

Overview of the Hollis Primary School \$19.4M Renovation Proposal

By Anne Wake-DePasquale, Chairman, Hollis Primary School Enrollment Committee

On March 17, 2026, the residents of Hollis have the opportunity to attend the Hollis School District Annual Meeting and vote on a \$19,384,375 bond to fund the renovation and expansion of the Hollis Primary School (HPS). The meeting will be held at Hollis-Brookline High School at 7:00 pm. With this bond, the school intends to address the myriad challenges that it, and the town, face as a result of increasing enrollment.

The school has seen many fluctuations in enrollment, but there has been a notable, steady increase over the past five years. Staff workspaces have been combined, storage closets converted into offices, the former library converted into three classrooms, a kindergarten classroom converted to the library, and a PreK classroom established in a hallway, are just a few of the steps the school has taken to maximize its capacity.

Changes in fire codes, state and federal requirements for services, and adding PreK and full-day kindergarten have altered the way that classrooms can be used. Rooms that previously held 18-20 children must now serve other programming purposes, resulting in a loss of capacity conservatively estimated at 116-120 students.

(See the FAQ sections of the Hollis Enrollment Committee website for full explanations.)

Construction was not the first option the Hollis Enrollment Committee (HEC) explored. This committee, formed in January 2024 with the mission of studying the enrollment trend, challenges, and possible solutions, began by touring both HPS and HUES, interviewing the principals, and identifying and prioritizing problems to be addressed. Solving the pressing problem of a three-classroom deficit for FY25 was its first charge. That problem was swiftly and inexpensively solved by the aforementioned conversion of the library. The other problems have proven more difficult to address with the resources currently available.

Not only is the school lacking sufficient classrooms and office space, it experiences other daily challenges. The current multipurpose room (MPR) is utilized as a cafeteria, gymnasium, performance/event space, and hallway. Such a situation is not unusual in elementary schools, but this space has become insufficient. With the increased number of classes taking PE, navigating the daily schedule is a constant challenge. The space must be

Continued on page 14

A Man of Thoughtful Action: Remembering Don Ryder

By Liz Barbour



Don and Sheryl Ryder

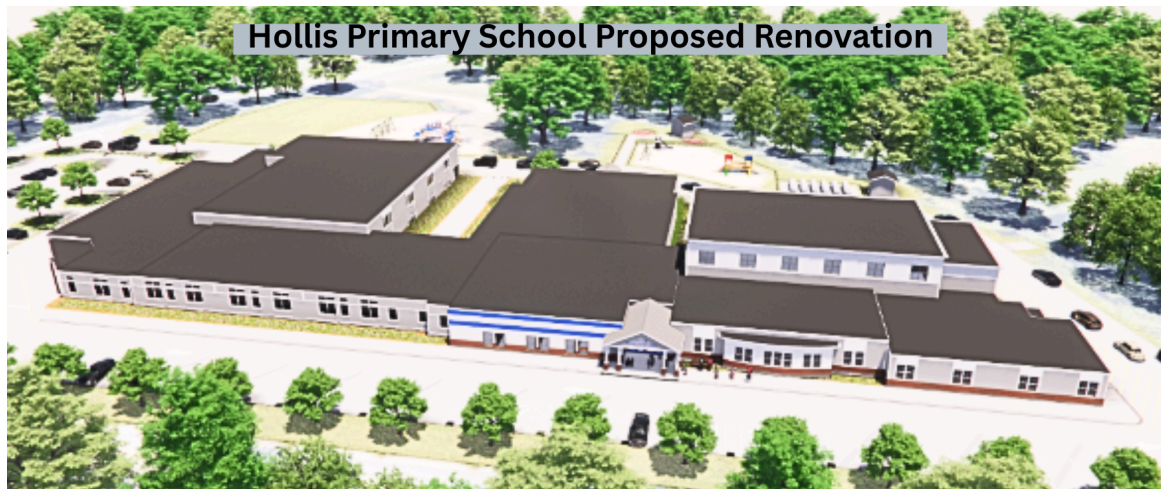
Don Ryder passed away peacefully at home on January 8, 2026, at the age of 85. He is survived by his wife Sheryl, his daughter Jen, and daughter-in-law Beth. Those who knew Don remember his calm, steady presence and his passion living in and serving Hollis. Don's commitment to service began early. After his studies at Northeastern University in Boston and graduate work through the University of Maryland's European Division, Don served six years in the U.S. Army Signal Corps.

Don and Sheryl came to Hollis in 1979 with their daughter Jen, settling on a dirt road bordered by open land and a beaver pond. After retiring from Lockheed in 1999, Don devoted himself to serving Hollis. He gave his time to Hollis without reservation and took great joy in supporting the simple pleasures of small-town life.


Over the years, he served on the Conservation Commission and shared his observations of the natural world he loved through his Life on the Pond column in the Hollis Times, offering reflections shaped by curiosity and appreciation for the land. In addition, he served on the Select Board for six years and chaired it for two, and the Planning Board for six years, as well as other town committees. Together, he and Sheryl co-chaired the Hollis Old Home Days Committee for eight years.

Those who served alongside Don say he led by example. Former Selectman Mark Johnson recalls Don's first rule of leadership: no grandstanding. Don encouraged careful thought and the courage to do what one believed was right. He took that ethos to the New Hampshire State House when he represented Hollis, Brookline, and Mason in the House of Representatives for two terms from 2005 to 2009, where he focused on education, finance, tax relief, and responsible budgeting. In January, Speaker of the House Sherman Packard, signed a Declaration of Service in recognition of Don. Even after leaving office, Don remained engaged with the

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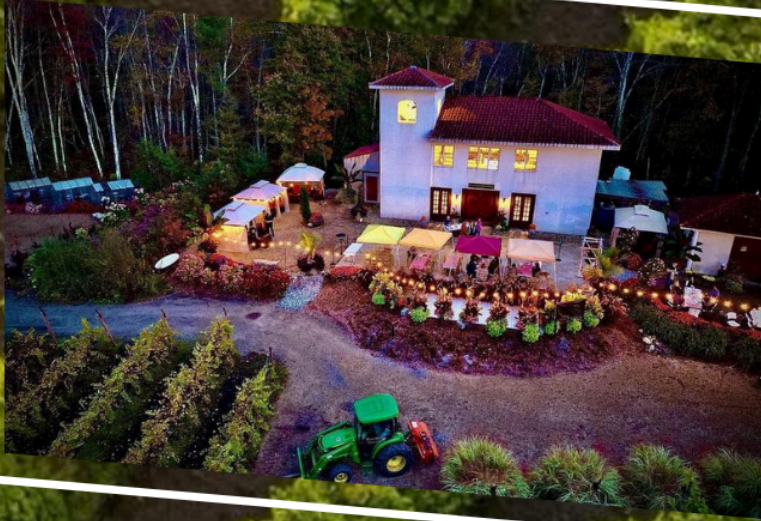


Hollis Primary School Proposed Renovation

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

March is here, and that means it is time for town and school elections. We hope the articles and guides in this issue are helpful as you consider the issues affecting the town, and head to meetings and the polls. If you are new to Hollis and would like to better understand how our annual town and school meetings work, be sure to check out our “Vote Notes” on page 9. Do not miss the opportunity to participate and make your voice heard!

March also marks another milestone for The PH Post as we begin our third year of publication. We have grown from eight to 16 pages, welcomed more than 30 advertisers, and with this issue, will have mailed 36,000 free copies to homes across Hollis.

Producing a community newspaper is always a collaborative effort. We are grateful to the writers, photographers, organizations, and advertisers who help make each issue possible. Their support allows us to continue featuring local stories and delivering The PH Post to every home in town. We welcome new businesses interested in supporting community journalism through advertising. Our rates are reasonable, our reach is targeted, and every ad placed helps keep this paper free to residents. Submission information and advertising rates can be found on our website: www.positivelyhollis.com.

Warmly,
Liz Barbour
Publisher/Editor

	PH Post Team	
Sharon Swart Production Mgr.	Liz Barbour Publisher/Editor	Haley Brown Layout, Ad Mgr.
Kristen Hettig Ad Design		Ted Barbour Business Mgr.

March Town Meeting Advice

With A.C. Worth

Dear A.C.:

As a recent transplant to Hollis, I'll be attending my first Town Meeting this month. I've heard a lot about these meetings being a cornerstone of community engagement and decision making, but I'm feeling a bit unsure about how to approach the proceedings. I greatly appreciate any insights or advice you could offer to help me navigate this new experience with confidence and effectiveness.

Sincerely, John Q. Voter

Dear John:

Participating in a New England Town Meeting is a significant aspect of local democracy, steeped in tradition and community engagement. I brought up your question with my circle of friends as we enjoyed mulled cider around a crackling fire. Here are some etiquette guidelines they came up with to help navigate and contribute effectively.

Fran Conia stated right away, “Familiarize yourself with the agenda items beforehand. Also familiarize yourself with the rules of parliamentary procedure governing the town meeting. Adhere to established protocols for

motions, voting, and debate.”

“**Pay close attention** to speakers when they have the floor,” added Connie Cord. “Be open to hearing different perspectives. Maintain civility and respect towards all participants, regardless of differing opinions.”



Advised Frank Lin, “If you plan to speak, go to the end of the line that forms in front of the podium. State your name and address clearly. Focus on the issues at hand. And, adhere to the time limit set by the moderator at the beginning of the meeting.”

As for my own advice, take your civic duty seriously and cherish the opportunity to actively participate in the democratic process. Vote thoughtfully, advocate for your beliefs respectfully, and work towards consensus and constructive outcomes. Of course, when the mulled cider ran out, so did my friends.

--A.C. Worth

Do you have a problem that needs some good old-fashioned common sense advice? A.C. Worth is ready to help.

Send your questions to A.C.WorthAdvice@gmail.com. All correspondence will be kept confidential.

 **Tag-Team Democracy** 

Couples can tag-team Town Meeting voting by watching the livestream at home and taking turns heading to the polls during one-hour secret ballot windows.

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Hollis and the Fight for Independence

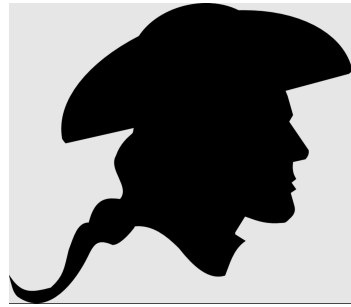
Submitted by Fredrica Olson, a descendant of S.T. Worcester

Since the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War is almost upon us, it's important to know the big part our little town of Hollis played in our fight for independence. For a community with a population of 1,255, Hollis's contributions were nothing short of remarkable.

On September 25, 1775, Hollis Selectmen Noah Worcester, Stephen Ames, Jacob Jewell, and Oliver Lawrence signed a census report for the Provincial Congress. It detailed the town's population and resources at the dawn of the revolution.

1775 Hollis Census:

- *Males under 16 years of age: 306
- *Males from 16 to 50: 174
- *All males above 50: 71
- *All in the Army: 60
- *All females: 640
- *Negroes and slaves for life: 4
- *Men capable of using arms: 223
- *Firearms: 131
- *Number of firearms still needed: 92
- *Powder Private Property: 111 pounds [At this time there was no powder in the town store. The ammunition of the town had been exhausted the previous spring]. Hollis lost ten men in service or to disease who were not included in the census.



Notably, Peter Poor, listed in the 1775 census under "Negroes and slaves for life," served as a patriot at Bunker Hill and died there, a sacrifice deserving remembrance. At the same time, life at home demanded its own courage: Hollis's wives, mothers, and children kept farms and households running while their men were away, making their labor an essential part of the war effort.

On the morning of April 19, 1775, the day after Paul Revere's midnight ride, Captain Noah Worcester was in the midst of shaving when Deacon John Boynton rode up to his door, spreading the alarm that "the regulars are coming and killing our men!" Worcester rushed to mount his horse and rode off to spread the alarm...with half his face still lathered! By the afternoon, 92 Minutemen rallied on

Continued on page 14

This July: Hollis Marks America's 250th with Parades, Fireworks, and More!

By Hollis Celebrates America 250th Committee

In 2026, the United States will reach a remarkable milestone: 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. To mark this historic anniversary, the Town of Hollis is planning an exciting community-wide celebration, and everyone is invited to participate.

America's story began with a bold idea—that people could come together to shape their own future. For 250 years, that idea has continued to grow through the voices, talents, and traditions of communities just like ours.

The Hollis Celebrates America 250th Committee is planning a multiday celebration spanning two weekends in July, filled with activities for all ages. Events include patriotic concerts and readings, a parade, historic walking tours, family games, art displays, community meals, kids' activities, and a grand fireworks finale. From decorating homes and learning local history to gathering with neighbors for concerts and field-day games, there will be many ways to participate. As plans are finalized, more details will be shared with the community.



Community involvement will be central to making this celebration special. Residents are encouraged to volunteer, share ideas, participate in events, or contribute their talents, whether through music, art, storytelling, or helping highlight Hollis's rich heritage. Whether you can lend an hour or help shape an event, every contribution helps bring this celebration to life.

To stay connected and follow updates, residents can find the committee on Facebook under Hollis Celebrates America 250th, visit the Town of Hollis website at hollisnh.org under Hollis Celebrates America 250th, or reach out by email at HollisCelebratesAmerica250@gmail.com. The committee includes Lillian Garruba, Chairwoman; Aaron Penkacik, Co-Chair; Chelsea Lennartz, Publicity; Nate Michaels, Secretary; Melissa Sayre, Treasurer; and members Erica Crea, Judy Mahoney, and Victoria Harnish.

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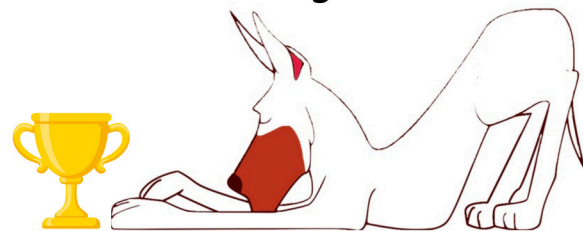
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Wine Tastings, Wagon Rides, and Wellness: Hollis Seniors Has Big Plans for 2026!

By Staff

If you are 55 or older and still refuse to call yourself a "senior," you are exactly who the Hollis Seniors are looking for. They promise friendship, laughter, and a good reason to get out on a Thursday.

Open to all Hollis residents aged 55 and older, the Hollis Seniors meets weekly from 11 am to 1 pm at the Lawrence Barn. There is something happening nearly every week. Chair yoga runs from 10 to 10:45 am. On the second Thursday of each month, PowerBack Rehab leads strengthening exercises. The third Thursday features a Positively Hollis luncheon prepared by local volunteer chefs, and the final Thursday includes the monthly business meeting and birthday celebrations.

Plans are underway for new programs



Hollis Seniors Christmas lunch crew - Karen Bradshaw, Liz Barbour, Roxanne Angevine, Beth Gadoury, Penny Edwards

with the Hollis Police and Fire Departments, Hollis Ambulance CPR training, scam-prevention talks, Delta Dogs visits, Fulchino Vineyard wine tastings, Brookdale wagon rides, a dietician presentation, live music, and art projects for the Memorial Garden. Programs typically begin at 11:15 am, followed by lunch (Meals on Wheels) and social time. Stop by on a Thursday and see what you have been missing.

Please don't hesitate to contact Hollis Seniors President, Doug Nye at 603-689-4456 or visit the Hollis Senior's webpage at www.hollisnh.org.



Hollis Seniors enjoy the annual Christmas luncheon

Meet Rachel Tieman: Real Estate Insight for Hollis Homeowners

By Staff

Living in Hollis for more than 15 years, Rachel Tieman understands firsthand what draws families to this special community. As a Senior Real Estate Specialist with Keller Williams Metropolitan, Rachel brings her background in mortgage lending and sales insight to every stage of the buying or selling process. We spoke with Rachel about her thoughts on the current real estate market.

Rachel, how does your background in mortgage lending help you guide buyers and sellers today?

Mortgage lending experience allows me to guide buyers throughout the process, setting expectations early particularly with regards to potential financing options and constraints. Staying current on available loan products and guidelines enables me to connect buyers to trusted lenders giving them financing options to explore.

What excites you most about the current real estate market in Hollis and the surrounding area?

Hollis is sought after for its rural community, highly ranked schools, and



Rachel Tieman

quality of life. Southern New Hampshire continues to attract buyers from New England and across the US. Even with its limited inventory, demand remains steady, and well-prepared and properly priced homes see most of the activity.

What is one practical tip for homebuyers entering the market now?

Homes in Hollis and nearby communities can move fast, so being prepared and pre-qualified or pre-approved is essential. Reviewing your credit report ahead of time also helps you address any issues early. In this market, only ready buyers are positioned to be competitive.

What advice would you give homeowners considering selling?

Focus on pricing and presentation.

Zillow is just a data point—features,

Continued on page 14

What Is Environmental Education, Really?

By Lindsay Jones, Executive Director at Beaver Brook Association

Lately, I've been getting this question more and more often: What exactly is environmental education?

It's a fair question. It sounds like something that belongs in a textbook or a college catalog. But at Beaver Brook, environmental education is anything but. It's muddy boots and curious questions. It's salamanders in small hands, quiet moments on a trail, and the slow realization that the natural world isn't something "out there," but something we are deeply connected to. Environmental education, at its heart, is about helping people build a meaningful connection with the land, with science, and with themselves. And hopefully, over time, those connections shape values, choices, and sometimes even entire life paths.

One of the most powerful examples of that impact comes from the people who first arrive at Beaver Brook as children, like Evie. Evie's mom shared that she came here for a Girl Scout field trip when she was seven years old. She was mesmerized by the experience and fell in love with science. Evie later went on to become a student assistant for her middle school science teacher and is now heading to college to major in biology. Stories like this are not rare at Beaver Brook. They're just often unseen. Many of the people who now work in conservation, environmental policy, land management, outdoor education, or climate science can trace their passion back to moments being spent outdoors exploring, learning, or simply being curious. People who grow up learning outdoors often carry that sense of stewardship into every



Maura Jones explores the wonders of a field at Beaver Brook

part of their lives, whether they become scientists, teachers, business owners, or parents.

At Beaver Brook, this work happens every day. School groups arrive wide-eyed and uncertain, and leave muddy, smiling, and full of questions. Summer campers build confidence alongside forts and friendships. Adults attend workshops and walks that deepen their understanding of the land they live on. Our 2,200 acres of land is the classroom.

Because our current facilities were never designed to support the scale and scope of what Beaver Brook has become, we have embarked on an ambitious capital campaign to build a new education center. For years, programs have been stretched into spaces that no longer meet the needs of students, educators, or the community. Staff do extraordinary work within tight constraints, but the reality is that our physical infrastructure limits how many people we can serve and how effectively we can serve them.

The Transforming Beaver Brook Capital Campaign is about removing those barriers. New facilities will allow for expanded programming, increased accessibility, improved safety, and year-round use. Many people have already stepped up to help move this project to where it is today. Donors, volunteers, board members, and community champions have generously given their time, resources, and belief in Beaver Brook's mission and in this project. But we are not quite there yet.

As we look ahead, we're at a moment where community support matters more than ever. With your support now, we can reach the finish line together. Environmental education isn't just a concept. It's a story that begins with a child finding their passion for the environment and continues with all of us choosing to protect the places that shape who we become.

To learn more or to support the campaign visit Beaver Brook's website at www.beaverbrook.org or call our office at 603-465-7787.

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An Overview of Bonding and Tax Impacts Related to the Hollis Primary School Expansion

By Mark LeDoux, Hollis Selectman 2006–2024

On March 17, 2026, Hollis voters will consider authorizing the School District to issue up to \$19.4 million in bonds to fund the expansion, renovation, or replacement of facilities used by the Hollis Primary School (HPS), which serves up to 430 children in our community.

While the current building has undergone cycles of renovation, refurbishment, and modernization over the past 20 years, the School Board and administration have expressed concerns that portions of the facility may not adequately support current and anticipated future needs.

To place this decision in context, it is helpful to understand how property taxes are allocated in Hollis. Approximately two-thirds of local property taxes support education, while the remaining one-third funds town and county services. Last year, Hollis spent approximately \$28 million on education for 1,243 students and just under \$10 million to provide municipal and county services for roughly 8,700 residents, including ambulance and fire services, police protection, emergency communications, road maintenance, governance,

planning, and building inspection.

Communities typically use bonds to finance large capital projects, such as school facilities, municipal buildings, or major equipment purchases like a ladder truck. Because these assets are expected to last 15 to 30 years or more, the cost is spread over time through debt service payments, allowing current and future users to share in the expense.

As an illustration, a 20-year bond of \$19.4 million could result in annual debt service payments in the range of approximately \$1.25 million to \$1.5 million, depending on interest rates and final bond terms. The actual tax impact for individual homeowners would depend on the final borrowing terms and assessed property values. These potential bond payments would be in addition to other planned capital expenditures (see Planned Capital Expenditures).

Understanding how long-term borrowing works and how it fits into the broader capital plan may help voters evaluate the proposal. Residents are encouraged to review the details carefully and participate in the School District meeting on March 17.

Planned Capital Expenditures

*This is an example of a few planned capital expenditures. Go to page 9 **Vote Notes** for links to more information.

- An average of approximately \$750,000 per year (2025–2030) under the Hollis Facility Improvement Plan for the Primary and Upper Elementary Schools
- \$1.7 million in 2026 and \$2.5 million in 2027 under the COOP Facility Improvement Plan for the Middle and High Schools
- \$2.5 million for Transfer Station repairs (2026)
- \$1.25 million for improvements to the Hardy West Field (2027)
- More than \$10 million for a proposed new Police/Fire Complex (2027–2031), as outlined in the Hollis Capital Improvement Plan

MARCH MEETING CALENDAR



HOLLIS TOWN ELECTIONS

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026
7 AM-7 PM
LAWRENCE BARN



Hollis Town Meeting Live Stream Video
https://townhallstreams.com/towns/hollis_nh

HOLLIS TOWN MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2026
9 AM-2 PM
HOLLIS BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL



HOLLIS SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday, March 17, 2026
7 PM
HOLLIS BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL



SAU41 School District Live Stream Video
<https://www.youtube.com/@sau41meetings73/featured>

HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANNUAL MEETING
Thursday, March 19, 2026
6:30 PM
HOLLIS BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL



HOLLIS TOWN MEETING

BINGO

Hollis Town Meeting
Saturday, March 14
9 AM at HBHS Gymnasium

Moderator calls someone out of order	You received the March issue of The Positively Hollis Post in your mailbox	You consider tag-team voting with your spouse	Inside joke between moderator and person making comment	Moderator says "Please keep comments to the article"
You thank the Moderator for his work during a ballot vote	Someone brings a coffee from Dunkin', you're jealous	Someone in the bleachers drops a water bottle and it rolls down 6 rows	Problem with microphone, someone under the age of 15 fixes it	Couple brings folding chairs from home
You are silently grateful you're not a vote counter	Someone napping		Speaker forgets their voter card at the podium	Person near you has brought very noisily wrapped food
You say AYE without realizing what you're voting on	You say NAY without realizing what you're voting on	You are so confused you don't know what AYE or NAY means relative to the article	Speaker includes number of years in residence as if to lend more credibility to opinion	Speaker forgets to give name and address
Card vote needs to be re-counted	Moderator gently scolds the room	"Point of order!"	Budget spreadsheet is hard to read	You buy a snack from the kids raising funds

Play along at the town meeting!

2026 Town Election CANDIDATES

Select Board
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Susan Benz
Will Walker
Bob Berkman

Budget Committee
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Mike Leavitt
Darlene Mann
David Parry
Jonathan Geehan

Town Clerk
3 yr term

Diane Leavitt

HOLLIS TOWN OFFICERS

Supervisor of the Checklist
6yr term

Mary Thomas

Town Moderator
2 yr term

Drew Mason

Cemetery Trustee
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Melinda Willis
Erika MacDonald

Library Trustee
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Merle Eisman Carrus
Claudia Dufresne
Diane Wilson
Vivian Johnson

Trustee of the Trust Fund
3 yr term

Don't Under Vote!

Several offices on the ballots have 2 positions to fill. When it says "Vote for up to 2", you can vote for 2 candidates.

SAU 41 SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICERS

Hollis School District Officers

School Board
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Ann Wake-De Pasquale
Raphael Zack
Karla Garcia

School District Moderator
1 yr term

Treasurer
1 yr term

Claudia Dufresne

School District Clerk
1 yr term

Diane Leavitt

Hollis Brookline COOP Officers

COOP School Board, Hollis
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Cynthia Van Coughnett

Budget Committee
3 yr term, **VOTE FOR UP TO 2**

Raul Blanche

Who Pays for Old Home Days?

By Lindsey Sud, Hollis Old Home Days Committee

Ever wonder how we make the Old Home Days (OHD) magic happen every year? Did you know that Old Home Days is funded almost exclusively by the generosity of local businesses and individuals? Let's shed some light on how the special sauce of Old Home Days is made!

Every year, a Warrant Article is presented that reads: Old Home Days Special Revenue Fund: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 for the purpose of sponsoring the Old Home Days event and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said sum from the Old Home Days Special Revenue Fund. This article will not affect the tax rate, as these funds will be raised from fees and donations.

The wording of the article is somewhat misleading, but in plain language, the article releases currently existing funds from the Special Revenue Fund that have been raised in previous years, and allows the committee to start spending funds for the current year. Fund-raising activities generally start in early summer, but deposits and orders start as soon as the committee reconvenes in April. The sum of \$50,000 exceeds all OHD expenditures, and is just meant to be a blanket amount to release all available funds.

In recent years, a \$6,000 line item has been included in the town's operating budget related to Old Home Days. This funding covers Department of Public Works support, routine town services, and any restoration needed for Nichols Field following the event. These



New inflatables were a hit at OHD. Photo by Allegra Boverman

services are essential to safely hosting a large community gathering and are one of the advantages of Old Home Days operating as a town-sponsored event. This status also allows the committee to use town facilities such as the Lawrence Barn and Nichols Field for the weekend.

However, the costs to put on Old Home Days every year are considerable. The fireworks run about \$10K, and this year, in addition to all the other standard entertainment, rentals, and incidental expenses, the newly added inflatables were an additional \$15K. Overall, the total outlay is about \$35K. Luckily, thanks to excellent admission sales, very generous donors, and weather that blessed us, the OHD Special Revenue Fund came out slightly ahead for 2025. One hundred percent of all funds raised always go back into staging the event, either for the current or upcoming year. As we all know, Mother Nature does not always smile, so it is also helpful to

have a literal rainy day fund.

On balance, Old Home Days is powered by the donations of our very generous business sponsors, individual donors, vendors, and attendees, while using a negligible amount of taxpayer resources, to say nothing of the innumerable hours put in by the all-volunteer committee.

It truly is a home-grown event for the town, by the town. We believe that the opportunity to come together as a community to support and celebrate that which makes Hollis special for a weekend in September every year is priceless.

The Committee is already discussing ways to improve and expand on what we can all agree was a banner year in 2025. The Friday night block party was an unprecedented success, and feedback on the inflatables was overwhelmingly positive. If you'd like to join us as we ride the high of last year's success into OHD 2026, feel free to stop by our first meeting on April 20 at 6 pm at the Lawrence Barn. We are especially looking for someone who would be interested in a Treasurer role.

In the interest of keeping Friday night family oriented and amusements free, we are looking for families to sponsor the wildly popular glow golf as well as other amusements. If your family would be interested, please reach out to Lindsey Sud, Sponsorship Co-Ordinator at info@hollisoldhomedays.org, and as always, donations can be made at hollisoldhomedays.org/donate, or checks

Continued on page 14

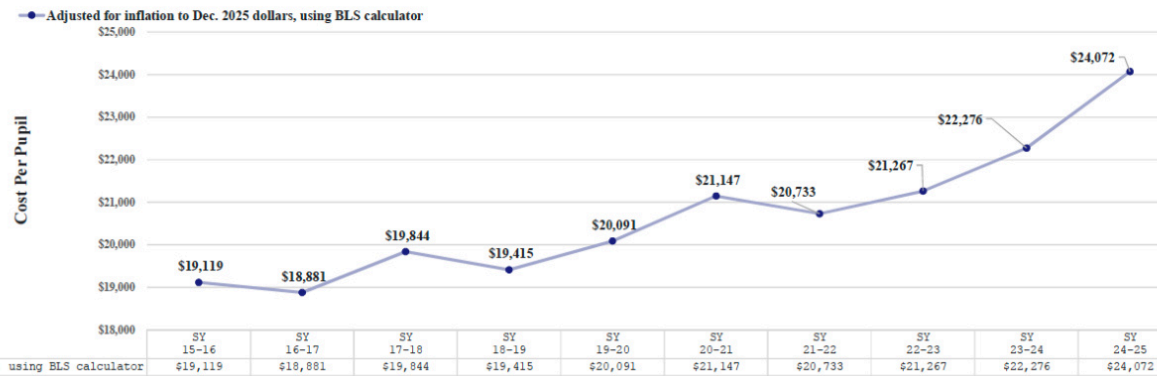
SAU 41 Mandatory Report to Voters

Report submitted by SAU 41

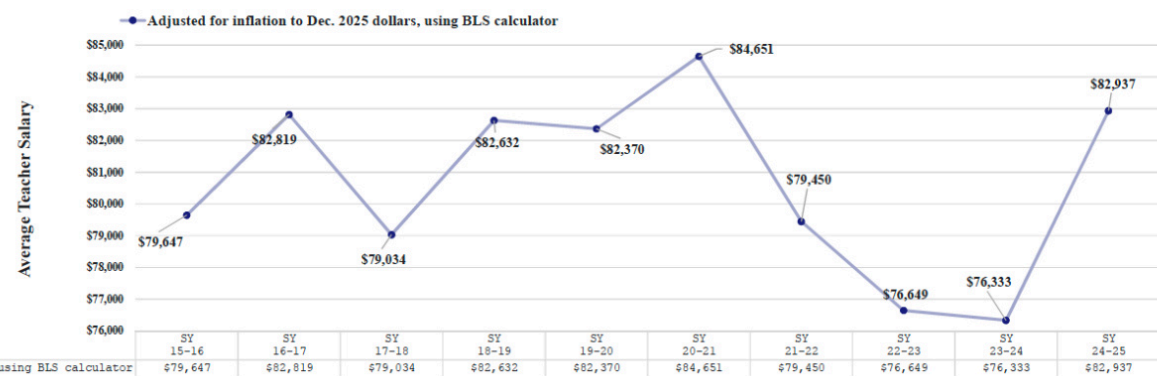
In keeping with a new state law, the **Students First Act** (RSA 189:75-78), school districts are required to publish the Mandatory Report to Voters in a local newspaper when one exists. To ensure timely access to this information, *The Positively Hollis Post* has provided space in this edition. The reports were provided by the SAU 41 Superintendent's office. Data sources are included at the bottom of page 11 for reference. If you have questions about the report, please contact the SAU office at 603-324-5999.

Hollis Brookline Coop School District Mandatory Report to Voters on School Expenses

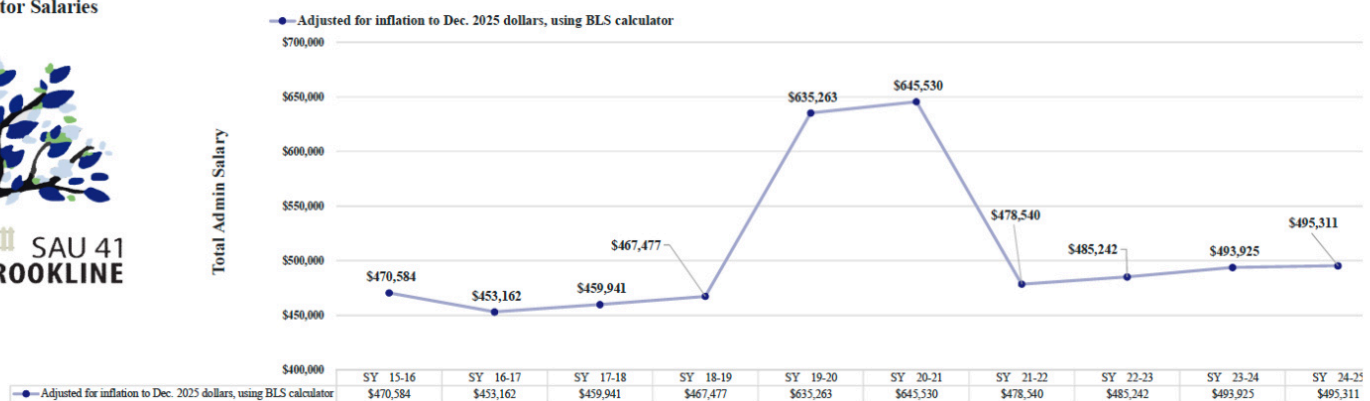
Average Cost Per Pupil



Average Teacher Salary

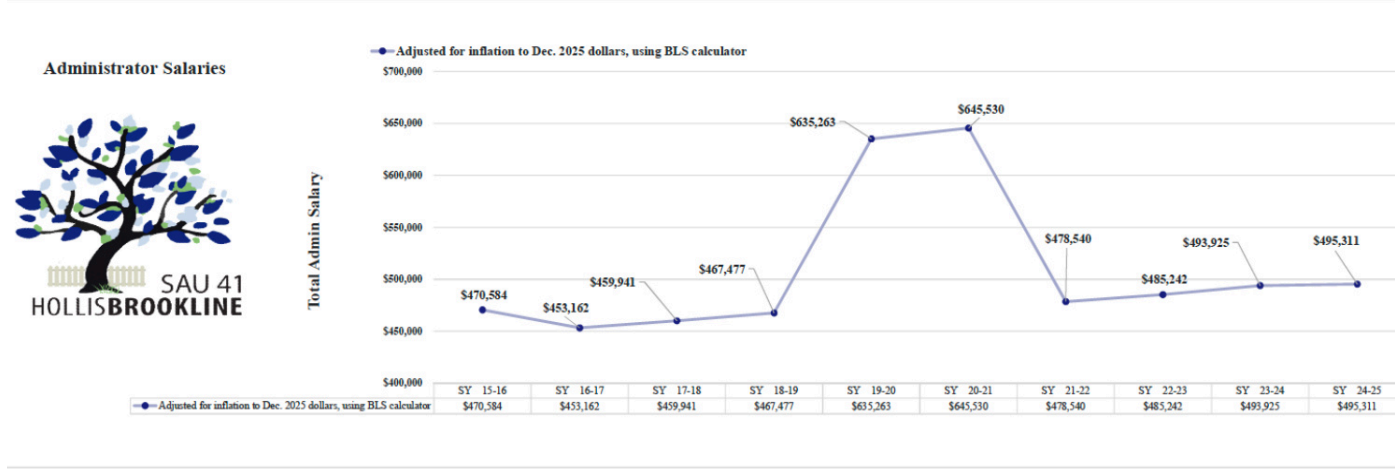
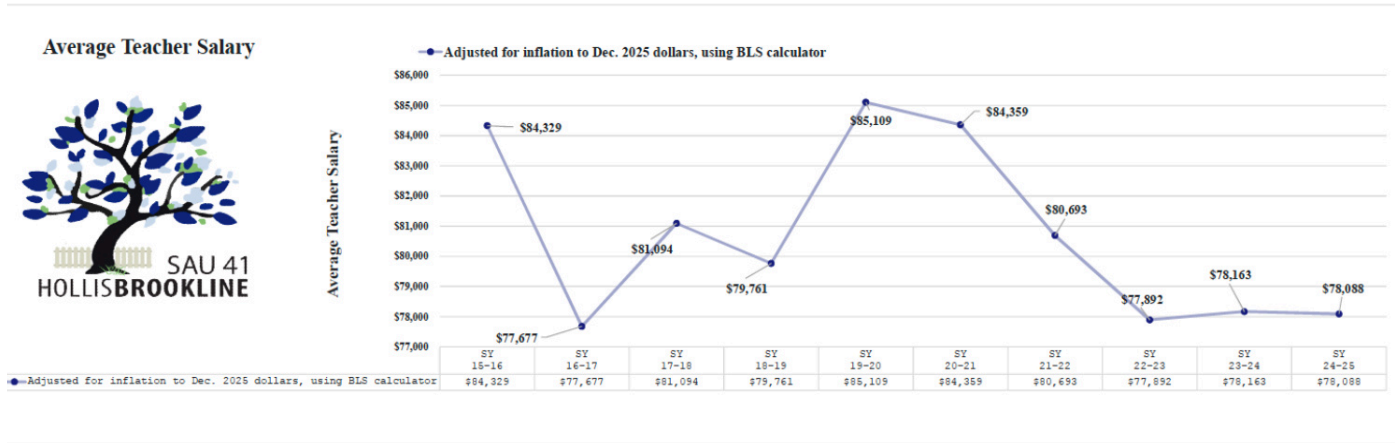
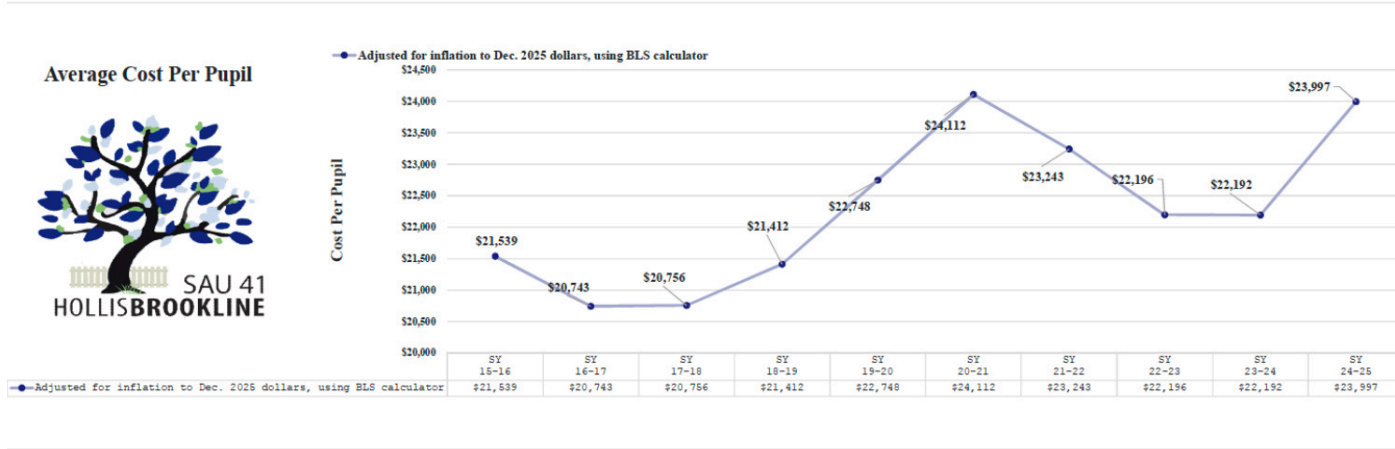


Administrator Salaries



Top Administrator Salaries for FY26	
Superintendent	\$176,752
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	\$138,004
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	\$135,058
Business Administrator	\$125,000

Hollis School District Mandatory Report to Voters on School Expenses



Top Administrator Salaries for FY26	
Superintendent	\$176,752
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	\$138,004
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	\$135,058
Business Administrator	\$125,000



Additional Information Regarding the Mandatory Report to Voters

Top Administrator Salaries for FY26 District Allocation	BSD Portion	HSD Portion	COOP Portion	Total
Superintendent	\$35,775	\$56,066	\$84,912	\$176,752
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	\$27,932	\$43,775	\$66,297	\$138,004
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	\$27,336	\$42,840	\$64,882	\$135,058
Business Administrator	\$25,300	\$39,650	\$60,050	\$125,000

How is inflation calculated?
We used the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator:
https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm



Inflation Calculator

Cost per pupil and salary data come from the NH Dept. of Education website.

Cost per pupil:
<https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-educator-and-analytic-resources/bureau-of-education-statistics/financial-reports>



Financial Reports

Teacher & Administrator Salaries:
<https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-educator-and-analytic-resources/bureau-of-education-statistics/staffing-and-salary-reports>



Salary Reports

The Mandatory Report to Voters on School Expenses comes from RSA 189:75 through RSA 189:78, which can be found on pages 315-317 of this document from the NH Department of Education:
<https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/2024-2025-nhed-laws-unannotated.pdf>



Students First Act

Hollis Brookline Middle School Basketball Coach Skip Payette Makes a Lasting Impact

By Sam Petrella

For more than 12 years, Coach Skip Payette has been a constant and respected presence at Hollis Brookline Middle School (HBMS). Known not only as a boys' basketball coach but also as a mentor, he spent over a decade shaping young athletes by focusing on things that extend far beyond the court: character, connection, and giving back.

Coach Skip believes that middle school sports are about more than competition. "Anyone can teach a kid how to play the game," he said, "but helping them learn teamwork and respect, that's what really matters." Throughout his years at HBMS, he has emphasized the importance of working together, supporting teammates, and learning how to handle both success and adversity. A major part of Coach Skip's coaching philosophy is building strong relationships with his players. He takes pride in creating an environment where students feel valued and supported. "If players know you care about them as people, they'll give their best effort," he explained. This approach has helped countless students gain confidence and develop skills they can carry with them long after middle school.

Coach Skip and his wife, Nancy, are also connected to the Coaches vs. Cancer program at the middle school. The program is a nationwide fundraising initiative where coaches and teams dedicate games, seasons, or events to honoring those affected by cancer and supporting the fight against it. For the last 12 years, the Payettes have



HBMS Boys Basketball Team with Head Coach Skip Payette and Assistant Coach Ray Ramos

made it a success with help from players and parents. Coaches vs. Cancer was started at Hollis Brookline High School over 15 years ago, with Coach Skip bringing it to HBMS as an annual event with fundraisers at the high school varsity basketball games and the Transfer Station, and with donations from selling American Cancer Society Hope cards. These are cards students share with donors in exchange for a contribution, serving as both a message of encouragement and a way to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. This year, the effort culminated on January 15 with a Coaches vs. Cancer game day, when boys' and girls' basketball teams played throughout the day while the community supported the cause through raffle basket sales, food, and other activities. A special shout-out goes to the many generous

Hollis and Brookline families and area businesses for their raffle donations, the proceeds of which go directly to the American Cancer Society's mission.

Coach Skip strongly supports the event and its mission, recognizing how cancer has impacted so many families in the community. "Cancer has hurt too many people," he said, "but humans have always found ways to persevere, and we will continue to do so." His passion for the cause has helped bring awareness, unity, and purpose to the school community.

As Coach Skip reflects on his time at Hollis Brookline Middle School, his impact is undeniable. Through his dedication, compassion, and belief in his players, he has left a lasting legacy built on teamwork, resilience, and the importance of caring for others, and the memorable annual event of Coaches vs. Cancer.

Sam Petrella is a student at Hollis-Brookline High School and aspiring journalist. In addition to writing, Sam plays on the school's football and lacrosse teams.

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Against the Odds: The Glover Farm Still Grows

By Jeff Begin, Begin Family Farm, Hollis

Longtime residents of Hollis will no doubt have noticed a loss of farmland as rolling orchards and hayfields have become houses over the last few decades. This is not unique to Hollis; it is happening all over the country. The economics are hard for landowners and farmers to ignore: Selling a house lot can generate a lot of income without the hassle of farming. In Hollis, there's a story that bucks that trend.

The Glover family operated Garnet Rock Farm on Witches Spring Road for several generations. Gerry and Marie Glover have kept their family farm alive since 1950 when Gerry's father Clifton bought the farm from Fred Hill. For a time, the open land was leased by Eddie Lievens, then-owner of Woodmont Orchard, who grew vegetables. The Glovers would go on to clear many acres of woodland and turn it into pasture so they could start a dairy farm. Gerry spent his childhood working alongside his father and family to operate the dairy with 105 head of cattle until Gerry entered the Air Force in 1957.

In 1969, the dairy barn caught fire and burned to the ground. What would have been a devastating blow became a story of resilience and community. Clifton, when asked by a neighbor what he was going to do now, said without hesitation, "We're going to rebuild."

And rebuild he did, with the help of dozens of townspeople who came to the Glover's aid. Today, the barn still stands as a monument to farmer grit and community spirit. Over the next few decades, the farm grew and Clifton aged into his late 70s. At the time,



Jeff Begin and Gerry Glover

Gerry was working for Hughes Aircraft in California. He got the subtle message from his mother's letters that Clifton needed help on the farm. So, Gerry decided it was time to return and join his brother Bob to run the farm. Clifton would continue working until his death in 1997 at the age of 97.

Meanwhile, the economics of farming were changing. The profit margin for family dairy farms was squeezed tighter and tighter as price controls on dairy products and a number of other economic factors began to hit dairy farmers hard. Family dairies all across the country started going under. In Hollis, these farms became houses. But Gerry and Marie held on.

After many years, Gerry sold the last of their herd in 2006, bringing an end to the dairy. He continued to use the field to make hay for another 20 years, all while

rejecting offer after offer from developers who wanted to turn the farm into dozens of houses. Gerry and Marie did not want to see their land developed and even tried selling it to the town, but in the end it fell through. There was no path to keeping the farm alive. Fate would soon intervene.

Jeff and Stacy Begin started Begin Family Farm in 2022, growing organic vegetables and fruit. Jeff left his engineering job and started farming their five-acre house lot in Hollis. This provided enough space to sell at local markets and through the farm's CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program. Expanding production each year, the farm quickly outgrew the available space. They knew they needed to find more land to farm, but finding it in southern New Hampshire, let alone Hollis, was proving to be difficult.

Through a chance conversation, Jeff was put in touch with Gerry, kicking off a multi-year lease that provided the perfect site for Begin Family Farm to expand. Jeff was able to keep increasing production, add new varieties, expand the CSA program, and even hire some local teenagers to help. After a few seasons, they all agreed that Jeff and Stacy would buy the farm. Begin Family Farm now has a permanent home on Witches Spring Road. Neighbors, customers, and visitors to the area will get to watch the hayfields transform into organic fruits and vegetables. Residents of Hollis get the benefit of the land being preserved and kept a working

Continued on page 14

How to Design Beautiful Plant Containers Without Overthinking It

By Holly Park, Scout Hill Farm, Hollis

One of the easiest ways to make your home feel welcoming in spring is with a great container. The difference between a pot that looks intentional and one that looks a little chaotic usually comes down to structure. When I design containers, I use a simple rule that works every time: thriller, filler, spiller.

The thriller is your anchor. The bold, upright plant that sets the tone for the whole pot. Think minimum 2/3 the height of the pot, like an annual salvia. Pick one strong focal point rather than having several tall plants competing for attention.

Next comes the filler. This is where most of the color and fullness live. Geraniums, coleus, begonias, vinca, and pansies are all great options. Remember, light matters for all these elements. Sun plants need sun, shade plants need shade, no matter how tempting they look at the garden center.

Finally, add a spiller to soften the edge of the container and give it some movement. One or two trailing plants is usually plenty.



Works every time: thriller, filler, spiller



Holly Park

One thing people don't always plan for: Containers aren't permanent. Cool-season plants fade, summer heat kicks in, and even the best pots need a refresh. Swapping a few plants mid-season keeps containers looking fresh from spring through fall. In winter, I love keeping things simple with foraged greens and structural elements. And if you love the look of beautiful containers but don't want to plan, plant, or refresh them yourself, that's exactly what I do through my Seasonal Container Styling service. Learn more at scouthillfarm.com/products/seasonal-container-styling.

Holly Park is a flower-obsessed local and the grower behind Scout Hill Farm in Hollis. A member of the Hollis Garden Club and Conservation Commission, she offers classes, personalized garden guidance and design, access to wholesale-priced plants, and a Flower Bouquet CSA. Find her on Instagram and Facebook at Scout Hill Farm, or visit www.scouthillfarm.com.

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Saturday, May 9
9 am - 12 pm
At the Lawrence Barn
28 Depot Road
(rain or shine)

Plant list available April 24 at our website
www.hollisgardenclub.org

Overview of the Hollis Primary School \$19.4M Renovation Proposal.....Continued from page 1

reset with tables for lunch after morning PE, then cleaned and mopped before afternoon PE, a tight race often resulting in lost class time. When it is used as a hallway, foot traffic interrupts PE classes, reducing the usable space. The proposed project will address these problems by providing a larger MPR that will accommodate PE and lunch simultaneously via a motorized partition. Strategic scheduling will allow older children to have PE at times when little ones are not having lunch so that they can utilize the full gym space. This MPR will also include a stage which, along with the gymnasium, could be rented by the community outside of school hours.

The school also faces a storage problem. With closets converted to offices and book storage lost when the library was relocated, school materials are stored in classrooms, taking away wall space and making rooms cramped. This is most obvious in the music room, which is lined with instruments, teaching materials, and performance risers. The proposed project will provide an appropriately sized library and music room with storage for each, and curriculum storage space.

In addition to solving internal challenges, the proposed project also addresses safety concerns of students and the town. Currently, the school entrance does not meet Homeland Security standards. The new entrance, relocated to face Rt. 122, would allow a double-buzz system, adding physical security while giving main office staff a direct view of approaching visitors. The project increases safety for the town by addressing the traffic problem created during drop-off and pickup times. The new driving pattern would eliminate the need for the lineup along Rt. 122 that impedes traffic and presents a hazard to drivers. Finally, the sitework would provide necessary emergency firelanes, which are currently lacking.

Another highlight of the project includes an updated septic system; the current tanks are over 30 years old. The more efficient system would accommodate the increasing school population while requiring 60% less leach field space. The upgrade would result in the conversion of the current leach field on the south side of the building into much-needed additional parking.

This project is intended to outlast the life of the bond. With five additional classrooms, sufficiently sized MPR, library, music room, art room, and curriculum storage, the building should accommodate enrollment increases for many years to come. The specific impact on taxes was not available at the time this article was written, but this information can be accessed in notes from the February 10, 2026 Public Hearing with the Hollis Budget Committee. Residents are encouraged to visit the HPS Renovation and Expansion webpage and the Hollis Enrollment Committee webpage for more details. For more information about the project, visit: www.sau41.org



HPS Renovation

A Man of Thoughtful Action.....Continued from page 1

Hollis community. He helped at the polls, and he and Sheryl joined forces again chairing the Hollis Seniors.

Away from town business, Don found joy in collecting rocks, crystals, and minerals. What began as helping his daughter Jen answer a question became a shared family passion that took them digging for stones across many states. Don loved sharing his finds and stories with younger generations, even sparking the curiosity of a neighbor's son whom Don inspired to become an avid collector.

In 2024, Don shared a remarkable story with Positively Hollis about a flight he was on that experienced a twin-engine failure shortly after takeoff. Don's full account can be found in the Golden Spotlight section of our blog at www.positivelyhollis.com. When asked what he loved most about Hollis, Don spoke of life's simple rhythms: heating his home with wood, walking dirt roads and orchards with the dogs, watching wildlife pass through the property, and forming friendships that lasted decades.

For those of us who were fortunate to work with Don in town, his leadership left a lasting and positive mark on Hollis governance. He had a kind way of listening, acknowledging your ideas, and then gently guiding you toward patience and thoughtful action. Our thoughts and prayers go to Don's wife Sheryl, who was his childhood sweetheart, and his daughter Jen and her wife Beth. *Readers are encouraged to revisit Don's obituary, which is available at www.hollisbrooklinenews.org.*

Meet Rachel Tieman: Real Estate Insight for Hollis Homeowners.....Continued from page 5

updates, and maintenance may matter more than square footage, thus significantly impacting true market value. Overpricing your home can be a painful lesson. Increased days on the market and subsequent price reductions invariably leave questions in the minds of potential buyers. Market knowledge, access to industry tools, and connections with other real estate professionals provide a significant advantage, ensuring your home is positioned and marketed to attract the right buyers from day one.

How can readers connect with you?

I welcome conversations at any stage of the home buying or selling process. I can be reached at 914-356-6789, email me at rachel.tieman@kw.com, or connect on Facebook: Rachel Tieman-Keller Williams Metropolitan.

Who Pays for Old Home Days?Continued from page 9

may be made payable to Town of Hollis, memo: Old Home Days donation, addressed to Town Hall. Mark your calendars for Old Home Days, September 18 and 19, 2026.. We'll see you there!

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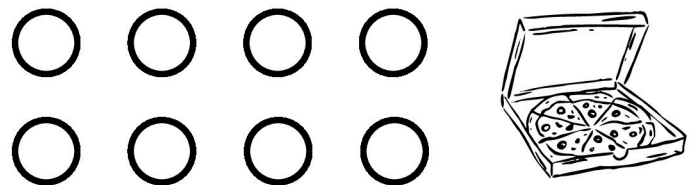


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Hollis and the Fight for Independence.....Continued from page 4

the Hollis Common, ready to do battle. Worcester's homestead still stands on the corner of Depot and Richardson Roads, and is still owned by Worcesters! It is estimated that in June 1775, one-sixth of the New Hampshire soldiers working to fortify Bunker Hill were from Hollis. WOW!

In 1782, the last year of the Revolutionary War, it has also been estimated that Hollis sent more than 300 soldiers during the seven years of the war, many serving in two or three quotas as enlistments ended and new troop requirements arose. This represents more than one-half of Hollis's households during that period of time! Twenty-two Hollis soldiers were killed or died of wounds or disease while in the Army. Think how difficult it was for the mothers, wives, and children of these brave men, left behind to keep the farms running and the family fed, while their men were off fighting for our independence. The year 1783 brought the end of the Revolutionary War with the signing of the Treaty of Paris.

At the Wheeler House, you can see the British musket ball that was removed from the ankle of one of the Hollis soldiers at Bunker Hill, Captain Reuben Dow. Plus, see Hollis Minutemen's payroll documents and other interesting artifacts while you walk through the same rooms that Hollis's retired Minutemen did, at Gould's Tavern Museum, a privately owned five-room museum on Main Street in Hollis. For a tour: text 603-325-3594 or email oldhorsestuff@tds.net. Tours are free. Donations benefit the Hollis Historical Society. Information for this article is from The History of the Town of Hollis, N.H. 1730-1879 by Samuel T. Worcester, available at the Hollis Historical Society

Against the Odds: The Glover Farm Still Grows.....Continued from page 13

farm, at no cost to the town.

Farms do not exist without the support of the community around them. You can support Begin Family Farm and be a part of preserving this land by signing up for the farm's organic CSA at BeginFamilyFarm.com/csa or by visiting their farmstand on Witches Spring Road—just look for the big red dairy barn. The farmstand is seasonal, opening to CSA members in early June, and to the public a few weeks later in late June/early July. The farm grows over 100 different crops, including sweet corn, all for sale through the farm's CSA, farmstand, and at the Milford Farmers Market. In addition to a wide variety of produce, expect to see organically grown blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries in the coming years. And if you see Gerry and Marie around the farm, be sure to give them hearty thanks for everything they've done for the town.

Brookline Aviator, Mark Andrews, Brings Flight to Veterans, First Responders, and Children

By Liz Barbour

Mark Andrews, a Brookline resident, 22-year U.S. Air Force veteran, command pilot, and father of four, is the president and founder of Operation HIGH FLIGHT (OHF), a nonprofit dedicated to honoring, inspiring, and helping others soar. Through raffles, sponsorships, auctions, and donated flights, OHF supports local charities and offers no-cost flights to veterans, first responders, children's hospital patients, and inner-city youth. For many participants, these flights serve as adventure therapy, and for veterans, a return to the camaraderie of mission and flight.

Early flights were conducted in Andrews' red Sportster aircraft, and as the mission grew, a donor helped fund the purchase of a second aircraft, a vintage 1941 Stearman biplane.

Now, OHF is launching its most ambitious project yet: transforming a retired A-10 Part Task Trainer, donated by the Maryland Air National Guard, into a fully functional flight simulator. With technical guidance from Joe Ayotte, an A-10 pilot and husband of Governor Kelly Ayotte, the simulator will be rebuilt with modern controls, virtual reality capability, and advanced flight software. Once complete, it will anchor OHF's aerospace education program for students in grades 6-12. OHF is passionate about providing young people with positive role models, career guidance, subject matter expertise, respectful accountability, and achievable goals.

Through hands-on simulator experiences, hangar tours, and conversations with experienced pilots, students gain insight into aviation, engineering, leadership, and service. The goal is not only to spark interest in aerospace careers, but to build confidence



that extends beyond the cockpit. The simulator will also provide access to veterans, first responders, and children's hospital patients who are unable to fly.

Before the aircraft returns to its new home in New Hampshire, OHF has an exciting lineup of events just outside Fort Hood, Texas. Then, from May 1st through 3rd, OHF launches its New England ride program. Individuals can purchase scenic flights directly through the organization's website. All proceeds support the nonprofit's mission, enabling it to donate even more complimentary flights to deserving recipients. These events highlight OHF's commitment to honoring heroes and sharing the joy of vintage aviation—check their website for details and to get involved! Visit www.operationhighflight.org.



Mark Andrews, Operation High Flight

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A Welcome Ride: Bicycles and E-Bikes in Hollis

By Staff

Hollis has always been a town that attracts cyclists. Recently, we have been seeing more e-bikes traveling through Hollis, especially in the town center. E-bikes have grown in popularity for good reason: They offer assisted riding that makes longer trips and hills more manageable. Many of the riders are young people headed to and from school or out to the playing fields. It is a great sight!

With spring approaching and more bicycles and e-bikes sharing our roads, this is a good opportunity for a reminder about safety.

For Riders

*Bicycles and e-bikes must follow the same rules of the road as motor vehicles under New Hampshire law. Travel with traffic, not against it. Obey traffic signals and stop signs.

*Avoid riding on sidewalks, especially in town center areas where pedestrians are walking.

*Helmets are required for riders under age 16.

*Be mindful of where you ride. Ball



fields, school tracks, and playground areas are meant for children and families. Riding through ball fields or near strollers and toddlers can create unsafe situations.

For Motorists

*Stay alert and expect to see bicycles and e-bikes on our roadways.

*Give riders adequate space when passing.

Reduce speed and drive predictably around cyclists.

Seeing so many cyclists enjoying Hollis is something to celebrate, and with awareness and courtesy on all sides, our roads can remain welcoming for everyone.

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Congregational Church of Hollis Hosts Photography Exhibit Exploring Immigration

Submitted by Andrea Seddon, Hollis Congregational Church

The Immigrant & Refugee Support Ministry Team of the Congregational Church of Hollis invites the public to a photographic exhibit featuring immigrants and their stories of resettling in New Hampshire. The exhibit, Finding Home: Portraits and Memories of Immigrants, showcases the work of award-winning New Hampshire photographer Becky Field and is based on her 2020 book of the same name. It opens on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026, and will be on display through May 24 with a free and accessible reception and artist engagement event on April 18 from 2-4 pm.

Becky Field's work shows that while we are different in many ways, we all have the same desires for safe homes, good jobs, a strong future for our children, and freedom to practice our traditions. In addition to her photographs, Field interviewed immigrants about their journeys to resettle in New Hampshire. "These photographs and stories celebrate the cultural diversity in our state," said Field. "Cultural and ethnic diversity have always been part of New Hampshire's history and continue to strengthen our communities." A QR code accompanies



Becky Field

each story to provide a short recording of the immigrant's own voice and accent. Ms. Field holds a certificate in photography from the New Hampshire Institute of Art and a doctoral degree in ecology. She lives in Concord, NH.

As an Open and Affirming church, the Congregational Church of Hollis welcomes people of all backgrounds and life journeys, affirming the dignity and worth of every individual. For additional viewing times, contact the church office at (603) 465-7797 or churchoffice@hollischurch.org. The Congregational Church of Hollis is located at 3 Monument Square.



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