

QUABOAG CURRENT

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Friday, August 25, 2023

Campfire Singalong

Recreation Committee hosted beach bonfire for families



The Kokocinski family was ready to roast marshmallows at the West Brookfield Recreation Committee's first ever Campfire Singalong family night at the Town Beach. From left are Jeff, Juniper, Willow and Libby. TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA QUIMETTE

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Recreation Committee hosted its first ever Campfire Singalong at the Town Beach this past Sunday, enjoying the glow of a bonfire on the shore of Lake Wickaboag.

Musician Lori Brooks led the singalong, strolling across the sand while singing and strumming her guitar.

Cindy and Roger Larson, owners of the Hitchcock Tav-

ern donated s'mores-making kits for all 75 participants at the family event, and the Lions Club donated popcorn.

Next up for the Recreation Committee is a block party on Saturday, Sept. 16 from 3-6 p.m. on the Common. This free event is for residents only.

There will be a bicycle decorating contest followed by a bicycle parade, hair braiding, facepainting, music and much more.

The Committee is also planning a "Polar Express" movie night, with guests appearances by Santa Claus and the Grinch (who just happened to stop by the bonfire for a s'more).

For more information about the Recreation Committee and upcoming events, find "West Brookfield Recreation Committee" on Facebook.

See MORE PHOTOS | PAGE 8

All around the lake

Annual meeting discusses life at Lake Wickaboag

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WEST BROOKFIELD – Members of the Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association discussed the status of the lake, and its surrounding area

at their annual meeting held at Salem Cross Inn last week.

At the Aug. 17 meeting, President Mary Beth Czaja said LWPA had a busy year before introducing Dave Brown, who gave a detailed update about the lake's water quality.

Guest speakers at the meet-

ing were Cynthia Henshaw, executive director of the East Quabbin Land Trust and Jim Emerson of the Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council who both discussed conservation and recreation around the lake.

See WICKABOAG | PAGE 12

Community Center welcomes families to downtown location

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Since COVID, the community has needed a way to reach one another again, but there wasn't a space for it - until now.

Located on 173 North Main St. is the Emilia K. Hope Community Center in the big blue building across from the church.

The founders of the Community Center wanted to give the people of the town a safe and welcoming place for anyone and everyone, young and old, to go and just "be."

"We wanted to do something for the community because there wasn't anything yet - we wanted a physical place to go," said Jillian Phillips, the president of the organization.

See FAMILIES | PAGE 15



Shown from left are Katelinde Grenevich and Jillian Phillips (and her dog Charlie) outside of the Emilia K. Hope Community Center located at 173 North Main St., North Brookfield. TURLEY PHOTO BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

Fundraiser to preserve steeple kicks off Saturday

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WEST BROOKFIELD – If you look up at the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, one of the most recognizable landmarks on the historic Common, you'll notice that the steeple is weathered and needing restorative work.

Church Administrative Assistant Terry Hall, a member of the congregation for over 30 years, said the church is prepar-

See STEEPLE | PAGE 12



The steeple of the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield needs repairs. TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA QUIMETTE

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- community -

PVPC secures grant for historic preservation projects

This month the National Park Service named the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's 501(c)3 subsidiary - the Pioneer Valley Regional Ventures Center, Inc. - as one of only 13 awardees nationally to receive a Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant.

The \$750,000 grant will allow the state-designated regional planning agency to work with the Ventures Center to develop a subgrant program and select individual projects in rural communities for physical preservation projects that will contribute to economic vitality.

It is the first time a Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant has been awarded to a Massachusetts organization.

"From our cities to our rural towns, we know economic development is often spurred when we reinvest in places that reflect the history of community

and pay tribute to the people who came before us," said PVPC Executive Director Kimberly H. Robinson in a press release. "We are grateful to the National Park Service and its Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grant program for providing the resources necessary to re-activate historic buildings in rural towns that will create 21st century opportunities for growth."

Using its 501(c)3 subsidiary, the Pioneer Valley Regional Ventures Center, PVPC staff will provide subgrants to competitively selected preservation and rehabilitation projects on National Register-listed anchor historic buildings in 40 communities with less than 12,500 residents in Hampden and Hampshire Counties and West Central and South-west Central Worcester County.

The PVPC's Perseveration Works

in Western Mass Bruhn Competitive Subgrant Program's focus is on projects that will support the revitalization of National Register-listed anchor historic buildings that are significant to the community and, when rehabilitated, will contribute to local economic development.

Subgrant awards of up to \$100,000 will be given to work in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties to conduct pre-planning; roof repair or replacement; exterior rehabilitation such as painting, repointing, or historic siding restoration; structural repairs; window and door restoration; and life safety improvements to include fire suppression and ADA compliance.

Eligible owner-applicants will be private, public, or nonprofit. There will be

no match required.

Applications will be evaluated based on population, regional distribution, variety of project type, community and economic development potential, pre-planning to determine project needs, and the capacity of the active, local working group.

A Preservation Restriction will be required on a property that receives funding.

These grants mark the fifth year of funding for the program honoring the late Paul Bruhn, executive director of the Preservation Trust of Vermont for nearly 40 years.

The Pioneer Valley is the state-designated regional planning agency for the 43 cities and towns of Hampden and Hampshire Counties.



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- community -

NBEMA interim directors become permanent

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Anne Adams and Chris Marinin were appointed to serve as the permanent director and deputy director, respectively, of North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency.

Adams and Marinin have been filling these positions on an interim basis.

“They’ve been doing a fantastic job,” Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said at the Aug. 15 meeting.

Adams said the Federal Emergency Management Agency awarded an emergency management performance grant in the amount of \$2,500 to NBEMA. She said they will use the grant to purchase necessary items for the Police Department and the Fire Department, as well as a trauma kit for the shelter.

Fire report

Board of Selectmen Clerk Elizabeth “Brook” Canada read the monthly report submitted by Fire Chief Joseph Holway.

Holway reported that new firefighters are undergoing fireground training and work has begun to secure grants for the Fire Department and Fire Station rebuild. A kickoff meeting was held, and teams are moving forward with specifications and detail drawings.

The Fire Department has received a Department of Conservation and Recreation grant in the amount of \$1,125 for new radio pockets for brush firefighting.

A grant to replace a fire truck from FEMA’s Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program in the amount of \$285,000 is still pending. Holway said he was advised that the Department was still in the running to receive

the grant.

The Training Center is busy and has received some upgrades, Holway said.

Holway said the Dive Team has been training at the Town Beach and they are working to develop a quick response dive team for the area. Fire Prevention is conducting fire alarm testing at the schools.

The month of June had 23 total incidents, including two building fires, four medical/EMS assists, three motor vehicle accidents with injuries, two motor vehicle accidents without injuries, one electrical/wiring/equipment problem, two attempted burnings, two cover assignments/standby, two false alarms and more.

Parks and Recreation report

Board of Selectmen Vice-Chair John Tripp read a report from the newly formed Parks and Recreation Committee.

The report submitted by Parks and Recreation Committee Chair Brandon Avery documented the progress Committee members have made since May, including working with the Board to create a comprehensive policy for use of the Common; maintenance of the facilities and equipment; removal, repair and selective replacement of certain park elements; as well as giving recommendations for parking and the Town Beach.

By spring of 2024, the Committee is hoping to continue improvements on the Common, including repairing cracks on the newer basketball courts, painting baseball scoreboard, adding new benches, completing fence repair, staining/sealing new picnic tables, adding a paver base for yellow storage box, moving and upgrading water fountain, removing damaged and unused backstop at corner of Grove and North Common streets and removing basketball court and blacktop.

Town Forest Park will also see improvements, including adding a paver base for the memorial bench by the pond, rebuilding the bridge over the stream, replacing or rebuilding the bench at picnic area, working on parking area borders, removing trees near bridge, cleaning debris from pond, creating ramp access to shed, adding pads for picnic tables, and working toward completing the shed.

Avery thanked all members of the Committee for their hard work and dedication, as well as the Board of Selectmen and Highway Department.

Spending freeze

At a previous meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted to implement a spending freeze.

Petraitis read from a memo that was sent to all departments: “Any discretionary spending over the limit of \$100 must be approved by the Board of Selectmen at an on-camera meeting. Nondiscretionary spending such as utility bills and anything already contracted, doesn’t need approval.”

The memo noted that Accountant Shiela Leblanc will not process invoices for discretionary spending over \$100 without the Board’s approval.

Appointment

Bill King was appointed as the town’s alternate to the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. Avery is the town’s delegate.

Resignations

Senior Center Director Donna Seguin submitted her resignation from her position, effective Aug. 10.

Seguin noted in her letter that she has enjoyed working with the seniors and thanked the Board for allowing her to work for the town. The Board accepted her resignation.

See DIRECTORS | PAGE 15

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- opinion -



Midsummer questions for the Garden Lady

Marie, who gardens in Wheelwright, has harvested her potatoes and she's a little upset with the outcome. "The potatoes have raised, warty areas all over them. In other places they are pitted. Is my soil infected with some type of disease or is there an insect that is causing these imperfections?"

My guess would be that you are fighting the scab fungus. It is most prevalent in soils that contain lots of decaying organic matter and remain wet for a considerable amount of time.

With all of the rain we had this summer there are many gardeners in the same boat, pun intended!

Although the fungus can remain in the soil for years, it is most active when the pH is between 5.7-7.5. With this in mind, rotate your potato crop from year to year.

Also, do not lime or apply wood ashes to the soil where potatoes are to be planted. If you amend the soil with compost or manure, be sure it is well-rotted.

Select seed potatoes that are certified disease-free and choose varieties that are resistant to the disease. Thicker skinned russet types as well as those with reddish brown skin seem to suffer the least amount of damage.

Check out the Moose Tuber section in the Fedco Seeds catalog (www.fedcoseeds.com) for a resistant variety that suits you.

Karen reads the column from her Brimfield home. She takes great pride in her new flower gardens!

"Some of my annual flowers are starting to look a little beyond hope. Should I pull out my snapdragons, bachelor's buttons and calendulas or will they rebound?"

All of the flowers you mention are cool loving annuals. By the heat of midsummer they are looking tired.

There are a few things that you can do now to help the plant send out more flowers once the weather cools in early autumn.

First, deadhead spent flowers regularly. Lots of times this action will encourage the plant to initiate new growth from the base.

If it does, cut it back to that point and apply liquid fertilizer. In no time at all you should be delighted with a burst of new blooms.

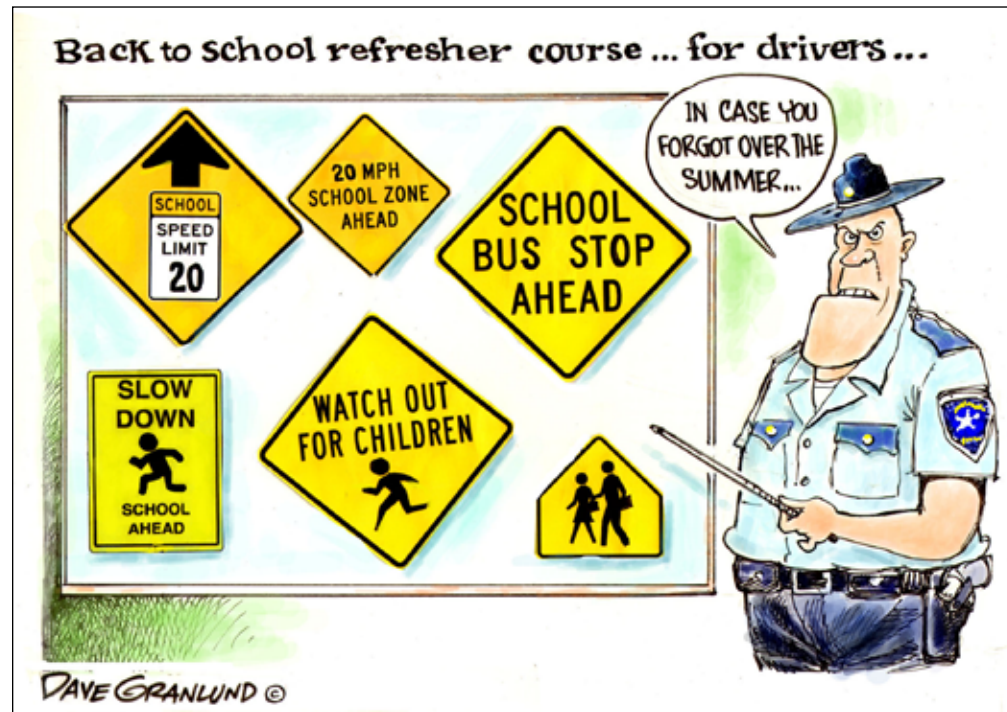
Of the three that you mention, you will get the best response from calendula and snapdragon. I like to leave these in place and work my fall mums and kale around them.

It is time to harvest carrots from Lisa's vegetable garden and she's a little concerned that many of them are forked or bumpy.

"What causes this phenomenon?" Forked, bumpy or otherwise deformed carrots are likely the result of your soil type. Is it heavy clay or does it have lots of rocks in it?

Carrots prefer loose, well-drained soil, that way their roots can grow straight down.

See GARDEN | PAGE 7



in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

I received an email this week from an Oakham resident, who saw a couple of warblers at Muddy Pond in Oakham.

He said they were very vocal and "chirping." He said at first, he thought they were Tennessee warblers, but then he noticed more gray on their head and neck.

They may have been orange-crowned warblers. The orange-crowned warbler is about five inches long and looks similar to the Tennessee warbler.



Orange-crowned warbler

A distinguishing feature is the orange-crowned has yellow under tail coverts and the Tennessee, white. Drab is a term used to describe the orange-crowned warbler and is best identified by its lack of field marks. The orange crown patch is seldom visible as these warblers flutter about in the trees.

It has dull olive-green upper parts and pale olive-yellow underneath. In addition to the yellow under tail coverts it has faint streaking on the sides of the breast.

The female lays three to six cream colored eggs in a nest of bark strips and grasses, placed either on the ground or in a shrub. They eat insects and berries and inhabit dense thickets, forest edges and brushy fields.

Their song is a high-pitched chipping trill, which trails off at the end. The call is a metallic "chet."

Wild turkeys and poults

I had to stop to let a flock of three adult hens and over 12 poults cross a road recently. As they made their way across the road, I tried to get an accurate count.

However, the young turkeys moved quickly and often went behind another poults or a hen. This was the second time I saw the flock in the same general area.

Loon census

On July 15, the Loon Preservation Committee of New Hampshire held their annual loon census. In their newsletter they said, "During the Loon Census, a total of 440 volunteers took to 121 lakes across New Hampshire to count loons. In total, they documented 431 adult loons, 56 loon chicks, and 2 immature loons. This census coverage represents roughly 1/3 of the lakes that LPC biologists monitor annually, and as such, our final population numbers for the season will likely be higher."

Loon fact

After the hatch of their first chick, adult loons often remove the membrane from the first hatched egg and any attached large pieces of eggshell from their nest. This behavior has been widely documented here in New Hampshire, both on LPC's Live Loon Cams and by wildlife photographers, as well as by biologists in the field.

In a recent newsletter from LPC an article said, "The removal of eggshell fragments from loon nests may occur in part due to the asynchronous hatch of the two chicks. Until the second chick hatches, the loons brood their first chick on and around the nest. While they may take it into the water for brief swims or to feed it, the first chick ends up spending a lot of time on the nest while the family waits for the hatch of the second chick."

The article continued, "Loon eggs and newly-hatched loon chicks are brown in color, and as such, they blend in with their surroundings on the nest. The egg membrane and the inside of eggshells, in contrast, are a creamy white color. That makes them much more conspicuous and, if left on the nest, could increase the chance of nest predation. Therefore, it is believed that in removing egg membranes and large eggshell pieces from the nest, adult loons may be protecting their chick and the second egg from being easily noticed by predators."

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

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Send opinions to:

Letters to the Editor, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082 OR e-mail to pouimette@turley.com. Deadline for submission is Monday at noon for the following week's edition.

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We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.

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Quaboag Current Newspaper

- community -

Second Chance provides support for new pet owners

EAST BROOKFIELD – Adopting a pet involves a deep commitment and a lifetime of care and Second Chance Animal Services is committed to turning the tide by instilling a sense of responsibility during the adoption process and providing ongoing support for new pet owners. Making the decision to adopt a pet requires thoughtful consideration, as highlighted by Wendy Hall, director of Second Chance’s Animal Relocation programs.

“Pet ownership is like raising a child-it takes time, care, and resources and Second Chance is here to help,” said Hall in a press release. “Pets have emotions and needs and rely on their owners for food, medical attention, love, and companionship. By investing effort from the start, many common problems can be avoided, leading to a happy and lasting pet-owner relationship.” To prevent unnecessary surrenders, Second Chance provides a range of resources and assistance for pet owners facing difficulties.

The organization believes that open communication and guidance can often resolve issues without giving up a pet. Knowledgeable shelter staff are available by phone or email to listen to owners’ concerns and offer advice on various pet-related matters.

Whether it’s dealing with behavior problems, training challenges, or introducing a new pet to the family, they offer personalized solutions.

In addition, Second Chance operates four full-ser-

vice veterinary hospitals to ensure pets receive necessary care. Located in North Brookfield, Southbridge, Springfield and Worcester, the hospitals are open to everyone and offer reduced rates for those who qualify, along with weekly low-cost vaccine clinics.

The nonprofit also has a pet food pantry program that supplies pet food to local human food pantries, helping pet owners facing financial difficulties. New Second Chance adopters also get access to a week of free one-on-one online training through an app designed to help dog owners address behavioral issues and foster positive interactions with their pets in their homes. Owners can continue to use the app for a minimal charge as needed.

Well-trained pets are more likely to stay in their homes with their families.

Second Chance remains committed to educating pet owners, providing resources, and promoting responsible pet ownership to create a community where pets are valued as cherished family members. With the right support and effort, many challenges can be overcome, allowing pets to stay where they belong, with the families who love them unconditionally.

For more information on Second Chance’s programs and resources, visit www.secondchanceanimals.org.



Mack, a 2-year-old Bernese Mountain Dog, is just one of the pets waiting to find a home at Second Chance’s Adoption Center in East Brookfield. *SUBMITTED PHOTO*

Musical festival on Aug. 27 helps children in need

BRIMFIELD – Supporting Orphans Nationally & Globally (S.O.N.G.) based in Brookfield and Ware is sponsoring a music festival at Brimfield Winery, 35 Main St., on Sunday, Aug. 27, from noon-6 p.m.

“S.O.N.G.Stock 2023” is a family friendly music festival to benefit children orphaned by the conflict in Ukraine and foster children in Massachusetts. This event features live music all day by Secret Sage, The Lisa Martin Band and Peter J. Newland & RadioX.

S.O.N.G. is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that has been providing care and support to orphaned children since 1999. By attending this event, you’ll help S.O.N.G. make a much-needed positive impact on their lives.

In addition to the fantastic music, you can enjoy locally crafted wine from Brimfield Winery, locally crafted beer and cider. This event offers various fun family activities, including a pie-eating contest, sack races, face painting, other fun contests, and much, much more.

Don’t miss the 50/50 raffle and silent auction featuring Red Sox tickets, sports memorabilia, collectibles, original paintings, and many other treasures like two beautiful handmade quilts that have been donated by a very talented local artistic quilter.

Advance tickets are \$15 (\$20 day of the event) and children under 13 are free. Advance ticket purchases are automatically entered in drawings for special door prizes.

For tickets and more information, contact S.O.N.G. by emailing info@supportingorphans.org or calling 413-813-8100.

Visit their website, supportingorphans.org, and follow them on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for updates and to learn more about their Mission.

Lawn chairs, blankets, pop-up tents, and umbrellas are welcome. Parking is free.

Please, no outside beverages or food and no smoking around the stage or anywhere attendees are gathered. No fires.

Food will be available for purchase. Well-behaved, quiet pets are welcome.



VETERANS DAY SALUTE

Quaboag Current ~ November 3, 2023

The Quaboag Current will be saluting our local veterans (from all wars and branches, including honoring deceased veterans), reservists, active duty U.S. Military members.

Please submit a photo of your veteran with his or her name, rank, branch of military and hometown by email to dflynn@turley.com or drop off a photo to **Quaboag Current, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082**
All photos will be returned.

Please submit your photo no later than Tuesday, October 17, 2022

There is no cost to submit a photo. No photos will be accepted after deadline. If you would like to use a prior submitted photo, please contact us before to October 10th.

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

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

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

Local athletes complete 100-mile ruck challenge



Holly Dube of Oakham makes her way to the aid station at Barre Falls Dam during the 100-Mile Ruck March Challenge. TURLEY PHOTOS BY MARY WHITELAW

BARRE – On July 20, 41 athletes left Sherry's House in Worcester for the 3rd annual 100-Mile Ruck March Challenge.

An aid station was set up at Barre Falls Dam, and athletes also enjoyed refreshments at Stone Cow Brewery.

For four days, athletes rucked through flooded trails, poison ivy, a tornado warning, bear sightings and torrential downpours. Twenty-seven of those athletes cross the finish line that Sunday, earning their finisher medals.

Holly Dube from Oakham completed the challenge, with her daughter Ally walking with her for the first 25 miles. Ally was unable to continue due to her knees.

Dube's daughter Samantha was there along the way as a volunteer. Samantha is hoping to participate next year.

Rob Halvorsen walked in memory of his nephew Patrick Halvorsen, who was from Hubbardston.

Other athletes to complete the challenge include Tobey Belton Jr., Jim Black, Jess Bridge, Will Chapman, Brenda Couture, Melissa Cutroni, Joe Ford, Tina Gendron, Lori Jacques, Tye Jordan, Jay Lyons, Kyle Manuel, Eric Matta, Jay Monette, Adam Mottyl-Szary, Mike Pichan, Marielle Pitts, Joe Russell, Jay Sauvageau, Jeff Sauvageau, Alex Silkman, Dillan Skamarycz, Dave Smith, Sam Smith and Rick Woods.

The athletes raised almost \$140,000 for Why Me & Sherry's House.



Athletes leave Stone Cow Brewery after enjoying food and music.



Shown from left are Ally Dube, Holly Dube and Samantha Dube of Oakham.



Athletes were happy to reach the aid station after rucking through heavy rains.



Athletes walked together as they continued toward their 100-mile goal.

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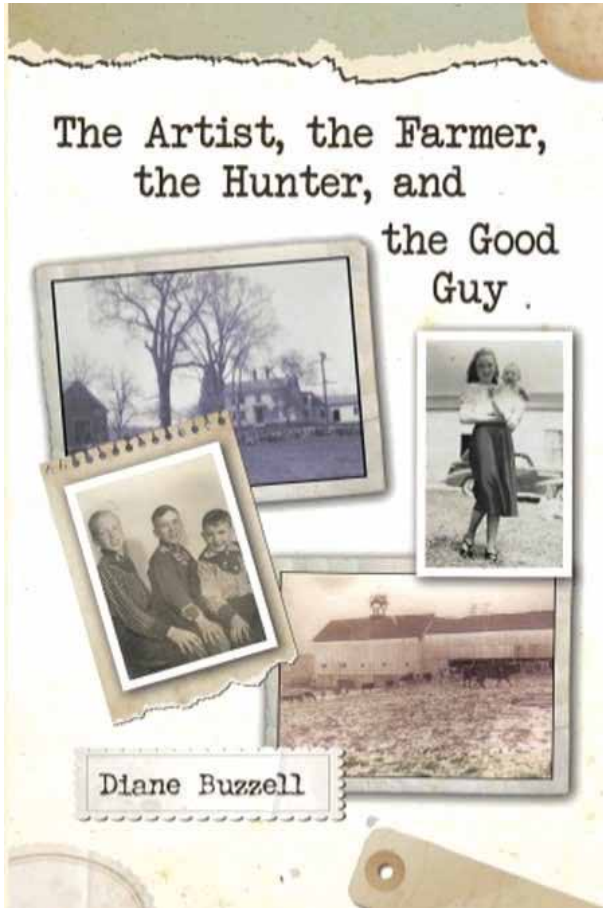
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- community -

Author Diane Buzzell presents at Senior Center

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Local author Diane Buzzell will have a presentation and book signing of her book “The Artist, The Farmer, The Hunter, and the Good Guy” on Tuesday, Aug. 29 at the North Brookfield Senior Center, 29 Forest St., at 11 a.m.



North Brookfield author Diane Buzzell will give a presentation and book signing about her book about life and growing up in a small town at the North Brookfield Senior Center on Tuesday, Aug. 29 at 11 a.m. SUBMITTED PHOTO



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GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

What likely happened in your garden is that the carrots split to avoid a stone.



Before planting your seeds next spring, remove rocks and if necessary, sift the soil. You can also try growing carrots in a raised bed filled with screened loam or special raised bed soil mixes.

Overcrowded conditions can also cause roots to fork, so be sure you thin your seedlings carefully to about a thumb's width apart.

Overwatering can also cause forking. This year we didn't have control over much of that!!

One other suggestion: don't apply fresh manure to your seed bed - it too can cause the problem you speak of. Instead, add plenty of organic matter in the form of finished compost if you would like to increase your soil's fertility.

Test results could initiate some revisions to our fertilization and liming routine this fall, preparing the way for a healthier, more productive garden next spring and summer, and maybe even a few more peppers for Genevieve to enjoy!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

Summer Jam takes the stage day

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Cultural Council is getting ready to set the stage for local talent with the first ever West Brookfield Summer Jam, a live performance spotlighting amateur musicians.

Bands, solo acts and more are welcome to take to the Great Hall of the Town Hall on Saturday, Aug. 26 from 6-9 p.m. and get a feel for playing through a professional sound system in front of a live audience.

Interested musicians can sign up for Summer Jam by emailing wbrookfieldlcc@gmail.com with "Summer Jam" in the subject line. Please include your name, phone number, email address and band name (if applicable) as well as the number of band members.

Bring your instruments and your friends.

For more information about the West Brookfield Cultural Council and other upcoming programs, find them on Facebook at "West Brookfield Cultural Council of MA," visit massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/west-brookfield, email wbrookfieldlcc@gmail.com or call 508-867-3610.

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N. Brookfield	5+ acres	\$49,900
Sturbridge	11+ acres Town Util	\$149,900
Sturbridge	11+ acres Waterfrt	Call for details
Ware	11+ Acres (perc)	\$65,000
Warren	4.5+Acres (perc)	\$31,500
Warren	22+ acres (perc)	\$89,900

Many of the lots have perc tests, some have septic designs.

CALL FOR DETAILS AND LOCATIONS.

Have a parcel to sell? I do have buyers waiting.

WARE: Set on 4+ acres multi use brick building set just outside of town. Some rental income, 3 phase power, overhead doors. \$375,000. Call for details or private tour. Don't miss this opportunity if you need more space for your company at an affordable price.

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www.BuyRiteHome.com

Recreation Committee hosted beach bonfire for families



Anthony Frediani helps Autumn with her s'more. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA QUIMETTE



Even the Grinch stopped by for a relaxing evening of tunes and treats.



The Matt family enjoyed music by the bonfire. From left are Sean, Ellie, Rowan and Brianna.



The West Brookfield Recreation Committee is made up of members Jennifa Frediani, Lisa Bardo-Barnes, Doreen Piechota, Michael Drolet and Lisa Girard (not shown).



From left are Meadow Harris, Summer Ferreira, Skylar Ferreira and Hunter Harris.



Lori Brooks led the campfire singalong.



From left, Ross Ranks, Riley Ranks and Jenna Ranks, enjoyed the evening with Debra Kite and Tom Kite.

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West Brookfield Annual Flea Market on the Common

Sponsored by the First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ

Saturday, August 26, 2023

9AM - 3PM, Rain or Shine!

\$40 for a 20 x 20 VENDOR SITE

The flea market will be free and open to the public.

Email for a registration form:
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SPORTS

Warriors prepare for opener

FISKDALE – Last Saturday, Tantasqua’s youth football program held a jamboree for the youth football teams of Central Massachusetts. Tantasqua participated in a number of short scrimmages throughout the day and are preparing for their regular season opener next weekend.



Jayven Zayas and Carter Kelly try to make a tackle. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Chancer Stanger makes a catch.



Lucas Ferguson gets set to throw.



Jordyn Brooks heads on a rush.



Logan Travers makes his way up the field.

St. John’s captures men’s title

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Aiden Casinghino was a senior captain of the Tantasqua Regional boys varsity soccer team in 2018. Braylon Casinghino was a senior captain of the Warriors soccer team a year ago.

The brothers had never been teammates on the same soccer team until this summer.

The duo helped the top-seeded St. John Heating & Cooling celebrate an exciting 2-1 victory over the sec-



Aiden Casinghino takes a shot. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Fall leagues get update by PVIAC

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

The fall preseason has started this week, and with it, alignments for fall leagues have been updated. Full realignment typically takes place every four years, but has happened more frequently due to the pandemic and the introduction of the new state tournament.

In Western Massachusetts, due the geographic diversity throughout the region, the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Association makes leagues based on the competitiveness of a school in a given

sport, sometimes regardless of what division they play in at the state level for tournament.

For example, in the updated Kurty-Fielding Division for girls soccer, South Hadley, a Division 4 and smaller school, is in a crowded league with larger schools like Agawam, Wahconah, Chicopee Comprehensive, and Pittsfield.

The Central League features one of the top teams in Western Mass. once again. Monson is a part of the league, along now with Palmer, which has had a couple of very successful leagues. Chicopee, South-

- sports -

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Turleysports

Athlete of the Month

NAME: Lucas Ferguson
SCHOOL: Tantasqua

Ferguson is one of the quarterback hopefuls for Tantasqua youth football, which just tuned up for the season at a jamboree last Saturday.

To nominate someone for Athlete of the Week, contact Managing Sports Editor Gregory A. Scibelli at 413-283-8393 ext. 258 or send an e-mail to gs-cibelli@turley.com.



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Bonsignore Rolls To 13th Career Thompson Win

THOMPSON – Justin Bonsignore hadn't won at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park since 2019, but Wednesday night, he reminded everyone on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour why he leads all active drivers with wins at the oval.

Bonsignore's Kenneth Massa Motorsports team sent him off pit road first after a pit stop around halfway, then Bonsignore held off the charges of Doug Coby, then Ron Silk through multiple restarts to score his 13th career Thompson win. The victory tied Bonsignore for second all-time in Thompson wins with Ted Christopher, only trailing Mike Stefanik, with 15.

The victory was also Bonsignore's third of the 2023 season (Riverhead,

Loudon) and his 10th top-five finish in 11 races this season.

"After we won seven out of eight here, then the runs we started having were a bit frustrating for us," Bonsignore said of Thompson. "The car was really good. We missed it a little bit, too tight on the first set of tires, but on the second set, it fired off so well. This is a really big confidence booster. This is my favorite track – and to bounce back like this and to lead half the race... it was a total team effort to win this one."

Bonsignore and the Kenneth Massa Motorsports team will be heading to Langley Speedway in Virginia for the next NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour race on Saturday, Aug. 26.



Justin Bonsignore picked up his first Thompson Speedway in four years last week. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Blue Sox season ends in opening round

HOLYOKE – Earlier this month, the Valley Blue Sox won their division and went after the New England Collegiate Baseball League championship. The Blue Sox won back-to-back titles in 2017 and 2018, but have not gotten back there since.

Unfortunately, history would repeat as the Blue Sox were defeated by the Bristol Blues two games to one in a best-of-three series.

The Valley Blue Sox season has come to an end after falling to the Bristol Blues 10-3. After winning the first game of the quarterfinals series, the Blue Sox were shutout in game two and defeated in game three at home, allowing Bristol to advance to the semifinals.

The Blues piled on the scoring early, putting up six runs in the first three innings. An RBI groundout in the first, a throwing error and RBI single in the second, and a sacrifice fly and RBI single in the third allowed the Blues to take the lead 6-0.

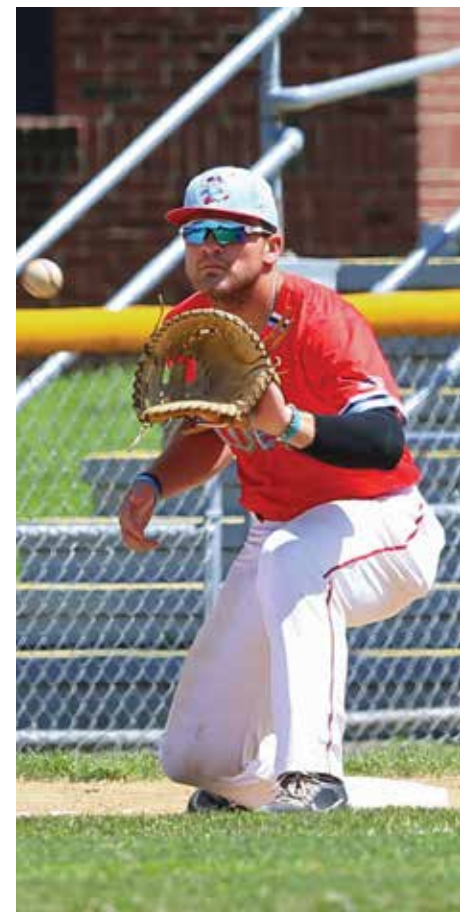
Dillon Ryan started the game for the Blue Sox, pitching three innings allowing six runs and striking out two batters.

Joe Dooley took over for Ryan in the top of the fourth, pitching four innings allowing four runs with one strikeout.

Bristol added a run in the top of fifth following an RBI double, another in the sixth off an RBI double, and two more in the seventh after a sacrifice fly and RBI groundout to go up 10-0.

The Blue Sox put a run on the board in the bottom of the seventh after Jeff Pierantoni hit an RBI single to score Matt Bergevin.

Brendan Yagesh relieved Dooley in the top of the eighth, pitching a score-



Matthew Bergevin gets the out at first. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

less frame with three strikeouts.

Valley added two more runs in the bottom of the eighth following an RBI single from Michael Zarillo to score CJ Willis and Bergevin.

2023 All-Star Michael Weidinger got the ninth for the Blue Sox, striking out two batters during his clean inning.

PVIAC | FROM PAGE 1

wick, and Granby are also a part of the league, along with larger schools in Amherst and Northampton. Northampton was defeated by Monson in an independent game last year.

Ware joins the Pioneer North League and will now meet twice this year with Easthampton, St. Mary's, Frontier, Mahar, and even Holyoke.

Holyoke was dropped from the Central League after a couple of disappointing years.

The top league in the region is the Coombs League, and features Minnechaug, Belchertown, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, Ludlow, West Springfield, and Westfield.

In boys soccer, there are not a lot of big changes, though the Churchill League, which features Agawam, Westfield, and Pope Francis, and Pittsfield, will add Hampshire Regional and Mt. Greylock of Williamstown.

Dropped the Holley League is Chicopee Comprehensive. Chicopee, Holyoke, and Monson are also a part of that

league along with SICS and Northampton. South Hadley will be part of the Moriarty League, and will once again matchup with Frontier, Easthampton, and Mahar. Southwick and Lenox will also be in the league this year.

Granby is part of the Schmid League this year, and Ware is a crowded Bi-County League that features eight teams.

Pathfinder, which now co-ops with Palmer, is in the Tri-County League again this year.

Football leagues did not see any major changes. The AA still features the same six teams, including Minnechaug and Holyoke. Agawam is part of the Suburban South, and South Hadley, Ludlow, and Chicopee are in the Suburban North again this season.

Belchertown will compete in the Intercounty South, and Palmer and Ware are part of the Intercounty North along with Greenfield, Mahar, Athol, and Franklin Tech. Pathfinder remains in the Tri-County.

Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching "turleysports." We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and

share with your friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

- sports -



St. John's took home the PVSSL Men's Championship this year.

ST. JOHN | FROM PAGE 9

second-seeded Villa FC in the men's championship match of the prestigious Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League held at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, last Saturday night.

"Because I'm a few years older than my brother, we never played on the same soccer team in high school," said Aiden Casinghino, who also played soccer at Springfield College. "Winning the men's championship title is fantastic, especially having the opportunity to play on the same soccer team with Braylon. We fought very hard for the entire 80 minutes."

St. John Heating & Cooling (10-1 regular season record), who was previously known as Griffin's Café, lost to the Lusitano Red, 1-0, in last year's finals. They also captured the men's title in 2016 and 2019.

"We've been able to win the summer league title every three years. There wasn't a summer league season in 2020 because of COVID," said St. John Heating & Cooling co-coach Jon Remillard, who's from Palmer. "We have some younger guys on this year's team who worked very hard. It feels great to win another title."

Remillard shared the coaching duties with Jaime Prickett, who lives in South Hadley.

Following this year's championship match, Aiden Casinghino received the MVP award.

"Winning the championship game means a little bit more to me than receiving the MVP award," he said. "The MVP award should go to the entire team because everyone has worked very hard this summer. The championship cup trophy is the only one that matters."

While Aiden Casinghino is a midfielder, his younger brother was the St. John Heating & Cooling starting goalie.

Braylon Casinghino will be a goalie for the Western New England University men's soccer team in the fall. He was in the spotlight throughout the entire second half of the championship match.

"It has been a lot of fun playing on the same soccer team with Aiden," Braylon Casinghino said. "Watching him receive the M.V.P. award was awesome. He just put us on our backs and got the job done. We came out firing on all cylinders in tonight's game."

The Western New England University men's soccer coach is Devin O'Neill. His two sons, Sean and Shay are listed on the St. John Heating & Cooling roster, but they didn't play in the championship match. The O'Neill's were outstanding soccer players at Belchertown High School.

Aiden and Braylon Casinghino, who live in Brimfield, are really looking forward to being teammates with their younger brother, Cole, next summer.

Cole Casinghino is entering his senior season as a member of the Tantasqua boys' varsity soccer team, which is coached by Matt Guertin.

"We're hoping Cole will be joining our summer league soccer team next year," said Aiden Casinghino, who has been playing in the PVSSL for the past five years. "It has been a lot of fun playing in this soccer league."

At the start of the summer league season, Braylon Casinghino replaced Mark Tiffany, who's also from Belchertown, as the St. John Heating & Cooling starting goalie.



Mike Lima, of Ludlow, sends a free kick across the field.

Villa FC (9-0-2 regular season record) posted a 4-0 shutout victory over St. John Heating & Cooling at the beginning of the summer league regular season.

"I only missed two games during the regular season and our loss against Villa was one of them," Braylon Casinghino said. "I think it would've been a little bit different outcome if I had been there."

Troy and Matt Remillard were also key members of the St. John Heating & Cooling soccer team.

All three of the Remillard's were outstanding soccer players at Palmer High School.

It didn't take St. John Heating & Cooling very long to score a goal in the finals.

During the fifth minute of the opening half, Byron Peabody, who also graduated from Palmer High School, fired a rebound shot into the lower left corner of the net past Villa goalie Mike Traghese, who played soccer at Monson High School, giving St. John Heating & Cooling a 1-0 lead.

Ten minutes later, they took a 2-0 lead following a goal by Jed Theilman, who's from Amherst. Aiden Casinghino was credited with the assist.

Villa FC cut the deficit in half following a goal by Deandrae Brown, which was assisted by Anthony Basile.

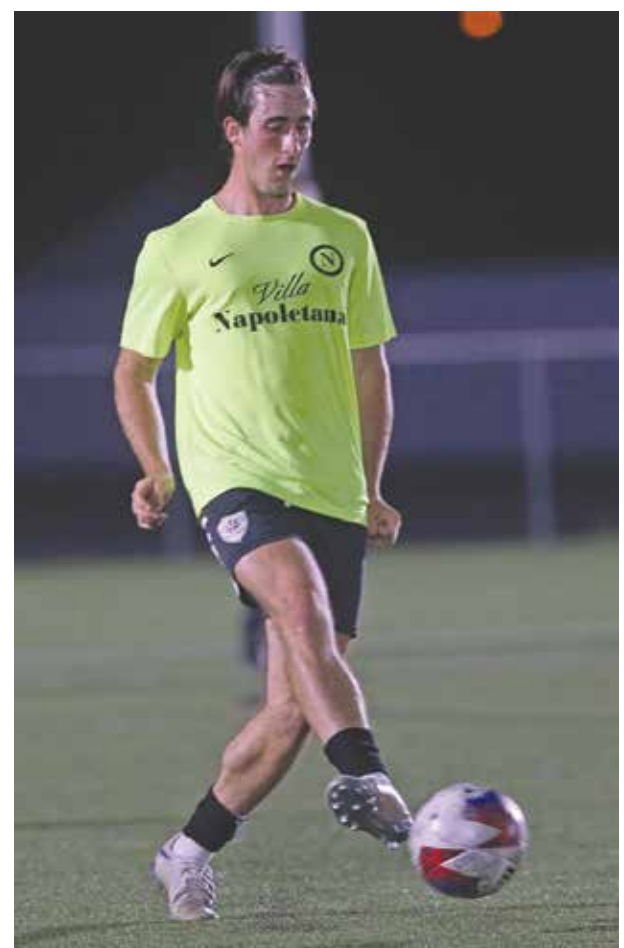
Brown played college soccer at UConn a couple of years ago.

Villa FC had six corner kicks and several other scoring chances during the second half, but Braylon Casinghino managed to hold onto the one goal lead for St. John Heating & Cooling.

"Braylon is a tall goalie," said Jon Remillard, who has been playing in the adult soccer league since 2010. "The players on the opposing team are afraid of him and I'm very glad that he was a member of our team this summer. I hope he has a good year at Western New England. He's a very good goalie. We do have several brothers playing for our team this year, which made it a lot of fun."



Jed Theilman settles a ball.



Nick Bellak sends a pass away.

STEEPLE | FROM PAGE 1

ing to start an approximately \$15,000 project to strip the old peeling paint, repair leaks, clean the clock face, and repaint the steeple.

“We’re making it beautiful again,” Hall said.

With its congregation’s roots going back to the early 1700s, the Church is a prominent part of the town’s history, and an evolving one. About where the Church is located now, a building was constructed in 1757; followed by a larger building in 1795; and another in 1881, when the previous one was destroyed by fire.

According to Church Historian Dave FitzGerald, the 1881 building was partially destroyed during the 1938 hurricane, but a portion was preserved.

Starting this Saturday, Aug. 26 at the Church’s annual Flea Market on the Common from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., rain or shine, the Church will launch a fundraising campaign to help cover the cost of preserving the steeple. People will have the option to contribute to the project there, but donations can also be mailed to First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, P.O. Box 371, West Brookfield, MA 01585.

The Flea Market on the Common has been the Church’s annual tradition for close to 60 years, and helps raise money to support the Church’s mission and general fund.

“I feel, and we hope the community feels, that the First Congregational Church enhances the Common,” Hall said. “It’s iconic...we all expect the traditional, tall white church on the Common in New England. We feel like we’re a focal point of the Common and the community.”

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield is an integral part of the town and surrounding



Paint is peeling and the clock face needs to be cleaned. TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

area, Hall said, providing the Sharing Cupboard food pantry twice a week, sponsoring a number of missions and having an open faith community.

“We open our doors to the community, we are not a closed church at all,” she said.

Now, the Church members are reaching out to the community for support.

It’s been about 20 years since the steeple was painted, and work is expected to begin in November.

Hall said in addition to seeking donations, the

Church will also host a steeple benefit dinner, offering great food at a great price.

“So many people in the community love them,” she said of the dinners.

The Church is also preparing to kick off a capital campaign to replace the building’s aging heating system and make the building more energy efficient, as well as add mini splits. These projects will make sure that the long-standing institution will continue to serve the needs of people for generations to come.

After the Flea Market on the Common, the Church is gearing up for the start of Sunday School, hosting a Rally Day on Sunday, Sept. 10 at 10 a.m., followed by a special coffee hour. During Rally Day, the children will gather together, and the congregational will celebrate them.

Sunday School meets the second and fourth Sunday of each month, for children in kindergarten-sixth grade, using the Whole People of God curriculum. Nursery care is available for children ages 4 and under.

Children are always welcome to join the regular worship service at the Church, held each Sunday at 10 a.m.

The Church is also resuming its weekly “Aging and Spirituality” sessions on Wednesday mornings, starting in September. These casual sessions among Church members have doubled since they started meeting.

For more information about the steeple project, stop by the Flea Market on the Common this Saturday from 9-3 a.m.

For more information about the Church, its faith offerings and its missions, visit westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org, email fccwbworship@gmail.com or call 508-867-7078.

WICKABOAG | FROM PAGE 1

“What goes on around the lake affects us all, and what we do on the water affects those around us,” Czaja said.

Czaja said the LWPA continues to act as stewards of the natural resource, making sure the lake is taken care of.

Brown said he was happy to report that the state of the lake was pretty good.

The LWPA continues to work with SOLitude Lake Management every year to control invasive aquatic plants.

“They keep the lake clean and safe,” Brown said.

This year, Brown said, they tried something different to combat the weeds, an herbicide called ProcellaCOR, specifically targeting the milfoil in North Cove.

“It was a good move,” he said, adding that milfoil is “stubborn” to treat.

After application, other nuisance aquatic plants were reduced as well, Brown said. He added that SOLitude Lake Management is applying the correct amount of the treatment, which allows beneficial aquatic plants to grow.

Heavy amounts of rain throughout the summer, including 15 inches in July alone, have left the lake water silty; compared to last year when it was stagnant from the drought.

Water has been routinely tested for phosphorus and nitrogen, and levels are in line with other years.

Cyanobacteria appeared in a small patch, and with prompt treatment, it was resolved in a matter of hours. Brown said cyanobacteria resembles a gas spill or an oil slick.

Brown and Czaja reminded LWPA members that lake management is the responsibility of all of them, and urged people to follow the best practices found on the LWPA website, lakewickaboag.com

Pynchon’s Grist Mill

Henshaw has been with the East Quabbin Land Trust since 2006 and has a background in forest management. She spoke about improvements made to Pynchon’s Grist Mill Preserve, a 75-acre tract of land off Wickaboag Valley Road.

According to EQLT’s website, the preserve’s most prominent natural feature is Sucker Brook, a major tributary to Lake Wickaboag.

Henshaw said EQLT is working with the Historical Commission to put up signage to share the important places related to the mill once located on the property.

She said most of the work that happens at Pynchon’s Grist Mill Preserve is through volunteer efforts, including an Eagle Scout project at the homestead site of Lemuel Gilbert.

“Boy Scouts have been clearing vegetation at the homestead location,” Henshaw said. “We’d love to learn about the history.”

Henshaw said a fence will be installed around the homestead’s well also. She said a stone trough to provide water for animals was also found while clearing vegetation.

Henshaw said stewardship practices include connecting the cellar hole back to the trail to make a loop, and a bird habitat management plan. The preserve has a lot of invasive plants, as well as illegal access from the bordering state forest.

Henshaw shared an update about another EQLT project upstream from the lake, the pocket park known as Little Marshy Meadow, at the intersection of Route 9 and Foster Hill Road.

Henshaw said the park is less than an acre, but is enjoyed by many. Volunteers have worked to clear the site, after the existing house was demolished.

An Eagle Scout project added a kiosk and benches to Little Marshy Meadow, and the town added parking.

“The property will continue to evolve,” Henshaw said.

Blue Trails and water testing

Emerson joined the Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council in 2015, making his home on the Chicopee River in Wilbraham.

The watershed measures 705 square miles and is the largest in the commonwealth.

Emerson talked about progress C4R has made over the years, including establishing the Quaboag and Chicopee Blue Trails, launching the BAC-T (bacteria testing) program in 2015.

Starting with seven sampling sites, the BAC-T program is “stronger than ever” and now tests 15 sites.

The Blue Trails have also expanded over the past two years, and C4R has led a series of group paddles to explore the waterways.

“Ultimately, it adds to our quality of life, and tourism,” Emerson said of the Blue Trails. “In a fun, environmental way.”

C4R is also continuing river restoration work, such as the removal of water chestnuts. The first year the removal started, Emerson said they removed thousands of pounds of the invasive

aquatic plant, and now it’s down to about 400-500 pounds.

He said the seeds of the water chestnut can remain dormant for 10 years, so the weeds have to be removed each year to slow their spread.

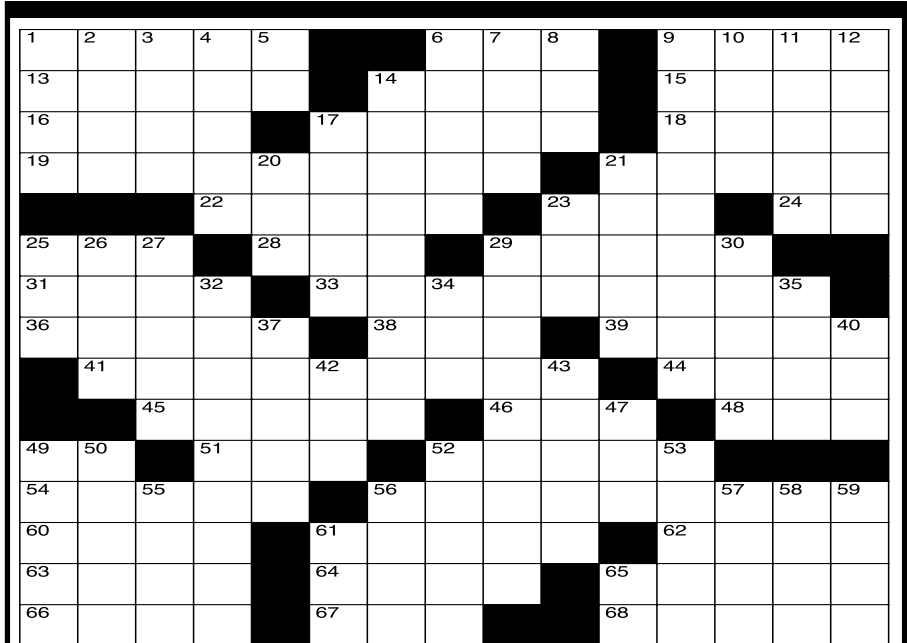
“You can’t let your guard down,” Emerson said.

Bylaw changes and election

LWPA approved three amendments to the Association’s bylaws, including clarification that voting members are limited to individuals and family mem-

bers; the executive committee could engage in electronic voting; and that the executive committee could appoint to fill a vacancy between annual meetings.

The election of officers was held, and results are as follows: Czaja, president; Brown, vice-president; Jill Brown, secretary; and Marissa Savary, treasurer. The executive committee includes Jim Armstrong, Albert Collings, Tracy Crane, Tom Ford, Jane Gately, Dave Healey, Dave Mazzaresse, Kate McGovern, Barbara Portal and Reed Savary.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Russian painter
- 6. Very fast jet
- 9. Phillipine municipality
- 13. Intestinal
- 14. Small freshwater fish
- 15. Algerian coastal city
- 16. Vomit
- 17. Famed astronomer
- 18. Ghanaian currency
- 19. Improved the condition of
- 21. Int'l association of interpreters
- 22. Infections
- 23. Dish made with lentils
- 24. Thou
- 25. Former CIA
- 28. Unit used to compare power levels
- 29. Members of Pueblo people
- 31. Myanmar monetary units
- 33. Polished
- 36. Signed a contract

- 38. Nothing
- 39. Once-ubiquitous department store
- 41. Neural structures
- 44. Thick piece of something
- 45. Slang for trucks with trailers
- 46. Longing
- 48. Senior officer
- 49. Levels of frequency
- 51. Bird's beak
- 52. Move rapidly downwards
- 54. Koran chapters
- 56. Stretches out
- 60. Top of the human body
- 61. A Chinese temple and Indian town are two
- 62. Fertility god
- 63. Sea eagle
- 64. Dry
- 65. Zodiac sign
- 66. "Horizon Call of the Mountain" character
- 67. Have the ability to
- 68. Take somewhere

CLUES DOWN

- 1. "Iron Man" actress
- 2. Wings
- 3. Adjust the spacing
- 4. They're usually locked
- 5. Atomic #43
- 6. Wise individuals
- 7. Horse mackerel
- 8. Pearl Jam's debut album
- 9. Confines
- 10. Colorless crystalline compound
- 11. Unsatisfactorily
- 12. Plant of the parsley family
- 14. Determines time
- 17. Causes the birth of
- 20. Small ornament on a watch chain
- 21. Richly decorated cloth tapestry
- 23. Vito Corleone was one
- 25. Igbo musical instrument
- 26. Put in harmony
- 27. Japanese alcoholic drinks
- 29. Tinseltown
- 30. Closes tightly
- 32. Songs sung to one's lover
- 34. One thousandth of an inch
- 35. Small drink of whiskey
- 37. Political divisions in ancient Greece
- 40. Helps little firms
- 42. Baby's eating accessory
- 43. Very long periods of time
- 47. Small block of wood
- 49. Town in Surrey, England
- 50. Enquiry
- 52. Murdered
- 53. Bura-__: Chadic language
- 55. Crater on Mars
- 56. Mammal genus
- 57. Sock
- 58. Make
- 59. Stony waste matter
- 61. Partner to cheese
- 65. Pound

- community -

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Aug. 14-21, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 20 building/property checks, 35 directed/area patrols, five traffic controls, three radar assignments, three emergency 911 calls, one citizen assist, one animal call and one motor vehicle stop in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, Aug. 14

9 a.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled

10:19 p.m. 911 Suspicious Activity, Webb Road, Officer Handled

Friday, Aug. 18

10:52 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital

Saturday, Aug. 19

9:28 p.m. 911 Disturbance, Dennis Whitney Road, Peace Restored

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5 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER \$249.99 WAS \$299.99	FRIGIDAIRE DISHWASHER #7150 \$399.99 WAS \$599.99	SAMSUNG WASHER \$699.99 WAS \$899.99	MAYTAG DISHWASHER #MDB4949SKZ \$549.99 WAS \$849.99	
FRIGIDAIRE SIDE-BY-SIDE REFRIGERATOR \$1199.99 WAS \$1,599.99	AMANA WASHER OR DRYER #VEDC6HWH \$479.99 WAS \$599.99	MAYTAG DRYER #VEDC6HWH \$579.99 WAS \$699.99	WHIRLPOOL FRENCH DOOR BOTTOM FREEZER \$1699.99 WAS \$2,699	10 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER \$479.99 WAS \$599.99
MAYTAG TOP FREEZER 18 CU. FT. \$699.99 WAS \$899.99	AMANA GAS RANGE #AGR1533BAS • Stainless Steel \$599.99 WAS \$699.99	GE FRONT LOAD WASHER #GFW550SSNWW \$799.99 WAS \$999.99	20 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER \$899.99 WAS \$1,099.99	LG SMOOTH TOP ELECTRIC STOVE \$799.99 WAS \$899.99

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JOB OPENING

STAFF WRITER

Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

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- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Proficiency in Associated Press style

Please tell us in a cover letter why you would be a good fit for this position and send it along with a resume and three writing samples to

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FAMILIES | FROM PAGE 1

“Our town is known for coming together to help when people need it. That is what inspired me to create a space for that to happen more.”

Phillips, alongside her friends, Katerine Grenech, vice president; Nancy Voutour-Waldron, treasurer; and Kaylee Kuhne, secretary; began the organization after a Carnival held back in May as a fundraiser.

Phillips founded the Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield and has since built the Community Center. They have big hopes for the Center and want to see it grow, but as a nonprofit organization, they need help from the community.

The Community Center is filled with tables, chairs, and several couches. There is a bathroom and changing station along with interactive toys for young children to play with.

For older children, there is a Pac Man table game, and plenty of fun events to join.

There are art supplies, toys, a coffee station, and snacks. The Center is truly a place for anyone to go to feel safe and welcome.

“We are like a family- very open-minded and supportive. We are all here for each other and want better for the community,” Kuhne said of the organization.

“We wanted the space to be in the center of town where the most people can access it,” Phillips said. The importance of the Center being accessed by everyone was one of the biggest factors in the development of the Community Center.

But the Community Center offers more than just a place to relax and play. The Center also offers connections to resources like WIC and SNAP as well as guides on how to access mental health, family, and financial support.

“Our big focus is bringing in the resources that people either don’t know about or can’t access because of issues like transportation,” Phillips said, and shared her desire for the Community Center to be a place of easy access for

all, including her hopes for the town to come together and make the area handicap accessible for wheelchair users.

This past week, they had two fantastic events at their building, a Nutrition Class with Litani Bassett, a SNAP-Ed Coordinator that taught a class on nutrition while making a berry smoothie. The second event was a puppet show with talented puppeteer John McDonough of Pumpernickel Puppet, with a build-your-own puppet workshop after the show.

Both events were free to the public, and several children attended both of the events and had an amazing time learning and interacting with the special guests.

The Nutrition Class had six children in attendance during the Aug. 14 class, where they learned how to make a berry smoothie while following a recipe and adding in the required amount of ingredients and learning about each ingredient’s nutritional values.

Ingredients included frozen mixed berries, Greek yogurt, oat milk, chia seeds, and honey with whipped cream to put on top at the end.

Bassett worked patiently with each child and taught them the health benefits of the ingredients and guided them along to thicken or loosen the smoothie with the frozen fruit or oat milk.

“I like giving people the tools to do these things and be not so regimented- its very child-oriented. we end up doing food science and having them think about food science without realizing it,” Bassett said, regarding the several cooking classes she taught at the Center.

The puppet show, put on this past Saturday, was a retelling of the classic story, “Sir George and the Dragon” with McDonough’s puppets with featured appearances of Tabby the Singing Cat and Virginia Ham the Singing and Dancing Pig.

The performance was funny, and the children gathered filled the room with laughter.



These young chefs show off their smoothies made during the Emilia K. Hope Community Center's Nutrition Class. TURLEY PHOTOS BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

“The reaction you get from the kids is the best,” McDonough said. “I have had kids who have seen my shows and then gone on to be puppeteers.”

McDonough loves his job, and it is evident in his performance, and after when he taught the kids in the audience how each one of his puppets worked so that they could see and learn about the behind the scenes of the puppet show.

Afterwards, they got to make their own puppets with socks, pipe cleaners, pom poms, glue, sequins, and pipe cleaners. They gave their puppets names and talked about what kinds of shows they wanted to put on when they got home.

However, as they actively strive to help the community around them and provide a space with events and open space hours, they ask for the community to give back to them.

They are a nonprofit organization, and as such, need a financial sponsor (or a few) to help with payment for things like electricity, internet, rent, and other

expenses and bills. “I love being able to give back to the community,” Phillips said. “My kids love making new friends and coming to events like the puppet show. My hope is that the community will love and value it, too.”

The Center, looking to the future, wants to hold more events like paint nights, art workshops, support groups, and work with the local cultural council in order to hold multicultural events.

The Center staff want it to be a safe place for everyone and wants it to be available for kids to go to hang out at after school and be open as an indoor space for winter activities over the weekend.

The Community Center is a new and important part of the town, and will continue to grow to host more and more events, continuing to become a space to welcome families and everyone with open arms, no matter where they come from.



Children create their own puppets following a performance by the Pumpernickel Puppets.



John McDonough of Pumpernickel Puppets showing off Virginia Ham as she sang Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive".



Julia and her baby brother, Nicholas Plankey, Macy, Emmett and Jude Phillips, and Lexi Williams are seen enjoying the puppet show.

DIRECTORS | FROM PAGE 3

The Board also accepted Kathleen Crevier’s resignation from the Council on Aging.

Spectrum concerns

A Rufus Putnam Road resident returned to share her concerns with internet services provided by Spectrum.

The resident submitted a letter, requesting that representatives from Spectrum meet with the town to address these concerns.

“Residents continue to have serious difficulty accessing the internet with lit-

tle or no connectivity, and we need to begin with a clear review of the status of service available for all residents and businesses,” she stated in her letter.

The resident said she would like to support the Board of Selectmen to help resolve these issues.

Traffic concerns

A resident voices concern about speeding in the downtown area; saying more signage is needed to post the 25 mph speed limit.

Aside from a speed limit sign near the intersection of North Main Street and Grove Street, he said there’s no other

signs along Main Street to tell people what the speed limit is, he said.

Motorists passing vehicles on the double line is another concern. Another resident said pedestrians crossing the road near busy areas is another danger.

Residents said more police enforcement could also help make downtown travel safer.

Spending request

The Town Collector requested permission to spend funds on boxes of white, windowed envelopes to send out bills. The Board approved the request.

One-day liquor license

The Board approved a one-day liquor license for an event at Still Hart’s Café on Sept. 16 from noon-9 p.m. to benefit the playground. The event includes an outdoor concert, food and beverages.

Special Town Meeting

A special town meeting will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. at the Police Station. There will be two articles to change the wording of articles that were previously approved at the town meeting.

QUABOAG

CURRENT

NORTH BROOKFIELD
NBEMA appoints
directors p3

REGION
S.O.N.G Stock benefits
children Aug. 27 p5

WEST BROOKFIELD
Summer Jam rocks
Saturday night p7

Editorial/Opinion
Sports
Police Logs
Classifieds

4
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13
14

Volume 16, Number 39

Friday, August 25, 2023

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