

QUABOAG

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Living history

Students and re-enactors bring past to life

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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BROOKFIELD – History came to life on the common this past Saturday, with a historical wax museum at the gazebo, and a demonstration of Civil War life by re-enactors.

Six third graders from Brookfield Elementary School dressed up as various historical figures, and retold

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Brookfield Elementary School third graders Jason, Eli, Abigail, Bennett, Cora and Rhys performed in a historical wax museum on the common.

TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

ATM approves budget and bulaws

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
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EAST BROOKFIELD – Residents voted on the operating budget, school budget and bylaw changes at the annual town meeting held on June 10.

FY 27 budget

Article 1 was the operating budget for town departments, which was recommended by the Finance Committee for a total of about \$3.460 million.

See E BROOKFIELD
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West Brookfield Farmers Market is back for the summer

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – On June 11, Amy Dugas rang the bell at 3 p.m. to open the second session of the West Brookfield Farmers Market's 16th season.

The day was warm and lovely.

Amy, with Louise Garwood are the management team of a weekly Wednesday event that is a town tradition drawing shoppers not just locally, but from other locales to visit the array of vendors that have what you may need or want.

Moving around the common, we came to Susan Linnéa Kallander who has been at the market in prior years. Susan does pet



Louise, Nathan and Amy were at the West Brookfield Farmers Market tent.

TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY

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Town Meeting passes budget, changes FD structure

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Residents voted on the fiscal year 2027 budget and a change in the structure of the Fire Department at the annual town meeting held last Friday.

FY 27 budget

The third article of the warrant was for the budget, and it was split into four separate motions, which each passed by majority. The total of the four motions was \$15,383,318 including transfers.

The first motion funded the salaries and expenses of the own moderator, selectmen, finance committee,

accountant, assessors, treasurer, collector, town clerk, conservation, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, planning board and the zoning board of appeals.

The motion also transferred \$184,172 from free cash to group insurance. The total for the first motion was \$5,656,001.

The second motion was for the funding of the salaries and expenses of the police and fire departments, and the building, plumbing, gas and wiring inspectors. The motion also funded the tree warden and the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency.

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Marilynn Borst selected as Artist of the Month

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House selected Marilynn Borst as the Artist of the Month for June.

Borst is an author, historian and community advocate who moved to North Brookfield 26 years ago. Originally from Worcester, Borst and her family were looking for a more private space in the country and away from the city.

Borst got a place near Brooks Pond with a beautiful view.

Borst said she never thought of herself as an artist but sees herself more as "a creator."

Borst's writing journey

began by writing newsletters and conducting research and gathering information. She also wrote guidebooks for Preservation Worcester house tours and picked up an interest in touring old houses.

When asked about what kind of writing she finds the most interesting, Borst shared that history writing is one of her big interests.

She has also tried other forms of writing such as radio dramas, parables and love stories. One of her radio dramas was put on by a group in Worcester.

She tried writing in these styles while taking part in Worcester Institute for Senior Education classes at Assumption College.

Borst also began writing stories about her family while taking these WISE courses. Borst shared her writing by meeting with a writer's group. The group

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Marilynn Borst



Members of the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, celebrated its Open and Affirming designation.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Church celebrates Open and Affirming designation

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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WEST BROOKFIELD – Earlier last month, members of the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, took a vote to designate the church an Open and Affirming congregation.

According to the United Church of Christ's website,

the Open and Affirming Coalition of the UCC advocates for and supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, nonbinary and queer individuals, equipping UCC congregations to fully embody Christ's extravagant affirmation.

Through education, advocacy, and community-building, the Coalition empowers churches to become bold witnesses for

LGBTQ+ justice and inclusion, ensuring that all people are celebrated as beloved children of God.

This designation also celebrates and learns from differences in race, culture, economic and political background and physical and cognitive challenges.

To begin the process, the congregation formed a committee to educate the church members about the Open

and Affirming designation, which included Bible studies led by Rev. Dr. Doug Showalter and others. The congregation also watched videos, heard testimonials and held panel discussions to prepare to become Open and Affirming.

After this, the congregation took a vote, which was

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- community -

Selectmen discuss infrastructure projects

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
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EAST BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen met June 8 to discuss infrastructure in the cemetery and various roads in town.

Chairman Andrew Lynch said there were multiple leaks in the cemetery, and the brittle lining of the pipes continues to break when it gets repaired. He said they will need to have discussions with the Cemetery Commission and Highway superintendent to discuss how things can be done differently at the cemetery.

Lynch said some cemeteries install spigots at each entrance to allow people to have water so they can water the flowers at graves, and as of the June 8 meeting, there is only one at the meter box that will be oper-

ational. He said to replace all of the water lines, it would be a discussion as to whether it comes from the Cemetery or Water Department budget.

Board of Selectmen Clerk Robert Button said the money should come out of the Cemetery enterprise fund.

Highway Superintendent Michael Olson was present at the meeting, and said all of the water lines in the cemetery are under the road, so they would have to rip up the road and then repave the entire cemetery.

A resident said the Cemetery Commission does not have the money for that.

The board also discussed the Complete Streets grant, which Olson said will be ready by their next meeting. The board said this grant is for projects like sidewalks, ramps and crosswalks.

Olson said it can only be utilized for downtown areas, where more people are walking, or in areas where there is a town hall or senior center. He said the grant does not include paving, but the town could apply for a federal grant if they want to pave.

Olson said part of this project will put crosswalks and more stop signs near the post office on Mechanic Street, along with signs near Depot Square. He said the grant is for \$500,000, but the estimated cost for the sidewalks on Mechanic Street, Pleasant Street, Depot Square and Cottage Street is over \$600,000.

Olson said the rest of the cost could come from Chapter 90 funds. He said next year's grant could be up to \$1 million.

Olson said the town currently has about \$670,000 in Chapter 90 funds, but

with various monies coming in, it will be above \$1 million soon.

He said some other roads being looked at for work include Young Road, Draper Road and West Sturbridge Road. He said Draper Road needs basins and piping, and Young Road needs more work, including surveying.

He said West Sturbridge Road doesn't need as much work.

Button said the Mass-Works program closed on June 3, but there is a new program for culverts open until August, which offers up to \$150,000 for design and up to \$1 million for installation. Olson said he was aware of it, and they are looking at a culvert on Podunk Road.

Following this discussion, the board entered into executive session to discuss pending litigation.

Lake Wickaboag 'Lights Up' for nation's 250th

WEST BROOKFIELD – To celebrate our nation's 250th birthday, the Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association is sponsoring a 4th of July weekend spectacular in the theme of "The Spirit of America – Light Up Lake Wickaboag."

Cash prizes will be earned by several, bragging rights will be claimed by many, and lots of fun will be had by all.

Starting on Friday, July 3, the weekend will include displays of patriotic and themed docks, boats and decorated cottages.

On Saturday, July 4, at approximately 6:30 p.m., a massive boat tie up center

lake is planned to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and sing the Star Spangled Banner. Following at 7 p.m., a full "Light Up Lake Wickaboag" parade will start at the Boat Club and continue cruising into the night.

If you can't get out on the lake in a boat, kayak or canoe, no worries. Pack your beach chairs and picnic baskets or relax on a floatie within the town beach area.

Whether an active participant or spectator, you won't want to miss it. For more details, check the LWPA Facebook page, visit lake-wickaboag.com, or email LWPA01585@gmail.com.

PTO hosts summer 5K and family festival on June 20

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Elementary School PTO is hosting a summer 5K and family festival on Saturday, June 20.

The event will include a 5K, a fun run for kids, family games and activities, food trucks, vendors and more.

The PTO is looking for sponsors to help make this event memorable for everyone. In return, sponso-

logos will be placed on runner's T-shirts.

Sponsorship tiers include bronze \$100, silver \$200, gold \$300, diamond \$1,000. If you are interested in being a sponsor or a runner please email wbrookfieldpto@gmail.com

Proceeds of the 5k event go to the nonprofit WBES PTO to fund a variety of student events throughout the year.

Sturbridge to celebrate America250

Parade and festival to be held on June 27

STURBRIDGE – The Town of Sturbridge will celebrate America250 on Saturday, June 27 with a parade and festival.

The parade steps off at 10:30 a.m. from the intersection of Stallion Hill and the OSV Access Road. Featured are Bob Briere as Grand Marshal, and Guest of Honor Virginia Jalbert, the town's oldest resident.

There are over 70 units participating – bands, floats by local groups and businesses, scouts, local youth sports teams, dance troupes, vintage vehicles, clowns, a tank, and so much more. Viewing will be along Route 20 and Route 131 starting at Saw Dust Coffee House and

ending at the Town Common.

Emcee Bill Emrich will have colorful play by play of the entrants.

At 1 p.m., the America250 Festival kicks off on the Town Common. Jenee Lacey will sing the National Anthem, followed by welcoming remarks by state Sen. Ryan Fattman and state Rep. Todd Smola, and readings from the Burgess Elementary School essay contest winners.

Also attending and reading her essay, which has been awarded second place in the National Essay Contest, is Burgess sixth grader, Elizabet Beaupre. The 215th Army Band of the Massachusetts Army National Guard will perform from 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Throughout the event, which lasts until 5 p.m.,

there will be various booths, activities and demonstrations. These include a militia encampment and military uniforms display, historical activities, a display of Model A cars, axe throwing, a bouncy house, yard games, a photo booth and food trucks from BT's Smokehouse, Thai Place, Chic-fil-a and Suzy Q's Ice Cream.

The Publick House and Oakholm Brewery will be serving beer, and Deep Roots Distillery will serve lemonade and cocktails. At 2:30 p.m. there will be a cherry-pie-eating contest, followed by a ceremonial cake cutting and serving of a special America250 cake created by the Publick House.

From 2:30-3:30 p.m. interpreters will be stationed in the Old Burial Ground

to engage visitors in a self-guided tour and discuss the Revolutionary War veterans buried there.

At 3:30 p.m., performers from Mass Motion Dance Academy will dance to patriotic music.

Parking around the Common will be available for handicap and accessible needs. There will be parking available behind the Town Hall, in the parking lot off Haynes Street, and at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 345 Main St. Additional parking is available at the Burgess Elementary School and the Sturbridge Host Hotel, with shuttle buses providing service to and from the Common starting at approximately 12:30 p.m.

Follow traffic signs for road closures and traffic shifts due to the parade.

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

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

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

Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661.**

29th annual Relay for Life June 20

SOUTHBRIDGE – The 29th Annual Relay For Life of Southern Worcester County is taking place Saturday, June 20 at McMahon Field, 25 Cole Avenue from 9 a.m.-9:30 p.m.

Please join to celebrate cancer survivors and give thanks to caregivers. Walk a lap or two, participate in plant bingo or the one pound auction. Take your chance on a raffle or two.

Come get a bite from ChiChiWow or something sweet from Glazed Gourmet Bakery.

For more information, visit RelayForLife.org/SW or call 1-800-227-2345.

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USDA INSP. STOREMADE BONELESS KOREAN BBQ MARINATED PORK BUTT STRIPS..... \$3.35 lb	USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN COOKED SHRIMP 16/20 COUNT 1 LB..... \$8.88 lb	
USDA INSP. DEUTSCHMACHER NATURAL CASING HOT DOGS 2 1/2 LB BOX \$11.99 ea		

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TDD (800)439-2379

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- community -

Spaghetti dinner fundraiser

BROOKFIELD – The Brookfield Congregational Church, 8 Common St., will host a spaghetti dinner fundraiser on Friday, June 20 from 5:30-7 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

The menu includes spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread, beverage, side salad and dessert. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children or \$30 for a family of three or more.

Proceeds from the fundraiser go to BCC Teen's Mission Trip. For more information, contact Harriet LaCasse at 508-347-3464 or the church office (Monday, Wednesday or Friday) at 508-867-6262.

Church hosts solstice concert on June 20

WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, 36 North Main St., will host a concert on Saturday, June 20 at 7 p.m., preceded by a social hour from 6-7 p.m.

"Solstice Sing for Peace and Justice - Songs to Cultivate Community, Compassion, and Commitment" will feature local singing group, A Chorus for These Times, directed by Nym Cooke with instrumentalists and guest artist Leslie Sweetnam.

All are welcome and snacks will be served.

There is no admission charge but donations will be accepted to support Abby's House, Worcester's largest provider of affordable housing specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children.

For more information, call the church at 508-867-7078, or contact Karen Murphy (kmurphy718@charter.net) or Nym Cooke (nym-cooke@gmail.com).

Church hosts annual chicken BBQ

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 133 North Main St., will host its annual chicken BBQ on Saturday, June 20 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

The meal includes a ½ chicken, baked potato, cole slaw, roll, drink and fresh strawberry shortcake. Take-out or eat in.

Tickets are \$20 per person and will be sold at the door or they can be reserved by calling Sandi at 508-867-3272 or Mary at 508-662-8174.



Quaboag Regional Middle High School eighth grade students viewed the Quabbin Reservoir up close.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Remembering the Lost Towns of the Quabbin

WARREN – Quaboag Regional Middle High School eighth graders recently spent a day exploring the Quabbin Reservoir to culminate their interdisciplinary study on the history and impact of the creation of the reservoir.

In their civics class with their teacher, Joe Salvatore, students learned the history and timeline of the reservoir, along with mapping the four "lost towns" and the area of the protected watershed today.

Students also wrote an essay on whether or not the creation of the Quabbin was justified and had to cite evidence to support their claim. Civic content such as the 5th Amendment, Civic Virtue, and the common good were applied to the reasons why the Quabbin was justified.

Students in their English class with teacher Nick Barrett examined letters and poetry about the Quabbin Reservoir to see the emotional cost the creation of the Quabbin had on those that had to vacate their homes and could cite these documents as reasons the Quabbin Reservoir was not



Quaboag students are shown next to the foundation of the Power's House.

justified. The majority of students supported the claim that Quabbin was justified because the people were compensated for their property and the common good of the two million in Boston outweighed the 2,000 in the four towns.

Although the students don't benefit from drinking the Quabbin water, they acknowledged they enjoy visiting and hiking in the Quabbin and appreciate

the "accidental wilderness" that was created. Maintaining a healthy forest in the watershed is the natural filtration system that protects the clean water supply for Boston.

On the field trip to the Quabbin the students rotated through three stations. At the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitors Center, Director of Interpreted Services, Maria Beiter-Tucker led the students through a short film, the museum, and

a scavenger hunt.

Another station had the students hike up Webster Road to view the ruins of the "Power's House" and then down Hank's Meadow to the water's edge. The third stop was to complete the Swift River Trail Hike to view the emergence of the Swift River below the Windsor Dam and then to run up the grassy hill of the dam, and walk back across the top.

All students then met at

the Quabbin Tower for a picnic lunch before returning to school, tired after walking over four miles but with fun memories learning about the Quabbin Reservoir.

The field trip to the Quabbin Reservoir was made possible through the generous donation of the Quaboag administration and the Friends of the Quabbin to cover the cost of bussing to make this a free experience for 100 Quaboag eighth graders.

Sturbridge kicks off inaugural Kids Market on Aug. 30

STURBRIDGE – The Town of Sturbridge and the Sturbridge Recreation Department under Recreation Director Andrew St. George is excited to introduce the very first Sturbridge Kids Market to take place on Sunday, Aug. 30 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on the Town Common.

Though separate from the Farmers' Market, the event will take place during the Market to ensure a broad audience for these creative young-resident businesses.

St. George describes this as a fun, hands-on opportunity for young entrepreneurs to launch their own small businesses.

He added that the goal is, "Giving participating children the opportunity to experience a real market environment while showcasing their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit to the community."

The program is open to children entering grades three-eight this fall and participants will create and

market their own products, learn basic business and financial skills, and interact with customers in a real market environment. St. George said that the goal is to build confidence and entrepreneurship skills as well as experience what it's like to run a business.

Types of businesses that may be represented are those that produce handmade crafts, artwork, jewelry, games, or decorations. Some may showcase inventions or services. St. George

said that the goal of the program is to encourage imagination, responsibility, problem solving, and community involvement in a supportive and exciting environment.

Participation is limited to 10 vendors for the first year, and applications will be reviewed to help ensure a diverse and balanced market featuring a variety of products and ideas.

Applications are accepted through June 18, with selected participants notified by July 1.

Town Administrator Robin Grimm said, "This is a great opportunity for our young residents to become engaged in the community and learn valuable business skills. I am thankful to our Recreation Department as well as the Recreation Board for this creative initiative."

Director St. George presented this to the Sturbridge Selectboard at a recent meeting where it garnered praise from all of the members.

NOTICE

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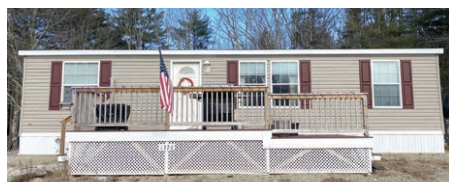
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- opinion -



Strawberry culture 101

Melissa, who gardens in Belchertown asked this question of the Garden Lady.

"It's always so hard to install strawberry plants and pinch off the flowers the first year. Do you really have to? It would be so wonderful to enjoy some fruit."

I completely understand where you are coming from! Last year I was in the same boat. This year, the fruit is coming in and boy, am I enjoying it!

Removing the flowers redirects the plant's energy away from reproducing to forming strong roots and more shoots, so yes, it recommended practice.

I thought you might find this column, one of my very first, helpful. It contains lots of good tips for strawberry culture.

I have fond memories of strawberry picking. One of the first days of summer vacation was always spent at a local pick-your-own farm with my mom, filling boxes with luscious red berries.

Like any kid I did my share of sampling out there in the rows, and my taste buds never forgot the intense sweetness found only in fresh picked fruit. Now that I have my own space to garden I am able to go strawberry picking in my backyard.

With a lot of patience and a little labor, so can you!

My bareroot strawberry plants arrived by mail in early spring. I had prepared the sunny space intended for them ahead of time, by eradicating all weeds and tilling in two-inches of finished compost and some slow release organic fertilizer.

Lime wasn't necessary, as strawberries prefer a slightly acidic soil.

The plants looked a bit limp from their trip so the roots were soaked in water for an hour to rehydrate them prior to planting. I set the crown of the plant right at soil level with the roots spread over a small mound of soil in the hole.

Keeping in mind that strawberries send out runners (daughter plants), I set my plants in a single row roughly two-feet apart with three feet between the rows. This wide spacing allowed for four daughters to be positioned four-five inches apart from mom and each other.

Some gardeners prefer to pinch away all runners, and nourish only the original mother plant. Initial yields may be higher, but without replacement plants the patch will expire sooner.

All blossoms, although it is tempting to leave them, must be removed the first season so that energy will be spent on building strong roots.

I set up a soaker hose among the plants to be sure that they would continue to grow with gusto

during droughty spells. If you choose to do the same, be sure to position runners *under* the hose, otherwise removing it for winter storage may be a difficult and tangled task.

A mulch of chopped leaves conserves soil moisture and prevents weeds from sprouting. Evergreen boughs laid over the row after the ground has frozen lessens temperature extremes, preventing the plants from being heaved out of the ground during winter freeze/thaw cycles.

Anticipation begins to build in the spring of the second season. It is only a matter of time before the plants will be loaded with ripe berries.

As new growth emerges remove the protective boughs. Pull stray weeds and reapply mulch. If frost threatens during blossoming cover the plants with spun poly floating row covers or old bed sheets.

Keep up with watering. Lightweight netting works well to deter birds, while slugs can be captured in shallow containers filled with beer and buried at ground level. Remove dead slugs and top off the beer nightly.

June-bearing strawberries bear fruit for two-three weeks. Harvest when the berries are bright red; if fruit is picked unripe it may turn red, but flavor will be sacrificed.

The season can be extended a bit by growing early, mid and late season varieties, or by growing day-neutral types which bear smaller amounts of fruit over a longer period, from June-October.

Nourse Farms (noursefarms.com) of South Deerfield is an excellent local source for strawberry plants.

After fruiting is complete mow down the plants with a push mower. I had to cross reference a few advice books before I had the courage to do this, but it surely did wonders to renovate the bed.

Rake away the mowed leaves, thin runners that are too close, and remove the oldest plants. Top-dress with compost and a sprinkling of fertilizer before re-mulching.

Although labor intensive, strawberries are worth the work. Managing a strawberry patch in this manner will likely keep it productive for five years. Imagine, your own flavorful memories!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 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.



Indigo bunting

A reader emailed she saw an indigo bunting at her feeder.

The indigo bunting is sometimes called the "blue canary."

However, the indigo bunting like all blue colored birds, lack blue pigment. Their color comes instead from microscopic structures in the feathers that refract and reflect blue light, much like the airborne particles that cause the sky to look blue.

Bunting plumage contains the pigment melanin, whose dull brown-black hue is seen when holding a blue feather up so the light comes from behind it, instead of toward it.

The bunting is sparrow size and about 4.7-5.5 inches long. The adult male Indigo Bunting is dark blue in the spring and summer. Females are brown, usually with fine streaks on the chest and a blue tinge on the tail. A one-year-old male in summer may be blue with a white belly.

Males are often seen singing from a perch in a tall tree. For years, a male indigo bunting sang from a dead limb on a tall tree. Rarely, I spotted the female usually in a brushy area.

They inhabit brushy pastures and bushy wood edges. For nesting, the indigo bunting favors roadsides, old fields growing up to bushes, edges of woodlands and other edge habitats such as along rights-of-way for

power lines or railroads.

The male indigo bunting establishes territory in the spring and defends it with song. A male may have more than one mate at a time living on his territory.

The nest site is usually one to three feet above ground, rarely up to 30 feet or more, in dense shrub or low trees.

The female lays three to four white to bluish-white eggs with brown or purple spot. Females incubate the eggs and feed the young.

Males will help feed young when they are nearly old enough to fly. Young usually leave nest 9-12 days after hatching.

The male sometimes takes over feeding of fledged young while the female begins second nesting attempt as she has two broods per year.

Indigo buntings forage at all levels from the ground up into shrubs and trees. They take insects from leaves, seeds from the ground or stems and berries from shrubs.

They eat mostly seeds and insects. In breeding season, the indigo bunting feeds mainly on insects and spiders and also some seeds and berries.

Young in the nest are fed mostly insects at first. In winter, they eat many seeds and also some insects.

Indigo buntings migrate at night, using the stars for guidance.

The oldest recorded wild indigo bunting was a male and at least 13 years, 3 months old when he was recaptured and rereleased during banding operations in Ohio in 2013.

Other birds

Besides seeing an indigo bunting, the reader also has several Baltimore orioles, rose breasted grosbeaks and goldfinches.

She stated, "Around the

corner at the Brook Road pond in West Warren, there was a lone swan. There was a lone swan there for a couple years about six years ago and it made me wonder if it was the same one."

Pileated woodpecker

I received another email on June 6 from a Belchertown resident.

She stated, "My husband and I witnessed a beautiful pileated woodpecker mating ritual in our backyard this morning.... They jumped around the tree on opposite sides going around several times before then jumping to other trees moving farther back into the woods during the process."

She stated, "After looking them up, I realized that I have heard their calls and rapid pecking sounds in my backyard for the past two years, but never saw them until now. What a joy to watch and video. They are beautiful birds."

She also stated her home has semi dense woods immediately behind that is a haven for several bird species, robins, yellow finch, bluebirds and blue jays. The property also borders some wetlands that attract a variety of species from time to time, including hawks, owls and ducks.

Mute swans

My brother, who lives in Sutton, has a pond bordering his property. For several years, a pair of mute swans have raised their family on the pond. They are back this year.

Bluebirds

I often see a pair of bluebirds in my yard. After seeing them, I put out dried mealworms for them. I don't feed the birds in summer because of the black bears. Hopefully, bears are not interested in a few mealworms and the birds will eat the mealworms before the bear.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edown-er@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

- letter to editor -

Spencer Rescue Squad ceases operations

Dear residents of Spencer,

With heartfelt appreciation, the board of directors of the Spencer Rescue Squad wishes to inform you that the Spencer Rescue Squad will cease operations on June 30 at midnight.

Our annual subscription drive and all benefits also expire on that date.

We are grateful that the

Spencer Rescue Squad has been able to donate all of its assets to the Town of Spencer, including the building, ambulances and equipment. Most importantly, ambulance service will continue through the Town of Spencer Fire Department.

For the past 68 years, the Spencer Rescue Squad has been honored to serve this community. We sin-

cerely thank our employees, volunteers, board members and residents for their steady support, generosity and trust over the years.

We hope you will continue to support your town EMS service in the years ahead.

With gratitude,
Board of Directors
Spencer Rescue Squad

Lasting impressions...



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

QUABOAG CURRENT

We Want to Hear From You

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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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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

Living history



Steve Raff of the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry let Rhys feel the weight of the 1861 Springfield rifled musket.



Abigail looked down the barrel of the rifled musket.

LIVING HISTORY FROM PAGE 1

their life stories completely from memory. The students created posters and answered questions, sharing a wealth of information they learned through their research for this class project.

Event organizer and Cultural Council member Jeanne Lytle, said she looks forward to attending the school event each year, and that she invited the students to perform again during Saturday's event.

Portraying Crispus Attucks was Rhys, who noted that Attucks was the first person to die during the Boston Massacre in 1770; and considered the first casualty of the Revolutionary War.

Eli took on the role of Benjamin Franklin, and shared Franklin's discovery that dark-colored fabric absorbed light and white reflected it. He said Franklin proved this by placing dark and light fabric on the snow, and comparing how much the snow melted underneath the fabric.

"The dark colors sank and the light colors stayed up at top," Eli said.

Bennett portrayed the second president of the U.S., John Adams, husband of Abigail Adams and father of the sixth president, John Quincy Adams. Bennett said Adams lived to 90 years old, and that he had six children with his wife, four of which survived to adulthood.

Phillis Wheatley was portrayed by Abigail, who noted that Wheatley's full name was Phillis Wheatley Peters, and that she only lived until age 31.

Cora took on the role of Susan B. Anthony, who got her first job as a teacher at the age of 17 in Philadelphia at a Quaker boarding



Re-enactors with the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry talked about the Civil War.

school. Jason portrayed 35th U.S. President John F. Kennedy. He said many people didn't know that Kennedy survived a case of scarlet fever as a child.

Across the common, the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry set up camp to replicate life during the Civil War.

Re-enactor Steve Raff said the 15th Massachusetts regiment was made up of various companies, including Company F of Brookfield.

The Sergeant Major for the regiment hailed from North Brookfield, Francis A. Walker, who was just 21 years old at the start of his leadership. He served until Aug. 25, 1864 when he was taken prisoner, and was repatriated in January of 1865.

Most of the men who joined the infantry served for three years, sometimes opting to continue their

service with other regiments.

Raff said many of the infantrymen were leaving home for the first time, with the average age being 19.

"They called going to war, going to see the elephant," he said.

These men were also joined by about 400 women, who disguised themselves as men to join the efforts to protect the Union.

Raff said Company F received basic training in Worcester, and that the surviving members of that company continued to meet each year for a reunion at a hotel in the city, up until the last member passed away in the early 1900s.

Re-enactor Deborah Martin, known as "Private Auggie" portrayed her relative Augustus Potter, who was part of Company F and lived in West Brookfield. Joining her was her dog, Henry, named after Potter's brother.

The re-enactors said that all of the infantrymen had to be right-handed, due to the mechanisms on the muskets, and working in tight formation with each other.



Brookfield Elementary School students learned about life in the infantry during the Civil War.



Jason looked over the 1861 Springfield rifled musket held by re-enactor Steve Raff.

The benefit of sanitation was also somewhat discovered on the battlefield, when soldiers who had their wounds stitched up using boiled horsehair had a lower infection rate than those whose wounds were stitched with thread. The boiling was intended to soften the

horsehair, but it also helped to sterilize it.

More than half of those who fought in the Civil War died from disease or infection rather than battle wounds.

Of the over 1,000 men in the 15th Massachusetts regiment, only 75 returned

home by train. Some lost their lives, others were taken prisoner, and more joined other regiments in order to keep fighting.

"They were fighting for the Union," Raff said. "They were fighting for an ideal...they fought and died for a belief."



Abigail posed for a photo with Henry the dog.



Saturday, June 20th
7pm-10pm

Caboodle

EVERY FRIDAY
Karaoke

EVERY WEDNESDAY
Wise Guys
MUSICAL BINGO
7:30-9pm

Upcoming
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7pm-10pm
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LUCK OF THE DRAW
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- community -



Swampdog Farm offered native plants.

FARMERS MARKET
FROM PAGE 1

portraits and makes earrings out of gemstones and clay. This day, she had lovely greeting cards.

New to the market this year is Stillmans Farm from up in New Braintree. Stillmans is part of the local Stillman clan. Still Life Farm, a fixture at the Winter Market is related. The table this Wednesday was well stocked with veggies, enough to remind us of the relatives.

Next was Gail and Autumn Leaf Farm with a variety of mushrooms, but also microgreens and eggs from Golden Comet Chickens.

A new and interesting presence at the market was Lisa McIntosh and Swampdog Farm. She brought native plants you can transplant to your own garden.

If you like baked goods, Sweet Treats Bakery in West Brookfield might be for you. They came with a variety of goods from cookies to muffins and brownies and much more.

Four Acre Farm is not just four acres but is also rented land where healthy grass-fed beef is raised by Jason and Cindy.

Interested in boosting your immune system? Jean Novia's Nonna's Kitchen has antioxidants and vitamins to help as well as granolas and energy bars.

At the end of the line of vendors on the North Main side was Monica, founder of Dreamwork Natural Soaps & Cosmetics. According to Monica, "What started as a way to protect my own family from harsh chemicals in store-bought soaps has grown into something I'm deeply proud of. Every product I make combines my love of science and nature to create skincare that's pure, effective, and gentle for everyone."

Crossing over to the other side of the market, there is Brad, a man who takes a coin and changes it into a ring. It still has the minted imprint visible, but you can wear it.

Now there is a way to beat inflation.

There are a couple of lads out of Ware we keep an eye as they are a mischie-

vous duo.

The first fellow is The Chairman of The Board. No, not Frank Sinatra, but woodworking artisan, Wayne Boulette, known for his cutting boards and other examples of craftsmanship.

Wayne is a dog lover and has a couple of poodles at home, and part of the chairman's profits go to support the ASPCA.

The other wood guy from the next town over is Bernie Wilson of B&D Enterprises. He is known for making pens out of recycled pallets, because he is "too cheap to buy wood." But has more recently, used the American Chestnut wood from the rehabbing of the covered bridge between Ware and Hardwick.

Back at her usual spot is Joy Hinton, entrepreneur of Joy of Beans Coffee with beans from all over the world. Joy shared news of an event she is holding on Saturday, June 20.

Last year, Joy and Rebecca Fay, of West Brookfield Art & Frame held a Summer Solstice celebration in front of their shops. It was a great time so come to 10 and 12 East Main streets in West Brookfield around 5 p.m.

After the Farmers Market, there are the concerts on the common. If you want to enjoy a picnic on the common at the event Joy will have food boxes available.

Linda Fuchs is back with her Flourish Farm with lovely starter plants and great microgreens coming.

After Flourish is the Brookfields celebrated beekeeper, Donald Grimes. If you like honey and beeswax products, Donald's your man.

Bucha Bros, LLC came to the recent Winter Market and is here this summer. Representing the team is Ryan Laurie making their Kombucha, fermented tea beverage known for its health benefits. The Bros are bringing new flavors for spring, Jun Tea, Blueberry Lemon and Cardamom Pear.

Finally, there is Thompson's Maple Farm, back again with Maple Syrup and products as well as wonderful ice cream.

So, we have summer back with us and one of its wonderfully pleasant aspects, a



Stillmans Farm of New Braintree attended the summer market.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPHY



Jean Novia of Nonna's Kitchen.



Bernie Wilson is shown with his handiwork.



Sweet Treats Bakery had cookies, muffins, brownies and more.



Artist Susan Linnéa Kallander.

town and region summer farmers' market. This year, the variety of vendors augurs well for the season, all the way until fall.

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Monica of Dreamwork Natural Soaps & Cosmetics.

SPORTS

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SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

Warriors able to get by Orioles

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

ISKDALE – Because of the MIAA's power ranking system, athletic directors are always looking to schedule the best non-league opponents for their teams.

Belchertown High School Athletic Director Kevin McNeill and Tantasqua Regional Athletic Director Marcus Backlin were able to schedule a non-league girls basketball game.

The first ever meeting on the hardwood between the two squads was a very entertaining affair from start to finish.

The four freshmen players listed on the Tantasqua varsity roster combined

to score 43 points which helped the Lady Warriors secure a 58-53 home victory over the Belchertown Lady Orioles, last Tuesday night.

"Belchertown is a very good basketball team and they're well coached," said Tantasqua head coach Andy Haley. "Marcus always does a very good job of finding different opponents for us to play against. It was also nice playing a solid non-league opponent before beginning our league schedule."

Belchertown is the only Western Mass. opponent listed on Tantasqua's regular season schedule.

The Lady Orioles posted a 56-24 victory at Quaboag Regional in their final game of 2025.

Belchertown and Tanta-

squa are both young teams this year with only two seniors. They're trying to qualify for the Division 3 state tournament.

Freshman Myah Lewis and Teagan Baker led Tantasqua with 12 points apiece. The Lady Warriors' other two freshmen are Ellie Barnes (10 points), and Milayna Bousquet (9 points).

"I thought our four freshmen took a step forward in tonight's game," Haley said. "The older players are doing a very good job of being leaders. It's a close knit team."

Sophia Ezzo, who's one of the Tantasqua seniors, netted six of her 10 points after halftime.

Junior Tessa Sheldon also scored five points in

the second half.

The five-point victory improved the Lady Warriors overall record to 5-2, while the Lady Orioles had a 3-3 record.

"Both teams played well and it was a fun game tonight," said Belchertown head coach Jason Woodcock. "I would rather lose a game against a very good team than beat a weaker opponent by 30 points."

The Lady Orioles were outbounded by the Lady Warriors.

"My players played very hard, but we were outbounded which was the difference maker," Woodcock said. "They're not much taller than us, but they were a little more physical and

See ORIOLES PAGE 8



Cassandra Hykiel tries to cut to the hoop.

Indians fall at home to Monson

NORTH BROOKFIELD – In a matchup between independent opponents, Monson High School boys basketball defeated North Brookfield 72-50. Monson led throughout the matchup, taking advantage of good ball movement and some good shooting early.

The Mustangs were led by Austin Meacham with 33 points, while Jake Beaupre had 17 points. Brady Ronaldson added 10 points.

Kris Ortiz works around a pair of Monson guards.



Ryan Roy looks to pass out of trouble.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Quinn Reilly gets ready to shoot.



Brody Traska inboundes a pass.



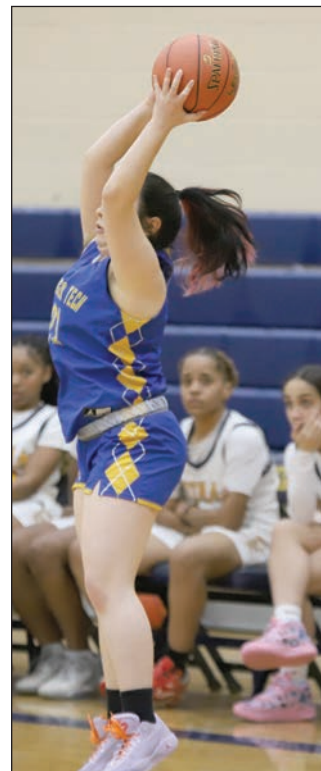
Evan Roy spins a pass around the perimeter.

Pioneers fall to Putnam Voke

SPRINGFIELD – Last Friday evening, Pathfinder Tech girls basketball suffered a power outage late in the game, falling to host Putnam 52-39.

The Pioneers managed just four points in the final quarter, making a big difference in the result. Putnam was led by Addison Doktor, who scored 25 points to lead the Pioneers in the matchup. Megan Clark added eight points.

Pathfinder would fall to 2-3 on the season.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Jinx Ripley catches a high pass



Addison Doktor goes for the short jump shot.



Taylor Allen heads down the court.

Thunderbirds stunned by loss to Phantoms

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (13-15-4-2) were snakebitten by a three-goal third period rally as the Lehigh Valley Phantoms (19-11-2-2) came away with a 3-2 win on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the Mass-Mutual Center on Indians Throwback Night.

Entering the game having allowed only two total goals in their prior three victories, the Phantoms and their netminder, Carson Bjarnason, made it clear goals would not come easily for the T-Birds, as the rookie backstop turned away all 10 first period attempts from the home side.

At the other end of the

rink, Georgi Romanov had a relatively quiet first period, making all seven saves asked of him in the Springfield crease. Neither team could connect on a power play chance, and each goalie came up with a timely save off an odd-man attack, with Romanov stoning a Phil Tomasino 2-on-1 bid and Bjarnason rejecting a Juraj Pekarcik breakaway.

The T-Birds' power play wasted little time getting to the lead in the opening minute of the second, as Calle Rosen gathered a pass from Matthew Peca at the top of the left circle and picked the top corner over Bjarnason's glove to make it a 1-0 Springfield

See T-BIRDS PAGE 8

Throwback jerseys help Railers grab win over Florida

WORCESTER – The IceCats have been gone from these parts for more than 20 years but they keep winning anyway.

They kept their Railers victory streak alive Saturday night in the most compelling fashion possible, as the home team won one of the most dramatic victories in team history as they wore Cats uniforms.

Down, 2-0, to the powerful Florida Everblades with a little more than five minutes to go in the third period, Worcester came back to make it 2-2 and send things into overtime. For the fourth time this season, the Railers came away with the OT victory.

Max Dorrington scored the winner at 4:23 with Worcester on a power play.

He tipped home a shot by Jesse Pulkkinen, who scored the Railers first goal of the game. It was the first professional goal of his North America career.

With the crowd of 8,025 roaring for most of the night, and with Worcester's Parker Gahagen and Florida's Cam Johnson both playing superbly in net, the building had a playoff atmosphere.

The Railers have never lost a game in front of a home crowd larger than 8,000. They are 8-0-0 in those games.

Pulkkinen got Worcester's first goal at 14:36 of the third period on a sizzling slap shot from 55

See RAILERS PAGE 8



Megan Clark crosses midcourt with the ball.



Ciara Green tries to power through Putnam's defense.

- community -

Workshop13 seeks contributions for community art project

WARE – Workshop13 invites community members of all ages and abilities to help create a large-scale modern Lady Liberty puppet to delight the crowds at Ware’s celebration parade for the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Revolution.

Your artwork will be incorporated into Lady Liberty’s flowing robes, bringing together public art, storytelling and community participation.

The deadline to participate is July 1.

Use 8 ½ inch x 11 inch paper or fabric to draw, paint, write a message, poem, pattern, or artwork of inspiration and hope for the future. Your artwork will become part of Lady Liberty’s robe — a colorful quilt of hopes, dreams and community stories. Artwork can be dropped off in person in

the dropbox outside Workshop13’s main building at 13 Church St. You can include your name, age, and email on the back of your piece or submit anonymously.

You can also submit your work by emailing info@workshop13.org with the subject line: Lady Liberty.

Workshop13 is also offering several free workshops related to this project. For adults, there will be a

special community art gathering on June 24 from 6-8 p.m. facilitated by Megan McDonough.

For all ages, Elizabeth Buck will be leading three family-friendly workshops on June 23, 24, and 25 from 10 a.m.-noon. On the June 23, people can drop in to dye, paint, print, or draw on a fabric patch for Lady Liberty’s robes. On the June 24, participants will craft a

unique crown that reflects their personality, creativity, and community pride.

They will be invited to join Workshop13 in the parade as one of the shining stars on our celebratory flags.

And on June 25, participants can craft a personalized percussion instrument a be invited to march with Workshop13 in the parade as part of the vibrant drum

circle that will lead the way for the Lady Liberty puppet.

About Workshop13

Workshop13 is a dynamic center where arts, culture, and community converge—expanding access to the arts and nurturing creativity and self-expression in our rural region.

For more information visit workshop13.org, or call 413-277-6072.

T-BIRDS FROM PAGE 7

lead just 52 seconds into the frame.

That same man-up unit added to their tally at 16:53 on a gorgeous three-man passing play, as Alek Kaskimaki slid a pass to Chris Wagner at the left post. From there, Wagner stuffed a perfect between-the-leg pass over to Matt Luff, who fired home his

team-leading 12th goal to make it a 2-0 game into the intermission.

The third period began at 4-on-4, and the Phantoms finally got on the board as Lane Pederson curled to the middle of the ice before snapping a perfect shot upstairs over Romanov at the 27-second mark, cutting the Springfield lead to 2-1. On a power play just 2:40 later,

Christian Kyrou dissected the T-Birds’ defense and chipped a forehand over Romanov’s glove, bringing Lehigh to a rapid tie, 2-2.

The 2-2 tie made it all the way to the game’s final seconds, but a bad-angle shot from Anthony Richard at the bottom of the left circle somehow found its way home with 11.9 remaining, and Lehigh Valley escaped with the victory.

RAILERS FROM PAGE 8

feet. Ryan Miotto made it 2-2 at 17:00 as he tipped a shot by Michael Suda.

After Friday night’s defeat, Worcester coach Nick Tuzzolino compared coming back from a two-goal deficit to climbing two mountains. His team could not do it Friday. Saturday night the Railers scaled Wachusett and Monadnock.

“I think we had a little bit better mindset,” Tuzzolino said, “more positivity on our bench, myself included, trying to keep to our game plan.”

The victory snapped a three-game losing streak during which Worcester was always playing from behind. Getting the game into overtime was just what the Railers wanted to do given how well they have played in the fourth

period.

Saturday’s triumph improved their overtime record to 4-1 this season. Worcester is 8-2 in its last 10 overtime games going back to last season.

There was no denying the energy in the DCU Center and both teams responded.

“If we’re ever gonna talk about being a post-season team,” Tuzzolino said, “and playing post-season hockey, that’s what we’ve got to get out of this. They’re a great team.”

Craig Needham and Reid Duke scored for Florida. Needham scored at 4:52 of the second period, one second after an Everblades power play ended. Duke made it 2-0 at 2:41 of the third.

The triumph was Worcester’s second-ever over Florida. The Railers are 2-6-0 all-time ver-

sus the Everblades. It was just the second time they have beaten Johnson in six games. One victory is in overtime, one in a shootout.

As was the case Friday the first period was scoreless, although Worcester had a 10-7 edge in shots on goal. The home team took a while to get going and created its best scoring chances in the final minutes.

Riley Piercy had a re-direct from just outside of the crease that Johnson turned aside at 18:11. Shortly after that Worcester had several fine chances that did not go in, but as the buzzer approached Anthony Callin had a good look from the left and some net to shoot at but missed to the far side.

It took the Railers a while to stop missing, and that set up a great finish.

ORIOLES FROM PAGE 7

wanted the ball a little bit more. We just kept giving them four or five chances to score.”

One of the three Belchertown sophomore starters is Gabriella Slovack, who led the way offensively with a career-high 17 points. She scored two field goals in each of the four quarters. She also made a free throw in the third quarter.

“Gabby played very well in tonight’s game,” Woodcock said. “We decided to spread the floor, and she scored most of her points by cutting to the basket.”

Belchertown’s other two starting sophomores are Aubrey Klingensmith, who scored eight of her 10 points in the first quarter before getting into foul trouble, and Kina Roy, who scored six of her eight points during the final minute of regulation.

“I took a chance leaving Aubrey in the game with two fouls in the first quarter,” Woodcock added. “She’s a smart basketball player, but she picked up a third foul and had to sit on the bench for rest of the first half. She scored eight quick points and had a hard time getting into a rhythm offensively again in the second half.”

Junior Morghan Litz also reached double digits for the Lady Orioles with 10 points.

Junior Aubrey McCain added five points.

Ezzo and Sheldon also picked up two personal fouls during the opening quarter.

“We always seem to be in foul trouble,” Haley said. “We just need to fine tune a few things.”

The score was tied four times and there were several lead changes during the first 16 minutes of the contest.

The game was tied for the first time at 11-11 before a Slovack lay-up and a Litz 3-pointer from the left corner gave the Lady Orioles a 16-11 advantage entering the second quarter.

With 3:55 remaining in the first half, Bousquet made a 3-pointer from the left corner giving the home team a slim 21-19 lead.

The Lady Warriors also held a two point lead with less than two minutes left before Roy hit a jumper in the lane and Slovack made another lay-up.

Belchertown also scored the first five points of the second half and held a 30-23 lead.

Tantasqua would then put together a 15-2 run during the final five minutes of the third quarter.

The duo of Barnes and Sheldon scored seven of those points. A put-back hoop from Ezzo increased the Lady Warriors lead to 38-32 at the end of the third quarter.

A Litz 3-pointer and an inside hoop by sophomore Cassidy MacLean (3 points) sliced the Lady Orioles deficit to 38-37 less than a minute into the final quarter.

A Sheldon fast-break lay-up and a Lewis inside hoop began the Lady Warriors 14-4 run.

Tantasqua built a 52-41 lead following an Ezzo lay-up with 2:30 left in regulation.

The Lady Warriors also led 56-45 with 42 seconds left before the Lady Orioles made one final comeback attempt.

While Roy was making a 3-pointer from the top of the key, Klingensmith was fouled. She made both foul shots, making the score 56-50 with 33.5 seconds left.

Another foul shot by Bousquet pushed the lead to seven points before Roy was fouled while attempting to make a three-point shot with 23.8 seconds remaining on the scoreboard clock. She sank all three free throws, but the Lady Orioles couldn’t get any closer than four points.

Unless the two teams face each other again in the Division 3 state tournament, Tantasqua will most likely be making a trip to the Belchertown High School gymnasium during the 2026-27 regular season.

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					59						60			

CLUES ACROSS

- Similar
- Have an ambitious plan or a lofty goal
- No (Scottish)
- ___ Aires, city
- Morning
- Senior’s son (abbr.)
- A notable achievement
- European nation
- Endings
- Puts into place
- Former
- Grenadier
- Sea patrol
- Algerian port
- Norwegian river
- Precipitation
- Sunscreen rating
- New York is one
- Patti Hearst’s

CLUES DOWN

- Administer a drug
- Holy places
- Contrary opinions
- Blood type
- Gags
- Micturating
- Silly
- A type of “cuff”
- Spanish be
- Austrian river
- Messenger
- Consume food
- California supermarket
- Electronic communication
- Cassia tree
- Written works

CLUES ACROSS

- captors
- Soft mineral with greasy feel
- Retired Brazilian footballer
- An Indian nursemaid
- Atomic #24
- Immobile
- Insignia of royalty
- Seeds from which chocolate is made
- Begin again
- Round root
- Beginning to end (alt. sp.)
- What newlyweds just said
- Empire State
- Give back
- College hoops tournament
- Unstable situations

CLUES DOWN

- Cool!
- Noteworthy 90s lawyer Kenneth
- One who was compensated
- National symbols
- Raising
- A type of talk
- Cloud
- Middle Eastern peoples
- Pouches
- 007’s creator
- A cut of meat
- Sports entertainment award
- Christine __, actress
- Relief organization (abbr.)
- Canadian province (abbr.)

N BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

The total for the second motion was \$1,153,952.

The third motion was to fund the salaries and expenses to operate the school department. The total for the motion was \$7,358,698, with about \$6.833 million of that being for the North Brookfield Public Schools.

The fourth motion of article three was for the salaries and expenses of the highway department, board of health, cemetery, council on aging, veterans, library, playground and Town Forest Park. The total for the fourth motion was \$1,214,655.

Fire Department oversight

Article 15 of the warrant was to change the oversight of the Fire Department to

be directed by the Board of Selectmen rather than a board of fire engineers, which would be terminated at the appointment of a fire chief by the selectmen.

The new structure would allow the fire chief to supervise the day-to-day operations of the department.

Selectman Peter Orsi said this was for updated leadership, and the article passed by majority.

Other financial articles

Articles 4 and 5 funded the salaries and expenses of the water and sewer departments respectively. The total for the water department was \$834,679. The total for the sewer department was \$1,384,509.

Article 13 was for the North Brookfield Emergen-

cy Squad contract, and a separate cost for Advanced Life Support, for a total of \$178,000.

Article 14 approved the town’s apportionment of Chapter 90 funds at \$532,141. Article 12 set the revolving funds for various boards and departments.

All other articles

Every other article on the town meeting warrant passed.

STM

There was a one article special town meeting prior to the annual town meeting, which approved the transfer of \$3,555 from free cash to the general fund transfer to satisfy school lunch program interest from a prior fiscal year.

EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of July 4th, there will be an **EARLY AD, PUBLIC NOTICES & CLASSIFIEDS DEADLINE**

To advertise, place your ad no later than **NOON**

Thursday, July 2

– Thank you!

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- community -

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH FROM PAGE 1

“overwhelmingly” in support of becoming Open and Affirming.

Showalter said the committee decided to create what they called a “Covenant of Welcome,” which is printed on the back of each week’s bulletin.

The covenant states, “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

Church member Terry Hall said the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield has always been welcoming to all people, and that the time felt right to adopt this designation.

Karen Murphy said many in the congregation have loved ones that are LGBTQ+, and they need a safe space to worship.

“We wanted folks from that community to feel safe,” Murphy said. “We want them to know they are more than welcome here.”

Murphy said this isn’t much of a change for the congregation, which has always welcomed everyone with open arms.

“The only difference is we now let people know... we don’t want them to be afraid to come here,” she said.

Hall said it “hurt some

of our souls” to know that people might think they weren’t welcome in a church, or that they had to change themselves to attend.

Angela Carville said, “Or even have to hide who they really are.”

Showalter said in his Bible studies, he did not see Jesus condemning homosexuality, adding that “the whole idea of retaliation seems very much against Christianity.”

Rev. Dr. Doug Williamson, the church’s minister, said he joined the congregation at the time its members were already working toward an Open and Affirming designation, and that it was one of the reasons he was drawn to serve here.

“I really wanted to be at a church that was Open and Affirming or moving in that direction,” he said.

Having been ordained in the United Methodist Church, Williamson said he really struggled when that denomination was not fully accepting of the LGBTQ+ community. Now since 2024, the UMC has allowed full inclusion.

“For me this was really personal,” Williamson said of the Open and Affirming designation.

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, created a symbol of a tree to represent its Open and Affirming designation.

now joins the almost 44% of UCC churches to receive the Open and Affirming designation, which began in the commonwealth in 2004 with the legal recognition of same-sex marriages.

Massachusetts was the first state to open marriage to same-sex couples.

Hall said becoming an Open and Affirming congregation was “the right

thing to do.”

“As Christians, our whole thing is to share God’s love and care for people,” she said. “We want people to know we do care for them and their family members.”

Williamson said the congregation has talked about finding new ways to live in the Covenant of Welcome, by sponsoring ongoing education and promoting in-

clusivity.

“We want to grow in the Covenant,” he said.

This includes renovating the front door of the church to be fully Americans with Disabilities Act accessible. The back entrance of the church is fully accessible now.

“We feel this is more welcoming to everyone,” Hall said.

Williamson said the door renovation is an “investment in inclusivity” and really important to everyone.

The church members will also be participating in the Rural Justice Network’s Small Town Pride event on Saturday, June 27 from noon-5 p.m. at O’Gara field, 63 Valley Road, Spencer.

Hall said they will hand out bags with information about the church and candy, and talk with anyone who is interested or has questions about the church, and “just be friendly faces talking to people.”

Hall said the Open and Affirming designation is a “whole mindset.”

“We welcome people of all types, all cultures, languages, disabilities, religions,” she said. “Nobody has to fit in a certain box.”

About the church

The First Congregation-

al Church of West Brookfield, UCC, is located at 36 North Main St. with worship services offered each Sunday at 10 a.m. All people are welcomed and encouraged to attend, no matter where they are in their faith journey.

The church also hosts AA meetings on Tuesday and Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m.

The church will be hosting a Summer Solstice Concert on Saturday, June 20 at 7 p.m., preceded by a social hour from 6-7 p.m.

“Solstice Sing for Peace and Justice - Songs to Cultivate Community, Compassion, and Commitment” will feature local singing group, A Chorus for These Times, directed by Nym Cooke with instrumentalists and guest artist Leslie Sweetnam.

All are welcome and snacks will be served.

There is no admission charge but donations will be accepted to support Abby’s House, Worcester’s largest provider of affordable housing specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children.

For more information, stop by a worship service, visit westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org, call 508-867-7078 or email fccwb-worship@gmail.com.



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- legals -

LEGAL NOTICE: TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, 18-25, as amended by Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2009, The Wetlands Protection Act, the West Brookfield Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **WEDNESDAY, July 1, 2026 at 6:00 pm** in the first floor meet-

ing room, West Brookfield Town Hall, 2 East Main Street.
6:00 – Public Hearing:
NOI – 207 Shoreline Drive – Dold – Demolition and Reconstruction of existing dwelling
NOI – 153 Wickaboag Valley Road – Continuation - East Quabbin Land Trust – Repair Farm Road and culverts with bridge
NOI – 380 West Main Street – Continuation - Raymakers Construction – Staging area
06/19/2026

- public safety -

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of June 8-15, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 17 building/property checks, 26 directed/area patrols, 10 radar assignments, one traffic control, four emergency 911 calls, eight citizen assists, three assist other agencies, two investigations, two safety hazards, one trespass, one scam and five motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, June 8

12:45 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled
11:29 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Utley Road, Negative Contact

Wednesday, June 10

5:15 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Brookfield Road, Patient Refusal
8:35 a.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled
10:37 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled

Thursday, June 11

8:27 a.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled
8:49 a.m. Safety Hazard, Hardwick Road, Removed Hazard

ard
10:50 p.m. 911 Safety Hazard, Gilbertville Road, Removed Hazard

Friday, June 12

12:41 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Brookfield Road, Patient Refusal
5:12 a.m. 911 Misdiagnosed, Dennis Whitney Road, Services Rendered
8:31 a.m. Scam, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled
2:23 p.m. Investigation, Wine Road, Officer Handled
2:55 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Memorial Drive, Services Rendered
3 p.m. Trespass, McEvoy Road, Officer Handled
5:21 p.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Services Rendered
6:06 p.m. Assist Citizen, Gilbertville Road, Officer Handled
6:34 p.m. Assist Citizen, Gilbertville Road, Services Rendered

Saturday, June 13

5:06 p.m. Investigation, Utley Road, Officer Handled
5:30 p.m. Assist Citizen, Gilbertville Road, Officer Handled
6:55 p.m. Assist Citizen, Davis Road, Spoken To
7:01 p.m. Assist Citizen, Pierce Road, Officer Handled

FOSC appoints Mackenzie as Artistic Director

HARDWICK – Friends of the Stone Church is investing in its celebrated concert program with the appointment of, soprano, educator and arts administrator, as Artistic Director.

Critically acclaimed as “a soprano of extraordinary agility and concentration” by the New York Times, Mackenzie has performed across the U.S. and is particularly known for her evocative chamber music performances. As a soloist she has collaborated with the Albany Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, American Symphony Orchestra and the Juilliard Percussion Ensemble, among others.

After over a decade of being a full-time freelance musician based primarily in New York, she and her husband now live in Worcester, and she serves as the Director of Events & Operations for Infinity Events Co., an event planning company with a focus on producing events for corporate and non-profit businesses.

Mackenzie has a large

network of colleagues in the northeast who are exceptional performers and educators in classical (and classical-adjacent) music and she is excited to bring her skills and contacts to FOSC and to work with the FOSC board to develop its concert programming.

“As a performer and producer whose training is rooted in the classical tradition, but who has had a career built on a love of contemporary classical music, I believe very strongly in bridging the gap between old and new,” said Mackenzie. “I want audiences to have the opportunity to experience something familiar – and something surprising.”

Of the Stone Church Cultural Center, she said, “The Stone Church’s strength as a venue is its ability to be both a formal and informal space. The combination of wonderful acoustics, excellent instruments, and a warm, inviting and creative local community make it a true gem of a place for musical

artists to share their work and to have fun doing it!”

FOSC continues its dual mission of preserving the iconic 1874 Stone Church and welcoming the community in through its open doors. Since its founding 11 years ago, one of the primary ways FOSC has engaged the community is through the presentation of high-quality music.

To continue the tradition of Friends of the Gilbertville Organ, established by founding board member the late Don Boothman, and to develop its own signature concert program, former FOSC director Mary Warbasse reached out to many talented musicians to create a distinctive concert series. Her success is reflected in the fact that musicians contact FOSC wanting to play at the Stone Church Cultural Center.

FOSC president, Judy Edington, and the entire board recognized that this was a program worth continuing and investing in. Warbasse is “delighted that

the program will continue with professional leadership.”

Mackenzie begins her part time position with FOSC immediately and will help complete and fill out the upcoming 2026/2027 concert season. The fall concerts will include Wild and Tended, a program of art songs from the 19th century to today, developed by and presented by Mackenzie and collaborator Matthew Jaskot from College of the Holy Cross.

Edington stated, “The board could not be more excited to begin this new relationship, and we look forward to watching how FOSC’s concert program will grow and evolve in the years ahead.”

FOSC is a charitable organization that relies on the generous support of time, talent and treasure of its community supporters. The Friends look forward to keeping the doors of the Stone Church Cultural Center wide open and welcoming in the community.

E BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

Finance Committee member Leo Fayard said creating a balanced budget this year was difficult, and they requested town departments to level fund their budgets. Fayard said the departments complied to the extent possible.

Fayard said one of the reasons for the difficulty was an increase in the school assessment, as the town faced a \$400,000 deficit once it came in. He said the town does not blame the school though, because they looked at grants and creative solutions, and have paid for items the town should have paid for in the past to reduce the assessment to East Brookfield.

Fayard said the school’s operating budget increased, and the budget increase had nothing to do with renovations at David Prouty High School.

Fayard also said state and local revenue has not kept pace with rising costs, and the town used \$225,000 in one time funds to balance the fiscal year 2027 budget, and the process for the FY 28 budget is planned to start in the fall, where the town will look for efficiencies and reductions where possible.

He said the town would hold public meetings if there is still a deficit, in case there is a need for an override next year.

Two residents had questions about the overall budget, with one asking why veteran’s benefits have been reduced from \$30,000 to \$10,000. Select Board Chair Andrew Lynch said the item has not been expended much.

Another resident asked about street lighting and what that covers. Lynch said it covers street lights, and there is an estimate done by National Grid, and all lights

in use have been deemed necessary by the chief of police.

School budget

Voters approved article 15 for the FY 27 assessment from the Spencer-East Brookfield School District for a total of \$3,400,548. The town will raise and appropriate \$3,164,830, transfer \$112,859 from the elementary stabilization account, and transfer \$122,859 from free cash.

Bylaw changes

Voters approved article 29, which was to exempt municipal grounds or parking areas as prohibited areas for firearms. This does not exempt any schools.

Article 30 amended the town’s general bylaws to make the tree warden an appointed position rather than an elected one.

Article 31 amended the general bylaws to restrict camping on public or private

grounds without permission from the property owner or town, with a fine of \$50 for violation. One resident asked about homeless people.

Police Chief Joseph Lazarick said the intention of this bylaw is not to arrest people, but to give the town and property owners the ability to move people along. Another resident said the fine was too small, and should have been \$250. Lazarick said people can be arrested if they refuse to leave.

Article 33 imposed a local meals tax of 0.75% “of the gross receipts of the vendor from the sale of restaurant meals.”

Other articles

All other articles on the town meeting warrant passed, and articles 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 33 were passed over.

Concerts on the Common scheduled announced

NORTH BROOKFIELD – North Brookfield Parks and Recreation, in conjunction with North Brookfield Cultural Council, will be hosting Concerts on the Common this summer season.

A Mass Cultural Council grant is making these concerts possible for all residents to enjoy.

Dates and bands include June 20 from 6-8 p.m. – Ravenwood, an easy listening blue grass band; July 25 from 6-8 p.m. – Sue Lyons, an acoustical guitar player and vocalist; Aug. 15 from 6-8 p.m. – Stan Matthews, country music with some

exceptional Johnny Cash tunes; and Aug. 29 from 3-5 p.m. – the Superchargers, a fun rock and roll band.

All concerts are free, they are held on Saturdays and start at 6 p.m. and end around 8 p.m. Food will be available for purchase but folks are welcome to bring their own. Feel free to bring chairs, blankets, bug spray and sunscreen – whatever makes you comfortable.

The playground is right on the common, located on Grove Street in town.

There will also be games for families to enjoy and some surprise craft tables during some concerts.

Job Connection

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Police Officer

JOB POSTING Town of Warren FULL TIME OPENING

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

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

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

Resumes and cover letters must be returned no later than Friday, July 3, 2026, to the attention of Lt. Kyle Whitcomb, WPD PO Box 606, Warren, MA 01083 or whitcomb@warren-ma.gov.

The Town of Warren is an equal opportunity employer.

BORST FROM PAGE 1

went to different houses for lunch, and each member read what they had written and encouraged each other to continue to write.

With a growing interest in historic buildings, Borst wanted to take part and explore North Brookfield’s history. She became a member of the nonprofit, Friends of the North Brookfield Town House in 2008.

Borst also gained an interest in the architecture of the buildings from learning about the architecture of some of the neighborhoods in Worcester.

While learning about the work being done in North Brookfield and hearing the stories from many residents, Borst wanted to help out more with the historic Town House.

Soon her interest in history would lead to the pub-

lication of her first book, “George M. Cohan Was Here!: North Brookfield’s Town House past, present and future”. This 100-page book, with 85 illustrations and photographs, covers the history of North Brookfield’s Town Houses from 1833 to 1864 and follows the life of the present building from 1864 to 2013 and beyond.

Her book also talks about the many happenings that took place at the North Brookfield Town House. The many meetings, shows, plays and many community memories are shared and remembered through this historical book.

With the help of Shelby Fullam and at least 100 more residents of North Brookfield, Borst was able to connect with so many people that helped her with her research for the book. Residents provided photos

and notes of their family history.

Borst’s research also involved visiting the historical museum in town and looking through yearbooks from previous high school years. For Borst, it was a lot of fun to track all this history of the town she proudly calls home.

Town Historian Gene Caille also helped out during Borst’s research.

“He gave a lot of insight,” Borst said.

Caille was a history teacher for 30 years and knew a lot about the town.

Borst is also the creator of a PowerPoint program used in third grade classrooms. The program teaches North Brookfield history by describing three of the town’s most important buildings. After reviewing the PowerPoint, students are tasked to organize their own town meeting.

Borst came out with



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33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
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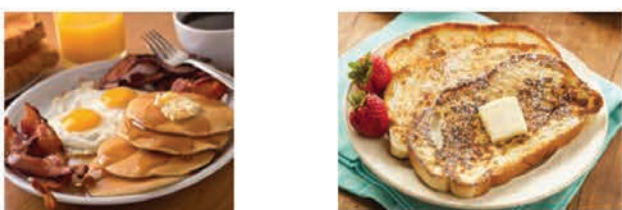
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