

From "Medfield Insider"
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Subject Pfaff demise, stalled results, Garlick party, hotline open

News Recap & Peak Into The Week

-Nov. 25, 2024-

Capturing the Golden Hour...

Passing through the neighboring town, she was struck by the late afternoon sun, and how it illuminated the landscape all around her.

Never one to let a good shot go by, she quickly pulled off to the side of the road, determined to catch nature's beauty. Knowing the golden hour lasts for such a short time, she was especially thankful to have caught the scene at just the right moment.

As the minutes passed, and the sun cast its rays through the clouds, she couldn't help but feel buoyed by the light that soothed her soul, providing a warm and festive welcome to the holiday week.

The Week Ahead...

(When "**Executive Session**" is noted, it means a private meeting is scheduled, as allowed by law, only for [specific topics](#). While the public is not permitted to attend these sessions, each one must be preceded by a brief public meeting to allow citizens to learn the reason for the private session.)

[Monday, Nov. 25 -- Medfield Outreach Advisory Board](#), 6 p.m. -- Key topics: General update on staffing, holiday programming (coats, gift drives); prevention updates on interns, club and current initiatives; and other updates related to community outreach and book club.

[Tuesday, Nov. 26 -- Blake Middle School Site Council](#), 3:15 p.m. -- Key topics: General school update; budget/planning update; district Strategic Plan/School Improvement Plan; and parent/family education/engagement.

[Tuesday, Nov. 26 -- Dale Street School Site Council](#), 3:15 p.m. -- Key topics: School Improvement Plan 2025-2027 focus on "Priority #1" (not defined on notice; likely safety, belonging and well being); building updates; and open forum.

[Wednesday, Nov. 27](#) – no public meetings noted on town calendar as of this writing.

[Thursday, Nov. 28 -- HOLIDAY: Thanksgiving](#) -- no public meetings; non-emergency town offices closed.

[Friday, Nov. 29 -- HOLIDAY: Day after Thanksgiving](#) -- no public meetings; non-emergency town offices/facilities closed, with one exception: [Transfer Station is OPEN.](#)

*Meetings may be held in person, virtually via Zoom, or using a hybrid format. **Notices should be read closely to determine how the meetings will be held.***

Town Officials See Pfaff Demo

as Obvious Step Given Costs

Faced with a potential \$700,000 price tag to repair just the Pfaff Center walls and roof, at their Nov. 19 joint meeting, Select Board, Permanent Planning & Building Committee, and Parks & Recreation Commission took the relatively easy first step of agreeing that demolition of the 1927 building was needed.

But with Parks & Recreation staff now prohibited from working inside Pfaff due to safety concerns, solutions for timely and affordable alternative space didn't come quite so easily during the 90-minute discussion.

Multiple options put on the table

With both Parks & Recreation and Medfield Afterschool Program needing homes, short-term, mid-term and long-term options were discussed and debated.

At the current time, department staff members are operating out of the small first-floor Warrant Room in the Town House, an untenable location even short term.

In the mid-term, Parks & Recreation also needs larger, temporary space from which to operate its programs which provide much-needed revenue to cover department expenses. Katie Walper, Director of Parks & Recreation, noted that the patchwork of space at The Center, Library, Public Safety Building and First Parish

is not sustainable and difficult for parents to navigate.

Town Administrator Kristine Treirweiler said she had explored one possible building rental, but it cost \$8,000 a month, and also required a 10-year commitment.

While Walper was hoping for a demo of Pfaff Center and a modular building to sit in its place, Mike Quinlan, chair of the Permanent Planning & Building Committee, noted that it would likely cost about \$2 million to demolish the Pfaff, level the site, and pave it. The estimated high cost is due in part to asbestos and PCB abatement that would be required as part of the work. The cost of a modular would be extra.

Said Treirweiler, "I'm not sure how we're going to pay for the short-term. We don't have a lot of cash on hand." She noted that a Special Town Meeting might be needed

MSBA decision puts town in holding pattern

Much discussion at the meeting focused on the option of a combined Dale Street School and Parks & Recreation project, and the pros and cons of that path.

However, Quinlan noted that the Pfaff path becomes more complicated if Massachusetts School Building Authority invites Medfield into its program again for the Dale Street School since MSBA only funds school projects. This would mean a 5- to 10-year wait for Parks & Recreation until that project is finished.

Medfield should know MSBA's decision on or around Dec. 11 -- two days before the MSBA votes on extending its invitations.

In the meantime, Quinlan noted he would develop a short-term work plan, and schedule follow-up meetings with key stakeholders. An update for the Select Board is tentatively scheduled for Dec. 17.

[See the Nov. 18 Medfield Insider for background on the Pfaff situation.](#)

[Watch the Nov. 19 discussion here.](#)

Medfield Invited to Celebrate

State Rep. Denise Garlick

When Denise Garlick begins her retirement at the start of the new year, she will have dedicated 14 years of service as State Representative for Medfield precincts 1 and 2, in addition to serving the towns of Dover and

Needham. She has also dedicated 30 years of service to Needham in a variety of town roles.

Medfield residents are invited to help thank and celebrate Rep. Garlick at a [special event on Monday, Dec. 9](#) from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. in Powers Hall in Needham Town Hall at 1471 Highland Ave.

[Learn more about State Representative Denise Garlick and her decades of public service here.](#)

Medfield Rolls Out Hotline for Reporting Hate Incidents

This Town of Medfield hotline for reporting incidents of hate speech and oppressive actions is now live: **508-906-3050**.

Town Administrator Kristine Treirweiler provided hotline details in a Nov. 22 press release, with additional information [posted on the town website](#), including these points:

- * The hotline is **solely for reporting incidents of discrimination, bias or intimidation**. It is set up as a messaging system, not staffed for live calls. Residents who are in life-threatening emergency situations should **contact 911** immediately;
- * Calls that include reports of theft, threats, vandalism or violence should also report them to the **Police Department directly**;
- * Residents may report incidents **anonymously**, however, providing identifying information helps the town take appropriate action in response to the report, and/or allow for follow-up questions; and
- * After reports are received, the office of Town Administrator will **coordinate with the appropriate town department(s) or school department** to determine next steps. Select Board will also be informed of reported incidents.

The dedicated phone line was developed along with the release of the Select Board [“Statement Against Oppressive Actions and Speech Directed at Individuals and Groups”](#) last year. The actions were in response to resident reports of political hate speech, and anti-Semitic material and graffiti. *(Generic graffiti shown for illustrative purposes.)*

As [stated in the hotline press release](#), "The primary goal of the hotline is to ensure the incidents that violate the Select Board Statement are addressed by the necessary parties regardless of whether the incidents are legally actionable. By implementing this hotline, Medfield aims to enhance its visibility and understanding of the prevalence and severity of undesirable conduct within the community."

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey...

Regional Results Show Gains;

Medfield Holds Back Student Data

With the exception of 2020 due to COVID, the **MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey** has been administered every other year since **2006** to middle school and high school students to monitor health and risk behaviors.

Medfield is one of 25 communities that participated in the most recent survey administered in 2023 by the Education Development Center (EDC) with funding from MetroWest Health Foundation.

EDC distributed fall 2023 MWAHS results with participating districts in the **spring of 2024**. That summer, two Medfield teachers received "research and development" stipends for their time spent analyzing the district MWAHS results and providing findings.

Yet, while other school committees have readily discussed their MWAHS results in fall 2024, Medfield administration has refused to release the results until **January 2025** which is later than a number of districts. The Medfield timing comes at a point when department allocations have been incorporated into the overall budget without the benefit of school committee using the data to guide the most strategic use of resources.

At the same time, the desire to increase adolescent sleep is the driving force behind a **major change in middle school and high school start times** for the 2025-26 school year, yet related MWAHS data was never considered during school committee discussions.

Based on the **regional** 2023 MWAHS data, a majority of high school students (**53 percent**) believe **use of digital media** makes their sleep worse.

In addition, more than half of youth (**52 percent**) **spend three or more hours daily** on their smartphones (not for school or homework).

Regional results readily available

The report on [regional 2023 MWAHS high school results](#) was finalized in April 2024. It cites many positive findings to indicate that adolescent physical and mental health is improving based on student responses, including:

- * **Substance use has continued to decline**, with nicotine vaping, alcohol use, and marijuana use reaching their lowest levels since the MWAHS began in 2006;
- * **Mental health issues are also on the decline** with data showing that problems that preceded and continued through the pandemic have receded based on 2023 findings; and
- * **Stress, depressive symptoms, self-injury, and suicidality have reached previous low levels.**

Regional MWAHS results also point out areas needing continued efforts, including:

- * Smartphone and social media use (the most prominent finding);
- * Bullying and cyberbullying prevention; and
- * Strategies that address health disparities based on students' sexual orientation/gender identity, race/ethnicity, and disability status.

While Medfield-specific 2023 results are not yet available for comparison, a look at 2021 MWAHS data helps to highlight percentage increases that were higher for Medfield versus the region overall, including:

- * Vapor product use;
- * Alcohol and marijuana use;
- * Physical fights and weapon carrying;
- * Distracted and impaired driving; and
- * General anxiety.

[Regional 2023 MWAHS results for middle school students](#) in grades 7 and 8 are similar to high school results that show improvements in many areas. However, increases in smartphone use and bullying are among the top concerns.

News Briefs & Reminders...

- * **Medfield Public Schools has a half day on Wednesday, Nov. 27.** As a result, the downtown area, including Medfield Public Library and Brothers, is expected to be particularly busy starting at about 11:15 a.m. Downtown visitors may want to plan accordingly.
- * Work has begun on the resurfacing and repair of the **basketball court adjacent to the Public**

Safety Building on Dale Street. The contractor who is reconstructing the court started demolition on Nov. 18. [More details are available on the town website.](#)

- * Town board hearings continue on the **Montrose School project**, with **proposed artificial turf** causing extended deliberation in some cases. **Board of Health** is expected to hold its first public hearing on the project on **Dec. 3**; **Conservation Commission** will likely meet again with its project hearing on **Dec. 5**; and **Planning Board** expects to continue and close its hearing on **Dec. 9** after receiving status reports from the other town boards.
- * On Nov. 14, **Medfield Historical Commission** voted to allow the demolition of **33 Pound St.**, a ranch house built around 1950. In other business, the commission received an update on the gate at the **old Town Pound** on Spring St./Route 27, which was recently repaired. The old stone wall surrounding the pound also needs repair, and the adjacent tree, believed to be more than **300 years old**, is not in good condition. It was also noted that an offer has been accepted on the contemporary and [architecturally significant brick Saltonstall house](#), circa 1937, at 70 Main St. The real estate listing for the nearly nine-acre property shows it sold for almost **\$2.3 million**.
- * [Department of Public Works has relaunched its quarterly newsletter, "The Works,"](#) with the latest issue featuring updates on roadway maintenance, sidewalk resurfacing and repair, Transfer Station news, and water meter replacement. The issue also includes a **spotlight** on long-time Highway Superintendent **Bobby Kennedy, Jr.**
- * The **December issue** of the [Council on Aging newsletter](#) is now available on the town website. This edition features a variety of special holiday-related events, trips and activities, in addition to the usual program and services information.
- * Preparation for the **Monday, March 31, 2025 Town Election** has begun. Nomination papers will be available mid-December, and the ballot will include a question about a Town Charter change to make the Town Moderator term three years instead of one year. On related town election note, **Planning Board member Jim Brand** announced last week he would not be seeking re-election in 2025.
- * The **Medfield Rail Trail** and **Bay Circuit Trail**, both off Ice House Road, will feature a **bicycle repair station** that will be installed in the vicinity. On Nov. 19, the Select Board approved the general concept of the station that will be donated by **Appalachian Mountain Club**. Medfield resident and Bay Circuit Trail representative George Lester will return to Select Board at a later date to present a plan for the proposed location.
- * Medfield Principal Assessor Yvonne Remillard recently shared with Select Board a proposal to **add tax exemptions for senior citizens and veterans, and Senior Tax Work-Off Program enhancements**, to be tentatively brought forth for 2025 Town Meeting. For the Senior Tax Work-Off Program, enhancements would include increasing the maximum tax reduction from **\$1,000 to \$1,500**, amending the number of participants to a set amount of 50, and allowing for anyone who receives town compensation for less than 15 hours a week to be eligible for the program. The board was supportive of the proposed changes. Next step is a discussion of the Senior Tax Work-Off Program enhancements with the **Council on Aging** board. Based on the latest enrollment, **51 seniors are participating in the program** helping to staff a variety of town positions, whether at Town House, The Center, or elsewhere.

- * **Eversource** has found an alternative staging area and will no longer need the former Medfield State Hospital site for its Hospital Road **electrical pole replacement project**.

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Further Ahead...

(Dates/topics based on town calendar, public hearing notices, or prior meeting information; subject to change)

Monday, Dec. 2:

- Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, 11 a.m. (***moved from Nov. 18***)
- Transfer Station and Recycling Committee
- Planning Board

Tuesday, Dec. 3:

- Board of Health (*Montrose School*)
- Select Board

Wednesday, Dec. 4:

- Council on Aging Board

Thursday, Dec. 5:

- Conservation Commission (*Montrose School*)

Monday, Dec. 9:

- Planning Board (*Montrose School*)

Wednesday, Dec. 11:

- Medfield Energy Committee
- Medfield Historical Commission
- School Building Committee (*MSBA update expected*)

Thursday, Dec. 12:

- School Committee

Monday, Dec. 16:

- Planning Board

Tuesday, Dec. 17:

- Select Board

Thursday, Dec. 19:

- Conservation Commission

Tuesday, Jan. 7:

- Town Meeting 2025 warrant deadline & closing (citizen petitions due by this date)

Community Events & Initiatives...

ZULLO EXHIBIT, events help launch new children's book

On **Saturday, Nov. 30**, the Zullo Gallery will open a new exhibit featuring the latest work of local children's book author/illustrator, David Biedrzycki, as part of his launch of "ARTificial Intelligence."

In addition to the exhibit, these two special "live with Dave" events will take place: a free artist demonstration/talk on Dec. 15 from 2 to 4 p.m., and [readings of his book for families on Sunday, Jan. 5 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. \(ticketed events\)](#). Cost for the January event is \$15 per person, or \$50 for a family of four.

The exhibit runs through Sunday, Jan. 12 with the Zullo open free to the public during regular Saturday and Sunday gallery hours of 12 to 5 p.m. All of the illustrations in the exhibit are available for purchase and autographing by Biedrzycki.

(Image credit: David Biedrzycki)

LIONS TREE sale begins Nov. 30

Beginning **Saturday, Nov. 30**, Medfield Lions will once again hold its **annual Christmas tree sale** in the back parking lot of **St. Edwards Church** off Spring Street/Rte. 27.

Hours are Thursdays and Fridays, 4 to 7 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., until trees sell out. A **tentative** Saturday, Dec. 21 end date has been set, but based on past brisk sales, an earlier closing date is likely.

Medfield Lions fundraising proceeds help to support a variety of local organizations.

(Photo credit: Marjorie Cappucci)

TOWN PREPS for festive weekend

Here's a line up of **holiday-related festivities** for **Dec. 6 to 8**:

FRIDAY, DEC. 6

- * Festivities kick off at 4 p.m. with the [Bellforge Holiday Stroll](#), followed by/in parallel with the **MEMO Holiday Tree Lighting** with a 6:30 p.m. start time in Baxter Park.

- * A **new event** is also planned this year: [Gingerbread House Contest \(details here\)](#).
- * **Dwight-Derby House** on Frairy Street will also welcome Santa Claus back to the historic site during the Stroll, and the Holiday Shoppe will be open.

SATURDAY, DEC. 7

- * From **10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**, **Medfield Garden Club** will host its annual **Holiday Home Sale** in a **new location** at United Church of Christ, 496 Main St. (with parking on Miller Street). Shoppers can select from festive table arrangements, wreaths, swags, porch and doorway decorations, boxwood trees, and Christmas ornaments handmade by club members. Proceeds benefit club programming and volunteer initiatives.
- * At **1 p.m.**, the [MEMO Holiday Parade will roll](#) through downtown Medfield and area streets.
- * In the evening, beginning at 7 p.m., the **Lowell Mason House Holiday Concert** will celebrate its 10th anniversary with headliner Boston youth chorus, "Voices of Renaissance," guest speaker Tony Beatrice, Executive Director for the Arts for Boston Public Schools, and an array of local performers. The concert begins at 7 p.m. [Details and tickets available via Lowell Mason House website.](#)

SUNDAY, DEC. 8

- * The **Angel Run**, a Medfield Foundation Inc. initiative, kicks off from Medfield High School a little later this year at 11:30 a.m. Standard online registration continues until 11:59 p.m. on **Sunday, Nov. 24**. After that, in-person, day-of-event registration becomes available. Cost is \$35 per person, and does not include a T-shirt. Angel Run proceeds are distributed in partnership with Medfield Outreach to support the local community. [More information about the Angel Run is available on the MFi website.](#)

Further ahead: NEW Dec. 31 "First Night Lantern Walk" on the Rail Trail.

Planning a community event? E-mail information to MedfieldInsider@gmail.com by 5 p.m. the Friday prior to publication each Monday morning. Brief details in the body of an e-mail is appreciated, along with a PDF flyer and simple photo.

[Medfield Insider -- Past Issues](#)

[Nov. 18](#) -- Pfaff \$700K repair, Wilkins Glen/Hinkley fire, Butterfly news, SC start time vote, MSH award

[Nov. 11](#) -- Election results/MCAS ballot divide, more Pfaff, Dale site & school start time votes, fire alert

[Nov. 4](#) -- Election day info., Pfaff wall alert, drought/fire safety, Elm St. & BOH topics, new Harley cycle

[Oct. 28](#) -- Election info./vanishing signs, MSH \$500k, water bills, school traffic risk, gristmill gate update

[Oct. 21](#) -- New MSH off-leash, Montrose turf, 86 Plain St., archaeological sites, Donovan MHA honor

[Oct. 14](#) -- School start-time vote deferral, PSB sign, Commty Mkt season end, bike accidents, vol slots

[Oct. 7](#) -- CivicAlerts, MBTA Zoning okayed, Elm St./Hannah Adams developer issues, gun range noise

[Sept. 30](#) -- Medfield Day pics, School Committee mtg/contracts, Fire grant, rail trail, Metacomet courts

[Sept. 23](#) -- Medfield Day prep, hydrant flush, smoker rights attendee, Montrose, Tilden projects, voting

[Sept. 16](#) -- Playground opening, roundabout revisited, building energy, gristmill gate, MCAP funding

[Sept. 9](#) -- Montrose project review/turf, housing projects, ConComm (86 Plain, Elm, 0 High, gristmill)

[Sept. 2](#) -- Water main/fire issues, EEE/mosquito alert, school resource officers, new town composter

[Aug. 26](#) -- Montrose project w/turf, lost & found ring, SC meeting recap, alpaca farm update-40B

[Aug. 19](#) -- Safety/incidents, gristmill gate/Elm/Danielson ConComm actions, library events, coyote II

[Aug. 12](#) -- Mother Anna's opening, MSH graffiti, in-law apartments/AUDs by right, COVID/West Nile

[Aug. 5](#) -- West Nile mosquitoes, Tilden Village annual plan, Stigmatine home, ConComm 8/15 topics

[July 29](#) -- Planning Board goals, Hannah Adams home listed, facility plan w/Arrowstreet, more W/S

[July 22](#) -- PSB & court cases update, Parks & Rec mtg recap, interns, Community Electricity update

[July 15](#) -- River search, water/sewer rates, community electricity update, Hinkley opening, Adams site

[July 8](#) -- Legislator history tour, FY2025 key town issues, Registry visit, Metacomet closing, coyote

[July 1](#) -- New train regs, legislator history tour set, county deed registry visit, SBC survey reminder

[June 24](#) -- New school resource officer, site survey, K9 refund, board changes, water plant event

[June 17](#) -- MPD chief contract, horse save, school start times, Bellforge, AHT loan, Perfect Strangers

[June 10](#) -- Brook Street concerns, Kidsborough Blake space, SBC forum summary, heart safe goal

[June 3](#) -- Gristmill cutoff/gate, post-fire help, roundabout debate, MHS graduation, old Hinkley bricks

[May 27](#) -- Memorial Day details, Gold Vets plaque, 21 North opening, MFi Legacy Fund grants

[May 20](#) -- Police topics/enforcement, bears, PFAS litigation, SBC forums, various newsletter links

[May 13](#) -- Town meeting recap, restaurant updates, market promo, school PR cost, SBC forums

[May 6](#) -- Town meeting info., Bellforge line up, school start times, 40B rent increases

[Apr. 29](#) -- PFAS woes, weekend event pics, high school ranking, Red Gate Farm mill clip

[Apr. 22](#) -- Trinity update, future sidewalks, extra garden plot, gazebo names, big event weekend

[Apr. 15](#) -- Dog bylaw update, alpaca farm vernal pool, K enrollment, *Boston Globe* eclipse coverage

[Apr. 8](#) -- 30K town water bill, Officer Manganello departure, solar eclipse, Saltonstall home relisted

[Apr. 1](#) -- Election results, afterschool space, town health help, Paul Alberta, last MBTA Zoning hearing

[Mar. 26](#) -- Special edition-MBTA Communities Zoning

[Mar. 25](#) -- Town election, alpaca farm subdivision, community electricity, hydrant flushing, P&R award

[Mar. 18](#) -- Town administrator pay bump, moderator candidate Q&A, West St. crash, alpaca farm end

[Mar. 11](#) -- Habitat for Humanity, tree hearing, Select Board topics, MBTA & IE sessions, knitting

[Mar. 4](#) -- MBTA Zones narrowed down, SRO shift/officer retirement, Metacomet lights, pickleball

[Feb. 26](#) -- MPD break-in info, community market news, Salvatore buy-up, Danielson mtg recap

[Feb. 19](#) -- Tree removal notice, water/sewer appeals, Rep. Garlick news, Trinity/MSH progress

[Feb. 12](#) -- Candidate list, moderator Q poll, teacher contract/family leave, drop box, Garrison Path

[Feb. 5](#) -- Trinity SB meeting promo, dept. budget insights, election prep, MSBA/Dale questions

[Jan. 29](#) -- Holdovers movie filming, MBTA Zoning update, school budget revision & K planning

[Jan. 22](#) -- MBTA Zoning site review, ATM articles w/Bellforge petition, barn renovation, Danielson Pond

[Jan. 15](#) -- MHC reviews of 13 South St. & Harding subdivision, SBC RFP planning, MEC updates

[Jan. 8](#) -- SBC next steps for Dale, school solar update & ConComm actions, warrant closing

[Jan. 1, 2024](#) -- Top 10 2023 topics, court cases, MSH vandalism, missing pets, rainbow pic

[Click here to access back issues from July 2, 2020 through Dec. 25, 2023.](#)

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