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Farewell, but not goodbye ...

BY CAROL BROOKS BALL

They say change is good and I know this to be true. But often it can be painful, even when the change leads to something good.

It is with a somewhat heavy heart then, that with this issue of the Transcript, I must bid adieu to the residents of Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield as editor of their local paper.

Effective next Monday, Aug. 29, I will take over as editor of the Melrose Free Press, another Community Newspaper Company weekly publication. This exciting promotion will enable me to grow in my profession as a journalist, overseeing a widely read newspaper in a city of close to 30,000 people. It is a challenge that, when presented to me, I quickly embraced.

That doesn't mean the change comes without some sadness, however.

My Tri-Town roots run deep: I have been a Topsfield resident for the past 18 years and have been involved with the Transcript since my now almost-16-year-old son was a one-year-old toddler. I worked as a freelance correspondent for this and other CNC papers for several years, joining the Transcript as a staff reporter some five years ago. Three years later, I was promoted to editor and have been responsible for the editorial direction of the paper since then.

On Monday, as I take over the reins at the Melrose Free Press, David Rogers will take over the reins here at the Transcript. Rogers has been editor of CNC's Amesbury News for the past three years. Prior to that, he was the sports editor of that paper and has worked for other CNC publications as well as the Eagle Tribune.

To all the elected town officials, appointed officials, committee members, volunteers and residents who helped make my tenure here at the Transcript a pleasure, thank you. To those who perhaps made my tenure here uncomfortable at times, thank you as well. Both experiences led to tremendous learning opportunities for which I am grateful.

I will continue to work out of the Beverly newsroom here at 72 Cherry Hill Drive and will be packing my office only to move across the newsroom. I'll also still be around Topsfield with my family, eating ice cream at Sweets (until, sadly, it closes), checking out books from the Topsfield Library, popping into Gil's while my children purchase

penny candy and bugging Jack at Dawson's with some obscure hardware-related questions. It will be nice, for a change, to walk the town and the soccer fields and the school hallways as a resident only, without having to wear my journalists' cap at the same time.

However, there will always be that tug. And I'll still be a faithful reader of the Transcript. You can count on that.

Carol Brooks Ball is editor of the Tri-Town Transcript.

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