

Town Topics

A municipal newsletter for the Wilmington community

From the Manager's Desk



Another summer has come and gone and students are once again back in school, as it should be. Notwithstanding the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the variant, the ability to provide in-person learning is critical for students of all ages. The School Committee and the School Department, including the administration and staff, are lauded for their efforts to create a measure of certainty in this uncertain environment of COVID. They are clearly endeavoring to create as healthy an educational environment as possible.

Wilmington is well known and celebrated for its sense of community and gathering to support one another in times of need and to support family and friends in the armed forces and our veterans. This spirit of solidarity was exemplified once again with the 9/11 Remembrance held at the Wilmington High School and on the Town Common.



In tribute and remembrance to each person lost from the attacks on 9/11, students from Wilmington High School and Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, teacher advisors to the Wilmington High School 9/11 Memorial Committee, staff from the Veterans' Services Department and town officials placed 2,977 flags on the Town Common. Remembrance services held in the Joanne M. Benton Auditorium were introduced with the National Anthem performed by the Wilmington High School Band with poignant remarks offered by state and local officials and members of Wilmington clergy about that September day 20 years ago. Attendees had the opportunity to view pencil portraits of people lost on that fateful day as created by local artist Gina Johnson and to view the 9/11 memorial in the high school courtyard that was designed and funded through the efforts of the student-led 9/11 Memorial Committee. The events of September 11, 2001



forever changed the lives of the victims and their families, the first responders and those who joined the military in the aftermath. And Wilmington remembers.

Representatives from the School and Town administration continue to gather information associated with school enrollment, enrollment projections and information associated with maintenance of the Town's school buildings to provide to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The MSBA has invited the Town into the initial phase of their program to provide financial assistance for communities seeking to construct or renovate schools. This first phase, referred to as the

Eligibility Period, is intended to provide the state agency with detailed information about the merits of Wilmington's need for assistance for school construction or renovation. In addition to providing information to MSBA, the Town will need to appropriate funds to complete a feasibility and schematic design for a school. These actions must be completed prior to March 28, 2022, the close of the Eligibility Period.

The Senior Center Building Committee and the Town / School Administration Building Committee are continuing to work with their respective architects to develop the design for the respective buildings and to determine the most appropriate location for each facility. The committees met jointly to evaluate the four potential sites: existing Town Hall, existing Senior Center and former Swain School site (parking area on Middlesex Avenue across from the Town Common), the former Whitefield School site across from the Registry of Motor Vehicles on Middlesex Avenue and property on Main Street next to the Parish of the Transfiguration. Recommendations on the proposed siting will be presented to the Board of Selectmen for their consideration. Once a site has been agreed upon for each facility and preliminary design and cost estimates are completed warrant articles will be prepared to seek funding to construct each building. Funding requests are expected to be made at a 2022 Town Meeting.

Linda Kanter, Senior Clerk in the Recreation Department since 2003, is calling it "game over" and retiring in November. In her "other life" Linda was a registered nurse and began work with the Town in 1994 on a part-time basis as director of the Town's Tobacco Control Program in the Health Department. Linda has been an integral part of the "recreation team." Her customer service skills and keen perspective will be missed. My hope is that Linda's next innings will be full of fun, family and good health.

Looking forward for the balance of calendar year 2021 it appears that we will be dealing with COVID-19 and its variants for the foreseeable future. Due to the continuing number of cases being reported in Wilmington including cases within general government departments, the decision has been made to once again require face coverings for personnel and the public entering all general government buildings, regardless of vaccination status, effective October 1, 2021. It is understood that masks represent an inconvenience. If, as a community and as a country, we wish to protect our loved ones and ourselves against COVID-19 and bring this pandemic to a close, making this sacrifice will hasten our ability to return to more "normal" lives. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



REMEMBER OUR VETERANS



In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the

heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

A sincere thank you is extended to our veterans and their families for sacrifices made on behalf of freedom.

The Wilmington Department of Veterans' Services invites all the residents of Wilmington to attend, remember and honor all our past and present veterans on **Thursday, November 11, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. on the Wilmington Town Common.**

Participants will assemble at the Fourth of July parking lot at 10:45 a.m. All current social distancing and safety protocols will be followed and the ceremony will be livestreamed on Facebook.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Veterans' Services at 978-694-2040 or veterans@wilmingtonma.gov.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

By Massachusetts General Law, applications for FY 2022 are due to the Board of Assessors on or before April 1, 2022. The Board has 3 months to act on the application and may request further information from you regarding your eligibility during that time.

Filing for an exemption is by ANNUAL application. Your qualifications and status may change year to year, as well as the eligibility requirements for certain exemptions change annually. Income and Asset Limits also change annually, if you have not qualified in the past you may now qualify.

Senior Exemptions have age, ownership, residency, income and/or asset requirements. The FY22 Senior Income requirements for Clause 41C are as follows:

	<u>INCOME LIMIT</u>	<u>ASSET LIMIT</u> (excluding domicile)
SINGLE	\$24,911	\$40,000
MARRIED	\$37,367	\$50,000

For Seniors (over 70) or Surviving Spouse, the Clause 17D FY22 ASSET Requirement may not exceed \$50,000, excluding the domicile. There are NO income requirements for this exemption.

If you apply and qualify for an exemption, the Board will notify you by sending a green Exemption certificate after the January 1st tax bill.

The Assessors' office will have brochures available explaining the types and qualifications for the various exemptions.

For more information you may also review the back of your tax bill which outlines the application filing deadline or visit the Exemption section of the Assessors' webpage or contact the Assessors' Office at 978-658-3675.

Applications will be accepted by mail, fax to 978-657-6437, email at boa@wilmingtonma.gov or through the drop box located in the wall to the left of the front entrance of Town Hall.

TRASH AND RECYCLING INFORMATION

Residents are reminded to have their Trash and Recycling placed curbside by **6:30 a.m.** on their collection day. Once trash and recycling have been collected, residents should pull their barrels off of the street.



Contamination levels in recycling have become a serious issue with recycled materials. Residents continue to include items that are not recyclable such as diapers, wood, gas jugs, paint cans, garden hoses, lights, party supplies (disposable dinnerware) and, **worst of all, plastic bags of any kind.** These items and others cannot be placed in recycling receptacles. Due to the current depressed recycling market conditions, there is zero tolerance for any unacceptable items without financial consequences for the Town. Please **DO NOT** include plastic bags in the recycling barrel. All soft plastics such as grocery bags, dry cleaning wraps, bread and produce bags, food storage bags and case wraps (plastic surrounding a case of water, a package of diapers or paper towels) must be kept out of your recycle container. Plastic grocery bags can be returned to the supermarket for recycling and other soft plastics may be disposed of in your trash. We want all to be aware of these facts to help with keeping Wilmington green and minimize the escalating costs for solid waste disposal.

Casella Phone Number: 1-800-Casella (1-800-227-3552)

Call this number for missed trash/recycling collection or to schedule a bulk item pickup. Every residence is allowed to dispose of one bulk item at a time. Bulk items include but are not limited to sofas, chairs, bureaus, mattress and box spring, and tables.

Please see <http://www.wilmingtonma.gov/trash-recycling> for further information regarding the Trash and Recycling Collection Program.

If you move from your home, the trash and recycle barrels must remain with the house.

FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Community Teamwork, Inc. Fuel Assistance Program is available to new applicants starting November 1, 2021. Any Wilmington resident 60 years or older who is in need of fuel assistance should contact the Elderly Services Department at 978-657-7595. Wilmington residents who applied last year and are receiving renewal applications in the mail may also call for an appointment. Residents under the age of 60 in need of assistance should contact the Veterans' Agent office in Billerica at 978-671-0968. The income guidelines are as follows:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Gross Income</u>
1	\$40,951
2	\$53,551
3	\$66,151
4	\$78,751

FALL PROGRAMS AT THE LIBRARY

Interested in learning money management tips or looking for Bigfoot sightings? You will find a variety of offerings this fall at the library. Some programs will be virtual and some will be held indoors. Please check the library's website www.wilmlibrary.org for a complete list of all programs and for registration information as well as up-to-date guidelines on COVID requirements. At this time, we encourage everyone to wear a mask and require that children ages 2 to 12 wear a mask when visiting the library.

The Psychology of Money

Monday, October 4, 2:30 pm (VIRTUAL)

Bradley Baskir, a financial advisor at Morgan Stanley, will present a workshop exploring how our personal perceptions, biases and emotions can affect the financial decisions we make. This interactive workshop is designed to help attendees develop strategies for making objective decisions about money so they can manage their wealth more wisely.



Smart Women Love Money: 5 Simple, Life-Changing Rules of Investing

Thursday, October 7, 7 pm (VIRTUAL)

Discover how to invest in your financial future with five simple rules that cut through the unnecessarily complex jargon of Wall Street. Learn how to talk about and manage your own investing so that you are in better control of your money and future. Presented by Alice Finn, author of *Smart Women Love Money: 5 Simple, Life-Changing Rules of Investing*.

Financial Tips, Tricks and Tactics

Thursday, October 14, 7 pm (VIRTUAL)

Even though everyone's situation is different, there are tips and tricks that will help anyone obtain and maintain a healthy financial situation. Having a basic understanding of key financial components and building on that knowledge is essential. Topics covered include credit scores, financial ratios and financial apps. Led by Pamela Richardson, founder and owner of Money Mastery with Pam.

Ghosts & Ghouls of Ireland

Saturday, October 23, 10 am (VIRTUAL)

Join acclaimed Seanchaí (Irish storyteller) & singer Helena Byrne as she shares gripping Irish tales of the supernatural. From haunted castles and poltergeists to guardian angels and other strange phenomena, Helena delves deep into the captivating world of Irish ghost stories and the Irish people's unique relationship with the afterlife.

Folksoul Duo

Thursday, October 21, 2:30 pm

Join husband and wife Leslie Vogel and Fred Simmons, known as Folksoul Duo, for an afternoon of American Roots music. Fred plays trombone and guitar and Leslie plays accordion and keyboard. Their musicianship coupled with their vocal harmonies create a beautiful afternoon of song to be enjoyed by all.

Granite State Bigfoot

Thursday, October 28, 7 pm

New Hampshire based filmmaker and cryptozoology researcher Aleksandar Petakov will present his investigations into reports of strange encounters and sightings of Bigfoot-like creatures across New Hampshire over the decades.



Halloween Parade

Friday, October 29, 2:30 pm

Come join our Halloween parade! Wear a costume and walk through the library to collect sweet treats, snacks, crafts and take fun photos. Participate in our costume contest to win a cool prize.



RECREATION PROGRAMS

The 53rd Annual Halloween

Horribles Parade is Sunday, October 24 at 4:30 p.m.

Participants march from the Public Safety Building to the High School cafeteria where goodies galore await costumed children. In case of inclement weather, report directly to the cafeteria. Don't forget to bring a bag for your treats!



RECREATION BASKETBALL

We are celebrating our 58th year! This popular program runs from December 4 – February 12 (there are no games/practices 12/25 or 1/1). There are separate leagues for boys (grades 3 – 8) and girls (grades 3 – 6). The season will begin with two weeks of "drills and skills" led by SNL staff and Philadelphia Sixers Advance Scout Jeff Nelson. The season will continue with half hour practices followed by forty-five minute games on Saturdays.



Registration deadline is Thursday, October 7.

Cost of the program is \$110.

JUNIOR BASKETBALL (GRADES 1 & 2)

This six-week program runs from January 8 – February 12.

The girls division will play on Saturday mornings and the boys division will be scheduled for afternoon games. **Registration deadline is Thursday, November 4.** Cost of the program is \$50.



REFEREE CLINIC

On Mondays, October 25 and November 1 we are offering our annual **Referee Clinic** for anyone age 16 (by 12/1/21) and up interested in a possible paid position as a basketball referee, or to earn community service hours. Contact the Recreation Office for additional information or to register for these free clinics.

IN OTHER RECREATION NEWS

Saturdays in the fall are filled with children's programs such as SNL Super Sports Jr., Kinder Basketball, Pottery Plus and Yoga Play. Popular programs such as Babysitter Training, Home Alone and Kids Test Kitchen are returning. We have several adult craft classes to prepare for the holidays including stencil projects ("Trick or Treat" porch sign and a "Christmas Eve" sign) as well as new customizable "Burn Baby Burn" cutting or charcuterie boards or trays – all of which make outstanding gifts.

UPCOMING TRIPS

We are thrilled to finally include a new theatre trip on our schedule: "Ain't Too Proud", the Life and Times of the Temptations will be performed at the Opera House on April 21. We are also excited to be heading to Santa Fe next April to enjoy such sights as the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, the "High Road to Taos", a UNESCO site, to see the home of the Pueblo Indians and the Los Alamos Bradbury Science Museum. Consider "hitting the road" with us.



The Recreation Department's complete newsletter is on the Town's website at www.wilmingtonma.gov. Click on the Recreation prompt to explore the many programs this department has to offer. **Recreation Matters** is updated quarterly – February, May, August and November.

FALL YARDWASTE PROGRAM

The end of the year **curbside pick-up of leaves and grass clippings will begin on October 25 and continue the weeks of November 1, November 15, November 29 and December 6.**



Residents should place their yardwaste in biodegradable paper bags or uncovered barrels at curbside on their regular trash collection day. Yardwaste in plastic bags will not be accepted.

Residents may also use the recycling center off Old Main Street near the Woburn line for leaves and brush drop-off.

The center will open for 9 weeks on Wednesdays and Saturdays from October 6 through and including December 4. Hours of operation are Wednesdays, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. and Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

In order to use the yardwaste recycling facility, residents must purchase a \$15 punch card which is good for five visits to the center. The card may be purchased at the Treasurer/Collector's Office, Room 1, Town Hall. **Wilmington residents only** are allowed to use the facility for leaves and brush drop-off. **NO GRASS CLIPPINGS.** The punch card and an ID must be presented at the entrance. **No contractors or commercial vehicles** are allowed to use the facility.

PROTECT YOUR PIPES



As the colder weather approaches, residents are encouraged to review items around their home that need to be protected from freezing, especially water pipes and meters. Failure to properly prepare for the winter months can lead to freeze-ups, which leave residents without water. Since freeze-ups typically occur in the basement, it is important to eliminate cold drafts by securely closing windows and doors along with filling gaps with expandable foam insulation. Wrapping vulnerable pipes with pipe insulation is another step that helps to prevent freeze-ups. These maintenance items are inexpensive and may be purchased at any home improvement store. A few minutes of prevention this fall can save you from real troubles when the snow flies. Please take a moment to check these items in addition to winterizing your sill cocks, garden hoses and sprinkler systems before the holiday season.

SNOWPLOW CONTRACTORS FOR DPW

The DPW is hiring snowplow contractors. Work includes plowing roadways and municipal parking lots. Contractors must meet minimum insurance and equipment requirements. Applications and information are available at the DPW Administration Office, 115 Andover Street, Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call the DPW at 978-658-4481 for more information.

FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

November 7th is the date to set clocks back one hour. The Fire Department recommends replacing the batteries in all Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detectors including plug-in and hard-wired types, which usually have battery back up in case of power loss. Massachusetts Law requires replacement of smoke detectors after 10 years.



SENIOR CITIZEN WORK PROGRAM

The Senior Citizen Work Program offers Wilmington residents the opportunity to work off a portion of their property tax by working part-time for the Town. The purpose of the program is to assist seniors in reducing their property tax burden. Participants **MUST** be Wilmington residents occupying a house for which property taxes are paid (or spouse of homeowner), have limited financial resources and be 60 years of age or older as of January 1, 2022. Applications are available in the Town Manager's Office and at the Buzzell Senior Center. **Application Deadline: October 29, 2021.** All seniors, regardless of past participation however, are encouraged to apply. Job listings and program information are on the application.

FESTIVAL OF TREES

Wilmington's nonprofit organization, We're One Wilmington (WOW), will hold their 11th Annual Festival of Trees virtually beginning Tuesday, November 30 through Sunday, December 5 and in person on Saturday, December 4 and Sunday, December 5. Through the use of cutting edge online raffle technology you can view and buy chances to win one of the many trees, wreaths and baskets. Proceeds benefit WOW. For more information visit www.onewilmington.org.



DEPARTMENT



TELEPHONE

Accountant	694-2029
Animal Control	658-5071
Appeals Board	658-4531
Assessor	658-3675
Building Inspector	658-4531
Cemetery	658-3901
Collector of Taxes	658-3531
Elderly Services	657-7595
Engineer	658-4499
Fire	(Business) 658-3346
	(Emergency) 9-1-1
Fire Prevention	694-2006
Harnden Tavern Museum	658-5475
Health	658-4298
Housing Authority	658-8531
Library	658-2967
Nurse	658-4298
Planning/Conservation	658-8238
Plumbing Inspector	658-4531
Police	(Business) 658-5071
	(Emergency) 9-1-1
	(TDD) 657-8368
Public Buildings	658-3017
Public Works	658-4481
Recreation	658-4270
School	694-6000
Selectmen	658-3311
Town Clerk	658-2030
Town Manager	658-3311
	(TDD) 694-1417
Treasurer	658-3531
Veteran's Agent	694-2040
Water & Sewer	658-4711
	(Billing) 658-3116



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