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Many of the residences at 50 Liberty will have views of both the harbor and the city. Views to the harbor, the city or both are not available in all of the residences. The view shown is for illustrative purposes only and is not representative of the view available in all of the homes at 50 Liberty. Images shown are for illustrative purposes only, not exact.

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features spring 2017

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Wellesley’s Fuller Brook Park and the Brook Path that runs through it are growing up (naturally).

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We sit down for a face-to-face interview with Wellesley’s former police chief who is on a mission to repair community/police relations across the country.

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Visit Elm Bank’s grand mansion that the Massachusetts Horticultural Society plans to restore to its former glory.

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Learn about the lives and legacy of Waitstill and Martha Sharp, who bravely fought against Nazi oppression as part of an underground resistance.

110 Traffic Jam
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Discover how virtual reality technology is making an impact in our towns.

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Get a courtside look at the 2016 Wellesley High School Girls’ Varsity Tennis Team’s undefeated season.
The Green Scene
Ruth Furman shares her spring blooming favorites that will revive your garden.

The 10 Tips for Spring Cleaning
Follow our spring cleaning and home maintenance suggestions and save yourself from big headaches in the years to come.

Inbox
Get the latest on the people who make things go in community businesses and read about important events in Wellesley and Weston.

Forum
Readers speak out on issues of importance to them. In this issue, Erica Dumont discusses the collaboration between the public schools and the Wellesley Historical Society that gives students access to the Denton Butterfly Collection.

Business
Area artisans showcase their talents while crafting creative businesses.

Fitness & Health
Regardless of their ages, Wellesley and Weston women are committing themselves to regular workouts to meet their goals.

Good Works
As executive director of Hope for the Children of Haiti, former Wellesley resident Lee Stone helps orphanage children face a brighter future.

Family Matters
You don’t have to travel far to find a rich selection of nonathletic activities for kids.

Education
Meet the Robot Raiders, the Wellesley Middle School LEGO team that’s full of girl power.

Artist Profile
Artist Chelsea Sebastian finds inspiration for her paintings in Wellesley.

Books
Matthew McKay’s first book, Evolved, is a science fiction novel that explores life’s big questions.

Food & Wine
Learn how to better nourish yourself this spring with our ideas and recipes for healthful eating.

Excursions
Cape Ann on Boston’s North Shore offers plenty to enjoy on a day trip or longer.

About Town
Wellesley and Weston residents attending noteworthy events throughout Greater Boston.

Last But Not Least
This page gives our readers the opportunity to express themselves creatively with writing, art, and photography. In this issue, Maggie Mulqueen writes about being the last one down the mountain during family ski trips.
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Wellesley - New, meticulously crafted five bedroom home on cul de sac in Standish Estates .......... $2,095,000

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235 LOWELL RD, WELLESLEY
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11 SAGAMORE RD, WELLESLEY
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21 CHESTNUT ST, WESTON
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every spring, as I walk down the Brook Path and take in the buds on the trees, the flowers peeking up from the earth, and inhale the fresh, warmer air, I am reminded of how much I love where I live. I love this part of Wellesley for so many reasons. First of all, I can walk to just about everything—the library, Whole Foods, and the wonderful shops and fabulous restaurants in Wellesley Center. Secondly, if I want to feel like I’m away from it all strolling through the countryside, I can visit the horses at Dana Hall School. Or I can walk in the opposite direction through Nehoiden Golf Course along the aqueduct and visit the cows grazing in a nearby pasture. Talk about the best of both worlds. When out-of-town guests come to visit, we will often take them for a stroll along the Brook Path, and someone will usually say, “Why would you live anywhere else?”

In “Restoring Beauty” we visit the Fuller Brook Park and the Brook Path and learn about the many improvements that have been taking place over the last few years to keep this natural gem beautiful, vibrant, and viable for years to come. The park and path are really looking spectacular and the enhancements have made a major impact to this green space thanks to many people in town who have devoted countless hours to this important project.

Another favorite place of mine is Elm Bank Reservation, 36 acres of natural resources on the Charles River that is today run by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. When we first moved here more than twenty years ago, we began visiting Elm Bank and still love to explore its open fields, streams, woods, and formal gardens. In 2005, when searching for a name for our company, we decided upon Elm Bank Media, in honor of this special place. If you have visited Elm Bank and wondered about the mansion there, I know you’ll love reading “A House of Many Stories.” The history here is fascinating and important to know as Mass Hort sets about planning renovations and restoration to this landmark.

I really enjoyed reading “Crafting a Business” in our Business department, which features local artisans with exceptional talents. I was fascinated by Dale Broholm and his beautiful wood creations from witness trees. One of the reasons Dale’s creations spoke to me so personally is that they remind me of my beloved dad who I lost late last year. My dad was also a master craftsman who created exquisite pieces from wood he collected from our yard in Maine. My dad lived a long and wonderful life, and I cherish the art and his legacy that he left behind.

Enjoy all of nature’s wonders this spring!

Beth
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last fall, my husband and I visited Europe where we spent a glorious week traveling up the Rhine River on a barge. The pace was a bit slower than other trips we’ve taken in the past so we had the opportunity to take advantage of the tours and learning opportunities in this beautiful part of the world that has seen more than its share of devastation and destruction due to its geography and the politics of the region.

After reading “Building a More Fair and Just Society,” the story of Martha and Waitstill Sharp in this issue, I was reminded of my trip just a month earlier. As you’ll read, the Sharps were a Wellesley husband and wife who risked their lives and left their own children behind in order to travel to Europe on the eve of World War II and join an underground resistance to save Jewish children from persecution by the Nazis.

On my visit to the picturesque university town of Heidelberg, Germany, our excellent tour guide pointed out a small brass plaque atop a cobblestone on the doorstep of one of the homes in the center of town. Called a stolperstein, or stumbling stone, each plaque is engraved with the name and life dates of the person who last resided in the home before becoming a victim of the Nazi regime. At this particular home, the stumbling stones indicated that the husband and wife who once lived in the home had died in a concentration camp.

Our guide then told the story of how the year before, an elderly man on one of her tours told the group that the man and woman memorialized on the doorstep of this same home were his parents, and that he was one of the couple’s five children who were sent away before the Nazis could get to them. Each child was taken in by a different family, and they all survived the war. After many years, the children found each other and were reunited. I wonder if the children in this family were saved thanks to the help of strangers like the Sharps who were willing to sacrifice their own lives for the sake of others.

In this issue, you’ll meet others who devote themselves to making our world a better place. Former Wellesley Police Chief Terry Cunningham has made it his mission to help repair the relationships between communities and police departments across the country. You’ll also meet Lee Stone, who is helping orphan children in Haiti look forward to a brighter future. I hope you’ll find all of the articles in our spring magazine interesting and enlightening.
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spring is the season of optimism. Days are longer, tiny green shoots and buds tingle with growth, leaves begin unfurling, and flowers flutter open while the bees and other pollinators awaken from their winter sleep. This is the season of revivals—both of spirit and nature. Soon the surrounding landscape will become fully saturated in greens punctuated with blasts of long-awaited color and scent. The best place to be in spring is outdoors amidst all this surging activity.

Walking about a garden in early spring is to be tantalized by what’s coming or suddenly on show. If beds and borders are still looking dormant there are some spring blooming favorites that will revive your garden.
I never fail to be overjoyed when strolling past one particular corner of our garden in early spring and seeing branches studded with small, yellowy flowers. “Hooray,” I say, spring has sprung, and the native spicebush, _Lindera benzoin_, is in bloom. It’s a true harbinger of spring with a profusion of flowers blooming well before the bright green leaves unfold. These flowers are not the startling yellow of forsythia; they are more delicate—but abundant creating an ethereal haze. The scent is spicy lemony, and all parts of the plant are scented when bruised. Best in full sun, it develops a multistemmed round shape with an average height and spread of six to ten feet. Also, for you nature lovers, the beautiful swallowtail butterfly uses this plant for its successive life stages, so it’s very important in our ecosystem.

Another native to welcome in the spring landscape is the shad-bush or serviceberry, _Amelanchier_, with clouds of delicately scented, sparkling white blossoms that appear before its leaves. The flowers are ephemeral, lasting only about a week, but stunning in the spring landscape. They are the earliest white flowering shrubs to bloom. In the wild, these plants appear as understory shrubs or trees. Cultural requirements are simple, either full sun or shade, and the habit is either multistemmed or tree form. We had a narrow space in our woody corner where we planted _A. canadensis_ ‘Glenn Form’ RAINBOW PILLAR, a shrub with a narrower upright habit, and a lovely follow on after the spicebush.

If yellows and whites are too tame for your taste, then emblazon your garden with a stand of deciduous azaleas that can be found in a range of colors.
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from electric oranges to soft pinks. There are many species to choose from, making it possible to have azaleas blooming all spring into summer and beyond. The native flame azalea, _Rhododendron calendulaceum_ (note: azaleas are known botanically as rhododendrons), as its name suggests is a vivid orange-red to yellow. It is perhaps the most spectacular native found in mountainous woods, although the flowers are unscented.

Scented native azaleas are the pinkshell, _R. vaseyi_, one of the largest deciduous types with colors from deep true pink to light pink, or the rosshell, _R. prinophyllum_. Either will fill your garden with a spicy fragrance on warmer days. A cheerful spring look can be had with any of the hybrid azaleas from the Northern Lights series with warm colors and names like 'Mandarin Lights,' 'Rosy Lights,' 'Golden Lights' (fragrant), or 'Orchid Lights' to brighten any spring landscape. Azaleas do best in full or dappled sun with protection from strong wind and moderately moist soils.

Get outside and get to work cleaning up winter’s debris. Once the ground has thawed, it’s a great time to plant your own welcome-to-spring shrub and enjoy it for many seasons to come.

Happy planting!
AN OPEN LETTER
from Joe Campanelli, Needham Bank’s CEO

It is my great honor to succeed Mark Whalen as Needham Bank’s new Chief Executive Officer. Mark will continue serving the Bank as CEO Emeritus and as a member of our Board of Directors. I want to thank him for his distinguished banking career which began at Dedham Cooperative Bank before it merged with Needham Bank.

Being a Wellesley resident and a career banker, I have watched with great admiration as Needham Bank has become “the evolution of community banking.” Change is not easy and I know that I have big shoes to fill following Mark and Jack McGeorge before him as Needham Bank’s CEO.

What won’t change is Needham Bank’s mutuality. At the heart of our brand as we approach our 125th year is our commitment to being the leading mutual bank in the State. We embrace the fact that we are not publicly-traded and that instead of answering to Wall Street, we answer to the customers we are so privileged to serve.

Some may ask why I would leave the world of big banking for community banking. That’s an easy one for me to answer. I have many friends who have left big banks for smaller banks for a variety of reasons which always seem to come back to a desire to be closer to the customer and the community. Doing so is simply impractical at very large institutions, but it is at the very core of community banking and no bank is more committed to doing that, or does a better job at that, than Needham Bank.

That, in a nutshell, is why I am here. I look forward to working with the very talented team of employees at the Bank. And I look forward to meeting our customers as well as those of you who don’t yet bank with us. It is my responsibility to help lead the sort of community bank which appeals to everyone looking for a better banking option. We will continue to accomplish that goal by providing a very high level of service to our customers, by investing in our employees and our communities, and by offering the very best financial products and services in Massachusetts.

Needham Bank is your bank, which is why I’d like to hear from you. My direct line at the Bank is 781-474-5548 and my email address is JCampanelli@NeedhamBank.com. Please accept my sincere best wishes for the New Year.
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10 tips for... (SPRING CLEANING)

Besides checking your smoke detector batteries and tuning up your air conditioning, consider these spring cleaning and home maintenance projects. They could save you from bigger headaches in the years to come.

eone Clean your financial house
Go through your drawers and files. Cut up credit cards that are expired or no longer used (inform the company that you are cancelling, so your credit report doesn’t carry them). Check that your insurance and financial forms are up-to-date. You may discover that you’re still paying for an insurance policy or credit card that you’re no longer using. Destroy old bank statements and checks. If you haven’t done so already, consider enrolling in online bill paying to eliminate unnecessary paper.

two Organize
Clear out, wipe down, and organize the shelves of your kitchen cabinets and refrigerator and sort through your bathroom medicine cabinet. Toss out expired food and medication. When rearranging items, put like things together (such as your six bottles of half-empty ketchup). And don’t forget the chaos under the kitchen sink. Add plastic storage containers and shelving for cleaning supplies, sponges, and grocery bags. For a quick, inexpensive makeover that yields big results, replace cabinet and drawer knobs to give your kitchen or bathroom an updated look.

three Get down to the nitty-gritty
Remove mildew, mold, and grime buildup from the grout in your kitchen and bathroom tiles. Clean your oven, microwave, toaster, and toaster oven. Gently push the refrigerator away from the wall, unplug it, and vacuum dust that has accumulated on the condenser coils (your electric bill will thank you). Check the instructions from the manufacturer to determine the proper way to do this for your make and model.

four Freshen up
Clean window treatments, especially those in smoky areas, such as the kitchen and rooms with fireplaces. Brush off blinds before applying wet cloths to avoid smearing dust. Wipe down all indoor woodwork. Walk around the house with a Mr. Clean Magic Eraser or similar product. You’ll be amazed by how many scuffs and stains you can remove from walls, baseboards, and risers.

five Let in the light
Schedule an appointment with a window-washing company to clean windows inside and out. Get out the hose and wash down patio furniture and wash outdoor cushions. Hold off until the end of pollen season before washing.
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them on the same kind of hangers so they fall flatter and take up less space; **Another tip:** arrange garments from lighter to darker colors so later you’ll more easily be able to find what you want to wear.

**six**  When in doubt, toss it out
Before swapping winter and summer clothes from the closet, sort out for donation anything you haven’t worn within the past year. When rehanging clothes, place windows and patio furniture, however. Otherwise you’ll find yourself in a losing battle with Mother Nature’s reproductive drive.

**seven**  Clear the air
Besides opening windows, refresh your rooms and linens by airing blankets and comforters outside. If necessary, send comforters to the cleaners and think about replacing linens and towels that have seen better days. Sprinkle carpets with baking soda and then vacuum after 15 minutes (also vacuum the bottom of wool rugs to keep moths from laying eggs). Finally, flip mattresses over and from head to foot.

**eight**  Take a closer look
Cold, icy winters can wreak havoc on the structure of our homes. Inspect the attic and closet ceilings for signs of water leaks. Look up at your roof and make sure all of the shingles are in place. Also, look for cracks in the exterior foundation and check all corners of the basement to make sure that all is dry.

**nine**  Wrap it up
Sort through papers and photos you have in storage. Encase them in plastic sleeves or scan into your computer anything you want to save; otherwise, keepsakes could become mildewed and deteriorate. Now is also a good time to make sure your computer and cell phone are adequately backed up.

**ten**  Call a professional
Finally, pull out a ladder to clean winter debris from gutters and replace hard-to-reach light bulbs and smoke detector batteries. If you’re not a do-it-yourselfer, hire a handy person for a day or so to go through your home to fix dripping faucets, stuck windows, broken screens, running toilets, loose door handles, and finicky electrical fixtures. If you’d like to give your home a new, fresh look, consider calling one of the staging and interior design professionals listed above who provided valuable input for this article.
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Cutting Edge Homes is pleased to announce that they will again serve as a Gold Sponsor for Boston Design Week, March 29–April 9, 2017. This will be the fourth year for the 12-day citywide festival, which in 2016 had 80+ events throughout Greater Boston and attracted an estimated 11,000 participants. “This festival brings together the design community, and we are honored to be involved again this year,” remarks Sean Cutting, president of Cutting Edge Homes. For more information visit www.ThinkCuttingEdge.com or call 508.435.1280.

Karen Newman of Pentimento Interiors was awarded the Silver 2016 Prism Award for “Best Kitchen Renovation” of the Roger Babson house in Wellesley along with Design Associates. Combining elegant features such as a vintage 40-inch alabaster light fixture, floor to ceiling custom cabinetry, luxurious two-inch Carrara marble slabs, and natural brass hardware, the kitchen is a statement in both design and function, while honoring the original details of its 1920’s architectural plans. For more information about Pentimento Interiors, visit www.pentimentointeriors.com or call 617.840.4204.

William LoVerme, M.D., at Accurate Aesthetics Plastic Surgery, P.C., now offers patients the brand new BTL Exilis Ultra™ machine, which is a revolution in skin tightening. It is the first non-invasive aesthetic device to simultaneously transmit radio frequency and ultrasound energy. By combining energies, the delivered therapy is safer and more comfortable, with consistent results for a wide variety of patients of various ages, body mass index, and skin type. For more information, visit www.AccurateAesthetics.com or call 781.263.0011.

Meditresse recently announced that Dr. Mark DiStefano and Diana Gallerani, N.P. have joined its medical team. Dr. DiStefano brings over 20 years of experience as the preeminent hair restoration specialist in New England, and is a member of the American Board of Hair Restoration Surgery, as well as the International Board of Hair Restoration Surgery. Gallerani has an extensive medical background as both a registered nurse and nurse practitioner for almost 10 years. Visit www.meditresse.com.

Alba Boutique is thrilled to announce the opening of their third location at 22 Church Street in Wellesley. Alba features an assortment of contemporary and chic women’s apparel and accessories. The store made its mark in fashion in New Jersey in 2013, and now founder Jeanna Bruno has teamed up with Weston native Kate Phelan to bring more than two decades of industry experience and style to Church Square. Alba offers monthly events and trunk shows with global designers and serves chilled champagne every Saturday. Follow the Alba journey via Instagram @albaboutique.

On March 29 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm psychotherapist and author Lynn Lyons will lead a workshop called “Anxious Kids, Anxious Parents: How to Stop the Worry Cycle at Home and School.” Lyons will teach seven concrete strategies that normalize worry and help families respond and react to worry in a different way. This event will be held at Charles River School in Dover, an independent PreK-8 school, located in Dover. It is open to the community and free of charge. Visit www.charlesriverschool.org.
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Christopher Dallmus of Design Associates, Cambridge and Nantucket is pleased to announce that the company has been awarded the Gold Prism award for the “Best Detached Home of 2,500 to 5,000 Square Feet” at the C Lazy U Ranch in Granby, Colorado and the Silver for the “Best Kitchen Remodel over $200,000 of the Kitchen, Family Room, and Mudroom” at the historic Roger Babson residence in Wellesley. To see photos, please visit the 2016 Gold and Silver Prism Award Winning Projects at www.design-associates.com/home.

Elaine Bannigan, owner of Pinnacle Residential Properties, announced that Teri Adler is the company’s top agent for the ninth consecutive year. “Teri is one of the most talented and skilled real estate professionals in New England as evidenced by her stunning sales results and the overwhelmingly positive testimonials she receives from her clients,” Bannigan said. Adler is an area native and received her MBA from Babson College. She and her family currently live in Wellesley. To reach Teri, call 617.306.3642.

Beginning in early 2017, J. Todd Galleries will be showing the work of famed Boston expressionist painter Giovanni DeCunto. DeCunto’s bold, expressive works are both visually and intellectually engaging, and sure to catch the eyes of passersby when they see them in the gallery’s windows at 572 Washington Street in Wellesley. The gallery plans to further bolster its offerings of more contemporary artists and will continue to showcase the traditional and transitional artists for whom they are best known. For more information, please visit www.jtodd.com.

Dean Poritzky, principal and license partner at Engel & Völkers Wellesley, is delighted to announce the addition of six new advisors to the shop including: Sari Coduri, Jen Cubell, Jennifer Lozada, Rob MacLeod, Keith Magnus, and Paige McVay. Engel & Völkers is the leading international real estate firm based in Hamburg, Germany and nationally in New York City. Further expanding its rapidly growing footprint in New England, the new shop is located at One Abbott Street in Wellesley Square.

In June, Dana Hall School in Wellesley will host its Girls’ Summer Leadership Program for girls who have completed eighth grade. The seven-day, six-night residential program offers specially-designed workshops and activities to help girls find the tools they need to navigate the transition to high school with confidence and self-awareness. Now accepting applications for the 2017 session (June 24-30). Find out more at www.danahall.org/gslp.

Barbara Elza Hirsch of Elza B. Design, Inc. was thrilled to participate in the Concord Holiday Home Tour on Saturday, December 3 to benefit the Concord Museum. She decorated a grand Craftsman home with rustic and organic Christmas décor including abundant fresh greens, birch logs, flowers, colorful fruit, burlap, and pinecones to bring a festive feel to the home. Barbara especially loved creating the dining room table setting with a fresh floral arrangement, antique china, and a limed-oak candelabra.

Dave Schofield has joined Wellesley’s Deland, Gibson Insurance, bringing with him many years of insurance sales and entrepreneurial experience. In other news, Deland, Gibson’s Alexis Kimball
Wellesley resident and architect Jan Gleysteen, AIA, was recognized at the 2016 PRISM Awards. His Colonial Charm Residence was awarded two Gold Awards and one Silver by the Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston for excellence in renovation, historic renovation, and kitchen design. For more information on Jan Gleysteen Architects and their work please visit www.jangleysteeninc.com or contact Jan Gleysteen Architects, Inc. at 781.431.0080.

For 90 years, local realtors have chosen M. Annis Home Enhancement to help prepare homes before they’re listed for sale with window, gutter, and roof cleaning and other home repair needs. The company has recently received many awards including an Angie’s List “A+ Super Service” award, “Pulse of the City Best Company,” BBB A+ rated “No Complaints” award, and a “Best Pick Reports” company. Visit www.manniswindows.com and see their ad on page 211.

Betsy Kessler was Rutledge Properties’ Top Producer for 2016. Now beginning her 19th year at Rutledge, Kessler has been the top listing agent since 2008. Kessler grew up in Wellesley.

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attended Hunnewell and Dana Hall Schools, and still lives here today. She uses her lifelong knowledge of Wellesley to help her clients make informed decisions when purchasing a home. For more information, visit www.betsykessler.com or call 781.235.4663.

Gregory Lombardi Design recently completed the landscape architecture at the Woods Hole Golf Club clubhouse. While historically focused on residential estates in the Greater Boston area, the firm’s recent acquisition of Bill Madden, a seasoned landscape architect with numerous award-winning projects, has allowed the firm to grow in new directions. Madden is leading his design studio with a focus on country clubs and resorts, civic open spaces, and corporate landscapes.

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Meyer & Meyer, Inc. Architecture and Interiors received the 2016 Pinnacle Merit Award for the restoration and design of 9 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston. The highly coveted Pinnacle awards are given to projects whose beauty, creativity, ingenuity, and craftsmanship exemplify professional mastery in the use of natural stone. Built in 1861, 9 Commonwealth Avenue is a seven-story French Academic style townhouse located steps away from the historic Boston Public Garden. The firm is led by John Meyer, Jr., AIA, LEED AP and Laura Brooks Meyer, IIDA. Visit www.meyerandmeyerarchitects.com.
Lisa Abeles, Wellesley resident and president of Abeles & Associates Architects, Inc., is happy to announce that her full-service firm is now including landscape design for their architectural clients. “The fact of life in New England is that a lot of our landscape appreciation is enjoyed from the inside looking out,” Abeles notes. “The architecture and landscape need to be fully integrated from the beginning of the design process, incorporating composed views from each window.”

Principals Debi Benoit, Amy Mizner, and Sheryl Simon of real estate powerhouse Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. (BMS) welcome seasoned brokers Annie Bauman and Sandy B. Tobin—in addition to The Pearlstein Team—to the company’s roster of experienced associates who will soon be working out of BMS’s new Needham office at 936 Great Plain Avenue. With the addition of Benoit Mizner Simon & Co.’s Needham location, the company’s roster size will exceed 100 sales associates in 2017.

Meadowbrook Day Camp will be hosting an open house on Sunday, March 5 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Drop in to take a tour of the wonderful camp facilities, gyms, and pools and ask questions of Director Dan Hanlon. Children are welcome to come with their parents. Meadowbrook Day Camp opens June 26, 2017, runs through August 18, and is for kids 4.6 to 12.6 years of age. Teen Adventure programs are also available. For more information, visit daycamp.meadowbrook-ma.org.

Neiman Marcus Natick hosted a holiday-inspired cosmetics runway event called Project Beauty on November 19. Neiman Marcus Special Events Manager Chuck Steelman flew in from Dallas to emcee the show, and nine cosmetic and fragrance lines participated. Even Santa made a guest appearance down the runway. Following the show that was funded by MasterCard, attendees enjoyed an after-party, which included a photo booth, makeovers, skincare consultations, refreshments, and more. Attendees also relaxed in the MasterCard Lounge, which housed the Lalique Trunk Show.

On April 12, The Chestnut Hill School will host its annual spring open house from 8:30 to 10:30 am. There will be an opportunity to tour the school and to speak with faculty, administrators, trustees, current families, and students. Please call 617.264.1342 for more information. There is no need to RSVP.

In celebration of their ninth anniversary in Wellesley, FLX Training is debuting a brand-new lineup to show how your workout can be the best part of the day. Clients can now experience their diverse culture, professionalism, and lightheartedness through an unlimited group personal training membership, “FLX’D,” a couples program, and FIERCE, a women’s only monthly health challenge. All options at FLX allow clients to sweat and smile with people who feel like family. FLX Training is located at 443 Worcester Street in Wellesley. Visit www.flxtraining.com.

Forever Young Laser & Skin Center, located at 204 Worcester Street in Wellesley, is now offering Profound, a revolutionary energy-based facial treatment. Profound is designed to create...

Patrick Ahearn, FAIA has recently been awarded eight PRISM Awards hosted by Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston and five BRICC Awards hosted by Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Cape Cod. Please visit www.patrickahearn.com for more information and links to social media.

Patrick Ahearn
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Craig P. Gilmartin, Senior Partner (left)
Yitz Magence, Senior Partner (right)
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**Jesamondo Salon & Spa** continues to flourish and expand and has added three new members to its staff: **Diane Gable**, master stylist and colorist; **Ryan Marion**, master stylist and balayage expert; and **Heather Ericson**, massage therapist. Each individual brings numerous years of experience and a long roster of skills to the salon and the staff is honored to have them join their incredible team. Check out what’s new at Jesamondo for the spring and visit www.jesamondo.com.

**Royal Barry Wills Associates, Architects** has moved its main office to Wellesley. The 91-year-old firm, led by **Jessica and Douglas Wills-Lipscomb**, designs traditional homes for the Wellesley and Weston communities as well as Cape Cod and mid-coast Maine. The firm’s new office is located at 318R Washington Street. The firm was recently recognized by Ocean Home Magazine as one of the Top 50 Coastal Architects of 2016.

**Trove**, located at 542 Boston Post Road in Weston, recently held a trunk show for **Ray Griffiths**, one of the world’s most gifted jewelry designers. Griffiths creates exquisite gold crownwork settings that reflect his early training fabricating the intricate substrata of tiaras and crowns. Based in New York City, the Australian-born designer has been creating timelessly elegant jewelry for more than thirty years, and his technical skills can be seen in his signature collections as well as custom pieces. For more information, visit www.raygriffiths.com.
In order to better serve her clients, Gabrielle Clemens, CDFA, has opened an office at the UBS branch in Wellesley Office Park, located at 55 William Street, 3rd floor. As an Elite Woman Financial Advisor recognized by Barron’s, Clemens attended the Barron’s Top 100 Women Advisors conference in Palm Beach. She obtained the UBS Wealth Advisor designation, which is offered to a select group of successful advisors to handle complex wealth management solutions for individuals, families, and corporate entities. Visit www.ubs.com.

Drs. Ali of Wellesley Dental Group have recently acquired the T-Scan Novus technology, which digitally records occlusal, or bite analysis. It works on a diagnostic and preventative level by identifying bite discrepancies before they adversely impact the teeth. It also has restorative applications, making sure that all dental work is in complete harmony with one’s bite, increasing the lifespan of any crown, bridge, or implant.

Pinnacle Residential Properties is pleased to announce that top-producing agent Lisa Curlett has created a new logo and redesigned her web-
site: www.homesalesbylisa.com. Not only is her website now easier to navigate, it’s also packed with important and interesting information for consumers. Lisa has more than 14 years in the real estate business and has lived in Weston for more than 18 years. To speak with her about buying or selling a home, please contact her at lcurlett@pinnaclehouses.com or visit www.homesalesbylisa.com.

**Sea-Dar Construction** recently won a PRISM award from the Builders and Remodelers Association of Greater Boston for a home renovation they completed in Wellesley. The firm was also named Best of Boston this year and received the Home Builders Association of Cape Cod’s BRICC award for their building and renovation projects on Cape Cod. This award-winning builder is now focusing on their Cape and Islands service group, which can prepare or renovate summer properties in time for the warmer months. For more information, visit www.seadar.com or call 508.419.7372.

**Boston Home Magazine** acknowledged **Dayton Home** in its 2017 Best of Boston Issue, adding to the company’s 2016 Wicked Local Readers Choice award and the 2013 Best of Boston endorsement. Although the retail showroom closed in mid-January, the interior design services continue with DH Design. In early spring, DH Design will open an interior design studio in Concord and see clients by appointment. Email design@Dayton-Home.com for more information.

**William Raveis Real Estate, Mortgage & Insurance**, the number one family-owned real estate company in the Northeast that also has offices in Florida, has announced a freshening of the firm’s brand, including next-generation branding along with launches of state-of-the-art technology tools and promotional publications. Among the additions are RaveisEscapes.com, a digital, interactive lifestyle magazine and property showcase; and Raveis 365, a powerful, digital portal developed in partnership with Microsoft to assist the agency’s 4,000 real estate agents. To learn more, visit www.raveis.com.

**Kathryn Russo, N.P.,** has partnered with **Destination Beauty MedSpa** in Framingham to offer the most up-to-date therapies in anti-aging and beauty. Her favorites right now are IV vitamins, bioidentical hormone replacement therapy, and platelet rich plasma. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please visit her at www.dbmedspa.com or call 508.879.2222.

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by artist and designer April Chestnut. Chestnut has worked with Anthony DiAntonio on numerous projects and designs, and learned metalwork from DiAntonio while working as an apprentice. All of her pieces are handmade and signed one-of-a-kind productions inspired by the Art Nouveau style. Follow DiAntonio on Instagram at Bostonplatinum and on Facebook at DiAntonio/Boston Platinum & Diamonds.

Dr. Touradj Ameli was invited by the American Academy of Implant Dentistry® to speak at the 2016 Southern Districts Meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida about the science and practice of implant dentistry. His eye-opening presentation mainly focused on the effect of poorly designed dental implant treatments on overall health leading to other diseases, including cancer and diabetes. To learn more about dental implants, make an appointment for a consultation with Dr. Ameli by calling 781.237.1190.

Scandia Kitchens is continuing its partnership and expanding its presence with Clarke, the New England distributor of Sub-Zero, Wolf, and ASKO products. Scandia Kitchens has completed its displays in the new Boston showroom located in the Seaport District and is currently installing a new substantial display in the Milford showroom. The factory/showroom is located just five minutes from the Clarke Milford location, making it convenient for their clients to visit both showrooms to plan their dream kitchens. For more information, visit www.scandiakitchens.com or call 508.966.0300.

Premier Dental Group of Wellesley, P.C. announced that it now offers impressionless dentistry with the Trios Scanner, a digital imaging system. This system enables the dentists to create high-quality impressions without patients experiencing an unpleasant taste or gagging. The dentists’ group is also now participating with Cigna dental insurance in order to expand access to dental care and to better serve the community. They will continue to be in-network providers with Delta Dental of MA and BC/BS of MA. For more informa-
The North Suburban Chamber of Commerce (NSCC) recently honored Wellesley resident Gail Fine at with the NSCC Spirit Award recognizing outstanding leadership for her work at the non-profit organization, the Ellie Fund, which provides support for both patients undergoing breast cancer treatment and their families. Fine’s leadership at the Ellie Fund has had tremendous impact on the organization’s ability to care for its network of breast cancer patients and their families. Fine was promoted to executive director in March 2015. For more information, visit www.elliefund.org.

The Wellesley STEM Expo 2017 will be held on April 8 from 10:00 am. until 4:00 pm. High school students will be hosting a “hack-a-thon” for 6th through 12th graders where participants will use App Inventor to create an android application to solve a local problem. All students are encouraged to enter the STEM Sustainability Challenge and submit a drawing, story, poem, video, or essay that portrays their vision of renewable energy. Please visit wellesleyeducationfoundation.org to learn more and for scholarship and exhibitor opportunities.
When it comes to listings, no one tops Debi Benoit. Clients list with her because no one has more market intel, more experience, or more commitment to selling their home or helping them find a new one. No wonder she has been Wellesley’s #1 broker for 11 consecutive years. Join Debi’s A list; call her at 617.962.9292.

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You have a reputation for selling high-end, luxury homes. Is this your specialty?
My passion is selling homes and making the deal periop. With offices in Weston, Wellesley and Needham, I also service clients in surrounding towns including, Wayland, Dover, Lincoln, Sudbury and Newton. I built my reputation on selling luxe homes, but I bring the same level of excellence and white glove service to all price ranges to make the selling or buying experience the best it can be.

What is unique about Amy Mizner?
I strive to make a difference for my clients. My former career in advertising as an award winning TV producer has given me the background to create fresh and memorable marketing for my listings. I work tirelessly, pay attention to every detail during a transaction, and pride myself on being a fierce negotiator with a focus on closing the deal. My goal is to make the buying or selling experience seamless while accomplishing powerful results.

What is your vision for 2017?
My vision for 2017 is to continue raising the bar of excellence as a top producing broker and to affirm Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. as the #1 independent real estate company in the MetroWest.

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Who are your clients?
Over 95% of my clients are repeat customers and referrals. I have a reputation for being trustworthy and pragmatic. I am a trusted advisor and set up realistic goals. My clients can always rely on a seamless and efficient real estate transaction based upon my proven abilities in skilled negotiations, superior client service, on-target property positioning and pricing.

What differentiates your brand?
I’m never satisfied with just doing a good job; I strive to do an extraordinary job and my clients’ well-being is always at the heart of the process. My client’s needs are highly diversified and each one fully relies on my expertise, regardless of the price range. The key to my success is sharing my strong relationships with industry related experts and helping clients build a lifestyle in and around the community.

When is a good time to buy or sell?
Traditionally, the Spring market produces the most active buyers. Sellers acting on this notion tend to list their home in the late spring when the flowers are in bloom. The reality is that buyers start their search as early as mid-January. Sellers should not miss the opportunity to meet some of these potential purchasers and take advantage of fewer competing properties.

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Buyers often get better deals on homes that have been sitting on the market for over 90 days or even longer. While newer inventory often attracts more buyers the older inventory may result in a better purchase price. Often times the period between Thanksgiving through New Years and the period between late June through August are prime opportunities for buyers to negotiate.

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“I treat every client as if they were my only client”
Public Schools and Wellesley Historical Society Collaborate to Give Students Access to Denton Butterfly Collection

The Wellesley Historical Society has served as the keeper of the Denton Butterfly Collection since the 1960s. Still stored in the drawers with which they were donated, the butterflies, moths, and other insects have sat quietly within the walls of the Society for the past half century.

Their story is a fascinating one. They were collected, mounted in a specially-patented box, and put up for sale by The Denton Brothers, a company formed in Wellesley in 1895 by William D. “Willie” and R. Winsford “Winsey” Denton. The specimens in the Society’s collection were the ones that didn’t get sold, and were passed down to the next generation of family members.

Over the years, the butterflies have been displayed and photographed only a handful of times, as they are extremely light-sensitive. Therefore, the general public hasn’t been able to fully enjoy their beauty, much less learn from them. That is, until June 2016.

Last winter, the Society was approached by Carolyn Collins, elementary science coordinator for the Wellesley Public Schools. She had heard about the butterflies and thought the students could learn from them as part of their studies of variation and adaptation.

Collins developed lesson plans for the third-graders. In their lessons, the students learn about butterflies’ various defense strategies, including surprise, hide, misdirect, and warn. They discovered that certain characteristics of a butterfly, such as having long tails, help them escape the grasp of a predator.

While the students were learning about butterfly defense strategies in the classroom, Collins worked with Kathleen Fahey, curator of the Wellesley Historical Society, to identify which butterflies from the Denton collection would represent each of the four defense strategies that the students learned about.

After spending hours carefully viewing the hundreds of butterflies, Collins and Fahey chose three sets that would travel to the elementary schools in Wellesley. While only one set is needed at a time, it was decided that the same set of butterflies should not be taken out every year, due to the light they would be exposed to. Therefore, the three sets will rotate each year.

When June approached, Fahey and other staff members of the Society packaged each butterfly in its own archival wrapping, and carefully placed each of them in a padded box. This ensures that the butterflies are not damaged, which is particularly important for such a remarkable collection.

The butterflies were brought to all seven Wellesley elementary schools over the course of three weeks. Before the students viewed them, Collins gave them information about the butterfly collection.
and the Denton family. The students learned that the butterflies were about 100 years old, and that they were extremely light-sensitive and fragile.

The students broke up into groups, and the butterflies were uncovered. Each student was able to view every butterfly, and play an identification game.

Without touching them, the students decided which butterflies displayed characteristics related to the defense strategies they learned about. The children were amazed at the colors, sizes, and shapes of the butterflies, and that they still looked so good after 100 years!

While the Denton brothers most likely did not have education in mind when they were collecting these specimens, over 400 students were able to benefit from the butterfly collection this year.

Since 1925 the Wellesley Historical Society has been collecting and caring for historical treasures that tell the stories of Wellesley’s past. Though the artifacts are being cared for while they’re on the Society’s shelves, the real purpose of collecting these treasures is so that members of the community can learn from them.

This collaboration with the Wellesley schools allowed the students not only to gain an understanding of a historical Wellesley family, their business and their collection, but also to incorporate history into a science lesson. This interdisciplinary activity will pave the way for many more years of collaboration between the Wellesley Public Schools and the Wellesley Historical Society. It is the hope of both the Society and the schools that the collections housed within the walls of the Wellesley Historical Society will be able to teach Wellesley’s students about the community’s past, and provide insight into subjects they’re learning.
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the morning light slips in slowly on the Brook Path illuminating the tops of wild grasses and rhododendrons. As the sun rises, the mist that has gathered in the hollows and along the waterway melts away to reveal a meandering brook that pulses along, sometimes singing, sometimes quiet. The animals that make this park their home give way to the humans who enjoy it. Gradually this two-and-a-half-mile corridor in the center of Wellesley takes on its most familiar mantle: a quiet respite in the very heart of a humming Boston suburb.

To a casual observer, this green space that begins at Maugus Avenue and ends at the Nehoiden Golf Course at Wellesley College seems enchanting and in no need of improvement. But to those who make it their business to understand the mechanics of water flow, drainage, and natural systems, Fuller Brook Park and the Brook Path that runs through it have been in a long, slow decline. To restore the vibrancy and efficiency of the park, Wellesley Town Meeting appropriated $5.4 million in 2014 (with the vast majority of those funds provided by monies from the Community Preservation Act, which collects a one percent surcharge on property taxes) toward a major long-term rehabilitation of Fuller Brook Park, a project that is currently nearly complete on time and on budget. “People saw it as an area that hadn’t been tended to and was a bit neglected,” says Diane Campbell, the chairman of the Fuller Brook Park Committee that was established at that Town Meeting. “It needed to be rehabilitated to meet open space demands and the changing needs of the town based on development.”

Wellesley has long understood the value of green space. In 1897, the parks commission (now defunct) hired the firm of Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to visit and evaluate potential area parklands. John Charles Olmsted visited in January of that year and wrote a florid, impassioned assessment of the attributes and potential difficulties in constructing parks in the nascent town with a special focus on Fuller Brook. He worried that not improving low wetlands could lead to some dark outcomes. “The wetlands of a thickly settled town usually become its...
above: Granite slab bench at west end of State Street Pond.

slums. These unhealthy conditions are largely produced by human action or inaction…making the [inhabitants] more unhealthy and vulnerable to attacks of disease.” In fact, adding bucolic elements was only one of the objectives in creating Fuller Brook Park. The other was to improve the unpredictable drainage of the Fuller Brook and its vexing potential to flood.

“Some of the earliest work back in the 1900s was excavating the brook deeper,” says Peter Jackson, the town’s project manager for the Fuller Brook Improvement Project. “They lowered the elevation of the water two to three feet, thereby lowering the water table so all of the land itself and the adjacent residences became drier and more usable.”

In a talk on the project given this past November, Jackson noted, “In March of 1899, the commissioners presented their plan to the town to acquire land along Fuller Brook for parkway and drainage purposes and for the future development of a sewer system. The estimated cost of the project was $40,000 for acquisition and development and $3,000 a year for maintenance.” Construction of the path began right away, and thus began the Town’s stewardship of the park that over the decades has shifted between benign neglect and blatant over-engineering.

Because of the tension between the twin objectives of the parkland, functionality and beauty, well-intentioned tinkering began to erode them both. “Fuller Brook is the second largest watershed in the town as far as area goes,” notes Dave Hickey, the town engineer for the Department of Public Works, which was given responsibility for the construction oversight. “The two large watersheds drain nearly 70 percent of the town.” As the population grew, the runoff and drainage became more severe. “Between fertilizers and animal waste, street runoff is not necessarily clean,” he observes. “It ultimately ends up in the Charles River, and we don’t want to add to that pollution.”

Back in the late 1950s, a plan was devised to improve drainage along the Fuller Brook. The resulting manhandling of the natural flow of the brook with concrete embankments (which also straightened out the natural meandering of the water) horrified many residents and even
GREGORY LOMBARDI DESIGN
Landscape Architecture
more so when dozens of trees and shrubs were eliminated in the name of progress. “The concrete liners were the ugliest feature of the park,” says Jackson. “It’s artificial, and they are a poor design.” The flaw was that they channeled storm runoff at a very high rate of velocity. Nothing could permeate the embankment to slow it down. As a result, the swiftly flowing water was dumped directly to the Charles without stopping to filter out pollutants. In addition, invasive species had encroached on open space and crowded out native plants and shrubs. By the end of its first century, it was clear that Fuller Brook Park needed some time, money, and attention.

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) had recognized the problem by 2003 and, with infinite patience, began a decade-long process of assessing the health of Fuller Brook Park. With the help of outside consult-
ants, comprehensive studies concluded that the park needed to “get back to nature.” This meant the removal of the offending concrete blocks, reintroducing a more natural flow, slowing down the water, eliminating invasive plants, and dealing with flood water on site, not just sending it down river. Because the Fuller Brook Park has elements of historical significance, of engineering import, and of natural consequence, there were many cooks stirring a very complex broth. “From the beginning, there was the recognition that one board or one town department would not be able to manage this project on its own,” says Brandon Schmitt, the director of the NRC. “It’s a major pedestrian alternative access, but it also functions as a storm water system. People typically don’t think about that.”

Nowadays, habitat restoration dovetails nicely with erosion mitigation and the Brook Path has some nifty tricks to mimic and enhance the workings of a flood plain and a natural stream. For example, there are artificial “slowdowns” inserted directly into the stream. “We have buried boulder clusters directly into the stream bed,” says Jackson. “They control and change the way the water flows by creating shallow areas on one side and deep areas on the other. This creates more habitat.” In addition, root masses were placed into the stream bank to add turbulence. Trees that fall on their own are removed because they will impede water flow. “The root masses add turbulence to the water and

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traps sediment,” says Schmitt. “It provides habitat for fish and other critters that might be in there.” It is important to shade the brook directly from harsh summer sun so where the banks are being restored, there has been an investment of anchoring plants directly into the soil. “We have these bio logs, called coir logs that are made up of ground-up coconut shells, and we plant shrubs directly into them,” explains Jackson. “The idea is that in three or four years when the logs decompose, the shrub’s root system will take over to shore up the embankment.” Jackson estimates that there are thousands of new plantings: approximately 200 trees, 500 shrubs, and thousands of perennial plugs. Some of these species go directly into creating bio basins or rain gardens in areas that are too wet to act as typical parkland. Residents might notice two unmowed meadows that are overgrown with grasses and wildflowers. These wet spots are ideal for bird habitat and act as filters and catch basins for rain water after big storm events.

In order for these new arrivals to thrive, however, the park planners needed to get serious about tackling invasive species. “The stream had become degraded with invasives,” says Schmitt. “Some of them are very hard to deal with. Wellesley is a leader in not permitting pesticide use so it makes it challenging to deal with these stubborn plants.” One radical method to halt the unchecked growth of Japanese knotweed was to dig out the top layers of soil, cover the area with heavy black plastic, and leave it alone for up to four years. This draconian method only weakens knotweed, it doesn’t eliminate it. “It will need to be mowed continuously for it to finally give up,” observes Jackson. Other similar onslaughts are underway to eliminate oriental bittersweet and Norway maples, among others.

What is clear about the Fuller Brook Improvement Project is that it is unlike any building or engineering undertaking in town. It is a living biosphere that doesn’t pay much attention to stop dates or wishful thinking. “We need to maintain these improvements,” says Kurt Somerville, a member of the Fuller Brook Park Committee and the president of Friends of Fuller Brook Park. “Nature is relentless and it doesn’t stop growing just because you cut it once.” There is
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money in the budget to help the three-year-long project stay on track into the future. And in the end, what was achieved was satisfying in the extreme to all those who had put years of effort into it. “I think many towns would kill to have a green, pedestrian corridor in a heavily trafficked area,” says Dave Hickey. “It is very special landscape in all seasons.” The volunteers who spent countless hours planning always tried to keep the users of the park at the forefront of their consideration. “We had years of design feedback with the community,” says Campbell. “In fact, when it came to the path medium, we actually set up test tracks for folks to come and test them in real time in real conditions.”

The winner was a dense graded crushed stone, a surface material that is designed to be universally accessible, something that the prior pathway couldn’t provide. All of the dedication and commitment paid off when Fuller Brook Park was made part of the National Register of Historic Places in 2013. But that doesn’t necessarily matter to those who just appreciate a quiet, friendly place in the middle of a busy town. “If we were on the sidewalk on Washington Street, we probably wouldn’t acknowledge one another. We would probably just pass each other by,” says Somerville. “But here on the path, there’s a great sense of community. People who are walking or jogging, people who don’t know each other say ‘hello.’”
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2016 was a year marred by extraordinary community/police tensions fueled by several shootings of minorities by police and shootings targeting police across the country. It was also the year Wellesley’s Chief of Police, Terrence Cunningham, served as president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the largest police chief organization with 27,000 members.

Addressing IACP members at their annual conference in San Diego, California on October 17, Cunningham called for an apology for the “historic mistreatment” of racial minorities in the United States: “There have been times when law enforcement officers, because of laws enacted by federal, state, and local governments, have been the face of oppression for far too many of our fellow citizens.”

Yet, Cunningham did not fault his fellow officers. “Those who denounce the police must also acknowledge that today’s officers are not to blame for the injustices of the past.” He asserted, “If either side in this debate fails to acknowledge these fundamental truths, we will be unlikely to move past them.”

He wrapped up his speech with a provocation, “All members of our society must realize that we have a mutual obligation to work together to ensure fairness, dignity, security, and justice. It is my hope that, by working together, we can break this historic cycle of mistrust and build a better and safer future for us all.”
Cunningham delivered his controversial four-minute talk to spur the difficult conversations necessary for police and their communities to band together to build trust. The Los Angeles Times called Cunningham’s speech a “watershed moment” for the IACP, an organization with a mission to advance the law enforcement profession through advocacy, outreach, education, and programs.

But Cunningham’s speech also elicited diametrically opposed reactions. A few weeks after his presentation to the IACP, Cunningham addressed 250 police executives at the FBI National Academy in Washington, D.C. He arrived with laptop and PowerPoint presentation in hand, only to be met at the door by two agents who taught at the Academy warning him that his “historic mistrust” speech was all the officers were talking about, and most weren’t happy with it.

Cunningham faced the elephant in the room head-on, skipping his prepared remarks to invite discussion. Some demanded an apology for what they felt was anti-police rhetoric, to which Cunningham replied, “I have nothing to apologize for. I didn’t say you were racist. When you put on a uniform, you carry the history of the police force on your shoulders.”

The very next day, Cunningham presented at a “policing from the inside out” conference held at Howard University, the historically black school in Washington, D.C. Community activists from Baltimore not only had the opposite reaction to that of the police at the FBI National Academy. They ripped Cunningham apart for not speaking strongly

POLICE DO NOT HAVE THE TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO DEAL WITH THE MAJORITY OF TODAY’S CRIMINALS WHO HAVE MENTAL ILLNESS AND UNTREATED SUBSTANCE ABUSE, WHO ARE JOBLESS AND/OR HOMELESS.”
enough about what they perceived to be police brutality against blacks. A sentiment echoed by Dr. Delores Jones-Brown, a professor at the John Jay College Center for Race, Crime and Justice, who told the LA Times: “The apology amounted to too little, too late.”

When asked for his opinion on why there was a rise in community/police tension, Cunningham replied, “When people are upset with government as they are now, they use police as a vessel. The police are the most visible arm of government.”

Cunningham also believes the criminal justice system needs an overhaul to meet the demands of the 21st century. The last time that the system was revamped was in 1967 after President Johnson created the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. About 50 years later in 2014, Congress was one vote short from authorizing a new study. Cunningham had hoped to convince President Obama to issue an executive order to get it completed, but did not.

Cunningham and the IACP support federal background checks for firearm purchases. The organization’s position is clearly stated on its website: “Dangerous people acquiring firearms is a serious problem that demands a federal response. State and local governments cannot go it alone, as ineligible firearm purchasers are able to circumvent the
strong laws of some cities and states by obtaining guns in other states or jurisdictions with weaker gun laws where they can avoid a background check. Interstate trafficking is a critical problem, and requiring a background check for every gun sale reduces the flow of guns to criminals.” Cunningham brings the issue to life: “Forty percent of gun purchasers get through without a background check. Of the sixty percent of people who received a background check in the last five years, two million people were prohibited from buying a gun. Two million. It’s ridiculous. Ninety percent of the public and even eighty-six percent of the NRA support background checks.”

To humanize the statistics, U.S. Representative Gabby Giffords’ shooter would not have procured a gun if federal background checks were required. They are not in Arizona where Jared Lee Loughner, diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, purchased the 9mm Glock pistol that he used to severely injure Giffords and thirteen other citizens and kill six people, including Chief U.S. District Court Judge John Roll as well as a nine-year-old bystander, Christina-Taylor Green.

In his role as president of the IACP, Cunningham had the privilege to advise Obama and speak candidly about how to deal with complicated racial issues, including the July 2016 series of tragedies: the police killing of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and Philando Castile in Falcon Heights, Minnesota, followed by Micah
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“Even in Wellesley, racism and implicit biases can seep into our police department just as it can in our resident population. But, our job as police administrators is to root it out of the department,” explains Cunningham. “99.9 percent of our officers do an incredible job, but law enforcement is one of the few professions where we expect a batting average of a thousand.”

Cunningham recounts the “1990 Dee Brown Wellesley incident,” which, Brown calls a case of “mistaken identity, not racism.” Cunningham was actually involved in the widely publicized event that followed on the heels of five local bank robberies, when the manager of the South Shore bank on Route 16 called 911 to say that the person who had robbed their bank was sitting in a car parked across from the Wellesley Hills Post Office. The police responded, surrounded Dee and his fiancée and ordered them to lie face down on the pavement. In less than two minutes, the detective on the scene realized Brown was not their guy, and he was never arrested.

Cunningham has deep roots in Wellesley. He grew up in town, attending Hardy Elementary, Wellesley Junior High, and Senior High schools before putting himself through Northeastern University as a criminal justice major and then graduating from the Massachusetts Police Academy. Cunningham’s maternal grandfather, who also lived in town, founded the Wellesley Volunteer Police during WWII when many of police officers were redeployed to the military. Cunningham credits his grandfather for sparking his lifelong interest in law enforcement. In 1981, Cunningham joined the volunteer police group, and in 1983, he launched his career as a patrolman in his beloved hometown. In addition to serving as president of the IACP, he has served as president of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, and president of the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council, an organization he founded.

In 2017, Cunningham assumed the role of deputy executive director at the IACP. In a
November 17, 2016 *Boston Globe* article announcing his upcoming appointment, Cunningham identifies his top priority: improving community-police relations. He plans to pool resources of the IACP Institute for Community-Police Relations with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, stating, “What we can do together, we shouldn’t do as one-offs.” And, Cunningham will advocate for President Donald Trump to appoint a task force to reevaluate the nation’s criminal justice system.

Wellesley residents were fortunate to have the intelligent, devoted, and very human Terry Cunningham at the helm of our town’s police department for more than 15 years. In his new position at the IACP, Cunningham will continue to catalyze the difficult conversations and decisions society desperately needs to move forward peacefully and respectfully—and for that, all Americans are fortunate.
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A House of Many Stories

Mass Hort Looks to Restore Elm Bank’s Grand Mansion

STEVE MAAS writer / JOHN HARMON photographer
katherine  K. Macdonald first learned about the mansion at Elm Bank following the Blizzard of '77.

Her family had just moved to Wellesley, and her husband and her brother had set off exploring the area on skis.

They came back with a tale of a snow-encrusted estate that looked right out of the movie Doctor Zhivago.

But once defrosted, the property’s boarded-up mansion would turn out to be not a Russian dacha, but a red-brick Georgian Revival manor house. It was built in 1908 by Alice Steele Cheney Baltzell, daughter of one of the richest men in late 19th-century Boston, and her husband, Dr. William Hewson Baltzell, a retired Baltimore surgeon.

Today, the empty house looms amidst the gardens of Elm Bank, the 36-acre home of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society that straddles the Wellesley-Dover line along the Charles River. As the society’s president, Macdonald is conducting a $150,000 fundraising drive to pay for a master plan for Elm Bank that would include a study to assess the cost of restoring the forty-room, three-story mansion to its former glory.
Considering that the mansion hasn’t been occupied for nearly forty years—except by a movie crew for several months in 2008—it’s in remarkably good condition.

“It’s structurally a fortress,” said V.J. Tocci of Tocci Building Companies in Woburn, which specializes in historical restoration.

Barry Ganek, a Carlisle-based architect who often teams up with Tocci on restoration projects, likened the mansion to those in Newport.

“It would be a crime to lose that structure because it is not decrepit in any way,” said Ganek, who marveled at the handcrafted plaster detailing on its ceilings and the elaborate Greco-Roman carvings on its many fireplaces.

While water has damaged some of the ceilings and walls, the marble floors and wood-paneled walls are intact, as are most of the quarter-inch thick window panes. In the basement are the glass fronts of the
floor-to-ceiling bookcases of the two-story library that is said to have been inspired by that of Sir Walter Scott.

But when you consider the cost of renovating just a bathroom in your house, it should come as no surprise that the cost of restoring the Cheney-Baltzell mansion could run well beyond $15 million.

The 108-year-old house was designed by Carrere and Hastings, one of the leading architectural firms of the early 20th century. Its most famous project was the New York Public Library; locally, it designed the Wellesley Congregational Church in 1918. The architects were renowned for integrating the interior with the natural surroundings.

The manor house’s grand ballroom looks out onto an Italianate garden, one of several on the property designed by the Olmsted Brothers, founded by the sons of Frederick Law Olmsted of Central Park and Emerald Necklace fame.

But there’s more to the house than marble and fancy plasterworks. If its walls could talk, they would tell tales right out of an Edith Wharton novel.

* * *

The fortune that laid the foundation for the Elm Bank estate was made by a blacksmith’s son born in Hillsborough, New Hampshire, in 1815. Benjamin Pierce Cheney, father of Alice, was named in honor of the town’s leading citizen, the father of a future president, Franklin Pierce.
If Cheney, too, sounds vaguely presidential, that’s because the family descended from the same colonial ancestors as former vice president Dick Cheney.

But the statesman who would matter most to Benjamin was Daniel Webster. At age 16, the lad took a job driving a stage coach, and the legendary lawmaker was among his regular customers. Endorsed by Webster, Cheney developed his own express coach business that carried people and valuables through New England and into Canada. In 1879, his United States and Canada Express Company merged with others to form what became American Express, of which Cheney for decades was the largest stockholder. He was also a director of Wells Fargo.

As stagecoaches gave way to railroads, Cheney hopped aboard. When he lost an arm in a train wreck, according to family lore, he used the insurance settlement to invest in what became the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe. As a director of that line and the Northern Pacific, among other railroads, he played an instrumental role in putting transcontinental travel on a sound footing.

It wasn’t until 1865, when he was 50, that Cheney finally settled down and married, to a woman half his age, Elizabeth Stickney Clapp. When the newlyweds returned to their new house at 32 Marlborough Street in Boston’s Back Bay, they were greeted by the stench of smoke. Several days before, rags stored in the basement had ignited a fire. But while the house was saved and refurbished, the story of the fire may have had a profound effect on the Cheneys’ daughter, Alice, but more on that later.

Cheney, the one-time stagecoach driver, galloped through the ranks of Boston society, becoming prominent in philanthropic and horticultural circles. From 1866 to 1880—appropriately enough, as it would turn out—he served as a trustee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

In 1874, he purchased a 182-acre Wellesley estate next door to the summer home of Horatio Hollis Hunnewell, a friend and fellow railroad magnate, philanthropist, and horticulturalist. That was at a time when Wellesley, Weston, and neighboring towns were becoming popular vacation retreats for Boston’s elite.

Cheney kept the property’s name, Elm Bank, given to it by its previous owner—Theodore Otis, a former mayor of Roxbury—because of the elm trees that then lined the Charles River. Cheney built a Queen Anne mansion and laid out gardens, carriage ways, and trails befitting an English country estate.

Of the Cheneys’ five children, it was Alice who enjoyed Elm Bank the most. She was born in 1867 while her father was on emergency business in New York. In her family memoir, Alice’s...
mother recalls sending him a telegram: “Miss Cheney sends love to her dear Father and hopes to see him soon.”

Alice attended the prestigious Miss Porter’s School in Farmington, Connecticut, when it was still under the direction of founder Sarah Porter. There, the young women were encouraged to pursue a broad range of interests, from Latin and European languages to botany and geology to tennis and baseball.

In 1895, the Boston Sunday Post wrote of Alice and her two sisters: “The three daughters … have all made their appearance in Back Bay society, but are unmarried. They are always together, and were always popular in their set. All three are entertaining, and their taste, remarkably, runs nearly alike for music, out-door amusement and traveling … nearly all over the other continents.”

That description appeared in an article just after Benjamin Cheney’s death, when it appeared that a dispute over his will would land in court. The Boston papers reported that Benjamin Pierce Cheney Jr. was, in the view of the rest of his family, exercising too much control over the estate and that his father was not of sound mind when he made known his final wishes. Fortunately for the family, but not for the gossip-hungry public, the matter was settled before it reached the bench.

B.P. Cheney Sr. left an estate estimated as high as $9 million (in today’s dollars, he would have been a billionaire) and, based on The Boston Globe account, a sterling reputation. “Great tenacity was one of his leading characteristics,” the Globe eulogized. “In nothing is this more apparent than in his sincerity in standing by the great transcontinental lines in their prosperity and in their declines.” The Globe added: “His fortune was squarely and honestly made without connivance or double dealing.” The story praised Elm Bank as being “among the most beautiful places in the state.”

Daughter Alice acquired Elm Bank from the family in 1904. Three years later, she married. The Globe headline: “Brilliant Wedding at Elm
Jacob Lilley Architects, Inc.
Bank, Wellesley, of Baltimore Physician and Wealthy Bride.” She was 39, her husband nearly a decade older.

The *Boston Post*, mistaking the groom’s middle name for his last name, reported that the marriage was “the result of a brief and romantic courtship, in which it is said Dr. Hewson had another very wealthy suiter for a rival.”

Dr. Baltzell, who had practiced at Johns Hopkins, had been married once before, for just five weeks, in 1899. His wife died of typhoid after taking ill on their honeymoon.

* * *

A month before the Cheney-Baltzell marriage, an item popped up in *The Wellesley Townsman*: “It is rumored that members of the Cheney family are to start a $2 million residence on the site of the present Cheney house.”

Indeed, Alice and William had decided to replace her father’s mansion. Some accounts speculate that, haunted by family memories of the Marlborough Street fire, she wanted a fireproof, brick structure. Others suggest that she simply wanted something grander.

While work on the mansion was underway, the couple toured Europe, where—in the tradition of other wealthy Americans—they set about buying artwork and antiquities to furnish their home.

The gilded ceiling in one of the front rooms is rumored to have come from Spain, according to a slide lecture by the Reverend Paul Fohlin, a Carmelite priest who became interested in the family while living in and nearby three other Cheney homes in New Hampshire. The rumor further suggests that the gold originally had been exported from the New World by Christopher Columbus.

The Baltzells ran afoul of U.S. Customs, according to several convoluted stories in *The New York Times* and *The Boston Globe*. Apparently at issue was a marble shrine that Italian art dealers had represented as being centuries old. The couple had paid $100,000. A customs court judge in New York ruled that they owed $40,000 in duties after he was persuaded by testimony that it was not an antiquity but of recent origin (antiques were not subject to the tax). An art expert maintained that the object had been aged with coffee, among other agents. We may never know the truth, since at some point when the estate was not in use muscular
thieves with a bent for classical architecture lugged away the shrine.

Alice was an unusual mix, intensely private but very much a part of her social set. In an essay for the Journal of the New England Garden History Society, landscape historian Alysson Hayward writes: “Workmen on the estate recall her ordering the bridge to be drawn so that no one could enter the property. Trucks and equipment would wait in line on the narrow entry drive as the head gardener, John Morris, a resident on the estate, hurried to the main house to plead with the owner to drop the bridge to allow the workmen access.”

The estate employed more than 30 gardeners.

Yet Alice was known for opening her house to social galas, where guests could walk through French doors onto a patio overlooking her Italianate garden. Macdonald imagines, though, that when she grew tired of partying, she’d have everyone leave and then pull up the bridge.

No photographs exist of the interior of the house from the time when she lived there. Among the few of the exterior from that period is one of Norfolk Hunt Club members with their horses at the marble-pillared front entrance of the mansion. They would be invited inside to fill their flasks to fortify themselves for the chase. Macdonald says she was told that on at least one occasion a member didn’t bother to dismount and trotted his horse across the wide black-and-white marble entrance hallway.

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Alice belonged to the exclusive Chilton Club for women, regularly attended the Boston Symphony, and sponsored civic and cultural events. An April 1915 story in the *Globe* lists her among the members of the Equal Franchise Committee, which sponsored speeches, rallies, and lobbying efforts to promote women’s voting rights.

In honor of her husband, who died in 1928, Alice donated a paneled room that had been dismantled from the 18th-century Newland House in Gloucestershire, England, to the Museum of Fine Arts. In her lifetime and by bequest, she also gave the MFA antique furnishings and paintings.

The Hurricane of 1938 downed many of the famous elms on the estate. Raymond Frost, whose father managed the property, recalled in a lecture at Mass Hort that Alice was heartbroken.

Less than two months later, on November 3, Alice attended a New York production of *Victoria Regina* starring Helen Hayes. During intermission, she left for the restroom. When she didn’t return, a nephew, John Davis, who happened to be in the audience, sought out a doctor. He learned that his aunt had been found dead of natural causes. Alice was 71.

* * *

The Cheney and Baltzell families stayed in the news after Alice’s death. In 1941, three brothers—sons of a first cousin of Dr. Baltzell—sued for a share of the Cheney-Baltzell estate. They sought $21,000, claiming that Alice had promised to pay their college and related expenses if they swore off liquor. Their mother sued for an additional $28,000 for her role in keeping her sons sober. The family, all members of a prominent Philadelphia family, failed to persuade a Dedham jury.

Interestingly, one of the brothers, E. Digby Baltzell, went on to become a celebrated sociologist, author of such books as *The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America* and *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia*. He is credited with having popularized the term WASP.

Meanwhile, Alice’s oldest brother, Benjamin Cheney Jr., suffered numerous financial setbacks and had to rely in part on the income of his wife, Broadway actress Julia Arthur. Later in his life, he became interested in the history of his father’s railroad enterprises and the blazing of the West. He would take the lengthy journey on his own, phoning his wife in Boston every few days. In the spring of 1942, the 76-year-old set out to explore the Arizona desert. When Julia didn’t hear from him for two weeks, she called for a search. A cowboy found Benjamin’s body, an empty canteen at his side, 20 miles from his stalled car. Not far away were the tracks of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe.
ERICA HELMER

Erica Helmer, a native of the Boston area, has recently joined The Donahue Maley team at Benoit, Mizner & Simon. A current resident of Wellesley, Erica has moved with her husband and three children throughout the country over the past ten years, giving her a deep understanding of the buying and selling process. Erica is careful to never put pressure on her clients as she understands the many factors that affect a move. Placing great emphasis on developing long-term relationships, Erica is a thoughtful listener, allowing her to truly understand each clients’ unique goals. Erica is professional, energetic, passionate and excited to help with your next home purchase or sale.

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Alice Cheney Baltzell’s will stipulated three possible heirs of Elm Bank: first, nephew Arthur Davis, who lived in Dover (his family built the estate that is now Boston College’s Connors Center); then, Wellesley College; and finally the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. All three rejected it, because they lacked the means to keep it up. Ultimately, the estate was sold to Dartmouth College, which had given Benjamin Cheney an honorary degree, for $40,000. The college held retreats and alumni picnics there before selling the property to Stigmatisne Fathers of Waltham in 1941. The Roman Catholic order used the estate as a school and camp until selling it to the state in 1976. The fate of the property was disputed for several decades before it was turned over to Mass Hort on a 100-year lease in 1996.

Macdonald envisions many possible uses for the Cheney-Baltzell mansion. Mass Hort already is booked months, if not years in advance for weddings. The house could provide reception areas and lodging for guests, and host corporate retreats as well. She said the house has sufficient kitchen and storage space for a restaurant and/or tea room. Several rooms could be set aside as a museum, with exhibits on horticulture or, in keeping with the house’s history.

An added feature is what Ganek and Tocci, the architect/builder team, suspect was a basement spa. Classical statues stand at the entrance of what appears to be a small soaking pool.

The main challenge, of course, would be the multimillion dollar restoration costs. Among the expenses: bring the building up to code; installing new electrical, plumbing and heating, and air conditioning systems; and hiring artisans with the highly specialized skills to repair century-old plaster, woodwork, and marble.

Up to 40 percent of the cost could be reimbursed through state and federal historic tax credit programs. Macdonald plans to seek out potential nonprofit or corporate partners, as managing Mass Hort’s gardens is already a mammoth job.

Restoration expert Tocci said that if regularly maintained, the reborn mansion could thrive another 50 to 100 years before requiring major work.

Macdonald said that under the terms of Mass Hort’s lease with the state, the society must prevent the house from further deterioration or pay the estimated $3 million tab to raze it.

And that would be no easy task, said Tocci. “It would put up a hell of a fight for anyone who wanted to demolish it—as well it should.”

A video tour of the manor house can be viewed on the Massachusetts Horticultural Society website, masshort.org.
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On September 20, 2016, 310 PBS stations premiered the documentary film *Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War* featuring Waitstill and Martha Sharp, the minister of the Wellesley Hills Unitarian Church and his social worker wife, who bravely fought Nazi oppression head-on as part of an underground resistance.

The Sharps had lived in Massachusetts for only two years when they answered the call from Everett Baker, the Vice-President of the American Unitarian Association, to lead the Church’s first international emergency relief mission. They traveled to Europe on the eve of World War II in 1939 to help Jews and anti-Nazi dissidents escape Czechoslovakia and then France. Trading their quiet suburban life for a perilous existence as covert agents, they left their three-year-old daughter and six-year-old son in the care of parishioners in order to...
“What I owe the Sharps is my life in America. My life itself.”

— Catherine Chvany • Professor Emerita MIT • rescued by the Sharps as a child
“What is it in a human being that gives up something that is comfortable and safe and familiar for something that is not only uncomfortable but dangerous and life threatening? … The minister and his wife, they figured out how to write in code. They figured out smuggling of human lives. They figured out how to get past Nazi guards. This is not stuff they teach you in divinity school.”

— Ken Burns • filmmaker
"The experience was wonderful, as each idea blossomed and became better through their thoughtful, creative and collaborative approach."

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tales, including Mummy Mummy dodging Gestapo agents at night and Grandpa Sharp traveling to European capitals to launder money. Not what he had expected. Joukowsky turned that interview into a paper he titled, “A Matter of Faith,” for which he earned an “A”—the only A he says he received in high school. That auspicious history assignment sparked Joukowsky’s life-long commitment to carry on his grandparents’ humanitarian legacy.

Waitstill and Martha Sharp never considered their service in World War II extraordinary, but those who knew about their exploits did. In fact in 2006, the two posthumously received the “Righteous Among the Nations” honor from the state of Israel, bestowed upon non-Jews who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews from extermination by the Nazis. The Sharps are two of only five Americans recognized with this distinction given to more than 26,000 people from countries around the world.

On Wednesday, October 5, 2016, in the very same church and in the very same room where Waitstill Sharp delivered his weekly sermons, the Unitarian Universalist Society welcomed the local community—including members of Wellesley’s Temple Beth Elohim—to watch the just-released documentary and hear from esteemed panelists: Artemis Joukowsky III; Catherine Chvany,
“What the Sharps demonstrated by example was their fundamental belief that this moral imperative—to confront evil wherever it appear—holds true for the individual as well as society. I can’t think of a more important message for me to carry from their generation to mine and beyond.”
— Artemis Joukowsky III • grandson of the Sharps

rescued as a child by the Sharps and Professor Emerita of Russian at MIT; and Unitarian Universalist Service Committee President and CEO, Tom Andrews. The three answered questions posed by the moderator, the Society’s Director of Religious Education Mick Hirsch, and from the audience.

The panelists each spoke about the moral imperative to stand up against inhumanity. While they acknowledged that few of us will act on a global scale as the Sharps did, Chvany recounted a story to illustrate that even small acts of compassion have a profound impact: “Sixty years after my little sister and I came to the United States as refugees, she still talks about the kindness of the women of the Red Cross who welcomed us to America with hot chocolate on the cold docks of New York harbor.”

When it came time for the audience to ask questions, a congregant of Temple Beth Elohim approached the microphone. She thanked Joukowsky and the Unitarian com-
munity for their commitment to social justice, enabling Jews of her generation to live and carry on their religious tradition. Next, a woman who identified herself as a congregant of Wellesley Hills Unitarian Universalist Church since 1940 inquired, “Why is it that I never heard about our minister and his wife’s story before the movie?” Joukowsky was quick to reply, “I joined this church back in 1990 and not one member knew about my grandparents, either.”

From the pulpit and the pews alike, people in attendance questioned why the Sharps and the Unitarian leadership hadn’t spoken publically about the minister and his wife’s selfless work to combat evil. Surely, the reasons are complex. First, Unitarians are not known to be self-promoters, and in keeping with their tradition, the faithful Sharps did not draw attention to themselves. In fact, the humble duo told their grandson that they considered their work as something that

“I was beyond the pale of civilization. I owed no ethics to anyone if I could save imperiled lives.”
— Waitstill Sharp

“When many people become concerned and act together at the same time, a series of miracles can happen.”
— Martha Sharp
needed to be done and that anyone else in their place would have done, too.

The Sharps probably avoided speaking about Nazi Europe because, as is the case with many Holocaust survivors, no words adequately describe the horror they witnessed first-hand. Clearly, it was inappropriate to expose their young children to descriptions of the worst of humanity. Many of the people the Sharps worked with had died, and while they had saved many lives, their intimate understanding of the millions left behind to perish likely haunted them.

The Sharps’ divergent reactions to their traumatic experiences in Europe contributed to family tension and their decision to divorce in 1954, a personal matter likely they and the Unitarian leaders preferred not to discuss publically. When the court asked Martha Content to declare which parent she preferred to live with after their divorce, she answered, “Neither.”

Waitstill Sharp opted to resume the more private ministerial and family life he valued prior to his departure to Europe. He continued to serve others as a minister. The first time he wrote about his work in Europe was when he was in his 80s. Martha Sharp chose a more public role for herself, even before the divorce, including founding “Children to Palestine” in 1943 to help orphaned Jewish children start new lives in what is now the state of Israel. She moved to Portugal in 1944 as Associate European Director of the
“Beyond the cloak-and-dagger suspense of my grandparents’ experience, it is a story of what America meant to refugees fleeing war-torn countries to build new lives. And it underscores what Waitstill would call a collaborative effort of how a small but effective underground network of rescue workers saved as many lives as they could, and how important that lesson is for what is happening today.”

— Artemis Joukowsky III, grandson of the Sharps
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Traffic Jam

ALBERT McKEON writer
welcome to Wellesley, where the public school system wins accolades, annual median income dwarfs the national average—and traffic is not so swell.

Indeed, you won’t find traffic congestion included in the long list of reasons why Wellesley is a desired place to live, but it’s there on every major roadway and many side streets. As soon as you leave home and drive almost anywhere in this leafy suburb, a traffic jam awaits.

Try making a U-turn on Route 9 during the morning and evening commutes. Try ducking out for coffee on Washington Street on a Saturday. Heck, try picking up your kid at school just as every other parent does the same and creates a conga line of cars in cramped school parking lots and neighboring streets.

“I have lived in Wellesley for 19 years. I think the traffic is a bit worse lately, but it’s always been bad,” said Julie Koeninger. “First thing you learn is to stay off Route 16 and Route 9 as much as possible.”

And that’s what many residents and commuters passing through town do: use side streets and roads with the hope of saving time. But thanks to the proliferation of traffic apps on smartphones, almost everyone driving
through Wellesley now knows the shortcuts, frustrating residents on those once quiet streets and creating even more congestion.

Town officials feel motorists’ pain. They are, after all, getting stuck on those same roads. Between several planning initiatives—including traffic lights to mitigate the Route 9 and Kingsbury Street terrifying turnaround—and various police strategies, officials hope to relieve some of the most painful points of congestion and make motor vehicle travel in Wellesley safer.

These steps can go only so far, however. Unless a large number of residents start walking, biking, and carpooling, traffic isn’t going anywhere.

“When you have this kind of traffic volume, what can you do?” Wellesley Police Chief Terrence Cunningham said in an interview before he left his position to become deputy executive director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. “The number one complaint we get is about traffic.”

Life on the Streets

If a news traffic copter had a live audio feed into the vehicles on the Wellesley roads below, here’s what you’d hear:

“The new I-95/Route 9 interchange has made my already hellish commute a nightmare,” said Jennifer Schwegel Perry. “And my tricks to back-road it to Oakland Street to avoid most of Route 9 in Wellesley don’t help anymore.”
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“Cedar Street is holy hell. Everybody uses it as a shortcut to Route 9 and Route 16,” said Debbie Ann Innes. “Taking a left from my driveway takes forever.”

“How about the left from Weston Road onto Linden Street at the bridge?” said Amy Sullivan Wagner. “If people just moved over then the cars going over the bridge could pass.”

That’s not even the half of it. Dozens of residents responded to a Facebook query about traffic in Wellesley and didn’t spare any feelings about consistent gridlock, the cars that cut through their quiet neighborhoods at what seems like law-breaking speeds, and the drivers who won’t cede an inch of territory and let a car enter the same roadway. Even those traveling on foot feel the sting of traffic.

“As a motorist and a runner…the traffic and creative driving I see is scary,” said Nicole Johan Rand. “Wellesley has the worst 'do not enter' and 'no left turns' signage. I can’t even cross Route 16 most days because not only is there constant traffic—no one stops at crosswalks.”

Wellesley is obviously not alone; the entire Boston area is gridlocked. But traffic problems became more acute in Wellesley in 2016 because of two construction projects: the new on-and-off-ramp configuration at the intersection of Interstate 95 and Route 9 and the five-month closure of the Central Avenue-Elliot Street bridge connecting Needham and Newton. Those projects forced commuters to drastically alter their traveling routes. For example, commuters who would always travel through the south end of Wellesley and eventually enter Newton via Central and Elliot had to, for nearly half the year, drive farther north and join the mob of vehicles on Routes 16 and 9.

The projects have ended, and traffic patterns should be back to normal, but normalcy won’t alleviate volume. Consider these numbers: A traffic study in late 2014 counted 15,400 vehicles per day on the Wellesley Square end of Washington Street, near the police station. Route 9, west of Emerson Road, saw 45,800 vehicles per day in 2013.

Former Police Chief Cunningham and Deputy Police Chief Jack Pilecki grew up in Wellesley and remember fewer traffic jams and motor vehicle collisions simply because there were fewer motor vehicles. With the town’s population now hovering near 29,000 and many families owning several cars, it’s no wonder traffic is lousy. Add the many commuters of neighboring communities who have to pass through Wellesley on their way to work, Pilecki said, and you have significant traffic volume.

**Working on a Plan**

No one in town expects carpooling to become a craze overnight, especially with members of single households traveling in different directions at different times for work and school. Instead, off-
cials are doing what they can to relieve traffic issues, encourage walking and biking, and maintain Wellesley’s small-town aesthetic, said town Planning Director Michael Zehner.

That effort includes getting the feedback of residents on road and safety plans large and small, Zehner said. Inevitably, every plan tries to strike a balance between unimpeded traffic flow and the needs of walkers and bikers, he said.

Theoretically, more roadwork on Washington Street could lessen traffic jams, Zehner said, but such work could also hamper foot and bike traffic and diminish the aesthetic of the roadway, which includes the end-to-end stretch of lampposts that reminds people they’re in Wellesley. Last year, the town attempted to balance person and machine by adding bike lanes when it repaved sections of Washington Street.

Driving in a rush of traffic on the other major east-to-west corridor in Wellesley, Route 9, leaves little time to consider aesthetics and creates a harsh divide between the north and south sides of town. No one feels this separation more than students and their parents. Nearly half of middle school and high school students live north of Route 9, meaning they have to cross the roadway twice a day either on foot or in a car. And often, parents like like Ramon Nunez Cooke take a longer journey to avoid the highway.

Rather than wait in a long line of cars at a Route 9 turnaround and then tempt fate by
Traffic Jam

Accelerating fast onto the highway, Nunez Cooke instead lengthens his commute by traveling on safer town roads to drop off his three children at Sprague Elementary School. One morning, when he did venture to a Route 9 turnaround, a Wellesley police officer got out of his cruiser and helped cars get around.

Soon, Nunez Cooke and others won’t need a police officer’s assistance to cross town directly on Route 9. That’s because the town is prioritizing how it should approach its Route 9 Enhancement and Study Plan, a 64-page review of the busy highway and list of recommendations on how the road can better support traffic, pedestrians, and public transportation.

Recommendations include encouraging public transportation by creating stops for the local MetroWest Regional Transit Authority bus route, enhancing traffic signals for pedestrians and bicyclists, reconstructing and installing sidewalks along the entire Wellesley section of Route 9, and creating bike and multi-modal paths along the route. The plan also doesn’t rule out footbridges across the highway. Because Route 9 is a state road, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation will have to approve the town’s recommendations.
One Route 9 improvement that’s scheduled to start in 2017 is the placement of traffic signals on the Kingsbury Road turnarounds. The traffic lights should bring order—not to mention safety—to an intersection that gives drivers like Nunez Cooke great pause.

“Route 9 affects us so much, so we should have a voice,” Zehner said. “If Route 9 functions better, then it might encourage more people to drive it and help Washington Street.”

**Trying to Move Cars Along**

Despite road improvements and efforts to promote walking and biking, Wellesley Police will undoubtedly still get calls about traffic. Police review those complaints and act in problem areas, Pilecki said. Officers monitor crosswalks for cars failing to stop for pedestrians and watch roads for speeding cars, and the department makes larger decisions such as asking construction and utility crews not to start work on major roadways until the morning commute has ended.

Last year, police issued more than 7,400 citations for traffic violations, but not all of them carried fines. Many were warnings in an attempt to educate motorists, said Pilecki, who belongs to a town safety committee that reviews traffic and safety issues with input from residents and state officials and then presents recommendations to selectmen.

One thing police can’t do is discourage motorists from using side streets. A familiar complaint is an increase in traffic on what was once a quiet street, Cunningham said. “And we’ll say, ‘Yeah, but it’s a public roadway.’” All the police can do, he said, is ensure that motorists follow the law.

Like Cunningham and Pilecki, Tory DeFazio is a Wellesley native. Other than eight years of military service, the 79-year-old owner of The Windsor Press on Washington Street has spent his life watching Wellesley grow. He can remember when Washington Street was so light with traffic that he could angle park his car in front of his office.

“Traffic will continue to be a problem,” DeFazio said. “It used to be if you had a two-car garage, well, you’ve really made it. But now I’ve seen one with five cars. Many families have three or four cars. You add that all up, and you’ve got quite a number of cars on the road.”
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The Reality of Virtual

BOB BROWN writer

the Elm Park Clock Tower in Wellesley Hills, the giant globe at Babson College, and Weston’s Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History had something in common last year. The three local historic sites became Pokémon GO hotspots, where gamers wielding smartphones convened to do virtual battle or collect animated creatures with names like Pikachu and Charmander.

Wellesley and Weston, like the rest of the country, were gripped with Pokémon GO fever starting in July: as a result, the concept of augmented reality seeped into the consciousness of many locals. Augmented reality, or AR, blurs the line between authentic and pretend environments by layering digital information over reality, such as when you see a Pokémon bouncing around on your smartphone screen in front of town hall. Right alongside AR is VR, or virtual reality, which refers to a simulated sensory experience that responds to eye and head movements—typically while you are wearing a specialized viewing device—and can either be like real life or entirely out of this world.

School officials, businesses, library administrators, and first responders surveyed in Wellesley and Weston say they are aware of the technologies, but most aren’t doing much, if anything, with them yet.
and Augmented Reality

in Wellesley and Weston
That’s likely going to change right before your eyes though, because billions of dollars are being pumped into augmented and virtual reality, both by venture capitalists and the biggest names in technology. Facebook, for example, bought virtual reality company Oculus Rift for $2 billion in 2014, and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has gushed over the possibilities of such an immersive computing and communications platform for everyday consumer applications and sophisticated business ones.

As you might imagine, the hottest new virtual reality technology for consumers isn’t cheap. When the Oculus Rift high fidelity VR headset began shipping to consumers last March, it cost $600, and buyers really needed a $1,000 PC to take advantage of it. HTC Vive debuted last April at $800 and PlayStation VR rolled out last fall priced between $400 and $500. Tuong Huy Nguyen, a principal research analyst at tech-market watcher Gartner, says that because the market is so young it’s hard to forecast how fast prices will fall. However, he does say, “We are expecting some pretty good competition in terms of price erosion.

As we know hundreds of vendors in China and elsewhere are doing their own things.”

In fact, more affordable options are already available. Samsung Gear VR, which snaps on to Samsung Galaxy phones, retails for $100 and can be had for less, and there’s even a VR version of the old Mattel View-Master obtainable for $30. Cheaper yet: the very non-high-tech-sounding Google Cardboard phone attachment costs just $15, and has also been a popular giveaway through phone companies, newspapers, and even late night talk show hosts like Conan O’Brien.

It’s these less expensive options that Wellesley and Weston residents have more commonly had access to so far.

**VR Comes to Town**

Not that the Boston Red Sox couldn’t afford the pricier VR equipment, but when the team brought its traveling showcase of mascots, games and former players to Wellesley’s Hunnewell Field in late June, it also brought Samsung Gear VR technology. It was used to thrust those
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willing to slap on a goofy-looking headset into a virtual batting cage alongside David “Big Papi” Ortiz or to face pitcher David Price. This technology, which fans can also check out at Fenway Park, might have been the first real public use of VR in town, and judging from the steady line of people trying it out, the public is intrigued. This same underlying technology has been adopted by Six Flags in western Massachusetts this year to make its Superman roller coaster ride even more thrilling.

It was the aforementioned Google Cardboard that introduced Wellesley sisters Gigi and Mimi Celi, and fellow 7th grader Hannah Kreiss, to the world of virtual reality.

The Celi sisters say their dad, John, bought a Cardboard viewer because it looked like fun, and, indeed, the girls have used it to travel virtually around the world via Google StreetView, checking out Paris, Jamaica, and Rio, among other places, as well as riding on virtual roller coasters.

Kreiss received a Cardboard viewer from her grandfather, who got it as part of a New York Times journalism experiment. “It’s a fun thing to pick up because I have the apps on my iPhone, so I never forget about it,” says Kreiss, whose brother also now has one.

‘Making the Invisible Visible’

While the girls say technology companies still have kinks to work out of VR, which can be blurry or grainy at times and even cause headaches, they say it also has promise as an educational tool. “There’s a high possibility of using it in social studies if teachers want to show what it’s like in other countries or in science if they want to show something in space,” Gigi says.

Orit Shaer, an associate professor of computer science at Wellesley College, has high hopes for AR and VR in education, too.

“We will see AR and VR integrated into both formal (e.g., schools) and informal (e.g., libraries, museums, afterschool programs) learning
environments within the next two years,” she says. “With these technologies, complicated concepts could become accessible to people of all ages. I am particularly excited by the potential VR and AR have to make the invisible visible. What if children could take a field trip into a bacterial or a human cell? What if they could see energy, electricity, or radio waves? What if they could see historical artifacts within their original context? Perhaps children could explore topics that in the past have been considered too complicated or too abstract for children to learn.”

Wellesley College itself has been an early adopter of enhanced reality technologies through the Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory, led by founder Shaer.

Among the projects undertaken has been using Google Glass head-mounted displays to make novice researchers in wet laboratories (those labs dealing with chemicals and other materials in liquid form) more effi-
Virtual and Augmented Reality

Students were able to view instructions via the Google Glass display, freeing their hands to hold materials as they moved around the lab. Researchers at the college are now replacing Google Glass with Microsoft HoloLens, an example of a mixed reality technology that combines AR and VR. Separately, the college is conducting a study of visual attention while using HoloLens and eye-tracking techniques.

Shaer emphasizes that “there are many emerging non-game applications of VR and AR that are beneficial for communities such as Wellesley and Weston, and would help contribute to safer, healthier, and more involved communities.” One example she cites: Toyota is developing a VR simulator to show the risks of distracted driving.

And a near-term application of AR can aid those involved in community developments. “People will be able to walk around the town with their mobile or eyewear devices and see both the existing environment and the proposed development,” Shaer says. “This will help residents imagine how future developments will impact their lives and participate in the planning process. A similar application presents how the current environment looked in the past and can also help people grasp and explore the rich history of their town.”

There are many emerging non-game applications of VR and AR that are beneficial for communities such as Wellesley and Weston, and would help contribute to safer, healthier, and more involved communities.
Raj Malhotra, an entrepreneur who lives in Weston, has formed a venture company called InvenTrust that seeks to connect innovators in new technology fields with the academics, investors, and management types who can help bring their creations to wider audiences. AR and VR are indeed among the technology clusters that InvenTrust targets.

Sharing his vision of how AR and VR might present themselves in the 'burbs, Malhotra describes a possible immersive experience from a program like Weston Drama Club or Weston Drama Workshop. This would allow audience members to download apps and don headsets before interacting with actors across an expansive stage, with music and video complementing the performance. For example, you meet an actor who tells you his great-great-grandmother was a slave in the Deep South and your app kicks in with a Billie Holiday song about the tragic experiences the character’s family faced. “It is a fascinating experience that weaves in the here-and-now with the then-and-there,” he says. Another example: You pick up AR glasses at the entrance to a Whole Foods supermarket. The glasses register who you are via retina detection, and you’re directed to the aisles that fit in with your shopping preferences. The glasses also clue you in on the nutritional content of items in your cart.

Oh, and someday you might be enjoying articles like this in a virtual way as well, if Malhotra’s intuition is good. “VR and AR will be the next form of art and video development. The next novelists and journalists will write for that medium because it changes how you look at and sense things,” he says.

While Pokémon GO might be dismissed as simply fun and games, Malhotra says it also has opened up a great opportunity to spark ideas from kids studying everything from computer science to theater. “The schools should be talking about this with students, who are comfortable in this space. They should be asking students what else this technology could be used for.”

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mastering the sport of tennis can be grueling, exhausting, and even lonely, but it’s helpful when you have a sister to hit balls with and even compete against. Ashley and Caitlyn Avery, the daughters of Wellesley natives and tennis enthusiasts Warren and Deborah Avery, were introduced to tennis at about age two when they first swung a racket at a NERF ball. At age eight, they enrolled in the New England Academy of Tennis in Natick in part for structured lessons as well as for social interaction. At nine, Ashley and Caitlyn yearned for the competitive training and tournament grind required by the US Tennis Association (USTA). No strangers to the commitment of competitive tennis, their parents were fully supportive.

Success seemed to come effortlessly to Ashley, a natural athlete. She believed she could play at an elite level when at just nine years old she beat some high school players and started winning tournaments. Caitlyn was similarly talented
but forged progress through persistence and sheer force of will. Over the next nine years Ashley and Caitlyn endured tens of thousands of reps, endless training sessions, and distant tournaments, while missing countless family and social gatherings, holidays, and school breaks. The sisters supported one another as they toiled to develop the technique to earn state and national rankings within their respective age groups.

When their classmates enjoyed free time during their tween and teen years, Ashley and Caitlyn had to live vicariously through them on Instagram and Twitter. Older sister Ashley said that she felt compelled to set the example for her younger sibling. Since they played tournaments almost every weekend, they didn’t form a core group of friends at school, which made large social functions “awkward.” Speaking for both sisters, Ashley said she believed that after she chose her path all of the sacrifices she endured would be worth all of the opportunities received. Consequently, she focused on the big picture, embraced her identity as a player, and became excited for what the future held for her.

Trying out for the Wellesley High School Girls’ Varsity Tennis Team in late March of 2016 was exciting and new for the sisters. After Caitlyn defeated the previous year’s number one singles player, junior Anna Gishin, she found herself on the opposite side of the court against her sister. In straight sets, Ashley, a senior, claimed the number one spot; Caitlyn, a freshman, took the number two position; and Anna anchored a solid third singles seed.

Coaches Alan Brazier and Andrew Bennett were excited about the potential strength of this 2016 team. Brazier even hoped to eclipse the 2009 season when WHS went undefeated through the playoffs but fell short in the title match after a heartbreaking loss. But he knew that if Anna, a gifted, multi-sport athlete who could be a top player on virtually any team was his third singles athlete, the team was in good shape, and it also had depth. Sophomore Alexis Tsang, a top-three singles player her freshman year, made one of the doubles pairs, while co-captain, senior Christina Liu was on the other pair.

Talent alone does not always guarantee success, however. Fortunately, WHS also had the character quotient covered. Senior co-captain Kelli Murray was a natural leader who always led by example, earned respect, and possessed the ability to positively influence the athletes to support each other—and embrace the team above all else. Sporting her trademark hair ribbons and armed with a clipboard, she continually patrolled all five courts during team matches with a discerning eye. As co-captains, Christina and Kelli complemented each other well. While Christina’s leadership style was to quietly develop one-on-one relationships with her teammates, Kelli was more vocal and spirited. She kept the team focused on the big picture during every match and acquired an acute sense of each player’s personality and
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idiosyncrasies. Her ability to know what to say and when to rally the team behind a struggling player would prove to be invaluable.

The 2016 season started strong. Wellesley’s top three singles dominated and continually claimed the best of five matches needed for team victories. The doubles pairs were the icing on the cake. When WHS went 14-0, all of the girls felt the increased pressure to remain undefeated. What’s more, every opposing team was highly motivated to end Wellesley’s Cinderella season.

Illusions of invincibility were almost shattered on May 17 when the intimidating team of Hopkinton High School squared off against Wellesley. Ashley claimed the first match, which was badly needed. Unexpectedly, Anna lost in straight sets along with the first doubles pair. A formidable wave of angst quietly flooded the team. However, it was buoyed by Pooja Reddy and Gabby Clifford of second doubles who stepped up to win. Tied at two matches apiece, all eyes were on Caitlyn who had already dropped the first set 2-6 to a gritty opponent. Kelli rounded up the troops. With everything on the line, Caitlyn fed off of her team’s positive energy, focused, and loosened up to win a critical second set, 7-5, and the final set 6-1.

Wellesley finished the regular season 18-0. It amassed a staggering 76 individual match wins to just 13 losses.
the first two rounds by defeating its opponents 4-1. In the third round, Barnstable came to town. Ashley went undefeated in straight sets and was off the court fast. Caitlyn and Anna started with commanding, 6-0, 6-2 sets, respectively. Then a looming, dark cloud rumbled in. Lightning and a downpour forced the players inside to the nearby Boston Sports Club. Indoors, Wellesley lost momentum. Caitlyn dropped her second set 4-6, and first and second doubles lost. Anna restored hope, tying the team match with a convincing win in straight sets. Again, it came down to Caitlyn who was locked in a see-saw battle against a tough opponent. Though spectators were not allowed courtside, Kelli and Anna noted the Barnstable players were there. They led their teammates through the glass enclosed viewing area to bolster their besieged teammate. With renewed focus and channeled emotions thanks to the support of her team, she won her third set 6-2 and kept Wellesley’s hopes alive, at least for another day.

In the fourth round, Wellesley faced Sharon. Though Ashley had never lost a set, she now faced her toughest opponent. Down 5-6 in the second set, she reached down deep and emerged with the determination to pull off a 7-5 set and match victory. Then first doubles lost. Caitlyn played “tight” and appeared distracted despite encouragement from her sister and Anna on adjacent courts and from other teammates courtside. After
going 21-0, Caitlyn’s magic melted when she experienced her first stunning defeat. Second doubles, who won 6-2 in the first set but lost 6-7 in the second, was now in the spotlight. Coach Brazier recalled that after the second set Pooja and Gabby looked beaten, awaiting their demise. But incredibly, for a second, critical time, second doubles resurrected themselves, rallied, and won the last set and match, 6-2, keeping Wellesley alive.

Three days later in the fifth playoff match against Westford Academy, Coach Brazier predicted it would be another 3-2 decision. But who would win? While Ashley and Anna both breezed to win in straight sets, second doubles fell short. Unbelievably, Caitlyn suffered a devastating, second-straight loss, dropping to 21-2. This time it was first doubles time to shine. Gabby Clifford and Julia Wilson won 6-1, 7-5, thereby propelling Wellesley to the Division I state title match against Nashoba Regional High School.

June 15, 2016, was a hot day in the upper 80s. The last thing Coach Brazier wanted was to repeat what happened seven years earlier.

Ashley quickly won straight sets, finishing her senior year 24-0. She was UMass-bound, a varsity team walk-on who would eventually be awarded a D-I scholarship. Her sister in the adjacent court achieved a commanding 6-2 first set victory against a strong opponent. Next door a dramatic battle featured Anna who had injured her shoulder during the semi-finals. Principled and proud, Anna silently fought through her plight. Because she couldn’t swing her arm above her shoulder, she was relegated to underhand serves, hits and returns. After some disputed calls and dropping the first set, 1-6, she dug in, ignored the pain, started hitting the ball overhand, and went up 4-0. Anna eventually lost the match, however, on a disputed point.

Meanwhile, second doubles lost in straight sets while first doubles was engaged in a hard-fought, see-saw match that went to three sets,
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which they would eventually lose. Caitlyn established a solid 5-2 lead in
the second set before seeing it evaporate after her opponent fought
back to tie the set and gain the momentum. All spectators surrounded
Caitlyn’s court watching both athletes competing vigorously for each
point. Caitlyn won the critical game six and needed match point in
game seven to claim the set, match, team match, state title, and an
undefeated season. She glanced briefly at the crowd but only saw her
teammates watching with wide eyes while clinging to the chain-link
fence. Letting out a breath she served to her opponent who fired back
to Caitlyn’s right. Hours of wind sprints paid off as she dug hard and
positioned herself to return the ball. With all of the cards on the table,
Caitlyn gave it her best shot: a laser down the line that landed two
inches inbounds away from her opponent’s reach. The Division 1 title
and an undefeated, 24-0 season were decided by two inches.

Afterwards, Coaches Brazier and Bennett stood before their student-
athletes. Emotional, Brazier implored them to savor the moment. “As
you get older, you’ll realize just how special today was. Most people will
never say that even for a fleeting moment they were perfect!”

In a mischievous gesture, Anna and freshman Maria Laso snuck up
and drenched their coach with iced water. Ashley recalled that their
accomplishment did not sink in until the ride home. At the Wellesley-
Natick line, a Wellesley police cruiser led the team’s school bus, back to
WHS with lights and sirens on. Proud parents and friends welcomed
the team with cake. The co-captains opened a massive champagne
bottle (non-alcoholic). Kelli shook it and soaked her teammates while
Queen’s “We Are the Champions” blared in the background.

After fifteen minutes, the impromptu cele-
bration ended. The gathering dwindled, leaving an empty parking lot
at dusk. Only a stray champagne
cork lay somewhere in the early
summer grass, testament to the
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A Furniture Maker

Across America, so-called “witness trees” mark the site of major battles or events. At Gettysburg white oak, white ash, and red poplar flank the battlefields, and some 200 are labeled “witnesses.” If it is true that plants can feel, what then did these trees experience as 60,000 men slaughtered each other over three days in 1853?

Custom furniture maker and Rhode Island School of Design teacher, Dale Broholm, a Wellesley resident, introduced trees donated by the National Park Service to his furniture-making class a decade ago. These trees, wearied by history, have left for the Great Forest in the Sky, leaving their timbers to fall, rot, or be wrought into art by RISD students. The students learn the history of each tree and, once inspired, carve, cut, hammer or join timber from trees brought from Thomas Edison’s home, a former slave plantation in Maryland, and other historic locations. Trees, silent witnesses to history, speak to those with the imagination to hear.
A landmark in town Estate sited on 1.3 acres of rolling green lawn with elevated western water views over Oyster Pond is available for the first time in over a generation. “The Beechwood” is a stately Federal style home built by Henry Sherman Howes in 1948 using the finest materials and innovative craftsmanship. Over 8,000 square feet on the three main levels, there are ten bedrooms, seven full and three half baths, seven fireplaces and a three story elevator. An additional 4000 square feet on the lower level includes a ballroom and a speakeasy bar. An original hand painted mural in the south foyer and staircase leads to the master suite. The grounds include multiple terraces, specimen plantings including a 250 year old 80 foot Beechwood tree and exquisite privacy. Steps to a sandy beach and the village of Chatham. Truly a living piece of history, peerless in its architectural detail and scale.

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In Broholm’s Norwood studio, as an example, is a beautiful golden piece of curly maple. “Some maples, due to stress, have striations,” Broholm says. They look like careworn wrinkles or ripples within the bark. What did this tree see?

More than 30 years after an interest in boat building caused him to fall in love with wood, Broholm remains inspired by the potential of wood and “the romance” of furniture making. On a lathe is a knotted, lumpy, sculptural burl of wood that he found during a stroll on an island off the coast of Maine. When finished, this piece of nature will be a beautiful salad bowl to be enjoyed for many years to come.

Broholm’s first job as a young furniture maker was for a couple building a house on the Cape. He filled the home with paneling, cupboards, beds, furniture, and cabinetry. “Everyone wants a story; a story is a critical piece of an object,” he says. “I don’t have cookie-cutter clients, they don’t want to walk into a big store and get what others can. Some people care about history or legacy; they’re interested in provenance, and they want items around them that carry stories.”

In one part of his vast studio is a magnificent wooden arch with paneling that will flank the entrance to a South End brownstone that is being renovated by a developer. It is reminiscent of the astonishing wood-paneled dressing room that he created for a client on Boston’s Marlborough Street. “He [the client] wanted the room to be like a jewel box, so I gave the wood a high-lacquer finish, created a leather seat [on the throne-like] chair, and silver plated all the hinges and pulls on drawers.” It is little wonder that Broholm has pieces on display at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian, the Museum of Art at Smith College, and the Duxbury Art Complex.

TO LEARN MORE, visit www.dalebroholm.com.

A Craft Beer Maker

Years ago, when Drew Brosseau’s brother and his girlfriend visited him at college they couldn’t sleep because of the bubbling sounds emanating from a cupboard. It was the sound of beer brewing.

The Founder and President of Plymouth’s Mayflower Brewing Company laughs at the recollection. Brosseau grew up in Sonoma, California—wine country and also the birthplace of the New Albion Brewing Company, the first craft brewery in the United States. Inspired by the craft in college, Brosseau began brewing beer in a five-gallon
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bucket in his apartment’s kitchen. “There was no beer smell,” he says. “All you could smell was the sweetness of the grain.”

In those years, the most fermentation taking place in San Francisco was in Silicon Valley where the personal computer revolution was underway. Brosseau tossed his hops and yeast down the drain and became involved in the software industry. But over a period that seemed as quick as the brewing of an American amber, technology shifted again, this time away from the software business—where Brosseau was now working as an investment analyst in banking—to phones and websites, then to social media. His enthusiasm for his profession flattened, and with enough money saved for early retirement he moved to Wellesley with his family. He spent the next six months playing guitar and generally having a good time, until his wife told him he was setting a bad example for his kids, he needed to get back to work.

The year was 2007, and, fortunately, he didn’t return to investment banking, which crashed dramatically the following year. Brosseau went back to his college hobby: craft beer. He adopted a name that spoke to his and his wife’s family histories: Mayflower. Brosseau is a tenth great-grandson of John Alden, the beer barrel cooper on the Mayflower. “One in nine Americans is a Mayflower descendant,” he says with a shrug and a wry smile.

Brosseau hired a staff of four, including two professional brewers and a sales director, and by 2008 they were filling barrels. The Brewers Association defines craft brewers as breweries that produce fewer than two million barrels per year. In 2007, there were 1,492 craft brewers in the United States but just 392 of those were microbreweries, which produce less than 15,000 barrels per year. By comparison, Anheuser Bush produced 125 million barrels of beer in 2007. However, the froth has come off big brewers, and today there are more than 4,000 craft breweries in the U.S. And, according to Brosseau, “More than one a day opens in the U.S. Craft beer is growing by 10 percent a year.”

“Consumers are more experimental, and they have less brand loyalty,” Brosseau continues. To be successful in the industry requires persistent innovation and careful attention to pack-
aging (with the artistry of craft beer labels now gaining museum curator attention).

The business environment is also different from what Brosseau was accustomed to in his previous career. Investment banking can be cutthroat with scant loyalty, but Brosseau runs a business today where every person counts, and every employee from driver to president is on the website. “What every person does matters. If one person isn’t at work, we feel it. I get a lot of satisfaction from it.”

Innovation is so rapid that Mayflower develops new beer specialties every season. This spring, try the Spring Hop Ale. Four varieties of aroma hops are combined to create a flavorful and citrusy red ale that is the perfect beverage for celebrating the renewal of spring in New England.

FOR A LISTING of all of Mayflower’s offerings, visit www.mayflowerbrewing.com.

A Light Maker
Jon Maccini is perched on the same wooden industrial chair he sat on four decades ago as a child helping his dad in the basement workshop of Wellesley Antique Lighting. The chair, like almost everything else around him, has a story: it came from the College of the Holy Cross and has the humility and simplicity one would expect of a Jesuit chair.

On a bench is an old ship’s compass from Anthony’s Pier Four, the now-closed restaurant that was one of Boston’s most successful restaurants. Hanging from a hook is a 1910
Empire Basket Chandelier, with the same high-waisted glamour as dresses of the time.

For the collector, Wellesley Antique Lighting is a treasure trove, from the 18th century Louis IV French electrified candelabra Maccini is restoring, to the fine Japanese and Korean pottery his dad is selling from his vast collection, to the leaded glass four-arm chandelier from a Philadelphia mansion, to a huge palm-leafed 1850 light fitting from Louisiana that is astonishing in its detail and its weight. There is also a Southern Belle’s basket of light-filled flowers, and, for the guys, Jon has crafted rocket ship light complete with spinning rocket engines and a great star above it.

On the door of his basement workshop is a small oil painting of a Madonna and Child, inside are colored wires, signs, and worktables. “People say it reminds them of their grandparents’ home,” he says.”

The youngest of the three Maccini children, Jon always knew he wanted to follow in his dad’s footsteps, and he got his start as an electrical contractor. “I liked traveling all over Boston and meeting different people,” he says. “I didn’t think I wanted to be stuck in the basement of this shop.” After seven years, he was ready, “I was burnt out,” Maccini says, no pun intended. He bought the business from his father in 2000 and through it his own personal creativity has flourished as he has added extras onto light fittings and lamps, making what was once plain, a unique collector’s piece. He has also become Wellesley and Weston’s go-to person for chandelier and crystal cleaning. Although, he advises, let him fetch it. One woman stuffed her chandelier in a laundry basket, and by the time she got it to Wellesley Antique Lighting, three of the four arms were broken. Maccini was able to fix them, but with heirloom pieces, care is needed.

His dad’s earliest clients who began frequenting the store in 1972 when it opened remain customers today. And, as one recent visitor said, “Why would I go anywhere else? They’re the best.”

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step inside a local fitness studio, and you’ll be pleasantly surprised by the mix of ages. From FLX Training to Get in Shape for Women (GISFW), women are investing time and energy in a healthy lifestyle. Studios draw a community of people who care about their health, and trainers guide participants to greater strength, flexibility, and endurance. From high schoolers to octogenarians, Weston and Wellesley women are committing to regular workouts to meet goals like reversing signs of aging or looking their best for a wedding.

All trainers will modify a workout to meet any individual’s needs. Joint replacement or injury, back pain, or pregnancy are all accommodated. Ellen Cohen-Kaplan, a fitness instructor in Weston says, “When we’re younger, fitness is an option. When we get older, it’s mandatory. Our bodies decline, but you can address and reverse the downward spiral.”

It’s hard to define what’s “old.” Much depends on attitude, health, and retirement status. Age thresholds vary for joining AARP, the Council on Aging, and Medicare, but these are arbitrary guidelines. Feeling old depends in large part on what you can do and how engaged you are in meaningful activities.
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Dr. Rosalind Barnett, a longtime Weston resident, and her co-author Boston University Professor Caryl Rivers refer to ages 55 to 80-plus as “late adulthood” in their new book *The Age of Longevity: Reimagining Tomorrow for Our New Long Lives* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016). They cite statistics and studies that show that many older Americans alive today will live longer productive lives in better health than anyone has before. Additionally, their cognitive abilities will remain strong for many years. Today in Wellesley and Weston, women in late adulthood continue to work, work out, and mingle with younger women as respected members of these communities.

When asked for three words that describe her older clients at GISFW, trainer Annelieke Rietsema says, “Amazing, inspirational, and stick-with-it tough.” To illustrate, she recounts the day a woman dropped in to the Weston studio to inquire about membership. She had been...
babysitting her granddaughter for more than a year and was finding it hard to lift the toddler and keep up with her through the day. “She knew she needed to do something,” says Rietsema, and she committed to coming to fitness class three times a week for a few months. As her strength and endurance improved, she shed several pounds.

At GISFW this client was in individualized small-group sessions where she did strength training and cardio alongside women of all ages, shapes, and sizes. Rietsema, in her twenties, had her own personal journey from a non-athletic girlhood to physical strength in college where she began to work out. “Today,” she says, “I know I am a strong, independent, capable woman,” and her confidence and enthusiasm are contagious. She reports her grandmother client is now carrying packages into the house that she formerly left for her husband and managing the groceries with ease. Most important, she has energy to play with her grandchild and feels better in her body.

Weight loss often isn’t the primary reason older women come to fitness class. Functional fitness draws many: women who want to take a walking vacation in the Swiss Alps, play golf or garden without pain, or reduce the need for medications. After spending decades putting others first, they realize they must take care of themselves. Derith Cass (“Coach D”), fitness coach and co-owner of FLX Training in Wellesley and creator of the FIERCE pro-
As a working woman, it’s easy to put clients and projects first. While retirement is a great time to join a gym, many older women continue their professional lives. But older women may be coming to the gym for the first time ever. When they were growing up, exercise wasn’t important unless a girl played sports, and Title IX hadn’t yet increased the athletic opportunities for female students. Beautiful often meant thin, and thin meant dieting.

Nutrition counseling is part of a whole body approach. For example, at FLX Training and GISFW, clients, if they choose, can talk with staff about how to replace unhealthy foods with better choices. Calorie restriction isn’t the focus, and knowing that someone supports your goal to eat better makes it easier to make the right choices every day. “We’re excited about what our bodies can do,” says Nicole Kefalas, Wellesley GISFW manager, “Skinny is out. We need to eat to build muscle.”

At One2One Bodyscapes in Wellesley, Charlotte Davis McGhee has worked with trainer and manager Jeff Dosdall for more than a decade. She travels for work and can still get her suitcase into the overhead bin and walk the length of the largest airport. Balance and flexibility are important components of her workouts to reduce the chance of falling and to reduce the impact and recovery time if she were to fall. Dosdall
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says his mission is to keep older clients doing everything they want to do. “Don’t concede to your age,” he says. “Use it or lose it.”

Women who commit to a fitness program find they feel better mentally as well as physically. Stress and mood can improve. At Boston University, researchers in the cognitive neuroscience lab of Dr. Karin Schon are studying whether aerobic exercise can protect the brain against dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. Study participants, adults ages 18-35 and 55-85 who haven’t exercised before, come to the BU Fitness Center for weekly workouts. Researchers hope the Exercise and Brain Function Research Study will demonstrate that exercise is a cost-effective prescription for fighting brain pathologies associated with aging.

B'Tone Fitness in Wellesley offers the Lagree method of training on the Megaformer, which gives a full-body workout based on Pilates principles in 45 minutes or less. Ideal for body sculpting as well as for older bodies, the Megaformer allows for slow and controlled movements and safe cardio while addressing flexibility, balance, and muscle building. Beginner classes are available and an introductory session is free of charge. “Our workout is challenging but modifiable,” says Alissa Pool, owner and manager, “Our classes are different each time to work different muscles and retrain the body.”

FLX Training’s goal is to take clients from where they are today to where they have always wanted to be. It’s important to remember that it’s not too late to start making positive lifestyle changes that will impact your health and general well-being. Older women today can be living proof that age does not define or limit physical ability. Like champion athletes, they exhibit the inner strength that’s important to fitness, bringing gratitude, wisdom, and grit to their workouts. There’s a workout program for you right in town. You just have to step inside the door.
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Helping the Children of Haiti

PETER GOLDEN writer

like most dads with teenage kids, Lee Stone wakes up early to get things rolling—but not quite in the way one might imagine. First he sends his two children off to school and has coffee with his wife, Laura. Then, instead of heading out the door himself, he retreats to his study to tend to the needs of 105 orphans by raising money, planning capital projects (solar power on the orphanage roof among other pressing concerns), and organizing mission trips. All of which would be fine, were it not for that awfully long commute to Haiti.

As fate would have it, the orphanage in Port-au-Prince whose welfare Lee oversees is located over 1,600 miles from his home in Chestnut Hill. Periodically, however, he does fly down to Haiti to lend support to orphanage manager Emmanuel Romain and his staff. He also leads working missions charged with facility improvements and English tutoring. His family misses him, but they know Dad likes a challenge, if only because Grandma raised him that way.

Lee grew up in Wellesley and, according to his mom, Martha Stone, “He had a great sense of humor and always kept himself busy. When asked to do something, he was always cooperative. I don’t think he ever had enough time to do all the things on his list.”

At 87, Martha Stone is sharp as a tack and, with a delightful sense of humor, she radiates good will and common sense. As an almost 30-year resident of Wellesley, where she raised her family, Martha gained a well-deserved reputation as a community activist throughout the
1970s and into the mid-'90s. Revolutionary at the time, she successfully initiated and pushed forward the town's recycling programs.

Yet for all her dedication to the Wellesley community and with the numerous honors she received for her innovative leadership, none of it compares to the commitment she has shown to her family. When Lee was a teenager and attending Rivers School, Martha and her husband, Jay, decided to foster her nephew and two nieces after her brother was tragically killed in a car accident. From three children to six, overnight the Stone family learned that not only was mom a ball of fire when it came to getting things done in the community, she was also a world-class source of nurture.

Lee appears to have inherited his mom’s nurturing nature, but he got involved with Hope For The Children of Haiti in an unexpected way.

With two teenagers of his own and the natural desire to ensure that they would grow up with good values, he went to church one Sunday at Grace Chapel in Lexington and found himself raising his hand (right after his daughter Sophie raised hers) and volunteering to join a summer mission to the Marion Austin Orphanage and School in Port-au-Prince. He’s still not sure why exactly he did that, but some lingering memory of his family taking in his homeless cousins so long ago may have spurred his decision.

Nor was it all that big a surprise when he started attending orphanage board meetings, volunteering to do administrative chores, and, one day after participating in a mission to Haiti, going so far as to accept the position of executive director of Hope for the Children of Haiti.

Lee describes the orphanage in this way: “We raise our orphanage kids as part of a cohort,” he says, “so while they may have lost their birth family they become part of another one, if on a much larger scale. Through cooking and cleaning, along with schooling, socializing, and prayer we make sure they also end up as self-sufficient young adults. And whether it means becoming a plumber or carpenter—or going to college or a technical school—we stick with them all the way so they leave us with marketable job skills.”

Calm in the face of a constantly changing set of circumstances—the orphanage board recently decided to take in a new cohort of kids left
parentless or at-risk by Hurricane Matthew—Lee’s sense of humor and firm resolve carry him through days that lead from one challenge to another.

I first encountered Lee at a Rotary meeting in Natick in 2015. Listening to him you “get it,” immediately. His cause is just; his mission critical; the challenges he shares with his Haitian colleagues overwhelming. I got so intrigued by his words that day that I decided to take a closer look for myself.

And this is what I saw.

The orphanage, I discovered, after a long flight and a harrowing drive through the impoverished streets of Port-au-Prince, had gathered two cohorts of kids of roughly 75 each in number. The first, assembled over two decades ago in founder Marion Austin’s time, is now living independently or in small groups and is active in college or trade school.

The second, the one I encountered in the halls and classrooms of the orphanage, was assembled about three years ago and ranges in age from four or five into late teens. Along with sheltering all those kids, Hope for the Children of Haiti runs an enormous school that serves local students, with more than half on scholarship. “Thriving” is a good way to describe most of the kids I encountered during my brief stay last June. Given the unending onslaught of natural disasters to which Haiti has been subject (earthquakes, epidemics, hurricanes, and endemic poverty), the walls surrounding the orphanage encompass a small miracle.

Now a third cohort, the product of Hurricane Matthew, whose path across the southwest quarter of Haiti tore the area to shreds and left behind any number of orphans and children at risk, is being formed. More than 30 new kids showed up late last fall in the dead of night, referred by an informal network of clergymen. After a quick health check by Dr. Carrie Tibbles, the orphanage’s medical director, they were washed up, given a snack, and put to bed. They bunked down, three to a mattress, in the already crowded orphanage.

“I was asleep in the visitors’ wing when outside my bedroom door I heard murmuring at one in the morning,” says Tibbles, who back in Boston is an emergency physician and Director of Graduate Medical Education at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. “I was just down
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for a quick visit to check on our kids and to assess the new wave of cholera sweeping the country,” she says. “But that many kids so late at night? We managed, somehow, to get them settled,” she adds, chuckling at the unexpected arrival time.

In combining a sense of Christian faith and duty, Lee, Emmanuel, the orphanage staff, and its loyal supporters (whose numbers and generosity over the years have been legendary) have created a sustainable community based on true grace and generous support from the US.

Wellesley’s Amy Berg knew Lee casually when both were teenagers growing up in Wellesley and says, “I really got to know him when we met up again after all those years at a Belmont Hill School Regatta in which both our boys where rowing.” When Lee told her about Hope for the Children of Haiti, she was intrigued. “I knew immediately I wanted my son to go there to help. It’s vital that my children gain a sense of perspective, if only to understand how very fortunate they are and, of course, to be of service to others.”

From the chatter and excitement of the orphanage’s classrooms to the library, dining room, and dormitories where evening prayers are offered by the children with pride and joy, Hope For The Children of Haiti is a fully functioning and healthy community.

For Lee Stone, sustaining such an undertaking is a daily challenge. But like the intrepid mother in whose steps he walks, he is very much up to the task.
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art, baking, and chess. These are the new ABC’s of afterschool choices for kids who aren’t interested in bouncing a ball, shooting a puck, or performing flips in midair. “My girls have never been interested in any organized sports, although they’re surrounded by friends who are,” says one Weston mother of two pre-teens. “But we easily fill up our afterschool time and weekends with endeavors that they love.”

Although American culture glorifies athleticism, the reality is that there are great things for children and teens to be passionate about if they don’t happen to be sporty. If you’re disappointed, know that your youngster’s happiness isn’t always found in a ring, a rink, a court, or a field. The best way to channel your child’s focus is to be an advocate in helping him or her identify an activity he or she can become enthusiastic about.

And you don’t have to travel far to find a rich selection of nonathletic activities in Weston and Wellesley. Encompassing everything from art to technology, indoors and out, there’s just as wide a selection for the nonathlete as there is for the jocks.
Hometown Recreation

The Weston Recreation Center, conveniently located near the elementary schools, hosts a plethora of youth afterschool programs. Indeed, some are sports-oriented, such as weekly karate and gymnastics, which might help get the nonathletic kid moving. But, “We offer anything you can image that’s fun for a kid,” says Christopher Fitzgerald, recreation director for the town of Weston.

Class choices include chess, robotics and Scratch computer programming, and music and art—from clay to sewing. A new offering is girls’ science club. “We offer these classes simply because there’s a high demand for a variety of different activities for kids after school,” Fitzgerald states. “The classes are educational, but not in the way of a school environment. They’re fun experiences.”

A longtime favorite at the Weston Recreation Center is Diane Benson’s afterschool cooking and baking classes, especially since there’s an eight-kid maximum per session. The small class size ensures every child gets a hands-on kitchen experience.

“We have had plenty of parents tell us they really like our program offerings, even to the point where we’ve heard about competitors from private companies coming into town to try to duplicate our services,” Fitzgerald reveals. “But parents have said that they don’t have a need to go elsewhere for a particular class or theme, so they continue filling our recreation classes.”

Much the same is true at Wellesley Recreation. While many classes, like Star Wars Galaxy Academy, take place at their headquarters on Washington Street, their youth activities are so popular that an afterschool pilot program is now a reality.

“We run after school enrichment programs directly in the schools with recreation staff on hand, and sometimes in conjunction with teachers, depending on their area of expertise,” says Brandon Fitts, deputy director of Wellesley Recreation. “We offer yoga, chess, LEGO robotics, and art themes such as pottery and painting. Based on demand, we also created a nature club after school.” These in-school programs typically run from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. seasonally, in six of Wellesley’s elementary schools (Bates, Fiske, Hardy, Hunnewell, Schofield, and Sprague).
AMIEE MUNRO
Amiee Munro, a Wellesley resident since 2009, is excited to join the growing Donahue & Maley team at Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. Munro has devoted the past few years to volunteering in the community, including serving as the Fiske PTO Co-President and co-chairing the wildly successful Fiske auction this past May. In addition, Munro is a member of Wellesley Hills Junior Women’s Club. With experience in leading media organizations, Munro is poised to offer Donahue & Maley clients strategic marketing & publicity plans that are designed to optimize value. For those looking to move to or move within Wellesley, Munro’s fresh approach to real estate, combined with the experience of the Donahue & Maley team, offer clients the best of both worlds.
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Because these “add-on” programs are so popular, the Town of Wellesley recently hired a full-time staff person solely dedicated to managing these afterschool offerings.

According to Fitts, once online registration opens, classes can fill up in under one hour. “The activities are very popular and sought after, and Wellesley’s PTOs have been great about getting the word out about them, too,” he says. “Parents have told us they’re so thrilled that their kids are getting enrichment, and an extra hour of supplemented learning in a place where they know where their children are.”

Afterschool events at the Wellesley Recreation building are also enjoyed by schoolkids from Weston, Needham, Newton, and Natick, although residents are prioritized during the registration process. The same is true in Weston—while the programs are open to all, Weston residents get the first signup privileges.

**Scouting and Drama and Coding, Oh My!**

When it comes to scouting in the United States, everything old is new again. Boy Scouts have been around since 1910, and it’s one of the largest youth organizations in the country. Girl Scouts was founded only two years later after its male counterpart.

While many meetings and events are held on weekends, there are self-guided fulfillments and requirements that can be done either at home or outdoors after school. Kids and teens learn important life skills such as survival techniques, orienteering, and fire awareness and prevention education. There are also project-based events like camping (which teaches kids how to pack and plan); and cookie or popcorn selling, which forms the basis of excellent business and money-management skills including budgeting and forecasting.

Just as importantly, scouting also fosters team-building and collaboration in working toward a common goal. Scouts also learn the importance of giving to others through a wide variety of community service projects.

For the drama-inclined, look no further than Wellesley center. The Wellesley Theatre Project is a nonprofit musical theater company that offers everything from short-term afterschool workshops to master classes, full-fledged productions, and community initiatives that call upon dramatic skills.
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A number of engaging spring classes are offered, including “From Page to Stage,” “Theatre in a Trunk,” and musical theater dance class. The benefits of theater training are obvious—when kids are encouraged to perform monologues, scene work, character building, and improvisation, it’s a confidence builder that takes them through adulthood.

All classes and rehearsals take place at one of their two studio locations known as “WTP East” (at the Wellesley Community Center at 219 Washington Street), or WTP West (in the heart of Wellesley Square at 98 R Central Street).

For a fuller experience, the WTP also stages full, vibrant productions that are filled with children from ages kindergarten to high schoolers. Recent performances include High School Musical, The Addams Family, and In the Heights.

Even if you’re the parent of a sporty kid, there’s no doubt that the internet is a big part of his or her day. So, in this highly digitized age, it’s no accident that both Weston’s and Wellesley’s recreation departments offer junior coding programs based on age and grade levels. Kids as young as kindergarten can dig deep into the computer and online world. “Not only do kids learn to code, they have a great time,” says Fitts. “In this ever-changing landscape of our society everything is computerized, and programs like Junior Coders are preparing the next generation of computer programmers.”

And who knows—rather than an athletic all-star, your child might grow up to be the next chess champion, business magnate, Silicon Valley whiz, famous artist, or Tony-winning performer.
what do you get when you put a group of sixth graders together and tell them to build a robot out of LEGOs? A lot of camaraderie. Pizza night every Sunday from September through December while preparing for the competition. And, as a bonus, genuine excitement about science and technology.

The “Robot Raiders,” a Wellesley Middle School LEGO League team is full of girl power. Caroline Jolley, Lucy Kim, Isabella Pavano, Molly Plenge, Lucy Snow, Sadie Solomon, and Annabelle Xu have been a team for the last three years and have learned a thing or two about robotics, persistence, and teamwork.

Competition at the annual LEGO League robotics tournament is stiff. Thirteen-year-old boy teams can be intimidating, especially when you’re nine. Until your score is better than theirs. Then they don’t seem so formidable.

First LEGO League (FLL) is an international competition for students ages nine to fourteen organized by the international youth organization FIRST—For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology. FIRST was founded in 1989 to develop ways to inspire students in the engineering and technology fields.
Each year in August, FLL releases a challenge for teams, based on a “real world” scientific topic. The competition involves three parts: Robot Game, Project, and Core Values. The robotics part of the competition involves designing and programming LEGO MINDSTORMS robots to complete tasks. The Project section requires researching a topic related to the current real world challenge and creating an innovative solution. For the Core Values assessment, teams are asked to demonstrate how they used Core Values throughout the challenge, and, must perform a timed teamwork exercise at the actual competition. The students meet for regional tournaments to share their knowledge, compare ideas, display their robots, and earn points across all as part of a competitive environment.

Core values are an important part of FLL and include teamwork, “gracious professionalism,” and “coopetition” (a neologism coined to describe cooperative competition). Participants learn that friendly competition and mutual gain are not separate goals, and that helping one another is the foundation of teamwork.

FLL started with its pilot challenge in 1989. In 1999, there were 975 teams and 9,500 participants. By 2016, this number had skyrocketed to over 32,000 teams and over 255,000 participants competing in 88 countries.

Wellesley parents Robert and Alexa Plenge were inspired to start a FLL team in 2014, when their daughter Molly was a rising fourth grader. She had an interest in technology, and they wanted to foster that. They opened it up for classmates to join, and the “Bates Bots” team was in business.

The first year as group leaders brought a steep learning curve for the Plenges. It was both more involved and less structured than they’d expected.

“The LEGO League directives say ‘Here are the missions. Here’s what your robot should do. Figure it out.’ ” Robert notes. There were no instructions to guide programming or recommendations on how a
team might accomplish the missions. “We had no idea what we were getting into. We learned as we went. As a coach, that’s not ideal,” he deadpans. He watched a lot of programming videos on YouTube.

Of his team, Robert notes, “Every kid learns differently. You have to work to find each kid’s strength and how they can contribute. Some kids are patient and focused; others more free spirited but come up with some of the best ideas.” He adds, “I have a new appreciation for teachers.”

In its rookie 2014 season, the team started out meeting once every week for 2 hours. Robert and Alexa quickly recognized that a group of energetic 9-year-olds required more time to build and program a robot.

A strategy change was needed. The Plenge coaching duo divided and conquered. Robert took over the robotics responsibilities and Alexa directed the project side of things. Robert acknowledges that the first year, he—rather than the girls—did most of the programming. The girls agree. “We had no clue what we were doing!” team member Caroline Jolley recalls.

A lot has changed since those early days. The team has gotten into a familiar groove, and the overall approach has evolved. This season they met in small groups in two- to three-hour blocks each weekend to work on robotics. Sunday nights they met to work on the project component of the challenge (and to have pizza).

Their skills have improved tremendously. Parent Peter Solomon notes, “The girls have now become adept at programming and have taken much more ownership over how to complete the various missions.”

And as it turns out, the lack of instructions has been liberating. “As soon as you realize that fewer rules mean more creativity and openness to how you do things, you feel released to try lots of different approaches,” Robert Plenge says.

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The Robot Raiders—renamed from Bates Bots now that the girls have transitioned from Bates to middle school—have been inspired by the themes of the Challenge. In 2014—their first year—the theme was to “create an innovative solution that improves a learning experience.” They decided to focus on strategies to improve how children learn to ride a bike. They were fourth graders then, and brainstormed about what was hardest for them when they learned. Some of their conclusions: You can’t learn to balance when you’re using training wheels. And your ankles get scraped by the pedals when you fall.

They rounded up a focus group—their six-year-old siblings—and had them do test riding to confirm their hypotheses and generate ideas for a smoother road to two wheels. Their concept for a solution? A training gym that would include walls in close proximity for when you fall. A series of courses that would provide decreasing support as your skill level increased. Padded pedals to decrease ankle trauma. And a talking helmet that would give you both riding tips and words of encouragement.

Not bad. Why didn’t the adults think of all of that?

In 2015, the theme, “Trash Trek,” led not only to self-directed education about the subject, but a real world change in their elementary school. The challenge: identify difficulties in the way we handle trash and find an innovative solution.

The girls focused on cafeteria waste and opportunities to reduce it. They came up with the Zero Waste school cafeteria project, and persuaded the fifth grade student council to join forces with them. The student council group created an educational video for the school and proposed...
a composting system. They created a program called the Sharing Table, whereby unopened packages of food and whole fruit are collected to share with other kids and to donate to the Wellesley Food Pantry. Bates students now donate over 30 pounds of food every week—string cheese, bagged carrots, organic yogurt, apples, etc.—perfectly edible food that otherwise was being thrown in the trash.

This inspired Alexa Plenge and Gretchen Hall, another LEGO League mom, to do more. Plenge and Hall met with other interested parents to determine ways to pursue more recycling in the school. With enthusiastic support from Bates Principal Toni Jolley (also a Robot Raiders parent), they formed a committee to oversee Bates’ participation in two EPA programs that targeted waste from cafeterias and classrooms: the Food Recovery Challenge and WasteWise. With the help of volunteers—including the Bates Bots FLL...
team—the committee spent a week in the cafeteria collecting, separating and weighing each of seven categories of waste. A full-scale recycling program was added to the food donation table. As a result, Bates now diverts about 40 percent of its cafeteria waste from landfill.

The Robots Raiders have learned a lot, and have given back to their community, since they started working as a team. The girls have not only learned about robotics, problem solving, and teamwork, but have had a lot of fun along the way.

Team member Sadie Solomon has loved the experience. “You feel like you don’t want to stop working toward your goal. In the end, you get to see what you built. You have a sense of accomplishment that you don’t get from other things.”

Adding LEGO League to the schedule of already busy middle schoolers is no small commitment. From September to December, the girls—and parents—spend hours every weekend on programming and research—in addition to sports, music, homework, and other obligations. Is it worth it? The parents of the Robots Raiders say it is.

“Legos provide the girls with all the benefits of any team-based activity—camaraderie, teamwork, unselfishness, and the like,” Peter Solomon, father of Sadie, says. “But the intellectual benefits are perhaps more significant—how to problem solve, how to iterate, how to persist and make incremental changes, how to present information visually and orally, how to think logically. These are skill sets that get addressed at school, but not in such a cohesive and robust way, and certainly not with the same sense of ownership and self-directedness. I also think the girls realize that their gender has absolutely no bearing on their ability to enjoy and excel at STEM content.”

And while one might think that the girls all had an interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) subjects before FLL, talking with the team members makes it clear that this isn’t the case. “Personally I don’t like science class in school,” team member Lucy Snow says. “But this is more like engineering and programming. In LEGO League, we can brainstorm ideas and aren’t just sitting at a desk. Even if you don’t think you like programming, I’d tell people to give it a try because it can be a really fun experience.”

And as Isabella Pavano notes, there’s always the future to consider. “What we’ve learned we could apply in getting a job.”

When you think about it that way, a few hours every weekend sounds like a pretty good investment.
Painting the Town
Artist Chelsea Sebastian Finds Inspiration in Wellesley

LISA ROGERS writer


Seems unlikely? Not when you think about it. To an artist, the most ordinary scenes can be infused with meaning.

Take the little street tucked away near Truly Yogurt that runs parallel to Washington Street. There’s not much there: It’s bordered by parking lots and an auto shop. But the scene in early morning, happened upon by Chelsea after she dropped her son at school, took her breath away.

“The light on Spring Street and the Auto Lab!” she exclaimed. “Wellesley is stunning!”

Chelsea's work is all about light. Like Hopper, this Wellesley artist’s work features sharp contrasts, strong lines, and unexpected colors. Like Vincent van Gogh, her hand works to build texture and movement.
And there’s always the light.

Chelsea paints in a third-floor studio near Cottage Street, conveniently close to the heart of town and high enough to catch the sun’s rays. It’s a win-win for this Washington State native.

“The Hopper light is a real thing,” she said. “As an artist, I see that light.”

That’s evident in Chelsea’s portfolio. One of Wellesley College’s signature lampposts explodes in a meteor of light. Light spilling from the windows of Captain Marden’s scatters iridescence into the parking lot. Bulbs strung outside Juniper restaurant blaze like mutant fireflies. Fiery train tracks glow beneath the Crest Road railroad bridge. Leaves glisten like confetti in a Brook Path scene.

You might find Chelsea taking photos or sketching around town, absorbed in the landscape and waiting for that breathtaking moment that guides her work and moves her to paint. It’s a feeling she’s had innumerable times.

Chelsea’s emotional response to art can be incredibly strong. When observing Vincent van Gogh’s towering, swirling cypresses on view at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, she actually lost her balance. “Van Gogh has the power to literally move me!” she said.

Chelsea’s admiration for artists is homegrown. Both of her parents are artists who met in art school. Her mother’s work features color and an off-kilter, Alice Neel-like sensibility, which Sebastian has inherited. She’s influenced by her father’s love of geometries and philosophy. “It’s awesome to have that legacy,” she said. “It’s a blessing. It’s in me. It’s in my DNA.”
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The legacy goes back further, to her great- great- grandfather, Frederick Nelson Atwood. Atwood studied painting in Boston and specialized in maritime art. He is most famous for his 1895 painting “Battleship Maine,” of the ship that later exploded and sank in Cuba’s Havana harbor. Atwood’s son, Frederick Nelson Atwood II, trained on the East Coast in fresco and decorative arts painting. He headed to the Yukon Territory, where he prospected for gold and specialized in designing and painting theater sets.

Yet Chelsea’s parents discouraged her from centering her life on art, concerned about her financial future. She earned a bachelor’s degree in community and environmental design, and a master’s in international studies. “And all I wanted to do was paint!” she said.

And paint she has. Her studio and storage spaces burst with her work. Her canvases tell a story of a painter who’s inspired by her town and the people who live there. From the iconic—Wellesley’s Romanesque Town Hall—to the vernacular—Captain Marden’s seafood restaurant and fish market, and, yes, the Spring Street car repair shop—Sebastian’s works evoke an emotion and express a feeling.

“I paint representational art,” she said. “I want to tell a story.”

Chelsea’s process is multilayered. She might start with a small painted sketch before moving to a large canvas, brushing broad strokes with high-toned acrylics. On one canvas, an indoor scene is sketched out in cyan; on another, wide, curved strokes of white almost completely cover a cerise underpainting. She might finish a painting, then paint completely over it. Her hallmarks include thick layers of paint that almost appear folded underneath her subjects, as if she tucked tissue paper underneath.
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True to a painter of light, she often creates base layers with cadmium yellow and cadmium orange pure, then sketching her subject with brilliant blue. Instead of black, she uses dioxazine purple, and creates shadows with a shade called light hue violet.

“I generally use the full spectrum in all of my paintings, and I place complementary colors next to each other because they cause my brain to vibrate a little,” she said.

During one frigid winter with abundant snowfall, when Chelsea was home with an infant and toddler, she worked on a series of floral still lifes as an antidote to the cold—not that you could call anything she paints “still.” Her work is so vibrant that it jumps off the canvas, yet it’s always a welcome greeting.

“My mom says I’m the Princess of Primaries,” she said. “It’s bold, straight color.”

On her easel leans a large canvas of the view from a porch on Cushing Island, Maine. A scarlet rocking chair invites the viewer in to admire the treed meadow and water beyond. It’s stunning, but something about it, she believes, is not right. So she will work at it and work at it. The bonus is that overlapping applications of paint add texture and depth.

“I’m trying to recreate the feeling that I had when the yellow sunrise hit that red rocking chair. It took my breath away,” she said. “If I get myself to feel that, then I’m done.”

Perfection, for an artist, is elusive, and perhaps not even desired.

“I make tons of mistakes,” Chelsea said. “Someone said: ‘How you handle your mistakes becomes your style.’ My perspective can be a little off, but the distortions are what give my work soul.” Again, she notes, think of van Gogh’s expressive work.

“The viewer engages with the emotion, and accepts the imperfection or corrects it in their own mind.”

That doesn’t mean that creating a painting, from start to finish, is a smooth ride. “I go through a rollercoaster of emotions,” she said. “There’s the excitement and anticipation of beginning a work. Then “I get mad, then I love it. There’s a journey that happens—before noon!”

Then she must pick up her preschooler.

Choosing Wellesley as a home has reaped benefits for Chelsea. In addition to feeding her inspiration, Wellesley is home to a strong network of artists. Chelsea joined Wellesley Women Artisans, which includes artists of varied disciplines and provides support, motivation, and the opportunity to share work with the public through community events. “I plan on being here for a long time,” she said.

Being in the lucky position of having her parents as mentors and teachers, Chelsea only now has signed up for her first formal painting instruction, at the Museum of Fine Arts. It’s a portrait class, which dovetails with her latest challenge: painting the people of Wellesley. She plans a 20-painting series.

Creating a challenge helps her to focus on art, when all of her time could so easily be spent meeting demands of family and home. As soon as she drops her children off at school, she carves out three hours for painting. Emails and errands wait while she works.

“This is what I’m meant to be doing,” she said, “so I’d better make it sacred.”
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Matthew McKay, 45, is an accomplished swimmer, a Harvard University grad, a seasoned financial analyst turned stay-at-home dad, and an active Wellesley community volunteer. Now he’s also a debut author. His first book, *Evolved* (Big G Books), a science fiction novel exploring life’s big questions, hit the bookshelves last November.

Matthew didn’t always know he wanted to be a writer, but he was always fascinated by science fiction. “Growing up I was a big *Star Wars* fan, and I loved *Star Trek*—especially *The Next Generation* series,” he said. His writing journey began when he was at Belmont Hill School, and his grades started to suffer because of his passion for swimming. “My English teacher pulled me aside and said, ‘This is unacceptable. I’m going to teach you how to write a paper.’” Through that process, Matthew first learned how to write. Then at Harvard, he was required to take an expository writing course, which further honed his writing skills.

But his first love was always swimming. When he was just two years old he learned to swim at Lake of the Woods in Ontario where his family has summered his entire life. “For me swimming is very spiritual and meditative. You immerse yourself in water. Your senses are cut off. But they’re enhanced in other ways. Buddhists believe that you should clear your brain and empty it of all the clutter. And swimming helps me do that,” said Matthew. When he was at Harvard, he’d walk down to the pool for a two-hour practice and think to himself: “What the hell am I doing here? I don’t have time for this.” But after he emerged from the water, his head was clear.
After getting his BA in economics, Matthew began his career as a financial analyst. He worked at several prominent investment banks—in Boston and San Francisco—during the dot-com era. “There’s a lot of writing required in financial services,” he said. “I took very complex situations and tried to distill them down into industry reports that were quick and easy to digest for traders,” he said. “I may not have used flowery metaphors, but I basically had ten seconds to grab their attention. It takes a lot of practice to do that.” And that’s a skill he still uses in his writing today.

In 2007, he moved from the West Coast to Wellesley with his wife and eldest daughter. A year later their youngest was born. When Matthew’s wife went back to work, it gave him the flexibility to stay home with their two daughters, Isabael and Ella. “I was pretty burnt out from traveling, and my initial plan was to stay home for a year, but that turned into eight,” he said. “It’s been good for our daughters to have one of us home. I’ve enjoyed my time with them, and my wife has been able to focus on her career.”

While Matthew had the desire and drive to write a novel, he knew he needed a better understanding of aspects of fiction writing, such as story arc, character development, and dialogue. So he took a few classes at GrubStreet, in Boston, a nonprofit creative writing center for writers in a range of genres. “I was a few chapters in when I started looking at theories of space, quantum mechanics, and Einstein’s Theory of Relativity.” Lisa Randall, a physics professor at Harvard, introduced him to String Theory—the concept that the universe has multiple dimensions including hidden dimensions—which inspired him to think more deeply about his own story.

Matthew’s first barometer for success was his wife. “If she fell asleep after the first page, I knew I needed to revise.” Several other beta readers gave him feedback as well. After the fifth revision, Matthew had a feeling there was something “more to the story.” He met with his minister at Village Church in Wellesley who told him, “There’s a whole spiritual side of this you’re missing.” So Matthew read Aldous Huxley’s The Perennial Philosophy and started researching early Christianity.
and Judaism. His conclusion? “Science and spirituality ask two different questions. Science asks how. Spirituality asks why.” But they’re both important.

In November 2016, after four years of work, Evolved was published. The story is set in the future and follows 14-year-old Amos on a physical and emotional journey. He’s forced to choose between the superconscious, the melding of computer and brain, and the supraconscious, a combination of intellect and spirit. “I wanted a protagonist who was innocent and malleable to show his development throughout the novel,” explains Matthew. “Amos is incredibly distracted by the cardinal sins. He may be a highly organically developed human with enhanced brain and physical function, but he also has human flaws.”

In the book, 90 percent of Earth’s population has perished, and the people remaining have taken over the evolutionary process to elevate their own intellect. Through each round of evolution, fewer and fewer people are able to evolve, until only one person can see the extra dimensions and think more creatively than others. That’s Amos. He falls in love with Sarah, which saves him in this loveless society. Evolved tackles scientific topics such as entropy and pregnant time (low entropy singularity in space), but there’s also a spiritual side. “When people read Evolved, I hope they’ll think about free will versus determinism, how space exists, what happens when a computer gains consciousness, and other philosophical questions.”

During the writing process, Matthew had an emotional breakdown one day. “I was sitting in front of my computer touching on all these themes when I just started crying. I was gasping for air before I regained control over myself,” he said. “Through that awakening and finding some spiritual leaders, it’s become important for me to talk about what’s going on this world, where we’re headed, and how we can rediscover love for each other which seems to be disappearing.”

When Matthew is not writing or busy with family duties, he works for Myrtha Pools. He also volunteers in the community. He is former chair of the aquatics sub-committee to the 900 Worcester Committee, an elected member of the Wellesley Recreation Commission, and a former Sprague School PTO president. “The more I’ve given of myself, the more I’ve received. That has been an important part of my journey beyond writing.”

Matthew says, “It takes a lot of guts to do what you love—to do what resonates with you at a deeper level versus chasing that paycheck. We live in this reality where we have to feed our families, and that distracts us from what’s really important. If this book proves to be successful, it will be very rewarding, but if not, so be it. I’ve accomplished my number one goal—to inspire my daughters to write.”

Looking ahead, Matthew is exploring the idea of writing about the Holy Trinity and its connection to science. “I hope Evolved will ultimately become part of an ongoing conversation—a book that inspires people to start thinking differently about the bigger issues,” he says. The ones that really matter.
spring, being the season for renewal and rebirth, seems a more natural time to make a resolution for healthier living than the cold and dreary month of January. The barren lands of New England start to produce healthful, if sometimes bitter, greens. With summer and its bounty an imaginable distance away, spring seems the right time to reassess eating habits. With the help of two nutritionists familiar to Wellesley and Weston, we set out to explore how to better nourish ourselves.

Julie Freeman of Feel Great Look Great Nutrition became interested in nutrition as a child.

“I often tell people that I was groomed for this profession. I was an overweight child, and at nine, I was already encouraged to diet. However, the diets never worked or helped me. I felt addicted to food. I knew I had to find a better way,” states Freeman.
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I love to use the cloudy apple cider vinegar as that has an added benefit, helping with digestion,” shares Freeman.

The third point that she emphasizes for healthy eating is vitamin D. “Obviously the best way to receive vitamin D is through sunshine, but in winter months supplements are a great alternative. Other sources include egg yolks and canned, cold-water salmon.”

Freeman also uses functional and integrative medicine to build a more fulfilling practice for clients and herself. “I practice Reiki and yoga with clients for whom it is useful. My goal is to really understand the root of the disease and why the patient is visiting me. I rely on functional tests like urine, stool, and blood to look for things like food sensitivity.”

Freeman also has a specific interest in working to help heal anxiety and depression via natural approaches.

Here is her first doctrine for eating right. “One of the keys is to maintain a good balance between protein and good quality carbohydrates. Carbohydrates give you a good instant energy. The pancreas will pump out insulin as a result. As the energy is used up and the blood sugar crashes, a panic signal is sent to the brain—which can result in anxiety. Protein, on the other hand, provides a more stable energy source and by eating the right combination of both of them, you can avoid the panic signal. A good example is to have whole grain crackers with natural peanut butter.”

Her second doctrine for eating right is to have a good amount of omega fatty acids, which are important for brain health and mood. She recommends taking fish oil supplements, but encourages the brands that are marked to be purity tested, cold water fish oil. Wild caught, cold-water salmon is also great. Her favorite source for that is Captain Marden’s in Wellesley. She encourages clients to always ask their fish supplier if the salmon is wild caught or farm raised.

Other great sources for omega-3 fatty acids are leafy greens such as spinach, kale, and Swiss chard. When making foods with these greens, Freeman suggests using both an acid and and oil.

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Lastly, Freeman emphasizes the benefits of drinking organic green tea. Green tea contains healthful polyphenols (mostly flavonols, commonly known as catechins) which provide some protection against degenerative diseases and oxidative stress.

Sandrine Ghosh, co-founder of Eat Clean Nutrition and a Wellesley mother of three, encourages many of the same principles in her practice. “When my children were young and we were living in Mill Valley, California, I decided to go back to school and study nutrition. I was influenced by the northern California diet and focus on local food.”

With another student from her program, she started Eat Clean Nutrition. “We see clients privately, but also do workshops and lectures,” she says.

In Wellesley, Ghosh has run a number of “elimination diets” and cleanses, but she emphasizes that her preference is to start working with clients at their status quo level.

“I think elimination diets can be very overwhelming for people. My preference is to meet my clients where they currently are and assess their shopping, cooking, and eating habits—as well as learn about their daily lives and stress levels. I like to start by adding things to their diets instead of removing them. People are typically more comfortable with this approach.”
The first thing she will typically add is water. “The majority of us are not drinking enough water. We are dehydrated and, given the cold winters with heating systems, there is a real need to stay hydrated.”

She encourages people to invest in a water filtration system that can easily be added to the kitchen sink. “I ordered our family’s filtration system online and a local plumber connected it in less than an hour,” she says. “It is easy and impactful.”

Other drinks that provide a good source of hydration are herbal teas and pure vegetable juices.

The second thing that she typically adds are healthy fats, or omega-3s, as Freeman also mentioned. She encourages adding avocado, wild salmon, nuts and seeds, coconut oil and olive oils to her clients’ diets. Ghosh also promotes eating everything in its whole form. “If you are eating an egg,
it's better to eat the whole egg for absorption purposes. I also encourage people to eat whole fat milk and yogurt. When they skim the fat off of the dairy, they replace it with other substances that are not healthy to make it tasty. It is better to eat the whole fat and perhaps eat less of it.”

Inflammation in the body is a specific issue that Ghosh spends a lot of time discussing with her clients and addressing in their diets. “The root cause of many diseases is inflammation in the body,” she says. The typical American diet can be acidic. It is grain and dairy heavy. Processed or fried foods, often high in trans fats and sugar, can induce inflammation by damaging cells in the lining of blood vessels. Foods that combat inflammation include leafy green vegetables, fruits, olive oil, nuts, and fatty fish. Leafy greens for example help combat this inflammation. “Coconut oil is great too,” she says. “I bake with it, roast my veggies in it, and add it to smoothies.”

In addition to coconut oil and leafy greens, Ghosh also promotes eating probiotics to counteract inflammation in the digestive tract.

“Our immune system is largely in the digestive tract. If your gut is not doing well, it can lead to allergies and inflammation. It is good to take probiotic supplements and eat probiotic rich foods like raw sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir, and yogurt as they restore digestive health and in turn help strengthen immunity,” she says. Bone broth has also been shown to help boost immunity, particularly when it comes to upper respiratory infections, and it may help replace electrolytes after exercise. Ghosh points out that it is now readily available at grocery stores but it’s easy to make your own. “I will make my own by adding all my chicken bones to a slow cooker with water and cook it for 15 hours or so.”

Ghosh concludes in stating, “When people think of diets or healthy eating, they think of elimination. I want to encourage people to look at it from another perspective. Let’s add to your diet. You can eat red meat, but let’s pick high quality grass fed meat and add some extra greens. Starting with a small change now can lead to bigger changes in the future. I prefer this method as it is more sustainable than crazy diets and bouncing back and forth. Healthy eating is meant to be and needs to be sustainable, so start with what you are comfortable.”

Perhaps, as a result of all the information that Freeman and Ghosh have shared, there is a small step that we can add to our diets this spring.
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“this area is not as well-known as Cape Cod, and we hope it doesn’t get that way,” said Eddy McKenzie. It was a strange thing to say, given her job. My husband and I had just arrived for a two-day midsummer getaway on Cape Ann. At our first stop, the Rockport Visitor Information Center, she was behind the counter armed with maps and brochures for area attractions. “We don’t want the traffic,” she explained. But despite her unscripted comment, it quickly became clear she adores her adopted hometown and is happy to extoll its virtues. We soon understood her mixed emotions.

Cape Ann, about an hour from Wellesley or Weston, on Boston’s North Shore, offers plenty to enjoy on a day trip or longer. McKenzie was positively poetic describing scenic lighthouses,
Coastline and marshes, fishermen’s shacks, and farms long ago helped make Cape Ann arguably America’s oldest art colony. Such notable painters as Fitz Henry “Hugh” Lane, Winslow Homer, Frederick Childe Hassam, Edward Hopper, Marsden Hartley, Mark Rothko, and many equally talented but less famous women have been among artists living and working here since the mid-19th century. Last October, the area’s four waterfront communities, Gloucester, Rockport, Essex, and Manchester-by-the-Sea, inaugurated an annual Cape Ann Plein Air competition and festival (www.capeannpleinair.com), honoring the tradition of painting outdoors.

It’s no wonder many memorable movies have been filmed in these parts, including Captains Courageous (1937), starring Spencer Tracy and Lionel Barrymore; Mermaids (1990) with Cher and Winona Ryder; and The Perfect Storm (2000), based on Sebastian Junger’s nonfiction bestseller about a Gloucester-based commercial fishing vessel lost at sea.

Whether stormy or serene, Cape Ann is distinctly New England. Photo-worthy vistas appear around every bend. We also found satisfying seafood, historic lodgings, and topnotch live music despite McKenzie’s good-natured claim that “the sidewalks roll up early.”

Essex is the birthplace of fried clams. Lawrence “Chubby” Woodman invented the recipe in 1916, and Woodman’s restaurant still gets big crowds although some prefer nearby J. T. Farnum’s or The Clam Box in Ipswich. They’re all great clam shacks. But on this trip the full-service Village Restaurant (55 Main Street, Rockport), jumped to the top of our list for light batter, freshness, and taste. On the other hand, it’s hard to beat lobster rolls for lunch at Roy Moore (two Rockport locations: 21 Dock Square and 39 Bearskin Neck).

Rockport alone has 33 art galleries, many in the harbor district, from Main Street to Bearskin Neck. It’s a fun place to stroll, with gal-

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eries, ice cream, antique shops, and boutiques brimming with décor and clothing. You’ll catch multiple views of Motif No. 1, a replica of a fishing shack said to be the most-oft-painted building in America. At George Anderson Gallery (11 Main St.), which features the eponymous artist’s bold and colorful nautical scenes, we met Scott Tubby, a potter and painter who was happy to discuss the current art scene.

“Rockport became known for impressionist plein air style but now is attracting more varied artists,” said Tubby. “It’s such a beautiful place. Everywhere you look could be a painting. So artists are attracted here by color and traditional motifs, but they often work in non-traditional styles.” His own paintings of
architecture have a contemporary Cubist, at times whimsical, sensibility.

To see varied works by more of today’s local artists, we visited the Rockport Art Association (12 Main Street). Founded in 1921, the organization currently has more than 250 exhibiting members. Three adjacent buildings display their paintings, graphics, sculpture, and photography. The oldest is a sea captain’s house (circa 1787). Another is a contemporary barn.

The day was hot under cloudless skies despite a forecast of impending rain. Taking advantage of the weather, we drove to Halibut Point State Park (Route 127, Rockport) for a leisurely hike with spectacular coastal views. There’s an old quarry at Halibut Point where for nearly a century beginning around 1840, stone blocks were cut from the 450-million-year-old granite. Now filled with water, the quarry is wonderful for birdwatching. The park’s self-guided trails are not well-marked and can be confusing; nonetheless, most people find the hiking easy along narrow paths through low brush and across granite ledge. On clear days, there are expansive views of the Eastern seaboard and across Ipswich Bay to the Isles of Shoals in Maine as well as New Hampshire. (Wear proper footwear.)

Loving the scenery but drained by the sun and summer heat, we were ready to relax. Our lodging for the night was just up the road. The historic Emerson Inn (1 Cathedral Avenue, Rockport), built in 1856, with a 1912 addi-
tion, was purchased in 2015 by Migis Hotels whose properties include the well-known Black Point Inn in Maine. During our stay, the Emerson (www.emersoninnbythesea.com) was in the final stages of an extensive restoration that retained the grand hotel’s traditional features. A sweeping staircase connects guest rooms to an intimate first floor parlor with a cozy bar. Updated public spaces had received sophisticated color schemes and framed works by contemporary local artists. Like many of the 36 guest rooms, ours had a high old-fashioned four-poster bed, luxurious linens, a flat screen TV, and a view to the rocky shore. Without delay, we changed for the pool. Charmingly old-fashioned, it was nothing glamorous and still needed fresh paint but the setting was peaceful and the water fine. It was an unpretentious, soothing prelude to dinner in the Emerson’s casual Pigeon Cove Tavern, which serves excellent local and seasonal dishes.

We had scheduled our visit around a particular concert at Shalin Liu Performance Center, the home of Rockport Music (www.rockportmusic.org). In the heart of town, a historic building was given a million dollar renovation and a new life. It opened in 2010 with a beautiful contemporary performance space designed by the team responsible for Tanglewood’s Ozawa Hall. Shalin Liu, named for the woman who is its major benefactor, has a reputation for superb acoustics and a year-round schedule of jazz, classical, folk, pop, blues, chamber, and world music. This was our first visit. On the way in, we were greeted by a longtime volunteer, Mary Jane. We told her we were looking forward to seeing the venue’s signature element: the harbor seen through a glass wall backing the stage.
**KIRSTEN SCANNELL**

Kirsten is a licensed real estate agent with a B.A. in communications from Stonehill College. Prior to joining Benoit Mizner Simon & Co., she worked for over eight years in curriculum and course management at Harvard Medical School. With a longstanding passion for real estate, renovation, and interior design, Kristen has the ability to help buyers visualize a space to its full potential, and assist sellers in getting their home in top shape to put on the market. Her highest priority is to help clients achieve their individual real estate goals through personalized and comprehensive assistance with the utmost integrity. Kristen is a lifelong Massachusetts resident and is very familiar with all that this area has to offer.

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The artists like it here. They’re comfortable,” Mary Jane told us proudly. “All the money went into where it’s important, including a top-notch sound system and an in-floor HVAC that’s silent.” Many performers praise its intimacy, she said. They admire the way it lets them connect with audiences. But inside we were disappointed to find the window blocked by drapery. During intermission, we bumped into Mary Jane again and politely complained. Some artists say the bare window affects acoustics, she explained. They insist on closing the curtain. But on the third floor we could find refreshments and admire the panorama.

Morning dawned rainy, as predicted. Instead of walking Cape Ann’s miles of public beaches, we went to see a curiosity, the Paper House on Curtis St. in Rockport’s Pigeon Cove (www.paperhouserockport.com). The novel structure began as an experiment in 1922 when Elis F. Stenman wondered what could be done with Boston newspapers without destroying the print. With the help of his family, he rolled, pasted, and folded newspapers to make walls 215 layers thick. Over the next 20 years, approximately 100,000 newspapers were used to construct tables, chairs, lamps, a cot, a desk, and more. International newspapers were rolled to make a bookcase. Newspapers from the capital cities of the then-48 states became a grandfather clock. The Paper House is open daily on the honor system from April to October.

Gloucester’s Rocky Neck merges a bohemian arts district with old industrial maritime New England. In better weather, we would have walked from studios to galleries and stopped to photograph commercial fishing boats and cranes. But not that day. Fortunately, this gave us the chance to see the Cape Ann Museum (www.capecannmuseum.org) in Gloucester, a New England gem. Its collections relate the story of “America’s Oldest Seaport” through paintings and sculpture by prominent North Shore artists. It also features tools, ship models, and artifacts of the fisheries, maritime, and granite industries.

There’s more: kayaking; quiet roads for cycling; nature trails to wander; whale watching; abundant sandy and rocky beaches; and festivals celebrating sailing schooners, music, art, or lobsters. See www.capecannvacations.com.

Area accommodations range from campsites and motor lodges to historic B&Bs. The Yankee Clipper Inn in Rockport (www.yankeeclipperinn.com) is a cozy 1929 art deco mansion with ocean views. Of note, John F. Kennedy slept in the Sunrise Suite. At other times the inn has welcomed John Lennon, Bette Davis, and Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward.

“It’s its own little world here on Cape Ann,” marveled Krysten Reilly, the Emerson Inn’s general manager, who had recently relocated from Maine. I certainly agreed with her observation that, “It feels so quaint yet it’s easy to get here from Boston and the suburbs, and feels like a real vacation.”
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About Town is the place to find Wellesley and Weston residents at noteworthy events throughout Greater Boston. For more information on the events shown and to view additional photos, visit wwmblog.com.

WellesleyWeston Magazine’s blog is the talk of the towns with the latest event photos, calendar listings, and conversations for the people who make things happen in Wellesley and Weston. Log on today and you might see yourself in our expanded About Town section. Post a comment by going directly to wwmblog.com or visit our Web site at www.wellesleywestonmagazine.com and click on About Town or wwmblog.

Lux Bond & Green Holiday Party

1 Trevor LaMarche, Mary French, Nancy Haas, Maria Tigou, Alex Jalai, Bethany Vasconcellos, and Joudi Rhodes  
2 Jeanie May and Judy Johnson  
3 Naomi Singer and Trevor LaMarche

Debi Benoit’s Annual Toy Drive to Benefit MassGeneral Hospital for Children

1 Debi Benoit, Danny Amendola, Lara O’Rourke, Chelsea Robinson, and Caroline Contin  
2 Liz Licata, Lauren Cofino, and Jennifer Dube  
3 Lawrence Rand and Tina Smith  
4 Tiffany Rosedale, Jennifer Griffin, Renee Glorioso, Ingrid Houghton, and Courtney Koenig
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Coldwell Banker Social Media Event

Joni Shore, Melissa Dailey, Deena Powell, Deb Edmonds, and Carole Millot

Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Boston Fashion Meets Furniture Benefit

1 Clotilde Zannetos, Chris McCann, and Sister Lee Hogan
2 Betty Ann Elliott and Katya Rego
3 Dr. John Przybylski, Toni Hays, JJ Przybylski, and Alexis Lawton
4 John and Diane Welsh
5 Mary Jo Libertino and Dr. John Libertino

Regis College Gala

1 Janet Wu and Cheryl Fenton
2 Heather Mehra and Vani Sayeed
3 Barry Segel, Bill Emery, Kimberly Kosanovich, Milan Kosanovich, and Stuart Segel

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Angie’s List
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Wellesley Square Business Networking Event

Paul Tolino, Michelle DeSimone, Amy Lynch, and Demian Wendrow

Royal Barry Wills Associates, Architects Relocation Celebration

1 Thomas Aaron, Jessica Barry Wills-Lipscomb, and J. Douglas Wills-Lipscomb
2 Bunny Cecchetto, Judy Oriol, and Suzanne Sherman
3 Nancy Brewton, Susan Ausiello, and Ginny Murray

Benoit Mizner Simon Holiday Party at King’s Bowling

1 Sheryl Simon, Amy Mizner, and Debi Benoit
2 Carolyn Ross, Leslye Fligor, Kelly First, Tanya Tanimoto, and Lena Voloshin
3 Jessica Allain, Jared Wills, and Abby Davis
4 Benoit Mizner Simon Top Producers

For more information on these events and additional photos, visit wwmblog.com
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Neiman Marcus Natick Escada Cocktail Party

1 Joan Kraft, Tricia Schinnerer, Patrice Grady Erickson, Ainsley Charles, Christine Labb, and Gabriel Contreras 2 Sonia Garuti, Jen Brown, Linda Petrosian, and Cheryl Hodgson 3 Christina Kapinos, Genevieve Glenn, and Amber Shorts 4 Laura Schurell, Betsy Streit, Linda Petrosian, Lynn Leblanc, Helen Wong, Mary Fitzgerald, and Kristina Bogen

Wellesley Historical Society Historical Homes Tour

1 Tori Defazio and Erica Dumont 2 Diane Varr, Lizzie Conover, and Jeanne Palmer 3 Karen and John Krolkowski 4 Anne Sheridan, Ray Oram, and Robin Gaynor

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Beaver Road, Weston SOLD
Glen Road, Weston SOLD

If you are thinking of selling or buying, please contact me for a free market analysis of your home.

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Trunk Trove Show

Marie-Juliette Bird

Dr. Anthony Whittemore at J. Todd Galleries

1 Mona Kumar, Brian Hart, Dr. Anthony Whittemore, and Jessica Case
2 Kate Pond, Fred Stetson, Tony Chamberlain, and Linda Wakeman
3 Steve Mendes, Sarah Mendes, Bruce Friedman, and Kim Friedman

For more information on these events and additional photos, visit wwmblog.com

Wellesley Marketplace

1 Diana Kanter and Ellen Subramaniam
2 Gail Miller and Ann Baisley
3 Eliza Quincy and Pam Webb
4 Nate Parsons and Jenna Weiner
5 Debbie Leibole and Marggy Gabriel

PHOTOS BY BETH FURMAN
PHOTOS BY JOHN HARMON
Wellesley Field Fund Reception Hosted by Needham Bank

1 Bill Darcey, Peter Cassidy, Pam Cassidy, Leslie Frasier, Tim Frasier, and Chris Teachout
2 Patty Bishop, Lisa Hastings, Pam Worl, and Shelly Ward
3 Chris Bradley, Nancy Brady, Bill Brady, and Mike Jennings
4 Tripp Sheehan, Paul Totino, Michael McNamara, and Michelle DeSimone

William Raveis Ride-Walk

Pine Straw Sip N Style Night

1 Maria DiLorenzo, Jen Monteiro, Kristen Weiss, Tracy Cranley, Lindsay Mason, and Pam Fink
2 Jen Monteiro
3 Kristen Weiss and Kelli Gribbel
4 Kim Emerson, Calli Posnik, Melinda Nies, and Pam Fink
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Wellesley Free Library Leadership Society House Party

1 Drew Spangler, Beanie Spangler, and Sanford Lyons
2 Kevin Macdonald and Charles Lovejoy
3 Amy Fuller Boyd, Norris Boyd, and Bridget Bettigole
4 Rachel and Martin Zinny

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To post a comment or view expanded coverage of these events, calendar listings, and conversations for the people who make things happen in Wellesley and Weston, visit wwmblog.com.

Village Church Rummage Sale

1 Maggie Peterson and Sally Kellogg
2 Cherie Hoffman and Linda Harding
3 Carolyn Peterson Greiner, Betty Peterson, Diane Peterson Seaborn, and Cindy Peterson
4 Betty Seaborn and Lois Woodward

For more information on these events and additional photos, visit wwmblog.com

Do You Have An Event You Want Us To Showcase?
Please send your photos and descriptions to: jill@wellesleywestonmagazine.com. Email submissions only please; jpeg photos are welcome at a minimum size of 3” x 4.5” at 300dpi.
Graham, my youngest son, and I are forty years apart, but we learned to downhill ski at the same time. As a five-year-old he lasted one day in ski school before begging to ski with the family. The upside was he could go at his own pace, fast. The downside was occasionally he was stuck skiing with me. As I made my way down the bunny hill, feeling triumphant in my Ski Market rentals because I had not fallen, he would wait at the bottom, tapping his ski tips. “Are you determined to be the last one down the mountain?”

Thanks to the kindness of a lift operator, I learned that if you look back rather than face forward paralyzed with fear, you see the chair coming and avoid yelling every time it hits you behind the knees. A ski instructor taught me that French fries and pizza are not just options for lunch at the lodge, but essential ways to place one’s skis to navigate the mountain.

Each year I set a goal for myself to measure my improvement. My first goal was to make it off the bunny hill. In subsequent years, I learned to take the fast chairlift to the top and ski down the entire mountain—albeit sticking to blue squares.

Over the years, Graham became my favorite ski instructor. Like Goldilocks, I tried them all. My husband is so patient, I feel patronized. My eldest son likes to show off, which scares me to death. My middle son crossed to the dark side and snowboards. Graham coaches me in a way that feels just right. Early on, he told me to sing (to myself of course) as I ski. This was a huge concession given that when he was two he told me my singing gave him stomachaches. Down the mountain I come, singing “Old MacDonald Had a Farm,” “Climb Every Mountain,” and any other catchy tune I know the words to—impressed by how well his instruction helped me relax.

More than a decade has passed since we started skiing, but when conditions are tricky, Graham still offers to ski with me on my first run of the day. He skis ahead, then stops, turns, and looks up the mountain and calls, “Ski to me, Mom!” Using wide turns, I ski down to meet him. He skis a bit further, stops, calls to me, and so it goes as he guides me safely to the bottom. Once there, I release him to the land of black diamonds where he belongs, and I am content to be the last one down the mountain.

Be Creative This page is designed to give our readers the opportunity to express themselves creatively. If you have a short piece of fiction or nonfiction (300-500 words), a poem, illustration, or photograph depicting life in Wellesley and Weston, we would love to hear from you. Please email your submissions to jill@wellesleywestonmagazine.com.
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