



# March Newsletter

*Preserving Our Past by Protecting Our Future*

## **News and Politics**



## MHS teams head into postseason

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# MARBLEHEAD REPORTER

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2022 | MARBLEHEAD.WICKEDLOCAL.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Masking now optional at all five Marblehead schools

Chris Stevens  
Wicked Local  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Masking is now optional at five of Marblehead's public schools.

Superintendent John Buckley recommended students remain masked for the week following February vacation, and transition to mask optional on March 7, but the School Committee voted to go all in.

School Committee member Meagan Taylor, who made the motion to rescind the mask mandate effective Feb. 28, said since the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education decided not to renew its mask mandate as of Feb. 28, and the town also rescinded its mask mandate, she felt comfortable going mask optional sooner rather than later.

"I think doing this is going to be OK," agreed Emily Barron.

## Hate vandalism in Marblehead: How do we make it stop?



Members of Marblehead High School's Team Harmony recently made a presentation at the Village School aimed at promoting diversity and combatting bias & bullying. COURTESY PHOTO

### 'You don't give up'

Chris Stevens and Leigh Blander  
Wicked Local

First, it was swastikas scratched into the stalls in two boys bathrooms at the Village School. Then came hateful language found in a girls bathroom. That was after another swastika was found scratched into a dark corner at the middle school.

And all of this came on the heels of the hostage standoff in a Texas synagogue.

The local incidents might seem small, almost easy to dismiss — except for the fact that they represent hate and seem to be part of a larger question. Why does this keep happening in Marblehead?

Because it's not just these seemingly small occurrences. The list of such incidents across the town is long, goes back for years and includes an anti-Semitic message in the dirt on a school baseball diamond, Marblehead High School students circulating a Snapchat image taken in a chemistry lab of a swastika made

See HATE, Page 2A



Over the past week, we have been glued to our screens, following the news from Ukraine. For many of us, that war has overshadowed the release of the latest [report](#) from the UN-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warning that the window to limit the world-altering impacts of climate change is closing. The global news has also taken our minds off events happening here in Marblehead.

But lessons from the global sphere can be applied here at home.

Lesson One: The flow of reliable, unbiased news is necessary to allow citizens to make critical decisions, such as whether to flee their country or stay and fight.

Lesson Two: We need trustworthy, democratically elected representatives to advocate for us. Corollary: A brave leader can unite his country, and possibly affect the fate of world democracy.

Right now, Marblehead faces challenges on both fronts.

Regarding reliable news coverage, we have learned that Gannett, the owner of the *Marblehead Reporter*, is planning to eliminate the local coverage on which we have come to depend. The company has reportedly made the decision to publish regional stories instead of covering Marblehead news. This is a blow to Sustainable Marblehead and many other local organizations and businesses which rely on our local paper to communicate with town residents.

On the political front, our former state representative, Lori Ehrlich, who was appointed FEMA Region I Administrator by President Biden in January, will not be replaced until the November election – nine months from now. As a result, we no longer have representation in the House of Representatives on major pieces of legislation currently under consideration, including a variety of important climate-related bills. The House Speaker cannot by law appoint an interim representative and has decided that a special election would be too rushed and expensive.

So, what can we do?

To express your concerns about diminishing local news coverage, write to Lisa Stratton, Gannett's Regional Editor for New England, at [lstrattan@gannett.com](mailto:lstrattan@gannett.com) and tell her what you think. Keep up with local news by visiting the town's [website](#) and watching MHTV (Comcast Channel 8, Verizon Channel 28 or [online](#)). Watch for efforts to create alternative nonprofit and/or online news outlets to replace our vanishing local paper, as other cities and towns in the region have done.

You can also follow Sustainable Marblehead on social media (Facebook and Instagram), read our monthly newsletter, and visit our [website](#) for local, regional and national climate-related news.

As for politics, attend Town Meeting on Monday, May 2, at 7:00 pm at the Marblehead Veterans Middle School Auditorium and make your voice heard. Click [here](#) to learn about items on the town warrant this year. And vote in the municipal election on June 21.

You can also volunteer with Sustainable Marblehead. Go to our [website](#) and click on “Volunteer” at the top to sign up and tell us what skills you have to reduce waste and our town’s carbon footprint. We are in particular need of people who are interested in reducing carbon emissions related to transportation. Think electric vehicles, electric boat engines, public transport, cycling, walking, etc.

Democracy, a free press, and climate change advocacy are all intertwined. As Bill McKibben, a well-known climate activist says, “I don’t think we can solve the climate crisis without a functioning democracy.”

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## Focus on Housing



The largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Marblehead comes from heating and cooling our homes and town buildings. Residential buildings alone represent a whopping 44% of our total emissions. Sustainable Marblehead has created a sub-group under the umbrella of the Clean Energy & Public Policy Working Group to address this issue locally, even as regulatory requirements are changing around us.

One major change currently underway is a proposal introduced in early February by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to put in place new, more stringent building codes that will take effect in 2023. You can view the proposal [here](#) and participate in one of the [public comment meetings](#) that will take place in the coming weeks.

The other major change is that recent updates to Mass Save<sup>®</sup> program incentives now make it possible for Marblehead gas customers to access energy efficiency rebates and 0% financing for heat pumps and ductless mini-splits. You can get up to \$10,000 in rebates toward a heat pump purchase and our partner, HomeWorks Energy, will complete the paperwork for you and apply the rebates upfront. The Mass Save HEAT Loan offers 0% financing for home energy efficiency upgrades – up to \$25,000 for up to seven years.

The first step to accessing the rebates and financing is to sign up for a no-cost Mass Save Home Energy Assessment [here](#) with our partner, HomeWorks Energy. You can also call 781-528-0822 to sign up over the phone. Don't forget to mention the Sustainable Marblehead partnership!

The creation of our Green Buildings Group is an occasion for all interested people to get involved, both to learn about the changes and contribute to the work of the group. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jean-Jacques Yarmoff at [jjyarmoff@gmail.com](mailto:jjyarmoff@gmail.com) .

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## **Brendan Crighton Appointed Senate Chair of Transportation Committee**



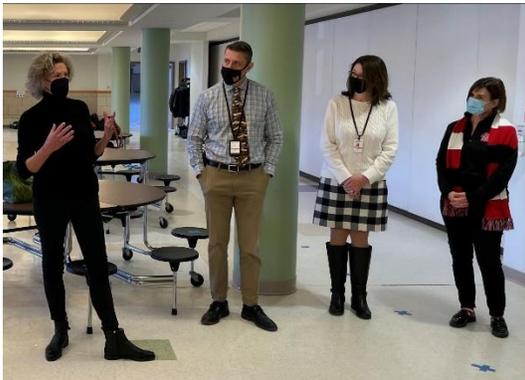
State Senator Brendan Crighton (representing Lynn, Lynnfield, Marblehead, Nahant, Saugus and Swampscott) has been appointed as the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Transportation, serving alongside state Representative William Straus, who is the House Chair of the Committee.

“Transportation is at a pivotal moment as we try to reach our emission-reduction goals, combat congestion that is returning to pre-pandemic levels, and decide how to effectively utilize once-in-a-generation infrastructure funding,” said Crighton.

Crighton has had experience working on transportation issues throughout his career as a legislative staffer, city councilor and legislator. During his time on the Lynn City

Council, Crighton wrote a “Complete Streets” ordinance that makes the city consider all modes of transportation — including pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, and those with mobility issues — when planning transportation projects.

Crighton joined the Lynn legislative delegation, local officials and community stakeholders in successfully advocating for the prioritization of his proposal, known as the Environmental Justice Corridor (EJC). The EJC would electrify the commuter-rail line from Boston to the North Shore and increase frequency, which would reduce costs to subway-like fares. While this project was approved, he continues to push for funding for electrification and operation as soon as possible.



### **Vets Middle School Hydration Station Dedication**

To date, students at Marblehead Veterans Middle School have used the hydration station funded and donated by Sustainable Marblehead to replace more than 1,600 plastic bottles. They are also

recycling and composting. On February 15, the school held a dedication ceremony to thank Sustainable Marblehead for its donation, which honors the years of dedicated work of past Executive Director and current Board member Lynn Bryant (pictured above with, from left, Superintendent Dr. John Buckey and Assistant Superintendents Michelle Cresta and Nan Murphy).

Middle School Vice Principal Julia Ferreira had heard Sustainable Marblehead was putting hydration stations in town parks, so she reached out to see if we could help install one at the middle school. Her outreach coincided with a discussion in among our Conservation Working Group members about the need to reduce plastic. After getting hydration stations into parks, Sustainable Marblehead decided it was equally important to put them in schools.

“I couldn’t think of a better place to support our efforts to reduce plastic than the schools,” Bryant said. “It is important that as adults that we support what is clearly a passion the students have for reducing plastic.”



## RECYCLE IT!

- Keep shrink wrap **CLEAN** and **DRY**
- **REMOVE** all wood, zippers, rope, tape, etc.
- **BUNDLE** & tie with excess wrap for storage

### Shrink Wrap Recycling Returns this Spring

Every year, US boat owners generate about 92 million pounds of shrink wrap. The vast majority of this plastic material ends up in landfills and often contributes to plastic pollution in our oceans. We can make a difference in reducing this waste by considering other options for covering our boats, or by recycling or reusing existing shrink wrap.

**RECYCLE:** If your boat is currently shrink-wrapped, bring used shrink wrap to the Marblehead Transfer Station beginning this spring to a specified container. No town trash permit is required. Please remove all ties, zippers, rope and tape before depositing the plastic in the container. If your boat yard is handling your shrink wrap removal, be sure to ask them to recycle it.

REUSE: Consider reusing your shrink wrap next year. It will be good for your wallet and the planet. For tips on reusing shrink wrap, check out this [video](#).

Next year, consider buying a canvas cover for your boat. Did you know that switching to a reusable cover for a 24-foot boat could save you nearly \$2,000 over the cover's ten-year lifespan?

Together we can reduce waste and make boating kinder to our planet!

For more information on shrink wrap recycling in the Northeast click [here](#).

(Content contributed by James Ashton, image courtesy of Clean Ocean Access)

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## Harbor Plan Working Group



The long-awaited Marblehead Harbor Plan Working Group (HPWG) got underway with a virtual kick-off meeting in mid-February. An official town body appointed by the Selectmen, the HPWG will provide input on the development of the town's Harbor Plan. The 16 HPWG members – including Sustainable Marblehead

Board member and former Corinthian Yacht Club Commodore Rob Howie – represent town boards, committees and other constituencies. Also serving on the HPWG is James Ashton, a Sustainable Marblehead supporter and former head of our Harbor Working Group, who is serving as the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce’s representative.

The Harbor Plan will include Marblehead’s goals and recommendations guiding public and private use of our harbor areas. It will also include an implementation plan. The Town has contracted with Innes Associates Ltd. and Tighe and Bond Engineering as consultants to assist with this project, which is being funded by the Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council.

Rob Howie and James Ashton will be interviewing, among others, the commodores and general managers of all of Marblehead’s yacht clubs to gather their input regarding the long-term use of the harbor, its access, usage and sustainability practices.

As Sustainable Marblehead supporter, if you have specific recommendations regarding harbor sustainability, please send your comments directly to Rob Howie at [rlhowiejr@gmail.com](mailto:rlhowiejr@gmail.com). The work of HPWG members along with the consultants over the next six months will culminate in the release of a new 2022 Harbor Plan in September. We hope that this report will inspire and guide the Town’s commitment to protecting and preserving our harbor for ourselves and future generations.

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## Upcoming Events



### **Ecobricks and Their Uses**

Tuesday, March 8, at 4:30pm  
On Zoom

Want to give your single-use plastic bottles and thin film plastic a useful purpose? Then learn how to make an ecobrick.

How do you make them? What can they be used for? Join us to get the latest updates on how ecobricks are keeping plastic out of landfills from Nathan Gray, Project lead at EcoBrick US.

Click [here](#) to register.



## **Coastal Communities Talk Water**

Thursday, March 10, at 6:00pm

The Cabot, 286 Cabot Street,  
Beverly MA 01915

Join us for this free, in-person event that brings together local water-focused nonprofits to share insight into what we can do in our daily lives to support sustainable freshwater and marine ecosystems in our coastal communities. Anchored by Ted Talk-style presentations from three local experts, including Sustainable Marblehead's Harbor Working Group Leader Steve Wolf, the evening will include musical performances by Wood and Bone, free food and children's activities.

To learn more, click [here](#).

To register, click [here](#).



## Commission on Clean Heat

Public Meeting #2:  
Thursday, March 24

Option 1: 12:30pm - 2:00pm  
Click [here](#) to register.

Option 2: 6:00pm - 7:30pm  
Click [here](#) to register.

Last fall, Governor Baker established the Commission on Clean Heat to advise the Administration on a framework for long-term greenhouse gas emission reductions from heating fuels. The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) is holding public meetings over the next two

months (meeting #1 was on March 1) focused on the work of the commission and related policies for building decarbonization. The virtual meetings include a short presentation, followed by a period for public comment. The EEA is holding two sessions on each date with the same presentation, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. People are encouraged to preregister. Click [here](#) to learn more.

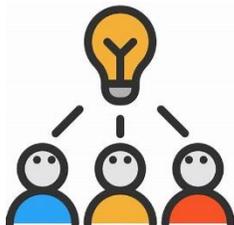
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### Did You Know?

Globally, 40 million tons of textiles are sent to landfills or incinerated every year, with the fashion industry responsible for more than 8% of total greenhouse gas emissions.

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### What Can You Do?

Get retailers to recycle your used clothes. Earth 911 has a guide to participating retailers <https://earth911.com/living-well-being/retailers-recycling-clothes/>. You can also bring used clothing and other textiles to the Marblehead Transfer Station and deposit

them in one of the clothing donation boxes. Because there is a market for used textiles, even textiles that can't be reused because they are too worn can still be recycled.

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## Support

Sustainable Marblehead is a community organization working to reduce waste and achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2040. Our work is important, and we can't do it alone. Please join us by donating today.

[Donate Today](#)



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Sustainable Marblehead · P.O. Box 1320 · Marblehead, MA 01945 · USA

