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Friday, July 10, 2026



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Airman First Class Johnny Barker performed on percussion.

U.S. Air Force band performs for town's 275th

By Paula Ouimette

Editor

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NEW BRAINTREE – The Historical Commission and the 275th Anniversary Committee hosted the renowned U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band for a special 4th of July performance of “American Ascent: 250 years of Nation and Sky”

this past Sunday.

The 1st Hardwick Independent Battery fired its cannons during several of the musical selections, including the “1812 Overture”.

The green between Memorial Drive and the common was filled with hundreds of spectators, while the band performed the in-

See **NEW BRAINTREE** PAGE 6

Helen Lapenas receives Boston Post Cane

Town's oldest resident also celebrates 99th birthday

By Paula Ouimette

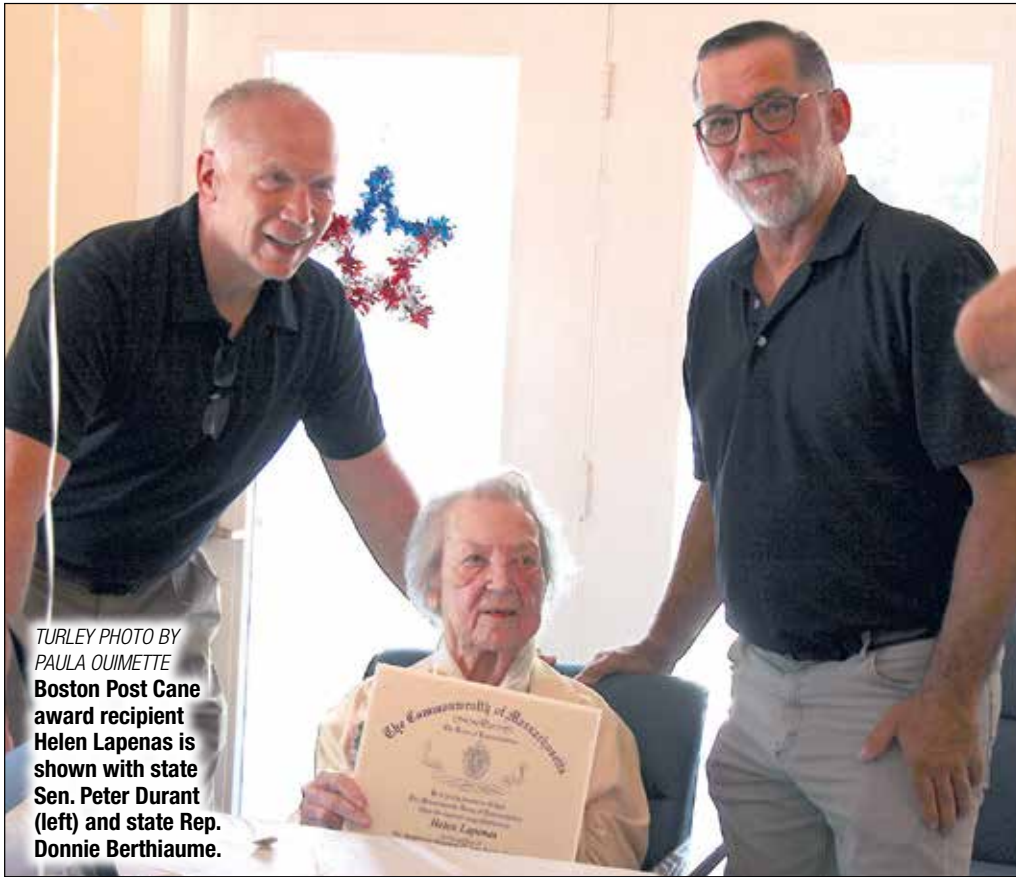
Editor

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WEST BROOKFIELD – Family, friends and community members joined together to celebrate two special occasions with resident Helen Lapenas – her 99th birthday and her receiving of the Boston Post Cane award as the town's oldest living resident.

At the June 30 celebration, Historical Commission Secretary Anne-Marie Nolan said Lapenas was the town's 27th recipient of the Boston Post Cane, a tradition that has continued since 1909.

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TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Boston Post Cane award recipient Helen Lapenas is shown with state Sen. Peter Durant (left) and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume.



Sue Lewandowski and Sheila Orsi ran the Community Heart & Soul tent at North Brookfield's 4th of July celebration held this past Saturday on the common.

TURLEY PHOTO BY CAMREN ROBERTSON

A star-spangled CELEBRATION

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Parks and Recreation Committee and friends hosted a well-attended 4th of July celebration on the common this past Saturday, complete with music, games, activities, food and a bonfire.

This event celebrated the nation's 250th anniversary of independence.

The Otters and DJ Tabby LeBlanc provided the musical entertainment, and festivalgoers were able to keep cool in the dunk tank and chill zone.

Various businesses and town organizations set up booths, and a food and ice cream trucks were also on hand.

There were free crafts, temporary tattoos, face painting, an egg hunt and more.



SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 9.

This child enjoyed a rubber duck game.

Community enjoys bonfire and concert

By Richard Murphy

Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – The annual West Brookfield Bonfire was scheduled for 6-9:30 p.m. last Tuesday, but the weather was threatening not to cooperate.

When the climate goes awry here in Massachusetts, it can be interesting. For example, some of us thought the snow from last winter would never melt.

Well, it did, but that was then.

On June 30, a different question asserted itself. The heavens were threatening to open up.

The bandstand committee would have to decide. The team was monitoring the forecasts and promised a decision when and if more was revealed.

As time got closer, it was decided, bravely: Go!

The committee of Monica, Michelle, Mike and John were going to keep up the community tradition.

People arrived with their chairs and began settling down. Children were on street in front of the bandstand drawing Old Glory with colored chalk.

Young people were riding motor bikes without incident.

See **BONFIRE** PAGE 10



The bonfire was lit and enjoyed at the June 30 concert.

Board discusses Gay Road

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis

Staff Writer

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BROOKFIELD – The Select Board discussed the closing stages of the Gay Road project at their meeting on July 1, and the costs associated with the work.

Bruce Clarke, who was appointed to oversee the last 5% of the project said there is about \$120,000 of costs associated with finishing the project, including between \$6,000-\$7,000 for loam and seed, \$2,000 for mailboxes, \$1,000 for a stone wall reset, between \$60,000-\$80,000 for screen millings, and a cost of line painting that was not involved in the contract for the work. Clarke said a top coat has been applied to two thirds of the road and needs to be finished.

Select Board member Richard Chaffee said there is stone on town property, which was purchased for the project, and it may be given to the contractor Jim Pioppi to be taken off of the bill.

Clarke said so far, the total cost for the project is about \$1.058 million. Chaffee said the original contract was signed for \$969,000.

The board also discussed which part of the project is grant eligible, saying the grant was to pave to the town line, but there was work to the power lines done out of the contract. Board members also said there was a cost of \$45,000 approved for pre-work and another \$187,000 approved for pulverizing and paving.

See **BROOKFIELD** PAGE 10

- community -

BOS accepts year end transfer

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen accepted various year end transfers at its June 30 meeting, as fiscal year 2027 began on July 1.

There were multiple requests from the Police Department accepted, including \$380 from police salary to animal control salary, \$1 from animal expense to animal control salary, \$1,000 from police salary to police facility expense, \$150 from police salary to office firearms supply, \$1,037 from animal control expense to police vehicle repair, \$1,500 from police salary to purchase of service, \$2,298 from police salary to chief salary, \$21,800 from police salary to overtime and \$3,955 from police salary to career incentives.

There were also four requests from the Board of Health accepted, with all transfers going toward the recycling contract line, with \$1,800 coming from other expenses, \$6,000 from recycling monitor salary, \$2,000 from purchase of service and \$2,040 from food inspector salary.

There were two requests from the Assessor's office accepted, including \$0.14 from other expense to Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission and

\$6.70 from other expenses to Worcester County Regional Retirement.

Other financial items

The board accepted reserve fund requests, including \$2,369 for the library to repair a chiller condenser, and \$496 from selectmen's salary to pay a negative balance. There were also spending requests accepted for the Highway Department including \$285 to Home Depot for a bench vise, \$1,333 to Pete's Tire Barn for four tires for a 1999 international dump truck, and \$749 to Pete's Tire Barn for four rims for the dump truck.

One spending request from the Council on Aging for \$925 to Accurate Medical Cooling for HVAC system service was passed over because it was unclear if there is a contract with them, whose responsibility the maintenance on the system is, and whether the COA got a quote from any other business.

Pole hearings

There were three petitions by National Grid accepted, including the placement of one joint-owned pole approximately 30 feet east of the intersection of North Main Street and Reed Avenue; two joint owned poles to be placed and two more to be relocated about 110 feet west of the intersection of Donovan Road and East

Brookfield Road continuing about 508 feet west; and an underground petition on Donovan Road for two 10 foot by 13 foot manholes and 435 feet of conduit to be placed.

Appointments

The board appointed Kathleen McClintock to the Board of Library Trustees. She said she loves the library and wants to make a community contribution to it.

The board also appointed Tyler Goyette to the Highway Department, he said he previously worked in Barre and lives in town.

The board appointed members to the Fire Chief Search Committee including Police Chief Ryan Daley, Brookfield Fire Chief Peter Martell and local firefighter Mario Polanco.

MassDOT

Board of Selectmen Chair Jamie Gilman said the town is working on the paving contract with the Department of Transportation, and once it is completed, parking times will be posted. He said the town needs to look at the parking lines painted, as there is variation by up to seven inches between widths of the spots, and there is no handicap spot painted.

The board also approved a traffic study to be done on a local road by MassDOT, since some residents were

concerned about the speed limit.

Administrative items

The board approved payroll, school and general fund warrants, the minutes for June 16, and approved a one day liquor license for Connect Restaurant for July 26.

The board also signed a Sustainable Materials Recovery Program grant for the Board of Health, as part of the town's recycling dividend program.

Public comment

Karen Hubacz, chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals and a member of the Planning Board said there is no clerk for either board, and there are a lot of statutory requirements for these boards, and without a clerk doing the job, the town could get in legal trouble. Executive Assistant Mary-Beth Kularki said she would post an internal posting.

Highway Department Clerk Kim George said paving estimates from Mass Brokenstone came in, one over budget, and one at approximately \$321,000 for over 2,600 feet of road.

The Board of Assessors have new hours, from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-noon on Wednesday and evening hours of 5-7 p.m. on Tuesday.

Registration open for Alex Cordy memorial golf tournament

St. Carlo Acutis Parish, Brookfield/West Brookfield/Warren, is having its 9th Annual Alex Cordy Memorial Charity Golf Tournament at Quail Hollow Golf and Country Club, 1822 Old Turnpike Road, Oakham, on Saturday, Sept. 12.

Registration begins at 7:15 a.m., with a shotgun start at 8 a.m.

Alex Cordy was an integral part of the West Brookfield community for many years. In memory of his outstanding service to his community, his parish and being a founding member of our Knights of Columbus Council 11080, this tournament will once again benefit the Youth Activities Fund to support the youth in the local community, a cause that was very important to Alex.

The golf tournament organizers were able to award two \$1,000 scholarships this past year from the proceeds of this event to two local high school seniors, as well as fund many other youth activities.

Consider supporting this event by sponsoring or participating in the tournament individually or with a foursome. Tournament raffle items and general donations to this event are always welcomed and appreciated.

Registration and sponsorships are now available for this tournament. To register, and for more information, please call 413-813-8100 or email wallyconnor122@gmail.com.

Family fun at St. Aloysius Parish BBQ on Aug. 2

HARDWICK – St. Aloysius Parish invites families from across the area to its Summer BBQ on Sunday, Aug. 2 with dinner served noon-1 p.m. at the South Barre Rod and Gun Club, 2626 Barre Road.

The afternoon is planned with every age in mind, from grandparents to grandchildren.

The meal is a half chicken dinner served with baked potato, corn on the cob, salad and watermelon. Children and adults alike can join in the games, and raffles and prizes will run throughout the afternoon.

Tickets are \$20 each and are available by calling the rectory at 413-477-6493. This is a fundraiser to benefit the Parish Renovation Funds.

All are welcome to join in the fun.

About St. Aloysius Parish

St. Aloysius Parish serves the villages of Gilbertville and Wheelwright, from two worship sites, St. Aloysius Church (64 Church St., Gilbertville) and St. Augustine Mission (98 Church Lane, Wheelwright).

A parish of the Diocese of Worcester, it is home to St. Aloysius Catholic School and is served in collaboration with St. Francis of Assisi Parish in South Barre. Learn more at stalloysiusstaugustine.com.

Teddy Bear Picnic to be held Friday evening

BROOKFIELD – It's National Teddy Bear Picnic Day, so bring your favorite Teddy Bear (or other stuffed animal) to the common on Friday, July 10 from 5-6 p.m.

Bring your family and friends, a blanket or chairs and your favorite picnic foods.

At 6 p.m. the picnic will be joined by Maggie the Clown and she will make balloon creations. From 6-8 p.m., local band Moonlight Saints will be rocking the common with some lively music. There is something for everyone at this event and all are welcome.



The Deloreans will perform a farewell concert at Powder Mill Park on Sunday, July 12 as part of the Spencer Parks & Recreation Commission's 2026 Summer Concert Series.

The Deloreans return for Summer Concert Series

SPENCER – The Spencer Parks & Recreation Commission's 2026 Summer Concert Series continues with a farewell tour performance by the Deloreans from 2-5 p.m. on Sun-

day, July 12 at Powder Mill Park, corner Smithville and Meadow Roads.

The Deloreans, who will be disbanding at month's end, is a seven-piece horn band that performs most-

ly pop, rock and soul hits of the 70s and 80s. The instrumentation is guitar, bass, drums, keyboards, sax, trumpet and trombone. Four members sing and create great harmonies and

backups.

The series runs every Sunday through Aug. 23 and continues July 19 with the Love Dogs. The concert series is proudly sponsored by Cornerstone Bank.

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- community -

Naturalization Ceremony held at Old Sturbridge Village

151 citizens sworn in on America's 250th birthday

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – Old Sturbridge Village hosted its annual Naturalization Ceremony on the village common on the 4th of July.

As part of celebrating the U.S.'s 250th birthday, the village welcomed 151 individuals from 39 countries, who were about to receive their naturalization certificates and be sworn in as citizens of the U.S.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services presented candidates to the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, and they pledged their Oath of Allegiance to the U.S. for the very first time.

During the Naturalization Ceremony, the Old Sturbridge Village Singers gathered on the common to perform the National Anthem. Announcements were made by supervisory and senior immigration services officer with USCIS, Justin Merrifield.

Merrifield said he was honored to be at this proceeding at Old Sturbridge Village, and said, "this is the best part of my job."

Speaking during the ceremony was member of the Old Sturbridge Village Board of Trustees, Cynthia Michener, who shared that this day marks a "very special day," as these candidates become citizens on the nation's 250th birthday.

For over a decade, Old Sturbridge Village has been hosting the Naturalization Ceremony and has welcomed new citizens to the U.S. The historic village is a place where the ideals of revolution are understood.

Michener ended by congratulating the new citizens.

Naturalization Clerk Samantha Stoutenburg came up to ask all candidates to stand and raise their right hands and pledge an Oath of Allegiance to the U.S. As part of the ceremony, dozens of children came up to the front of the podium to participate in a Pledge of



One hundred and fifty one candidates were sworn in as U.S. citizens at Old Sturbridge Village on July 4.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO



The Old Sturbridge Village Singers performed the National Anthem during the Naturalization Ceremony.

Allegiance with the American Flag displayed by their sides.

Magistrate Judge Robert B. Collings of U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts attended the Naturalization Ceremony and shared some inspiring words about what it means to be a U.S. citizen.

Collings talked about how 250 years ago, on July 4, the Declaration of Independence ended people's time as subjects to the English crown. July 4, 1776, was a day when residents became citizens of the U.S.

and were no longer subjects.

This moment in history was something Collings wanted the newly appointed citizens to understand and how important it is becoming citizens. As Collings spoke, he wanted to give an important message about how all citizens have routes to immigrants who came to U.S. throughout its 250 years of history.

"Immigrants built this country," Collings said. "They enrich us."

Collings also talked about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in

the U.S., which includes the right to vote.

"I'm urging you to vote," Collings said.

Despite the division that is happening in the nation today, Collings said this is nothing new in the U.S. There have been many moments of division throughout U.S. history.

Collings talked about the division the country endured during Abraham Lincoln's Presidential campaign during the Civil War. There were core ideological divisions during the 1800 presidential election between

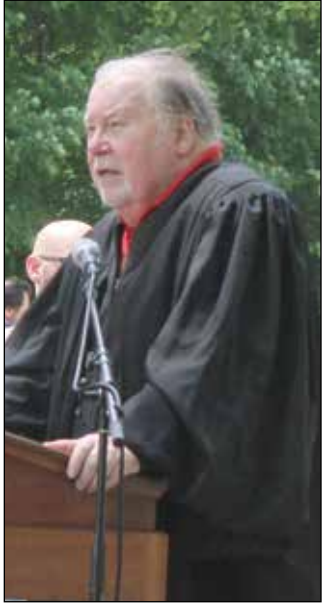
John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

When addressing the core values of being a U.S. citizen, Collings quoted Benjamin Franklin from 1787 when he was asked what kind of government the U.S. should be.

"A republic, if you can keep it," Franklin stated.

Collings ended by congratulating all the citizens who were sworn in during the Naturalization Ceremony.

Naturalization Clerk Samantha Stoutenburg came up to swear in new citizens of the U.S.



Magistrate Judge Robert B. Collings of the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts spoke during the Naturalization Ceremony.



Registration open for Lions Club golf tournament

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Registration is now open for the 2026 Brookfields Lions Club golf tournament, according to event chair, Marc Kokansky.

The annual event is taking place on Saturday, Aug. 22 at the Quail Hollow Country Club, 1822 Old Turnpike Road, Oakham. The four-person scramble tournament begins with registration at noon, followed by a 1 p.m. shotgun start.

The entry fee is \$100

per golfer, which includes 18 holes of golf, cart, skins competition, closest-to-the-pin contests and a meal following the tournament at Quail Hollow Country Club.

Proceeds from the tournament will benefit the Brookfields Lions Club's charitable programs and community service projects throughout the area. Through fundraising events such as this tournament, the club supports local organizations and individu-

als while carrying out the Lions' mission of serving those in need.

To register a team or obtain additional information, contact Kokansky at 508-847-9843. Registration is open now through Aug. 15.

About the Lions Club

As the world's largest, youngest and most active service organization, the mission of Lions Clubs International is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet human-

itarian needs, encourage peace, and promote international understanding.

Members of the Brookfields Lions Club are dedicated to service and support in the communities of Brookfield, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, and New Braintree.

Sons of A.L. to host scholarship golf tournament

WEST BROOKFIELD – Sons of the American Legion, Post 244, West Brookfield is hosting its 21st Annual "Scholarship Scramble" Golf Tournament on Saturday, Aug. 8 at Quail Hollow Country Club in Oakham.

The 18-hole tournament

will have a 8 a.m. shotgun start. Chicken dinner, raffles and prizes to follow at the Legion Post 244 in West Brookfield. The registration fee is \$120 per person and must be received by Aug. 1. To register, contact Kevin at 774-230-3262 or Gary at 508-450-8643.



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Farming as a verb

By Drew Blazewicz

Words are important. It’s probably obvious that I believe that, given my propensity for writing as a way of sharing and processing information.

Our realities are shaped by the stories we tell ourselves and others (as well as the stories we tell *about* ourselves *to* others and vice versa).

So when it came time to choose a name for our agricultural endeavor it felt important to choose something that captured the essence of what we were working towards and how we thought of this project.

Long before my partner, Marissa, and I got into the act of naming our farm we had spent years discussing the practicalities of our farming plans as well as the philosophies behind them. After an intensive season studying and participating in the food system, operating in the margins of excess and redistribution, we were drawn to starting our own farm with a few principles in mind.

We saw shifting our food system towards smaller farms practicing more ecologically sound growing as a necessary step to meet the challenges of climate and societal change. Inspired by so many others who came before us in this tradition, both ancient and contemporary, we wanted to work towards shepherding in a new world that recenters both human connection to the earth as well as to each other. Thus “Tending Tomorrow” was conceived as an expression of that desire; actions taken today to nurture the world we want to be a part of tomorrow.

In Braiding Sweetgrass, Robin Wall Kimmerer explains a significant difference between the English and Potawatomi languages; the prevalence of verbs versus nouns.

She describes English

as a noun-heavy language; things *are* one thing. This language is useful for a specific type of reasoning and logic, and lends itself to an atomized and disconnected worldview.

On the other hand, the Potawatomi language uses verbs to describe things. One example given is that the word for “bay” would be directly translated as “water taking the form of the bay.”

This language recognizes transience, and transience illuminates our interconnectedness. The water is acknowledged as being the same as the water that later takes the form of rain, or the river that runs down into the bay, or that feeds our crops and our bodies. Our endeavor is not a fixed or concrete thing, it’s a verb; an ongoing act. Our farming methods are often experimental, sometimes to the point of failure, but always with the goal of repairing and strengthening local ecologies and global systems.

As we try new approaches, both in the practicalities of food production as well as the role of food producers, we will make mistakes. But we will continue to practice and learn, and that act is an expression of care and hope for the future.

This vision of “tending” to the future came about from learning a variety of ecologically sound farming practices that build soil health and biodiversity while also producing more nutrient dense and healthful vegetables (or any agricultural product). Industrial agriculture inflicts incredible harm on people and the environment, but we will always need to eat.

Tending Tomorrow is about practicing and sharing a vision for the future, one in which we work together with ecology to create a robust food system and ultimately a more resilient and enjoyable future.

- opinion -

Bad news and good news in this week’s garden

My annual flower gardens were just starting to come into their own when I noticed some damage on the leaves.

They looked chomped on from the outer edge going in. Some leaves also had a watery brown residue on them.

Going by date, I knew the culprit already, even before digging around the base of the plant. The Asiatic Garden beetle is hard at work wrecking my plants.

Read on to learn more about this pest.

I’ve also got some good news. Blueberries and peas are ready for harvest. Yippee!

The Asiatic Garden beetle is a bit smaller than the Japanese beetle and is chestnut brown in color. It feeds during the night, so look for chewed foliage in gardens or planter boxes under lamp-posts, street lights or other outside lights.

Cultivate directly underneath the affected plant during the day and you will likely see the culprits scurry back into the soil. Usually they snuggle up very close to the stems an inch or so below the soil surface.

Sometimes watering at the base of the plant will bring them to the top of the soil where they can be easily collected or squished. 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!

In my experience, two plants they particularly love are coleus and calibrachoa. This year they are decimating my blue salvia.

It’s pretty amazing that I’ve found dozens a day in an 18-inch planter. If digging around in the soil isn’t your style, go out near dusk with a headlamp or flashlight and pick them right off the plant.

Hand picking can significantly cut down on the damage.



One note of good news is that my blueberries are bearing great this year, really it’s the first year that I’ve had a significant harvest since the bushes were given to me over a decade ago. I am pretty certain I owe it all to Organic Grower Supply through Fedco Seeds, (fedcoseeds.com), where I purchased “Blueberry Booster.”

I ordered the fertilizer last year and applied 3 pounds per bush in the springtime. Lo and behold it worked.

I have enough to do it again this fall since I missed the opportunity this past spring. A blend of Granite Meal, sulfur, Tennessee brown rock phosphate, compost, and Azomite, the mix reduces the soil pH and provides the nutrients necessary for healthy blueberry plants and good fruit.

Fourth of July weekends over the last several years have been spent picking, shucking and freezing peas, and this year is no exception. It’s technically a tradition around my house.

Now you may be thinking that I really know how to have fun, but to me, this is what summer is made of! I plant my peas the end of April, so typically they ripen almost on cue each year!

I plant three seeds deep a couple of inches apart up against the interior of my garden fence where they naturally climb up with their tendrils attaching to one another and the fence. I loosen up the soil prior to planting, but I never add any fertilizer – maybe just a sprinkling of compost if I am feeling generous.

Since peas are legumes, they “fix” their own nitrogen from the air.

I do soak the seeds in an inoculant prior to planting them, however, to make the fixation happen easily and to reportedly increase yield.

If you are going to try your hand at freezing your “shell” peas, as opposed to sugar snap or snow peas, be sure to pick, shuck and freeze in the same sitting, since peas begin to lose their sweetness within hours of being off the plant.

Like anything else, we take the good with the bad. As long as there is enough good, we won’t throw in the towel just yet.

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



Why doesn’t my Social Security record show all my military earnings?

Dear Rusty:

When I look at my earnings on my Social Security account, I see that in 1955 and 1956 have no earnings. I was in the U.S. Navy as a first officer and have my DD-214 paperwork, which shows my military service from Oct. 1954-Oct. 1958.

My Social Security earnings record shows that I had earnings in 1954, 1957 and 1958 but doesn’t show that I was paid in 1955 or 1956. Shouldn’t I have received Social Security credit for all my service years?

Signed: An Older Veteran

Dear Older Veteran:

First, I want to thank you for your military service.

Whether your earnings while in the military would provide you with any additional Social Security benefit depends on your career earnings after leaving military service. Here’s why:

Your monthly Social Security benefit is based upon

the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime with earlier years adjusted for inflation.

From those highest earning 35 years, SS develops your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings, your lifetime “AIME,” which is the basis of the SS benefit you get if you claim for benefits to start at your Full Retirement Age So, if - after you completed your military service - you had at least 35 years of other employment where you earned more money than you did while serving, then your military pay won’t affect your Social Security benefit.

FYI, Social Security payroll tax has been withheld from military pay since 1957, which is why your SS earnings record shows your military pay only for 1957 and 1958. Your SS record wouldn’t show military pay prior to 1957 because you



didn’t contribute to SS from your military pay during those years.

The earnings you see in your SS earnings record for 1954 are likely from non-military employment prior to starting active duty in October 1954.

SS does provide older veterans with “special extra credits for military service,” but those credits are only a supplemental earnings amount added to your military pay record during the years you served.

It is not a bonus amount added to your monthly Social Security payment; rather it is only an amount added to your military pay record used when calculating your Social Security benefit. For those who served prior to

1957, Social Security would have no record of your military earnings during those early service years.

But when you claimed Social Security later in life, they would have asked if you served in the military and given you “special extra credit” in the form of presumed earnings for your service years. They likely asked for a copy of your DD-214 and would have added \$160 to your military earnings record for each active-duty month from October 1954 through December 1956 and additional earnings credits for 1957 and 1958.

But that doesn’t mean you get a special Social Security bonus for your military service. If you have at least 35 years of civilian employment after serving in the Navy, your service years would only affect your SS

benefit if those military service years were among the highest paying 35 years over your entire lifetime. And, again, please accept our appreciation for your service to our country.

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QUABOAG
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- community -

‘Voices of a Revolution’ heard at Old Sturbridge Village

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – To honor and celebrate America’s 250th anniversary, Old Sturbridge Village presents “Voices of a Revolution.”

In partnership with ClockJack Productions, the village presented a new, family-friendly experience for the month of July as part of Old Sturbridge Village’s Independence Forever celebration. “Voices of a Revolution” places people inside a story to help them experience what it was like living during the American Revolution.

Visitors explore the village in various destinations and hear the stories of a specific person in a profession and hear their contrasting views as the Revolution unfolds. Visitors put themselves in the shoes of a person living in Sturbridge in 1776 and soon decide whether they should remain loyal to the British Crown or join the patriots in the growing Revolution.

The “Voices of a Revolution” focuses on what New Englanders at the time kept asking themselves. Do they support Independence, or remain loyal to the British Monarchy?

These individuals were living in a world of division and uncertainty that changed their lives and the actors who portrayed these characters made sure the voices of the past were heard as a nation was being born.

The story began with the Printer, played by Bryce Crumlish, who talked about what it means to be an American. After the news of Lexington and Concord broke out, the Printer made it clear that he was in favor



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO
The Housemaid, played by Crystal Tweed, spoke out in front of the Printing Office about freedom as part of the program Voices of a Revolution, which took place at Old Sturbridge Village.



The Lawyer, portrayed by Jake Austin Robertson, spoke in favor of remaining loyal to the British Crown in front of the Center Meetinghouse.

of pursuing life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The Printer talked about the public reading presentation of the Declaration of Independence by fellow printer Isiah Thomas in Worcester. The words inspired the Printer to use his



The Farmer's Wife spoke in front of the Freeman Farmhouse sharing her struggles as her husband is away fighting in an unpredictable war.

ink for words that will bring independence forward to the eyes of the public.

“I will print the truth of this war,” the Printer said.

During his speech, the Printer was greeted by the Housemaid, played by Crystal Tweed. The Housemaid,



The Tavernkeeper, played by Marc Fontaine, spoke to an audience in front of the Bullard Tavern.

Ms. Walker, asked the Printer what the definition of independence is and who it applies to.

The Housemaid encouraged the Printer to “print liberty without exception.”

The story continued in front of the Bullard Tavern as the Tavernkeeper, played by Marc Fontaine, came out to speak his opinions about the Revolution unfolding in Massachusetts. The Tavernkeeper heard the news of the Declaration of Independence and quoted the saying “All men are created equal.”

The Tavernkeeper, with a pint in hand, toasted the brave men who left home to fight for the Patriots.

The Farmer’s Wife, played by Catherine Luciani, approached the Tavernkeeper to question his opinions about the patriot effort. The wife’s husband left her and their children to go fight in the Revolution.

At the Center Meetinghouse, the audience heard the opinions of the Town Lawyer, played by Jake Aus-



The Printer, played by Bryce Crumlish, spoke in favor of the American Revolution and promised to use his ink to “print the truth” of the war.

tin Robertson. Being born under British Law, the Lawyer remains loyal to the British Crown.

The Printer arrived and heard enough of the Lawyer’s rant of justifying the British Crown. The Printer made a point that it was unfair for a ruler of a land to be distant and neglect their people.

“Distance is not wisdom, it is neglect,” The Printer said. “My ink will not be silent.”

The Lawyer claimed that revolting was dangerous and of high risk and the time has come for people to choose a side.

The Housemaid spoke in front of the District School and talked about freedom for not just the colonists but for all living beings. Asking about how this fight for independence impacts the enslaved men, women, and children.

During the Revolution, a petition went out for Massachusetts to end slavery but failed.

The Shopkeeper, played by Amy MacRae, arrived to the school to drop pencils off for the children. The Shopkeeper had a debate with the Housemaid and how education of the children is impacted if the Colonies choose to fight the Crown.

Both individuals agree to “pray for a better tomorrow.”

The Farmer’s Wife in front of the Freeman Farmhouse spoke of her daily struggles of running the family farm, while her husband goes to war. She expressed concern of how ordinary farmers, blacksmiths, and young men would leave their lives behind to fight against a well-trained military.

The Lawyer arrived and expressed interest in buying some of the farmland. Not knowing if her husband will ever come home, the Farmer’s Wife denied the offer believing that the land is her family’s home and shouldn’t be given up by any dollar amount.

The Shopkeeper had some issues as her store was looted and vandalized with the term “Tory” drawn on the side of the property. The Tavernkeeper approached the shopkeeper and pleaded her not to give into the British Crown.

The “Voices of a Revolution” concluded at a Town Meeting inside the Center Meetinghouse where the visitors portraying the residents cast a vote and decided to remain loyal to Britain or join the Revolution in pursuit of independence.

This program will go on throughout the month of July at Old Sturbridge Village, located at 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road. For more information, visit www.osv.org.



Anne-Marie Nolan of the Historical Commission pinned Boston Post Cane award recipient Helen Lapenas with a lapel pin at her 99th birthday celebration.

LAPENAS FROM PAGE 1

The Boston Post Cane has been awarded to a town’s oldest resident since it was started by Edwin A. Grozier, publisher of the Boston Post newspaper. Grozier sent 700 gold-headed ebony canes manufactured by J.F. Fradley and Co. to the boards of selectmen in towns across New England, including West Brookfield.

“It took close to a year to produce a perfect cane,” Nolan said.

The cane was traditionally presented to the oldest male resident of each town until his passing, when it would then be presented to the next oldest male. In 1930, women become eligible to receive the cane.

Many of the original Boston Post Canes have been lost or destroyed, and towns have opted to give lapel pins, or replica canes to recipients.

Nolan said the town’s Boston Post Cane is on display in the Town Hall, and that since 2012, all recipients

have received a lapel pin to recognize this honor.

Lapenas spoke about her life with Nolan prior to the party, and said that she worked hard day to day, and was blessed with two wonderful sons, Paul and Edward, who take care of her.

Born in Brockton as the seventh of eight children to Lithuanian immigrant parents, Stanley and Apolonia Matiyosus in 1927, Lapenas grew up on the family’s 15-acre farm in Abington.

Lapenas shared that her father died shortly after rescuing her from a house fire when she was 4 years old. The home was later rebuilt.

The Great Depression was difficult for her family, with all of the children helping their widowed mother with farm chores.

“Somehow we managed,” Lapenas said. “We survived.”

Lapenas said her mother was resourceful with a strong work ethic. Traits that Lapenas also inherited herself, according to her family.

At just 18 years old, La-



Helen Lapenas prepared to blow out her birthday candles, alongside her great-grandson, Owen. Helen celebrated her 99th birthday on July 2 and Owen celebrated his 12th birthday on July 1.

penas purchased the property next to her family farm using money she borrowed from her mother. She went on to work at a shoe factory for three years and married Paul Lapenas Jr. when she was 20 years old.

The couple moved to Brockton, where they later welcomed their two sons.

After her mother’s death, Lapenas and her husband purchased the family farm and moved back to Abington.

Lapenas had many jobs in and out of the home while she raised her children, including sewing, crocheting, rug hooking, gardening, and even giving haircuts.

“She had to chase us on haircutting day,” Paul Lapenas recalled with a laugh. “But we always looked sharp.”

She worked for at Gillette

inspecting the blades for defects, which often resulted in nosebleeds from looking down for long periods of time.

Lapenas also became an instant employee for Cumberland Farms when she went in to apply for a job, and the cashier suddenly jumped over the counter and quit. Even though she had never operated a cash register before, Lapenas took over with confidence.

She also spent time working for Fotomat and Raytheon.

When she was 54 years old, Lapenas sold her home and moved to Florida to live in a custom-built home that she designed. Finally, she settled in West Brookfield in order to be closer to her sons, who visit her each day



Helen Lapenas celebrated her 99th birthday on July 2, and was named the Boston Post Cane award recipient.



Select Board Clerk Henry Brogna presented Helen Lapenas with the Boston Post Cane lapel pin.

and keep her well stocked with her favorite treats of ice cream and Klondike bars.

Select Board Clerk Henry Brogna presented Lapenas with a Boston Post Cane lapel pin and a certificate from the board. Nolan pinned the lapel pin on Lapenas.

Nolan said that Lapenas’ name will be added to a plaque to be displayed with the actual cane in Town Hall.

Lapenas then enjoyed cake and ice cream (as well

as Klondike bars) with party attendees. Each of her family members wore butterfly pins from her extensive collection ,which Lapenas had passed down to her granddaughter. The party was also attended by state Sen. Peter Durant and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume, who presented Lapenas with citations from the Senate and House.

“It’s a life that’s very well lived,” Durant said of Lapenas.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA QUIMETTE

Helen Lapenas enjoyed time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren at her birthday party.

- community -



Master of Ceremonies for the concert was Rory Fitzgerald.



Staff Sergeant Daniel Gelman, Staff Sergeant Jarrett Kocan and Technical Sergeant Brian Bean were soloists for the song, “Bugler’s Holiday” during the U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band’s performance for New Braintree’s 275th anniversary celebration held on July 5.



U.S. Air Force Major Christina Muncey directed the Heritage of America Band.

NEW BRAINTREE
FROM PAGE 1

augural concert under the newly built pavilion. This pavilion was built by volunteers to commemorate the town’s 275th anniversary.

Master of Ceremonies for the concert was Rory Fitzgerald, who shared a detailed history of the town that once boasted “more cows than people.”

The town got its start as part of Braintree Farms, on land once home to the Nipmuck people. In 1751, the town was incorporated as New Braintree.

The town has long been known for its contribution to the dairy industry and farming, and was producing over 200,000 pounds of cheese each year by the 19th century.

Town population has now exceeded that of cows, with 1,009 people and there is one working dairy farm remaining.

Fitzgerald spoke about the town’s involvement in

the pursuit of freedom and independence, from Wheeler’s Surprise through the Revolution, and onward to modern day.

He said Captain John Granger of New Braintree fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill, and he is buried in the cemetery of the New Braintree Congregational Church.

New Braintree even saw battle on its own grounds, with the Battle of New Braintree in 1787 during a rebellion led by Daniel Shay. Twenty-three outnumbered farmers joined together to fight the state militia in the field behind the pavilion; and four of them lost their lives.

“They marked the first casualties of the rebellion,” Fitzgerald said.

Fitzgerald said the townspeople have always been quick to respond and defend themselves, even off the battlefield. He spoke about the formation of C.O.S.T. (Conserve Our Small Town) in the 1980s,

which successfully blocked the state’s attempt to open a prison at the location that is now the State Police Academy.

“This town didn’t just appear,” Fitzgerald said. “It took service, sacrifice and support.”

Student Charley Chauvin read the Preamble to the Constitution and student essayists Olivia Monahan and Liam Letendre both spoke about their hometown, and what life is like there.

“It’s a beautiful place with wonderful people,” Letendre said. “It’s the greatest town in the commonwealth.”

The town’s 275th anniversary celebration will continue with an Olde Home Day on Saturday, Oct. 3 from 1-8 p.m. This event will include a parade, farmer’s market, kids’ games, live music, bonfire, beer and wine tent and local food.

The celebration year will conclude with a New Year’s Eve Gala on Thursday, Dec. 31 in Town Hall.



Quabbin NJROTC’s Color Guard presented the American Flag for the Pledge of Allegiance. Cadets included Quinlan Fauteux, Eleanor Carroll, Lucas Proctor and Wyatt Clark.



The U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band performed over a dozen patriotic songs.



Staff Sergeant Patrick Lenz was the narrator for the U.S. Air Force Heritage of America



Liam Letendre prepared to read his essay about New Braintree.



Charley Chauvin read the Preamble to the Constitution.

	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12		
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	69								70						

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mended
- 7. Hymns
- 13. Commercial transport of goods
- 14. Poked holes in the ground
- 16. They precede C
- 17. Branch of knowledge concerned with wealth
- 19. Larry and Curly’s pal
- 20. Injured
- 22. Popular type of dance
- 23. Moon crater
- 25. American state
- 26. Places to lock valuables
- 28. Stalk that supports the capsule
- 29. Keyboard key
- 30. ‘__ death do us part
- 31. A type of cage
- 33. A place to sleep
- 34. Annual music awards show
- 36. Made over

- 38. Hard, stony substance
- 40. Incantations
- 41. Long-legged, wading bird
- 43. Breathe noisily
- 44. Congressman
- 45. Rip off
- 47. Golf score
- 48. Popular pickup truck
- 51. Where infants sleep
- 53. Music term
- 55. Small opening in a surface
- 56. Musical term meaning “very”
- 58. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 59. Treats with powder
- 60. Email subject line feature
- 61. A British lawyer
- 64. Expression of laughter
- 65. Farmer’s calendar
- 67. Seeds used as food
- 69. Eurasian shrubs
- 70. Periods of inactivity

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Hard things to kick
- 2. Collective of countries
- 3. Letter of Hebrew alphabet
- 4. One-time Alabama running back
- 5. One’s sense of self-esteem
- 6. Of the teeth
- 7. Treat with care
- 8. Type of whale
- 9. Curved structure
- 10. Emits coherent radiation
- 11. One of the Gospels (abbr.)
- 12. Smallest interval in western music
- 13. Netherlands seat of government
- 15. Gives to charitably
- 18. Lout
- 21. Pastas
- 24. Release from restrictions
- 26. Female sibling
- 27. Title of respect
- 30. Silver coins
- 32. Region in India
- 35. Partner to cheese
- 37. Dark or dusky
- 38. Pacific Northwest tree
- 39. Exaggerate
- 42. Toddler
- 43. Touch lightly
- 46. Fundamentals
- 47. Jeopardies
- 49. Curved structures
- 50. Isolated, flat-topped hills
- 52. Forming the bottom layer
- 54. Reciprocal of sine
- 55. Genus of Old World birds
- 57. New York college
- 59. Cloak
- 62. Kawhi Leonard’s team (abbr.)
- 63. Vietnamese offensive
- 66. “The Great Lakes State”
- 68. “__, myself and I”



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Post 241 walks off against Aldenville

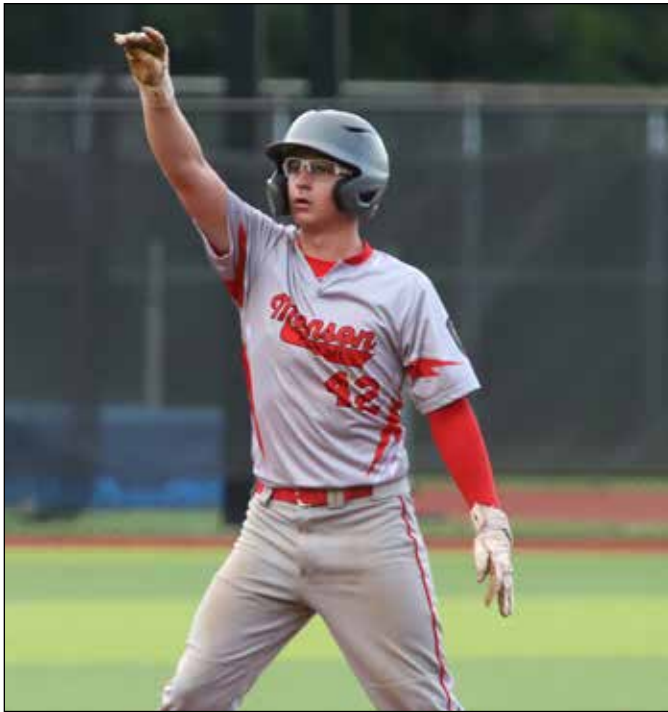
By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE — Had Monson Post 241 short-stop Matt Santos come up with the game-winning hit against Aldenville (Chicopee) Post 337 at historic Legion Field, it probably wouldn't have meant as much to him as doing it a couple miles away at St. Joe's Ballpark in Thorndike.

The second meeting of the regular season between the two Senior Legion teams was still scoreless, entering the bottom of the seventh. With two outs and the bases loaded, Santos turned on a fastball and ripped it past the third baseman into left field, giving Monson a thrilling 1-0 walk-off victory last Wednesday night.

"The pitcher threw me a fastball. I knew I needed to get a base hit and win the game," Santos said. "It's just a great feeling. This is also the first time that I've ever won a game on this field."

Santos, who recently received his high school



Brayden Mega signals to the batter as he leads off second base.

diploma, was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Palmer High School. He was the 2026 recipient of the Karl Oliveira Memorial Tri-County Baseball Scholarship Award.

Oliveira, who passed away in 2021, spent many

summers playing baseball at St. Joe's Ballpark for the St. Joseph's Saints in the prestigious Tri-County Baseball League.

"Matt is a great kid and he's the perfect candidate to receive this year's scholarship award," said Monson



Kyle Kaczuwka takes a swing at an outside pitch.

manager Steve Tripp. "Karl and I were teammates on the varsity baseball team at Palmer High School. This field was his shrine. Karl probably played 1,000 games here and this is a very memorable night."

The Monson Legion

baseball team normally plays their home games at Legion Field, but they were forced to move last Wednesday game to St. Joe's Park due to a scheduling conflict.

The walk-off victory snapped Monson's five game losing streak. Four of those



Theo Haley makes a throw to first.

losses were by one run. They entered this week's action with a 3-7 overall record.

"We've been in almost every game that we've played so far this season," Tripp said. "We played very well in tonight's game."

See POST 241 PAGE 8



Santiago Blasco Gomez tries to keep the ball from going out.

Black Rock battle to 1-1 draw

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Just when it appeared that the Western Mass. Pioneers were set to close out a 1-0 shutout victory against Black Rock FC, a late lapse gave the visitors from Nashua, New Hampshire an opportunity to score the tying goal.

Black Rock FC converted a corner kick goal during the seventh minute of stoppage time and last Friday night's USL League 2 match-up held at Lusitano

no Stadium ended in a 1-1 draw.

The result all but ended the Pioneers' postseason hopes, eliminating them from the USL League Two playoffs for the first time since joining the league in 2019.

"I really don't know what happened at the end of tonight's game," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "Almost everything has gone wrong for us this season."

It was the third consecutive tie between the two teams, who played a scoreless tie in the first meeting of the season on June 3. The

two squads also played a 1-1 draw at Lusitano Stadium a year ago.

The Pioneers entered the final week of the 2026 regular season sitting in third place in the Northeast Division table with a 7-2-3 (24 points) overall record.

The Western Mass. squad were scheduled to play at AC Connecticut on Tuesday night before hosting the first place and undefeated Vermont Green FC, who have already clinched a playoff berth, in the regular season finale on Friday night.

See PIONEERS
PAGE 8



Riley Priddy dribbles up the field.



Geronimo Gomez socks a free kick away.

Bankers in control following Fourth of July holiday

HOLYOKE — PeoplesBank is in control of the Tri-County Baseball League once again, as the longtime playoff champions and multi-time regular season champions stand at an impressive 11-1-1 so far this season. The Bankers have 23 points for the league lead with their main rivals, St. Joseph's, tugging behind with 22 points. Teddy Bear Pools holds third place at 17 points, while Turners Falls, the Spartans, and BankESB round out the standings, all with less than 10 points. Last Monday, PeoplesBank played to their only tie of the season as they battled to a 2-2 draw with the Spartans.



Jackson LaValley winds and fires for PeoplesBank.

The game was called due to darkness at South Hadley High School. Action resumed earlier this week with games scheduled on Wednesday, July 8.



Brian Hungerford tries to keep a throw from getting to the outfield.



Pete Hogan fires down to second to try and catch a base stealer.



Sam Allen fields a grounder behind second base.

- sports -

Rivet wins Firecracker 100 at Monadnock

WINCHESTER, NH - Kimmy Rivet captured the win at Monadnock Speedway, leading both early and late en route to victory in the annual Firecracker 100 Modified main event at the high banked quarter-mile.

Her victory in the decades-old top jewel of the summer 604 Modified division was worth \$3,000. It was Rivet's first win of the 2026 racing season. Other winners on the high banks on June 27 included Massachusetts Missile JD Stockwell, who struck late to score his fifth win of the summer in the Limited Late Models, Pure Stock blaster Michael Yeaton, who stormed to his fourth win in a row, and Pro 4 Modified ace Rob Richardi Jr., who boosted his championship points lead with his second win of the season.

Young Gun Dylan Stati won his track-high seventh 2026 feature race Saturday. Only Sofia Rego, who has since moved up to weekly Pure Stock competition, has also won in this season's youth division.

With a huge crowd on hand, and a colossal fireworks display awaiting them at race's end, the decades-old mid-summer Firecracker 100 was again a race that will be talked about well past the current season. Rivet and rookie Kyle Kenny sat up front as the 100-lap Minkler Paving and Painting sponsored main event went green.

With a potent field of All States Material Group 604 Modifieds exploding into action behind her, Rivet quickly took charge. Ty Leclerc and reigning speedway Modified champ Tyler Leary were quickly at her bumper.

Leary rocketed up to second on lap 12, with his mirror soon filled by last week's winner Eddie Gomarlo. Leclerc, stuck at the top groove in fourth, had no idea of giving up and, behind him, fast timer Brian Robie and previous winner Andrew Brousseau, from scratch on the starting grid, were zooming to the front.

Gomarlo stormed into second on lap 19 in his Robie Motorsports car, bringing Robie with him, as this time it was Leary stuck in the top groove. He, like Leclerc before him, wasn't giving up the chase. At the halfway point - lap 50 - it was Rivet, Robie, and Leary sailing around the high banks nose-to-tail.

Robie's all-out efforts in the low line finally paid off on lap 52, as the Sunapee speedster took the lead and set sail to repeat his Open Mod victory of two weeks earlier. A strategic mistake on a lap-62 restart, though, would prove to be his undoing.

Opting to re-fire from the top groove, he had to then watch Rivet charge back to the lead and hold the top spot until the checkers waved 38 laps later over her first-ever Firecracker 100 victory. With Robie a single length back in second, Leclerc charged back up for third, Brousseau's strong night's work netted him fourth in the 100-lap main event, and Gomarlo in fifth.

Wesley Stedt may long remember Saturday's Twin State Truck Service Limited Late Model feature as the one that got away. Gunning for his first career feature win in the fast full-fendered division, Stedt, who'd earlier topped his heat race, led for 23 laps in the main event before giving way with three to go..

Top points man JD Stockwell, again aboard the fastest car on the track, then took over and sped off to a five-length victory. Stedt stayed strong to score a career-best runner-up finish, and Robert Hagar, coming off a big night Friday at Claremont, was third.

Previous winner Hillary Renaud sailed under the checkers in fourth, with rookie Owen Zilinski, the early leader, fifth.

Micheal Yeaton may or may not go perfect on the summer in the Brattleboro Towing and Recovery Pure Stocks, but he's certainly giving it his best effort. Saturday, the Amherst, NH

hot shoe won for the fourth race in a row.

Top points man Jimmy Zellman took the early lead, giving way to Dylan Zullo, aboard the CJ Johnson ride, on lap six. Yeaton, blasting forward from tenth, was up to third a lap later and the next go-round was at Zullo's bumper.

Yeaton took the top spot on lap 16, then holding off the furious challenge of Kyle Begos to stay perfect at four-for-four in his new-found favorite division. With Begos finishing at his bumper in second, Zellman stayed atop the points parade with his third-place finish.

Rookie sensation Josh Brigham, who had to duck into the pits early for repairs, kept himself very much in the points chase with his fourth-place finish, and Zullo was fifth. Begos and Linsey Wenzel won the heats.

There was only one car capable of keeping Rob Richardi Jr. from taking another bow in victory lane Saturday in the LaValley Building Supply Pro 4 Modifieds, and that was the Ryan McPartland entry.

The Green Mountain State pilot stayed glued to Richardi's bumper until abruptly exiting the track on lap 14. With McPartland suddenly done for the night, the leader then blasted off into another time zone, only to see his huge advantage evaporate with a lap-23 caution.

Still very much up to the task, Richardi again flat-footed away to score a two-length victory over steady Josh Badach. Fast Eddie, victorious a week earlier, was third in Saturday's 25-lapper. McPartland and Fast Eddie topped the heats.

Dylan Stati dominated the Doug's Auto Body Young Guns again Saturday, leading all the way in the night's caution-free 15-lapper to win his seventh in a row. Maeve Barry, faster every week, was second, and 12-year-old Mason Bezio, in his first race ever, came home third.

POST 241
FROM PAGE 7

A week earlier, Aldenville (2-8-1) squeaked out a 1-0 victory against Post 241 at Legion Field.

"I think if we faced Monson 100 times, we probably would win 50 games and they would win 50 games," said Aldenville manager Nate Carillon. "We match up very well against each other. We had several scoring chances, but timely hitting wasn't on our side tonight."

The timely hit was delivered by Santos.

Liam McGrath, who was Monson's starting pitcher before taking over at first base in the seventh inning. He lined a line-drive single into center field against Aldenville righthander Matt Butler leading off the bottom half of the seventh. McGrath was replaced at first base by pinch runner Hunter Sherman. A sacrifice bunt by Josiel Ortiz, who was a defensive replacement at second base, moved Sherman into scoring position. After the next batter grounded out to the second baseman, the Aldenville manager decided to intentionally walk both DH Sebastian Mayberry and Kyle Kaczuka, who started the game at second base, which loaded the bases with two outs.

"I decided to walk those two batters to get a forceout at any base and make it a little bit easier on the defense," Carillon said. "Their hitter just hit the ball very hard into left field for the game winning hit."

PIONEERS
FROM PAGE 7

NEFC (10-2-0), who joined the league a year ago, is sitting in second place with 30 points. They only need a tie against either last place Boston City FC or the Albany Rush to officially lock up a playoff spot for the first time. NEFC defeated the Pioneers, 4-2, at Lusitano Stadium on May 23.

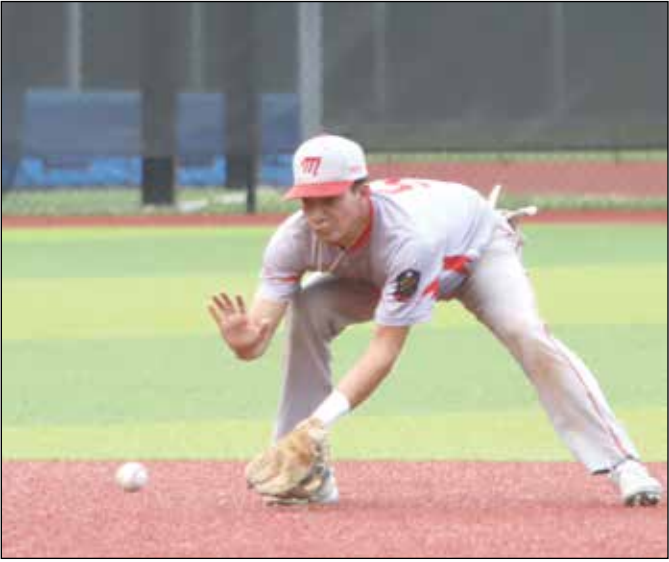
Black Rock FC (5-3-3, 18 points) has the chance to tie for third place if they can win their final three matches and the Pioneers lose a match.

Each soccer team earns three points for a victory and one point for a draw.

Just like in their first meeting of the regular season meeting a month earlier, neither Black Rock FC nor the Pioneers scored a goal during the first 45 minutes of last Friday's contest.

Geronnimo Gomes had two of the shot attempts for the home side during the opening half.

At the beginning of the contest, Jackson Gould lined a shot from outside the top of the box that sailed wide of the net.



Matthew Santos fields a clean grounder.

Not only did Santos collect the game-winning base hit, but he was also the winning pitcher. He replaced McGrath on the mound before the start of the seventh inning. Santos did hit a batter with one-out before recording back-to-back strikeouts.

McGrath, who was a junior on the Quaboag Regional High School varsity baseball team this past spring, pitched very well during the first six innings. The righthander didn't allow any runs on just four base hits, which were all singles. He struck out 12 and issued four walks.

Two of Aldeville's base hits were by third baseman Cam Carpenter.

McGrath escaped a jam in the top of the first inning.

Centerfielder Justin Rivera hit a leadoff single into rightfield before stealing second base. Then shortstop Charlie Maxwell drew a walk. Both runners moved into scor-

ing position with two outs following a double steal. McGrath ended the threat with a strikeout.

Maxwell singled to center leading off the third inning before stealing second base. McGrath retired the next three batters on a pop-up and two strikeouts.

Aldenville stranded five runners in scoring position during the first four innings.

Monson had a golden opportunity to take the lead in the bottom of the fourth inning.

With one-out, Santos walked. After the next batter hit a long flyball caught by Rivera, right fielder Emerson Boronski hit a flair single to left and first baseman Dayne Shanley followed with a walk loading the bases. Butler struck out the next hitter keeping the contest scoreless for a little bit longer.

Butler, who went the distance, also pitched very well. He allowed one run on seven hits with four K's.

sophomore in high school. He'll be a sophomore member of the UMass Amherst men's soccer team in the fall. He was recruited by UMass volunteer assistant coach Takehiko Nakamura.

Murasawa's roommate at UMass as a freshman was Thomas Wadas, who's also a member of the UMass soccer team. Wadas also plays for the Pioneers and was an outstanding soccer player at Ludlow High School.

"Thomas was my college roommate and teammate last year," Murasawa said. "He told me about the Pioneers, and I wound up playing here. It's been a lot of fun and it's a great atmosphere here."

The score remained 1-0 until stoppage time.

With ten Black Rock players standing inside the box on a corner kick, Juan O'Neill booted the ball from the right corner and goalie Christian Herluf Braae-Anderson put a shot into the net, which spoiled the Pioneers night.

The Pioneers supporters are hoping to celebrate a victory in the regular season finale on Friday night against the undefeated Vermont Green FC.

T-Birds bring in Tynan for 2026-27 season

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds announced today that the club has signed forward T.J. Tynan to a one-year AHL contract for the 2026-27 season.

Tynan, 34, skated in 67 games last season with the Colorado Eagles, posting 50 points (3g, 47a). He added another 14 points (2g, 12a) in 17 Calder Cup Playoff games as the Eagles advanced to Game 7 of the Western Conference Finals.

A veteran of 760 regular-season AHL games, Tynan ranks seventh in league history with 579 career assists to go along

with 113 goals. The Orland Park, Ill. native and Notre Dame alumnus has eclipsed the 40-point mark 11 times in his standout career. He has also recorded 51 points (9g, 42a) in 85 career Calder Cup Playoff games, including trips to the Calder Cup Finals in 2016 and 2019.

A two-time recipient of the Les Cunningham Award as AHL MVP, Tynan posted a career-high 98 points in 2021-22 with the Ontario Reign, highlighted by 84 assists, tied for the third-most in a single season in AHL history. He has led the AHL in assists four times during his

career and enters the 2026-27 season just eight points shy of 700 for his career, a milestone reached by only 26 players in league history.

Tynan's professional journey began in Springfield with the Falcons organization in 2014. A third-round pick by the Columbus Blue Jackets in 2011, Tynan appeared in the first 78 AHL games of his career in the City of Firsts, recording 13 goals and 35 assists during the 2014-15 season. He later captured a Calder Cup championship with the Lake Erie Monsters in 2015-16.



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A photograph of a soccer player, Jackson Gould, in a red jersey, running with the ball on a green field. He is wearing red socks and blue cleats. In the background, another player in a white jersey is visible, and a yellow banner with the word 'MURASAWA'S' is partially seen.

Jackson Gould hustles up the field.

A star-spangled CELEBRATION



The Otters performed during the 4th of July celebration



Firefighters were ready to monitor the bonfire.



Kathleen McClintock and Brianna Lamb offered free crafts and temporary tattoos.



Volunteers had bubbles and other activities for children to enjoy.



The dunk tank was a popular and refreshing activity.



The community celebrated 250 years of independence on the 4th of July.



Face painting was available during the event.



Many enjoyed music from The Otters and DJ Tabby LeBlanc.

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- community -



The Emergency Management team and Police Chief attended the concert.



Facepainters were ready to share their talents at the bonfire concert last week.

BONFIRE FROM PAGE 1

It was overcast, but no one seemed to mind. The usual array of food vendors was set up and business seemed brisk. Tents of town departments were along North Main Street. There was the Fire Department's. The members of the Department were mostly on the Common. Normally, when we think of the Fire Department, it is in the context of putting out the flames. As the damp weather had soaked the wooden fuel, The department, would of necessity have to get the fire going. This they would set to do and accomplish the mission using fire starters with accelerants. At the Emergency Department Tent, we met Lieutenant Tyler, Emily of the Board of Directors and Police Chief Nathan. They were there, and ready, but weather was probably going to be the only problem. The Firemen and women were working to get the fire going despite the rain drops falling. Your correspondent was approaching to get a picture of the effort when fireman Brandon suggested moving back. Discretion be-



Jerry McAlister sang the National Anthem

ing the better part of valor, we complied and lived to tell the tale. The wood, supplied by Rusty's Tree Experts, would ignite brilliantly. One should not forget that the evening included many generous sponsors from businesses to civic and fraternal groups and families. When it came time, the first band was introduced. The Slik Pickers, a blue grass style group began playing with gusto. After the Pickers, Jerry McAlister, with heart, sang a rousing rendition of the National Anthem. Wheelsmith would be the next band up. They are rockers from the Brookfields and gave it heart as long as possible. The feared downpour did arrive and it would not be denied. The crowd would dissipate but not completely disappear. No matter, to have come and endured as much as possible was an adventure in itself. If there was one musical theme, however, that spoke to the night, it was by a musician and song writer not present. James Taylor's words, "I've seen fire and I've seen rain" said it all.



People of all ages enjoyed decorating the pavement with chalk.



Wheelsmith performed during the concert.

BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

Town Administrator Blythe Robinson said a \$1 million grant for the project will be closed out on time, and there are other funds available from the American Rescue Plan Act funds and Chapter 90 funds. Apple Country Radio The board discussed the contract between the town and Apple Country Radio to use a room in the Town Hall for equipment and broadcast use, to be shared with the Information Technology department. Robinson said she met

with Apple Country Radio director Sharon Mahoney, and agreed to continue the license agreement at the request of town counsel, and updated the terms of the contract. These terms include one year renewals capped at 10, the contract running through the fiscal year instead of calendar year and the deletion of a section, according to Robinson. Robinson said an invoice of \$1 and utility bills were presented, and Mahoney provided checks for \$1 each for last year's contract and this coming fiscal year's contract along with two checks for utilities.

The board accepted the checks as written, but Select Board member Beth Coughlin said in the future, the board should consider fee credit and consider the investment the radio station has put in. Roller rink Chaffee said the town could consider selling the property of the old roller rink since it may meet the requirements for new development, making sure the town complies with auctions and Chapter 30B. Coughlin said the site was deemed sensitive by a septic survey, and there were historical restrictions re-

quested when the town was considering demolishing the site. Coughlin said the reason the town was going to tear it up in the winter was because the ground would be frozen and it would disturb the area less. She said if it is sold, there should be non-building rules. Clarke said there was a study done that did not find anything of historical significance, but there is also a property line that determines what can be done on either side. Robinson said she would review the findings when they are given to her. Appointments The board appointed Herb Chaffee as Tree Warden. Robinson said there are certifications necessary and that it is a volunteer position. Chaffee motioned the board to pay any certification fees, which passed 2-1. There was also an agenda item to appoint Chaffee to assist in paving recommendations for Lake Road and other roads, but Robinson said there is nothing in the

charter to make that an appointed position. The board also appointed John Couture as Alternate Building Inspector. Year end transfers The board approved transfers of \$6,000 from Town Administrator wages to unemployment, \$16,000 from Town Administrator wages to legal, \$5,000 from veterans case work to legal, \$2,000 from veterans case work to Medicare, \$2,437 from testing to expense, and \$1,600 from water secondary operator wages to water department clerk wages. FY 27 appointments The board appointed Jeanne Lytle, William Simpson, Doreen Niefert, Tyler Niefert, Ana Afton, Jessica Smith, Margaret Aubin and Margeret Powers to the Cultural Council; Donna LaFleur as Emergency Medical Squad Chief; Peter Martell, Matthew Graves and Shawn Adams as Emergency Medical Squad officers; and Adams, Ashley Marks, Jeffrey White, Matthew Roderick, Martell, Terry Anderson,

Daniel Esser, Luke Qau-trocelli, Graves, LaFleur, Ashley Leger, Cayla Hurley, Cameron Courtney and Jared Maldonado to the Emergency Medical Squad. TA job description The board discussed amending the Town Administrator's job description to remove wording requiring seven years of town administrator or municipal experience to require seven years of education in an appropriate field and town administrator or municipal experience combined. Administrative items The board accepted the Town Administrator's contract, approved vacation carryover for various employees, ratified a signature for year end transfers, ratified a signature for the Yankee Steeplejack Company for bell tower repair in the cost of \$21,200, acknowledged the Police Department reports for March and May of 2026 and approved the minutes of May 6, May 27 and June 4.

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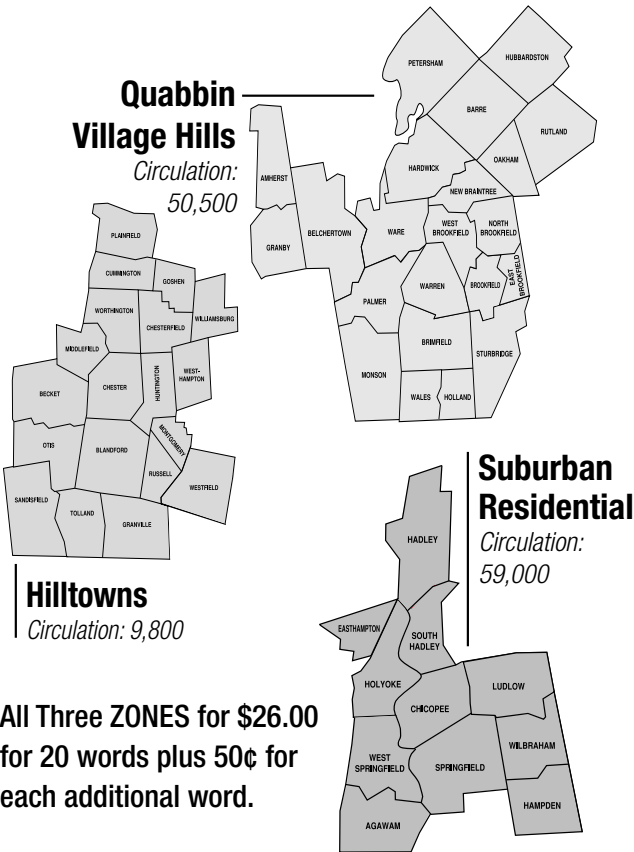
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Lions host community service carnival

July 18 event to showcase what they have to offer

WARREN – The public is invited to experience the service, fellowship, and community spirit of Lions Clubs at the upcoming Lions Service “Carnival” on Saturday, July 18 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the St. Stanislaus Polish Club, 2270 Main St., West Warren, in conjunction with the Ware Lions.

The family-friendly event will showcase the many ways Lions Clubs serve their communities while offering a day of fun activities, food, and entertainment for all ages.

Visitors will have the opportunity to learn about Lions Club membership and community service programs, as well as participate in free eye screenings. Children can enjoy a bounce house and games, while complimentary refreshments – including snow cones, cotton candy, popcorn, hot dogs and water – will be available

for children while supplies last.

A highlight of the day will be a Cornhole Tournament beginning at noon. Registration and warm-up activities start at 11 a.m. The entry fee is \$20 per person, with cash prizes awarded to top competitors.

Participants may register in advance through the Scoreholio app or sign up on the day of the tournament. All proceeds from the tournament will benefit local veterans.

“This event is a way we can make the community aware of what the Lions have to offer the community, and it is also part of a membership drive with the hopes of starting a new club in Warren,” said Curt Jameson, past district governor of Lions Clubs District 33A and chair of the event.

The event is open to the public and admission is free.

For more information, contact Jameson at curt6203@gmail.com.

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Woodshed rocks Summer Concert Series

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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STURBRIDGE – The 2026 Summer Concert Series in Sturbridge continued with Woodshed performing under the gazebo.

This past week, visitors at the common relaxed in the shade during a hot summer evening and listened to the original music of the band Woodshed. The Summer Concert Series is made possible by the Sturbridge Recreation Department.

Woodshed’s concert was also sponsored by Convenient MD.

The Summer Concert Series brings a variety of musical performances featuring all familiar music genres such as classic rock, jazz, blues, country and pop. Summer Concerts take place every Thursday on the common from 6-8 p.m. with a new band performing each week.

The concerts are free to attend and guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and blankets.

Food trucks, ice cream trucks and local breweries were on-site to keep guests refreshed.

Woodshed been playing together since 2023 and had a series of their original songs to share.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO
Woodshed featured A.J. Kiernan on acoustic guitar, Karen Gallant on percussion, Mike St. Germain on bass and Jason Wood on guitar

Woodshed started the show with their original song “The Holler” from their recently released EP, “The Holler”. Woodshed also played “Hangin’ Tree”, “If I Had Known”, and “The Hallmark Song”.

Guitarist and one of the lead singers of Woodshed A.J. Kiernan shared the back story of the Hallmark song. Kiernan said she always wanted to be in a Hallmark movie and that helped inspire the song.

Woodshed also played “Full Moon Rain”, which is also featured on The Holler EP.

On Thursday, July 16,



Caelus and Jenny wore and sold Woodshed themed T-shirts during the concert.

the Summer Concert Series continues with the classic rock group the Vig.

For more information about the 2026 Summer Concert Series in Sturbridge, visit sturbridgema.myrec.com.

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