

QUABOAG

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Planning Board grants approval for manufacturing building

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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STURBRIDGE – The Planning Board continued a public hearing from July 28 to review an application for site plan approval for Old Road Realty LLC, located at 660 Main St.

The applicant is looking

to construct a 40,150 square foot manufacturing building with ancillary office space with associated site improvements. The applicant also requested a special permit due to the increase in lot coverage.

At the Aug. 11 continuation, Town Planner Jean Bubon presented updated stormwater and groundwa-

ter protection district information and an updated site plan.

She said the Planning Department also received the record survey, the traffic evaluation and an updated peer review. The plans have been revised based on comments received from the Fire Department.

Bubon said the applicant

has submitted a waiver request for the landscape architect stamp.

“All the missing information has been provided and that’s been reviewed by staff and by the peer reviewer,” she said. “We do find that all requirements have been met at this time.”

Bubon said she recommended the board vote to

grant the waiver for the landscape architect stamp. She said she believes the landscaping plan submitted by the applicant exceeds the intent of the bylaw.

She said the total landscaping plan is about 1,600 square feet and includes 18 street trees, as well as perennials and shrubs, which is “above and beyond” what is

required.

Bubon also recommended the board grant the special permit for the groundwater district as required.

“I do believe they’re making sufficient improvements to the stormwater management plan and that the groundwater protection dis-

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Here's Boomer!

Boomer of the Springfield Thunderbirds arrived at the East Brookfield Public Library this past week.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Thunderbird mascot arrives at EBPL

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library had a special guest this past week in the form of a big bird.

It was Boomer of the Springfield Thunderbirds,

who was ready to hang out at the library for reading, games, and pictures. Dozens of kids accompanied by adults lined up to take pictures with the Thunderbirds mascot. If kids participated in the summer reading program, they could stay for the closing raffle.

Boomer stuck around and would hang out with all his friends at the library.

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BCC hosts Back to School Bash

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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BROOKFIELD – The Brookfield Congregational Church held their annual Back to School Bash this past Sunday.

The event brings people of the congregation closer together during a celebration prior to the start of the upcoming school year. Music Minister Reagan Paras says this event helps students get started for the new school year and helps revitalize the church.

Prior to the bash, parents and children participated in praise and worship music at the church. According to Paras, having moments like singing together brings people close together.

“It’s a blessing to see,” Paras said. “A response to the growth of youth in the church.”

Organizing the event was Faith Formation Director Colleen Fipps. The Back to School Bash has been going on for the last five years and is the start of school and Bible study.

The amount of youth participation has grown gradually over the years. There is a teen youth group that meets periodically, and



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

The Brookfield Congregational Church hosted its annual Back to School Bash this past Sunday in the backyard of the church. Food was ready to be served.

the church provides Sunday school for elementary and middle school kids. The church provides a nursery for younger kids during services.

Fipps wants to offer more events in the future at the church for both adults and kids. While hosting events such as the Back to School Bash, what sends a powerful message is seeing three generations of a family attend-

ing the same service together.

Fipps is trying to bring new ideas to the Brookfield Congregational Church. Having events at the church helps kids get back to church and start developing relationships with their community.

The Back to School Bash took place right after service in the backyard of the Brookfield Congregation-

al Church. The event featured various activities for kids and families to enjoy. Churchgoers brought either an appetizer or a dessert to share. Delicious hot dogs and hamburgers were being cooked on the grills outside.

For entertainment, there were lawn games such as cornhole available. For the

See BACK TO SCHOOL PAGE 5

Dog Days of Summer

Event benefitted Second Chance Animal Services

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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BROOKFIELD – Oakholm Brewing Company hosted the Dog Days of Summer this past weekend bringing all dog lovers and four legged friends together.

The proceeds for this event help support Second Chance Animal Services, who brought their mobile adoption unit featuring five dogs seeking a new home.

Guests were welcome to bring their furry pals for this fun event. There were dogs everywhere in the beer garden. Organizing the event is Jesslyn Thrasher, who describes Oakholm



Dozens of guests brought their furry friends as they checked out the mobile adoption unit.

TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Brewery as a “dog friendly brewery.”

Thrasher was in charge running a tie-dye station for kids and adults. There were youth and adult sizes available for purchase and for colorful tie-dye. This DIY activity had a great turnout with both youth and adults getting crafty with their tie-dye shirts.

For the Second Chance Animal Services’ mobile adoption unit, Thrasher

See DOG DAYS PAGE 9



Callie, a 2-year-old English Springer Spaniel, enjoyed hanging out at Oakholm Brewery during Dog Days of Summer.

Fire Dept. personnel earn promotions

Bessette appointed to Assistant Chief

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Fire Chief Darin Anderson and the Board of Selectmen formally recognized two members of the Fire Department with a promotion and an appointment.

At the Aug. 12 meeting, Shaun Adams was the first member of the department recognized. He has been running the department’s state program and writing grants in order to purchase supplies for youth and senior citizens.

Adams is a full-time paramedic in Brookfield and a call firefighter.

“Shaun’s been instrumental,” Anderson said.

Anderson said Adams will be promoted to First Lieutenant of Training. He will be responsible for all

new recruits and preparing them to respond to calls and fight fires.

Adams was pinned by his wife, Anne, who is also a firefighter and the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency director.

Anderson also recognized Thomas Bessette and asked the board to appoint him to the position of Assistant Chief.

Bessette has served 18 years in the fire service and is an acting captain at Logan Airport.

“Without him, we could not have gotten done all the mandated NFPA testing... he does a ton of work,” Anderson said.

Bessette’s wife, Natalia, pinned him with his new badge.

Moment of silence
Board of Selectmen Vice-Chair Jamie Gilman said the community lost two of its distinguished

See N BROOKFIELD PAGE 9

- community -

Haston Free Public Library lists upcoming events

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library, 161 North Main St., lists upcoming events for the month of August.

For more information or to register for any of these events, stop by or call the library at 508-867-0208 or email hastonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com.

Video Game Freeplay

Children are invited to celebrate the end of the “Level Up” Summer Reading Program on Saturday, Aug. 23 from 10 a.m. 1 p.m. with OneUp Games. There will be both modern and retro game consoles for everyone to play.

Summer Reading prizes will be drawn at this event and game-themed snacks will be served.

Registration is recommended but not required. To register for this event, stop by or call the library, or email blamb@cwmar.org.

This program is funded in part by a grant from the North Brookfield Cultural Council, a local agency, supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Book Group

The Haston Free Public Library Book Group will discuss “This Other Eden” by Paul Harding on Tuesday, Aug. 26 at 7 p.m.

Adult Craft Night

Make floral apothecary lights at the Adult Craft Night event on Thursday, Aug. 28 at 5 p.m. Registration is required.

Adult D&D interest meetup

The library is gauging interest and availability to explore the possibility of starting an adult Dungeons & Dragons or tabletop gaming group at the library. An interest meetup will be held on Saturday, Aug. 30 at 10:30 a.m.

Tabletop Gaming at the Library

Young adults are welcome to join the Tabletop Gaming group on Wednesdays at 2 p.m. No experience is necessary.

Dungeon World

Adults and teens are welcome to embark on an epic adventure playing Dungeon World, a beginner-friendly roleplaying game on Thursdays from 5:30-7:30 p.m.



The Chain will perform the final concert of the 2025 Summer Concert Series on Sunday, Aug. 24 at Powder Mill Park.

Final concert of summer series is this Sunday

SPENCER – The Spencer Parks & Recreation Commission’s 2025 Summer Concert Series concludes from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 24 at Powder Mill Park, corner Smithville and Meadow Roads, with a rain-out make up performance by The Chain.

The Chain is a musical group that has developed a sound that is fresh and new, yet very easy to love. Led by the dynamic presence and

powerful voice of Alison McTavish, The Chain has developed a set of music that is an eclectic mixture of cover songs.

Rich three-part harmonies, a dynamic rhythm section, great musicianship and of course, Alison, combine to make The Chain one of the most exciting new bands in central New England.

The concert series is proudly sponsored by Cor-

nerstone Bank. Serving Worcester County, Cornerstone Bank’s local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch.

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St. Joseph’s hosts chicken BBQ and family picnic

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Blessed Carlo Acutis Parish, St. Joseph Church, 296 North Main St., will host a Chicken BBQ & Family Picnic on Saturday, Sept. 6 and Sunday, Sept. 7.

All are welcome to come join parish members for plenty of fair food on Saturday evening and a delicious BBQ chicken dinner served on Sunday from 12:30-1:30 p.m. The cost of the chicken dinner is \$15 for adults and \$8 for chil-

dren ages 12 and under.

Music will be provided by DJ Richard “Tabby” LeBlanc on Saturday and Sunday. There will also be assorted raffles including a scratch ticket raffle which features the grand prize of a book (50) \$30 lottery scratch tickets, and lastly a delicious bake sale.

On Saturday, the Family Picnic begins on the church lawn at 5 p.m. after the 4 p.m. Mass. Music by DJ Richard “Tabby” LeBlanc, lawn games, fair style food,

and plenty of raffles will be offered from 5-7 p.m.

On Sunday, there will be music by DJ Richard “Tabby” LeBlanc, lawn games, bake sale, and plenty of raffles. Chicken dinners will be served (eat in and take out) from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Music and raffles will be available both days. For chicken dinner tickets and more information, please call the parish office Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at 508-867-6469.

Register for Rotary’s annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K & Fun Walk

STURBRIDGE – The Rotary Club of Sturbridge has announced that pre-registration is now open for its popular TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K, and Fun Walk, which is slated to return on Sunday, Oct. 26, according to club president and race director Klaus Hachfeld.

“To pre-register for this year’s event, just go to getmeregistered.com, and type ‘Sturbridge’ in the search field in the upper right-hand corner,” said Hachfeld. Participants who pre-register by Oct. 21 will get a free 2025 TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K T-shirt.

All activities begin at the OSV Education Center on Old Sturbridge Village Road (not to be confused with Old Sturbridge Village Academy at the main entrance to the village). Park-

ing will be available in the Education Center lot.

The family-friendly event offers two timed races, including a 5K Trail Run & Fun Walk, and a 1K Pre-Teen Run. In the spirit of the season, participants are encouraged to come in costume. The event also includes free children’s game starting at 9 a.m. at the Education Center.

The timed 1K Pre-Teen Run (\$20 registration) starts at 9:15 a.m. This is for the 12 and under crowd, and the course is accessible for anyone with mobility challenges.

The timed 5K Trail Run (\$35 registration) & Fun Walk (\$30 registration) will start at 10 a.m. using Old Sturbridge Village Road and the Arbutus Park Trail in the Leadmine Mountain Wildlife Conservation

Lands. An awards ceremony will follow at 11:15 a.m. starting with a competition for best Halloween costume for all registered runners and walkers. Judging will be by popular choice.

On-site registration will also be available starting at 8:30 a.m. on the day of the race.

The Trek Sturbridge Halloween 5K and Fun Walk is a Sturbridge Rotary Club fundraiser, with all profits going to the organization’s community needs projects.

For additional information, or to sign on as an event sponsor, email the race director at laserklus@gmail.com. Or visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club website at <https://sturbridgerotary.com>.

Rep. Berthiaume lists office hours

State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume and Chief of Staff, Donna, invite constituents and town officials to meet them to express any concerns, ideas or issues that they may need assistance with. People may call Donna at 774-402-4742 if they

would like a private meeting.

Office hour schedules include Tuesday, Sept. 9 town of West Brookfield, at the Senior Center from 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. and town of Brookfield at the Town Hall, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.; on Wednesday, Sept.

10 town of East Brookfield at the Senior Center from 11:15 a.m.-noon; and on Thursday, Sept. 11 town of New Braintree at the Town Hall from 10-10:45 a.m.; town of North Brookfield Town Hall from 11 a.m.-noon.

Methodist Church Thrift Store open on select Saturdays

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Thrift Store of the George Whitefield United Methodist Church is open the first and third Saturdays of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at 33 West Main St.

Many lovely summer wardrobe selections are now available for women, men and children, as well as other seasonal updates to inventory. The Thrift Store offers quality used clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, décor, picture frames, children’s toys, books and DVDs at bargain prices.

Donations of gently used items are appreciated and may be arranged by contacting Jane Dolan at 508-867-5571. Proceeds from sales support the church’s ministries and missions.

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- community -

Workshop13 presents 7th Annual Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition on August 23

WARE – The seventh annual juried Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition opens on Saturday, Aug. 23 with a reception from 1-4 p.m.

Awards will be announced at 3 p.m., including a \$1,000 Best in Show Award. This annual exhibition of realism is held in the unique Grand Hall gallery of Workshop13, a non-profit cultural arts and learning center located at 13 Church St.

The 7th Annual Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition will be on display from Aug. 23 to Sept. 7 and can be visited on Fridays from 4-7 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. This year's exhibition gathers more than 100 works by artists throughout the northeastern U.S.

The juror for the 7th annual NEFAE is David Gray. Gray's award-winning works have been covered by major art publications including Southwest Art, Art of the West, and American Art Collector. His signature style reveals a personal and



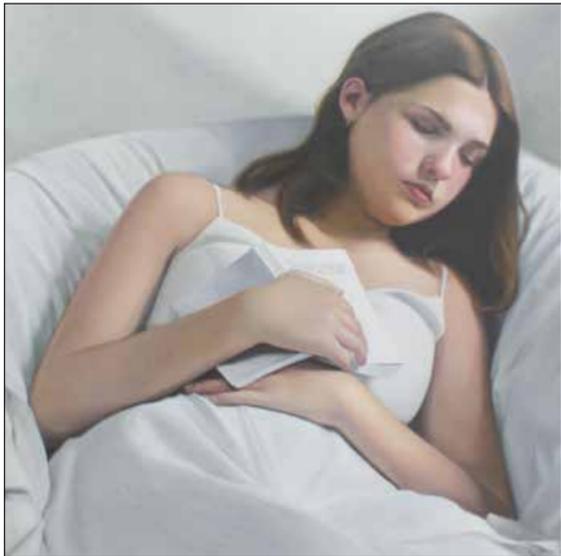
This photo was taken from the opening reception of the 6th annual Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition.

contemporary expression of beauty and order which pays homage to Western European Classical Tradition in its craftsmanship.

About Workshop13
Workshop13 Cultural Arts and Learning Center is

a rural non-profit arts innovator located in Ware, and devoted to increasing the appreciation and accessibility of the arts, strengthening

the creative life of our community through instruction, collaborations, and arts-based initiatives.



"Yet We Sleep, We Dream" by Eliza Moser was the Best in Show award-winner from the 6th annual Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition.



"The Noble Profession" by Jeff Kern was the The Beck Still Life Award winner from the 6th annual Northeast Fine Arts Exhibition.

Second Chance seeks clothing and linens donations

EAST BROOKFIELD – Cleaning out your closets? You can now bring used clothing donations to Second Chance Animal Services East Brookfield or North Brookfield locations.

Second Chance has partnered with St. Pauly Textile Inc. to provide a wood-frame clothing drop-off shed for community use. The sheds are designed to give community members a uniquely clean, convenient, and well-cared-for option to donate their used linens and clothing to.

St. Pauly Textile Inc. partners with businesses and various organizations

to distribute donated items both here in the U.S. and worldwide, where they're ultimately re-worn by people who need them. Second Chance receives funding for donated clothing and additionally has the option to use donated items like towels and blankets to care for pets.

With over 1,600 clothing drop-off sheds in place, St. Pauly Textile Inc. collects over 175,000 pounds of clothing a day and estimates that this clothing ends up in 44 different countries (including the U.S.) yearly. In 2024, the company was able to help keep over 64 million

articles of clothing out of landfills, which clothed an estimated 7.8 million people worldwide.

The company was founded in 1996 and is an A+ rated member of the Better Business Bureau.

Accepted items: clothing, shoes, belts, purses, towel, blankets, sheets, curtains, pillowcases, and stuffed animals.

The donation sheds are located at the Second Chance Adoption Center, 111 Young Road, East Brookfield and the North Brookfield Community Veterinary Hospital, 372 North Main St., North Brookfield.

W Brookfield Farmers Market held on Wednesdays

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Farmers Market is held on Wednesdays from 3-6 p.m., rain or shine, throughout the spring, summer and early fall.

The 2025 season the market will feature 17 vendors with a wide array of locally grown and made goods including three new vendors sure to please the palate.

The West Brookfield Farmers Market is held every Wednesday afternoon from 3-6 p.m. on the common starting on June 4 through Oct. 8, rain or shine.

Explore Lake Wallace with the Quabbin Photo Group

BELCHERTOWN – The Quabbin Photo Group invites the public to an inspiring evening on Monday, Aug. 25, at 7 p.m. at the Belchertown Recreation Department, 66 State St., that will feature retired Belchertown educator and environmental advocate Louise Levy.

Levy is well known in the community as one of the visionaries behind the creation of the Lake Wallace Recreational Area (www.belchertown.org/lakewallace), a scenic spot tucked away in the heart of Belchertown. During her career as an educator, she brought countless students into the outdoors, using hands-on ecology lessons to help them connect with the natural world.

Today, as a leader of the Friends of Lake Wallace, she continues to champion its environmental and educational importance.

At this special program, Levy will share her extensive knowledge of the lake – its history, its diverse plant and animal life, and why it's such a treasure for photographers and nature lovers alike. Following her talk, members of the Quabbin Photo Group will present a showcase of their favorite landscape and wildlife images taken at Lake Wallace,

revealing the area's beauty through the eyes of skilled local photographers.

Adding to the evening's appeal, the lake itself is located directly behind the meeting venue, giving attendees the opportunity to step outside and explore the area for themselves after the presentation.

Founded by renowned nature photographer Les Campbell, the Quabbin Photo Group was created to celebrate the natural beauty of the Quabbin Region.

The group holds monthly meetings open to the public, offering educational programs, guest speakers, and opportunities for photographers of all levels to share their work. Membership helps support QPG's mission of fostering appreciation for the region's landscapes and wildlife.

This free event welcomes everyone, whether you're an experienced photographer, a casual nature enthusiast, or simply curious about one of Belchertown's hidden gems.

For more information about the program, contact Program Chair Ed Comeau at ecomeau@comeauphotography.com. To learn more about the Quabbin Photo Group, reach out to President Mark Lindhult at mlindhult@gmail.com.

Close of Concerts on the Common to be held Saturday, Aug. 30

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Concerts on the Common will be held on select Saturdays on the town common from 6-8 p.m. The final concert of the season will be held on Aug. 30 and features the Superchargers.

These concerts are free, but tips for the band and free will donations toward future events are appreciated.

Food trucks will be available, or people are welcome to bring their own.

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- opinion -



Rust is no joke

This time of year I always get a few questions from gardeners who wonder what type of disease is afflicting their treasured hollyhocks.

Sadly, it's affecting mine too. Read on for more information on this malady.

Two years ago I planted Hollyhock seeds indoors. The plants grew wonderfully that first year with nice deep green basal foliage.

Being biennial in nature, year two is when they came into their glory with incredibly beautiful pink flowers on towering six to seven

foot spikes. Now it's year three—a gift when biennials are concerned.

The plants started out fine and then I noticed a few raised orange-brown spots on the leaves. By season's end, the plants are pale in color and covered with the rusty orange spots.

Most of the lower foliage has been destroyed and has dropped to the ground.

My hollyhocks are suffering from a fungal problem by the name of rust. It first appears as waxy orange blisters, known as "pustules" on the undersides of

the lower most foliage. On the surface of the leaves small, orange-yellow spots form.

Hollyhock rust rarely kills its host, but it can make plants look quite unsightly. In a severe infestation like mine, premature leaf drop occurs.

Next spring, if I dare to grow hollyhocks again, I'll have to do it in a different part of my landscape and escape any spores that the soil is harboring.

The best way to control hollyhock rust is to remove infected leaves and discard them in the trash. The quicker you act, the better.

Other members of the hollyhock family (Malvaceae) are prone to this disease as well, so scour your perennial bed for spotted leaves on Lavatera and Malva (Tall Mallow and Musk Mallow) and dispose of them.

A common weed that goes by the name "cheese weed" or "cheeses" is also a Malva and likewise is

susceptible. Cut down on the chance of infestation next year by removing all foliage and debris from these plants prior to winter. Even go as far as to remove the bark mulch beneath them to further reduce the spore population. Proper cultural practices also make a difference in combating hollyhock rust and most plant diseases. First, give perennials adequate space from one another to allow for good air flow.

In the case of hollyhocks, I'd recommend about 18 inches. We can't control when and how often it rains, but when we supply the moisture timing and application count. Water around the base of the plants, without it touching the foliage, and do so early in the morning so that leaves have a chance to dry before nightfall.

Apply new bark mulch each spring to cover spores that may be waiting in the soil. And lastly, when plant-

ing new seedlings, locate them as far away as possible from previously grown plants even if they didn't have a serious infestation.

Although I've never tried this myself, I have read a few testimonials from gardeners who had luck applying corn meal to their soil in an effort to control soil borne fungal diseases such as rust. Reportedly it stimulates beneficial organisms that feed on pathogens. Two pounds per one hundred square feet is recommended.

Even if it doesn't work, it probably won't hurt!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33

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.

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Why hasn't my Social Security benefit changed because I am still working?

Dear Rusty:
I am currently receiving Social Security benefits while continuing to work full time.

There are no restrictions on my wage earnings because I waited until full retirement age before beginning benefits. However, I was also told that my benefit amount would be reviewed each year if my current earnings were higher than past earnings.

That held true for the first two years, but has yet to be adjusted for 2025. I thought it might be because of HR 82, which does not impact me directly, but I think it may be the reason my payment has not yet been changed. Has enough time passed so I should contact SSA now to see if this is the case?

Signed:
Waiting Anxiously

Dear Waiting:
If you are already collecting benefits, Social Security reviews your earnings each year to see if your more recent earnings are high enough to warrant an increase in your monthly benefit. They do this automatically, after they get your most recent earnings data from the IRS and they typically do that review by the end of the third quarter of each year. If a higher benefit is indicated, they will increase your monthly amount and pay you retroactively to the beginning of the year for any difference in your benefit.

SSA has, indeed, been vigorously working on changes resulting from HR82 (the Social Security Fairness Act), which may have affected the timeliness of their review of your recent earnings. However, I suspect that is not why your SS benefit has not yet changed. More likely, it has to do with the fact that your past earnings have been adjusted for inflation, which is a normal part of Social Security's process when calculating

your benefit amount.

Your earnings for each year in your lifetime up to age 60 were adjusted for inflation when you originally claimed SS and your recent earnings would need to be higher than the inflation-adjusted amounts used by SS when you claimed. They use the 35 highest earnings years adjusted for inflation over your lifetime to calculate your benefit and inflation has a substantial effect. For example, \$50,000 earned in 1990 would require over \$100,000 in earnings today to cause an increase in your benefit. Thus, you cannot go by the actual dollars you earned in earlier years, because SS uses inflated amounts to calculate your benefit.

In any case, if you believe that the Social Security Administration neglected reviewing your earnings from last year or in any year since you claimed, you can make an appointment to review that with them by calling 1-800-772-1213. SSA typically does such appointments over the phone, so you likely won't need to make a personal visit to your local SSA office to investigate this.

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.



Protect yourself from heat-related illnesses

Even before the official start of summer, many of us were feeling the heat. Dangerous temperature records were set and we have a long, hot summer ahead.

Our bodies are resilient, but heat is dangerous even to the fittest person. Heat-related illnesses are the main reason emergency room visits spike in the summer.

Let's review the signs of heat-related illnesses and review safety tips. These are especially important if you have a young child or senior in your care, as they are most susceptible.

Types of heat-related illnesses

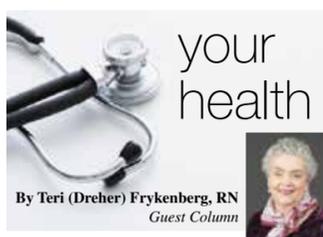
We're designed to maintain an internal body temperature a few degrees above or below 98.6° F. Heat-related illness sets in when the body isn't able to rid itself of excess heat at a fast enough rate.

When the body starts to overheat, blood vessels get bigger and the heart beats faster and harder. More blood flows to the outer layers of the skin so that heat can be released into the environment.

If the outside air is warmer than the skin, the brain triggers sweating to cool the body. As sweat evaporates, it releases heat from the body. As you probably have experienced, sweating when the weather is humid is much less effective.

When the body can't cool itself effectively or quickly enough, heat-related symptoms can start showing up. Here are a few things to watch for:

Heat rash: This is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating and clogged



By Teri (Dreher) Fryberg, RN
Guest Column

pores during hot, humid weather. Babies, who have folds of skin on their necks, legs and arms, can quickly develop this, but anywhere your skin rubs together (armpits, under the breasts) can be susceptible. Small blisters may develop.

Heat cramps: The body loses a lot of salt and electrolytes when it's sweating excessively, which can lead to painful muscle spasms in the arms, legs, abdomen and other areas.

Fainting or light-headedness: More blood is flowing to the skin surface (which is why people may look red or flushed when suffering heat-related illness), so there's less in the brain. This may cause you to feel dizzy or even faint when you stand up. One of the reasons for ER visits in summer is injuries caused by a fainting spell or dizziness.

The more serious heat-related illnesses are heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which is potentially fatal. A person's skin may feel cool to the touch, but the internal body temperature may still be dangerously high.

Heat exhaustion: When the internal temperature is between 101 and 103 degrees and you've become dehydrated from sweating, heat exhaustion can result, with feelings of fatigue, nausea, fast heartbeat and shallow breathing. This is

your body telling you to stop exerting yourself.

Heat stroke: This is a medical emergency. Sweating causes your blood volume to drop and therefore your blood pressure, meaning not enough blood and oxygen are reaching internal organs. The body's internal temperature of 104 or above may be enough to lead to organ failure. Immersing a victim in cold water is the best immediate course of action.

So, clearly, heat is not something to mess around with. How do you protect yourself and those you love?

Avoid going outside unless you really have to. Most of us are fortunate enough to have air conditioning in our homes and cars, but if you don't have it, find somewhere that does, whether that's the mall, the library or a museum. There are cooling centers across the region.

Get wet. As water evaporates from the skin, it cools the body. Jump in a lake or take a cool bath.

Shed layers. Summer is no time for fashion statements. Wear light-colored, loose clothing that allows air to flow around you. And a broad-brimmed hat, too.

Exercise or do yardwork in the early morning. One of the effects of prolonged heat is that even the nights are hot. Temperatures are usually lowest in the early morning.

Stay hydrated, but not too hydrated. Yes, drink water or sports beverages and eat foods that are water-rich. But too much water can dilute the salts

See YOUR HEALTH
PAGE 9

OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500 and 800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamatory of character. Send opinions to: Letters to the Editor, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082 OR e-mail to pouimette@turley.com. Deadline for submission is Monday at noon for the following week's edition.

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Lawn games were available, including cornhole.

BACK TO SCHOOL
FROM PAGE 1

kids, there was a bounce house and an inflatable slip and slide. Many kids lined up to try out the slip and slide on a nice summer day this past Sunday.

There was also music being played in the background as everyone enjoyed the Back to School Summer Bash. This was a celebration of fellowship and fresh starts as summer approaches to its end and the school year is right around the corner.

More information about activities at the Brookfield Congregational Church can be found on their Facebook page or on their website, bcc1857.org. The church will be hosting a school supply drive on Sunday, Aug. 24, starting at 10 a.m. Church members will be collecting school supply donations for Brookfield Elementary School.



Don and Jeff were in charge of the grills, cooking hot dogs and hamburgers for the back to school bash.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

STURBRIDGE
FROM PAGE 1

tract will actually be better protected than it is currently after the construction of the improvements," she said.

Bubon also recommended the board grant site plan approval with conditions.

Design Professional Dan Sheehan of Haley Ward, Inc. said the revised design includes a sign on the western side of the building preventing truck traffic from continuing to the access road. He said other changes were made to meet the suggestions given during the

peer review.

Bubon said the Conservation Commission has reviewed and approved the revised plan with conditions.

The board voted in favor of granting the waiver for the landscape architect stamp. The members also voted in favor of granting the special permit for the groundwater and site plan approval with conditions.

Solar and battery storage

Bubon said she attended the solar and battery storage meeting hosted by Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. The

presenter included information gathered from a prior meeting held with her staff.

Bubon said she was grateful that the presenter listened to her staff's concerns, but she is still worried about the impact battery storage would have on the town's wetlands, groundwater protection districts and aquifers.

She said representatives from the towns of Oakham and Barre also attended the meeting. She said those towns are facing the possibility of a large battery storage facility going in as a public utility, overriding

local bylaw.

"I think it's a little scary for a lot of small communities," Bubon said. "It's taking away local control."

Tree removal

Bubon said an abutter to the ConvenientMD Urgent Care site on Route 20 had concerns about a large stand of pine trees between the site and their property. Bubon said originally she felt it would be a good idea to keep the trees to create a buffer between the properties, but the abutters said the trees are in declining health and dropping large branches.

Bubon said an arborist inspected the trees and deemed four of the trees to be in hazard condition.

"They want the trees removed," she said.

Bubon said a demand was served to ConvenientMD Urgent Care for a notice of diseased and dangerous trees. She said representatives from ConvenientMD Urgent Care contacted her office and were willing to take the trees down.

Cedar Street sidewalks

Bubon said they are working on the segment of sidewalk from Route 20 to

the end of Burgess School Road. This project is being funded through the Complete Streets grant.

She said they have the concept plans for the project and legal counsel is working on the easement documents for property owners to sign off on. She said they met with impacted residents over the summer to share the concept plans.

Bubon said the Safe Streets to School grant will be used to continue the sidewalk up to Burgess Elementary School in a later phase of the project.

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Boomer was hanging out with kids during an arts and crafts activity.



Boomer arrived in his custom cruiser.

BOOMER FROM PAGE 1
Many kids participated in an arts and crafts activity and Boomer sat alongside them to see what they created.
Boomer arrived in his custom-made Springfield

Thunderbirds Hockey Club cruiser. The cruiser had the Thunderbirds logo and sported colors of red, blue and yellow.
Boomer appears in various charitable organizations and special events through-

out the year. The hockey team introduced Boomer as the team's mascot in 2016. Though Boomer is a beloved figure in the Springfield community, he enjoys participating in local events and programs outside of

Thunderbirds game nights. The staff at the East Brookfield Library appreciated Boomer's visit this past week.
For more activities at the East Brookfield Public Library, visit eastbrookfieldli-

brary.org.
Regular programs at the library include Storytime on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m., Knitting Group on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m., and Pokémon Go Club on Mondays at 10 a.m.

The library also hosts a Library Book Talk Group on the first Tuesday of the month at 11 a.m. Folks can pick up the book in advance. Patrons are welcome to pick up the book even if they are not attending the discussion.

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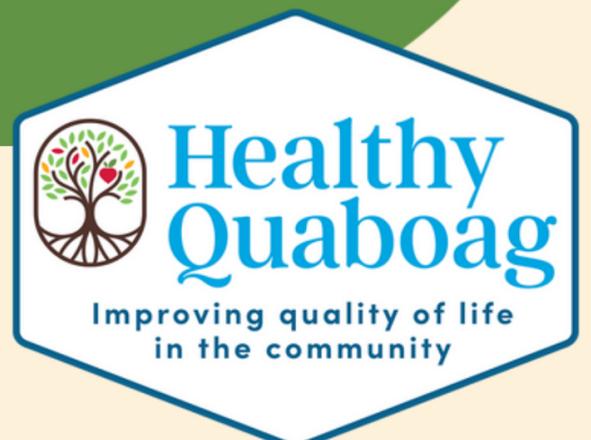


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SPORTS

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Summer Warriors capture title

WILBRAHAM – On Sunday, Aug. 10, Tantasqua Summer Warriors were big winners as they defeated Play for MJK 20-6 in the finals of the 5-6 A Division in the Spec Pond Summer Basketball League.



Maddie Contois goes for a shot.



Averie Toomey dribbles near the arc.



Juliana Fluery sends a pass away.



Emi Dougherty shoots in traffic.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Angela Ren tries to get around an opponent to shoot.

Cougars summer season ends with playoff loss

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

AUBURN—The only reason why the Quaboag Regional boys' basketball team participated in this year's Auburn Summer League was because Oxford High School dropped out right before the season started.

With only seven players listed on their roster, Quaboag won eight games during the summer league regular season.

The Cougars (8-1), whose only loss came against Leicester in the regular season finale, finished tied for first place with Quabbin Regional. They entered the playoffs as the top-seeded team due to a tiebreaker.

After earning a first round bye, Quaboag fell behind early in the opening half and suffered a 48-41

loss to 10th-seeded Grafton in the quarterfinals, which were held inside the Auburn High School gymnasium on August 4.

"This was a very tough game for us all around," said Owen Stevens, who was the head coach of the Quaboag summer league team. "We got into early foul trouble, and we had to approach things a little bit differently than we normally do. We also started off very slow offensively, which killed us."

Stevens was assisted by Ryan Fernandez.

A couple of years ago, Stevens and Fernandez were teammates on the Quaboag summer league team, which lost to Millbury in the finals.

Grafton, who went 3-6 during the 2025 summer league, advanced into this

See COUGARS PAGE 8



Villa FC captured the PVSSL Men's Championship earlier this month.

Short-handed Villa FC captures PVSSL Men's Championship

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—After being forced to play the final 20 minutes of regulation with only ten players, the chances of winning the Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League men's championship title for the second consecutive year didn't look very promising for third-seeded Villa FC.

The defending champions, who were trailing 1-0, managed to tie the match against top-seeded Cap & Hitch of New England with less than a minute remaining in the second half.

The score remained tied during the two 10-minute overtime periods.

During the ninth round of the penalty shootout, Villa goalie Lucas Morales-Fernandez made an outstanding diving save giving his team an exciting 1-1 (9-8 PK's) win over Cap & Hitch at Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow earlier this month.

"This is our second championship in a year, and it feels excellent," said Villa player/coach Mike Lima following the match,



Anthony Basile, an Agawam High School graduate, poses with the trophy and league co-president Dianna Kolodziej.

which lasted more than two hours. "We're one of the better teams in this league, so everybody always wants to be beat us. We were trailing late in second half, but we were able to battle back."

Lima, who shared the coaching duties with Ruben Sousa, is one of the Villa FC players who graduated from Ludlow High School.

The other former Ludlow High School soccer players listed on the Villa FC roster are Kyle Tomas, who received a red card during the 60th minute,

Brandon McCarthy and Enzo Botta.

A year ago, Villa FC, who plays their home matches at Minnechaug



Kamer Nuhui, of Agawam, possesses the ball for Cap & Hitch.

Regional, defeated Lusitano White in the men's finals. They also took home the championship trophy in 2017 with a 3-2 win over Pros Malaca.

Anthony Basile was selected as this year's MVP award winner. He was also the M.V.P. of the 2017 championship match.

"This is a very special team with a lot of very special players," said Basile, who's from East Longmeadow. "I'm very happy that I'm still able to be a part of it."

Villa FC, who finished the regular season with a 9-1-2 record, advanced

See MEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP PAGE 8

Emerling takes Thompson 150 win

THOMPSON, CT — An incredible flood of fans entered Thompson Speedway on Wednesday night for the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour's annual midweek Thompson 150 with plenty of magic in the air. Along with a much anticipated visit from Geoff Bodine and the original Big Red Machine #1 from his stellar 1978 campaign, the NASCAR touring teams battled in the Tour's 750th event back where it all began in 1985.

Ron Silk got the capacity crowd on their feet during Hoosier Racing Tire qualifying as he earned the pole position by just breaking the nineteen-second mark with an 18.999-second run. Silk launched on the start of the 750th NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour event with a rearview mirror full of Thompson arch-rival Justin Bonsignore. The first caution flag flew on lap 14 as Eric Berndt moved up across the front bumper of Luke Baldwin at the start/finish line sending Berndt into the wall and Baldwin pitside for

damage control.

Silk maintained control at the front of the field until the hard turn one wreck for Baldwin around lap 70 as the leaders jumped pitside for fresh Hoosier rubber. Jon McKennedy led the pack under the return to green and pulled away from Stephen Kopcik, Jake Johnson and point leader Austin Beers as Silk and Bonsignore began the long march from deep in the field. A turn-two-tap between Kopcik and McKennedy rapidly took both out of the top five with Johnson stealing the show out front.

As laps wound down, Patrick Emerling made his case known as he grew ever closer to Johnson's rear bumper. Emerling pulled up on lap 124 to lead lap 125 and fortunately never had to deal with another caution period. Unspoiled, Patrick Emerling took down the Thompson 150 win in the Big Red Machine look-a-like #1 complete with Geoff Bodine in the 750th NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour victory lane celebration.

More teams wanted for Quabbin fall league

Following up on the resounding success of its inaugural campaign, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 adult baseball league will hold its second Fall League this September and October.

Seeking to create a similar competition environ-

ment to its spring/summer league, Quabbin Valley, with contributions from the Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League, created a four-team fall league last year featuring the Braves, Dodgers, Cardinals, and Twins.

Those same four teams

are set to return and each team tends to have openings on them. Additionally, the league is open to welcoming more teams in to the league if it finds enough interest.

The league is looking for at least one full team to join the league. If you play

in an adult league in the region and have most of your team comprising of players over the age of 28 and would like to enter the league, please get in touch as soon as possible. The league is looking to finalize

See QUABBIN PAGE 8

- sports -

HoopHall releases enshrinement schedule

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame has announced additional details, including start times for key events, regarding the Class of 2025 Enshrinement Weekend.

The Class of 2025 celebration will culminate with the Enshrinement Ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 6, in Springfield – the Birthplace of Basketball.

Revealed in April, the Class of 2025 includes nine honorees, WNBA legends Sue Bird, Sylvia Fowles, and Maya Moore; and NBA stars Carmelo Anthony and Dwight Howard. Other inductees include two-time NCAA championship coach Billy Donovan; legendary NBA referee Danny Crawford; Miami Heat owner Micky Arison; and the 2008 USA Basketball Men's National Team.

Enshrinement Weekend will tip off at Mohegan Sun on Friday, September 5, starting with the always-popular autograph session, followed by a re-formatted Media Availability, and concluding with the headlining Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala. The evening will also include special recognition for the 2025 Curt Gowdy Media Award recipients, George Blaha, Clark Kellogg, Michelle Smith, and Adrian Wojnarowski, as well as longtime Boston Celtics executive Jeff Twiss, the recipient of the John W. Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Class of 2025 and over 40 returning Hall of Famers will then journey to Springfield, Mass., for the annual celebratory events taking place at the acclaimed Marriott Springfield Downtown as well as Springfield's Symphony Hall. Fans and guests are also encouraged to tour and visit the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame on Enshrinement Weekend, where special events such as the Ice Cube Impact Award and SuperFan presentations will take place.

Details of the schedule of events for Enshrinement 2025 are as follows:

Friday, Sept. 5
Class of 2025 Autograph Session at Mohegan Sun (Uncasville, Conn.)
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Meet the Class of 2025 at

their first public Enshrinement Weekend event! Each ticket to this event grants you the opportunity to receive one autograph per class member.

Enshrinement 2025 Media Availability at Mohegan Sun

2 to 4 p.m.

The Hall of Fame will implement a new media availability format, offering structured interview stations and podium access to the inductees to facilitate in-depth coverage.

Enshrinement Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala at Mohegan Sun

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.: Reception

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.: Red Carpet

8-10 p.m.: Gala Program

The Class of 2025 and the Hall's prestigious annual award recipients will be celebrated at this televised Enshrinement event at Mohegan Sun. This event will feature the unveiling of the Class of 2025 rings, presented by Baron Championship Rings, and the awarding of the Class of 2025 Hall of Fame jackets, provided by Reveal Suits. The program will also include the presentation of the Hall's annual John W. Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award and the Curt Gowdy Media Awards, and recognition for the National Wheelchair Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2025.

Saturday, Sept. 6
Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame Museum Hours

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Jr. NBA Clinic at Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame (Springfield, Mass.)

9 to 11 a.m.

Young athletes will take part in a high-energy Jr. NBA basketball clinic that focuses on fun, skill development, and teamwork. Participants will work with trained coaches on fundamentals such as dribbling, shooting, passing, and defense, while also learning the core values of the game, sportsmanship, respect, and effort.

Coaches Circle Presentation at Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame (Springfield, Mass.)

1 to 2 p.m.

Join us in celebrating the exceptional coaches who will be honored with bench-

es in the Naismith Coaching Circle. Established in 2015, the Naismith Coaches Circle program was created to pay tribute to basketball's first coach, Dr. James Naismith, and to uphold the core values he instilled in his players: teamwork, determination, self-respect, leadership, initiative, and perseverance.

Ice Cube Impact Award Presentation at Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame (Springfield, Mass.)

2 to 2:30 p.m.

Jalen Rose, former player, TV analyst, and philanthropist, will be honored in a ceremony on the Jerry Colangelo Court of Dreams. This award recognizes individuals making substantial contributions to their communities through basketball.

Note: Ice Cube is scheduled to present the award in person

SuperFan Presentation at Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame (Springfield, Mass.)

2:30 to 3 p.m.

Several NBA SuperFans will be honored in the James F. Goldstein SuperFan Gallery. This special space is dedicated to celebrating the most iconic and passionate fans of the game.

NOTE: The 2025 SuperFan Class will be announced at a later date

Enshrinement Ceremony Reception at the Marriott Springfield Downtown (Springfield, Mass.)

4 to 5:45 p.m.

Toast the incoming Hall of Fame Class of 2025 at the Marriott's rooftop prior to the sport's ultimate recognition. The party is limited to select ticket holders for the Enshrinement Ceremony.

Enshrinement Ceremony Red Carpet Show at Symphony Hall (Springfield, Mass.)

6 to 7 p.m.

The Class of 2025, returning Hall of Famers, and many of the sport's icons walk the red carpet in a live NBA TV broadcast from outside Symphony Hall and down East Columbus Avenue.

Enshrinement Ceremony at Symphony Hall

7 to 9 p.m.

One of the most elite events on the basketball calendar, the Hall of Fame Class of 2025 will be formally enshrined into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in a nationally televised ceremony on NBA TV. The stars of basketball will gather to celebrate the newest group of the sport's iconic figures.

MEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP FROM PAGE 7

into this year's finals after defeating sixth-seeded STCC Alum in a penalty shootout in the quarter-finals, and Lusitano Red, 6-2, in the semifinals.

Cap & Hitch (11-1) joined the prestigious summer league a year ago. They dispatched eighth-seeded Empower Health, 5-0, in the quarter-finals and the White's 6-2 in the semifinals.

"This was just an unbelievable match by both teams. It's tough that someone had to lose," said Cap & Hitch head coach Bennett Walsh. "I've never been involved in a match where they were 18 shots in the penalty shootout. I'm very proud of my guys."

Both teams had chances to take the lead during the first half, which was 40 minutes long.

Cap & Hitch had the first opportunity during the 26th minute.

Ethan Czaporowski, who played soccer at Belchertown High School, weaved around a couple of defenders inside the box before firing a shot that deflected off the crossbar.

Another former Belchertown player listed on the Cap & Hitch roster is Shay O'Neill, who's father, Devin, is the long-time men's soccer coach at Western New England University.

A minute later, Gabriel Ganzer, who plays for Villa, had a breakaway opportunity, but his shot attempt bounced off the left post.

Ganzer, who's a former member of the Western Mass. Pioneers, recorded a hat-trick in last year's finals. He was also selected as the 2024 MVP winner.



Shay O'Neill, of Belchertown, heads up the field with the ball.

This year's championship match was still scoreless at the half.

Cap & Hitch was given a penalty shot by referee Fabio Cardoso following a foul in the box twenty minutes into the second half.

Kamer Nuhiu, who graduated from Agawam High School, stepped up to the line and fired a shot into the net past Morales-Fernandez.

During that sequence, Cardoso gave Tomas a red card leaving Villa with only ten players on the field.

Cardoso continued to issue yellow cards like they were parking tickets, which kept the match from getting out of control.

Basile tied the score at 1-1 after putting a shot into the net past goalie Alberto Truoiolo with only a couple seconds remaining in regulation.

"I just saw an opportunity," he said. "I just swung my foot and watched the

ball roll to the back of the net. It just felt great."

At the end of the second overtime period, Bryant Keeney had a chance to be the hero for Villa, but his line-drive shot hooked wide.

The nine Villa players that made PK's during the shootout were Andre Morrison, Joao Miranda, Shane Sewell, Andrew Ortiz, Quin Serafino, Mason Perham, Mike Willis, McCarthy, and Ganzer.

The eight PK's made by the Cap & Hitch players were Simba Pelletier, Bennett Walsh Jr., John Senn-McNally, Dominic Cirelli, Connor Weslocki, Czaporowski, O'Neill, and Nuhiu.

Morales-Fernandez finally ended the match by making a save on a shot attempt by Nathan Sanchez.

It was another memorable summer for the members of Villa FC.

COUGARS FROM PAGE 7

year's finals after upsetting second-seeded Quabbin in the semifinals two nights later. It was the second consecutive year that Grafton played in the championship game. They lost to Burncoat last year.

Quaboag won the regular season match-up against Grafton.

"We played a different Grafton team tonight than when we faced them earlier in the season," Stevens said. "I think most of their varsity players also play in a league at Crompton Park in Worcester. It's difficult to beat a team when you really don't know what to expect from them. We still had a very good season."

One of Quaboag's biggest wins of the Auburn League regular season came against Ware.

"We beat Ware by about 15 points, and we played very well against them," Stevens said. "Some of

the players on my team also play AAU basketball with the Ware players. It's always a big rivalry game whenever we play Ware."

Grafton scored the first eight points of the quarter-final game and were leading 13-5 with a little more than eight minutes left in the opening half.

The Quaboag points were scored by Jacob Toomey, who picked up his fourth personal foul early in the second half.

Toomey was one of the Quaboag starters against Grafton, along with Isaac Cowher, Kadin Dufalt, Jacoby Labillois, and Jack Stevens. Their two reserve players were Jackson McGarry, and Kaleb Vankleef. All seven of the Quaboag players are incoming seniors.

The Cougars leading players this summer were Toomey, Cowher, and Stevens. The trio have been members of the varsity squad since they were

sophomores.

Owen Stevens was teammates on the varsity basketball team with his younger brother two years ago.

"It was a lot of fun being teammates with my younger brother," Owen Stevens said. "I do appreciate it a little bit more now."

Owen Stevens was a freshman member of the men's Track and Field team at Franklin Pierce University last year. He transferred to UMass-Amherst and is planning to join the Minutemen men's track team.

Quaboag was trailing Grafton, 28-17 at halftime.

With less than ten minutes left in regulation, Quaboag was only trailing 39-33, following a Toomey jumper.

Then Labillois scored five unanswered points, which closed the gap to 46-40 with 29 seconds left. boag couldn't get any closer than that.

QUABBIN FROM PAGE 7

its schedule by Aug. 25.

While the fall league schedule is still under construction, it will mostly feature Sunday morning games played with wood-bat only, which is customary for fall baseball. There could be some Saturday games added to the schedule depending on the completion of the spring/summer season as well as to makeup rain-outs, potentially. Games are nine-innings long and there is a small playoff and championship held at the end of the season. Last year's fall season was eight games and that is the goal for this year.

Free and low-cost fields are used as well as just one umpire in an effort to keep the costs lower for players. The cost to play will likely range from \$40 to \$60 for the eight-game schedule. Players from outside the Quabbin League may also pay a small fee for insurance as well.

An interest/registration form, will be forthcoming soon, but until then, to express interest in the league, you can email the coordinators of the league at either GScibelli22@yahoo.com or ikhandfield@gmail.com.

Schedule and team placement for unaffiliated players will be finalized in mid-to-late August. Please join in the fun this fall.

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

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- community -

DOG DAYS FROM PAGE 1

was hoping the five puppies in the unit would be adopted during Dog Days of Summer. Many guests with their furry pals got to meet the puppies through the window of the adoption unit, which was parked inside the beer garden of Oakholm Brewery.

There were several ways to support Second Chance Animal Services. Direct donations were accepted and there were also proceeds from purchases of dog bandanas and a purchase of Oakholm Brewery's tropical tractor shandy. A portion of the purchase of this beverage goes to support Second Chance Animal Services.

There were dog vendors available as well, including Willy Bear Designs. This company is based out of Belchertown and has dog bandanas available for purchase during Dog Days of



The mobile adoption unit from Second Chance Animal Services had five puppies looking for a new home during Dog Days of Summer.

Summer.

Julie Miller is the owner of Willy Bear Designs and has been in business for four years. The name was inspired by one of her dogs, Willy, who she some-

times calls "Willy Bear". This was the first time Willy Bear Designs participated in Dog Days of Summer.

One of the four legged visitors to Dog Days of Summer is Callie, a 2-year-

old English Springer Spaniel. Callie's owner Lisa says she is a very friendly dog who likes to make friends with both humans and dogs.

"She makes friends ev-



Dog bandanas from Willy Bear Designs of Belchertown.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

erywhere she goes," Lisa said.

For live music, Jared Fiske and Jon Taylor were performing out in the Beer Garden while Dog Days of Summer was taking place.

Pup's Pizza was serving up delicious pizza all day.

More information on Second Chance Animal Services can be found at www.secondchanceanimals.org.

N BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

veterans recently; Rev. Ken Winters and Paul McQuaid. He said Winters dedicated 20 years of service to the U.S. Navy and McQuaid served four years in the U.S. Coast Guard.

Both were active members of the community.

"Their legacies of service, integrity, and dedication will not be forgotten," he said.

Appointments

The board reappointed Sue Lewandowski to the Downtown Development Committee.

The board also appointed Karen Hubacz as a reg-

ular member on the Planning Board; Sadie Kiley as an alternate member on the Planning Board; Julianna Petraitis to the Cultural Council; and Maggie Woodward to the School Committee.

Hubacz is a lifelong resident of the town and has served on several boards and committees, including the Finance Committee and Zoning Board of Appeals. She has also served on the Highway Search Committee and the Town Administrator Search Committee.

Kiley, who is Hubacz's daughter, said she was looking forward to helping out on the Planning Board.

Petraitis said she has

lived in town for most of her life and she hopes to help the community through the Cultural Council.

Woodward has children in the school district and volunteered to fill the vacancy on the committee. She is currently involved in the school district's task force.

Lake Lashaway 200th anniversary

Historian Brandon Avery said he and Heather Jablonski have partnered with East Brookfield to plan the 200th celebration of Lake Lashaway in 2028.

"We're getting started early," Avery said.

Avery welcomed anyone interested in getting in-

volved with the celebration to contact him. He said fundraising events for the 200th celebration will start next year.

Avery said they are also looking for historical and personal stories and photographs of Lake Lashaway to be shared during the celebration.

Dog licenses

Board of Selectmen Clerk Ralph Kay read a memo from the Town Clerk regarding annual dog licensing. The letter states that so far, 629 owners have licensed their dogs, but 44 owners have not responded or licensed their dogs since 2023.

The Town Clerk reminded dog owners that

it is state law that requires owners to register their dogs, or notify the Town Clerk if the dog no longer resides in town. Late fees will be \$50 per household beginning Sept. 1.

Financial items

The board approved a spending request from the Council on Aging in the amount of \$1,642.80 for postage to mail a Senior Center survey. There are 1,114 surveys and return envelopes to be mailed.

Gilman said this expense will be paid through grant funding.

Senior citizen barbecue State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume will sponsor a free multi-town senior barbecue on Friday, Sept.

26 at 11 a.m. at the North Brookfield Sportsmen's Club. Reservations can be made at the Senior Center by Sept. 19.

Recognition

Resident Diane Hopkins wrote a letter to the Board of Selectmen commending the volunteers at the Transfer Station who organize the take-it-or-leave-it shed. Hopkins said they do a great job organizing the shed, including the books.

Special town meeting

A special town meeting will be held during the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 26 to address a prior year's bill with a one warrant article.

YOUR HEALTH FROM PAGE 4

in your body, so some salty snacks are a good addition.

Listen to your body and keep an eye on others. Heat illness can develop very rapidly and is not always obvious before it becomes life-threatening.

Most of all, don't hes-

itate to seek medical treatment if you suspect heat exhaustion or heat stroke. You want to make sure to be around when things cool off in autumn!

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC

(NShore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.



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CLUES ACROSS

1. Mongolian politician
5. Coconut palms
10. Rounded knob
14. Japanese city
15. Covers in soft material
16. Walk around
17. Ancient region in Syria
18. French painter
19. Grandmother
20. Cow part
22. Rocky peak
23. Secret plan
24. Sings to one's lover
27. More (Spanish)
30. Father
31. Chinese philosophical principle
32. Hat
35. In agreement
37. A person's brother or sister
38. Evil spirit
39. Monetary units
40. Partner to cheese

CLUES DOWN

41. About Sun
42. A place to dance
43. Performer __ Lo Green
44. Beach accessory
45. Recipe measurement (abbr.)
46. Partly digested food
47. Pooch
48. Honorific title added to family name
49. Salts
52. Lichens genus
55. Lowest point of a ridge
56. Type of sword
60. Albanian language
61. Gold measurement
63. Italian seaport
64. Longtime late night host
65. Extremely angry
66. U. of Miami mascot
67. Mid-month day
68. Omitted from printed matter
69. Upper body part

CLUES DOWN

1. Two-toed sloth
2. Cooking ingredient
3. Iranian city
4. Publicly outs
5. Steep-sided hollow
6. Spoke
7. General law or rule
8. Extravagantly theatrical
9. Very fast airplane
10. Arm bones
11. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
12. __ fide: legitimate
13. Gemstone
21. Counsels
23. Top exec
25. Cool!
26. Touch lightly
27. Extract money via taxation
28. Dyes
29. Cloying sweetness
32. Soft drinks
33. Capital of Guam
34. Chemical compound
36. The bill in a restaurant
37. Car mechanics group
38. Late comedian Newhart
40. Health care for the aged
41. Wise individuals
43. A passage with access only at one end
44. Trim
46. Former OSS
47. The upper surface of the mouth
49. Edible lily bulbs
50. Type of reef
51. Vaccine developer
52. Mottled citrus fruit
53. A place to store lawn tools
54. Rare goose native to Hawaii
57. Hollywood pig
58. Musician Clapton
59. Take a chance
61. Spanish soldier
62. Mark Wahlberg comedy

- community -

Audit identifies mismanagement/violation at CCC

BOSTON – State Auditor Diana DiZogio's Office released an audit of the Cannabis Control Commission, reviewing the period from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2024.

The CCC is the independent agency responsible for developing and enforcing regulations over the marijuana industry in Massachusetts. Among the audit's findings is that the CCC's mismanagement of prorated fees for license extensions resulted in revenue loss, procedural inequity, noncompliance with state regulations, and the appearance of potential favoritism and/or impropriety with respect to some being required to pay fees, while others inexplicably did not need to do so.

CCC management failed to institute procedures to fully quantify and accurately and equitably administer license extensions. These failures, alongside the CCC's failure to institute procedures to properly supervise licensing staff, contributed to a significant breakdown of the internal controls over

requests for and approvals of extensions.

As a result, not all fees were appropriately billed. The CCC did not maintain appropriate documentation regarding those instances where fees were not appropriately collected or waived, and did not follow its own stipulated process with respect to fee collection in these instances.

Verbal conversations took the place of a documented process in instances where fees were not collected. These procedural inequities contribute to an appearance of potential impropriety, which could erode the public's trust in the CCC.

The CCC violated state regulations and applicable policies by failing to ensure that fines were assessed and collected within reasonable timeframes and by not designating a hearing officer to oversee related hearings.

The absence of both timely enforcement and a hearing officer allows for unresolved compliance issues at marijuana establishments to persist or potentially worsen. De-

lays in enforcement undermine regulatory effectiveness by adversely impacting the CCC's ability to administer and enforce applicable laws and regulations and may create an inequitable situation, especially for disadvantaged smaller establishments that lack the resources to independently navigate prolonged enforcement processes.

Lengthy timeframes, especially around enforcement action, put customers at potential risk either of purchasing and consuming contaminated or expired marijuana products, or being exposed to other public health risks. Additionally, the lack of a hearing officer compromises due process rights for licensees subject to fines and enforcement actions.

Furthermore, the audit found the CCC's failure to review existing host community agreements allowed unenforceable language and noncompliant provisions to remain in effect despite its authority and obligation to regulate these HCAs under Chapter 180 of the Acts of

2022. Noncompliant HCAs put undue financial burdens on small businesses in a burgeoning industry.

Moreover, the audit found the CCC did not have a documented and transparent process for employee settlement agreements containing non-disclosure, non-disparagement, or similarly restrictive clauses.

If the CCC does not have a documented and transparent process, which would hold itself accountable, to handle employee settlement agreements, especially those containing non-disclosure, non-disparagement, or similarly restrictive clauses, then it cannot ensure that employee settlements are handled in an equitable, ethical, legal, and consistent manner.

Additionally, the audit found that a breakdown of management structure and role consolidation contributed to operational and compliance risks. The CCC failed to implement sufficient controls related to the administration of the marijuana regulation fund and its HCA review process and did not have a

fully compliant internal control plan as required by the Office of the Comptroller's Internal Control Guide.

This inadequate internal control environment contributed to several operational and financial risks, including: absence of control testing, which resulted in inconsistent practices, a lack of clearly documented procedures, and diminished organizational accountability;

deficient oversight in licensing, HCA reviews, and management of the MRF, as evidenced by missing documentation of final approvals and unreconciled financial activity, raising concerns about transparency, fairness, and regulatory reliability; and

the lack of a fully compliant internal control plan leaves the CCC unprepared to address emerging risk posed by an unstable organizational structure.

The audit also found the CCC failed to identify double payments for license fees and did not ensure that revenues were coded and classified. The failure to im-

plement adequate financial controls resulted in several risks and inefficiencies, including financial misstatements and reporting inaccuracies; increased risk of noncompliance and audit findings; erosion of public and stakeholder trust; operational inefficiencies and resource strain; and potential for financial loss or fraud.

"Our audit identified a number of issues that undermine and negatively impact the Cannabis Control Commission's mission to equitably and effectively oversee the cannabis industry in Massachusetts," said DiZogio. "Our team appreciates the Commission's cooperation throughout this audit, which serves to identify areas for needed improvements to better serve the residents of the Commonwealth. We encourage the Cannabis Control Commission to adopt our office's recommendations for improvement and will be revisiting the Commission's progress in roughly six months as part of our post-audit review."

Watch out for fake coupons on social media

Everyone loves a good deal, and scammers know it. Counterfeit coupons are a popular way for scammers to steal your identity and money.

These fake deals are tricking consumers on websites, social media platforms, and in texts and email inboxes. While motives and methods vary, phony coupons often mean serious losses for retailers, consumers, or both.

How this scam works
Usually, fake coupons are worth much more than real ones, offering steep dis-

counts like 80% off. By using brands' official logos, it's nearly impossible to tell if it's fake or not.

In one variation of this scam, you may be scrolling on social media or checking your email and come across an ad with a coupon or promo code offering a major discount on products at a popular retail store. You click on the link and make a purchase using the promo code.

After several days or weeks without your order being received, you find out that the website was fake and

your order was never actually received. Your order's "tracking number" may tell you the package was delivered when, in reality, your order never existed.

If you try to reach out to the company to get a refund, you may find that the company's website no longer exists or they refuse to respond to your emails and calls.

In another variation of this scam, you come across a website, either through a web search or an ad on social media, for coupons from major retailers. In some cases, getting the "coupons" requires subscribing to a coupon service and paying a monthly membership fee.

Once you sign up, the service promises to either send you digital coupons or paper coupons in the mail. You may never receive any coupons, or you might receive coupons that are fake. Plus, by signing up, you've handed over your personal details and possibly your credit card information to a dishonest stranger.

You may also come across coupons that offer deals in exchange for sharing a link on social media. Don't do it. The link leads to a third-party website where visitors enter personal information in exchange for the coupon.

In most cases, after signing up, you never receive any coupons. Instead, you've given your personal details to scammers.

How to avoid similar scams
Don't fall for deals that are too good to be true. Be skeptical. If a coupon is valued near or above the retail price of an item, consider it a red flag.

Check the source of the coupon. If the coupon doesn't come from a recognized coupon distributor, the

manufacturer, or a specific store, be wary. If you aren't sure about a coupon, visit the company's website directly to look for the coupon on their official site or contact their customer service line to inquire about the coupon.

Think before you click on links in emails. If you receive a coupon via email, hover your mouse over the link without clicking on it to see where it will take you.

If the URL looks like a random assortment of letters and numbers, or if it is a shortened link that doesn't reveal where it's taking you, don't click it. Check the sender's email address to see if it is legitimate.

Only visit official websites to avoid downloading malware onto your computer.

Read coupons carefully. If a coupon doesn't have an expiration date, if it looks photocopied, or if it contains spelling and grammar errors, you're probably dealing with a fake.

Don't trade personal information for perks. A real business will not ask for your personal information, such as your credit card number or bank account information, in exchange for a coupon or to enter a giveaway.

Promotional offers that ask for personal information are usually scams. You shouldn't have to pay to receive a coupon either.

Do a search for coupon scams. When in doubt, search the coupon offer along with the word "scam." This will often bring up similar offers that are fake and can help you determine whether a coupon is real or not.

Find more consumer tips to avoid scams at the Better Business Bureau's website, BBB.org.

BBB warns of loan processing company scam

Scammers are at it again, posing as representatives from loan processing companies to trick consumers into sharing personal information, first using the name Jessica, now Evelyn from "Lending Union's west coast branch" (Lending Union is not a real company).

This advanced fee loan phishing scam often comes in the form of harassing phone calls and voicemails. The caller insists they need to verify minor details, such as your income, to finalize your loan application. While the message may sound convincing, it's a ruse to steal your private information.

How the scam works
You receive a call or voicemail from someone claiming to be from a loan processing team. The caller says they've been trying to contact you about your loan application and need to verify some final details to complete your approval, although, more than likely, you never applied for a loan. They provide a callback number and application ID to make the message seem legitimate.

The voicemail emphasizes urgency, requesting you call back before a specific deadline to finalize the loan.

The Better Business Bureau has received over 500 Scam Tracker reports about "Jessica" and over 1,000 about "Evelyn" indicating that scammers are aggressively targeting consumers. People report receiving multiple calls per day, often from different phone numbers but with nearly identical voicemail scripts.

Realistically, there is no loan, and returning the call could lead to scammers collecting sensitive information, such as your Social Security number, bank account details, or other personal data.

Tips to avoid this scam
Verify the company's legitimacy. If you're contacted about a loan application you don't recall submitting, hang up and do your research. Look up the company name online and contact them directly using verified contact information.

Never share personal information with unsolicited callers. Scammers often ask for details like your Social Security number or bank account information. Avoid sharing sensitive information over the phone unless you initiate the call. Watch for red flags in voicemails. Be wary of messages with vague details, generic names, or urgent demands for a callback. Scammers often use scripted messages to target as many people as possible.

Avoid calling unknown numbers back. Resist the urge to call the number back. Returning calls to unknown or suspicious numbers could connect you to scammers or result in unexpected fees.

Check for scam reports. Look up the phone number or details of the voicemail online. Many victims post about similar scams to warn others.

Report suspicious activity. If you believe you've been contacted by a scammer, report the incident to BBB Scam Tracker at BBB.org/ScamTracker.a

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For a complete job description please visit the Town's website www.warren-ma.gov

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Town of Blandford is hiring a **PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT** to the Assessors. Duties include administrative support for daily operations of the Assessors' office. Pay: \$18-\$20/hr, based on experience. Communication, customer service, organizational, and tech skills required. Send cover letter and resume to: dhopson@townofblandford.com.

Town of Blandford is seeking a fulltime **ASSISTANT TREASURER/COLLECTOR**. Pay range \$29.50-\$37.50/hour. Please visit our website for full job description. Submit resume to Administrator@townofblandford.com

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WILBRAHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Wilbraham Housing Authority seeks highly qualified applicants for the position of Executive Director. Responsibilities include the administration of 69 Chapter 667 Elderly housing units and 9 Chapter 705 Family housing units. The Executive Director reports to a five-member Board of Commissioners. Work schedule shall be a minimum of 22 hours per week during normal business hours, flexible as needed. The estimated salary range \$46,177.00 To \$54,326.00 is based on the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities' Executive Director Salary Schedule. The ideal candidate must have two years' experience in a housing, community development, public administration or a closely related field. Knowledge of the principles and practices of housing management, finances and maintenance systems in public or private housing. Excellent written and verbal communication skills required. Willingness to work with people of various socio-economic backgrounds. Must be bondable. Certification as a Public Housing Manager from an approved organization desired, and may be substituted as a property manager or similar classification by a nationally recognized housing or real estate organization such as an EOHLC-approved Massachusetts Public Housing Administrator Certification Program or HUD. Two-year full time post-secondary education in a related field may substitute for up to one year of experience. Applications will be accepted until 12pm, August 29, 2025. Please submit cover letter, resume and contact information for 3 references to: **Mr. Peter Manolakis, Chairman Executive Director Search Committee, Wilbraham Housing Authority, 88 Stony Hill Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095. Contact: Peter Manolakis (413) 519-8195**
Wilbraham Housing Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer

The Town of Huntington is seeking a **part-time Town Hall Floater/Select-board Administrative Assistant/Assistant Town Clerk**. \$20-\$22 per hour based on experience. 15 hours per week. Application and complete job description are available online at www.huntingtonma.us or by emailing admin@huntingtonma.us. Position is open until filled.
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LWPA hosts 8th Annual Poker Run on Aug. 23

WEST BROOKFIELD—The Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association will host its 8th annual Poker Run on Saturday, Aug. 23 from 2-5 p.m.; in case of rain, the event will be held the following Saturday, Aug. 30, also from 2-5 p.m.

The event is a fun way to get out and spend time with

friends while enjoying the wonders of Lake Wickaboag.

The LWPA Poker Run has little to do with poker beyond using poker hand rankings to score the game. To play, players simply need a scoresheet and a winning attitude.

On the day of the Poker

Run, for a \$20 donation to the LWPA, players can purchase a scoresheet at any of the five dealer pontoon boats marked with red flags. With scoresheet in hand, players can then take a leisurely cruise or paddle to each of the dealer boats in any order they choose to be dealt one card.

To improve their chances of a winning hand, players can purchase an extra card at any one of the dealer boats for an additional \$10. Dealers will mark the cards dealt on players' scoresheets. For final hands to be counted and scored, players must turn in their scoresheets to any dealer boat no later than

5 p.m.

LWPA volunteers will tabulate and score all scoresheets, and the winner of the game will be the player who has the best five-card poker hand at the end of the event. Second and third place winners will also be determined by their hands.

Winners will be an-

nounced at 7 p.m. at the Lake Wickaboag Boat Club, or contacted by phone. Players must be sure their name and phone number are clearly printed on their scoresheet.

For more information and updates, please visit the LWPA website at lakewickaboag.com, or visit their Facebook page.

East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of July 26-27, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 16 building/property checks, 14 directed area patrols, one traffic control, four radar assignments, four emergency 911 calls, two complaints, and 17 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Saturday, July 26
3:27 a.m. Mutual Aid Ambulance, Spencer, No Action Required
1:40 p.m. Mutual Aid Ambulance, Spencer, Services Rendered
8:14 p.m. Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations,

Route 49, Services Rendered

Sunday, July 27
3:38 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Baker Hill Road, Transported to Hospital
12 p.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Route 49, Dispatch Handled
1:09 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
1:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
1:33 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
1:43 pm. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Cita-

tion Issued
1:52 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
2:03 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
5:35 p.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued
5:39 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
6:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
6:29 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Aug. 4-11, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 11 building/property checks, eight directed area patrols, four radar assignments, one traffic control, three emergency 911 calls, one citizen assist, one assist other agency, one motor vehicle investigation, three complaints, one motor vehicle accident, two animal calls and three motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, Aug. 4
2:44 p.m. Complaint,

Pierce Road, Officer Handled

Tuesday, Aug. 5
7:48 p.m. Complaint, Barre Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency
10:24 p.m. Fire Alarm, West Brookfield Road, Investigated

Wednesday, Aug. 6
12:02 p.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Oakham Road, Dispatch Handled

Thursday, Aug. 7
11:32 a.m. 911 Misdi-

Services Rendered
12:11 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Hardwick Road, Officer Handled
6:41 p.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Hardwick Road, Negative Contact

Friday, Aug. 8
4:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, Barre Cut Off Road, Vehicle Towed

Sunday, Aug. 10
12:43 p.m. Assist Citizen, Gilbertville Road, Services Rendered

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