



# THE Positively HOLLIS POST

March 2024

"CELEBRATING HOLLIS & CREATING COMMUNITY"

Volume I, Issue 1

## It's Time to Imagine: Restoring Silver Lake Park to Hollis

By Mark A. LeDoux, Selectman Town of Hollis



Silver Lake Park 1960s.  
Courtesy, Friends of Silver Lake

One of the remarkable characteristics of Hollis, New Hampshire, is the dedication of the residents to ensuring that future generations can enjoy the open spaces, farmland, forests, trails, and waterways through conservation. These properties help to preserve the 'rural character' of our community and provide recreational access for hiking, biking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, fishing, and more. And while swimming had been high on that list in years past, that is not the case today. Today, Silver Lake stands as one of Hollis' fragile bodies of water with an ecosystem deserving of our thoughtful stewardship.

Centrally located, Silver Lake Park is comprised of over 34 acres and 1000 feet of sandy beach. It was central to Hollis's summer recreation. In its early years, the lake was so pristine that it supplied ice for neighboring Boston. The lake had long been a

destination for swimming, fishing, summer camps, and family picnics. In the spirit of protecting the property from development, neighbors took the first steps to place the land surrounding Silver Lake into the hands of the State.

In 1945 a group of residents formed Silver Lake Corporation, which sold shares to cover the cost of purchasing land and buildings on the lake. In 1948, shares were sold to the State of New Hampshire for a nominal amount – probably less than \$1000.00 – for a 'state park' and the document to sell was signed by Harold E. Hardy and Woodbury D. Bell. Early in my tenure on the Board of Selectmen, I broached the subject of re-acquiring the 'park' from the state of New Hampshire to be returned to the ownership, management, and use of Hollis residents. It is easy to see that the State is not spending enough in resources to manage the facilities, clean the park, and prevent deterioration of the water. The lake is often closed to swimming for weeks at a time and last summer it was closed for the entire season. Vast amounts of trash along the roadways leading to and from our neighbor to the South – the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have been an issue for years and ultimately become the responsibility  
*(continued on pg. 2)*

## The Farley Building: Transformation into a Multi-Generational Community Center for Hollis

By Liz Barbour

The Farley Building stands above future use. Ten years later in 2021, the Main Street looking across a tree-shaded lawn and down over the historic center of Hollis. The school building has been a witness to almost 150 years of Hollis's children running through its halls and out the front doors prepared to meet the world. Since the last day of classes in 2006, this sturdy building has awaited a new purpose, holding the potential to be transformed into a vibrant multi-generational community center.

As the population of Hollis expands, existing single-use community spaces are often booked well in advance, creating challenges for groups in search of suitable meeting places. Taking inspiration from the successful preservation and rehabilitation model of the Lawrence Barn Community Center, a group of residents began to consider the Farley Building as a viable solution to the town's space problem.

**Farley Building Project History**  
In 2011, the town voted to provide \$50,000 in funds for work needed to stabilize and mothball the building for

future use. Ten years later in 2021, the Hollis Select Board formed a committee to determine viable options for the fate of the building. After careful study, the Farley Building Committee recommended preserving and re-purposing the building to serve the entire community. In response, the residents of Hollis showed their continued support and approved the \$50,000 funding to hire an architectural firm to produce a condition assessment and reuse study. The comprehensive analysis by structural engineers, architects, and contractors confirmed the building's structural soundness and suggested that the rehabilitation of the building would be a cost-effective and environmentally sustainable option for the town.

Dave Sullivan, Chairman of the newly named Farley Building Community Center Committee (FBCC) has been involved with the project since the beginning. "The firm of Misiaszek Turpin found the building to be in overall good condition. All work to be  
*(Continued on pg. 4)*



Farley Building Community Center. Courtesy, FBCC

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# Honoring A Hollis Hero: The Unseen Tribute to the First Jewish Marine Fallen in Beirut

By Liz Barbour



Staff Sergeant Allen H. Soifert  
Photo Courtesy: Family / Beirut Memorial OnLine

Beyond the public eye, a heartfelt ceremony unfolded, following the 'Wreaths Across Hollis' event in December. The ripple effect of the ceremony, initiated by Al Fulchino, continues to resonate deeply within the Hollis community. Staff Sergeant, Allen H. Soifert, a Hollis native and a hero whose sacrifice profoundly touched the community, received a special tribute from a small group of dedicated volunteers. While Positively Hollis previously highlighted the wreath-laying event at the Congregational Church Cemetery, there's a deeper narrative to be shared, as revealed by Hollis VFW Quartermaster, Chris Lussier. As the plans for 'Wreaths Across Hollis' took shape, Chris Lussier couldn't help but think of the historical significance of Staff Sergeant Allen H. Soifert, the first Jewish Marine killed in Beirut on October 14, 1983. Despite assumptions about Allen's resting place among Hollis Veterans, his final resting place is in Nashua's Jewish Cemetery at Temple Beth Abraham. Hollis pays tribute to Sergeant Soifert with a memorial stone situated in front of the Hollis

Brookline High School. In a moving gesture, Lussier and a group of Veterans and friends placed a wreath at the stone, followed by a journey to Temple Beth Abraham Cemetery in Nashua. I spoke with Hollis resident, Laura Landerman Garber, the creator of the Holiday Card Challenge, and she shared with me the emotional impact of the day. "The wreath-laying ceremony in Hollis was the most moving experience. And it was remarkable to me that the group then wanted to travel to the cemetery at Temple Beth Abraham to honor Allen appropriately and in keeping with his Jewish faith." Guided by the rabbi and Laura, the group opted for prayer and the traditional laying of stones instead of a wreath on the grave, respecting Jewish customs. "The 'Shema' is considered to be the central and most holy of all prayers in the Jewish faith, declaring there is one God to love with all your being. And the laying of stones marks that we were there, that we witnessed Allen." Inspired by the commitment to honor Allen and other Jewish service members, the group noticed the faded flags on some Veterans' graves during their visit. In the spirit of ongoing respect, they pledged to return in the spring, refreshing the flags with the full support of the rabbi and the synagogue community, both were deeply moved by the gesture. This act not only pays homage to Allen but also recognizes the service of all Jewish military personnel interred in that sacred ground, embodying a promise to remember their sacrifices.

*Silver Lake (continued from pg. 1)*  
of the Hollis DPW to clean up. Policing and providing emergency services at the park are another cost to Hollis's limited resources. When confronted with the obvious poor condition of the park, State personnel in public session at a Board of Selectmen's meeting feigned a lack of resources and the need to focus on more pressing matters and priorities within the state system. Hollis deserves better. As the Annual Town Meeting approaches, you will see Warrant Article 2. It is seeking approval to expend up to \$100,000.00 to conduct a study to evaluate the sources and causes of the bacteria and will include a plan to reduce or eliminate the cyanobacteria bloom at Silver Lake. These funds will be reimbursed by the state, and any interest accrued on their use will be paid for by the Silver Lake Improvement Association, made up of residents on the lake. This is the first step in identifying potential resolutions to improve the health of the lake.

The residents of Hollis have a choice. The community can work together to secure and return the oversight and restoration of Silver Lake Park from the state. Or we can choose to leave it in the hands of the State, in which case it is likely that the deterioration of the lake, park, and buildings will continue. Returning the stewardship of this natural gem to the town of Hollis isn't simply a matter of governance; it's a commitment to the sustainable future of the lake and the park's ecosystem. There is an urgent need to restore Silver Lake Park to its former glory. Can you imagine doing that under the compassionate and watchful care of the town of Hollis?

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**Thumbs Up! to The Hollis Trails Committee for their new website ([www.hollistrails.org](http://www.hollistrails.org)).** The website trail maps cover over 40 miles of multi-use trails, for hikers, bikers, horseback riders, and snowmobile enthusiasts. Visit the website to plan your next outdoor adventure.

**Thumbs Up! to the woman who picked up trash at the Woodmont Orchard parking lot.** It looked as though someone emptied their car of food wrappers, bottles, cigarettes, etc. People walk their dogs there and so much of that trash could have been toxic to them.

**Thumbs Up! to the ladies at the Historical Society for helping PH research many of the stories for our Heritage and History section.** Their dedication to archiving and sharing Hollis's history is amazing. The Wheeler House is open Mondays from 1 pm to 4 pm.





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- "Golden Spotlight"**  
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# A Letter from the Positively Hollis Team



## Welcome To the First Edition of The Positively Hollis Post!

Dear Readers,

It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome you to the first edition of The Positively Hollis Post, your newest source of local information, inspiration, and community connection. We present this printed newspaper, as an extension of our digital platform ([positivelyhollis.com](http://positivelyhollis.com)) and our Facebook group Positively Hollis and Brookline, where respectful community conversations can be found.

In a world often saturated with negative news and strife, *The Positively Hollis Post* is here to shine a light on the stories that inspire, the individuals making a difference, the events that bring us joy, and the local businesses and institutions that provide such excellent goods and services to our services to our town.

Within the pages of our newspaper, we hope to build bridges between neighbors, promote a sense of belonging, and capture the essence of what makes Hollis such a special place to live.

As we embark on this journey together, we invite you to share your stories, achievements, and community events with us. Your input and contributions are vital in creating a publication that truly represents the heartbeat of our community.

Together, let us foster a sense of positivity, connection, and celebration. Here's to the first edition of The Positively Hollis Post, and to many more editions filled with stories that warm the heart and strengthen the ties that bind us together!

With Gratitude,  
The *Positively Hollis Post* Team  
(Kristen, Liz, Julie, Sharon, and Dave)

## About the Positively Hollis Team

**KRISTEN PEIK**  
Kristen grew up in Hollis and is an ardent horse enthusiast. Now a professional marketing whiz and graphic designer, she offers her talents as production editor for *The Positively Hollis Post*.

**LIZ BARBOUR**  
Liz and her family have called Hollis home since 1999. Her passions include gardening, cooking, hiking, and biking. Liz helps strengthen our community by providing uplifting and informative Hollis stories to our readers.

**JULIE LE DOUX**  
Julie and her family moved to Hollis in 2001. She has been active in the community while home- educating her three children. Julie is an author, painter, and professional jazz musician. Julie brings a strong creative vision and inspirational content to Positively Hollis.

**SHARON SWART**  
Sharon is a resident of Hollis for 7 years. A former engineer and legal professional, she enjoys textile design, flower and herb gardening, cooking, nature, and all things creative. Sharon brings extraordinary project management and creativity skills to the team.

**DAVE PARRY**  
Dave and his wife are happy to call Hollis "home" since arriving in 2021. Dave is retired after 36 years working with the Boy Scouts of America. He is a native New Englander who enjoys fly fishing for wild trout, skiing, birding, hiking, gardening, and just about anything outdoors. Dave works with our Positively Hollis advertisers.

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*Farley Building (continued from pg. 1)* done to the Farley Building will be done following the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*. These standards acknowledge the need to alter and add to historic properties, to meet the current needs, while maintaining the property's historic character."

The environmental impact of repurposing the building has also been an important consideration. "The environmental advantage of rehabilitation is that the energy to build this structure has already been expended. Labor, materials, and the environmental impact of developing this property took place nearly 150 years ago. By rehabilitating this existing structure, we will not duplicate this process. The quality of materials and the workmanship that went into buildings of the era have stood the test of time. We should take the opportunity to use the craftsmanship within the walls of the Farley Building to our advantage. Recycling this building and bringing it to current standards is the environmentally responsible thing to do," noted Dave Sullivan.

**Community Input**

The FBCC has recognized the importance of community input on the proposed concept and created multiple ways to invite ideas. Karla Vogel, the Heritage Commission representative on the committee offered some insight. "We presented the design drawings to the public at the 2023 Old Home Days. This was followed by a community meeting attended by representatives from clubs, commissions, and interested individuals where they could offer ideas and ask questions. It became clear from comments that Hollis needs several smaller meeting spaces. Students in attendance showed great interest in supervised spaces to gather

after school. The Farley Building would offer a safe, convenient location for them. Mothers expressed the need for spaces to meet other moms and form connections with their children. Clubs and other groups were very much in support of more accessible meeting spaces. Even senior citizens wanted a place to 'hang out,' a room to meet for coffee and card games. It would be a welcoming place to many who are living alone."

**The Vision**

The vision for the rehabilitation of the Farley Building is to maintain the original structure and features of the 1920 footprint. This plan will showcase the unique classroom features inside the building while at the same time providing modern amenities that will serve residents of every age and accommodate a wide range of activities. The building spaces will be designed to offer ample room for such things as group meetings, enrichment classes, social gatherings, small performances, and art shows. Each room will be filled with natural light streaming in through the building's 78 expansive windows. The open basement space is ideal for a children's play space and storage lockers that can be assigned to different town groups. The front porch redesign will offer a large, covered space that can be used for outdoor concerts and performances that overlook the shaded lawn, where audiences can gather. Building access considerations include wide staircases, an elevator, and a handicap entrance from the back of the building. Ample parking is ensured at the rear entrance. As you can see, the possibilities of how the space can be used are endless.

**Financing the Project**

The residents of Hollis have shown their support for the FBCC by previously voting to invest \$100,000 to fund the stabilization of the building

and develop a condition assessment and feasibility reuse study. The estimated cost of the completed project is around \$5 million, significantly less than the over \$7 million estimated for a teardown and rebuild of the exact building. "We realize that a project of this size will have a large cost, but the benefits to the community will be immeasurable. Looking forward, we will employ the financing model of the Lawrence Barn project. The combination of Town funding, grants, donations from residents, and donations of labor and materials from Hollis businesses can all be incorporated to fund this project. It's important to remember that over three-quarters of the cost to rebuild the Lawrence Barn, and the Noah Dow Cooper Shop was done with donations and pledges. When voters pass Warrant Article 4, we will then have a clear understanding of the scope of work and cost involved," explained Dave Sullivan. Dave added that like other community centers in the area, this project could be accomplished in phases which would break down the overall cost into smaller amounts over time. While this option tends to add time and cost to the overall project it is certainly an option.

**Next Step-Pass Warrant Article 4**

"Passing this warrant article IS the next step in this process that began in 2011. We are asking for up to \$300,000 to develop the needed documents, drawings, and plans to take this project to bid. This phase could very well come in under this amount. Donations to this phase, creative funding, and the possibility of a grant may all contribute to offsetting this amount. However, this amount must be our starting point to ensure this phase is completed correctly, it is also based on the industry standard of 7 to 8 % of the total project," Dave Sullivan. We'd like to note that

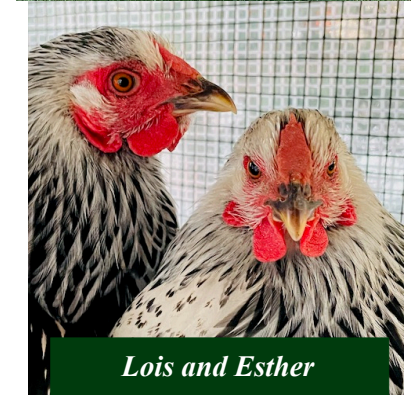
Warrant Article 4 has earned the unanimous support of both the Hollis Select Board and the Hollis Budget Committee. Details about the warrant article can be found on the FBCC website (www.farleyforhollis.org).

Now is the time to envision a building where our community can gather. A community center that conveniently connects schools, ball fields, the library, and the town center. A place where different generations can regularly pass each other in hallways, where lives are enriched, and where folks can just sit and pass the time. A place where every Hollis resident will find a welcoming home. The Farley Building is ready to be transformed into a community center we all can enjoy. We encourage you to learn more about the project at www.farleyforhollis.org. There you can join an email list to receive project updates, see the project floor plans, project FAQs, and information about Warrant Article 4.

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*Lois and Esther*



*Weezie and Ben*

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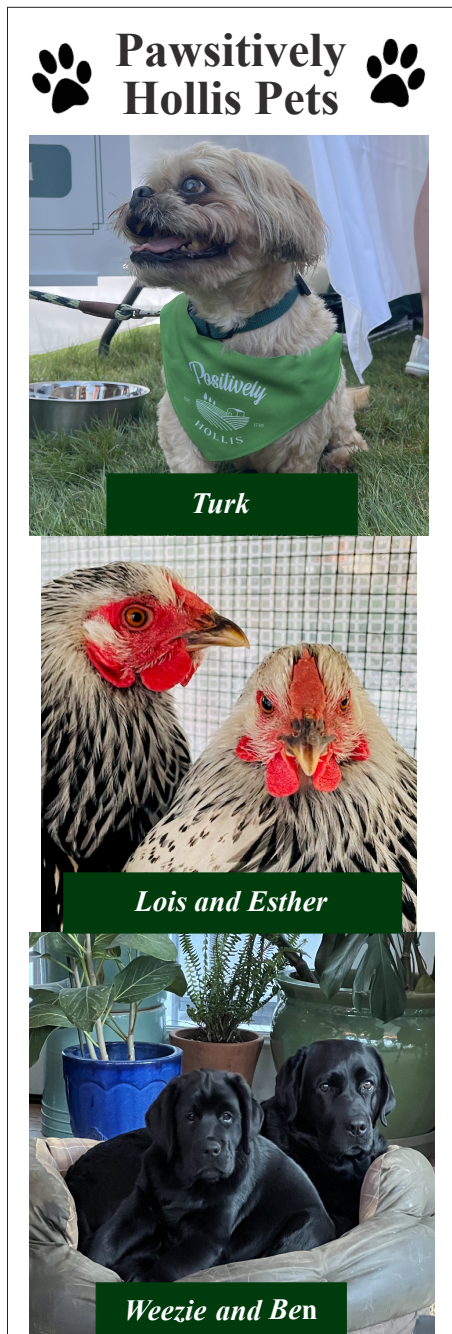
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## Embracing the Next Chapter: Retirement Plans of Hollis Pastor and Police Chaplain Mike Rattin



HPD Chief Joe Hoebeke, Mike Rattin & Russel Norris  
Courtesy, Mike Rattin

After more than 32 years of dedicated service as the pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Hollis, Mike Rattin reflects on his journey in this thoughtful and personal interview. From his initial calling to Hollis and the growth of his congregation to his unique role as the Chaplain for the Hollis Police Department, Rattin shares the meaningful moments that have shaped his ministry.

**PH Post: Pastor Rattin, how many years have you served as pastor of Faith Baptist church? What drew you to our community?**

Pastor Rattin: We came to Hollis from Meredith, NH in June of 1987. I have pastored Faith Baptist Church (FBC) for over 32 years. We were challenged to consider coming to FBC by the founding pastor, Stan Rockafellow, who is a friend and mentor to me. Having grown up in a small-town church in Illinois. I have a love for smaller churches and an even greater love to give the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will hear.

**PH Post: Can you share a key milestone or transformative moment during your tenure as the pastor that shaped you and the Faith Baptist Church community?**

Pastor Rattin: Many have followed the Lord in baptism openly declaring to the world they are believers and followers of Christ. The memories of the many baptisms we have held at Silver Lake, early on at Olive Nichols's home, and more recently at the home of Mary Anton are a great delight to me. Having witnessed so many young people grow up and move on to serve Christ in so many places and ways also brings me so much joy.

**PH Post: Your role as the Chaplain for the Hollis Police Department has been a unique aspect of your service to the community. Can you explain the role of a police chaplain?**

Pastor Rattin: My role as Chaplain was to be an encouragement to the men and women who put their lives in harm's way. Our first responders see some of the very best and worst in people and can be susceptible to emotional stresses. The very nature of their job adds unique pressures to family and relationships. We are a community blessed with outstanding men and women who serve us well. It has been a joy to witness the leadership respond with integrity. I commend each of our officers and the gifted leaders at the Hollis PD. It has been a privilege for me to have been a part of the PD family. *(continued on pg. 6)*

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## Cook's Corner

Each edition of The PH Post will feature a favorite recipe from a Hollis resident. If you would like to submit a recipe for the newspaper, please email it to [positivelyhollis@gmail.com](mailto:positivelyhollis@gmail.com). We also feature a weekly recipe on our website. Submissions are always welcome!

### Mother's Day Sponge Cake

Recipe By Eleanor Whittemore

This recipe was featured in our story "Remembering Eleanor." You can find it and other recipes at our website.

*Makes one 10" tube pan with a removable bottom.*

#### Ingredients:

½ cup sugar	1 tsp vanilla
2T water	6 egg whites
6 egg yolks	¼ tsp salt
1 tsp grated lemon rind	½ tsp cream of tartar
1 T lemon juice	½ cup sugar

#### Directions:

1. Combine ½ cup sugar with water and egg yolks and beat with a rotary beater until the mixture is very thick and forms soft mounds.
2. Blend in lemon rind, lemon juice, and vanilla.
3. Beat the egg whites with the salt until foamy. Add cream of tartar and beat until egg whites are stiff but not dry. Fold in ½ cup sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time.
4. Combine egg yolk mixture and egg white mixture carefully, then fold in the flour, 2 tablespoons at a time.
5. Pour into an ungreased tube pan and bake at 325 degrees for 50 minutes, until light brown. Cool in an inverted pan for 1 hour. You may need to run a knife around the edges to release the cake. Enjoy!





Mike Rattin (continued from pg. 5)

**PH Post: What is the most meaningful aspect of your work with the Hollis police?**

Pastor Rattin: There have been times when I found myself at both ends seeking to help people struggling who had come into conflict with the law. I respect and admire the officer's response to those who broke the law and yet my calling to shepherd and care for those following their arrest never became a conflict.

I was asked to sit in on a critical incident where a debriefing of a tragic event in town had taken place. All those from the dispatch to the officers who responded were asked to retell their part in the event. I was part of a team to provide support and help for the emotional health of our officers and offer follow-up.

**PH Post: What advice would you offer to individuals aspiring to engage in meaningful community service, drawing from your own experiences and lessons learned?**

Pastor Rattin: There is fulfillment in finding a place to serve and in joining others in meeting needs. The Apostle Paul quoting Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) I have found more joy and delight in helping others than when I focus on myself. In Hollis, you can there are many opportunities to get to know people while serving together. Find others and join in serving your community and you will be blessed. I would add that I love my church and our town. Sue and I will miss so many that have been a daily part of our lives. We are so thankful that we were allowed to serve in Hollis. I look forward to hearing encouraging news from the Faith Baptist and the community of Hollis.



Rattin Family Photo.  
Courtesy, Mike Rattin

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## Love and Healing with Therapy Dogs at the Hollis Social Library

Story by Susan Lynch

*A very special program takes place on Thursday afternoons at the Hollis Social Library. Rune, a trained therapy dog is the star of Paws to Read storytime. Promptly at 4 o'clock, he is patiently waiting for his young companions to arrive to read to him. What unfolds in each session is magical. "A visit from Susan and Rune brightens the day for the children who read to him and anyone else who meets them in the library," commented HSL Library Director, Tanya Griffith. Hollis resident and author Susan Lynch shares some background about her dogs, how they helped her in her time of grief, and how their unconditional love spills over to the time they spend with Hollis's children.*

Most of us dog lovers know that life is better with a dog. Studies have revealed the simple act of petting a dog releases endorphins which boost our mood and help reduce anxiety. Florence Nightingale learned over a century ago that being around small animals aided patient recovery. Today you can find therapy dogs in hospitals, schools, libraries, and nursing homes. In nearly every stage of my life, I have been blessed to have had the companionship of a dog. I developed a passion for training dogs and began



Manny and a friend. Photo Courtesy, Susan Lynch

competing with them in American Kennel Club dog sports in 1995. Competing was rewarding, but so was volunteering with them as a therapy dog team. Five of my Golden Retrievers have been certified with Therapy Dogs International (TDI.org). Over the years, I have seen the positive difference my dogs have made when visiting people who were lonely, stressed, or sad.

In 2015, two of my Golden Retrievers (Manny and Tripp) became my therapy dogs when my son Kevin died. Manny and Tripp were my constant companions who gave me comfort and eventually showed me how to take the first step toward healing. Their impact was so profound that I was compelled to share my experience by writing, *Life After Kevin, A Mother's Search for Peace and the Golden Retrievers That Led the Way*. Along my grief journey, I

learned that helping others was going to be a big part of my healing process. My dogs were so helpful during my grief that the idea of sharing them with others became a logical direction for me to explore. I had Manny certified with TDI and we began volunteering with Merrimack Home Health and Hospice. Manny was perfect in his role for children who had lost a parent. His job was to be a friendly greeter for the children to engage with as they arrived at the grief support group. Later, I was introduced to TDI's Tail Waggin Tutors program where children read to a dog at their local library. Part of why the reading-to-a-dog concept is so successful is because there is never any judgment from a dog. The child relaxes knowing that the dog is there to just enjoy the story. Over time, the child's reading ability and confidence can improve, making them enjoy reading even more.

Manny had proven to be a natural with children and was the first Tail Waggin' Tutor dog at the Hollis Social Library. His job was to lie next to the child and just "listen" to the story. I recently had this experience with my current therapy dog, Rune:

A mother and her daughter arrived at the Hollis Social Library to read to Rune. The girl was excited about her time with Rune and was showing him the early reader book she had brought from home. After greeting his new friend, he settled in for her story. When she had finished the book I congratulated her on what a great job she had done.

Since there was still time before the next child arrived; I asked if she'd like to pick out another book to read. Her smile quickly faded and she turned toward her mother with a look of worry. Her mother explained that this was her daughter's very first book and she had been practicing for weeks so she could read it to Rune.

Thankfully, I responded quickly asking if she'd like to read it to him again. Her smile returned as she opened her book and gave Rune a repeat performance.

To learn more about Susan Lynch and her book visit: [susan-lynch.com](http://susan-lynch.com).



## Hollis's New Playground Realized with the Power of Volunteers



In the heart of our town center, sits Little Nichols Field - a gift from Charles Nichols for the play and enjoyment of the children of Hollis. Centrally located in the Historic District, just downhill from the original Farley School and adjacent to the library, the spot has been a meeting place for families for over a century. Over time, a playground was added and became a place for families to gather and children to play. Recently, the playground was replaced due to safety concerns. A great deal of careful planning has gone into the new playground. For insights into the project's scope, we reached out to Recreation Commission Coordinator Erica Crea in November, just as the new playground was being installed.

**PH Post: Erica, what led to the decision to replace the playground equipment?**

Erica: "In November 2022 the Recreation Commission recommended to the Select Board that the old structure be removed due to rust and damage. We felt it was no longer safe for children to play on. The playground is an important gathering location for the community and the Rec Commission made the project one of our top priorities for the year. Altogether, the project took one year from start to finish. We couldn't be happier with the results!"

Many community projects in Hollis rely on volunteers to plan and execute much of the work needed to complete. It's part of the deal of living in a small

town in New Hampshire. It's cost-effective, efficient, and is a wonderful way to get to know each other. The new playground at Little Nichols Field is a great example of neighbors joining together to get the job done. Chelsea and Greg Lennartz are busy parents of two young children who were regular visitors to the playground. Together they helped to spearhead a 12-person committee that took on the bulk of the playground project. Bids from three vendors were gathered and ultimately led to the selection of Merrimack, NH-based O'Brian and Sons Landscape Structures. Careful design planning and materials selection led to a playground plan meant to serve the children of Hollis for years to come. The total playground cost was \$131,738. with \$125,000 coming from ARPA funds and \$6,738 coming from the Recreation Revolving Fund. Parents continue to be involved with the project providing the labor to install safety bearers, a sandbox, and a picket fence to keep children safe from the parking lot will be added in the Spring. We had the chance to connect with Chelsea Lennartz and Caroline Geehan, two moms who regularly meet at the playground with their children.

**PH Post: Chelsea, both you and your husband have played a big role in the new playground. As a parent, do you feel that the new playground has enhanced the sense of community and social interaction among local moms and their children?**

Chelsea: "I have a group of friends we met through that playground. We would have never met otherwise, and I feel lucky it was present when my daughter was born. When it was removed, I went before the select board to voice how important it had been in meeting friends in town and how devastating it was. It's what brought me to volunteer for the recreation committee. I'm happy to give back and now feel like a true part of my community. I hope we can keep making improvements to the play-

ground. During the process we explored more ADA-friendly surfaces, sunshades, a pavilion, and new picnic tables. Erica even mentioned adding some planters once the fence is added and working with the library to include some story and planting activities. Many families like mine are moving to town for the amazing schools and closeness to nature, and I think our recreation spaces are key to building that sense of community early on."

**PH Post: How has the new playground affected your child's playtime experience?**

Caroline: "We visit the playground as often as we can! Typically, a few times a week since it is our favorite place to walk to in town. With three children 4 and under it has become a lifeline for me as a SAHM (Stay at Home Mom). It is a joy to watch them explore the various components and challenge themselves in new ways each time we visit. My boys love the climbing options and the super-fast slides. They love pretending that the structure is a fire station or a pirate ship or whatever has popped into their imagination for the day."

**PH Post: Do you feel that the new playground has enhanced the sense of community and social interaction among local moms and their children?**

Caroline: "Absolutely! Before this new playground, it seemed that mostly young families were drawn. Since the new structure, I've noticed that moms with school-age kids are now stopping by regularly. It's been great to meet new families and watch children of all ages enjoy the space together. When we first moved to Hollis in 2021, the playground was the place where I met all our now-good friends. It's a natural meeting spot for families. Now that we have a brand-new structure the draw is even greater, and we continue to meet new people nearly every time we visit. We feel incredibly lucky to live in Hollis and have such a sense of community."

### IMPORTANT DATES IN HOLLIS MARCH 2024

**March 12th**  
Town Election at Lawrence Barn  
7:00 am to 7:00 pm

**March 14th**  
Hollis School District Annual Meeting at  
Hollis Brookline Middle School  
6:00 pm

**March 16th**  
Annual Hollis Town Meeting at  
Hollis Brookline High School  
9:00am to 3:00 pm

**March 19th**  
COOP School District Annual Meeting at Hollis Brookline High School  
6:30pm-8:00pm



### This Could Be Your Ad

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### Volunteer Opportunities in Hollis:

- Building Code Board of Appeals: 3 Regular Member openings.
- Cable Advisory Committee: 1 Regular Member
- Conservation Commission: 1 Alternate Member
- Energy Committee: 1 Regular Member
- Farley Building Committee: New Members Welcome
- Historic District Commission: 1 Alternate Member
- Representative to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC): 1 Regular Member
- Old Home Days Committee: Treasurer and General Volunteers ([www.oldhomedays.org](http://www.oldhomedays.org))



*If you have an open volunteer position, send us an email ([positivelyhollis@gmail.com](mailto:positivelyhollis@gmail.com)) with a job listing and we will post it on our website.*

### HBHS AP Students Win State Competition!

*Let's Help Them Get to the National Finals.*

Hollis has every reason to be immensely proud of HBHS AP Government Studies students, who won the New Hampshire We the People competition. Kudos to the 12-member team and their Civics teacher, Trevor Duval! They're heading to Washington D.C. for the National competition and are seeking support through fundraising. Your contribution would be a meaningful endorsement of their hard work. The National Finals marks the culmination of students' We the People journey, testing their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and American government. HBHS will be competing with 48 state teams.

Email Trevor Duval to donate: [trevor.duval@sau41.org](mailto:trevor.duval@sau41.org)

## Kids' coloring feature: The Farley Building



### Artists of All Ages *Unleash Your Creativity*

Use your imagination to color this picture of the Farley Building Community Center. Share your artwork by emailing a photo to [positivelyhollis@gmail.com](mailto:positivelyhollis@gmail.com). Your submissions will be featured in our website's art gallery!

### Fun Facts!

Maine is the only state that has a one-syllable name.

A shrimp's heart is in its head.

Like fingerprints, everyone's tongue print is different.

*Source: NIEHS*

Share Your Fun Facts!  
Send to:  
[positivelyhollis@gmail.com](mailto:positivelyhollis@gmail.com)