

# QUABOAG CURRENT

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Newspaper

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Volume 18, Number 10

Friday, January 31, 2025

## Market Spotlight

# Tulips from West Brookfield, Bacon from Charlton – it's all good

*Editor's note: The Quaboag Current will regularly feature a spotlight story on different farmers market vendors. Learn about the people that bring food and locally sourced items to your community.*

By Richard Murphy  
Correspondent

**WEST BROOKFIELD** – Yup, its cold. Surely, you are tired of hearing about it and thinking about it, but it is so true.

### What to do?

Well, as we often belabor the point, there is a place of refuge. It is from 3-6 p.m. on Wednesdays at The First Congregational Church, 36 North Main St. It is the Winter Farmers Market. The temperature is warmer, as is the spirit of the vendors

### Blair House Blooms

On Jan. 22, when we passed through the doors, into the hall, on the right as usual was Robyn Scott. Robyn's specialty is tulips.

We met Robyn last year and she is back with more. Back then, she related the story of growing up in Holden, but mom and dad eventually fell in love with West Brookfield, like a lot of us have.

Living on West Main Street, she only has to come a little way to the market.

Becoming the "Tulip Lady"

See MARKET | PAGE 12



Robyn Scott and some Blair House Blooms. TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY

# Mass DCR gives creel survey on fish species

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
Staff Writer  
epappas@turley.com

**BELCHERTOWN/WARE** – The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife held a presentation about the Quabbin Reservoir Creel Survey this past Sunday, and many people joined remotely and in person.

The goal of the presentation, held by biologists Brian Keleher and Jason Stolarski, is to help people understand and learn about the different fish species found in the Quabbin Reservoir.

Keleher works as a district fisheries biologist for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, or Mass-Wildlife, and specifically for the Connecticut Valley District in Belchertown, one of five management districts of Mass-Wildlife that each have their own fisheries biologist.

"MassWildlife is responsible for the conservation of freshwater fish and wildlife in the Commonwealth, including endangered plants and animals. MassWildlife restores, protects, and manages land for wildlife to thrive and for people to enjoy," said Keleher.

"I have worked here at this position for just short of nine years. I'm originally from up-

See SURVEY | PAGE 12

# Hearts for Heat hosted successful spaghetti dinner fundraiser

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

**NORTH BROOKFIELD** – Residents got to enjoy a spaghetti dinner this past Saturday at North Brookfield Elementary School, put together by the North Brookfield chapter of Hearts for Heat.

Hearts for Heat is a community-based charitable organization dedicated to providing heat to qualified residents in town.

The chapter consists of seven faithful volunteers: Sue

See DINNER | PAGE 8



Susan Lewandowski is president and secretary of the North Brookfield Chapter of Hearts for Heat. TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

# Local Eagle Scouts recognized at celebration dinner

**WORCESTER** – Heart of New England Council, Scouting America proudly hosted the Annual Eagle Scout Recognition Dinner at the Hogan Campus Center at Holy Cross College.

This prestigious event honored the remarkable achievements of the newest class of Eagle Scouts, the highest rank attainable. One hundred-three young men and women were honored, including Adrik Matys, Troop 118, West Brookfield; Andrew Gentili, Troop 238, East Brookfield; Zachary Lowe and Gavin Finn, Troop 141, Rutland; Camrin Bolduc, Troop 142, Warren; Richard

Tucker and Jacob Labarre, Troop 144, Oakham; and Nathan Lavoie, Joseph Roderick, Alex Fairbrother, Dominic Perreault, Adam Bailey and Ryan Beede, Troop 161, Sturbridge.

The evening was filled with inspiring stories of dedication, leadership, and community service. Distinguished guests, including local dignitaries, community leaders, and proud family members, gathered to celebrate the hard work and commitment of these exceptional young individuals.

The Heart of New England Eagle Project of the Year was

See SCOUT | PAGE 7

# - community -

## Karen Murphy graduates from MWCC Practical Nursing program

GARDNER – Mount Wachusett Community College held a traditional pinning ceremony for the graduates of its Practical Nursing program on Dec 13 at the Theater at the Mount.

Karen Murphy of Brookfield was one of the Class of 2024 graduates.

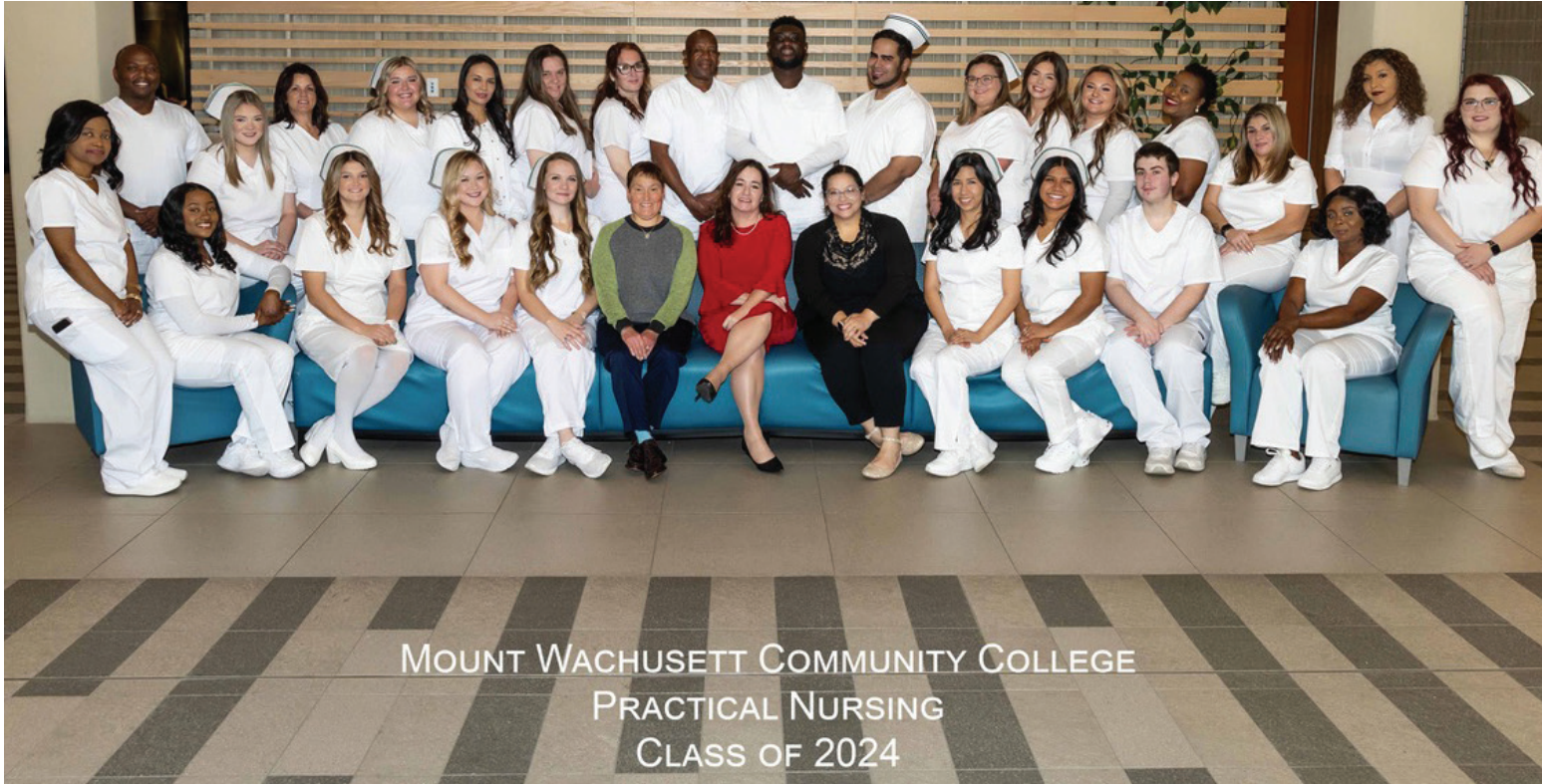
“You have chosen a caring profession, you have chosen a vocation to help others in their times of need, and that I believe is the highest vocation that one can aspire to.

You have not only chosen to help others before yourself, but you have also successfully completed a very difficult and rigorous curriculum.” MWCC President James Vander Hoooven told students.

Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences, Kim Shea, DNP, RN, addressed graduates, “Over the past 10 months you have embarked on a journey that was anything but easy. You have balanced, demanding coursework, clinical rotations and have probably

had many sleepless nights. But through it all you’ve persevered. And today you’re not just graduates, you are the leaders in compassionate care and the newest ambassadors to the nursing profession.”

Each student was given the opportunity to share a few words of thanks for the love and support shown by their friends, family, and faculty through their education before receiving their pin from their chosen faculty, friend, or family member.



Shown is the Mount Wachusett Community College Practical Nursing Class of 2024. SUBMITTED PHOTO BY JENNIFER A. GYLES



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## Health grants available to central Mass organizations

WORCESTER – The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts announced the opening of its 2025 Activation Fund grant opportunity, which provides capacity-building support for organizations working to address the community-identified health needs of central Massachusetts residents and workers.

With grants typically ranging between \$60,000 and \$125,000, the Activation Fund supports discrete, one-year projects in central Massachusetts aimed at helping organizations advance to their next level of capacity and effectiveness that can be sustained over time. The deadline for submission of a brief concept paper to express interest is Feb. 28.

Organizations invited to apply will be notified in April so that they can submit full applications; final funding

decisions will be made in late June so that projects can launch in July.

“Through the Activation Fund, we seek to offer grants that enable organizations to seize strategic opportunities for growth, address emerging challenges, purchase equipment, or improve facilities, thereby facilitating activities and outcomes beyond the status quo” said Dr. Amie Shei, President and CEO of the Foundation. “Over the past 25 years, nearly \$12 million in Activation Fund grants has been awarded to 117 unique organizations with positive and lasting ripple effects on health throughout the region.”

Those interested in applying for an Activation Fund grant should visit the Foundation website at www.thfcm.org to access information on the application guidelines and register for a virtual information session to learn about the

geographic focus and other eligibility requirements, types of support considered, and examples of previous grants.

Examples of 2024 grant recipients include Growing Places, which received a \$110,000 grant for development of a customized IT solution to enhance efficiency and expand its capacity to serve local food consumers, buyers and small farmers in north central Massachusetts, and Quinsigamond Community College, which received a \$125,000 grant to replace outdated dental chairs and equipment stations at its Worcester-based dental clinic that prioritizes underserved patients.

For questions about the application process, please contact Vice President for Programs Jennie Blake at jblake@thfcm.org or 508-438-0009 extension 6.

About the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts is dedicated to improving the health of those who live or work in central Massachusetts, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations and unmet needs. Through its unique and impactful approach to grantmaking, The Health Foundation supports community-identified health issues, with health defined broadly to include social determinants of health and with a focus on promoting health equity.

As a health conversion foundation launched in 1999 following the sale of the not-for-profit HMO Central Massachusetts Health Care Inc., The Health Foundation’s grants have totaled over \$59 million to more than 230 unique organizations over its history. For more information, visit www.thfcm.org.

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- community -

# Historical Commission announces 2025 scholarship

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Historical Commission is pleased to announce its 2025, 14th annual scholarship in the amount of \$2,000.

Qualified students must reside in West Brookfield and may attend Quaboag Regional High School, or be school-choice students, home schooled students, and independent school students.

This award is made possible through

the J. Irving and Jane L. England Charitable Trust.

**Application criteria**

The students must be planning to attend either a four-year college/university program or a two-year college with the intent to a transfer to a four-year college. The commission will show preference to study plans with concentration on history and history-related areas. Major or



minors may include political science, social studies, anthropology, archaeology, historical preservation, museum studies, and education in any of these related fields.

Applicants must submit a brief essay based on one of the Notable Persons or Significant Places listed on the application. All necessary information will be found on the West Brookfield Historical

Commission website. <http://westbrookfield.org>.

Essays are due no later than April 11 by email to [info@westbrookfield.org](mailto:info@westbrookfield.org) or mail to West Brookfield Historical Commission, P.O. Box 372, West Brookfield, MA 01585.

The application and details can be found on the Historical Commission website- <http://westbrookfield.org>.



# COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

*Flu shot available!*

**Wednesday February 5, 2025**  
**11 am - 3 pm**

**Located:**  
**Holland Community Center**  
**40 Brimfield Rd,**  
**Holland, MA 01521**


**Pfizer & Moderna available.**  
Bring your ID, insurance card, and vaccination card (if you do not have an insurance card, you can still get the vaccine).  
All vaccinations are no cost to you, walk-ins and families welcome!

Supported by Healthy Quaboag and The Rural Vaccine Equity Initiative

**\$75 gift card with Vaccination! (12 years old or older)**

**Please use QR Code or the link to pre-register:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/mr3zx3m3>

**Please direct any questions to Nisha Humayun at**  
[nhumayun@townofware.com](mailto:nhumayun@townofware.com), (413) 207-7698



# - opinion -



## Creating a “wow” factor at home

This past week I’ve been hard at work trying to come up with new and exciting garden ideas for the entrance areas of Old Sturbridge Village.

It’s a job I’ve done for decades now, and maybe I take for granted how cool it is to work for a place that many people visit each year. I want to give visitors something to rave about with my color combinations and plant selections!

Read on, straight from the archives, to bring some of this “wow factor” attitude home to your own landscape.

How often have you visited an outdoor museum, amusement park or resort and felt inspired by the gardens or container plantings used to adorn the property? Chances are you may have even used an especially delightful display as a backdrop for a family photo or two.

Tourist attractions such as these put “their best foot forward” each season of the year to awe their customers with spectacular combinations of unique plants, so that no matter when the visit is planned, the guest leaves with the feeling something special was done in their honor.

We can treat our home gardens in a similar fashion. Why not? Certainly we deserve to have exceptional plantings, for our own enjoyment and for the compliments they will elicit from our friends.

So instead of utilizing border plantings that provide only glimpses of color in the spring, summer and fall, devote entire beds to the showiest plants available for the time of year and change them with the seasons.

These types of gardens don’t have to be very large, but they do have to be situated for optimal effect. Think “location, location, location!”

If you have a long driveway, consider placing a “welcome garden” just as you turn down the path. Since it will be viewed from a distance, and from a single vantage point, make the bed more wide than narrow, and raise the height of the soil in the back of the bed a bit for a multidimensional appearance.

Utilize large, bold flowers, bright colors, and strong foliage forms- these will capture the eye en route.

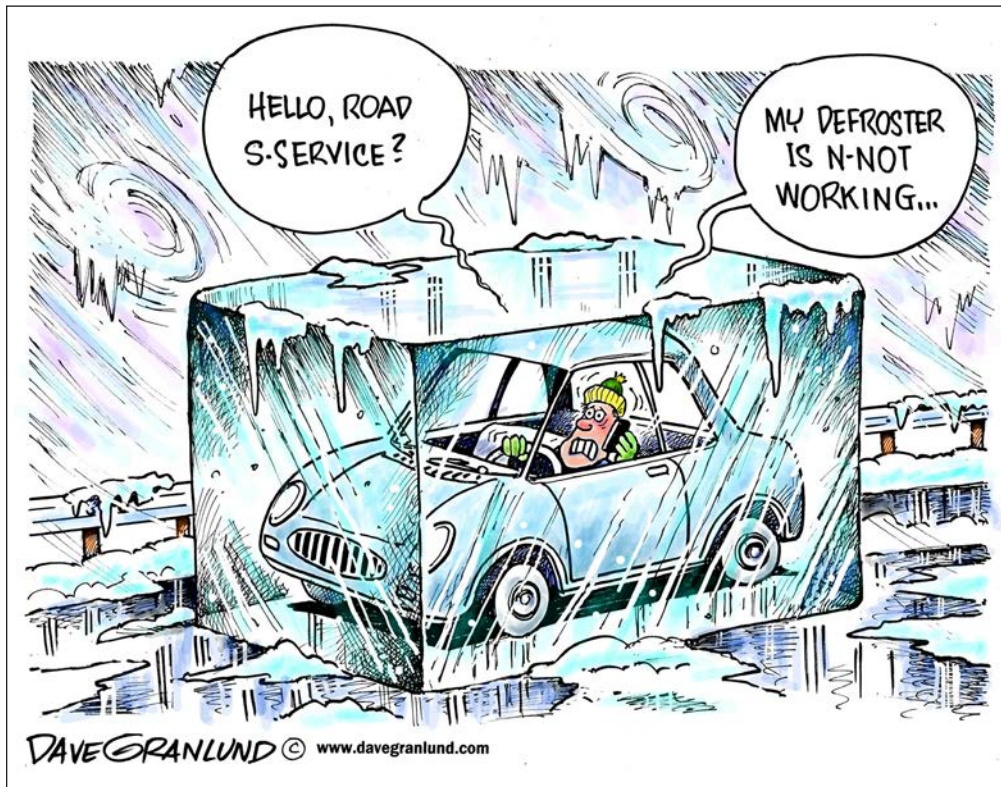
Which door do you or guests normally use to enter and exit the house? Plant a small garden nearby, one that can be admired up close, each time you pass by it.

Here, the intricacies of color and form can be fully appreciated, whereas in the garden out front they would be lost. Experiment with a variety of flower and foliage shapes and color schemes.

Don’t be afraid to use delicate or small flowers, or those that are mottled or two-tone. Likewise, variegated and cut-leaf foliage can make for interesting inspection if properly paired with surrounding plants.

Similar beds or container plantings can be planned for patio or pool-side, or for other areas within the landscape that might be suitable for entertaining. Simply tailor the gardens to the timeframe in which these locations are used most often, and choose your plants accordingly.

Next week we will get into the “nitty-gritty” of each of the three seasons: spring, summer and fall, and how to capture the essence of each in your plantings. You too can have



I received an email from a Hampden resident on Dec. 6. She reported a bald eagle perched in tree in her backyard. She said, “The adult bald eagle sat in the tree for a while, then swooped over my house to the north. This was the first time I had a sighting of a bald eagle in my yard.”

I saw an adult bald eagle perched in a tree by a field along Route 67 in New Braintree on Jan. 17. It is always a thrill to see an eagle.

The bald eagle is a large 31 inch long dark bird with a white head and white tail. Immature eagles have dark feathers with white mottling on the wings and tail and variable amounts of white on the belly. They keep their immature plumage for four years.

Eagles eat mostly fish and birds. They also will eat carrion and some mammals like rabbits. The female lays one to three bluish white eggs in a massive platform nest of sticks and vegetation lined with moss and grasses. These nests are placed on cliff ledge or in the fork of a tree.

Eagles congregate at feeding areas in late winter and early spring. They inhabit coasts, lakes and large rivers. The eagle has a repeated piercing scream given between a pair and a rapid series of chirps given at the nest. Eagle populations are recovering from series declines due to the use of DDT, which caused thinning of their egg shells.

### Bluebirds

A North Brookfield resident had half a dozen bluebirds at his feeder on Jan. 9. Another Hampden resident reported the bluebirds were back in a Jan. 17 email. He said, “He puts out a container of warm water every morning and puts a scoop of critter food on the ground every morning.”

### Great blue heron

The same Hampden resident with the bluebirds said in Dec. 5 email a great blue heron “has been visiting my fish pond early mornings and late afternoons for the past

couple of weeks. It has consumed over 20 goldfish in the three foot deep pond.”

### Pine warbler

A reader some time ago had a bird with a lot of yellow. She identified it as a pine warbler. She said she never had a pine warbler come to her nugget feeder before and she has lived there for 40 years. She also included a photo of a mocking bird sipping sap from a maple tree after the yellow bellied sapsucker made multiple holes in the bark.

### Rescue of iced in loons

The Loon Preservation Committee reported, “On Dec. 14, [they] responded to a report from Weare Reservoir (aka Horace Lake) in Weare, New Hampshire. As the reservoir froze, a juvenile loon became trapped in a small (15 foot diameter) hole of open water. Fortunately, the opening was not far from shore and LPC Senior Biologist, John Cooley, was able to make his way out across

the newly-formed ice to capture it. LPC staff then evaluated the loon, taking blood and x-rays. No problems were detected, and the loon was released onto the ocean that afternoon.” The loon received two bands per leg in a unique color combination that will enable us to identify it if it returns to a New Hampshire lake in the future.

The LPC also reported, “That same

night [Dec. 14], we received a call from volunteers on Franklin Pierce Lake. There, too, a juvenile loon was icing-in and with cold temperatures predicted overnight, its situation was not likely to improve. On Dec. 15, LPC staff headed to the lake. The loon was much further from shore than the loon on Weare Reservoir had been, but the ice was solid and we were able to capture the loon. The loon was given a physical examination on site and no obvious problems were detected. Because it was late in the day and we wanted to make sure the loon had plenty of daylight to explore and get acquainted with its new surroundings, we opted to have the loon stay overnight with wildlife rehabilitator Maria Colby of Wings Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. We banded it and released it onto the ocean at Odiorne Point the following morning.”

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.



Bald eagle

## OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500 and 800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

### Send opinions to:

Letters to the Editor, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082 OR e-mail to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com). Deadline for submission is Monday at noon for the following week’s edition.

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Quaboag Current Newspaper

# - community -



Michael Dias was promoted to Product Marketing & Business Insights Officer at Country Bank.



Melissa Mann was promoted to Vice President of Customer Experience at Country Bank. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

## Country Bank announces promotions in customer experience and marketing

WARE – Mary McGovern, President and CEO of Country Bank, is delighted to announce Melissa Mann’s promotion to Vice President of Customer Experience and Michael Dias to Product Marketing & Business Insights Officer.

Mann offers a unique blend of skills, including completing New England School for Financial Studies through Massachusetts Bankers in 2019. She is currently working on completing her Project Management Certification through the Project Management Institute which shows her ongoing commitment to professional development and has prepared her well for this role.

She will continue to lead and manage the Bank’s Sales and Customer Experience programs and strategies, showcasing her dedication and leadership.

Dias has been promoted to Product Marketing & Business Insights Officer. Dias has been a driving force in integrating data analytics into the Bank’s marketing strategies. With an MBA in Data Analytics from Western New England University and his recent certification as a Certified Financial Marketing Professional from the American Bankers Association, his strategic mindset and forward-thinking approach have been key in integrating data analytics into the Bank’s marketing strategies.

“We are excited to announce the well-deserved promotions of Melissa and Michael,” said Miriam Siegel, Chief Culture and Development Officer at Country Bank. “Their hard work, dedication, and contributions have been

instrumental to the Bank’s success. We take great pride in supporting our team members’ commitment to continuous professional and personal growth, empowering them to explore the many rewarding career paths in community banking.”

These promotions are a testament to the dedication, innovation, and leadership that drive Country Bank forward. They underscore the significant impact that Mann and Dias have had on their teams, colleagues, and the Bank, demonstrating their ability to inspire and lead.

About Country Bank

Established in 1850, Country Bank has a rich history of supporting personal and business banking customers through financial solutions with FDIC and DIF insurance for added security. Country Bank is a full-service \$1.8B mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 banking centers and two business offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton, Springfield, Uxbridge and Worcester.

With a commitment to personalized service and community involvement, Country Bank offers individuals, businesses, and municipalities a comprehensive range of banking products and services. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network. Country Bank can be reached at 800-322-8233 or online at countrybank.com.

### GARDEN | FROM PAGE 5

museum quality gardens within your home landscape!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff

horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

## Crumbling foundations legislation needs to be refiled

BOSTON – While the State Senate approved legislation that would have created a committee to address how best the state can help homeowners whose foundations are crumbling due to pyrrhotite, the House of Representatives failed to take up the matter which will now be refiled in the upcoming legislative session.

“It is extremely disappointing that our colleagues in the House have let down the residents of Massachusetts who are struggling to keep their homes,” state Sen. Peter Durant, R-Spencer, said in a press release. “Anyone who has seen the devastation caused by crumbling foundations can understand the urgent need for this legislation.”

Durant has likened the problem of crumbling foundations to a natural disaster and, alongside several colleagues on both sides of the aisle, has made the issue a top priority during his first year in the Senate.

Homeowners with crumbling foundations are unable to file insurance claims in order to fix the damage to their homes created by pyrrhotite which causes concrete to fail. Residents often find it difficult to fund the raising of their homes and complete replacement of their foundations at costs of more than \$200,000 because their homes lack equity and borrowing becomes impossible.

The creation of a committee to study the best ways to help homeowners would have moved the process forward at no cost to taxpayers.

“This legislation is very important to certain residential homeowners in Dracut and to many homeowners in Worcester County,” Sen. Ed Kennedy, D-Lowell said. “I am very disappointed that the House failed to take any action on the legislation that would have

set up a commission charged with addressing the crumbling concrete foundation problem.”

Sen. Michael Moore, D-Millbury echoed the feelings of disappointment.

“Faulty foundations are putting the homes and life savings of thousands of Massachusetts families across the Commonwealth at risk, at no fault of their own,” Moore said. “I’m proud to have partnered with Senator Durant, Senator Fattman, and Representative Ashe to put forward a bill to create the Crumbling Concrete Assistance Fund – a priority of former Worcester Senator Anne Gobi – as a first step to making homeowners whole for foundation repairs and replacements due to the presence of pyrrhotite. While I am incredibly disappointed we were not able to get this legislation past the finish line this term, I am hopeful that we will finally address the crumbling foundation crisis next session.”

Sen. Ryan Fattman, R-Sutton, has also been pushing for passage of the bill.

“The passage of this bill (in the Senate) today marks an important step toward providing relief for homeowners with crumbling concrete foundations,” Fattman said, urging House members to also swiftly act on the bill.

Durant said the bill will be refiled and will remain a priority for him in the upcoming session.

Crumbling foundations have been discovered in homes in western and central Massachusetts and have been found in 40 communities including Boxford and Dracut. Experts say the problem will only become more widespread, impacting communities by lowering property values and prompting local tax abatements to impacted homeowners.

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### TOWN OF BARRE Cemetery Clerk

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Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest to: Tammy Martin, Town Administrator, 40 West Street, Suite 697, Barre MA 01005 or townadmin@townofbarre.com. For further information, please contact the Board of Selectmen's Office at (978) 355-2504 x135. A.A. / E.O.E.

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# - community -

## Senior Center open house to be held March 1

STURBRIDGE – The town of Sturbridge invites the public to the Senior Center Open House.

Please join them as they celebrate the opening of the newly renovated Senior Center on Saturday, March 1 from 1-3 p.m. at 480 Main Street. A

ribbon cutting will begin at 12:30 p.m. with a blessing of the building to follow.

Come for a tour, light refreshments and meet the Senior Center staff and learn about its programs. This event is free and open to the community.

## Names sought of craftswomen who made 1991 town quilt

WARREN – The Warren Town Quilt has come out of its resting place and is now hanging in a brand new case on a wall at the Shepard Municipal Building.

A celebration of its being hung in this beautifully crafted case will be scheduled in a few weeks.

A plaque is planned to list all the craftswomen who worked on the quilt to

celebrate the Town's 250th Anniversary in 1991. If you, or someone you know (or knew), worked on the Warren Town Quilt in 1991, please contact Historical Commission Chair, Sylvia G. Buck sgbuck37@verizon.net and include a telephone number at which you can be reached. Use "Warren Town Quilt" in the subject line to verify your intent.

## Cradle Rock Chapter to hold designer pancake breakfast

BARRE – Cradle Rock Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, will hold a designer pancake breakfast on Saturday, Feb. 1 from 7:30-10:30 a.m. at Mt. Zion Masonic Lodge hall, 71 Pleasant St.

People may create their pancakes with plenty of chips, fruit, nuts and

more. The complete breakfast includes designer pancakes, waffles, sausage gravy with biscuits, bacon, sausage, juice and coffee.

The cost is still \$9 per adult and \$5 for children ages 6 and under. Everyone is welcome.

## Nomination papers for town elections available Feb. 3

WARREN/WEST BROOKFIELD – The Town Clerks' of Warren, Laura Stockley, and West Brookfield, Heather Gough, announce that nomination papers are available on Monday, Feb. 3 for the Annual Town Election, which will be held on Tuesday, May 6.

Office hours in the town of Warren are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and Thursday from 1-6 p.m.; and for the town

of West Brookfield, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Quaboag Regional School Committee nomination papers will be available for pick up on Tuesday, Feb. 4 at the Quaboag Regional Middle High School front office between the hours of 8 a.m.-3 p.m. School Committee positions open are: two members from Warren for a three-year term and two members from West Brookfield for a three-year term.

## Durant and Berthiaume list office hours for February

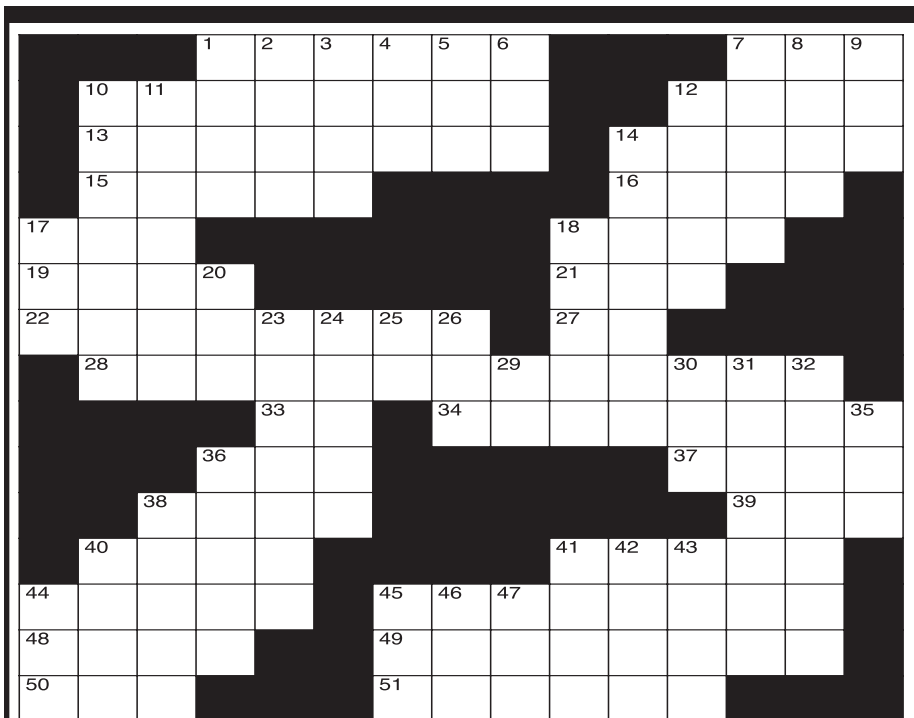
Staff from the offices of state Sen. Peter Durant and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume will hold office hours at the locations listed below in February.

Feb. 4, 9:30 a.m. Ware Town Hall, 10:45 a.m. Hardwick Municipal Building, noon New Braintree Municipal Building; Feb. 5, 9:30 a.m. Hubbardston Senior Center, 10:45 a.m. Barre Senior Center, noon Oakham Town Hall; Feb. 10, 9:30 a.m. East Brookfield Senior Center, 10:45 a.m. Brookfield Town Hall, noon West Brookfield Senior Center; Feb. 12, 9:30 a.m. North Brookfield Senior Center, 10:45 a.m. Richard Sudden Library, Spencer with State Rep. John Marsi's Chief of Staff Tammy Ruda), noon Leicester Senior Center.

Constituents are welcome to drop in to meet with Donna Farmer, Chief of Staff for Rep. Berthiaume, along with Sen. Durant's District Liaison Jared Grigg and Communications Director Kim Mongeau who are available to discuss legislative concerns and ideas or assist with matters involving state agencies.

In cases of inclement weather when schools are closed in the towns where hours are being held, office hours will also be cancelled. The staff will make every effort to quickly reschedule should that happen.

Staff members from both offices are also available by phone or email and can arrange to meet with you privately, if you desire.



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Where entertainers perform
- 7. Miller beer variety
- 10. Ageless
- 12. River in SE Europe
- 13. Able to be repaired
- 14. Type of wrap
- 15. Atomic #54
- 16. Type of tent
- 17. U.S. Treasury position
- 18. Opposed to
- 19. Protective covering
- 21. Bridge building degree
- 22. Clouding of the lens
- 27. Priestess of Hera loved by Zeus
- 28. Unacceptable
- 33. Mr. T's "The A-Team" character
- 34. American national

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Supreme god of ancient Egyptians
- 2. Nevada city
- 3. Energy, style and enthusiasm
- 4. Bird's beak
- 5. Language
- 6. Midway between south and southeast
- 7. Punjab village
- 8. Small biting flies
- 9. Sportscaster Patrick
- 10. A way to get around
- 11. Repeat
- 12. A way to cook with fat
- 14. Temporary loss of consciousness
- 17. Reciprocal of a sine
- 18. Fir tree genus
- 20. "Transformers"

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# TAX GUIDE

# GUIDE

## TAX GUIDE PROMOTION

Your ad will be placed in our successful classified sections, seen in our 12 weekly newspapers.

Advertise your tax preparation or accounting business for new or repeat customers from

### Wednesday, January 22 to Friday, April 11, 2025

Help your customers take the worry out of tax time. Run a 3 column inch ad in 12 of our weekly community newspapers for only \$125\* per week. \*minimum 4 week run

Agawam Advertiser News • Barre Gazette • Chicopee Register  
Country Journal • The Journal Register • Quaboag Current • The Register  
Sentinel • The Holyoke Sun • Town Reminder  
Ware River News • The Wilbraham-Hampden Times

- A TURLEY PUBLICATION -  
WWW.TURLEY.COM

Contact Dan to advertise  
dflynn@turley.com  
413-283-8393  
www.turley.com

# - community -

## Local author presents writing/publishing workshop March 9

WEST BROOKFIELD – “Everyone has a story to tell,” said award-winning author Ed Londergan.

His ninth annual creative writing and publishing workshop will be held on Sunday, March 9, from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Salem Cross Inn.

“The writing workshop aims to help those who want to write but don’t know where to start or who have had an idea for a story that’s been bubbling in their head for years and finally want to put it on paper. I also help people who have written something and need to know how to move ahead,” said Londergan, who provides a full day of information.

“The workshop will cover the entire process of writing and publishing, including idea development and sources of inspiration, drawing from storytelling traditions, developing the story, structure, and flow, conceiving and bringing characters to life, dialogue, editing, short fiction, writer’s block, and the publishing process,” Londergan said. “The publishing process can be confusing and frustrating. I’ll take the group through the various publishing options available. There will also be some fun writing exercises.”

Past workshops have been attended by people of all ages and occupations, from 12-year-old students to 75-year-old retirees.

“Five attendees have written books and had them published while others have had stories and articles placed in various publications,” said Londergan.

“One of the things past attendees have enjoyed and learned from is the writing exercises,” Londergan said. “The writing exercises this year are different than what I’ve done in the past. I enjoy seeing the creative ideas that come out of them.”

“Back-and-forth discussion is always a popular part of the day. Attendees learn from each other. Individual issues or problems anyone has with their writing are discussed, and the group helps them with suggestions and observations. At times, a lot of ‘here’s what happened to me, and here’s what I did,’” he said.

The workshop is limited to 14 participants. The cost is \$110, and lunch is included.

Registration is required, and the deadline is Febr. 28. To register, email ed.londergan@gmail.com or call 508-864-8685.

## FOSC receives Cultural Council support for concerts

HARDWICK – The Friends of the Stone Church received notice that the Hardwick-New Braintree Cultural Council will provide

\$750 in partial support of their 2025 spring concerts at the Stone Church Cultural Center, located at 283 Main St., in Gilbertville.

## HCC accepting scholarship applications for 2025-2026

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College Foundation has begun accepting scholarship applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.

The deadline to apply is Friday, March 14.

Last year, the HCC Foundation awarded 388 scholarships worth about \$350,000 to 323 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Some students received multiple scholarship awards. The average scholarship award is typically around \$900.

“Awarding scholarships to deserving students has been a cornerstone of the work of the HCC Foundation since its founding,” said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. “Scholarships established by donors celebrate academic achievement, community service, and civic engagement, and, most importantly, these funds ensure hundreds of students have the resources they need to complete their college degree.”

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships.

“While the recent launch of MassEducate, the state’s free-community-college-for-all program, has made HCC accessible to more individuals, that only means we have a greater responsibility to ensure students make it to the finish line,” Sbriscia said. “Tuition and fees represent only a portion of the cost of being a college student today, and, oftentimes, a

donor scholarship can truly change a student’s life.”

Applicants only need to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students and students transferring to other institutions, scholarships based on financial need, scholarships for students in specific majors, scholarships for residents of certain communities, and scholarships that recognize academic achievement.

To view scholarship opportunities and begin the application process, please go to: [www.hcc.edu/scholarships](http://www.hcc.edu/scholarships).

In 2024, HCC opened a dedicated Scholarship Resource Center to help current and incoming students navigate the process of applying for scholarships. The office, located on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158) is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The HCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that works to advance the college’s mission, vision, and values. Founded in 1968 as the Friends of Holyoke Community College, in response to a devastating fire that forced the college to rebuild on a new campus, the Foundation now manages assets of more than \$20 million, the largest community college foundation endowment in Massachusetts.

Questions should be directed to the HCC Foundation office by calling 413-552-2182, or by emailing [scholarships@hcc.edu](mailto:scholarships@hcc.edu).

## DCR offers February vacation program on tracks and scat

BELCHERTOWN – The Department of Conservation and Recreation will host a February Vacation Program “Tracks and Scat” on Monday, Feb. 17 from 10-11 a.m.

Although we may not see them often, our native wildlife is all around us. Come learn to recognize some signs of wildlife through a fun

and informative indoor activity.

Meet at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center in Belchertown. Great for all ages, children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information, call 413-323-7221. To register visit <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/250b6dcbeefc4f30a4da5b0f86abc4f3>.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

### SCOUT | FROM PAGE 1

awarded to Amsden Klinghard, Troop 131 Sutton. Amsden’s Eagle project was inspired by Troop 131’s long-standing partnership with American Legion Post 414 in Sutton.

The Eagle Off-Road 5k for Veterans was held to raise awareness and to collect much needed supplies for veterans’ organizations. In lieu of an entry fee, race participants donated three items requested by Veterans Inc., a shelter for homeless veterans in Worcester.

What it means to be an Eagle Scout  
Becoming an Eagle Scout is a significant milestone that represents years of dedication, perseverance, and personal growth. To earn this rank, a Scout must demonstrate proficiency in various skills, complete a series of merit badges, and lead a community service project that benefits their local area.

The journey to Eagle Scout fosters leadership, responsibility, and a strong sense of community. Eagle Scouts are recognized for their ability to set and achieve goals, their commitment to ethical and moral values, and their readi-



Heart of New England, Scouting America Class of 2024 Eagle Scouts. SUBMITTED PHOTO

ness to take on challenges.

This rank is not only a testament to their past achievements but also a foundation for future success in their personal and professional lives.

About Heart of New England Council

Heart of New England Council is a 501(c)(3) organization that serves about 4,000 boys and girls in more than 60 communities in central Massachusetts. It provides the nation’s foremost program that teaches young people character, leadership, and citizenship through

fun and exciting adventures for the entire family.

HNE fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion that makes it enriching to participate, volunteer and work in the Scouting program. Visit [www.hnescouting.org](http://www.hnescouting.org) for more information.

**DINNER | FROM PAGE 1**

Lewandowski serves as president, secretary and founder of the Hearts for Heat Chapter of North Brookfield; Ellen Smith is the treasurer and application facilitator; and the Board of Directors includes Louise Bouchard, Thomas Lewandowski, Tina Buzzell, Crystal Caron and Caitlin O'Connor.

Lewandowski said North Brookfield Hearts for Heat was founded 16 years ago, shortly after the cost of oil first skyrocketed to an all-time high.

“A group of people came together to form the North Brookfield Chapter,” Lewandowski said.

Soon the annual spaghetti dinner was created to help raise funds to support North Brookfield Residents.

This annual event is a collaboration of community members and businesses coming together to support a great cause. Hannaford Supermarket supplies most of the food and the Hayden Masonic Lodge prepares the homemade meal. Members of the lodge were keeping busy in the cafeteria preparing spaghetti and meatballs with brownies for dessert.

The North Brookfield Parent Teacher Organization pays for the school building use, while North Brookfield High School National Honor Society and Valley View School students sell raffle tickets and help with cleaning up after the meal. Local businesses donate smaller items to the raffle table for guests to try and win.

North Brookfield Savings Bank matches \$2,500 in community donations.

Lewandowski mentioned that in the last two years, Hearts for Heat has provided fuel assistance for 75 families.

The spaghetti dinner has been going on for 16 years, but for the last 15 years the dinner has featured live music from The Otters. The band plays many covers of classical songs and provides a great atmosphere that keeps the diners entertained.

The support has been tremendous over the years and Lewandowski certainly appreciates all the hard work being done by the North Brookfield Hearts for Heat chapter.



Hearts for Heat North Brookfield hosted their annual spaghetti dinner at North Brookfield Elementary School this past Saturday night. Roger and Rachel, left, alongside Janet and David enjoyed their spaghetti and meatball meal. *TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO*



Members of the Hayden Masonic Lodge of North Brookfield were operating the cafeteria preparing the spaghetti meals.

“Our small group of seven volunteers was able to assist 34 families last year, 107 individuals ranging from infants through senior citizens. Since 2009, we have helped 309 families”, Lewandowski shared.

Many businesses and organizations generously donated items that were a part of the raffles taking place during the spaghetti dinner. Some of the donated prizes included tickets to a Worcester

Red Sox game, a signed basketball from the Boston Celtics and a prize from the Boston Bruins.

This year, the dinner, raffles, and attendee donations totaled up to \$2,344. Lewandowski said this will help up to five families with emergency fuel assistance.

North Brookfield Hearts for Heat will provide one delivery of fuel oil (or the equivalent in natural gas, pellets,

electricity, cord wood, or propane) to qualified North Brookfield residents.

For more information, visit [www.heartsforheat.org](http://www.heartsforheat.org) or [www.heartsforheat.org/NorthBrookfield/about.html](http://www.heartsforheat.org/NorthBrookfield/about.html). There is an application that can be found on the Hearts for Heat website for any of those who are town residents and cannot afford heat.



Sports organizations including the Worcester Red Sox, Boston Celtics and Boston Bruins donated prizes that were part of the raffle.



Guests lined up in the cafeteria to receive their spaghetti dinner.



The Otters were the entertainment during the spaghetti dinner and have been performing for the annual fundraiser the last 15 years.

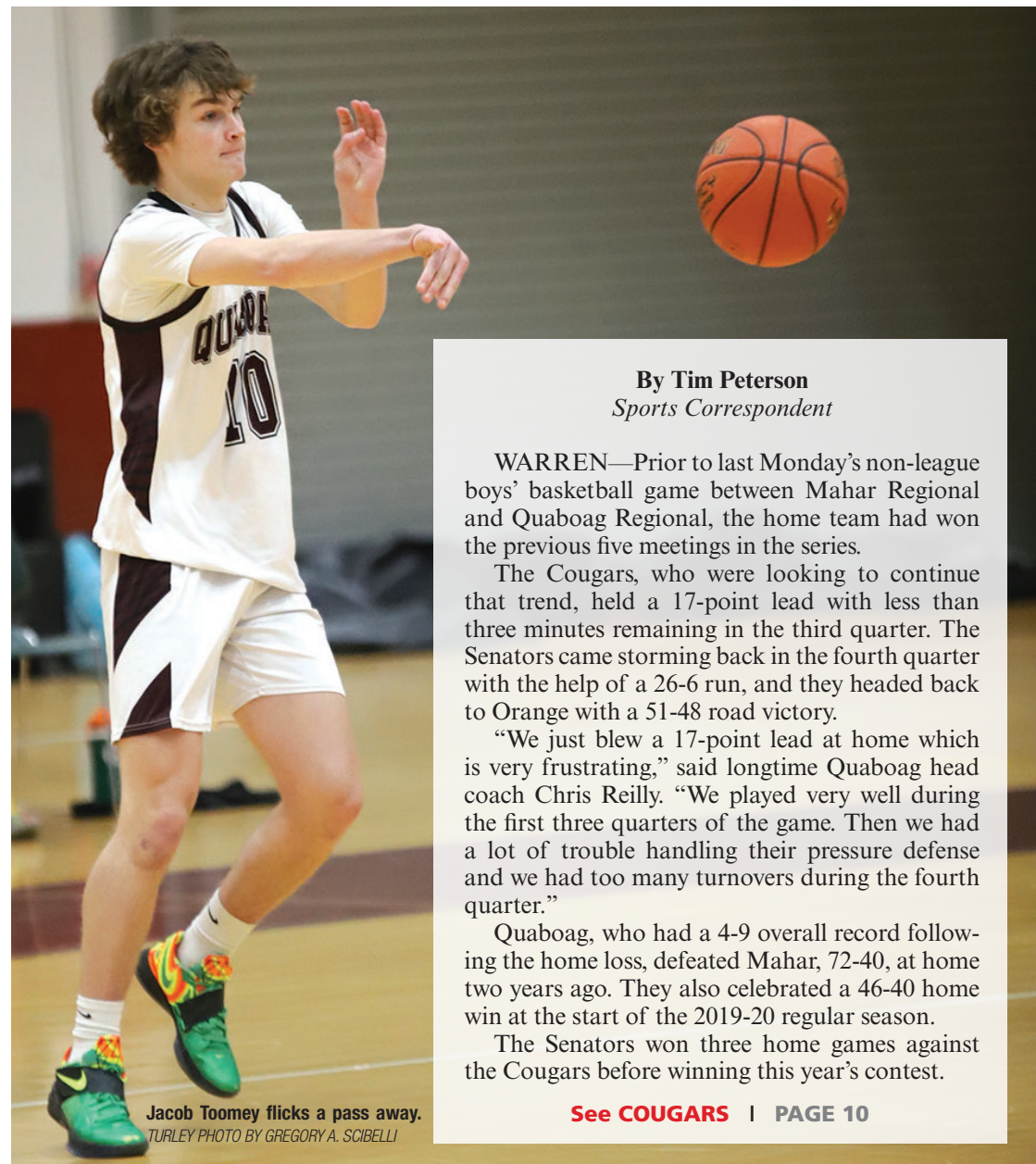


The annual spaghetti dinner for Hearts for Heat had a great turnout with the elementary school cafeteria packed.



# SPORTS

## Late run hurts Cougars in loss



Jacob Toomey flicks a pass away. TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WARREN—Prior to last Monday’s non-league boys’ basketball game between Mahar Regional and Quaboag Regional, the home team had won the previous five meetings in the series.

The Cougars, who were looking to continue that trend, held a 17-point lead with less than three minutes remaining in the third quarter. The Senators came storming back in the fourth quarter with the help of a 26-6 run, and they headed back to Orange with a 51-48 road victory.

“We just blew a 17-point lead at home which is very frustrating,” said longtime Quaboag head coach Chris Reilly. “We played very well during the first three quarters of the game. Then we had a lot of trouble handling their pressure defense and we had too many turnovers during the fourth quarter.”

Quaboag, who had a 4-9 overall record following the home loss, defeated Mahar, 72-40, at home two years ago. They also celebrated a 46-40 home win at the start of the 2019-20 regular season.

The Senators won three home games against the Cougars before winning this year’s contest.

See **COUGARS** | PAGE 10

## Warriors suffer loss against Agawam

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

FISKDALE—Playing a game inside a fieldhouse for the first time this season really didn’t bother the members of the Agawam girls’ basketball team very much, especially in the first half.

The Brownies, who held a 15-point halftime lead in last Tuesday night’s game at the Tantasqua Fieldhouse, coasted to a 41-22 non-league victory over the Lady Warriors.

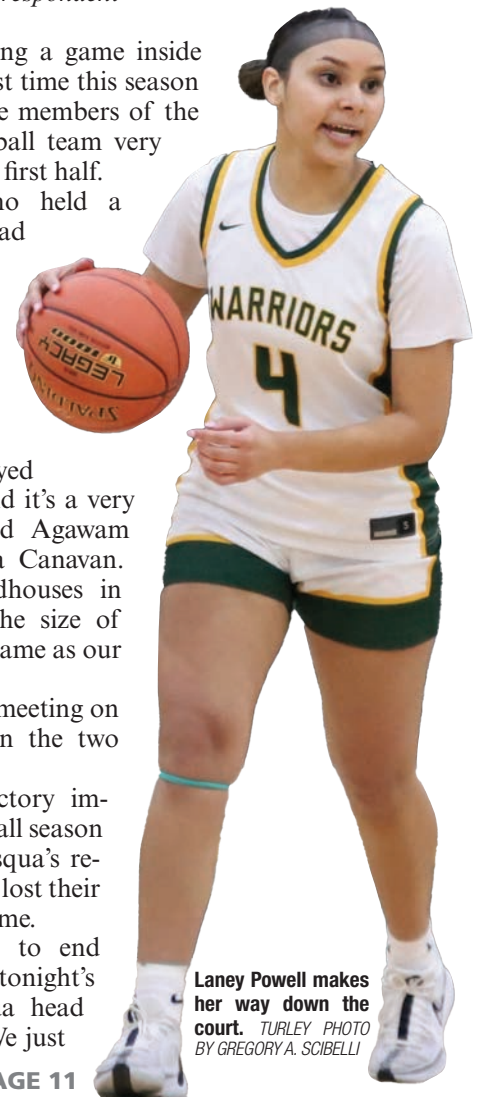
“We’ve never played a game here before and it’s a very interesting place,” said Agawam senior co-captain Mia Canavan. “There isn’t any fieldhouses in Western Mass., but the size of the court is about the same as our home gym.”

It was the first ever meeting on the hardwood between the two squads.

While the road victory improved Agawam’s overall season record to 11-2, Tantasqua’s record fell to 3-7, as they lost their seventh consecutive game.

“We were looking to end our losing streak in tonight’s game,” said Tantasqua head coach Andy Haley. “We just

See **WARRIORS** | PAGE 11



Laney Powell makes her way down the court. TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

## Pioneers fall at Monson

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

PALMER— In their only meeting of the regular season against Pathfinder Tech, the Monson boys’ basketball team played very well both offensively and defensively, especially in the first half.

Holding a 40-12 halftime lead, the Mustangs put it into cruise control during the second half leading to a 58-38 road victory over the Pioneers, last Friday night.

“We normally don’t get to use the press defense very often in our league games, but we felt like we would be able to use it in tonight’s game,” said Monson head coach Zach Dreher. “We were able to create some turnovers in the first half, which helped us build a large lead. We also had the chance to play our reserve players in the second half. It was a good opportunity for those guys to get some experience playing in a varsity game.”

Three years ago, Monson lost a home game to Pathfinder



Cayden Bousquet heads into the paint.

Tech, 43-39, at the end of the regular season.

The Mustangs defeated the Pioneers, 84-57, last year, which was also played at Michael J. Kane Gymnasium.

Seven of the ten players

listed on this year’s Mustangs varsity roster scored at least two points in last Friday night’s non-league game.

Leading the way offensively

See **PIONEERS** | PAGE 10



Cassian Kowalik holds the ball back before taking a shot. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

# - sports -

## COUGARS | FROM PAGE 9

“Quaboag has also been a very tough team for us to play against,” said Mahar head coach Chad Softic. “They’re a scrappy team and Chris Reilly is an outstanding coach. This is the first time that we’ve been able to win a game in this gym.”

Quaboag faced Mahar (7-3) without the services of leading scorer junior forward Isaac Cower, who suffered an injury in their previous game at Uxbridge.

The Cougars only double-digit scorers against the Senators were senior guard Hart Waz and junior center Jack Stevens.

Waz made five of his team’s nine 3-pointers leading to his team-leading 15 points, while Stevens scored seven of his 12 points in the second half.

Junior forward Jacob Toomey checked in with eight points and junior guard Jacoby Labillois added six points. The Cougars other two scorers were sophomore forward’s Liam McGrath (4 points) and Christian Rudz (3 points).

McGrath was a starter in a varsity game for the first time.

Just like the weather outside of the Quaboag gymnasium, both teams were ice cold offensively during the first eight minutes of the contest.

With 25 seconds left in the first quarter, Waz made his first 3-pointer from the left side which tied the score at 6-6. Then a put-back hoop by sophomore center Max Kimball gave the visitors a two point lead entering the second stanza.



Jacoby Labillois gets ready to receive the ball. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Hart Waz tries to get around a defender.

Mahar held a 12-6 lead a minute into the second quarter before back-to-back McGrath lay-ups sliced the Cougars deficit down to two points.

The home team took their first lead of the game at 18-15 following another Waz 3-pointer from the right side. A minute later, Waz made a trey from the opposite side of the court pushing the lead to 21-15.

The Senators then scored the final three points of the first half, as senior forward Jayden Delgado (11 points)

made a fast-break lay-up and senior guard Morgan Softic added a free throw.

Softic scored 12 of his game-high 17 points during the second half.

The Cougars put together an impressive 21-7 run during the first six minutes of the second half.

The third quarter run began with Toomey hitting a 3-pointer from the top of the key.

Then a pair of inside hoops by Stevens gave the Cougars a double digit lead for the first time at 30-20 with 5:15

left in the third quarter.

Quaboag built a 34-20 advantage a minute later following a Waz 3-pointer. He made another trey and a Toomey put-back hoop gave the Cougars their largest lead, 42-25, with 2:35 remaining in third quarter.

The home team was only leading 42-34 entering the final eight minutes of the contest, as the Senators scored the final nine points of the quarter. Softic scored six of those points.

Mahar also scored the first nine points of the fourth quarter.

Holding a slim, 42-41, the Cougars managed to hold onto the lead for a little bit longer when Stevens converted an old fashion three-point play with 3:19 showing on the scoreboard clock.

Mahar was able to tie the score at 45-45 with a lay-up and a pair of free throws.

With 1:55 left Labillois buried a 3-pointer from the left side giving the home fans something to cheer about.

A Softic 3-pointer tied the score (48-48) for the final time with 1:20 left in regulation.

The Senators would retake the lead for the first time since the second quarter when Delgado was fouled while making an inside basket with 18.8 seconds left. He also made the bonus free throw.

Quaboag had an opportunity to tie the score for the sixth time, but they missed a three point shot at the buzzer.

The two head coaches are hoping that the series continues next year.



Liam McGrath is pressured by the opposing defense.



Reilly Comptois makes his way down the court.

## PIONEERS | FROM PAGE 9

for the Mustangs was freshman Trey Dillahunt, who scored 16 of his game-high 20 points before halftime.

Dillahunt, who has been a member of the varsity basketball team since he was in the seventh grade, entered the road game with 956 career points. The plan is for him to score his 1,000th career points at home against Hampshire Regional on Wednesday night.

“They only needs 24 more points to reach 1,000,” Dreher said. “We’ll be playing another road game against Baystate Academy on Tuesday night, but we’re hoping that he does it at home the following night against Hampshire. I’ve talked to Trey about it, I think it’s going to be a little more special for him if it does take place in a home game. He’s a very special basketball player.”

Dillahunt, who scored a game-high 24 points in last season’s meeting against the Pioneers, didn’t make any 3-pointers in this year’s contest.

He was aided by junior Jake Beaupre, who scored 10 of his 16 points before halftime with the help of four 3-pointers.

Beaupre scored a career-high 30 points in an 85-69 win at Southwick three days earlier.

The junior duo of Austin Meacham and Shane Szado chipped in with eight points apiece.

The other three Mustangs scorers were sophomore Kyle Beaudry (3 points), sophomore Brennan Peterson (2 points), and senior Tyler Labonte (1 point).

While the Mustangs, who are members of the Bi-County West Division, had a 7-4 overall record following the road win, the Pathfinder Tech had a 1-9 record.

The Pioneers played very well during the final 16 minutes of the contest, as they outscored the Mustangs, 26-18.

Pathfinder Tech junior Aiden Girard scored eight of his 11 points during the first half, while sophomore Cayden Bousquet netted all 11 of his points in the second half.

Junior Dustyn Cook added eight points for the home team, while freshman Cassian Kowalik scored five points, and freshman Jordan Mbi made a 3-pointer with less than

See PIONEERS | PAGE 11



Dustyn Cook flies for a shot. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Matthew Vanasse goes for the tip.

# - community -

**WARRIORS | FROM PAGE 9**

had too many turnovers. We only have one senior, so this is a rebuilding season for us. We just need to keep improving in every game.”

Tantasqua, who’s a Division 3 team, has several other Western Mass. opponents listed on their regular season schedule. They lost to Minnechaug Regional at home earlier in the season. They’ll be playing at Longmeadow on February 5 before hosting Holyoke in the regular season finale a week later.

The Lady Warriors are the only Central Mass. opponent listed on the Brownies schedule.

“It’s nice playing a team that we normally don’t play against,” said Agawam head coach Tim Murphy. “Tantasqua has been a very good basketball team during the past couple of years.”

During the first half, Agawam, who’s a Division 2 team, was shooting at the basket that has a large curtain hanging from the ceiling behind it. The background behind the basket at the other end of the court is wide open.

“We did have a very good shooting background in the first half, which really helped us a lot,” Canavan said. “It was a little more difficult in the second half when we were shooting the ball at the end of the court where there wasn’t any background.”

Canavan, who’s planning to play college basketball next year, scored nine of her game-high 13 points in the first half. She made five field goals and three foul shots.

Canavan was helped offensively by junior Isabella Laprise, who finished the game with 11 points. Isabella’s twin sister, Sophia, checked in with seven points and senior co-captain Katelyn Cleavall added five points.

Another Agawam senior is Marlee

Montagna, who suffered a season ending ACL injury a couple of weeks ago. She kept the scorebook and cheered on her teammates during the road game.

“Marlee is one of our best players and it’s been difficult not having her on the court with us,” Canavan said. “It’s been an adjustment, but she’s still supporting us at every game. We just need to find different people to fill her role. This is a very special team, and we get along with each other very well.”

The Lady Warriors leading scorer was sophomore Tessa Sheldon, who scored eight of her 10 points during the first quarter. No other Tantasqua player scored more than four points.

The Brownies raced out to an early 6-0 lead as Isabella Laprise made a wide open lay-up which was followed by a pair of Canavan’s inside hoops.

“We made some shots at the beginning of the game, which helped us build a lead,” Murphy said. “Even when we were struggling offensively in the second half, it didn’t affect us very much because we had a large lead.”

After making a driving lay-up, Sheldon knocked down two 3-pointers from both the left and right corners giving the Lady Warriors an 8-7 lead with 4:15 left in the first quarter.

The home fans didn’t have very much else to cheer about during the rest of the game.

The Brownies closed out the opening quarter with a 7-0 run and they entered the second stanza holding a 14-8 lead.

An inside basket by senior Maggie Johnson (4 points) did slice the deficit to 14-10 a minute into the second quarter, but the Lady Warriors wouldn’t get any closer than that.

Isabella Laprise hit a 3-pointer from the left side and a lay-up. Then Canavan made another inside hoop before



Sophia Ezzo tries to grab a rebound. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Sophia Laprise buried a 3-pointer from the left corner, which gave the Brownies a 24-10 lead with three minutes remaining in the first half.

Agawam’s largest lead of the first half was 28-11 before a Sheldon inside hoop sent her team into the locker room trailing, 28-13 at halftime.

The Brownies held a 36-13 lead after scoring the first eight points of the third quarter.

Canavan scored half of those points. The other four points were scored by senior Emma LaCresse (3 points) and Isabella Laprise.

The Lady Warriors did put-together

a 9-0 run at the end of the third quarter and the start of the fourth quarter.

A Johnson put-back basket and a 3-pointer from freshman Violet Spooner (3 points) made the score 36-18 entering the final eight minutes.

Freshman Liv Kearns also made another 3-pointer for the home team at the beginning of the fourth quarter before junior Abbie Wotton made a foul shot with 3:55 left in the game.

Agawam, who was leading 36-22, scored the final five points of the contest. Cleavall and sophomore Maya Gingereruha each made a field goal, while LaCresse added a free throw.



Mady Vejack sends a pass away.



Maggie Johnson holds the ball in the paint.



Tessa Sheldon attempts a layup.

**PIONEERS | FROM PAGE 10**

a minute remaining in the game for his only points.

Kowalik, along with sophomore Ian Sauri-Nieves, and freshman Grayson Griswold, are from Monson.

“We do have a couple of players from Monson,” said Pathfinder head coach Ethan Ortyl. “They were very excited to play against their hometown high school tonight.”

The score was tied 2-2 before the Mustangs pulled away with the help of a 24-2 run.

Dillahunt and Beaupre combined to score 15 of those points.

Meacham contributed five points with a 3-pointer and a put-back hoop.

The Mustangs were leading 26-4 after Szado made a pair of free throws with 56.9 seconds left in the first quarter.

The Pioneers closed out the opening quarter with Girard sinking a 3-pointer from the top of the key and a lay-up from Cook.

The Mustangs outscored the Pioneers, 14-3, in the second quarter.

Trailing by 28 points at the start of the second half, the Pioneers played very well in the second half.

“Monson is one of the best teams that we’ve this season. We did make some adjustments at halftime, and we executed a lot better during the second half,” Ortyl said. “These guys always play hard no matter what the score in the game might be.”

Kowalik and Bousquet began the second half with back-to-back lay-ups.

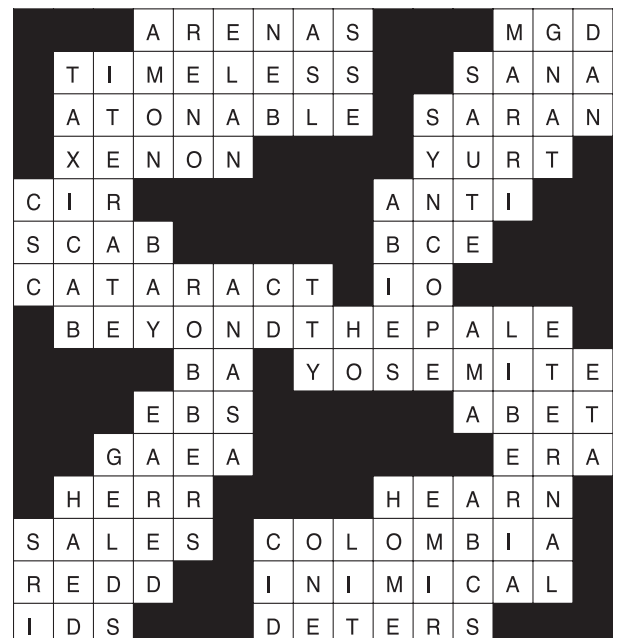
A couple of minutes later, Girard hit a 3-pointer from the left corner, which closed the gap to 42-19.

The Mustangs finished the third quarter with a 13-4 run, and they entered the final quarter holding a comfortable 55-23 lead.

Dillahunt came out of the game with three minutes left in the third quarter and Labonte was the only Monson starter who played during the fourth quarter.

Bousquet scored nine of the Pioneers 15 fourth quarter points.

The only points scored by Monson during the final eight minutes of the contest was a Beaudry 3-pointer from the left corner.



## - community -

# Neal announces \$7.8M in federal funding for Hamilton Street project

SOUTHBRIDGE – Congressman Richard E. Neal joined Southbridge Town Manager John Jovan, Jr., Southbridge Director of Economic Development and Planning Peg Dean, and state and local officials to announce a \$7,888,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant Program to support the Hamilton Street Reconstruction Project.

USDOT's RAISE program provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact. The eligibility requirements of RAISE allow project sponsors, including state and local governments, counties, Tribal governments, transit agencies, and port authorities, to pursue multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects that are more difficult to fund through other grant programs.

Previously known as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery discretionary grants, the RAISE program was established under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and operated under annual appropriations acts until authorized by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in November 2021.

"The Hamilton Street Project exemplifies the transformative impact that thoughtful federal investment can have on safety, equity, and economic revitalization in communities like Southbridge. With much of the Infrastructure Law drafted in the Ways and Means Committee under my chairmanship, I am thrilled that communities throughout the First District continue to reap the benefits," Neal said.

A prominent area in the Town of Southbridge, Hamilton Street represents a downtown corridor with immense potential to contribute to the town's overall economic growth. With a current mix of commercial use and vacant parcels, and easy access from Interstates 90, 84, and 395, as well as Massachusetts Route 20, the town has sought to revitalize this area for several years.

However, longstanding challenges, including narrow sidewalks, limited parking, and a lack of essential amenities, coupled with financial constraints,

have stifled the town's ability to unlock the area's full economic potential. With nearly \$8 million in funding from USDOT, the vision for Hamilton Street will soon become a reality by creating a walkable neighborhood business district corridor through investments in localized infrastructure.

"After applying for the RAISE grant three years in a row, we couldn't be more grateful to finally be awarded \$7.8M for well-deserved reconstruction of Hamilton Street, a major cut-through, adding lighting and cross-walks to increase safety, drainage, improved traffic flow, new sidewalks, and paving," said Dean. "This project will help transform the Town of Southbridge's downtown. We will see real impact which we otherwise would not have been able to fund thanks to our Congressmen and Senators' advocacy."

The funding awarded under the RAISE Grant Program will cover the entire cost of the project and enable the Town of Southbridge to harmoniously complete this project with an adjacent ongoing intersection improvement plan. The town recently completed design work for a Massachusetts Department of Transportation intersection improvement project along Central Street at the southeast terminus of Hamilton Street and Hook Street.

Roadway improvements between both projects will include new or reconstructed sidewalks, the addition of bike lanes, additional turning lanes at the proposed signalized intersection, converting a non-signalized intersection with a monument into a mini roundabout, and providing accommodations at the traffic signal for a new multi-use rail trail.

"I have had the privilege of participating in many great moments in the Town of Southbridge, including with the hotel and conference center at the former American Optical Company, Harrington Hospital, and supporting the construction of a new fire station," continued Neal. "This is certainly one of those moments."

This grant was one of 109 awarded throughout the nation, including one of three grants awarded in Massachusetts, for the first round of awards from the FY2025 RAISE Grant Program.

## SURVEY | FROM PAGE 1

state New York, and have worked in and around the fisheries field for about 16 years now."

"Prior to coming to MassWildlife I worked as a Fisheries Biologist for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation in North Central Washington State on the Columbia River. Prior to that I worked in Alaska, and the Adirondacks in New York," said Keleher.

"[My favorite part is] having the constant opportunity to work outdoors, especially in and around water. Work with the public and anglers has always been a highlight as well, particularly field trips and school groups where students get the chance to see and interact with fish and develop an interest in the outdoors and fishing," said Keleher.

MassWildlife stocks about 500 bodies of water across the state, and each year releases approximately 500,000 trout during the spring and fall, consisting of mostly rainbow trout and most fish are over 12 inches long.

Stocking these waterbodies provides opportunities for angling, and the fish are stocked in these areas when water temperatures are at the correct range.

MassWildlife holds a creel survey, which "is an important tool that fisheries biologists can use to get a better understanding of how a fishery is used by anglers," Keleher explained.

"It is simply an angler survey with questions designed to help look into specific areas of a fishery and the way that anglers interact with it. At its most basic level creels are used to see how many anglers fish at a location, how long they spend fishing, look into what they are 'targeting' or fishing for, and calculate their 'catch rate' and 'harvest,'" said Keleher.

Creel surveys determine the success rate of catching fish, like how long it takes to catch fish or a specific kind of fish, and what percentage of fish are kept or released after catching.

The MassWildlife team creates these surveys, and during the presentation Keleher illustrated how the Quabbin Reservoir Angler Survey is conducted, anonymously, and help to keep track of fish populations.

The Quabbin Reservoir is ideal for these creel surveys because of the largely constrained areas with three boat launch areas, and is consistently staffed by DCR attendants during fishing seasons.

The Quabbin Creel Survey is a complete survey and gate attendants provide all anglers with a creel card before their trip, which they fill out after their trip is finished and return to the attendants. The demographic and trip data is then collected by the attendants as part of the boat sealing process.

Throughout Massachusetts, rainbow trout, brown trout, brook trout, tiger trout, and landlocked Atlantic salmon are stocked in the waterbodies.

The fish all come from five different hatcheries across the state, including McLaughlin in Belchertown, Bitzer in Montague, Sunderland, Roger Reed in Palmer, and Sandwich. More specific information on stocking can be found at [www.mass.gov/trout](http://www.mass.gov/trout).

Keleher also gave a refresher regarding clipped adipose fins on fish. A clipped fin on a salmon means it was hatchery-raised, while no clipped fin means it was produced naturally within the Quabbin.

For lake trout, the adipose fins are clipped for an ongoing study of the trout in the region since the 1950s, and a clipped fin means it has a PIT tag or is being handled in the study.

The Quabbin Reservoir has seen a steady flow of people fishing in the region, with a spike in more people during the COVID-19 pandemic, but have seen a steady decrease since then from 45,000 to 13,000 between the 1980s to today.

The surveys have also revealed that the annual average catch rates are low, but slightly higher than the Wachusett Reservoir because of a large amount of nutrients and influence of boats. "I grew up fishing with my dad and family, and now effectively get to do it as a career, I think I'm pretty lucky to have had that opportunity for both; to have an outlet and positive exposure to the outdoors at a young age and to work in this field now.

"There is a certain level of mystery involved with water; ponds, rivers, streams and the ocean. For the most part you can look at the surface and have no idea what is going on below, there could be literally (within reason) anything down there out of sight," said Keleher.

"When you are a fisheries biologist you have access to many more tools that can help you look into that mystery a little further, to see what is below the surface and what it is up to down there."

## MARKET | FROM PAGE 1

was an adventure in itself. The family famous for the "Sound of Music" settled in Vermont, and one should not be surprised as they were an Alpine family.

Emily Von Trapp, a great-granddaughter of Baron Von Trapp teaches the craft and Robyn heard about it and she went to learn and came back to run Blair House Blooms.

So, what is new this year? Robyn is booking weddings and events.

There is a good reason to have Blair House Blooms' flowers at your wedding or special occasion. The keyword is sustainability. 98% of what Blair House does is local with no imports, and a low carbon footprint.

Valentine's Day will be here soon and Easter is not far away. This year, Blair House has doubled what will be available.

We don't need to import for gorgeous, it's here.

Farm46

Back again this year, and at his table across the room is Rich Laba of Farm46. Often in attendance with his wife Amy and daughters Madison and Charlotte, Rich was flying solo this day, but he had with him what Farm46 is known for.

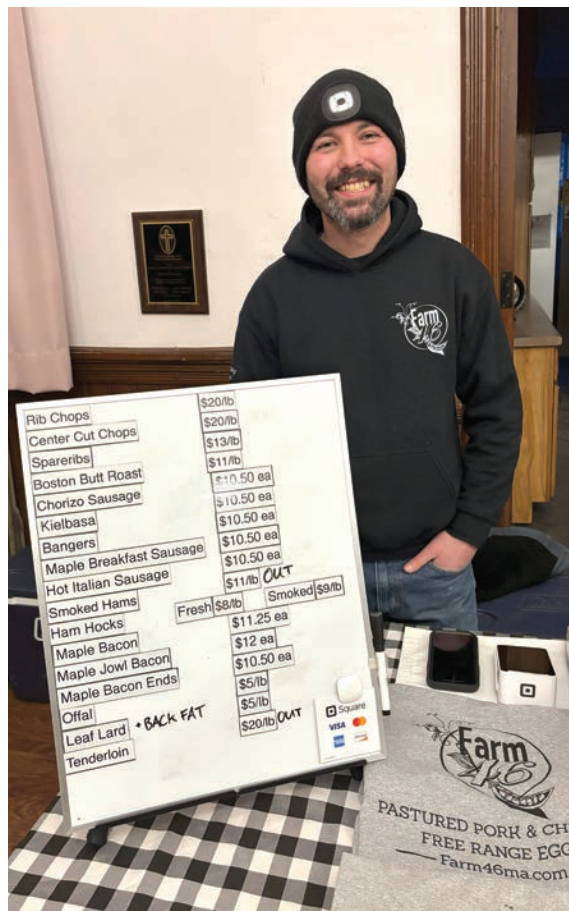
That would be pork products from farm raised Berkshire pigs. Berkshires are a heritage breed that have been raised for 300 years.

The piglets in mobile structures are moved as pasture changes. They are always outside rooting on the ground and in the woods, which is what they naturally do, unlike factory farmed meat. Thus, the product is delicious, marbled and healthy.

When asked what's new this year, Rich related that he has a new butcher and has switched to all-natural bacon and sausage.

The new butcher is an artisan out of Maine providing all uncured products using maple syrup and no added sugar.

As if the bacon and sausage were not enough, Farm46 also does antibiotic free pastured poultry



Rich Laba from Farm46. TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY

products. Chicken and eggs from the farm are on sale.

Farm46 will be at the West Brookfield Winter Farmers Market through March 12. In the summer they are at the Charlton Farmers Market, on Wednesdays from 4-7 p.m. on the Common.

You can keep in touch at the website, <http://farm46ma.com/>, and on Facebook.

# - obituary -

## Gerald LaVerne Paist

MECHANICSBURG, PA – Gerald LaVerne Paist (“Gerry”) passed away peacefully at Harrisburg Hospital on Jan. 24, 2025.

He was a resident of Country Meadows Mechanicsburg since April 2024.

Born in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Gerry was the son of Thomas Holland Paist, Jr. and Ethel Ann (Hubbell) Paist. He grew up in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania and attended the Upper Moreland School District, where he graduated Valedictorian of the class of 1957.

Gerry was very active in Scouting and attained the rank of Eagle Scout. During his senior year, Gerry was selected to tour Europe with the World Friendship Organization. While there, he visited 18 European countries and received the Queen’s Scout Badge, the highest award in English Scouting.

Following high school graduation, Gerry earned a B.S. in Mathematics from Lafayette College and Masters and Doctoral Degrees In Educational Administration from Harvard University.

After teaching Mathematics at Stoneham and Framingham School Districts, Gerry served as Assis-

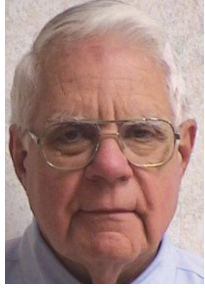
tant Dean of Westfield University in Massachusetts. He then became the Superintendent/Director of Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, where he served for 47 years. Currently he is the longest running School Superintendent in the United States.

Gerry will be remembered lovingly by his sister, Susan Hubbell Whyte (Howard) of Carlisle, niece, Kimberly Eshbach Barger (Chad) of Mechanicsburg and grand nephews, Alec Barger and Chase Barger. Burial will be private at West Laurel Hill Cemetery in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania.

The family would like to thank Country Meadows Mechanicsburg and UPMC Harrisburg for the excellent care given to Gerry. Also, the family would like to express their gratitude to Greg Salois, Eric Duda, Jim Jyz, Dan Whaley, Scott Moynihan, Mark Moynihan and Tim Moriarty for their ongoing support and friendship.

Memorial donations can be sent to: Pathfinder Vocational Technical High School, 240 Sykes St., Palmer, MA 01069.

Services will be private and at the convenience of the family.



## Death Notice

Paist, Gerald LaVerne “Gerry”  
Died Jan. 24, 2025

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## SNHU announces President’s list

MANCHESTER, NH – Southern New Hampshire University announces the fall 2024 President’s list. Local students making the President’s list are: Chelsea Sanders of North Brookfield and Valeria Contreras of North Brookfield.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President’s list. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired eight-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

## Colleges and universities announce Dean’s lists

**Dean’s list**  
**University of New England**  
*Biddeford and Portland, Maine*  
Savannah Cote of North Brookfield

**Nichols College**  
*Dudley*  
Zoe Cataldo of North Brookfield

**Norwich University**  
*Northfield, Vermont*  
Matthew Czaja of West Brookfield

**Regis College**  
*Weston*  
Serenity Ayala of North Brookfield

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## HELP WANTED

### ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

**Council on Aging for the Town of Oakham is seeking an experienced Activities Coordinator.**

Miscellaneous duties to include supporting current programs and developing new programs to increase attendance and participation of the growing aging population in the Oakham Senior Center. Up to 12 hours per week (flexible) \$20.00/hr. depending upon experience. Resume should be sent to **Admin@Oakham-Ma.gov** or mailed to **Board of Selectmen, Town of Oakham, 2 Coldbrook Road, Oakham, MA 01068.**

**COA COORDINATOR** for Town of Westhampton. Description available online at **www.westhamptonma.gov**. Applications accepted until position filled.

**HAMPDEN POLICE DEPARTMENT** is now accepting applications for a **FULL-TIME police officer**. Review of applications begins immediately. Visit **www.hampdenpolice.com** for more information. EOE

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### TOWN OF BARRE

#### Cemetery Clerk

The Town of Barre is seeking qualified applicants for the part-time position of Cemetery Clerk. This position is approximately 10 hours per week and the minimum hourly rate is \$15.00/hour and the maximum hourly rate is \$18.02/hour. A full job description is available upon request. Applicants must have HS Diploma or GED, with a minimum of two to three years' experience in office setting, or equivalent combination of education and experience.

Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest to: **Tammy Martin, Town Administrator, 40 West Street, Suite 697, Barre MA 01005** or **townadmin@townofbarre.com**.

For further information, please contact the Board of Selectmen's Office at (978) 355-2504 x135.  
A.A. / E.O.E.

**WILBRAHAM UNITED CHURCH** is hiring a sexton three evenings, 7-10 hours per week, \$16 per hour. Additional compensation for hours needed for weddings and funerals.

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More information found at **www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/**

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# New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Jan. 20-27, the **Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department** responded to **eight building/property checks, 19 directed/area patrols, six radar assignments, two traffic controls, one emergency 911 call, one assist other agency, one citizen assist, one property damage, one vandalism, two investigations, one animal call and two motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.**

### Wednesday, Jan. 22

12:14 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Memorial Drive, Dispatch Handled  
3:02 p.m. Property Damage, Ravine Road, Officer Handled

### Saturday, Jan. 25

3:40 p.m. Vandalism, West Road, Officer Handled  
5:55 p.m. Investigation, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled

### Tuesday, Jan. 21

8:22 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Barre Road, Services Rendered

### Sunday, Jan. 26

4:01 p.m. Investigation, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled  
4:03 p.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled



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# Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

# Quaboag hosts annual craft and small business fair Feb. 8

WARREN – Quaboag Regional Middle High School, 284 Old West Brookfield Road, is bringing back its annual Craft & Small Business Fair on Saturday, Feb. 8 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

With Valentine's Day fast approaching, this fair is a perfect opportunity to shop local and get some gifts for your loved ones. This annual fair is hosted by Quaboag's Student Council.

The fair has free admission and features over 80 local crafters and small business vendors that will be set up all across the halls of Quaboag. There will also be concessions available.

The fair will also feature raffle tables with numerous prizes available. Proceeds from the raffle will go towards the Student Council's MASC Leadership conference in Hyannis.

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## FULL TIME POLICE OFFICER

The **Warren Police Department** is accepting applications for the position of full time Police Officer. Applicants are preferred to be academy trained and must be willing to work weekends, nights and holidays.

Responsibilities include responding to emergency and non-emergency calls for Police, Fire and Ambulance services. It is preferred that applicants currently possess valid certification as a Police Officer. Candidates must have strong interpersonal, verbal, and written communication skills. Preferences include an associate degree or higher in criminal justice, serve in the US military, or experience as a Police Officer.

The Patrolmen's contract provides an education incentive and a candidate with prior experience may also be considered to start at a higher step rate of pay.

Resumes and cover letters must be returned no later than **Thursday, January 30th, 2025**, to the attention of **Lt. Kyle Whitcomb, WPD PO Box 606, Warren, MA 01083** or **Whitcomb@warren-ma.gov**.

*The Town of Warren is an EOE.*



The Town of Wales, MA seeks a qualified professional to fill the full time (40 hours per week) position of **DPW Director**.

Appointed by and serving under the direction of the Board of Selectmen, the Director performs complex supervisory, administrative and professional work in planning, organizing, directing and supervising various public works functions, including but not limited to the maintenance of highways, municipal and rural roads (25.46 local road miles), rights of way, parks, recreation facilities and playgrounds, municipal and school grounds, municipal buildings and dams, cemeteries, and fleet maintenance. There is no public utility (sewer and water) infrastructure in the Town of Wales. Administrative leadership responsibility includes budget development and forecasting, resource allocation, policy development and implementation, managing service objectives, and staffing. The Director is responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control. Minimum education and experience requirements include a high school diploma or equivalent; five (5) years of experience in construction, road maintenance, pavement management and winter weather operations; experience in a municipal leadership role in public works/public safety preferred; or any equivalent combination of education, training, certification, licensure and experience.

Eligible candidates shall possess a valid Class B Commercial Driver's License with air brakes endorsement or the ability to obtain within one (1) calendar year of appointment and a valid Hoisting License Class 2B or the ability to obtain within one (1) calendar year of appointment. Complete job description available at **www.townofwales.net**. Successful candidate will be subject to an extensive background investigation. Interested candidates should forward a cover letter, resume and three (3) professional references to: Ms. Pamela Leduc, Executive Secretary, Town of Wales, P.O. Box 834, Wales, MA 01081 or via email to **select@townofwales.net**. Resumes will be accepted until position is filled; however, priority consideration given to resumes received by 12PM on Monday, February 3, 2025.

*The Town of Wales is an AAEOE.*

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Friday, January 31, 2025

## Your BUYLINE CONNECTION

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