

QUABOAG CURRENT

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Newspaper

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A TURLEY PUBLICATION
www.turley.com

Volume 17, Number 29

Friday, June 14, 2024

Quaboag holds 56th graduation ceremony

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The community gathered for their 56th high school graduation ceremony in the Quaboag Regional Middle High School gymnasium.

On June 6, 85 students wearing the maroon caps and gowns entered the school gymnasium for one final time as students at the high school.

Prior to the ceremony, graduate Rachel McGrath sang the National Anthem. McGrath sang beautifully as the audience filled with friends and loved ones roared and cheered.

The address of welcome would be recited by class Historian Riley Patchen as she welcomed Class President Patrick Toomey to the podium. Toomey addressed his fellow graduates and the audience and said that their journey into the world is now beginning.



The 56th Quaboag Regional Middle High School commencement ceremony took place this past Saturday. The entire graduating class of 2024 standing tall and proud. TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

See **GRADUATION** | PAGE 12

Opening day at West Brookfield Farmers Market

The place to be
Wednesday afternoons
from now to October

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – On Wednesday, June 5 at 3 p.m. the bell was rung by Amy Dugas on the West Brookfield Common to begin the day's session of the town's farmers market, the first of the 2024 season.

Dugas has been in charge of the smooth operation of the market since it began. With her at the command tent was Louise Garwood who offered free sunflower seeds to attendees, a market tradition.

This being New England, weather is always a matter of luck, as all who attended the



Amy rings the opening bell, signaling the start of the West Brookfield Farmers Market season. TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY

See **MARKET** | PAGE 8

North Brookfield graduates honor memories and values

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Graduates of North Brookfield Jr./Sr/ High School's Class of 2024 marched into the auditorium as students for the last time as the band played "Pomp and Circumstance".

On June 1, graduates earned their diplomas and prepared for the road ahead, as they set off for college, the workforce and military.

Principal John Diorio welcomed families, friends and faculty to celebrate the "remarkable achievements" of the Class of 2024.

"As we reflect on the journey that has brought us to this moment, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of pride and

admiration for each and every one of you," Diorio said,

Diorio said this moment marks the culmination of years of hard work, dedication and determination.

"You have embraced challenges and demonstrated the true meaning of resilience," he said. "I have seen you overcome obstacles, discover your passions and emerge as confident, compassionate individuals ready to take on the world."

Diorio said the students' success isn't just measured by academics or extracurricular activities, it is also measured by the friendships they have formed, kindness they have shown and the impact they have had on the school community.

See **MEMORIES** | PAGE 7



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BBB IS BACK at Farmer Matt's

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Upcoming BBB dates

Thursday, June 20
Thursday, July 25
Thursday, August 22

Thursday, Sept. 19
Thursday, October 31

- community -

Summer Reading fun comes to Haston Library

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library will be holding its annual summer reading program from June 22 through Aug. 24, with this year's theme being "Read, Renew, Repeat", focusing on nature and conservation.

Children who sign up will get a book log, a schedule of events, and some other fun items.

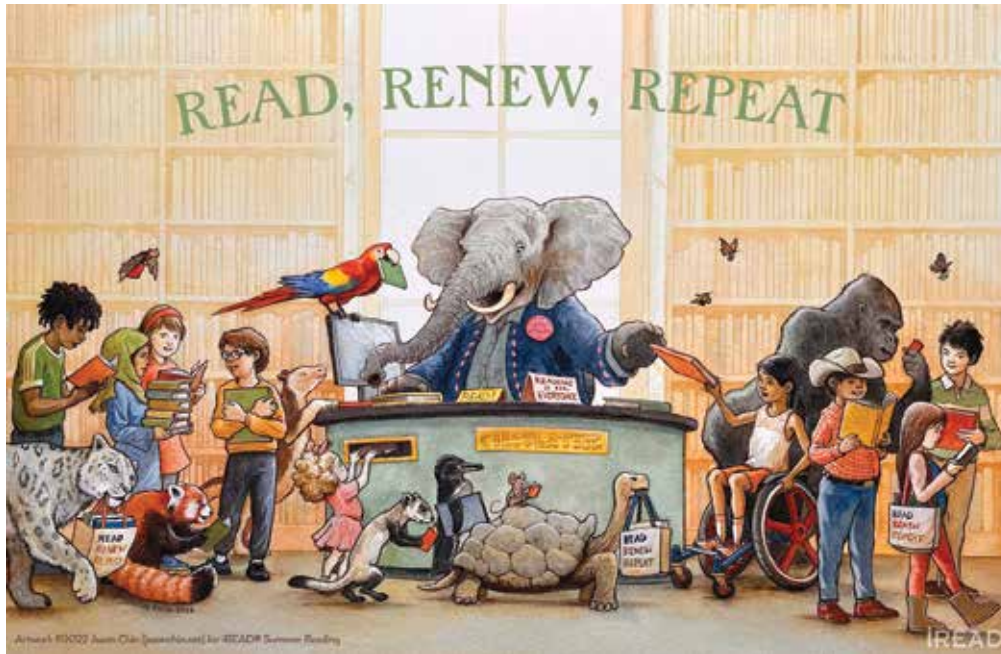
Children of all ages are encouraged to read and visit the library to get their book logs checked off once a week, after which they can receive a small prize. There will also be a larger prize drawing at the end of the summer.

The library also has some exciting nature themed programs in store. On Saturday, June 22 at 10 a.m. Hands on Nature, a Berlin-based educational nature nonprofit, will host a program called "Butterflies and Moths", where participants will learn about the creatures and even get a chance to enter a butterfly tent with real butterflies.

Cynthia Henshaw of the East Quabbin Land Trust will lead a nature walk for all ages on Wednesday, June 26 at 10 a.m. at Wendemuth Meadow located in North Brookfield. Be sure to bring good walking shoes.

Be sure to check back at the library for later summer programs. In addition to these programs, daily activities will be run Monday through Thursday for different age groups at the library.

For more information or to register for any of these programs, please email Youth Services Librarian Brianna Lamb at blamb@cwmar.org or call the library at 508-867-0208. Program space is limited.



SUBMITTED ARTWORK BY JASON CHIN

Lake Wickaboag to receive weed treatment June 20

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Board of Health and Lake Wickaboag Preservation have announced that Lake Wickaboag will receive an herbicide treatment on Thursday, June 20, to address residual weeds and algae.

The Board of Health has hired SOLitude Lake Management to apply the herbicide treatment. Lake water use will be restricted as follows: June 20 – No swimming, fishing or boating; June 20 and 21 – No livestock watering; June 20 through June 23 – No

direct drinking of lake water; and June 20 through June 25 – No use of lake water for irrigation.

Members of the LWPA will notify boaters and swimmers by posting signs on streets leading to the lake and by placing red flag buoys on the lake.

For additional information, please contact SOLitude Lake Management, by calling 508-885-0101, or emailing the LWPA at LWPA01585@gmail.com.



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– Thank you!

A TURLEY PUBLICATION
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Citizen Petition discussed during annual town meeting

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WEST BROOKFIELD – A citizen petition on the annual town meeting warrant asked voters to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a one-year contract with the West Brookfield Rescue Squad, Inc.

At the June 4 town meeting, article 20 sought to provide emergency medical services, patient transportation services and mobile integrated healthcare services and community paramedic program at the Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support level to the town beginning fiscal year 2025.

West Brookfield Rescue Squad was seeking the sum of \$60,000 to help sustain ongoing services for the next year, starting July 1 and ending June 30, 2025.

The West Brookfield Rescue Squad is a nonprofit organization which relies on donations to support their mission. The rescue squad has proudly served the West Brookfield community and surrounding area with 24/7 emergency services as well as pre-scheduled non-emergency transport since 1952.

President and Chief of EMS Dan McCall spoke on behalf of the West Brookfield Rescue Squad during the annual town meeting after several residents brought up the petition. McCall told the residents during the meeting that the rescue squad will still operate as a private nonprofit organization.

The \$60,000 is currently a part of the FY 25 town budget and it is mainly for the continued need for EMS in the town. The squad is a full-time agency with a total of 24 staff consisting of EMTs, paramedics and a couple registered nurses.

The squad also provides two ambulances currently on a life support level.

McCall believes the \$60,000 his agency is requesting for support is reasonable and is in more of a benefit for the residents in town since they're a full-time agency.

Town Administrator Ron San Angelo said the squad has provided a beneficial service to the town for many years and is essential for West Brookfield.

"We need to have an ambulance service in town," San Angelo said.

A resident spoke against the citizens petition and made a motion to remove the \$60,000 from the town budget until it is moved to a town vote. Prior to the motion passing or failing, moderator Bill Mansfield opened the town meeting for discussion on the newly appointed motion.

Many residents had the opportunity to speak and express the importance of having an EMS service in town. Most who spoke believe that the current service provided by the West Brookfield Rescue Squad is good and it would not be the best idea to remove their proposal from the town budget.

One resident said that the rescue squad is a private organization that could easily depart from the town.

McCall said the squad started charging fees back in 2006. At one point, the squad used a subscription drive.

McCall says the Rescue Squad is seeking \$60,000 to continue sustaining an EMS system they provide and wished to continue serving the residents of West Brookfield.

"Provide the best care to little to no cost," McCall said. "What is best for the citizens."

The rescue squad also provides services in Hardwick and other nearby communities. McCall has served as president

of the squad since 2014.

The agency used to be housed at the Fire Station prior to their location at 18 R, West Main St. Without any regulations, the stations would house an ambulance.

Since 1972, the squad has passed regulations until it was decided that no private organizations were allowed to be housed in any municipal buildings without a contract.

After a handful of comments were shared, Mansfield moved the motion to a vote. The motion failed and the \$60,000 bid from the West Brookfield Rescue Squad would remain in the town budget.

When it came time to vote on article 20, which was the citizens petition, moderator Mansfield stated that he wasn't informed or aware of the article being in the town warrant. Many residents expressed some confusion considering that the citizens petition of the town authorizing the Selectmen to enter into a one-year contract with the West Brookfield Rescue Squad was listed as article 20 in the warrant.

The article was excused from the meeting as Mansfield suggested that all parties involved with the petition go through the proper steps in processing the petition. McCall had been informed that there was miscommunication between the Board of Selectman and the moderator and possibly the town advisory board.

McCall is confident that the residents of West Brookfield believe it is a good deal for the town's Board of Selectmen to enter into an agreement with the West Brookfield Rescue Squad. McCall said that the amount of money is for support and to sustain the ongoing services that his agency provides.

"We're a full-time agency in the region," McCall said. "We're here to sustain

what we have; residents depend on us."

Fire Department articles
Articles 15 and 16 were sponsored by the town's Fire Department. Article 15 had the town voting to authorize the Board of Selectman to file a petition with the General Court for special legislation to approve the extension for mandatory retirement for a firefighter from the age of 65 to 70 for Deputy Chief Daniel Santos, or until he assumes retirement before the age of 70, which passed favorably.

Article 16 had the town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to file a petition with the General Court for special legislation to approve the extension of mandatory retirement for Lieutenant George Kenneth Collette and that motion passed as well.

Special announcements
It was announced prior to the annual town meeting that as of February, the town launched a new website at www.wbrookfield.com.

The town honored resident Robert E. Benson, also known as "Benny", with a lifetime achievement and dedication award. In 1971, Benson became a Water Commissioner and worked with the town's Water Department.

He retired with 52 years of dedicated service as a Water Commissioner.

In association with the Water Department, Benson served as a member of the Storm Water Committee in 2001 as a representative of the Water Department. He retired after 23 years as a Storm Water Committee member.

Benson officially retired on May 24 of this year. The residents in attendance gave Benson a round of applause and thanked him for his commitment to the community and for his military service.

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- opinion -

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid

June garden do's and don'ts

I get a lot of questions about what to do and when to do it!

There are some gardening tasks that should be done now and other things you might be tempted to do now but should be done in another season. Read on from the archives to get your questions answered.

To ensure supermarket-size broccoli, do scratch in a tablespoon or two of balanced granular fertilizer around the base of your plants when heads are about the size of a quarter. Make sure the moisture is sufficient and harvest when the main head is still tightly packed but before it bursts into flower.

Do not, on the other hand, waste your fertilizer on beans – they generally grow well enough without extra food.

Do be on the look-out for the Asiatic Garden beetle – it has been spotted already, and earlier than normal. It is a tad smaller than the Japanese beetle and is chestnut brown in color.

Since it feeds during the night, look for chewed foliage in gardens or planter boxes under lampposts, street lights or other outside lights. Cultivate directly underneath the affected plant during the day and you will likely see the culprit scurry back into the soil.

This is one pest you don't want to have around – send them swimming in a soapy bath or you may not have any plants left!

Floating row covers are great tools to keep bugs off of young squash seedlings. Do not leave them on too long however, or pollinators won't be able to do their work. Remove the fabric at the first sign of blossoms.

Sweet William (*Dianthus Barbatus*) and Wild Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) are at their peak right now. Do leave a few seed heads of these and other favorite biennials in place.

With any luck seeds will drop and you will have enough volunteers next spring to replace the parent plants and share them with your friends.

Don't be surprised to see all foliage and no flowers next year. Biennials bloom the second year from sowing, making only leaves the first year.

Do remove spent flowers from Mountain Laurel bushes – you don't even need any clippers! Simply bend the sticky stems forward and they should break right off. With the flowers gone the shrub can redirect energy spent on seed making into forming next year's buds.

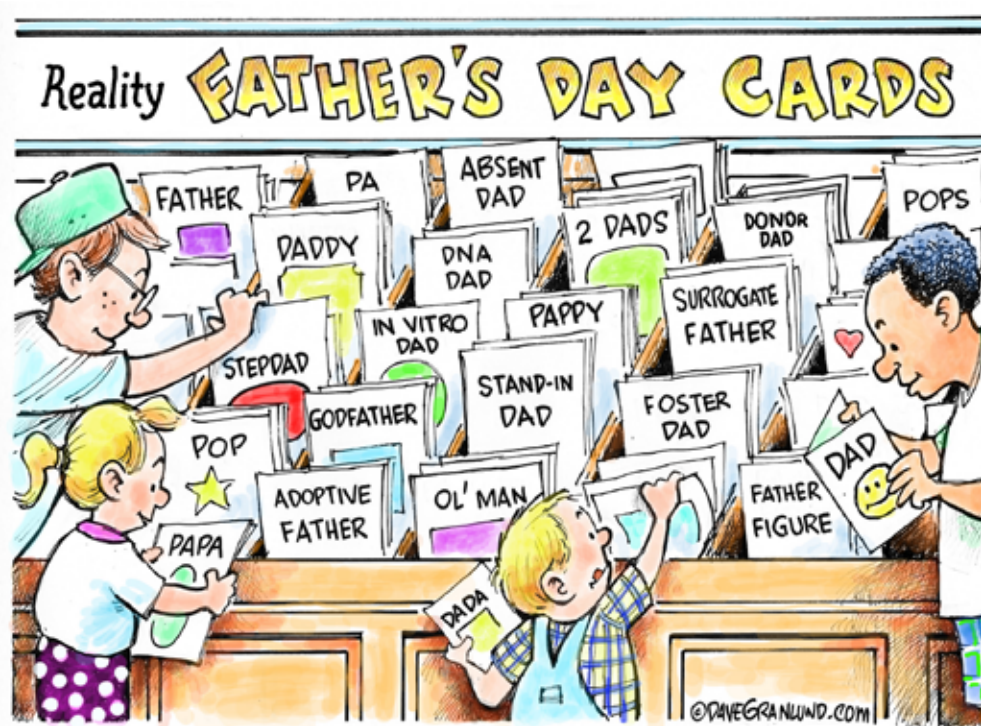
Don't wait much longer to prune spring flowering shrubs – next year's flowers are usually set in early to midsummer. Rose of Sharon should also be left alone – it will bloom in August. A haircut now would certainly be at the sacrifice of flowers.

Bearded iris can be divided now.

Start digging at the outer edge of the clump, lifting as you go. Once the entire clump is removed, rhizomes can be pried apart by hand.

The healthiest "fans" of foliage are those the furthest from the center. Leave about two inches of rhizome attached to each fan for replanting.

If you are changing your site altogether, keep in mind that irises need at least six hours of full sun a day for optimal flowering. They despise "wet feet," so plant where drainage is good.



in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

I receive an email from a Brimfield resident. He said, "In Brimfield I found bobolinks at two locations, a field off of Hollow Road, and a field bisected by Agard Road. I'll check back to see if the birds at either field are successful in raising young."

The male bobolink has a black head and body with a yellowish nape and white feathers on the rump and wings. The white rump is visible in flight. The female has brown streaks on the back and flanks, buff breast and dark line behind the eye.

Bobolinks feed on the ground, eating insects, weed and grass seeds. They inhabit hayfields and grasslands. Their population declined due to loss of grassland breeding habitat and hunting during the last century to protect rice crops.

The female lays four to six cinnamon colored eggs with brown blotches in a nest of coarse grass and sedge lined with finer material on the ground. Urban development, reforestation and loss of dairy farms resulted in loss of their breeding habitat. Early cutting of hayfields can kill more than 80% of unfledged young. Their song is a long bubbling sound given by the male in flight. The call is a "pink."

Hummingbirds

I receive an email from a resident of Lake



Bobolink

Lashaway in North Brookfield. She said, "Hummingbirds arrived at my feeder May 3. They visited for a week, but I have not seen one in the last week and a half." She changed the sugar water mix, but still no hummingbirds. She said a neighbor has not seen hummingbirds recently.

Dusting turkey

A Brimfield resident, who frequently sends emails, said, "Recently I had noticed an area behind the house where the ground had been disturbed. I thought I knew what had caused the disturbance, but wanted to be sure so I set up a wildlife camera near the area. When I checked the camera some of the pictures showed what I expected, a turkey taking a dust bath."

On one occasion, he said, "the bird spent over half an hour taking a dust bath. Shortly after the bird finished one of our resident gray foxes spent some time checking out the area."

He also saw a great crested flycatcher taking a dust bath. He said, "On three different days, a flycatcher was seen taking a dust bath." The great crested flycatcher and a house wren are both using nesting boxes he put up in the yard.

Bear

The Brimfield resident had a bear take down his oriole jelly/oranges feeder. The jelly was eaten, but the oranges were untouched. He put the feeder back up with just oranges and no jelly. Last night nothing bothered the feeder.

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

come January. It's guaranteed, right?

Signed: Retired But Questioning

Dear Retired

You've brought up a common belief about the annual Social Security Cost Of Living Adjustment, one that we hear often. Let's start with some background. Each year's COLA results from comparing the third quarter average Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) each year to the same average from the preceding year.

The result of dividing the current year's average by the previous year's average produces the COLA for the following year. For 2024's adjustment, the 2023 third-quarter



Social Security's 'guaranteed' annual Cost Of Living Adjustment

Dear Rusty

I've been reading a lot lately about speculation on what next year's benefit increase will be, and it seems like most of the experts are suggesting a range of 2.5% to 3%. My neighbor says don't worry about it, because there will always be some level of increase

OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

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Send opinions to:

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- community -

SOCIAL SECURITY | FROM PAGE 4

average was 301.2 and the comparable figure for 2022 was 291.9, producing the 3.2% benefit addition.

It's not always the case that the year-to-year CPI calculation produces a positive result, as was the case three times so far this century. As recently as 2016, for example, the 2015 third-quarter average was 233.3 and the comparable figure for 2014 was 234.2, producing a negative change. Fortunately for beneficiaries, Social Security law prohibits a negative COLA, so the negative result was ruled out and the COLA for 2016 was zero.

So, the rumor that there will always be a benefit increase in January is untrue, although having only three zero COLA years since the start of automated adjustments in 1974 leads folks to assume there will always be a boost in the new year. The size of the adjustment fluctuates with economic cycles and has ranged from a high of 14.3% in 1980 to 0.3% in 2017 (excluding, of course, the zero years). Incidentally, the historical average since automatic COLAs began is 3.8%, so the 2024 adjustment of 3.2% isn't that far from the average.

Social Security's rules are myriad and often confusing, but no question is too simple to be asked. The AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory Service is available, at no charge, to answer all your Social Security questions, via email at SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org or call 1-888-750-2622.

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.

GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

If your soil is lean, compost can be added to richen it up. While you're at it, add a sprinkling of lime as well; irises prefer a soil near neutral.

Dig a shallow hole wide enough to fit the rhizome. Make a ridge of soil in the hole for it to sit on so that its fibrous roots can hang down. For optimal blooms, the top of the rhizome should be level with the soil surface and exposed, not buried.

If your peonies are overcrowded and have begun to bloom poorly division may be necessary.

Although it would be logical to think that this should be accomplished shortly after blooming, it is not the case. Tackle this project in September.

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.

Strike up the band

Quabbin Community Band concerts start June 16



The Quabbin Community Band French Horn section rehearses in preparation for the band's first concert this Sunday, June 16 at 6 p.m. at Nornay Park in South Barre. Shown are Brenda Cibien, Emma Suzedell, Cailan McClure and Julie Rawson. SUBMITTED PHOTO

BARRE – Sunday, June 16 marks the opening of the 51st season of the Quabbin Community Band.

Members come from as far away as Keene, New Hampshire and as close as our own Quabbin Regional Middle-High School to take part in this annual summer tradition with roots in the Barre area back more than one hundred years.

The first concert kicks off with classic outdoor music fare: "Amparito Roca", a Spanish march by Jaime Texidor; "Kentucky 1800" by Clare Grundman; "Alexander's Ragtime Band" by Irving Berlin; an arrangement of "Phantom of the Opera" by Andrew Lloyd Webber and so much more.

The Quabbin Community Band Auxiliary is excited by the amount of community support they've received for the program booklet this year including specific donations for uniforms, music, and the band's rehearsal space in the Barre Town Hall.

Concerts on the common are a great New England tradition so the band hopes to see lots of people enjoying music and community each Sunday for the next nine weeks.

June 16-30 will be held at Nornay Park in South Barre, and July 7-Aug. 11 will be in Barre on the Harding Allen Bandstand. All concerts begin at 6 p.m. and generally run 90 minutes in length.

Load those lawn chairs and blankets into the back of your car because it's summer, and time to "Strike Up The Band."

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Angelina Botelho-Fritze



Peyton Cantwell



Kaden Corvese



Diego Cruz



Kayliann DiGregorio



Olivia Giangrande



Julian Haidaichuk



Bianca Jackson



Madison Laferriere



Jacob Lamy



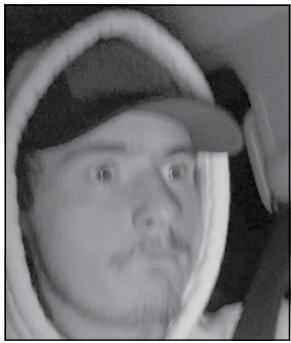
Mary McGeachie



Courtney-Alice McGraw



Jacob McKeon



Thomas O'Brien



Kaylee Peterson



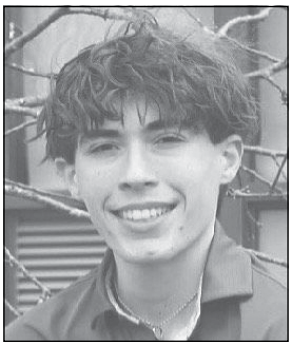
Jose Rivera



Noah Rodney



Anthony Sheard



Zachary Smith



Jacob Standrowicz



Colin Sukharev



Lola Sukharev



Nadezhda Sukharev



Lily Syas



Tyler Thompson



Shannon Toomey



Tyler Warner



Jamie Williams



Flenda's

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Tony Soul Project Band

Wednesday Nights ~ 7pm-10pm
Mix Tape Music Bingo/Prizes!

Friday Nights ~ 8pm-11pm
Karaoke

Upcoming Events
 Saturday, July 20
 8pm-11pm
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Library offers Summer Reading fun for all

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, will host special summer events starting with a magic show by Ed Popielarczyk, on Monday, June 17 at 4 p.m.

All ages are welcome to attend, and come see Ed do magic tricks and create his balloon art. Ed also has a flea circus to show you.

Ed has been doing magic shows for nearly 35 years so come to the library and enjoy the show.

Gilbert and Friends will visit the library on Tuesday, July 16 at 10 a.m. Come visit with these cute and smart special guests, Gilbert the Pig and his friends, Meadow and Sprinkle.

Pet them, feed them, and help them with some tricks. Take pictures with the

special guests and learn all about pigs.

This program will be about an hour long and all ages welcome. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult caregiver (one adult for every two children).

Boom from the Springfield Thunderbirds will visit the library on Thursday, Aug. 1 at 10:30 a.m. Boomer is the AHL affiliate hockey team to the Saint Louis Blues' beloved mascot. Don't forget your camera.

This event will also be the closing of the summer reading program where those who participated in the summer reading program can pick up their raffle prizes.

Recurring programs

The library is more than just a place to find books – check out these regular

programs.

You can find full details on any programs in the library's printed newsletter. Swing by the library and pick one up.

People interested in starting a group should contact the library.

Story Time will be held weekly on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.; Activity and Play will be held on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.; Knitting Group on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.; Technology Help Tuesdays (drop-in) on Tuesdays; Library Book Talk Group on first Tuesday of the month at noon; Tri-Valley Services on last Tuesday of the month from 1-3 p.m.; Bingo on the last Monday of the month at 5 p.m.; and Pokémon Go Club on Mondays at 5 p.m. and Thursdays at 1 p.m. (this is a noncompetitive and fun group).

Annual Strawberry Festival is June 22

NEW BRAINTREE – The annual Strawberry Festival will be sponsored by the New Braintree Congregational Church at the New Braintree Town Hall, Memorial Dr., at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday June 22.

The menu of baked ham, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, rolls and beverages will be followed by strawberry shortcake for dessert. There will be one sitting.

Reservations must be made by calling 508-410-7424 or 508-477-6653. Tickets are \$18 for adults; \$12 for children ages 5-10, children under 5 are free.

MEMORIES | FROM PAGE 1

"In a small school like ours, every student is valued, every voice is heard, and every contribution is appreciated," Diorio said. "You have each played a unique and invaluable role in shaping the fabric of our school and for that, we are eternally grateful."

He urged the graduates to cherish the memories they have made and to carry the lessons they have learned with them.

"Never lose sight of the values that have guided you...always remember your 'why,'" he said.

Fourth ranked scholar Peyton Cantwell spoke to her fellow graduates, reflecting on hearing the words "seniors" and "graduation" while still in elementary school.

"I thought, 'that's never going to be me, I still have like 30 years,'" Cantwell said. "The last day of school never meant too much to me, except thinking about all the fun things me and my friends were going to do."

The last day of middle school felt about the same, as they still had about 26 more years of school ahead of them, Cantwell said jokingly.

"Throughout high school, with every new last day, my thoughts about the ice cream, fun summer plans and the hot days slowly drifted into more and more 'I'm going to miss you,' 'what college am I going to go to?' and 'please don't forget about me,'" she said. "It all started to mean a little bit more."

Cantwell said she realized now that every last day of school was the beginning of something new. Now it means a new home, new opportunities and new friendships.

Third ranked scholar Mary McGeachie said she wasn't sure what she wanted to say in her speech, but she thought back on a phrase all of her classmates have said over and over again – "I can't wait."

Whether it be proms, class trips, or even graduating.

"Often times, we aren't really living in the moment and soaking it all in. We are too busy thinking about what is happening next week, month or year," she said. "Life moves pretty fast; if we keep looking into the future, we are going to miss the present day."

McGeachie said they need to remind themselves that they can learn to wait.

"Every day, be in the moment and soak it all in," she said.

Salutatorian Jacob

Lamy addressed his fellow graduates, saying that the end is just the beginning, an inspiring message he got from the title of a book that he never read.

"The phrase always stuck with me," he said. "I've grown to appreciate how it can be applied to not only my current life, but my life in the past and the lives of people I know."

Lamy said it seems like everything they know is coming to an end and changing, but there is a whole world of possibilities ahead of them.

"While we may all be going somewhere unknown, we still have our friends and the memories we created," Lamy said.

Lamy talked about his friendships he has had over the years, and how those relationships have grown apart, or grown closer. He thanked all of the people who have had an impact on the members of the graduating class.

Valedictorian Jacob Standrowicz said today marks a significant milestone in all of their lives.

He shared a story of when he asked a kindergarten student a deep, thought provoking question – "what is the meaning of life?"

"I was both amused and impressed with her answer," he said.

Standrowicz said the student held up a small, shiny glass pebble buried amongst a pile of Legos, and said "this."

"A lot can be learned from this pebble and the meaning that was found in it by this kindergartener," he said. "It is not the star of the show in the bin of Legos by any means...but this pebble has something special about it."

He said the pebble may have stuck out, but it did not leave an impression. It tried to impersonate the Legos and

tried to fit in.

Soon the pebble grew up and was discovered and found its footing outside the bin of Legos.

"This new setting is absolutely amazing for the pebble...it is flourishing in the abundance of opportunity and responsibility it can take on. In the short amount of time that it has been out of the bin of Legos, it has grown exponentially."

Standrowicz said the story is not really about a pebble, but about himself and how he has grown through high school. He said he knows many people will be able to relate to it.

"A person who is just the same as everybody else, but then put the work into becoming a great, distinguished leader," he said.

School Committee Chair John Magario said graduation is a celebration and recognition of the students' hard work. He congratulated them on behalf of the committee.

"You have persevered and now here you are, ready to begin inscribing the next chapter of your lives," he said.

Magario reminded the graduates that success is truly measured by the impact they have on the people around them.

He encouraged them to be critical thinkers and to challenge and question the status quo.

"This is how innovation happens," Magario said. "By those who dare to question, who think for themselves and refuse to accept 'because that's the way it is' as an answer."

Superintendent Tim McCormick shared his appreciation for all school staff and their passion and dedication for teaching. He thanked the families for nurturing the students' success.

McCormick congratulated the graduates and said the school district has been "immensely enriched" by their presence.

He offered advice to the graduates, reminding them to stay curious and embrace open mindedness. He urged them to seek out challenges and to step out of their comfort zones.

"Celebrate the diverse voices and experiences that make our journey together meaningful and profound," McCormick said.

McCormick said to express gratitude for their relationships in life and to build meaningful connections.

"These relationships have enriched both your personal and professional lives," he said.

North Brookfield Jr./Sr. High School Class of 2022 graduate Jenna Dupell was the keynote speaker for the commencement.

"I am honored to be speaking in front of you all today and celebrating the achievements of this graduating class," she said. "Today is the beginning of the rest of your lives."

Dupell said their diplomas signify all of the challenges and accomplishments throughout their high school career.

"Everyone in this auditorium has something to celebrate today,"

Dupell encouraged the graduates to remember the place they call "home," adding that North Brookfield Jr./Sr. High School holds a special place in her heart.

"My hope is that high school has allowed you to form and appreciate your own values," Dupell said. "You can change the world based on what you value."



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MARKET | FROM PAGE 1

recent Flower and Asparagus Festival at the same venue can attest. Luck was with us all on this opening day, and no one could complain with the abundant sunshine.

Moving clockwise around the Common, the first vendor we met was Susan Linnéa Kallander who was seated at a small table displaying some of her work. Kallander works in different media from water color, oil to pastel paintings.

She pointed out that none of her work is printed, which means a lot of effort.

In other media, she has veggie and crystal earrings and is also available for your pet portraits.

Next was the Table of Kate Bakes and she certainly does judging by the picture that includes items on display. Kate was always a baker, but upon retirement, gave the business a shot.

Continuing on there is Hunt Berry Farm. They do berries and the blues are wonderful, but as the season progresses, the veggies will fill the tables as well.

Tamsin, at the helm of The Bread Box Company, has a variety of baked goods that are not often seen in stores. There is a British flavor to much of it.

Leland Mushrooms was next. Matt Smith from North Brookfield started the business about three and a half years ago at the suggestion of his wife. Leland adds variety to the market.

Crossing over to the other side of the market, we come to an artisan who refers to himself as the Chairman of the Board. It is not in the corporate sense that Wayne Boulette does this, but rather as to the cutting boards and other woodworking products he brings to the market.

A dog lover with a couple of poodles at home, part of the profits go to support the ASPCA.

A regular at the summer market and the winter market is Joy Hinton. She is the entrepreneur behind Joy of Beans which is a coffee business headquartered at 12 East Main St. in town.

Hinton roasts over 30 different coffees from 23 different countries. If you have coffee questions, she probably has the answer.

Adventurous, she is branching out and now has Mem Tea at the shop and it is a big hit.

Linda Fuchs' Flourish Farm is back with micro-greens and assorted herbs. Also, she has tables of starter plants, enough to begin a farm if one is so inclined.

Another market perennial is Donald Grimes of Grimes Apiary. He has all the honey and bee products you need.

Next in the row was Elzire's Acre Goat Milk Soap with the table staffed by Chad Steiner. Elzire's is popular at the winter market and will be here for the summer. Steiner will alternate Wednesdays with his wife, Terri.

Last, but a long-time market presence, is Thompson's Maple Farm. It is a maple farm, but big in the ice cream biz on Wednesdays.

There is something for everyone at the West Brookfield Farmers Market. It is the perfect way to spend a Wednesday afternoon from June until October.



The artist Susan of Apple a Day Studio. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPHY



Team Hunt Road Berry Farm was at the market for opening day.



Leland Mushrooms had plenty to offer at the West Brookfield Farmers Market.



Louise and Amy are shown at the headquarters tent of the West Brookfield Farmers Market.



Thompsons Maple Farm offered sweet treats.



Tamsin of the Bread Box Company.



Kate sure does bake.



SPORTS

Warriors baseball heads for state semifinals

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

FISKDALE—Tantasqua junior righthander Lucas MacNevin won two games during the 2023 Division 3 state tournament as a relief pitcher.

MacNevin, who was the starting pitcher in this year's round of 16 game against Dighton-Rehoboth Regional, picked up his third victory in the state tournament with a little bit of help from his teammates.

The contest remained

scoreless until the bottom of the fourth inning when the sixth-seeded Warriors scored five runs. The 11th-seeded Falcons did battle back during the final two innings against senior relief pitcher Joe Amaru, but the Warriors hung on for a 6-3 victory at William R. Emrich Field, last Wednesday afternoon.

"I won a couple of games in the start tournament last year, but winning today's game feels a lot better," MacNevin said. "I pitched well, and the boys made

the plays behind me against a very good hitting team. It was a lot of fun."

MacNevin didn't allow any runs on six base hits in 41/3 innings in the Warriors final home game of the 2024 campaign. He walked two and struck out six.

The victory improved Tantasqua's overall season record to 17-4.

During the past four seasons, the Warriors have compiled an impressive 62-19 overall record.

Amaru, who'll be a freshman at Liberty University in

the fall, is one of the nine seniors listed on the Warriors varsity baseball roster. The other eight seniors are third baseman Colm McGrath, first baseman Jack Rapose, shortstop Hunter Normandin, designated hitter Cole Nussey, right fielder Petey Casine, center fielder Ryan Wright, left fielder C.J. Harrell, and Jack Alexander, who's a reserve player.

"The seniors are very talented baseball players and they've helped us win a lot of games during the past four years,"

said Tantasqua head coach Jon Leroux. "They've worked very hard and they're fun to be around. It has been a pleasure coaching them."

Leroux also enjoyed coaching against Dighton-Rehoboth head coach Bill Cuthbertson, who has won more than 600 varsity baseball games in the past 43 years.

"I met the Dighton-Rehoboth head coach for the first time today," Leroux said. "He has won a lot of games and it's

See WARRIORS | PAGE 10

Marchand competes at all-states



Natalia Marchand starts her run toward the high jump bar during her performance at the recent All-State Meet held two weeks ago. TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE



The Quabbin track team member clears the high jump in this attempt.

Quabbin's season ends after outstanding performance

BARRE – After an impressive regular season run, Quabbin Regional High School girls tennis was defeated on the road at Endicott College last Monday afternoon.

The Panthers were defeated by Manchester Essex High School 5-0. It was one of just three losses for Quabbin on the season as Annabelle Magill, who had an outstanding year, was defeated in first singles. Camryn Orsini and Carlee Rich also suffered defeats as did the doubles teams. The Panthers final record was 17-3.

Pioneers softball picks up state tourney win

PALMER – Last Saturday, June 1, Pathfinder softball, which had an outstanding regular season, picked up its first win in the state tournament. The Pioneers hosted a

preliminary round and defeated the Boston Collegiate Charter School. Pathfinder scored early and often and had a 19-4 win in the matchup. With the win, Pathfinder advanced

into the Round of 32, scheduled to face off against Hopedale of Central Mass.



Brianna Beynor ranges to field a grounder. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Sam Prouty swings at a pitch.



Emma Chevalier makes a clean play on a grounder.



Lianna Carrasquillo makes the routine throw to first.



Kendra Burke winds up and fires to the plate.

- sports -

Theriault makes big impact in debut for Mutiny

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Maddy Theriault scored a total of 143 goals and had 39 assists during her outstanding varsity soccer career at Palmer High School.

Theriault, who'll be a junior on the Fairfield University women's soccer team in the fall, made a major impact in her first match as a member of the New England Mutiny.

Theriault, who's a forward, posted a hat-trick leading the Mutiny to a 7-1 victory in their most recent home match against the Albany Rush at Lusitano Stadium on June 1.

"It's really nice to play for a very good summer soccer team," said Theriault, who played a match at Lusitano Stadium for the first time in more than ten years. "I'm very excited to be a member of this soccer team. It's close to Palmer and I get to play with a bunch of great players. It's a lot of fun." The home victory improved the Mutiny's season record to 3-0-0. They've outscored their first three opponents, 14-3.

The other two Mutiny forwards are Chioma Okafor, who plays soccer at UConn, and Cat Berry, who plays at the University of South Carolina.

"Both of them are amazing soccer players," Theriault said. "We work very well together, and I really enjoy playing on the same team with them."

Unfortunately, Berry, who recorded a hat-trick in the Mutiny's previous match against Sporting CT, will be heading back to South Carolina in a couple of weeks.

Okafor, who plays at UConn, is also a first-year Mutiny player. She netted the only goal of the opening half during the fifth minute.

The scoring play began with Berry sending a pass from the left side to Theriault, whose shot attempt was deflected away by Albany goalie Molly DiCarrio, who made a couple of key saves during the first half.

Okafor was in the right spot to knock home the rebound shot giving the Mutiny an early 1-0 advantage.

Berry had several shots on goal during the final 40 minutes of the first half, but they were saved by DiCarrio, who plays soccer at Clarkson University.

The Mutiny was still leading 1-0 at halftime.

Less than five minutes into the second half, Okafor was fouled in the box and the Mutiny were awarded a penalty kick from referee Stephanie MacFarland.

It was an all-female official crew. The two assistant referees were Julia Connor, and Diana Kolodziej, who's the Director of the prestigious Pioneer Summer Soccer League, along with her husband, Chris. The fourth official was Meghan Litten.

Mutiny midfielder Avery Klingensmith, who plays college soccer at American University, stepped up to the line and delivered a line-drive shot into the upper right corner of the net.

Klingensmith, who graduated from Belchertown High School, and Theriault faced each other a couple of times during their varsity careers.

"I played soccer against Maddy at the youth level and in high school, so it's great to finally be playing on the same team with her," Klingensmith said. "Maddy is a very hard worker, and she



Maddy Theriault, of Palmer, scored three goals in her Mutiny debut on June 1. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

had a hat-trick in tonight's game. I think it's awesome to have a lot of the local players playing for this team."

Theriault scored her first goal wearing a Mutiny uniform during the 59th minute.

The initial shot which was taken by Jess Mazo was saved by DiCarrio, but Theriault put home the rebound shot.

"I just knew the ball was going to ricochet off the goalie, so I just wanted to get in the right position to score a goal," Theriault said. "It felt very nice to score my first goal with this team."

About sixth minutes later, Theriault fired a left footed shot into the back of the net from the middle of the box, which gave her new soccer team a commanding 4-0 lead. Mazo was credited with the assist.

After receiving a pass from Berry, Theriault completed her hat-trick by scoring another goal during the 69th minute. She came out of the game at that point.

"It's very exciting scoring my first hat-trick with this team," Theriault said. "I was just in the right place at the right time. I'm just glad that I could help my team win tonight's game."

Mutiny head coach Federico Molinari was impressed with Theriault's performance.

"This was the first game that Maddy was on the roster, and she did very well," Molinari said. "We played a lot better in the second half."

Mazo, who also played college soccer at UConn last year, scored a goal, which was assisted by Berry, during the 71st minute.

The Mutiny's final goal of the home match was scored by Catie Bean.

Just when it looked like Mutiny goalie Katrina Chorzepa would post her first shutout of the regular season, Ruth Hotaling netted a stoppage time goal for the Rush (0-2-0).

The Mutiny will be playing their first road match of the season against the Maine Footy on Saturday night. Their next home match will be against the Hudson Valley Crusaders at 7pm on June 15.



Chioma Okafor works in traffic.



Jess Mazo tries to settle the ball.



Emma Pedolizky starts to move up the field.

WARRIORS | FROM PAGE 9

always nice beating a very good baseball team. They put a lot of pressure on our defense, but my players just did a great job."

The Warriors defense turned two huge double plays while MacNevin was on the mound, which helped keep the Falcons (14-8) off the scoreboard.

Junior second baseman Charlie Roth led off the top of the first inning with a ground ball single up the middle into centerfield and junior leftfielder Jordan Castro drew a walk. Then junior third baseman Bill Miller hit a line-drive that was caught by Normandin. He then tossed the ball to junior second baseman Chace Fredette, who stepped on bag to complete the double play.

MacNevin struck out the next batter for the third out.

The Falcons left two runners in scoring position in the second inning and another one in the third.

It was still a scoreless game entering the top of the fourth inning when the visitors loaded the bases with no outs. That threat came to an end quickly, as junior centerfielder Jake McGarry hit a line shot caught by McGrath. He then touched third base which completed the unassisted double play.

Just like he did in the first inning, MacNevin ended the frame with a strikeout.

The Warriors offense, who only had one base hit against sophomore righty Will Labrie during the first three frames, broke the deadlock in the bottom of the fourth.

Fredette began the rally with a lead-off single to left. After stealing second

base, he scored when Rapose hit a hard ground ball which was booted by the Falcons first baseman for an error.

Rapose stole second and advanced to third on a throwing error by the catcher before back-to-back walks by Normandin and junior catcher Brandon Phillips loaded the bases for the home team. Then Casine fisted a pop-up that landed behind the mound for an infield hit scoring another run. The Warriors third run crossed the plate when Wright hit into a fielder's choice play. Harrell knocked home two more runs with a line-drive single to left field making the score 5-0.

After giving up a single and hitting another batter with a pitch with one out in the fifth, MacNevin was replaced on the mound by Amaru, who's a righty. He got out of the jam with a 5-3 inning ending double play.

The Warriors took a 6-0 lead in the fifth when Phillips hit a sacrifice fly to center.

The Falcons scored a pair of runs in the sixth and another one in the seventh.

Amaru, who earned the save, struck out the final two batters that he faced, as the Warriors advanced into the Elite Eight for the second consecutive year.

"It feels very good to win my final high school baseball game on this field," Amaru said. "I've really enjoyed being a member of this baseball team the past four years."

Tantasqua defeated third-seeded Hanover, 3-0, in eight innings, in the elite eight, last Saturday afternoon.

The Warriors were scheduled to face second-seeded St. Mary's High School in the Final Four.

- community -

Opacum Land Trust selected as 2024 TerraCorps Service Site

BRIMFIELD – The Opacum Land Trust is excited to announce that they have been selected as a 2024 TerraCorps service site.

TerraCorps places AmeriCorps members in 11-month service terms across a network of land-based community nonprofits working towards equitable land use, food justice and environmental sustainability. Opacum Land Trust is now recruiting for a Land Stewardship Coordinator position.

Land Stewardship Coordinators build the long-term capacity of their Service Sites by creating networks of volunteers to support hands-on stewardship of community lands. TerraCorps service members receive a stipend for their service.

TerraCorps is an environmental nonprofit working at the intersection of land conservation, sustainable agriculture, and food justice to grow the next generation of environmental leaders. They operate as an AmeriCorps program intermediary and administrator, facilitating access to federal resources that are often out of reach for small, community-based nonprofits.

TerraCorps helps community nonprofits leverage the AmeriCorps national service model. Each year, they recruit a new cohort of up to 60 AmeriCorps Service Members and place them at a service site organization within their network of 40+ nonprofit partners throughout Massachusetts and Rhode

Island.

Service members are paired with a site supervisor, an experienced professional, who provides them guidance and mentorship while they learn to manage community programs and projects throughout their service term.

TerraCorps cultivates an ecosystem of people and organizations that center community land ownership, access, and stewardship to support a diversity of interests that benefit human health and environmental sustainability. They value the power of local nonprofits to best understand and serve their communities.

TerraCorps's goal is to help them succeed by providing them access to the AmeriCorps national service model to build organizational capacity. The program is funded in part by a grant provided by AmeriCorps, a federal agency, and administered in Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Service Alliance.

Do you love being outdoors? Are you interested in gaining valuable experience in land stewardship, volunteer coordination, and education? Interested candidates can apply today to be a Land Stewardship Coordinator through the TerraCorps Service Program and help Opacum Land Trust to expand our stewardship program.

Land Stewardship Coordinators build the long-term capacity of their Service Sites by creating networks of volunteers to support hands-on stew-

ardship of community lands.

Some potential LSC projects might include: setting up Landscape software to track stewardship needs on Opacum properties and establish property monitoring protocols. Coordinating educational walks on our properties about environmental stewardship, or educational activities on environmentally conscious practices. Establishing a volunteer stewardship program to assist with property monitoring including coordinating property workdays for trail improvements, habitat management, and maintenance.

Interested applicants should com-

plete an application at <https://terra-corps.my.site.com/terra-corps/s/available-member-positions> and choose Opacum Land Trust as your preferred service site.

Opacum Land Trust is a mostly volunteer nonprofit conservation organization in south-central Massachusetts whose mission is to protect local land, water, and wildlife for current and future generations. To date, Opacum Land Trust has protected more than 3,800 acres of land with another 1,000 acres in the process of being protected.

For more information, visit their website at www.opacumlt.org.

Knights host benefit spaghetti dinner June 22

WEST BROOKFIELD – Knights of Columbus Council 11080 is sponsoring a spaghetti dinner on Saturday, June 22 in Dugan Hall, Sacred Heart Church, 10 Milk St.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Dinner includes pasta fagioli, garden salad, meatballs and sausage, spaghetti and sauce, garlic bread, dessert, water, soda, and coffee. The cost is a \$15 donation and \$10 for children under 12 years old.

Take-out is available at 6 p.m. and

sit-down dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. Admission tickets are also good for entry for a special door prize.

Raffle tickets for a 50/50 raffle and more will be available.

Advance ticket purchase is encouraged and appreciated. Tickets are available from any Knight or by calling 508-612-1649 or 413-813-8100 or by emailing bobfalter@gmail.com or wallyconnor122@gmail.com.

Tickets will only be available at the door while they last.

Registration open for EQLT's Hills of East Quabbin Ride

HARDWICK – The East Quabbin Land Trust, a nonprofit land trust caring for the land that sustains the region, will host its first ever bike ride fundraiser, the Hills of East Quabbin Ride, on Saturday, June 22.

The ride is open to all ages and includes a 25-mile and 50-mile loop passing several EQLT properties. Registration is \$60, and riders may register online through June 21 and in-person on the day of the event until 9 a.m.

All proceeds will go to EQLT and support its mission to fostering the sustainable use and conservation of farmlands, woodlands and waters of central Massachusetts.

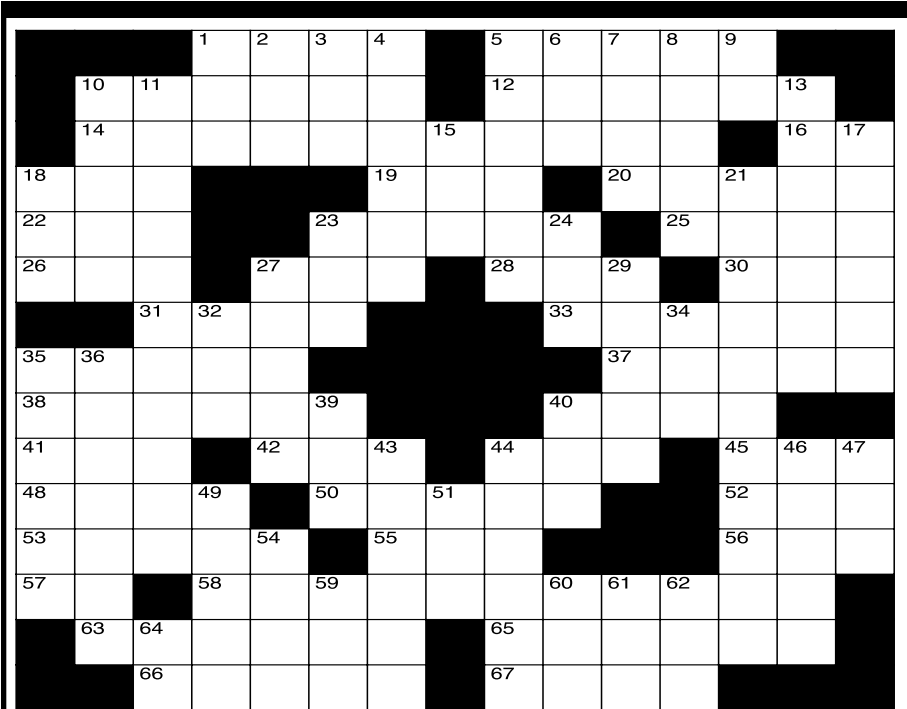
The routes follow local roads with

light traffic. Both routes include a rest stop at EQLT's headquarters located at 120 Ridge Road, offering bathroom facilities and snacks to refuel, along with sweeping views of the Ware River Valley.

The ride starts and finishes at Farmer Matt®, 860 West Brookfield Road, New Braintree.

Riders will receive a \$5-off coupon for a hamburger, hot dog or veggie burger with a choice of sides from Farmer Matt. Other locally sourced farm-to-table items will also be available for purchase.

For more information about the Hills of East Quabbin Ride, or to learn about EQLT, please visit www.eqlt.org.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Native American people
- 5. Very long periods of time (Brit.)
- 10. Schoolboard accessory
- 12. Rods
- 14. One who renews
- 16. Sculpted body part
- 18. Chatter incessantly
- 19. ___ King Cole, musician
- 20. Plates on a turtle's shell
- 22. University of Utah athlete
- 23. The world of the dead
- 25. Singer Redding
- 26. Former Yankee great
- 27. Prefix indicating wrongly
- 28. Unhappy
- 30. Anger
- 31. Dark brown or black
- 32. Restaurants have a lot of them
- 35. Made a mistake
- 37. Damp
- 38. Type of gasoline
- 40. Actor LeBlanc
- 41. Perform in a play
- 42. One's mother
- 44. Prohibit
- 45. Swiss river
- 48. Part of a banana
- 50. Indian hand clash cymbals
- 52. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 53. Agave
- 55. Noted journalist Tarbell
- 56. Computer firm
- 57. Type of record
- 58. Bacterium that can cause infection
- 63. Sheaths enclosing the spinal cord
- 65. A narrow opening (as in a rock wall)
- 66. Pattern

- 67. Very eager to see something

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Witch
- 2. Utilize
- 3. Writing utensil
- 4. Places to perform
- 5. Subsides
- 6. Consume
- 7. Athleisure clothing brand
- 8. California town
- 9. Atomic #50
- 10. The Muse of lyric and love poetry
- 11. Creates anew
- 13. Humorous commentaries
- 15. Cool!
- 17. Most ignoble
- 18. Soggy dirt
- 21. Designed to be useful
- 23. Hebrew unit of liquid capacity
- 24. High schoolers' test
- 27. One-time internet accessory
- 29. City in India
- 32. Furniture
- 34. You have likely chatted with one
- 35. Pass or go by
- 36. Proof of purchase
- 39. A digital tape recording of sound
- 40. More (Spanish)
- 43. Disfigured
- 44. White (Spanish)
- 46. Building occupied by monks
- 47. Georgia rock band
- 49. Device that generates intense beam of light
- 51. State of agitation
- 54. Make by braiding
- 59. Local area network energy
- 61. Indigenous person of Thailand
- 62. Liquefied natural gas
- 64. Distance to top

EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of July 4th,
PUBLIC NOTICES
EARLY AD DEADLINE
Place your public notice
no later than **NOON**
Thursday, June 27
– Thank you!

GRADUATION | FROM PAGE 1

Toomey thanked all the dedicated staff at Quaboag for all of their guidance and support throughout the class's high school journey. Toomey described the staff at the school as the backbone of the school community.

He thanked all of his family members for all of the support they have given him over the years.

Toomey finished his address by encouraging his fellow graduates to always express kindness and lend a helping hand as they move forward.

"Play nice in the sandbox or don't play at all," Toomey said.

Principal Casey Handfield wished the Class of 2024 all the best of luck as they enter into the world. He said the world is in their hands and it is up to them to make all the important decisions in their lives.

"Only you can be the governor of your destination," Handfield said. "Gather all information that is available to you."

For a special musical selection, the Quaboag Singers performed "A New Day" by Pinkzebra. Many graduates joined their fellow singers for one final time before graduation.

On the piano during the performance was Quaboag music teacher James Joinville.

The Salutatorian address was given by Kennady Sloan and the Valedictorian address was given by Antonio Congelos. Both Sloan and Congelos believe it is important to work hard every day and let whatever you need to find you on the road ahead.

Superintendent Stephen Duff gave an inspiring speech as he served as this year's keynote speaker.

Duff shared a little bit of his journey toward working in a school environment. Duff acknowledged how tough it was at first to find work while he was in college.

Duff attended Northeastern University and then Worcester State College and began working as a tutor. Duff now serves as the Superintendent of Schools for the Quaboag Regional School District; a place he considers home.

"Sometimes a job chooses you," Duff said. "Life has a way of guiding us."

This commencement was special for Duff as his daughter, Jenna Duff, was graduating this year. Duff said his daughter has had him as her school principal for a total of 13 years.

Duff encouraged the Class of 2024 to always be helpful and always remember their experiences in high school.

"Never pass up an opportunity to do something for someone," Duff said. "Take a piece of this chapter with you."

The next musical selection was "On a Hymn Song of Philip Bliss" by David Holsinger. The selection was performed by the Quaboag Wind Ensemble.

Class Treasurer Isabelle Burgess and Class Secretary Abigail Long presented the class gift.

Serving as the Class Marshalls for the ceremony were Quaboag juniors Nora Pennington-Russell and Norah Schwenker. Both Pennington-Russell and Schwenker will be part of the Quaboag Graduating Class of 2025.

Duff congratulated the class once again prior to handing out the diplomas. Alongside Duff during the presentation of the diplomas was School Committee Chair Andrew Schwenker.

The reading of the graduates were class advisors Tyler Shepard and Sibilla Flannery.

The turning of the tassel concluded the 56th commencement of Quaboag Regional Middle High School. Congratulations and good luck to the Class of 2024.



Matthew Carter and Olivia Dumas are shown with their high school diplomas.



Alexandra Cacace alongside proud father, Anthony Cacace.



Superintendent Stephen Duff gave not only his superintendent's address but was also the keynote speaker.



Quaboag graduate Owen Stevens is shown alongside his proud mother, Elizabeth Stevens.



Mason Blount, left, and Jason Houle stand next to a Quaboag banner.



Dawson Kelly and Haileigh Swistak posed for pictures after graduation ceremony.



Jada Cowher making her way through the gymnasium at graduation.



Evan Long is shown alongside his proud mother Lisa Long.

- community -

Chamber hosts legislative breakfast at Cedarbrook

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce hosted a breakfast at Cedarbrook Village.

This annual legislative breakfast is a great away for chamber members to connect with their areas legislators. The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce has been around since 1978 and represents about 200 members and businesses.

Chamber President and CEO James Przypek welcomed dozens of guests and chamber members to the breakfast provided by the hardworking staff of Cedarbrook Village. Legislators scheduled to attend included state Rep. Aaron Saunders (7th Hampden District including Belchertown) and state Rep. Todd Smola (1st Hampden District including Brimfield, Holland, Wales, Ware and Warren). This year's guest speakers were presented by Superior Plus Propane.



State Rep. Aaron Saunders spoke after Smola and ensured guests that he and Smola are a unified voice for western Massachusetts.

Both state representatives gave an address during the legislative breakfast and got to hear questions, comments and concerns from the residents. According to Przypek, there are many small businesses in the western part of the Commonwealth that still may be experiencing challenges after the pandemic.

With the state representatives present, the members get a chance to address some of the essential needs in western Massachusetts. Several questions were submitted in advance, but both Smola and Saunders took some questions that were asked after their presentations.

The legislative breakfast was a chance for members to introduce themselves to the legislators and share the challenges their business face and connect to resources, funding and solutions.

The Chamber represents businesses and members in all the Brookfields, Palmer, Ware, Warren, Holland, Wales, Brimfield, Monson, Belchertown, Spencer, New Braintree and Hardwick.

Smola spoke first and mainly discussed what he and Saunders are pushing for and addressing different appropriations in the state budget.

"We're acting on different initiatives," Smola said.

Smola commented that many bills are being discussed but are written in different versions amongst a conference committee. These versions are written up by members of the Senate and by the House of Representatives.

Smola said both groups must reach an agreement and vote on the amount of money, language and technical changes. Smola says the input they get from the residents of western Massachusetts is supportive and is the driving force of businesses thriving in the area.

"We rely on you and the business community," Smola said.

Saunders spoke next and talked about the importance of having a positive working relationship amongst other



The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce hosted a legislative breakfast at Cedarbrook Village in Ware. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

legislators.

"A bipartisan amongst different parties is doable," Saunders said. "We have someone to ensure our voices are heard."

Saunders shared that some of the biggest needs in their region is small businesses and affordable housing. Saunders is confident that western Massachusetts has a strong voice in the discussion when addressing these essential needs.

After the address of both representatives, Przypek thanked both Saun-

ders and Smola for their time. As guests finished their breakfast Przypek announced the winners of the raffles.

The prizes consisted of orchids and gift certificates generously donated by chamber members and businesses. Przypek ended the legislative breakfast by thanking Cedarbrook Village for hosting their event.

For more information about the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce, visit www.qhma.com, call 413-283-2418 or email info@qhma.com.



State Rep. Todd Smola spoke during the legislative breakfast and shared information about the state budget.

Father/son show opens at gallery

WEST BROOKFIELD – Frank White and his son Eric White welcomed the public to view their wood turned creations at an opening reception held at West Brookfield Art & Frame, 10 East Main St.

"Chip n' the Old Block" will be displayed at the gallery through the month of June. Gallery hours at West Brookfield Art & Frame are Thursdays, Fri-

days and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sundays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Upcoming events at West Brookfield Art & Frame include "Tunes, Java Brews & Artist Views" on July 27 from 7-10 p.m. Joining the fun is neighboring Joy of Beans coffee roaster for an evening of outdoor, live music with local singer/songwriter Adelaide Fay and her band.



Eric White and his father Frank White share their wood turned creations during their joint show "Chip n' the Old Block" at West Brookfield Art & Frame at an opening reception this past Friday. The show will be on display through the month of June. TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE



The Bluegrass Gospel Service returns to the George Whitefield United Methodist Church in West Brookfield on Sunday, June 30 at 10 a.m. All are welcome to attend. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bluegrass Gospel Service to be held June 30

WEST BROOKFIELD – The George Whitefield United Methodist Church, 33 West Main St., will be hosting its popular Bluegrass Gospel Service on Sunday, June 30 at 10 a.m.

This quarterly event, which happens when there is a fifth Sunday in a month, will next bring together local musicians for an all music Bluegrass Gospel Service. The event is free, though a free will

offering will be taken and refreshments will be served after.

The services have drawn many from around the area and have been entertaining and spiritually uplifting. Mark your calendar and plan to join us to listen, sing, tap your toes and leave feeling good.

For more information, call Heidi Jeldres at 978-989-5736.

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DANA WOODS ANNUAL tag sale: Belchertown: George Hannum Rd off Rt 9 (turn at Stop & Shop) Children's clothes, toys, furniture, housewares, tools and more! **Saturday, June 15th, 9:00am-3:00pm**

JUNE 22-JUNE 23, 9AM-4PM. 22 Victoria Lane, Wilbraham. Moving sale, home items, books, cookbooks, clothing, unique items, furniture, artwork.

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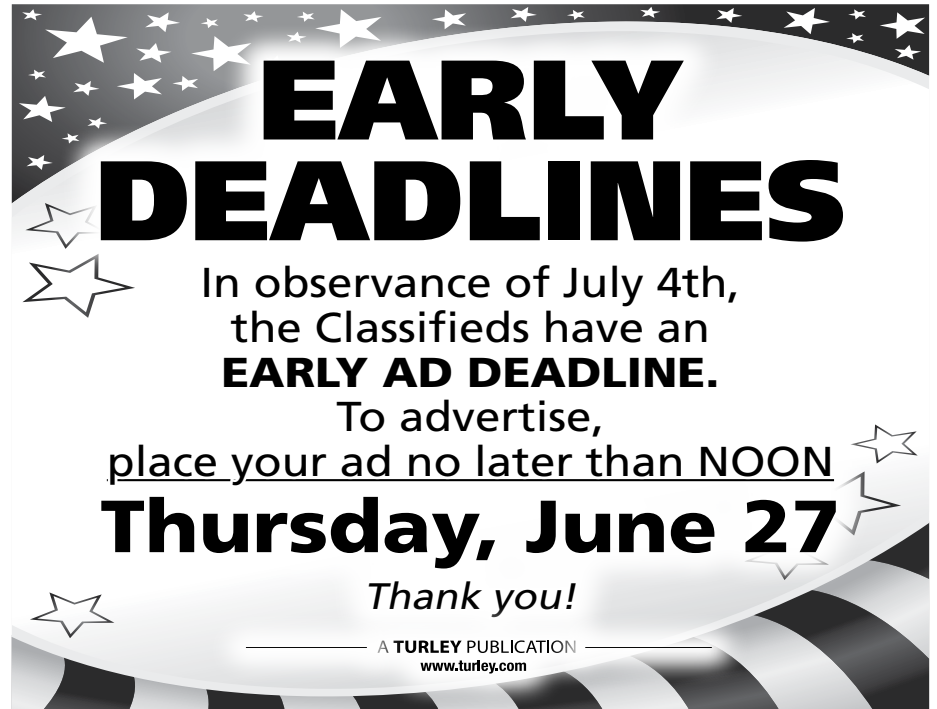
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New Braintree Police Log

During the week of June 3-10, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 11 building/property checks, 19 directed/area patrols, five radar assignments, three emergency 911 calls, one assist other agency, one complaint, one safety hazard, one motor vehicle investigation and four motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Tuesday, June 4

10:10 a.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Padre Road, No Action Required
4:02 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Memorial Drive, Dispatch Handled

Friday, June 7

3:50 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Road, Transported to Hospital
5:03 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Hardwick Road, Vehicle Towed

Saturday, June 8

7:09 p.m. Safety Hazard, McKay Road, Removed Hazard

Sunday, June 9

6:49 a.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Hardwick Road, Officer Handled

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Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church hosts clothing drive

BROOKFIELD – The Committee for Ecology and Social Action of the Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church is sponsoring our second clothing and textile drive through Helpsy, the largest clothing collector in the Northeast.

Textile waste is a fast-growing problem and occupies nearly 5% of all landfill space, but 95% of unwanted clothing can be reused, repurposed, or recycled. Only 15% currently is.

On July 16-20, the church will be open between 3-7 p.m. so you can bring your old clothing (including slips, bras, underwear, socks) and certain other acceptable items, such as shoes, accessories (including hats,

bags, belts, scarves and jewelry), luggage, stuffed animals and linens (including sheets, blankets, curtains, table linens and quilts). All items in any condition are acceptable if they are clean, dry, and odorless.

Last year the church was able to keep over 5,000 pounds of textiles out of the landfills. They hope to exceed that this year.

The Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church is located at 9 Upper River St. on the Brookfield Common, near the junction of Route 9 and Route 148.

For more information, contact Barbara Hale at blh.buuc@gmail.com.



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QUABOAG CURRENT

WEST BROOKFIELD Weed treatment starts June 20 p2	NORTH BROOKFIELD Summer Reading at Haston p2	NEW BRAINTREE Strawberry Festival is June 22 p7	Editorial/Opinion Sports Classifieds Police Logs	4 9 14 15
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Volume 17, Number 29

Friday, June 14, 2024

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