

QUABOAG CURRENT

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Quaboag Current Newspaper

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Volume 17, Number 26

Friday, May 24, 2024

Nothing stops the Asparagus and Flower Heritage Festival

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Asparagus and Flower Heritage Festival of 2024 mimicked the 2023 event in that the day’s weather could not be called pleasant in any sense.

However, like the prior year’s edition, attendance was steady despite the constant drizzle or raindrops.

Many of the exhibitors and vendors came back from prior years, but there were not a few new ones.

If you have never attended the annual celebration, you might ask why an asparagus festival? Therein lies a tale.

We owe it all to Diederik Leetouwer. In 1784 was appointed as “consul for the provinces of New Hampshire and Massachusetts Bay” by the Dutch government. In this capacity he arrived in West Brookfield.

Consul Leetouwer started growing Asparagus here in Quaboag. Legend has it, he was the first to grow the perennial in this country, importing the vegetable from his homeland, and beginning a tradition, if not an industry.

How exactly he ended up here is difficult to say, but why quibble. we got the West Brookfield Asparagus and Flower Heritage Festival out of it.

See **ASPARAGUS** | PAGE 8



Volunteer Vendor Coordinators, Emily, Maggie, Anne and baby Muggsy. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPHY

Learning to keep a sketchbook

Joan Ellis shares her knowledge at JHPL

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – Joshua Hyde Public Library hosted a workshop on how to keep a sketchbook this past weekend.

The workshop was sponsored by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library and they welcomed Joan Ellis to teach the class. Ellis is an art designer and has experience in multiple mediums such as drawing, painting and found objects to create lasting memories.

According to Ellis, keeping a sketchbook is all about keeping memories. Sketchbooking is a very popular activity when people go on an extensive trip.

“Keeping a sketchbook encourages you to slow down and be ‘in the moment,’” Ellis said.

See **SKETCHBOOK** | PAGE 12



Joan Ellis of Andover visited the Joshua Hyde Public Library to share tips of keeping a sketchbook. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Pathfinder students honored at awards ceremony for NTHS

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School held an awards ceremony for its students being entered into the National Technical Honors Society.

Superintendent Eric Duda presided over the ceremony, which was attended by the students being honored, their families, faculty members, and School Committee members.

Forty-six students were honored.

See **PATHFINDER** | PAGE 12



Heather Martin and Alexander Hastings leaned up against the Pathfinder Tech logo. TURLEY PHOTOS BY MARCELO GUSMÃO

Educators honored at ‘Above and Beyond’ awards

By Karen A. Lewis
Correspondent

BARRE – Going above and beyond is nothing new for Quabbin Regional teacher Lizz Mallett, who embraces her role as the Therapeutic Classroom Special Education Teacher for middle and high school students.

“My goal is to help students learn how to be independent learners who know how to advocate for themselves and understand their strengths and weaknesses,” said Mallett, who

along with over two dozen other Quabbin educators and staff were recognized on May 8 when the Quabbin Special Education Parent Advisory Council presented their 8th Annual Above and Beyond Awards.

“We hope the staff members who receive these awards feel special and rewarded for all their hard work during the school year,” said SEPAC Committee Chair Stephanie Uguccioni. “Oftentimes, students might not be able to express just how much of a difference

See **AWARDS** | PAGE 6

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- community -

Cougar Fridays

Quaboag school mascot greets students and staff

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – Every Friday morning, the students at Quaboag Regional Middle High School are greeted by their school mascot.

Friday morning is now known as Cougar Fridays as the cougar mascot is awaiting students and staff at the student drop off.

Behind the cougar mask is student Kyle Withers. Every Friday morning, Withers gets up early and joins Superintendent of Schools Stephen Duff while he is on traffic duty for student drop off.

Withers has participated in Cougar Fridays throughout the school year and enjoys greeting students each week. Every Friday morning, he stands out waving and sometime holding out a cool sign.

What made this past Friday so much fun is it was also his birthday. On the sign he was holding, it said “Happy Birthday to Kyle Withers.”

What the cougar mascot also enjoys about Cougar Fridays is the dragon fruit refresher beverage he is given every Friday morning.

Joining Duff and the Withers was Warren Police Chief Gerald Millette. The police chief occasionally joins Duff and the mascot during traffic duty at the school and has witnessed a lot of smiles and cheers from students and staff.

Also, Millette has witnessed many dragon fruits drinks given to the mascot.

“Mr. Duff buys him a dragon fruit at Dunkin,” said Millette.

Millette has also witnessed Duff still doing traffic duty every morning of the

school year. As principal and as superintendent, Duff always enjoys greeting the students and staff every morning and still does traffic duty near student drop off.

Millette pointed out humorously that Duff also cracks a few jokes here and there when he greets the students. Most of the jokes are old dad jokes and the students laugh, but not as much as Duff.

Withers enjoys being the cougar mascot and greeting all the students and staff on Cougar Fridays. It was a fun birthday celebration for him, and he did get a surprise dragon fruit refresher.



Cougar mascot Kyle Withers greets students and staff every Friday morning. This past Friday was also Withers' birthday.



Warren Police Chief Gerald Millette and Superintendent Stephen Duff alongside the Quaboag cougar mascot during Cougar Fridays. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO



Withers is given a cool beverage by Superintendent Stephen Duff.



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2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

School Choice openings for the 2024-2025 school year:	The School Choice application can be downloaded at www.wareps.org or picked up at Central Office 239 West Street, Ware, MA 01082
Grade 1..... 5	<p style="text-align: center;">Deadline to submit applications is May 31, 2024</p> <p>The selection of non-resident students for admission will be in the form of a random drawing, when the number of requests exceed the number of available spaces. The drawing, if needed, will take place on June 3, 2024.</p>
Grade 2..... 9	
Grade 3..... 5	
Grade 4..... 4	
Grade 7.....19	
Grade 8.....21	
Grade 9.....16	
Grade 10.....15	
Grade 11.....12	
Grade 12.....15	

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To learn more about the programs offered at WJSHS, visit:
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- community -

Star Wars trivia at Oakholm Brewery

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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BROOKFIELD – Many groups of friends and family stepped into the world of Star Wars for trivia night.

Oakholm Brewing Company hosted about 100 participants to test their knowledge of one of the most beloved franchises, Star Wars. The night before May the 4th was trivia night and every trivia night at the brewery has a popular theme.

In a world where the force must be with you, the theme is Star Wars and every element of its universe. Trivia host Kyle Kustak was asking all the questions.



Oakholm Brewery was in the spirit of celebrating Star Wars while hosting Star Wars trivia night. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Trivia night happens once a month at Oakholm Brewing Company and Kustak usually hosts the event. Kustak is also the host of music bingo at Oakholm.

Kustak uses Good Thomas Entertainment to provide trivia and music bingo. Good Thomas Entertainment is an entertainment agency that provides weekly musical bingo, trivia and karaoke nights in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut & Florida.

May the 4th is popularly known as Star Wars Day and that was the chosen theme for trivia night at Oakholm Brewery.

“Every trivia has a theme,” Kustak said.

In the past Kustak has provided trivia for music, television shows, Marvel and has now added Star Wars to the list. There were a total of 21 groups who made up teams and came up with catchy team names; predominately Star Wars related.

The teams will compete in five question rounds and submit their answers through their phones. Every round has questions about each Star Wars film and some rounds about the television shows.

Amongst the teams were big Star Wars fans, supporting attire with multiple themes. Even the Oakholm staff were supporting vintage Star Wars T-shirts while serving the packed crowd in their beer garden.

Some of the beverages were named after a Star Wars related theme. One green seltzer was named “Baby Yoda.” For those who favor the dark side of the force went with a red seltzer called “Darkside.”

When asked what his favorite part of the Star Wars franchise was, Kustak said



The winning team of Star Wars Trivia, Max Rebo Band, won a \$50 Oakholm Brewery gift card.

his favorite characters are the Ewoks; characters from Return of the Jedi.

The winning team of Star Wars Trivia will receive a \$50 Oakholm Brewery gift card. After five competitive rounds and Star Wars knowledge put to the test, The Max Rebo Band was the winning team.

The star of the team was Tyler Finney, who was wearing an orange Star Wars rebel alliance jacket. His team praised him as Finney brought the most knowledge of the Star Wars franchise to lead Max Rebo Band to victory.

The team is named after an alien band that pops up in Star Wars and Max Rebo is one of the aliens. The band first appears in Return of the Jedi. Max Rebo Band received the \$50 Oakholm Brewery gift card.

To continue the Star Wars celebration, Kustak also did trivia at the UNOS in Sturbridge on May the 4th.



Many guests got into the spirit of Star Wars Trivia. Tyler Finney was wearing a Star Wars jacket.

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Three of the eight areas of incompleteness

There is a lot going on in my yard. That is a true statement.

Every fall I say I am going to be smarter about what I take on and then spring hits and I am obsessed with gardening. It is all I think about, and it has been this way since I was a teenager.

I guess I could get myself into worse trouble.

Presently I am adding to the front border, redefining a perennial garden, making a permanent spot for dahlias, and waking up the raised beds and vegetable garden. Read on for a taste of what I've been up to.

I'd been on the hunt for a Pink Flowering Dogwood; and this year, because I wanted one, I seemingly saw them everywhere. What a year for the dogwoods!

My husband determined that said tree would be my Mother's Day gift if only we could find one. I made the acquisition early last week and had it planted in the front border within hours.

Cornus 'Rutger's Stellar' is a hardy, disease and borer resistant hybrid, with gorgeous pink bracts.

To plant the tree, I dug a hole bigger than the rootball and amended with nearby soil mixed with moist peat moss. I planted it at the same depth it was in its pot and I'll be careful not to let mulch build up around the trunk.

Now, what can I add to the part sun under-story? Astilbe? Japanese painted fern? Hostas? Hmm. Much to think about in terms of texture and color.

I have lots of perennial gardens here and there. There is a big one in my front yard, left from the original blueprint of the previous owner.

For some reason it was made deep, very deep. Half of this bed is backed by a stone retaining wall, the other half by a white picket fence. I'd like to narrow it up a bit, only keeping a couple of specimen plants and some edgers on the side with the picket fence.

I have one gorgeous Peony plant seems incredibly happy there. It is staked in an extra large tomato cage and for the most part it's doing the trick to hold up what appears to be dozens of potential heavy blossoms.

To use the cage I had to put it in place when the plant was emerging from the soil – to do so now would be disastrous!

If you need to stake your peony and haven't yet, try this method. Insert bamboo or wooden stakes into the ground on the outer edge of the plant to three-quarters of its height. Run two rows of twine or jute at one third and two thirds up the stakes, respectively.

Simply start by tying a knot on one stake, wrapping around the next and tightening as you go. If green bamboo and jute are used the staking will hardly be visible, especially if you don't tighten so much that it looks unnatural.

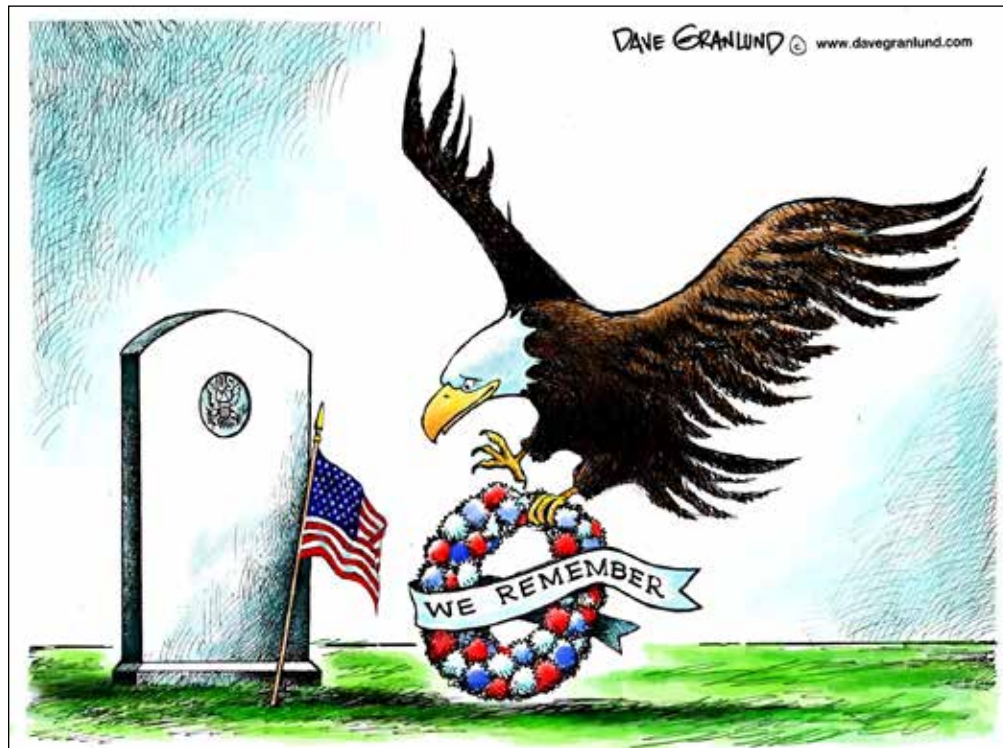
The search goes on for exactly what plants will finish up that half of the bed.

Dahlias will make their home in the other half. My collection is still fairly small – I think I have seven varieties, but I can feel the fever building.

They are just such an amazing group of plants in so many gorgeous color variations and sizes. From teenie pom-poms to "dinner plate" and every size in between, I am in awe.

See GARDEN | PAGE 7

- opinion -



SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

Widower's retirement stymied by Social Security's WEP and GPO rules

Dear Rusty:

My wife passed away four years ago. I want to retire so called SSA and was told I can collect my own SS at 62, reduced by Windfall Elimination Provision.

My wife's SS was greater than mine, but they said I do not qualify for hers at age 60 because of the Government Pension Offset. This seems odd that I get zero for her, however I can collect mine at the two thirds reduction at 62. Is this true? This zero dollar amount places my retirement on hold for now. I was counting on her SS.

Signed: Discouraged Widower

Dear Discouraged:

The Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset are two of the most confusing and unpopular of Social Security's myriad rules. From the way you describe your conversation with the Social Security Administration, it doesn't appear to have concluded with you fully understanding how these provisions work, so allow me to elaborate.

WEP and GPO affect anyone who has a retirement pension from a federal, state or local government agency which did not participate in Social Security, meaning neither the employee nor the employer paid into Social Security based on the employee's earnings. Obviously, you have such a pension, which means that WEP will reduce any Social Security retirement benefit you have earned from other employment where SS payroll taxes were withheld and the GPO will affect any survivor benefit you are entitled to.

WEP affects only the SS retirement benefit you earned elsewhere; WEP does not affect any surviving spouse benefit you might be entitled to from your wife. Rather, it is the GPO, which affects your survivor benefit, again because of your state retirement, called a "non-covered pension" - one earned without contributing to Social Security.

The GPO will reduce any surviving spouse benefit you might be entitled to by 2/3rds of the amount of your "non-covered" state pension. Depending on the size of your state pension, that reduction may entirely eliminate your surviving spouse benefit from your wife.

Under normal SS rules, a surviving spouse does not become eligible for survivor benefits until they reach age 60 (age 50 if disabled).

Normally, a surviving spouse benefit claimed at age 60 is reduced by 28.5% and it is the GPO that will affect your survivor benefit whenever you claim it. However, even without GPO, your age 60 survivor benefit amount would be only 71.5% of the amount your wife was receiving or entitled to receive at her death.

If you are already collecting your non-covered state pension when you claim your SS survivor benefit from your wife, then that reduced age 60 survivor benefit would be offset by 2/3rds of the amount of your state pension. And that, according to what Social Security told you, is what eliminated your age 60 eligibility for a surviving spouse benefit from your wife.

If you don't claim it at 60 your survivor benefit will continue to grow until you reach your Full Retirement Age of 67, but if 2/3rds of your state pension is more than 100% of your SS survivor benefit, you still won't get any surviving spouse benefit from your wife's record.

A further consequence of your non-covered state pension is that the SS retirement benefit you earned elsewhere will be reduced by WEP. WEP will reduce, but cannot eliminate, your Social Security retirement benefit.

The WEP formula is complex but, generally, your WEP-based Social Security retirement benefit will likely be roughly half of what you would get if you did not have a state "non-covered pension." You could claim your WEP-reduced SS retirement benefit as early as age 62 or, if financially feasible, delay longer to get a somewhat higher, but still reduced amount.

Just For Your Information, your state employer had an obligation to fully inform you of the consequences of not contributing to Social Security while earning your state pension. It appears as though they may not have fulfilled that obligation.

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/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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Send opinions to:

Letters to the Editor, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082 OR e-mail to pouimette@turley.com. Deadline for submission is Monday at noon for the following week's edition.

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Quaboag Current Newspaper

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Quabbin High lists honor roll

BARRE – Quabbin Regional High School, 800 South St., lists the third quarter honor roll.

Grade Nine, High Honors

Klavdiya Antonian, Madeleine Boisselle, Makenzie Casey, Isabel Doty, Leah Doucette, Tess Dunphy, Grace Fl- amand, Anna Hautala, Audrey Laursen, Anna Metcalf, Ella Reeves, Grace Vanoudenhove and Brendan Welch.

Grade Nine, Honors

Skyler Bard, Carter Bassett, Jacob Bassett, Halo Bissonnette, Ava Brady, Emma Clark, James Cook, Benjamin Darcey, Kherington Deschenes, Katelyn Durant, Brody Faucher, Quinlan Fauteux, Alijah Flint, Jacoby Hartshorn, Violet Kelley, Sadie Kennan, Jil- lian LaMontagne, Ailey Majoy, Scar- lett Merriman, Mia Miville, Samantha O'Connor, Owen O'Donnell, Julia Quintal, Arianna Riendeau, Abigail Rogowski, Emma Ryan, Kailynn Schus- ter, Sienna Shaw, Gabriella Totas, Owen Twarog, Ellary White and Leanna Zou.

Grade 10, High Honors

Kenzie Gallagher, Elizabeth Matthe- son and Zoe Orellana Cadenas.

Grade 10, Honors

Adam Adams, Aaron Bodine, Owen Breuer, Branden Brooks, Tricia Bruso, Troy Budreau, Kylee Costello, Annabel- la DiMartino, Mia Ducos, Kalina Dyer, Garrett Erickson, Evelyn Giese, Ad- elaide Harmon, Samuel Kane, Collin Lindley, Grace Manna, Samuel Mor- gan, Parker Proulx, Aaron Rowell, Wes-

ley Sanderson, Cameran Vega, Andrew Warfield, Bianca Wilder, Collin Wilk, Hannah Zereski and Jin Xi Zou.

Grade 11, High Honors

Matthew Erickson, James Geary, Isabel LaBelle, Ethan Salvatore, Irene Stolgitis and Jaxon Warburton.

Grade 11, Honors

Andre Ampong, Haley Ayer, Alex- ander Bedard, Jordan Blanchard, Kevin Boles, Kaeliana Boucher, Kyle Clark, Ava Conley, Teaghan Earle, Adam Faulha, Angelina Feliciano, Jack Fors, Ellie Frost, Sophia Gagne, Kyra Grum- mell, Samuel Guertin, Veronika Men- drek, Nathen Pride, Luke Salvatore, Kaylee Shaw, Sadie Sheldon, Sydney Slattery, Isabella Smith, Julia Smith, Richard Tucker, Ryan Wing and Ryan Wreschinsky.

Grade 12, High Honors

Kylie Casey, Ally Legare, Sophia Ja- nuszewski, Michael Tobin, Benjamin Vasseur and Brianna Whitelaw.

Grade 12, Honors

Alena Arnold, Annabel Audino, Hannah Baxter, Trinity Boissoneau, Sophie Borbone, Brianna Caponigro, Evan Cole, Samantha Dube, Jady- n Gonzalez, Sophia Januszewski, Grace LaValley, Gavin Majoy, Emma Mass- er, Grant McConnaughey, Cole Mor- rill, Camryn Orsini, Carlee Rich, Kay- la Sherblom, Julianna Stanger, Amy Stauder, Christian Stolgitis, Heather Stuart, Lillian Swett, Gracie Talbot and Eleanor Thompson.

St. Michael's benefit turkey buffet coming June 3

STURBRIDGE – The Publick House Historic Inn and Restaurant will host another in their series of commu- nity dinners on Monday, June 3, this time to benefit St. Michael Romanian Orthodox Church of Southbridge.

The Publick House cooks for many local organizations as a way of giving back to the community. Each spon- sored organization receives a portion of the ticket price for every dinner served.

The dinner will offer two seating times to accommodate guests: an ear- ly seating from 4:30-6 p.m. and a later seating from 6:30-8 p.m. Attendees will be treated to a buffet-style meal that includes oven-roasted turkey, corn- bread-sausage stuffing, mashed pota- toes, butternut squash and cranberry sauce.

Tickets are priced at \$16 per adult

and \$5 for children aged 4-12 years. To purchase tickets or for additional information, please reach out to Spiro Thomo at 774-200-8043, Sandra Nasto at 774-318-8659, or Ken Benson at 774- 230-3848.

Tickets may also be purchased at the Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale office located at 8 Maple St., on Monday through Friday between 9 a.m.-noon. Payments may be made by cash or check made payable to The Publick House.

Tickets are pre-paid only, no tickets will be sold at the door. The deadline for ticket purchases is Thursday, May 30.

The mission of St. Michael Roma- nian Orthodox Church is to experience the grace of God and to share it with others.

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Quabbin Visitor Center lists First Thursday hikes

BELCHERTOWN – The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center, is hosting First Thursday Habitat Hikes each month.

All ages are welcome at these programs; however, dogs are not allowed anywhere at Quabbin Reservoir.

Quabbin is an area of immense diversity of habitat, from shady vernal pools to sunny mountaintops. Staff will be hosting hikes one Thursday each month (weather permitting) to spotlight some of these beautiful landscapes.

Hikes will vary in location and intensity and may focus on an individual species or on a more general area. For more information and to register visit www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir or email QuabbinVisitor.Center@mass.gov

Tower Trail Habitat Hike

Join a 3-mile moderate Tower Trail Habitat Hike on Thursday, June 6 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (<https://goo.gl/maps/9K3L4xf44nbVK4bG7>)

This hike will meet at the parking area inside the Middle Entrance off Route 9. It is a moderately diffi-

cult hike, approximately 3-miles round-trip up Quabbin Hill through woodland and mountain habitat and back.

Due to safety issues, hikers will not be able to go up to the tower itself, as it is currently closed for renovations. Please wear appropriate footwear and protect yourself against ticks.

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c2dd1551fbb7467bbdda704a469c7929>.



Recipients of the 2024 SEPAC Above and Beyond Awards from the Quabbin Regional School District include, back row left to right: Diane McMorrow, Melissa Hobson, Beth Olson, Steve Nicora, Mary Fleming, Shannon Harris, Lizz Mallett, Brooke Graves, Emma Madsen, Alex Narvekius, Kristin Perrault, Chrissy Robillard, Brianna Biggs, front row left to right: Nycole Majka, Allison Hart, Katie Gaspar, Caitlin Foster, Kylie Wilson, Debra Tyler, Carla Medeiros, Casandra Stagias, Caroline Ludwig, Kristi Haupt, Karen Varney and seated left to right SEPAC Officers Stephanie Uguccioni, Chair, Caitlin Bogue, Secretary. Missing from photo: Jesslyn Lapati, Kristi Bliss, Mike Groner, Nikki Rice and Nancee Roy. TURLEY PHOTO BY KARENA LEWIS

AWARD | FROM PAGE 1

QRSD staff members have made in their education and lives. We believe this award speaks volumes.”

All parents of students in the Quabbin District were given the opportunity to nominate Quabbin staff who they felt excelled beyond the daily job expectation, when a district wide email survey was sent out at the beginning of April.

“We encouraged nominating any and all QRSD staff including, but not limited to teachers, administrators, office managers, custodians, van and bus drivers, related service providers, paraprofessionals, interventionists and tutors,” said Uguccioni.

Categories of the awards included Fostering Community, Differentiated Learning, Preparation Under Pressure, Increased Family Engagement, Exceeding Expectations and Making Learning Fun. Surveys were due back at the beginning of May and from there, a list of deserving teachers and staff was created along with special certificate recognitions.

In the case of Mallett, this year she was the recipient of two awards, both were for Exceeding Expectations. Prior to 2024, she received an award last year and one at the end of her first year at Quabbin.

“The best part of my job is building relationships with kids,” Mallett said, who was grateful to be recognized. “The students in my classroom are like part of my family, and we are all very close. They are all so

unique and each contribute so much in their own way to our classroom community. I love watching them learn how to take care of themselves and each other.”

Quabbin seventh grade English teacher Nancee Roy received her second award this year.

“It is quite an honor to be recognized,” Roy said, who was first awarded five years ago. “My goal as a teacher is to make connections with my students and provide them with an environment where they feel safe and supported. When students know that you care about them as a person, they are more likely to take academic risks, which leads to greater success for them.”

Recipients find out on the evening of the ceremony who nominated them.

“It is incredibly important for our educators and staff to be recognized especially in this way,” said Quabbin Superintendent Colleen Mucha. “Children are complex and while we have data to tell us if students are making academic progress and we receive feedback about our instruction, it can be challenging to know if you’re having an impact on the whole child. These awards represent both the academic impact and the personal impact. That’s the intersection where the magic happens, and our educators work so hard to make that happen.”

Mucha praised the work of SEPAC and encourages all families to check the organization out, as they are all inclusive and supportive to all students and fami-

lies.

“Our (SEPAC) members are passionate about education and they are here to help families navigate some of the celebratory and challenging moments that may arise,” said Mucha. “They strive to break down barriers for students and families with diverse learning needs. It’s a great group.”

SEPAC offers monthly meetings with a variety of guest speakers covering topics relevant to a wide range of students and their families. Over the current school year, SEPAC has hosted presentations with Quinsigamond Community College, Q-Drug, Worcester Talking Book Library, Making Opportunities Count (MOC), Quabbin Unified Sports and others.

Those interested have the option to either attend in person or by zoom. Further information can be found on the Quabbin school website at <https://www.qrzd.org/departments/student-services>.

“SEPAC meetings are built around support available for families and the QRSD community,” Uguccioni said. “In becoming involved in SEPAC, you will have a direct insight into the district’s special education programming. Also, it will provide you with an additional resource group to help your child in the district.”

Recipients of the 2024 Above and Beyond Awards include from Ruggles Lane School: Kristi Bliss, Kristi Haupt, Nikki Rice, Emma Madsen, Kristen Perrault, Alex Narkevicius, and Melissa Hobson, who received two awards for Differentiated Learning and Fostering Community; from Oakham Center School: Caroline Ludwig, Cait Foster, Brooke Graves, Chrissy Robillard, Karen Varney, Brianna Biggs and Casandra Stagias; from Hubbardston Center School: Carla Medeiros and Debi Tyler; from Hardwick Elementary School: Kylie Wilson and Mary Fleming; and from the middle and-or high school: Mike Groner, Nancee Roy, Melissa Hart, Jesslyn Lapati, Steve Nicora, Beth Olson, Nycole Majka, Shannon Harris, Katie Gaspar, Diane McMorrow and Lizz Mallett, recipient of two awards.

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Thank You For Your Service

GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

It's exciting to finally have an area devoted entirely to my collection and I can't wait to get them in the ground.

Plant dahlias in full sun, in fertile soil amended sparingly with compost and organic fertilizers. Most tubers are planted about 3 inches deep and 1 to 3 feet away from one another, depending on plant size.

Providing enough air circulation between plants will help keep diseases at bay.

Most gardeners install a stake at planting time and attach the dahlia to it as it grows, beginning when it is a foot tall. Subsequent ties are made every 18 inches or so depending on variety.

Without the use of stakes, large flowers will likely topple in the wind and rain, sometimes taking a good portion of the plant with it.

Pinching dahlias is another good practice. When the plant has three sets of leaves gently

remove its growth tip. This will encourage more branching and inevitably more flowers.

Once blooming starts it is important to cut away spent blooms on a regular basis; tubers will grow stronger because of it. Dahlias thrive on sufficient moisture, especially since they are shallow rooted.

Furnish them with one inch per week during active growth.

Well, there is more incomplete, but you get the gist of my adventures. Chances are you have your own as well. Enjoy now; they'll be time to sit later.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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.

Sheriff's Office to host annual Drive-Thru Senior Picnic

SHREWSBURY – Sheriff Evangelidis and the Worcester County Sheriff's Office announce the return of the annual Sheriff's Senior Picnic on Saturday, June 8 from 11 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at SAC Park.

Due to the success of previous years, the picnic will once again be held as a drive-thru and feature a BBQ boxed lunch, goodie bags, music, giveaways, raffle prizes and more.

The event is free and open to all residents in Worcester County over the age of 60. Space is limited and an RSVP is required.

Please visit the following link to RSVP: ReserveDeputySheriff.com/2024-senior-picnic Alternatively, RSVP by calling 508-796-2638 or email nydia@worcestersheriff.org. Please leave a message with your name, address and phone number.

Those wishing to attend must register by May 20.

National Grid is inviting you to an Informal Open House Learn More: Palmer to Ware Improvement Project

National Grid's Palmer to Ware Improvement Project is a proposed transmission line project that will upgrade a deteriorating electric transmission line. The upgrade will focus on portions of the 10.35-mile-long segment of overhead power lines that run through Palmer, Ware, and West Brookfield. Once upgraded, the newly rebuilt transmission line will provide enhanced electric reliability for the region.

National Grid is hosting Open Houses for the Palmer to Ware Improvement Project. We encourage you to join us to learn more about the project.

If you are unable to join us at the in-person event and are interested in learning more about the project, please email info@O15nproject.com to set up a meeting with a member of our project team.

Questions? Contact us!

Phone Number: (800) 674-9510

Email: Info@O15nproject.com

Website: PalmerToWareImprovementProject.com or scan the QR code.

nationalgrid 7-57 Wells Ave., Suite 27, Newton, MA 02459



You are invited to an Informal Open House

Palmer to Ware Improvement Project

May 22nd, 2024

5:00pm to 7:00pm

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5:00pm to 7:00pm

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Palmer MA 01069

PalmerToWareImprovementProject.com
E: Info@O15nproject.com
P: 800-674-9510

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ASPARAGUS | FROM PAGE 1

Back to the event

One might suppose long time attendees have rituals as to the order in which they take in the day. Those not caffeinated early on could head to Joy of Beans. Joy of Beans is the town's, and arguably, the region's gourmet coffee vendor.

Moving east along the Common, one comes to the tents of those specifically part of the festival organization. Amy Dugas was, as usual, exercising supervision. In a tent laden with asparagus for sale next to her, were the volunteer vendor coordinators Emily, Maggie, Anne and baby Muggsy.

Close by was the table of the West Brookfield Historical Commission. The commission seeks to preserve the town's history. The town has much lore worth preserving and to that end, the table had an abundance of literature to share.

There were other civic groups represented such as Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association. The LWPA is a non-profit, grass roots organization with the mission to preserve and improve the water quality and surroundings of Lake Wickaboag.

While traversing the Common, the duo, Imogene, played music that had a folk vibe if not exactly the genre.

At a table by herself when we stopped by, Laura Fitzpatrick represented the CERT team for West Brookfield, Warren and West Warren. CERT stands for Community Emergency Response Team. These Volunteers, as one might guess, respond to emergency situations and work with FEMA and MEMA as well as the towns themselves.

The East Quabbin Land Trust or EQLT "works to conserve land by undertaking or assisting direct land transactions—primarily the purchase or acceptance of donations of land or conservation easements." At the festival, the Land Trust was ably represented by Cynthia Henshaw and two others.

The Land Trust recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. Upcoming will be The Hills of East Quabbin Ride on June 22. Registrants have the choice of a 25-mile or 50-mile trip on not overly hilly terrain. Come on and test yourself for a worthy cause.

Another organization is a combination of businesses that support local enterprise while promoting the history and beauty of the area known as Browse the Brookfields. They are restaurants, shops, destinations and services. Their brochure tells you what you can find and where you can find it in the Brookfields.

In Ware is the pottery studio known as ClayWorks and members came over and represented the ceramic arts at the festival. Mary Remington spoke with us about the group's activities. There are classes for youth and other ages and they are beginning fundraising.

The ClayWorks shop is on Main Street and they hope to expand into the Berkshire Blanket building.

Crafts are also learned and practiced at the associated Workshop13 on Church Street.

Unfortunately, the vendors were too numerous to report on them all, but we can present at least a few.

Local writer Ed Londergan shared a table with authoress Mary Anne Salonas Slack. He was there to present his novel about the horrific Spooner Well murder in Brookfield during the Revolution.

Mary's novel, "The Sacrificial Daughter" is about the child who grows up to be the one to remain home and take care of the remaining family. In this case the sacrifice breaks free.

Another writer sharing his novel, "Spurious", was Kevin Flanders. He is an area author with a large oeuvre.

One interesting fellow, Angelo Cerminara, of L'Amore Della Pasta was asked if he had his own squid for the squid ink pasta. Angelo didn't miss a beat and claimed to own a squid farm. He did fess up and admitted that he sourced pasteurized squid ink from Italy.

Judging by the number of patrons, the food vendors were doing well. Pig Park BBQ, Hitchcock Tavern, Street Taco and, of course the Congregational Church's Asparagus Alley all had lines.

Maybe nobody stayed as long as on a bright spring day, but the tradition is such that people continued to show up and wend their way among the tents and would be replaced by others.

Let us hope for a sunny 2025.



SPORTS

North Brookfield softball back in action



Pitcher Abby Lindburg sends an offering to the plate. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Whitney Reno makes a strong throw to get an out.



Angie Fritze fires a throw to first.

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Excessive rainouts have delayed the season for North Brookfield softball. The Indians have finally been able to get some game in over the course of May, and so far, the Indians are 2-4 on the season, with more makeup games scheduled to be

played this week. The Indians have defeated Hampden Charter at home and lost on the road at Ware High School. The Indians have also faced Pathfinder and still have two games scheduled against Quaboag Regional.

Quabbin girls tennis wins again

BARRE – On Monday afternoon, Quabbin Regional High School girls tennis scored another win, and another shutout of an opponent, defeating Leominster 5-0. Annabelle Magill had a big match as she scored a win in straight sets 6-0, 6-0. Not far behind her was Camryn Orsini, who won 6-0, 6-2. Car-

lee Rich and the second doubles team of Elizabeth Matheson and Madelyn Stauder both swept their matches. It took three sets, but Farrah Wojcik and Kalina Dyer won first doubles with a 7-5 win in the third set. Quabbin girls tennis is an impressive 14-1 overall with the playoffs looming.



Olivia Holmes looks for the base hit with this contact.



Carlee Rich gets the low hit to send the ball back over the net. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Camryn Orsini goes high to return the ball.



Annabelle Magill starts off play with a good serve.



Kale McPartland fouls off a pitch.

- sports -

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Turleysports

Athlete of the Month

Brasen Sauriol
SCHOOL: Quaboag

Sauriol had a strong game for Quaboag in a win earlier this month over Pathfinder Regional.

To nominate someone for Athlete of the Week, contact Managing Sports Editor Gregory A. Scibelli at 413-283-8393 ext. 258 or send an e-mail to gs-cibelli@turley.com.



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Hunter Griswold sends a deliver to the plate. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Pioneers fall to rival Palmer

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER—Eighth grader Grayson Griswold is the starting second baseman for the Palmer varsity baseball team. His older brother, Hunter, is wrapping up his outstanding athletic career down the street at Pathfinder Tech.

The two brothers faced each other for the first and only time in a varsity baseball game last Tuesday night.

It was a memorable evening for Grayson Griswold and his Panthers teammates who celebrated a 6-1 victory over the Pioneers before a large crowd at Legion Field.

“It was a lot of fun playing a baseball game against my older brother’s team for the first time,” said Grayson Griswold, who joined the Palmer varsity baseball team as a seventh grader. “I’m going to be following in Hunter’s footsteps next year. I’ll be playing football, basketball, and baseball at Pathfinder.”

Hunter Griswold, who’s planning to play college football at Mass. Maritime Academy in the fall, also attended Palmer High School before transferring to Pathfinder tech as a freshman.

“It definitely stinks that we lose a lot of our very good athletes to Pathfinder,” said Jacob Graveline, who’s the current varsity baseball coach at Palmer High School. “I know that they’re only doing it because they want to learn a trade. Grayson is a very good baseball player who can play several different positions.”

Last Tuesday’s contest was the fourth boys’ game between the two high schools during the 2023-24 school year.

The Pioneers football team didn’t have very much trouble defeating the Panthers, 33-6, in the season opener last September at Legion Field.

The Panthers boys’ basketball team posted a 53-37 victory inside the Pathfinder gymnasium three days after Christmas. The two hoop teams also met in a Division 5 state preliminary round game at the end of February. The Panthers won that contest, 79-51, on their home court.

The two schools also co-op in boys’ soccer, field hockey, wrestling, cross country, and swimming.

The Panthers, who don’t have any seniors listed on their roster, had a 5-11 overall record following their fourth consecutive victory. They were sched-

uled to play at rival Ware in a Western Mass. Class. D quarterfinal game on Monday night.

The Pioneers (10-7) didn’t qualify for the Western Mass. Class C tournament, but they’ll be competing in the MIAA Division 5 state tournament, which starts next week.

The winning pitcher in last Tuesday’s non-league game was sophomore righty Brendan Hess, who’s the ace of the Panthers pitching staff. Hess allowed a run on only two base hits. He finished the contest with nine strikeouts and only two walks.

“I thought Branden pitched a great game tonight,” said Graveline, who was an outstanding pitcher at Palmer High School a little more than ten years ago. “He just needs to keep throwing strikes.”

It wasn’t very much fun for Hunter Griswold, who was the Pioneers starting pitcher.

Because of the MIAA pitch count rule, the righthander was limited to only 25 pitches against the Panthers.

After throwing out a baserunner trying to steal in the top half of the first inning, Palmer sophomore catcher Theo Haley blasted a triple to right field leading off the bottom half of the frame. He would score the first run of the non-league game on a wild pitch.

Griswold managed to get out of that inning without allowing any more runs with the help of an inning ending double play.

However, the Panthers put three more runs on the left field scoreboard in their next at-bats.

With one-out, seventh grader Zack Marciniac, who was the DH, lined a single to center and Hess followed with an infield hit. Then Grayson Griswold faced his older brother for the first time in a varsity game. He hit a ground ball to the first baseman which moved both runners into scoring position. Marciniac scored the Panthers second run on another wild pitch. Then freshman centerfielder Taydem Haley drew a walk, which was the final batter Hunter Griswold faced. He was replaced on the mound by junior righty Zander Auffrey, who started the game in left field. Griswold stayed in the game as the catcher.

Theo Haley greeted the Pioneers relief pitcher with a two-run single to left field giving the home team a 4-0 lead.

“Theo is our leadoff hitter, and he

Bonsignore grabs third-place finish at Riverhead Raceway

RIVERHEAD, N.Y. – Justin Bonsignore continued his streak of top-six finishes to open the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour season on Sunday afternoon at Riverhead Raceway. Bonsignore brought the No. 51 Phoenix Communications machine home in third in the Miller Lite 200 presents Wayne Anderson. The New York native posted his 24th top-five finish in 28 career Whelen Modified Tour starts at Riverhead.

Bonsignore started fifth on Sunday, one day after a heavy mist in the air postponed the Miller Lite 200 Salutes Wayne Anderson. He would fall just outside the top-five early, but then

charge back inside and remain there for the duration of the race. He was up to second at one point, but Austin Beers slid by late, eventually finishing second to winner Ron Silk.

“We were a little off today but all in all, a good day for our Phoenix Communications team,” Bonsignore said. “We will get back to work on continuing to work on our cars and be ready for Seekonk in a few weeks.”

Justin Bonsignore will return to the track at Seekonk Speedway for the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Seekonk 150 on Saturday, June 1.

Serenity Ayala competed on lacrosse team

WESTON – Serenity Ayala of North Brookfield, a sophomore student-athlete studying nursing, competed on the Regis women’s lacrosse team during the spring 2024 season.

The women’s lacrosse team concluded the 2024 season with a 9-8 overall record, the most victories for the team since the 2019 season. Head

coach Courtney Duggan earned her 100th career coaching win against College of Lady of Elms on Saturday, April 6 as the team finished third in the Great Northeast Athletic Conference South Division with a 5-2 divisional record and qualified for the GNAC Women’s Lacrosse Tournament.

See PIONEERS | PAGE 11

- community -

PIONEERS | FROM PAGE 10

has scored more than 20 runs this season,” Graveline said. “He has also done an outstanding job replacing Dom Allen as our starting catcher. It’s a position that he hadn’t played before this season.”

Auffrey managed to keep the Panthers off the scoreboard during the next two innings.

With two-outs in the bottom of the fifth inning, back-to-back RBI singles by Grayson Griswold and Taydem Haley gave the Panthers a comfortable 6-0 advantage.

Hunter Griswold beat out an infield hit leading off the sixth inning. After stealing second base and advancing to third on a throwing error, he scored on a sacrifice fly to center by senior right fielder Branden Hnitecki.

Pathfinder senior centerfielder Ethan Nompoggi-Hawk was hit-by-a-pitch leading off the seventh inning. Hess struck out the next two batters before Grayson Griswold caught a pop-up for the final out, which gave him the bragging rights in his family.



Brayden Mega smothers a grounder to third.



Miguel Velasquez slings a throw to second.



Tim Russell hustles on the basepath.



Dayne Shanley slides into third base.

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PATHFINDER | FROM PAGE 1

ored at the ceremony, which Duda confirmed is in the top three largest classes of inductees from the school, just shy of the school's record a few years ago at 57.

"I stand before you with a sense of pride and connection, as I was inducted into the National Technical Honor Society at this very school, in almost this exact location, 25 years ago," Duda said in his speech at the ceremony. "Being a part of NTHS remains one of the most cherished memories of my high school years."

Following Duda's initial welcoming statements, Cooperative Education Director Caitlin Phelps spoke about the purposes of the NTHS and the symbolism of its logo. Interim Principal Brenda Turner then led the Candlelight Ceremony, in which School Committee members lit candles onstage that signified each of the values promoted by NTHS.

"Perseverance, achievement, teamwork, and honor; sound familiar?" Turner asked. "I sure hope so; these are the core values at Pathfinder Tech, our path to professionalism. You all are shining examples of exactly what we are all about."

Turner said she knows the students didn't get to this point by chance.

"I can say this with 100% certainty... you are all here as a result of hard work and dedication. You show up and push through, even on those days or times when maybe you don't quite feel like it," she said.

The event then turned to the Pinning Ceremony, where Academic Director Dan Whalley read the students' names, and Assistant Principals Patrick Boudette and Lisa Tassone presented the students with their certificates.

The students were then pinned by a family member, and photos were taken by Community Outreach and Communications Coordinator Lindsey Tracy.

"When this school was built 50 years ago, you were exactly what the vision of vocational technical education should be," Turner said to the students. "Securing a range of technical skills, achieving academic success, and exhibiting outstanding character. Pathfinder Tech grads would be exceptional school citizens who would join our communities and contribute – contribute to our towns, our state, our country, and hopefully the world."

Turner said this recognition is just the beginning for the students, and what they will achieve in their future.

"For all that each of you have accomplished thus far, and I know there is more ahead, you are all highly deserving of recognition and celebration tonight," Turner said.

At the end of the ceremony, IT Director Cole Rogers led the students in reciting the NTHS pledge, which states that the students will uphold a high standard of personal conduct, strive toward excellence, and invest



Superintendent Eric Duda addressed his opening remarks to the 46 students being recognized with the National Technical Honors Society awards. TURLEY PHOTOS BY MARCELO GUSMÃO



Evelyn Shilosky was pinned by her father as part of the ceremony.



Evin Reardon climbed back onstage to get a picture with his family and his certificate.

their talents to uphold their obligations as a part of their community.

"I recently came across a quote that resonated with me," Duda said. "'People are more likely to take steps forward on a path if they see footprints from others on the ground.' Your leadership, willingness to take risks, and determination to challenge the status quo are the footprints that pave the way for others to follow."

"Embrace this responsibility as you continue through high school or as you enter your next chapter and embark on your chosen career paths," Duda said.

The National Technical Honor Society is an educational non-profit that exists to recognize and empower students and faculty in technical vocational education. NTHS serves over 100,000 active members annually in both secondary and post-secondary chapters across the country, according to its website.

To learn more about Pathfinder Tech, you can visit their website at pathfindertech.org. For more information about the NTHS, visit their website at nth.org.

SKETCHBOOK | FROM PAGE 1

This workshop was for kids ages 13 and up and adults. Materials were provided and Ellis provided samples and references to give her guests some helpful starting points to work on their own sketchbook art.

Most common utensils for sketchbooks consist of crayons, watercolors, permanent markers and colored pencils. For paper, bond paper and watercolor paper is used.

During the workshop, Ellis admitted she doesn't erase anything and prefers permanent sketches. When explaining the beauty of using a permanent marker in your sketchbook Ellis pointed out that you don't have to press too hard on it.

For reference material Ellis provided calendar pictures of backyard birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles to help give the guests an idea of what they wanted to sketch during the workshop. A lot of Ellis' work comes from traveling in different parts of the world.

Ellis claims traveling is a good time for sketching. There are numerous images people come across when they're traveling and somehow wish to keep that image forever.

Ellis retold a story of one of her camping trips in Maine and she spotted a fox near her tent. On two occasions the fox visited her campsite but both times the fox got away while Ellis tried to take a photograph and then tried to sketch in her book.

However, Ellis managed to imprint that memory and just started to draw how she envisioned that scene. Ellis shared that memory in one of her sketchbooks with the fox at her campsite and used examples she researched to get a more accurate sketch of the fox.

There were also a series of notes to go along with the sketches.

Ellis suggests that taking notes in the margins or below your sketches are good to document the atmosphere and senses your feeling at the time you captured that image. When sketching Ellis suggests not to worry too much about tiny details unless you have a lot of time at the location you're in.



One of Joan Ellis' sketchbooks highlights some of her trips and images she came across and recorded.

Sketching is not an art form you want to rush and Ellis passed that advice along to her guests at the workshop.

"It's really important to slow down and pay attention to what you're doing," Ellis said.

Ellis has always wanted to be an artist since the second grade and has been teaching classes on sketches for about 20 years.

"I'm always drawing in my head," Ellis said as she continues to work on her own art and pass along her experience to many aspiring artists who wish to keep their work well organized. Sketching while traveling brings back a lot of memories for artists such as Ellis.

One of her inspirations for wanting to continue working in art is appreciating her art history classes over the years. Learning about the works of notable artists such as Monet and Van Gogh were great experiences and Ellis always has her own art inspired by going out and enjoying nature.

One of her favorite quotes that inspires Ellis and her art is by Frederick Franck and his work "The Zen of Seeing".

"In this 20th century, to stop rushing around, to sit quietly on the grass, to switch off the world and come back to earth, to allow the eye to see a willow, a bush,

a cloud, a leaf... I have learned that what I have not drawn, I have never really seen."

Ellis resides in Andover and has her own art studio, Joan Ellis Designs in the same town. Ellis continues to work on her own sketchbooks and practice her penmanship.



An amazing rooster sketch done by one of the guests of the sketchbook workshop.



Guests got to work on their own sketches using samples provided by Joan Ellis. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Veera Patel named Young Women in Public Affairs award winner

Dana Burton, Scholarship Chair for the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley, is pleased to announce that Veera Patel is this year's Young Women in Public Affairs scholarship award recipient.

Patel is a senior at Minnechaug Regional High School where she is president of the National Honors Society, plays on the Girls Varsity Volleyball team, and is involved with Student Council, Key Club, International Club, and World Care Club. She also enjoys volunteering at community organizations and working with and mentoring youth in sports and social skill building.

Zonta's mission is to build a better world for women and girls through service and advocacy. When asked about her thoughts on this mission, Patel noted that while she is proud of her Indian



High school senior Veera Patel was named the 2024 Young Women in Public Affairs award winner by the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley. SUBMITTED PHOTO

culture and background, she is aware that the role of women in many Indian societies is secondary.

"Through my own leadership efforts here in America, my ambition is to inspire other females, not only Indian, to learn how to stand up for themselves and know their value," Patel said.

Looking forward, Patel would like to pursue the fields of business finance and law.

The Young Women in Public Affairs Award recognizes young women, ages 16-19, for demonstrating leadership skills and commitment to public service and civic causes and encourages them to continue their participation in public and political life.

As an awardee, Patel will be presented with a certificate of accomplishment

and a check for \$1,000 to use toward college expenses.

She is also eligible to compete for the Zonta District 1 and Zonta International award of \$5,000.

About Zonta

The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley (www.zontaqv.org) is part of Zonta International - a global community that works for gender equality, empowerment of women, access to all resources and a life free of violence. Since 1923, it has provided more than \$41 million to empower women and expand their access to education, health care, economic opportunities, and safe living conditions.

More information on all of Zonta's education awards is available at: zonta.org/web/Programs/Education.

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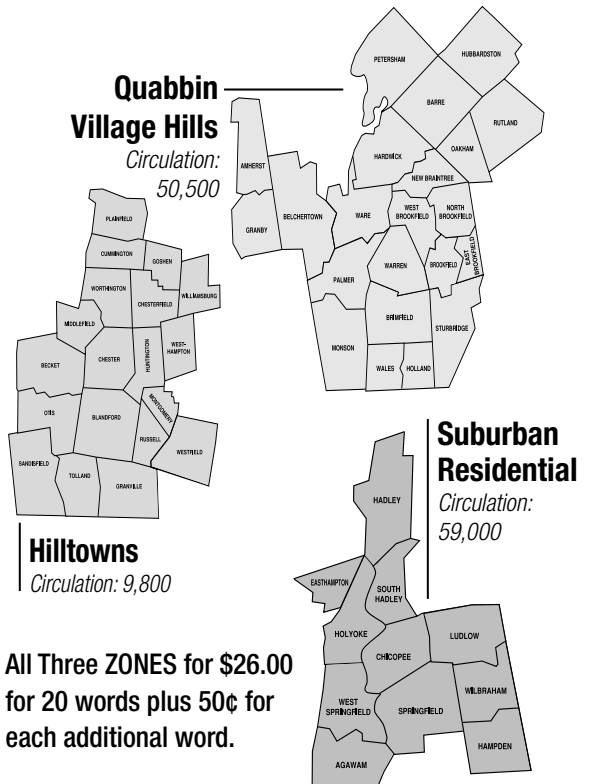
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Town of North Brookfield Accepting Bids

Town of North Brookfield is seeking proposals from MassDOT pre-qualified general contractors for construction of proposed sidewalk upgrades along N. Main Street. Bid documents may be downloaded at www.Biddocsonline.com. **Bids due 05/31/2024 at 10 a.m.** 05/17, 05/24/2024

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS Town of Brookfield Kimball Street Improvement Project

The Town of Brookfield has been awarded funds from the FY 2022-23 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Professional engineering design services are needed for drainage and roadway infrastructure improvements on Kimball Street in Brookfield, MA.

A more detailed Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is available at the Central Massachusetts Planning Commission, 1 Mercantile Street, Suite 520, Worcester, MA 01608, (508)459-3359, from 9 AM to 5 PM. The RFQ will be available from 9 AM on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, until the due date specified below in digital format by request from Joe Ferguson, jferguson@cmrpc.org. The Town of Brookfield, awarding and contracting authority, reserves the right to reject any and all proposals if it is deemed in the best interests of the Town to do so.

Completed proposals are to be submitted in accordance with the RFQ's submission procedures no later than 3:00 PM, Thursday, June 13, 2024, at the Central Massachusetts Planning Commission, 1 Mercantile Street, Suite 520, Worcester, MA 01608. 05/24/2024

Weir River Jazz band presents 'Jazz in June'

HARDWICK – Weir River Jazz will present a big band concert on the grounds of the Stone Church Cultural Center, 283 Main St., Gilbertville on Sunday, June 9 at 2 p.m.

Come join the band "under the tent" to hear the great sounds of a traditional Big Band. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and relax to some great sounds.

This concert is open to the public and there is no charge for admission. In case of inclement weather, the concert will be held in the sanctuary section of the church building.

Sponsored in part by the Mass Cultural Council and Country Bank for Savings.

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of May 13-20, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 13 building/property checks, 23 directed/area patrols, two radar assignments, four emergency 911 calls, two citizen assists, one motor vehicle accident, one fraud, seven animal calls and two motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, May 13

8:49 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, McEvoy Road, Transported to Hospital
9:33 a.m. Assist Citizen, Oakham Road, Officer Handled

Tuesday, May 14

4:37 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Oakham Road, Vehicle Towed

11:21 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Worcester Road, Transported to Hospital
7:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Gilbertville Road, Citation issued

Wednesday, May 15

4:39 p.m. Fraud, Barre Road, Report Taken

Thursday, May 16

7:42 a.m. Animal Call/Complaint, Ravine Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency

Sunday, May 19

7:38 a.m. 911 Animal Call, Padre Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency
10:19 p.m. Assist Citizen, Hardwick Road, Officer Handled

Try a free Tai Chi Class at the Senior Center

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Join the North Brookfield Senior Center for Tai Chi classes on Tuesday afternoons at 1 p.m. for strength, balance, relaxation and fun

The cost is only \$5 per 45-minute class led by certified Tai Chi instructor Jen Tetreault. Tetreault will take you through some easy warm up exercises, then move on to gentle relaxing movement patterns that will increase your strength, ease stress and improve cardiovascular health.

You do not need to be a North Brookfield resident to take advantage of this weekly class, and your first session is free.

The classes are open to anyone between the ages of 50 and 99. Tetreault will help you modify the movements, if necessary, by using a chair for seated moves or to have on hand for balance.

Who knew caring for yourself and improving mental health and well-being could be so much fun? It's all here at the North Brookfield Senior Center, 29 Forest St.

Call the senior center at 508-867-0220 if you have questions about the Tai Chi class or want information on other center programs.

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Volume 17, Number 26

Friday, May 24, 2024

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