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Town looks into tuition agreement with regional school

By Paula Ouimette

Editor

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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said there has been discussion about entering into a tuition agreement with Quabog Regional School District. “We’re not obligated to

anything, it’s just something that came up,” Petraitis said at the April 8 meeting.

He said Superintendent Stephen Duff had reached out to members of the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee about the possibility of entering into a tuition agreement with the school district.

Petraitis said mem-

bers spoke to Duff and it was also brought up at the school committee meeting a few weeks ago.

“Last week, Mr. Duff hosted a Zoom meeting where the chairs of the School Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen and the Town Accountant, were able to ask questions about some things”

Petraitis said. “The hope of that meeting is that the various boards will figure out what those outstanding questions are...and there’s lots of them.”

Petraitis said it’s not something they are hoping to jump right into, as they need to determine if this agreement would be both financially sound and bene-

ficial to the students.

He said back in 2009, the School Committee had requested the board form an education task force. He said Jim Metcalf was the chair of the task force and he said its goal over the two plus years it met, was to seek the best route forward for North Brookfield Public Schools. “They knew that it was

starting to get more and more difficult to sustain the level of education with the money that we have available in this town,” Petraitis said.

He said over the years the budget has increased, but student enrollment has

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Special town meeting date set for May 9

By Paula Ouimette

Editor

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NORTH BROOKFIELD – At its April 8 meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted to hold a special town meeting on Friday, May 9.

Administrative Assistant Ashley Barre said the purpose of this meeting is to clear up any negative departmental budgets. She said this will give the Town Accountant more time to make transfers and correct budgets prior to the annual town meeting.

“This will quickly clear up all negative balances, any transfers that need to be made, stuff like that,” Barre said.

Members of the Capital Improvement Planning Committee have requested to place articles on the special town meeting warrant as well, and approached the board to discuss this.

Committee Chair Jamie Gilman said it was reestablished in September 2024, and they have been collecting capital requests from the town’s various departments.

“We got four requests,” Gilman said. “With money being what it is right now... two were kind of picked out to be kind of highest priority and ones that potentially could be approved with the financial situation this year.

The first request was for a new “jaws of life” hydraulic rescue tool for the Fire Department. The estimated cost of this tool is \$15,600.

Fire Chief Darin Anderson said the department’s current “jaws of life” tool is from 1987. He said last year, the department responded to 34 car accidents, of which three required use of the

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Inaugural Brookfield Gala honors distinguished citizens



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO
Elizabeth Jay spoke after she and her late husband Art Jay received the first Distinguished Citizen Award at the first Brookfield Gala. This special event took place at the Salem Cross Inn.

By Ryan Drago

Staff Writer

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WEST BROOKFIELD – The Friends of Brookfield, Inc. hosted the first ever Brookfield Gala at the historic Salem Cross Inn this past Friday.

This inaugural event helped raise funds to support the Friends of Brookfield, a registered 501c3 nonprofit organization, and their mission to enhance their community through economic development, community initiatives, and historic preservation. All

proceeds from the evening will go toward local projects and programs that benefit residents of all ages.

The Gala experienced a great turnout at Salem Cross Inn and featured a series of events such as cocktail hour, a silent auction, a delicious meal and dessert, dancing, music, and a presentation of the first Brookfield Distinguished Citizen Award.

Members of Friends of Brookfield, Inc. Shelby and Jake Hill said every item in the silent auction was generously donated by various individuals and local busi-

nesses. Over 160 guests attended the Brookfield Gala and participated in the silent auction.

Friends of Brookfield member Kermit Eaton describes the organization as a “group of like-minded citizens with a passion for the town. Dedicated to help businesses and citizens.” Kermit also mentioned that funds from the Gala will help the Friends of Brookfield support programs they would like to implement in the future.

This special event high-

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Select Board appoints interim veterans’ agent

By Paula Ouimette

Editor

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STURBRIDGE – The Select Board appointed Michelle Durkee to serve as the town’s interim veterans’ agent.

Durkee served 25 years in the U.S. Navy and Army, and is also the veterans’ agent for West Brookfield, Warren, Templeton and Lunenburg.

At the April 7 meeting, Town Administrator Robin Grimm said she has looked into the difference between a veterans’ agent and a veterans’ service officer, which is what the town previously had. She said a veterans’ agent is able to assist veterans with Veterans Administration work, and would need to have a minimum of 20 hours a week and go through a certification program.

Grimm said as interim, Durkee will work 10 hours

a week for the town and will also be helping with Memorial Day.

Grimm said she recommended the town pursue the hiring of a veterans’ agent.

“I just think we offer more service for the same money to our residents,” she said.

DPW report

Department of Public Works Director Heather Blakeley said now that winter weather is ending, the department is starting spring cleanups in time for Memorial Day.

She said she is still working to get road bids out using feedback from the engineers who helped put the pavement management plan together.

“We’re going to look into doing some slurry seal type work on some of the roads...then we’ll be putting

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TURLEY PHOTO BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS
Raffi, Mich  el, Erik, Ethan, Luk, and Christopher are shown with 3D printed items from their business, 3D Prints Created by Doodle Kittredge.

PTO hosts successful craft fair

By Emily-Rose Pappas

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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Over the weekend after a sudden snowstorm sent in up to half a foot in some places, people still braved the weather to set up shop at the North Brookfield High School in support of the PTO’s an-

nual craft fair.

Over 60 vendors came out to fill the gym, cafeteria, and upstairs main floor with gifts, treats, and more, from books to read to honey for your tea, to adorable crocheted plushies and 3D-printed wonders.

“My favorite part is the variety. Seeing the creativity and wide variety of dif-

ferent vendors,” said Jess Wisniewski, the PTO’s President.

The North Brookfield PTO worked hard despite the weather, and many people came out to escape the frigid weather and look around at the many vendors present.

“Our PTO is incredibly

See **CRAFT FAIR** PAGE 6



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- community -

Local Author Showcase

Library event featured work of several writers

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library hosted a Local Author Showcase this past weekend and brought many local writers together. This event was a celebration of the local authors who once called North Brookfield their home. There were book excerpts and poetry readings shared by many talented authors who attended this showcase.

“Without authors, there are no books. Without books, there are no libraries” said Diane Buzzell, an author based out of North Brookfield and a current member of the Haston Free Public Library’s Board of Trustees.

A historical display of past local authors and poets could be seen at the Haston Free Public Library and many historical facts about each author were shared by Buzzell at the beginning of the Local Author Showcase. Buzzell read numerous historical facts of each local author that are honored in the rich literary history of North Brookfield.

The local authors acknowledged in the historic display included Amasa Walker, Francis Amasa Walker, William Cullen Bryant, Tryphosa Bates-Batcheller, George Michael Cohan, William Cary Duncan, Tim Parker and Richard Johnson. The display featured not only photographs and historical facts of each author, but copies of their work as well.

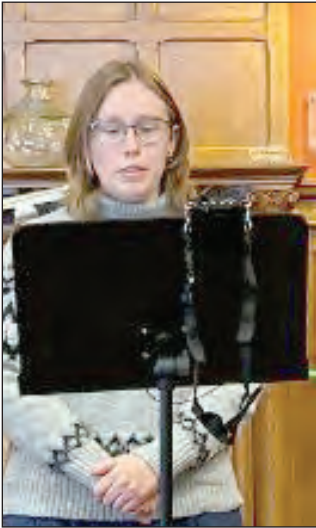
Buzzell found it important to share all these facts about these writers who are connected to North Brookfield. Their work and connection to the town adds to its unique history.

Buzzell made the audience laugh by mentioning one obvious fact about North Brookfield is that it is the only Brookfield that is not on Route 9.

Buzzell mentioned she would like to start a group for writers to talk about experiences with different publishers throughout their writing careers. Several of the guest speakers found it



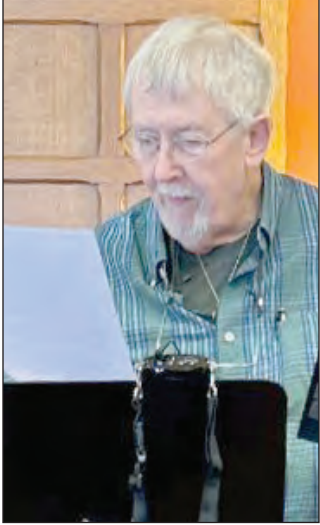
Diane Buzzell shared a presentation of past local authors of North Brookfield during the Local Author Showcase presentation held at the Haston Free Public Library.



Youth Services Librarian Brianna Lamb shared several of her poems, one of them, “Brilliance”, was published in a magazine.



Kristi Lee Seymour read a passage from her book “Deeply Rooted”.



Jack McClintock read several short stories from one of his books, one of them was inspired by the town of North Brookfield.

interesting and hope this group idea will spark some interest.

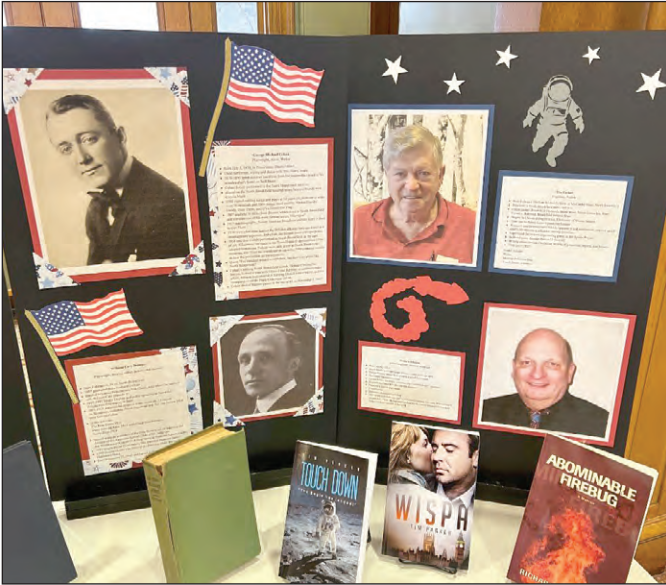
The first to speak during the showcase was Brianna Lamb, Youth Services Librarian of the Haston Free Public Library. Lamb loves writing poetry and brought four of her poems to read at the showcase.

One of her poems, “Brilliance”, was published in October Hill Magazine and it was the first poem she shared at the showcase. The last poem Lamb read was inspired by her trip to Korea and is titled “Dubu Kimchi in Jongno-gu”.

Lamb said this poem is one of her favorites because it carries a memory of that trip. Lamb plans to continue to write poems in the future.

Next to speak was Kristi Lee Seymour, the author of “Deeply Rooted”. Seymour was inspired to write a book about five years ago said she wanted to “write something to bring people hope.” With a lot of passion Seymour read a passage from her book.

“Deeply Rooted” is a per-



A historic display of some of the notable, local authors of North Brookfield.

sonal and inspirational true story about overcoming tragic deaths, infertility, miscarriages, lawsuits, bankruptcy, and surrendering a dream home with Jesus Christ. Seymour brought copies of her book for the showcase.

The next author to speak was Tammy Doherty. Instead of sharing a passage from one of her books, Doherty wanted to share her writing background.

Doherty brought copies of her book “She’s Mine”, a romance and suspense story set in a small New England town. Doherty had her first book published around 2001-2002. Her other books include “Celtic Cross”, “Claddaugh”, and “Celtic Knot”. These three books by Doherty are Christian western romantic suspense stories.

The last to speak was Jack McClintock, who is also an educational psychologist and a mental health counselor. McClintock began by first thanking the friends of the library for the invitation to the showcase.

He began writing poetry

as a teenager and has several published works throughout his writing career.

“You can’t pick your family, but you can pick your friends,” he said while speaking.

McClintock read a couple short stories out of his book “Son of the Servant”. The first one he read was titled “Soul of a Nation”. After reading McClintock was excited to read another short story, “This Fruitful Mind.”

McClintock brought copies of his work as well, including his book, “Sin Eater: Memoirs of a Prison Psychologist”.

Buzzell returned to the podium and thanked all the writers for talking and would like to host another showcase in the future.

The Haston Free Public Library will be celebrating spring during the May Festival on Saturday, May 3 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information visit www.northbrookfieldlibrary.org or contact the library by calling 508-867-0208 or emailing hastonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com.

Ecumenical Easter sunrise service at Old Sturbridge Village

STURBRIDGE – The annual Ecumenical Easter sunrise service will be held at Old Sturbridge Village on April 20 starting at 6 a.m.

According to The Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale’s pastor, the Rev. David W. Cote, seven local faith communities will join together at the original Baptist Meetinghouse that is now located at the end of the Common at Old Sturbridge Village.

Participating in this year’s sunrise service, in addition to Cote, are The Rev. Dan Purtell (Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Sturbridge and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Southbridge), Father Luc Martel, A.A. (St. Anne/St. Patrick Parish, Fiskdale), The Rev. Brian Oxman (Brookfield Congregational Church, Brookfield), The Rev. Kathryn Light (Elm Street Congregational Church, Southbridge), and Ms. Christine McTigue (St. Joseph

Church, Charlton).

“Together, we will welcome the dawn with prayer, song, and messages of hope and renewal as the sun rises,” said Cote. “The service is open to all and will offer a peaceful, reflective start to Easter Sunday.”

Those who wish to attend are advised to enter the Village and make their way to the Meetinghouse by way of the security gate at the top of the parking lot, and dress appropriately for the weather. Please note that food and drink are not permitted, except for bottled water.

The Village will not be open for touring during this event and restrooms will not be available. Attendees are requested to leave the Village directly following the service.

Easter morning services will follow the sunrise service at each of the respective churches.

Tri-Parish Community Church lists Easter services

HARDWICK – Tri-Parish Community Church will hold its Easter Sunrise Service on Sunday, April 20 at 5:45 a.m. at the East Quabbin Land Trust office, 120 Ridge Road.

All are welcome to attend. The Easter Sunrise Service will be led by Deacon Virginia Rich.

The Tri Parish Community Church will also hold an Easter worship service to be led by Pastor Nathan Pederson on Sunday, April 20 at 10 a.m. at the New Braintree Congregational Church, 3 Oakham Road, New Braintree. The church is handicapped accessible and all are welcome

EQLT’s annual Geocache Scavenger Hunt kicks off on April 19

HARDWICK – The East Quabbin Land Trust’s Geocache Scavenger Hunt will begin on April 19 and run through May 4.

Appropriate for both children and adults, EQLT’s Geocache Scavenger Hunt pairs an outdoor scavenger hunt with a word game. Registration is open through May 2, and participants may register as individuals, a family or a group.

“Our annual Geocache Scavenger Hunt is a popular, family-friendly activity and a fantastic way to get outdoors to enjoy the first signs of spring at our preserves,” said Cynthia Henshaw, Executive Director of the East Quabbin Land Trust. “As a land trust, we are always encouraging people to get outside to enjoy nature, and the Geo-

cache Scavenger Hunt is a fun way to do it.”

The Geocache Scavenger Hunt involves a self-paced search for geocaches, or boxes, hidden at various EQLT preserves using GPS technology typically found on a smartphone. Each registrant may collect one item at each geocache.

Players then bring their items to the Reveal Party, which will be held at EQLT’s office, 120 Ridge Road, on Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m. Scavenger Hunt participants will have the chance to meet and play a game against other participants at the Reveal Party using the items they collected during the Geocache Scavenger Hunt.

To learn more about it and to sign up, go to EQLT’s website at eqlt.org/geocache-scavenger-hunt/.

Cost is \$20 per entry, with a reduced entry fee for children and youths under 15. Email Henshaw at chenshaw@eqlt.org for reduced-fee registration.

Library hosts open house on April 24

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, is hosting an open house on Thursday, April 24 from 2-4 p.m.

This is a great chance to visit and learn about all the different services the library offers.

Lions Club hosts 38th annual River Race on April 27

STURBRIDGE – The Sturbridge Lions Club River Race will be held on Sunday, April 27 with registration at 9 a.m.

Since 1987, the 38th Annual River Race has been held on the Quinebaug River, known as the “River of the long

Fish” (eels).

The first craft off will be at 11 a.m. from the famous Turners Ball Field in Fiskdale. There will be thrills, spills, picnics, and a family fun day.

The race finishes at the popular Westville Recreation Area. Walking

trails on site.

After the cold of winter, come out and enjoy the sunshine and if you own a canoe, raft or kayak, this event is for you.

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- community -

Chamber Chat Breakfast held at Cedarbrook Village

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – Members of the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce met for breakfast at Cedarbrook Village at Ware this past week.

After a delicious breakfast provided by Cedarbrook Village, members of the Chamber would be a part of informative discussions covering multiple topics. The Chamber’s CEO James Przypek welcomed all the members who attended and thanked Cedarbrook Village at Ware for the breakfast they provided.

The first group to speak was Ed Fisher of Fisher Tech Solutions and Patrick Hughes of Lantern Digital Marketing Agency.

Both Hughes and Fisher briefly spoke about their businesses and talked about digital marketing and technology. One of the main subjects brought up was the use of artificial intelligence.

According to both marketing and tech experts, there are advantages and disadvantages to using AI.

Hughes shared some input and said there is a lot of misunderstanding with AI and the biggest example of some of the negative infor-



Palmer Town Manager Brad Brothers talked about what has been happening in Palmer.

mation from AI comes from social media.

“The country wants oversight of AI,” Hughes said.

Both agree it is important for business owners, especially small businesses owners to review ideas, ask questions and have important discussions to how AI factors into their content. While taking questions, Dr. David Ewen, the Chair of the Western Mass Chapter of SCORE shared some input about the use of AI.

According to Ewen, there have been fears in the past about technology possibly eliminating certain jobs. When it comes to the use of



Ed Fisher, left, and Patrick Hughes, center, discussed digital marketing and technology.

AI and how it impacts jobs and businesses, Ewen said “the person using AI will take your job.”

In the past, technology may have taken a job away, but two new ones would come in. However, in the modern world and AI use growing in popularity, it is still uncertain how impactful AI will be.

“We live in a different time now,” Ewen said.

The next informative discussion was about Business Training, Financial Planning and Insurance. The presenters were Melissa Fales from Quaboag Valley Community Devel-

opment Corporation, Renee Niedziela of J. Stolar Insurance Agency and Nicholas Manolakis from Mass Mutual’s Charter Oak Financial.

Fales talked about helping businesses in underserved areas and how her organization works with a lot of small businesses starting off.

Niedziela talked about the importance of insurance and the high rates and how they impact people and businesses. What plays into these high insurance rates is that companies can’t pay every claim that is in their books. Natural disasters,

fires play a significant role with insurance throughout the country.

Niedziela says business insurance is getting more expensive and it is wise to negotiate with companies and “look at your billing options.”

Manolakis would then speak and talk about his work in helping companies create employee benefit packages. From Manolakis’ point of view, one of the biggest challenges businesses face is finding or keeping good employees depending on what benefits and programs are being offered. Other challenges are property markets and businesses not making enough to continue to pay their running costs.

The next topic was about maximizing membership. Przypek and Tanya Bullock of Life’s Memories & More talked about a checklist they handed out for members to review and to help further maximizing membership for the chamber.

“The chamber is as strong as it’s members,” Bullock said.

Both talked about the website and the login settings and how to keep information up to date. There are plenty of resources

available to help members as they continue to run their business. More information can be found at www.qhma.com.

The last discussion was about working with municipalities. Representing Ware was Town Manager Stuart Beckley and Building Commissioner Anna Marques. For the Town of Palmer, Town Manager Brad Brothers and Heidi Mannarino attended the Chamber Chat Breakfast.

Each town manager shared what has been going on in their towns and what can be developed in the future.

Brothers says he “believes in working with people” and the importance of small businesses growing in the community. Beckley discussed vacant properties in Ware and potential opportunities for economic development, a mixture of business and housing.

Ware is currently reaching out to health services after a recent zoning change to the Mary Lane Hospital property as a healthcare district.

Przypek thanked everyone for attending the Chamber Chat breakfast and said he looked forward to the next gathering.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sturbridge Militia reenactors are shown at a muster on the common.

‘Sturbridge and the American Revolution’ presented by Historical Society

STURBRIDGE – On Thursday, April 24 at 7 p.m., the Sturbridge Historical Society is sponsoring a presentation by Doug Quigley on Sturbridge and the American Revolution at the Publick House.

Quigley will tell the story of the American Revolution as we begin to celebrate its 250th anniversary. He will focus more on the early years of the war and New

England’s participation.

The program will include Sturbridge town records, which show the town’s resistance to the King and their support for the protests.

Quigley has lived in Sturbridge since 1979. He is a long-time historical reenactor, as well as an accomplished fifer.

He has participated in the country’s 200th Anniversary as a Revolutionary

War participant. He was on the North Bridge in Concord in April 1975, and at the surrender in Yorktown, Virginia in 1981. H

He enjoys studying and participating in history, and is currently president of the Historical Society.

This program, which is generously hosted by the Publick House, is free and open to the public.

East Brookfield library hosts ‘Meet the Candidates’

EAST BROOKFIELD – On Monday, April 28 from 5:30-7 p.m., residents will get a chance to “Meet the Candidates” at the East Brookfield Public Library.

Candidates seeking election or write-in candidates seeking election for town office on Tuesday, May 13 are welcome to attend. Each candidate will have five minutes to talk and answer questions. Please contact Carolann at the library with any questions.

The public is encouraged to attend the event at the library and light refreshments will be served.

Solo/Duet poetry and music series continues on Tuesdays

WEST BROOKFIELD – Solo/Duet, a poetry and music series at the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library will be held on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. in April.

In celebration of National Poetry Month, Jonathan Blake will read poems from the collections of poetry found on the shelves of the Merriam Gilbert Library in West Brookfield. Each

April reading will begin and end with performances by a jazz duet of original compositions and those from the “standard book” of America’s one true art form.

On April 22, bassist Jerry Wilfong and vocalist Lydia Fortune will perform while Jonathan Blake reads Stern and Oliver; and on April 29, bassist Jerry Wilfong and

percussionist Dick Hummel/Jonathan Blake reads Gluck and Wright.

This series is free and open to all. Please stop by or call the library or call 508-867-1410 to reserve your seat.

This program is made possible by the West Brookfield Cultural Council as supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Earth Day Clean-Up and pancake breakfast

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Park & Recreation Committee is hosting the annual Earth Day Clean-up on Saturday, April 26 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., rain or shine.

Get involved by taking ownership of your street, create a team or join one, and earn volunteer hours (for students).

The event will be kicked

off by a free pancake breakfast sponsored by the Hayden Masonic Lodge at 3 High School Drive (next to the North Brookfield Elementary School) from 8-9 a.m. Hannaford Supermarket is donating the food.

Bags and gloves will be provided at the lodge.

The Highway department dump truck will be available for bagged trash at the Senior Center. Note

that this is a different location than in previous years. Bags and gloves will also be available.

So, enjoy a comforting breakfast with your “neighbors” before heading out to pick up trash.

Research has revealed that communal eating and volunteerism increases feelings of well-being and enhances one’s sense of contentment and community.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

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- opinion -



Vacation plans, anyone?

Vacation plans, anyone? Many people plan trips over April vacation! Not me, I am planning an escape to the garden.

I have been chomping at the bit to do some gardening in spite of this crazy, post-winter weather we are having. Can you believe it snowed twice last week?

Maybe a dusting at your house, but Saturday’s snowfall was a despicable four inches! At least forecasts for this upcoming week are improving, and I’m hoping that vacation week’s are even better.

While it’s best to wait until Memorial Day to sow bean and squash seeds, as well as transplant your tomato and pepper seedlings into the garden, there are many veggies that thrive in cooler spring temperatures. Here is a re-cap of a column from a few years back, outlining the veggie seeds that can be sown in the garden now:

Beet seeds can be planted as soon as the soil can be worked. Sow them close together and thin to three inches apart for full size beets – use the culled greens in salad. For a pretty beet try Chiogga for its alternating stripes of pink and white; pick early for best quality.

More interested in beet greens than beets themselves? Beautiful Bull’s Blood grows well throughout the summer months without getting bitter.

Carrots will also grow well under cool conditions, although they may take longer to come up. Keep them moist to hasten germination. Experts recommend sowing fast-growing radish seeds to mark carrot rows as well as provide shade (and therefore moisture retention).

I’ve also heard of folks covering rows of carrot seeds with burlap or straw for the same reason. For the longest, straightest roots, be sure the seed bed is deep and rock-free. Thin twice, with an ultimate spacing of one inch apart.

Amazingly enough, carrots come in all shades of yellow and orange, purple and red, even white. Try Yellowstone, Atomic Red, Purple Haze and White Satin for an extremely colorful coleslaw.

Lettuce is one of the best crops to start now. In fact, it won’t germinate at all when soil temperatures top 75 degrees.

Sow your seeds every couple of weeks for a continuous supply throughout the summer. Get creative with lattice or interplant with other crops to give lettuce a break from sun and heat.

When all your friends are complaining that their salads are bitter, you’ll be rewarded for your efforts

with sweet greens. Look for seeds that suit your season. Consider New Red Fire or Slobolt for growing in the summer months; Tango or Lollo Rossa for fall and winter season extension.

Parsnips, like carrots, take a long time to come up and need consistent moisture in order to germinate. Try some of the tricks I mentioned above or just be diligent with the hose.

Old Sturbridge Village grows two great heirloom varieties – Hollow Crown and Student. Harvest some after a few hard frosts in the fall, but hold on harvesting the rest until early spring.

You will be in for a sweet surprise.

Peas have been a favorite plant of mine for the last several years. Sow them now and provide support for all but the dwarfest varieties. I plant them around the perimeter of my garden up against the fence, and will utilize “pea brush” for another row or two within the garden.

Be on the lookout for cut worms – in my garden they nearly always decimated my crop. If you see pea seedlings cut off at the soil line, gently cultivate around your plant and dispose of the chubby green or golden caterpillars.

Oregon Giant is a great snow pea, with flat pods perfect for stir fries. Tall Telephone (aka Alderman) is nearly six feet tall under optimal conditions, and yields upwards of 30 pounds of peas per one hundred foot row.

Spinach is another crop that must be started early to ensure success, and a crop I can’t quite seem to master. I was never satisfied with the meal or two I ate before the plants bolted – I wanted more!

So instead of growing regular spinach, I now grow New Zealand Spinach. It isn’t a true spinach, nor does it resemble one, but it can be grown throughout the summer and substituted for cooked spinach in nearly any recipe.

Soak the large seeds overnight before sowing to hasten germination. Pinch off and use the waxy leaves when they reach two or three inches long. New Zealand spinach also freezes extremely well.

Enjoy these earliest days in the garden; I know I will! The best vacation ever spent.

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.

PEOPLE/MILESTONE NEWS

As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a “people news” form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content.

For more information, or to submit people or milestone news for the Quaboag Current, please email pouimette@turley.com.



When is the best time for me to claim Social Security?

Dear Rusty:
I will be 66 ½ in June and would like to discuss when would be the best time for me to start taking my social security benefits.

I am still employed full time and don’t want to be penalized because of that. Please let me know what I need to do to set up an appointment with you. I got your information from the AMAC website and I look forward to hearing from you.

Signed: Ready to Claim

Dear Ready:
You can certainly call us on 1-888-750-2622 during normal EST business hours for a personal conversation.

But to facilitate that conversation, be aware that deciding when to claim your Social Security benefit normally depends on just a few factors, including your financial need, your health and expected longevity, and your marital status. A few things to be aware of: Born in 1958, your “Full Retirement Age” is age 66 years and 8 months. If you were born in October 1958, you will reach your FRA in June 2025, and that is the point you can get 100% of the SS benefit you’ve earned from a lifetime of working.

Once you reach your FRA in June, Social Security’s “annual earnings test” no longer applies. Thus,

you can continue working after you start your SS benefits and your earnings will not negatively affect your monthly benefit amount. If you claim any earlier than your FRA, you will get a smaller benefit and also be subject to Social Security’s annual earnings test (which for you this year - your FRA year - is \$62,160, or \$5,180/month after you start your SS benefits). If you decide to claim before your FRA, your benefit will be reduced by .556% for each month early (a permanent reduction).

You can also wait beyond your FRA to claim and earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) at the rate of .667% per month (8% per year of delay), in order to get an even higher benefit later. If financially feasible, you can delay up to the age of 70 when your monthly benefit will reach maximum - about 27% more than it will be in June of this year.

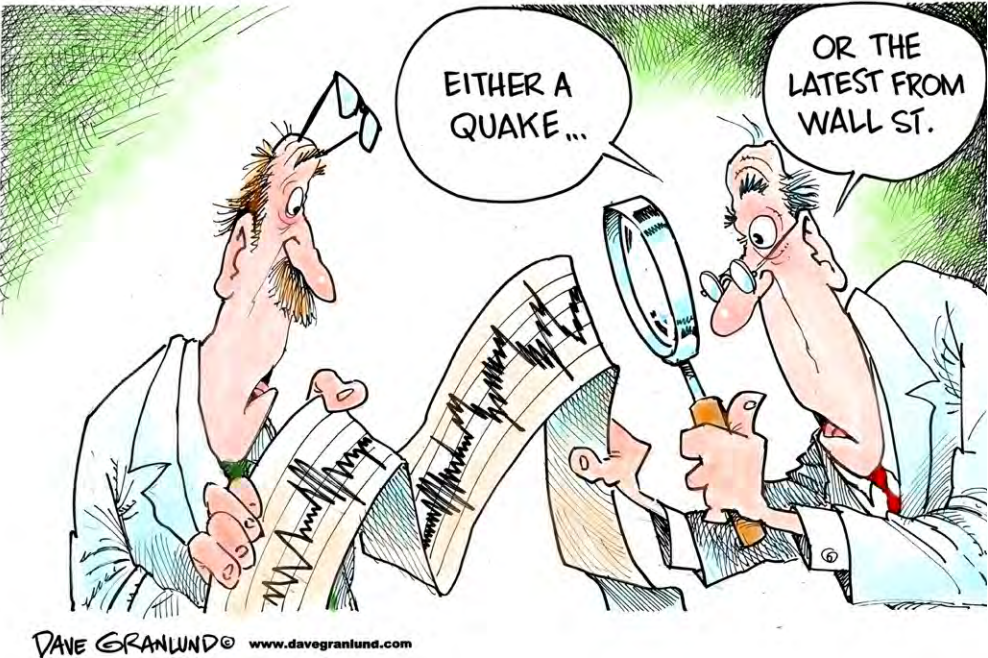
0-If you are single and will not be eligible for a spousal benefit, then you should make your claiming decision based only on your own needs. If, however, you are married and your spouse’s FRA benefit is more than twice your FRA amount, you may be entitled to a “spousal boost” (a supplemental amount added to your own SS benefit).

Your life expectancy

should be considered when deciding when to claim your SS retirement benefits. If you expect to enjoy at least “average” longevity (about 87 for a woman your current age), then you might also consider delaying your claim (if financially feasible) and that is often a prudent choice. If you don’t expect to achieve a long life, or if you need the money sooner, or if you are entitled to spousal benefits, then claiming at your FRA of 66 years and 8 months is likely your best option.

In the end, only you can decide when you should claim your Social Security, but we’re always here to answer any additional questions you may have. You can feel free to call us at any time (1-888-750-2622) during normal EST business hours to discuss your options directly with one of our certified Social Security advisors. Or you can also ask any additional questions via email, which we will be most happy to respond to promptly.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/lprograms/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



A day in the life: Never a dull moment

People often ask me what a patient advocate does. Truly, when my phone rings I never know what the day might bring. But if I have done my job, by the time my head hits the pillow, I will have made someone’s life better or their hospital stay safer.

Let me walk you through a day in the life of a patient advocate.

Morning

I receive a call from a senior health-care industry professional with a referral for a man who is struggling to care for his wife, who has

Alzheimer’s. Dementia is hard not only on the person who has it, but on their loved ones who are determined to care for them. It can be a lonely existence.

This man needs support because he wants to keep his wife safe at home, meaning he will need to find 24-hour care. In addition, he is suffering from caregiver stress and has health challenges of his own. It seems also that a new neurologist is needed to get a fresh set of eyes and a new evaluation of his wife’s condition.

One of our nurses will follow up with this couple after I share their story and initial priorities of care.

Then, a community member calls regarding an elderly neighbor who has been in the hospital for several weeks and is having complications that come with prolonged hospitalization. People who are hospitalized for days or weeks at a time may suffer sleep deprivation and disorientation, which can complicate

their recovery.

The neighbor is concerned that the man is not receiving the care he should, but I explain that we cannot legally help unless we are formally retained and have the individual’s or family’s permission to act as their representative.

In addition, the man has a wife at home with dementia and no family around to help out. We plan to have a call this afternoon to discuss having one of our nurse advocates going to assess the patient’s situation and make sure his wife is well cared for in his absence.

Afternoon

I prepare for a panel discussion presented by the National Association of Healthcare Advocacy Consultants.

Two sisters contact me about their father, who is experiencing complications following what was supposed to be a straightforward surgical procedure.

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- community -

GALA FROM PAGE 1

lighted the presentation of the Distinguished Citizen Award, an annual recognition celebrating individuals who have made a profound and lasting impact on Brookfield. The inaugural award was presented to Art and Elizabeth Jay, two dedicated community leaders whose unwavering commitment has been immeasurable in shaping the community for the better.

Jake Hill first spoke up at the podium after the delicious meal at Salem Cross Inn and wanted to remind everyone at the Gala about this great dedication.

"We dream of a stronger, prouder Brookfield," Hill said. "Tonight, you're all part of our vision."

Brookfield Congregational Church Pastor Brian Oxman spoke first during the presentation of the Distinguished Citizen Award. Oxman in his speech talked about some of the projects done in the community thanks to residents such as Art and Elizabeth Jay.

There was much gratitude expressed by Oxman, who recalled speaking with Art just a couple of days before he passed away in February.

Oxman truly believes citizens like Art and Elizabeth are big contributors to making the world a better place by making their community a better place.

"Let your community be the catalyst to make the world a better place," Oxman said. "We have a responsibility to leave it in a better place."

Elizabeth Jay approached the podium and thanked Oxman for his speech and thanked the guests for the recognition as being the recipient of the Distinguished



Shelby and Jake Hill of the Friends of Brookfield were excited to have a great turnout for the first Brookfield Gala.



The Gala had an excellent turnout with over 160 guests at Salem Cross Inn.



Pastor Brian Oxman is shown during the presentation of the first Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award.



Numerous items were donated for the Gala's silent auction.

Citizen Award along with her late husband. She shared several great stories about her husband Art and the numerous activities he was involved in and wanting to do good things for the community of Brookfield.

"I truly believe that every person called to serve this town, are all dedicated to keeping Brookfield vibrant for all of us," Jay said.

She ended her speech by reading a card in honor

of Art. Jay was also given several citations that were presented by state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume. The commendations were from the House of Representatives, the Senate and from the office of Governor Maura Healy.

Receiving these citations was all part of the celebration of the Distinguished Citizens of the Year Award and further acknowledging the Jays' extraordinary con-

tributions to the community.

Eaton returned to the podium to make another special announcement. Starting with next year's Gala the name of the Distinguished Citizen Award will be renamed as the Art & Elizabeth Jay Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award. The guests cheered after the announcement was made and Jay expressed much gratitude and was honored



Kermit Eaton made a special announcement after Elizabeth Jay accepted the award.

to have the annual award named after her and her husband.

Attendees enjoyed a night of camaraderie with fellow residents and local leaders, all while celebrating the spirit of Brookfield. The Friends of Brookfield extend their heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended and supported the Brookfield Gala.

The Friends of Brookfield want to thank their

generous event sponsors: Southbridge Credit Union, Smokestack Lightning, Inc., Cornerstone Bank, Hometown Mental Health & Wellness, Oakholm Farm Estate, Willow Brook Academy and St. Mary's Credit Union.

For more about Friends of Brookfield, Inc. visit FriendsOfBrookfield.org and follow their activities and updates on their Facebook page.

NB SELECTMEN FROM PAGE 1

dropped. He said the town has also looked into the possibility of regionalization with other school districts.

"Hopefully the various committees will put their heads together...before we decide whether or not we would entertain actually entering into a tuition agreement with somebody," Petraitis said.

Petraitis said the board will discuss this tuition agreement at its next meeting.

Social media comments Judy Manning, chair of the Council on Aging, joined by council members Mary Waytina and Diane Hopkins, said there have been a lot of negative contacts scrutinizing the COA Director Courtenay Rivera and the COA on social media.

Manning said these comments are upsetting to the COA, the director and the Friends of the COA.

"We feel that Courtenay is doing a great job," Manning said.

Manning said Rivera is participating in online training, and she loves her job and helping the senior citizens in town.

"She is a good listener, and she welcomes anyone who comes into the Senior Center," Manning said. "The COA board respects and supports her."

Manning said anyone with concerns about the Senior Center is welcome to stop in during business hours and discuss this.

Petraitis said there have been a number of untrue comments made on social media, including allegations that the Board of Selectmen are "lining their pockets."

"Nothing could be further from the truth than that statement," he said.

Petraitis said another comment on social media states the town needs to be audited. He said the town is audited by a third-party every year as mandated by the state.

"We are being really careful with how we do things, and we are being watched and managed by third parties to make sure that we're not doing anything illegal," he said.

Board of Selectmen Vice-Chair Elizabeth "Brooke" Canada agreed with Petraitis, and suggested that people who have questions about town business reach out to the various departments and ask questions directly, or attend a meeting.

Resident Brandon Avery said it's a shame there is so much negativity online, and from his experience, board and committee members work hard and try to do their best for the town.

"We do have a shortage of people volunteering in this town and there are a number of committees that could use help and the more help we can get, the better off the town will be in the end," Avery said.

Spending requests

The board approved the Senior Center's request to spend \$400 to pay its cleaning company for a deep clean of the center's carpet and to polish the hard floors. This has not been done in years, Petraitis said.

The board also approved the Highway Department's request to spend \$3,700 to purchase pipes to be installed on Tucker Farm Road and prep work for fiscal year 2026 paving.

Contract extension

The board signed a con-

tract amendment with Haley Ward, the engineers overseeing the Mount Pleasant Street Project. This amendment will extend the contract.

Letter from Cultural Council

Petraitis said the board received a letter from the Cultural Council requesting the removal of member Connie Moore, stating she had not attended a meeting in two years. The board approved the request.

Petraitis said the committee handbook states that members can be removed from appointed positions af-

ter missing a certain number of meetings.

New licenses

The board signed new licenses for ND Enterprises, formerly known as Dupre Recycling.

Resignation

Petraitis said the board received a verbal resignation from Paul LeBlanc from LPAC. The board accepted his resignation and thanked him for his years of service on that committee.

Upcoming events

Nancy Waldron from the Parks & Recreation Committee said an Earth Day celebration will be held on

Saturday, April 26 starting with a pancake breakfast from 8-9 a.m. at Hayden Lodge A.F. & A.M. on High School Drive. She said the breakfast will be cooked by the Masons with food donated by Hannaford.

Waldron said people can then pick up gloves and trash bags to pick up trash around town. Trash bags can then be dropped off at the Highway Department truck which will be parked at the Senior Center, 29 Forest St., from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

The Friends of the North Brookfield Council on Aging will be hosting a spa-

ghetti dinner fundraiser on Saturday, April 26 at the Senior Center, 29 Forest St. Tickets are \$12 adults and \$6 children ages 12 and under and can be purchased at the center or by calling 508-867-0220.

There will be live entertainment, raffles and door prizes. All proceeds go toward programming and meals for the Senior Center.

Fire hose donation

Fire Chief Darin Anderson said he received 1,500 feet of three-inch hose for free from the town of Oxford.

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- community -

CRAFT FAIR
FROM PAGE 1

active and does so many great donations and events for our town, school, and children,” said Wisniewski.

The craft fair also featured a group of young students, a group of boys who worked hard to make their 3D creations for a table at the fair, even taking some time to walk around with their items for sale.

The vendors at the event came from all over, from the locals in the Brookfields to Boston, New Hampshire, and beyond.

Even though the snow came in drifts, the vendors supported one another as well, taking their time to see what creativity flourished in the school.

The PTO will be hosting more events for the community to enjoy in the future, including their Annual Town-Wide Yard Sale on May 24, and their Annual Color Run on June 1 at 1 p.m.

“[The community can



Local author Sharon Legasey with her two books, “The House of Wonder” and “The Creative Pet Show”.

help the PTO by taking part in our events. These events do not happen without the community’s support,” said Wisniewski.

The hard work of the PTO and the support they can bring to the children, parents, and teachers of the town is made possible by the way the community comes together to support one another.

“Being a part of the PTO has brought a lot of joy into my life and my children’s lives. I have had an opportunity to interact with their school in ways many others do not,” said Wisniewski.



Robin Wallis is shown with beautiful items from her business, Sunsign Wood Custom Creations.



Meghan Young, owner of Gypsy Girl Apothecary, is shown with her handcrafted soaps and scrubs.



Stephanie Mazejka, or Stephanie Pendragon, is the author of the new children's book “The Dragon Way”.



Betsy Heron has her beautiful animal art printed on cards, stickers, and T-shirts. NBPTOCraftFair8



Lucille Hernandez, owner of Sourdough Shenanigans, had different flavors like double chocolate, cheddar jalapeno, and garlic rosemary sourdoughs.

STM FROM PAGE 1

tool.

“We had one failure of our power unit at one of those calls,” Anderson said. “We were able to get it somewhat repaired, but it’s still not perfect.”

Anderson said the tool’s power unit cannot be re-

paired as that part is no longer being made.

He said a dealer of fire technology equipment has a demo set of this tool that they are willing to sell at a discounted rate. He said the demo set is less than half the cost of a new one.

Anderson said the demo tool they are looking at runs off DeWalt 60v batteries,

which can be purchased anywhere. He said other devices require batteries that cost over \$1,000 each when replaced.

Anderson said he can utilize a state grant to purchase DeWalt batteries and tools.

“Being battery operated allows us to work easier with less people,” he said.

Gilman said the second request has to do with the radio system for the Highway Department.

“Right now, the current radio system that the Highway has is a low-band system,” Gilman said. “Which is kind of a rarity these days.”

Gilman said this type of radio system was more effective in the 1960s and 1970s.

He said there is a lot more noise pollution on the system and it doesn’t work well enough to be utilized.

Gilman said the low-band frequency is also not licensed with the FCC and it is illegal to use. He said the department staff use their cell phones instead.

“Highway Department is

the last ones that were left with the low-band frequency,” Gilman said.

Gilman said the town purchased a high-band frequency license in June 2022, but it is not being used.

“We bought it, we are licensed for that frequency, just Highway is not equipped to use that currently,” he said.

The North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency is also using an unlicensed frequency, which is high-band. He said the agency has an antenna on top of Bell Hill.

“They have the equipment, they have the antenna, they just don’t have the license,” Gilman said.

Highway Superintendent Randy Morgan originally received a quote for about \$25,000 for the project, which he was able to bring down to \$18,165. This second quote would allow both the Highway Department and NEMBA to use the frequency purchased by the town using the existing antenna.

Gilman said the new system would allow both departments to use the same frequency on different channels and also allow cross-talk between town departments, including police and fire.

“It certainly gives a high level of ability to communicate amongst the departments as well as taking care of our licensing problems,” he said.

Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said they will discuss these two proposed articles along with the other articles to appear on the special town meeting warrant when it’s opened.

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Christian Marshall gets an overhand return.

Cougars fall to Grafton

WARREN—Last Wednesday afternoon, Quaboag Regional boys tennis had a tough round against visiting Grafton. The Cougars suf-

fered a rare sweep 5-0. They dropped to 1-3 on the season after also losing to Belchertown last week. Their only win this season is a 5-0 sweep

of Southbridge. Coming up, the Cougars have a long lay-off before being back in action on Monday, April 28 at Leicester.



Elijah Wilhelm makes a return during second singles. Max



Sturges goes to his side to send the ball over the net.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Cam Olivo sends an underhand hit away.

Panthers leave runs on base in loss to Clinton

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

CLINTON—If they could've come up with a couple of clutch hits with the bases loaded against Mid-Wach rival Clinton, the Quabbin Panthers would've probably had a 3-1 record instead of being at the .500 mark.

The Panthers left the bases loaded in four of their first five at-bats during last Friday's 5-4 loss to the Gaels on a chilly afternoon at the Clinton Veterans' Athletic Complex.

"We did have a ton of scoring chances," said Quabbin varsity baseball coach Mark Battista. "We left the bases loaded in four innings. We also made a couple of mistakes in the field that also hurt us."

Quabbin (2-2) hasn't won more than five games during the regular season since they qualified for the 2021 Central Mass. Division 3 tournament with a 7-6 record.

The Panthers began the

2025 regular season with a 14-1 non-league home win over Quaboag on April 1. They also defeated rival Gardner, 5-2, in another home game twenty four hours before making the 45-minute van ride to Clinton. Their other loss was at home to Oakmont Regional, who are the two-time defending Division 3 state champions.

The Panthers loaded the bases for the first time against Clinton (3-1) with one-out in the top of the first inning.

Freshman left fielder Abe Brown swung at a strike three pitch thrown by junior righthander Aiden Dubois leading off the frame. Brown was safe at first base following a wild pitch. After the next batter hit a fly ball caught by the centerfielder, Brown stole second base. Then junior Adam Adams, who was Quabbin's starting pitcher, drew a walk and junior second baseman Sam Morgan lined a single into

See **PANTHERS** PAGE 8

Valley Wheel tryouts began April 13

Players looking to join the Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League can attend the tryouts beginning Sunday April 13. The first weekend of tryouts was rained out. Tryouts will take place at 2 p.m. at Blunt Park in Springfield. The final tryouts are set for Saturday, April 19 at 2 p.m.

The league, which plays its games in Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut, makes sure that everyone gets a fair share of the action. Everyone plays a minimum of 4 innings in the field, and everyone bats. The league follows MLB rules with some modified rules adapted with safety in mind.

The Valley Wheel stands apart from other leagues across the country for this reason:

Their league charter and one of their main goals, is to work toward having a league with teams of equal strength.

The league is now seeking new players to fill open roster slots. Enjoy the competition and camaraderie with a great group of guys who enjoy the game as much as you do. Stay in shape and make new friends. Be part of something that happens once a year, and with luck, win a championship that might be once in a lifetime. Grab your glove and cleats and join a team for a great adventure. It's not too late don't miss out; opening day is just around the corner. For more information, contact Jim Nason at 413-433-4308 or visit the website www.Valley-WheelBaseball.org

Orioles score opening win over Pioneers

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN—The Pathfinder Tech and Belchertown softball teams are both hoping to finish in first place in the Tri-County League standings this spring.

Belchertown, who scored five runs in the second inning, defeated the Lady Pioneers, 7-2, at home on a sunny and cool afternoon, last Wednesday.

"We're hoping to contend for the league title this year, so this is a very exciting win for us against one of our biggest rivals," said Belchertown head coach Michael Lafayette. "We lost both games we played against Pathfinder last year."

The Lady Orioles (1-1) began the regular season with a 7-5 non-league home loss to Monson on April 2.

Pathfinder Tech, who played their season opener versus Belchertown, won both meetings a year ago by the final scores of 13-5 and 11-7.

"We were a little bit rusty in today's game," said first-year Pathfinder Tech head coach Phil Gallo. "They just made the plays, and we didn't."

The winning pitcher in last Wednesday's contest was Belchertown freshman righthander Madeline Williams. It was also her first career varsity victory.

"It's very special to win my first varsity softball game today" Williams said. "We played very well as a team. I was a lot more nervous in our first game of the season."

Williams allowed two runs on just three hits, which



Kendra Burke winds and fires to the plate.

were all singles, with six walks and seven strikeouts against the Lady Pioneers.

"I've been coaching Madeline since she played softball at the youth level. She pitched very well in today's game," Lafayette said. "She's a very consistent pitcher who always throws strikes. We also have a solid defense behind her."

The Lady Pioneers managed to take a 1-0 lead with one-out in the top of the first inning.

Junior catcher Emily McNeaney reached first base following a walk. Then senior centerfielder Greenly Lagimoniere grounded a single between the shortstop and the third baseman into left field. Senior third baseman Lianna Carrasquillo drove home the game's first run by hitting a line-drive single into right field. Wil-

See **PIONEERS** PAGE 9



Lianna Carrasquillo fields a throw to third.



Aubrey Ortiz fires a throw home.



Isabella Nompoggi gets an out at first.

- sports -

T-Birds offense falters in loss to Penguins

WILKES-BARRE, PA — The Springfield Thunderbirds (34-30-2-4) could not get their offense in rhythm in a 4-1 loss to the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, who rebranded as the Carbondale UFOs (38-22-7-1) on Saturday night inside Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza.

In his AHL debut, rookie forward Jacob Hudson could not have dreamt of a better script for his first shift with the T-Birds just 1:45 into the contest. He jumped on the ice, picked off the puck from fellow rookie Harrison Brunicke at the Penguin line, and snapped a perfect wrist shot past the glove of Joel Blomqvist to give Springfield the 1-0 advantage.

From that point forward, though, the Penguins, rebranded on this night as the Carbondale UFOs, kept the pressure on inside the Springfield defensive zone. At 13:32, Tristan Broz broke through on an odd-man rush, taking a beautiful drop

pass from Sam Poulin and beating Colten Ellis to tie the game. The rookie's 19th goal of the year turned out to be just the first of two in a 20-second blitz for the UFOs, as fellow ookie Nolan Renwick cashed in for



his first pro tally at the goal crease following a centering pass from Chase Stillman at 13:52. The two strikes gave the home team the 2-1 lead heading into intermission.

Ellis continued to be the busiest man on the ice in the second period. The T-Bird netminder saw his save total rise to 30 through just 40 minutes of game action. Among his best work in the period were splendid close-in shots from Emil Bem-

strom and Broz.

Offense continued to be hard to find for the visitors, and the UFOs eventually added to their lead at 16:44, just seconds after a power play had concluded. Owen Pickering sent the puck to the back door from the right circle, where Atley Calvert wedged it through Ellis to extend the lead to 3-1.

The story did not change much in the third, as Wilkes-Barre/Scranton continued outpacing Springfield in the shot department, finishing the night with a 44-23 advantage in shot attempts. Ellis's terrific night would not be enough despite his 40-save effort. Bemstrom sealed the night with his 22nd of the season into an empty net with 1:31 remaining.

Springfield returns home to close the regular season for a two-game set against the Charlotte Checkers at the Thunderdome next Friday and Saturday.

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Bogey Doubles

EAST BROOKFIELD – The Bogey Doubles on Monday nights met for the first time in April as the season is about to end.

During the second round of matches, the team of Clauson & Santora bowled against Renaud & Ward. In game one, Renaud & Ward defeated Clauson & Santora by a score of 307-255. Steve Renaud Sr. started the match with a 135 and his partner

Tina Ward bowled 126.

In game two, Renaud & Ward won again by a score of 254-243. Both Renaud & Ward slowed down in game two with scores of 94 and 114, but it was enough to win.

In game three, Clauson & Santora won the last game by a score of 265-260. Gary Santora bowled a 120 to help his team win one game. The final score was 821-763 in favor of Renaud & Ward.

Next match was Murphy & Kenneson bowled against Pellett & Nester. In game one, Murphy & Kenneson won by just three pins, 249-246. In game two, both teams

tied at 264. In game three, the two teams tied again by scoring 245 each. Murphy & Kenneson held on to a three-point lead and won total pin-fall, 758-755.

Gauthier & Clough bowled against Mondor & Brayton. In game one, Gauthier & Clough won by a score of 258-251. Dan “Shoe” Gauthier bowled 114 to get the first game victory.

In game two, Mondor & Brayton won by a score of 260-254. Jesse Mondor bowled a 105 to help win game two for his team. In game three, Mondor

PANTHERS FROM PAGE 7

left field.

Dubois got out of the jam without allowing any runs with the help of a 6-4-3 inning ending double play.

With two-outs in the following inning, Quabbin junior third baseman Wes Sanderson and sophomore right fielder Zach Mielnicki drew back-to-back walks. Then an infield hit by Brown loaded the bases for the second time.

This time, the Panthers took a 1-0 lead when junior centerfielder Chase Talbot hit a ground ball to the Gaels first baseman which should've been the third out. The first baseman's toss to the pitcher was a tad late resulting in an infield hit. Sand-

erson scored on the play. The visitors did leave the bases loaded once again.

While the Panthers offense failed to score more than one run during the first two innings, Adams retired seven of the first eight Clinton batters that he faced.

With a runner at first with one-out in the third inning, Clinton junior Josh Nelson hit a comebacker. Instead of throwing the ball to second base, Adams decided to get the out at first base. It turned out to be a costly mistake as junior right fielder Brian Silvester lined an RBI single into left field which tied the score.

Walks by Sanderson, Brown, and Adams loaded the bases again with two outs in the top of the fourth.

Quabbin would retake the lead when junior second baseman Sam Morgan was hit-by-a-pitch.

The home team quickly tied the score in the bottom half of the frame.

Senior DH Ethan Frisch drew a leadoff walk. He stole second and advanced to third on a throwing error by the catcher. Junior shortstop Jake Notaro drove Frisch home by blasting a double to the gap in left center.

Adams retired the next three batters and was replaced on the mound by Brown before the start of the fifth inning.

Adams allowed two runs on four hits with three strikeouts and two walks in four innings. He threw 65 pitches.

The Gaels, who lost to Pittsfield in the 2024 Division 4 Elite 8 game, scored the go-ahead run with one out in the bottom half of the fifth inning. The home team put two runs on the right field scoreboard in the sixth inning and held a 5-2 lead entering the top of the seventh.

Freshman first baseman Jake Doty began the Panthers seventh inning rally against sophomore righty Braydon Huban with an infield hit and Sanderson walked bringing the tying run to the plate. After the next batter flied out, Brown fisted an RBI single into right field. Then Talbot hit a ground ball to the second baseman scoring Sanderson.

With the tying run standing on third base, Huban ended the Panthers comeback hopes and the ball game with a fly ball out.

“If we had a couple of key hits, we could have scored more than seven runs in today's game,” Battista said. “We should win a lot of games this year.”

The Panthers will be looking to even the season series when they host Clinton on May at 4 p.m.

Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching “turleysports.” We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and share with your friends and loved ones.

We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

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Quaboag Historical Society seeks scholarship applicants

The Quaboag Historical Society is proud to announce its annual scholarship program, designed to support high school seniors with a passion for history and a commitment to preserving the past.

This \$1,000 scholarship aims to assist students plan-

ning to pursue higher education in any historical related field.

The scholarship is only offered to a student who resides in one of the Quaboag Plantation towns of Brookfield, East Brookfield, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Warren, or West Brookfield.

It is offered to a current high school senior planning to enroll in a college or university for the upcoming academic year who will pursue a degree in one of the following fields: education, history, museum studies, anthropology, women's studies, American studies, or archaeology.

Students wishing to study closely related fields are encouraged to apply.

The application deadline is May 2. For applications or more information, please contact Jeff Robbins by emailing jeffrobbins@charter.net or calling 508-579-4786.

Easter egg hunt at Lucy Stone Park on April 19

WARREN – The annual Easter egg hunt will be held at Lucy Stone Park on Saturday, April 19 with a rain date of April 26.

Egg hunts will be organized by age group with children ages 5-7 starting at

10:30 a.m.; ages 8-10 starting at 10:45 a.m.; and ages 4 and under starting at 11 a.m. Please bring your own Easter basket. There will be an Easter raffle, refreshments and a chance to have your photo taken with the Easter Bunny.

STURBRIDGE FROM PAGE 1

ting our list of our full depth more major construction out,” Blakeley said.

Blakeley said her second-in-command has resigned from her position, and that job will be posted soon.

Blakeley gave an update on the filter media replacement project at the water treatment plant. She said when the first filter was taken offline and the tank was inspected, it was found there is pitting inside the tank that needs addressing.

“That is why we’re opening the special town meeting for additional funding because although we included one day of welding for pitting, the level of the welding that’s required is more than that one day, it’s more like five days,” she said.

Blakeley said she believes the other tanks will require the same type of treatment as well.

Grimm said this is a water quality issue and will require attention to meet Department of Environmental Protection guidelines.

Town meeting warrants

Grimm said a couple of things on the annual town meeting warrant have changed since the Finance Committee reviewed it.

Article 8 asks voters to approve borrowing for the construction of a bridge from the trails to the parking lot at 501 Main St. The Finance Committee took no action unless it came back with different funding sources.

She said the Trails Committee reworked it with the Community Preservation Committee and restructured the funding and it is now \$90,000 less than before.

“There’s also an agreement that Trails will be turning back about \$500,000 from several of its projects,” she said. “That money would go toward the project rather than borrowing.”

Grimm said there is also a good chance the Trails Committee will receive a \$500,000 grant.

She said the Finance Committee voted to place and support article 8 with the new funding structure, 5-4. The board also revoked the new funding structure, 4-0.

Grimm said the article related to the purchase of a new school bus was pulled due to the school department finding a different funding source.

Article 27 (formerly article 28) had additional language added by town counsel. The board voted to place and support the revised article.

The board voted to place and support articles 31 and 32, which deal with the Water Department and Sewer Department rates, respectively. The Water Department is seeing a 3.2% increase over the previous year and the Sewer Department is seeing a 6.4% increase.

The water rates will be \$8.72 per hundred cubic feet, effective April 1, 2025. The sewer rates will be \$16.07 per hundred cubic feet, and flat sewer rates \$243, effective April 1, 2025.

The board also addressed articles on the special town meeting warrant, including article 43 with the added cost of snow and ice removal which totaled \$73,500; and articles 44 and 45 to address unpaid bills.

A new article was added to the special town meeting

warrant in the amount of \$120,000 to cover the cost of additional welding for the water treatment tanks as explained by Blakeley in her report.

Police Department report

Police Chief Earl Dessert gave his monthly department reports for the months of December, January and February.

He said in December, the department held its annual senior Christmas dinner at the Federated Church with about 60 senior citizens participating.

“We served them, and it was a great time,” he said.

For trainings, Dessert said then-Lieutenant Joseph Lombardi (now the Deputy Chief of Police) graduated from the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia and brought back a “wealth of knowledge” to the department.

ZBA resignation and appointment

A joint meeting was held with the Zoning Board of Appeals to accept the resignation of Margaret Cooney and appoint Stephen Possemato.

Select Board Chair Jamie Goodwin said Cooney has

been a constant presence and the community, and he thanked her for her service to the town. Mary Dowling noted that Cooney served for 27 years.

Possemato will serve in this position until Sept. 17, 2025.

Town Administrator’s report

Grimm said the town’s 250th Anniversary Committee is continuing to meet, and that Sandy Quigley had recently joined as well. She said Leslie Wong will be her staff liaison for the committee and state Rep. Todd Smola met with them to talk about grants and joint opportunities with other parts of the state.

Grimm said the urgent care is scheduled for construction at its location on Route 20, across from the Cracker Barrel restaurant.

Hometown heroes banner program

Grimm said residents had approached her about starting a “hometown heroes” banner program, and she gave the lead to the Memorials, Monuments and Markers Committee, led by its member Krystal Dunbar. Grimm said she has looked at how other towns

organize this program to create something similar for Sturbridge.

Dunbar said the committee is still waiting on final quotes for the banners and the brackets to place the banners on utility poles. She said they are hoping to have the program in place by July in celebration of the country’s 250th anniversary.

Dunbar said many towns have the person requesting the banner pay for it and Grimm said a fund could also be established for people to donate to in order to help pay for banners if there was a financial need.

The banners would potentially be displayed along gateway roadways Memorial Day through Veterans Day.

Donations

The board accepted a \$300 donation from CMG Environmental of Sturbridge on behalf of the Fire Department.

The board also accepted a \$1,000 donation from Scott Deane and \$300 from Jeffrey Cairry on behalf of the Trails Committee to purchase bridge deck boards.

PIONEERS FROM PAGE 7

liams retired the next two batters on a strikeout and flyball ending the Lady Pioneers rally.

After Pathfinder Tech stranded another runner in scoring position in the top of the second, the home team scored five runs in the bottom half of the frame against senior righty Kendra Burke, who didn’t get very much support from her defense.

Sophomore leftfielder Sophia Mitus (2-for-3), who leadoff the inning with an infield hit, scored the tying run on a wild pitch. The ball bounced back to McNeaney off the backstop and Mitus slid into homeplate just before being tagged. Senior second baseman Valerie Williams, who walked, also scored the go-ahead run on another wild pitch. The Lady Orioles final three runs of the frame scored following throwing errors. Belchertown’s only other hit during the second inning was a bunt single by senior first baseman Vivian Ross.

“We just capitalized on their mistakes in the second inning,” Lafayette said. “We’re also aggressive on the bases.”

Burke, who has recorded more than 750 K’s during her varsity career, allowed seven runs on just four base hits. She walked four and had eight strikeouts.

With one-out in the third inning, Mitus delivered an RBI single to center giving the home team a 6-1 advantage.

Ross led off the fourth with a walk before stealing both second and third. She scored the Lady Orioles final run when sophomore third baseman Emily Waller grounded out to the second baseman.

Overall, Belchertown stole eleven bases in the home win.

The Lady Pioneers scored an unearned run in the fifth with the help of a couple of fielding errors.

The two league rivals are scheduled to meet for the second time at Pathfinder Tech at 3:30 p.m. on April 29.

TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L Chapter 40A, Section 5, Adoption or change of zoning ordinances or by-laws, the West Brookfield Planning Board will open a public hearing on **Monday, May 5th, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 2 East Main Street.

The following proposed zoning bylaw amendment will be considered:

To see if the Town will vote

- public notices -

to amend the Zoning Bylaws by amending section 3.23 Commercial Use by adding Section 17 Indoor Storage

A copy of the proposed amendment to be considered is available at the office of the Town Clerk and on the town webpage under Planning Board at www.wbrookfield.com.

The Board invites all interested parties to attend the public hearing and offer comments on the proposed zoning amendment.

Timothy Morrell
Chairperson

04/18, 04/25/2025

TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the North Brookfield Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing to consider a petition to locate poles, wires, cables, and fixtures, including the necessary anchors, guys, and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures, brought before it by National Grid **Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:15 PM at the Police Department, 55 School Street, North Brookfield, MA 01535.**

The pole location that will be considered is as follows:

Green Road-National Grid to install 1 JO pole on Green Rd beginning at a point approximately 1000 feet North of the centerline of the intersection of Shore Road, National Grid to install new sub pole 61-84.

Said hearing will begin at 6:15 PM and continue until completion, and will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 166.

Jason M Petraitis, Chairman
E. Brooke Canada

04/11, 04/18/2025

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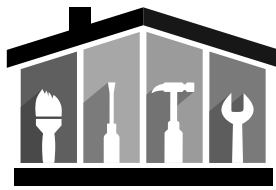


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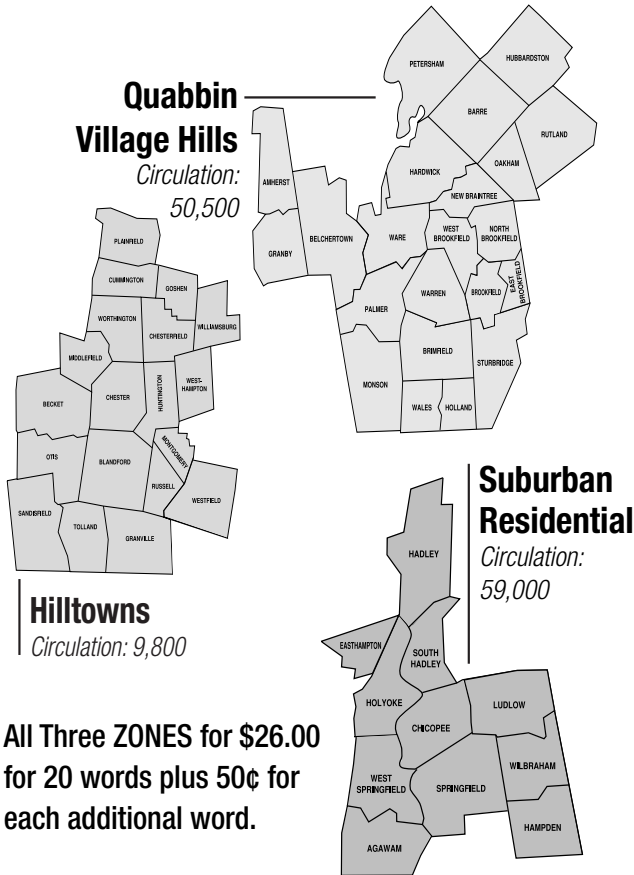
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CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Base Price \$26.00
21 Base Price \$26.50	22 Base Price \$27.00	23 Base Price \$27.50	24 Base Price \$28.00
25 Base Price \$28.50	26 Base Price \$29.00	27 Base Price \$29.50	28 Base Price \$30.00
29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	31 Base Price \$31.50	32 Base Price \$32.00
33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
37 Base Price \$34.50	38 Base Price \$35.00	39 Base Price \$35.50	40 Base Price \$36.00

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HEALTH FROM PAGE 4

When they tell me his story, I realize that the proper standard of care is not being met. Because of the trauma he is experiencing, the patient is also displaying disturbing psychological symptoms for which he is being (unnecessarily as it turns out) medicated.

The sisters tell me that they have tried to speak to the medical staff but don't feel they are being heard. Meanwhile, they are terrified of losing their dad.

Patient advocates are often able to dial back the drama and get the situation sorted because we understand patient rights as well as the hospital's perspective and can try to work out a win-win for all concerned. I schedule a visit to the hospital. Later, if this family receives a bill from the hospital, I will work to make sure they don't pay a penny.

Evening
I get a call from a former client whose sister had a massive stroke four years ago, and now the insurance company is saying she no longer qualifies for placement in a skilled nursing facility. There has been fragmented communication among the physicians, therapists and family.

The family wants me to appeal the insurance company's decision and gather doc-

umentation that will allow the sister to be approved for further long-term care, therapy and high-tech care for her needs. While waiting for documents, I speak with the woman's daughter to formulate a plan.

Finally, I update presentations for our Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur training program and speak with two nurses who are eager to sign up and start their own advocacy businesses. From their hospital experiences, they can see that families need a great deal of help these days navigating the health-care landscape.

My days aren't always this busy, but every day reminds me of the significant impact I can have on someone's life, health and well-being. It's worth it, to be sure.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NShore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

- public safety - East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of March 24-30, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 145 building/property checks, 72 directed area patrols, five traffic controls, three radar assignments, six emergency 911 calls, five citizen assists, two assist other agencies, one threat, one fire/illegal burn, one harassment, one investigation, three animal calls and 27 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Monday, March 24
3:25 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
3:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
3:43 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
4:18 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

4:26 pm. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
6:26 p.m. 911 Animal Call, Draper Road, Services Rendered

8:20 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Harrington Street, Services Rendered

Tuesday, March 25
9:57 a.m. Safety Hazard, Route 49, Unfounded
10:13 a.m. Assist Citizen, Route 49, Services Rendered
6:11 p.m. Investigation, North Brookfield Road, Spoken To
10:18 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Main Street, Transported to Hospital

10:41 p.m. Assist Other Agency, East Main Street, Officer Handled

Wednesday, March 26
8:38 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Podunk Road, Officer Handled
2:56 p.m. Threat, East

Main Street, Officer Handled
3:51 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To

Thursday, March 27
6:20 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

11:06 a.m. Assist Citizen, Unknown Location, Dispatch Handled

5:38 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

8:41 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued

8:56 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

9:12 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Shore Road, Citation Issued

9:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Friday, March 28
3:30 p.m. Bomb Threat,

East Main Street, Report Taken
4:21 p.m. Harassment, East Main Street, Spoken To

Saturday, March 29
12:02 a.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued

5:32 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Pond View Road, Transported to Hospital

9:44 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

11:17 a.m. Fire/Illegal Burn, North Brookfield Road, Investigated

Sunday, March 30
3:58 a.m. Directed/Area Patrol, East Main Street, Citation Issued

9:49 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, East Main Street, Transported to Hospital

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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- community -

Tri-Parish Community Church hosts 19th annual event

Plant, bake, craft and tag sale scheduled for May 17 and 18

HARDWICK – The Tri-Parish Community Church is pleased to an-

nounce they will be holding its 19th Annual Plant, Bake Sale, Craft & Tag Sale on the Hardwick Common Saturday and Sunday, May 17 and 18 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. each day. This popular East Quab-

bin area event will feature traditional, favorite, and connoisseur perennials, plus selected annuals, heirloom vegetable plants, and herbs in time for spring planting. There is a wonderful variety in plants offered through sev-

eral local vendors including Stillman's Farm and Howe's Farm and Garden of New Braintree, Inishowen Farms of North Brookfield, and "home-grown lovelies" from private gardens. A delicious assortment

of home-baked desserts and breads will also be sold. The event is held rain or shine. The Church is also seeking vendors for their annual Tag and Craft sale to coincide with the Plant and Bake Sale. Spaces on the Hardwick

Common will be offered for \$35 each. Applications may be obtained by contacting Marguerite by emailing mcrevier1.mc@gmail.com or calling 413-477-6942. Please reserve your space early. All are welcome.

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