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August 28, 2026



TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Left to right stands the golf team of Jim Lovett, Gary Donlin, Mark Franson and Steve Brunell (not pictured). This golf team competed in the annual Brookfield Lions Club Golf Tournament at Quail Hollow Country Club in Oakham.

Lions Club hosts annual golf tournament

By Ryan Drago

Staff Writer

rdrago@turley.com

OAKHAM – The 2026 Brookfields’ Lions Club Golf Tournament took place this past Saturday at Quail Hollow Country Club.

This year’s golf tournament held on Aug. 22, featured 25 teams and about

100 golfers participating.

One of the 25 golf teams included Jim Lovett, Gary Donlin, Mark Franson and Steve Brunell, who were all ready to take the cart to the course of Quail Hollow Country Club.

“We’re going to need all the luck we can get,” Lovett said.

Checking in the players were event co-chairs Marc

Kokansky and Bill Fullam of the Brookfields Lions Club. Kokansky has been with the Brookfields’ Lions for 40 years and has records of the annual golf tournament dating back 25 years.

The original home for the club’s annual golf tournament was the Bay Path Golf Course in East Brookfield, which recently had a disc golf course incorporat-

ed onto the property.

Quail Hollow Country Club in Oakham has been the host of the tournament for the last 10 years.

This annual golf tournament helps the Lions Club members support their local communities, including all the Brookfields and New Braintree.

See **GOLF TOURNAMENT** PAGE 5

Select Board sets FY 27 property tax allocation

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis

Staff Writer

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STURBRIDGE – The Select Board held a joint meeting with the Board of Assessors last Monday, where Ann Murphy, Principal Assessor, gave a presentation on fiscal year 2027 property tax allocation scenarios.

They included whether to have a split tax rate, a residential discount and a small commercial discount.

According to Murphy, there are four designations in the tax allocation including residential, commercial, industrial and personal property. The total value of all of these categories in Sturbridge is about \$2.2 billion.

There are 4,442 residential homes in the town, of which the average value is nearly \$523,000. About 85% of the tax levy is made up by residential homes, the other 15% is commercial, industrial and personal property, or CIP.

The decision for the Select Board at the Aug. 17 meeting was whether to implement a split tax rate, which would shift the bur-

den away from residential properties onto CIP properties.

Massachusetts data in the presentation showed that 145 communities in the state have a higher CIP percentage than Sturbridge, and of the 116 communities with a split rate, 99 of them have a higher CIP.

The calculations showed that a 150% shift would add \$7.73 per every thousand dollars for CIP properties and decrease residential by \$1.41 per thousand. On average, it would decrease a residential bill by about \$800, and increase a CIP bill by about \$12,000.

A 110% shift would increase CIP by \$737 and decrease residential by \$219.

The Select Board voted to not implement a split rate, and instead implement a single tax rate.

There was also the option for a residential discount for qualified properties, but with 35% and 15% shifts respectively, unqualified properties would see increases of \$1,900 and \$712, with qualified properties reducing by about \$1,000 and \$453. Murphy said the retirement

See **STURBRIDGE** PAGE 5



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shown are some of artist Evan Lipton’s watercolor paintings and graphite drawings to be featured in his show, “Avian Obsession” which opens on Friday, Sept. 4 from 5-7 p.m. at West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery. His artwork from left includes northern pintails and green-winged teals, a yellow-bellied sapsucker and a great blue heron.

Avian Obsession

Local artist displays bird-themed art

By Paula Ouimette

Editor

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WEST BROOKFIELD – North Brookfield artist Evan Lipton is preparing for his first show at West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, 10 East Main St., called “Avian Obsession,” which opens with a reception on Friday, Sept. 4 from 5-7 p.m.

All are welcome to at-

tend the reception and enjoy artwork, wine, cheese and friendly fellowship.

Lipton grew up in Milton and lived in Rhode Island before settling in North Brookfield about four years ago.

His love of birds started with photography when he was about 16 years old and taking photos of birds at his backyard feeder.

“I had some free time and the birds were a fun challenge,” he said. “I start-

See **AVIAN OBSESSION** PAGE 6

Creamery Road bridge opens to traffic

HARDWICK/NEW BRAINTREE – The Department of Transportation announced the completion of the new Creamery Road bridge, which connects the towns of Hardwick and New Braintree over the Ware River.

This 100-foot single lane bridge replaced the previous bridge that was built in 1939, and closed in April 2024 due to structural and safety concerns. This closure resulted in a four-mile detour.

The project included new concrete bridge railings, guardrails and improvements to both approaches to the bridge. It also provides improved conditions for wildlife passage beneath the bridge.

MassDOT reported that the project was completed on budget and on schedule.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

The one-lane bridge connects Creamery Road in Gilbertville to Unitas Road in New Braintree.



The Creamery Road bridge that connects the towns of Hardwick and New Braintree reopened after being closed for over two years.



School district prepares for first day of school

By Paula Ouimette

Editor

pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Superintendent Timothy McCormick said the administrative team “hit the ground running” back in May to fill staff va-

cancies over the summer for the start of the school year.

At the Aug. 17 School Committee meeting, McCormick said they have filled 15 positions to date.

He gave the School Committee an update on staff training, including Investigative History, a

high-quality instructional material curriculum.

“We’re excited about this,” McCormick said.

This curriculum is for grades three through seven, and is made possible with support from the One8 Foundation.

McCormick said the

school district is also phasing in its second Career Pathway in healthcare and social assistance. He said healthcare is one of the top job sectors in the region right now.

See **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL** PAGE 6

- community -



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The Worcester Winds, a dectet of two flutes, two clarinets, two oboes, two bassoons and two French horns, performs Aug. 30 at 3 p.m. in the First Congregational Church, 144 North Main St., North Brookfield.

Worcester Winds performs Aug. 30

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Worcester Winds, a wind dectet of professional music teachers and musicians from Worcester County, performs a concert on Sunday, Aug. 30 at 3 p.m. in the First Congregational Church, 144 North Main St.

Admission is free, and the concert is funded in part by the North Brookfield Cultural Council, a local agency, which receives funding from Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Conducted by Luis Torres, the group consist of two flute, two clarinets, two oboes, two bassoons and two French horns. They will perform music by Arnold, Debussy, Bizet, Bernard, Pierne, and Maestro Torres. For more information, people may visit worcesterwinds.org.

‘Glow Ball’ tournament fundraiser is Aug. 29

BARRE– Quabbin Area Little League is holding its annual “Glow Ball” fundraising event for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute on Saturday, Aug. 29 at Felton Field, 120 Old Coldbrook Road.

The Quabbin Area Little League’s summer baseball program, the Jimmy Fund Baseball League, culminates each year with a dedicated fundraising event. This initiative is entirely focused on generating vital funds for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, supporting their critical research and patient care programs.

Check-in starts at 5 p.m. and games start at 7 p.m. The game features specialized glow-in-the-dark balls, and all participants are adorned with luminous bracelets and necklaces, creating an electrifying visual experience.

This six-team, double elimination tournament is a glow-in-the-dark modified wiffle ball game.

The game itself is designed for rapid-paced play, allowing for a five-inning game to conclude in approximately 35 minutes.

There are no age restrictions, no prior skill level is required, and all necessary equipment is provided.

For a nominal fee of \$10, anyone can participate and enjoy this unique, community-focused event.

This year, they are elevating the experience further by incorporating black light technology, reducing reliance on traditional glow sticks. Field lines will be marked with fluorescent paint, and in addition to glow accessories, players will receive black light-active face paint.

They encourage participants to wear fluorescent or white clothing to maximize the vibrant visual effect under the black lights.

Following registration, teams are formed in a “sandlot” style, guided by six designated captains, ensuring a balanced and fair competition.

The festive atmosphere commences upon arrival, promising an evening of spirited play and community engagement.ood and drinks will be available for cash purchase.

Friends of the Poor Walk to be held on Oct. 18

STURBRIDGE – The St. Vincent de Paul Society in Fiskdale will host its third annual Friends of the Poor Walk, on Sunday, Oct. 18, at noon at the Sturbridge common during the harvest fest.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will go toward supporting local individuals and families in need across Brimfield, Brookfield, Holland, Sturbridge, Wales and other nearby towns.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society in Fiskdale provides practical assistance throughout the year, including emergency housing, rental and utility help, food, clothing and other essential needs – serving people of all backgrounds and faiths.

The Fiskdale conference raises funds through parish poor boxes, public donations and events such as this one.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul operates in 153 countries, with more than 4,000 local conferences, and is run entirely by volunteer members committed to tackling poverty in all its forms.

Residents are encouraged to come to the harvest fest and join the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the walk for their neighbors in need.

For more information contact svdpfiskdalepr@gmail.com. To make a donation, visit svdpfiskdale.org and click on the “Donate” button.

Vendors wanted for Flea Market on the common

WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, 36 North Main St., has been hosting their Flea Market on the town common for more than 50 years.

This year the Flea Market will be held on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (vendor check-in 6:30-8:30 a.m.). Sellers of all kinds are welcome – flea folk, antique dealers, crafters, product vendors and those emptying out basements and attics. No food vendors, please.

Spaces are available for \$40 for a 20 x 20 grassy spot. Vendors must bring their own tables and tents.

The church will sponsor a food tent with grilled food, cold drinks and sweet treats. Email to fccofwbfleamarket@gmail.com for an application or call Karen at 508-801-7692.

Michael Pillsbury celebrates 35 years as funeral director

Michael Pillsbury, Director, of Pillsbury Funeral Homes in North Brookfield, Brookfield, Barre and Spencer, celebrates 35 years as a licensed Massachusetts Funeral Director.

Together with his wife Michelle, Pillsbury owns and operates the four family-run funeral homes, continuing a proud tradition of service that began over 60 years ago.

The Pillsbury’s have dedicated their lives to providing compassionate, professional care to families throughout Central Massachusetts, upholding the values of dignity, respect and community that define the Pillsbury name.

Michael and Michelle are the proud parents of five children: Kory, Katelyn, Michael Jr., Colin and Connor, and are deeply grateful to the many families, who have placed their trust in Pillsbury Funeral Homes over the years, as well as to their devoted staff for their continued commitment and care.



Michael Pillsbury

Troop 163 hosts ice cream social/open house Aug. 30

STURBRIDGE – Do you like camping, hiking, swimming, biking, fishing, kayaking, whitewater rafting, sailing, exploring with friends and more? You might like being a Scout.

Come to an ice cream social and open house held by Troop 163, an all-girl troop of Scouting America, on Sunday, Aug. 30 from 4-6 p.m. at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 345 Main St.

Learn about lassoing and how to use a sling shot and other activities. Families are welcome.

Stop by, have fun, and learn about Scouting and the troop.

The troop is open to girls aged 11-17, and while based in Sturbridge, is open to residents of any town. Please email troop163sturbridge@gmail.com with any questions.

Bluegrass Gospel Service will be held on Aug. 30

WEST BROOKFIELD – The George Whitefield United Methodist Church will host a Bluegrass Gospel Service at 10 a.m. on Sunday, Aug. 30 at 33 West Main St.

The program will feature traditional bluegrass instruments and voices performing old time Gospel favorites and other toe-tapping tunes in the bluegrass style. These services have been very well received and are back by popular demand.

Come as you are and enjoy some good music and fellowship. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served.

Any questions can be directed to Heidi Jeldres at 978-989-5736.

International Overdose Awareness Day is Aug. 31

WARE – The Recovery Center of HOPE’s third annual Overdose Awareness Candlelight Vigil will be held on Monday, Aug. 31 at Veterans Park at 6:30 p.m.

The vigil will remember those lost to overdose, honor those impacted by overdose and stand together in hope and community.

The Recovery Center of HOPE will provide candles for the vigil, as well as purple candles to bring home and place in your window as a visible sign of overdose awareness. All are welcome.

There will be gathering beforehand at the Recovery Center of HOPE, 52 Main St., from 5:30-6:30 p.m. for food, soft drinks and fellowship.

Final ‘Concerts on the Common’ performance will be Aug. 29

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

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

The final concert will be held on Saturday, Aug. 29 from 3-5 p.m. with the Supperchangers, a fun rock and roll band.

This concert is free and food will be available for purchase, but folks are welcome to bring their own.

Feel free to bring chairs, blankets, bug spray and sunscreen – whatever makes you comfortable.

The playground is right on the common, located on Grove Street in town. There will also be games for families to enjoy and some surprise craft tables during some concerts.

Sunoco to host Spencer’s Bravest Family Fun Day on August 30

SPENCER – Support local firefighters and police officers at Spencer’s Bravest Family Fun Day on Sunday, Aug. 30 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Sunoco, 73 West Main St.

There will be hot dogs, hamburgers, a lemonade stand, face painting, temporary tattoos, raffles, local vendors, games and more.

Bring your family, friends, and neighbors for a day of fun, community and giving. All proceeds from this event will go to support Spencer firefighters and police officers.

Remember to recycle this newspaper

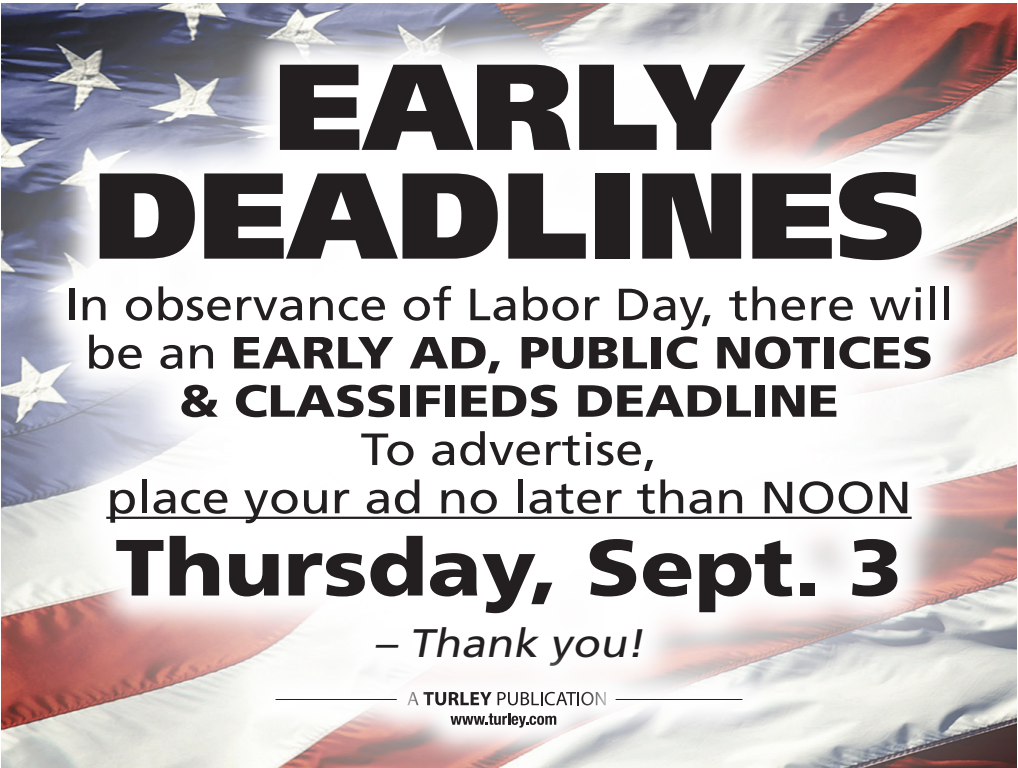


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- community -

Summer, Sounds, & Sparks at OSV

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – Continuing to celebrate America 250, Old Sturbridge Village hosted Summer, Sounds, & Sparks on Aug. 15.

The event featured food, drinks, games and crafts for families to enjoy as they traveled to the countryside of the village for the main festivities.

For the first time in over 10 years, Old Sturbridge Village reintroduced fireworks as 2026 marked a special year for not only the village, but the entire U.S.

The event began with a performance of the National Anthem by the Old Sturbridge Village Singers with Thomas Hopkins conducting.

The next performance was by Songs of Liberty. The Minuteman for the Songs of Liberty, James Perlas, came up to talk about how many revolutionary songs carried through the area during the time of the American Revolution.

The group began by performing “The Liberty Song”, originally written in 1768 by John Dickinson, who set out to reflect on the



The Old Sturbridge Village Singers performed during Summer, Sounds, & Sparks on Aug. 15.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

political strife caused by the Townshend Acts of 1767. Dickinson later joined the Pennsylvania Militia during the Revolutionary War.

The Songs of Liberty highlighted the saying, “United we stand, by dividing we fall”.

Perlas talked about the

history behind these patriotic songs and the freedom movement of the 1770s.

In 1772, the notable song “Amazing Grace” was written by John Newton, which was inspired after experiencing a violent storm at sea.

Other songs include a cover of “Our Town” and

“Yankee Doodle”.

Perlas said this song was originally intended to mock the American Colonies, but “ends up inspiring them.” The performance of “Yankee Doodle” included some audience participation.

The music didn’t stop with Songs of Liberty; next

to perform was the Sturbridge Martial Band. This traditional drum and fife corps perform regularly at Old Sturbridge Village and played some patriotic tunes for the audience relaxing in the countryside.

To bring sparks to the event, the Old Sturbridge Village Militia were set up

in the field beyond the countryside for a cannon and musket demonstration. The Militia alternated with a series of musket fires, followed by cannon fire.

The Old Sturbridge Village Singers returned to the stage for another performance to honor those who served.

During one of the performances, veteran Darrel Hopkins came up to sound off all the U.S. military branches while the Singers and band performed military themed music. Hopkins has also been a volunteer at Old Sturbridge Village for over 25 years.

Thomas Hopkins sang in honor of the late Tom Kelleher, a beloved member of the Old Sturbridge Village community. Kelleher served the village in countless roles for over 40 years.

The Old Sturbridge Village Singers performed a song they have been playing at the village for 23 years, “America”.

The event reached its finale with a display of fireworks to cap off a wonderful evening of celebrating the nation and its 250th anniversary year.

More programs at Old Sturbridge Village can be found at www.osv.org.



James Perlas talked about the history behind the patriotic songs that are still sung to this day



The Sturbridge Martial Band is shown during its fife and drum performance.



Veteran Darrel Hopkins sounded off the branches of military during the Old Sturbridge Village Singer’s performance.



Thomas Hopkins of the Old Sturbridge Village Singers performed a song as a dedication to the late Tom Kelleher, a beloved member of the Old Sturbridge Village Community.



Songs of Liberty performed revolutionary songs as Old Sturbridge Village continued to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the U.S.



The Old Sturbridge Village Singers performed the National Anthem.

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- opinion -

By Ellenor Downer

I received an email from a Hampden resident, who sent two photos of Eastern bluebirds – one adult male and a fledgling.

She states, “I live in Hampden, for the past several years we have been blessed to have a pair of bluebird’s nest in our yard. They have had three broods of babies each year including this year.”

The fledgling in the above photo is a male. The photo was taken shortly after fledging. Wing feathers, wing coverts and tail feathers are essential in determining the sex of young bluebirds.



The fledgling male Eastern bluebird blends in with the ground cover. Blue feathers are visible.

By day ten to eleven days after hatching, feather colors are noticeable. The blue tail in males and gray in females become apparent. In the male, the short tail at fledging is bright blue. Times may vary but by day 13 the tail color is apparent.

Both sexes have a gray spotted back and chest. They also have a white eye ring.

By the time a bluebird is 19 to 24 days old, the male has blue wing coverts and the female gray ones.

At five weeks old the young male has blue wing feathers and a bright blue tail. The female’s primary wing feathers are blue, but concealed. The base of her tail is blue and the rest bluish gray. Spots are still present on back and breast.

Young bluebirds continue to depend on their parents for food until six weeks old. Siblings tend to forage nearby until they join flocks of young birds. Some first brood birds even help raise their parents next brood if their parents have a double brood season.

Between July and October young birds begin to replace their juvenile plumage. Blue and brick red feathers begin to appear. By mid to late October all juveniles finish molting into their first adult plumage.

Leucistic crow
I met a New Braintree resident at the Oakham



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH FREDERICK
This adult male Eastern bluebird is seen at the entrance of a bluebird house checking on his brood.

Post Office this week. He said he saw a crow with one white wing. Leucistic birds are birds that have abnormal plumage coloration due to a genetic mutation that causes a partial loss of pigmentation.

They may have washed out feathers or blotches of white feathers. While rare, they are found in many bird species around the world.

Whippoorwills
A Brimfield resident emailed, “I thought you’d be interested to learn that I still have several whippoorwills calling at dusk in the lower Haynes Hill/ Paige Hill area of Brimfield.”

She stated, “I’ve only lived here four years, but they are here every year!. They start calling about 8:30 p.m.”

She stated, “My grandparents owned a house that bordered Reedy Meadow in Lynnfield. We heard Whippoorwills there. So cool to have them calling from my front and back yards at the same time.”

While on vacation as a child on Lake Winnisquam, my dad, brother and I would hear them calling while fishing for horn pout at night. I used to hear them in Oakham, but I not heard one in years.

Owls hooting
I do hear barred owls hooting back and forth at night. Sometimes they are quite loud and can be heard even with the windows closed.

Juvenile red-tailed hawk
I received an email from a reader who saw a juvenile red-tailed hawk in her front yard. She stated, “It was quite beautiful. It had a small rodent for its dinner. It was really close to my front door, I’ve never seen a hawk so close to me.”

People may report a bird sighting by emailing edowner@turley.com or calling or texting 774-262-5882.

Preservation questions are popular this time of year

Dawn, who gardens in Tolland, asked a few questions of the Garden Lady this past week.

You see, this is the first year in three years that Dawn has a had a productive garden. Her former garden was too far from the house to be tended. It was tricky to irrigate and animals often found their way through or under the fence.

Dawn’s hard work ended up being a hearty meal for woodchucks and more. Now, with raised beds close to her house, she is grateful for a bountiful harvest.

First, she wanted to be reminded how to roast tomatoes.

I enjoy roasting my cherry tomatoes; it’s a great way to use them up when they produce like gangbusters.

Depending on the size, I either cut them in half or quarters and put them no more than two rows deep in a roasting pan. I sprinkle a teaspoon or two of extra virgin olive oil over the tomatoes and then I add half an onion and two-three cloves of garlic.

After mixing all the ingredients together, I bake at 400 degrees for about an hour, stirring midway. You know when it is done when the skins pucker and there is very little liquid left. Now you can either eat it this way, say over pasta or rice, or you can zip it up with a few basil leaves and you have made your own sauce.

No need to de-seed or remove the skins. Just think, all that added fiber and goodness, with less work to boot!

You can tailor your roasting to suite your own taste buds as well. Some folks add chopped peppers or eggplant.

Certainly you can use any type of tomato, too and add additional herbs or spices.

Speaking of peppers, Dawn also wanted to know

how to roast peppers. It’s a little different from tomatoes.

Peppers roast best when they are fully ripe – i.e., when they have changed color. I have mentioned it before, but my favorite roasting pepper is “Carmen,” a long bell pepper with thick walls.



Simply wash the fruits and position them whole in a single layer under the broiler, turning frequently until they bubble up and char slightly. This can also be accomplished on a gas grill or as my husband will attest, over the flame of your kitchen gas stove.

Once charred, place them in a paper bag or covered container. The steam will soften the skin to the point it can be rubbed off, revealing yummy, thick flesh.

Pull off the stem and remove the seeds and voila! Roasted red peppers are yours to freeze.

I just blot mine dry and put them in single servings in plastic freezer bags. The fruit is easily thawed by placing the bag into a shallow basin of water; likewise, you can pop the pepper popsicle on to a plate and let it thaw in the fridge.

Roasted peppers are fantastic on homemade pizza or blended into hummus.

I shared with Dawn that I was making pickles. She went on to say that hers never turn out well, so I texted her a copy of a recipe given to me by a dear coworker over 20 years ago. I am still making them.

I’m not sure who originally gave Ron the recipe, but here it is for anyone wanting to use up an abun-



dance of cucumbers. I’ve made it with full size cukes as well as picklers.

I would recommend that you fill your canning jars, be it quart or half gallon, with the cucumbers first. They can be packed tightly.

Then, add plain water to the jar all the way to the rim. Dump the water out into a large measuring cup to see just how much liquid you need.

Then you can adjust the other ingredients to the ratio in the recipe. I learned this trick the hard way after wasting ingredients because I didn’t need quite a double recipe.

Ron’s Pickle Recipe
Ingredients:
14-16 cucumbers
8 teaspoons pickling spice
6 dill tops
6 cloves garlic
2 teaspoons sugar
4 tablespoons Kosher salt
1 cup vinegar
5 cups water
Instructions:

Combine all ingredients into canning jars. Shake and leave on counter for 36 hours. Refrigerate for two days before eating. Will keep in the fridge for a few months although the flavor will intensify with storage.

Enjoy the harvest as much as Dawn is!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

We were bitten by Medicare’s IRMAA this year; What should I so?

Dear Rusty:
My wife and I file our taxes jointly.

In 2024, I took an IRA Required Minimum Distribution, which was significantly more than I was required to take.

My Medicare premiums were not affected in 2025 and our Social Security payments were not reduced. Then, our joint filing in 2025 kept us below the IRS’ “Modified Adjusted Gross Income level. Yet in 2026 our Medicare payments increased and our Social



Security payments were reduced.

If my MAGI is below the maximum for 2025, will my regular SS payments/Medicare reductions be restored in 2027? Is there any action I need to take to ensure this will happen or will our Medicare payments and reduced SS payments be our new norm?

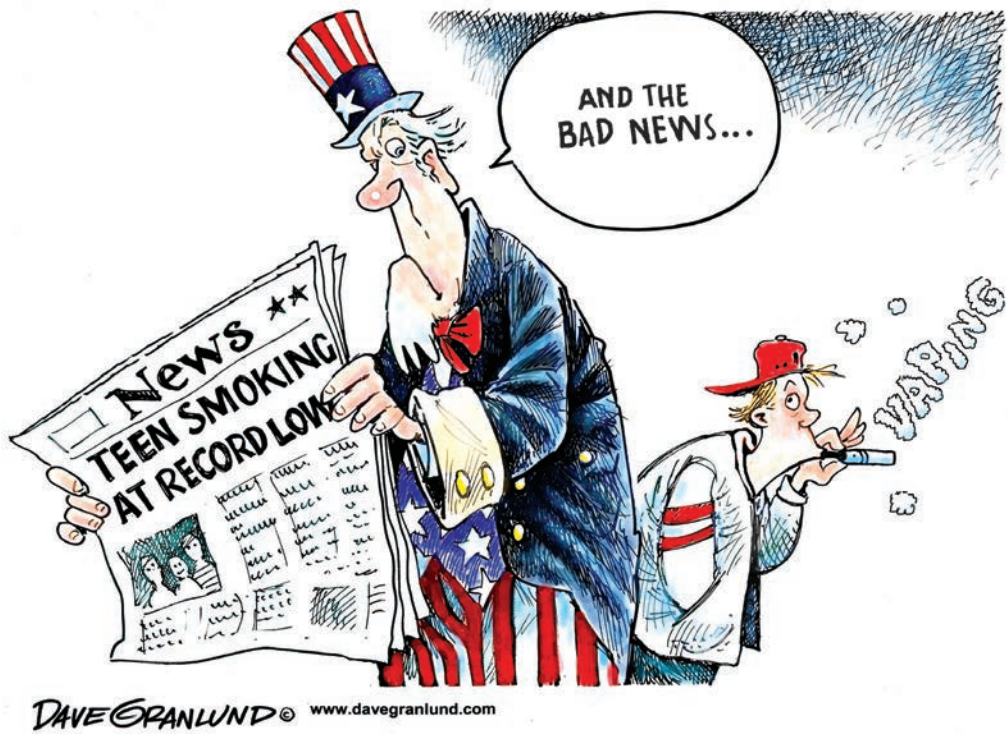
Signed: Worried Retiree

Dear Worried Retiree:

FYI, your Medicare premiums in 2026 were affected by the large RMD you took in 2024, which caused a Medicare provision known as the “Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount” to apply for 2026.

When determining the Medicare Part B premium for next year (each fall), Medicare uses the income you reported to the IRS

See SOCIAL SECURITY PAGE 10



PEOPLE/MILESTONE NEWS

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- community -

STURBRIDGE
FROM PAGE 1

co-op would increase if this was implemented, so the Select Board voted to have no residential discount.

The board also voted to have no small commercial discount.

DPW report

DPW Director Heather Blakeley said in the past two months, there were two sinkholes and a water main break along with some washouts. The department is doing their roadside mowing and street sweeping and catch basin cleaning, along with preparing for various paving projects.

Blakeley also presented three options to purchase snow equipment, as the annual town meeting approved \$250,000 to go toward it. The options were a 2025 trackless MT7 machine for \$224,700, a 2026 Wacker Neuson wheel loader for \$135,721 and a Ventrac for \$73,620.

Blakeley said one of the priorities of this purchase was sidewalk clearing, as the DPW currently uses a John Deere small tractor.

She said each of the op-

tions has its benefits, and the MT7 is made specifically for sidewalks. The Ventrac can have accessories like a blower put on it, and can be used at other times of the year for landscaping.

Blakeley said it can potentially be used for brine spreading as well.

The Select Board voted to approve the purchase of the Ventrac with any necessary attachments up to \$100,000. Town Administrator Robin Grimm said the rest of the money will roll back into free cash, and can be approved for another capital purchase at a town meeting.

Water/Sewer report

Water and Sewer Superintendent Shane Moody said the plants are running well, and they are currently in drought status two, and if it progresses to status three, there will be restrictions.

Moody said status is determined by the cubic feet per second of a dam in town, and if it gets below 18 per second, the designation will be status three. The measurement on Aug. 17 was 23.5 cubic feet per second.

Moody said there is a

cleaning of the tank on Fiske Hill Road coming.

Moody also said the per-and-Polyflouroalkyl substance measurement, or PFAS, in well one is at its limit, so the department will try to back off of well one and bring more water from the good sources to see how it mixes. Moody said he wants to see the results with three filters, and in the worst case scenario, they would have to implement PFAS treatment into a new wastewater plant.

Conservation report

Conservation Agent Lauren Vivier said there is a new administrative assistant in the department, Lori Williams. She also said the Conservation Commission has five members, but there are two vacancies for alternate spots.

There were 14 regular meetings and five special meetings in the last fiscal year, and there were 157 permits issued. There were three enforcement orders, two notices of violations and one cease and desist.

Vivier said increased education and relationships should reduce those instances.

Some things the commission has worked on include an open space and recreation plan, which Vivier said they are working to implement, and master plans for parcels on Douty Road and Plimpton Community Forest.

There was a survey of Fiske Hill done and a draft for stewardship grant submitted for Leadmine Road.

The commission hosted some seminars including Your Land, Your Legacy and Simple Steps, Big Impacts, along with implementing a new mascot, Chip the Beaver for educational outreach for younger generations.

Vivier said there was a Great Sturbridge Pumpkin Walk with many families last year, and one will be held on Oct. 23 this year.

Vivier said some focuses are on lake stewardship and monitoring, including at Big Alum Lake.

The commission has worked on a hazard mitigation plan, and are working to keep forests healthy and water quality high. She said there is not one lake without aquatic invasives or algae blooms.

There were also items voted on related to conservation, including an agreement with Geosyntec Consultants to do a limnological study at Big Alum Lake for \$20,000, an agreement with Wilcox and Barton Inc. to draft and submit an application for a 604 (b), or watershed study grant, and a letter of support from the board on behalf of the Conservation Commission for a water quality management planning grant application to conduct a watershed study at Cedar Lake.

The Select Board approved all three items.

Contracts

The Select Board approved the spending of \$58,900 from funds appropriated at the annual town meeting for a water quality and treatment alternatives analysis for wells one, three and five, with the town administrator conducting the professional services agreement with Tighe & Bond.

The board also approved a contract with McClure Engineering Inc. for \$30,000 to do engineering design services for a Church Street water tank utility shed project, which was appropriated

at the FY 24 annual town meeting.

The board also signed the collective bargaining agreement with the Sturbridge Police Association.

Appointments

The board appointed Alex Perron to the Design Review Committee, and re-appointed Debra Schiro to the Monuments, Memorials and Markers Committee and Laurance Morrison to the Personnel Classification and Policy Committee.

Other business

The board approved the Aug. 3 meeting minutes, and a one day liquor license for Altruist Brewing Company, who will be serving at the town bonfire on Sept. 5. There is also a pickleball tournament coming up on Sept. 25.

A representative from Trinity Solar was approved to do door-to-door sales through the end of December.

Sept. 1 state primary voting will be at the Sturbridge Host Hotel from 6:30 a.m.-8 p.m.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Golfers warmed up before taking to their carts.

GOLF TOURNAMENT
FROM PAGE 1

The golf tournament is one of three major events the Lions Club puts on every year. The club also hosts an annual ice fishing derby, and a \$10,000 raffle.

The top three teams in the golf tournament received prizes and there was also a closest to the pin competition and a skins competition.

Taking first place with a score of -11 was the team of John Wheeler, Dan Gagne, Ryan Metterville and Ryan Seilis; second place with a score of -10 was Kevin Koksansky, Mark Bengston, Matt Baronoski and Dave Earle; and third place with a score of -9 was Dave Brown, Doug Brown, Dennis Trela and Tom Emery.

To wrap up the tournament all the participants and club members enjoyed a chicken dinner, featuring corn on the cob and a baked potato.

Glenn Waugh has been a Lion for 50 years and has been playing in the annual golf tournament for 40 years.

"I've never won, never came in last," Waugh said. "It's a lot of fun."

Waugh says the Lions Club raises around \$40,000 per year during their three



Golfers checked in before tee time.

big events, including the annual golf tournament. All the funds raised go back to the communities they support.

The Lions also contribute to several major causes such as the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, the District 33A Sight and Hearing Fund, and the Lions Club International Foundation. In addition to local support, the Lions also support efforts on a global scale.

Lions Clubs International Foundation Coordinator Bill Cass attended the annual golf tournament and is a

past president of the Brookfields Lions Club.

Cass talked about the annual awards that recognize the outstanding work done by Lion members.

The Lions Club District 33A Joseph J. Camarda Fellowship is a prestigious recognition awarded to individuals. The award goes to Lion members and non-members who make significant contributions to sight and hearing initiatives within Massachusetts.

There is also the Melvin Jones Fellowship, named after the founder of Lions Clubs International, who

helped organize the Lions out in Chicago where he was a respected businessman.

The golf tournament was supported by numerous sponsors throughout the communities. The tournament sponsors included the American Legion Post 41 in North Brookfield, North Brookfield Savings Bank, 308 Lakeside, Howe Lumber, Cuddy Insurance Agency, Stone & Lime Imports Inc., Country Auto & Tire Center and many others.

For more information about Brookfields Lions Club, visit www.brookfieldslionsclub.org.



Quail Hollow Country Club has been the host of the annual Brookfield Lions Club Golf Tournament for the last 10 years.

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Fudge, Family Memories and more!

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- community -

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
FROM PAGE 1

“There is a definite need for people to go into these Career Pathways and again, we want to set up our students for success,” he said.

McCormick said the school district received a \$15,000 support grant for this program, and he expects to phase it in for the 2027-2028 school year.

He said they have also received a \$50,000 grant for an Advanced Manufacturing Pathway, which just concluded its first year with “great success.”

McCormick said this grant will offset some salaries and supplies.

He said the school district is using a new student information system called School Insights. He said information will be sent out to families to register their students.

McCormick said the

school district is also launching a new website.

First day of school

Kindergarten open house will be held Monday, Sept. 1 and the first day of school for students in grades K-12 is Tuesday, Sept. 2. The first day of preschool is Tuesday, Sept. 8.

Administrators’ reports

High School Principal Brian Beck recognized senior Taylor Harris for cleaning and organizing the care closet at the school.

Beck said the high school daily bell schedule will run Monday through Friday, instead of on a rotating schedule. He said this change came from staff and student feedback.

He said Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are the same schedule and Tuesdays and Thursdays will have rotation.

Elementary Principal Ar-

thur Murphy said the school library received an update over the summer. He said the books were organized and new furniture was added.

The library will also be home to the school’s Star Bucks store, where students can receive rewards for positive behavior.

Director of Student Services Dr. Michael Baldassarre said the school district receives clinical services and social emotional support from clinicians through the Behavioral Health Network. He said a new memorandum of understanding has been signed and this should help to ensure more consistent staffing for the students.

Baldassarre said 34 staff members have now been trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools. He said Murphy will become a TCI trainer, authorized by Cornell University.

“It’s not just a system of intervention, it’s a system that was designed to create a culture in a school that provides staff with common language, common understanding and common methodology,” he said.

Baldassarre said the first Special Education Parent Advisory Council meeting will be held virtually on Sept. 17 at 6 p.m. He said the SEPAC is now a member of the state organization, MassPAC.

The school district was awarded a 240 grant in the amount of \$136,740. Other special education grants the school district is expected to receive include: Title I, \$100,005; Title II, \$14,308; Title III (in partnership with Tantasqua Regional School District), \$2,055; and Title IV, \$10,000.

Recognition

McCormick recognized Sophia Giangrande and

Emily Litchfield, recent graduates from the high school, who worked as paraprofessionals with the school district this summer.

“It was a great opportunity for both of them,” McCormick said. “We were very excited to have both of them involved in the programming.”

McCormick also recognized Facilities Director Joe Holway for his leadership and building a “high-functioning team.”

Public participation

Margaret Hanson recognized students who planted a tree on Aug. 5 in honor of late teacher, Damian Sarrette. The students organized the tree planting prior to leaving for college.

“I just want to thank them for making the time to do that and honor him that way,” she said.

School Committee goals

The School Committee members shared ideas for the committee’s goals for the 2026-2027 academic year. The committee will select its goals at its September meeting.

Ideas for goals included re-evaluating tuition agreements with other school districts, focusing on North Brookfield Public Schools as a standalone district, educational goals and superintendent/administrator goals.

Student handbook approval

The School Committee voted to accept the student handbook as presented.

Beck said changes to the handbook include the new bell schedule, new National Honor Society bylaws, alternatives to suspensions and more.

A new cell phone policy will be reviewed and adopted prior to the start of the school year.

AVIAN OBSESSION
FROM PAGE 1

ed taking pictures of them and wanted to know what I was taking pictures of.”

Lipton, who spent years conducting biology field work with birds around the country, including in Massachusetts, California, Rhode Island and Utah, focuses on making his artwork as accurate as possible.

“I focus mostly on scientific aspects of birds,” he said. “I try to keep my stuff as true to the subject as possible, based on real-life observations and photos I’ve taken... I strive for accuracy and people really appreciate that”

“Avian Obsession” will feature close to a dozen of Lipton’s watercolor and graphite works of birds he has observed – mostly found in Worcester County.

Lipton has also hand-made all of his work’s frames from wood and matted and framed them himself.

“That’s been a big project,” he said.

In addition to watercolor



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Evan Lipton created his own frames for his artwork made of purple-heart, red oak and black walnut.

and graphite, Lipton creates visual art on his iPad and makes postcards and greeting cards. His cards can be found at Joy of Beans, located adjacent to West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery at 12 East Main St.

Lipton and his partner began frequenting Joy of

Beans a few years ago, and it is now part of their regular Saturday routine.

He also held a small art show at the coffee shop, where his talent was recognized by gallery owner Rebecca Fay, who invited him to be a guest artist at West Brookfield Art & Frame

Gallery for the month of September.

Lipton can be found selling his cards throughout eastern and central Massachusetts, and will be featured at the North Quabbin Garlic & Arts Festival on Sept. 26-27 at Forsters Farm in Orange.

One of the watercolor paintings featured in “Avian Obsession” is of several northern pintails and green-winged teals he observed in a flooded field at Bolton Flats.

Lipton said this was one of the first big paintings where he really “leaned into” creating it based off the experience and not just a single photo – a direction he wants to continue with his watercolors.

“It was half from memory and half from some bad quality photos I took,” he said.

When asked about his love of birds, Lipton said he has a great respect for birds that are often overlooked.

“I really like underrepresented and not really colorful things,” he said. “I really love sparrows and

shorebirds...mostly the birds with unique and cryptic patterning – the ones that are a big identification struggle.”

Upcoming events at the gallery

Upcoming shows at the gallery include a fine art benefit auction on Friday, Oct. 2 from 5-7 p.m. with proceeds going to the Sharing Cupboard food bank in West Brookfield. Artists will be donating their works for a silent auction.

A special “The State of our Union” show will be held and is open to anyone. An opening reception will be held on Friday, Nov. 6 from 5-7 p.m.

The public is encouraged to submit a piece of work. All entries will be hung unless they are inappropriate for children.

Artwork must meet the following requirements: the theme of the art is “The State of our Union;” the format is six inches by six inches; and the artwork must be mailed to West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, P.O. Box 102, West Brookfield,

MA 01585 or dropped off at the gallery during open hours before Oct. 30.

Artists can use any medium of their choosing.

Gallery owner Fay said, “You don’t have to be an ‘artist’ or an adult to participate, and it doesn’t matter what you like or don’t like. All work submitted will be respected.”

The “Tiny Works Holiday Group Show” will close out the year with a reception on Friday, Dec. 4 from 5-7 p.m. This annual show features small works by gallery artists just in time for the holiday gift giving season.

About the gallery

For more information and a complete listing of gallery happenings, call the gallery at 508-753-8604, email yafacceber@hotmail.com, visit westbrookfieldartandframe.com or stop by the gallery during open hours, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.



VETERANS DAY SALUTE

Quaboag Current ~ November 5, 2026

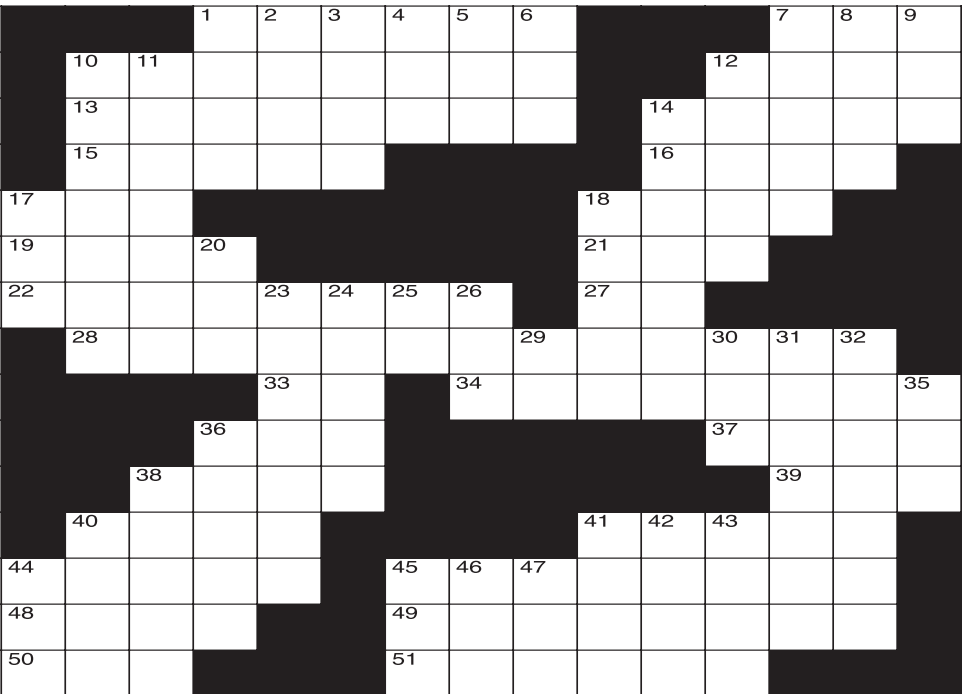
Quaboag Current will be saluting our local veterans (from all wars and branches, including honoring deceased veterans), reservists, active duty U.S. Military members.

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, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069

All photos will be returned.

Please submit your photo no later than Monday, October 20, 2026.

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 Dan Flynn no later than October 13th (413) 297-5886.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. A vast desert in Africa
- 7. Reciprocal of a sine
- 10. Type of phone
- 12. Biblical figure
- 13. One who renounces a religious belief
- 14. Warren and Monroe are two
- 15. Wild ox
- 16. Dismounted a horse
- 17. Cave dweller
- 18. Where infants sleep
- 19. Popular type of shoe
- 21. Clumsy large person
- 22. Evil-like
- 27. Integrated circuit

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Slovenly person
- 2. In addition
- 28. Austin-based athlete
- 33. Postscript
- 34. Follows 18
- 36. People of Gambia
- 37. Popular actor
- 38. Platform for a lectern
- 39. Taxi
- 40. American songwriter Sammy
- 41. Iranian city
- 44. Heavy clubs
- 45. One who is expelled
- 48. In bed
- 49. Lifelessness
- 50. Former CIA
- 51. Most slick

CLUES ACROSS

- 3.hovels
- 4. Pie ___ mode
- 5. Subway rodent
- 6. They ___
- 7. Indigenous S. American people
- 8. Fine sand
- 9. Central nervous system
- 10. Nightclub entertainment
- 11. The perfect example of something
- 12. Supreme Islamic leader
- 14. Pain
- 17. Binary-coded decimal
- 18. Projecting corner of an angle
- 20. “Succession” actor Brian
- 23. Dinner table decor

CLUES DOWN

- 24. Ancient settlement in modern Turkey
- 25. You can call Paul Simon this
- 26. Opposite of a pro
- 29. Atomic #28
- 30. Type of drug (abbr.)
- 31. Arrives at
- 32. Nullifies
- 35. Bird’s beak
- 36. Partner to “ooled”
- 38. Ray-finned fishes
- 40. Taxis
- 41. Sat on and controlled
- 42. Sea eagles
- 43. Remain as-is
- 44. Chinese revolutionary
- 45. Tooth caregiver
- 46. Snakelike fish
- 47. Compensate

SPORTS

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Quabbin Little League raises banner



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Last month, the Quabbin Area Little League baseball all-stars celebrated winning their district championship. The team, shown here at Felton Park, entered the state tournament was defeated twice to be eliminated from further contention. In the Little League World Series this year, Massachusetts was actually represented in Williamsport, PA by a team from Bridgewater.

Committee announces next Hall induction

BARRE – Tickets for the 11th Quabbin Regional Athletic Hall of Fame Induction are now available for the Nov. 7 ceremony to be held at Teresa's Restaurant, 315 Palmer Road, Ware, MA.

A social hour will begin at 5 p.m. with dinner at 6 p.m. followed by the induction ceremony.

Seven individuals and a pair of championship teams will be honored. Dating back to the first induction in 2002, this will bring the total number of individual inductees to 72 in addition to 11 teams.

The induction class includes Louis Panaccione '75, Eugene Rich '95, Matthew Brunelle '08, Stephany Halfrey '15, Thaddeus J. Gumula Contributor and Athletic Director, Coach Cheryl Adams, Coach Debra Spi-

See HALL OF FAME
PAGE 8



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHTOS.COM

Teddy Bear Pools becomes the first new playoff champions in more than a decade

Teddy Bear Pools takes playoff title in Tri-County

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE—For the first time since 2012, the Tri-County League championship title belongs to a baseball team other than PeoplesBank.

The third-seeded Teddy Bear Pools & Spas ended the second-seeded PeoplesBank twelve year dynasty after sweeping the best of three semifinal series. Teddy Bear then captured the championship trophy for the first time since the 1980's with an 8-4 victory over the top-seeded St. Joseph's Saints in last Sunday's night decisive game three held at St. Joe's Park in Thorndike. "Before the start of the

regular season, I thought we had the most talented team in this league," said Teddy Bear player/manager Ryan Magni. "We have a couple of outstanding college baseball players on our roster, which made the biggest difference. It does feel great to win the championship title, but I do have a lot of respect for St. Joe's."

Ryan Magni played for St. Joe's for eight years before switching sides a couple of years ago. His younger brother, Brandon, was the St. Joe's starting first baseman in game three.

Ryan Magni started the game in centerfield before



Jacob Hayes fires over to first.



Brendan Fournier fires a pitch home.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHTOS.COM

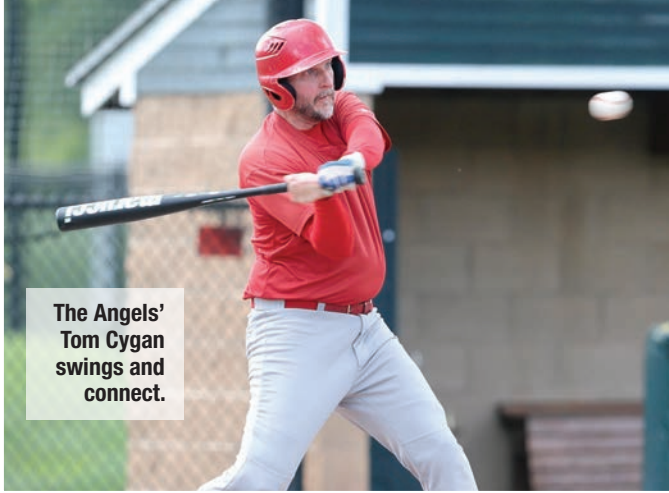
The Orioles are the 2026 Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League champions.

Orioles repeat as Valley Wheel champions

WILBRAHAM – On Saturday, Aug. 15 at Spec Pond in Wilbraham, the Orioles defeated the Angels 15-8 in the championship game. The Orioles were propelled by nine runs in the first two innings. While the Angels would manage some offense later in the game, it was not enough to come all

the way back in the match-up. The Angels were this year's pennant winners, taking first place with an 11-4 record. The Orioles won the championship for the second year in the row. They defeated the Twins in last year's championship game.

Sam Maxwell makes a back-hand play.



The Angels' Tom Cygan swings and connect.



Alex Gochinski takes a swing.



Andy Roland fires a pitch for the Orioles.



Mike Burgos delivers a pitch for the Orioles

- community -

‘World Turned Upside Down’

Kordack returns to library for second presentation

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library continued its Celebrating America from the Beginning program with “World Turned Upside Down”.

Returning for this program was East Brookfield resident Vincent Kordack, who gave a presentation at the library called “Road to Independence” back in June. This program was an opportunity for folks to learn about National Parks and how they played key roles in the Revolutionary War.

Kordack has over 38 years of experience as a National Park Ranger and was assigned to 16 of the 18 National Parks that revolve around the Revolutionary War (1775-1783). Maps of some of the historic battles were provided as well as pamphlets of the historic parks, battlefields, and encampments that are preserved by the National Park Service, and U.S. Department of the Interior.

Kordack began by explaining how the American Revolution was a long, eight-year conflict where the colonies were easily divided by three groups.

“Patriots, Loyalists, and people in between it all,”

Kordack said.

From his last visit, Kordack recalled his sharing of the leadership of George Washington, who was not an experienced war general at the time of the war. In New York, Washington lost a total of five major battles.

According to Kordack, Washington had realized that holding out was the key to victory and that is exactly what he did as the Colonists rose against British rule. As a general, Washington was credited with several victories.

One of them was the Battle of Trenton, which was explained with a map provided.

Another notable battle was the Battle of Princeton in Princeton, New Jersey (January 1777). This notable battle, also depicted on a map, explained how Washington managed to rally his troops for a counterattack.

When it comes to these National Parks, each one tells a story, and many are stories of battles.

In Massachusetts, there’s Minute Man National Historical Park. This memorable national park in the Commonwealth commemorates the historic battle that igniting the beginning of the eight-year conflict.

This park includes the towns of Lexington, Lincoln and Concord where the moments of a revolution occurred.

The park commemorates the events of April 19, 1775, from the Lexington Alarm

to the shot heard around the world; the rest is history.

Kordack also provided pamphlets of the Bunker Hill Monument as part of the Boston National Historical Park.

Kordack talked about the Saratoga National Historical Park in upstate New York. With a map to view, the Battle of Saratoga in 1777 was considered a turning point of the American Revolution. The American Forces successfully defeated and captured the British Army of General John Burgoyne, who surrendered.

The victory of Saratoga not only gave the American Colonists a momentum-building victory but also convinced French allies to support American independence.



Vincent Kordack explained the picture of a portrait depicting one of the historic battles during the American Revolution.

This historical landmark and park preserve the site of the battle that is still discussed as a pivotal victory leading up to America’s eventual victory over the British.

Colonial National Historical Park in Virginia in-

cludes the Yorktown Battlefield, which took place in 1781. American and French Forces successfully defeated General Cornwallis’s British Army.

Surrender Field can be walked on today by visitors on the very grounds where

the British laid down their arms. People can also visit the colonial era homes that survived the Siege of Yorktown and historic Jamestown.

More information about these historic parks can be found at www.nps.gov.



The East Brookfield Public Library welcomed back Vincent Kordack for his presentation of “World Turned Upside Down”.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

HALL OF FAME FROM PAGE 7

nelli, 1979 Field Hockey Team and 1998-99 Boys Varsity Basketball Team.

Tickets are \$50 and may be obtained by calling Hall of Fame Chairman Ted Gumula at (413) 348-0414 or through the mail by contacting: Quabbin Regional Athletic Hall of Fame, P.O. Box 874 Barre, MA 01005.

The last date to purchase tickets will be Oct. 23. All checks must be payable to Quabbin Regional School District.

TRI-COUNTY FROM PAGE 7

replacing righthander Brendan Fournier on the mound in the bottom of the seventh inning.

St. Joe’s scored two runs against the righthander in their final at-bats. The game came to an end when Brandon Magni hit a ground ball to the second baseman against his older brother.

“I’ve faced my brother many times over the years,” Ryan Magni said. “I didn’t have my best stuff tonight, but I didn’t make it very easy for him.”

St. Joe’s, who lost to Peoplesbank in last year’s championship series, was looking to win the TCL title for the first time since 2006.

“They just capitalized on our mistakes in tonight’s game,” said St. Joe’s manager Paul Marcinek. “It would’ve been nice if we could’ve scored a few more runs. We did win the regular season championship with a 16-4 record, and we have nothing to be disappointed about.”

Marcinek was assisted by Brian Hayes this season.

With one-out in the top of the first inning, Teddy Bear had runners on first



Mate Carrill makes a throw down to second.

and third when right fielder Willie Landman hit a ground ball up the middle. St. Joe’s shortstop Jacob Hayes made an outstanding diving stop before tagging second base and throwing a strike to Magni completing the inning ending double play.

Jacob Hayes, who’s a member of the UMass Dartmouth baseball team along with his brother Jackson, belted a double to right center leading off the bottom half of the opening frame. Brandon Magni followed with a groundball single into left field putting runners at the corners. St.

Joe’s took a 1-0 lead when centerfielder Pat Fitzgibbons hit a blooper just out of the second baseman’s reach which scored Hayes. Magni also crossed the plate following a throwing error by the catcher.

Fournier, who graduated from Chicopee High School in 2017, retired 17 of the final 18 St. Joe’s batters that he faced. St. Joe’s only base runner during that stretch was Fitzgibbons, who hit a triple to right field with one-out in the sixth inning.

“I struggled in the first inning, but I started throwing more off speed pitches that kept them off balance.

My teammates also made the plays behind me,” said Fournier, who was the winning pitcher. “I’ve been playing in this league for almost ten years, and it feels great to finally win a championship.”

Teddy Bear cut the deficit in half against righty Jack Feltovic in the third inning.

With one-out, catcher Mike Toth, who graduated from Granby High School, was hit-by-a-pitch. Second baseman Ramon Jimenez singled to right field putting runners at first and third. Then Landman hit a sacrifice fly to right.

Jimenez graduated from Chicopee High School before playing Division 1 college baseball at Boston College and Central Connecticut. He was intentionally walked in his other three plate appearances.

The visiting team took the lead for the first time two innings later.

Ryan Magni and Jimenez reached base via walks, which was sandwiched between a Mike Toth flyball single, which loaded the bases with one out. Left fielder Josh Frometa (2-for-3) blasted a triple to center giving his team a 4-2 lead.

“The bases were loaded and I was looking for a pitch to drive,” said Frometa, who played baseball at Chicopee High and A.I.C. “It was a

huge hit at that point of the game, and it feels great to win the championship title.”

After scoring an unearned run in the sixth, Teddy Bear scored three more runs in the top of the seventh against leftlander relief pitcher Jackson Hayes. The key hit during that frame was a bases loaded double by first baseman Will Kennedy, who played for St. Joe’s several years ago.

Teddy Bear entered the bottom of the seventh inning holding an 8-2 advantage.

St. Joe’s DH Adam Zebian drew a walk against Ryan Magni leading off the final frame. Zebian was replaced at first base by pinch runner Adam Przybycien. Left fielder Ryan O’Leary followed with a triple to center scoring Przybycien. O’Leary scored on an infield hit by catcher Nate Carillon, who graduated from South Hadley High School.

Ryan Magni settled down and got out of the jam by retiring the next three batters, including his younger brother.

Teddy Bear Pools & Spas will be looking to defend their championship title in the summer of 2027, but challengers like St. Joe’s and People’sBank will be looking to knock them off the top of the mountain.

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- community -

Professor discusses drought and water supplies

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – Professor Konstantinos Andreadis of UMass Amherst gave a presentation on drought and water supplies last week at the Belchertown Town Hall.

Andreadis has been at UMass for nine years and his research focuses on hydrology, water resources, drought and climate impacts.

Many Belchertown residents attended this informative presentation to learn about the research that has been done on droughts. Belchertown Conservation Administrator Julie Meyer welcomed everyone and introduced Andreadis, who began his presentation by sharing some statistics.

There are 412 billion gallons of water that make up the capacity of the Quabbin Reservoir.

For the town of Belchertown, 3,300 people are on



Julie Meyer of the Belchertown Conservation Department welcomed the public prior to the presentation by UMass Amherst professor Konstantinos Andreadis.

town water and 12,100 people are getting their water from a private well.

The main question Andreadis addressed was where the water comes from. There is surface water and groundwater, which is not visually seen.

Andreadis explained that groundwater is not an underground river or lake.

There are two kinds of aquifers: sand and gravel and fractured bedrock. When it comes to the wells in Belchertown, Andreadis' research found that around 99% of the wells are a bedrock aquifer.

The water comes from the cracks in the bedrock, but it is difficult to know where the cracks are.

Andreadis presented a map of all the wells located in Belchertown. What the map reveals is areas where the bedrock is deep and areas where bedrock is closer to the surface.

However, research lacks detail on where the cracks are and where the water is located. Drillers don't know how much water is coming out.

Andreadis showed a well chart of data collected from the U.S. Geology Survey monitoring in the neighboring town of Pelham. The chart shared 21 years of daily measurements and explained when the well fills.

According to graph, the



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

UMass Amherst professor Konstantinos Andreadis provided a presentation on drought and water supplies at the Belchertown Town Hall.

well fills from the months of November to April. Then it starts emptying from May to September.

"General behavior on how groundwater works," Andreadis said.

Though the area had a decent amount of rain during the month of July, Andreadis said rain in July is not a deposit. Most of the July rain is taken by the trees and goes back to the sky.

Based on records, Andreadis says the median depth of the water is about 20 feet. The amount of water a well can get depends on how many cracks a well would hit going down.

Those who are on a well may have concerns of their well going dry. Andreadis presented a graph example if a well went dry, which explained how some wells are deepened and gain access to more water.

Andreadis said if a well does dry it doesn't mean there is no more water. Sometimes wells have to go

deeper and are able to access more cracks, which is where water gets in.

Andreadis talked about a template for a well completion report. Folks may want to identify what kind of well they have, how deep it is and see where the water stands.

As for water supply, Andreadis did a compare and contrast slide of different water supplies.

As for who's watching the water. For the 3,300 residents in town currently on town water, it is being watched by a licensed operator.

For the other 12,100 residents, they are the ones watching the water. For town water, it is being treated and tested by law. For the others on private wells, it is whatever the users arrange.

For town water, there is approximately 750,000 gallons in the tanks. For well users, it is what stands in the well.

Andreadis discussed drought, which has no

strict definition, but it all starts with the lack of rain. Drought consists of thirsty lawns, burnt lawns, low rivers and low wells.

People and businesses feel the effects of drought more in recent years. The challenge is these versions of drought don't all start and end together at the same time.

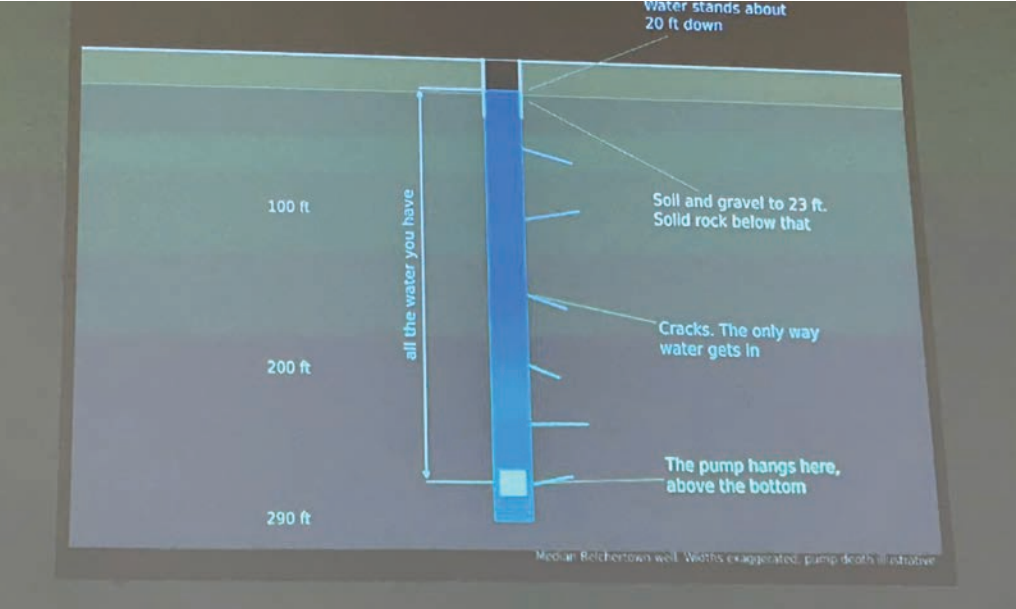
"They don't start together, they don't end together," said Andreadis.

According to studies with status effective on July 2026, Massachusetts is at a Level 2 drought, known as a "significant drought." The highest level of drought would be a Level 4, or "emergency drought."

Even though the state had received 4.5 to 9 inches of rain in July, many towns are still in a drought.

Andreadis shared another USGS report for rain fall precipitation, and it has shown low precipitation in the last few years.

Another distinct difference in groundwater is



A graph example of how water wells differ in deepness, which may impact the amount of water coming in.

Colleges announce Dean's and President's lists

Simmons University 2026 Dean's List

BOSTON – Jessica Hennessy of Fiskdale and Vanessa Sanchez of Spencer were named to the 2026 spring semester Dean's List at Simmons University in Boston.

To qualify for Dean's List status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

Radebaugh named to President's List at Plymouth State

PLYMOUTH, NH – Abigail Radebaugh of Brookfield has been named

to the Plymouth State University President's List for the spring 2026 semester.

Radebaugh is majoring in nursing at Plymouth State.

To be named to the President's List, a student must achieve a grade point average of 3.70 or better for the spring 2026 semester and must have completed at least 12 credit hours during the semester, at least nine of which must confer grade points, at the time the lists are finalized.

Cassandra Waugh named to President's List

EAST HARTFORD, CT – Cassandra Waugh has earned a spot on Goodwin University President's List for the spring 2026 session.

Waugh, a student from New Braintree, is one of 306 students to make the President's List, reserved

for those who demonstrate exemplary academic performance. Inclusion on the President's List requires a student to earn a 4.0 GPA during a given academic session.

Megan Bokis named to spring 2026 Dean's List

BOSTON – Megan Bokis, of North Brookfield has been named to the spring 2026 Emmanuel College Dean's List.

To earn a spot on the Dean's List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

Ertsgard makes Miami University President's List

OXFORD, OH – Jess Ertsgard from Sturbridge was named to the Miami University spring 2026

President's List.

Miami University students ranked in the top 3% of undergraduate students within each division for the spring 2026 semester have been named to the President's List, recognizing academic excellence.

Laskowski makes Salve Regina University's Dean's List

NEWPORT, RI – Alfred Laskowski of Fiskdale was named to the Dean's List during the spring 2026 academic semester at Salve Regina University.

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 for full-time students completing at least 12 graded credits, or a semester grade point average of 3.8 for part-time students completing at least six credits.

Annual Ware Grange Fair returns on Aug. 28-29

WARE – The Ware Grange Fair will be held on Friday, Aug. 28 and Saturday, Aug. 29 at the Grange Hall on Route 9, 297 Belchertown Road.

This year's fair will feature a fun dog show, Kids' Corner workshop, children's field events, games, raffles, bake sale, live music, a barbecue dinner and an auction. Exhibits may be entered on Thursday, Aug. 27 from 5-7 p.m. or Friday, Aug. 28 from 9-11 a.m.

The exhibit hall opens to the public Friday evening from 5-7 p.m., and there

will be a bake sale, raffles and penny sale. The fair continues on Saturday with exhibit hours from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and various events throughout the day.

An auction of fruits, vegetables, baked items, etc., will begin at 6 p.m. Raffle and penny sale winners will be drawn after. A barbecue dinner will be held from 4-5:30 p.m.

For more information, details on exhibiting, or to make reservations for the barbecue, call 413-284-1135 or visit waregrange.org.



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- public notices -

**Town Of West Brookfield
Notice Of Public Hearing**
The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, September 8th, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** in the first floor meeting room, West Brookfield Town Hall, to act on an application for a Special Permit, for WB RV LLC, for the property

located at 58 John Gilbert Road, West Brookfield. The applicant wishes to change the usage on this property to year round use. A Special Permit is required per Sections 3.0 Use Regulations and 3.1 Basic Requirements of the Zoning Bylaws.
08/21, 08/28/2026

Input needed for Open Space and Recreation Plan update

EAST BROOKFIELD – The town of East Brookfield, with assistance from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission is updating its 2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan and is seeking input from residents.
Community members are encouraged to participate in a survey to share their thoughts on open space, recreational opportunities and priorities for the future. Public feedback will help guide the development of the updated plan,

which is required to maintain the town’s eligibility for state grant funding for conservation and recreation projects.
Residents can complete the survey online at <https://tinyurl.com/yv7b23fy>. Hard copies are also available at Town Hall, the East Brookfield Public Library and the Senior Center.
The town encourages all residents to take part and help shape the future of East Brookfield’s parks, recreation resources and open spaces.

Parish to host annual chicken BBQ and family fair

NORTH BROOKFIELD – St. Carlo Acutis Parish will host its annual Chicken BBQ & Family Fair Sept. 12-13 at Saint Joseph’s Church 296 North Main St.
Come join the parish for plenty of fair style food on Saturday evening and a delicious Chicken BBQ dinner served on Sunday from 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Tickets for the Chicken BBQ are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children age 12 and under. Chicken BBQ tickets can be purchased at the parish office.
There will be karaoke music on both days. They will also have assorted raffles including a scratch ticket raffle which features the

grand prize of a book (50) \$30 lottery scratch tickets, and a bake sale.
The Family Picnic begins on Saturday, Sept. 12, at 5 p.m. on the church lawn after the 4 p.m. Mass. From 5-7 p.m., there will be karaoke music, fair style food and raffles.
On Sunday, Sept. 13 from noon-3 p.m. there will be karaoke music, fair style food, bake sale and raffles. From 12:30-1:30 p.m. the Chicken BBQ will be served, either eat in or takeout.
For Chicken BBQ tickets and more information, please call the parish office Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at 508-867-6469.

Ware Grange hosts annual barbecue dinner on Aug. 29

WARE – The Ware Grange is holding a barbecue dinner at the annual Grange Fair on Saturday, Aug. 29 at 4 p.m.
The menu includes pulled pork, chicken, brisket, baked beans, coleslaw, cornbread, drink and dessert for \$25. Eat outside under the tent or take your meal to go.
Reservations are required. Please call 413-284-1135 or email waregrange164@gmail.com to make your reservations for the barbecue.

- public safety -

East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of July 20-26, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 134 building/property checks, 139 directed area patrols, 16 radar assignments, four traffic controls, 12 emergency 911 calls, two citizen assists, three assist other agencies, two complaints, two investigations, one motor vehicle investigation, two safety hazards, one trespass, one motor vehicle accident, three animal calls and 28 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Monday, July 20
7:44 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled
10:33 a.m. Investigation, Oakland Drive, No Action Required
2:15 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, East Main Street, Transported to Hospital
7:03 p.m. Radar, East Main Street, Citation Issued
7:06 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Tuesday, July 21
12:52 p.m. Suspicious Activity, East Main Street, Negative Contact

Wednesday, July 22
5:03 a.m. Complaint, Putney Court, Negative Contact

9:37 a.m. Suspicious Activity, Oakwood Drive, Report Taken
11:33 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, South Pond Road, Transported to Hospital
12:27 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, East Main Street, Officer Handled
5:07 p.m. Safety Hazard, North Brookfield Road, Officer Handled
5:36 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued

Thursday, July 23
3:24 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Officer Handled
5:14 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued
9:30 p.m. 911 Welfare Check, Route 49, Transported to Hospital

Friday, July 24
2:07 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Howe Street, Transported to Hospital
4:06 a.m. Suspicious Activity, East Main Street, Officer Handled
7:19 a.m. Safety Hazard, East Main Street, Referred to Other Agency
1:05 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To
2:11 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Howe Street, Patient Refusal

6:23 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, East Main Street, Patient Refusal
8:43 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Spencer, Officer Handled
9:39 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Baker Hill Road, Patient Refusal

Saturday, July 25
12:49 a.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Route 49, Officer Handled
7:33 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
7:43 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
8:21 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued
8:37 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
8:47 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
9:05 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Circle, Citation Issued
9:41 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Maple Street, Transported to Hospital
10:15 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
10:43 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
3:35 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Stone Road, Transported

to Hospital
5:27 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Lashaway Drive, Transported to Hospital
10:06 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued

Sunday, July 26
12:43 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Maple Street, Citation Issued
4:09 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Howe Street, Transported to Hospital
4:11 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Referred to Other Agency
8:01 a.m. Radar, East Main Street, Citation Issued
8:11 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
9:50 a.m. Investigation, East Main Street, Officer Handled
12:11 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
12:28 p.m. Complaint, West Sturbridge Road, Negative Contact
1:11 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
3:20 p.m. Trespass, Maple Street, Officer Handled
4:12 p.m. Neighbor Dispute, Maple Street, Officer Handled
7:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Aug. 17-24, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 19 building/property checks, 13 directed/area patrols, four radar assignments, five traffic controls, three emergency 911 calls, one safety hazard, seven citizen assists, one harassment, one complaint, one disturbance, one investigation, four animal calls and two motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, Aug. 17
9:48 a.m. Safety Hazard,

Mara Road, Removed Hazard
4:28 p.m. Complaint, Padre Road, Officer Handled
5:11 p.m. Disturbance, Moore Road, Transported to Hospital
6:57 p.m. Assist Citizen, Moore Road, Merge
9:04 p.m. Harassment, Pierce Road, Officer Handled

Tuesday, Aug. 18
12:11 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Brookfield Road, Transported to Hospital
9:08 a.m. Assist Citizen, Barre Road, Dispatch Handled

Wednesday, Aug. 19
8:35 a.m. Assist Citizen, West Brookfield Road, Officer Handled
9:50 a.m. Investigation, West Brookfield Road, Investigated

Thursday, Aug. 20
9:06 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Gilbertville Road, Transported to Hospital
1:27 p.m. Assist Citizen, Worcester Road, Services Rendered

Friday, Aug. 21
6:35 p.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled

Saturday, Aug. 22
11:05 a.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled
1:56 p.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Services Rendered

Sunday, Aug. 23
10:57 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital

SOCIAL SECURITY FROM PAGE 4

two years prior to calculate your Medicare Part B (and Part D) premium for upcoming year.
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IRMAA threshold by (FYI, the base IRMAA threshold for 2026 for a married couple filing jointly was \$218,000). If your 2024 income exceeded that initial IRMAA threshold, you paid a higher Medicare premium, which also reduced your SS monthly payment because Medicare is deducted from your SS benefit. IRMAA uses a sliding scale to determine how much more than the standard Medicare premium you will pay.
However, that will all automatically correct itself going forward. In other

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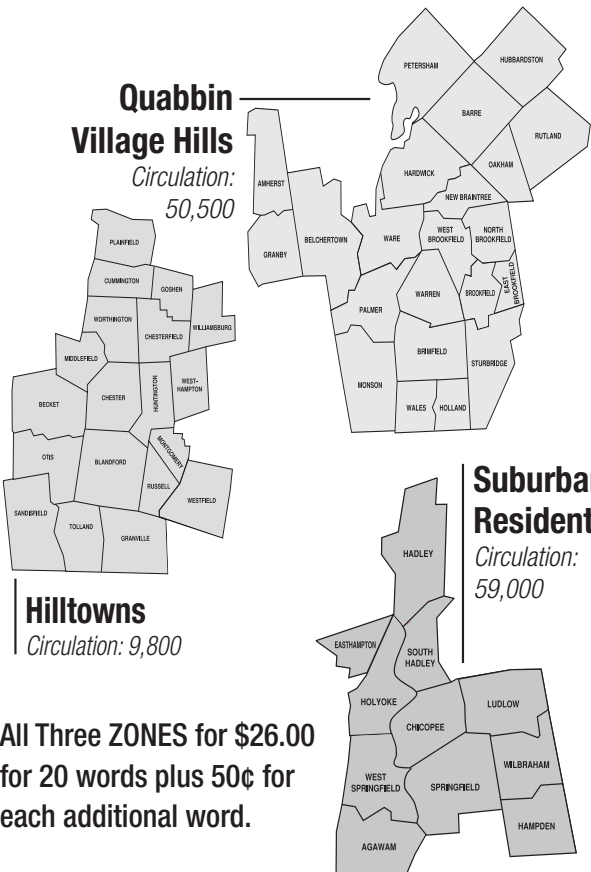
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- community -

Fire Department joined 250th celebration

NEW BRAINTREE – Members of the New Braintree Fire Department recently participated in the town of Ware’s U.S. 250th celebration parade on Aug. 1.

With over 70 participants, the parade featured public safety responders and their vehicles from Ware and surrounding towns.

TURLEY PHOTOS
BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Maddy Gaumond drove a firetruck, accompanied by Fire Chief Dennis Letendre Jr.



Kylie George drove one of New Braintree Fire Department's trucks in the town of Ware's U.S. 250th celebration parade on Aug. 1.



Weston Letendre looked out of a firetruck during the town of Ware's parade.



Engine 2 was driven by Kylie George.

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