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Vol. 12 No. 3

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April 2023

Norfolk Resident to run Boston Marathon for 'Cops for Kids with Cancer'

Part of Ironman Marathon Team

By GRACE ALLEN

Tim McDonagh was working the Boston Marathon in October of 2021, one of thousands of police officers and other law enforcement professionals focused on security that day. The Norwood Police officer, a Norfolk resident, had recently started running to get in shape, and was inspired by the runners he saw, especially by fellow officers participating in the Marathon.

"I thought, 'I think I can do this,'" said McDonagh, a detective sergeant. "I want to try."

First, however, he had to get a charity bib. He decided the only organization he really wanted to run for was Cops for Kids with Cancer, a non-profit that provides financial support to families with children battling cancer.

The competition for charity bibs can be fierce, but Mc-



Detective Sergeant Timothy McDonagh, left, and Officer Justin LaRoche will run the Boston Marathon for the second year in a row to raise money for Cops for Kids with Cancer.

Donagh finally managed to get on a waiting list for the organization.

"A couple of hours later I was sitting on the couch and a spot must've opened up somehow," said McDonagh. "I got an email with the subject line, 'You're In!' and I turned to my wife and said, 'They're letting me run!' It was very exciting."

And so in April of 2022, he

ran his first Boston Marathon alongside fellow Norwood Police Officer Justin LaRoche. The two officers, running as part of the Massachusetts State Police Ironman Marathon Team, raised \$13,000 for Cops for Kids with Cancer. The ex-

MARATHON

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DPW to Give Away Tree Seedlings for Arbor Day

Tree Planting Demonstration to be Held on April 29

By GRACE ALLEN



Blair Crane is Norfolk's director of public works and the town's tree warden.

Norfolk's DPW will be offering free tree seedlings later this month, in celebration of Arbor Day.

One hundred eastern redbud seedlings will be available on a first come, first served basis, starting on Friday, April 28 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Department of Public Works facility on Medway Branch, and then on Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Transfer Station across the street from the DPW.

On Saturday, April 29 at 11:30 a.m., Blair Crane, Norfolk's director of public works and the town's tree warden, will hold a tree planting demonstration at the Norfolk Cemetery. Any remaining tree seedlings will also be available there as well. The event will go on rain or shine.

SEEDLINGS

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MARATHON

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perience, said McDonagh, was amazing.

“All the officers along the route were cheering us on, and the crowds were incredible,” he



Officer McDonagh at last year's Marathon, one mile from the finish.

recalled. “So many times we’ve all heard, ‘Right on Clarendon, left on Boylston,’ and it really is crazy when you’re actually running that stretch. You have nothing left but you’re running the fastest at that point. You cross the finish line and you see your wife and kids and you hug them.” He paused. “It’s literally the hardest thing I’ve ever done. I’m so thankful I could run on this team for this charity.”

On April 17, McDonagh and LaRoche will run the Boston Marathon for the second year in a row. Once again, they will run on the Ironman Marathon Team to raise money for Cops for Kids with Cancer, with the goal of raising \$15,000 for the charity.

The Ironman Marathon Team is dedicated to the life of Mass. State Police Detective Lieutenant Billy “Ironman” Coulter, a longtime cancer survivor who finally succumbed to the disease in 2019. Coulter, who completed over 20 Ironman Triathlons and 150 marathons—including 36 consecutive Boston Marathons—was the chairman of Cops for Kids with Cancer at the time of his death. He was a legendary, inspirational member of the State Police, said McDonagh, noting Coulter once ran the Boston Marathon with a feeding tube and his oncologist running beside him. They stopped at every water stop so the doctor could inject water and Gatorade with a syringe into Coulter’s feeding tube so he could finish the race.

Cops for Kids with Cancer has helped both Norwood and Norfolk families with children battling cancer, said McDonagh. Each family typically receives \$5,000. Since its founding in 2002, the organization has given more than \$4.75 million to 915 families.

McDonagh ran 4:49:11 in 2022 and says this year he’d like to get closer to 4 hours, noting he’s running faster than ever. But he keeps in mind an oft quoted

saying of Billy Coulter’s: “It’s not about the finish time, it’s about the finish line.”

A Norwood native, McDonagh attended St. Catherine of Sienna Catholic School, and then Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, where he played lacrosse. He went on to Saint Anselm College for undergraduate studies, followed by Boston University for a master’s degree. After graduating from the police academy, McDonagh was in superb shape. But new work responsibilities and a young family took up more and more of his time, so regular exercise fell by the wayside.

Now, at age 44, he credits Officer LaRoche, a life-long runner and Easton resident, for helping him navigate the Marathon’s training program and work through the inevitable injuries that come with age.

This year is the 10th anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombing. McDonagh says this year, especially, the Marathon means a lot to law enforcement, and security will be stepped up. While he will no doubt be thinking of that day ten years ago as he runs this year, Cops for Kids with Cancer will also be top of mind.

“I’m so thankful they’re allowing me to run for them again,” said McDonagh. “My kids are healthy, thank God, but when you see pictures of some of these kids suffering with cancer, it breaks your heart. And that pushes you along.”

He added, “If we can raise \$15,000, that’s three families we can help. I love running now, and I’m healthy enough to do this. And to be able to do this for this charity, well, it’s a win-win.”

To contribute to McDonagh and LaRoche’s fundraising efforts, visit <https://copsforkidswithcancer.org>. At the top of the page, click on “Boston Marathon 2023” and search for either officer.



McDonagh with his wife Brittany, and children John and Abby, at the conclusion of last year's Boston Marathon.

localtownpages

Published Monthly
Mailed FREE
to the Community of
Norfolk/Wrentham
Circulation: 8,473
households and businesses

Publisher

Chuck Tashjian

Editor

Grace Allen

Send Editorial to:

editor@norfolkwrenthamnews.com

Advertising Sales Manager

Jen Schofield

508-570-6544

jenschofield@localtownpages.com

Creative Design & Layout

Michelle McSherry

Kim Vasseur

Wendy Watkins

Ad Deadline is the
15th of each month.

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Norfolk and Wrentham Residents Running in the 2023 Boston Marathon

In just a little over two weeks, 17 local residents will join thousands of others setting off from Hopkinton to run the 26.2 miles to Boston in the 127th Boston Marathon. Runners get a bib by entering with a qualifying time or by running for a charity.

Wish these folks luck if you see them around town.

Norfolk entrants: Stephanie Burnham, 30; Erin Flanagan, 25; Jonathan Gavin, 38; Kayla Hobbs, 23; Laura Joyal, 39; Kevin Keleher, 43; Paul Kelley, 24; Kara Lightowler, 32; Timothy McDonagh, 44; and Mary O’Connor, 25.

Wrentham entrants: Andrew Briggs, 27; Mark Conley, 57; Rylie Dalzell, 25; Linda Liljeberg, 62; Natthasit Nimitsakulchai, 37; Ellen Wagner, 27; and Marc Waxman, 50.

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SEEDLINGS

continued from page 1

This is the second year Crane has held a seedling giveaway and planting demonstration. Last year, 100 white oaks were offered to residents, and they went quickly.

Both last year and this year, the DPW ran a poll on its Facebook page with a list of tree types to vote on for the giveaway. Crane picked the poll candidates after consulting with the state's other 350 tree wardens. The DPW head is on the executive board of the Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Association.

Crane says the Arbor Day giveaway stems from the fact that the town and various utility companies have had to cut down a lot of trees in the last few years due to issues like disease and overgrowth. Dutch elm disease, for example, has devastated tree populations across North America.

"I thought it would be a great way to not only restore some of those trees, but to get the public involved as well," explained Crane.

According to Crane, last year's poll winner, the white oak, was a good choice because of its hardiness and lifespan. Although white oaks grow slowly, they can live 500 to 600 years. The trees are widespread across eastern North America.



Crane and DPW staff at last year's planting demonstration.
(Photo courtesy of NCTV.)

"This year I wanted to offer something a little different, a tree that would be hardy enough to survive in Norfolk but at the same time bring a little color to town as well," explained Crane. "We have a lot of great residents here in town, really active arborist types, that have an interest in trees and offered their opinions on the poll choices, too. I think this year's seedlings will also go quickly."

The eastern redbud tree, known as "the harbinger of spring," is native to North America and Canada. It grows to a height of 20 to 30 feet, with a spread of 25 to 35 feet at maturity.

The seedlings to be offered at the giveaway are about two years old, and between 18 and 24 inches tall. They will come pre-packaged in bags with some topsoil to start them off. A page of instructions will also be included.

The seedlings are grown in nurseries across the country.

Crane has worked for the town for about four years now. Active on Facebook, he is diligent about posting storm updates or road closures for maintenance and repairs, among other notifications for residents. He believes that three of the town departments—police, fire, and public works—touch everybody in town, one way or the other.

"Public works is kind of the Secret Service of those three branches, because it's in the background," says the personable Crane. "My responsibility is not the just the roads, but water, parks, sanitation, and trees. We cover everybody in town on a daily basis."

In his role as tree warden, Crane is tasked with protecting every tree larger than 1 inch in diameter on public property as well as alongside the roads in



One hundred eastern redbud seedlings will be given away in celebration of Arbor Day.

town. He's also responsible for protecting the public from those trees, if a tree poses an immediate risk to life and property.

However, Massachusetts has many laws that govern and protect public roadside trees, noted Crane.

"It's a big, lengthy process to take down a tree in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts," he said.

In 1899, Massachusetts became the first state to enact legislation requiring that every municipality have a tree warden. According to the state's Depart-

ment of Conservation and Recreation, the term "warden" was a common title for natural resource officials in the 1800s, who were responsible for guarding public resources against destructive forces like insects, diseases, and people. Today, tree wardens have many responsibilities and also must be trained in arboriculture, the science of tree care.

Follow the Norfolk DPW on Facebook to stay informed about its services, and to participate in next year's poll for seedling giveaways.

Norfolk's 14th Annual Clean and Green Town-Wide Cleanup set for April 15

The Norfolk Grange invites locals of all ages to celebrate Earth Day and participate in Norfolk's 14th annual Clean and Green Town-Wide Cleanup on Saturday, April 15 to clean the unsightly litter along roadways and public places and beautify our community.

Participants may collect litter any day(s) of the week prior to and including April 15. Participants are asked to attest that the trash is not from a household. Drop off collected litter and recyclables at the Grange Hall at 28 Rockwood Road from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the 15th.

Alternatively, participants may request their litter collection or large items be picked up

at the site of the cleanup. Contact Kevin Roche at 508-328-5604 if you would like pickup on the 15th by Lions Club volunteers.

During this event, if applicable, please follow Massachusetts COVID safety guidelines. Also, participants may pick up volunteer certificates documenting their community service during drop off times at the Grange Hall.

For more important safety and general information regarding this event, please visit the Norfolk Grange Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NorfolkGrange or contact Robin Biscaia at (508) 740-2777.

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Senior Spring College Checklist

Attention seniors: The finish line is in sight! Up to this point in time, the college process has been very structured- with steps laid out in a logical fashion to help students stay on task and focused. When spring arrives, so does senioritis and the distractions that come with it. Yet, there are still important items that need to be on the student's radar the last few weeks of school. Here are a few useful tips to follow in the months of April and May:

1. May 1st is National Decision Day: For students who applied Early Action and Regular Decision, May 1st is the deadline to make their final college decision, send a deposit to one college, and officially enroll in the student's choice college. Although, it is good practice to confirm the admission deadline with the school that the student has decided upon. Also, if the student has been waitlisted from their top choice college, contact the Admissions Office to ask what the policy is for students on a waitlist.

2. Attend Accepted Student Visit Days: As detailed in last month's article, this special visit opportunity is designed to give potential new students an opportunity to take a closer look at the school, meet students who may enroll, and learn more about the academic program and the extra-curricular offerings. Most events require pre-registration, and the program can fill up quickly. Remember, take notes and compare top criteria. This is also the perfect time to have the final family conversation- make sure you are all on the same page as far as college choice, logistics, tuition costs, and opportunity. Free Resource: email tracy@mycollege101.com for a copy of our college criteria comparison spreadsheet.

3. Send in Final Transcript: Final grades are always evaluated by the colleges. Though infrequent, colleges may still rescind their admissions offer if

there has been a dramatic decrease in grades, new reports of unacceptable behavior, or misrepresentation of information on any college application. Details are usually in the acceptance letter. Advice to students: Just keep doing your best and finish the year strong.

4. Compare College Costs: For so many families, college costs are a major factor in making the final decision. Before a student accepts an offer:

- a. Compare college costs (without loans) for each college. Free resource: email tracy@mycollege101.com to receive our cost comparison spreadsheet.
- b. If a student/family needs to take out loans, understand the estimated monthly costs after graduation. The Federal Student Aid is a great resource that offers tools to determine loan amounts/payment plans: <https://studentaid.gov/loan-simulator/>
- c. Keep debt to a manageable level. Many financial experts suggest student loans should not exceed the students first year's salary, post graduate, using \$50,000 as the average salary.



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

5. Inform Colleges if Student Decides to NOT attend: Students should contact each college to which they have been admitted and will not enroll. Simply send an email to the Admissions Office, thank them for the acceptance and kindly let them know you will be attending another school. A student on the college's waitlist list will thank you!

6. Keep on top of Emails: Most high school emails will disappear on graduation day. Students should move any important emails to a personal email account. Additionally, the student should send their new contact information to their chosen college so as to not miss any important emails over the summer about orientations, housing options, course registration, etc.

7. Keep Searching for Scholarships: Continue to look, through senior year in college, for other sources of funding for your college—it's a four-year financial commitment. There are many scholarship opportunities available.

As author Cathy Bramley said, "This is about your future. No one else can make the decision for you." Good luck and enjoy your next adventure - college!

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Norfolk Public Library Foregoes Most Library Fees

Norfolk Public Library Director Sarah Ward has announced that the Norfolk Public Library will forego most library fees to ensure that all community members have equitable access to library resources regardless of any financial barriers that may exist.

Recently, the Norfolk Public Library has removed several previously-existing fees from patrons' accounts. Fees that have been removed from patrons' accounts include charges related to overdue items, lost card charges or items that went into collections.

The Norfolk Public Library began slowly adopting a fine-free model over the last several years in an effort to make patrons more comfortable using the library and subsequently returning overdue materials without the fear of having to pay a potential fee.

"Libraries are supposed to be a free resource for the community and fines can be a financial barrier to those that need the library the most," said Norfolk Public Library Director Ward. "We are looking forward to welcoming community members back to the library with a clean slate, no questions asked."

Patrons should note that there will still be fees associated with damaged items, lost items and any processing fees.

In accordance with the Southeastern Automated Integrated Library Services (SAILS) network, patrons have their items automatically renewed once. If the item is still not returned after 30 days, it is assumed lost and the patron is charged.

Patrons get automatic email reminders of due dates and renewals, as well as a letter mailed to their address once an item is billed to their account. Once the item is returned, the bill is cleared.

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Wrentham Town Election

Here's the ballot for Wrentham's Town Election, scheduled for Monday, April 3. Voting will be held from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Wrentham Elementary School, 120 Taunton St.


SPECIMEN BALLOT



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C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name and address on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

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EMASS Senior Softball League Opens Registration for 2023 Season

Eastern Massachusetts Senior Softball (EMASS) is opening its annual registration campaign for slow-pitch softball players aged 50 and older. The EMASS season opens in late April with sixteen or more weeks of regular season games and year-end playoffs completed by October 1.

With over 450 members, the league attracts players from towns across Eastern Massachusetts with games played on fields in Wayland, Medfield, and Framingham.

Interested players can register for the EMASS 2023 season at <https://e-mass.org/current-programs>.



King Philip School District Names Rich Drolet as Next Superintendent

The Philip Regional School District has announced that Dr. Rich Drolet will join the district as its new superintendent later this year.

Drolet currently serves as the superintendent of the Seekonk Public Schools, where he has served since 2018. On July 1, he will succeed Superintendent Paul Zinni, who is retiring on June 30, pending the successful completion of contract negotiations.

“Dr. Drolet brings a wealth of experience in education and leadership with him to the district, and I am excited to see the ways in which he supports King Philip’s growth in the years to come,” Superintendent Zinni said. “I’ve been fortunate to consider Dr. Drolet a colleague in recent years and am confident he will make an immediate positive impact on our students, staff and community as a whole.”

In Seekonk, Drolet oversaw the development of a three-year Strategy for Continuous District Improvement, which served as a precursor to the district’s five-year District Strategy for Student Success. This strategic plan serves as a complement to Seekonk’s Vision of a Graduate.

In addition, Drolet served on committees that oversaw an expansion of Aitken Elementary School, an installation of Seekonk High School’s turf field and track facility and the construction of Seekonk Transitions Academy — a special education program for adults between the ages of 18-22. Drolet has also spearheaded Seekonk’s work in adding key positions to lower class sizes.

Prior to joining Seekonk Public Schools, Drolet served as the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability for the Uxbridge Public Schools. In that role, he developed a district-wide teacher mentoring program, oversaw the district’s English Language Learners program and authored grants to support programming related to science, technology, en-



Dr. Rich Drolet has been named as King Philip Regional School District’s next superintendent. (Courtesy photo.)

gineering and math (STEM) and sustainability. He also facilitated literacy programming and served as Uxbridge’s Title IX Coordinator, among other responsibilities.

Drolet has also served as a consultant in educational leadership, providing professional de-

velopment support for teachers and principals with King Philip and the Taunton Public Schools.

Drolet has served as a building-level administrator in Cumberland, Rhode Island, working as an assistant principal and principal at North Cumberland Middle School — being named Rhode Island’s Middle School Principal of the Year in 2013 — and as a principal at McCloskey Middle School in Uxbridge. He began his career in education as an elementary school teacher in Virginia in 2000 and moved into a middle school classroom in Natick in 2002.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology from the University of Colorado, a master’s degree in education from Rhode Island College and a doctorate degree in educational leadership from Johnson & Wales University. He’s also earned a certificate of advanced graduate study in school administration from Cambridge College.

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12th Annual Norfolk Community Day Youth Art Show

Promoting Our Community through the Arts

The Norfolk Lions are sponsoring a Youth Art Show open to all Norfolk residents in Grades 1 through 6. The artwork submitted should represent what your community looks like to you. The Youth Art Show will be held at Community Day on June 10 at the Holmes Complex, 22 Myrtle St., Norfolk.

This show is free to all participants, with one entry per person. Artwork should be drawn or painted on paper no larger than 11" x 17" using pencils, pens, crayons, paint, markers and fabric, or 3D no larger than 17" x 17" x 12". Each entry must

include an entry form taped to the backside of the art. Entry forms have already been given to children in the Norfolk public schools and additional forms can be found in each classroom. There are also forms available in the main lobby of the Norfolk Public Library.

Entries will be judged by a panel appointed by the Norfolk Lions in three age groups: Grades 1 and 2, Grades 3 and 4, and Grades 5 and 6. Winners will be selected based on artistic creativity, neatness, and originality. All entries will receive an award and winners in each age group will be

awarded 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and honorable mention ribbons. The 1st place winners in each age group and one Grand Prize winner will also each receive gift certificates.

These winning entries will be displayed at the Norfolk Public Library for two weeks after Community Day.

The contest entry deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, June 2. All artwork can be placed in the collection boxes at the Freeman Kennedy School, H. Olive Day School, or the Norfolk Public Library.



The Safe Sleep for Babies Act Bans Crib Bumpers and Incline Sleepers

By PEGGY SETTLE, RN, PhD

Each year over 900 infants die unexpectedly during sleep from

accidental suffocation. The Safe Sleep for Babies Act (SSBA), effective January 16, 2023, guides

parents to create a safer sleep space for their infants. This act makes it illegal to produce, sell, or

import padded crib bumpers, angled adjustable sleepers, or positioning devices. For years parents and caregivers have been told not to use a crib bumper, an incline sleeper, or a sleep positioning device by their pediatricians. At the same time, advertisements of nurseries were decorated with bumper pads and quilts hanging over the crib. The SSBA makes it easier for parents to follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) safe sleep guidelines.

Crib Bumpers

The SSBA defines crib bumpers as "any material that is intended to cover the sides of a crib to prevent injuryfrom impacts against the side of a crib or to prevent partial or complete access to any openings in the sides of a crib to prevent a crib occupant from getting any part of the body entrapped in any opening (15 U.S.C. 2057)." The

newly banned products include padded crib bumpers, supported and unsupported vinyl bumper guards, and vertical crib slat covers. Although non-padded mesh crib liners were not included in this ban, AAP warns that mesh crib liners could get loose and may lead to strangulation.

There is no proof that crib bumpers prevent injury. Cribs are regulated by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The crib slats are closer together preventing an infant's head from getting stuck. After years of study, researchers found that crib bumpers are not safe for babies. The AAP research found that crib bumpers can cause serious injury if an infant can roll over into the hard padded surface and is not able to move its head. This may lead to suffocation.

SLEEP

continued on page 8

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Your Money, Your Independence

Peak Earnings Years Are Your 50's - Parents Maybe, You... Not So Much.



Glenn Brown

A myth young professionals face from family, peers, marketing and even financial professionals is that your peak earning years are in your 50's. There's trouble with this assumption in a financial plan. Let me explain.

Do you make over \$162,051 a year?

If you're age 42, then congratulations you're a Top 10% earner in the United States per the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS), conducted jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Given your earnings at 32, you may believe a similar trajectory of promotions and compensation will occur over the next 10 years into your "peak earning years".

Let's find age 52 to see the Top 10% earn over... \$150,222.

Wait a minute, must be a mistake.

How about age 51?

\$160,822.

Look, if you're head of a division or executive entering your 50's, you're exceeding. But by age 55 or older, you're also in the ~1-3% of workforce at that age in those positions.

As I explain to new clients in their late 30's and 40's, ageism is real in corporate America. Some dismiss it, so I ask, "How many peers on your level or above are in their 50's?" They answer, "There are some." Next I ask "How about over 55?." It's then that I get a pause with realization.

Several things can be done, start with 3 foundational steps.

Act As If. Apologies if you hear Ben Affleck's voice, but act as if you're at peak earnings today. What would you be doing differently? Do you save more? Do you invest differently? Is there

a career change? Would one of you in the household take a risk to work for a start-up, start a small business or become self-employed? How are your future income streams?

Budget. I know, it's a dirty word. Especially in dual income households making \$250-400K. Yes, we all need our "play hard" moments and/or family experiences, but has a once or twice a year indulgence become a monthly habit because you can?

Effective budgets are not envelopes, obsessive tracking or family meetings, but running a cash flow analysis and review every 6-12 months to see if the projections are your reality. A proper analysis should show projected net free cash flow after all categorized expenses, taxes, and automatic savings allocations.

Savings Prioritization. In conjunction with your cash flow analysis, you should have a clear rationale of where your savings are going. There is balancing between what's for today, the next 1-2 years and for the future unknown.

Is it 401k, HSA or FSA, 529 plans, IRAs, Roth, brokerage, bank, down payment, emergency or an upcoming experience? De-

finer percentages or amounts are best, however it's more important to understand the purpose for prioritization and impact of your choices.

In closing, if you've done a financial plan see if the income assumptions are only adjusting for inflation and not bumping up in your 50's or worse, remaining constant until 65. If you haven't, consider a Certified Financial Planner that can help you build, execute and monitor.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general informa-

tion 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. He 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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Register O'Donnell Addresses Wrentham Council on Aging

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell appeared as a guest speaker at the Wrentham Council on Aging building on February 9, as part of his ongoing efforts to bring the Registry of Deeds directly to the residents of Norfolk County.

Register O'Donnell gave an overview of the Registry of Deeds, which is the principal office for real property records in Norfolk County, cataloging and housing more than 8 million land documents dating back to 1793.

"Register O'Donnell provided crucial information regarding Homestead Protection and the Consumer Notification Services," said host Rose Stavola, from The Rose Stavola Realty Group LLC. "I've received numerous phone calls and emails from attendees since the seminar expressing gratitude for



the information and assistance provided."

Register O'Donnell spent time warning those attending the event about an ongoing deed scam that is being perpetrated against all citizens of Norfolk County, young and old. Norfolk County residents continue to receive direct-mail solicitations offering them a certified copy of

their property deed for exorbitant fees. The average price for a mailed homeowner's certified deed by the Registry, usually two pages, is \$3.00.

"Don't fall victim to this deed scam. These companies are making outrageous profits. If a

AGING
continued on page 21

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2023 Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 2nd 10am Service
9:40 processional and 11am Easter Celebration after the service!

Thursday, April 6th Maundy Thursday Service-7pm
You are invited to a spiritual, musical, and meditative service.

Friday, April 7th Good Friday - 12 - 3pm
You are invited into our quiet and peaceful Sanctuary for prayer and reflection.

Saturday, April 8th - Decorate the Blooming Cross
Come decorate the cross on the front lawn anytime on Saturday. We will have some flowers available, or you can bring your own favorites!

Sunday, April 9th - EASTER SUNDAY! He is Risen!
8am Community Service on Town Hill
Easter Breakfast in the Vestry at 9am
10am Traditional Service in the Sanctuary with our Choir

Wednesdays during March - Join Pastor Derek for "Soup for the Soul" Lenten Bible Series! RSVP at mail@fcon.org or 508-528-0262

Guest Column

Senior Squeeze

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

COVID infection rates are significantly decreasing in most parts of the United States, but inflationary price creep continues in the opposite direction for the cost of essential household items. Seniors living on fixed incomes are seeing their budgets squeezed, especially for food. Efforts to control raging inflation have not yet had the desired impact on escalating prices. “New normal” price tags on staple items such as eggs, butter and breakfast cereal are at levels unimagined a couple of years ago.

Social Security increases have not kept pace with increasing costs. Interest rates on certificates of deposit and other conservative, relatively secure savings account methods are laughable, barely budging from their near-zero levels, so even seniors who have had the foresight to save the recommended percentage of their income for retirement are beginning to suffer. But woe to the large percentage of our elders who have fallen far short of the savings rate needed to support them throughout retirement. The high costs of essential items are rapidly exhausting meager savings, leaving some seniors looking at food stamps, food banks and other available emergency resources. Massachusetts is better prepared to assist challenged seniors, but other parts of the country leave bankrupt seniors with little recourse.

It is time for federal and state government officials to take a much closer look at the pricing practices and profit levels currently enjoyed by the business sector. The most blatant example of excessive profit is, of course, the fossil fuel industry, doubling their net gains during the last year. The employed segment of the population has seen significant growth in wages for the most part, offsetting inflation-driven prices to a large extent. But many retired seniors are left in the wake, as Social Security stumbles behind.

Capitalism has long been averse to wage and price controls, arguing the approach strangles growth and innovation. But when it comes to seeking ways to avoid plunging significant numbers of our seniors into poverty and homelessness, action must be taken to assure they are being properly protected. This goal may be achieved through government-implemented specific price controls and special senior discounts on specified goods and services for elders near or at poverty levels, as calculated by individual states. We cannot afford to wait and hope for the economy to “recycle” to their possible advantage. That just may never happen.

Opinions expressed in the Guest Column do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

SLEEP

continued from page 6

Adjustable Incline Sleepers/Sleep Positioning Devices

The SSBA banned infant sleepers, also known as baby nests, docks, pods, loungers, rockers, or nappers. The product is not as firm as a mattress. It also has adjustable angles that can raise the head of the sleeper more than 10-degrees.

Most products listed above may adjust to raise the head of the sleeper to a 30-degree angle. The 30-degree angle is a risk because it changes the way a baby moves in their sleep. At the 30-degree angle infants move and may fall asleep in the chin-to-chest position. The chin-to-chest position may narrow the infant’s airway and lead to suffocation. Plus, infants may roll out of the product and become trapped under them.

With sleep positioners, infants can roll on to their stomachs and the soft padding can make it difficult to breathe if the baby’s face presses against it, is face down, or is unable to lift their head. This position can narrow the infant’s airway and cause suffocation.

The ABCs of Safe Sleep

Based on new research in 2021, the AAP changed their advice about making safer sleep spaces for infants. They advise parents and caregivers to follow the ABCs: place infants to sleep **alone** on their **back** in their **crib** every time. The infant must sleep **alone** and the crib must be empty of toys, stuffed animals, and blankets. There is less chance a baby can roll onto the toy, animal, or blanket and suffocate.

Babies who sleep on their backs are less likely to die suddenly and unexpectedly than babies who sleep on their stomachs or sides. Side sleeping positions may lead to the infant rolling on their stomach. If the infant cannot move its head, the infant may rebreathe their own exhaled carbon dioxide. This may lead to a suffocation during sleep. Some parents report feeling worried about their infant choking if they spit up while on their back. The infant’s gag reflex and the baby’s airway will protect their choking. This holds true for babies with reflux. As your infant grows and begins to roll from back to stomach and stomach to back during sleep, there is no need to keep placing your infant on their back.

The AAP recommends a firm, flat, sleep mattress that should not indent when your infant is lying on it. Any incline greater than 10 degrees is not safe for your baby to sleep on. Use only products for sleep that meet the safety standards of the CPSC. Make sure your crib mattress is for your specific crib and that it is a tight fit. If your baby falls asleep in a car seat, stroller, swing, infant carrier or sling, you should move them to a firm sleep surface on their back as soon as possible.

These resources may clarify any questions not addressed in this article:

- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/a-parents-guide-to-safe-sleep.aspx>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/ages-stages/baby/sleep/paginas/a-parents-guide-to-safe-sleep.aspx>
- <https://www.cpsc.gov/>

Peggy Settle, a Wrentham resident, is the former Nurse Director of the Newborn Intensive Care Unit at Mass General Hospital for Children and member of the Neonatal Quality Improvement Collaborative of Massachusetts.

Garden Plots Available for Community Garden

Norfolk’s community garden is gearing up to open on April 15, and there are a limited number of plots available to Norfolk residents on a first come, first served basis.

If any beds are not reserved by May 15, registration will be open to non-residents.

The garden consists of 31 plots in total. All are raised bed plots inside an 8’ high fence. Twenty-six beds are 2’ X 3’ X 19” high and are \$35 each.

There are also three accessible beds measuring 10’ X 3’ X 30” and two smaller beds measuring 6’ X 3’ x 19” high. These beds are \$25 each.

Norfolk Recreation, in conjunction with the Norfolk Lions Club, manage the community garden, which is located at 49 Rockwood Road. The gardening season starts April 15 and ends on October 30.

To reserve a plot, or for more information, visit www.norfolk.activity.ma.us.

Look for “Community Garden” under the information tab for the rules and regulations. To reserve a bed, registration and payment is required. This may be done online or in the office. The Norfolk Recreation office is located at Town Hall, 1 Liberty Lane.

For more information, contact the Recreation Department at (508) 520-1315 or email recreation@norfolk.ma.us.

Fundraiser Planned for Injured KP High School Student

The Norfolk Lions Club will hold a fundraiser for King Philip High School junior Landen Gibson on April 28 at the German Club, Route 109, Walpole.

Gibson suffered a spinal cord injury in a December 14 car accident, and his family needs help to make the home accessible and safe for the teen, who is paralyzed from the waist down.

The event, “A Night of Caring & Support,” will run from 6 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$40 per person and include appetizers, coffee, and desserts. There will be a cash bar, raffles, and music.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.norfolkmalions.org/landen-strong.

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State Rep. Marcus Vaughn Accepting Intern Applications

The Office of Massachusetts State Representative Marcus Vaughn is accepting applications from highly motivated high school, college, post graduate, and law school students looking to work on legislation and constituent services. Candidates for legislative intern positions should be hard-working, organized, and passionate about public policy and public service.

Interns are an integral part of ensuring the smooth operation of Rep. Vaughn’s office. Interns can gain insight into the legislative process firsthand and how the office aims to make state government work for constituents.

Term

- Part-time spring 2023 Semester
- Part-time summer 2023
- Full time (up to 40 hours per week) summer 2023

Responsibilities

- Reviewing and drafting constituent correspondence for legislation
- Assisting with office administrative tasks such as organizing and filing documents
- Researching legislative priorities and preparing policy memos for the Representative
- Attending legislative hearings on the Representative’s bills and briefings on important legislation


Qualifications

- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Attention to detail/project management ability.
- The ability to work cooperatively with others.

To apply, email a resume and cover letter to nick.tagg@mahouse.gov. Contact the office of Representative Vaughn with any questions or concerns at (617) 722-2263 or Marcus.Vaugh@mahouse.gov.

About State Representative Marcus Vaughn


State Representative Marcus Vaughn (R-Wrentham) is a freshman representative who represents the 9th Norfolk District, which includes the towns of Norfolk, Plainville, and Wrentham, as well as Medfield (Precincts 3 & 4), Millis (Precinct 1), and Walpole (Precinct 5). Currently Representative Vaughn serves on four committees: House Committee on Operations, Facilities, & Building Security; Joint Committee on Community Development & Small Business; Joint Committee on Economic Development & Emerging Technologies; and Joint Committee on Public Safety & Homeland Security. Learn more about Representative Vaughn’s background and experience prior to entering the legislature at <https://www.vaughn4staterep.com>.



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Last-Minute Tax Tips for Procrastinators

It's April already. Are your taxes done? If your answer to the question is no, you are not alone. The Internal Revenue Service says as many as 25 percent of taxpayers file their returns the final two weeks before the filing deadline. After the COVID-19 pandemic that we had, as well as the multiple stimulus programs offered, I feel that percentage is probably quite higher.

If you have not completed your taxes yet, here are some stress-relieving ideas:

Don't Procrastinate Any more - Resist the temptation to put off your taxes until the very last minute. Your return takes time to prepare, and your preparer may need to request certain documents from you, which will take additional time.

Don't Panic If You Can't Pay - If you can't immediately pay the taxes you owe, consider some alternatives. You can apply for an IRS installment agreement, suggesting your own monthly pay-

ment amount and due date, and getting a reduced late-payment penalty rate. You also have various options for charging your balance on a credit card. There is no IRS fee for credit card payments, however the processing companies charge a convenience fee. Electronic filers with a balance due can file early and authorize the government's financial agent to take the money directly from their checking or savings account on the April due date, with no fee.

Request an Extension of Time to File,- But Pay on Time

- If the clock runs out, you can get an automatic six-month extension, bringing the filing date to October 16, 2023. The extension itself does not give you more time to pay any taxes due. You will owe interest on any amount not paid by the April deadline, plus a late-payment penalty if you have not paid at least 90 percent of your total tax by that date. Contact your tax



professional for a variety of easy ways to apply for an extension.

To get an estimate of what you owe, you generally have to do a dry run of your tax return—which probably means you will have almost everything you need to file anyway. If they're 90 percent done, it's really in your best interest to just get it done and file by April 15th (and for this current tax season,

you have until April 18th due to April 15th falling on the weekend and Washington DC celebrating Emancipation Day on 04/17 this year).

Contribute to (or Open) an IRA Account or HSA Account

You can make previous-year contributions to a Traditional or Roth IRA, or SEP-IRA through the filing deadline. If you still need to open an account, be warned that some companies' processes are not instantaneous. If you are under 50, you can contribute up to \$6,000 into your Traditional or Roth IRA accounts and add an additional \$1,000 if you are over age 50. SEP-IRA contributions can not exceed \$61,000 but the actual amount depends on your specific situation. Best to seek professional advice on this.

If you're covered by a high-deductible health plan—defined as a minimum deductible of \$1,400 for an individual or \$2,800 for a family—you can

also deduct contributions made to a Health Savings Account (HSA). You have until the tax filing deadline to make a deductible contribution. For the 2022 tax year, you can contribute up to \$3,650 to an HSA if you have self-only coverage or \$7,300 for family coverage. People aged 55 or older can make an additional \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution.

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 call Jeffrey at 800-560-4NFS or visit online - www.nfsnet.com

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Church Receives Renewal as "Welcoming Congregation"

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is pleased to announce that it has once again received its annual renewal from the Unitarian Universalist Association as a Welcoming Congregation.

In 1993, FUSF voted to become a Welcoming Congregation and has maintained their status ever since. This means FUSF works hard to make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people are accepted as full members of our faith community. Being wel-

coming also means striving for radical inclusion, and creating spaces that honor every part of our identities, backgrounds, and experiences.

To receive designation as a Welcoming Congregation, FUSF has to complete the "5 Practices of Welcome Renewal" every year. This past year, FUSF completed these requirements by conducting two LGBTQIA+ worship services, recognizing LGBTQIA+ Days of Observance, hosting two Out MetroWest LGBTQIA+ workshops,



donating to OUT MetroWest, and supporting the Franklin LGBTQ Alliance with donations and volunteers for Franklin's Celebrate with Pride Day.

The FUSF Welcoming Congregation Team is responsible for

leading the annual certification process.

FUSF will hold its annual Pride Service on June 4. All are welcome and invited to attend. Details of this, or any service, can be found at fusf.org.

For inquiries please contact:

Rev. Beverly Waring, Interim Minister First Universalist Society in Franklin 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin MA 02038.

Minister@fusf.org or call 508-528-5348



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Notable Places of Wrentham

As part of Wrentham's 350th anniversary celebration, the committee planning this year's events has asked residents to submit memories of significant people and places in the town's history. Following is a submission the anniversary committee shared with Local Town Pages that previously appeared in the January 2021 edition of the paper.

Wrentham's Little Red Schoolhouse: A Long History of Educating Children

Once upon a time, there was a little red schoolhouse. Scores of area children passed through its doors to be educated. One hundred and fifty-two years later, the iconic structure is still standing and still educating children today.

The Little Red Schoolhouse, or "Little Red" as it is affectionately known, is now a non-profit cooperative preschool, and its directors, both past and present, view their role not just as educators but as caretakers of history.

Maintaining the school "was a labor of love," acknowledged Donna Dunn, the school's former director. Dunn retired in 2007 after nearly two decades at the school's helm.

Amy Tierney, the current director, said, "The roots of the school are what we are so connected with."

History of the School

The Little Red Schoolhouse was known as the Sheldonville School when it was built in 1869 to replace several one-room district schools (neighborhood schools) located in private homes throughout the area.

"By the mid-1800s, education in Massachusetts was trying to get away from district schools and the single, multi-grade classroom and move to more centralized schools, but that did not work well for Wrentham because it was such a big town," explained Greg Stahl, the chairman of the Wrentham Historical Commission.

The building itself gives hints of what schooling was like in the 1800s and early 1900s. There are two front doors, one for the boys to enter and another for the girls, suggesting they were separated for lessons. The second floor of the building, now used for storage, may have been used as an

overflow classroom or perhaps a play-space on rainy days. The building has likely always been red, agreed Stahl, the color most schools (and barns) were painted at the time. Red paint was inexpensive because it was made from iron ore, which also acted as a wood preservative.

By the early 1930s, however, the Sheldonville School was the only Wrentham district school still in operation. Other district schools had closed down and students were transported to the newer, much bigger Center School, which was located at the intersection of Rt. 140 and 1A, across from the Original Congregational Church.

The Sheldonville School was a primitive and crowded building compared to the Center School, says Stahl. The 1930 town report notes the interior of the Sheldonville School was rehabbed and electric lights were installed in that year, but a request to "replace the sanitary closets" was denied by the town.

While we do not know the names of all the teachers who taught at the Sheldonville School, town records note that Miss Nina B. Sheldon was hired by Wrentham in 1921 to teach at the school, and she remained its head teacher for many years, probably until the school closed. Nina Sheldon was likely a descendant of Rhodes Sheldon, a whaleboat builder who settled in the area and is considered the founder of the Sheldonville section of Wrentham. Records show Nina lived on Arnold Street with her younger brother and his wife before eventually moving to West Street.

By 1951, only grades 1 through 4 were being taught at the school. Miss Sheldon taught grades 3 and 4 and a new teacher, Dora Dalton, taught grades 1 and 2. In 1957, the original King Philip High School was built (it has since been renovated). This freed up space for younger grades in the town's schools, and in June of 1958, the Sheldonville School closed its doors.

From the Past to the Present

After the school closed, the building was briefly used as a consignment shop. However, sev-



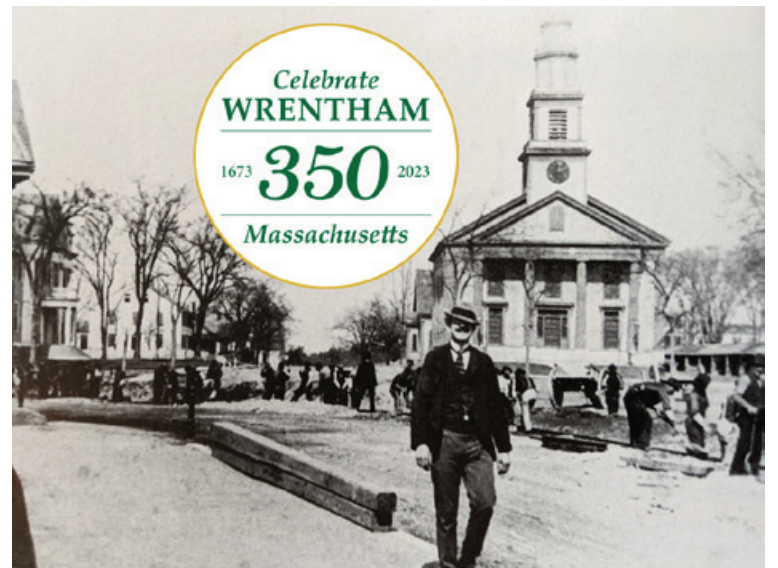
eral area parents soon decided to reopen the building as the Little Red Schoolhouse, returning the structure to its original purpose of educating children.

Donna Dunn, the former director, says the age of the beloved school demanded support from the preschool staff and the parents, and everyone was glad to help.

"It needed a lot of extra time, a lot of extra ideas, and a lot of extra energy," Dunn explained. "The building is so old you can't imagine all the physical things that can go wrong with it, and the town is not responsible for its upkeep."

During her tenure, parents donated and replaced windows, built tables, installed a playground, and raised \$30,000 to delead the structure. Dunn recalled she only had to say the word and parents took on the tasks, motivated by a love of the cooperative program and a respect for the school's long history.

Dunn and her husband Jim took on maintenance tasks themselves, too. Often after returning home at the end of the day, Dunn would tell her husband about a problem with the school's plumbing or heating. Jim would finish his dinner and then drive over to the school to fix it.



"Jim used to tell everybody we have two houses," said Dunn. "Not only did we love the program, we loved the building."

The cooperative preschool model gives parents a voice in the education of their children. Dunn believes that involvement endears families to Little Red long after their children graduate. She still receives Christmas cards from past students, some of them now married with children of their own. She and her husband have attended Eagle Scout ceremonies and weddings of former students.

"I used to tell parents, this is the beginning, this is the foundation," said Dunn. "If the beginning starts out on a positive note, a child will love school their entire life. And that's the crux of Little Red, that every child leaves with a love of school."

Tierney, the current director, says, "When I walk into Little Red, I always say you feel the

warmth and positive energy. It is a place of peace, happiness and kindness."

The Little Red Schoolhouse is one of only a few remaining one-room schoolhouses in New England, and the only one in the area that has been educating children almost continuously since 1869, notes Stahl of the Historical Commission. As a reminder of what Wrentham once was, it serves as a link to the roots of the community.

Little Red has continued to educate children through two worldwide pandemics now, surely a significant milestone. Perhaps that is the real legacy of Little Red: not just that it has withstood the test of time in Wrentham, but that it has helped children to feel safe and nurtured even in an uncertain world.

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TOP FOUR SIGNS OF A TERMITE INFESTATION

Red flags that could indicate the presence of a termite infestation

This year, WPC Pest and Termite Control and the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) are working to spread public awareness about termites during the spring of 2023. With spring on the horizon, termites will begin swarming and could seek out your home for their new nesting space. Because the damage from a termite infestation can easily go unnoticed, WPC Pest and Termite Control is educating homeowners and offering FREE inspections to help identify the top four signs that signal their home is infested.

"Experts with the NPMA estimate that termites cause \$5 billion in damage every year," said

Jim Mazzuchelli, owner of WPC Pest and Termite Control. "This could mean a costly repair bill for homeowners if they don't spot and stop an infestation in its tracks. Unfortunately, most homeowners don't recognize the signs of an infestation until it is too late."

While pest professionals don't recommend a homeowner inspect their home on their own, there are a few red flags that they should look out for that could signal the presence of an infestation. With the help from experts at NPMA, WPC Pest and Termite is sharing the top four signs that a home has termites:

1. Swarmer or Discarded Wings: Swarmers, also known as reproductives, are young female and male winged termites. In the springtime, after the last freeze, termite swarmers will emerge from their nest to mate and search for a new location to start a colony, which typically includes our homes. Termite swarmers, or their discarded wings near windowsills and doors, are often the first (and only visible) sign of a termite problem.

2. Mud Tubes: Subterranean termites, the most destructive termite species, build mud tubes to provide moisture while they travel between their colony and food source. Mud tubes are most often found near the home's foundation and look like encrusted, dry

dirt similar to the size of a drinking straw.

3. Wood Damage: Termites tend to eat wood from the inside out, so wood that sounds hollow when tapped often signifies a termite infestation. Additionally, homeowners should also look for blistering pieces of wood.

4. Uneven or Bubbling Paint: Uneven or bubbling paint is often a sign of moisture build-up, which could mean one of two things – water damage or termites.

"If you suspect you have a termite infestation, it is best to contact a licensed pest control expert as soon as possible to stop the damage before it gets worse," added Mazzuchelli. "It is also recommended that homeowners have an inspection done every year to ensure their home is safe from termites."

For more information on this pest, or to contact a licensed pest control expert, Please visit WPC Pest and Termite Control at www.nobugsnopests.com

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April Program Highlights at the Norfolk Senior Center

The Norfolk Senior Center building is closed until further notice, but programs are being held at alternate locations as listed below. The staff is working at Norfolk Town Hall and is available by phone Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 508-528-4430.

Pre-registration is required for these events. RSVP to 508-528-4430.

Tuesday, April 4 at 11:30 a.m. at the Norfolk Grange, 28 Rockwood Rd. **Santorini Sunset Virtual Tour** Begin your virtual tour at one of the island's most iconic spots and let the exploration begin. Get ready to explore and be amazed by Santorini's most enthralling island features. Tune in with your local guide and learn about the island's history.

Wednesday, April 12 at 1 p.m. at NCTV Studio, 158 Main St. **Going to Town: The Department Stores** Presented by author and historian, Anthony Sammarco. Do you remember when going to town was special? After a bus ride, or taking the subway, we ar-

rived in Boston and were greeted with such stores as Jordan Marsh, Filene's, Filene's Basement, Gilchrist, Raymonds, R.H. Stearns, R.H. White, Conrad and Chandler, C. Crawford Hollidge and many more.

Tuesday, April 18 at 1 p.m. at NCTV Studio, 158 Main St. **Genealogy Program: Working with Census Reports** Presented by Seema Kenney, MA Society of Genealogists. Census reports tell tales—they are a treasure trove for genealogists! Seema will cover types of population census reports by year.

Wednesday, April 26 at 10 a.m. at the Norfolk Grange **Balance & Vertigo** Presented by Meghan Kelly, DPT

Personal Best Physical Therapy of Norfolk. Falls are the leading cause of injury and death as we age. One in four older adults 65+ falls each year. Get some tips on how to improve balance at home.

Norfolk Public Library Book and Bake Sale

The Friends of the Norfolk Public Library will hold their annual book and bake sale on Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22 at the Freeman Kennedy School, 70 Boardman St. in Norfolk.

Friends can shop at the Friends Only preview sale on Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. A current membership is required or may be purchased at the door beginning at 5 p.m.

The general public is wel-

come on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The sale will include over 30,000 fiction and non-fiction books categorized and alphabetized, in good to excellent condition. Popular titles, classics, and

an extensive collection of children's books will be available. Most books are priced from \$.50 to \$2.00.

For more information or to purchase a membership, visit norfolkmalibraryfriends.org.



Celebrating the Life of Peter Hildebrandt

The life of long-time Norfolk resident and firefighter/EMT Peter Hildebrandt was celebrated on January 21 at the Federated Church of Norfolk. Hildy, as he was known, passed away on November 28, 2022 at the age of 80, leaving his wife, Kathy.

Hildebrandt served as a Norfolk firefighter/EMT for 31 years, retiring in 2007. He was also a school bus driver for the Holmes Bus Company. From



1960-1962, he served in the United States Army, working in the field of restoration.



Long-time firefighter and Norfolk resident Peter “Hildy” Hildebrandt. (Photo courtesy Norfolk Fire Department.)

Gelato and One of a Kind Gift Shop to Open Next Month in Franklin

Franklin residents are in for a sweet addition to downtown Main Street this spring. Applause, a gelato shop and unique finds gift store, is set to debut at 34 Main Street, the former location of The Spotlight Shop.

This is the first gelateria to be offered in Franklin, and the only one within a 20-mile radius of the downtown area. The aim is to offer a true artisan, Italian-style gelato shop in Franklin, featuring flavors that deliver unparalleled texture and taste. In keeping with Italian tradition, Applause gelato will offer authentic gelato perfection in every bite with the use of the finest ingredients from around the world, including real Belgium chocolate, Italian nut paste, Argentine dulce de leche, Alphonso mangos from India, Sicilian blood oranges, Madagascar vanilla, and more.

The shop will offer eight flavors in rotation, including vegan options. Customers can expect to see classics like chocolate, birthday cake, cookies and cream, and coffee gelato, but also more complex flavor profiles such as bourbon vanilla apple

crisp, roasted banana dulce de leche, and maple roasted butter pecan.

Founder and Franklin resident Raye Lynn Mercer, who is the director of the neighboring Franklin School for the Performing Arts, is an avid traveler with an affinity for European culture. Her 20+ years of annual travel to Europe with her teen sensation music ensemble, Electric Youth, was the impetus for her unique vision to offer an authentic, European dessert experience in the heart of our downtown.

“I hope Applause provides a unique experience for patrons and helps draw visitors to Main Street,” says Mercer.

Perhaps what makes this experience different from any other is its fusion of artisan gelato with artisan gifts within a one of kind retail space, a space which incorporates bold colors, eclectic exuberance, and European tradition with a modern flair. From copper ceiling and stools to modern pendants and beautiful live edge counters, the

GELATO
continued on page 17

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THE BLACK BOX presents Big Band Brunch

BLACK BOX Jazz presents a Big Band Brunch with The Kenny Hadley Big Band on Sunday, April 23 at 12 pm. The critically acclaimed 16-piece ensemble, led by drummer Kenny Hadley, boasts masterful musicians with performance ties to Big Band legends Woody Herman, Count Basie, Stan Kenton, Maynard Ferguson, Buddy Rich, and more. The Kenny Hadley Big Band has shared the stage with such notables as The Count Basie Orchestra and The Duke Ellington Orchestra and has hosted guest soloists including Clark Terry and Louie Bellson.

Brunch begins at 11:45 am, with music beginning at noon. Brunch includes assorted Mini Quiche, Bacon, Waffles, Fresh Fruit, Yogurt & Granola, Bagels, Muffins, OJ, and Coffee. In addition, there is a cash bar with Mimosas and Bloody Marys available. Visit www.THEBLACKBOXonline or call the box office at 508-528-3370 for tickets and more information. Follow TBB on Facebook (THE BLACK BOX Online) and Instagram (@the_black_box_online) for updates.

Pre-College Summer Programs at Dean College

Is your high schooler interested in learning more about the performing arts, careers in sports or forensics while getting a taste of college life? This summer, Dean College will offer the Dean Summer Arts Institute and two pre-college programs in Sports Broadcasting and Forensics. For students interested in dance or musical theatre, the Dean Summer Arts Institute is a week-long intensive in the performing arts. Students in the dance intensive will receive conservatory training in ballet, modern, jazz, tap and related dance techniques taught by world-class faculty. In the musical theatre intensive, students will study acting, singing and dancing with renowned faculty and guest artists while learning about auditioning, picking repertoire, acting for the

camera, self-taping and rehearsal techniques. The Dean Summer Arts Institute will run from July 30 to August 6. For more information, visit www.dean.edu/summerarts. The Sports Broadcasting and Forensics Pre-College Summer Programs offer a great introduction to college life. Students will earn college credit for completing the program while they learn from experts in the field and get advice on the college admissions process from a Dean College admissions counselor during a free one-on-one consultation. Students will also participate in unique real-world experiences and field trips embedded into each program, with behind-the-scenes access to program-specific venues such as Gillette Stadium and the New England Patriots

training camp. Additional experiences may include trips to a science lab and police station for the Forensics program and a baseball stadium for the Sports Broadcasting program, as well as the opportunity to call live play-by-play and host talk show programs. Two one-week sessions of each pre-college summer program will be offered. The first session will run from July 23-28, and the second session will run from July 30-August 4. Free virtual information sessions will be held on Tuesday, April 11, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, May 3, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. For more information, visit www.dean.edu/summer.

Dean College Presents April Theatre and Dance Performances

The School of the Arts and the Joan Phelps Palladino School of Dance at Dean College will perform a number of productions in April, including the Theatre Senior Showcase, Dance Theatre Showcase and Dance Company. The School of the Arts at Dean College will feature the talents of senior theatre majors in the Theatre Senior Showcase on Friday, April 14 and Saturday, April 15, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. Featuring scenes, songs, and monologues, the annual Theatre Senior Showcase is a celebration of the class of 2023 and the cohort's formal introduction to the professional theatre community. The Joan Phelps Palladino School of Dance will feature the talents of senior dance majors in the Dance Senior Showcase on Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22, at 7:30 p.m. Creating a performance from the ground up, our talented senior dance students will share their choreography, performance, and production expertise in this annual collaborative showcase. The Joan Phelps Palladino School of Dance will perform Dance Company from Thurs-

day, April 27 through Sunday, April 30. Award-winning faculty and guest choreographers will showcase the impressive talent of our dance majors through a mixed bill of new and restaged dance works, ranging in style from hip-hop to jazz dance, tap to modern and ballet. The Dean College production of Dance Company will take place at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, with 2:00 p.m. matinees on Saturday and Sunday. All three productions will take place in the Main Stage in the Dr. Paula M. Rooney Student Center at Dean College, 109 West Central Street, Franklin. Dean College welcomes children and families to all of our performances, provided patrons have complied with all safety guidelines. However, infants and children under 2 years of age are not allowed in the theatre, and children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. All patrons must have their own ticketed seats; lap sitting is not permitted. To learn more about the shows and to purchase tickets, visit www.dean.edu/boxoffice.

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court

Docket No. N023P0573EA

Norfolk Probate and Family Court
35 Shawmut Road, Canton MA 02021
(781) 830-1200

Estate of: Edward J Letscher, III
Also known as: Edward J. Letscher, Edward Letscher
Date of Death: 08/13/2022

To all interested persons: A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **David Letscher of Wrentham MA** requesting that the court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **David Letscher of Wrentham MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a vcopy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have the right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/19/2023.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline in which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Patricia Gorman, First Justice of this Court.
Date: March 13, 2023
Colleen M Brierly, Register of Probate

The b.LUXE beauty beat

b.LUXE Visits Mexico for 5th Scholarship Trip

By GINA WOELFEL

We're back from our trip to visit our sister school, The Martello Instituto de Belleza in Cancun, Mexico, a cosmetology academy owned by Cinthia Martello! Fourteen of the b.LUXE team made the trip this year and, as always, Cinthia and her students treated us like family and welcomed us with warmth and excitement! We toured the school, met the students, and saw the amazing work they've been doing there. It's always so exciting to see the progress the students have made.

We've now visited The Martello Institute five times, and each visit is just as rewarding! It's no surprise that The Martello Institute holds a special place in our hearts. Thanks to Heather Cohen's initiative in 2016, b.LUXE employees have had a chance to give back through philanthropy - perfectly encapsulating our workplace values of community outreach and generosity at its very core.

We believe that education is paramount for personal growth and the key to unlocking a better future. We're so excited to be part of that journey for so many of these students. To date, b.LUXE has given 13 individuals the gift of a beauty career, and is honored to provide some of the resources and professional training necessary to make their dreams a reality.

This was one of our largest salon groups to travel to Mexico and we decided to teach a class on hair extensions. We brought enough supplies to provide all 18 students with an amazing swag bag that included flat irons, professional hair care products, makeup and styling tools. To give our class an extra boost, Heather treated them to a complete hair extension kit from Bellami Hair with enough supplies for the entire class to master the cutting-edge trends of the hair extension industry. Our trip was made all the more remarkable thanks to the generous support of Masello Salon Services, Goldwell and J Beverly Hills - three distributors who we are forever grateful for!

Our holiday had it all - beautiful beaches, delicious meals and time to relax, unwind and reconnect. It was the perfect blend of business and pleasure with days spent laughing 'til we could laugh no more and every step on the warm, soft sand reminding us how lucky we are to work side-by-side each day.

Our travels together proved the strength of friendship - how it can solidify us on our path and encourage great accomplishments. It's a lesson in both personal relationships and professional pursuits that will stay with us forever.



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We're counting down the days till we see our Martello sisters next year! Their welcoming spirit and kind-hearted nature was a blessing we won't soon forget

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Living Healthy

Milford -Franklin Eye Center World-Class Eyecare Closer to Home

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

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has been providing eye care to the community for almost 5 decades. Our mission is to deliver state-of-the-art eyecare by physicians, surgeons and optometrists who are predominantly from the community, live in the community and dedicate their careers to serving the community. During the past decades we have performed hundreds of thousands of procedures, many of those are complex and are only available in Boston. We serve everyone in the community, regardless of insurance coverage, race, or disability. Our practice physicians are local and are available daily for emergencies and difficult cases. Other practices do not do the same and often times the provider you see in those practices is not even

a physician. If they have physicians, they are only there sporadically. When it comes to eyecare, ask your friends and neighbors who is the best? Your eyes deserve the best.

Are all eyecare providers equal? Unfortunately, they are not. For example did you know if you have cataract surgery in a practice with no local ophthalmologist present daily you may end up referred to Boston in an emergency? We have you covered as our ophthalmologists (eye physicians/ surgeons) are local and available on a daily basis. Did you know that our practice is the only practice taking calls for our local emergency room at Milford Regional Hospital? The only practice! Other practices refuse to take call. We have been doing the same for 5 decades and are dedicated to you.

Milford Franklin Eye Center has a better vision for your eyes and is dedicated to our community. Our ophthalmologists have performed hundreds of thousands of surgeries, have lectured nationally and internationally and trained junior physicians and other ophthalmologists from prestigious academic institutions. Choose wisely- Your eyes deserve the best.

With offices located in Milford, Franklin and Millis (Millis Eye Center), and soon a new satellite office in Hopkinton, our own award-winning surgery center in Milford and a support staff of 60, we are proud to be the leading medical and surgical eye care center in the area and one of the major eye care centers in the State. We are also one of the rare ophthalmology practices to own and operate our own surgi-

cal center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. No longer need to travel miles and hours to have cataract surgery! Three experienced eye physicians/surgeons and 5 optometrists are here to deliver comprehensive and excellent eye care for the entire family. If your eyecare provider is still asking you to travel far away for eyecare or surgery, call us for a second opinion.

Have you wondered where do other physicians and even ophthalmologists go for their eyecare and surgery? You guessed it! We have been privileged to care for other physicians and we have operated on other ophthalmologists. Those who know best about eyecare and surgery have consistently chosen us for their care and continue to do the same.

Our practice is proud to offer the latest and best in medical and surgical ophthalmology. For glaucoma we have the latest in selective laser trabeculoplasty to reduce eye pressure and offer Durysta implants to reduce dependence on eye drops. We also use stents and other procedures with cataract surgery to lower eye pressure and manage glaucoma. Our surgeons were the first surgeon in the area to offer bladeless laser assisted Femto cataract surgery. This laser procedure is offered locally at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford. We have the only fellowship trained pediatric ophthalmologist in the area. We have the only dedicated optical shop offering a boutique style frames and glasses for our precious and unique little eyes. Our vitreoretinal specialists are world- renowned and have written the books on retina eye care. They have also trained other students and fellows in this field.

We are particularly proud of our surgery center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. This facility is in your backyard and is proud to offer world class cataract surgery closer to home: Here in Milford. Our surgery center passed certification and accreditation by the most rigorous State and National accreditation agencies.



Cataract surgery is all about better precision, more safety, and excellent outcomes. At Milford Franklin Eye Center, Dr. Kaldawy is proud to have been the first surgeon in the area and among the first in Massachusetts to offer bladeless laser assisted cataract surgery and the first surgeon in the greater Boston area to implant the PanOptix and Vivify lens implants. We have trained local and out-of-state surgeons on how to perform cataract surgery. We implant high quality premium lenses, with correction for distance, near and everything in between. Many cases of astigmatism are no longer a problem. Our percentage of posterior capsule complications and infections is one of the lowest in the Nation. 100% of the surgeries are performed under topical anesthesia, so only drops, no need for shots and no need for stitches.

We are also proud of our 5 optometrists who deliver comprehensive and routine eyecare to our community and for the entire family. They are all accepting new patients and they have a zero-wait time appointments. They are here to help daily, with availability of late and Saturday appointments. All our optometrists work under the direct supervision and immediate access to our ophthalmologists/specialists.

We are equally proud of our optical shop which is the only local shop to have its own dedicated lab and can cut and finish your glasses while you wait. Our shop is run by an optician with 4 decades of experience.

Our eye institute has professional management focused on quality customer care. 90% of

EYES

continued on page 17



MILFORD - FRANKLIN EYE CENTER



Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.



John F. Hatch, M.D.



Bryan Hong, M.D.



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Living Healthy

GELATO

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shop features classic interiors that have been beautifully reimagined for today's taste, with a vibrant traditional European look.

The concept and design of the space and management of the renovation has been under the direction of Marcie DiChiara and Kylie Bodiya of Franklin.

"It has been a thrilling opportunity to be a part of the creative design team for Applause," DiChiara notes. "From inception to the final finishing touches, we really strived to create a particularly unique and inviting aesthetic. I think Franklin residents will be excited to have this new addition in the heart of their downtown."

Mercer adds, "Our goal is to marry the concept of a gelateria with a unique, one-of-a-kind global treasures gift shop. The product offerings in our retail space will be made up of one-off, custom curated, and hand-crafted pieces, specially selected for Applause."

Inspired by her global adventures, her aim is to offer gifts such as jewelry, apparel, home accents and art pieces that are one-of-a-kind, and never duplicated. Mercer also plans to incorporate some local flair into the mix as well, drawing from local artists and creators who offer unique giftables and artisan treasures.

Applause will celebrate with a formal ribbon cutting by invitation on April 6 and will be featured at the annual Culinary Cabaret at THE BLACK BOX on April 7. Doors will open to the public on Saturday, April 8, from noon to 4 p.m. Preliminary spring hours of operation will be Wednesday through Friday, 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, noon to 4 p.m. When you are welcomed into Applause, whatever you do... don't call it ice cream.



EYES

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our staff has been with us for over 5 years! Excellent retention of staff means outstanding loyalty and training.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center realizes you have choices when it comes to eye care. We are different. We are an M.D. physician/ surgeon specialist eyecare institute available for you daily and fully-headquartered locally with our optometrists helping with routine eye care only. We focus on excellent and advanced eye care and treat our patients as if everyone is family. We have surgical results that rival those of major centers in Boston- we can prove it. We are from the community, most of us live in the community and our focus is to serve the community. We believe in a better vision for your eyes. Your eyes deserve the best.

For more details, see our ad on page 16.

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Seasonal Allergies

SPRING! The birds are chirping, the flowers are blooming, the sun is shining and the scent of cut grass is in the air. What could be better you might ask? For many people, this season boosts energy levels with increased light exposure, warmer temperatures and those familiar fragrances, but those suffering from recurring allergies react to the season very differently. Spring allergies affect 20% of the population who will experience itchy watery eyes, sneezing, runny nose and even rashes. Airborne pollen is the most common cause of seasonal allergies.

There are, however, resources to combat those allergies other than medication. Eighty percent of your immune health is located in your gut, so supporting your digestive health is essential to sustaining a healthy immune system. When your immune system is compromised, symptoms such as allergies emerge.

Tom G suffered for 10 years with seasonal allergies, complaining of congestion, runny nose, sneezing and cough until his colleague at work suggested he visit The Holistic Center at Bristol Square. We identified his specific allergies and started Tom on a program which was geared toward rebuilding his immune system. Removing stressors to the immune system such



Dr. Rochelle Bien & Dr. Michael Goldstein

as processed foods, preservatives, and cleaning products, as well as creating a healthy eating plan, boosted his nervous system function and added supportive supplements. Within several weeks Tom noticed a significant difference. He was less congested, his nose stopped running and the cough was greatly reduced. Tom is not worried the SPRING HAS SPRUNG as he is feeling

so much better and is planning on enjoying all the outdoor activities he had to miss out on for so many years.

If you are suffering with allergies call THE HOLISTIC CENTER AT BRISTOL SQUARE located at 1426 Main Street, Walpole. Call (508) 660-2722 to schedule your appointment today.

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Sports

New Dugouts Ready for Wrentham's Opening Day

Tri-County Carpentry Students Complete the Project

There's nothing better than being around a Little League diamond on a late spring or summer afternoon. The young families, the crack of the bat, the sense of community, the feel of small-town America.... it's perfection.

In Wrentham, a little slice of paradise exists at the end of Randall Road. It's the Sweat Field Athletic Complex, and it has just gotten better over the last twelve months thanks to a dedicated baseball board of directors, some local business

owners, and the Tri-County Regional Technical Vocational School's carpentry shop.

The opening day parade from the center of town to the fields is always exciting. On April 22, young Wrentham athletes will feel a little extra excitement as they enter the complex. They will see for the first time new or improved dugouts on five of the six diamonds. After a decade of saving, and years of planning, the Wrentham Youth Baseball Softball Association (WYBSA) has improved (with lots of help) the Little League and softball diamonds at Sweat Field with ten new or improved dugouts.

As with any major capital project on public land, there were many moving parts and partners, including both the Wrentham Parks and Recreation and Building & Inspection Services departments. This \$70,000 project was presented as a gift to the town of Wrentham from WYBSA at a Board of Selectman meeting in September of 2021 by project manager and WYBSA board member Mark Anderson.

Pat Laughlin of P.L.A.N.S. Company, Wrentham, donated the design and architectural plans on a 10 x 20 open faced dugout with a poured concrete slab. The final plan was approved by the WYBSA board and work was started in January of 2022. Local general contractor Walnut Hill Construction did a major overhaul on the existing Gilpatrick Field dugouts and built two new dugouts on Pisani Field. WYBSA was very pleased with the construction, and the preferred pricing. WYBSA went to great lengths to hire a Wrentham contractor – and it worked out very well.

By April of 2022, the season was about to start so time was up and funds were limited. The remaining three fields were left for a future date.



Tri-County carpentry instructor Mark Spillane, left, and senior carpentry students Hunter Murray, Annabel Brady, Angelo DeCaries, Jacob Carpenter, Samuel Wojes, Conner Jackson, and Samuel Sepulveda.

Tri-County Carpentry Students Step In

In the late summer of 2022, Jeremy Barstow and Mark Spillane, carpentry instructors at Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School, reached out to Anderson regarding a pavilion project at the Sweatt complex that was in the early stages of discussion. However, with the plans for more dugouts already finished and approved, the decision was made by the WYBSA board to pivot and get started instead on two new dugouts at Heckler Field with the help of the junior and senior students in the Tri-County carpentry class. The students' time was all donated, and the lumber was provided with fair pricing from Chase Lumber. Dowling Supply donated crushed stone, and SLP Painting donated the painting.

From September 2022 until late January of this year, the Tri-County carpentry class did all the work from excavation, shoveling stone, pouring concrete, framing, and finishing the dugouts. The students enjoyed the project so much and had time on their schedule, so an offer was made to continue with building two more dugouts, this time at Lorusso Field. At the time of this writing, those dugouts are still in progress.

The WYBSA has been so impressed with the students' carpentry skills, and their speed and efficiency as they worked, that they asked the students to replace the roofs of the WW2-style concrete dugouts on Mc-Morrow Field, too.

Under the direction of their instructors, the students' projects at Sweatt encompassed quite a bit of construction detail, from excavation, foundation work, framing, trim work and roofing. It was a great learning experience for these young, future construction company owners.

Not enough nice things can be said about how professional the young men and women of Tri-County have been in building these structures that will stand for decades to come on Wrentham's fields of dreams.

"It has been very nice to see the excitement of the kids watching these dugouts go up slowly but surely over the course of the last year," said WYBSA board member Mark Anderson. "The year 2022 was my last year coaching on the Sweat fields. It was so very satisfying to see the young kids getting an opportunity to use nice new dugouts during last year's spring and summer season."



From left, Tri-County junior carpentry students Devin Chandler, Nathan Kushner, Nicholas Lanci, Lucas Sobczak, Sam Noonan, John Ioven, Elijah Turbides, and carpentry instructor Mark Spillane.

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Sports

KP Nine Eyes Another Deep Run in the Playoffs

Warriors' Roster an Experienced Group

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The current edition of the King Philip baseball team would like to take care of some unfinished business — like winning the Division 2 state championship.

Last year's squad came close. Very close.

The 2022 Warriors were 12-8 after the regular season, then won four straight games in the playoffs before Milton eliminated them, 4-2, for the state crown. KP finished with a 16-9 overall record.

"Last year's team relied on desire and dedication," said Jeff Plympton Jr. who's in his fourth season as KP's coach. "They were a pleasure to be around. They battled through the season after we lost pitcher Tom Martorano (elbow injury) in our opener, and we lost four one-run decisions. But, they showed resiliency. Martorano returned for the tourney and pitched a 1-0 shutout over Mansfield to get us into the state final."

The current contingent has 9 returnees from last year, and Plympton's goals for 2023 speak volumes about KP's ability and character.

"We'll strive to win the Kelley-Rex Division of the Hockomock League and to qualify for the tourney where we'll aim to go as deep as possible," he said. "Our objectives will also include daily improvement in practice and games and a desire to continue to build a winning culture."

The 29-year-old Plympton, whose Warriors will open the season on April 3 at Stoughton, is optimistic his forces can check all the boxes.

"We've got hard-working players who've got the potential to do well and we've got a dedicated staff of coaches," he emphasized. "Our team strengths are a major plus. Our kids are athletic, versatile, competitive and coachable, and they've got a high baseball IQ. We're talented on offense, our pitching is strong and our returning players have varying degrees of experience."

KP's senior captains — Rudy Gately (pitcher-infielder) and Matt Kelley (outfielder) — per-



Jeff Plympton Jr. is in his fourth season as KP's baseball coach.

sonify talent and leadership. Gately was dynamic last year, posting a 5-1 record and an earned-run average of 2.73. He batted .329, had 25 hits, knocked in 21 runs and scored 21 runs. Kelley hit .325, had 26 hits, drove in 18 runs and scored 25 times.

"Rudy is the ultimate competitor," Plympton noted. "He's super focused on the task at hand and although he's a quiet captain, he leads by example on and off the field. A right-hander, Rudy's assortment of pitches includes a fastball (mid-80s mph), change-up, curve and a slider. His change-up is his best pitch."

"Matt is versatile, a good contact hitter who has a high baseball IQ. He'll jump on the first pitch and he's a quality fielder who reads the ball well and gets a good jump. He also leads quietly and by example."

Martorano is a senior who'll pitch and likely play first base, too. Because of his injury, the left-hander hurled only 12 innings last year, went 2-0 and didn't allow a run. "Tom throws a fastball, change-up and a curve," Plympton said, "and his fastball is electric. His fastball is in the high 80 mph range and its movement makes hitters struggle. He's a terrific competitor."

Junior Anthony Fraone could join Gately and Martorano in the starting rotation. "Anthony is a right-hander who played on the jayvees last year," Plympton said. "He throws a fastball, curve and change-up and his control is top-notch. He's willing to take advice and strives to improve daily."



The KP baseball team advanced to the Final Four last year, then bowed in the State championship final to Milton.

Junior Tommy McLeish, who was KP's quarterback in the Super Bowl last fall, is another potential starter.

"Tommy, who can also play as a middle infielder, was 3-0 last year as a middle-inning reliever and a closer," Plympton offered. "He handles tough situations well and has a good assortment (fastball, curve, slider and change-up). He's got good control of his fastball and his curve has a 12 to 6 drop. He definitely will be counted on in relief."

Left-hander Max Robison is a junior who showed lots of versatility last year. He was used as a relief pitcher and a first baseman and could possibly see duty in the outfield this season. His pitching assortment includes a fastball, curve and a change-up.

"Max isn't flashy but he's reliable," said Plympton, who teaches physical education and health at KP. "He's got great control. A hard-worker, he hits for power and had a .345 batting average last year."

Senior Brendan Sencaj is KP's only returning all-star. Batting cleanup last year, he had 30 hits and compiled a .390 batting average. He also had 25 RBIs and scored 26 runs. "Brendan played third base last year and later in the season was used in the outfield," Plympton said. "A patient hitter, he's powerful and he's also a great fielder. He'll be playing for Bentley University next year."

Sophomore Aidan Astorino, who'll play either first base or be the D-H, was called up from the jayvees halfway through the season last year. "Aidan was impressive with the junior varsity," Plympton said. "His strength is hitting and I expect him to be a capable contributor."

Plympton, who'll round out his roster with additions from the sub-varsity teams, has a very capable staff. Jim Danielson will serve as a varsity assistant, Jason Connelly is the jayvee coach and Nolan Bradley will direct the freshmen. "They communicate well with the players and do a good job preparing the kids to play at a higher level," Plympton said.

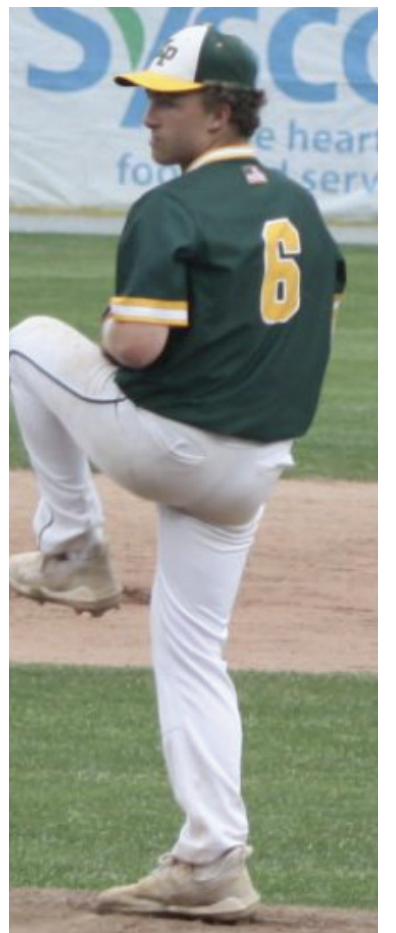
A native of Wrentham who played two varsity seasons of baseball at KP, Plympton relies on a competitive philosophy that stresses reaching one's potential and having fun.

"When those things occur, winning will be the by-product," he emphasized. "And valuable life lessons can be learned in athletics, like being prepared, working hard and overcoming adversity. Leadership and setting goals can be learned and I want our players to respect others, respect the game and be role models."

Whether the 2023 edition of the Warriors wins a state title or comes close like last year's contingent will be revealed in three

months. Don't count out this group because it has the same resilient nature as last year's contingent.

They also are intense and focused on strengthening KP's baseball tradition, which took a major step forward last June on a big stage.



Pitcher Rudy Gately was dynamic last year, posting a 5-1 record and an earned-run average of 2.73.

Real Estate Corner

Home Sellers Seminar at Wrentham Senior Center

Seniors over 60 are once again invited to the Wrentham Senior Center for the final informational seminar of the year, hosted by the Rose Stavola Realty Group LLC. On Thursday, April 27th at 11:00AM. Rose Stavola will share helpful information related to selling your house. In addition to highlighting ways to maximize your profits, Rose will give you a better understanding of topics such as: “direct buy or flipper companies”, pricing, how Zillow affects your home sale, and discount brokers such as, Redfin. She will also review what buyers want and marketing versus marketability.

The Rose Stavola Realty Group LLC is a national award-winning real estate team lead by Wrentham resident Rose Stavola. Rose and her team serve our community out of Wrentham’s




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Attendees are asked to pre-register by phone at 508-384-5425 or in person at the Wrentham Senior Center at least one week prior to the seminar. Anyone with questions may call Rose at 508-507-1853.

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February Real Estate Activity in Norfolk County

Norfolk County recordings for the month of February 2023 indicate a continued decrease in overall real estate activity, with significant drops in mortgage activity and the average property sale price as compared to the February 2022 numbers, according to Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

In February, there were 6,702 documents recorded at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, a 35% decrease from February 2022 and a decrease of 10% from January 2023.

“As the real estate market ventures further into 2023, it is still feeling the effects of high inflation, steep interest rates, and recession fears,” said O'Donnell.

Overall lending activity showed a continued downward trend for the month of February.

A total of 909 mortgages were recorded this month, 53% less than a year ago at the same time and down 9% from last month.

“In February, the average mortgage rate jumped back to 6.5%, which may be contributing to a decrease in lending activity,” noted Register O'Donnell.


The number of deeds for February 2023, which reflect real estate sales and transfers, both commercial and residential, was 968, a decrease of 11% from February 2022 and a decrease of 6% from the previous month of January 2023.

“A continued decline in the number of deeds and mortgages recorded at the registry may indicate that homeowners who took advantage of lower interest rates in 2020 are hesitant to make moves with mortgage interest rates at or above 6.5%,” said O'Donnell. “The scarcity of available real estate inventory is the most likely factor in keeping property prices above pre-pandemic levels, as well as the desire to live in area communities.”



Sale prices for February appear to have dropped significantly compared to February 2022. The average sale price in February was \$947,974, a 22% decrease from February

RE ACTIVITY
continued on page 21


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Real Estate Corner

AGING

continued from page 7

consumer knew that the Registry of Deeds would provide them a certified copy of a property deed for a charge of only \$1.00 per page, plus an additional \$1.00 for postage, they would never agree to pay these companies such an outrageous fee for service," stated the Register.

O'Donnell spent time discussing the advantages of the Massachusetts Homestead Act. The Homestead Act is an important consumer protection tool for homeowners, as it provides limited protection against the forced sale of an individual's primary residence to satisfy unsecured debt up to \$500,000.

The Register also reminded attendees about the importance of filing a mortgage discharge after their mortgage has been paid off. A discharge is a document (typically one or two pages) issued by the lender, usually with a title such as "Discharge of Mortgage" or "Satisfaction of Mortgage."

"When a mortgage has been paid off, a mortgage discharge document needs to be recorded with the Registry of Deeds to clear a homeowner's property

title relative to that loan," said O'Donnell.

The Register elaborated on mortgage discharges for the attendees, who seemed particularly interested in the topic.

"In some cases," noted O'Donnell, "discharges are filed directly by banks or settlement closing attorneys with the Registry as part of a property sale or as a result of a refinancing transaction. In other instances, the mortgage discharge is sent to the property owner, who then becomes responsible for making sure the document is recorded. Whether or not a discharge is recorded by the lending institution or the individual property owner, it is important that the property owner makes sure all necessary documents have been recorded at the Registry of Deeds."

Concluding his remarks, O'Donnell stated, "I first want to thank those who attended the event. They asked great questions, and their attendance was greatly appreciated. I also want to thank Rose Stavola for hosting the event, Representative Marcus Vaughn, the members of the Wrentham Council on Aging board, and all the staff who do an outstanding job advocating for and serving the seniors of Wrentham."

RE ACTIVITY

continued from page 20

2022 and an 11% increase from January 2023. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 33% from one year ago and increasing 2% from last month.

"While mortgage rates remain high, potential homebuyers may find comfort in the fact that prices have come down significantly from a year ago, bringing home values about 4% above values seen in 2019," said O'Donnell.

According to the data, there are significantly fewer mortgages being recorded, noted O'Donnell, which could be the result of several factors that the country is currently experiencing, including the increasing cost of living and spike in interest rates. These aspects of the economy can influence the local real estate market.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has been closely monitoring the foreclosure market. In February 2023, there were 3 foreclosure deeds recorded because of mortgage foreclosures taking place in Norfolk County, whereas in February 2022, there were 8 recorded. However, in February 2023, there were 43 notices to foreclose, the first step in the foreclosure process, significantly more than the 27 recorded in February 2022.

"February 2023 saw notices to foreclose more than double the number in February 2022. The increasing number of these notices is troubling. It suggests that more of our neighbors may have financial difficulties adapting to a shifting economy," said O'Donnell. "We will continue to monitor these figures."

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.

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

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2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019



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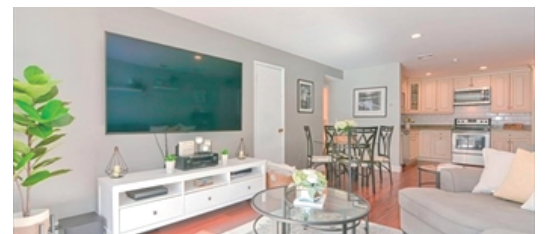
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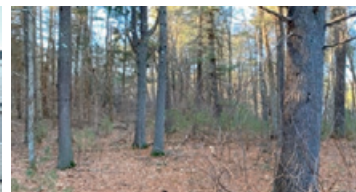
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Wrentham Adopts New Master Plan to Shape Future Growth and Development

The Wrentham Planning Board and Board of Selectmen recently announced the adoption of the Town of Wrentham's new comprehensive master plan, which will guide future growth and development over the next 10 years.

The Master Plan is the result of a collaborative effort between the town government, local busi-

nesses and residents. It includes a vision for the town's future, strategies to improve the quality of life, and a roadmap for implementing community-driven initiatives.

To view the completed Master Plan, visit www.wrentham.gov.

Prior to the adoption of the Town of Wrentham's new Master Plan, the plan was last updated 19 years ago. The updated 2022 plan focuses on key areas such as land use, transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental protection. It considers the town's history and character, while also looking ahead to future opportunities and challenges.

The plan provides the framework for regulations and is meant to be implemented by tools such as zoning bylaws, budget plans and capital improvement programs.

Overall, the purpose of a Master Plan is to guide policy decisions that will shape the community's physical, social and economic development through leadership, regulations, public investment and effective public engagement in the civic life of the town.

"The master plan ensures that our community will continue to grow in a way that encompasses the values of the Town of Wrentham and its community members," Town Administrator Kevin Sweet said. "This plan will be a living document that guides the town over the next ten years, and we couldn't be more thankful for all stakeholders that

helped facilitate this new step forward into a future of sustainability and inclusivity."

Wrentham's Master Plan was a two-year process completed in conjunction with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and included stakeholder involvement via several public forums and surveys.

The process was spearheaded by a Master Plan Steering Committee appointed by Town Administrator Sweet. Members of the committee included Krista Andberg, Debbie Exner, Chris Gallo, Julie Garland, John Jackson, George Labonte, Jerry McGovern, Jeffrey Plante, John Murphy, Beatrice Schembri, Steve Schwarm, Alan Selling, Everett Skinner, Jr., Rebecca Zitomer and Lauren White. Former committee members who served but did not stay on for two years include Diane Glass, Jeffrey Spratt, Laurence Johnson, Louis Allevato, Selena Zubrowski, Stephanie Duquette and Leo Immonen.

The Wrentham Master Plan was made possible with funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Community Compact and MAPC's Technical Assistance Program. District Local Technical Assistance funding was also provided by the Department of Housing and Community Development.

For more information about the Wrentham Master Plan, contact Director of Planning & Economic Development Rachel Benson at 508-384-5440 or email planning@wrentham.gov.

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Real Estate Corner

Hillary Swenson Corner Awarded Berkshire Hathaway Homeservices Commonwealth Real Estate's Chairman's Circle-Gold

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Commonwealth Real Estate today announced Hillary Swenson Corner has been named to Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices' esteemed Chairman's Circle-Gold Level for 2022. The Chairman's Circle-Gold Level is awarded to the top three percent of the network's sales professionals based on gross commission income or closed units.

Hillary was honored for her exceptional performance at the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices' annual Sales Convention,

in Las Vegas, NV. Real estate professionals from across the globe attended the annual business conference, to network, educate and celebrate the success of the network.

"We applaud Hillary Swenson Corner. Earning the Gold Level of the Chairman's Circle Award is a remarkable achievement and is a testament to Hillary's dedication to her industry. She is knowledgeable, has a strong work ethic and is a natural leader. Hillary Swenson Corner strives to provide the best possible real estate experience

for all her clients," said George Patsio, Broker/Owner of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Commonwealth Real Estate.

Hillary entered the real estate industry in 2005 and joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Commonwealth Real Estate in March 2008. Prior to winning the award, she also been awarded Chairman's Circle-Gold and Chairman's Circle-Platinum level awards in prior years, and was just awarded the 5-Year Legend Award.

Recent Home Sales in Norfolk


Date	Address	Amount
Feb. 17	88 Cleveland St.	\$735,000
Feb. 21	15 Tailwind Circle	\$1.05M
Feb. 21	15 Chestnut Road	\$345,000
Feb. 22	27 Seekonk Street	\$500,000
Feb. 27	71 River Road	\$440,000
Feb. 28	17 Lake Street	\$750,000
Mar. 3	13 Briarwood Road	\$704,000
Mar. 9	37-37A Grove Street	\$490,000
Mar. 15	6 Mill River Road	\$750,000
Mar. 17	39 Pine Street	\$500,000

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

Recent Home Sales in Wrentham

Date	Address	Amount
Feb. 10	316 Hancock Street	\$170,000
Feb. 13	55 Oak Ridge Drive	\$825,000
Mar. 10	335 South Street	\$345,000

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



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NHS Students Visit Wrentham Elementary School

National Read Across America Day

On Thursday, March 2, twelve junior and senior National Honor Society Students at King Philip High School read to Wrentham Elementary School students in kindergarten to fifth grade as part of National Read Across America Day, an annual reading motivation and awareness campaign sponsored by the National Education Association.

National Reading Day is recognized nationwide among schools, libraries and communities on March 2 (Dr. Seuss' birthday).

The NHS students visited 18 classrooms and read various books, including some by Dr. Seuss and the "Amelia Bedelia" series by Peggy Parish, to the elementary school students.

"This was the first time in three years that we were able to host older students for National Read Across America Day," Wrentham Elementary Principal Kathleen Maloney said. "The NHS students did an outstanding job interacting with and reading to the younger students. We are thankful for their



King Philip Regional High School Students read to Wrentham Elementary School students for National Read Across America Day. (Photo Courtesy of King Philip Regional High School.)

time and look forward to continuing this tradition."

The students discussed what

they read and answered questions about themselves and topics related to the books.

"I remember when I was in elementary school, it was always fun to have the big kids come and

do activities with us and I hope the kids I read to had a similar experience," junior Shaylee Cahoon said. "They were all super nice and really engaged with the books. We had a lot of cool discussions afterward."

The event was organized by Wrentham Elementary School Secretary Lori Blake, who reached out to the High School with the idea of restarting the program after a hiatus due to the pandemic. Linda Devore, the library assistant, helped facilitate the event.

The time spent at the elementary school counts towards the eight hours of community service NHS students are required to complete to remain in good standing.

"I am so glad that I had the opportunity to share a love of reading and learning with the kids during our time together," NHS Vice President and senior Charlotte Griffin said. "I also want to thank the Wrentham teachers and administrators for making our visit as enjoyable as possible."

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