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Friday, September 5, 2025

The big band sound returned to Sturbridge

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

STURBRIDGE – Late Thursday afternoon, Aug. 28, saw the weather over the Sturbridge common as pleasant as one could imagine. This was more than welcome as folks were bringing chairs and setting up to face the bandstand.

As usual, there would be food and drink supplied by local vendors. Altruist Brewing provided brewed beverages. Crust & Confection Pizza Co. LLC from Brimfield did what the name implies. West Brookfield's Kettle and Pine supplied many a patron with kettle corn.

Dan Gabel and his orchestra were tuning up on

the bandstand and would be performing what has become their traditional summer concert in the town for their fans.

The performance would be later than usual this season, due to a small logistical mix-up, but Sturbridge Recreation would come through, much to the delight of the assembled.

At 6:05 p.m., Dan stepped up to begin the evening, introducing the Dan Gabel Orchestra and starting with the Vaughan Monroe tune, "Boston Rocker". The music was rich in horns with Dan on trombone.

Dan and his retinue are a "Big Band" orchestra.

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Concertgoers enjoyed an early evening on the Sturbridge common.



Margi Gianquinto and Dan Gabel are shown singing on the bandstand during last Thursday's concert by the Dan Gabel Orchestra.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPHY

Local photographer featured during Family Fun Fest

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Friends of North Brookfield Town House will be hosting the Family Fun Fest on Sept. 28.

The event will be held at Bike House Brewing in North Brookfield and will feature live music, food trucks, local vendors and games for the entire family.

Guests will get to witness the art of photography by Bruce Arnold of North Brookfield. Arnold was recently recognized at Workshop13 in Ware for his innovative approach to photography.

This local photographer has agreed to be the Friends of the Town House featured artist for the month of September. During the Family Fun Fest, Arnold's work will be displayed.

Arnold's photography comes in numerous forms

and truly brings out the beauty of the natural world.

"I strive to make my photo efforts unique, showing and sharing the natural world in landscape, panoramic, architectural, macro and infrared medium," Arnold said.

Arnold has been involved in photography since he was a teenager when his brother gave him a camera he had while serving in the U.S. Air Force. Arnold has held many positions in the photographic industry as a photographer, technician and salesman for photographic services.

At the Fun Fest, Arnold will display a few of his infrared prints of scenes from around the town. Arnold recently exhibited his infrared photography work at the ArtWorks Gallery in Ware. Infrared photography captures light invisible to the

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Apothecary floral lights were made during craft night at the Haston Free Public Library. These examples were made by Library Director Lia Tulip.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Library glowed with apothecary floral lights

By Ryan Drago
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library, 161 North Main St., had another fun craft night this past week.

Guests signed up to make their own apothecary floral lights and the turnout was exceptional. There were two separate floors of the library to offer the same class.

Helping out during the craft on the top floor was Laura Biro, a volunteer at the library.

This was the first time Biro instructed a class at the library, where she's been volunteering for the

last seven years. Biro was asked to help during this craft, which featured lots of creativity. Materials for these apothecary floral lights include dry flowers, mod podge, and small jars.

The result the crafters were looking for was to make frosted looking glass. This helps the light reflect more out of the jars and have the dry flowers and leaves stand out. Each crafter got to make two apothecary floral lights.

Biro says she enjoys "supporting the library" and there will be more classes in the future.

On the bottom floor was the other group creating these beautiful apothecary floral lights. Library Direc-

tor Lia Tulip was teaching this group on the bottom floor.

Tulip said the idea of creating these lights came from her and said the last few turnouts for craft night have been fantastic.

Last month, the library's craft night featured the creation of sea glass windchimes. The turnout was so big, the library had to use two floors. Tulip showed an example of the windchimes as crafters began creating their own floral lights.

Tulip also made examples of the apothecary floral lights for guests to see. Flameless candles were

See **FLORAL LIGHTS**
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Candidate for Town Administrator interviewed

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen interviewed candidate Adam Lamontagne for the Town Administrator position.

At the Aug. 25 interview, Lamontagne spoke about his many years in municipal government, including working for the city of Chippewa for almost a decade, and with the town of Templeton since 2018.

Lamontagne said he worked his way up to Town Administrator in Templeton in 2020 where he remained until March of this year. He said he decided to leave that position after issues related to the school budget.

Lamontagne then took his current position as Chief Administrative Officer in the town of Phillipston.

Prior to his career in municipal government, Lamontagne attended the police academy but did not continue. He said this was one of his failures, but it was an experience that encouraged him to go back and earn his master's degree in municipal government.

"It's taking those failures and moving on how you can succeed in other areas," Lamontagne said.

He spoke about challenges he is working to address in his current position, including the reuse of a vacant school building and advocating for the town to have its own post office and zip code.

See **CANDIDATE**
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Sturbridge Select Board voted to continue single tax rate

By Paula Ouimette
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STURBRIDGE – The Select Board and Board of Assessors held a joint meeting to hold a tax classification hearing for fiscal year 2026.

At the Aug. 25 meeting, Principal Assessor Ann Murphy

said the purpose of the hearing is to present information to the Select Board in order to consider the tax rate options available to the town.

"This is not a hearing to decide a tax rate and it does not decide how much money can be raised," she said. "It only determines the distribution of the tax

levy among the property classes.

Murphy said the presentation has a tax rate of \$15.60, which has not yet been approved by the Department of Revenue.

Murphy said the residential class is the largest in the town (85%), and the rest is made up of commercial, industrial and

personal property. The total town value is \$2,151,267,819.

She said the average single family home value has increased at a steady pace over the past 10 years, now reaching \$504,459, which is an increase of 4.49% over last year.

A split tax rate would reduce the tax burden on residen-

tial properties, but it would increase it for CIP properties. Murphy said the last time the town had a split tax rate was in 2014.

Murphy said the Select Board can also adopt a Residential Exemption for qualified properties, of which 15 cities and towns in the state had in FY 25. She said the

Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative would be greatly impacted if this were to be adopted.

"If you adopt a Residential Exemption...about 2,519 would probably see a decrease and 1,650 would see an increase," Murphy said.

See **TAX RATE**
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- community -

National Grid proposed substation expansion

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Representatives from National Grid gave a presentation to the Board of Selectmen about a proposed expansion of the Lashaway substation located at 39 East Brookfield Road.

At the Aug. 26 meeting, the representatives said the town has a 16.5 foot sewer easement that bifurcates the substation parcel, and National Grid is requesting the release of the easement to allow for the construction of the expanded substation.

The 12-foot clay sewer pipe within the easement was cut and abandoned

about 30 years ago. There is currently no plan to install a new sewer pipe within the easement.

The existing substation was built in the 1960s and the proposed expansion would increase the load capacity from 21 megavolt amperes via three feeders to 110 MVA with five feeders installed and also the provision of three additional feeders to support future growth, system reliability and redundancy.

With the release of the easement, the construction of the expansion could begin in late 2026 with a completion date of October 2028.

Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said even through the easement is not being used currently, it

is still a town asset. National Grid representatives said it could be feasible to swap the location of the easement so the town would still retain it as an asset, without it cutting through the expansion area.

“It’s still a taxpayer-owned asset...I think that’s got to be worth something,” he said.

The board members discussed whether this decision could be made during a future Selectmen’s meeting or if a special town meeting would need to be held. The board members will revisit the discussion at a future meeting.

Online auction

Starting on Monday, Sept. 15, the town will host an online auction through

GovDeals. The auction will run through Monday, Sept. 29.

The link to the online auction is www.govdeals.com/northbrookfield. Items will be available to bid on starting at 8 a.m. and the live auction will end at 8 p.m. with 5 minute staggering end times between auction items.

Items to be auctioned include a 1947 Buffalo fire engine, a 1996 pump truck, two Ford Crown Victorias, a 1995 International with sander, 76 lengths of fire-hose and more.

Special Town Meeting

Voters unanimously approved the sole article on the Special Town Meeting warrant, to pay a prior year’s electricity bill. The amount of \$846.47 was transferred

from the Highway prior year 2025 account to Highway prior year 2024.

Spending request

The board approved a spending request in the amount of \$1,200 to cover the cost of tree removal from the southeast corner of the Maple Street cemetery. The tree being removed overhangs North Street and has several dead limbs.

Petraitis said this is a tree the Cemetery Commission has been looking to remove for some time.

“Before it becomes a hazard, they want to take it down,” he said.

Resignations

The board accepted the resignation of Tax Collector Clerk Brianna Walters. They also accepted the res-

ignation of Michelle Petraitis from the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Public comment and events

Parks & Recreation Committee Chair Brandon Avery reminded residents that the hours of use on the common are from dawn to dusk. He also asked people to refrain from removing or relocating items and equipment from the common.

“The common is for everybody to enjoy,” he said.

Avery said there will be a picnic in the park with the band Tequila Mockingbird from 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 6. He said on Saturday, Sept. 13, Still Hart’s Café will host its annual fundraiser to benefit the common.

Ensemble Davuli performed on common

By Ryan Drago
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BROOKFIELD – The concert series continued on the common last Friday evening with performers Ensemble Davuli.

Ensemble Davuli and Davuli Dance Company performed under the gazebo on the Common this past Friday night. This group of musicians and dancers provide tradition Middle Eastern music and dance.

Guests were encouraged to bring their chairs to sit comfortably on the common as Ensemble Davuli performed.

Though the rain popped up intermittently, the music and dancers still performed. When the skies began to



Ensemble Davuli performed on the Brookfield Common this past Friday night. The group dance took place at the end of the concert.

clear, Ensemble Davuli thought the color in the sky would work to their advantage. The group thanked

those who braved the storm and stayed around to watch their performance.

“The thunder and colorful skies made an excellent background while we conjured up some magic in the gazebo,” said Dina LeDuke.

The performance consisted of individual dances and group dances. Mich Rabushka was one of the three dancers who performed during an individual dance and the group dance.

This concert was presented by the Brookfield Cultural Council. The next concert

on Brookfield Common is Woodshed on Friday, Sept. 5 at 7 p.m.

On Saturday, Sept. 6, the second annual Brookfield Town Rummage Sale will take place from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. This year will feature an open mic during the rummage sale, allowing local musicians a chance to perform and provide music on the common.

The Brookfield Town Wide Yard Sale will take place on Saturday, Sept. 6 and Sunday, Sept. 7 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.



Mich Rabushka is shown during a solo dance performance.

Second Chance seeks clothing and linens donations

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

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

St. Pauly Textile Inc. partners with businesses and various organizations to distribute donated items both here in the U.S. and worldwide, where they’re ultimately re-worn by people who need them. Second Chance receives funding for donated clothing and additionally has the option to use donated items like towels and blankets to care for pets.

With over 1,600 clothing drop-off sheds in place, St. Pauly Textile Inc. collects over 175,000 pounds of clothing a day and estimates that this clothing ends up in 44 different countries (including the U.S.) yearly. In 2024, the company was able to help keep over 64 million articles of clothing out of landfills, which clothed an estimated 7.8 million people worldwide.

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

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

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

Take-Out church supper planned for Sept. 19

WEST BROOKFIELD – The George Whitefield United Methodist Church in West Brookfield will hold a Take-Out Chicken Dinner on Friday, Sept. 19.

Meals may be picked up curbside at 5 p.m. in front of the church at 33 West Main St., West Brookfield. The meal will include

chicken breast, baby potatoes, glazed carrots, roll and dessert for \$15 or two for \$25.

Reservations may be made by calling Elsa at 209-400-4429 or just come by and pick up dinner on your way home.

Proceeds will benefit the church and its missions.

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A band was playing for the dancers during Ensemble Davuli’s performance.

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- community -

Teachers held standout over lack of contract

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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WARREN – Despite contract negotiations starting last fall, this school year the teachers at the Quaboag Regional School District will begin without a contract in place.

On the morning of Aug. 26, the teachers gathered on the front steps of the middle/high school holding signs that said, “You can’t put students first if you put teachers last,” and “Valuing Students = Valuing Educators.”

The union’s contract negotiations co-chairs Kimberly Chaffee and Tannis Rossi said after nine meetings with the School Committee, contract discussions have turned to mediation.

Chaffee said compared to neighboring school districts, teachers at Quaboag earn less by about \$6,000-\$8,000, and those other districts are



Teachers at the Quaboag Regional School District gathered on the front steps of the middle/high school the morning of Aug. 26 and held signs in support of a fair contract.

also giving annual increases ranging from 2.5-3.5%.

“We cannot compete. We cannot attract talent,” Chaffee said.

Chaffee and Rossi said

some vacancies in the Quaboag Regional School District are currently being filled by long term substitutes, due to this. This includes vital roles in special

education.

Chaffee said the union understands that the towns face financial challenges, but advocated for better contract negotiations moving

forward.

“Quaboag is a special place,” Chaffee said. “We love our kids; we love our schools...we want to feel valued.”

Church to host tag sale on Sept. 13

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 133 North Main St., will host a tag sale on Saturday, Sept. 13 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

There will be plants (indoor and out), puzzles, books, clothes, kid’s stuff, kitchen and household items, treasures, and more. Name your price.

New this year – you can help support the North Brookfield Community Food Collaborative by bringing non-perishable items for the table.

Rain date for the tag sale is Sept. 20.

Troop 163 recognized newest Eagle Scout

Submitted Article

STURBRIDGE – Another Scout in Troop 163 has obtained the rank of Eagle Scout.

Addie Oxman is a founding member of the troop, soon to be senior at Tantasqua Regional High School, and member of Brookfield Congregational Church. She passed her Eagle Board of Review on Aug. 5.

Addie has always had a desire to help others, and she started looking into organizations that help marginalized communities.

The first organization she reached out to never responded to her request to meet and discuss a possible project. The second was set up and ready to go, but due to a reorganization of the organization the project was put on hold indefinitely.

Third times a charm, it was a huge success. A connection was made with St. Luke Guest House in Southbridge and was a good match. St. Luke’s works with those who are living on the street or out of their cars, helping them to become independent and self-sustaining by providing resources, helping them find a job, a permanent home, and how to save money.

Her project had two parts. First was to help build awareness of the mission and purpose of St. Luke’s, handing out brochures and making presentations. Second was to collect supplies to help the Guest House

and it’s residents. She set up outside local stores handing out information, answering questions about St. Luke’s and collecting supplies for them.

When Addie joined the troop, she was observant, hesitant to step up, hung more in the background but participated in everything that the troop did, according to former Scoutmaster Chrissy Chamberland. The leadership roles Addie took on were Troop Guide, Instructor, and most recently Bugler.

“Some may think being a patrol leader is the only way you can show how well you lead in a troop. I disagree. In my experience, there are many ways to lead without having the title ‘leader,’” Chamberland said. “Addie could be found encouraging others to participate, helping them with a task or difficult skill, making others feel welcome within the troop, helping before being asked, and stepping up and filling in as ‘leader’ if the situation arises.”

Chamberland said Addie had a barbie, Narcissa, which started as an emotional support tool.

“It became something so much bigger, it became a way for others to feel comfortable instead of embarrassed when they brought a stuffed animal, or special toy, to a meeting or on a trip, she showed them it was ok to be nervous and have something to help calm them down. She led but in her own way, and that’s how it should be,” Cham-

berland said.

From the start Addie grew to love summer camp. Every summer she would go for the week with the troop, then attended at least one if not two additional weeks as a provisional Scout.

She even went cross country to Washington State, for a week of summer camp, having to travel by boat to reach the camp located just off the coast.

She recently returned from a troop trip to Sea Base, one of Scouting’s high adventure bases. She spent a week on an island in the Florida Keys learning about the surroundings, eco system, native plants and animals, went snorkeling, fishing, and had a lot of fun.

“I was pushed to do things I never thought I could; swimming a mile, ice climbing, shark fishing, indoor skydiving, and more,” Addie said while reflecting on her experiences in Scouts. “Every challenge showed me what I could accomplish, and what really interests me.”

Next summer she hopes to work at Camp Wanocksett, the summer camp she spends many weeks at. She also hopes to be on staff at the National Jamboree.

Outside of Scouts, Addie participated in Vacation Bible School as a camper and then as a camp counselor, working with younger age groups and putting on various programs for them.

“Addie handled the younger ones with kindness and finesse,” Jane Snyder

commented. “Whenever help is needed, Addie is there.”

She also was a counselor at Circus Camp at Alice’s Fitness and Dance Studio. She helped to create dances, pick out music, organized costume changes and ensured the campers went on stage when they were scheduled.

This fall Addie will be a senior. She knows it’s time to start thinking about plans for after graduation. She is considering three different career paths at the moment; teacher, social worker, or study law.

Addie noted, “Whatever path I choose will require me to use the organizational skills from my 7 years in this program. I hope in the coming years I can give back to a world that has already taught me so much.”

Still having time to narrow down her choices, she is not rushing into any decisions. It is clear, no matter what she chooses she will be all in.

“Addie is one of the most accepting, nonjudgmental, caring and unique humans I have ever met,” Chamberland said. “I know whatever she chooses to do in the future will be as awesome as she is, I can’t wait to see what comes next.”

If you would like to learn more about St. Luke’s Guest House visit www.friendsofstlukes.org or call them at 774-230-6416. To learn more about Scouting or Troop 163 email them at troop163sturbridge@gmail.com.

2nd annual Friends of the Poor Walk will be held on Sept. 13

STURBRIDGE – The 2nd annual Friends of the Poor Walk followed by its first Family Fun Day will be held on Saturday, Sept. 13 from noon-6 p.m. on the Sturbridge Town Common.

Featuring Maggie the Clown, alpacas from Ledgecreek Farm, a variety of vendors, food, games for both children and adults, a DJ, live music by G Note & The Tinman, and much more.

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, in-

cluding 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 members committed to tackling poverty in all its forms.

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

To register for the event, go to the events tab at svdpfiskdale.org.

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Medicare 101 educational event to be held Sept. 16

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Senior Center will be hosting an educational presentation on Tuesday, Sept. 16 at 11 a.m. at the senior center located at 29 Forest St., for current beneficiaries and for those who will soon be eligible for Medicare.

West Brookfield seniors are also invited. The information is specific to Massachusetts. The session will run from 1 to 1.5 hours, including time for questions.

The presentation will be conducted by Ed Spater, a licensed Insurance agent, who will explain the basics of Medicare including: why it’s important to evaluate your current Medicare coverage each year; the pros and

cons of each of your Medicare coverage options; what to consider when deciding which Medicare coverage

option is right for you; ways to save money and get better Medicare coverage in 2024.

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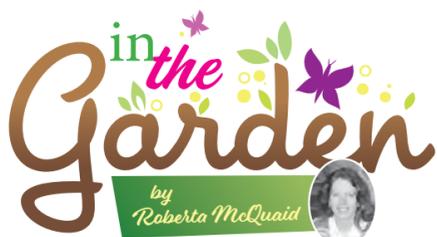
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- opinion -



It's harvest time! How to cure and store for optimal longevity.

I harvested my garlic well over six weeks ago. It's been curing in my mudroom stems and all, first with a fan on it to speed the drying process.

Yesterday I cut the stems away and put the garlic fists that were left in mesh bags. Some will be seed garlic, in other words, it will be broken apart into planting cloves. The rest will be used for cooking all through the winter and hopefully into the spring.

It's so important to cure your vegetables well, both for optimal taste and for longevity.

As for garlic's cousin, the onion, there is a two step curing process. When three-quarters of the tops have fallen over push down the rest and let them stay in the ground a little while longer. Then, unearth the bulbs and lay them, tops and all, on the ground in the sun, turning occasionally.

When they turn completely brown cut the stems to one inch and spread them on screens single file in a warm and dry, well-ventilated area to cure further. They can rest in that location for up to two months, then store at temperatures close to 40 degrees.

Store apples, bananas, and tomatoes away from onions, these vegetables excrete ethylene gas as they ripen, causing onions to sprout prematurely. Use bulbs that have two centers first, they won't store well.

It is interesting to note that the same compound that starts the tears flowing when we cut into onions-sulfur, is also a potent fungicide and bactericide. No wonder they store so well!

Potatoes are perhaps the most tricky vegetable to store. Curing them properly will help to prevent rot, premature sprouting, and toxic greening of the skin and flesh. By waiting a week or more after the plant has died before digging up the tubers, the skins will thicken and be less prone to injury during harvest.

Once they are dug, a week spent in a cool and totally dark space will further firm their skin and change sugars to starch, completing

the ripening process. Never wash potatoes prior to storage!

Gently brush off dirt and store in a single layer in the darkness at 55-60 degrees. Darkness will prevent greening, which renders potatoes inedible. Use any pitch-forked or shovel-marked spuds first, as damage to the skin will invite rot.

Harvest winter squash after vines have died back or prior to an impending frost. A pretty New England autumn scene is fields of pumpkins or colorful squash curing under sunny skies.

If you follow the farmers lead, just be sure to lift squash off the ground, and cover if rain or frost threatens. Two weeks in the field or a sunny, well-ventilated space is sufficient for curing, at which point the skin should be hard enough to resist the dent of a fingernail.

Gently washing squash in a 10% bleach solution will help to prevent rot prior to storing at temperatures between 50 and 60 degrees.

The flavor of many of our favorite squashes only improves with age.

I remember my mom used to store our butternuts up off of the floor in our basement. I've heard of other people storing theirs under the bed in a spare bedroom.

For me, my mudroom serves as an all purpose storage area with mesh bags of onions and garlic hanging from hooks on a shelf, the squash on a small pallet on the floor. I have yet to have enough potatoes to store, but this year might just be the exception and I'll come up with a dark enclosure to store them well.

Get creative and you too will be enjoying the fruits of your labor through winter into spring!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



Can my wife get her full spousal benefit at 62 or must she wait?

Dear Rusty:
I'm 64 and my wife is 62.

If my wife starts her own benefit now, she will get about \$700 on her own at 62. I will retire next year and claim Social Security when I am 65. SSA says my wife can draw \$1,100 under spousal benefits, so if she claims now will they give her spousal benefits of \$1,100 or does she need to wait until I claim at age 65 to get the \$1,100?

Signed: Trying to Understand

Dear Trying:

If your wife is now 62, then her Full Retirement Age for Social Security purposes is age 67 and if she claims any SS benefit before reaching her FRA, the amount will be reduced for early claiming. If your wife were to claim now (before you), she would get only her own SS retirement amount (the \$700 amount), and that would be a reduction of about 30% from what she would get if she waited until her FRA to claim.

Your wife cannot get a "spousal boost" (an additional amount as your spouse) until you claim your SS retirement benefit (at age 65?). And her benefit as your spouse at that time will also be reduced because she will not have yet reached her

FRA. If your wife is already collecting her own SS retirement benefit when you later claim, she will be given her "spousal boost" to make her benefit equal what she is entitled to as your spouse. But her total monthly benefit as your spouse will also be reduced because it will be awarded before her FRA. The only way your wife can get her full spousal benefit from you is to wait until she is 67 to claim Social Security. If she claims any earlier, her monthly amount will be permanently reduced.

FYI, if you plan to claim at age 65, you should also be aware that your full retirement age (FRA) is also age 67 and claiming at age 65 will mean that you will get about 87% of the amount you would get if you waited until age 67 to claim. Again, these reductions are permanent, except for normal Cost of Living Adjustments awarded annually thereafter.

Having said all of that, deciding when each of you should claim your Social Security benefit is a matter of financial need, while also considering your life expectancy. If your life expectancy is short and/or you need the money, then claiming early is likely the right decision. But if your life expectancy is longer and you don't urgent-

ly need the money, then you might both consider waiting longer to claim a higher monthly amount and get more in cumulative lifetime benefits.

Finally, please remember that whenever SS is claimed before full retirement age, Social Security has an annual earnings test which limits how much can be earned by working while collecting early SS benefits. The earnings limit for 2025 is \$23,400 and, if that is exceeded, SS will take back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit (they take back by withholding future SS payments). FYI, the earnings limit for those who claim SS early changes (increases a bit) yearly and goes away entirely once full retirement age is reached. So, if either or both of you are working, you should evaluate whether claiming your Social Security benefit early (before your respective FRA) is a prudent choice.

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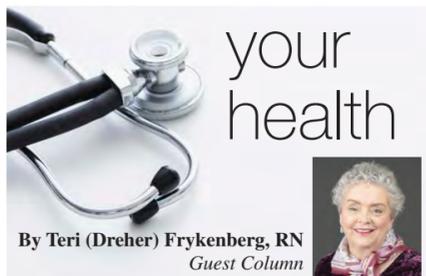
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Quaboag Current



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

Summertime and the warming climate in general usually bring about an increase in the number of animal bites reported to health authorities. As you might expect, the main culprits are dogs, but while cats are responsible for fewer bites, they are responsible for more infections.

And as people spend more time outdoors, they may be more likely to encounter wildlife, such as raccoons, skunks and foxes.

All this is to say that an-

imal bites are nothing to be ignored. In the United States, there are between 2 million and 5 million bites each year, the vast majority of reported bites being caused by dogs, with the remainder caused by cats (5 to 10 percent) and rodents (2 to 3 percent). Children are bitten more often than adults.

Of course, most animal bites aren't reported to authorities or treated in the ER or doctor's office, so there are likely many more.

Here are some things to

Animal bites, even from pets, can be dangerous

know about animal bites.

Cat bites can be more serious than dog bites

That cute little kitten may look harmless compared to a snarling dog, but if it bites or scratches you, watch out. The likelihood of a cat bite becoming infected is double of that of a dog bite, according to the World Health Organization.

Dogs' teeth may be bigger, but cats' slender, sharp fangs can penetrate a wound deeper, causing damage to tendons or ligaments. Cats don't necessarily have more bacteria in their mouths, but, as self-groomers, their mouths are anything but clean. Women are the most frequent victims of cat bites.

Unvaccinated feral cats are dangerous, though they probably won't let you come near. Among domestic cats,

the most common cause for a bite is when they're being medicated. If you've ever tried to get a cat to swallow a pill, you know this to be true.

If the vet prescribes a pill for your cat, have them demonstrate how to administer it. Better yet, ask if the medication comes in a liquid form that you can administer using a syringe.

Cat scratch disease is a thing

Cat scratch disease (CSD), also known as cat scratch fever or Bartonellosis, is a bacterial infection, most commonly transmitted through scratches or bites from cats, especially kittens, that have fleas carrying the bacteria. The bacteria can also be spread through exposure to cat saliva or flea bites.

CSD is rarely serious on its own, but those with weakened immune systems and children are more vulnerable. There are two tell-tale signs: swollen lymph nodes and bumps or cysts under the skin, usually near the wound. It usually goes away on its own, but if you develop fever or the infection seems to be spreading, get medical attention.

Rabies is nothing to laugh at

Rabies is a viral disease that is more common in wild animals (skunks, squirrels, raccoons, foxes) than domesticated ones, which are usually vaccinated. If you're taking a nature walk and encounter wildlife, even though it's cute and you

See YOUR HEALTH
PAGE 10

- community -

East Brookfield library lists upcoming events and programs

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, lists upcoming events and ongoing programs.

Annual Craft Fair

The library's annual Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, Oct. 18 from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Stop by and start your holiday shopping early. Knitters, doll makers, candles, woodwork, adult clothing protectors, painters and many more.

This program is free and open to the public. If you would like to be a vendor, please contact the library.

Storytime

Children ages 6 months to 6 years can play games, listen to stories, and create art projects to take home at Storytime on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Caregivers are required to stay with the child. One adult caregiver is required for every two children.

Story Pals

This program is for children who have outgrown Storytime, but still enjoy making a craft and listening to a story. Story Pals is held on Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

The group will not meet

on Oct. 23, as children will be decorating pumpkins. On Nov. 20, children will be creating turkeys for Thanksgiving.

Food Shelf

Please bring new, unexpired food items to the library during our regular hours. Personal items can include items such as shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, diapers, wipes, deodorant, barrettes, hair ties, socks, reusable plastic containers for food, aluminum foil, plastic wrap, trash bags, dish soap, and more.

The collected items will be distributed to local families and individuals in need; the library's food shelf is always available during normal library hours.

Fiber Art Group

This group welcomes anyone who is interested in fiber arts which includes but is not limited to knitting, crocheting, embroidery, hand sewing and cross stitching. Stop by if you would like to spend the morning with a group of people who also love to stitch.

The Fiber Art Group

will meet on Tuesdays, Sept. 16 and 23, Oct. 14 and 21 and Nov. 18 at 9:30 a.m.

Knitting Group

Adult Knitting Group meets on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. All skill levels are welcome. Bring a current project or check out our many pattern books for inspiration.

Library Book Talk Group

The Library Book Talk Group meets the first Tuesday of every month, at 11 a.m. Stop by the library and pick up the book in advance. Patrons are welcome to pick up the book even if they are not attending the discussion.

Pokémon Go Club

The Pokémon Go Club meets every Monday at 3:30 p.m., players must have their own device to play on.

All children and adults are welcome. Children under 12 years old must be accompanied by an adult.

Drop in Craft

Every Monday in the children's room there is a self-directed craft project. Craft projects may have small parts. Children under 12 years old must be accompanied by an adult,

with one adult for every two children. This project is available as long as the supplies are available.

Technology Tuesday!

Need help with technology? Library staff can teach you how to do things like use the library catalog to look for books and materials, place holds, add Libby to your e-reader or phone, and generally make the most out of the online resources we have available for you. Staff can also help with non-library related things like setting up an e-mail account.

If you would like help specific to your device, please bring it along.

Morning Mend

Do you have a favorite piece of clothing that needs a little TLC? Do you need help mending something you know has a little more life left in it? If yes, this is the workshop for you.

On Tuesdays, Sept. 30, Oct. 28 and Nov. 25 at 9:30 a.m., stop by the library and staff will help you mend your special item. They have all the tools you will need (sewing machines, needles, threads, fabrics and more).

Movie Time

Movie Time will be held on Tuesdays, Sept. 30, Oct. 28 and Nov. 25 at 12:30 p.m. Stop by the library with your lunch and enjoy a block buster movie, meet new friends.

Homework Help

Staff members will be available to assist children with homework questions on Mondays from 3-6 p.m. This is not a tutoring session; this program is designed for children to ask for help on a specific question. Children under the age of 12 must have a parent or guardian remain with them.

Adult Board Games

If you like to play games and want to meet new people from the community, this program is for you. This program is for adults 18 years or older and is held on the first Tuesday of every month at 1 p.m.

Walk-ins are welcome but registration is preferred so staff can plan accordingly for the snacks and number of games.

Saturday Board Games

All ages are welcome to come to the library and play a few board games starting

at 10 a.m. No Board Games on Oct. 18.

Teen Volunteer Program

Interested in volunteering with the library? Let staff know when you are available. For ages 12 and up.

Sponsor An Author

Do you have a favorite author? Hate being on the waitlist to check out their newest book? The "Sponsor an Author" program guarantees that you will receive the book first as soon as the library gets it in. Your price is what the library pays. See Carolann for details.

Friends of the Library

Want to help the library but don't know how? Consider joining the Friend's Group.

Maker Space and Library of Things

Come visit the Maker Space area and Library of Things. There you will find cake pans, charcuterie boards, platters, small specialty appliances, tools, button maker and so much more. Library staff are looking for items to add to the Library of Things and Maker Space, tools, small kitchen appliances, gardening supplies, baby monitor, DVD player, etc.

BIG BAND SOUND FROM PAGE 1

From the 1920s into the 50s it was the music of the era on film and radio, and in dance halls.

As time goes by, tastes change, for better or worse. The big band era may have passed, but it has never died. It lived gloriously on Sturbridge Common last Thursday.

Not everything was instrumental. Take the song about the phone number; "Pennsylvania 6-5000", with the audience enlisted for the chorus, which is the song title. It's a lively Glenn Miller tune, pre-dating the world of area codes and much more technological telephony.

The evening was still young when Dan sang "Mr. Sandman". No matter, no one was falling asleep.

Dan would introduce the vocalist, Margi Gianquinto. Margi came up from New York City to be part of the evening and would duo with Dan on "Let's Get Away From It All".

"Let's Get Away From It All" would be an important part of the evening as Dan Gabel and his Orchestra have released an album with that song as the title. It is available on compact disc, but the artwork of Michael Crampton really shines on the vinyl album.

To bring such a project to life takes no little technical skill. Dan was generous in his praise of Josh Lu who superintended the recording and mixing.

The release contains many of the songs heard on Thursday evening and some that weren't, so it is a way to get even more of Dan and his band.



Margi Gianquinto sang during a concert on the Sturbridge common.



Cathy and Walter enjoyed the sounds of big band music.



Altruist Brewing Company provided beverages during the concert.

Margi would be featured singing much more over the course of the evening. She would do favorites such as "A Tisket, A Tasket", "Saturday Night (Is the Loneliest Night in the Week)", "I Love Being Here With You", co-written and originally sung by Peggy Lee, "East Of The Sun", "Sentimental Journey", and many others.

Margi would sing harmony with Dan on "The Sunny Side Of The Street".

Margi's talent was more that vocal. For a time, as the band played without her, she stepped out and danced with a gentleman in front of the bandstand, and that display was a treat for the audience.

To end the first half, the orchestra played "American Patrol".

Upon returning, Dan thanked the veterans in the audience, and also the Rotary and Lions for their gener-

osity as well as the Town of Sturbridge for their support. Then it was on to more music.

The bandsmen would continue their instrumental work and one of them, Steve, would shower the audience with "Pennies From Heaven" (well, not literally).

Dan and Margi would continue to sing with Dan's rendition of "I Left My Heart In San Francisco", being a highlight.

So, the evening would go. The crowd growing large and feeling the warmth even if tinge of fall filled the air at the end.

The audience loved it, and if they want more, Dan has an outlet. He and the orchestra will be sailing away on the "Let's Get Away From It All Cruise." A luxury Holland-America liner will depart Boston on Oct. 3, 2026, and will head up the Coast of Maine to the Maritimes for a week of big band music and dancing in a stately ballroom.

If you really want to "get away from it all" contact tom@ahoycruises.com or call 214-761-1968.

Flea Market to be held on the West Brookfield Common Sept. 13

WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church, 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. 13 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Tell your friends and come out for a day of bar-

gains and yummy a lunch.

New this year is a tag sale inside the church. Come in for more bargains.

Sellers of all kinds are welcome – flea folk, antique sellers, 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 lunch, cold drinks and sweet treats.

Email Karen at fcofwbfleamarket@gmail.com for an application or call her at 508-801-7692.

Grange Kids' Corner explores weather

WARE – The next Kids' Corner at Ware Grange will be called "Weather" and will take place on Saturday, Sept. 6 at 10 a.m. at the Grange Hall at 297 Belchertown Road.

Kids' Corner workshops

are led by local preschool teacher, Jen McNally, and teach children about nature and the environment through stories, songs and fun activities.

All types of weather are very important to the en-

vironment. Children will explore the different types of weather and how each plays their own part in making Earth beautiful.

Visit Ware Grange on Facebook or at waregrange.org for more information.



Kettle and Pine provided kettle corn.

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- community -

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

STURBRIDGE – The Rotary Club of Sturbridge has announced that pre-registration is now open for its popular TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K, and Fun Walk, which is slated to return on Sunday, Oct. 26, according to club president and race director Klaus Hachfeld. “To pre-register for this year’s event, just go to getmeregistered.com, and type ‘Sturbridge’ in the search field in the upper right-hand corner,” said Hachfeld. Participants who pre-register by Oct. 21 will get a free 2025 TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K T-shirt.

All activities begin at the OSV Education Center on Old Sturbridge Village Road (not to be confused with Old Sturbridge Village Academy at the main

entrance to the village). Parking will be available in the Education Center lot.

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

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

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

tain Wildlife Conservation Lands.

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

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

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

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

St. Joseph’s hosts chicken BBQ and family picnic Sept. 6 & 7

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

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

dren ages 12 and under. Music will be provided by DJ Richard “Tabby” LeBlanc on Saturday and Sunday. There will also be assorted raffles including a scratch ticket raffle which features the grand prize of a book (50) \$30 lottery scratch tickets, and lastly a delicious bake sale.

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHER FROM PAGE 1

human eye.

During the Family Fun Fest, visitors will see how Arnold creates images

through the use of infrared photography.

“I strive to create and share unique images of the natural world with infrared photography,” shared Arnold.

The Family Fun Fest will be held at Bike House Brewing, on Sept. 28 from noon-4 p.m. For more information about the Family Fun Fest, visit nbtownhouse.com.

Circle of Song began 25th season

BARRE – Circle of Song will begin its 25th season on Thursday, Sept. 4.

Rehearsals are on Thursday nights from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, corner of Exchange and Mechanic streets.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary, original co-director Elisabeth Bryant is guest conducting two of the pieces for the concert. Mozart’s Regina Coeil will be the centerpiece of this Dec. 20 concert (7 p.m. Barre Town Hall), which Bryant will conduct.

She will also conduct Java Jive, Ben Oakland and Milton Drake’s enjoyable “ode to coffee.”

Additionally, she will solo on clarinet with the chorus in Rene Clausen’s arrangement of “Black is the Color of My True Love’s Hair”.

Jeff Williams will direct Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas”, Nancy Afonso will lead “Mary Did you Know” arr. by the Pentatonix, and Scott Bryant will direct Morten Lauridson’s “O Magnum Mysterium”.

Julie Rawson, COS director will lead, “At the River” by Aaron Copland, “The Irish Prayer”, arranged by Doug Andrews, and finally, “The Seal Lullaby” by Eric Whitacre.

Circle of Song, a choral group of approximately 20 members, is always looking for new members. The chorus sings in four-part harmony, pieces that are somewhat a reach musically.

And support is given to all singers as desired, with learning tapes and sectionals for those who are interested. New and experienced singers are invited to join. Circle of Song is a no-nonsense, down-to-earth chorus that includes singers of all ages and experience.

Those interested in joining the chorus can call Rawson at 978-257-1192 or email julie@mhof.net.

FLORAL LIGHTS FROM PAGE 1

provided as the light source to be put inside the jars. It was getting a bit dark over by the craft table Tulip was using and the lights were sitting by themselves with no light. Someone turned on the lights to let her three floral lights glow.

“They looked so lonesome by themselves,” Tulip said

The dry flowers and leaves were glued on the outside of the jars and the mod podge helped add a frosted look to the glass. The Haston Free Public Library was shining during craft night.

The next craft night will be on Sept. 18 from 2-6 p.m. This will feature a variety of crafts and historical crafts with Castle Nitor.



Gloria is shown working on two apothecary floral lights, which featured mod podge, dry flowers and leaves, all pasted on a small jar.



Flameless candles provided the glow of the apothecary floral lights.



Dry flowers and leaves were part of the decoration and were provided by the library.

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
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66					67					68			

CLUES ACROSS

- Fairly large
- Barrels per day (abbr.)
- Cover the entirety of
- Leafy appetizer
- Showy ornament
- Norse personification of old age
- Athletes
- Closes tightly
- Attack via hurling items
- Where the reserves stand
- Sword
- Begat
- Damage another's reputation
- Northeast
- Turf
- For each
- Hours (Spanish)
- Western state
- One who offers help
- Flanks

- A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- Free from drink or drugs
- Tunnels
- Mature
- More dried-up
- News organization
- Steal something
- Forms one's public persona (abbr.)
- Female fish eggs
- Small petrel of southern seas
- Edible starches
- Historical
- In a place to sleep
- Horse grooms
- Off-Broadway theater award
- Chinese dynasty
- Resembling a wing
- Small projection on a bird's wing
- Of the Isle of Man
- Derived unit of force (abbr.)

CLUES DOWN

- Vipers
- Ancient city in Syria
- Slog
- Emits coherent radiation
- "Pollock" actor Harris
- Bleated
- Monetary units of Afghanistan
- Tooth doctor
- One who takes apart
- Commoner
- Beat poet Ginsberg
- Cave deposit material
- Home energy backup
- Begets
- Face part
- Frocks
- Hill or rocky peak
- Giving the impression of dishonesty
- About ear
- Male parents
- Popular grilled food

- Vaccine developer
- Not conforming
- Polite address for women
- 1970 U.S. environmental law
- Astronomical period of 18 years
- One who fights the government
- Center for Excellence in Education
- Watches discreetly
- An electrically charged atom
- Hymn
- Arabic given name
- Popular pie nut
- City in Zambia
- Species of cherry
- John __, British writer
- Be next to
- Make angry
- Give birth to a lamb or kid
- Unhappy

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Warriors take part in Tigers jamboree



Hayden O'Malley tries to steal possession.

SOUTH HADLEY – As has become tradition in recent years, Tantasqua Regional High School girls soccer took part in the South Hadley High School's annual girls soccer jamboree. Tantasqua had a few short



Kina Demears dribbles up the field.



Sarah Parson goes for the loose ball



Kayle Roy-Pina guides the ball up the field.



Tess Alexander passes ahead of pressure.



Makaela Tourville sends a pass away

Pioneers lock up with Panthers in scrimmage



Taylor Allen holds possession.

PALMER – Last week, both Pathfinder and Palmer girls soccer got together for scrimmage action with both teams preparing for the regular season. Pathfinder faced off with Lee High School earlier this week in the season opener for both teams. Coming up on Friday, Sept. 5, the Pioneers have their home opener on Commerce at 4 p.m. They will face Renaissance on Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 4 p.m.

Pioneers scrimmage as season nears

PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder Regional football had a scrimmage with Chicopee High School as the regular season approaches.

The Pioneers are scheduled to open up the regular season against neighboring rival Palmer High School next week. Pathfinder did have one final scrimmage on Sept. 5 against Bishop Guertin before facing the Panthers at Legion Field on Sept. 12 at 7 p.m.



Pathfinder scrimmages against Chicopee last week.



Dustyn Cook extends for a catch.



Anthony Arventos heads up the field



Cassion Kowalik looks for an opening to go on a long rush.



Trevor Alexander hugs the football as he goes on a run.



Megan Clark tries to clear the ball ahead of pressure.



Addison Doktor attempts a save.



Evelyn Wood goes after the ball.

Quabbin Fall League expands to six teams

SOUTH HADLEY – After successful recruiting, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League has reached a decision to expand this year's fall league to six teams.

With the expansion, there are still some open roster spots for players who are age 28 and older. The league is set to get underway with its Sunday schedule beginning on Sunday, Sept. 7.

All players in the league will get to experience an

eight-game slate with the cost in the range of \$45 to \$60 depending on the number of players on the team. The cost reflects paying for insurance, umpires, baseballs, and fields.

Primary fields being used this fall include Mittineague in West Springfield and Beachgrounds Park in South Hadley, with a third field being finalized this week.

Players potentially interested in participating in the league this year, don't wait to

sign-up.

Go to www.quabbinvalley-baseball.org and click on the registration page. If you have more questions, you can contact the league's co-coordinators at gscibelli22@yahoo.com or ikhandfield@gmail.com

The Quabbin Valley Baseball League is an over-28 baseball league playing games during the spring and summer in Western Massachusetts. The league recently expanded

to offer an over-28 fall league to allow players in the age range to face like competition during the fall months. There were four teams last year, and the league is expanding due to higher interest in its second year.

The tradition of fall league is to play with wood bats only. The league has nine-inning games and participants are guaranteed time in the field for at least four innings.

- sports -

Former minor league brings regional camp back

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM — There were many different sports camps held throughout Western Massachusetts this summer.

The last one was called the Summer Sendoff Baseball Camp, which took place on the baseball fields at Spec Pond in Wilbraham during the third week of August and featured players from all over the region. The camp director is Dustin Brisson, who played Minor League Baseball for the Boston Red Sox.

“This is our second year holding the baseball camp and it has been absolutely incredible,” Brisson said. “All of the kids have been great. They understand that this isn’t just a normal day camp, it’s a skills camp. They’re learning different things about baseball every day.”

Brisson, who was born in Florida, played college baseball at the University of Central Florida from 1997-2000. He was drafted by the New York Mets and the Miami Marlins before signing with the Red Sox.

He advanced to Double A before his professional baseball career came to an end due to an injury.

“I was blessed to have the opportunity to play professional baseball,” said Brisson, who also owns Forge Athletics. “I’m doing what I can to give back.”

During one of his college baseball games in Orlando, Brisson hit a long flyball down the right field line. The base umpire was Don LaValley, who’s from Chicopee. LaValley ruled that the ball was foul, but it was a home run. LaValley told the campers that story at this year’s camp.

“I’ve known Don since I was playing college baseball,” Brisson said. “We’re good friends now.”

About 45 youth baseball players between the ages of



Alex Nunlist takes a swing.

7-15 from Wilbraham and the surrounding communities attended the baseball camp. The campers were split up into groups depending on their age.

“Once we know how many kids will be coming to the camp, we like to put them in groups depending on their age,” Brisson said. “We just want to make sure that the kids are in the appropriate skill level. It’s hard to put eighth or ninth graders with third or fourth graders. I want them to have fun and learn some new things at the same time. They’re learning for some of the best coaches in the area.”

A couple of the camp instructors were Chade Shade, who was the first-year head coach of the Springfield College baseball team, Dan Gomez, who’s the head baseball coach at Western New England University, and Terry Doyle, who coaches baseball at New England College which is in Henniker, NH.

Minnechaug Regional varsity baseball coach Mike Netkovick also worked at this year’s camp.

“This is an outstanding baseball camp for the kids,”



Luke LaChappelle eyes the ball as he swings.

Netkovick said. “Dustin is a great guy, and he has an outstanding baseball resume. I’m glad that I was able to help at this year’s camp. I never attended a camp like this one when I was a kid.”

Ray Fagnant, who grew up in Chicopee and is the Boston Red Sox Northeast Regional Scouting Supervisor, also helped at the camp.

A few of the different stations were hitting, fielding, and throwing.

One of the older camp-

ers was Nolan Witek, who’s from Wilbraham.

“This baseball camp is a lot of fun,” said Witek, who’s a sixth grader. “This camp will prepare me for my baseball tryouts for the Wilbraham Falcons in a couple of weeks. Baseball is my favorite sport.”

Brisson was also aided at the camp by his wife, Kasey.

“My wife is the backbone of the organization,” Brisson said. “She keeps everything in order. I appreciate all the support



Eli Olbrych frames up a pitch.



Rick Colon practices his technique behind the plate.



Sam Lacasse works on his pitching.

from many different people that I’ve received running this camp.”

Brisson and his staff are

already looking forward to holding the baseball camp again next summer.

Jarvis gets first Modifieds win at Great Place Race

WINCHESTER, N.H. - Add Joey Jarvis to the long list of first-time Modified feature winners at the Great Race Place. The second-generation hot shoe held off the best in the business to win the Aug. 23 604 Modified main event at Monadnock Speedway.

Super Street ace Dylan Zullo, also a generation star, moved closer to his first divisional championship by topping his Saturday night feature, and Super Modified blaster George Helliwell won his second SMAC 350 main event of the summer here on Back To School

Night on the high banks.

Cameron Sontag won the Mini Stock feature, Gordon Farnum scored his third win of the summer in the Pure Stocks, and up-and-coming teen speedster Sofia Rego won for the first time in the Young Guns on Saturday.

Jarvis, no stranger to victory lane but still seeking his first Modified win at Monadnock entering Saturday’s 40-lap feature, comes from a storied pedigree of Green Mountain State racers. Following in the footsteps of dad Peter, and uncles Dwight and Victor, he led all the way Saturday to score the win with Brian Robie glued to his bumper.

To earn the win, he held off the all-out challenges of previous 2025 All States

Material Group Modified winners Brousseau, Leclerc, Patnode and then Robie. Trying the top groove lap after lap, the speedway’s top points man had to settle for second, inches behind the first-time winner. Patnode’s big night aboard his Swanzey Oil ride brought him home third.

SMAC’s Helliwell, setting a Monadnock lap record for 350 Super Mods at a mind-bending 11.348 seconds, started the night’s 50-lap main event up front and rocketed off to win by a country mile.

“I hate to lose, and I’ve done a lot of it,” Helliwell quipped in victory lane. At Monadnock Speedway, though, all he’s done is win. Along with his Saturday speed record, he was perfect at two-for-two this summer on the high banks. Matt Seavey kept him in sight to finish second Saturday, and Matt Riley was third.

Erik Smith led early in the Twin State Truck Services Super Street feature but top gun Dylan Zullo, who’d settled for second a week earlier, wanted more. Charging to the front from the top groove on lap five, Zullo took the lead and quickly sped off into the night to solidify his spot atop the points parade.

Chris Riendeau, victorious seven days before, worked his way through the strong field to claim second on lap 24 but, by then, Zullo was far ahead. Smith finished his impressive performance in third, with JD Stockwell and Hillary Renaud completing the potent top five. After a post race inspection, Reindeau was disqualified for an upper control arm infraction placing Zilinski into fifth.

Kevin Clayton, and then Dick Lamotte, both set a fast pace early in the Fabian Fuels Mini Stock feature but Cameron Sontag took charge on lap 13 and never looked back en route to the top prize in the high speed rear-wheel versus front-wheel-drive battle for the win.

With Sontag making Saturday’s night’s win look easy, Owen Zilinski blasted into second on the final lap to edge Louie Maher for the runner-up hardware. Timmy Paquette was fourth on the night, and Kevin Clayton - he the division’s champ a quarter century ago - came home fifth.

Saturday night’s win moved Sontag up to second in the 2025 points chase, now only four markers behind John Fultz, who finished pitside for 14th on the

night. Markus O’Neil was first to the front in the Brattleboro Towing and Recovery Pure Stock feature, but Kyle Kenny - victorious with ease the night before at Claremont - was shooting for a weekend sweep. And, back in row four, Gordon Farnum had plans of his own.

Kenny took the lead on lap five, bringing Dominick Stafford with him, and Farnum seized third the next time around. Diving under a turn-four lapper on the 21st go-round, Farnum was back where he’d finished a week earlier, at the front and off to his appointed stop in victory lane.

With Kenny and Stafford both rock solid to complete the top three, 2024 high banks champ Andrea St. Amour rebounded from two in-race brush-ups to come home fourth, and Chris Chambers was fifth.

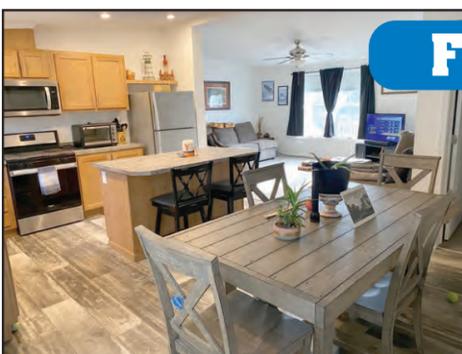
Sofia Rego, who wrecked a month ago in a Doug’s Auto Body Young Guns event, is getting used to her new ride. In fact, she has it fully figured out. Saturday, the teen pilot swept both her heat and feature races to score her first win. Previous 2025 winners Maya Bell and Hunter Duquette were second and third,

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

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

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Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.



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REMEMBER TO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SPORTS TEAMS

- community -

Rep. Berthiaume staff announces office hours

State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume and Chief of Staff, Donna, invite constituents and town officials to meet them to express any concerns, ideas or issues that they may need assistance with.

People may call Donna at 774-402-4742 if they would like a private meeting.

Office hour schedules include Tuesday, Sept. 9 town of West Brookfield, at the

Senior Center from 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. and town of Brookfield at the Town Hall, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.; on Wednesday, Sept. 10 town of East Brookfield at the Senior Center from 11:15 a.m.-noon; and on Thursday, Sept. 11 town of New Braintree at the Town Hall from 10-10:45 a.m.; town of North Brookfield Town Hall from 11 a.m.-noon.

West Brookfield Farmers Market held on Wednesdays

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Farmers Market has returned on the beautiful West Brookfield Common for its 15th consecutive season.

The market is held on Wednesdays from 3-6 p.m., rain or shine, throughout the spring, summer and early fall.

The 2025 season the mar-

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

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

Thrift Store at Methodist Church open on select Saturdays

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

Many lovely summer wardrobe selections are now available for women, men and children, as well as other seasonal updates to inventory. The Thrift Store

offers quality used clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, décor, picture frames, children's toys, books and DVDs at bargain prices.

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

USPS has hiring event at East Brookfield library on Sept. 9

EAST BROOKFIELD – Join the U.S. Postal Service team at the East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive on Tuesday, Sept. 9 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. to discuss career opportuni-

ties in your area.

Positions include City Carrier Assistant, Rural Carrier Associate and Maintenance Mechanic. If you have any questions, please contact Caryn at 978-962-2371.

BBB Tip: Get ready to go back to school

Paula Fleming
pfleming@boston.bbb.org

As the back-to-school season approaches, parents and students are gearing up for the annual shopping spree. Whether you prefer in-person shopping or browsing online, staying informed and prepared can make this busy time more manageable and cost-effective. BBB has tips to help you navigate back-to-school shopping.

What you'll learn:

Steps to take to prepare for back-to-school shopping.

How to maximize savings from sales and tax-free weekends.

The types of sales and discounts you may be able to leverage.

Before determining what students may need for the year, set a budget. Planning ahead as much as possible will help keep expenses to a minimum and help everyone involved stay on task.

BBB recommends the following tips when looking for school-related items, either in person or online:

In-person shopping

Create a shopping list before heading to the store. This helps you stay focused and avoid impulse purchases.

Shop early. To avoid crowds and ensure you get the best selection, start your shopping early in the season.

Compare prices between retailers, save coupons, sign up for email alerts, and redeem any cash-back or rebate offers. This will help you get the best deals and stay within budget.

Check store policies. Be aware of return policies, especially for electronics and clothing, in case you need to make exchanges or returns.

Research big-ticket items

Read reviews. Look for reviews from credible sources to understand the pros and cons of different models.

Check specifications. When buying new equipment, check with your child's school to learn about any technical requirements and determine if any changes are necessary to the home's high-speed internet. Before purchasing an expensive laptop, tablet, or computer accessory, research the brands, warranty, customer reviews, and prices at various stores to ensure the best deal. Also, look up the retailer's reputation on BBB.org.

Look for student discounts. Many tech companies offer discounts for students. Verify eligibility and take advantage of these savings.

Shop smart with sales and tax-free weekends.

Plan ahead. Mark your calendar for upcoming sales and tax-free weekends. These are ideal times to buy school supplies, clothing,

and electronics without paying sales tax. Check out this resource from the Federation of Tax Administrators to see what your state offers.

Make a priority list. Decide which items are most crucial to purchase during these sales to maximize your savings.

Combine discounts. Look for opportunities to combine store sales with manufacturer rebates or coupons.

Asking for discounts

Don't hesitate to ask. When shopping in person, inquire if there are any available discounts, especially for bulk purchases or floor models.

Leverage loyalty programs. Sign up for store loyalty programs, which can offer exclusive discounts and points on purchases.

Use student IDs. Some store discounts are available to students with either a ".edu" email address or a student ID. If you're a student or have a student in your family, ask if there are any student discounts available.

Visit school supply drives. Many communities and organizations host school supply drives where you can either donate or receive supplies. Check with local schools, community centers, or non-profits.

Consider buying in bulk. Team up with other par-

ents. Consider pooling resources with other parents to buy supplies (like paper towels, tissues, wipes, hand sanitizer) in bulk, which can be more cost-effective.

Warehouse stores. Check out warehouse clubs for bulk deals on school supplies and snacks.

Shop wisely and safely online

When shopping online, be wary of ads that feature items that imply that you may want or need them based on your search history. Scammers could be trying to drive you to a different website. Take note of the ad and go to the store's website by directly typing into the search bar. Note the website's privacy policy and contact information, and always use a credit card when purchasing.

Shop on reputable websites. Ensure you are purchasing from well-known and trusted websites. Look for HTTPS in the URL.

Use secure payment methods. Opt for secure payment methods like credit cards or payment services that offer buyer protection.

By following these tips, you can make your back-to-school shopping experience smoother, safer, and more economical. Whether you're shopping for essentials or splurging on big-ticket items, a little planning and research can go a long way in ensuring you get the best value for your money.

Audit highlights need for improvements at Massachusetts Gaming Commission

BOSTON —State Auditor Diana DiZogio's Office released an audit report of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, reviewing the period from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

MGC is the oversight agency charged with monitoring gaming establish-

ments in the Common-

wealth. Its mission is to create a fair, transparent, and participatory process for implementing the 2021 expanded gaming law, which was passed to generate new revenue for Massachusetts and to increase economic growth in surrounding com-

munities.

The five-person appointed body establishes oversight and management of the licensing and regulatory processes for two casinos, MGM Springfield and Encore Boston Harbor and the statewide slots parlor, Plainridge Park Casino, through

a series of regulations. Additionally, MGC is tasked with creating and overseeing the regulatory framework of the Commonwealth's sports wagering industry, which includes 13 sports wagering operators

See AUDIT PAGE 10

TAX RATE FROM PAGE 1

She said the Select Board could also vote to adopt a Small Commercial Exemption for qualified businesses. She said there are about 41 of the town's 162 businesses that meet the criteria to benefit from such an exemption.

"It's the owner of the property, not the businesses on the site, that receives the tax benefit," she said.

The Board of Assessors recommended the Select Board vote to adopt a single tax rate without a Residential Exemption or Small Commercial Exemption.

The Select Board voted to retain a single tax rate without exemptions.

Project management at landfill

Town Administrator Robin Grimm said the town received a proposal from EA Engineering, Science and Technology Inc. to provide project management for the town's landfill in the amount of \$48,365.

"This is a grading project on the landfill that had been voted at town meeting," she said. "Regardless of when we move to close the landfill...this is work that would have to be done anyway."

Grimm said this is a normal requirement of landfills and will address the slope of the landfill and prevent runoff.

The Select Board voted to accept the proposal.

CANDIDATE FROM PAGE 1

"At this point, I was working to make sure that building's staying in compliance, look at various options for the select board to reutilize the building," he said.

Lamontagne said in his previous role in Templeton, he was responsible for putting the former Baldwinville Elementary School out to bid, which he did twice. The building sold for \$400,000 and is now back on the town's tax roll.

"We were very successful getting MPC Development after the bidding process...

the select board awarded it to them," he said. "It's a \$30 million investment in the community over there...I'm really proud of that project."

Lamontagne said he also worked to secure Community Development Block Grant funding to redo all of the roads in that area.

"That project I was very proud to accomplish...with all of the town departments. They worked collaboratively with me," Lamontagne said. "I'm a very project-oriented town administrator."

He said the reason he wants to work for North Brookfield is to "expand

his horizons." He said he learned a lot about the town during his interview process with the search committee.

"I think you have established a good thing here," he said. "I want to just be able to take that and take the next step."

These next steps include looking at the best way to provide education for the town's students.

"I think that you have a good team, and I can make positive improvements here for the town of North Brookfield," Lamontagne said.

Lamontagne said he believes the key issues the town is facing includes the

school district and the possibility of regionalizing with another school district.

"I think that is the challenge not just here, but across the commonwealth," he said.

Lamontagne said he would like to be able to continue in his position in Phillipston in addition to being the Town Administrator in North Brookfield. He said his schedule would commit Monday, Tuesday and Thursday to North Brookfield and Wednesday and Friday to Phillipston.

"I believe I can make it work," he said. "I'm up for that challenge."

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Saturday, September 6th

7pm-11pm

Pure Country

Friday Nights ~ 8pm-11pm

Karaoke

Saturday Nights also if no band

Upcoming Events

Saturday, September 27th
7pm-11pm

Uncle Country

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- public safety -

East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of Aug. 1-9 the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 160 building/property checks, 78 directed area patrols, nine traffic controls, 16 radar assignments, 14 emergency 911 calls, four citizen assists, two assist other agencies, three investigations, one safety hazard, two harassments, one vandalism, one burglary, one property damage, three complaints, two motor vehicle accidents, seven animal calls and 62 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Friday, Aug. 1

11:54 a.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Services Rendered
 12 p.m. Assist Other Agency, East Main Street, Services Rendered
 12:39 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Podunk Road, Citation Issued
 7:56 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued
 8:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 8:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued

Saturday, Aug. 2

4:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle

Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 4:15 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued
 6:22 p.m. 911 Misdial, East Main Street, Spoken To
 7:09 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued
 8:26 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 9:23 p.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Route 49, Taken/Referred to Other Agency
 9:24 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 9:41 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 9:48 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued
 10:42 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Sunday, Aug. 3

7:19 a.m. 911 Investigation, East Main Street, Services Rendered
 9:47 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued
 12:37 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Rice Road, Vehicle Towed

Monday, Aug. 4

4:38 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued
 1:37 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued
 2:03 p.m. 911 Parking Complaint, East Main Street, Services Rendered
 6:42 p.m. Investigation, Maple Street, Investigated
 8:50 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued

Tuesday, Aug. 5

5:59 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 8:20 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 11:36 a.m. Safety Hazard, Podunk Road, Removed Hazard
 12:42 p.m. Radar, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 1:07 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 4:52 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Dispatch Handled
 5:33 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Howe Street, Transported to Hospital
 6:08 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Mechanic Street, Citation Issued
 6:16 p.m. Motor Vehicle

Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 8:22 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Drake Lane, Transported to Hospital
 8:32 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Faith Drive, Services Rendered

Wednesday, Aug. 6

8:49 a.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, East Main Street, Vehicle Towed
 1:27 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 1:32 p.m. Radar, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 1:44 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 1:55 p.m. Harassment, North Brookfield Road, Officer Handled
 2:01 p.m. Vandalism, Unknown Location, Report Taken
 2:24 p.m. Assist Other Agency, East Main Street, Dispatch Handled
 3:48 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Main Street, Services Rendered
 7:09 p.m. Assist Citizen, Paule Circle, Officer Handled
 9:15 p.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 9:27 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

tion Issued
 9:35 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Thursday, Aug. 7

8:27 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 8:47 a.m. 911 Burglary, Harrington Street, Spoken To
 11:12 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Podunk Road, Citation Issued
 3:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 3:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 3:30 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 4:16 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued
 4:30 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued
 4:59 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 5:16 p.m. Harassment, North Brookfield Road, Officer Handled
 6:28 p.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 6:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

tion Issued
 7:19 p.m. 911 Property Damage, Rice Road, Officer Handled

8:11 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, West Sturbridge Road, Officer Handled

8:32 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

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

Friday, Aug. 8

1:15 p.m. Hazardous Incident, East Main Street, Transferred Call to C3
 6:26 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To
 8:24 p.m. Investigation, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

Saturday, Aug. 9

7:50 a.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, West Main Street, Report Taken
 10:20 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Services Rendered
 11:45 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To
 5:11 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, North Brookfield Road, Transported to Hospital

AUDIT FROM PAGE 9

licensed to conduct online and in-person sports gambling within Massachusetts.

Among the audit's findings is that MGC failed to monitor sports betting advertisements before public release, violating state regulations. Seventeen advertisements lacked required responsible gambling information, including an omission of the Massachusetts Problem Gambling Helpline. These failures risk exacerbating gambling addiction and exposing youth to harmful promotional materials.

The audit also found that GameSense agents, who are tasked with supporting individuals affected by gambling addiction, were not fully trained as mandated. Without proper training, these agents are ill-equipped to help individuals struggling with gambling addiction. This undermines the very support systems designed to mitigate gambling-related harm.

Moreover, the audit

found that MGC has no accountability process for reviewing and entering into employee settlement agreements, which could conceal workplace misconduct. Without transparency, public funds may be used to silence victims while shielding wrongdoers, risking erosion of public trust.

Finally, during the audit, the State Auditor's Office learned that two class action lawsuits were filed against Massachusetts gaming establishments. These lawsuits are believed to have arisen from discrepancies between the Massachusetts General Laws, specifically Section 29 of Chapter 23K, and Code of Massachusetts Regulations, 205 CMR 138.13(4), regarding the monthly win/loss statements that should be sent to reward cardholders.

Reward cardholders were not provided with clear and detailed monthly statements that outlined their wins and losses. This means that cardholders were deprived of information that was essential for making informed decisions about their gaming habits

and practicing responsible gaming.

By not meeting these requirements, gaming establishments may enhance their profitability at the expense of their patrons' well-being. Moreover, MGC stands to gain financially, as it receives a portion of the revenue generated by these casinos. This situation raises concerns not only about the implications of prioritizing profit over player welfare but also about the effectiveness of regulatory oversight in promoting safe gaming practices, especially when that regulatory oversight appears inconsistent with the General Laws.

"The Massachusetts Gaming Commission has a responsibility to follow the law and provide adequate oversight, especially pertaining to gambling addiction issues," said DiZoglio in a press release. "Our findings reveal regulatory breakdowns that we encourage the Commission to continue addressing over the course of the next six months, at which time we will conduct our post-audit review."

YOUR HEALTH FROM PAGE 4

want to share your granola, keep your distance. Rabies is also more common with a cat bite.

Though rabies cases in the U.S. are extremely rare, if you are bitten, you need immediate treatment.

Report animal bites

You should contact animal control or your local police if you are bitten by an animal that behaves in an odd way; an unknown pet or one that's unvaccinated; or a stray or wild animal. In Massachusetts, any non-domestic animal biting or scratching a human must be reported to Department of Public Health Epidemiology at 617-983-6800.

How to avoid animal bites

These tips seem like com-

mon sense, but they bear repeating, especially where children are concerned:

- Don't scream or run near an animal.
- Avoid eye contact
- Don't have food out when a strange animal is nearby.
- Stand very still with your hands at your sides.
- Don't pet or catch a wild animal.
- Never bother an animal while it's eating.
- Never tease or chase an animal or pull its ears, tail or paws.
- Once the animal loses interest, slowly back away until you no longer see it.
- Walk away if an animal is growling. Don't run.
- If attacked, give the animal your jacket, book bag or anything you can put between you and it.
- If you fall down, curl

into a ball with your hands over your ears and don't move. Try not to scream and roll around.

We love our companion animals, but keep this in mind: They are still just that – animals that may behave unpredictably.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NShore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

- public notices -

CHILD FIND QUABOAG REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, require districts to annually attempt to identify and locate every qualified (individual with a disability) attending the Quaboag Regional School District. If you suspect your child or a child in your care may have a disability or physical or mental impairment and is in need of an evaluation, please contact the Director of Student Support Services at 413-420-1994. 09/05/2025

Town of North Brookfield Notice of Surplus Auction:

The Town of North Brookfield will be holding an online auction hosted by GovDeals starting on **September 15, 2025 and ending on September 29, 2025**. Items will be available to bid on starting at 8 AM. Live Auction will end at 8 PM with 5-minute staggering end times between auction items. Final bids must be submitted before that deadline. This Auction will be hosted ONLINE ONLY!! Potential bidders can access the auction using this link <https://www.govdeals.com/northbrookfield>. Some of the items available items are a 1947 Buffalo Engine,

a 1996 Pump Truck, two Ford Crown Victorias, 1995 International with sander, 76 lengths of fire hose, and more. The Town of North Brookfield follows MGL 30B for disposition of Surplus. 08/29, 09/05/2025



Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

Full-Time Police Officer

The Warren Police Department is accepting applications for the position of full time Police Officer. Applicants do not have to be academy trained, but academy trained are preferred. Must be willing to work weekends, nights and holidays.

Responsibilities include responding to emergency and non-emergency calls for Police, Fire and Ambulance services. It is preferred that applicants currently possess valid certification as a Police Officer. Candidates must have strong interpersonal, verbal, and written communication skills. Preferences include an associate degree or higher in criminal justice, serve in the US military, or experience as a Police Officer.

The Patrolmen's contract provides an education incentive and a candidate with prior experience may also be considered to start at a higher step of pay.

Resumes and cover letters will be accepted until position is fill to the attention of Lt. Kyle Whitcomb, WPD PO Box 606, Warren, MA 01083 or Whitcomb@warren-ma.gov.

The Town of Warren is an EOE.

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

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- community -

Pyramid scheme masquerading as scooter investment

The Better Business Bureau is warning investors about Lightning Shared Scooter Company LLC, a business claiming a North Texas address that appears to be operating as a pyramid scheme.

LSSC currently holds an "F" rating with BBB for failing to respond to complaints and for operating

without the required competency license from the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. In July, BBB saw a sharp increase in consumer complaints and BBB Scam Tracker reports, triggering an investigation.

Investors were given what appeared to be an SEC certificate. However, the document was riddled

with typos, grammatical errors, and a fabricated certificate number. The company advertises itself as the "leading shared scooter company," encouraging investors to lease scooters at varying investment levels, with promises of daily returns.

BBB Scam Tracker reports describe losses rang-

ing from \$1,000 to \$55,000, matching the so-called "investment levels."

Like many pyramid schemes, investors are recruited by friends or family and encouraged to bring in new members. Bonuses are promised based on the investments of those recruits. Investors report being required to pay in crypto-

currency, a common tactic in fraudulent investment schemes.

Scam reports connected to LSSC have come in from 20 states and three Canadian provinces as of Aug. 22, with many concentrated in California and Florida.

BBB has a long history of exposing such scams. In recent years, BBB investi-

gated another North Texas operation, Blessings In No Time (BINT Operations LLC), which lured investors with a so-called "blessing loom."

If you've been approached by Lightning Shared Scooter Company LLC or a similar investment, file a report with BBB Scam Tracker.

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