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We consulted nature lovers for suggestions of where you can enjoy the outdoors even on the steamiest days of summer.

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, Wellesley resident Eileen Brackenbury points out the need for a Demolition Review Bylaw.

Business
Get to know three local family businesses that maximize family harmony with business success.

Fitness & Health
Find out how locals are pedaling their way to a healthier lifestyle.

Good Works
Good Sports is well equipped to help young athletes realize their dreams.

Education
The Wellesley Chinese Language School aims to increase multicultural awareness in Wellesley and surrounding towns.

Artist Profile
Award-winning painter Jean Wiecha creates striking, large-scale landscapes and intimate portraits.

Books
Escape from Saigon, a novel by Michael Morris and Wellesley’s Dick Pirozzolo, follows the lives of two foreign correspondents at the end of the Vietnam War.

Food & Wine
Get recipes and advice on how to make your own summer cocktail party the epitome of laidback revelry.

Excursions
Our Cape escapes offer plenty of fun-filled activities for children of all ages.

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, Ernie Corrigan fondly remembers his weekly trips to the dump as a child growing up in Wellesley.

Local Cuisine
Rachel Klein’s Needham restaurant, RFK Kitchen, is earning rave reviews.
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There are so many reasons to love 50 Liberty. Spectacular water and city views – always in motion – are just the beginning. You’ll love the array of lifestyle amenities ranging from the private club room and the well-equipped fitness center to the 24-hour concierge. Situated in the heart of Boston Harbor overlooking Boston’s Waterfront and the Fan Pier Marina, the luxury condominiums of 50 Liberty welcome you to city living that feels open and relaxing and places you within easy access of all that Boston has to offer.

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No registration of the condominium residences at 50 Liberty at Fan Pier Boston has been made with any state or foreign jurisdiction where prior registration may be required by law, and no offer to sell condominium residences at 50 Liberty at Fan Pier Boston is made to any person in any state or foreign jurisdiction where prior registration may be required by law. Current concepts for the residences at 50 Liberty and the Fan Pier development are subject to change. Balconies are not available on all homes. Pricing is subject to change.

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.

The Seller of the residences at 50 Liberty at Fan Pier is committed to the letter and spirit of U.S. policy for the achievement of equal housing opportunity throughout the Nation. We encourage and support an affirmative advertising and marketing program in which there are no barriers to obtaining housing because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.
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my mantra for the summer is “Get out!” Get out and enjoy nature. Take a bike ride. Walk through the woods. Go for a swim. There is so much to see and explore in New England and right in our own backyards. This issue is filled with ideas and inspiration to help you make the most of summer and create lasting memories.

The fun begins with our “Ten Tips for Finding the Coolest Spots in Town this Summer.” Writer Steve Maas spoke with our local conservation experts to find popular and some not so familiar places in town to hike, bird watch, enjoy a water view, and catch a beautiful sunset. I have lived in Wellesley for many years, and a few of these spots were unknown to me until now. I hope you will enjoy exploring them as much as I plan to.

In “Bringing the Indoors Outdoors,” we speak with local landscape designers to learn new trends in creating outdoor living spaces that feel like the most well-appointed living rooms. Fabulous fire pits, spectacular swimming pools, and show-stopping “she sheds” are just a few of the trends Patty Lenz Bovie uncovers when talking to homeowners and design experts.

I also plan to do some exploring on my bicycles this summer. Our Fitness and Health article highlights what our neighbors are doing to stay fit while riding for fun, charity, or a cardiovascular workout. I love visiting new neighborhoods on my road bike, and this summer I also plan to check out some off-road trails on my fat tire bike. There are quite a few trails that offer a diverse array of challenges with twists, turns, ledges, and hills, all amidst gorgeous scenery if you can look up long enough to take it all in. I’m still trying to perfect my form, up the skill level, and hope to survive the summer with minimal bruising!

We also look ahead to an exciting event this fall: the opening of the Tolles-Parsons Senior Center in Wellesley. After much discussion, planning, and building, the center looks amazing and I was intrigued by the hidden design details that provide elegant touches but also double as safety measures for those who are frail or who have vision or mobility problems. The center will also offer a wonderful array of programs such as yoga, dance, lifelong learning classes, and container gardening on the patio. Outdoor games, pool tables, and a lounge with a fireplace will provide many opportunities for hanging out with friends and making new ones.

Whether traveling on vacation or staying close to home, I hope you and your family have many opportunities to get out and enjoy a fun-filled summer.
kelly mcguill home
interior design
it's always something. If you've ever planned a family reunion, you know how difficult it is logistically. With family members scattered across the country, schedules need to be coordinated months in advance, vacation time blocked off, flights booked, and dinner reservations made. Every year, our family gets together for such a reunion in Naples, Florida, and it's up to me to organize and implement it. I thought I was in pretty good shape this year when I picked up my husband at the airport and we sat down for a nice dinner to make last minute adjustments to the schedule. Late that evening, he was awakened by intense abdominal pain and, after hours in the emergency room, underwent an appendectomy the next afternoon… just when everyone was due to arrive.

As unfortunate as the situation was, especially for my husband, there was a silver lining: our family was together. No one missed a beat. Our daughter stepped in as hostess while I was at the hospital, and our son took on the role of comedian, keeping the atmosphere upbeat and cheerful. Over the course of the next three days, everyone took turns visiting the patient in the hospital, providing much needed love, comfort, and support.

I’m sure that most of you will agree that nothing is more important than the support of a loving family. In this issue, I was reminded of this when reading about Colin Lualdi, the subject of our face-to-face interview. When Colin was born, his parents instinctively knew that something wasn’t right. After audiological testing determined that he was completely deaf, Colin’s parents did not hesitate and forged ahead to find the best resources to help their son navigate and excel in both the hearing and deaf worlds. The story of this remarkable, accomplished, and humble young man is inspirational, and the appreciation he has for the love and support of his parents, brother, and friends is evident throughout the article.

You'll also read about two families who are adapting to situations they probably didn’t anticipate when they decided to have children. In “Transitions,” you’ll meet John and Alex, bright and energetic children who are transgender boys. Both boys have incredible families whose love, acceptance, and support is overwhelming as they embrace their children during their social transition and quest to live their true selves. Each family has a different story to tell and both are heartwarming and encouraging. There is also an abundance of useful information in the article that is important for all of us to know.

I hope your summer is filled with fun and the love and support of family and friends.
many of us grow a few herbs in our gardens to use for culinary purposes or as ornamentals. Did you know that those very herbs you grow might contain nutritive properties that can benefit your health? The tradition of using herbs goes back a long way—to the time before pharmacies or doctors—when people relied on healing remedies found in nature. The medicinal use of herbs led to the creation of physic gardens, mainly found in medieval monasteries, where plants were displayed and cultivated for treatment of diseases. The tradition of herbal medicine is still widely accepted in Europe and elsewhere. Here in the United States it is considered an alternative therapy.

Let’s step into the garden to find out what herbs are growing and what some of their health-promoting properties might be. Many of the herbs we grow hail from the Mediterranean area, which means they prefer a sunny, dry location. Interestingly, the mint or Lamiaceae family comprises most of the herbs we commonly cultivate and use because they have strong flavors. At the top of the list for summer is the annual basil, *Ocimum basilicum*, a happy herb with zest; its
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essential oils can be uplifting, providing a gentle mental stimulus. It also soothes when a crushed leaf is rubbed on an insect bite.

Another favorite of the season is lavender, *Lavandula angustifolia*, with its aromatic essential oil believed to be useful as a mild analgesic. When used externally, it can relieve aches, itches, and rashes and can be used to treat burns. It’s a great general use herb with a clear, sweet scent that can soothe and de-stress the mind, body, and spirit.

One of the highest antioxidant levels of all herbs is found in thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*, which is considered effective against respiratory and digestive infections. A combination of lavender and thyme oils is often used in massage to relax tense muscles and leave one feeling great.
A natural companion to thyme is sage, *Salvia officinalis*. During the Middle Ages, monks concocted a soothing syrup of sage, honey, and apple cider vinegar for colds, coughs, and sore throats. All the herbs mentioned here are high in antioxidants that help protect the body’s cells from damage, with sage being the highest. Perhaps that is why it is associated with longevity. Many of you will be familiar with rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*. Like sage, it is rich in potent oils. A stimulating herb, it is said to clear the mind and improve circulation.

Perhaps the best known herb is peppermint, *Mentha x piperata*. With its distinctive smell and taste, it is found in many household products. Menthol gives it its bracing flavor that is purportedly good for digestion. If you choose to grow it, make sure its growth is restricted as it spreads.

Lastly, is an unsung hero often just used as a garnish but full of goodness—parsley, *Petroselinum crispum*, a biennial grown as an annual. Unlike its Mediterranean cousins it prefers a rich, moist soil, and its flavor improves when the weather cools. It takes up minerals and vitamins and concentrates all this goodness in its leaves. It’s also a good breath freshener.

Many herbs are high in vitamins and rich in minerals with versatile properties that promote health. Gardening has many positive benefits and growing herbs could enhance your well being, bringing you closer to the earth and improving health. Don’t miss out! Get out and plant an herb garden for the well being of your body and spirit. 

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about herbs, visit the New England Unit of The Herb Society of America’s Teaching Herb Garden at the Gardens at Elm Bank, home to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in Wellesley.
10 tips for...

FINDING THE COOLEST SPOTS IN TOWN THIS SUMMER

Yes, it’s hot. But that doesn’t mean you have to retreat to an air-conditioned room. We’ve consulted with area nature lovers for suggestions of cool spots where you can enjoy the outdoors even on the steamiest days of summer. Some of the places are a bit out of the way, so you may want to buy one of the maps listed at the end.

one  Find a Shady Spot
Elm Bank in Wellesley has many picturesque spots for enjoying a sizzling summer afternoon. “My favorites are ‘Hannah’s Bench’ on top of the sledding hill and under a shade tree looking toward the Charles River, the new belvedere between Weezie’s Garden and the Bressingham Garden, and the Crockett Memorial Garden next to the Maple Grove,” says Katherine Macdonald, president and executive director of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, which oversees the reservation and is headquartered there. For more information, visit www.masshort.org.

two  Climb a Hill
Although the climb to the top of Maugus Hill in Wellesley may make you hot, it will reward you with cool breezes and views to Great Blue Hill in Milton. For a 1.7-mile loop walk, park at the Centennial Reservation lot off of Oakland Street and take a trail through meadows and woods to Maugus Hill. For details, visit www.wellesleyma.gov and find the Trails Committee under “Boards and Committees.”

three  Get a Lakeside View
Find a spot to sit along Lake Waban at Wellesley College or take the three-mile path around it. Highlights include the boardwalk near the Keohane Sports Center, views of the topiary gardens of the Hunnewell Estate, and encounters with wildflowers. Park in the lot off of Washington Street opposite the College Club. Cross the street and head for the water. Stick to the path, as some land is privately owned.

four  Seek Sanctuary
Guernsey Sanctuary in Wellesley is a 25-acre preserve that borders Sabrina Lake, which was created by the eccentric...
19th century sewing machine magnate William Emerson Baker. You can walk along a levee or catch a bass from the dock. The sanctuary, one of 10 overseen by the nonprofit Wellesley Conservation Council, features wood trails, wildflowers, ferns, and swampland (wear your boots). Kids can hop off the tree trunk pieces that line both sides of the path to a vernal pool. Park at a lot off of 163 Winding River Road at the Needham border. The Guernsey path is a short distance northeast.

**five Discover Fauna (and Maybe) Hobbits**
“Explore the flora and fauna, and imagine the fairies and hobbits that inhabit the moss-covered cottage,” says Michael Tobin, a director of the Wellesley Conservation Council. The council maintains Cronk’s Rocky Woodland, a sanctuary which includes a marked nature trail. It is next to 24 Crown Ridge Road in the Wellesley neighborhood south of Route 9 between Weston and Wellesley. From College Pond, and is a favorite of the town’s conservation director, Michele Grzenda. “During the spring and summer months, the observant birder will be rewarded with any number of treasures: flushing a sleeping owl from a large white pine tree, spying an indigo bunting from the apple orchard, or hearing the ‘peent’ of an American Woodcock at dusk along a wetland edge,” Grzenda wrote in Bird Observer (April 2014). Access is via Burchard Park, which you can enter opposite 268 Concord Road. Park in front of the tennis courts.

**six Catch a Fish**
Enjoy a cool breeze while fishing at the tip of Pickle Point on Morses Pond in Wellesley or just watch the swans or the more than two dozen other types of birds that fit among the trees. The three-acre peninsula, another Conservation Council preserve, is at the northwest side of the pond. Park on Kendall Road, a short dirt street near where the Cochituate Aqueduct and the Crosstown Trail cross Russell Road.

**seven Enjoy the Sunset**
Looking west from Sunset Corner in Weston, you can see Wachusett Mountain from a concrete bench at the edge of Highland Forest. From Route 20, take Highland Street for a mile south to a dirt turnout on the right. Warning: there’s no sign saying “Sunset Corner.” Cross the street and climb up the stone steps. Bear right where the trail splits, and you’ll shortly see the bench. The spot is a favorite of Meg Kelly, president of the nonprofit Weston Forest & Trail Association, which owns the site and maintains its many trails.

**eight Cross a Bridge**
Several hundred yards and a world away from busy Route 20 in Weston is Lee’s Bridge, a small stone bridge built in 2013 over gurgling Three Mile Brook. The bridge is named for Lee Cohen, a longtime trustee of the trail association, and was paid for by his family. In the 19th century, water wheels along the brook powered factories. Nature has since reclaimed the area, known as Sears Woods. Access is via Crescent Street, which befitting its name, curves off, and then back onto Route 20. Turn off at No. 27, marked by a sign for Land’s Sake, and follow the narrow road as it twists behind backyards and leads to the historic Melone homestead that is now home to the Land’s Sake main office and greenhouses. Park there and then walk west along a rutted dirt path. Just before it heads uphill, a trail marker will direct you to a narrower path on your left. After a steep and stony descent, you’ll wind up at the bridge—recognizable by its rustic elegance.

**nine Observe the Birds**
College Conservation area in Weston is a preserve that includes numerous trails, including a loop around College Pond, and is a favorite of the town’s conservation director, Michele Grzenda. “During the spring and summer months, the observant birder will be rewarded with any number of treasures: flushing a sleeping owl from a large white pine tree, spying an indigo bunting from the apple orchard, or hearing the ‘peent’ of an American Woodcock at dusk along a wetland edge,” Grzenda wrote in Bird Observer (April 2014). Access is via Burchard Park, which you can enter opposite 268 Concord Road. Park in front of the tennis courts.

**ten Marvel at the View**
Thank the ice ages for Weston’s Doublet Hill, a rocky outcropping with views of the Boston skyline. Park at the end of Doublet Hill Road and take a quarter-mile hike up the hill. Signs mark the path.
Karin Robison, account manager with NatureWorks Landscape Services, has been designated as a Massachusetts Certified Landscape Professional by the Massachusetts Association of Landscape Professionals. Karin also holds designations as a certified horticulturist, a master gardener, and a rain garden specialist. NatureWorks provides year-round landscape management, fine gardening, arboriculture, and construction services for homeowners in Wellesley, Weston, and surrounding towns.

Mortgage Network, Inc. announced that Pamela Steele Parker (NMLS #114462) has joined the company as a senior loan officer in its Wellesley office and will be responsible for serving customers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. Parker brings 15 years of mortgage banking experience with a personalized approach to each client, along with extensive knowledge of loan programs. Parker says, “I am especially excited about Mortgage Network’s wide assortment of mortgage options, including jumbo portfolio products.” Visit www.pamelasteeleparker.com.

Wellesley estate planning attorney Richard Feigenbaum has been named a Super Lawyer for 2016. Super Lawyers is a rating service of outstanding attorneys from more than 70 practice fields who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. Attorney Feigenbaum focuses his practice of law on estate planning and trust law. For more information, visit www.elderlaw.com.

Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. Real Estate recently announced the winners of the company’s annual B.O.L.D. (Building Our Legacy Daily) awards. The awards are given out each year to the company’s top sales producers. This year’s recipients included associates from the company’s Wellesley, Weston, and Needham offices: Traci Shulkin, Donahue Maley Team, Tanya Tanimoto, Noah and Lisa Pearlstein, Jared Wilk, Jared Parker, Jane Wemyss, Barbara Miller, Burns and Karpowicz Team, Jessica Allain, Theresa David, Leslye Fligor, Elise Siebert, Wyndham Flaherty, and Mary Wilson.

The MacDowell Company, a Weston-based landscape architecture and construction company, has received the Best of Houzz for Service Award for 2017. Beyond MacDowell’s ability to deliver exceptional design and construction services, this award recognizes its dedication to providing an outstanding project experience for its clients. Please visit TheMacDowellCompany.com or call 781.899.9393. For information on the Houzz award and to view some of The MacDowell Company’s projects, please visit Houzz.com/Pro/MacDowell.

Laurie Gorelick, the principal designer of Laurie Gorelick Interiors, a full-service interior design firm.
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**inbox**

Laurie Gorelick

Studio for residential and commercial spaces, is the recipient of the 2016 Best Custom Design Award from the New England Chapter of the International Furnishings and Design Association (IFDA). Industry peers judged projects created by IFDA members based on functionality, creativity, and overall design. Gorelick earned the honor for her design of a bedroom space for a Junior League of Boston Showhouse. For more information, visit www.lauriegorelickinteriors.com.

A group of local women gathered in March for the second annual Wellesley Wellness Retreat. Sponsored in part by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the retreat took place at the Hunnewell Carriage House at Elm Bank in Wellesley. Activities included yoga, meditation, and workshops focusing on self care that supports wholehearted living and vibrant good health. The retreat was co-founded by Stacy Kennedy, MPH, RD; Molly Shrewsberry, MPH, MS; and Cory Halaby, RYT. For information about future events, please visit www.wellesleywellnessretreat.com.

Premier Dental Group of Wellesley, P.C., formerly Drs. Thiel Wang & Associates, Inc., is moving. By the end of the summer, their new office will be located at 70 Walnut Street in Wellesley. There is plenty of parking and the new suite is on the first floor. Patients can now find Premier Dental Group on social media as well. Be sure to “like” and “follow” them on Facebook. For more information on how to make a positive difference in your oral healthcare, visit www.premierdentalgroupofwellesley.com.

Alexandra Melignano of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Weston was recently recognized as the most stylish real estate agent in Boston Agent Magazine’s Top Ten MyStyles of 2016 feature. Melignano is a recent addition to the roster of talented brokers at Coldwell Banker Weston where she has been working alongside the equally stylish Rosemary McCready for the past two years.

The Law Offices of Sonja B. Selami P.C., please visit www.selamilaw.com.

Cutting Edge Homes is proud to welcome Andrew Shveda Jr. AIA, NCARB as the senior architect to the firm. Shveda earned his BA in Architecture at the University of Kentucky College of Architecture and studied at Atelier Venezia in Venice, Italy. He is also the recipient of the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art’s 2013 Bulfinch Award for new construction projects over 5,000 square feet and serves the community as the chairman of the Worcester Historical Commission. For more information please visit www.ThinkCuttingEdge.com or call 508.435.1280.

The Third Annual Lunch with Kate Walsh event was held on March 30 at Wellesley Country Club. Attendees learned about the Birth Sisters Program at Boston Medical Center (BMC). Thanks to the generous support of the community, Birth Sisters were assigned to moms who would otherwise have little or no support during labor or in the stressful weeks after delivery. For more information, visit www.bmc.org.

Melissa Dailey of Coldwell Banker Wellesley has been ranked the No. 2 top-performing sales

The Law Offices of Sonja B. Selami P.C. have been providing legal real estate quality services for more than ten years. The firm opened a new office in Bedford in March to join its five other offices located in Lexington, Wellesley, Newton, Franklin, and Norwood. The new office will be a great addition to the firm, its clients, and their real estate agents. For more information about the
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associate out of over 4,000 Coldwell Banker New England sales professionals. Melissa was recognized with the Society of Excellence Award, a coveted honor reserved for top Coldwell Banker-affiliated sales associates nationwide. Only 40 real estate agents received this award. This is the second consecutive year she has achieved this award for her sales accomplishments. For more information, call 617.699.3922 or email Melissa.Dailey@NEMoves.com.

Darby Road HOME, a fine home furnishings store located on the Waltham-Weston line, was named Boston magazine’s Best of Boston® Home 2017 Best Accessories for the Home, West. DRH is excited to team up with the Alzheimer’s Innovation Fund founded by Matt and Jenna Vettel, to help raise critical seed money aimed to research Alzheimer’s prevention. DRH will be donating up to 20 percent of all sales for the month of June to support the Alzheimer’s Innovation Fund. For more information, visit www.darbyroad.com.

Sudbury Design Group is pleased to announce the relocation of its Cape Cod office in Cataumet to 749 Main Street in Osterville. The company’s continued presence on the Cape allows its professionals to more efficiently and effectively manage projects on the South Shore, Cape and Islands, as well as Rhode Island. The group is enthusiastic to bring its experience to customers in the design and permitting of coastal projects. For more information, visit www.sudburydesign.com.

Dean Poritzky, Principal/License Partner of Engel & Völkers Wellesley, recently attended Exchange, the company’s annual networking and awards presentation event. Held in Miami, this year’s event marked the 40th anniversary of
Engel & Völkers worldwide. Poritzky was named the #9 Top Producer in the U.S. He received the President’s Circle Award as a top-producing agent for 2016, and he was inducted into the company’s Private Office network, the highest category of service reserved for the most distinguished clientele and properties.

After many months in the making, Dan Gordon Landscape Architects is proud to present its new website and firm identity: DanGordon.com. The new website captures the essence of the firm and what it brings to each project as landscape architects.

The firm was also honored as one of Ocean Home magazine’s 2017 Top 50 Landscape Architects and received the 2017 Best of Boston Home Award for Best Landscape Architect—West.

Drs. Ali of Wellesley Dental Group are proud to announce the addition of a new CEREC® Omnicam, a cutting-edge technology that scans teeth, allows for customized design, and fabricates natural-looking porcelain crowns, bridges, and implant restorations. With the help of this technology, patients can comfortably address their restorative needs in a single visit, achieving long-lasting and aesthetic results.

The first time Dara Delaney jumped out a perfectly functioning plane, she set a precedent for the rest of her life—from skydiving, marathon running and falling in love. She believes that taking the leap is almost always worthwhile. As the new branch manager for Century Bank’s Wellesley office, Dara brings a unique and deep understanding of “risk management” to her and her clients’ personal, professional and financial decisions. Recently married, Dara loves her family life and helping people achieve their personal and business financial goals. Visit her at the Century branch at 258 Washington Street or call 781.235-6500. CenturyBank.com.

Kertzman & Weil LLP kicked off the spring real estate season by welcoming more than 120 guests at a book launch event at Babson College. Christine Lennon, former editor at Vogue and Harper’s Bazaar and now an LA-based freelance writer, shared her personal experiences that led her
to write her first novel *The Drifter*. Lennon read passages from her book and autographed copies for attendees, who had the opportunity to connect with others in the local market.

- Expanding on their selection of handcrafted artisan jewelry, *J. Todd Galleries* in Wellesley is now offering an increased selection of designs by *Ruta Reifen*. Reifen is noted for her contemporary jewelry designs and signature coral-like textures accented by precious stones. The designs, complemented by a synergy of form and surface, are handcrafted in 14K gold and use gemstone color combinations to convey an ongoing romance with the sea. For more information, visit www.jtodd.com.

- This summer, two teachers from *Dana Hall School* will visit the South African Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls (OWLAG), as part of an ongoing partnership called the Strengthening International Sisterhood Through Education, Relationship-building and Service (SISTERS) program. SISTERS is based on joint service missions, curriculum sharing, collaborative online research projects, and faculty and student exchange programs. Dana Hall students visit OWLAG as part of a biannual curriculum-based trip to South Africa, and the Wellesley school has hosted educators and students from the Academy.

- Wellesley resident and local architect *Patrick Ahearn* FAIA, was recognized by *Ocean Home* magazine as a Top Coastal Architect of 2016, the only architect based in Massachusetts to receive the honor. Ahearn specializes in classical architecture and is a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Please visit www.patrickahearn.com for more information and links to social media.

- *Bill Andrews* is pleased to announce the launch of *Andrews & Company*, a premier home management and concierge company serving clients in Weston, Wellesley, Wayland, West Newton, and Concord. The company handles errands and shopping, appointments, auto maintenance, luxury travel, opening and closing of second homes, and contractor management. Their detailed and proactive approach ensures that all activities and home maintenance are handled on a consistent and timely basis. For information, contact Bill directly at 781.956.8325 or via email at bill@andrewsandcomp.com.

- *Maura Wayman Photography* is excited to announce the addition of *Robin Davis* as account manager/new business development manager. Robin brings a strong visual and production background as well as great energy. Maura and Robin worked together as video producers for Cramer Productions, and, after a long hiatus they have teamed up again. If you’re looking for corporate imagery, headshots, or family photography check out their new website at www.maurawayman.com.

- The *Wellesley Historical Society* received a generous grant from the *Wellesley Community Preservation Committee* in 2016 to process a large part of its individual and family archives. The project, which began in July 2016, involves organizing and describing the archives, placing them in acid-free folders, and creating finding aids which are made available online. Once a collection is processed, it is available to researchers. These projects allow the...
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Society to better serve the community and preserve Wellesley’s history. For more information, email director@wellesleyhistoricalsociety.org or call 781.235.6690.

Founded by former Weston residents Alyssa and Gabriella Melignano, two sisters with a love of fine jewelry, Sixty Stax is a Boston-based contemporary jewelry brand specializing in handcrafted and custom-beaded bracelets. Always representative of the ever-changing fashion and color trends, Sixty Stax paves the way for a new kind of accessorizing, encouraging customers to mix and match their ‘stax’ to create different looks. Each bracelet is 100 percent handmade with high-quality materials from the U.S. For more information, visit www.sixtystax.com or email sixtystax@gmail.com.

Pine Straw is fully stocked with gift options for Mother’s Day, graduation, and Father’s Day. Need ideas? Pine Straw’s staff is ready to help you put together something special. Stop by the Wellesley store on May 16 for a Chan Luu Trunk Show that will include great graduation and confirmation gifts. Need a beach cover up or a tote? Pine Straw has you covered there, too. Visit the Wellesley store at 466 Washington Street, the Waban store at 1625 Beacon Street, and go online at www.livegivepinestraw.com.

Nancy Haas is celebrating five years as the store manager at Lux Bond & Green Jewelers’ Wellesley
store, located at 60 Central Street. She has been creating special memories for her Lux Bond & Green customers for more than 20 years. The LBG family understands that community is a partnership and they are proud to support the Newton-Wellesley Hospital Fund Gala, “A Night of Illumination,” and the Wellesley Little League. The company is also the official jeweler of the Boston Red Sox. For more information, visit www.LBGreen.com.

Vanquish Fat Removal is the newest addition to Dr. William LoVerme’s non-surgical body contouring options at Accurate Aesthetics Plastic Surgery, P.C. With no downtime, this FDA-cleared non-invasive treatment can be done up until the day you leave for vacation. Vanquish is easier than Cool Sculpt and can help you lose two to four inches. Get ready for summer now! Visit www.AccurateAesthetics.com or call 781.263.0011.

Joan Roover, MSW, J.D., owner of A Thoughtful Move, is pleased to announce her induction in the Diamond Society of the National Association of Senior Move Manager’s prestigious Circle of Service. Servicing Wellesley, Weston, and surrounding areas, A Thoughtful Move assists with downsizing, home staging, and being the catalyst needed in planning for the next stage of life. Learn about services and how A Thoughtful Move can help you by visiting www.athoughtfulmove.com or see the ad on page 111.

FLX Training coached a fundraiser class for all ages and fitness levels to benefit the Melanoma
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Foundation of New England and to honor Annie Rolincik who is on the Boston Marathon Team, Running For Cover, FLX is also debuting its new in-house fitness tracker, MYZONE, which displays your real-time heart rate, energy utilized, and your percentage of effort during your workout. MYZONE will motivate you to set goals and push yourself to the next level. Find your ZONE at FLX training, located at 443 Worcester Street in Wellesley. www.flxtraining.com.

Barbara Hirsch, award-winning interior designer and principal of Elza B. Design, Inc., led a Q&A at Boston Design Week titled "Designing a Furniture Collection—What does it take to create your own line of furniture?" Barbara recently designed the Bois et Couleur Collection for Dowel Furniture. The furniture line, composed of two chic dining chairs and their corresponding armchairs, a statement-making living room armchair with accompanying ottoman, three end tables that also serve as nightstands, and two versatile counter stools, launched in May 2017.

One2One Bodyscapes, located at 386 Washington Street, is celebrating 17 years in Wellesley. Visit its newly renovated training studio and updated, private Pilates studio. One2One’s experienced trainers will motivate and educate you so you can set and maintain your personal fitness goals. You’ll learn how to reduce health risk factors, change unwanted habits, manage stress, and meet life’s milestones with optimism and vitality. Call 781.235.2262 to schedule a consultation and begin working on a customized fitness program that’s perfect for you.

Posies of Wellesley is celebrating two years in its new location at 158 E. Central Street in Natick, just before Jesamondo. Owned and operated by Margaret Becla, Posies offers the finest floral arrangements and gifts, backed by friendly and prompt service. The dedicated staff will always go the extra mile to make your floral gift perfect. Posies will liven up any birthday party with a festive bouquet with local and nationwide delivery. For more information, visit www.posiesofwellesley.com or call 781.237.9669.

Jesamondo Salon & Spa, located at 154 East Central Street in Natick, is offering Balayage, the hottest and most popular trend in hair coloring because it’s flattering on all hair types. It’s also low maintenance due to lack of foil lines and is customizable to create both natural and unique looks by feathering in pops of color. Jesamondo stylists have reached new levels of training taught by leading national educators, bringing cutting-edge techniques in Balayage to the salon. Visit www.jesamondo.com to enjoy a 15 percent discount now.

Jenn Shotkus was named vice president of merchandising and buyer for Lyn Evans last January. Jenn grew up in the fashion industry alongside her late mother, Linda Shotkus, who was her mentor. Jenn graduated from Weston High School in 2008. Thereafter, she attended Lesley University and studied marketing. Today, the store is excited to introduce “NexJenn,” a multi-generational shopping experience. Jenn will bring a new attitude and a younger vibe to the Lyn Evans brand. See www.lynevans.com for more.

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38
Their drive towards independence

A teenage life is filled with milestones. From their first days at High School to their first days behind the wheel. Momentous occasions arrive with an increased level of responsibility.

They’ve done their practice hours, received their certificate from Driver’s Ed, and now passed the State driving exam. And so here you are, handing over the keys to your son or daughter. As you learned yourself, they now have a responsibility beyond simply operating the car. From oil changes and tire rotations to registrations and renewals. Not to mention a steady stream of gas money.

Speaking of money, how is your new driver going to pay for it all? Maybe it’s time to consider another milestone - their own checking account.

Introducing NB Checking.
In addition to no account fees or any hidden charges, with NB Checking your young driver can use any ATM anywhere in the world, and we’ll automatically reimburse every ATM fee. And even though they can now drive to one of our branches, with NB Mobile one never actually has to: easily transfer money, deposit checks, track spending, and receive cash back rewards directly on the app.

Don’t wait for college for them to learn about banking.
Please stop by and meet our Wellesley Branch Manager, Stephen Walls, at 458 Washington Street. He’s a parent and will take as much time as needed to discuss banking and set up an account. He can be reached directly at 781-474-5541 or SWalls@NeedhamBank.com. Let’s create the next milestone together.
Cathy Varetimos is celebrating her second anniversary as the new owner of Beauty and Main, located at 79 Central Street in Wellesley. Beauty and Main’s latest product lines include Patchology, Coola Organic Suncare and Self-Tanning, Coastal Salt and Soul, and the Smith and Cult Nail Line, to name just a few. Other popular lines include Trish McEvoy, Laura Mercier, Bare Minerals, Pai Shau, and more. Beauty and Main offers in-house and off-site makeup services, parties, and workshops, and also complimentary curbside pick-up. Call 781.237.1685 for details and information.

The Wellesley Bank Charitable Foundation announced that Maureen E. Sullivan has been named president of the foundation. Sullivan previously served as a director on the foundation board. Sullivan will continue to perform in the position of executive vice president, chief marketing and human resources officer at Wellesley Bank. The Wellesley Bank Charitable Foundation supports 200 various non-profit organizations in Wellesley, Weston, Natick, Needham, Newton, and Boston. It was formed in 2011 for the purpose of giving back to the communities in which the bank serves.

Ellen Curran Design’s new slogan, “New Designs Where Modern Meets Convention,” embodies the sleek, modern, and functional style that Ellen creates. “Effectively bridging the gap between conventional and minimalist styles, results in an up-to-date and highly functional version of what has been known as the ‘traditional home.’ Respect for convention, and restrained modernism, brings life to this new vision, through streamlined traditional elements, and subtle changes in shapes, colors and materials.” The kitchen on page 79 is a good example of this approach.

Joe Campanelli, chairman of the Tufts Medical Center Board of Directors, addressed the large crowd of attendees at the 2017 Working Wonders for Tufts Medical Center event held on March 28 in the Boston innovation district. The event raised more than $1.2 million while highlighting the incredible work of Tufts Medical Center’s CardioVascular Center. A longtime resident of Wellesley, Mr. Campanelli also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Needham Bank.

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PLEASE SEND YOUR INTERESTING NEWS ITEMS to jill@wellesleymagazine.com. E-mail submissions only please; jpeg photos are welcome at 300dpi.
Debi Benoit has been Wellesley’s top broker for 11 years with good reason: she closes the deal. She brings deep experience, knowledge and business acumen to the table. Debi Benoit acts with integrity and respects confidentiality. Put the consummate dealmaker on your side. Call her at 617.962.9292.

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22 GREYLOCK RD, WELLESLEY
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80 MONADNOCK RD, WELLESLEY
$3,695,000

3 STONEFIELD LN, WELLESLEY
$3,450,000

35 HUNDREDS RD, WELLESLEY
$3,145,000

17 GARDEH RD, WELLESLEY
$2,995,000

20 OLD FARM RD, WELLESLEY
$2,850,000

55 PINE ST, WESTON
$2,850,000

97 WOODLAWN AVE, WELLESLEY
$2,495,000

461 SANDY VALLEY RD,
WESTWOOD $2,375,000

30 OLD FARM RD, WELLESLEY
$2,250,000

260 WELLESLEY AVE, WELLESLEY
$2,250,000

15 FULLER RD, WELLESLEY
$1,870,000

65 ARNOLD RD, WELLESLEY
$1,850,000

40 BANCROFT RD, WELLESLEY
$1,350,000

16 HAMPSTEAD RD, WELLESLEY
$1,295,000

63 GARDEN RD - Unit 4, WELLESLEY
$1,195,000

20 HAMPSHIRE RD, WELLESLEY
PENDING

129 ALBION RD, WELLESLEY
PENDING

28 BELAIR RD, WELLESLEY
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What are the challenges behind selling unique and luxury homes?
 Pricing is a challenge because these are one-of-a-kind homes. The property’s distinctive attributes need to be showcased to a sophisticated and targeted audience. The marketing is key and needs to tell an exclusive story in an innovative and compelling way. Working with a top-producing broker who knows the luxury market and specializes in high-end properties is your best bet.

How have you accomplished such great success in this sector?
 Unique and luxury homes require a comprehensive online marketing effort. Beautiful, glossy brochures are a nice accompaniment, but they don’t necessarily find their way to potential buyers. Social media is king. It is constantly changing and must be kept fresh and informative. Marketing to this sector requires highlighting features of the home that will brand it as exceptional and stand out from the clutter. The photography should be art directed and complemented with provocative copy. With over 30 years of experience, I have accumulated a stellar list of consultants as well - architects, interior designers, lenders, attorneys, home inspectors, etc. who can guide my clients through the challenges of the buying or selling process. Most importantly, a significant measure of my success is due to a loyal base of repeat clients who are themselves influential individuals.

617.851.4909
amy@benoitmiznersimon.com
AmyMizner.com

What makes your team so valuable when buying or selling?
 My power team of real estate professionals ensure my success. We share the same commitment to excellence and have the passion to exceed beyond the expectations of our clients. Amy Rutkowski’s involvement in the Weston community and schools is a tremendous benefit to our buyers. Monique Mooney’s family of builders is an unrivaled resource during home inspections and new construction projects. As an attorney and litigator, Amy-Jo Vesely handles my business operations with superior attention to detail and professionalism. Together, my team provides the support necessary to make your real estate experience a rewarding one.

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View from the Top

What are you seeing in the first quarter of 2017 in the real estate market?
I am seeing a pretty healthy market. Buyers still seem to have a preference for new construction and many of those homes have been absorbed especially in the high-end. Homes that tend to need updating in some cases are being overlooked. The inventory is at an average level for this time of year.

What do you tell your buyers who are active in the market right now?
I coach them to look for homes and property locations that meet their criteria. It is hard to get everything on your wish list so settle for 90 percent of what you are looking for. Changes can often be made to the home but not the neighborhood. Rates are still very low so it’s a great time to jump into the market before rates rise.

What do you tell your sellers that are thinking of selling in this market?
Be realistic about the price of your home and be aware of how it competes with other homes on the market. Always have your house tidy and be prepared to have it ready to show on a moment’s notice! Remove as many personal items as possible, especially photographs, so that the new buyer can envision themselves living there. Don’t wait until the spring flowers are in bloom to put your home on the market, it is getting late and many buyers have already purchased.

What do you love most about your career?
That is an easy one, I truly wake up every day and feel lucky to do what I do. The opportunity to meet new people every day is what I love. Being able to connect buyers to their new house or being able to find just the right buyer for the home being sold by my client is very gratifying. It is either a new beginning with lots of new memories to create, or helping seniors find a safer and more secure environment. People trust me because they know I always have their best interest in mind.
Delaying Demolition

**Wellesley** is losing its historic homes at an alarming pace. The town has one of the highest demolition rates in the Boston Metro area, and a home is lost at the rate of one house every 3.8 days. According to the Wellesley Historical Commission, 772 houses (and counting) have been demolished since 2002. In 2015 alone, 95 demolition permits were issued. New speculative or “spec” houses are often designed with little regard to historic neighborhood character, setbacks, lot coverage, or conservation of the existing tree canopy. Larger lots are subdivided, and enormous three-story houses now loom over their neighbors. And the majority of Wellesley residents believe that the increased rate of demolitions is a problem: a 2015 survey conducted by the Wellesley Planning Board Residential Development Working Group found that over 70 percent of Wellesley residents agreed that both the number of teardowns and the impact of new construction on neighborhood character were concerns.

Wellesley has been a particularly attractive town to developers due to the lack of restrictions in place in regards to demolishing historic buildings. Many towns across the country have what’s known as a demolition delay bylaw. Demolition delay bylaws help cities and towns protect against the loss of historic structures and neighborhood character. These bylaws are currently in place in 148 Massachusetts municipalities, including all of the towns surrounding Wellesley: Weston, Natick, Newton, Needham, and Dover. Other communities like Waltham, Lincoln, Brookline, Framingham, Concord, Lexington, Sudbury, and Boston also have demolition delay bylaws. As a result, when a developer is looking for an easy place to tear down a house and put up a McMansion, Wellesley is the first place they look. A demolition delay puts our town on a level playing field with other similar communities.

The accelerated pace of demolition has detrimental effects beyond the loss of history. Smaller houses are generally replaced with much larger, more expensive homes, pricing out families looking to move to Wellesley and limiting diversity. From an environmental perspective, the loss of usable houses results in a massive waste of materials. Property lots are clear-cut with little regard to saving existing trees. There is also the huge environmental cost of constructing a new house both in materials and transportation.

The Demolition Review Bylaw proposed by the Wellesley Historical Commission was voted on and passed at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting. The Bylaw was endorsed by the Natural Resources Commission, the Historic District Commission, and the Planning Board. As written, the Demolition Review Bylaw is intended to “assure the preservation and enhancement of the Town of Wellesley’s historical and cultural heritage by preserving, rehabilitating, or restoring whenever possible, buildings that have distinctive architectural features or historical associations that contribute to the historic fabric of the Town.”

The Bylaw will apply to buildings constructed before December 31, 1949; secondary structures like garages and sheds are not subject to review. Property owners are free to alter the interior structure of their buildings,
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change the roofing or siding materials, and construct additions. A building will be considered demolished if 50 percent or more of the exterior structure is removed or enveloped.

The review process is straightforward. An owner wishing to demolish a pre-1950 structure needs to file an application with the Planning Department. The Planning Department staff will determine if the Bylaw is applicable; if so, the Historical Commission will hold a public hearing open to all town residents where owners, abutters, neighbors, and other residents may speak. If the Historical Commission determines that the building should be preserved, the structure may not be demolished for 12 months. During the delay, the property owner can explore alternatives to demolition like constructing additions, adaptively reusing the building, or selling the property to an owner who is willing to preserve the building. If the building is not found to be preferably preserved, the property owner may apply for a demolition permit.

Although there is often pushback on these types of restrictions, multiple studies have shown that preservation laws actually increase property values. Homebuyers come to Wellesley in part because they like the neighborhood character of our town. A demolition delay bylaw helps maintain that character and increases the value of each neighborhood.

Wellesley has lost some of its most significant historic buildings in the past 15 years, including the original Town Hall/Poor Farm where West Needham residents voted in 1880 to separate and become the town of Wellesley; the Wellesley Inn; and the award-winning 1938 Wellesley High School. Other historic structures like the Elm Bank Manor House—designed by world-famous architects Carrère and Hastings—and the Wellesley Farms train station—designed by Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge—sit semi-abandoned in disrepair due to neglect. Far too many historic homes have been lost as well. The Demolition Delay Bylaw will hopefully allow the town to maintain its historic character.
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a warm summer breeze. The aroma of freshly cut grass. The seasonal chirping of crickets. These natural delights are a few of the reasons why so many people are moving their typical “inside” spaces outside—to experience the wonders of the outdoors without relinquishing the comfort of the indoors.

Today, more and more architects, landscape designers, and builders are creating fabulous exterior living areas so their clients can marvel at a star-filled sky from an overstuffed couch, prepare a gourmet meal while their family lounges by the pool, or even watch a movie by the light of a crackling fire.

As growing numbers of people are enjoying family and leisure time outside, requests for garden rooms, fire pits, outdoor kitchens, and “she sheds” (see sidebar on page 54)—essentially outdoor “man caves” designed specifically for women—have grown exponentially.

Locally, New Englanders are starting to make the most of their outdoor spaces so they can soak up every minute of the summer months. “We design outdoor spaces that transcend the boundaries between indoors and out, using the foundations of classical design and proportion to create comfortable outdoor living spaces and timeless landscapes,” said Kathryn Ostermier of Dan Gordon Landscape Architects in Wellesley.

Bruce MacDowell, Jr., owner of The MacDowell Company, a Weston-based landscape architecture and construction company, has collaborated with a number of clients in
left: The poolhouse at Westover in Westonight: This stone fireplace and dining terrace provide space for the clients to entertain family and friends
Wellesley and Weston to achieve a range of distinctive exterior living areas. “We’ve created terraces with fireplaces as inviting spaces for family and friends to congregate closely around,” he said. “They are optimal for evenings and add the natural ambiance of sound, smell, and warmth to the suburban landscape.”

Another trend is a move toward outdoor kitchen and dining areas. For one client, MacDowell created a unique space that transports the comforts and conveniences of indoor dining outside.

It features an open-air cabana with Greek architectural influences that is warmly lit by a bold, cast iron chandelier to create an elegant ambiance. Instead of a rug, colorful ceramic tiles warm up the dining space as a practical, water-resistant alternative. And the columns and rooflines of the structure boast Tuscan styling reminiscent of Italian piazzas.

But clients don’t need to have acres of land or endless budgets to create inviting outdoor space. “Many times it’s the smaller projects, whether

While the term “she shed” is relatively new, the idea is not. In 1912, Alva Vanderbilt (yes, that Vanderbilt) had an elaborate Chinese Tea House built on her sprawling Marble House property in Newport, Rhode Island. Alva used the space for political rallies and social teas to raise money for “Votes for Women.”

Now, “she sheds” are popping up anywhere there’s space and desire for them, not just at the most elite homes. Some women use their “she sheds” for art or music studios, pool houses, to practice yoga, as a reading or writing nook, or as a place to retreat for some well-deserved solitary peace and quiet—not just footsteps from home. Others use them to gather with friends, socialize, and relax—not just in summer, but all year round. No matter what they are used for, there’s no denying that their popularity has begun to soar.

The she shed in Weston shown in the accompanying photo is anything but a shed. Originally built as a pool house in the 1920s, this elegantly appointed room reflects the owner’s sensibility to Old World spaces. Its soaring Palladian windows bring in rays of natural light; and the bright, floral décor in this intimate hideaway is as sophisticated as it is feminine. In the summer, the fully recessed doors have hidden screens that enhance the indoor-outdoor feel of the room. The trellised ceiling is reminiscent of a gazebo, and the hand-painted flowers that run along the border were inspired by the owner’s love of roses.
it be due to scale or budget, when a designer’s skills and creativity become paramount,” explained MacDowell. “Every problem has a solution; each canvas has a painting not yet realized. It’s often amazing how small changes in the landscape can reinvent the space and make what was uninviting or unusable into a desirable place to be.”

“When able, we like to get away from the basic stone patio, function-only walls, square lawn spaces, and simple plantings,” said MacDowell. “We feel it’s our obligation to introduce interesting and inviting spaces that draw in the client, their family, and their guests.”

Rebecca Verner, landscape architect and senior associate at Gregory Lombardi Design in Cambridge, agrees that livable outdoor spaces are becoming more and more desirable. “There’s definitely been a growing interest in creating elaborate outdoor spaces for our clients—fire pits with hearths you can sit on, pools adjacent to sports courts, and entire cabanas with full-on outdoor kitchens that include not only a grill, but an ice maker, a dishwasher, and a fully-stocked refrigerator. These exterior spaces have become an extension of their interiors and a destination, especially in the summer.”

One Lombardi client wanted to create a space to entertain their two teenage children—a place where the kids would feel comfortable inviting their friends over and hanging out at home. “When the family moved in four years ago, the lot did not have much usable space.
The property abuts protected wetlands, and is very steep and rocky,” said Verner. But both the client and the designers knew it had tremendous potential.

Lombardi and Verner worked with Meyer & Meyer Architects to create doors that open up onto a terrace for entertaining. Under the terrace, a walk-out “outdoor basement” has a flat-screen television built into the wall. Hammock chairs dangle from the ceiling, and a circular couch for lounging and entertaining looks out onto a 100-year-old wooded landscape. “It’s a really inviting space now,” said the client. “I have two teenagers who are constantly coming and going so I wanted to make our home accessible to them and their friends with game tables, a snack bar, and movies.”
He also believes in adding interesting visual elements whenever possible. “Mixing a brick herringbone pattern with traditional bluestone provided a little extra something at one Wellesley home,” he said. Without deterring from practicality, the bricks added texture and created a dining space distinct from the rest of the patio.

One client’s home in Weston had a view of a wire fence, with very little privacy. French doors opened to a yard, but the space was completely underutilized. Douthit recommended building a large bluestone patio with a fireplace and sitting wall separate from the dining area. To create privacy, his landscapers planted dark American Arborvitae along with white pine, spruce, and hemlock trees beyond the stone fireplace, creating an additional spot for family and friends to gather. And because

didn’t want to be inside in the movie room in the summer—we wanted to be outside with the crickets and the babbling brook and the sounds of nature. Now, when we’re sitting out there, we feel like we’re on vacation.”

Jim Douthit, owner of a Blade of Grass in Wayland, sees the appeal of outdoor additions as well. “Creating an outdoor ‘room’ makes it feel like your home has a whole new level of living space.” But he also points out that it’s important to make these “rooms” easily accessible. “If you have an exterior space that’s just a few steps from the house, you’re much more likely to use it.” One of the things he’s big on is elevating patios. “Walking down two steps versus four can make all the difference when you’re doing it a lot.”

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Development: Samuels & Associates and Landsea
Douthit raised the grade of the patio to match the dining room level, “it now feels like it’s part of the same room,” he explained.

Another of Douthit’s projects in Weston had an oversized, flat yard, which was easier to work with than some, but begged for depth and dimension. In this case, the client wanted a place to relax in the summer and entertain, while also creating an intimate setting for family. The team at a Blade of Grass transformed the space by adding extra windows for an enhanced view; an expansive patio and pool with hot tub; and plantings of plane trees, boxwood, quick fire hydrangeas, and tree-form ‘PeeGee’ hydrangeas.

“Hardscaping adds beautiful structure to a space, but mixing it with plantings and landscaping is what makes a project really special,” added Douthit.

No matter how small, steep, wooded, or barren as your yard may be, most lots have underused space that can be repurposed and transformed by someone with a trained eye and creative vision. In the end, it can make all the difference. Having outdoor space provides an extra space to entertain—or just relax and decompress.

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by the time Colin Lualdi was two months old, his parents suspected that he had some kind of hearing loss and mentioned it to the pediatric nurse practitioner. The nurse assured Danielle and Paul that Colin was developing just fine. They were just overly concerned first-time parents.

Convinced that their instincts were right, Danielle and Paul conducted their own “creative hearing tests” and shared their findings at Colin’s four-month-old visit. The pediatrician referred them to an audiologist and formal testing revealed that Colin was completely deaf. The Lualdis were stunned. They had been prepared for news of mild, not profound, hearing loss.

This was in 1995, and Danielle and Paul immediately switched into high gear, resolving to find the best way to communicate with their son, to help him learn and appreciate the wonders of the world. They discovered The Learning Center for the Deaf (TLC) in Framingham, Massachusetts and arranged for the Parent Infant Coordinator to visit them at their home with an interpreter. This was the first time that the Lualdis had ever communicated with a deaf person. They quickly determined that Colin needed to acquire language and not simply speech skills in order to reach his cognitive potential and enjoy long-term happiness.

The Lualdis learned American Sign Language (ASL), they participated in TLC’s Parent Infant Program, enrolled Colin in the preschool program, and continued his education at TLC full time through elementary school. In middle and high school, Colin split his time between TLC and the Framingham Public Schools where he took honors and AP classes. They all felt it important for Colin to learn to navigate the hearing world and use interpreters in an academic environment in addition to becoming comfortable in the Deaf community among peers and role models.
A gifted student, after high school Colin enrolled at Princeton University and graduated in the spring of 2017. He was the sole Deaf student at Princeton during his four years there and not only handled a demanding course load, but also conducted physics research in Italy with a Princeton professor and in New Jersey at MITRE Corporation.

At a mere 21 years of age, Colin has already achieved more than have many hearing adults twice his age. This inspirational and humble young man shows that Deafness is less a disability than a different way of living. We interviewed him to learn more about how he sees himself and what he does to thrive.

***

WellesleyWeston Magazine: How do you like people to refer to your hearing condition?

Colin Lualdi: I refer to myself as “Deaf” with a capital “D,” to indicate that I identify as a culturally Deaf individual—part of a heritage that includes the Deaf community, Deaf culture, and American Sign Language—not merely as a hearing-impaired person who considers his deafness strictly as a medical condition.

“My greatest joy is that Colin seems to have overcome a huge pre-existing barrier for the Deaf to achieve academic success, and doing so has helped him reach his potential, and, more importantly, happiness and a sense of self-worth without giving up his Deaf identity. There were many involved in his journey that helped accomplish this and to that ‘team’ of players we are all grateful.”

— Colin’s mother, Danielle Lualdi
“Princeton stood apart from other schools because it offered the resources of a large research university with the experience of a small liberal arts college.”

**WWM: How do you communicate?**

**CL:** ASL is my primary means of communication. While I can lip-read fairly well, it is mostly guesswork, and I rely on it as a last resort. To communicate with people who don’t know ASL, I usually engage in some form of typing/writing back and forth—on my phone, laptop, or simply on a piece of paper—or I use an ASL interpreter.

**WWM: Do you ever wish you were a hearing person?**

**CL:** Since being a Deaf person is an integral part of my identity, I’ve never yearned to be a hearing person. I am not frustrated that I am Deaf, but instead, by the fact that communication can be challenging. Although I can obviously read and write English, since I am profoundly Deaf, I do not have the option to hear or speak the majority language, so I appreciate it when people make accommodations to grant me communication access.

I am very fortunate to have a mother, father, and younger brother who are supportive and understanding when it comes to communication access. Unlike the experience of many of my Deaf peers, everyone in my family knows American Sign Language. This has allowed me to develop a close relationship with my parents as well as a wonderful, adventure-filled friendship with my brother, Garret, for which I am extremely grateful. Additionally, where appropriate, this also allows my family to interpret for me to ensure that I’m included in conversations with extended family and friends who don’t sign. It has always been my goal to straddle both worlds.

A lot of my hearing friends actually learned ASL, and some even serve as mediators between their hearing friend groups and me. Similar to my years in Framingham public
WWM: Please share a formative experience you had at TLC.

CL: I joined the TLC Academic Quiz Bowl team my first year of high school and was the only freshman in the group. The other members were seniors who instantly took me under their wings. As prom approached, they asked me who I was taking, and I told them I planned to go solo. They would have none of that and encouraged me rather strongly to find a date. In fact, they already had their sights on a freshman girl they thought would be an ideal candidate. The seniors

WWM: As a Weston resident, did you ever consider going to the Weston public schools?

CL: During my eighth grade year, I considered multiple options for high school, including staying at TLC part time and mainstreaming part time at Framingham High School, mainstreaming full time at Weston High School (WHS) or at Newton North High School that has a full-time mainstreaming program for the Deaf. I had thought I might want to attend WHS because it's obviously a good school and it would give me an opportunity to connect with my peers in Weston, especially friends I had made in Boy Scouts. Ultimately, I realized that I valued daily interaction with the Deaf community, and the best option was to split my day between TLC and Framingham High School only ten minutes away.

schools, at Princeton I had a great group of friends who all learned to sign fairly well, and, because of that, my social life was very fulfilling. We took classes and studied together. We ate dinners together. We chilled together late into the night, holding deep philosophical discussions on all sorts of subjects ranging from dating gossip to the meaning of life. We went to formals and parties together. Several of my friends were in the Princeton University Scramble Band (a marching band with a lot less formality and a lot more humor than a typical marching band), and, after a couple years of nagging, they managed to convince me to join. (I play in the percussion section!)
I selected Princeton over universities for the Deaf and other hearing universities for multiple reasons. First, when I graduated from high school, my roots in the Deaf community were sufficiently deep that I felt that I would be able to maintain them if I went to a hearing university. Second, my academic interests were diverse, so I determined that a liberal arts school would enable me to explore and master a range of subjects. Princeton stood apart from other schools because it offered the resources of a large research university with the experience of a small liberal arts college.

Also, I found the Princeton Office of Disability Services (ODS) staff impressive before I even stepped on campus. They arranged all the details for interpreters and other accommodations for my overnight visit, assuring me that they would take care of everything. Other hearing universities I visited confessed that while they wanted to make sure that I had the access I needed, they had limited experience accommodating deaf students.

Princeton is filled with motivated and visionary students and professors. I believed the opportunity to spend four years with this group of people would be life changing, and it was. For instance, the only reason why I am currently the CEO of a successful ed-tech start-up is because
during a random dinner conversation with two hearing students my freshman year, we talked about a common frustration: the lack of accessible ASL learning resources. By the end of dinner, we had decided to start a company to create precisely the resource we needed. Today, I am the CEO of SignSchool, a company developing an interactive online learning platform for teaching ASL. We offer both free consumer resources and commercial educational learning software for grades K-12 and universities. Princeton has been extremely supportive, providing financial support, office space, mentoring, and more. SignSchool is staffed by a mix of hearing and Deaf individuals. One of the co-founders who graduated from Princeton in 2016 currently works at the company full time.

**WWM: What did you study at Princeton?**

**CL:** I concentrated in physics and earned certificates, the Princeton equivalent of minors, in computer science and linguistics.

**WWM: What types of accommodations enabled you to master your studies at Princeton?**

**CL:** I had very skilled and committed sign language interpreters for all of my classes that the ODS and I chose after a careful screening and interviewing process. During my junior year when I took advanced math and physics courses, I had a hard time following the very abstract material in class, as did my interpreters. The ODS developed a
solution by generously doubling my accommodations, adding Communication Access Real-time Translation—a captioner typing everything said in class by the professor and students verbatim in real-time.

WWM: What are your goals for life after Princeton?

CL: Among my immediate options, I am considering pursuing a physics Ph.D., concentrating in the field of quantum information. I am fortunate that physics is one of the few truly universal scientific disciplines. Research can be communicated through the sharing of data and mathematical models regardless of the spoken languages of the researchers involved. I’ve experienced this firsthand—in high school when I visited a school for the Deaf in Jiujiang City, China and only understood the physics equations written on the board; then again during my research in Italy, when I worked alongside Italian physicists with limited English; and finally, at an international conference on quantum cryptography where I discussed my research with scientists from around the world.

Because I cherish the Deaf community, I am committed to giving future generations of the Deaf more opportunities to achieve in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) fields. Just as previous generations advocated for accessibility for the Deaf, which enabled my success, I hope to continue to do the same and serve as a mentor and role model for those who follow me.
what could be more delightful than hearing the rustling of foliage beneath our feet on a walk down a tree-lined street in Weston or the enrapturing strains of the Wellesley Symphony in concert at MassBay Community College? Yet as seductive as such sounds are to our ears, harsh or extremely loud sounds can challenge the equanimity of the most intrepid soul.

From the clatter of a commuter train running up Route 16 through Wellesley to the endless rumbling of the Massachusetts Turnpike as it cuts through the heart of Weston, highly intrusive noise is always with us. In one way or another, we are all subject to its tyranny, be it in the form of a blaring car radio, the roar of low-flying aircraft, a television on full volume, a landscaper’s leaf blower, or the un-moderated ambiance of a busy restaurant.
It’s not just Wellesley and Weston, two communities noted for their open spaces and gracious residences, that are vexed by such intrusions. The quality of life for many Americans is being degraded by auditory assaults. As recently reported on CBS, one in four adult Americans will suffer from hearing impairment in the decades ahead. Blaring televisions, over-amplified cell phones, and the roar of sporting events and pop concerts are all taking their toll. Dr. Debara Tucci, a spokesperson for the American Academy of Otolaryngology, puts the problem we all face in stark terms: “The most common cause of hearing loss is prolonged exposure to loud noise.”

**A Community of Distinguished Colleagues**

Weston resident Eric Wood knows well what you’re up against, having devoted his long and distinguished career to taming the ever-present...
beast of intrusive sound. Having set out on a lifelong mission to quiet things down, Wood can fairly be called one of the deans of American noise control engineering. And if he has not been entirely successful in quieting the unruly beast, it’s not for lack of trying.

While his name or that of his Cambridge company, Acentech, may not be familiar to you, facilities managers at many local schools and other institutions know it well. Buildings in Weston that have received acoustical consulting services from Acentech include Weston Public Library, Weston Middle School, Country and Field Schools, and Weston High School. In Wellesley, the Wellesley Free Library, Fiske School, Schofield School, and Wellesley Country Club are former clients. And at Wellesley College, Pendleton Hall, the Science Center, the Margaret Clapp Library, and Houghton Chapel have also benefited from Acentech’s services. Many local homes are quieter places as the result of an Acentech consult, as well.

Wood has had good company in his field from other Wellesley and Weston residents, including Laymon Miller, now deceased, who played a pioneering role in the noise suppression and control field. For three decades Miller worked to quiet aircraft, industrial facilities, and concert halls. Ed Kerwin, a former Weston resident who’s also deceased, earned his doctorate at MIT before making a career of providing acoustical and noise control consulting services to the U.S. Air Force and Navy while helping to quiet airplanes, surface ships, and submarines.

Wood, like Miller and Kerwin were, is an alumnus of Cambridge’s world-famous company Bolt, Beranek and Newman where he worked...
for legendary technology pioneer Leo Beranek. Today, he is associated with other Wellesley and Weston residents in their efforts to diminish or manage the impact of noise on our lives. Jack Heine, a Weston neighbor and longtime friend of Wood’s, played a major role in capturing and analyzing acoustical data for U.S. naval defense purposes. Heine now is a principal at Cambridge Sound Management, which, as a collaborator with Acentech, has made many local public and private facilities more user-friendly.

Wellesley resident Bob Hellweg is a noted acoustical engineer and is active along with his friend Wood in a National Academy of Engineering initiative called “Technology for a Quieter America.” Hellweg’s professional focus is on a topic of concern for communities everywhere: environmental noise and its impact on neighborhoods—a vocation we can all be grateful for.

Sound, and the way it is managed is a relative thing, and if you’ve enjoyed a concert at the Katherine L. Babson, Jr. Auditorium at Wellesley High School, you’ve been touched by Wood’s consulting work. Max Hobart, longtime conductor of the Wellesley Symphony, has attended a half-dozen student concerts in recent years, auditing jazz ensembles and chamber orchestras in the high school auditorium. “I always sit in the same seat in the back of the balcony,” he notes, “and individual instruments are distinct and clear.”

Students at Weston’s Field School have directly benefitted from the work of Wood’s colleagues, where Acentech engineers worked collaboratively with Heine and Cambridge Sound Management and devised and installed a classroom sound augmentation system that assists teachers and students alike. “It’s in all our classrooms,” says Field School Principal Matt Lucy, “making teacher-to-student and student-to-student communication that much more audible and effective. Carefully-placed speakers and easy access to microphones facilitate instruction and save teachers’ voices,” he adds.
Wood’s Contribution

One clue to Wood’s pre-eminent influence in his field can be found in his resume, which is 16 pages long.

“I started out helping to reduce the sound of 747 airplane engines for Pratt & Whitney,” explains Wood. His manner is mild and in a flannel shirt and khakis he looks every bit the outdoorsman he has been for years, assisting his wife Brenda in her work raising and training Golden Retrievers.

As he talks about a career that has spanned five decades, his pride is self-evident. Then he describes his role as a fellow of the Acoustical Society of America and as a past president of the Institute of Noise Control Engineering. “We have over 950 members in the society, from all over the U.S. and overseas,” he says, with quiet satisfaction. The latter promotes professional competency in noise control engineering with seminars and recognitions for excellence.

Wood’s resume is a summary of his consulting expertise and reads like a comprehensive overview of his chosen field. From industrial applications (power generation and paper mills to pipelines and railways) to aircraft design, building construction, and product noise reduction he has had his hand in almost every area of noise-generating human activity.

One measure of the man can be found in his publications, which when taken in total comprise over two hundred manuals, sponsored reports, and papers, whether self-authored or written as collaborations. In range they run from efforts to reduce the impact of noise on residential neighborhoods to virtually every area in the landscape of production that defines human enterprise.

Yet Wood’s contribution to his field and its impact on the lives we live can best be seen elsewhere in the form of a personal memoir disguised as a fond recollection of his years at Bolt, Beranek and Newman.
A Fond Memoir

In his book, Sound Ideas, Wood recounts the multitude of technical challenges and personal contributions made by the hundreds of colleagues with whom he worked over the years. While technical in nature, it is also a fond memoir, mentioning the spouses and children of scores of colleagues and giving generous credit to one and all for past accomplishments.

Wood’s interest in sound management can be said to have begun when he was a babe in arms. The son of a Marine commander in World War II, Wood was raised on an air corps base, where the roar of aircraft engines was a constant. But it was not until he arrived at the University of Hartford as an undergraduate engineering student that his lifelong engagement with noise took a serious turn.

Thanks to an inspirational professor, Wood began to study the sources and management of sound in all its permutations, developing expertise in the field that led to a job with a major manufacturer of jet aircraft engines, arguably the noisiest devices in the world.

In working to reduce the sound level of jet engines, he first entered into the arcane world of noise control engineering that touches the lives of all of us in a myriad of ways. Technical standards and government regulation, including those of the Environmental Protection Agency, define much of what thousands of manufacturers of everything from cars to household appliances must do to ensure their products

“Sound has a culture all of its own. Whether in the workplace, the home, or public spaces, when it occurs in the form of unwanted noise it can disturb and degrade our quality of life.”

– Eric Wood
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“Sound has a culture all of its own,” Wood notes. “Whether in the workplace, the home, or public spaces, when it occurs in the form of unwanted noise it can disturb and degrade our quality of life.”

Sound All Around

Wood is so deeply concerned with the preservation of domestic tranquility that he has published a practical pamphlet on noise suppression and management in the home. Readily accessible on the Internet, it has led him to be interviewed by *The New York Times* and *This Old House*. Usefully entitled *Noise and Sound Control at Your Home*, it explains in simple language ways for homeowners to deal with a variety of noise-related distractions.

Careful selection of dishwashers, small kitchen appliances, air conditioners, and even yard equipment can make a real difference in one’s quality of life. “Traffic noise can prove more intractable,” Wood notes. “But there are ways to build sound-deadening fences — make them high, wide, and thick — and place sound suppressing storm windows on street-facing outer walls.” However, in some instances, “the only real remedy for vehicular noise, especially trucks and motorcycles, is a real estate agent,” he says.

Moderating Impact

You’re not alone in dealing with the concerns Wood treats in his booklet, nor are the sound-abatement engineers, product designers, and regulators tasked with moderating the impact of sound-producing devices. Consider the lowly leaf blower, for instance. Its depredations have come close to sparking civil war in some neighborhoods, where hordes of landscapers regularly descend upon local yards. Some think the louder the leaf blower, the more powerful it is, but manufacturers like
Echo have taken pains to reduce sound levels, and have had some success. A 2012 article in Wellesley’s Town Meeting warrant to ban them outright was defeated.

What does the future hold for those of us beleaguered by the bang, rattle, and buzz of times like these? Perhaps the most heartening trend is the emergence of electric vehicles, most notably in the sleek Teslas and Chevy Volts, whose presence betokens a time when noisy internal combustion engines like diesels and motorcycles will slowly recede from our roads.

Landscape conservation efforts supported by the Community Preservation Act may not return all sections of Wellesley to primal forestland, but they are making a marked difference in ensuring that large swaths of sound-deadening forestland and fields remain part of the local landscape. Weston, not without the good intentions of the community, still remains partly rural in character and arguably is more quiet than any other so close to Boston.

“I’m still active in my work,” said Wood when last I spoke with him in Florida where he spends the winter months. “My dear wife and I have enjoyed living amidst the peace and quiet of Weston for over 45 years,” he notes. “We raised three wonderful children and have a dozen grandchildren living nearby.”

“I’ve been blessed with a loving family and scores of friends while having had a particularly interesting, satisfying and unique professional career,” he adds. “It’s been a rewarding experience.”

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a family in transition

John Puopolo is 10. And he’s got skills. Double dunk in bedroom basketball? Check. Scoring touchdowns followed by a signature celebratory dance? Check.

He loves sports stars David Ortiz, Rob Gronkowski, and Julian Edelman, to name a few. He wakes up every morning to a life-size decal of Tom Brady on his wall.

The second child of Wellesley residents Merrill and Rob Puopolo, John was born a girl. Otherwise stated, his gender assigned at birth was female. He was named Caroline, and joined his sister Sofia, four years older.

As early as age three, John—then Caroline—loved all things boy. Boy clothes, boy toys, and boy names. Merrill and Rob were attuned to John’s preferences, but not sure what the significance was. They’d check in regularly with his preschool teachers, ask how he was doing, and with which kids he preferred playing.

Like many parents of transgender boys (female to male), they thought Caroline was a tomboy. But several experiences indicated to Merrill that this might be something different when John was about four years old.

“One moment that I recall vividly happened in TJ Maxx. We walked in
to see kids’ formalwear on display—dresses on one side and three-piece suits on the other. John asked if he could buy a three-piece suit. I thought, ‘okay, it’s not too expensive, why not?’ I can’t tell you how many times he wore that suit.”

The second memory that stands out is a weekend away when the Puopolos stayed at a hotel with a pool but had forgotten John’s bathing suit. “We couldn’t find a girls bathing suit to buy; they only had boys swim trunks. John could not have been happier.”

Around this time, John began preferring only boys’ underwear. “I remember standing in the boys section at Target, looking at these tiny boys’ underwear. As I stared at them I thought to myself: ‘What am I doing?’ And just as quickly I thought ‘I’m doing this because my child wants it.’ You can’t imagine the expression on his face when I got home and pulled them out—he lit up.”

This was a turning point. Merrill says, “I thought to myself—I can’t fight this.”

By the time John entered kindergarten, he wore only boys clothes and had a shorter haircut. Merrill notes she was resistant to a traditional boy’s haircut.

Until then, Merrill and Rob had never heard the term “transgender.” They started to do some research.

In April of John’s kindergarten year, the Puopolos went to Disney–world…and did a trial. Experts often recommend this to see how a child reacts to a social transition. “We called him John. We let him use the men’s room. He was totally happy.”

That summer, they met with three people: their pediatrician, a counselor specializing in gender identity, and Jeff Perrotti—founding director of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Safe Schools Program for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Students.

And they did more research.
After much consideration, the family made the decision to complete the social transition—with a new name and pronoun change—and he officially entered first grade as John.

John was the first student at Hardy Elementary School—and in the town of Wellesley—to socially transition. The Puopolos were prepared to help educate the Hardy staff and community. Principal Charlene Cook, school psychologist Lisa Goodman, and John’s first grade teacher Timothy Baldwin were fully supportive and dug into the literature to educate themselves.

The transition went well. John was now able to be his authentic self—who he’d always been in his heart and mind. The Puopolos wrote a letter to be sent to the first grade classes, but Rob wasn’t in favor of it. You wouldn’t issue a letter to a class if your child was gay, Rob reasoned, so why should it be necessary if your child is transgender? They discussed, they considered, and they redrafted the letter several times.

In the end, they didn’t send it. After a few weeks, Principal Cook told them she’d received only one parent phone call. The social transition in his class had gone smoothly thus far.

John is an outgoing, charming, and confident boy who was happy to be interviewed. Unlike his mother, he doesn’t have any “aha moments” or memories prior to his transition which stand out in his mind. When asked if there are any questions he doesn’t like to get about being authentic self—who he’d always been in his heart and mind. The Puopolos wrote a letter to be sent to the first grade classes, but Rob wasn’t in favor of it. You wouldn’t issue a letter to a class if your child was gay, Rob reasoned, so why should it be necessary if your child is transgender? They discussed, they considered, and they redrafted the letter several times.

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transgender, he notes that he doesn’t like to get any. From his standpoint, there’s not much to discuss. Given this preference, I asked him why he was interested in being interviewed for the article. Breaking out into an ear-to-ear grin he responded, “Because I want to be famous.”

redefining gender

TRANSGENDER is a term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex the doctor marked on their birth certificate. GENDER IDENTITY is a person’s internal, personal sense of being a male or a female. For transgender people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match.
The terminology (see sidebar on page 94) can be confusing to those without context or knowledge. As thoughtfulness for people with gender incongruence becomes increasingly common, sophisticated, and detailed, professionals and the community struggle to keep pace with providing a sensitive and descriptive lexicon. Preferred terms evolve and descriptors change, which makes educating the community even more challenging.

The prevalence of transgender people in the overall population is in the range of 0.3 to 0.5 percent, notes Dr. Joshua Safer, endocrinologist at Boston Medical Center (BMC), and medical director of The Center for Transgender Medicine and Surgery at BMC. “In the scientific community, we are quite clear that there is a biological basis for gender identity,” Safer notes.

It is important to understand that gender identity and sexual orientation are completely separate from each other, though the two are often erroneously conflated. Simply put, sexual orientation is about who you are attracted to and fall in love with; gender identity is about your own sense of yourself. One often
Transitions

Gender Identity, Sex, and Expression

- **GENDER IDENTITY**: An individual’s internal sense of feeling male, female, neither, or some combination of both.
- **NATAL OR BIRTH-ASSIGNED SEX**: The gender assigned at birth according to external genitalia or chromosomes.
- **GENDER EXPRESSION**: How gender is presented to the outside world (e.g., feminine, masculine, androgynous). Gender expression does not necessarily correlate with birth-assigned sex or gender identity.
- **“TRANSGENDER” (SOMETIMES ABBREVIATED AS “TRANS”)**: Term used to describe a person whose gender identity does not match the biological sex they were assigned at birth. “Transgender” is used as an adjective (“transgender people”), not a noun (“transgenders”).
  - **TRANSGENDER MALE/TRANSMALE**: Female to male. Person with a masculine gender identity who was assigned a female sex at birth.
  - **TRANSGENDER FEMALE/TRANSFEMALE**: Male to female. Person with a feminine gender identity who was assigned a male sex at birth.
- **CISGENDER (SOMETIMES ABBREVIATED AS “CIS”)**: Term used to describe a person whose gender identity matches the biological sex they were assigned at birth.
- **GENDER NONCONFORMING**: A person whose gender expression is perceived as being inconsistent with cultural norms for that gender. (e.g., a boy preferring feminine clothes or playing with toys intended for girls would be gender nonconforming.) A person whose gender expression is consistent with cultural norms expected for that gender (e.g., girls playing with Barbie dolls) would be gender conforming.
- **GENDER DYSPHORIA**: Psychosocial distress that may occur when gender identity and birth-assigned sex are not completely congruent.
- **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**: A person’s feeling of attraction toward other people: heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. Sexual orientation is entirely separate from gender identity, but it is often confused with it. The sexual orientation of transgender people is based upon their identified gender (e.g., a transgender man who is attracted to other men might identify as a gay man; a transgender woman who is attracted to other women might identify as a lesbian).
- **TRANSSEXUAL**: Older, clinical term that has fallen out of favor. Historically, it was used to refer to transgender people who sought medical or surgical interventions for gender affirmation.

Repeated idiom further clarifies it: “Sexual orientation is whom you go to bed with. Gender identity is who you go to bed as.”

One hallmark of a child who may be transgender is persistence, insistence, and consistency. It is common for children to act in cross-gender play—for example, choosing dress, toys, or play that are typical for the opposite of their natal gender. Referred to as “gender nonconforming” behavior, this does not necessarily mean a child is transgender. In other words, if a four-year-old boy wants to wear a dress or says he wants to be a girl once or twice, he probably is not transgender; but if a boy repeatedly insists, for months or years, that he is a girl, then he is more likely to be transgender.

Dr. Jeremi Carswell is a pediatric endocrinologist and the director of the Gender Management Service (GeMS) at Boston Children’s Hospital. The age at which a child becomes aware that he or she may be transgender varies. “We see kids as young as three whose parents may have questions about gender nonconforming behavior, and we see other kids who present after puberty.” She notes that a significant percentage of children who exhibit gender nonconformity at younger ages will ultimately not be transgender. Carswell says, “The strength of a child’s words and degree of their conviction can be indicative of whether they are truly transgender.”

Once a child has identified as transgender, many experts advocate for a social transition—which involves changing names, pronoun use, clothing, and hairstyle, for example—as soon as possible. Proponents of this approach argue that social transition can improve function in children who are intensely gender dysphoric and can ‘test the waters’; that is, giving the child a completely reversible way to explore life in the other gender before committing to any medical interventions (see sidebar on page 96). There is some evidence that once they have socially transitioned, children with intense gender dysphoria often show marked improvement in behavior and mood.

Dr. Carswell agrees, though with the caveat that this is a personal decision, and the environment of the child needs to be considered. “Early social transition is the right thing to do when there is parental support and when the child’s safety can be ensured.” If there is any concern about significant bullying or safety, she sometimes recommends that the child continue to present as cisgender (non-transgender) at school, and as transgender at home.

Anxiety and depression rates are higher in the transgender population than in the general population. Reassuringly, a recent study showed that transgender children who are allowed to socially transition...
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Transitions

have no more depression and anxiety than non-transgender children. Dr. Carswell witnesses this firsthand. “The kids who come to us at younger ages don’t have gender dysphoria because they’re getting the support they need. Society as a whole is so much more accepting. It’s such a joy to see.”

“i am not a girl”

Lauren Leahy’s realization that her 10-year-old son, Alex, might be transgender occurred in stages, and, like Merrill, Lauren has specific moments that she remembers well.

Her first memory was when Alex, born Alexandra, was two and they were visiting the theme park Story Land. “There was a face painting station with hundreds of faces to pick from. Alex pointed to Spider Man. It wasn’t what I was expecting. I pointed to all the feminine faces.”

Alex was very clear in his preference for the boy Spiderman. Lauren notes, “I thought I was going to have a tomboy.”

From ages two to five, Alex gravitated toward all stereotypically male things: boy Halloween costumes, the color blue, and boy characters in television shows. “Looking back,” Lauren says, “I think he thought if he chose boy things, this would solve the problem.”

Lauren and her husband, Steve, supported Alex’s preferences. Alex was “happy and funny” until about age five, but in kindergarten, things changed. “He started to have behavioral problems—temper flares, disruptive episodes,” Lauren says. Alex also developed depression, anxiety, and ulcers. And while he did well in school, relationships were difficult; he wasn’t connecting with many kids.

By second grade, Alex’s preferences were only increasing. “He really put his foot down. He refused girl clothes and begged for a boy haircut.”

Chris Edwards’ Story

FROM A VERY EARLY AGE, Chris Edwards knew that the girl staring back at him in the mirror wasn’t him.

Born and raised in Wayland, Chris was extroverted and fun-loving. But after struggling with gender dysphoria, depression and hopelessness ensued. He couldn’t bear the thought of continuing to live his life in a body that didn’t match his gender.

In 1995, at age 26, he chose to affirm the gender he’d always been in his heart and mind, coming out to family, friends, and coworkers. He was working at a high-profile Boston ad agency when he transitioned. He applied what he’d learned in advertising to “rebrand” himself, orchestrating a remarkably well-received gender transition—at a time when the word “transgender” wasn’t part of the vernacular.

His memoir, BALLS: It Takes Some to Get Some, is told with candor and humor. He discusses the confusion and isolation of growing up in the wrong gender, and finding happiness after completing his social and physical transition.

Had Edwards grown up in society today, he would have welcomed the chance to socially transition and start hormone blockers at an early age.

“Transitioning before puberty kicks in definitely has advantages,” Edwards says. “I could’ve avoided the trauma of getting my period and growing breasts. I also could’ve been taller and developed the build of a biological male. I’m 5’4”, so my best chance when I began transitioning was convincing every girl I knew that flats were making a comeback (nobody bought it). My hands and feet are also small (for a guy), and I’m very self-conscious about it. Of course, the opposite applies for kids transitioning from male to female. Tall, big feet, big hands—they are just as self-conscious. Their bodies would develop a smaller, more female build, and estrogen would prevent the adam’s apple from developing and facial hair from growing. So transitioning prior to the onset of puberty gives kids a better chance of ‘passing’ as their affirmed gender later on. There is no better feeling than looking in the mirror and seeing the real you in the reflection. Transitioning early gives kids that gift—a gift so many people who aren’t transgender take for granted.”

With tremendous support from those he loves, Edwards endured 28 surgeries to complete his physical transformation. But that wasn’t the worst of it.

“The most painful part of my journey wasn’t all the surgery,” Edwards notes. “It was the 25 years leading up to it when I had to pretend to be somebody I wasn’t.”

He thinks it’s great that Caitlyn Jenner has opened up a dialogue and taken this topic mainstream, but feels her life is un-relatable: “No parent can look at her as an example and say, ‘Oh, well, Caitlyn did it. My kid will be fine.’”

According to Edwards, more “everyday” success stories from regular people can show trans kids, their parents, and society as a whole that being transgender doesn’t have to define you. “That’s one of the main reasons I wrote this book,” he says. “That voice is missing.”

Edwards’ advice to a transgender adolescent? “You can build a successful career, get married, have a family…be whatever and whoever you want to be. The pursuit of happiness is your right. You can live a full and happy life just like everyone else.”
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It was then that Alex realized that he was transgender, but was not able to verbalize this.

In 2012, over the course of second grade, Alex had neuropsychological testing—several times—to help sort out some of the behavioral issues. Each time, Lauren mentioned the gender nonconformity. Each time, professionals seemed to minimize this.

During the summer after second grade, Alex was miserable. The family had just moved from Natick to Sherborn. Lauren and Steve thought perhaps stress related to the move was contributing to Alex’s depression.

It was on Labor Day that summer when Lauren’s “aha moment” occurred.

Alex had just started third grade at his new school—“in boy clothes but with long blond hair.” He was upstairs in his bedroom, and his two sisters wanted to come in. Alex was yelling “Get out of my room!!! No girls allowed!!” His sister said, “But Allie, you ARE a girl,” to which Alex responded angrily “NO!! I’m NOT!!”

“That was the moment I finally got it.” Lauren says. That weekend, she took Alex to get a haircut. It wasn’t easy. “I felt like, once we cut it, it wouldn’t be my secret anymore.”
Alex spent his third grade year as “very gender neutral.” He asked his teacher and classmates to call him “Al,” but still used female pronouns.

Lauren and Steve spent that year enveloping themselves in research and going to parent groups. While they now knew Alex was transgender,
they needed to figure out the best way to approach his social transition. On the last day of third grade, they sent out a letter to the school community explaining Alex's transition. It started a dialogue, and marked the beginning of Alex officially living in the gender with which he'd always deeply identified.

**bright future**

While John's and Alex's stories have many similarities, they also have notable differences. John adjusted almost seamlessly when he transitioned in first grade. Self-assured, gregarious, and athletic, his transition has been overwhelmingly positive, with few hiccups along the way. Exceptionally bright and somewhat reserved, Alex has struggled with some anxiety surrounding his transition, but he is much happier now, living as the boy he always was.

Both boys have one important common thread, however: families who surround them with love, and who have unconditionally embraced their sons' true selves. And that can make all the difference.
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A Place for Seniors to Grow Young
When the Tolles-Parsons Senior Center opens in Wellesley early this fall, look for the woman with the biggest smile and the most battle scars.

That will be Mary Bowers, who has devoted the last dozen years to seeing that the $825,000 seed planted by Mary Esther “Billie” Tolles would bloom into a beautiful home that the town’s seniors could call their own.

Bowers is among the key players who navigated a tortuous circuit of town committees to win approval for the $8 million center, at 500 Washington Street, across from the police station.

Wellesley’s director of senior services, Gayle Thieme, has been fighting alongside Bowers and likens her to the Energizer Bunny.

Thieme has been waging a larger battle as well — against stereotypes about seniors. Consider the reaction she gets at social events, when she tells people about her job: “I say I run a council on aging. They say, ‘Oh, you run a nursing home. How fun! You play bingo.’”

How wrong. And the new senior center will prove just that.
“We’re going to have pool tables, container gardening on the patio, outdoor games like lawn darts, lifelong learning, technology, and inter-generational activities,” Thieme said. “It’s so much more than bingo. It’s an opportunity center.”

Those opportunities will be for everyone. The new location makes it convenient for students to drop by after school. Local artists and musicians can teach classes. Volunteers can serve as greeters at the building, assist in classes, or be deployed as ambassadors reaching out to the community.

The 13,000-square-foot, two-story building includes flexible spaces for dining, cultural, and civic events; a fully-equipped commercial kitchen; dedicated rooms for activities such as arts and crafts, fitness, yoga, and dance; and a private office for social services and counseling.

“If we don’t help people age healthier, we’re going to have them in nursing homes,” said John Catlin, the architect of the center. “Even if it’s just a matter of leaving your house and coming to the center and having a place to be—it’s such a big part of healthy aging.”

The center’s heart will be a cozy lounge/café. On one side will be a gas fireplace surrounded by bookshelves; on the other, a counter with coffee, tea, and perhaps fresh-baked cookies. At the Wellesley Community Center, where the Council on Aging currently has its offices and hosts programs, seniors have no such place to drop by for a cup of coffee or
We take great pride in our senior living communities.
Catlin, who designed his first senior center nearly 30 years ago, said he was filling the building with elegant touches that will excite younger visitors and ensure the safety of older ones. “A lot of design elements are smuggled in so the very frail can manage the building easily, but the younger people don’t see it as ‘Oh my god, this is only for old people.’”

The wooden cap of the wainscoting doubles as a support element. “For the boomers, it looks like a really cool decoration; for somebody who really needs to lean on a rail, it’s there for them,” he said.

The coffered ceilings—besides adding to the building’s residential feel—absorb sound. They’re made up of tiles that are 50 percent better at dampening noise than those in a typical office. They also muffle high frequency sounds, which are particularly distracting for seniors who wear hearing aids.

Discreetly mounted fabric wall panels will keep the decibel level down in such potentially noisy areas as the multipurpose room. With a small stage at one end and space for dining tables at the other, it can accommodate 100 people for a concert or be divided in two at lunchtime.
Design details can also aid seniors who have vision, balance, and mobility problems. Through “wayfinding,” Catlin said, people who might otherwise meander are subtly guided by changes in the texture, pattern, and color of flooring materials.

The floors in the kitchen and bathrooms will be made of linoleum rather than ceramic, reducing the risk of a fall leading to a broken bone. The studio for dance and other movement activities will have a maple floor set on a foam slab, another construction detail to cushion falls. To avert collisions, contrasting colors will highlight door frames and jambs, and frosted bands will be strategically placed across doors and picture windows.

Noting that people over age 60 require illumination three times brighter than those who are 30, Catlin said that lighting will be tailored to the activity. Warm, energy-efficient LED bulbs will be used instead of fluorescent lighting, which tends to cast faces in a green tinge. By day, though, the light pouring out of many ceiling fixtures — even some on the first floor — will come from the most natural source of all: the sun. Solatube, which consists of highly reflective cylinders, can funnel light 30 to 40 feet from rooftop openings.

Just as he has cannily worked safety into his design, Catlin has included “stealth” techniques to encourage people to move about and try new activities.

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Even if its lot size hadn’t forced the center to be two stories high, Catlin would have preferred multi-levels. “Two stories are great for elders,” he said, pointing out that the National Council on Aging recommends climbing six to eight flights daily to stay nimble and fit. (An elevator will accommodate people with disabilities.)

Describing the stairway as “wide open and dramatic,” Catlin included modifications for accessibility. The risers will be six inches, rather than the typical seven inches. Made from black cherry—like much of the building’s woodwork—the steps will be edged with an abrasive coating to prevent slipping and a fluorescent strip in case the lights go out.

To prod people to climb those stairs, the second floor will include what are sure to be some of the center’s most popular attractions, such as a game room containing pool tables and card tables.

Next door will be a fitness area, equipped with a treadmill and other exercise equipment. One of its walls will be floor-to-ceiling glass and overlook the downstairs multipurpose room, which will have a beamed ceiling that slopes down from two stories to one story in height. Catlin imagines someone attending at a concert glancing up and saying, “That’s Margaret up there up on a bike. Maybe I should talk to her about trying it.”

***

As of now, the only dedicated space for seniors in Wellesley is a basement room on the ground floor of the community center made possible by a donation in the 1990s by Billie Tolles (see sidebar on page 112). The Council on Aging rents office space in the building as well, but must schedule the events it holds there around those of other community groups.

Still, even with Tolles’s subsequent donation, many in town questioned the need for an independent center. “Every time we put up [a proposal], they would knock us down,” said Bowers, who was named this year to the local paper’s Townsmen 10 in recognition of her relentless drive for the senior center.

Opponents asked why the seniors couldn’t continue to share space in the nonprofit community center or, if that wasn’t good enough, go to centers in Natick or Needham. Then there were other concerns. Even though the American Legion donated its property for the center, the Planning Board objected that more space was needed for parking. The
SHEL YU

After graduating from UC Berkeley, Shell completed her Master’s Degree in Architectural Design in Boston. Since then she worked for a very well-known architectural firms in town before pursuing her real estate career in 2010. Her architectural background gives her an in-depth understanding of building construction, construction administration, and most importantly design. Her personal knowledge and experience in the greater Boston housing market offers her clients expert insight, detailed guidance, and effective solutions. Shell is committed to her clients. Helping her clients achieve their real estate goals is her top priority. She is fluent in both Chinese and English.

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asking price for the adjoining property was above what Town Meeting was willing to pay (several years later, the town would agree to spend even more for the land). Other sites were considered; other plans submitted. The saga could fill a book.

Meanwhile, over in Hopkinton, Senior Center Director Cindy Chesmore could only sympathize. In 2006, after a years-long battle, Chesmore moved her town’s seniors from the town hall basement to a building of their own. With much more room for programs, participation increased fivefold within weeks, she said. “All the naysayers who did not want Hopkinton to build a senior center are very happy to tell me…how wrong they were.”

More than a decade after Tolles’s bequest, Wellesley Town Meeting last April approved a $5.5 million debt exclusion to build the senior center.

After the building opens, which is expected to be on September 30, Thieme plans for the staff to have time to settle in before launching a full slate of programs. “We must first get used to the space, understand the systems, and reassess how responsibilities might be changed,” she said. One lesson Thieme learned from other directors is that you need time to break a building in and make sure everything is in working order.

The Council on Aging has launched a marketing campaign to promote the senior center. Last fall, it sent a survey to 3,700 residents age 55 and over, asking about their perceptions of the council, their desires for the senior center and their concerns about growing older. The response rate was 26 percent—an excellent sign, considering that typically only 15 percent answer such polls, Thieme said.

Eventually, the center will be open several nights a week to accommodate working boomers. It will also provide meeting space for town boards and be equipped with audio/video for recording government and cultural events. The council’s three-day-a-week lunch program will go to five days, and a breakfast program may be added. Meals will be catered from a local restaurant, but the onsite kitchen opens possibilities for dining alternatives.

But if you ask Mary Bowers, the recipe for the senior center is simple: “Anything and everything to keep us young.”
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the term “sharing economy” has caught on to describe newfangled services like Uber and Lyft for ride-sharing, Circle and Venmo for peer-to-peer money transfers, and Airbnb as a hotel alternative. Though, as some locals are quick to point out, such a democratized marketplace has been in full swing in Wellesley and Weston for years when you consider the towns’ historic libraries and the give-and-take areas at their respective dumps.

Perhaps that history, along with the fact that Wellesley and Weston have a combined four college campuses within their confines, explains why the youth-infused and Internet-enabled sharing economy has thrived here.

At Babson College’s annual Rocket Pitch event late last year (think Shark Tank minus the sharks), dozens of budding entrepreneurs had three minutes each to pitch their ideas before peers and investors, and a good chunk of those ventures had serious sharing economy slants. One enabled parents to swap gently-used baby items, another employed...
How the Sharing Economy Has Taken Hold in Wellesley and Weston
Twin brothers and Babson College students Michael and Matthew Vega-Sanz are developing an application to enable their car sharing service.

Getting Their Fair Share

“PARTICIPATING IN THE SHARING ECONOMY IS JUST A WAY OF LIFE FOR THE COLLEGE CROWD.”
—Matthew Vega-Sanz

artificial intelligence to bring together unpaid caregivers of loved ones with Alzheimer’s disease, and yet another aimed to unite strangers over meals to discuss topics of mutual interest.

Babson College students Michael and Matthew Vega-Sanz have started a business called Lula, described in the Rocket Pitch booklet as “Airbnb for cars.” Matthew explained: “A couple of months ago my brother and I were starving, it was late Friday night, and we had just had Domino’s for the last three weekends in a row. We wanted something different so we decided to order from our all-time favorite pizza chain, Papa John’s.” Unfortunately, there wasn’t a local franchise that would deliver to the car-less brothers in Wellesley, and “taking a $30 Uber to pick up an $8 pizza didn’t make much sense,” so they wound up ordering from Domino’s again. But upon going outside to meet the delivery person, they noticed a parking lot brimming with idle cars and wondered if there might be a way to let students rent such vehicles for short periods of time, like to make a Papa John’s run. The Miami-born twins have now raised funding, partnered with an insurance company and are developing an application to enable their service.

Matthew says that participating in the sharing economy is just a way of life for the college crowd. He uses Venmo to split pizza tabs with his friends and he relies on Airbnb for accommodations whenever he travels—with the exception of when he goes places with his parents.
since “they are still a little weirded out about sleeping in other people’s beds.”

Asked for his definition of the sharing economy, Matthew says, “Convenience is the number one thing, but it also means flexibility and affordability.”

**Superhost with the Most**

Wellesley designer Valerie Gates has become a devotee of the home-sharing service Airbnb as both a host and guest over the past year or so. “I don’t even use hotels anymore,” she says, noting that she has scheduled a handful of Airbnb reservations related to college visits with her daughter this year.

Gates began on Airbnb as a host, renting out a house on Cape Cod, often to honeymooners. She has now risen to the level of a “Superhost” at Airbnb, which rewards those who score high ratings from guests with this designation. Once you’re a Superhost you get special privileges, such as having your listings appear on a short list of highly-recommended locations. Gates was also able to score a sweet deal on a place to stay in a winery in upstate New York.

Gates used to put the Cape property on a traditional listing site, but says Airbnb renters are preferable because “you get to vet people... then you get to review them and they get to review you. Everyone’s on their best behavior.” Whereas the first year Gates used Airbnb she got about 50 percent of her renters through the service, now it’s closer to 90 percent. She says Airbnb and similar services are especially popular among younger people who expect to be able to go to a website or app and book a place using a credit card.

While Gates hasn’t used Airbnb to rent out space in her Wellesley home, plenty of others are doing so with their area houses. Many prefer to keep low profiles while doing so, trying not to call too much attention to themselves among neighbors and local authorities. Town officials haven’t had too many issues with such home-sharing hosts, but a bylaw amendment could be in the offing in Weston.

Ride sharing services are also used frequently by residents, often more when they’re in Boston or another city, but sometimes to bridge the gap between a train station and
their home or sometimes to get home safely after a night out with friends locally.

Wellesley’s Chris Crowley, “a reasonably technical Dad being dragged into the 21st century by his children,” says “the simplicity of waking up at 4:30 a.m. to catch an early flight to Logan and knowing that when I open an app I will find a ride circling nearby has eliminated both stress and cost from that trip.”

He also appreciates the technical safety underpinnings of such services in that, “My phone tracks where I am. The driver’s phone identifies who picked me up. If I lose an item or wallet, there is no question where it went or who has it. I would rather that my daughters take a trackable Uber than hail a cab we may never be able to trace.”

**Beyond Bartering**

Such collaborative consumption is clearly here to stay, and the Wellesley Police Department is even getting into the act. It’s reworking its parking lot and will designate two spaces as safe exchange spots for people doing deals through websites such as craigslist.

Wellesley resident Robert Blake, an economist who works for a Boston-based investor education and analytics company called FinMason, says it’s only natural for consumers to want to share—and profit from—their excess capacity. Doing so typically brings down the cost for the owner and buyer, even if there is an intermediary like Uber or ticket-exchange site like StubHub involved.
Fittingly enough, Blake temporarily relocated to a conference room to speak to me by phone, because “as a startup, we share offices,” he says. “In economics, before you learn about how money in an economy functions you learn about barter transactions and why we moved from a barter economy to a monetary one,” says Blake, an avid user of HomeAway for vacation rentals here and abroad. “A barter economy is one where people have to have what’s called a ‘double coincidence of wants’—in other words, both people have to want what the other one has and they make a trade… The sharing economy to a large degree is information sharing: You share what you want with people directly and the Internet allows you to do that. It’s an interesting development in the history of economics.”

**Coming Full Circle**

Given the number of movers and shakers in fields such as finance and technology who reside in Wellesley and Weston, it’s no surprise that many of these business people are now taking part in the sharing economy in their lines of work.

Wellesley’s Tom Hennessey, as VP of business operations at a venture-backed startup called Circle, is among those right in the thick of this. In fact, the company boasts on its website that “We’re on a mission to change the global economy.” Circle, which competes with other payment apps like PayPal’s Venmo and Google Wallet, provides a free and secure way to exchange money online, including between currencies.

Circle was attractive to Hennessey for numerous reasons, including that its management team has successfully led other startups and had a

“The sharing economy to a large degree is information sharing: you share what you want with people directly and the Internet allows you to do that. It’s an interesting development in the history of economics.”

— Robert Blake
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Hennessey, whose definition of the sharing economy is "the shared utilization of an underused asset," acknowledges there are lots of startups attempting the "Uberization of this or that, and while some are legitimate business models, a lot feel a little forced. Many don’t have both the supply and demand required to scale," he says.

While some areas of the sharing economy are played out, with early entrants staking their claims to leadership positions, opportunities will continue to exist for businesses that provide ancillary services related to offerings from outfits like Airbnb (i.e., cleaning services for people who want to rent out their homes but not deal with the mess).

More evidence of opportunities that lie ahead can be found in a 2016 Pew Research Center survey of nearly 5,000 American adults that revealed almost three quarters of them had never heard of the term sharing economy, which is still in its infancy.

"The more that we can get the news out about the sharing economy and start to expand beyond the core demographics who use these services the better it is for everyone," Hennessey says. "It's better for the environment, people's convenience, and even for the GDP of the country the more we're utilizing these assets."

So, picture ride-sharing services that you can order to pick up your smartphone-averse grandparents to go grocery shopping or in Superhost Gates's case, helping people prep their houses or spare rooms for home-sharing services. Hennessey says, "I think we're just getting started with a lot of these services."

And don't overlook perhaps the least discussed aspect of the sharing economy—the community-building part of it. Gates says she'll go out of the way to stay at an Airbnb location to reunite with hosts who have welcomed her before.

"You kind of become friends with the people. You want to go back and finish your conversations," she says.
Wellesley | Architecturally Designed Custom Wellesley Farms Home $5,800,000

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Wellesley | Classic Colonial set on Cul de Sac $1,250,000

Natick | New Construction in Picturesque Setting $1,249,000

Dover | 3,300+ sf New Construction $1,295,000

Wellesley | Extraordinary Cliff Estates Home $3,690,000

Needham | Spectacular Colonial set on 1.5+ Acres $2,399,000

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**Solar Panels Enhance Wellesley’s Skyline**

Approximately 100 residential, business, school, and house-of-worship buildings in Wellesley are equipped with solar photovoltaic systems that harness the sun’s energy and convert it to electrical energy for heating, cooling, and light. Included in that number is Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley Friends Meeting (Quaker), Wellesley High School, Wellesley Municipal Light Plant (MLP), and Whole Foods Market.

The first Wellesley residents to embrace solar energy, Moneer and Sara Azzam, installed solar panels at their home on Manor Avenue in 1997. Those panels are still generating electricity for the family today, 20 years later. Moneer considers stewardship of the planet both his
From February 10, 2014 to June 30, 2015, the MLP in conjunction with Sustainable Wellesley and the Sustainable Energy Committee orchestrated a “Power to Choose — Solar” campaign and offered rebates to encourage solar adoption. The town granted a total of $115,000 over the course of 16 months.

Homeowners Jo and David Lee took advantage of the rebate program and added solar panels to a home they purchased in 2010. The personal and professional calling: “The Arabic origin of my name is ‘shining’ or ‘luminous,’ so perhaps it is destiny that I have spent much of my career in the photovoltaic and solid-state lighting industries.” Currently Moneer is the CEO of SolarOne Solutions, Inc., a company that manufacturers grid-independent, solar-fueled public lighting products — including those for bike paths, roadways, bus shelters, parking lots, and more.

Wellesley Needs

471 More Renewable Energy Participants to Lead the Country

Voluntary Renewable Energy Program

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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Renewable Energy Participation Rate*</th>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>10.33%</td>
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<td>Kalona, IA</td>
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<td>Sacramento, CA</td>
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*As of June 30, 2016

To Improve Ranking Wellesley Needs:

169 new enrollees to get to 12% participation and #2 ranking

471 new enrollees to get to 15% participation and #1 ranking

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couple planned to live in their house for the foreseeable future, so investing in solar made financial sense given their calculation of a six-year payback. Yet, return-on-investment was only one facet of their decision. Jo explains, “The biggest reason we went solar was being able to live our values. Every day we are doing something to protect the earth, and we don’t even have to think about it. It just happens. I like that, and I like that my kids can see it every day.”

Doug Gribbel also capitalized on the rebate and in April of 2015 installed solar panels on his home, albeit with a different primary motivation. Gribbel explains, “I am not a ‘tree-hugging liberal’ who is trying to save the planet like many solar-adopters. Politically, I’m a fiscal conservative who believes in running the country like a business, but I also have very progressive social views and do care about the environment.”

Gribbel values the simplicity of producing solar energy. “You just sort of install in and forget it...It’s so easy. I haven’t had any problems with my roof or the panels (my kids are not throwing balls up on the roof anymore). It’s nice to watch the snow build up and then slide...
off the panels, a great way to keep your roof clear and not have to worry about ice dams!”

Solar adoption by residents and organizations alike continues to gain momentum long after the rebate program ended. To a person, and beginning with the Azzams, Wellesley residents credit Dick Joyce, director of the MLP; Debra Healy, assistant director of the Wellesley MLP; and the Municipal Light Board for going out of their way to make the process of connecting a solar system to the town power grid easy.

Jessica Stanton was totally committed to solar energy, but took a break after her extensive home renovation before moving forward with installing panels because she couldn’t
the residential neighborhood on Benvenue Street, sourced 100 percent of their electricity from the MLP’s voluntary renewable energy program. Although they had been working hard toward solar energy for several years, they were inspired by the call-to-action on climate change delivered at the Friends 2016 Annual Meeting: “We all live on this planet and are all complicit in altering its climate. It is incumbent upon every Friend and every Friends Meeting to discover how God is leading us to do our part to reverse this great threat.” The Wellesley Friends decided to go solar immediately and leave more renewable energy on the grid for others to use. Great Sky Solar, a worker-owned cooperative and “social benefit corporation,” installed 36 solar panels for the Friends. The Wellesley Friends estimate that 73 percent of their electrical bill will be covered by solar energy; the rest will continue to be sourced from hydroelectric, wind, and solar energy through the MLP.

“stomach the thought of more disruption.” In hindsight, Jessica acknowledges that the disruption was minimal, and, therefore, counsels fellow homeowners, “If you are considering solar: do it as soon as you can. It’s honestly one of the easiest home improvement projects. There is virtually no downside other than the up-front costs. You get a 30 percent tax credit on your federal tax bill the year you install, and you begin offsetting your electric costs immediately. And, it’s a great feeling to know you are helping to create an energy grid that doesn’t rely on fossil fuels.”

Before installing solar panels and connecting to the Wellesley power grid in December 2016, Wellesley Friends Meeting, located in

Famed entrepreneur Elon Musk officially changed the name of his company from “Tesla Motors” to “Tesla, Inc.” early in 2017, signaling the strategic shift to an energy company committed to making intermittent renewable energy from the sun more reliable and affordable than traditional fossil fuels. Musk’s new brand extends beyond cars to solar panels and commercial and residential energy-storage systems.
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Temple Beth Elohim on Bethel Road added solar panels in January of 2017, working closely with congregant Laura Olton, principal of LSO Energy Advisors, and the MLP on an arrangement in which the synagogue hosts rooftop panels owned and maintained by Solect.

The synagogue offers a real-time view of its solar energy production through an online dashboard on its website. The dashboard provides positive reinforcement, translating the value of solar energy generated to relatable equivalent metrics, such as the number of smartphones charged, electric washer and dryer loads, CO2 emission tons avoided, AA batteries powered, electric cars charged, and more. Associate Rabbi Rachel Saphire explains the rationale for adding solar, “Installing solar panels is an actualization of our values, a way to model sustainability for our congregants, and a concrete effort to reduce our carbon footprint. We are proud to fulfill this sacred obligation and perform such an important mitzvah (commandment) of our tradition. On the first day of Creation, God created light and said, ‘It is very good!’”

Town resident Quentin Prideaux, who manages the Sustainable Wellesley Facebook page, created a Google Group for Wellesley solar owners to share information. The overwhelming majority of posts express enthusiasm:

- "The performance, cost savings, and overall positive impact to the environment have exceeded our expectations thus far. For example, once again this past summer we ran our A/C and still overproduced, resulting in a credit that was applied to our water bill."

- "We don’t for one minute regret putting in solar. Once again this past year we produced more electricity than we used, so we got a credit on our water bill. The system has performed without any problems, and we look forward to many more years of productivity from the panels. We pat ourselves on the back for doing our part to use less fossil fuel."
While I am not overproducing like my neighbors, I am nevertheless thrilled to be generating renewable energy from my own roof, reducing my electricity usage from the grid, and helping the environment overall. I love looking at the web portal and seeing how much I’ve generated daily, monthly, year to date, and overall since installation! I, too, am thrilled with my decision and only wish my system was bigger!

We just don’t think much about our solar system, it just keeps reliably producing, and we seldom get a positive electric bill. After 26 months, our meter reads 98586, which means it has gone backwards and credited 1414 kWh. We are happy to be producing clean energy.

Is Solar or Renewable Energy Right for Your Home or Business?
To determine if your home or business is solar suitable, first consider the orientation of your rooflines. The more south facing roof surface you have, the more energy you will produce. It is ideal to install solar panels on a surface within 40 degrees of direct south. Do trees shade your roof? If so, would you be able and willing to trim or remove them? What material is on your roof? Slate roofs are not good
Lastly, is your non-slate roof 10 years old or younger and in good condition? Solar panels have about a 20-year useful life span.

If your property is not solar suitable, you can still do your part in reducing the town and country’s energy dependence and contribute to cleaner air and water for all. Wellesley offers a voluntary renewable energy program called “Power to Choose” that provides the opportunity to purchase 10, 25, 50, or 100 percent of electricity from renewable sources, including wind, hydro, solar, and biomass power. About 1,100 commercial and residential customers have joined the program, marking about 10 percent participation.

It only costs about $3 a month for a typical Wellesley home to receive 10 percent of its energy from renewable sources. Wellesley’s electric rates are so reasonably priced that even purchasing 100 percent renewable energy yields a lower rate than rates charged to residents in surrounding towns such as Needham and Natick.

“Choosing renewable energy, in many cases for less than the price of a cup of coffee a month, will not only help the town meet its carbon reduction goal, it will also improve Wellesley’s national ranking for voluntary renewable energy,” explains Debra Healy. “If we can sign on 471 new participants, Wellesley can lead the entire country in voluntary renewal energy participation. What a fitting honor it would be for our town,” comments Dick Joyce.
Maximizing Family Harmony with Business Success

ANNUNZIATA VARELA writer

the quotable line from *The Godfather* that resonates most with the Wasik family is “We don’t discuss business at the table.” That strategy has become a mantra for The Cheese Shop owners, helping them maintain familial harmony while successfully navigating an unforgiving business landscape. Given that almost 80 percent of all businesses fail within the first four years, what happens when the participants in the journey are family members? In fact, two-thirds of family businesses that are initially successful do not survive passage to a second generation. We talk with the owners of three local family businesses that are successful and learn how they keep peace in the family while helping the business to thrive.

Mugging It Up

“We didn’t set out to start a family business. It found us,” recalls Jennifer Ash, Weston resident and mom of 12-year-old dyslexic entrepreneur Max Ash, chief creator at MAX’IS Creations and inventor of The Mug With A Hoop®.
When Max, a student at The Carroll School, was in his second grade art class, he made a mug with a hoop for tossing marshmallows into hot cocoa. It was only when fellow classmates started copying his idea that he realized it was a good one.

“I told him that there are people who will pay for his creative ideas,” explains Jennifer. When Max replied that he didn’t know any of those people, Jennifer and Max’s father, Ron, helped him create a 3D model and brought Max to pitch his idea at The Blank Center for Entrepreneurship at Babson College. Max later entered the “Product Pitch” at a Fenway Park innovation contest and won the popular vote on Facebook. After a successful crowdfunding campaign, he brought his mugs to market. Today, the mugs are sold through multiple online outlets, including UncommonGoods, The Grommet, local Wellesley and Weston retailers, and international retailers. Max’s creation is even a top-selling mug on Amazon.com.

With Max as the chief creator of a full line of sports mugs, Ron, handles the business operations and Jennifer helps with marketing and sales. Both Ron and Jennifer work full time in their own non-retail careers, leaving nights and weekends for MAX’IS Creations.

Adding the complexities of raising a family to the dynamics of running a competitive business can be a formidable challenge. “We want our kids to be kids, so we don’t want our conversations to always be about mugs,” says Jennifer, who also has a 15-year-old son, Sam, the chief product tester and Max’s biggest supporter. “When Ron and I are commuting to work, we’ll use that time instead.”

Even Max acknowledges the ups and downs. “It’s fun to get to talk about the business at dinner, making money, and getting checks. But it’s stressful when there are problems that come up, and my parents have to find a way out of it.” The hardest part is “When we have to do mug work, but we want to have free time for ourselves,” adds Max.

For people thinking about entering a family business, Jennifer advises, “Don’t bite off more than you can financially chew as you never want to burden the family around the business.”

Dr. John Davis, founding chair of the Families in Business program at Harvard Business School, agrees that successful family businesses tend to be more careful and more conservative in their financial structure. “They tend to take on less debt; they tend to be more careful about how they spend their money. They are focused on growing their family’s assets over the long-term,” he says.

Max believes that those who want to start a family business should “Go small at first and get bigger as you go. Spend a little at a time and make sure you have fun.”
And fun they have. A family trip to London mixed business with pleasure as Max partnered with James Middleton, the younger brother of Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge and fellow dyslexic entrepreneur, on a cross-promotion around Dyslexia Awareness Month. Middleton was promoting a line of personalized marshmallows at boomf, in which both companies gave away mugs and marshmallows. In fact, Max donates a portion of his profits to dyslexia charities and uses his business to raise awareness for kids who learn differently.

Maria Sinanis, senior advisor and partner at Cambridge Family Enterprise Group, a Boston-based advisory and education organization dedicated to multigenerational family businesses, states that it’s important to define the family’s mission and vision for owning a business together. “This helps families articulate and align around the same goals. The process of defining these statements helps to build the family’s commitment around a shared future together,” she says.

**Expertise in Crowd-Pleasing Cheese**

Back in the 1960s, Stephen Wasik was a teenager sweeping floors in a Greenwich, Connecticut cheese shop. By the time he graduated college, of which he paid his way, he was vice president of the company. No longer wishing to be on the road more often than home, he decided to move his wife, Carol, and their three kids to Massachusetts, where he opened The Cheese Shop in Wellesley in 1978.

“The back room was like a daycare,” recalls Brad, as both parents worked full time at the shop. “If we were sick, we’d be in the basement sleeping.”

Brian fondly remembers working before he “was legally allowed to work,” carrying boxes, and developing a strong work ethic. “I can remember the day, back in high school, when my dad was at the top of the stairs, and I told him this is what I wanted to do.” After college, both brothers began working full time at the shop where you can still see them today.
Dr. Davis agrees that family business owners should develop talent in the family starting at a young age. He says, “Teach and instill personal financial skills, a strong work ethic, an interest in the work of the business, a responsibility to the collective family and the community, and other important life, professional, and relationship skills. Even if the next generation does not end up working in the family business, they may be shareholders, board members, or parents to the young generation. Every family-owned business needs a talented and industrious family behind it.”

“Our folks were smart enough to give us different roles,” admits Brad. Brian buys the cheese; Brad is the wine buyer; and Carol, a Wellesley resident, is responsible for the shelf items. They all can be seen at the counter, chatting with customers and enjoying the interaction.

Brad professes that a family business is not for everyone. “It’s hard sometimes, but we just do it, and the benefits outweigh the challenges. We’re on display, so we talk about problems in the back. Our biggest arguments are over the music,” he quips. “And we don’t vacation together. But we still hang out all the time, and I get to talk to my mom every day.”

Brian acknowledges that it’s difficult worrying about the business with the added family dimensions and appreciates their unwritten rule of not talking about business at the kitchen table. “That’s our sanctuary, our symbolic time with family.”

Perhaps the greatest challenge the family faced both personally and professionally was the passing of patriarch and mentor Stephen. Tragically taking place days before Christmas in 2010, The Cheese Shop’s most lucrative time of year, the Wasiks had to mourn publicly while taking care of their customers. The response? “People were in line for hours. They knew and loved my father and wanted to support us. It reaffirmed how great our community really is,” recounts Brad.

Traveling from One Generation to the Next
In 1970, Barbara Viles, a Weston resident since 1942, wanted to give back to the community after raising five children. Using her extensive travel experience, she opened Weston Travel Service, which books tours and cruises and specializes in individual travel to Europe. It also became one of the largest agencies for business to Bermuda. Within a year, daughter Cindy joined her, and her other daughter, Carolyn, joined in 1975 for some time.

“My mom was my best friend,” reminisces Cindy Appleby fondly. During college, Cindy worked part time. “I never thought about moving on. It was a given that I’d work in the family business. I thought we’d work together forever.”
Benoit Mizner Simon & Co.

Bill Andrews

Bill Andrews joins Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. after a successful 25 year career as a business development executive in the technology field. Bill has held a Massachusetts Real Estate license since 1991 and plans to combine his expert negotiation skills, attention to detail, and passion for real estate, to deliver a truly superior customer experience. Bill has a business degree from Boston University and sits on the boards of Project Home Again, a 501 (3) (c) organization based in Lawrence, MA, and the Newton Village Condominium Association located in Quechee, VT. If you are seeking a real estate agent with integrity, energy and experience, Bill would be happy to assist you!

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In 1994, 70-year-old Barbara passed away suddenly and quickly, so Cindy immediately had to take over the business. Soon after, other challenges began their attack on travel. “The travel industry is a tough business, as federal TSA regulations, visa restrictions, and travel bans often complicate logistics,” explains Cindy. “September 11th was especially hard to bounce back from. The online travel industry has also been a major challenge in terms of competition, but luckily our concierge/boutique service is something online outlets do not offer.”

Dr. Davis offers advice on how family businesses can deal with unexpected circumstances. “As with all companies, the business might face unpredictable challenges before reaching the second generation, such as the need to buy out a partner, an economic or political crisis, a natural disaster, or an accident that significantly impacts the financial stability of the family business,” explains Dr. Davis. “Sometimes a founder will sell the company or merge it with another, so the company could endure, just in a different form or under new ownership.”

Sinanis adds that owners shouldn’t lose sight of where their industry is going, how technology and globalization — and other forces — are impacting their business, or how customer tastes are changing. “Industries are changing at a rapid pace today. Families need to have a plan for monitoring the key drivers of their business’s success, as well as their region’s and industry’s movements. A strong board of directors or board of advisors is essential today to keep the business’s strategic direction on track, and pivoting as needed,” she adds.

Now Cindy’s daughter, Liza Appleby, a stay-at-home mother, helps out in the office when
she can, researching and planning excursions for clients. "I was incredibly lucky as a child to accompany my grandparents and mother on dozens of trips," explains Liza. "My experiences have stuck with me, so now when friends, family, and clients of Weston Travel voice interest in such places, I can chime in with suggestions based on memories and highlights of my past."

Cindy has continued her mother's legacy both professionally and personally, and relishes the time she now spends with her own daughter whom she considers to have a tight relationship with. "I think it's important for a family business owner to be patient and understanding, but also to make it enjoyable. You have to separate work and family, so I don't like to talk about it at home."

"I am very proud of my mom," says Liza. "She sacrificed so much as a single parent to work hard at the office and provide for me throughout my life."

Cindy does not see herself calling it quits anytime soon. And she admits she hasn't approached Liza about taking over the business. "I'm guessing my mother will never formally retire, and I am always an email or an hour's drive away to chip in as needed," states Liza. "My daughter, Callie, fourth generation of Weston Travel Service, just turned three, and has already logged many trips. Perhaps Callie will be an Instagram sensation recording her travel adventures and running tours in the 2030s, while I stay home and run the books. She's started off strong so far!"
invented in Germany in the early 1800s, the bicycle was originally known as a “hobby horse” and, in fact, was considered at that time an alternative to riding a horse. Another bit of history: An English expat won the first bicycle race that was held in France in 1868, riding on a wooden bike with iron tires. And before improvements such as rubber tires and ball bearings, the bike was referred to as a “bone-shaker” in England.

Fast forward to now. According to Reference.com, bicycles now number about one billion worldwide, and are used for transportation, leisure, and sport. The sport of cycling has also changed dramatically to include mountain bike enthusiasts to Tour de France road racing professionals, whose bicycles cost in the many tens of thousands of dollars.

What hasn’t changed in all this time is the sheer sense of freedom that many feel on a bicycle. According to local mountain bike enthusiast and Weston resident Craig Tanny, who rides
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eight to twelve miles each morning through area trails, “Mountain bikes are one of the greatest of man’s inventions. I can fly though the woods and see no cars, just deer. Plus, I’m outside—what a great way to start my day.”

Local cyclists take up the sport for many different reasons—such as doing charity rides like the Pan Mass Challenge (PMC), staying in top physical and cardio shape, or enjoying the outdoors with family members. There are also a variety of different types of cycling these days propelled by technological advancements and space-age materials, says Andy Palmgren of Landry’s Bicycles in Natick. The most popular bike is called a hybrid, which has flat handlebars and wider tires than standard road bikes and is perfect to go on outings with the kids. Here are the major types of cycling.

Road and Racing Cycling

In general, road bikes today—which are often made with high-tech carbon fiber or aluminum frames—are much lighter, stiffer, and more responsive than those in the past. These bikes start at $700 and can go up to $15,000. They are characterized by thin wheels and drop style handlebars.

One of the biggest reasons many local cyclists take up road cycling, says Palmgren, is so they can ride in charity rides. Wellesley resident Frank Nemia has participated in the PMC for 14 years, riding 192 miles from Sturbridge to Provincetown each August with his cycling group called the “Pedaling Paesans.” Palmgren says Wellesley and Weston are some of the most represented Massachusetts towns for riders in the PMC.

How to Find a Bike Group

There are many small groups of friends and private riding clubs in Wellesley and Weston, but membership in them may be based on a rider’s experience and skill level. One Boston-area recreational cycling club, however, is open to everyone and has been around since 1966. The Charles River Wheelers (formerly known as the Charles River Wheelmen) can be found at www.CRW.org. The club offers rides that start both in Wellesley and Weston.

In addition, Landry’s Bicycles on Route 9 in Natick has a comprehensive list of local riding groups and clubs on their website at www.landrys.com. There are rides that leave from the store in Natick as well as their other store locations throughout Greater Boston. If you’d like to give cyclocross a try, be sure to visit Steve the Bike Guy in Sherborn and online at www.stevethebikeguy.com. Steve is an experienced cyclocross racer, and his shop sponsors a number of rides all year long.
Nemia, who frequently rides different loops through Wellesley Hills by himself five or six nights a week, says that riding for the charity motivates him, but he gets many other benefits from cycling as well. “I ride because it’s a great, low-impact way to stay in shape,” he says. “Plus there’s an especially amazing cardio benefit from climbing hills. Also, it allows me to see things I wouldn’t get to see if I were traveling in a car and to meet new people.”

The only downside, he says, is that, “the bike I ride now costs more than my first car!”

**Mountain Biking**

According to Trails.com, mountain biking is off-road cycling that often includes terrain with...
many obstacles. “This sport is relatively fast paced, making it appealing to the weekend warrior or adventure seeker. The mountain machine is heavier than its road counterpart and often comes equipped with [such high-tech features as] hydraulic suspension systems and disc-style brakes,” they note.

Palmgren says his store has seen a big resurgence in mountain biking as of late, especially with adults who were teenagers in the ’90s and are now in their late 30s and early 40s. With rugged tires that can go from 2.3 inches to 4 or 5 inches wide, “or fat bikes,” mountain bikes go from $900 to $12,000. Fat bikes are ideal for winter riding, but it may be necessary to purchase a second set of tires specially designed to handle deep snow and ice.

One of the benefits of mountain biking, or any off-road biking, is that you don’t have to contend with cars. You can have an accident mountain biking, that’s for sure, says Tanny, “but an accident on the road isn’t always one from which you can walk away… Mountain biking is more challenging tech-wise, but it’s safer, in my opinion.”

Tanny notes that he rides his mountain bike about 50 miles a week—despite having had a knee operation which makes sports like running difficult. At 52, he says he rides with a group of guys who are 45 to 60. “They all say, ‘this hurts, or that hurts, but I can still ride a bike.’”

There are a number of trails in our community open to mountain bikers, but Tanny notes you need to share them with people who are walking, running, or riding horses.

**Cyclocross**

The cyclocross bike is a cross between a road and mountain bike, with mountain bike-like tires along with drop handle bars and light weight, like a road bicycle. These are more durable road bikes. Riders often ride in groups on an off-road course, with the goal of speed like a road race.

A typical race, says Palmgren, is a 45-minute course over a field and woods or sometimes a school ground, where there are stairs or ramps to run up and down while you carry your bike. Basically the tires need to be wide enough for off-road biking, and the bike needs to be light enough to carry over obstacles. It’s an awesome spectator sport, says Palmgren. Cyclocross bikes start at about $1,000.
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Doug Leard comes to Benoit Mizner Simon with 40 years of residential real estate experience serving Wayland, Weston and its surrounding communities. He brings a wealth of experience in managing real estate transactions. Previously, he was a Massachusetts licensed real estate appraiser. Doug is a former member of the Board of Selectmen, Recreation Commissioner, Growth Policy Committee, Golden Tones Board of Directors and currently a member of the Board of Directors of the Hero’s Cup Hockey Tournament charity fundraiser. Doug is presently the Local Emergency Planning Committee Chairman for the Town of Wayland. Working to satisfy the needs of buyers and sellers while promoting the safety of family and friends is a priority.

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Good Sports is Well Equipped to Help Young Athletes

ROBIN BRETT WECHSLER writer

it is recommended that children ages 6–17 exercise for at least an hour every day. Yet according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, only 28 percent of kids aged 6–12 and 19 percent of kids aged 13–17 were involved in consistent physical activity in 2012.

A Shape of the Nation report finds only six states require physical education in every grade level K–12. Moreover, the National Institutes of Health reports that 46 percent of U.S. children aged 6–11 don’t meet the recommendation of less than two hours of recreational sedentarism.

And, when kids don’t get enough exercise, they lose out on the immense benefits that being active provides, namely healthy weight, stronger muscles and bones, less stress, increased confidence, and improved ability to sleep and learn. It’s no surprise that a third of our nation’s youth is overweight or obese.

Additionally, when kids don’t have the chance to play organized sports, they miss opportunities to be part of a team, learn responsibility, and foster friendships.
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good works  “many kids don’t have access to sports”

Why is this happening? One reason is that our schools and organizations face budget cuts, and, as a result, eliminate programs or pass the costs on to families. Parents have to cut back on extracurricular activities, with disadvantaged children being excluded in particular.

Thankfully, Wellesley resident Kirsten Hano, a former Williams College field hockey and ice hockey player, and Boston resident and entrepreneur Geoffrey Hyatt, were motivated to take on the challenge and help solve the problem by starting a nonprofit company called Good Sports that provides donated sporting equipment to underprivileged kids.

“We had just moved to Wellesley from the Chicago area in 2002, and hosted a party,” says Hano. “I saw Geoff playing with my son. We talked about how important physical activity is to kids’ development but that many kids don’t have access to sports. By the end of the night, I agreed to do something about it.”

Hano joined Hyatt and four friends who were mutual acquaintances: Wilbur Swan, Kaki Martin, Melissa Harper, and Christy Keswick. Each had a full-time job but committed to monthly meetings in Hyatt’s Beacon Hill apartment.

“We figured out that manufacturers want to give equipment away, but it’s not simple for them to identify and coordinate with hundreds of community youth programs,” notes Hyatt.

“We discussed how to structure our organization as the facilitator of these matches, and how to make that happen,” says Hano.

Their team decided on a name—Good Sports—and a logo, and agreed on their mission: to give all kids the lifelong benefits of sport and physical activity by providing new equipment, apparel, and footwear to those most in need, regardless of ability to pay.

Good Sports’ first big donation came in 2003 from Spalding, based in Western Massachusetts. Because the company has extra, unsold equipment at the end of the year, Good Sports was granted 500 basketballs and gave them to nonprofit organizations throughout Greater Boston like the Boston Housing Authority — which still receives equipment through Good Sports today.
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Good Sports officially launched the day it was incorporated in November of that year, with a small fundraiser at the top level (“Level 9”) of the Boston Garden, mostly among family and friends.

Another big milestone came with the receipt of a $1 million grant facilitated by United Way. Good Sports received the introduction to United Way via a connection with the New England Patriots. The outreach efforts of the small team were paying off, and Good Sports expanded and began donating equipment to children across Massachusetts.

Good Sports received more equipment like baseball bats from BSN Sports and clothes and footwear from New Balance, and diversified its funding sources—with a great deal of marketing effort and raising awareness.

“We figured out who ran community centers and parks, where the need was, and who controlled the need. Then we helped kids through places like the Boston public schools and area Little Leagues,” says Keswick. “We also met Mayor Menino, who was always supportive and appreciated the impact we had on kids in Boston. He helped us secure warehouse space to store donations.”

To run the organization, Harper left her job to be CEO and Keswick left her job to become COO (which they still are today). They set up an office, hired staff, and recruited additional board members to volunteer their time, like Weston resident Kent Weldon and Wellesley residents Mike Harrington and Len Freiman.

“I’m proud to lend my support,” says Freiman. “Good Sports promotes youth health and social skills—short- and long-term—by getting more kids into the game.”

After using up the $1 million from United Way, Good Sports continued raising funds and today partners with many companies like Target, ESPN, and Nike. They order some equipment
MELINDA JOHNSON

Melinda is a matchmaker at heart, which is why she was attracted to real estate. She works tirelessly to find the home that is a perfect fit for you, or to find the buyer who is a perfect fit for the home you are selling. Melinda has lived in Sudbury since 2006 with her husband and two children. She is a lifelong resident of New England and grew up in Lexington.

Melinda has a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology from the University of Massachusetts and a Master’s Degree in Human Resource Management from Framingham State University. These degrees have helped her to better understand her clients’ needs.

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To date, Good Sports has provided over $20 million worth of sporting equipment through 4,500 donations to benefit over 3,000,000 children in all 50 states. Good Sports is one of a handful of organizations that has had a four-star rating by Charity Navigator for three years or more. Good Sports also provides a value to its philanthropic partners by providing up to $2 in equipment for every $1 of financial support.

Looking ahead, the organization plans to have an impact on over six million kids by 2023 through donations of $30 million in equipment. “We’ll continue offering a great value to donors—and reaching more kids who can play more and for longer,” says Keswick.

One Wellesley couple strongly believes in Good Sports’ mission. “We have grandchildren we want to make the world a better place for,” say Lynne and Gary Smith. “Good Sports tackles obesity by allowing youth, particularly those at risk, to participate in sports who probably wouldn’t otherwise, and benefit from exercise and social development.” Lynne adds, “I serve on the committee to solicit items from local merchants to auction off at events. We’re thrilled to support such an effective and impressive organization.”

Hano and Hyatt stood firm in their belief that every child should have a chance to play sports. Good Sports has accomplished a lot, but the work is not done. The organization will continue to provide the opportunity for kids to be active, year-round.

To learn more or get involved, visit www.goodsports.org. Good Sports is also on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GSportsInc and Instagram @goodsportsinc. Kids can help too by “partying like a good sport” at a special event or birthday party that raises money for Good Sports.
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The Wellesley Chinese Language School

Naz Sioshansi writer

Schools are typically established with the primary goal of educating their student body. However, the Wellesley Chinese Language School (WCLS) had an even loftier goal at its outset. Its founders also wanted to help increase multicultural awareness in Wellesley and surrounding towns. And by all means of measurement, they have proven successful.

Housed in the Wellesley Village Church at 2 Central Street, the WCLS was established in 2009 and started matriculating students in 2010. The school started with a student body of 70 to 80 students and is now about twice that at 150 students.

"Before we started the school, we conducted a market survey on the goals and success of the 13 to 15 other Chinese language schools in the Boston area," says Jianmei Kochling, one of the three original founders and current principal of the school.
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We had a lot of decisions to make. While some schools provide Cantonese lessons, we decided that our focus would be on Mandarin. Other schools, such as the one in Newton, have a student body of 1,000 students. We decided that we wanted a more intimate atmosphere, with an average of 10 children per class.

The school is in session from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoons from September through June. Different classes, based on ability, are provided for one- to one-and-a-half-hour time slots.

“But we wanted to have a larger mission than just educating the students of Chinese-American families in the Wellesley area,” shares Helen Fang, another founder and current vice principal of the school. “Our ambition was to provide more multicultural awareness to the greater Wellesley community.”

As such, the school does not just provide language classes. Children can register for Chinese calligraphy, Chinese painting classes, and chess. They have also added kung fu for younger children and are now providing tai chi instruction for adults.

“I am often approached by parents who want to talk about the school. It is very flattering, and I am proud of what we have established.”

– Jianmei Kochling

“Our school is not just about language but about the greater Chinese culture,” states Fang. “Every year we have a large celebration for the Chinese New Year. This year, we had over 360 guests at Olin College. Each class did a presentation, whether it was a poem or song. The children also displayed the lanterns that they had made. It was a great time.”

But perhaps the most remarkable accomplishment of the school is the fact that over 20 percent of the school’s students are children who
come from non-Chinese families. Awareness of the school and its mission has impacted the greater Wellesley community.

“It is interesting for us to learn how these students learn about our school,” shares Kochling. “We had a number of families enroll in the school after they saw our students participate in the Wellesley Wonderful Weekend parade.”

“We were participating to support our goal of bringing more multicultural awareness to the community, and we learned that the community was very supportive,” says Kochling. “My children play ice hockey, and when I go to games, I am often approached by parents who want to talk about the school. It is very flattering, and I am proud of what we have established.”

“We have heard from other parents and some real estate agents that the school was one reason the family considered Wellesley. We have a few non-Chinese heritage families who used to work in Asia, and were drawn to the school as a way for their children to continue the education they had started in Mandarin,” states Kochling.

Jane Hasselback, whose two children, Mia and Grace, attend the school, agrees. “One of my daughter’s friends at the WCLS does not have a Chinese heritage. She just loves languages, and switched from a German language school to this one.”

“It is nice to have a student body that is here for different reasons,” continues Hasselback,
who, herself, attended a Cantonese language school in Lexington when she was growing up. “There are also plenty of children who may only have one parent who is Chinese, as is the case in our family.”

“Sometimes, these classes are the only time that the children speak Mandarin, as there is no one to practice with at home,” states Kochling. “This was the case for my children, as my husband is not Chinese. I am proud that they have no accent because of the work that the school has done with them. The key is to start children when they are young; five years old is perfect. At that age, their listening ability is exceptional. They may speak with an accent, but, once corrected, they can hear the difference, and it usually sticks.”

Of the 100 families that attend the school, 20 percent come from families where only one parent is Chinese. The student body’s diverse heritage provides an additional challenge for the school, but it works hard to support the students who may not have as many opportunities to practice Mandarin outside of school.

“We are careful to hire teachers who are bilingual and look for text books that allow for self-instruction when the students are at home and parents cannot help,” says Kochling. “Our chess teacher is not even Chinese,” she says with a smile.

The school also hires teachers’ assistants from Wellesley High School, providing another way to increase ties with the greater community. “We are proud that Wellesley provides Chinese in the public schools from the seventh grade onward and want to be supportive,” says Kochling.

Another aspect that’s impressive about the school is that it’s primarily run by a volunteer community, parents, and board members.

“They have really good teachers who are primarily volunteers,” states Hasselback. “Our tuition really only covers the cost of rent.”

Ally Lin, a board member of the WCLS, restates this fact. “I think it’s impressive for the children to see that the school is run by people...
who have another profession during the rest of the week. They see that the parents and school’s facilitators find this to be an important enough goal to dedicate so much time on the weekends. They also see role models. Jianmei Kochling is a science director at a pharmaceutical company and Helen Fang is a principle systems manager at a financial services company.

The school also provides children with leadership opportunities. For example, they are expected to host one of the Chinese New Year’s events. There are also opportunities for students to become teachers’ assistants as they progress through their studies.

“But I also want to emphasize that this is a fulfilling commitment for all of us,” Lin adds. “It has provided me, as a board member, with greater leadership opportunities. It is really a wonderful community and there are so many different ways that this school has enriched the students, the school community, and the great Wellesley community. I feel lucky to be part of it.”

One can thank the founders and board of the WCLS for having the foresight to set a lofty goal that included incorporation into the community.
Jean Wiecha’s striking, large-scale landscapes have a focus on the man-made environment. These include a line of misty green lights over EZ pass lanes and armies of transmission towers marching below an Arizona sky.

But there’s more than one side to this Wellesley artist, whose pieces have been featured in galleries, including Framingham’s Danforth Museum, and scooped up by collectors. Besides responding to humans’ effect on our environment, Wiecha also renders landscapes and seascapes of the Maine she loves.

With a lifelong passion for painting, she kept a studio even when her children were young. But as she moved to full-time work, she gave up the studio, her paintings became smaller, and her time at the easel less frequent. A public health research analyst with a Ph.D. in human nutrition and dozens of articles and grants to her credit, she recently felt the need for change.

“I woke up one day and realized how much I really love painting,” Wiecha said. “And yet, day after day, I wasn’t making time for it.”

She now works part time at the research position, and Wiecha has changed directions in painting, too, moving on from landscapes to the intimate, highly challenging art of portraiture.
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It turns out that her scientific training prepared her for the new challenge of painting portraits. “Science definitely helps me be more methodical and less judgmental. It helps me bring into painting that discipline of asking questions, experimenting with how to answer them, and then looking at the information I get with an open mind,” she said. “I would have given up painting long ago if I had kept seeing unsuccessful attempts as failures.”

Painting a living, breathing subject requires a completely different skill set than the one she spent years honing. She’s had to rewire some long-held drawing habits and push herself to paint with looser and more confident brushwork.

It’s been “a fascinating journey of relearning how to paint,” she said. “It’s very, very difficult.”

Her model for this genre is John Singer Sargent—think of his famously scandalous Madame X and daring Isabella Stewart Gardner portraits—whom Wiecha describes as a “master of light and dark, clarity and softness, and a meticulous draftsman and perfectionist.”

Like Sargent, Wiecha seeks to convey something deeper than a likeness. The rapport between painter and subject includes a “mystical” element different from that rendered in a photographic portrait, and one that she is working to understand. Besides the artist’s style and skill, she mused, “the person is bringing something—or leaving something—to the process.”

But before achieving that transcendental goal, she needed to retrain. For an adept painter, that took courage. “Every painter I’ve talked to is always anxious about not being able to make their next painting work,” she said. “It’s been great to have this opportunity to learn something that is so challenging.”

In July, she rented a high-ceilinged studio in a former Framingham warehouse, and then applied to study with Waltham-based Kelly Carmody, a portrait specialist who has had works in Washington, D.C.’s National Gallery of Art and in London’s National Portrait Gallery. Wiecha gained a coveted spot.

“When you make a decision that works,” Wiecha said, “things fall into place.”

She also takes a weekly class, where she draws from live models. But she needed to practice at home, so she began looking for subjects.

When Wiecha and I met to discuss the possibility of a magazine
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I knew only her urban landscape work. “I have an idea,” she said. “I’ve begun painting portraits. What if I paint your portrait, and you write about it?”

With that irresistible invitation to gain an insider’s look into the artistic process, from start to finish as an observer and a subject, we began.

Wiecha came to my home with her sketchbook, Faber Castell pastel pencils, and camera. “Wear a solid color,” she had written in an email, “and no makeup.” No makeup—that was easy. I reread her note just as she drove up, and quickly changed out of my patterned sweater into a heathered navy cashmere.

First, Wiecha placed me near several windows to check whether the natural light would be too bright, creating dark shadows, or too dim, providing not enough contrast. She took some photos. I began to be a bit self-conscious: should I smile or not? Just how clearly will those wrinkles show up?

Wiecha laughed. I didn’t have to smile, and as for the signs of aging, “I don’t even know how to paint wrinkles,” she said. “I don’t think it’s necessary, and it’s distracting.”

The photographs help her assess the painting’s composition—not only the pose, but other elements that might work toward the design. She considered the dining room’s floral wallpaper, recalling the paisley pattern that makes Sargent’s Mrs. Gardner practically vibrate off the canvas.

“The first thing is getting the composition for the photo,” she explained. “It’s not just a snapshot. It’s a very integral part of a painting—choosing the lighting, finding an acceptable background, and planning a photo with the intent of painting it.”

Then, she sketched my face, trying to learn where my eyes connect with my nose, and just how my hand joins my cheek as I rest against it. We had one more sketching session before she began painting, followed by a studio visit to check the drawing’s accuracy and to match paint to my skin color.

At the studio, I was struck by the light from the three huge windows, the rows of sketches and paintings, brush-filled jars, and the pungent odor of oil paints. Then I noticed the multiple images of me on display:
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two black-and-white enlarged photographs, a detailed sketch of my arm and hand, a sketch on an easel, and a 24 x 24-inch monochromatic oil sketch that forms the bones of the portrait.

It’s an unusual feeling, to see oneself on canvas. I wasn’t self-conscious, because while I’m the subject of the painting, and the face looks like mine, it’s more than that, somehow—an image of who I might be.

She’s used transfer paper to draw my image from the photo, using permanent ink, from the photo to the canvas, covered the canvas with thinned paint, and lifted out highlights with a turpentine-dipped brush.

Wiecha needed to tweak the oil sketch. The photo’s flattened perspective caused my hand to appear bigger than it actually is, so I sat as she made comparative measurements and redrew it.

To match paint to my skin, Wiecha mixed burnt sienna with yellow ochre and white, added Venetian red, more burnt sienna, then blue-black and a bit of white. She created three different tones to represent the varying effects of light on the skin. She checked my eye color—hazel—and mixed more paints to produce the color of my sweater.

When she sent me a photo of the painting, still in progress, I was amazed. Somehow, she’s captured not only what I look like, but my personality and the expression in my eyes. It’s utterly believable, yet intriguing and surprising.

Recreating the act of looking at someone: that’s what Wiecha wants her portraits to achieve. As she worked, she said, “You suddenly start to see the person come out of the canvas, which is a lovely kind of magic trick.”
**Escape from Saigon: A Novel**

**JANET MENDELSON** writer

**Vietnam** has been called “America’s first television war.” For two decades, beginning in 1955, people gathered nightly in their living rooms to watch network news anchors like Walter Cronkite and correspondents in the field bring war home in a way never before witnessed. Newspapers and magazines like *TIME* and *Newsweek* matched television coverage with in-depth accounts of the fighting and mounting casualties. Across the U.S., the stories reported by the news media were cited in arguments between those for and against America’s involvement in the war. The conflict was as divisive as any in our nation’s history. And long before cable TV, satellite news, and the Internet, broadcast television and print journalists were our eyes and ears on the scene.

*Escape from Saigon* (Skyhorse Publishing), a novel by Michael Morris and Dick Pirozzolo, follows the lives of two foreign correspondents among others in Vietnam’s former capital for 30 days, portraying the human side of the war at its end.

It is April 1975. The U.S. military has left. With the communist-supported North Vietnamese army advancing toward Saigon, refugees from the ravaged countryside are flooding into the city. The clock is ticking. Any day now, Saigon’s airfield will be destroyed. All remaining Americans, including diplomats, civilians, and journalists—anyone with a connection—are told to evacuate as quickly as aircraft can land, reload, and fly them out. South Vietnamese civilians, many of whom were translators and aides promised refuge by their American employers, are at the American Embassy gates, pleading to get themselves and loved ones on those flights or for safe passage to reach ships in the harbor. Seasoned war correspondents Sam Esposito and Lisette Vo know they should leave before it’s too late. Nonetheless, they continue
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to produce eyewitness stories and film footage that they frantically rush to their respective editors stateside. And against the odds, an ex-Marine named Matt Moran returns to Saigon in an attempt to locate and rescue his Vietnamese wife’s extended family.

Wellesley resident Dick Pirozzolo and his co-author Michael Morris are Vietnam veterans and career journalists. They based their fictional characters on real reporters who covered the war and described events inspired by their own experiences. Scenes unfold involving the real American ambassador and his staff, President Gerald Ford, and generals involved at that time.

When Pirozzolo and I met to discuss their new book, he confirmed he and Morris adhered closely to historical records. Woven throughout are excerpts from archival material drawn from major news media accounts and government documents. They interviewed former military personnel, CIA agents, even the proprietor of a Saigon bar, for technical fact checking and first-person accounts of pressure-cooker situations. Former U.S. Air Force pilot Major Steven Dorian (Ret.), who lives in Wellesley, imparted his knowledge of fighter jet and air transport operations.

As they recapture the frantic pace of a city and nation torn apart, the novel rings true. But this is not a war story in the traditional mode.

“We wanted to write about human relationships and how people behave or respond to extraordinary circumstances, rising or not rising to the experience,” said Pirozzolo. He described Sam as the archetypical, hard-hitting, ambivalent reporter out to get the story for his newspaper. Lisette, the bi-lingual daughter of a Vietnamese father and an American mother, covers the war for TV news. She is equally ambitious and talented, determined to make it big by landing a job working for Cronkite. As Pirozzolo pointed out, women were gaining prominence in the media at that time.

The characters Sam and Lisette are stubborn professionals and almost inseparable friends. Both rely heavily on South Vietnamese locals with whom they have worked for years. But in the final days, it becomes less clear whether some of those locals can be trusted. And
CLAUDIA ANDELMAN
Claudia is excited to join Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. and The Jared Wilk Group. Born and raised in the Boston area, she has been happily living in Needham for over 10 years with her husband and 4 children. Claudia has become an expert in every facet of Needham, as a resident, mother, and real estate investor. Claudia has spent the last few years finding, purchasing and managing rental properties in Needham and Newton. Prior to that, Claudia worked for 10 years managing client relationships for an online marketing company. Her knowledge of the Boston area, its neighborhoods and schools, combined with her love for matching homes and people, makes this new position a dream come true!

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North Vietnamese tanks are just days, and then hours away.

Pirozzolo and his wife, Jane, have lived in Wellesley for more than 40 years. They arrived shortly after he served in the Air Force as an information officer in Saigon from 1970 to 1971. While there as a media spokesperson, he participated in the daily press briefings known as “The Five O’Clock Follies” and developed an enduring affection for Vietnam and its people. Back in the United States, he was a reporter for the Worcester Telegram & Gazette and handled media relations for Boston University before opening his Boston-based firm, Pirozzolo Company Public Relations, whose clients have included the governments of Vietnam, Japan, and Canada, and corporations in several foreign countries. During the 1990s, he helped foster reconciliation and trade between the U.S. and Vietnam.

*top: Saigon during the Vietnam War; bottom: Saigon today: Tu Do Street—known for bargirls, beer, and brawls during the Vietnam War has been renamed Dong Khoi Street and recast with trendy cafes and boutiques, appealing to a post-war generation of Vietnamese Millennials. What’s more, the Ao Dai, the traditional Vietnamese garb, has been supplanted by the latest fashions.*
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and Vietnam. He currently serves on the editorial board of the Boston Global Forum, a think tank focused on peace initiatives with Vietnam.

Michael Morris served as an infantry sergeant from 1967 to 1968. He earned a Purple Heart for being wounded in combat while in the Northern I Corps region during some of the Vietnam War’s worst fighting, including the Tet Offensive. A career journalist and editor, he lives in Savannah, Georgia.

Their novel is a snapshot in time, but it also offers a vantage point for comparison with today.

“The U.S. made a massive effort to rescue the Vietnamese boat people and resettle refugees,” said Pirozzolo. “Correspondents made an equally massive effort to get the news to the U.S. accurately. There were no cell phones or laptops. It was a laborious process of getting film shipped to the TV networks and letters delivered to wives and family members.” They could use Telex but phone calls were difficult and time-consuming. Veterans returning to the States often were confronted by animosity from protesters opposed to the war; Pirozzolo recalls his welcome home as “lukewarm.” The Worcester Telegram & Gazette was actively looking to hire veterans, he said, and later Boston University hired him on the strength of his military communications experience.

Pirozzolo has returned to Vietnam a half dozen times since then. He has witnessed Vietnam changing in both subtle and significant ways. Women now favor western clothing over traditional dress, and upscale retailers have replaced seedy streets once known for the bars and bar girls who inhabit his book. He helped foster international business relationships that were part of the eventual reconciliation between the two countries. “The U.S. and Vietnam are now allies,” said Pirozzolo who acknowledged that writing the book became a very emotional journey.

“In 1971, Vietnam was in my rear view mirror,” he said. “I moved on.” Even though later he arranged media coverage of Vietnam by U.S. and world press, and wrote by-lined articles on Vietnam public policy and trade, writing the novel brought it all back. “That’s neither good nor bad for me,” he said, “but it was good for the book.”
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Rachel Klein may be widely acknowledged as a creative whiz with her chef’s knives, but one thing that she’s known to never mince is words.

“I don’t ever want to see just one kind of person in my restaurant,” says the outspoken 42-year-old New York City native of her new Needham spot, RFK Kitchen (as in Rachel Francis Klein), which has been full every night since it opened this past fall. “We’re drawing from towns all over—food lovers, old and young people, families and couples, and cool crowds that would normally go into the city to eat, but are staying here with us,” she says.

“Some people are dressed up and making a night of it, and some are stopping in for a glass of wine and a salad with a girlfriend on their way home from the gym. It’s that kind of unexpected mix that makes a restaurant real and unpretentious. That’s my kind of place.”

And to be sure, this is, at long last, her very own place. Since moving to Boston from Brooklyn by way of Providence more than a decade ago, Klein has racked up critical accolades and turned heads with her innovative-yet-comforting menus at high-end restaurants like the erstwhile Om in Harvard Square, swanky Asana at The Mandarin Oriental in Boston, and the trendy-meets-fine-dining venue Liquid Art House in Boston’s South End. But all of those plum executive chef positions, while high profile, were working for other people. RFK Kitchen is Klein’s first venture as not just head chef, but also co-owner.
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“I’ve always been lucky and had creative freedom, but this is a different role,” says Klein, pointing out that instead of manning the line by herself every night as she has previously, she now has a chef de cuisine and close friend, Stacey Cogswell, in place. (“I was at her wedding dress fitting this morning,” adds Klein.) That positioning represents a seismic shift in Klein’s life. “It’s not just about being behind a stove anymore,” she explains. “It’s also about research and development, and running new concepts, and different, bigger-picture responsibilities.” To that end, she finds herself doing a lot more events, charity, and local community work these days. “That’s a big part of making the community better. You’ve got to maintain the integrity of your creativity as a chef, but also balance that with what your guests want.”

That sense of lively community interaction is one of the surest signs that Klein has finally been able to craft her own kind of eatery. “I’ve always loved the experience of having people hanging out in my kitchen at home, sitting at the island and eating, talking, relaxing, and interacting,” she says. That experience is mirrored at RFK, where the bar and lounge area flanks the kitchen, sporting 35 seats, with 22 of them...
winding around two islands. “On one side is salads and desserts, and on the other is the rotisserie,” she says. “You could be talking to me or another chef while we’re baking cookies to order, or carving up an entree.”

With a menu brimming with subtly tweaked classics (the cioppino is one of the most flavorful fish stews you’ll ever dig a spoon into, and it arrives with perfectly crunchy homemade croutons and orange aioli), RFK also trades in creative, constantly rotating specials. “Last week we made a really wonderful wild boar with macomber turnips and a cherry gastrique,” she recalls. “That was a personal favorite.” All pastas are handmade, and vegan alternatives steer clear of falling into the ho-hum trap by packing in the intense flavors. “I’m a meat eater,” she laughs, “and I still absolutely love the roasted cauliflower with a chick pea cake, capers, and red pepper sauce.” If anything defines the menu, it’s a dedication to what one might call comfort-chic. Everything is approachable, with an emphasis on incredibly high quality and meticulously sourced ingredients rather than overly wrought presentations.

It all represents a slow evolution from the kinds of food she was making when she first moved to Boston, but with the same attention to detail and comfort factor. One thinks of the rich—but-adventurous dishes she made back at Om—most memorably, a slow-cooked, lacquered pork belly appetizer (before pork belly had reached trendy status) that had
food critics reeling. (It didn’t take long before she set up shop in that kitchen that Esquire Magazine named it one of the country’s best new restaurants.)

Her own metamorphosis as a chef, she says, has both rolled along with and been inspired by the diversification in the overall food landscape in and around Boston. “It’s changed so much just in the last 10 years, it’s insane,” she observes. “When I first started here years ago, it was only big-name chefs. Now you have so many up-and-comers who are becoming powerhouses in their own right, and running small, creative places. I’m always inspired by that group of new people trying new things.”

She’s also been buoyed by the local industry network of women chefs—something that is widely acknowledged as unique to Boston among food professionals. “In New York, I was working for one of the three women chefs around,” she remembers. “It’s gotten better there, but there’s still a shortage of women chefs. But in Boston you have huge-name chefs who are female, who are supporting each other. That meant that as I was making my way here, I could be accepted...
on a larger-scale dining demographic, because people here already were used to supporting women chefs. That’s made a huge difference in terms of what I was able to accomplish.”

Meanwhile, her vision for the place’s design was largely formed early on, in her years growing up in the art community of New York back in the graffiti era of the ’80s and ’90s. “My friends were artists and musicians, my dad was a painter, and I went to school for art history before I went to cooking school. We lived in loft spaces with freight elevators, and I loved that grittiness.” In the design of RFK, she sought to evoke that very sort of sophisticated imperfection with a mid-century modern mood, exposed pipe work, and deliberately quirky elements met with beautifully crafted artisanal furnishings—such as the custom-made lounge sofas made by Irish artists she found living and creating works locally on Cape Cod. “Nothing is absolutely ‘perfect,’” she says. “The back wall behind the bar is a textured piece that looks like it’s almost getting eaten away at a little. We have a very sophisticated design here, but if you really look around there’s a rawness to it.”

That’s a perspective that clearly extends not just to the design, but to the sumptuous yet unfussy food, to the eclectic mix of guests she welcomes, and to the individual experiences they all have every night. “I want things to be real. I don’t like ‘cookie cutter’ anything,” she says. “And I think we’ve hit that mark.”
Easy Does It  Summertime cocktail parties are the epitome of laid-back revelry

ALEXANDRA HALL writer

as much as I relish entertaining at any time of year, summer shindigs are an entirely different kind of animal. Put most simply, the usual rules don’t necessarily apply. And that is precisely why I love hosting summer parties most of all.

Instead of worrying about strategically planning out assigned seating arrangements like one does at a fall, winter, or springtime dinner party, in summer we tend to let guests mill about the patio or lawn, laze on the hammock, or stroll the garden. Guests can sit wherever they feel most comfortable while they nosh and talk to whomever it is they feel like talking to. Rather than sweating over a hot stove (or hiring someone else to), everyone loves the interactivity of getting involved with the ongoing grilling process—even if it’s just to chime in with requests about how they prefer their steak or tuna kabobs done. And instead of being about fine china and the perfect etiquette of “proper entertaining,” it’s far more about fun music, fresh air, and breezy conversation. Most of all, it’s about relaxing with friends—which, at least as far as I’m concerned anyway, is the heart and soul of what true hospitality and generosity are about.

My favorite settings for such festivities are most often someplace comfy, casual, chic (but not self-consciously so), and ideally either on a boat, near or on a body of water (which could as easily be a pool or fountain as it could a lake or an ocean), or, at the very least, outside on a
sun-dappled or moonlight-lit patio or porch. As gatherings go, they come in all shapes and sizes, of course—from epic bashes complete with equally epic guest lists and full catering to intimate cocktail parties with just a handful of close friends.

And no matter how big the get-together, one of the most alluring things about such casual, more freewheeling summer entertaining is the opportunity to jump into the fray with hands-on activities like playing grill maestro and bartender. The trick with both is to choose food and drink that are not only delicious but also easy to prep for before the party begins, so they’re a cinch to whip up on the spot. And as always, the more the recipes highlight the vibrant and local flavors of the season, the better.

“I love grapefruit-based cocktails straight through July,” says Joseph Spece (known simply to his loyal bar customers as “J.C.”) of Juniper restaurant in Wellesley. There he creates a roster of extraordinary and intricately balanced cocktails (and lest you detect a whiff of pretension in that description, know that he insists on being referred to as a “bartender,” rather than a “mixologist”) that focus on spirits infused with bold plant and fruit flavors. One of his favorites for a crowd? The Ciao Bella—his personal spin on the Negroni (see recipe to left). “It’s easy to make at home because it’s equal amounts of everything, and it’s so refreshing, you’ll never drink another mimosa by the pool again after you’ve had one,” J.C. says.

The refreshing element isn’t just grapefruit, but grapefruit from Texas. (Grapefruit is also a key flavor in the Icarus Lane, Juniper’s signature drink invented by bar manager Ashley Eaton.) “They’re so juicy and rich this time of year,” J.C. says. And he insists they pair perfectly with
the accompanying spirits and sweet vermouth. (J.C. recommends a higher quality one like Punt e Mes, which will bring in elements of clove and black cherry to make the drink more complex.) "It’s ideal for a party because it’s so easy to make, can be made in batches as large as you need, and with its ruby color and bright flavors, it’s as beautiful as it is delicious,” he says.

Another summer soiree winner: the Cetriolo Collins (see recipe below), a consistent warm-weather hit at the bar at Alta Strada in Wellesley. "It’s one of our favorite menu additions during the summer," enthuses General Manager Richard Bertin, who describes it as the epitome of crisp refreshment. Only slightly more complicated than (but just as impressive as) the Ciao Bella, it employs the clean taste of fresh cucumbers, the bite of vodka, gloriously fragrant summer basil, and a sweetness from the addition of simple syrup—an easy-to-make mixture of sugar and water that you can prep before the guests arrive. Line up all your ingredients beforehand and make sure to have a muddler handy, as well — they’re available at almost any kitchen store — to crush up the ingredients and release as much of the flavor as possible before passing around to friends so they can sip (and sigh with happiness).

Of course, the bounty of summer flavors reaches far beyond the bar, too. The season’s explosion of local New England produce is at a premium this time of year — from gleaming, deep green zucchini and gorgeous peppers (both great for simple-as-can-be marinating and grilling to a smoky, velvety tenderness) to more just-picked herbs than you can possibly use all at once. While everyone buzzes around the grill and the bar waiting for the next crops of culinary creations and libations to come forth, I love giving friends something to graze and comment on continuously. Enter the beauty of the buffet: Load it up with foods that taste delicious at room temperature (or backyard temperature), and then enjoy the ease of “set it and forget it” serving.

For this, I love dishes like delicate sautéed squash blossoms under a shower of creamy feta cheese crumbles, straight from the farmer’s

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**THE CETRIOLO COLLINS**
A summer favorite among Alta Strada regulars, the ultra-refreshing cocktail is easy to mix up for a crowd.

1 cucumber simple syrup
1 bunch of fresh basil club soda
1 oz. fresh lemon juice ice
2 oz. cucumber vodka (brands like Prairie and Pearl make versions)

In advance of the party, make a batch of simple syrup. In a medium saucepan, combine one cup sugar and one cup of water. Bring to a boil, stirring, until sugar has dissolved. Allow to cool and store in a container until ready to make the drinks.

For each drink, fill a Collins glass with one cucumber wheel and two large (or four small) basil leaves.

Add in one ounce lemon juice and one ounce simple syrup.

Muddle all ingredients in the glass together, then fill the glass with ice.

Add two ounces of cucumber vodka and top with club soda to taste.

Garnish each glass with a fresh cucumber wheel.

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**YELENA ELMAN**
Yelena Elman joins Benoit Mizner Simon & Co. with 10 years of experience as a very successful medical device sale representative in both NYC and Boston. Before moving to NYC in 2001, she graduated from Florida State University with a degree in Psychology. Yelena hopes to utilize her sales knowledge, closing skills and negotiating ability to help clients achieve their real estate goals. She has a passion for design and staging which will bring added value. Yelena’s attention to detail and outgoing personality will help her clients through their home buying or selling process with as little stress as possible. Outside of work Yelena enjoys time with her two young sons and husband. She is a fitness enthusiast, an avid crossfitter and a certified yoga instructor. Yelena will be working out of the Needham office.

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market; creative salads like carrot with coriander vinaigrette and pistachios (a personal favorite—see my adapted recipe above); smashed potato and scallion salad; roast corn salad with lime and avocado; and slaws that go wonderfully with spicy grilled meats like shredded candy stripe beets with radicchio. One perennial summer buffet success story: panzanella.

That Italian classic spotlights one of the most coveted treasures of the season—heirloom tomatoes grown on our local New England farms. (And if you can’t get to one before the party, the diverse and beautiful selection at Volante Farm in Needham is as formidable as any.)

Chef Michael Schlow, owner of Alta Strada, considers panzanella (see his recipe above) a must-eat dish throughout late summer, and when he serves it to guests, he opts to use Tuscan bread. That, he says, is “a nice way to add texture to the dish. The bread cuts through the acid in the dressing and combines all the flavors and textures together effortlessly.”

And effortlessness, in the end, may be the most crucial element of any summer party. In a season where the usual rules are thrown to the wind, the only real rule is to enjoy ourselves, and opt for relaxed companionship over stress. I’ll raise a glass (of Ciao Bella) to that.
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The beach—it's one of the main reasons you battle Route 3 traffic to get away every summer. But often, after a few days, there isn't a sand dune in sight that can hold your kids' attention. Ocean waves and beach buckets are only interesting for so long before you're scrambling to find something else for the little ones to do.

Several Cape resort escapes will keep your kids occupied when the sun and surf have worn out their welcome.

Chatham Bars Inn

One of the mainstays on the Cape, Chatham Bars Inn is synonymous with luxury living and was rated one of the top resorts in the world by Travel & Leisure magazine. But all this 100-year-old charm won’t mean a thing if your family is bored. The resort’s extensive range of kid-centric
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activities designed for ages four through twelve almost guarantees this never happens. Bonus: it gives you, the parents, some alone time to enjoy all the Inn’s luxury offerings.

From late June through Labor Day, the Inn’s award-winning children’s program offers several sessions that connect kids with the local community and lots of new friends.

The smaller set, kids aged four to six, known as Beach Buddies, enjoys a host of favorite activities including Eco-Chefs, a cooking lesson using produce from the resort’s own Brewster farm; and KABOOM, which allows future mad scientists to experiment with pop-rock volcanoes and elephant toothpaste. The Chatham Bars Inn also offers classics like swim and tennis lessons, a Pirate & Princess Hunt and IN-Tents Camping, where youngsters help pitch a tent and toast s’mores under the stars.

Whether it’s heading to the local Chatham Anglers playing field for hands-on baseball clinics with the Cape Cod Baseball League or working with local artists to craft watercolor masterpieces, the Clam Diggers group of seven- to twelve-year-olds delves into activities far beyond playing in the sand.
The older kids and tweens are never left out at Chatham Bars Inn. They can also hit the baseball clinics with the Clam Diggers or embark on their own field trips to Chatham Creative Arts Center's studio to learn the basics of pottery. There's iScavenge, complete with an app to lead participants through a series of wacky tasks; a Trip to Tween Beach; a boat ride to North Beach Island; and Crack the Case, a dinner detective mystery night. These are in addition to the resort's traditional Cardboard Boat Regatta, the Amazing Fear Factor Race, pool parties, sports lessons, and more.

When the entire family wants to get involved, Chatham Bars Inn uses its boats to take everyone out on the open water for a unique Shark Experience, researching and tagging great whites with a member of the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy, or an exciting Pirate Cruise searching for stolen treasures while children are dressed in character.

**Wequassett Resort and Golf Club**

A 1740s Colonial house with clapboard cottages nestled on 27 acres of pristine waterfront on Pleasant Bay in Chatham, Wequassett Resort and Golf Club is an exquisite hideaway that promises as active as a vacation as you please.

The newly designed Children's Center offers innovative, educational, and fun programming for tots to teens. This way, the younger guests stay entertained while potentially learning something along the way.
Seasonal programming includes a children’s beach club, a rock-climbing wall, puppet shows, camping under the stars, a floating dock for jumping, and “dive-in” movies. Sailing, tennis, and swimming are also offered, as well as customized children’s welcome experiences and amenities. There’s even an outdoor amphitheater specifically designed for kids to take center stage.

Always on the must-do list at Wequassett is its Oyster Expedition, which brings families out on a barge to Pleasant Bay waters to learn about (and experience) oyster harvesting. At the end of the 90-minute excursion, you get to feast on the oysters you’ve collected (and grown-ups can toast with flutes of champagne).

For your little landlubber, check out Wequassett’s famous nautical-themed playground with a “tot lot” for toddlers and children’s area for those over five years old. Pirate ships and treasure chests are customized with slides, ramps, and ropes adjacent to an aquatic playground with fountains and sprays.

Should the weather not cooperate with your outdoor plans, the center is also equipped with

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Here are a few other places to keep your little ones excited about their Cape Cod adventures.

- **CAPE COD CHILDREN’S MUSEUM**
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  577 Great Neck Road South, Mashpee
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- **CAPE COD INFLATABLE PARK**
  This outdoor park boasts both wet and dry inflatable rides that just scream fun. The water rides make a huge splash in the beach section, and there’s an assortment of ever-changing bounce houses, combos, obstacles, and slides. There’s also a toddler zone for the smaller set.
  518 Main Street (Route 28), West Yarmouth
  508.771.6060 / www.capecodinflatablepark.com

- **CAPE COD POTATO CHIP FACTORY**
  From their farmers’ fields to your child’s school lunchbox, your kids will love to see how the legendary chips in their snack bags are made. You can tour the facility and finish up with a sampling of chips of all flavors.
  100 Breed’s Hill Road, Hyannis
  508.775.3358 / www.capecodchips.com

- **CREATIVE ARTS CENTER**
  Open all year, the Center offers kids classes and workshops in drawing and painting, photography, printmaking, pottery, and jewelry.
  154 Crowell Road, Chatham
  508.945.3583 / capecodcreativearts.org

- **PIRATE’S COVE ADVENTURE GOLF**
  Mateys of all ages love how the legends of infamous pirates are brought to life at this award-winning theme park. Putt your way through caves, over footbridges, and under cascading waterfalls and learn a little pirate lore along the way.
  728 Main Street, South Yarmouth
  508.394.6200 / www.piratescove.net
an array of high-tech amenities, including a 135-foot HD screen, Wii, Playstation, and Xbox 360. It also offers popular family and teen gaming nights.

The resort also recently launched Cape Cod Curators, which translates to “insider” secrets on exclusive activities and adventures that celebrate the best of New England and Cape Cod lifestyle. Consider these in-the-know authentic Cape immersions, from a day with the Cape Cod Baseball League to cranberry bog tours or picnics on the Outer Beach part of Cape Cod’s National Seashore.

No matter how you spend your day, end it with the resort’s evening s’mores. You can order a kit to your room, complete with a personal fire pit, or venture over to one of the property’s outdoor fire pits.

**Ocean Edge Resort & Golf Club**

There’s no limit to the activities at Brewster’s famed Ocean Edge Resort & Golf Club. A seaside retreat with 429 acres, the resort boasts a private beach along the Brewster Flats, five indoor and outdoor swimming pools, golf lessons and clinics, tennis lessons, croquet on the sprawling Mansion lawn, hiking and biking the 26-mile Cape Cod Rail Trail, stand up paddle boarding, and kayaking on the private Bay Pines Beach.

While all of these have family-friendly appeal, the kids enjoy their own summer fun through the EdgeVenture program. This kids-only day club allows the resort’s youngest guests (ages four through nine) to participate in half or full days of crafts, games, educational experiences, and swimming.

When he or she signs up for the Eco-Venture, your budding explorer will get their fill of science-centered fun, including nature walks along Blueberry Pond, scavenger hunts, science experiments, and more. They’ll also enjoy crafts such as kite making, beach bag decorating, sand art, tie-dying t-shirts, and flip-flop making.

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The Beach and Pool Ventures take to the water with a beach life program, lessons on protecting the dunes, and sandcastle building. There’s also a “learn to swim” component and games in the pool. The family’s star athletes can focus on lawn games such as kick ball, parachute, tag, soccer, and more as part of the Sport Venture program.

When you want to add a little learning to all the fun, Ocean Edge Resort & Golf Club offers a three-day Junior Sport Camp in the summer for kids ages six through 15 years old. The camp runs Tuesday through Thursday and includes instruction and competition in golf and tennis, with each activity taught by certified instructors.

After a busy and fun day, there’s nothing quite like relaxing together for a movie night. During their Movies by Moonlight, the Mansion’s front lawn becomes the perfect backdrop for all the classics, complete with popcorn for the kiddos and snacks and a bar for the adults. And no summer night is complete without a S’mores Family Beach Fire, one of Ocean Edge’s most popular events. The whole family kicks off their shoes, takes in the sunset, and hangs around the beach fire to make friends and eat s’mores.

With all of these activities available to kids of all ages, you’re sure to find the right summer adventure for your family.
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about town

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.

Big Sister Role Model Fashion Show

1 Wendy Thurmond, Lauren Cronin, Sue Connors, Nanci Cicchetti, Jane Derry, Susan Kingsley, Stephanie Coughlan, and Amanda Pezzuto
2 Michelle McLough and Mike Casey
3 Kelly McDermott and Mariann Youniss
4 Rainy and John Wilkins

J. Todd Galleries Heart to Table Book Signing Event

1 Megan O’Block and Mona Kumar
2 Leslie Durgin and Sue Ferrera

Coldwell Banker Awards Celebration

1 Wendy Thurmond, Lauren Cronin, Sue Connors, Nanci Cicchetti, Jane Derry, Susan Kingsley, Stephanie Coughlan, and Amanda Pezzuto
2 Michelle McLough and Mike Casey
3 Kelly McDermott and Mariann Youniss
4 Rainy and John Wilkins

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Chan Luu Trunk Show at Pine Straw

1. Olivia Sheehan, Lindsay Heffernan, and Megan Bresenham  
2. Jill Attaman  
3. Madison Zucker and Tracy Cranley

Golden Ball Wassail

1. Bill Gallagher, Tare Newbury, Travis Powell, Kay Conrad, Polly Slavet, Michelle Roman, Bruce Peterson, Karen Valocin, Pam Fox, Amy Riedel, Dan Quinn, and Carolyn McGuire  
2. Joan Bines, Claudia Quinn, and Dan Quinn  
3. David Harmon, Anne Morgan, Arthur Pagas, Kathleen Rousseau, Ken Lemoine, and Bill Rousseau  
4. Bill Gallagher and Tare Newbury

Century Bank Wellesley Ribbon Cutting and Senate Citation


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about town

Wellesley Historical Society at The Local

1. Patti Dirlam, Dr. Ejaz Ali, Dr. Femina Ali, Erica Dumont, and John Dirlam
2. Robin Gaynor, Ellen Quinn Meagher, and Nan Morrow
3. Joyce Wadlington and Jean Berry
4. Marc Shecktman, JoAnn Jones, and Pete Jones

Wellesley Chamber of Commerce Silent Auction

1. Jane Abramson and Scott Coyle
2. Lorna Ruby, Gillian Kohli, Bill Kohli, and Henry Connors
3. Derek Owens, Eric Costa, Allison Straley, and Nathan del Llano-Silva
4. Caitlin Oliveira and Nancy Chandler

PHOTOS BY SHAUNA EPSTEIN

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about town

Newton Country Day Shopping Event at Lyn Evans

1 Georgia Jenkins, Sue Frontero, Liz McGain, and Maureen McCarthy  2 Louie Tracy Coats and Lorrie Woodacre  3 Diane Popeo, Laura Baines-Walsh, and Jackie Finnegan

Lunch With Kate Walsh at Wellesley Country Club

1 Petra Kurcon, Patricia Dacey, and Lara Gund  2 Elisha Wachman, M.D., Dorene Higgons, Kate Walsh, Pattie Bishop, Mariann Younis, Jessica Rosenbloom, and Nancy Nash  3 Evelina Taber, Lee Salerno, Shani DeFina, and Michele DeOliveira  4 Jill Creepy, Cricket Mullaney, and Cynthia Strauss

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Kertzman & Weil Book Signing Event

1 Trish Bradley, Mary Shea Wilson, SueAnn Sheehan, Susan Picking, and Chrisie Lawrence
2 Nancy Gallerani, Dani Sammut, Jared Parker, and Debbie Cerra
3 Mary Ellen Michaels, Dean Poritzky, Keith Magnus, and Michelle DeSimone
4 Chelsea Robinson, Betsy Kessler, and Trish Bradley

Wellesley Garden Study Group

1 Michele Livingston, Cheryl Colbert, Susan Hill, Lorane O’Hanlon, and Liz Tecca
2 Mary Bevilacqua, Ruth Breden, Bobbie Hayes, Fran Kerchner
3 Cricket Viass and David Ousenbury
4 Lucy Sur, Michele Livingston, and Cheryl Colbert

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about town

Wellesley Free Library Mini Golf

1 Giselle and Camille Nelson  2 Violet, Denise, Drake, and Lily Perrin  3 Aden, Enni, and William Abazaj  4 Grace Tuffy and Allison Witheford

Wellesley Historical Society Research Your House

1 Debbie Daniels and Neal Goins  2 Arvid von Taube and Kathleen Fahey

Brookline A Capella Concert at Wellesley Free Library

1 Jill Carroll, Janet Baret, Barbara Brer, and Polly Leland-Mayer  2 Allen Pendergrast, Andrew Levine, Emily Brown, Melanie LoBue, Sarah Friswell, and Brett Jackson
For more information on these events and additional photos, visit wwmblog.com

Wellesley Weston Chabad Fundraiser

1 Rabbi Moshe Bleich with wife Geni and children Esther, Levi, and Shneur
2 Noah Katz, Ashley Gerber, Samantha Stone, Geni Bleich, and Debbie Cohen
3 Rabbi Moshe Bleich and Steve Sheinkopf
4 Helena and Eli Cohen, Rabbi Bleich, and Chaim Zirking

FLX Running for Cover Fundraiser for Melanoma Foundation of New England

1 Colleen Phelps, Carol Chaoui, Julie Garvey, and Kate Maul
2 Anne Jackowitz, Todd Jackowitz, and Fran Avila
3 Jimmy Alden, Paul Rolincik, and Dwight Garland

Visit the WellesleyWeston Magazine Blog
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.

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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.
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| A Thoughtful Move, Inc.       | 111                     | FLX Training                               | 151          |
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as a child growing up in Wellesley, one of my favorite rituals was our weekly trip to “the dump,” then a cavernous pit within an incinerator where we gleefully pitched our trash from a week of consumption by a family of nine. My brother and I would sit on the back of the tailgate dangling our legs from the family station wagon, our father at the wheel, as he drove the short distance to what is now more elegantly called the RDF—the Recycling and Disposal Facility.

Before the Clean Air Act made incineration of trash a federal crime in the early 1970s, I stood mesmerized by the fire pit and the large steel bucket that would drop down and close its claws into the sprawling waste to haul another load for the insatiable fire awaiting its next meal. Among the available activities waiting for a seven-year-old boy in the 1960s, this one was high on my list.

Many years later, I returned to Wellesley with my own family and a new ritual. Saturday was my day to go to the dump, with the recycling more or less sorted, and the car loaded up with cans, aluminum, glass, paper waste, and the trash that didn’t fit into those categories.

Where my childhood trips were quick, my adult experience at the RDF was not. I would be gone for a solid hour or longer, catching up with friends, often the parents of my kids’ friends or the townies I’d known most of my life. My own children grew weary of my capacity for small talk and eventually withdrew from my offer to join me for the trip to the dump. I had to decide whether to cut short my social ritual or leave them at home as I headed to Great Plain Avenue to catch up with the townies.

Mostly they stayed home.

In a town that once called itself “dry,” I would chuckle at the overflowing containers of wine and beer bottles—clear, green, and brown—(as I was having my own contribution into them) that strongly hinted that this town was indeed pretty “wet.” And in an affluent town, you could always bank on finding a little treasure (like that brand new discarded golf bag I scored) that someone had left as trash in the “leave and take” area.

Knowing that I had done my little part to save the planet and had liberated my garage from the mounting heap of consumption was almost beside the point of my weekly sojourn. Chatting with old friends wasn’t the key objective, but it made the trip worthwhile. Now that I live in Boston, I still separate my trash, but leave it for pickup by someone I don’t know and who obviously doesn’t have time to talk.
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