

Friday, July 16, 2021

Mayor's Update

A New Center for Older Residents

With the hard work of so many of our older residents, we will be breaking ground in the summer of 2023 on a new center for Newton's older residents.

Click below for details.



As we lean in hard to complete the design for this wonderful project we've been calling NewCAL, stay involved as we have many opportunities for people to weigh in, including working together to find the right "forever" name.

Newton recently lost an incredible friend and pillar of our community, Audrey Cooper. Among her many accomplishments, Audrey co-chaired the committee that developed Newton's first Senior Center and then served on the Center's Board as its first President. Could this new facility be named the "Cooper Center?" Let's see.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and suggestions on naming and so many other important decisions as we move forward.

Find upcoming meeting dates and more information [here](#).

Thanks, also, to the City Councilors who are on the Public Facilities and Programs and Services Committees who voted unanimously Wednesday night in a straw vote to move forward with this new building.

While we're excited for the future, it's also great to be back together as the Newton Senior Center reopens its doors as the pandemic winds down.

Jayne Colino, staff and volunteers are offering programs inside the Senior Center at 345 Walnut Street in Newtonville, outside in a tent set up in the courtyard, and online as well.

Lunch service is also resuming inside the Senior Center on Monday, July 19. Dine indoors in our dining room or pick up a meal to eat outdoors or take home to heat up later. Please call 617-796-1668 before 11:00 a.m. *two days before to reserve your lunch.*

COVID-19 Case Update

Our Newton data this week continues to show a low level of COVID-19 and another slight uptick in cases with 12 confirmed new cases between July 7 – 14. We had 7 new cases between June 30 and July 6, and 11 between June 23 – 30. There was just one new case between June 16 – 23. Our cumulative total of cases over the course of the pandemic is now 4,409.

The average daily incidence rate over the past two-week state tracking period from June 27 – July 10 is 1.6 per 100,000, up a bit from the 1.2 reported last week, and from 0.5 from the June 6 – 19 state reporting period.

The percent of tests performed on Newton residents that came back positive is now 0.4% of the 5,663 tests performed. (The rate was 0.2% of the 6,726 tests performed from June 6 – 19). For comparison purposes, on Jan. 15, the day our Health and Human Services Department administered the first vaccines to our first responders, we reported an incidence rate of 37.1 cases per 100,000 people and a positivity rate of 2.96% of the 17,703 tests administered over the two week period of Dec. 27 to Jan. 9.)

Being fully vaccinated continues to be the best protection against COVID-19.

Looking to get vaccinated? Find a vaccination site at [vaxfinder](#). (Many sites no longer require appointments.)

Again this week, for the fifteenth week in a row, the best news is that no one in Newton died with COVID-19.

*Try some great food, pay what you want, and support the Newton School Foundation (NSF) at the official **grand opening weekend of Clover Food Lab**, at Trio, 845 Washington Street. Stop by tomorrow, July 17, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All proceeds will go to the NSF, a non-profit advancing*



excellence and equity in the Newton Public Schools.

Mosquito Season

Mosquitos are out, biting, and, unfortunately, spreading diseases. Mosquitos in cities and towns surrounding Newton have recently tested positive for West Nile Virus.

During these hot, humid summer days when mosquitos flourish, here are some simple steps to protect ourselves and our family from bites and the illnesses they can cause:

- Use an [EPA-registered insect repellent](#) when outdoors
- Wear long-sleeved clothing
- Schedule outdoor activities to avoid the hours from dusk to dawn –peak mosquito times
- Repair damaged screens
- Remove standing water around your residence since mosquitos can breed in even small amounts of water.



Get more information about mosquito-borne diseases from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health [here](#).

Update on Break Ins

Between June 13 and July 10, we had a total of five “breaking and entering” of houses in the city. In all five instances, the victims were of Asian descent. Thankfully, no one was at home during the break ins (which all occurred during the day and on weekends with money, jewelry and handbags being the primary target).

The Newton Police Department is reporting one additional home break in this week. The homeowner reported this latest one which occurred on River Street in West Newton on Monday, July 12. The homeowner in this case was not Asian (and no one was at home).

Altogether, Newton has had 46 residential break ins year to date in 2021. (There are a total of 54 break ins so far in 2021 including those at commercial properties.)

During the pandemic when people were home, the year to date number was considerably lower (19) and in 2019, the year to date number was 36.

City of Newton Residential Burglaries/Break Ins			
January 1st - July 15th			
	2019	2020	2021
Jan	15	2	4
Feb	5	2	4
Mar	1	1	13
Apr	3	6	10
May	3	4	6
Jun	4	2	7
Jul	5	2	2
TOTAL	36	19	46

Newton Police and our Detective Bureau are continuing to actively investigate all of these break ins. They are looking for similarities among the victims, trying to lift fingerprints, canvassing each neighborhood by knocking on doors and speaking with residents, seeking more video footage, adding directed patrols (104 in the area of the five break ins involving Asian families, and 2,409 anti-crime related patrols citywide during that period). Yesterday afternoon Chief John Carmichael and Lt. Bruce Apotheker joined Michelle Luo, Co-President of the Chinese American Association of Newton, to speak with residents in the Country Club Road area of Oak Hill where a break-in occurred on July 10. NPD is also working with law enforcement partners throughout the area, including Middlesex County District Attorney Marian Ryan.

NPD recommends several precautions we can all take to help safeguard ourselves and our property:

- Lock the doors and windows of your home and car.
- Tell a trusted neighbor or friend when you are away so they can check on your home.
- Notify the post office to stop your mail when you are away, and stop newspaper deliveries so they don't pile up on your doorstep or driveway. (You can put a vacation stop on the TAB delivery [here](#), or call the TAB at 1-888-697-2737.)
- Remove any ladders or furniture from your yard that could be used to climb to a second story window or balcony.
- Get a timer to turn on lights when you are away, and consider adding motion detecting lights outside your home.

- Leave a battery powered radio on when you're gone so it sounds like people are home.
- Consider getting an alarm system, a security camera or ring camera to video record people who are on your property or who come to your door.

If you're out of town and need to contact the Newton Police, call 617-796-2123.

Having your home broken into is traumatic under any circumstances; add that the victims may have been purposely targeted because they are Asian, and it's beyond upsetting.

These suspects are stealing some things that are valuable but replaceable, but also family heirlooms and sentimental possessions that can never be replaced. Most of all, for the victims and so many other Newtonians, they have stolen the sense of security and safety that is so essential.

Newton's Director of Social Services Meghan Kennedy put together some information about recovering from this trauma. You can read it [here](#). (We're working to provide translations in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish and Russian and they should be online Monday on the Health and Human Services Department page [here](#).)

In addition to taking steps to make our homes more secure, we can also work together to make our neighborhoods safer.

Let's all do our jobs as neighbors. Meet the people who live next door and across the street, exchange phone numbers, watch out for each other, and take care of one another.

Let's use these break ins to build bridges. With the pandemic winding down, let's get back to the great Newton tradition of having neighborhood block parties. Fill out a Block Party form with NPD [here](#) and Newton's DPW crews will drop off barricades to block off your street.

Warmly,

Ruthanne



P.S. Join the fun at the **4th Annual Schultz Family Kids Triathlon**. The race, where people of all ages and ability levels are welcome, is in person on Wednesday, July 21 at Newton North High School starting at 6:00 p.m., or virtually starting on the 21st through Sunday, July 25. Thanks to Newton Athletes Unlimited, there is also an adaptive division for children and adults with disabilities. Register today or tomorrow by 5:00 p.m. at [Schultz Family Kids Triathlon](#) and check there for more information and for race day details.



P.P.S. **Folk rock, blues guitar, rock and roll**, and more! Bring a chair, a snack and some summer music spirit to the Newton Centre Bowl (the open area below the hut off Tyler Terrace (81 Tyler Terrace) in the Newton Centre Park and close to two great playgrounds for kids). Join us on Sunday, July 18 at 6:30 p.m. to hear live music by The Day Breakers. The full schedule of Newton's summer concerts and information is [here](#).

P.P.P.S. **Welcome Home, a nonprofit "home goods pantry"** based in Newton Center, provides families experiencing hardship with basic household items they need to live with dignity (e.g., towels, pots & pans, blankets, kitchen appliances, plates & bowls, lamps). Each month Welcome Home collects and redistributes like-new and new household items to dozens of people with no fees, no forms and no requirements. Any items not used are repurposed or recycled. They currently provide and accept home goods by appointment. Interested in helping? Email welcomemass@gmail.com or call 617-454-4795. Find more information [here](#).



P.P.P.P.S. Consider joining the **Newton Auxiliary Police**, an all-volunteer group of department-trained officers. The Newton Auxilliary Police, active since the 1960s, patrol City parks and buildings on weekend evenings, help direct traffic at city-sponsored events, step up during natural disasters, and provide "extra eyes and ears." Stop by either open house and information session on Sunday, July 25 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday, July 28 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Newton Police Department, 1321 Washington Street in West Newton Square. Learn more [here](#).



P.P.P.P.S. Know a youngster interested in studying animals through the lens of an artist? How about trying an improv class, taking up Spanish cooking with both recipes and vocabulary on the menu, or traveling to Bar Harbor or Croatia? Registration is still open at **Newton Community Education**. Check it out at newtoncommunityed.org.



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