin. "It's really, really a special place. They're able to get back out there and get an apartment."

The mainstay of Banthin's training routine are days of shorter runs (6-8 miles), punctuated every so often by longer distances.

"Twenty-one if I'm having an exceptional day," she said. "I've been a runner for a very long time."

Mid March, Banthin was recovering from an 18-miler she'd done over the weekend. Yoga and Spinning classes round out her training regimen. She last ran the Boston Marathon in



Tara Bharadwaj

2019. Distance running is of course famous for the investment in effort required. But those many miles also require a significant

**MARATHON**  
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See our  
**Spring Home & Garden Guide**  
 Inside ...



## Celebrate Earth Day in Natick

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Natick's Earth Day celebration will be branching out this year.

In place of the usual festivities centered on and around Natick Common, volunteers have decided to host the event where the real work happens - out in the community itself. In lieu of the village of tents and tables that would sprout up in this hamlet's hub, they'll this year be dispersed throughout the town. In the popular parlance of the environmentally conscious, one might say the event is being reclaimed.

The move is an effort to decentralize the day's doings, get citizens to think and learn more about what's happening in their own backyards.

"Look out any window," goes the song, "to see what's going on in and around you."

The day won't be just about knowledge, but action as well. The ecological challenges facing the planet and its inhabitants can seem overwhelming, and often are. But in seeking to meet those challenges, said Debby Marion, we sometimes discover power and purpose.

"There's a certain paradoxical joy in doing something. That's how I became an activist and thought 'what can I do?'"

Marion is the lead volunteer organizing the newly-imagined event, which has been aptly renamed "Earth Day All Around Natick."

While the name doesn't lend it itself to a snappy acronym, the new and novel approach just might add some energy and new

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**MARATHON**

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sacrifice of time. Longer runs, upwards of 20 miles during training season, mean hours at a time spend out on the road.

While most people are still snug under covers during these winter months, runners training for a marathon are out going the distance under cover of night. For many runners, this means hitting the pavement during the day's smallish hours, before work and family life begins.

So while Natick's nocturnal running scene goes largely unseen, it nevertheless has quite a following. These dark and cold runs are made more bearable, many have said, by fellow runners who share in the experience.

"It's so much more fun with friends," said Banthin.

In New England, navigating the roller coaster of weather and road conditions comes with the territory. Freezing mornings can follow a fluke 55-degree day, surprising runners with stray sheets of ice here and there. But that tap dancing around treacherous terrain, said Banthin, is part of running's appeal.

"It's like a game. It really gets me through the winter."

The surface of Massachusetts roads tend to be as irregular and random as its weather. During a run days before, Sophanny McArdle took time out to send a text about a near-tumble related to topography. A curb was the culprit, that tried-and-true tripper of many a runner.

"Almost went down," read McArdle's missive.

The Natick mom chose Natick Community Organic Farms as the recipient of her running. This will be McArdle's seventh marathon, her third in Boston.

After many months of training for the 2020 Boston Marathon, the event was converted into a virtual race due to the pandemic. Runners designed their own routes, kept track of mileages and times. For many runners, this year's in-person marathon will mean a comeback from Covid.

"I'm excited and I'm ner-



**Michelle Banthin**

vous," said McArdle. "It's my redemption run."

She starting running around 2015, partly as a way to get moving after the birth of her second child. Crossing the finish line as

the culmination of so many miles and hours of training can be addictive. A sort of selective athletic amnesia can set in, a phenomenon many distance runners can relate to.

"I think after you run one of these fun races, you're like 'I can do it again.' You get the bug. Then you forget how awful it was."

But it's the training routines in between those brief moments of finish-line triumph that seem to hold the greatest appeal for distance runners. The exertion and focus required of running leaves little brain bandwidth for the multitasking that otherwise so easily intrudes upon our minds.

"I get time to myself," said McArdle. "It's like a great time to think and meditate. The running community is crazy and they're fun. It just makes the miles go by

so much quicker."

Days after McArdle's close call with a curb, Natick's Aaron Stevens sprained his ankle navigating one. These are the hazards no amount of running experience can fully inoculate against. A longtime runner, Stevens' standard goal is one marathon per month.

"I got out of bed and knew right away I had a problem," he said of that ankle, and the sprain put in question his plans to run a Marathon a week later on Sunday. He was to visit his father then in North Carolina, bringing his own son along for the trip, and planned to run the state's Tobacco Road Marathon.

To go, or not to go. The question was answered the same day Stevens awoke feeling the pain of that sprain. His son hours later tested positive for Covid, effectively putting the kibosh on the trip.

Stevens ran 11 marathons in 2019, but has found the pandemic a formidable obstacle to running regular organized races.

"It's been hard to get in a

**MARATHON**  
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**MARATHON**

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groove,” he said. “There’s so many calculations to figure this thing out.”

Stevens shoots for five days of running per week, and like his running partners, hits the road before daybreak most days. The 5:00 a.m. sessions are a ritualistic start to the day, and prevent running routines from interfering with family and work.

This winter has also been a worthy competitor, said Stevens. While March was a relatively mild month to get those miles in, the precipitation of its predecessors had been a challenge. Sidewalks and byways were frequently frosted with ice and snow.

“January and February were so tough,” he said. “I struggled. I really did.”

But these days, said Stevens, running has become more about community than personal bests. He strives instead to bring his marathon experience to bear in helping others achieve their goals. He chose to run for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, and this will mark his seventh marathon to benefit the organization.

“I think my fastest marathon is behind me,” he said. “And that’s OK.”

As a way to keep moving and safe, Natick’s Tara Bharadwaj got a stationary cycle when the pandemic first started panning out. Having just graduated college, she completed two half marathons this past fall, and Boston this month will mark her first full.

Bharadwaj chose Family Promise Metrowest for her charity, a Natick organization that offers shelter and services to families experiencing homelessness.

“Basically, they have a 100-percent success rate,” she said.

Bharadwaj’s typical training routine entails running four days per week, including one long-distance day of up to 18 miles.

“I’m just trying to get the miles under my feet. That’s all I need to do.”

As an incentive to maximize

commitment, many charities require runners to come up with the balance if they fail to achieve fundraising goals set by the or-

runners are incentivized to avoid coming up hundreds or thousands short of the minimum. Thus the hustle to raise funds runs alongside the many miles toward completing the marathon, and runners are often soliciting donations up until race day and beyond.

Natick’s Michelle Barbin called her running journey “road therapy.” Those extended bouts of exertion offer a break for the brain and bolster the body. She had knee surgery several years ago, and said the sport has helped her recover strength, functionality and focus. Her last few years have been injury free.

“Running’s kind of always done that for me,” she said. “I spent a lot of time rebuilding my lower body.”

Barbin has been training on the actual marathon route, focusing on becoming more familiar with Newton’s notorious rolling peaks and nadirs, includ-

ing the event’s Everest - Heartbreak Hill. A typical routine starts at Marathon Sports in Wellesley, runs west to Wellesley College, and then doubles back and beyond the starting point to a finish at Boston College.

“I like the challenge of it,” said Barbin. “You get to prove yourself every time you step outside. What I put into it, I get out of it.”

Barbin ran in that rare autumn Boston Marathon last October. The race was a makeup for the event cancelled due to the pandemic. Then, she ran on behalf of the Natick Service Council; this month, the Dana Farber Cancer Institute will be the beneficiary. The organization has stated that it’s seeking to raise \$5.5 million during this year’s marathon.

“Everybody has a connection to cancer,” said Barbin. She added that fighting on the frontlines against a pervasive disease is the purview of healthcare professionals, but backing them up is a form of support anyone can undertake.

“I can’t do a lot of things,” said Barbin. “But I can run. I figure, why not me?”



**Sophanny McArdle**

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**EARTH DAY**

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experiences to the annual event.

“We have decided to re-imagine Earth Day,” said Marion. “Now, Earth Day will be all around Natick.” On a recent weekend trip to NYC in mid-March, the long-time Natick resident noticed the Central Park forsythia beginning to bloom.

“That’s an April thing,” she recalls thinking.

Such irregularities in nature’s rhythms can be recurring reminders of a changing climate.

Among the constellation of Natick events will be resident-hosted show and tells, with homeowners welcoming neighbors to learn about the solar installations and energy-efficiency systems they’ve adopted.

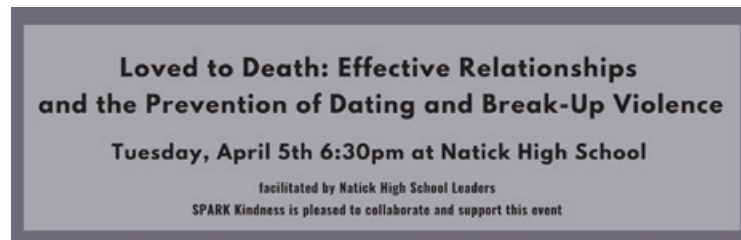
Activities that eschew motor-powered movement will also be featured at the event. These include group hikes, bike rides, and trail cleanups. Econatick.org is a new website launched to promote and provide info about the Earth Day weekend events, and the site includes a map that will point attendees toward their par-



ticular interests.

While Earth Day falls formally on April 22nd, Natick will host its event a week later. The timing is an effort to maximize attendance, avoid competing with April vacation travel plans. Earth Day All Around Natick will be held over the weekend of April 30th and May 1st, and will feature between 20 and 30 events.

**Spark programming**



**Loved to Death: Effective Relationships and the Prevention of Dating and Break-Up Violence**

Tuesday, April 5 at 6:30pm at Natick High School

For parents, caregivers, educators, community members and older high school students

This program was designed by Lori Hodin, and will feature a video from the CBS show 48 Hours about the tragic loss of Lauren Astley in 2011. During this interactive evening, Natick High School students will facilitate important conversations for community members, high school students and parents to promote healthy relationships, while recognizing the signs of unhealthy relationships and developing effective intervention

skills. Register and learn more about this free online program and other upcoming events at [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org)

**Boston 2022 - A Marathon of Kindness!**

SPARK Kindness is thrilled to have two charity runners - Melissa Hanna and Julie Luistro - making the 26.2 mile journey from Hopkinton to Boston to support kindness and community! We are so excited to cheer for these amazing women, every step of the way! Every time we



do something to help our community grow more kind, resilient and welcoming, we SPARK Kindness. Together as families, schools, organizations, businesses, coaches, artists, faith

and community leaders, we can make sure no one feels alone, bullied, unsupported or unconnected every day, and especially in challenging times. Visit [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org) to learn more and to support these two amazing runners!

**How to Move Forward During Difficult Times**

Wednesday, May 4 at 7pm via Zoom

For parents, caregivers, and community members

Are you, your child or someone you care for feeling stressed or stuck? Psychologist and author Lisa Coyne, PhD will share actionable microskills to help you tolerate the discomfort of



living through challenging times, confront obstacles and difficult emotions, and move forward to live a more meaningful life. Simultaneous Spanish Language and ASL Interpretation will be provided at this event. Register and learn more about this free online program and other upcoming events at [www.SPARKKindness.org](http://www.SPARKKindness.org)

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# How to Pick Your Helpers

TIFFANY A. O'CONNELL,  
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Today I won't be talking about what documents you should have in your estate plan. Instead, I'm going to talk about who you should think about for helpers in your estate plan. I know that 'helper' is not the legally correct term to use, but it does help describe what they do.

Here are the different roles a helper in an estate plan can take.



## Personal Representative

A Personal Representative (also known as an Executor) is the person who is appointed by the Probate Court to handle your estate for things going through Probate after your passing.

Think of the Personal Representative's role as a financial role. I would not recommend naming someone in your Will who is either not comfortable with finances or doesn't have the common sense to get professional help to guide them so that they are making prudent and reasonable decisions. In addition to this, remember that this is a job, and at times, not a pleasant one to have. Consider that it may be too burdensome for the person you've named. Finally, consider how family dynamics will be affected by that person serving in that role.

your role of being the parent if you are no longer living or are unable to care for your child. It is very important for you to let the Probate Court know who you would prefer in that role if a Guardian is ever needed. You do that by having a Will and nominating in your Will who you want to serve as Guardian.

When thinking about who should serve as Guardian, think about a helper who has a similar philosophy as you on raising children or think about a person who will honor what you would have done and what you would have wanted. You should also think about whether being Guardian would be too much of a burden for that person. Finally, consider the family dynamics that may result if that person is serving as Guardian.

your shoes to handle (or have power over) whatever you have authorized them to do in the document.

When picking a Power of Attorney Agent, your analysis of who it should be is very similar to how you chose who should serve as your Personal Representative.

## Health Care Directive Agent

A Health Care Directive Agent is the person you name in your health care directive document. The Health Care Directive Agent will make medical decisions for you if you are incapacitated and unable to do so yourself.

When picking a Health Care Directive Agent, pick someone who would be comfortable serving in this role. Also, consider

whether that person would have similar ideas as you regarding medical care.

## Trustee

A Trustee is the person who is responsible for:

- following the instructions you've set out in your trust;
- providing for the trust beneficiaries according to those instructions; and
- taking care and being responsible for the trust assets to accomplish those requirements.

Just like with the Power of Attorney Agent, your analysis of

who it should be is very similar to how you chose who should serve as your Personal Representative.

## Importance of Naming Successor Helpers

Since you will not know who will be available when the time comes, I always recommend that you name backup helpers for each helper role.

Want to learn more about estate planning and how to pick your helpers? Check out O'Connell Law's events on their website at: <https://www.oconnelllawgroup.com/events/>. You'll even find a webinar workshop on How to Pick Your Helpers. Go check it out.



## Guardian

A Guardian is the person appointed by the Probate Court to care for the day to day needs of a minor child and who steps into

## Durable Financial Power of Attorney Agent

A Power of Attorney Agent is the person you name in your Power of Attorney to step into

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# Open burning season continues through May 1

## Call Joint Dispatch Center for permission to burn

It is now open burning season in Natick. Permission may be obtained “simply by calling the Joint Dispatch Center on the day you plan to burn,” according to www.natickma.gov.

The Joint Dispatch Center phone number is 508-647-9550.

According to Open Burning Safety guidelines at www.Mass.gov, open burning must be done:

- After obtaining permission from the local fire department
- Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. from Jan. 15 to May 1
- Without causing a nuisance
- At a location greater than 75 feet from any dwellings
- On land proximate to the place of generation
- When air quality is acceptable for burning: Call the MassDEP Air Quality Hotline at (800) 882-1497 or visit [MassAir Online](https://eeaaonline.eea.state.ma.us/) at <https://eeaaonline.eea.state.ma.us/>

[ma.us/](https://eeaaonline.eea.state.ma.us/) to find out if it is safe to burn

Open burning permission/permits may be issued for:

- Training or research in fire protection or prevention with approval by the DEP.
- Activities associated with the normal pursuit of agriculture which have been determined as necessary by the DEP. (Agriculture is defined as the raising of crops and livestock for commercial foodstuffs).
- Open burning of brush and trees resulting from agricultural land clearing operations.
- Disposal of brush, cane, driftwood and forestry debris – excluding grass, hay, leaves, and stumps.

Items that CANNOT be burned include:

- Brush, trees, cane and driftwood from commercial and/

or industrial land clearing operations

- Grass, hay, leaves, stumps, and tires
  - Construction material and debris
- Items that CAN be burned include:
- Brush, cane, driftwood, and forestry debris from other than commercial or industrial land clearing operations.
  - Agricultural materials such as fruit tree and bush prunings, raspberry stalks, and infected bee hives for disease control.
  - Trees and brush resulting from agricultural land clearing.
  - Fungus infected elm wood ONLY if no other acceptable means of disposal is available.

How to safely ignite and tend the fire:

- An adult should always be present during open burn-

ing, until it is completely extinguished.

- Children and pets should be kept a safe distance away.
- Use paper and kindling to start the fire and add progressively larger pieces of wood, parts of a discarded Christmas tree can be used.
- NEVER use gasoline, kerosene or any other flammable liquid to start a fire because the risk of personal injury is high.
- Burn one small pile of material at a time and slowly add to it, this helps to keep the fire from getting out of control.
- Select a burn location away from any utility lines.
- Monitor the wind and be prepared to extinguish quickly.

Fire control tools to have on hand:

- Water supply. This can be a pressurized water fire extinguisher, a pump can



or a garden hose. TEST the water source before igniting the fire, you do not want to find out that the water is off or that the hose is cracked when you need it.

- Shovels and rakes – you can use dirt to put out a fire.

If the fire gets out of control:

- Call the fire department IMMEDIATELY
- People who allow a fire to get out of control, or who conduct illegal burning, may be held liable for the costs of extinguishing the fire in addition to fines or imprisonment (M.G.L. c.48, s.13).

For more safety tips, visit <https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-tips-for-open-burning/download>

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# April Brings Spring, Baseball and Tax... Squirrel!

Time for the annual, "You know, we should be doing more to pay less taxes".

Then like a dog seeing a squirrel, you get distracted, run in another direction and think "It's ok, we'll pay a lot less taxes in retirement."

Let me share a secret, if your wealth is mostly in tax deferred retirement accounts (i.e. 401(k)s, 403(b)s and Traditional IRAs), your taxes will be much more than you realize.

### Income Sources

Retirees receive income from a variety of sources, including distributions from tax deferred retirement accounts; payouts from company pensions and annuities; rental income; savings and earnings from investments.

Tax deferred retirement accounts enjoyed tax-deferred growth on contributions and investments; but when distributions

are taken, these are fully taxable as earned income and added to your adjusted gross income (AGI).

What if you don't need the funds? Don't worry the government wants its taxes, so starting at age 72 you have Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs).

For example, at age 62 your spouse and you retire with \$1.25M across all tax deferred retirement accounts. You live within your means, don't take from these accounts and grow 7.2% annually. By age 72, the accounts total \$2.5M and time for RMDs. Per IRS Table III divide by 25.6 at age 72 for \$97,656 taken as RMD, taxed as earned income and added to your AGI.

### Social Security

Factors such as your total income and marital status determine what/if a portion of your Social Security benefits are taxable. If your AGI plus any tax-

free interest exceeds \$34K for individuals or \$44K for married filing jointly, then up to 85% of Social Security benefits are taxable.

### Ways To Minimize Taxes

Taxes are inevitable with retirement savings or pension income, but there are many strategies to reduce amounts owed, here are a few:

During Retirement - Distribute funds in certain years of claiming large deductions, such as the breaks for medical expenses or charitable gifts, temporarily lower your tax rate.

Before Retirement - Contribute to Roth 401(k) and Roth IRA (if eligible) now. After age 59 1/2 and owned for at least 5 years, withdrawals are completely tax free. Added bonus is RMDs don't exist for Roth accounts nor



Glenn Brown

are balances in Roth accounts a factor in determining RMDs for your tax deferred accounts.

Before or During - Roth Conversion and Backdoor Roth. Yes, pay the taxes now for benefits listed in the prior paragraph. Consider greater amounts in

years of lower income if self-employed, change jobs and/or take away from work. Also, 20% (or more) market corrections provide an opportunity to convert investments over to Roth, pay less in taxes and let them rebound inside the Roth.

There are many more strategies to consider beyond this limited space. Bottom line, plan now for the tax implications of your retirement income.

*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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# Bacon Free Library News

Visit our website for the latest information: [baconfreelibrary.org](http://baconfreelibrary.org)

These passes allow for free or reduced admission to the following museums:

The Discovery Museum in Acton

## BFL Hours

The Bacon Free Library is open every Monday through Friday from 9:30am to 5:30pm, with extended hours on Tuesdays until 7:00pm. Patrons are welcome to come into the library and browse. Curbside pickup is available during all open hours as well as Saturday mornings from 10am to noon.

For programs that require registration, please call the library (508-653-6730) or register on our website, [baconfreelibrary.org](http://baconfreelibrary.org)

## New Services

Devices to Loan

The BFL has 4 iPads and 4 Wifi hotspots that are available for loan.

## Museum Passes

The Gardens at Elm Bank  
Mass Audobon Trails and Wildlife Sanctuaries

The Museum of Science, Boston

## The Natick Seed Library

The Natick Seed Library is now available at the BFL! Here's how it works: come into the library and select seeds to borrow (limit: 2 packets per patron); start

your seeds indoors or wait until the ground warms up to plant them outside; during the spring and summer, enjoy the bounty of your garden; at the end of the season, allow 1-2 of your plants to go to seed; harvest those seeds and return them to the BFL in a labeled envelope. More details are available at the library.

The Natick Seed Library is a collaboration between Natick Community Gardens, the Morse Institute Library, and the Bacon Free Library.



## Kids Programs

In-person, personal story times: Monday and Tuesday mornings in March from 10:00-12:00.

The BFL is happy to offer you a personal, indoor story time: just you, your kiddos, and a librarian. We'll gather in the children's area to read stories for about 20 minutes. We will choose the books—feel free to make requests!—or you are welcome to select your own. Registration is required.

Virtual story time on Zoom: Wednesdays in March at 6:30pm. Registration is required.

## Adult Special Program

Focus on Photos

Monday, March 21st at 7pm or Thursday, April 21st at 7pm; Zoom; Registration is re-

quired

If you enjoy taking photos & sharing them with others, this program is for you. Each person will share three photos with the group. You may choose any photos — your favorite spot in Natick, your beloved grandparent, a beautiful setting out West, a memorable spot on vacation — as long as it captures something special to you.

Each session is limited to four people to allow each person ample time to talk; we offer two sessions to allow more people to participate. Registration is required.

## Adult Clubs

The BFL offers 5 monthly book clubs and 1 film discussion club. These clubs meet virtually, over Zoom meeting. Copies of the books (normal, large print, and audio) as well as eBooks are available from the library. Check the BFL website, [baconfreelibrary.org](http://baconfreelibrary.org), in order to register for a book or film club.

Mystery book club - the first Thursday of each month at 1:00pm

March 3rd: The House on Vesper Sands by Paraic O'Donnell

April 7th: Finlay Donovan is Killing It by Elle Cosimano

History book club - the second Thursday of each month at 11:00am

March 10th: The Warmth of Other Suns : The epic story of America's Great Migration by Is-

abel Wilkerson (nonfiction)

April 14th: The Perfect Horse: The daring U.S. mission to rescue the priceless stallions kidnapped by the Nazis by Elizabeth Letts (nonfiction)

Environmental book club - the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

March 15th: Entangled life: how fungi make our worlds, change our minds & shape our futures by Merlin Sheldrake

April 19th: Land: how the hunger for ownership shaped the modern world by Simon Winchester

Fiction book club - the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

March 22nd: The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett

April 26th: The Henna Artist by Alka Joshi

Nonfiction book club - the fourth Saturday of each month at 10:00am

March 26th: You Don't Belong Here: how 3 women rewrote the story of war by Elizabeth Baker.

April 23rd: The Day the World Stops Shopping: how ending consumerism saves the environment and ourselves by J.B. MacKinnon

Cinephile Mondays (film discussion club) - the last Monday of each month at 4:00pm

The films are accessible through Kanopy or DVD.

Visit our website for the latest information: [baconfreelibrary.org](http://baconfreelibrary.org)

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## Morse Institute Library

now has hotspots available for borrowing!



For more information on hotspot lending, visit our Digital Branch:

[morseinstitute.libguides.com/rooms-technology/hotspots](http://morseinstitute.libguides.com/rooms-technology/hotspots)



We are very pleased to announce that the Morse Institute Library now has mobile wireless hotspots for patrons to borrow! The new Hotspot program fulfills the Library's mission to advance equitable access to resources and information, and is funded for one year through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support the IMLS' national goals for digital equity. Patrons must be 17 years or older and can borrow a Hotspot for 2 weeks with no renewals.

Learn all about the program on our digital branch: [morseinstitute.libguides.com/rooms-technology/hotspots](http://morseinstitute.libguides.com/rooms-technology/hotspots)



# Go local for all of your trash disposal needs

BY SUSAN MANNING  
STAFF WRITER

It is spring cleaning time, so start cleaning and call a local company for pick up.

When you choose I-HAUL for your trash removal needs, you're choosing to support a local business with long-standing ties to the community.

You will be getting something more than if you used one of those big box companies: you'll be getting Buz Bragdon, who was born and raised in Natick and runs I-HAUL Disposal Service as a detail-oriented, honest and friendly businessman.

I-HAUL Disposal Service takes the burden off of its customers by removing unwanted junk. It could be a pile of accumulated items in the middle of your garage floor, or it could be an entire house clean out.

It could include removing items from your office or your yard. You name it and I-HAUL can remove it. Bragdon takes the items and delivers them to the appropriate state and federally licensed facilities.

His is a custom service with fees based on each individual job because Bragdon knows each job is an individual situa-

tion and there is not a one-size-fits-all way of doing things.

I-HAUL can either work alongside you to help choose items for discard, they can place a container in your driveway or yard for you to load or they can do all the heavy lifting – you choose.

According to Bragdon, I-HAUL removes virtually everything including the kitchen sink—trash, furniture, large and small household items, carpeting, appliances: It all goes. Outside of the house, construction debris, demolition materials, minerals, brush and other yard waste are all part of I-HAUL's day.

They take all waste ban items and most hazardous materials. Occasionally, when Bragdon hauls away a piece that might still have life left in it, he attempts to find and new home for it.

Worried because some of your items are large and you don't have the capacity or time to break them down? Don't be. I-HAUL will do the necessary preparatory work before hauling large items. They'll demolish a shed or cut up a fence or swing set, for example. They'll cut down overgrown areas of your yard. I-HAUL is a full

## Business spotlight

service company and performs exactly what you need done.

So what's the craziest thing he's ever hauled away?

"An old dentist's chair. It was big and heavy... And I was told I couldn't tip it to get better leverage because there was oil in the base that would spill everywhere if I did. We had to finagle it out carefully down the steps and then into the tall back of my truck," he explained.

Bragdon has been doing removal and disposal for more than 35 years. Nights and weekends, he hitched up his small utility trailer behind his mid-1970s station wagon and picked up trash and junk to bring to the local town landfills.

"Because I had a trailer, people would ask me if I could pick up this or I could pick up that and help them out. I brainstormed that this could turn into more than just helping and that's how I started," he said.

Much has changed in the decades that followed: the kind



of vehicles needed, where to bring junk for proper disposal or recycling, even the kind of junk. In the beginning, no one had heard of "e-waste," for example and recycling was practically nonexistent.

Today, I-HAUL can recycle much of the debris collected and e-waste is a common component of what Bragdon deals with. Bragdon has also up-

graded a few times from his old station wagon to a larger trucks to haul the kinds of stuff people have nowadays.

Bragdon said his turnaround is often the next day. To reach him, call 508-655-4968 or email [ihaul@aol.com](mailto:ihaul@aol.com). Have a discussion of your removal and disposal needs with your local junk guy.

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# Sister, Brother Going to Curling Championships

Addison and DJ Neill are not your average athletes

Addison (she/her/hers) is 16 and is a Sophomore at Natick High School.

DJ (he/him/his) is 13 (will be 14 in May) and is an 8th Grader at Kennedy Middle School.

The siblings started to curl at ages 4 and 6, respectively. They learned of the sport through their father, who has been curling for over 40 years.

The Neills curl out of Broomstones Curling Club in Wayland. They are both "Skip" (aka captain) of their respective teams of 4, and both teams are headed to curling nationals this year!

Addison's team of 4 (names below) recently won the GNCC U18 Junior Women's Champion-

ships. GNCC stands for Grand National Curling Club, and it's equivalent to a regional qualification.

They competed for the U18 national title in Fort Wayne, Ind., at the end of March.

DJ's team of 4 (names below) were the regional winners/qualifiers for the U21 National Curling Championships in Stevens Point, Wis., in April.

Addison's team of 4 (one name substituted) will be competing as well, although they weren't winners of the qualifier.

### Addison's team for U18 Nationals:

Skip – Addison Neill, Natick, MA  
Vice – Julia Pekowitz, Wellesley,

MA  
Second – Kailey Price, Worcester, MA  
Lead – Kailee Pendleton, Windham, NH

### Addison's Team for U21 Nationals:

Skip – Addison Neill, Natick, MA  
Vice – Julia Pekowitz, Wellesley, MA  
Second – Kailey Price, Worcester, MA  
Lead – Alexa Pekowitz, Wellesley, MA

### DJ's Team for U21 Nationals:

Skip – DJ Neill, Natick, MA  
Vice – Benjamin Skoog, Marlborough, MA  
Second – Elijah DeRomanis, Webster, NY  
Lead – Stephen Colandrea, Averill Park, NY  
Alternate – Joseph Calabrese, Fairport, NY



## Community Gardens Lecture Series

Natick's Community Gardens Program has received a community giving grant of \$2,500 from Needham Bank in order to support a virtual lecture series for the

2022 growing season. Hosted in collaboration with the Morse Institute Library and Bacon Free Library, two lectures will be held virtually each month from March

to September and will be open to the public at no cost. The beginning of the lecture series coincides with the opening of the Bacon Library's new Seed Sharing Library.

All presentations will be related to gardening, with a specific focus on organic vegetable gardening for raised bed containers. Topics will include: "Tomato Growing", "Lifecycle of seeds", "Soil Preparation", "Companion Planting and Design", "Organic Gardening", and more. A schedule of events is included below. Speaker organizations include Massachusetts Master Gardeners, Backyard Growers, and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

For more information, to sign up for an event, or to participate in the seed sharing library, please visit the Community Gardens webpage or the Morse Institute Library and Bacon Free Library webpages.

Registration for a plot at Natick's four community gardens is currently open to individuals and organizations. To sign up for a plot at one of Natick's four Gardens, please visit Community Pass, or contact communitygardens@natickma.org.



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# Michael McCarthy Joins Mary Ann Morse Leadership Team As Executive Director, Mary Ann Morse Healthcare Center



From left, Michael McCarthy, Bethany Mercer and Marc Cohen

## Providing a Continuum of Senior Living & Healthcare Services to MetroWest & Surrounding Area Residents

We are pleased to announce the recent appointment of Michael McCarthy, LNHA, OT, to Executive Director of Mary Ann Morse Healthcare Center in Natick, MA, which provides short-term rehabilitation, memory and long-term care. He joins our executive leadership team, including Bethany Mercer and Marc Cohen, in directing our continuum of senior healthcare services and programs, supporting residents throughout Boston MetroWest and surrounding areas.

Michael brings strong rehabilitation and management expertise to Mary Ann Morse Healthcare Center as a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator. Over the past 20 years, Michael has held leadership roles within various healthcare settings, including long-term care facilities in Florida as a Rehabilitation Director and a Regional Director of Rehabilitation Operations. A graduate of the University of New England, Michael holds a BS in Occupational Therapy. Mary Ann Morse Healthcare Center holds a 5-star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and is accredited by the Joint Commission, offering: Long-term skilled Nursing care; Long-term memory care; Short-term rehabilitation; Outpatient rehabilitation (physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy).

Bethany leads Mary Ann

Morse Home Care, which provides customized Medicare-certified skilled and private duty in-home care services. Prior to this appointment, Bethany served as Executive Director of Mary Ann Morse at Heritage Assisted Living. She brings over 23 years of leadership experience in healthcare and senior living services, and has held executive directorships at long-term care communities in Vermont and North Carolina. Mary Ann Morse Home Care offers: Skilled nursing care following surgery, injury, stroke, cardiac event or other acute illnesses; Care of chronic diseases, diabetes, dementias; Physical, occupational, and speech therapies; Wound care and more.

Marc is seasoned senior living professional who brings a wealth of experience to Mary Ann Morse at Heritage, most recently serving as Executive Director at Wingate Residences at Needham and One Wingate Way. Prior to that Marc held executive director positions with Brookdale Quincy Bay and Whitcomb House Assisted Living. He is a Mass-ALA Lead Boot Camp Trainer and serves on the non-profit's Public Policy Committee. Mary Ann Morse at Heritage is a 2022 Caring Star Award recipient – one of 15 in Massachusetts – offering: all-inclusive assisted living, memory care, and mental health programs; restaurant-style dining;

social, educational, and physical activities; 24-hour staffing.

Please join us in welcoming Michael to the Mary Ann Morse family of quality senior living, healthcare, and home care services. Feel free to reach out to Michael, Bethany, and Marc directly if they can provide any assistance or additional program information.

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# MassBay's STEM Division Partners with Natick's ABI-LAB to Support the Pipeline of Industry-ready STEM College Graduates

MassBay Community College and Natick-based ABI-LAB have announced a new partnership that will provide MassBay Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) students access to the scientists, researchers, and other STEM professionals who lease lab space in the cutting-edge ABI-LAB lab incubator. This collaboration benefits MassBay STEM students with scholarships, networking opportunities, and exclusive mentorship through the MassBay STEM Mentor Program (SMP), while building and educating a stronger STEM workforce for the local economy.

ABI-LAB was established to support startups ranging from

life sciences to biotech and is a collaborative lab environment that provides state-of-the-art lab space and resources, which makes research possible for smaller companies. ABI-LAB provides expertise, support, and the environment for scientists and researchers to bring their research from ideas to fruition. This entrepreneurial lab concept is the only "biotech incubator" in MetroWest Boston, and it allows growth and discovery for over 45 of the area's latest research companies their house.

"Talking with a STEM professional who is currently working in their field of study gets students excited about pursuing a degree,

and it gives them a glimpse into their future careers, which is invaluable," said MassBay STEM Mentor Program Manager, Tracey Gustafson. "This partnership gives our students an opportunity to tour labs, ask questions, and network with leading industry professionals at ABI-LAB. We are thrilled to offer our students this additional insight into their STEM field, and we thank ABI-LAB for collaborating on building a stronger STEM workforce of tomorrow."

Through the new partnership, there are currently five scientists from ABI-LAB mentoring students in MassBay's STEM Mentor Program, which matches STEM students and industry professionals in one-on-one mentoring relationships for the course of the academic year. The five ABI-LAB professionals are from Avenge Bio, Cytovia Therapeutics, EverCell Bio, Synspira Therapeutics, and the WuXi AppTec company. For the past eight years, the SMP has been one of MassBay's signature programs, providing academic and career-related support for students pursuing STEM degrees. Since 2014, the SMP has served more than 400 students who report that the program has helped them to gain self-advocacy skills and confidence to be successful in a STEM field. Mentors assist students with defining career goals and developing individualized strategies to meet these goals.

The SMP also provides financial support to enrolled students through scholarships and stipends



for educational and career-related purposes. Through a generous donation from ABI-LAB this year, the program added two spring semester scholarships for science majors who are participants in SMP. In addition, six scholarships were awarded to assist international, immigrant, and self-supporting students. Eight scholarships, totaling \$4,000, were awarded this spring, providing vital financial support for students who are often balancing attending school with family and work responsibilities.

"To me, receiving the Stem Mentor Program scholarship provided by ABI-LAB means that I'm heading in the right direction," said MassBay Biotechnology student and Ashland, MA resident, Jade Martinez. "With the help given by ABI-LAB, I have the opportunity to continue on with my education and fulfill my desire to expand my knowledge in the Biotechnology field."

On March 4, 2022, all MassBay STEM students will have the opportunity to participate in

an in-person networking event, which will be hosted by ABI-LAB at their facility in Natick. Students will attend a career panel featuring professionals working in their facility, which will be co-facilitated by the Marketing Director at ABI-LAB, Natalia van Vloten, and Tracey Gustafson, the STEM Mentor Program Manager at MassBay. Following the panel, students will tour several of the private lab suites. The program will conclude with an open networking session, providing MassBay STEM students with an opportunity to meet informally with ABI-LAB professionals.

"It's important to remember the opportunities we have been given in each of our own paths had the possibility to change our lives," said ABI-LAB Marketing Director, Natalia van Vloten. "Through our collaboration, we hope to expose STEM students to unique learning opportunities

**MASSBAY**

*continued on page 13*

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# Natick Garden Club

## Upcoming Events

May 14 & 15  
Natick Art in Bloom, Morse Library

June 4, watch for details for our annual plant fundraiser! To be held at Natick Community-Senior Center, 117 East Central St., Natick

Info on our club:  
Our mission is to promote a positive educational environment for sharing gardening, horticultural, and conservation information and to encourage civic planting, beautification, and service in the Natick community.  
Organized in 1998, the Natick Garden Club currently has about

80 members. Members represent a range of ages, genders, and gardening acumen. All have a passion to learn, share, and volunteer in service to their garden club. The NGC has evening meetings September through May at Morse Library (currently via Zoom during Covid times) featuring a keynote speaker, with time for socialization and NGC business at the start. September and March are



non-membership meetings and for the public at large. We have deep roots in Natick although draw members from several communities, and can be found around town in a variety of capacities throughout the year. Activities include but are not limited to seasonal planting of the downtown window boxes, maintenance of the Morse Library gardens, group trips to area gardens, and a spring plant auction.

For more information please visit us at [www.natickgardenclub.org](http://www.natickgardenclub.org) or find us on Facebook.

## Natick 180 needs community input

Natick 180 is our community's resource for addiction education, prevention, and recovery. In an effort to best meet the needs of our community, we are asking parents and caregivers to please complete this survey about your perspectives and opinions on youth substance use in Natick. This survey is completely anonymous and should take about 15 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please contact Natick 180 staff at 508-647-6623 or [natick180@natickma.org](mailto:natick180@natickma.org). We thank you in advance for your participation and support!



### MASSBAY

*continued from page 12*

that will have a significant impact on the direction of their careers.”

To learn more about MassBay visit [www.massbay.edu](http://www.massbay.edu).

MassBay Community College is the most affordable higher education option in MetroWest Boston, offering a robust portfolio of courses and more than 70 associate degree and certificate programs with flexible day, evening, and weekend classes in Ashland, Framingham, Wellesley Hills, and online. MassBay students receive an unmatched educational value by earning stackable credits that transfer to bachelor's degree programs, and workforce-ready skills necessary to advance careers in high-demand fields such as health and life sciences, automotive technology, engineering, business, cybersecurity, and the humanities. MassBay's Associate Degree in Nursing (RN) and Practical

Nursing (LPN) programs were both ranked as the #1 Nursing Program in Massachusetts in 2020-2021 by national nursing advocacy organizations RegisteredNursing.org, and PracticalNursing.org. Since its founding in 1961, MassBay has been accredited by several governing bodies and remains firmly committed to

its mission of meeting the needs of the diverse local communities it serves. We value the intrinsic worth of all individuals, collectively in pursuit of inclusiveness and prioritize our work towards achieving equity within our community and beyond.

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# Sports

## NHS Softball Team Aims To Build On Last Year's Success

### Whittaker Ready To Take Coaching Reins

By KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Last spring was a very significant time for Natick High's softball team — it won a conference championship for the first time in 27 years.

The Redhawks finished with a 14-2 regular-season record and shared the Bay State Conference title with Newton North. The last time Natick captured a softball crown was in 1994 when Bill Clinton was president, the internet was introduced and Tom Hanks won an Oscar for Forrest Gump.

The 2021 team, which lost in the state tourney to Mansfield in the second round, was led by Tom Lamb, Natick's legendary football coach who was directing the squad in Diane Whittaker's absence.

Whittaker, who's now in her third year as head softball coach, has yet to personally experience winning or losing. When appointed in 2020, the MIAA canceled all spring sports because of the pandemic. Last year, Lamb was Natick's interim coach, filling that role after Whittaker suffered a concussion in an auto accident, forcing her to miss the entire season.

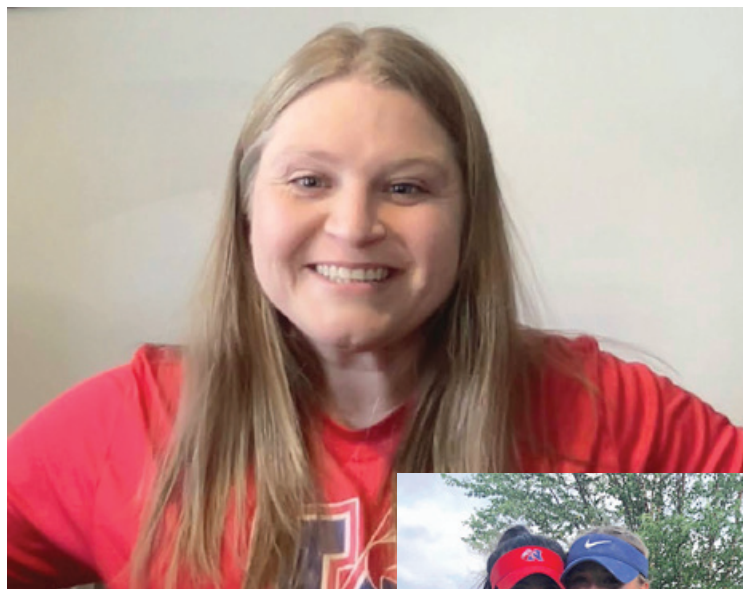
"I'm healthy, eager to return, and ready to go," Whittaker said. "Last year's championship season was awesome. I was so pleased and it's great to have an assistant like Tom Lamb. I coached the seniors at the jayvee level and saw them improve. I also got to know other players in 2020 when we worked on team building and had virtual and team competitions."

The 40-year-old Duxbury native, who works as a school psychologist at the pre-school and high school levels in Natick, has four goals this season.

"We want to qualify for the tourney and advance deeper than last year, contend for the Carey Division title, and improve daily in practice and games," Whittaker said. "Our objectives are reachable but we've got to replace two quality pitchers who graduated — Katherine Canty and Martha Jennings."

Whittaker is upbeat about her team because of its strengths. "We've got experience, good leadership, the players are coachable and versatile, they've got a high softball IQ and they're mentally tough," she emphasized. "We'll be scrappy on defense and we've got some assets on offense. We'll play some small ball and also hit for power."

Natick's senior captains —



Above, Diane Whittaker is eager to start coaching softball at Natick High.

Karina Killelea, left, and Jess Brill are Natick's captains.



catcher Jess Brill, who will play next year at Stonehill, and short-stop Karina Killelea — are dynamic leaders and competitors.

"Jess was an all-star last year," Whittaker said. "She had a .656 on-base percentage, scored 25 runs, stole 16 bases, hit .588 and had 11 RBIs. She's confident and aggressive. On defense, she's solid and has good arm strength. She's also a clutch hitter. Karina was an honorable-mention all-star. A smart base-runner, she commands the infield because of her range and strong arm. She's a contact hitter (.418 average) who also can hit for power."

Senior Mia Hansen, who's played left field, could be used at first base to replace Juliana Kiley who transferred to a private school. Kiley hit .558 and didn't commit an error. "Mia is versatile," Whittaker said. "And, she's energetic in the batter's box. She hit for an average of .442 and had three home runs. She's also solid in the field and has a strong arm."

Centerfielder Samantha Bean and utility player Samantha Gondelman are seniors who'll play key roles.

"Bean is incredibly fast, smart, has great range and takes risks in centerfield," Whittaker noted. "She'll dive for a ball and she backs up the corner outfield-

she said. "We're hoping they can provide depth."

Whittaker has a strong group of assistants. Besides Lamb, Brenna Keefe will also serve as a varsity aide. Nancy Molina will be Natick's jayvee coach and Jeff Wright will direct the freshmen. Lucia Cavacini is the pitching coach.

Whittaker relies on an athletic philosophy that "focuses on the little things." She believes in sharp bunting skills, communication, how to get a proper lead on the bases, strategic timing, and a keen mental approach. "The girls know they have a role and to focus on what we do well," Whittaker said. "If we do all these things, then winning will follow."

Whittaker knows valuable life lessons can be learned in athletics. She hopes her players learn to be quality teammates, know how to communicate, how to sharpen leadership skills and how to overcome adversity.

A dynamic two-sport athlete at Duxbury High, Whittaker played softball and field hockey. She was a two-time captain and a three-time all-star as a pitcher. A goalie in field hockey, she was a captain and a two-time all-star.

Injuries limited Whittaker to only one season of softball at Quinnipiac College in Connecticut where she majored in psychology. She has a masters degree in educational psychology and is an educational specialist in school psychology.

A coach early on at the youth level in Duxbury and in club softball, Diane Whittaker's passion now is at the varsity level.

Hopefully, her third year as Natick's head coach will be all about games, strategy and decision-making instead of dealing with a pandemic that erased her first year on the job and an injury that forced her to miss her second season.

It all starts April 6 at Walpole.

ers. Improving as a hitter (.333 last year), she's got speed on the basepaths and is a terrific bunter. Gondelman can play either the outfield or second base. Relying on soft hands and a quick transfer, she's steady in the field and she's got some pop in her bat. An incredible bunter, her speed on the basepaths is outstanding."

"A wall at third base" is the way Whittaker labels sophomore Olivia Schultz. "She's a fierce and intense competitor who's a superb fielder," Whittaker said. "Always giving 100 percent, she's a contact hitter who takes an aggressive approach at the plate. She hit .348 as a freshman."

Whittaker has a plethora of juniors aiming to earn playing time. "We've got juniors who are athletic, coachable and talented,"

For updates on area wrestlers who competed in the State, All-State and New England tournaments, and for basketball and hockey teams that advanced deep into the State Tournament, go to [naticktownnews.com](http://naticktownnews.com).

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# April Programs With Natick Community-Senior Center

## Mindfulness Meditation- Zoom

Call the center to register 508-647-6540. Every Thursday with Sharon 2:00-2:40 pm. This meditation is audio only and participants are muted during the meditation portion. Everyone is welcome to join for some guided meditation, some quiet sitting and some reflection with Q & A and sharing.

## Mondays At A Museum- Zoom

Call the center to register 508-647-6540. Mondays from 3:00-4:00 pm, free. We visit museums all over the world and view artwork with commentary by artists, docents, curators and others.

April 4- Family history and collecting- Edmund de Waal, author of Hare with the Amber Eyes

April 11- Japanese prints at the Clark Art Institute

April 18- Patriot's Day- Center is Closed

April 25- Frankenthaler, Picasso

Visit Elm Bank/Mass Horticultural Gardens by borrowing the Natick Community-Senior Center member card. Each pass admits 2 for the day. Gardens OPEN April 1, 2022. Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Reserve the pass online at Community Pass for the date you wish to visit or call the center 508-647-6540. The pass may be borrowed between 10:00 am and 4:30 pm. You may pick up the pass at the Center about 15 minutes before your visit and return the pass directly after your visit.

The pass will also be available to borrow for weekends (Gardens open 10am-7pm daily) with a pick-up time from the Center on Friday between 1:00-2:00 pm and must be returned to the Center Monday morning between 9:00- 9:30am. If there is a Monday holiday, then the pass must be returned the next day 9:00-9:30am. Sponsored by Whitney Place, Assisted Living and Memory Care, Natick

## Walking Group At Wellesley College- In Person

Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am, free- Drop-In, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Meet us at the Visitor's parking lot in Athletic Fields entrance for our weekly walk around natural landscapes of Wellesley College. This casual walk is a great way to start the day, meet new people, get outside and moving! Please wear sneakers/walking shoes, and any other outdoor stuff you need (ie. sunscreen, hat, water, bug spray etc). Rain or shine. Meet in the Visitor's Parking Lot entry is ONE WAY on the right, driving on Rt 135/Central St towards Wellesley Center from Natick COA; signage points to Athletic Fields and follow signs to Visitor Parking and look for Sharon. Call and talk to Sharon if you have questions.

## Pranayama- Yogic Breathing - ZOOM

Monday April 4, 2:00-3:00pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

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

## Demystifying Social Security- Zoom

Tuesday, April 12, 2:00-3:00pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Deciding how and when to claim Social Security is one of the most critical financial decisions a person will make in his or her lifetime. Without an understanding of the complex rules surrounding Social Security, you could leave thousands of dollars on the table. Join Dan Williams from The Dover Group to learn about: when you should file for benefits; advantages and disadvantages of filing at age 62 or deferring to age 70; taking advantage of available spousal, survivor or divorced benefits; how much of Social Security is subject to income tax and what

changes may be in store.

## New Books With Lorna - Zoom

Wednesday, April 13, 1:30-2:30pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Join book buyer and book expert, Lorna Ruby, Wellesley Books, for an entertaining and insightful overview of the new books coming out. Whether you're a fiction, mystery, non-fiction or open-minded to anything reader, this hour talk of new books is for you

## Food Waste Recycling - Zoom

Tuesday, April 19, 12:30-1:30pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Karen Mallozzi, a Task Force Member of the Natick Curbside Composting Program to learn how you can do it. Benefits include saving money not having to buy the Blue Bags for all your waste. Keep biodegradable matter out of our landfills and save the town money. About 35 - 40 % of our municipal waste (by weight) is compostable.

## Downsize Or Stay? - In Person

Tuesday, April 19, 1:30-2:30pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Many older seniors ask themselves the question of staying in their home of many years or downsizing. Then a host of questions arises, from what do you do with all your stuff to what type of residence to move to or accommodations to make so you might stay in your current residence. Join realtors, Lynn Cohen and Annette Reynolds who recently faced this decision in this conversational information session. They will share their personal experiences and what they learned through their research.

## Living With Hope In Trying Times- Zoom

Wednesday, April 20, 1:30-2:30pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Join us in this streamed Google Talks with U.N. Messenger of Peace Dr Jane Goodall recognizing

her remarkable achievements as a scientist/primateologist, environmentalist with Roots and Shoots program and author of The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide in Trying Times.

## Environmentally Friendly Cars - Zoom

Thursday, April 21, 3:00-4:00 pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Join Sharon Kirby in this overview of environmentally friendly cars--cars that use less fuel and have less emissions or are all electric. We'll look at what those cars are and how they're different from gas cars/internal combustion engines. This is great information if you're in the market for buying a new or used car or just want to see what's new and improved! Powerpoint presentation is about 1/2 hour with time for discussion and questions.

## COAST TO COAST- Charles Lindbergh's Historic Flight- A Talk With Historian Anne Barrett

Monday, April 25, 1:30-2:30pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Thanks to Riverbend of South Natick & Rehabilitation Associates for sponsoring this event.

They provide Exceptional Post Surgery Rehab & Skilled Nursing Care right in South Natick, www.rehabassociates.com

Join historian, Anne Barrett for this program! Charles Lindbergh's vision of coast-to-coast travel by plane and train in just 48 hours was only a dream until July 7th, 1929, when Transcontinental Air Transport's inaugural journey left New York City. My Great Aunt Grace was one of a select few passengers on that historic journey, and she kept a diary of her experience. Learn about the evolution of transportation in America, culminating in this exciting new venture that marked the dawn of commercial air passenger travel.

## LIVE tour from Edinburgh, Scotland with Beyond- ZOOM

Wednesday, April 27, 10:00-11:00am, free, Call the

center to register 508-647-6540.

We will be walking through the Old Town of Edinburgh in the heart of the Royal Mile relating stories about Mary Queen of Scots, Deacon Brodie, Robert the Bruce, Robert Burns and more historic figures. Our stroll goes up castle hill and through one of the eerie closes- tiny streets nicknamed Auld Reekie. The tour ends with spectacular views of the New Town and famous Princes Street. Zoom Link will be sent out a week in advance.

## Music For Seniors- In Person

Wednesday, April 27, 1:30-2:30pm, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Join guitarist and singer, Howie Newman for Music for Seniors featuring Sinatra songs, show tunes, oldies, Elvis, the Beatles and a bunch of popular tunes and standards. It's a sing-along, toe-tapping musical journey from the early 1900s up through the 1960s. I also add trivia, background stories about the songs and a little G-rated humor here and there. Made possible by a grant from the Natick Cultural Council.

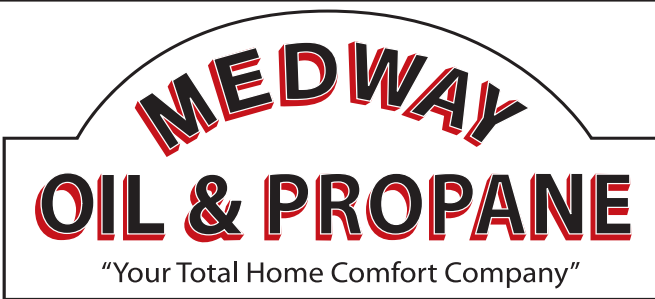
## Meet Up At Tower Hill Botanic Gardens, Boylston, Ma

Thursday, April 28, 10:30am, free, Call the center to register 508-647-6540.

Meet us at Tower Hill Botanic Gardens for an hour long tour of the gardens and especially appreciating the flowering spring bulbs and shrubs. You'll also have plenty of time to explore this 170 acre garden/ arboretum on your own as well. You may bring your own lunch or pre-order a boxed lunch from the café for \$20. Please ask Sharon from Natick Community-Senior Center for the menu in advance.

Registration REQUIRED—there is a limited number of spaces. Meet at the entrance of the gardens, 11 French Drive, Boylston, MA (allow 45' drive from Natick) restrooms will be available there.

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# Senate Passes Oversight Reform for Veterans' Homes

The Massachusetts State Senate passed legislation to increase public oversight over the administration of state-operated veterans' homes in Holyoke and Chelsea. To improve safety and transparency at the veterans' homes, the bill would restructure the chain of command to more closely match established administrative practices used in hospitals and other large organizations. This legislation follows continued scrutiny of administrative failures at the veterans' home in Holyoke, which led to the tragic deaths of 77 veterans during the early days of the pandemic, and builds on recommendations made by the Special Joint Oversight Committee on the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke COVID-19 Outbreak, which investigated.

"As the daughter of a veteran, I continue to be heartbroken for the families of those who lost their lives to COVID-19 at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home," stated Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "I would like to thank the Special Joint Oversight Committee on the Soldiers'

Home in Holyoke COVID-19 Outbreak for their thorough investigation of this tragedy, as well as my colleagues in the Senate who have remained focused on dramatic and drastic governance reform to our veterans' services to ensure the tragedy that occurred in Holyoke never happens again. The Senate will continue to lead in its efforts to support the brave men and women who have served our country. I want to thank Senator Rush for working for over a decade to confront the issues that affect the treatment of veterans and that impact veterans' services, as well as Senators Rodrigues and Velis for their partnership in crafting this bill."

"With the passage of this bill, the Senate recognizes the need to prioritize accountability and oversight, establish effective checks and balances, and ensure clear chains of command at our state's long-term care facilities for veterans in order to prevent the tragedy at Holyoke Soldiers' Home from ever happening again," said Senator Michael J. Rodrigues (D-Westport), Chair of the Senate Committee on

Ways and Means. "Thank you to Senate President Spilka for her leadership, to Senators Rush and Velis for their tireless efforts in shaping this bill, and to my colleagues in the Senate for their continued commitment to supporting our veterans."

"The Soldiers' Homes have long suffered from gaps in accountability and a confused chain of command, factors which left it unable to deal with a crisis like the one we saw with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic," said Senator Michael F. Rush (D-Boston), Senate Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs and sponsor of the bill. "The bill passed by the senate today tightens these gaps, enhances the level of oversight by elevating the Secretary of Veterans' Services to a cabinet level position, and creates a stronger governing structure that supports our veterans and provides high quality care. Thank you to Senate President Spilka, Chairman Rodrigues, and my colleagues in the senate for your continued support of the commonwealth's veterans

"From removing burdensome reporting layers and cleaning up the chain of command, to putting in place important infection control and medical oversight, this legislation builds on a lot of the critical lessons that we learned since the tragic COVID-19 outbreak at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home in the spring of 2020," said Senator John C. Velis (D-Westfield), Chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. "Those lives lost are the reason this legislation is before us today, to do right by them, and to do right by all the Veterans who will call Massachusetts home in the coming years. I want to thank the Senate President, the Chair of Ways & Means, and Senator Rush for their steadfast leadership on these important reforms and all my colleagues for their consistent support of our Commonwealth's Veterans."

This comprehensive reform bill is designed to increase the safety of residents of veterans' homes in the Commonwealth. A new, full-time ombudsperson would receive, investigate, and assist in resolving complaints related

to the health, wellbeing, and rights of veterans' homes' residents and staff. To effectively aid these efforts, a public hotline would be created for residents and staff to direct concerns. The bill would also task the Department of Public Health (DPH) with regularly inspecting the homes; all inspection reports would be made publicly available, excluding identifying information of patients and staff. Veterans' homes would be required to be licensed as long-term care facilities by DPH and adhere to the same standards and regulations.

Amendments adopted during floor debate will ensure that all veterans' homes are licensed as long-term care facilities; employ both an infection control specialist and an emergency preparedness specialist; have adequate infection control programs in place; and establish best practices for treating post-traumatic stress disorder. Other adopted amendments direct the Secretary of Veteran's Services to con-

## REFORM

*continued on page 17*

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**REFORM**

*continued from page 16*

duct an outreach program on the benefits and application process for the veterans' homes, and require all annual reports from the statewide and regional veterans' homes advisory councils to be publicly accessible online.

State-operated veterans' homes in Massachusetts are managed by a Superintendent, who is responsible for everyday operation of the homes and for ensuring improvements to quality of care. The Senate's legislation would give the authority to appoint a superintendent for each of the Veterans' Homes to the Executive Director of the Office of Veterans' Homes and Housing (OVHH). Under the legislation, superintendents would be required to fulfill certain criteria, including being a licensed nursing home administrator with

experience running a long-term care facility. Priority would also be given to superintendent candidates who are themselves veterans.

The Executive Director of OVHH would be appointed by the Massachusetts Secretary of Veterans Services, which would be elevated to a cabinet-level position, appointed by the Governor. The Secretary would be required to promulgate regulations concerning the operations and administration of veterans' homes. Elevating the Secretary to a cabinet-level position would facilitate more timely attention to all personnel challenges.

In addition to altering the command structure responsible for managing veterans' homes, the bill would also create a statewide Massachusetts Veterans' Homes Advisory Council, tasked with recommending policies to the Secretary of Veterans Ser-

vices, as well as Regional Councils, which would be tasked with representing the interests of the local community, residents, and family members at each veterans' home. Both the statewide Massachusetts Veterans' Homes Advisory Council and Regional Councils would report annually to the Secretary and to the Legislature. Together with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, these councils would be empowered to submit nominations for and recommend the removal of superintendents.

Furthermore, the bill would require each home to have a full-time specialist in infection control and emergency preparedness and to adhere to medically-sound guidelines for trauma-informed care, including best practices for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicide prevention. Additionally, the homes would be required to

maintain organizational plans, updated annually, for normal and emergency operations.

The Senate's bill would remove existing procedural hurdles which make it harder to donate operating supplies, clothing, medical equipment, personal hygiene products, and holiday gifts to veterans' homes.

This legislation would set procedures and guidelines for filling vacant positions at veterans' homes, including posting job openings in a timely fashion, and ensuring that an employee is available to temporarily be tasked with any unfulfilled emergency duties while the position is vacant. Additionally, annual performance reviews would be mandated for all leadership positions at each home.

To facilitate veterans' access to health care, state-operated veterans' homes would be required to accept Medicare and Medicaid

payments. The bill would also provide mental health resources to employees of state-operated veterans' homes who worked during the pandemic, and create a commission to rename the Veterans' Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke after specific Massachusetts veterans.

Finally, the Senate adopted an amendment from Senator Velis to establish March 21 as Veterans' Homes Remembrance Day, to honor the veterans who lost their lives due to the tragic COVID-19 outbreaks at veterans' homes.

As a version of An Act relative to the governance, structure and care of veterans at the commonwealth's veterans' homes has previously passed the Massachusetts House of Representatives, a conference committee will be appointed to resolve any differences between the Senate and House versions.

## Senate Passes Bills Supporting Equitable Health Care Access for Women

The Massachusetts State Senate passed two bills that would expand equitable health care access for women in Massachusetts. One bill would help to address the crisis in maternal health by ensuring that pregnant and postpartum mothers and birthing people get necessary and potentially life-saving health care by extending Massachusetts health insurance coverage to 12 months after pregnancy. A second bill would direct the state to provide menstrual products free of cost in certain public places, including schools, correctional facilities, and shelters and other temporary housing.

"Lack of attention to the health care of women, girls and those who identify as women has posed substantial and potentially life-threatening challenges, but today the Senate is kicking off Women's History Month by taking steps to rectify this," said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "The danger of dying during pregnancy or childbirth is still far too high in the United States, particularly for Black women, but the Senate is committed to continuing our efforts

to ensure pregnant and postpartum mothers and people who give birth receive the critical care they need and deserve. In addition, menstrual products are essential to the health and well-being of women, girls, and people who menstruate. Making them conveniently available in public spaces like schools will result in less stress,

a reduced financial burden, and better overall outcomes. I'd like to thank Senators Jehlen and Lovely for their unwavering efforts to bring attention to and address these issues, and to my colleagues throughout the Senate for their support for these

**HEALTH**

*continued on page 18*

## Annual Walk to End Homelessness on May 13-15

Family Promise Metrowest will sponsor its 13th annual Walk to End Homelessness during the weekend of May 13 to May 15. The walk is the organization's largest fundraiser of the year, fueling their mission to transform the lives of families with children facing homelessness across the Metrowest region. This year's walk will be filled with independent walks all over the region, family-friendly activities, social media marathons, hotly-contested fundraising competitions, and more! Walk 10 minutes or 10 miles, it's up to you, just grab your friends and family, form a team, and start planning! To register, visit <https://bit.ly/3ifaIRS>, and to donate visit [www.familypromisemetrowest.org/donate/](http://www.familypromisemetrowest.org/donate/)



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**HEALTH***continued from page 17*

bills.”

“The passage of these bills reflects the Senate’s commitment to expanding access to equitable care, urgently addressing maternal health and providing support for those who need it most, ensuring

that every mom and baby is afforded the opportunity of a healthy pregnancy and start at life,” said Senator Michael J. Rodrigues (D-Westport), Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. “Thank you to Senate President Spilka for her steady leadership, to Senators Lovely, Jehlen, and Friedman for their diligent work on

this legislation, and to my colleagues in the Senate for voting to support women’s health.”

“Today, the Massachusetts Senate has taken another step to combat inequities in maternal health,” said Senator Joan B. Lovely (D-Salem), Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules and the lead sponsor of legislation related to maternal postpartum care. “By extending postpartum healthcare coverage to a full year, birthing individuals will be able to access vital physical and behavioral health resources that will decrease mortality and severe morbidity and improve the overall health of parent and child, especially for our minority populations. I want to thank Senate President Spilka, Senate Ways and Means Chair Rodrigues, and their teams for their partnership and support on expanding maternal healthcare. I also want to thank Senator Jehlen for her work on ensuring menstrual equity. Both bills passed today improve access to key resources in our Commonwealth.”

“That we are considering this bill today is a result of the leadership of so many young people, particularly high school

students across the state, from Brookline to Belchertown,” said Senator Patricia D. Jehlen (D-Somerville), the lead sponsor of legislation related to access to menstrual products. “Once you start thinking about it, the need seems obvious. As the menstrual equity coalition says, ‘Non-menstruating people go into a bathroom expecting their basic bodily needs to be met—this is not the case for menstruators.’ This is now being seen as an issue because new generations are saying words out loud that used to be hidden by euphemisms, and they’re talking about needs that were unrecognized because they weren’t named.”

According to a recent report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of women identified as having died of maternal causes in the United States climbed from 658 in 2018 to 861 in 2020, with the maternal death rate for Black women reaching an alarming 55.3 deaths per 100,000 live births. Under the maternal health legislation, MassHealth would be directed to provide standard coverage for eligible

pregnant and postpartum residents of the Commonwealth for 12 months after the end of the pregnancy. Additionally, the Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services would be directed to maximize federal financial participation for coverage and benefits of eligible pregnant and postpartum residents. This bill follows last year’s Maternal Health Equity legislation, which was signed into law in January 2021.

The legislation relevant to menstrual products would require primary and secondary schools, temporary housing facilities such as shelters, correctional institutions, jails, and houses of correction to provide safe, disposable menstrual products in a convenient and non-stigmatizing way, at no cost to recipients.

An Act to increase access to disposable menstrual products and An Act relative to expanding equitable access to maternal postpartum care now head to the Massachusetts House of Representatives for consideration.

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# Real Estate Corner

## Recent Home Sales

Date	Natick	Amount
3/16/2022	58 West Central	\$485,000
3/15/2022	1 Evergreen Road	\$1.41mil
3/14/2022	2-4 Walkup Court #A	\$1.06mil
3/14/2022	9 Hampton Road	\$925,000
3/11/2022	11 Wethersfield Road	\$765,000
3/11/2022	34 Hemlock Drive	\$738,000
3/10/2022	4 Keane Road	\$777,000
3/09/2022	6 Proctor Street	\$705,000
3/07/2022	30 Sherwood Road	\$902,000
3/07/2022	8 Post Oak Lane #16	\$337,000
3/04/2022	4 Walden Drive #U16	\$330,000
3/02/2022	10 Sherwood Road	\$785,200
2/28/2022	66 Fairway Circle	\$643,000
2/28/2022	87 Kendall Lane	\$985,000
2/25/2022	28 Phillips Pond Road	\$1.35mil
2/24/2022	15 Walden Drive	\$265,000
2/18/2022	3 Elmwood Avenue	\$510,000
2/16/2022	10 Eliot Street	\$975,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages

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<b>NEW LISTING</b>	<b>SOLD</b>	<b>SOLD</b>
		
177 Plain Street (2-Family) Millis - \$524,900	Kensington Place, (Ava Marie Model) Millis - \$519,000	68 Glenview Street Upton - \$915,000
<b>PENDING</b>	<b>NEW LISTING</b>	<b>SOLD</b>
		
21 East Street Natick - \$649,000	100-102 Congress Street Milford - \$499,900	51 Lincoln Street Natick - \$1,250,000
<b>SOLD</b>	<b>NEW LISTING</b>	<b>NEW LISTING</b>
		
78 Fisher Street Medway - \$699,000	60 Forest Street Millis - \$749,900	7B Hawthorne Village Franklin - \$429,900



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MICHAEL RAWDING  
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**RawdingRealtyLLC@gmail.com**





# Top 10

## THINGS TO DO WHEN SELLING YOUR HOME

- #1 Call Janice
- #2 Pack
- (She'll handle the other 8)



**SOLD**  
9 HAMPTON RD, NATICK



**UNDER CONTRACT**  
1 OAKRIDGE AVE, NATICK



**UNDER CONTRACT**  
70 LAKE RD, FRAMINGHAM



**UNDER CONTRACT**  
13 HARWOOD RD, NATICK

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WELLESLEY MA 02482



#1 AGENT IN NATICK

Janice C. Burke  
REALTOR®



## Featured Natick Homes



53 Park Ave



121 N Main Street



68 Fairway Circle



3 Western Avenue



192 Speen Street



15 Emerson Street

## #1 in Natick in Homes Sold SINCE 2018



**Jessica Allain + Natalie Warren**  
617.820.8114  
allainwarrengroup@compass.com

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