

# The Town Common

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www.thetowncommon.com

Wednesday, April 3, 2024 - Vol. 20, No. 23

**FREE**

## First Parish Food Pantry Expands to Help the Needy

By Stewart Lytle, Reporter



Jane Merrow in front of the new addition

Photo by Stewart Lytle

REGIONAL – It was raining on the Friday morning before Easter when dozens of volunteers for the First Parish Food Pantry gathered, as usual, to fill bags with groceries and a special candy treat for the needy.

The rain forced the volunteers inside the 2,400-square-foot metal warehouse building instead of setting up tables outside on the parking lot. With most of the space in the building taken up with shelving to store food and other necessities, the volunteers were “squished” into a relatively small space near the door.

“It really gets small,” said Jane Merrow, director of the pantry.

But this spring, that challenge will be solved when contractors, donating much of their time, will complete a new 20-foot by 39-foot addition on the south end of the building. Merrow said the original plan was to be 40 feet long, but it was cut short by a foot to keep from intruding on a neighbor.

The addition will provide space for a walk-in freezer and refrigerator, add more space for dry goods, including several stacks

of bread. It will be large enough for trucks to unload entire pallets of food that come from the new multi-agency hub in Salisbury.

And it will allow the volunteers on a rainy, cold day like last week to work inside in a larger space while they fill 750 bags of food. About two thirds of the bags for about 300 families are delivered by volunteers driving their cars and a van that belongs to the Seacoast Food Providers.

“We are so blessed to have this big building,” Merrow said. But the need in the community has the pantry bursting at the seams.

The almost 800-square-foot addition will cost between \$130,000 and \$150,000, Merrow estimates. Those funds come from donations.

To save money, the windows in the rear of the building are being repurposed for use in the new addition.

“This community is incredibly generous,” Merrow said.

The pantry started in a small library of the church almost a decade ago. It quickly outgrew that space, as

Continued on page 3

## Adopt a Horse, Save Another Horse

By Ava Moeckel, Reporter



Photo by Stewart Lytle

Mary Martin (far right) with Paisley, her team and two minis, Holly and Callie

WEST NEWBURY – Marvel is one of many success stories at the New England Equine Rescue North (NEER).

An aggressive Haflinger, Marvel was thought to be a lost cause. Bought at an auction by a well-meaning but inexperienced owner, the horse developed dangerous habits, threatening to kick any humans or animals that came near him.

“I was told he should be euthanized. I probably should have euthanized him,” said Mary Martin, president and founder of NEER North. But thanks to the hard work of Laura Ciarletta, Mary and others at the rescue farm, Marvel was given a second, third and many more chances.

Today, the gelding has a job on a therapy farm. He also has his own Facebook page where his new caregiver posts photos of Marvel with children and other animals.

NEER North is a non-profit equine rescue registered in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Since 2008, it has been helping horses and owners in crisis. A safe haven, NEER

North rehabilitates these animals for adoption into new homes.

Since the horse and donkey rescue was formed, Mary Martin has rescued and cared for dozens of animals each year on the 13-acre farm at 52 Ash Rd. This year she has more than tripled that number, caring for the large animals at three locations along the North Shore, plus others in foster care and adoption.

A total of 40 horses, ponies and donkeys are currently housed with NEER North, including 17 on site, plus three mules and three donkeys. There is also a sheep named Paisley, all of which strain the operation’s capacity.

“Adopting a horse saves two: the horse you take home and the one you make room for,” the web site says.

Like Marvel, each animal has a story. Standing in front of a gallery of photos of horses inside the doors of the barn/office, Mary and her adoption matchmaker Andrea Moore-Dickison love to recite stories about each animal in their care.

Other team Continued on page 3

## Pink House Supporters Face Its Demise

By Stewart Lytle, Reporter



Courtesy of Parker River Wildlife Refuge

The Pink House

THE ROAD TO PLUM ISLAND -- The legions of Pink House supporters meet this week to discuss last-ditch efforts to keep the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (F&WS) from demolishing the beloved house.

The meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, April 4 at PITA Hall, 8 Plum Island Trnpl., is billed by the Support the Pink House organization as one “You will not want to miss.”

“Regardless of the headlines, we are still working on negotiations with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It’s been quite a ride! New things happen to shift the picture every day, and we are following every last option,” the meeting announcement reads.

“Public outcry has only grown and that’s why we keep using every minute, 7 days a week, working on the public’s behalf to fulfill the mission.”

The public Continued on page 3

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Ads - Page 7**

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## How to Submit Letters to the Editor



Marc Maravalli, B.S., R.Ph.  
Publisher/Editor, The Town Common

Letters to the Editor provide a useful way of communicating concerns, issues, or suggestions to all members of the community.

The Town Common encourages all citizens to submit letters concerning issues of interest and concern to the local community.

Letters selected for publication may be edited for length and clarity. Some letters may serve as a catalyst for other articles or coverage, and community leaders and agencies will be offered an opportunity to respond to letters concerning their areas of responsibility.

All letters must be signed and include a daytime telephone number.

Letters may be submitted to:

The Editor  
c/o The Town Common  
77 Wethersfield St.  
Rowley, MA 01969

or preferably via e-mail to:  
editor@thetowncommon.com.

The Town Common deadline is 5pm Wednesday (except when a federal holiday necessitates an earlier deadline).

The Town Common serves the communities of the Upper North Shore of Mass. & Coastal New Hampshire and welcomes your participation. Send your Organization or Group Notices, Birth or Engagement Announcements, Photos, Articles and Letters to the Editor, by mail, phone, or e-mail to: 77 Wethersfield St., Rowley, MA 01969 Phone: 978-432-9669 E-mail: news@thetowncommon.com

## The Town Common

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In loving memory of

Liz Ichizawa, '04-05 Reporter (1956 - 2005)  
Jim Wilson, '20-22 Publisher/Editor (1954-2022)

## Civil War Roundtable of the Merrimack April Meeting

Wednesday April 10, 7:30-9:30 PM

Hilton Senior Center, 43 Lafayette Road, Salisbury, MA

The evening program will feature the topic, "I Told Kevin Costner That Like the Character He Played in Dances With Wolves, His Own Ancestor Was Also a Union Army Cavalry Trooper," with Clay Feeter.

Clay Feeter has a reputation for researching genealogy beginning in 1990, helping many people focusing on the Civil War. His research revealed that Costner's second great-grandfather had similarities to the character Costner portrayed in the movie Dances With Wolves, a Union Cavalry trooper.

This event is free and open to all with an interest in the American Civil War. There will be a brief business meeting prior to the program.

## Rowley Annual White Goods and Light Metal Recycling

The Rowley Board of Health will hold its annual White Goods/Light Metal Recycling Event on Saturday, April 20th, 2024, from 8:30 am to 11:30 am at the Highway Department, 40 Independent St. All metals will be accepted, but no glass wood, ceramic, plastic or rubber goods containing incidental metal are allowed. White Goods accepted include washers, dryers, stoves, kitchen appliances and gardening machines. A more complete listing can be found at the Town website, <https://www.townofrowley.net/>

Engines must be drained of all fluids before arrival at the Highway Department. Propane tanks without gas will be accepted. A nominal fee (\$5.00 for 20+ lb. tanks, \$1.00 for those less than 20 lb.) will be charged.

Fees charged for electronics are: Televisions & computer monitors over 46", \$30.00 each, Televisions & monitors under 46", \$25.00 each and Laptop computers, \$15.00 each. No fees will be charged for smaller electronic components.

The Rowley Board of Health reserves the right to refuse collection of any item(s) deemed inappropriate. PROOF OF RESIDENCY IS REQUIRED. Residents should come prepared to transfer their items from their vehicle into the container. For more information, contact the Rowley Board of Health at (978) 948-2231.

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### GEORGETOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSION

1 Library Street, Georgetown, Massachusetts 01833  
(978) 352-5712 • FAX (978) 352-5725

A Public Hearing will be held by the Georgetown Conservation Commission on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 7:00 PM, by Zoom Link found on Town Website Calendar date of meeting 46 Pond Street., Public Hearing for a Request for Determination of Applicability for the construction of a garage in the 100' of Bordering Vegetated Wetland.

Contact person: Michèle Grenier, PWS (978) 352-5712 04/03

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2 Tue	5:59	8.1	6:45	6.9			12:34	0.6	6:20	7:12	🌑
3 Wed	7:02	8.2	7:47	7.1	12:46	1.5	1:36	0.5	6:19	7:13	🌑
4 Thu	8:06	8.4	8:47	7.5	1:50	1.2	2:36	0.3	6:17	7:14	🌑
5 Fri	9:07	8.7	9:43	8.1	2:53	0.8	3:32	-0.1	6:15	7:15	🌑
6 Sat	10:04	9.0	10:34	8.7	3:52	0.2	4:24	-0.4	6:13	7:17	🌑
7 Sun	10:58	9.2	11:24	9.3	4:47	-0.4	5:13	-0.6	6:12	7:18	🌑
8 Mon	11:50	9.3			5:40	-0.9	6:01	-0.7	6:10	7:19	🌑
9 Tue	12:12	9.7	12:41	9.2	6:31	-1.2	6:48	-0.6	6:08	7:20	🌑

## Groveland Water and Sewer Shares Information on Expected Water Quality Regulation Changes, Offers Guidance to Residents

GROVELAND– Superintendent Colin Stokes, Groveland Water and Sewer Department, and the Groveland Board of Water Commissioners would like to share information regarding the expected regulation changes.

State and federal drinking water regulations are expected to change and Groveland Water and Sewer would like to share the following information about the changes.

Groveland Water and Sewer is proactively working on options for the new regulation guidelines proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Once the new regulations are accepted by the state, Groveland will be expected to take immediate action.

The current regulations for PFAS public drinking water standard or Maximum Contaminant Level (MMCL), as published in 2020 by EPA, is 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) or parts per trillion (ppt) applicable to the community. This regulation takes into account the concentrations of six specific PFAS.

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are man-made and do not break down quickly.

Currently, Groveland is well below the standard for the MMCL and has been sampling monthly and quarterly since 2021, with steady results of 4.1075 ppt at Well 1 and 4.392 ppt at Well 3.

The water is safe to drink per the current Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).

As of March 2023, the EPA released a proposed National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for PFOA and PFOS, which is 4 ppt. This regulation would cover Four additional PFAS compounds, which will be measured using a Hazard Index. A Hazard Index is a calculation based upon a formula provided by the EPA.

Regulations are determined by the maximum contaminant level due to PFAS.

The Groveland Board of Water Commissioners is currently looking into a variety of options to meet these regulations. The goal is to find a solution with the least impact on residents and ratepayers. Options include:

- Building a water treatment/filtration plant in Groveland
- Finding sufficient new water sources that will comply with the upcoming PFAS regulations.
- Purchasing water from a neighboring community

The new regulations are currently expected to be adopted by the end of 2024, or early 2025. The timeline for compliance has not yet been determined.

Information about this process will be shared with residents as it becomes available.

## Downsizing & DeCluttering

The Friends of the Merrimack Public Library is hosting a program on Saturday, April 27th @1PM at the Merrimack Public Library. Led by Quilt Maker & Interior Decorator Barbara Graceffa, the program will feature tips on Downsizing & DeCluttering. Participants will learn practical reasons for downsizing and tips on how to live with less but still live in style. Learn to start the de-cluttering process; determine what to keep, toss or donate; and gain strategies for maintaining a clutter-free home.

This is a free event open to the public. Please register using QR code below or <https://buytickets.at/thefriendsofthemerrimackpubliclibrary/1203626>

----->Click the green "Join the guestlist" button to register!

## Downsizing & DeCluttering

Saturday, April 27th, 2024 @ 1 PM

Merrimack Public Library

Join Barbara Graceffa, (Barbara is a quilt artist and Interior Decorator) and learn practical reasons for downsizing and tips on how to live with less but still live in style. Learn to start the de-cluttering process; determine what to keep, toss or donate; and gain strategies for maintaining a clutter-free home.



Register for this event with  
QR code or go to  
[MerrimackLibrary.org](https://merrimacklibrary.org)



## Adopt a Horse

Continued from page 1

members who help make NEER the success it is are Hillary Lind and Nerissa Wallen.

Mary's phonerings continuously. In the last year, she has had 140 requests to take in unwanted animals from owners throughout New England who are unable to care for their horses and donkeys.

The uptick in requests, she believes, is caused by inexperienced people wanting to own a horse. She has also had a higher return rate, again because it takes hard work and money to own a horse.

A great opportunity to learn about NEER and enjoy the fun and excitement of the rescue farm is at its annual Open House from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., June 9. The open house raises money and introduces people to the farm. The event includes barn tours, games, food trucks, a beer tent and the chance to visit with beautiful horses.

NEER North is affiliated and recognized by some of the most important organizations, including Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, EQUUS Foundation, Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, Guidestar Platinum, Massachusetts Equine Welfare Council, Equine Welfare Alliance

Equine Welfare Society, Animal Welfare Institute Americans Against Horse Slaughter, Animal Law Coalition and the American Horse Defense Coalition.

The non-profit NEER North has several ways to help the effort. Supporters can make a tax-deductible donation, contribute to the Feed Fund or sponsor a horse, stall or corral. To learn more, visit neernorth.org

## Pink House

Continued from page 1

has many questions and the Support the Pink House board will be there to answer questions, talk about next steps and how supporters can help.

After months of reviewing proposed land swaps and public comments, the F&WS offered two options. Alternative A, which was rejected by the agency, proposed to keep the Pink House as is under its management.

Alternative B, which was selected, proposes to remove the Pink House, restore the site and open it to public use.

The only way the F&WS would keep the Pink House standing was to have a "viable land exchange" that would have taken the house out of federal ownership. It required that the land traded would be "of higher ecological value and approximately equal monetary value (as required by law)," the agency's decision states.

The estimated value was in excess of \$400,000.

"The Service and its partners actively searched for a viable land exchange option for eight years, without success," the decision states.

The Support the Pink House wrote on its website that it had proposed a variety of sites that might be traded for the Pink House. "In the past few months, we have brought them as many as 17 options that seemed to fit their criteria, several of which were seriously considered, but all ended up being rejected," the STPH wrote.

The supporters wrote that it is "inconceivable that a solution has not been accepted by FWS."

It has had plenty of time and

plenty of options, they wrote. "We're mystified as to why they couldn't, or wouldn't, allow one to work."

The federal criteria kept becoming more stringent, eventually making the land trade solution impossible by their own creation.

The F&WS, which said it has no use for the Pink House, maintained that the property is not a good fit for a land exchange and to keep it is neither fiscally nor environmentally responsible.

The plan is to remove the house and restore the habitat, add benches and interpretative signage. It does not plan to build an observation platform, as once thought.

After a year of monitoring the public's use of the site, the F&WS may decide to build the proposed observation platform, or if the public has caused damage to the habitat, it may close it.

The F&WS is also assessing the feasibility of putting the Pink House up for auction to a bidder, who would have 90 days to remove and relocate it.

Jeff Ackley, the STPH treasurer, said last week that moving the Pink House would destroy the visual beauty of the house that has appealed to thousands of photographers and artists through the years.

The F&WS wrote: "We acknowledge and accept that the future viability of the Pink House within salt marsh that already floods routinely – and is expected to do so with greater frequency and intensity – is increasingly dire."

Maintaining the house, it wrote, would be contrary to the F&WS' primary mission to protect and conserve wildlife and their habitats, while managing for climate change.

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## Food Pantry

Continued from page 1

the need for food grew for families living in Newbury and Byfield, Newburyport, West Newbury, Salisbury, Rowley, Ipswich and Georgetown.

During the Covid pandemic when in-person church services were suspended, the pantry took over the pews in the sanctuary.

Typical of the pantry's innovative leadership, the empty wooden pews, choir room and wall space became the shelves and cold storage for the food and supplies. Along with Bibles and hymnals jars of peanut butter, pies and boxes of pasta, particularly Mac and Cheese filled the pews.

Alan Bull, a local artist, teacher and illustrator, captured the organized chaos of the operations in a painting he has donated to the pantry to raise funds for the pantry's operations.

Post-Covid, when the church wanted its sanctuary back, Merrow and her legions of supporters and volunteers raised about \$320,000

to erect the current building at the rear of the church.

Now, Coffey Design and Builders, Atlantic Contract Systems and Caswell Mechanical have stepped up again to build the expansion, which will make the pantry and its volunteers even more efficient.

The "guests" of the pantry are so appreciative of the food, Merrow said, they often write thank you notes or tell the volunteer who delivers the food a story about how the food helps them.

Each Friday before the volunteers begin filling bags, Merrow said the

notes are read to the volunteers. "It feels good. It is very heard warming."

If you are ready to volunteer, please call 978-358-1077 or email info@newburyfoodpantry.org.

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## Tarr and Senate to Rename Salisbury State Reservation to Honor Local Hero & Veteran

SALISBURY – On March 14, 2024, the State Senate approved the legislation SB.2701, An Act relative to changing the name of the Salisbury Beach State Reservation filed by Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester). This legislation aims to designate Salisbury Beach State Reservation as “Robert ‘Boots’ Chouinard State Reservation at Salisbury Beach. This follows a request by the town of Salisbury’s Board of

Selectmen that occurred at the Board of Selectmen Meeting in April of 2022 to name the SBSR in memory of local hero ‘Boots.’

“The remarkable life of ‘Boots’ Chouinard is filled with examples of patriotism, hard work, sacrifice, and unyielding dedication to country and community,” said Tarr. “‘Boots’ is not only a local icon, but a person whose story reflects the story of America itself. Naming the reservation on his behalf will remind residents and visitors alike of his continuing example and inspiration.”

“A fine writer and a spirited presence in the community, Robert ‘Boots’ Chouinard is a living inspiration to everyone in the First Essex,” said State Representative Dawn Shand (D-Newburyport).

“The Salisbury Board of Selectman unanimously voted to request that the Massachusetts legislators designate Salisbury Beach State Reservation as Robert “Boots”



Photo courtesy of Kristin McDonald  
*State Senator Bruce Tarr celebrates with Robert ‘Boots’ Chouinard (right) at his 100th Birthday celebration at the Salisbury Senior Center in Salisbury, MA this past December 2023.*

Chouinard State Reservation at Salisbury Beach to honor our local hero,” said Ronalee Ray-Parrott, the Chair of the Salisbury Board of Selectmen. “‘Boots’ Chouinard has influenced generations of Salisbury residents. As a long time, Salisbury Beach State Reservation lifeguard, local schoolteacher, newspaper writer, but most importantly World War II hero, he has left a mark on our town history. His acts of bravery and sacrifice serve as a testament to ‘Boots’ Chouinard’s character and remain an inspiration to us all.”

100-year-old local hero Robert ‘Boots’ Chouinard, a WWII U.S. Army Veteran, is well-known throughout the town of Salisbury. Born in 1923, his nickname ‘Boots’ came from a trip he made to the store one winter day at the age of five wearing a pair of oversized boots, and that name has stuck.

This bill now heads to the State House of Representatives for further action.

## The Future of the Great Marsh in Rowley and the North Shore

Tues, April 9, 6:30PM – In-person

David Moon from Mass Audubon North Shore will present how Mass Audubon and other organizations and agencies all around the Great Marsh are working to restore resilience to the salt marsh, which is threatened by sea level rise and other anthropogenic impacts.

Recent advances in low-impact techniques hold great promise for helping the marsh to keep up with sea level rise, and David will share specific designs for how Mass Audubon will use them at Rough Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary in Rowley.

David Moon is Community Science and Coastal Resilience Manager for Mass Audubon North Shore and works from Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport, where he helps to restore coastal habitats and leads birding programs. He has been a science teacher, environmental educator, and administrator of nature center programs for 40 years. He taught science at The Putney School in VT, was Executive Director of Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory, in Keene, New Hampshire, was Education Director at Stonewall Farm in Keene, and teaches tropical ecology for Franklin Pierce University in Costa Rica.

No registration needed for this in-person program. For more information on this or other programs, check our web site at [www.rowleylibrary.org/calendar](http://www.rowleylibrary.org/calendar), or call (978) 948-2850. The Rowley Library is located at 141 Main St. in Rowley.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Rowley Library.

## Rowley Democratic Town Committee

The Rowley Democratic Town Committee is meeting at the Rowley Public Library on Tuesday, April 2nd at 7 p.m. This meeting will primarily focus on re-electing current/electing new officers. The meeting is open to all, offering an opportunity to gain understanding on local topics and connect with others in the community. The Rowley DTC provides a forum to meet like-minded people, learn about local issues and candidates, and be active participants in the political process.

Email [rowleydemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:rowleydemocrats@gmail.com) for more information.



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# Health & Wellness



By J. PETER ST. CLAIR, DMD

## Brighter Smiles...

### SNORING IS *NOT* NORMAL

have read multiple studies which suggest a reduction of oxygen to the body can take 6-10 years off of your life. Sleep is one of the most mysterious states of being – we don't know a lot about what is going on during sleep without it being recorded. Wouldn't you want to know if your body wasn't being oxygenated properly?

A restricted airway can be caused by numerous different factors. Many times, it is developmental and starts early in life. As we age, this risk for developing a restricted airway increases with things like gaining weight, muscle tone laxity, and even sleep position. Snoring is a fluttering of soft tissue in the back of throat due to there not being enough space for air to pass through. Not only does snoring have the potential to affect your brain and the way you feel on a day-to-day basis, it also disturbs the sleep of the person sleeping next to you....and in some cases, people in other rooms.

Snoring does not mean you have sleep apnea (a serious disorder measured by a sleep test,) but is a significant risk factor. If you do have sleep apnea, you need to know this so that it can be treated and you can live a better quality of life. If you don't have sleep apnea and just snore, this can also be treated, and you may be able to make it back into your own bedroom.

Aside from snoring, if you have any of the following: familial

history of sleep apnea, history of daytime drowsiness, history of clenching/grinding, history of TMJ disorder, history of mood disorders/depression, witnessed apnea events (gasping at night), large tongue with ridges on the sides, tooth wear, high blood pressure, gastric reflux, large neck (Males >17 / Females>16) – you should discuss this with your physician and/or your dentist.

There are different ways to treat snoring and/or sleep apnea including positional therapy (sometimes a wedge pillow strapped to your back so you can't roll onto your back), a CPAP device (positive air pressure through the nose to keep the airway open), or a dental device (to keep the jaw and tongue from falling back).

Just like exercising and good eating habits are good for the body, quality sleep vital to good health. Just because you get 7-8 hours of sleep doesn't mean it is good sleep. Don't hesitate to talk with your doctors about your sleep issues.....and encourage the loud person sleeping next to you to do the same.

*Dr. St. Clair maintains a private dental practice in Rowley dedicated to health-centered family dentistry. He has a special interest in treating snoring, sleep apnea and TMJ problems. If there are certain topics you would like to see written about or questions you have please email them to him at jpstclair@stclairdmd.com*

It is not uncommon for me to get a strange look when I ask a patient about snoring in the dental office. After an explanation about some of the reasons I include this on my medical history form, the patient will often say, "Well, I don't snore but my spouse does. In fact, we sleep in separate bedrooms."

A better way to ask someone about snoring is to ask, "Have you been told you snore?" Snoring can be a huge nuisance to the bed partner and is actually very detrimental to both people. For those without a bed partner, snoring can be assessed with apps such as Snore Lab, which measures snoring levels throughout the night.

Snoring is a sign of a restricted airway, which means that there is a possible depletion of air getting into the lungs and thus the brain. You spend approximately one third of your life sleeping, which means if you live to 90 years old, you may have spent 30 years sleeping. Oxygen depletion during sleep has both short-term and long-term consequences. I

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