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A community achievement

New Braintree pavilion project completed

By Joe Salvatore
Guest Contributor

NEW BRAINTREE – The COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 put a halt to community gatherings and events that provided activities for the people and helped build

a sense of community.

When it was finally deemed safe to return to school and resume public gatherings, the typical town events and gatherings seemed to have fallen to the wayside and proved difficult to restart. That's why some community leaders in the town of New Braintree decided to create a Revital-

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Weston Letendre, Dennis Letendre and John Head are shown digging one of the 11 four foot holes. Head's old post hole digger proved to be the best tool for the job.



TURLEY PHOTO BY
PAULA OUIMETTE

Militia re-enactors marched toward the battlefield during Old Sturbridge Village's annual Redcoats and Rebels weekend-long event sponsored by Dexter.

Redcoats and Rebels

Revolutionary War re-enactment held

STURBRIDGE – Old Sturbridge Village hosted hundreds of re-enactors at its annual Redcoats and

Rebels event this past weekend, which was sponsored by Dexter.

This two-day event gives people the chance to experience what life was like during the Revolutionary War, while touring the mi-

litia encampments and witnessing battle re-enactments.

Re-enactors portrayed soldiers, artisans and civilians to recreate the sights, sounds and stories of the American Revolution.

They performed drills, musket and cannon demonstrations and more.

Visitors to the village were able to visit with ar-

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Planning Board hears economic/tourism review

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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STURBRIDGE – Terry Masterson, the town's Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator, gave a presentation to the Planning Board about the latest meals and hotel spending, retail activity, tourism and marketing of the town's offerings and more.

At the July 27 meeting, Masterson said meal spending this year declined from \$21.6 million to \$19.2 million in the spring. He said last year's earnings ranged from \$21.2-22.6 million each quarter.

"Meal spending for all

of 2025 was the same – no seasonal ups or downs," Masterson noted in his presentation.

He said the current figures reflect a potential 4% decrease in meal spending for the year, compared to last year's 8% increase. The spring quarter's meal spending was 10% below the previous year's spending.

Masterson said hotel revenue figures have anomalies and he wasn't sure how consistent the reporting of these revenues was to the Department of Revenue.

"It's mixed," he said of the hotel revenue trends.

Masterson said while the winter quarter's revenues were less than the previous

year's, hotel revenue for the spring quarter was \$3.7 million, which is on par with last year's figures. He said the summer and fall quarters have earned an average of \$6-7 million over the past several years.

"Hotel revenues have averaged \$21-22 million since 2023," he said. "Revenues for 25 and 26 were lower than 2023."

Masterson said hotel visitorship remains seasonal with a shift of 80-100% from winter to summer/fall.

Looking at the current trends, Masterson said hotel revenues for this year could have a 5% reduction compared to 2025 revenues.

Masterson said the town

has 131 tourism related businesses including 52 food and beverages, 13 hotels/RV parks, 31 retail, 20 health and wellness, 12 personal care and three event venues.

"A lot of businesses for a town of our size is pretty impressive," he said.

Masterson said from 2024-2026 there were 23 new businesses opening, with 19 businesses closings as well as four-to-five vacancies.

"We've had a lot of closings in the last year but then we've had a lot of openings as well," he said.

Masterson said the Mill Yard building has 16 tenants and four vacancies. He said Mass Motion Dance has "greatly expanded their

presence," relocating to the third floor of the building.

"They have almost half the floor, which is really great to see," he said.

Brush It Off , Threads Boutique and Deep Roots Distillery have also expanded their spaces.

Masterson said a new bookstore, The Cursed Page, opened on the ground floor.

Masterson also shared some positive business investments that have occurred, including the expansion of Photonis USA, the American subsidiary of the French defense technology



SUBMITTED PHOTO

R.W. Beckett opened its new training facility on Route 20 on July 21.

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Russell Buzzell named Artist of the Month

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House selected local artist Russell "Russ" Buzzell as the Artists of the Month for August.

Buzzell of North Brookfield has been the artist of the family since the age of 5. His work is displayed throughout his studio, Buck Hill Studios, which is on a piece of land that was once part of the family farm, Buzzell Farm.

His journey into art began at a young age where he loved drawing animals. For



North Brookfield artist Russell "Russ" Buzzell is shown alongside his notable paintings of his family farm, Buzzell Farm. Buzzell is the August Artist of the Month, selected by the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House.

inspiration, he'd search for pictures in books that he would try to sketch.

One of Buzzell's earliest inspirations was Louie Selman, someone he used to

call Uncle Louie. Selman was an artist who used to draw a lot in New York and was also into making sculptures.

He was an incredibly

good artist and Buzzell used to show his Uncle Louie the sketches he would draw. Selman was the kind of person who would always give pos-

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Cultural council sponsors 'Freedomfest' set for Aug. 15

BROOKFIELD – The Brookfield Cultural Council is sponsoring many upcoming events including the 250th Celebration/Freedomfest on Saturday, Aug. 15 from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. on the common.

All are welcome to come an "party like it's 1776" on the common.

There will be performances throughout the day, including Spooner Well from 10 a.m.-noon; African Dance from noon-1 p.m.; Haphazard Jazz from 1-3 p.m.; Paras Project from 3-5 p.m.; and East Coast Soul from 5-7 p.m.

In the Children's Corner, Julie's Music and Movement will be held from 10:30 a.m.-noon.

Activities and games include Colonial games, hair tinsel, sand art, face paint-

ing, American Flag T-shirt making, touch-a-truck and a maze organized by Scout Troop 238.

There will also be vendors, food and beverages offered by Fiore Café, BCC Hot Dogs, Angry Panda, Wandering Buzz, Oakholm Brewing Co., Deep Roots Distillery, Brimfield Winery, Smashing Patties, Thee Taco Dude and Nayomy's Small Bites.

Visual displays and interactive art include Blair House Blooms, Commonwealth Vintage Dancers, graffiti art, Tumbao Latin Dance, caricature artist, armed services, National Guard Lancers, Brookfield Orchards and the Library Annex Museum.

There will be contests for

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- community -



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO
The National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors New England Chapter 8 hosted its annual picnic and mart this past weekend at the American Legion Post 244 in West Brookfield. Collectors from all over New England attended the picnic and mart providing dozens of vintage clocks and watches.

Watch and clock collectors picnic and mart held

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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WEST BROOKFIELD – The American Legion Post 244 hosted the annual picnic and mart for clock and watch collectors from all over New England. This annual event is put on by the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, New England Chapter 8. President of the Chapter, Chris Carey, says this annual picnic brings dozens of clock and watch collectors throughout New England to connect.

The annual picnic features a mart, where collectors can park their cars and set up their trunks, tables and tents to buy and sell vintage to modern clocks and watches. According to Carey, you can see some interesting horological items at the annual picnic and these marts that take place during NAWCC New England Chapter 8 events. During the Mart, there is a Show and Tell portion, where collectors can bring an item and share the stories behind them. Many members have discovered interesting horological items over the years, according to Carey. About 150 members represent Chapter 8, and many of them have stories behind the clocks and watches that are a part of their own collections. The Chapter hosts around five marts a year and hosts other events in New England, including central and western Massachusetts. Regular meetings and marts are held at the Auburn Elks Club, and the Chapter also hosts a couple workshops for the collectors and new beginners in the watch and clock repairing industry. One special meeting takes

place at the Willard House & Clock Museum in North Grafton. The event features several speakers talking about watches, clocks and history of the work of the Willard Clockmakers. One class, sponsored by the Chapter, is taking place on Saturday, Aug. 29, where students will learn about basic servicing and handling of mechanical watches. These classes help welcome the next generation clock and watch repairers. The class will be taught at The Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation in Waltham. More information can be found on nawcc8.org. Carey has been involved with watches and clocks almost his entire life, picking up the profession from his grandfather. His grandfather worked for Waltham Watch Company and after retiring, he operated his own repair shop. In this line of work, Carey said, “you do a bit of everything.” From antique watches and clocks to relatively modern clocks. One of Carey’s most common jobs is repairing bands for watches. His own shop is Watertown Watch & Clock in Waltham. One of the mart vendors was David Ewbank of Hartford, Connecticut. Ewbank has been involved in the clock business since 1970 and usually sells clocks and buys some for his own collection. The oldest clock in Ewbank’s collection is a 1750 tall clock, which is on the road of repair to being an operational clock again. Throughout the mart, clocks came in all shapes and sizes. One of the most unique clocks was on a fry-



Vintage Presidential themed clocks were seen during the mart of the annual picnic.



Clocks came in all shapes and sizes, including a clock on a frying pan.

ing pan with a hole for the clock hands placed in the center. Many collectors enjoyed a picnic near the pavilion of the American Legion Post 244. Meals included hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages, as well as cold water and soda. Some collectors at the mart had boxes full of antique pocket watches. Shawn Anderson of Douglas collects and repairs pocket watches, which he has done for over 20 years. As a repairer, Anderson tries to find parts made for the movement of the watches, which can be a challenge to find. The oldest watch he found at a flea market was from the early 1800s. Another veteran clock collector, Tom McIntyre of Harvard, started working with clocks back in 1968. McIntyre still has the first clock he ever got in his collection, still works. One of the most challenging clocks McIntyre had to repair was a Torsion Pendulum clock. The pendulum was operating as a spring rather than ticking from side to side. The clock operated under a different mechanism, but McIntyre still managed to bring the clock back to its original glory. His favorite clock is tied between his Belding D. (B.D.) Bingham clock, originally from a clockmaker based in Nashua, New Hampshire, and a Barraud & Lunds clock which still sits on his mantle. More about New England Chapter 8 of the NAWCC can be found at nawcc8.org.



A box full of antique pocket watches from one collector during the mart at the annual picnic for National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors New England Chapter 8.

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- community -



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Gold Dust Refugee will perform on Sunday, Aug. 9 from 2-5 p.m. as part of the Spencer Parks & Recreation Commission's 2026 Summer Concert Series.

Gold Dust Refugee performs at Summer Concert Series

SPENCER – The Spencer Parks & Recreation Commission's 2026 Summer Concert Series continues from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 9 at Powder Mill Park, corner Smithville and Meadow Roads, with Gold Dust Refugee.

Gold Dust Refugee is a premier New England tribute band comprised of six seasoned musicians playing guitars, drums, bass, and featuring dual-vocal harmonies that replicates the music of Fleetwood Mac and Tom Petty. The six-piece group performs combined live shows blending classic rock hits from two legendary catalogs.

Next up in this series that runs through Aug. 23 will be the Silverbacks on Aug. 16.

The concert series is proudly sponsored by Cornerstone Bank.

Lake Wickaboag to get herbicide treatment Aug. 10

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association has announced that on Monday, Aug. 10, Lake Wickaboag will receive a spot herbicide treatment for selected nuisance aquatic vegetation.

An algaecide application to treat for algae may also occur on that day. This treatment is being conducted pursuant to Massachusetts MassDEP WM-04 permit.

SOLitude Lake Management, the contractor hired by the LWPA to apply the herbicide and algaecide, has requested that the use of the lake be temporarily restricted as follows: Swimming, fishing and boating for one day, Aug. 10; livestock wa-

tering for two days, Aug. 10 and 11; direct drinking for four days, Aug. 10, 11, 12 and 13; and irrigation for six days, Aug. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.

The LWPA will notify boaters and swimmers by placing signs on streets leading to the lake and by placing red flag buoys on the lake, indicating that the lake is closed. As part of their education program, they will also send a reminder to residents by email and post on their Facebook page before the application begins.

If you need additional information, please feel free to contact SOLitude Lake Management, at 508-865-1000 or email LWPA at lwpa01585@gmail.com.

'Living Dragons' reptile program comes to library

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Merriam-Gilbert Library, 3 West Main St., will be hosting "Living Dragons," a family friendly program on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 4 p.m.

The Riverside Reptile Education Center, a non-profit Conservation and Education Reptile Rescue, will present their "Living Dragons" program. Come meet these fascinating lizards in a hands-on educational experience.

This program is funded by a grant from the West Brookfield Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Registration is required. Please call 508-867-1410 or stop by the library to reserve your spot.

Special Town Election to be held on Sept. 1

WEST BROOKFIELD – A Special Town Election to elect a Select Board member for a two-year term will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 1.

Last day to register to vote before the Special Town Election is Friday, Aug. 21 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Town Clerk's office at 2 East Main St.

East Brookfield library lists upcoming events

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, will host Celebrating America from the Beginning: Part 2 "World Turned Upside Down" on Monday, Aug. 10 at 5:30 p.m.

Come learn about how the National Parks played key roles in the Revolutionary War. Enter for your chance to win a book, view a musket and pick up the National Commemorative Stamp and coin that tells the history of the National Parks. Refreshments from the Revolutionary War will be served.

All ages are welcomed; however, the program should hold the interest of people from 12 and up.

Vincent Kordack is an East Brookfield resident with more than 38 years of experience as a National Park Ranger. He was assigned to 16 of the 18 National Parks that revolve around the Revolutionary War.

Magic show

Ed Popielarczyk will perform a magic show on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 10:30 a.m.

All ages are welcome to attend, come see Ed do magic tricks and create his balloon art.

Ed also has a flea circus to show you. Ed has been doing magic shows for nearly 35 years. Come to the library and enjoy the show.

Input needed for Open Space and Recreation Plan update

EAST BROOKFIELD – The town of East Brookfield, with assistance from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission is updating its 2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan and is seeking input from residents.

Community members are encouraged to participate in a survey to share their thoughts on open space, recreational opportunities and priorities for the future. Public feedback will help guide the development of the updated plan, which is required to maintain the town's eligibility for state grant funding for conservation and recreation projects.

Residents can complete the survey online at <https://tinyurl.com/yv7b-23fy>. Hard copies are also available at Town Hall, the East Brookfield Public Library and the Senior Center.

The town encourages all residents to take part and help shape the future of East Brookfield's parks, recreation resources and open spaces.

Select Board discusses Town Administrator interviews

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

BROOKFIELD – The Select Board met with Jeff Clark, the chair of the town administrator search committee to discuss applicants and set up interviews with the top applicants from the pool at their meeting last Wednesday.

According to the board, there were about 45 total applications received, of which there were 13 interviews.

At the July 29 meeting, Clark said the committee asked the candidates a comprehensive list of 14 questions, and presented four applicants the committee thought would be a good fit. He said the candidates are of varying ages and personalities.

Clark said he recommends the Select Board interview all four candidates, which according to meeting agendas posted will happen on Aug. 4 and Aug. 5. The candidates being interviewed on those days include Andrew Surprise, Charles Kokoros, Eric Weiss and Ryan Egan.

Clark said the committee graded candidates on a rubric, and the top candidates were within a few points of each other, adding that two of the candidates interviewed gave a detailed 90 day plan for their employment in Brookfield.

Current interim Town Administrator Blythe Robinson said she would put together a document of some of the issues in town, and would consider helping the new hire by having a short overlap between when the new candidate is hired and when she leaves the town. Robinson said she wants the new candidate to "hit the ground running."

Remote meeting procedures

Communications Committee members Beth Olesin and Steve Karrmann presented new procedures the committee developed to be sent to various boards in town, outlining how to operate the recording technology along with the requirements for accessibility.

Olesin said the procedures are specific to the banquet hall in the town hall, but can be updated to include the police station meeting room or to account for new infrastructure. Karrmann said these procedures do not assume the boards must record if they are not comfortable with it.

BOH appointment

The board discussed the potential appointment of Pamela Fitzgerald to the Board of Health to fill a vacancy. Fitzgerald said she is a chemist and has experience with environmental and recycling programs.

However, since there was not a quorum of the Board of Health present, the appointment was rescheduled to Aug. 5.

Disposition of property

The board voted to dispose of a parcel of land at 13 Kimball St. Robinson said there was a letter from a tax title firm in favor of the town, but the board concluded the value of the property would not match the taxes owed on it.

Highway items

The board voted to amend the wages on the highway superintendent job posting to \$104,000-\$105,000 per year, salaried.

The decision came as the town has not received many applicants, and the market has changed, according to board members. The board also approved the posting

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PAGE 10

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SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

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.

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

- opinion -

Privet pruning leads to instruction

Every year when we head off to the Cape, the "yard" talk becomes privets, and bunnies, but that is a whole other column. When we visited in June, the privets where we stay had been cut way back in an effort to reduce height and width. This trip, I noticed those cuts had grown back nicely, achieving the desired results. Read on while we revisit a column from the archives on pruning hedges. A living hedge offers multi-seasonal interest. A number of shrubs suited for hedges flower or have appealing fall leaf color. Others are evergreen and fulfill the "need for green" even in the offseason. Some make great homes for wildlife, and others are the perfect backdrop for our holiday decorations. Whatever the case, a hedge doesn't have to be old and overgrown to require your attention. Perhaps it is a little misshapen, or too tall and gangly. Maybe it has lots of dead wood. Anyway, there is no time like the present to get out the loppers and hand clippers and do some pruning. Old and overgrown Hedges that fall into this category should be rejuvenated over the course of three years. The general rule of thumb is to remove no more than one-third of a shrub's mass at one time. Working from the interior of each plant, cut out the oldest stems first to ground level. Fresh new growth will fill in the gaps. Repeat in years two and three, until all the old wood has been pruned away. If you prune more drastically

than recommended, there will be less leaf power for photosynthesis, and vigor may be reduced; curb your impatience and stick to the three year rule. Misshapen Hedges can sometimes be disproportionate and appear top or bottom-heavy. Proper pruning can alleviate this problems. Lots of dead wood The quickest way to prune a hedge has always been to employ shears or electric trimmers and simply remove new growth each season. Unfortunately this method makes for lots of green leaves at the plant's tips but for very little on the interior of the shrub. If you should decide you want to reduce the overall size of the hedge you will be in for trouble - all that will be visible is dead wood. Start making "windows" now by cutting out large stems back to main branches. Light will penetrate inside the plant spawning lots of fresh green growth. Eventually you will be able to cut the hedge back to that point. The three year, one-third rule that I spoke of earlier should apply here as well. Boxwood and yews benefit from this type of rejuvenation. Kudos to the privet pruner; you did well!

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.

bring down its height, then prune the sides of the shrub to outward facing buds to encourage a wider hedge. This technique works especially well with hedges comprised of Rose of Sharon. Before horticulture college, it never occurred to me that I could determine the direction in which my shrub will grow based on the pruning cuts I make. I used to think I was merely shortening stems! Grab a branch and examine the buds closely. Some point inward while others point out. Voilà! For a top-heavy shrub make cuts at inward facing buds on the upper section- this will curb outward facing growth. On the lower portion make your cuts at buds facing out to encourage outer branching. Best cuts are made on a 45 degree angle just after the bud of choice. Try this pruning method on privet. Too tall and gangly Hedges that are tall and thin need more than just "a little off the top." Here you will employ pruning strategies that you've already learned. Cut deep into the plant to



Reduce food waste for your wallet and the planet

By Lisa Marselle In America, about 35% of our produced food ends up in landfills taking up space, producing methane gas, and wasting our grocery dollars. As one researcher put it, it's like going grocery shopping, buying three bags of groceries, then tossing one bag right into the trash as you exit the store. The EPA also reports,

"that preventing wasted ood altogether is the most preferred action to reduce the environmental impact of food waste." So now is a good a time to share info and dispel any confusion on those interesting little numbers stamped on our food. Understanding food date labels such as "Sell by," "Best by," "Use by" and others, may help extend our food dollars, so we're not tossing out perfectly good food if handled and cooked properly. This helps us and our planet now and for future generations. Food dates inform us. Most of those dates though are surprisingly not expiration dates, except those on baby formula, food, and products. No baby products should be used after these dates. For all other foods though, as dates are not required by federal law, it's food producers who voluntarily determine all of these dates. And, dates have more to do with product quality and nothing to do with product safety. Many folks (nine out of 10 from one study) will trash items once they see that the product's date is past, but

needless to say, this practice could be wasting food. The following information gathered from The University of Maine Cooperative Extension, University of Georgia, the USDA, and other sources, tell us exactly what these dates and numbers describe. Known as "open dates," the most commonly used food date labels are: Sell by Date - This date label tells the store how long to keep an item on the shelf or on display for the best flavor and peak quality. It's not a safety date. You'll often find this label on foods such as dairy products, eggs, meat, poultry, seafood, bread and baked goods. Best if Used by (or Before) - This date label also has nothing to do with safety of the product, but again, indicates peak quality and best flavor. Use by - This date label also does not indicate safety, but stresses that this is the last date of peak quality. Freeze by - this date indicates when a product should be frozen to maintain peak quality. Again, it's not a purchase or safety date. Expiration date - These dates are rare in the U.S., except for the baby items. So if a date notes "expiration," simply do not use this product beyond this date. "Closed or coded dates" are all the extra numbers and letters found on shelf stable products, generally after one of the phrases above. This information tells manufacturers when and where a product was made, canned or boxed.

QUABOAG CURRENT

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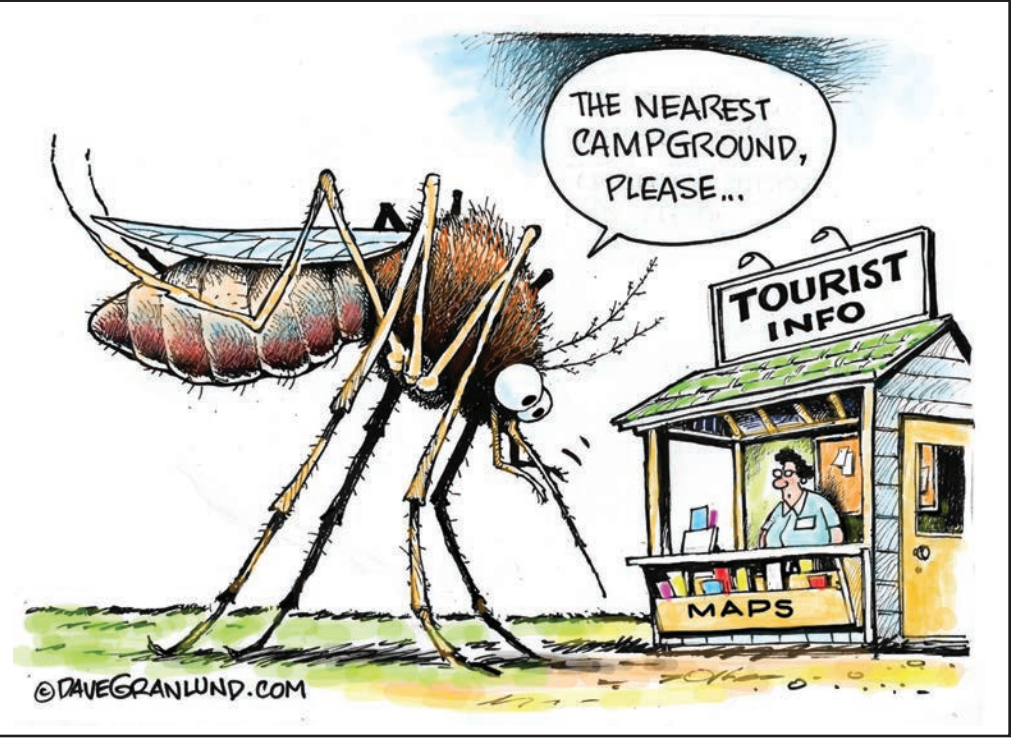
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- community -

Redcoats and Rebels



Re-enactors fired muskets during a battle in the lower fields by the Freeman Farm.



Drummers accompanied the militia to the battlefield



Militia members marched in formation while awaiting their orders.



Young children watched the re-enactors march, while holding their wooden muskets.

REBELS AND REDCOATS FROM PAGE 1

tisan craftspeople, tour the military encampments, listen to fife and drum music and talk with both re-enactors and Old Sturbridge Village's costumed historians.

Old Sturbridge Village is offering free admission to children (ages 17 and under) during the month of August with the purchase of an adult or senior general daytime admission ticket using code SUN26 at checkout on the website, www.osv.org.



Militia members prepared to face British troops on the battlefield.



British troops fired at the rebel militia.



Villagers are shown fleeing from the British troops during the battle re-enactment.

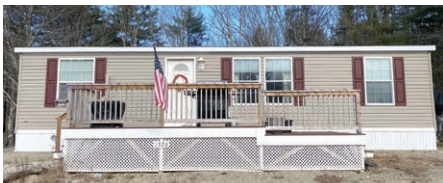


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- community -

PAVILION FROM PAGE 1

ization Committee to restart some of these community events to get people together once again.

The group consisted of Dennis Letendre, Joe Salvatore, Mike McQueston, Joe Chenevert, Andrea Letendre, Ryan Thompson, Jessica Monahan, Rory Fitzgerald, Jennifer Pollard and Debra Morrison. The group met monthly for two years and reestablished town events such as the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, Trunk or Treat, The Easter Egg Hunt, and Paint Night.

The group also installed trees around the common and fixed and repaired park benches.

In planning these events it became clear that the town lacked an outdoor shelter that could be used for concerts and gatherings. The idea of the pavilion took shape and the group created a sketch of a 20 foot by 40 foot pavilion in the style of an open red barn to fit with the farming character of the town.

The plan was sent out to an architect and blue prints were created and all necessary permission and permits were obtained to start the project.



Jason Ayer operated his backhoe to dig the trench for the underground electric



Ethan Salvatore, Dennis Letendre and John Head nailed boards together to create the beam to span the front opening of the pavilion.

Coming up with an idea and then actually making it become a reality are two different things. With no money to buy building supplies or to hire a builder, the pavilion project could have just been wishful thinking.

The community was very fortunate to have an anonymous donor come forward to fund the building supplies and Pathfinder Vocational agreed to use students in the carpentry program to build the pavilion. In 2024 Pathfinder students came out

and started to dig the foundation holes for the pavilion, which would be located on the old basketball court in the center of town overlooking the softball field.

The footprint was marked out and several holes were partially dug before the Pathfinder crew ran into issues with travel, timing, and supervision of the students. Pathfinder had to abandon the project.

The committee now had money for supplies but hiring a professional building crew would be too expensive so the pavilion project seemed to be stuck again. The group looked among themselves and realized that many of them were handy with the hammer.

Although it would take a while, they decided to build the pavilion purely with volunteer labor.

It was a 90 degree day on July 31, 2024 when the initial group of volunteers started to dig the 11 four foot deep holes needed for the concrete foundation footings.

Poor weather seemed to be the constant every time there was planned pavilion work. The group endured hot days, rainy days, and many finger-numbing cold days throughout the two years that it took to com-



Matt Koziol attached the blocking brackets between the beams.



Liam Letendre and Weston Letendre carried some lumber for the pavilion.

plete the pavilion.

The main group of volunteers that were there from start to finish and every work day were Dennis Letendre, John Head, and Joe Salvatore. However, just like in the old story of "Stone Soup," as the poles went up and the structure started to take shape more people came out to offer help and volunteer.

Matt Koziol, aka Farmer Matt, was very helpful in the early stages of construction providing both building knowledge and tools. Doug Waugh and Erik Lefevre were helpful in providing expertise on how to cut the rafters.

Construction and progress was slow at first and it was sometimes difficult

to get a work crew together due to work and family schedules.

Thinking about how nice it would be to have the finished pavilion available for the events planned for the 275th Anniversary in 2026, the group put out a call out for more volunteers to speed things up. Rick Forshay joined the work crew and brought with him years of carpentry and construction experience along with many helpful tools to give the pavilion work crew a push to the finish line.

Forshay also brought a cheerful attitude, funny quips and a sense of humor, which helped the work crew morale on those cold days in March.

Other volunteers who

stepped forward to help to get the job done include Dick Reavey, Jason Ayer, Brian Boucher, Maddie Gaumond, Rory Fitzgerald, Weston and Liam Letendre.

Doug Morrison painted the pavilion in classic barn red with white trim. The colors and location of the pavilion ties in nicely with the other town buildings and character of the town.

On some of the last big work weekends, Jessica Bennett and Dody Ayer cooked lunch for the crew and set up a whole buffet in the town hall that created the feel of an Amish barn raising event.

The last piece of the pavilion construction was the installation of the metal roof. Walking out on the slippery metal roof to fasten down the panels was not safe so Dennis Letendre brought in the old fire truck ladder to walk up and had the job of capping off the pavilion project.

With a few more trim pieces and the completion of electric work, the pavilion was finally done on June 29, just in time for its inaugural event, the Air Force Heritage Band of America Concert on July 5.

The group still plans to add some finishing touches to the inside of the pavilion but all are relieved it's done and all are proud of this community achievement.

The pavilion was built, "like a tank," and in the end the volunteers built it better than anyone else could have, and were certainly cheaper.

Not only does the pavilion look amazing and I enjoy seeing it every time I drive by it, I met and got to know the volunteers that came out to help. The building has enormous potential for hosting all sorts of town events from movie nights, outdoor concerts, crafters, watching softball games, exercise groups, story hours and more. The New Braintree Pavilion stands as a testament to what a town can accomplish with people who want to make a difference and care about their community.



Rick Forshay and Dennis Letendre were not afraid of heights.



The completed New Braintree Pavilion.

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
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60					61					62			
63					64				65				
66					67				68				

CLUES ACROSS
1. Bleated
6. Snakelike fish
9. Database management system
13. Social evolution
14. American rocker Grohl
15. Greek personification of compassion
16. Negatives
17. Rescued
18. Self-immolation by fire ritual
19. Assigns tasks
21. Popular type of cigar
22. Discounts
23. The whole quantity
24. New York Giants legend
25. Indicates before
28. Lentils
29. Extremely angry
31. Body part
33. "North Star State"
36. David __, US playwright

38. Lower and raise one's head
39. Private rendezvous
41. In a way, improved
44. A place to play
45. Astronomical period of 18 years
46. Automobile
48. Something you can take
49. A radio band
51. Jaws of a voracious animal
52. Short-billed rails
54. Chinese province
56. Shameless
60. Horizontal passage from the surface into a mine
61. Indian respectful titles
62. Fail to entertain
63. Dried-up
64. Central Utah city
65. Southern U.S.
66. German river
67. Necessary for breathing
68. Put into play

CLUES DOWN
1. Curved segment
2. Wings
3. Yellowish volatile liquid
4. Makes less severe
5. Debit note
6. Overhang
7. The nights before
8. Type of light
9. Lacking enthusiasm
10. Tattle
11. Some is "heavy"
12. One who is canonized
14. Indicates date and place of writing
17. "Peace" in Arabic
20. "Olaf" actor Josh
21. Fragmented rock
23. They __
25. Advanced degree
26. Backside
27. Influential architect and design couple
29. An act of undue intimacy

30. Words from which later words are derived
32. 10 meters
34. Neither
35. Fungal sacs
37. The law of God revealed to Moses
40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
42. A promise
43. Challenges
47. British Air Aces
49. Large bank
50. Served as an omen
52. Cavalry sword
53. Vaccine developer
55. Belgian WW2 resistance leader Jules
56. Italian Seaport
57. Hip joint
58. __ Clapton, musician
59. Insect repellent
61. Constrictor snake
65 "The First State" (abbr.)

SPORTS

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Field hockey summer campaign continues



SOUTH HADLEY – The summer field hockey program for high school students, hosted by South Hadley High School, continued last Wednesday with multiple teams in action for short games. Quaboag has been a regular participant in the summer league for the past few years.



Josie Hancock looks to drag the ball toward the goal.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Alexis Gauthier gets ready to send the ball up the field.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Ryan Sunshine socks a free kick away.

CF Arbor reaches semifinals

SOUTH HADLEY – In last week's PVSSL summer playoffs, the CF Arbor Men's soccer team, which was the No. 4 seed in the playoffs, was able to advance into the semifinals and took on Mt. Carmel, which defeated CF by a score of 2-0, ending CF Arbor's chances of reaching the championship game this year. Mt. Carmel would capture this year's men's championship.

Valley Wheel regular season concludes

WILBRAHAM – The regular season has concluded for the Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League, one of several adult baseball leagues that plays in the region.

This year, with play concluding this past Sunday, the Angels were able to finish the regular season with the top record, going 11-4. The Angels matched the Twins with the same record, but won two out of three head-to-head for the tiebreaker

advantage in the playoffs. The Orioles finished third and the Cubs overcame the A's by tiebreaker for the final of four playoff spots.

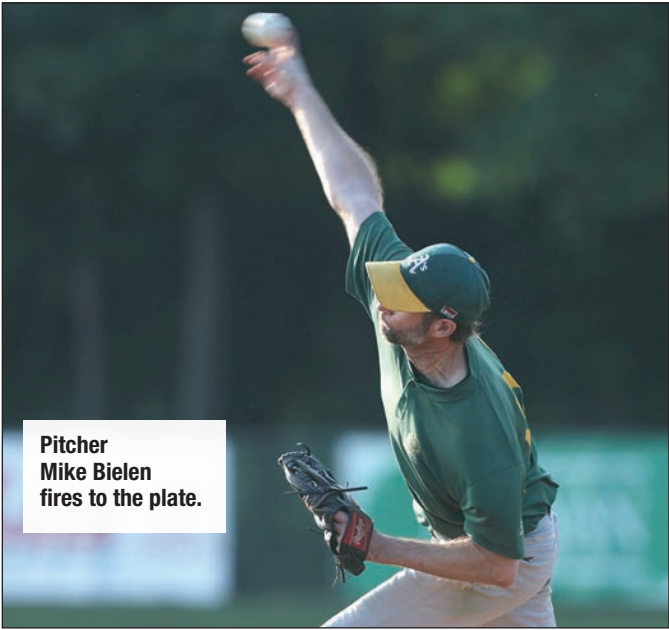
The semifinals for the league are set for this Sunday at Spec Pond in Wilbraham. In the first matchup, the No. 2 Twins host the No. 3 Orioles at 2:30 p.m. Then, the top-seeded Angels face No. 4 Cubs at 6 p.m. The championship game will be held on Sunday, Aug. 16 at Spec Pond at 3 p.m.



Adam Strain fields a grounder.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Ken Schubert heads into second base.



Pitcher Mike Bielen fires to the plate.



Nate Woodland makes a catch for the A's during regular season action in the Valley Wheel



Mike Burgos pitches in a game for the Orioles on July 26.



Troy Remillard outplays an opponent for the ball.



Owen Dieterle heads up the field.



Tyler Lewis advances up the field.



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-community -

Go/Baduk club kicks off at library on Aug. 11

WEST BROOKFIELD – All are welcome to check out the West Brookfield Go Club, held at the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library, 3 West Main St., on Tuesdays, Aug. 11 and 25 from 5-8 p.m. on the second floor. Go (also known as Baduk or Weiqi) is a 4,000-year-old board game of strategy, capture and territory. It is simpler to learn than chess, yet offers endless possibilities. The West Brookfield Go Club is a relaxed, friendly space dedicated to playing, teaching and sharing the love of this ancient game right here in the Quaboag Valley. All boards, stones and learning materials are provided. All of the club’s calendar details, meeting reminders and event RSVPs are coordinated through its official Facebook group, “West Brookfield Go Club.” RSVPing helps club coordinators set up enough tables ahead of time. Go can be played by children, teens, adults and seniors alike. Minors should be accompanied by an adult.

-public safety -
New Braintree Police Log

During the week of July 20-27, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 24 building/property checks, 22 directed/area patrols, six radar assignments, four emergency 911 calls, one safety hazard, one larceny/theft/shoplifting, three suspicious activities and three motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Thursday, July 23
6 p.m. Suspicious Activity, West Road, Spoken To

Friday, July 24
7:55 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Brookfield Road, Patient Refusal

Saturday, July 25
7:40 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Brookfield Road, Patient Refusal
10:50 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Moore Road, Negative Contact

Sunday, July 26
4:59 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Brookfield Road, Patient Refusal
3:36 p.m. Suspicious Activity, West Road, Officer Handled

Tuesday, July 21
5:49 a.m. Suspicious Activity, West Brookfield Road, Transported to Hospital
10:17 a.m. Larceny/Theft/Shoplifting, Gilbertville Road, Officer Handled
5:16 p.m. 911 Safety Hazard, Gilbertville Road, Services Rendered

Wednesday, July 22
9:03 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Trans-



Left to right, State Police Sgt. Daniel Riopel and K9 Benji, Trooper Nicholas Latino and K9 O’Lana, Trooper Joshua Lemay and K9 Spencer, Trooper Jose Cabrera and K9 Corby, and Sgt. Gregory Spahl and K9 Ember were recently certified as ignitable liquid or explosive detection K9 teams. Benji, O’Lana, and Ember will join their handlers on the Fire Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office, while Corby and Spencer are headed to the Bomb Squad.

K9 teams certified in accelerant, explosive detection

BRIDGEWATER – Nine Labrador retrievers and their handlers were certified as explosive detection or ignitable liquid detection K9 teams following an intensive State Police training program based at the Department of Fire Services’ Bridgewater campus. Two of the dogs – Corby and Spencer, who also goes by “Ancho” – will join Massachusetts State Police Troopers Jose Cabrera and Joshua Lemay on the Statewide Bomb Squad. K9s Ember, O’Lana, and Benji, who is also known as “Indy,” will take their place on the Fire Investigation Unit with Sgt. Gregory Spahl, Trooper Nicholas Latino, and Sgt. Daniel Riopel. Four more explosive detection K9 teams from the Falmouth Police Department, Hudson Police Department, UMass Amherst Police Department, and the Springfield Arson & Bomb Squad were also certified. All nine teams underwent more than three months of training by State Police personnel assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office. That process included imprinting on the odors of ignitable liquids such as gasoline or explosive substances such as black powder and then using a food reward system that motivates them to seek it out. To date, 28 classes of K9 teams have graduated from the program, which trains local teams in addition to those on the State Police Bomb Squad and Fire Investigation Unit. The nine teams took their final Odor Recognition Tests under the supervision of State Police chemists. After successfully completing the tests, each team was certified as an explosive detection or ignitable liquid detection K9 team by the New England State Police Administrators Conference. They received their certification at a ceremony crowded with local and state public safety officials. Also on hand for the ceremony was Dr. Mary Labato, a veterinarian who worked closely with the program and its canine graduates for years prior to her recent retirement. Detective Lieutenant Marc Reidy, commander of the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit, and members of the training program presented her with a certificate of appreciation and a mounted photo of State Police K9s and handlers in gratitude for her service. Officials also thanked the Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association, which generously sponsored K9s Ancho and Indy in addition to many other dogs who have worked with troopers assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office through the decades. On their own, the K9s can’t solve an arson crime or determine the nature of an explosive substance. Their handlers, who are experienced State Police investigators, must use their skills and training to evaluate all the facts and circumstances of an incident in partnership with local police and fire personnel. But the dogs’ powerful noses can identify trace amounts of evidence that can be sent for testing at the State Police Crime Laboratory and provide additional direction for an investigation.

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- Works collectively with various municipal departments ranging from School, Police, Fire, and Highway Departments as well as the Board of Health to ensure effective implementation of goals, training, emergency management, and planning.
- Acts as a liaison between the Town and relevant federal and state agencies, notably the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).
- Serves as an advisor regarding preparation for potential hazards, response to disasters, and post-event recovery.
- Performs other related job duties as required.

Please apply by submitting a letter of interest and resume to the Select Board Office, 23 Main Street, Brimfield, MA 01010 or by email to selectboard@brimfieldma.org

Vendors wanted for Sept. Flea Market

WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, 36 North Main St., has been hosting their Flea Market on the town common for more than 50 years. This year the Flea Market will be held on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (vendor check-in 6:30-8:30 a.m.). Sellers of all kinds are welcome – flea folk, antique dealers, crafters, product vendors and those emptying out basements and attics. No food vendors, please. Spaces are available for \$40 for a 20 x 20 grassy spot. Vendors must bring their own tables and tents. The church will sponsor a food tent with grilled food, cold drinks and sweet treats. Email to fccofwb@flea-market@gmail.com for an application or call Karen at 508-801-7692.

INTERVIEWS FROM PAGE 3

of a job description for a Highway Department administrative clerk.

Appointment
The board appointed Kevin Erkkila as an alternate Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Committee member.

Administrative items
The board approved one day pouring licenses for Oakholm Brewery for Aug. 8 and Aug. 15, along with Deep Roots Distillery for Aug. 15.

The board approved invoices for Community Development Block Grant for fiscal year 2022/2023, Partlow Pay App and Weston and Sampson.

The board addressed an open meeting law complaint filed on June 23 by Chris Kelleher, approved a book donation for the Planning Board, approved the minutes of April 22, May 6 and May 21 and acknowledged EMS and Police Department reports. The board also approved the state primary warrant for Sept. 1.

COMMUNITY FROM PAGE 4

See the trend? These dates indicate peak quality, not safety. Again, food must be handled properly, but overall, a past date does not mean that the food is bad.

So if we are not going by these dates, what do we as consumers do about safety? The USDA and others urge folks to use their senses.

If it smells bad, looks bad, feels bad (slimy), toss it. Thus the saying, “When in doubt, throw it out!”

Additionally, Food-safety.gov has information to help us stay safe. Their Food Keeper page and app give some safety guidelines.

While using this information, there are folks deemed as “People at Risk” including children under age 5, folks over age 65, sick people or those having treatments like chemotherapy and pregnant women. Here safety is imperative as these folks have a greater chance of becoming seriously ill by poor food safety.

But using this new information, let’s stop food waste and save our dollars.

B	A	A	E	D		E	E	L		D	B	M	S
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29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	31 Base Price \$31.50	32 Base Price \$32.00
33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
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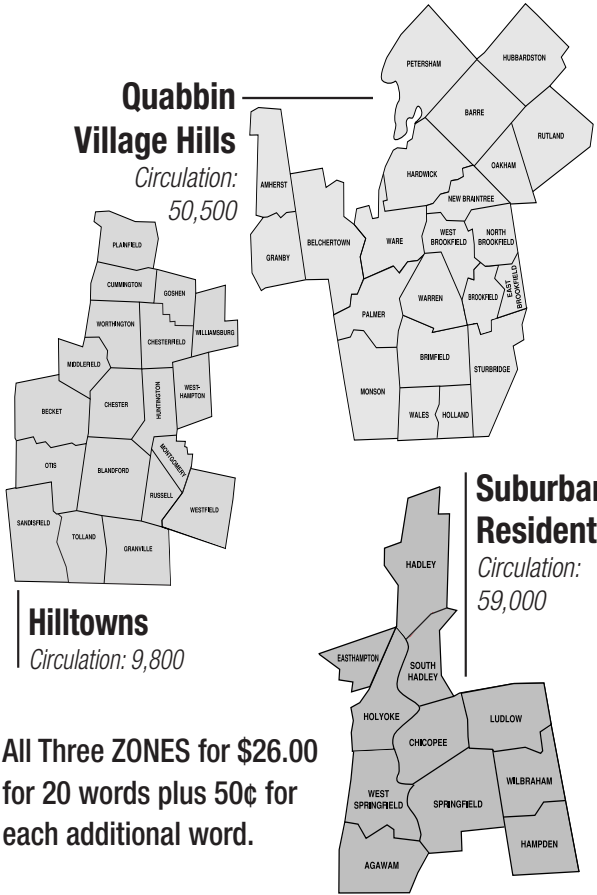
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