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WarehamWeekToday.com

► **This week:**



**Cruising into Christmas**

The annual Christmas parade rolled through Wareham Village on Saturday.

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**Candelight vigil**

Nurses and local leaders mourned the impending closure of the Tobey Hospital maternity ward on Tuesday.

Page 4



**Shop 'til you drop**

Shoppers explored five holiday fairs on Saturday to shop for presents and support the community.

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# Wareham Week

ABOUT WAREHAM, FOR WAREHAM, BY WAREHAM RESIDENTS

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FREE



**Meeting Mrs. Claus**

Mrs. Claus (Judy Barclay) takes Christmas wishes from excited puppies during the annual YMCA's "Snowy Night, Bright Lights" run/walk on December 6. See the story — and more photos — on Page 17. Photo by: Nadya Korytnikova

## Stuffed with love: Toy and food drives fill bus, cruisers

By Nadya Korytnikova and Chloe Shelford

The spirit of the season was in the air in Wareham on Saturday as community members donated hundreds of toys to drives for Turning Point.

Dressed up in warm layers, Wareham teachers and bus drivers collected toys for their third annual "Stuff-A-Bus" donation drive to benefit Turning Point.

Turning Point, an all-volunteer social service agency, provides assistance to the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless in Wareham through a variety of programs. During the holidays, the organization also helps to sponsor gifts for children in need.

"Three years ago, Turning Point did not have enough donations to bring to the families in town, so at the last minute we

Toy drives Page 2

## Honoring a fallen officer, Renaissance man

By Nadya Korytnikova  
reporter@warehamweek.com

Officers Christopher Argentinis and John Walcek always greeted each other with a firm handshake and friendly teasing as they worked together at the Wareham Police Station. Handling numerous calls together,

they always relied on each other's support and protection.

Their unbreakable friendship ended abruptly. On Dec. 11, 1999, Argentinis was struck by a State Police Cruiser as he chased a suspect on foot. He died from injuries sustained in the accident three days later, leaving behind his wife of ten years,

Maureen, and their two sons, three-year-old Nikolas and five-year-old Darius.

A week before the 20th anniversary of his death, Walcek, now an Acting Chief, said the 36-year-old officer is still missed — especially at this time of year.

After serving at the department for

Argentinis Page 12

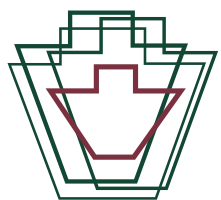
Shenanigans entertainment  
Thursday – Sunday

Irish Harp Concert  
December 15

New chef's specials  
at BB's Bar & Grille

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for Lopes Playground

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### Argentinis continued

12 years, Argentinis, was buried on Dec. 17, just a little more than a week before Christmas.

"I miss him every day," said Maureen. "Holidays are hard, Christmas is hard but that Christmas, in particular, was just unimaginably hard... not having him there. As the boys grew up, it of course would hit me all the time, but sometimes it was with things like going to see the boys' games. [...] If he could be there, he would have loved all of those moments, all of those events for school and sports."

Argentinis' mother Beth Godfrey said she misses her son "terribly," but one of the things she feels most sad about is that he did not get to see his children grow up and "how awesome they are," adding that he would have been very proud of them.

A valedictorian at Bourne High School, Darius, 25, now works as a paramedic and is preparing to begin medical school. Nikolas, 23, graduated from Northeastern University and now works as an industrial engineer for a company that develops artificial pancreas. Argentinis "lives through his kids," said Walcek, as they share his father's interests, including a love for music, sports, and learning.

Officers in the Wareham Police Department remembered Argentinis as a "Renaissance man" who could frequently be seen reading Shakespeare in his car. He loved to have political debates and discuss the evolution of rock 'n' roll, the intricacies of classical music, and the history of The Beatles.

Argentinis' mother said he "was never bored — he always had something going on." He earned a third-degree black belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, played in his 16-piece Big Band "Top Shelf," and practiced trumpet, all while being a reliable co-worker, devoted husband, and loving father.

Lieutenant Walter Correia, who wears a remembrance prayer card for Officer



Chris Argentinis. Photo courtesy: Maureen Argentinis

Argentinis inside his cap, remembered responding to a call to find a huge fight involving eight family members. Correia tried to stop the biggest fighter, who pummeled the lieutenant.

"I was on the ground and I remember thinking to myself, 'Oh, man we are in some stuff here.' But then, I looked up and I saw blue lights and it was Chris. He came up to the biggest one and he did some type of jiu-jitsu thing. And the next thing I know, that big guy was on the ground," said Correia.

Walcek said Argentinis' death in the line of duty is a reflection on the dangers of the job that officers face every day.

"It's a deadly serious business, and when you are looking at two little kids, a mother and a wife, it makes it very real," said Walcek, who served as a pallbearer at Argentinis' funeral.

Argentinis' dedication to helping people did not cease after his death, as his heart, liver, kidneys, pancreas and leg veins were transplanted to others.

"And you know that was a good heart to get," said Walcek. "Chris led a good life, a healthy life."

The Wareham Police Department will place a wreath in Argentinis' honor at the Wareham Police Memorial. This winter, the department also plans to install a plaque in his honor at the Plymouth Police Academy.



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