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## ► This week:



### Spinning for a cause

Participants raised funds to support the YMCA at the 4th annual Spin-a-thon.

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### Swinging into spring

Gateway Babe Ruth's spring season began with try-outs on Saturday.

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### Candidates speak

The three candidates for Board of Selectmen discuss their priorities and opinions.

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# Wareham Week

ABOUT WAREHAM, FOR WAREHAM, BY WAREHAM RESIDENTS

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FREE



### The world on their shoulders

Students at Decas Elementary traveled around the world — literally — at the school's International Night celebration. The event also featured international treats and activities. See Page 14. Photo by: Nadya Korytnikova

## Annual town elections Tuesday

### Voters to elect eight officials

By Chloe Shelford  
editor@warehamweek.com

Voters head to the polls Tuesday to make their choices for two seats on the Board of Selectmen, two School Committee seats, and four other town offices.

Polls will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Topping the ballot is a three-way race for two seats on the Board of Selectmen. Incumbents Anthony Scarsciotti and Patrick Tropeano are both seeking reelection to the three-year seats, while newcomer Jim Munise has thrown his hat into the ring.

Voters will be asked to vote for two of the three candidates with the top two vote-getters winning the seats.

The two School Committee races have been complicated by a mixup at the Town

Election Page 2

## Play before you buy at special needs toy store

By Nadya Korytnikova  
reporter@warehamweek.com

A quick Google search can pull up hundreds of sensory-friendly toys designed for children on the autism spectrum, but just because a toy is billed as appropriate for children with special needs, that does not

guarantee the kid will like it.

That's where Piecing It Together comes in. Located at 171 Marion Rd., it is one of the few stores in Massachusetts designed for children with developmental disabilities.

Behind Piecing It Together is Jess Roy, a mother of four whose 8-year-old twin sons were diagnosed with autism at 18 months

old. The store caters to children with autism, ADHD, or other sensory issues. All items are available for kids to try out prior to purchase, Roy said.

"Every single child with autism is completely different. My twin sons are total opposites. That's why what works for one

Toys Page 12

Weekend breakfast  
at Shenanigans Bar & Grill

Cool Banana Wig  
at Friends Academy

Buying a home?  
'Pre-approval' matters

Purple Passions  
at the symphony

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**Toys** *continued*

kid might not work for another,” said Roy. “Here children can touch, try and pick up the toys they like.”

The 500-square foot store features dozens of toys, including weighted animals that promote calm, a Magic Cube, which helps with sensory-motor development, and a Swing Hammock Pod Chair, which often helps Roy’s sons to calm down.

The store also assists customers in purchasing wearable GPS trackers for pinpointing a lost child’s location.

Piecing It Together will celebrate its grand opening on March 31.

Roy will also host a monthly support group at the Wareham library to connect with other parents raising kids on the autism spectrum.

“There are other parents out there who are going through the same thing,” Roy said. “I might have an idea that works for my kid that another parent hasn’t tried and vice versa. Sharing that knowledge with special needs families is huge and we should try to help one another.”

Roy said that one of the biggest motivations behind launching the store was to create a safe space, where parents with autistic children could buy toys without the fear of being judged.



A painting by Jess Roy’s daughter, Kayla Boucher. Photo: Nadya Korytnikova

“When an autistic kid has a meltdown, it looks as a temper tantrum for somebody else, but it is not a temper tantrum, it is sensory overload. Kids can’t handle all the light, all noise, it is just too much for their brains to process,” said Roy. “People would often look at me like my children were brats. They weren’t brats, they were just overloaded.”

As a single mother, Roy has mastered



Jess Roy at the counter in her new toy store. Children can text out all the toys before they buy them in the store’s Play Room. Photo by: Nadya Korytnikova

balancing her time between family and business, which she said, “took a few years to figure out.”

“You adjust,” said Roy. “You deal with it and it becomes easier over time. I am always tired, I am not going to lie. But you just do it. No one else is going to do it for you.”

Although the store is not officially open, the feedback from the community has

been positive.

Roy said more than 50 people on Facebook announced their plans to attend the grand opening.

Roy hopes her store will succeed so she can achieve her next big dream.

“My dream is to franchise the store and then employ people with autism,” Roy said. “That’s a big dream, but it is a dream.”



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