

The Cape Courier

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In the Spirit of Community

Three Cape Robotics teams take State Championships



Contributed photo

Cape Robotics was in top form at the VEX Robotics State Championship Saturday, March 1 at the Point in South Portland.

Eighth graders 56K, the "Killer Sea Rats" (Alex Markott, Ben Foley, Bennett Kang, Patrick Rolfe, Elliot Hughes) took both the Excellence and Skills Champion awards in addition to the Middle School Championship.

Sophomores 56S "Self-Destruct System" (Noah Scott, Jonah Chang, Hudson Charlebois, Finnegan Zwintscher) and Freshmen 56F "Armageddon" (Brendan Oakley and Ayden Diamond) formed an alliance to win the High School Championship.

Several other teams took home awards, and there was great cooperation and sportsmanship in evidence throughout the day. All in all, Cape Robotics supports roughly 70 students grades 5 through 12. Students work over several months to design, build, and code their own custom robots in order to compete in an event that changes from year to year. The program fosters engineering know-how, teamwork and sportsmanship. The Cape Robotics Team is coached by CEHS teacher Alex Anesko.

News from February Planning Board meeting

By Hanna Gilley

Blue Meadow Final Subdivision Review and Resource Protection Permit

Bob Metcalf, of Mitchell and Associates, requested a final major subdivision review and resource protection permit to construct Blue Meadow, an 18-unit condominium development located at 90 Ocean House Road.

Metcalf presented to the Planning Board minor changes to the site plan that included an identifying location for postal boxes and a request from the Conservation Commission for the loop trail to be noted on the final submission. Additionally, there are two public use parking spaces noted on the plan for public access to the open space and recreation area.

Most notably the proposed two units closest to the abutters, Canterbury on the Cape, have been pushed further away from the boundary line approximately 31 feet and 20 feet respectively.

Doug Babkirk, President of Canterbury at the Cape, thanked the Planning Board and the developer for the relocation of the two units as that was the primary concern from the beginning of the project proposal. Babkirk shared two additional concerns of residents of Canterbury at the Cape that include the vegetative buffer and potential impacts from blasting to any residential property nearest the boundary line.

-see PLANNING BOARD page 9

News from February Town Council meeting

By Hanna Gilley

Town Council Reports and Correspondence

Councilor Johnathan Sahrbeck and Councilor Elizabeth Scifres shared that they attended a recent Greater Portland Council of Government (GPCOG) meeting where the topic was centered around property taxes. Both councilors heard from other community leaders on their community's ideas and solutions and that it's the "start of a conversation."

Finance Committee Monthly Report

Councilor Scifres shared that the biggest variable in recent budgeting reporting is the Public Works Department's overtime, due to several recent snowstorms. Scifres also mentioned that they are looking ahead to start the budget process in early March when all departments will present their proposed budgets to the Town Council.

Citizen Comment Items Not on the Agenda

Mary Ann Lynch said that residents of Cape Elizabeth "do not want a tax increase bigger than 10%" in reference to the recent referendums on new construction and school renovations in the town. Lynch said further, "They (the school board) refused to listen to the voters and appeared determined to force a third referendum perhaps as early as June."

Town Manager's Monthly Report

Town Manager Patrick Fox shared that the first phase of a five-month long business outreach process along with GPCOG will conclude on April 7, 2025, at a business forum/Council Workshop. During that workshop, reporting on recent surveying will be shared.

Fox also said that he will create an agenda item for a future Town Council meeting to

-see TOWN COUNCIL page 8

Cape's 3rd and 4th grade basketball team wins championship



Contributed photo

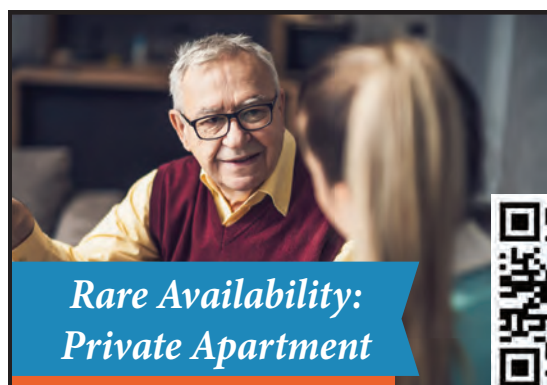
Cape Elizabeth's 3rd and 4th grade boys basketball team won the championship in Westbrook's Paper City Classic on February 23, finishing 6 and 0. Of the 33 years this championship has been held, this is the first time a Cape Elizabeth team has won.

Pictured left to right:

Front row: Ivan Ritchie, Silvio Cimato

Middle row: Abbott Oliver, Phineas Knott, Luca Hale, Ben Mitchell, Ben Wannemacher, Jack Mavodones, Teddy Bakis, Ambrose Marlow, Henry Hug, Bryce Ginn

Back row: Coach Jeff Mitchell, Coach Tom Marlow, Coach Matt Ginn



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NEXT ISSUE: March 26
DEADLINE: Noon, Mar

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Thoughts on the Swap Shop

The social hub in Cape Elizabeth is surprisingly the Swap Shop. Created in 1996 to divert usable goods and materials from the trash hopper, residents contribute all sorts of goods and materials...but the question to ask...are they usable?

I was in awe of the popularity of this shop. Friends meet, catch up on times and often leave with a bag or box full of goodies. From children's toys, electronics, housewares, garden tools, furniture, sporting equipment, and books for all ages are found in this Swap Shop.

The question to ask yourself before dropping off goods...are they usable and are they acceptable?

Do twenty years' worth of Business Week magazines, books written in foreign

languages, medical or educational textbooks that are out-dated, broken or chipped kitchenware, boxes from a basement or attic sight unseen an appropriate contribution to the Swap Shop? This shop is run by volunteers who have to handle every one of these items and then either organize them or toss them...a time-consuming effort.

As the town of Cape Elizabeth notes in their website, the Swap Shop requires help from all residents. Good judgment is needed to help volunteers sort through donations.

The Swap Shop also needs volunteer assistance for organizing the items at the Swap Shop. If you want to help out or share your ideas, contact the Recycling Committee.

Gail Kolbe

Cape voters 'reacted with dismay'

Cape Voters, who led the last two successful efforts to defeat the school bond, reacted with dismay that the School Board is requesting a referendum of \$86.5 Million for essentially the same project that was rejected by the voters only 3 months ago in the general election.

Now, in yet a third effort to get a new middle school building approved at a tax hit greater than 10%, the School Board plans to schedule a third vote -- this time asking the

Council for a June election-- where turnout will be much smaller. This will allow a minority of voters to determine the outcome of a huge tax increase.

By ignoring 2 previous defeats, the School Board is acting in bad faith by rejecting the express desires of Cape voters. The School Board's refusal to consider alternatives, after the November election result, stands in sharp contrast with neighboring Scarborough, which brought its School Building Advisory Committee back to develop new alternatives after failing at the polls.

And, in an irresponsible effort to get the measure approved, this time the School Board has removed \$4.8 million needed to responsibly and safely preserve the 1934 school building, \$11 million needed for essential work (as identified by the architect, Harriman) at CEHS and \$4 Million, at Pond Cove Elementary School.

It is very likely that the School Board's action will provoke even stronger opposition this time around.

Mary Ann Lynch
 James Walsh

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hear
from you!



We love feedback!

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Groups 'are using delay tactics'

The School Board's proposal is the result of years of professional study and input from experts in education and infrastructure. Yet, some groups continue to push misleading, non-professional alternatives that fail to meet the real needs of our schools and students.

Groups like Cape Voters are using delay tactics to obstruct real progress. Their so-called alternatives have been discredited by the professional architects who reviewed them. Manipulating expert data and creating unverified plans only serve to confuse the public and stall necessary improvements. The cost of inaction is rising, and each delay costs taxpayers more in the long run.

We must support our elected School Board members, who have done the hard work to craft a responsible, financially viable solution. The Town Council should place this on the June ballot and allow voters to make an informed decision based on facts—not misinformation.

Eric & Melanie Tennyson

'Keep your cats indoors'

I read with interest the Local Birding Report by E. Brooks Bornhoff in the Feb 19-March 11 issue. Useful tips were provided on how to prevent bird collisions with our windows. While I am not sure of the numbers of birds killed in this way, it is said to be significant. Nonetheless, these numbers are likely dwarfed by the staggering number of birds killed by house cats every year: between 1.3 and 4.0 BILLION birds in the United States annually (<https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms2380>).

It amazes me that our neighbors in town who enjoy our natural environment -- and may even consider themselves environmentally conscious, filling up the recycling containers at the transfer station -- will not take a simple measure to help prevent this carnage: keep your cats indoors. Cats may very much want to go outside and hunt, but they do not "need" to go outside.

Lisa Marshall

-see more LETTERS TO THE EDITOR on page 4

2025 Publication schedule		
Issue No	Ad/Copy Due	Issue Published
01	Jan 3	Jan 15
02	Jan 24	Feb 5
03	Feb 7	Feb 19
04	Feb 28	March 12
05	March 14	March 26
06	March 28	April 9
07	April 11	April 23
08	April 25	May 7
09	May 9	May 21
10	May 23	June 4
11	June 6	June 18
12	June 20	July 2
13	July 4	July 16
14	July 25	August 6
15	Aug 8	August 20
16	Aug 22	Sept 3
17	Sept 5	Sept 17
18	Sept 19	Oct 1
19	Oct 10	Oct 22
20	Oct 31	Nov 12
21	Nov 14	Nov 26
22	Dec 5	Dec 17

IT'S GROUNDHOG DAY ALL OVER AGAIN!



\$87M SCHOOL BOND = NEARLY 12% TAX INCREASE* PLUS \$19 MILLION IN HIDDEN FUTURE TAX INCREASES.



\$15M in essential repairs for the elementary and high schools have been stripped from the bond and dumped into the UNFUNDED Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).



Abandons the historic 1934 building and cuts \$4.8M needed to restore heat, electricity, water, and sewer.



Total Cost? Over \$106 MILLION when you include deferred repairs, while offering less than the defeated 2024 proposal.

**Based on current market rate of 3.9% for 30-year, level P&I, AAA bonds*

WHY THE RUSH TO A JUNE VOTE?

A low-turnout June election could allow a tiny minority of voters to approve ~\$87M in new debt.

A November referendum is the responsible choice:



More voters will have a say on this major project.



Gives the School Board plenty of time to explore alternatives.



More time to consider new state funding options that may become available this spring per Gov. Mills proposed reforms.

SCARBOROUGH LISTENED. WHY WON'T CAPE?

After Scarborough voters rejected a costly school plan, they formed a citizen advisory group to explore alternatives.



Scarborough, also working with Harriman architects, put forward seven options to the public.



Cape's School Board shut down discussion and refused to consider any alternatives.

AND WHAT ABOUT STUDENT ENROLLMENT?

The October 2024 NESDEC Report projects declining enrollment over the next decade:

- Overall school enrollment is expected to shrink by ~1% by 2035.
- Middle school enrollment has declined 27% since 2004 (from 619 to 448)

SMARTER ALTERNATIVES THAT OFFER STUDENTS MUCH MORE.

Former members of the School Building Advisory Committee (SBAC) proposed a true Three-School Solution that:



Saves at least \$23 MILLION compared to the current plan.



Builds 53,000 sq. ft. of new space for the middle and elementary schools.



Delivers modern classrooms, dedicated performing arts center, improved STEM spaces, and better cafeteria facilities—enhancing education and student experience at every grade level, K-12. Substantial savings by building on the current footprint.



Fully funds critical high school upgrades. School Board insists on future tax increases to fund these necessary investments.



Covers 100% of essential needs for ALL THREE SCHOOLS instead of throwing them into future CIP budgets, creating budget security for the next generation of Cape Elizabeth residents, and protecting future budgets for teachers and staffing needs.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Tell the Town Council to STOP the rush to a June vote and take the time to fully consider alternatives.

ACT NOW! Visit CapeVoters.com to learn more and contact your Town Councilors TODAY.



TC ‘should reject the request’

Citizens, especially burdened taxpayers and parents of school-aged children, should look carefully and skeptically at the School Board’s rush to regurgitate the failed middle school project, which has been twice rejected by Cape voters.

1) Raises property taxes by nearly 12% (based on current 4% market interest rate) and adds \$86.5 million in debt

2) Provides virtually ZERO funds in the bond for the high school, which requires \$11 million in essential repairs, according to Harriman estimates

3) Cuts approximately \$4 million in essential repairs for the elementary school identified by Harriman

4) Abandons the historic 1934 building (former high school) and cuts \$4.8 million from the bond needed to restore heat, electric power, water and sewer to the building, leaving a hidden tax hike to fund the work

Calling this a three-school project is a sham. Stealing from Peter to pay Paul is not an equitable or responsible solution while \$15 million in essential repairs for the elementary and high schools are dumped UNFUNDED into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The board has asked the Town Council to schedule a bond referendum for a very low-turnout election in June when a tiny minority voters could decide the outcome. This is a divisive and deceptively bad idea, which could undermine support for our schools for years to come.

The Town Council should reject the request for a June referendum and insist that the school board consider more cost-effective alternatives that meet the essential needs of all three schools.

Larry Benoit

‘Let’s come together as a town’

I believe that strong local communities are more important than ever in this time of national turmoil and uncertainty. Supporting our schools is one of the surest ways that we can invest in Cape Elizabeth’s future and demonstrate our commitment to each other.

The School Board’s plan to improve our schools is not just about buildings - it’s about supporting the heart of our community. Schools are where we come together to educate our children, strengthen our neighborhoods and invest in future generations.

A vote to support this plan is a vote to

sustain Cape as a vibrant, welcoming place to live. We cannot afford to delay action, quite literally. The cost of inaction is higher than the cost of investment. Our schools’ needs will not disappear, and every delay only makes repairs more expensive. The Town Council must act now to place this plan on the June ballot, giving voters the chance to secure the future of our community.

Let’s come together as a town and do what is right for our children, our schools and our shared future.

Heather Reeves

‘It’s time to consider alternative ways’

To put forward an \$87 million bond this June for a new middle school, 15+ million in “CRITICAL” repairs for the high school and Pond Cove have been moved into future school budgets. The plan to pay for these “critical repairs” is to fund 1.2+ million out of every school budget for the next 12+ years. This is the equivalent of 15+ full time teacher salaries.

Accounting for 2% annual inflation brings the total cost to 20+ million. Yearly critical repairs costs grow from 1.2 million to 1.7 million+ out of annual school budgets. This is the equivalent of 15- 20 teacher salaries every year for 12 years going to “critical repairs.”

These costs are many times higher than any previous CIP+maintenance+repair bud-

get. If it was economical to maintain this level of building investment, these delayed critical repairs would have long ago been fixed. Future squeezes to our school budget are likely and zero guarantee these extra monies will be available. This plan sets us up for having to choose whether to cut funding to already long delayed critical repairs or cut teachers and programs. It is financially unwise.

It’s time to consider alternative ways to reduce costs; relocating the new middle school to the current campus or a combination of a mostly new build with some re-use of our middle school could reduce costs. Pushing millions of critical repairs into 12+ years future budgets is just not responsible or in the best interest of our kids.

Jennifer Bodenrader

‘Let’s not blow this chance’

As the town debates another round of voting on a new school bond, the NO brigade is out in full force to stop progress in our community. I hope a majority of voters in Cape will look at the latest proposal and feel it is worthy compromise. It recognizes fiscal reality but gives the town the right infrastructure to support our students now and into the future.

It’s the fiscally responsible thing to do. Maintenance and operational costs on the current campus will continue to increase as the buildings age, with the original building in its tenth decade of use. And at some point, like it or not, we will need new buildings.

Future Cape residents will wonder why we didn’t take care of it now.

I also worry about property values. Property values have increased dramatically in the last few years, and we need to continue Cape Elizabeth’s historic support of its schools to maintain those lofty valuations.

Our community is fortunate to have the vision and the resources to solve this issue now. Let’s not blow this chance and force future residents (including our children and grandchildren) to pay the price.

Bill Springer

‘Pay attention’

Do you realize that:

- The CESD is cutting essential repairs—previously deemed necessary for all three schools—from the high school and Pond Cove to lower the bond amount for the new school building bond they are pushing forward?

- Their plan shifts millions in costs to future capital improvement budgets, leading to property tax hikes on top of those from the bond itself? Note: The current school leadership has no authority to speak for future years’ budgets, but they are doing just that.

- The \$4.8 million allocated to stabilize the historic 1934 High School Building has been cut. This will lead to its deterioration unless the town pays the millions. While hidden from the cost of the school bond, Cape’s property taxpayers will ultimately foot the bill.

- The CESD is proposing “fundraising op-

portunities” to offset costs, despite Cape having no history of raising funds at this scale.

- The “Three-School Phased Plan” is moving forward with budget cuts, raising serious concerns about affordability for our community.

Meanwhile, a pragmatic Three-School Proposal was submitted by Michael Hussey and Larry Benoit, former SBAC members. Their plan addresses all essential repairs at a lower cost, yet CESD and Harriman dismissed it outright. Though Harriman claimed aspects were unclear, they refused to meet for clarification.

If this is all news to you, pay attention. If these decisions move forward unchecked, we will all face significant property tax increases in the coming years.

Sharalyn Morrison-Andrews

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News from the Superintendent

By Dr. Chris Record

We have almost made it through a surprisingly tough snowy winter and thankfully can feel spring on the horizon. March can be a long month in our schools, but our students and staff are still focused on teaching and learning and making the most of every day and every opportunity. The School Board and the District Leadership Team are hard at work this month finalizing the 2025-2026 school budget. Unfortunately, due to an 18% valuation increase of Cape Elizabeth by the state, our state aid was reduced by nearly \$800,000 for next year. This is nearly a third of what we typically receive. Our aim is to still come forward with a budget that still provides our students with an excellent education, but some difficult choices will need to be considered.

Speaking of offering an excellent education, I wanted to share our math and reading

fall to fall NWEA results (for a complete review watch the January 14 School Board meeting) for the past five years. While there is always room for improvement, we are pleased that the vast majority of our students are meeting and/or exceeding the state standards due to their hard work, the teaching by our amazing staff, and the support of their parents/guardians and our community.

Math Achievement: 5-Year Comparison

The chart below shows the results of the fall NWEA Math Assessment for the past five years. The chart shows the % of our students meeting or exceeding the state standard. We are proud of these results, particularly in the face of the multiyear Covid epidemic, and appreciate the efforts of our students and wonderful staff. We will continue to help all of our students learn and grow.

School	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Pond Cove	80%	90%	89%	91%	90%
CEMS	83%	84%	86%	87%	85%
CEHS		86% (Gr. 11)			
CEHS			94% (Gr. 9)	90% (Gr. 9&10)	94% (Gr. 9&10)

Reading Achievement: 5-Year Comparison

The chart below shows the results of the fall NWEA Reading Assessment for the past five years. The chart shows the % of our students meeting or exceeding

the state standard. We are proud of these results, particularly in the face of the multiyear Covid epidemic, and appreciate the efforts of our students and wonderful staff. We will continue to help all of our students learn and grow.

School	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Pond Cove	82%	90%	86%	90%	91%
CEMS	90%	90%	85%	89%	86%
CEHS		80%			
CEHS			93% (Gr. 9)	91% (Gr.9&10)	93% (Gr.9&10)

As for the school building project, at a special business meeting on February 24, the Cape Elizabeth School Board unanimously approved the Phased Three-School Building Plan, moving it forward to the Town Council for review. The plan includes constructing a new middle school, building an addition to Pond Cove Elementary and critical improvements to Cape Elizabeth High School. The Town Council will now decide the timing of the school construction project referendum.

For more information on the project please go to <https://www.cape.k12.me.us/page/buildingproject>.

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It's time for a safer Mitchell Road

By Cape Elizabeth High School student
Lyla Whitney

Written for Dr. Lisa Melanson's English Composition Class

Have you ever been driving on Mitchell road and been scared to hit someone? I certainly have. Every morning at 8:00 a.m. when I'm driving to school, I live with the constant fear that I will turn around one of the blind corners and accidentally hit a runner, biker or walker. It's time to make a safer Mitchell Road.

Mitchell is one of the busiest roads in Cape. With its very narrow streets, absence of sidewalks, and lots of windy turns, it makes it the most dangerous road in Cape by far. The posted speed limit is 30, although it's a rare sight to see someone going that slow. Cars often speed down the road, weaving in and out, dodging mail trucks and pedestrians on the side of the road. This creates the perfect scene for an accident, with cars constantly coming from the other direction. With no margins or sidewalks, walkers and bikers are left with no choice but to walk right beside moving cars, heavily increasing the risk of an accident.

Mitchell at night is a scary sight. With only a few scattered and dimmed street lights, it makes it impossible to see what's ahead. Often people are taking their dogs out for a late night walk, or walking home without proper reflective gear. They blend into the surrounding trees making it impossible to see their frame during nighttime. This combination of a high traffic and low visibility road makes driving at night fearful.

In order to feel safe on Mitchell, a few changes need to be made. The most important one being implementing a side-

walk to allow pedestrians and bikers to have a designated space to safely enjoy the road without the risk of being run into. Putting a sidewalk in on Mitchell would make it a much safer road for pedestrians, but most importantly it would give the cars the space they need in order to travel the road. Additionally, more street lamps could be placed to increase visibility when commuting at night. Adding this light could ensure that people feel safe knowing what's ahead, including turns, animals, and other obstacles.

Some may argue that implementing these changes such as adding sidewalks and street lamps would be expensive and time consuming. The road is already super busy and construction would add even more traffic. Shore Road, another busy road in Cape, implemented sidewalks a few years ago. There was initially pushback from many people living in Cape. They said that it would look ugly, was too much construction, or was too expensive of a project. Although, in the end it was the safest and healthiest option for Shore. While driving on Shore Road now, people don't have to run the risk of turning one of the winding curves and accidentally hitting a pedestrian. The sidewalks offer room for people to walk, bike and jog around Cape, connecting neighborhoods all around.

There's little time before another fatal accident occurs on Mitchell. It's time to fund this project to make Mitchell a safer road for all.

Got a story to share? Email us!



editor@capecourier.com



Kathleen O. Pierce
 Vice President
 Real Estate Advisor

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School Board approves phased three-school building plan

(Press release) - At a special business meeting on February 24, the Cape Elizabeth School Board unanimously approved the Phased Three-School Building Plan, moving it forward to the Town Council for review.

The plan includes constructing a new middle school, building an addition to Pond Cove Elementary and critical improvements to Cape Elizabeth High School.

"After years of work and collaboration with some of the state's top experts, we are confident that this Phased Three-School Building Plan is the right choice for Cape Elizabeth students and taxpayers," said Dr. Christopher Record, Superintendent of Cape Elizabeth Schools. "This fiscally responsible plan prioritizes student needs and safety while also creating spaces that will benefit the entire Cape Elizabeth community."

The proposal calls for the construction of a new middle school, an addition to Pond Cove Elementary School, and critical repairs to Cape Elizabeth High School. The \$86.5 million plan repre-

sents a \$7.5 million reduction from the proposal presented in the November 2024 ballot question.

"For nearly eight years, the School Board has been working on a plan to address the district's aging infrastructure, and the need has only grown," said Phil Saucier, Chair of the School Board. "For the long-term financial health of our town and the safety of our students, it is imperative that we 'reset the clock' on one of our aging buildings, and Cape Elizabeth Middle School has the greatest need. Furthermore, if approved, this plan will allow us to immediately address critical repairs at both Cape Elizabeth High School and Pond Cove Elementary. I believe this is the right plan for our schools and our community."

The Phased Three-School Building Plan will now be submitted to the Cape Elizabeth Town Council for consideration. School Board members urged the Town Council to place the bond on the June ballot, warning that delaying the vote until November could increase project costs by at least \$1 million.

Dean's list announcements

Brendan Connolly was named to the Dean's List and President's List for the fall 2024 semester at the University of Hartford in West Hartford, Connecticut.

Scarlett Strunk was named to the fall 2024 dean's list at the University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Gavin Simopoulos was named to the fall 2024 dean's list at the University of

Southern Maine.

The following students were named to the dean's list for the fall 2024 semester at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts:

Georgia Stewart
Hannah Johnson
Tucker Livingston
Sara Levenson

Bail money scam reported

Reported by Debbie Butterworth

PUBLIC INFORMATION

- 1-30 An officer met with a property management company regarding theft of tools.
- 1-31 An officer met with a resident regarding a motor vehicle accident in the Spurwink Avenue area.
- 1-31 An officer met with a subject regarding a vehicle off the road on the Ocean House Road area.
- 1-31 An officer met with a resident in the Shore Road area regarding a violation of a protection order.
- 2-1 An officer met with a resident of the Shore Road area regarding a threatening phone call.
- 2-3 An officer responded to the Broad Cove area for a possible missing person. Subject was later accounted for.
- 2-3 An officer met with a subject in the Wells Road area regarding suspicious text messages received.
- 2-4 An officer was dispatched to assist the rescue for a subject who had fallen in the Shore Road area.
- 2-9 An officer responded to the Broad Cove area to check on the well-being of a resident.
- 2-9 An officer witnessed what appeared to be a minor car accident while on patrol in the Mitchell Road area. No one was injured and no visible damage.
- 2-9 An officer responded to the Fowler Road area for a terrorizing complaint
- 2-10 An officer spoke with a subject in the Fowler Road area regarding a criminal trespass complaint. The subject in question was served with a Criminal Trespass Order.
- 2-12 An officer met with a subject at the police station regarding a child's recent behavior and her concerns.
- 2-13 Two officers responded to a residence in the Ocean House Road area for a domestic disturbance.
- 2-13 Two officers responded to a location in the Shore Road area for a welfare check of a pedestrian.
- 2-17 Two officers responded to a residence in the Old Ocean House Road area for a well-being check.
- 2-17 An officer met with a resident of the Fowler Road area regarding a trespass complaint.
- 2-20 An officer met with a resident of the Oakhurst Road area who reported he had received a call from someone claiming to be his grandson, who needed a large sum of money for bail. Then resident put together the sum of money and spoke with his grandson's "attorney." The "lawyer" made arrangements for a "bondsman" to come to their house to retrieve the money. The resident then spoke with his "grandson" and asked a question to which he should have known

the answer but didn't. The resident hung up and called the police.

- 2-21 Two officers responded to a residence in the Scot Dyer Road area for a well-being check.
- 2-24 Two officers responded to the Shore Road area for a well-being check.

SUMMONSES

- 1-29 Cape Elizabeth resident, operating vehicle while using hand held device, Ocean House Road, \$85
- 1-30 Falmouth resident, operating vehicle while using hand held device, Ocean House Road, \$85
- 1-30 Scarborough resident, speeding (33/25 zone) Scott Dyer Road, \$114
- 1-30 South Portland resident, uninspected vehicle, Mitchell Road, \$148
- 2-2 Brownfield resident, uninspected vehicle, Ocean House Road, \$148
- 2-2 Cape Elizabeth resident, uninspected vehicle, Ocean House Road, \$148
- 2-2 Portland resident, uninspected vehicle, Ocean House Road, \$148
- 2-3 Cape Elizabeth resident, passing stopped school bus, Spurwink Avenue, \$326
- 2-3 Portland resident, speeding (60/50 zone), Old Ocean House Road, \$129
- 2-8 Portland resident, speeding, \$114
- 2-8 Cape Elizabeth resident, operating vehicle while using hand held device, Ocean House Road, \$85
- 2-8 Scarborough resident, uninspected vehicle, Ocean House Road, \$148
- 2-23 Cape Elizabeth resident, uninspected vehicle, Ocean House Road, \$148

JUVENILE SUMMONSES

- 1-28 South Portland resident, violation of interim license, Bowery Beach Road, \$385

ARRESTS

- 2-9 Cape Elizabeth resident, terrorizing, Fenway Road

ACCIDENTS

- 1-31 Liam Luke, Laurie Boutin, accident on Pleasant Avenue
- 2-1 Badoralden Edress, Rashad Gurwala, accident on Ocean House Road
- 2-7 Carla Gilley, Daniel Bryant, accident on Ocean House Road
- 2-18 Sybil Przeszlowski, Joshua Hayward, accident on Spurwink Avenue
- 2-19 Malvic Garcia, Marianne Schuman, accident on Old Ocean House Road

FIRE CALLS

Fire calls: 22; EMS calls: 77

C/O 2026 raising money for prom

The Cape Elizabeth High School Class of 2026 Student Council is raising money for this year's prom. The Prom Committee is excited to auction an oil painting commissioned by local artist and CEHS alumna, Rebecca Hays. Her landscape work often sells for over \$3,000. The painting depicts quintessential Cape Elizabeth, the Spurwink marsh, and includes a handmade

frame measuring 15.5" x 11.5". All proceeds earned from this fundraiser will directly benefit the organization of prom. The auction will begin on March 10 and run until March 24.

Link to website link: <https://www.32auctions.com/cehsclassof2026prom>
See QR code below to bid.



Contributed photo

Painting by Rebecca Hays.



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Town Council

Continued from page 1

“gather requests from neighborhoods for traffic safety concerns.” The Town Center Intersection Project bid was postponed due to inclement weather, but a mandatory pre-bid meeting was held on February 13, 2025.

Consent Calendar Item #29-2025 - Item #32-2025

Councilors Harriman and Sahrbeck made a motion to approve the consent calendar as presented which was unanimously approved by the Council. These items included the acknowledged receipt of the fiscal year 2024 audit results, Purpoodock Club liquor license renewal and special amusement permit, safe child/vulnerable adults policy and general use policy amendments for Thomas Memorial library, and amendments to the Remote Participation policy.

Public Hearing - Amendments to Chapter 19 Zoning Ordinance Relating to Town Center Amendments

There were many residents and community members who shared their concerns and opinions on the chapter 19 zoning ordinance relating to the town center amendments.

Cynthia Dill “strongly urged” the Council to support and approve the amendments that were requested by developer Hardy Pond, including the zoning ordinance that would allow for non-residential zoning on the first floor for buildings located 200 feet away from the road.

Bob Goodreau of Hardy Pond Development, who has requested amendments to zoning ordinances in the town center, shared his experience of getting complete approval from the Town Council back in September 2024, and planning review and ordinance review, and he feels that he has “succeeded at weaving a very narrow line” to get to where he currently is with the development project in question. Goodreau asked the Council to separate him “from the rest” and let him proceed.

Ryan Loanic with law firm Jensen Baird shared concerns about zoning changes and “its eventual impact on drainage, stormwater management, building height and the preservation of the surrounding environment” and asked the Town Council to “ensure proper planning is in place.”

Tony Owens shared that he is in opposition to changes that would “fundamentally change Cape Elizabeth town center and

change the town forever.” He believes the significance of ordinance changes have “been greatly downplayed” and he “respectfully urged” the Council to allow for more input and discussion with the community. Chair Penny Jordan asked Owens if he was opposed to the project or to the proposed amendments to which Owens replied “the parameters that go above and beyond” and that he wasn’t opposed to the project itself.

David Jacobson, owner of the property currently under contract with Hardy Pond Development, asked the Council to support the developer’s request for ordinance amendments.

Dave Andrews said that he is “saddened and worried” about the Council and Town Planner having “the authority to change zoning laws that could change the town forever.” Andrews asked the Council to consider what is best for the town and let the residents decide any changes to be made to zoning laws.

Tom Dunham said that is opposed to the amendments but supports a 55+ housing project. He believes this housing development project is an “excellent opportunity to free up housing in our community” and so deserves a high priority. Dunham also noted that he has known the developer for 40 years. Chair Jordan asked Dunham if he had concerns with the proposed ordinance changes to which Dunham replied “Yes, very much” noting increased demand on traffic, utilities and potential updates to the sewer treatment plant. Dunham said without much commercial property in town, much of that [increased cost] would fall on families.

Eliza Matheson shared her support for the ordinance amendments and the proposed project and said that the “consternation on changing the character of Cape Elizabeth is also why we don’t have a successful, viable walkable downtown.” She encouraged those in attendance not to let “perfection be the enemy of progress yet again.” Matheson said that there are residents in Cape who would like to downsize their homes and wish to stay in town but there are few options to do so.

Brandon Mitchell said that he hopes “we can see this through and have something we can all be proud of here” citing the housing crisis not only in Cape Elizabeth but across the state.

Mario Magnoli shared that he “would love to support this particular project” but he has initial concerns over “large scale zoning ordinance changes.”

After the public hearing closed, Councilor Sahrbeck shared “key things everyone

should know” of the proposed amendments to Chapter 19 zoning ordinances. Sahrbeck shared that there is a 125 foot “buffer” from Scott Dyer, Hillway, and Shore Roads and Route 77 and that “basically nothing in that 125 feet changes.” Sahrbeck said that “there are a total of six lots in the town center that could be impacted by the proposed changes, not counting the school, community service building or the Town Hall lot.” He added “the idea that this is going to fundamentally change the town center is inaccurate because there’s such a limited scope.”

Sahrbeck said that he thinks the town center amendments will allow for more opportunity to bring people into the town center, a problem cited by local businesses during a recent business forum. He added, “This puts people in the town center. This will help business...and more people will have the opportunity to move to Cape and bring their families and build the community.”

Councilor Stephanie Anderson asked what would happen if the town passed a 200 foot setback as requested by the developer and voiced her support to approve only what the developer has requested for ordinance changes. Councilor Caitlin Harriman responded that it was “not the Council’s job and prerogative to just approve one project in this narrow scope,” and that “we’re trying to be fair.” She added that “while that fairness only opens up to a few other possibilities, it’s only right that we allow that possibility to happen.”

Councilor Scifres clarified that the proposed amendments for the town center would allow for residential use on the first floor of a building if that building were to be located 125 feet from a public right of way.

Councilor Tim Thompson asked the other Council members why they were “stalling” and “slowing this project down” to a point where the developer may have to wait a year to start the project. Thompson asked, “why not just do what he’s [the developer] has asked us to do and look at his project on merits?”

It was noted by the Council and Bob Goodreau that the process has been followed as intended and not intentionally slowed down. Additionally, the proposed amendments by the Town Council are put forth as an effort to be “fundamentally fair” and avoid spot zoning which would prohibit the other six potential lots from having the same opportunity as Bob Goodreau’s project. Councilor Sahrbeck agreed with Councilor Harriman in that the Council’s job is to “look at what should happen in the town as a whole,

so we’re not just looking at one particular project.”

Councilors Anderson and Thompson made a motion to approve the proposed amendments but with an amendment that would only consider the requests made by Goodreau and Hardy Pond and not the amendments the Town Council has discussed and put forth. The motion failed to pass as amended with Councilor Sahrbeck adding that he was not in favor of changing the amendments “on the fly” as Councilors Anderson and Thompson suggested because it “leads to dangerous and unforeseen consequences,” wastes opportunity for the town, and wastes the Planning Board, the Town Council and the Public’s time.

Councilor Sahrbeck made the motion to approve the amendments as presented which passed with a 5-2 vote, Councilors Anderson and Thompson in opposition. The Ordinance Committee’s recommendations for amendments to Chapter 19 zoning ordinance to the Town Center amendments were officially approved.

Item #34-2025 Amendments to the Code of Ethics

Councilor Anderson shared with the Council amendments made to the Code of Ethics to include having them be applied to Council-appointed members of Boards, commissions, and committees. Language surrounding conflict of interest was clarified, a few provisions under standard of conduct were added, and an “entire enforcement provision” was drafted. All members of the Council expressed their thanks to Councilor Anderson for her work, and there was unanimous approval to adopt the code of ethics as presented.

Item #35-2025 Supplemental LD 2003 Amendments

The Town Council voted to adopt supplemental LD2003 amendments in November 2023 which were amended in December 2023, voted to send it to the Planning Board for review in December 2024, and voted to send it to a public hearing.

Tom Dunham shared that he is opposed to “allowing greater housing density in our established neighborhoods” and that the proposal would permit a single-family residence to be demolished and replaced with a 3 or 4-unit apartment without planning board approval.

The Council approved unanimously by vote to recognize receipt of supplemental amendments to LD2003 and to schedule a public hearing.

Dean’s list announcements

The following students were named to the fall 2024 dean’s list at Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts:

Lucy Berman
Abigail Agrodnia

Rory O’Grady was named to the fall 2024 dean’s list at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The following students received dean’s list honors for the fall 2024 semester at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut:

Ellie Gagne
Olivia Manning

* These lists are provided to the Cape Courier by the individual schools. If you would like someone added that we were not notified of, please reach out to: editor@capecourier.com.

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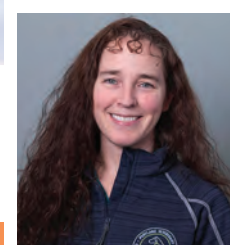
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EMERGENCY COVERAGE AT WARREN AVENUE LOCATION



Dr. Marta Agrodnia
DVM, DACVS-SA

Planning Board

Continued from page 1

Bob Metcalf said that the developer is open to any adjustments to the vegetative buffer including tree and shrub species. Metcalf also said that the developer will do a pre-blast survey on Canterbury property within a certain distance from the boundary line.

Planning Board member Andrew Gilbert mentioned creating signage for the two public parking spaces clarifying they are for public use to access the open space and recreation area. He also confirmed with Metcalf that the old barn on the subject property will be demolished and removed from the site, to which should be noted on the final site plan submission.

Al Palmer asked Metcalf if all units will have individual sprinkler systems or additional fire protection. Town Planner Maureen O'Meara confirmed with the Board that the Planning Board generally does not get involved with sprinkler systems unless the primary fire protection is not sufficient and relies on building codes and fire safety codes for anything further necessary.

Palmer inquired about the requirement of affordable housing and how they will be identified on the site plan submission. Further discussion clarified that the project units will be built over time and not all at once, including the two units designated for affordable housing which will "need to be built consistent with the market-rate units," according to O'Meara.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to approve, to which Jim Huebener added, "looks like a great project, good luck."

Purpoodock Club Seasonal Rest-

room Site Plan Amendment

Bob Metcalf, also representing The Purpoodock Club, requested a site plan amendment to construct a seasonal restroom and refuge to be situated near the 8th and 14th tee of the golf course located at 300 Spurwink Avenue.

Metcalf explained that the seasonal restroom would be fourteen feet by eighteen feet, stick built building with a concrete slab to fit two toilet rooms.

The existing shed and portapotty will be removed. The restroom will be serviced by a new leach field and seasonal water service by way of a water line coming off from an existing water line through the golf course. Solid waste will be held in containers in the building to be maintained by staff. Stormwater management will include an infiltration drip edge around the roofline of the new building. The seasonal restroom building will be grounded with a lightning arrestor which will also serve as emergency refuge in the event of severe thunderstorms.

The Planning Board voted unanimously to approve the site plan amendments for Purpoodock Club to construct a new seasonal restroom.

Prior to adjournment, Jonathan Sahrbeck expressed gratitude on behalf of the community that the Planning Board was entering into a special workshop that evening. Sahrbeck said he thought the special workshop was to discuss the proposed housing development project to be constructed in the Town Center which was now possible after the Town Council recently voted to approve amendments to the Town Center zoning ordinances.

CESD Assistant Superintendent retiring

By Kevin St. Jarre

In a letter to the Cape Elizabeth School Board and Superintendent Christopher Record, the department's assistant superintendent has announced her pending retirement.

Michelle McClellan wrote that while the "decision has been incredibly difficult to make, the time is right to be more fully present with my wonderful family."

McClellan has served the Cape Elizabeth School Department for the past four years, and called the opportunity an "extraordinary privilege." She said that she is profoundly grateful for the opportunity to contribute to a district where learning, growth and, above all, students are at the center of decision making. "Cape Elizabeth School Department is truly unique and I am so very proud of our many accomplishments," she wrote.

"Working alongside the remarkable educators, staff, students, and families of this community has been both incredibly rewarding and deeply fulfilling. Cape Elizabeth has been more than just my workplace. In the culminating chapter of my career, I have been honored to work with so many talented and dedicated individuals who share a deep commitment to excellence in education. The relationships I have built here and the work we have collaboratively accomplished together has been meaningful and impactful," McClellan wrote.

She wrote that until her effective date of retirement, June 30, 2025, she looks forward to working closely with the District Leadership Team to "continue to meet the needs of our students and staff with the same care and dedication that exemplify what our dis-

trict is well known for. I am committed to continuing this work - there is so much to accomplish for our students."

McClellan also personally thanked Superintendent Record in her letter, writing, "Finally, Chris, thank you for the trust you've placed in me and for allowing me the privilege of serving alongside you. Your support, encouragement and partnership have been invaluable and I deeply appreciate all we've accomplished these past four years. I am confident that our common vision and dedication has laid a solid foundation that will foster the district's continued growth and success. Working together has truly been an honor and pleasure. I am so very grateful."



Photo from CESD website

Assistant Superintendent Michelle McClellan, an educator with more than 40 years of experience, has announced her intent to retire from the CESD, effective this June.

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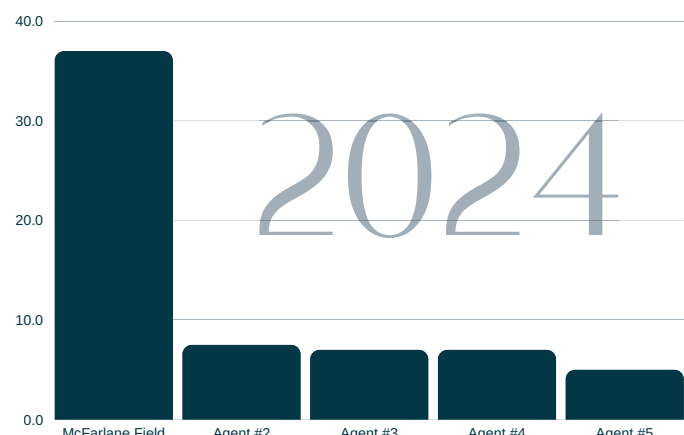


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Nancy Field, Jen Tabb, Randy Ferrell
Taylor McFarlane, Jen Monsulick, Jim McFarlane

*Based on information from Maine Real Estate Information System Inc. (d/b/a Maine Listings) for the period 1/1/24 - 12/31/24 © 2024 Maine Listings.

Library offers programs on sleep solutions for babies and toddlers, tween and teen creative writing workshop

Photographs by Olga Merrill on Display in the Stier Family Gallery

An exhibit called “Harbors Spirits,” featuring ethereal photographs by Maine artist Olga Merrill is on display this month in the library’s gallery space. The show includes work from the series of her images, entitled “Harbor.”

The Harbor images vividly evoke what she calls her “fairytale visions of boats,” fantasies of sailing away to shores only imagined, of running before the wind forever onwards. The Harbor series images derive from time spent in Maine’s harbors. Some images are essentially representative photography of the world around her that nevertheless dissolve into the wonder of abstract pattern, while others are complex manipulations of the ordinary visual world that use intentional camera movement, multiple exposures, and well planned color palettes to reflect her vision, dreams and feelings – and resonate with ours. The show can be viewed until March 31.

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

Please visit the library’s website for information about recurring weekly story times.

Sleep Solutions for Babies & Toddlers - A Quick Guide to Better Nights

Saturday, March 22 @ 10:30-11:30 a.m.

For parents and caregivers of children ages 0-3 years old. Join Zara Jarrett, certified child sleep consultant, to learn why sleep struggles happen and hear about a variety of solutions that work. Bring your little one, too! There will be toys available for calm play during the 30-minute, informal presentation, and plenty of time for questions afterward.

FOR TWEENS & TEENS

Venture Club

Wednesdays, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. (when

school is in session) (Ages 14+)

Venture Club is a teen-led board/card game and D&D club, with an emphasis on board games. We’ll try to play new games every week. No registration is necessary.

Et In Acadia Ego: A Murder Most Foul, with Sully McCarthy: Teen Edition

Friday, March 14, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Hear ye, hear ye! Sully McCarthy is back with a brand new murder mystery for you to solve. This thrilling story is a Shakespeare-inspired tale taking place in the fictional kingdom of Acadia. When Princess Rosebay is found dead, King Baxter commands all members of the court to stay until Rosebay’s death is solved. There could be multiple traitors in court that orchestrated Rosebay’s demise... This mystery is written for 11 characters and will be limited to 15 participants. Registration required.

Picturing My Climate Future: High Schoolers View Their World to Come

Thursday, March 20, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Young people have been left out of the national conversation around climate change, yet they have the most skin in the game—while not causing the problem in the first place.

If you attend high school, take this unique opportunity to promote your views by joining a pioneering effort this spring to convey with captioned photos what the local area will look like in the coming decades. The woods? The salt marsh? The South Portland beaches? The Portland fisheries? You choose. Hear all about it at this meeting—and enlist in the effort if you like what you hear. Feel free to email info@seeingforourselves with any questions ahead of time and/or to sign up for the project now. This initiative by Seeing for Ourselves got underway in Cape in April 2023 and was covered by the local

media. The effort has now spread to Chicago and the Bay Area—meaning that we here in southern Maine have spearheaded a national undertaking!

Tween and Teen Creative Writing Workshop with Lily Jessen

March 21, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Hermione Granger, Katniss Everdeen, Luke Skywalker. What is it about them, or other favorite characters, that keeps you rooting for them throughout their stories? How did their writers get you to care about what happens to them? And how can you use their formula for brilliant character development in your own writing? In this workshop, we’ll investigate all these questions, as we unpack popular characters from novels and movies, discuss how to write a character-driven plot, and design and workshop original characters. Come with an open mind, something to write with, and, if you like, a character you’ve created for us to workshop.

Maine Education 2050 Student Conversation with Allyson West

March 21 2:45-4:15 p.m.

Teens in small groups will meet to discuss their experiences in school and their hopes for the future. Groups of 4-7 will meet for 1-1.5 hours to discuss how education

and schooling can be designed for personal, civic, and economic thriving in the next few decades. Your experiences, not positions on issues, will be the focus of the conversation. Pizza will be provided. Teens ages 13-18. Registration required.

FOR ADULTS

For information on our regular recurring programs, please visit the library’s website.

Celtic Fiddle Songs and Traditions with Jeff Snow

Thursday, March 13, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Celebrate the season of St. Patrick’s Day with us. In this program, musician Jeff Snow combines the music, stories and a wee bit of history from Scotland, Ireland and England into an event that will keep the audience on the edge of their seat. There will be singing, laughing, clapping and perhaps a bit of foot stomping. Jeff’s concerts are interactive; questions and input from the audience are encouraged and become part of the event. No registration necessary. All ages welcome.

Et In Acadia Ego: A Murder Most Foul, with Sully McCarthy: Adult edition

Saturday, March 15, 2 - 4:30 p.m.

-see LIBRARY page 11



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Photo by Olga Merrill

A photography by Olga Merrill titled “Phantom.” Her work will be on display in the Stier-Family Gallery through March 31.



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Special Children’s Menu:

- Fruit Plate Scrambled Eggs French Toast Brownie Sundae Sorbet
Kids 4-12, \$36

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Library

Continued from page 10

Hear ye, hear ye! Sully McCarthy is back with a brand new murder mystery for you to solve. This thrilling story is a Shakespeare-inspired tale taking place in the fictional kingdom of Acadia. The plot: the kingdom of Acadia is at war with the kingdom of Beo Stone. To strengthen allyship with a neighboring kingdom, King Baxter arranged a marriage between his daughter and Prince Dow of Falmouth.

Princess Rosebay was due to marry Prince Dow in an elaborate ceremony attended by all in court. On the eve of the wedding, the court is shocked when Princess Rosebay is discovered dead, under mysterious circumstances. Determined to save the relationship of the two kingdoms that were set to be unified, King Baxter commands all members of the court to stay until Rosebay's death is solved. There could be multiple traitors in court that orchestrated Rosebay's demise... This mystery is written for 11 characters, and will be limited to 15 participants. Register on our website to secure your spot to solve this royal crime.

Maine's Big Night with CELT

Tuesday, March 18, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Maine's Big Night program is a community science initiative to protect amphibians. The program encourages everyday citizens to collect data on migrating frogs during the rainy spring season. The Cape Elizabeth Land Trust and Thomas Memorial Library are excited to welcome Greg LeClaire from Maine's Big Night who will tell us all about the initiative and how you can participate during late April or early May when the amphibians emerge again.

Film School, Kajillionaire

Tuesday, March 25, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Do you love watching movies? Have you ever secretly wished you had gone to film school? Here's your chance! Join Community Engagement Librarian Sasha Kohan each month as we watch a movie followed by a wide-ranging discussion, covering everything from costume design to lighting to star power (maybe with just a touch of film theory, as a treat). This time, we're celebrating Women's History Month with Miranda July's "Kajillionaire."

This crime comedy-drama focuses on a family of scammers whose world is upturned by a friendly young woman who becomes involved in their schemes. Wittingly described as "revealing and rebellious," "hilarious and heartfelt," and "keenly empathetic," "Kajillionaire" is one under-the-radar film you won't want to miss. Come just for the movie and popcorn, or stay for the conversation afterward too! To stay up to date on future Film School screenings and receive post-discussion material, sign up for the Film School mailing list. No registration required. Open to all from movie buffs to casual viewers, and everyone in between.

Support Circle

Saturday, March 29, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Parents of children and adults with disabilities are invited to participate in an informal monthly discussion group to share and learn from each other. Meets on the last Saturday of every month in the library's Community Room. Light refreshments will be provided, please register on our website.

Senior Social Hour: Wednesdays, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Come stop by for our usual coffee, tea, snacks, and conversation. Check our website for special guests and topics.

Fireside Writing

Thursdays, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Looking for a comfortable and cozy spot to join other writers? Come to TML's Fireside Writing program. Fireside Writing gives you the space and opportunity to work alongside fellow writers and reach your writing goals. Bring your laptop or your favorite notebook and join us by the fire for tea and quiet writing time. Meets weekly on Thursdays.

Kindergarten registration open

Registration is now open for incoming kindergarten students who will matriculate at Pond Cove Elementary School during the 2025-2026 school year. To attend kindergarten at Pond Cove, children must be five years old on or before October 15, 2025. Registration is required before a child may attend school and participate in the kindergarten screening process.

How to Register: The registration process has two steps, outlined below. All forms and documents must be submitted online through a PowerSchool account for which you will register.

Step 1: Pre-Registration To begin the registration process, follow the directions below. Please note: this step is pre-registration only.

- Visit the Cape Elizabeth District website at: <https://www.cape.k12.me.us/>
- Click "Enroll" on the right side of the site
- You will enter demographic, household and grade level prompts.

Step 2: Full Registration and Submission of Required Documentation The pre-registration information will be reviewed and approved by the school, after which, you will receive an automated email guiding you to create a PowerSchool account and complete the full enrollment process. (Be sure to check your spam/junk box for this!) Once all forms are complete, you must upload the following required documentation:

- Child's birth certificate
- Proof of immunizations
- Proof of residency

Need Help? If you need assistance, contact the Pond Cove main office:

- Email: pcoffice@capeelizabethschools.org
- Phone: 207-799-7339.

Capetoon: The 5 A's of snow

By Jeff Mandell





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CELT launches 40th anniversary with community events



Contributed photo

Left to right, neighbors and CELT volunteers Susan Cary, Larry Borysyk, Amy Witt and Hans Hackett joined CELT's 40th Anniversary Launch Party on February 25.

Sixty members and friends of the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust filled the Mast Landing Brewing Co. in South Portland on a Tuesday night to celebrate community and launch the land trust's 40th Anniversary year of events. Guests included both new and long-term members, board members, volunteers, and representatives of the town of Cape Elizabeth and the Cape Farm Alliance. They gathered to show support for 40 successful years of conserving and caring for the special landscapes of Cape Elizabeth. Representatives shared plans for the year, including some new project initiatives that will be coming up. CELT is grateful for all who joined, to Rosemont Bakery for donating the refreshments, and Mast Landing Brewing Co. for their support.

The public is welcome and encouraged to participate in a variety of events planned for 2025, including guided walks showcasing

Cape's greatest places and natural history, a series of free lectures and discussions with local experts at the Thomas Memorial Library, and some special ticketed events throughout the year. Watch www.capelandtrust.org for more information on these upcoming events:

- Tue 3/18** Maine Big Night with Dr. Greg LeClair
- Sat 3/29** A Peace of Forest Film Screening
- Tue 4/22** Spring Walk in Willow Brook Preserve
- Tue 5/20** Bird Migration with Dr. Carrie Gray
- Tue 5/27** Bird Song ID with Dr. Carrie Gray
- Wed 6/4** Ecology of Invasive Plants Guided Walk
- Sun 6/8** Cross Town Walk

For more information email info@cape-landtrust.org or visit www.capelandtrust.org/events.

Cape swimmers compete at 2025 New England Championships

By Kevin St. Jarre



Photo by William Harmon

Spencer Shaw of Cape Elizabeth competing at the New England Championships at WPI.

Four young athletes from Cape Elizabeth competed in the 2025 New England 15-18 Age Group Championships held at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts.

The championships are a club meet, so swimmers are competing as a part of their club teams rather than for Cape Elizabeth High School, which all four swimmers attend.

Two are seniors, Hope Taylor and Graham Plourde, while the other two, Spencer Shaw and William Harmon, are sophomores at CEHS.

Harmon said, "The meet was an incredible experience. Spencer Shaw and I being two of only six 15-year olds from Maine, worked hard all season together to make it to this point and it was very rewarding."

Shaw, who has been swimming competitively for 10 years, said, "One of my favorite parts of swimming at a competitive level is the relationships I have built along the way. Over the years, I've met many swimmers from across New England, and meets like this give me a chance to reconnect with people I don't see regularly. Even though the atmosphere can be intense, the social aspect helps take the edge off and makes the experience more enjoyable."

Taylor said she had fun at the meet, adding, "It was fun to be with my teammates!"

Of the experience, Plourde said, "I always have fun at high-level meets like this because everyone attending has a similar level of pas-

sion for the sport as myself. I especially loved spending time with the other Cape Elizabeth swimmers and watching them do really well. My only goal during the meet was to have a good time and soak it all in one last time before going to college, which is definitely what made this such a memorable weekend."

Harmon has been swimming competitively for around six years. He swam all four days of the meet, starting with the 800 freestyle relay, where he split his best 200 meter swim. Of the remaining swims, Harmon said, "On Friday, I swam the 200 freestyle where I dropped 0.05 seconds from my previous best from Maine State championships. I also swam the 400 IM and 400 freestyle relay on Friday. On Saturday, I swam the 200 freestyle relay and 500 freestyle where I dropped 2 seconds from my best, going a 4:57.42. Finally, on Sunday I swam the 1650 freestyle, one mile, where I went a PR by 6 seconds."

Shaw swam the 100 breaststroke, 200 IM, 200 backstroke and the 100 backstroke. He had personal best times in both the 100 breaststroke and 200 backstroke. Shaw said, "It's always rewarding to see best times towards the end of the season, especially at a championship meet like this."

Plourde, one of the seniors who has been swimming for more than 10 years, swam the 100 breaststroke, 400 IM, 200 IM, 100 freestyle, 200 butterfly and the 50 freestyle. "I did really well for this part of the season and even made it back for finals in four of my events! My highest finish was 9th place in the 200 butterfly," Plourde said.

The other senior, Taylor, who is a 13-year veteran of competitive swimming, swam the 1000, 400 individual medley, 500 free, 200 backstroke and 200 breaststroke, and did well. Shaw said of New England's, "What stood out to me the most was just how fast and competitive the meet was. Coming from Maine, which isn't as large or competitive as some other swimming states, it's eye-opening to see the level of talent across the region. Going from one of the fastest swimmers at



Photo by William Harmon

Hope Taylor competing in the 2025 New England 15-18 Age Group Championships held at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

-see SWIM page 15



Looking for work, and discovering a calling

An increasing number of Mainers are finding fulfilling opportunities in Direct Support

Find a job you love, it's been said, and you'll never have to work a day in your life. Justin Dyer, a Direct Support Professional, would be the first to attest that this old saying is true. After nearly 20 years of supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, he's discovered a job where the rewards go far beyond what could fit in a paycheck.



"Even if I won the lottery and retired tomorrow," Justin said, "I would still find a way to be involved in this work. It's tough and challenging, but it's really fulfilling."

Justin is part of the growing field of Direct Support, ensuring that Mainers with age-related, physical, behavioral, intellectual and cognitive health needs have the support they need to stay safe, independent and empowered to achieve their personal goals. There are thousands of openings with employers throughout the state. Training is widely available, and many employers offer flexible scheduling options that allow you to juggle work with other responsibilities.

"Even if I won the lottery and retired tomorrow, I would still find a way to be involved in this work. It's tough and challenging, but it's really rewarding."

Over the years, the support Justin has provided has taken many different forms, varying according to each client's goals, needs and level of independence. He has worked with some clients to help them develop the skills they need to gain and keep employment. He has assisted others with activities of daily living, like helping to navigate visits to the doctor, and complete routine errands. He currently works with individuals who have brain injuries. Though Justin has tried other types of work over the years, he keeps coming back to Direct Support, drawn to the satisfaction he gets from collaborating with people to achieve their personal goals.

"To see someone go from, 'I can't do this,' or 'I won't do this,' to doing it and enjoying it," he said, "that's the best part."

To learn more about full-time, part-time, and per-diem opportunities in your community, go to Mainecareerswithpurpose.org. Follow @MaineCareerswithPurpose on Facebook and Instagram.

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Local birding report

By E. Brooks Bornhoff

Although March can be unpredictable and unpleasant, for me this late winter month also brings a unique anticipation along with a rekindled sense of hope and possibility for seeing and hearing both the expected and unexpected in the days ahead. February's siege of cold and snow undoubtedly impacted the early birds of spring migration.

On the last day of February in the three prior years Cape had already started to see Common Grackles announcing their arrival with croak-like whistles and iridescent bluish hoods and Woodcocks were sounding off deep within the Gull Crest Marsh. The first Red-winged Blackbirds of the season showed up at Great Pond on March 1st. Single males were also found along Wells and Sawyer Roads. From year to year there are always slight variations to when certain species arrive or pass through.

On a particularly cold mid-February afternoon along the Sawyer Road section of the Spurwink Marsh I was watching what was likely a family group of three Red-tailed Hawks chasing each other along the tree line when my eyes pivoted to two large objects out on the marsh.

Upon closer inspection there were two immature Bald Eagles engaged in playful behavior. One eagle briefly took to the wing to give chase, then both eagles tumbled to the ground. This apparent commotion flushed a flock of more than thirty Horned Larks that sprung out from the tundra-like landscape and took to the air in a swift, twisting and turning flight that headed right over Sawyer Road. From my vantage point I could hear their jumbled, high-pitched tinkling call notes as they disappeared out of view.

According to Cornell's eBird, Cape Elizabeth is home to many of the top birding hotspots in all of Cumberland County. In fact, 25% of the top twenty birding hotspots (define by both number species recorded and by submitted eBird checklists) are in our town including, Kettle Cove, Dyer Point, Trundy Point, Portland Headlight – Fort Williams Park and Two Lights State Park. Great Pond was ranked 24th and Crescent Beach State Park came in at 39th out of 100 locations with only 28 individual species recorded.

Spurwink River Crossing has been the number one birding hotspot YTD across

all of Cumberland County with a total of 70 different bird species spotted so far this year and 175 individual checklists submitted from birders across the state and beyond.

It's also amazing to know that so many different species have been spotted at this one location, highlights include a Yellow Rumped Warbler, Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspur, Horned Larks, a Rusty Blackbird, an American Pipit and particularly noteworthy ducks include, American Widgeon, Barrow's Goldeneye, Northern Pintail, Hooded Merganser, Lesser Scaup and Wood Duck. Reasons why this location attracts both birds and birders include overall accessibility, a running tidal river and the exposed Saltgrass along the river's banks.

One bird that was reported along the Spurwink River in February is a bird that I have never laid eyes on before, the American Pipit. This sparrow-sized songbird has a rather unremarkable brownish gray body and streaking across breast and sides. American Pipits are among just a small handful of species of American songbirds that nest in both the Arctic tundra and alpine meadows. Remarkably, this state-listed endangered species is known to nest in only one place in Maine, Mount Katahdin.

Lastly, on the late afternoon of the second day of March I rather suddenly came upon two Snow Geese hunkered down upon Trundy Point's rocky promontory. What stood out to me most about these geese were their long very thick necks and pink bills with grin-like appearances.

I also noted all three types of Scoter ducks, Surf, White-winged and Black and a Great Cormorant passed overhead and I could hear the bird murmuring to itself as it flew through the frigid air.

Judy's Pantry- a community feeding itself

Judy's Pantry operates at the Cape Elizabeth Methodist Church on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 3 – 4:30 p.m. Prior registration is necessary.

Please contact Beth Owens: bethowens1@gmail.com. Please consider a non-perishable donation to the IGA drop box.

Picklepalooza for Pets



Contributed photo

This father/daughter team from Cape Elizabeth (CEHS 9th grader Allegra Adler and Steven Adler) took the silver medal (3.0, 49 and under) in Picklepalooza for Pets on February 22. This pickleball tournament benefited the No Bowl Empty Pet Food Pantry at the newly opened Wicked Pickle in South Portland.

CELT to renew national accreditation

The Cape Elizabeth Land Trust (CELT) is pleased to announce that it is applying for renewal of its national accreditation. CELT first achieved accreditation in 2015 through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the national Land Trust Alliance. That accreditation was renewed in 2020. The accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet the highest national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever.

A comment period is now open for members of the public to assist CELT in this valuable process.

In the renewal process, the Commission conducts an extensive review of CELT's land preservation, stewardship, governance and financial policies and the implementation of those policies, which are essential to the land trust's ability to fulfill its mission of caring for its conservation lands forever. Going through the review process to maintain its accredited status ensures that CELT stays current with best land trust practices and is

in the best position to steward the land under its care.

As part of the accreditation renewal process, the Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how CELT complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust.

For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>.

To submit a comment or learn more about the accreditation program, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Comments on CELT's application will be most useful by May 15, 2025.

Contact: Patty Renaud (207) 767-6054 email patty@capelandtrust.org.



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CAPE CALENDAR

By Wendy Derzawiec

Please see the town website, www.capeelizabeth.com for meeting locations

Instructions for joining video conference meetings listed below will be posted on the town website, www.capeelizabeth.com.

Wednesday, March 12

Community Services Committee, Community Center, 5:30 p.m.

Monday, March 17

Town Council Budget Review Session, Town Hall, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, March 18

School Board Executive Session - NEGOTIATIONS, Jordan Conference Room, Town Hall, 3:45 p.m.
Planning Board, Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, March 20

Fort Williams Park Committee, Community Center, 6 p.m.
Town Council Budget Review Session, Town Hall, 6 p.m.
Energy Committee, Jordan Conference Room, Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 25

School Board Budget Workshop, Cape Elizabeth High School Library, 6:30 p.m.
Board of Zoning Appeals, Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Ongoing each week

Al-Anon, 7 p.m. Fridays, First Congregational Church, 301 Cottage Road, South Portland. Parking in rear.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 2 p.m. Saturdays, First Congregational Church, 301 Cottage Road, South Portland; 7 p.m. Wednesdays, St. Bartholomew Church; 7 p.m. Fridays, St. Alban's Church.

Cape Elizabeth Historical Preservation Society, 9 a.m. - noon on Thursdays and by appointment, Fort Williams, in the brick building closest to Shore Road (ring the doorbell).

Cape Elizabeth Lions Club, 6:39 p.m., first and third Tuesdays at the Bowery Beach Schoolhouse (except July and August), Two Lights Road

Cape Elizabeth Republican Town Committee, 6-8:30 p.m. second Tuesday of the month, Cape Elizabeth Community Center. Contact: ccrcme.com for Cape information.

South Portland/Cape Elizabeth Rotary Club, 6:15 p.m. Wednesdays at 107 Preble Hall, Southern Maine Community College, 2 Fort Road, South Portland. sp-ce-rotary.org.

CABLE GUIDE

CETV CHANNEL 1302

Subject to change. Please see cetv.capeelizabeth.org for latest program guide and video on demand.

Nothing scheduled for March 12-25



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SERVICES

Cape Elizabeth Church of the Nazarene

499 Ocean House Road (Route 77)
747-1113

www.capenazarene.org

Sunday School for all ages: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship Celebration: 10:45 a.m.
Services streamed live or on demand: watch.capenazarene.org

Cape Elizabeth United Methodist Church

280 Ocean House Road
799-8396

www.ceumc.org

Sanctuary Service: 10 a.m.
In-person Sunday services 10 a.m. For Zoom services, call 799-8396

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

29 Ocean House Road
799-4321

Sacrament Meeting:

Sunday, 10 - 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School/Primary: 11:10 a.m.-12 p.m.

The Church of the Second Chance

Greater Portland Christian School
1338 Broadway, South Portland
641-3253

Sunday: 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Rise Church

1047 Congress Street, Portland
874-9779

<https://www.riseportland.church>

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Adult Bible Study: 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School for children: 10:00 a.m.

Services streamed live on Facebook

Congregation Bet Ha'am

81 Westbrook St., South Portland
879-0028

www.bethaam.org

Worship: Friday, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, 10:30 a.m.

Family Shabbat Services:

Second Friday, 6:00 p.m.

Hope Community Church

879 Sawyer Street South Portland
799-4565

www.hopesopo.com

www.facebook.com/hopesopo

Sunday Morning Worship at 10 a.m.

Kid's Church for ages 4 through grade 5

Service videos available on our website

Promised Land World Reach Center

536 Cottage Road, South Portland
799-3152

Sunday Prayer & Intercession: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.

Family Bible Studies: Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Sermon recordings available to download

Redeemer Lutheran Church - LCMS

410 Main Street, Gorham
839-7100

www.RedeemerMaine.org

Sunday Bible Class for all ages: 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 a.m.

Services are in person and streamed on Facebook and YouTube

Saint Alban's Episcopal Church

885 Shore Road
799-4014

www.stalbansmaine.org

Sunday Services:

Rite 1 with Holy Eucharist 8:00 a.m.

Rite 2 with Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.

Live Streaming on YouTube (stalbanschannel)

Children's Programs 9:30 a.m.

Celtic Eventide 5:30 p.m.

Room for all

St Bartholomew Catholic Church of Saint John Paul II Parish

8 Two Lights Road, 207-883-0334

Website: www.JP2me.org

Sunday Mass: 9 a.m.

Daily Mass: Mon. and Wed. 8 a.m.

Sacrament of Confession: Mon. 8:30-9 a.m.

Additional Mass times in Scarborough & South Portland listed on website

First Congregational Church United Church of Christ

301 Cottage Road, South Portland
799-3361

www.fccucc.org

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m. in person and streamed on Facebook & YouTube

First Congregational Church of Scarborough

167 Black Point Road, Scarborough
883-2342

www.fccscarborough.com

Sunday Morning Worship: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School & Nursery Care

Upcoming Lions Club community dinners

Spaghetti Dinners:

March 22, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Chicken Dinners:

April 12, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

May 17, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Tammaro Landscaping & Property Services

Winter Services

With not much snow out there this year it allows us to continue with the following services:

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Piano Lessons. All ages, all levels. Call Ora: 207-899-3014

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Swim

Continued from page 12

the Maine State Championships to one of the slowest at a New England level is both humbling and inspiring and pushes me to train harder so I can come back as a stronger competitor next year.”

Plourde said, “I was pleasantly surprised by how welcoming and friendly the swimmers from other teams were. It’s always a high-pressure environment but the other swimmers were more than willing to push that aside and engage with us. Meeting new people is always one of the best parts of these out-of-state meets.”

He’s already looking ahead to the next competition. Plourde said, “This meet was a great start to my championship season, but it’s not over yet because my club team is heading to North Carolina next weekend for another high-level meet. I’m on a different club team than the other three Cape swimmers, I swim for the Portland Porpoise Swim Club while they swim for Bluefish [Maine], but I believe they have a similar-level meet in New York coming up in a couple of weeks.”

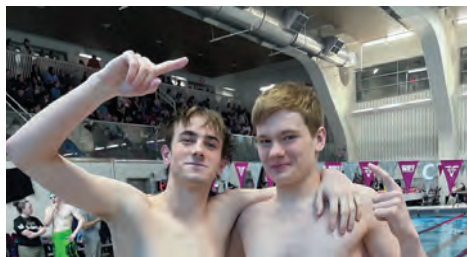


Photo by Hope Taylor

Spencer Shaw and William Harmon, two of only six 15-year old swimmers from Maine competing at the swim meet.

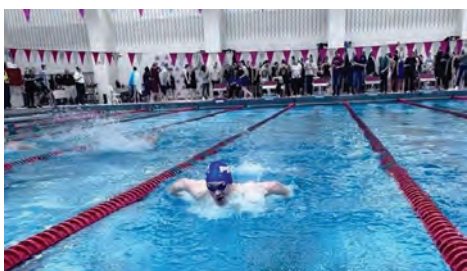


Photo by William Harmon

Graham Plourde participating at the New England Championships.

Bruce Edward McCarthy



Bruce Edward McCarthy of Bristol, Rhode Island passed away peacefully surrounded by family on February 15th, 2025.

Bruce lived with leukemia the last 10 years of his life, always displaying the immense courage, strength, grace and humor we loved about him.

Bruce was born August 6th, 1957 to Blanche “Smooogie” Steiner and the late E. Lane McCarthy. He grew up in Barrington, Rhode Island and graduated with a business degree from Plymouth State University in 1981. There he met lifelong friends and his former wife Elle Ivy.

He and Elle raised their three sons Samuel, Alexander and Satchel in New Hampshire, Michigan and Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

After college he traveled through Europe and spent time as a ski instructor in Germany. Once back home in New England he began a 40-year career in the insurance industry.

He loved gardening, skiing, pond skating, hiking, his Cape running group, the East Bay Bike Path, and all things tennis. Bruce was curious and a voracious reader. He loved Maine high school hockey, Crowell Beach on Cape Cod, cinema (especially The Godfather), raw oysters, and a dry martini. His love for life was infectious.

His huge smile mirrored the unending way he gave of himself to anyone that spent time with him. He was known as an especially loving son, father, partner, sibling, cousin, uncle, grandfather, and friend. His easy laugh, sense of humor, big smile and warm heart were felt by all – and will remain forever in our hearts.

He is survived by his loving partner, Marilyn Mayhall of Bristol, RI; his son Sam, daughter-in-law Tanis and grandson Lane of Pawtuxet Village, RI; his son Alexander of Providence, RI; his son Satchel and partner Pauline Kraatz of California; his mother Smoogie Steiner of Bristol, RI, his brothers Greg McCarthy of California, John McCarthy and Robin McAlpine of Bristol, RI and his sister and lifelong best friend Carrie Croft and her partner Bruce Jenkins of Bath, Maine; Marilyn’s granddaughter Eloise Cherubini of Barrington, RI and 9 incredible nieces and nephews and their families including Zoe Croft and Hans Croft of Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Audubon Society of Rhode Island (www.asri.org) and Preble Street (www.preblestreet.org).

Dean’s list announcements

The following students were named to the dean’s list for fall 2024 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts:

- Thomas Gray**
- Cody LaBonty**

Have a Classified Ad, Announcement or Event?



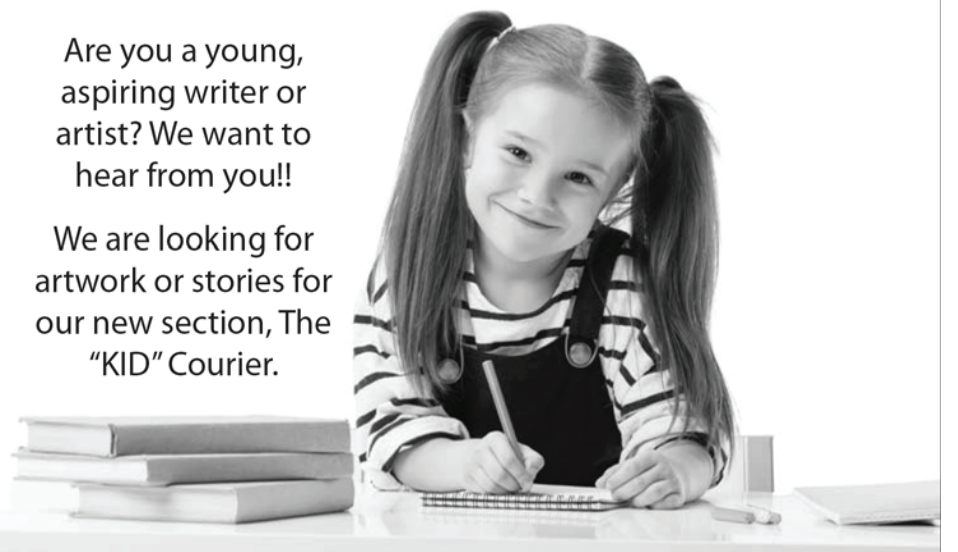
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Saving Cape's Neighborhoods: Is Another Petition Under Way? Find Out at CapeNeighbors.com

1) The Bad News: New Set of Zoning Amendments Take Aim at Cape's Neighborhoods

Once again, we can only predict that Cape's Town Council passed yet another controversial set of zoning amendments at the March 10th Town Council meeting. As small towns across Maine work to preserve the rural character of their communities, Cape's Council majority is doing the opposite - now pushing their dense housing agenda into Cape's neighborhoods. **The impacts of their latest zoning amendments are both significant and far-reaching as they:**

- **Eliminate current minimum lot size requirements**, replacing them with significantly smaller lot size requirements. This change puts hundreds of properties at risk, allowing developers to tear down existing single family homes in residential neighborhoods and replace them with apartment buildings with up to four units.
- **Remove site plan review requirements** for the apartments described above. This change eliminates important safety, environmental, and design protections.
- **Do not require notice** to be mailed to hundreds of impacted property owners - and their many abutters. **Neighbors will have no notice - and no say.**
- **Allow for 1,000sf+ house-sized ADUs.** Over a year ago, Cape increased ADU (Accessory Dwelling Units, aka mother-in-law suites) size allowance from 600sf to 800sf, well beyond state requirements. Going beyond 800sf to allow even larger, house-sized ADUs will have major impacts because state law both (1) prohibits off-street parking requirements and (2) prohibits towns from requiring ADUs to be attached to the primary residence.

By the time of this printing, we will know exactly what amendments were passed. If the changes look anything like what is was being proposed, we commit to support another citizen-led petition effort that will allow Cape's voters to weigh in. Please go to **CapeNeighbors.com** for more information.

2) The Good News: Town Center Zoning Changes are on Hold, Pending Citizen Referendum

In the previous issues of the Courier (available at CapeCourier.com), Cape Neighbors outlined the Council's aggressive move to use a developer's proposal to yet again apply excessive zoning changes across the entirety of Town Center. A citizen-led petition was once again successful, sending the issue back to referendum.

The referendum on the Town Center amendments will allow Cape's voters to:

- Maintain the requirement of first floor non-residential use, preserving the vision of a Town Center filled with small shops, cafes, and bakeries mixed with residential.
- Maintain the 35 foot cap on new construction within the Town Center district, preventing the building of large apartment complexes.
- Prevent the 1934 high school building from being developed as taxpayer subsidized apartments, right on top of Cape's school campus.
- Allow Ocean House Farm and other key Town Center properties to operate as they are, rather than incentivizing multiple 50 foot apartment complexes.

What are the conflicts of interest of these zoning changes that have been passed? Do any town leaders stand to benefit financially from these changes? Have such conflicts been disclosed?

JUNE School Bond Referendum: Do NOT be Disenfranchised!

The brazen push to schedule yet another (third) vote on the school building bond, **this time in JUNE**, continues.

A June referendum effectively disenfranchises many of Cape's voters, as both Councilors Jordan and Harriman-Jordan have stated in the past:

"I tend to lean toward a... a November time frame, for a couple of different reasons - and one of them, of course, is turnout." *Councilor Penny Jordan, Dec 1, 2021*

"If we're really going to get the biggest, you know, take on what the town really thinks, you need to do this in November." *Councilor Caitlin Harriman-Jordan, Dec 13, 2021*

Both of these statements were made as the Council debated the timing of the referendum vote on the controversial Town Center zoning amendments - a vote prompted by a successful citizen-led petition effort to require a town-wide vote. That vote, along with both failed school bond referenda, were each held in November.

Why the sudden push for a June school bond vote? Is this a blatantly manipulative and divisive strategy meant to sneak what would represent the largest locally-funded school bond in Maine's history past Cape's voters?

Additional School Concerns Remain:

1) Once one of the top three school districts in Maine, the Cape Elizabeth School Department's (CESD's) performance vs other Maine districts has slipped dramatically under the oversight of the current administration. Has the unending focus (and millions spent) on the battle for costly new buildings contributed to the decline? Can the CESD learned from other districts like Cumberland/North Yarmouth, where Greely remains Maine's top performing high school, despite its 29 portable classrooms?

2) CESD's K12 enrollment continues to decline precipitously, down over 20% from its peak just 20 years ago. Cape Middle School's enrollment has declined even further, **down over 25%** in that same time period. CEHS graduated 148 seniors in 2024, while Pond Cove has only 105 kindergartners enrolled this year. Forecasts shared by the CESD show that **the decline is set to continue.** Why are these data so hastily dismissed, ignored, and often replaced by demonstrably false claims of enrollment growth?

3) During the past election, a critical enrollment projection report was released by the CESD. The numbers in that report (completed by The New England School Development Council, or NESDEC), show that **the so-called "Middle Ground" proposal had been designed (and marketed) under a false premise of projected enrollment growth.** Per several members of Cape's School Building Advisory Committee (SBAC), the CESD appears to have delayed the production of the report by withholding (from NESDEC) data that was needed to complete it. **Did the CESD drag its feet in reporting its fall enrollment figures to NESDEC?** Did a majority (thousands) of Cape's voters in-fact vote (early/absentee) under this false pretense of future growth? Did the CESD have a legal and/or ethical obligation to correct the record in a timely manner?

4) How much did Cape's property taxpayers pay for the CESD's last one-sided advertising campaign? How much should Cape's property taxpayers expect to pay for the next campaign? Is it legal/ethical for the CESD to be using Cape's property tax money to fund one-sided political campaigns in the first place?

What is the Cape Neighbors Alliance?

We are a grassroots group of Cape citizens who believe that good governance happens when our community is heard, our government's processes are transparent, and personal agendas are set aside. We intend to stand with our neighbors and our community to ensure this vision becomes reality.