

QUABOAG CURRENT

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Friday, September 8, 2023

Central New England Equine Rescue prepares for annual event

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WEST BROOKFIELD – In its 20th year as a nonprofit organization, Central New England Equine Rescue, Inc. is preparing for its second major fundraiser this year, the Fall Festival at the Farm.

Founded by Vicky Berry and her daughter Betsy Johnson in 2003, CNEER has helped hundreds of horses and ponies find loving homes.

Now in its second year, the Fall Festival at the Farm will be held on Saturday, Oct. 14, at the 18-acre farm located at 96 New Braintree Road, with events and activities from noon-4 p.m. Last year close to 500 people attended to help support the horses and ponies rescued by CNEER.

Anyone that's owned a horse knows their care is expensive, but many of the rescues at CNEER face addition-

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Thunder enjoys the sunshine this past Sunday, before embarking to his "forever home" as a member of the therapy program at Field of Dreams Therapy Farm in Paxton, along with his herd mate Little Jack. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Diorio named new high school principal

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Interim Superintendent Tim McCormick introduced John Diorio, the new principal for the Jr./Sr. High School.

"He's really hit the ground running this summer," McCormick said at the School Committee's Aug. 29 meeting. Diorio has previously worked in Palmer, Springfield and Fitchburg.

"One of the things that stuck out about Mr. Diorio during the hiring process is just his enthusiasm, and what he brings to the table as far as

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Quaboag Regional welcomes new administrators, staff

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARREN – Superintendent Stephen Duff introduced several new staff members, including Middle High School Assistant Principal Micheal Lavelle.

"Mike comes to us with many years of experience as an assistant principal," Duff said, most recently at Oxford Public Schools for the past five years.

Lavelle, a Ludlow resident, is "very student-oriented," Duff said.

Lavelle has been a teacher for eight years and has 13 years of experience as an assistant

principal.

"When I came here and I interviewed, and I met the people...I felt really good about everything that was going on here...and opportunities here for our students that different districts are looking to get – we already have the infrastructure, we already have it here," he said. "I'm really happy to be here."

School Committee Chair Andrew Schwenker said he's always excited for the school year to start, but this year, he's "really excited."

"Outside of Superintendent Duff...our administration in the Middle High School has 99

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Author's book talks about life and love on the farm

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Diane Buzzzell has been gathering the story (or stories) of a lifetime for the past 50 years, before she even realized it.

It all began when she met her future husband Larry through her coworker at the shoe factory. The coworker was Larry's girlfriend at the time.

Both Buzzzell and her coworker had Morgan horses, and the two began riding and showing together.

See AUTHOR | PAGE 8



North Brookfield author Diane Buzzzell stands with her husband Larry Buzzzell, right, and his brother Russ Buzzzell, left. They are shown with a painting of the Buzzzell family farm, painted by Russ. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE



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- community -

Kat Stewart sings from the soul

Songwriter performs at Congregational Church

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

BROOKFIELD – Kat Stewart began her musical journey when she was only 5 years old, where she picked up her first instrument, the violin.

She grew up with her parents having a love for music and leading and singing at her home church of Holden Chapel for the worship team. Her love of music only grew, and every day, music filled her life in some way.

“From there, it blossomed into becoming a multi-instrumentalist. Anything instrument-wise, I learned to play it,” Stewart said.

Other than the violin, Stewart can also skillfully play the piano, guitar, drums and ukulele. Any instrument she could get her hands on to learn how to play, she did.

In 2020, she performed for the first time by opening for a band in New York. After COVID-19 closed everything, she took a year off from performing in order to write music.

Stewart has opened for and performed along several local Christian contemporary artists including Right Hand Shade, Collington, Boiling Point, Jonas Woods, Tom Golly, Rachel Delong, and Dave Pettigrew. Her performances have taken her to New York, Tennessee, and all across the commonwealth.

Today, she works closely with several of these artists, namely Tom Golly, who helps her to produce and write music, and acts as her manager to get her music gigs, manage



Kat Stewart will perform Friday, Sept. 8 at Brookfield Congregational Church, 8 Common St. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and the concert will begin at 7 p.m. Admission is free. SUBMITTED PHOTO

social media posts and advertising, and more.

Golly, Stewart’s “partner in crime” in the music world, has great admiration for her and is proud of what she has accomplished in a short time.

“She’s had enough shadows cast on her and I want her to fly. It’s been great to work with and get to know her. She puts everything into her music. She wants people to know what God has done in her life and it really comes through,” Golly said.

Golly’s positive role and influence in Stewart’s life was monumental and having him by her side during tough times was essential.

They first met through a mutual friend on an online platform in 2020, and then later met in person in Tennessee in December of 2021.

Stewart’s musical career was going and moving at a fantastic pace, but then she ended up getting very sick with an autoimmune disease and had to spend time in the hospital. She had a sketchbook and pencils and drew out an angel with large pink wings encircling it, and a quote.

The wings form a heart shape, and the angel at the center of the wings is meant to

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PHONE
413.967.3505
Fax: 413.967.6009
Subscriptions: 413.283.8393

EMAIL
Advertising Sales
Dan Flynn
dflynn@turley.com

Tim Mara
tmara@turley.com

Editor
Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com

WEB
www.quaboagcurrent.turley.com

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- community -

Capstone Planning Group welcomes Brookfield resident

WORCESTER – Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with 10 locations throughout central Massachusetts, announced the addition of Brookfield resident Kevin Outland to its team as a financial consultant for the Capstone Planning Group.

“We’re thrilled to welcome Kevin to our team,” said Capstone Planning Group Senior Vice President Christopher Mallon in a press release. “The work he’s done over the past decade to help his clients pursue their financial goals is commendable, and we can’t wait for our clients to get to know him.”

Outland comes to Capstone from Citizen’s Securities, Inc., where he spent 14 years helping clients pursue their financial goals through individually tailored planning and disciplined results tracking. He also holds various licenses through LPL Financial,



Kevin Outland recently joined Capstone Planning Group as a financial consultant. SUBMITTED PHOTO

including the Series 6 and Series 7 Securities Licenses; the Series 66 Investment Advisor License; the Series 63 State License; and Life, Accident and Health Licenses.

“I am passionate about help-

ing clients develop and implement financial plans to pursue their goals,” said Outland. “Whether they want to receive personalized investment guidance, retirement advice, protect assets or leave a legacy to loved ones in a tax-efficient manner, it brings me joy to work with people and earn their trust.”

A native of Sturbridge and current resident of Brookfield, Outland is actively involved with the Sturbridge BNI Chapter and is a volunteer for the Salvation Army.

The Capstone Planning Group is a wealth management team conveniently located at Cornerstone Bank that provides recommendations based on each client’s specific needs. Services include comprehensive financial planning, investment advice, retirement income planning, legacy and estate planning, insurance and more.

Seniors continue sunrise tradition at Quaboag

By Haileigh Swistak
Student Intern

WARREN – The new school year has started and Quaboag Regional High School’s senior class of 2024 is already making the most of it.

On Friday, Sept. 1, Quaboag’s seniors gathered in the back parking lot to watch the sunrise at 5:50 a.m. The students were chaperoned by their class advisors, Sibilla Flannery and Tyler Shepard.

About 40 seniors showed up to carry on this four-year long tradition at Quaboag Regional Middle High School.

The Warren and Spencer Dunkin’ Donuts donated food for their student employees to bring in Friday morning to share with the class. Bagels, donuts, muffins, and coffee were among the goods provided for the early-bird seniors.

Some students even brought their own spikeball net and ball to have fun with while waiting for the sun to rise.

At 6:11 a.m. the sun rose slowly above the eastern trees at Quaboag, giving students plenty of opportunities to take pictures of it and with their friends.

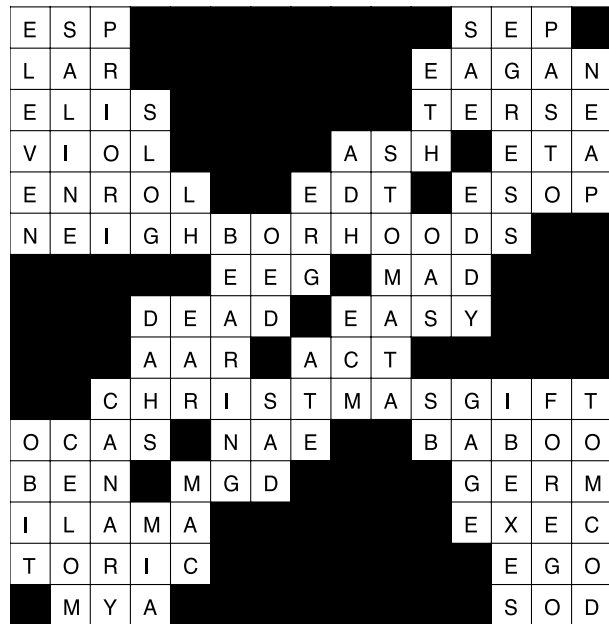
Most students stayed at the school, sitting in their cars or talking with friends until the first bell rang for class at 7:35 a.m.

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

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.



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Quaboag Current ~ November 3, 2023

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

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

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

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

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- opinion -



Fall plants extend the season

Over the last few days, I have heard the same sorry statement again and again: "I can't believe summer is over."

I am not sure if this is because school has started, or if honestly, folks feel cheated out of summer because of all the rain and overcast skies we had. Probably it's a little of both!

There have been a few coldish mornings, enough to make me get excited about all that is fall. Pumpkins, crisp apples, beautiful foliage and you guessed it, autumn plants!

Read on for a column from the archives, one that will inspire you to add some late season color to your landscape.

It is always fun to freshen up the garden with new plants. I think of adding a splash of color at this point in the season as a last hurrah before old man winter sets in.

There are all types of mums, and flowering cabbage and kale available for sale right now. Unfortunately, they command higher prices than summer annuals do.

This article will teach you how to get the most out of your investment.

Choose mums carefully.

Daisy and other decorative flower types will generally not last as long in the garden as "cushions" will. These have petals straight through to the center of the flower- no yellow center is visible.

Because the flower head is dense it tends to hold up after a heavy rain and as well as after the first few frosty nights. Although mums are pretty in their pots, they will do better if planted in the ground or at least repotted into a larger container.

The poor things have been growing in the pots you bought them in for quite a while and are usually root-bound. Because of this it is important to slice the roots in a few places just as you would annuals or perennials at planting time.

This way they will have a chance to expand into the new soil you have provided. Mums tend to dry out quickly and require water often.

If you notice that your plant has wilted before you have had a chance to plant it, submerge the pot in a bucket of water- the shrunken soil ball will soak up water like a sponge!

Although mums can stand temperatures a few degrees below freezing, it is still a good idea to cover them if an early hard frost is in the forecast. Try using bushel baskets, old sheets or blankets, etc.

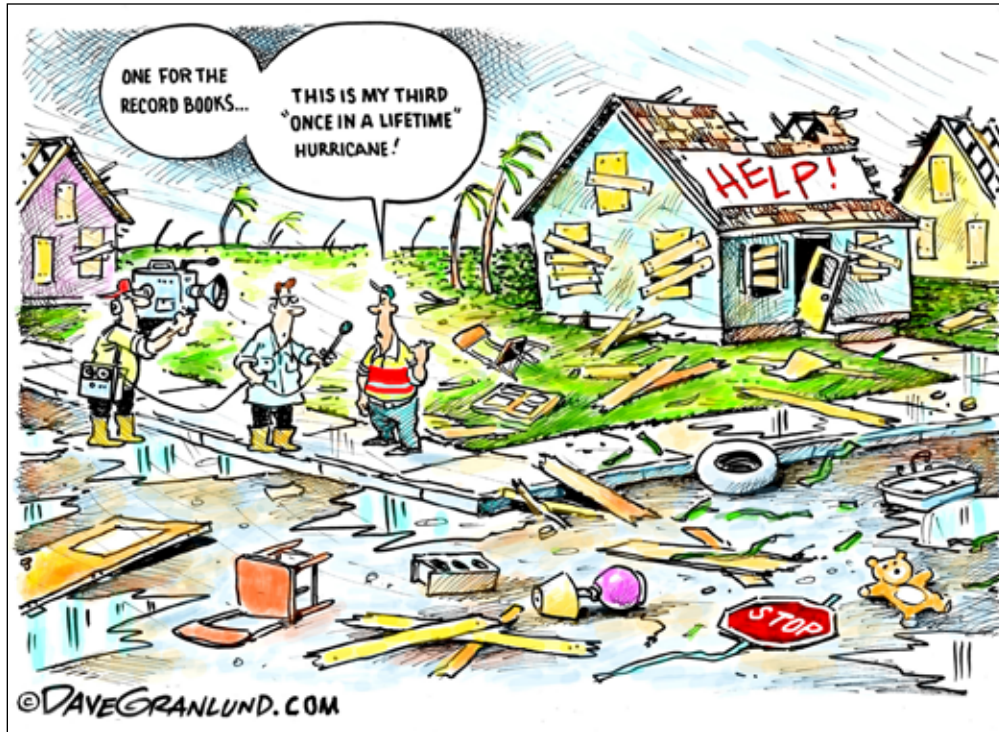
It is a nuisance, but so many times I have been grateful that I went through a bit of work to be able to enjoy my mums for weeks longer than if I hadn't.

If you are hoping that your mums will return for another season, cut them back to "fist height" in November, and provide them with a loose mulch after the ground freezes. The term "hardy mum" doesn't always prove true, but planting them properly, providing ample water and mulching for the winter will increase your odds of a repeat performance.

Remove the winter mulch around the time forsythias bloom.

Prevent gangly growth by pinching them back to a manageable height two or three times prior to mid-July. Expect blooms this time next year.

Flowering kale and cabbage can add nice



Black-crowned night heron

The Massachusetts Audubon Society reported the sighting of a black-crowned night heron in Pittsfield.

The black-crowned night heron is about 25 inches long and is gray and white. It is a stocky heron with pale yellow legs, which turn reddish in the breeding season.

The immature is brown with white streaks below and large, buff white spots on its back and wings. It keeps its immature plumage for two years.

The immature black-crowned night heron is distinguished from the yellow crowned night heron by its greenish-yellow lower bill. The yellow-crowned has a dark bill.

Although the night heron will feed by day, as its name implies this species feeds mostly at night or at dusk. They roost in trees.

It feeds on fish, amphibians, insects and small mammals. It also will eat the young of other bird species such as terns, herons and ibises.

They inhabit freshwater streams, lakes, rice fields, dry grasslands and salt marshes.

These herons nest either in colonies or singly. The female lays three to five pale blue green eggs in a nest of twigs, reeds and finer material placed against a tussock or in the reeds, shrub or trees up to 160 feet.

When greeting other black-crowned

night herons, they stretch their necks horizontally with breeding plumes on the head raised and they touch bills. They make a low, hoarse "quok" sound often heard at dusk.

During nesting, they make a "rok rok" sound.

Red-winged blackbirds

I received an email this week from someone who lives in the West Springfield/Agawam area. She said, "Red-winged blackbirds are one of my favorite birds, but I always wondered why they leave the area so early?"

She also said, "I go to areas where I know they nest, but never see them after mid-July or so."

Red-winged blackbirds are one of the first to arrive in early spring with the males coming first, then the females. They migrate anytime from late August to early October and gather in flocks for the trip south.

Audubon Society sightings

Other Audubon Society sightings reported for August in Berkshire include an alder flycatcher in Washington and a yellow-bellied flycatcher at the Jug End State Reservation in Egremont. In Hampshire County, four sandhill cranes were at East Meadows in Northampton and four more sandhill cranes at the Arcadia Sanctuary.

Migrants tallied at Quabbin Park in Ware included four common nighthawks, two yellow-bellied flycatchers and four Cape May warblers. In Worcester County 14 Common Mergansers were seen near fishing area #3 at Quabbin Reservoir in Petersham and four Bonaparte's Gulls were tallied along the Dana shoreline in Petersham.

Two black vultures were seen soaring over Mount Wachusett in Princeton and in Paxton there was a Cerulean warbler. Mount Wachusett is a popular spot for birders to view hawk migrations during September and October.

Two Cape May warblers were seen at the Moose Hill Wildlife Area.

Wild turkeys

It seems wild turkeys are everywhere. I have seen groups of three or four Tom turkeys and much larger groups of hens and their poults. Several times I stopped while a large flock of hens and youngsters crossed the road.

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

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Send opinions to:

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

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PATRICK H. TURLEY
CEO

KEITH TURLEY
President

EDITOR
Paula Quimette
pouimette@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Dan Flynn
Tim Mara

SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

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WEB
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- community -

Senior Center roof repairs to begin this month

By Paula Ouimette
Editor

pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Board of Selectmen Vice-Chair John Tripp said the town has been looking to repair the Senior Center roof for several years, and Damazio Builders was awarded the contract to complete the work, starting in September.

He said at the Aug. 29 Board of Selectmen's meeting, that the project is expected to be completed within two to three weeks of starting.

The cost of the project is \$92,777 and is paid for through grants secured by Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

Brownfield assessment

The Board signed a letter allowing CMRPC access to a brownfield where the H.H. Brown Shoe Factory and Aztec Industries were once located. Aztec Industries was an asbestos product manufacturer that closed in the 1980s.

Tripp said CMRPC needs permission to access the site at 14 South Common St. and 10 Grove St., which is fenced in and overgrown with brush and trees.

He said CMRPC is seeking grant money to help remediate asbestos from the brownfield. He said if this area was cleaned up, the town could connect the playground to the Rail Trail.

Tripp said the area where the Police Department is located, and the nearby emergency helicopter landing area have already been remediated of asbestos.

"This will be the last remaining sec-

tion that is not asbestos-free," Tripp said.

"I think it will be a great addition to the town, connecting the center of town here with the trail and with the playground, and get some more parking over there," he said.

Financial items

The Board approved the Highway Department's request to purchase the following items, a transmission kit for \$900, tires for \$600, a chainsaw for approximately \$500 and two air brake cans for \$500.

Town Clerk Tara Hayes said she wants to order her 2024 dog licenses early, as she is running out of her 2023 dog licenses.

As of July, there were 450 residents who haven't licensed their dogs, she said. Hayes said of that number, 230 have now paid, or they have communicated that they have moved, or their dog is deceased.

Hayes said that still leaves 220 residents that need to license their dogs and she only has six 2023 licenses remaining. She asked for approval to order 900 2024 licenses for \$141.

Hayes said the remaining 220 residents can come in and pay for their 2023 dog license, their late fee, and their 2024 license, which will be issued to them.

Hayes said her office has its new postage meter, and she requested to transfer \$1,000 from her postage account, to cover upcoming mailings.

The Board approved both of these requests.

Town Collector Lisa Taylor request-

ed approval to spend \$3,000 for postage, which was also approved.

Fire report

Board of Selectmen Clerk Elizabeth "Brooke" Canada read the Fire Department report for the month of July, as submitted by Fire Chief Joseph Holway.

Holway said the Department had a busy month, responding to storms.

He said the grants are still active for the new brush truck. Holway said the Department was also asked to host a Volunteer Fire Assistance Program grant receiver event for all fire departments across the commonwealth on Sept. 14 at 10 a.m.

Holway said this event is open to the public, to see the forestry equipment secured through this grant program and the people behind the program.

"We are honored to be asked to host this event," Holway wrote in his report.

Holway said the station rebuild is coming along, and he hopes the bidding process will be out to contractors this December.

The Fire Department responded to 35 incidents, including one building fire, one outside equipment fire, four medical assist/assist EMS crew, one motor vehicle accident (no injury), one watercraft rescue, one gasoline or other flammable liquids spill, one electrical, wiring or equipment problem, one attempted burning/illegal action, six water problems, one assist police or other governmental agency, four false alarms, one system malfunction, seven smoke detector activations due to malfunction, one alarm system activation due to malfunc-

tion, two smoke detector activations (no fire) unintentional, one windstorm, tornado and hurricane assessment and one lightning strike (no fire).

Vegetation trimming

Tripp reminded property owners to keep bushes and other vegetation trimmed along roadways and sidewalks. He said some areas have become obstructed and pose a safety hazard for pedestrians and motorists.

Special Town Meeting

Following the adjournment of the Board of Selectmen's meeting, Moderator James Caldwell opened a two-article special town meeting, with the first article asking voters to rescind a previous town meeting's article which authorized the town to appropriate \$6,600,000 from the Sewer Enterprise fund.

Article 19 was approved at the March 10 special town meeting, and due to an error in the language of the motion, the voters need to authorize the Treasurer to borrow these funds.

"When we were in the process of borrowing the funds, it was discovered that we needed specific wording that authorized the Treasurer to borrow the funds. When we originally voted it, that language wasn't in that article," Administrative Assistant Ashley Barre said. "It doesn't change the intention of the article, we just need to add, basically a sentence...so that we can move forward with borrowing the funds."

Voters approved rescinding the previous article, and voted unanimously in favor of approving the revised article by ballot vote.

McGovern graduates from ABA Wharton Leadership Lab

WARE – Country Bank announced that Mary C. McGovern, executive vice president, chief financial and operating officer, successfully completed the inaugural American Bankers Association Wharton Leadership Lab at the University of Pennsylvania.

McGovern earned an ABA Wharton Executive Leadership Certificate, a prestigious credential that demonstrates her excellence in leadership and strategic planning.

The ABA Wharton Leadership Lab is a rigorous, immersive program that challenges executive bankers on the reality of

leadership in today's world at an Ivy League level. The program, which included 42 students, covers topics such as creating and sharing a vision, goal setting, managing talent, driving innovation, and sustaining meaningful relationships.

McGovern is an influential executive leader with more than 30 years of experience in the financial services industry. McGovern's leadership has contributed to the bank's continued success for the past 12 years.

McGovern's participation in the ABA Wharton Leadership Lab reflects her commitment to continuous learning and profes-

sional development at a critical time in the industry as regulations, technologies and the work force continues to rapidly evolve.

"Mary's commitment to Country Bank is admirable, with oversight of operations, finance, facilities, retail banking delivery and technology, she has continued to drive strategic change throughout the Bank," said Paul Scully, President and CEO. "On behalf of the entire team and the Board of Directors, we would like to congratulate Mary for this achievement and look forward to her continued leadership as we navigate the next few years in a challenging economy."



Country Bank's Executive Vice President, Mary C. McGovern graduates from American Bankers Association Wharton Leadership Lab. SUBMITTED PHOTO

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CNEER | FROM PAGE 1

al expenses due to age and health issues. Several of the horses are considered “seniors,” and require a custom diet with medication to let them enjoy their golden years happy and healthy.

The unusually wet summer has greatly affected the quality of hay in the area, causing prices to increase.

In addition to paying for the care of the horses at CNEER, the rescue also needs to replace their wood shavings shelter, which was destroyed by a wind storm earlier this year.

With the skills and help of students at Tantasqua Regional Vocational High School, the rescue will be able to rebuild the shelter, but will need to raise money to cover the cost of materials. The students have previously completed projects at rescue, building stall doors (complete with wood burned name plates) for two of the resident miniature horses, Thunder and Captain Jack.

Thunder, a senior miniature horse, has been with CNEER since October 2020 and is closely bonded with Little Jack.

Little Jack had previously been adopted from the rescue, but returned after his longtime companion Annie passed away.

“Thunder wasn’t nice to Jack at first, but now they’re inseparable,” said Sari Pomponio, event organizer and a longtime volunteer with CNEER.

Now, the two minis have found a new home, at Field of Dreams Therapy Farm in Paxton, where they will be part of a therapy program.

“I’m going to miss them so much,” CNEER Vice-President Vicky Berry said.

Another mini at the rescue, Captain Jack, has faced more hardship than he should have in his young life.

“Captain Jack is 6 and was going to slaughter,” Berry said. After he was purchased from the slaughterhouse and supposedly bound for West Brookfield, he was mistakenly sent directly to the slaughter pipeline in Texas.

Berry and CNEER were able to send a rescuer to pick Captain Jack up from Texas, bringing him to Arkansas, then Virginia, before he finally arrived at his new home.

The cross-country journey made it difficult for Captain Jack to adjust at first, but now he’s settled in with the rest of the herd, Berry said.

“He’s very friendly,” she said.

Joining Captain Jack in the field are Monet, a Shetland cross pony, Mama, a Haflinger cross, Winnie, a Paint and Bandit, the oldest member of the herd.

Bandit would be 100 years old in human years, and is considered a “sanctuary horse” like Badonk the donkey. This means he will spend the rest of his life at CNEER and is not available for adoption.

Other sanctuary horses include Sega,



This stall door was made by students at Tantasqua Regional Vocational High School. Fall Festival at the Farm

a blind Andalusian and his seeing eye guide Minnie Pearl, a mini. Sega and Minnie Pearl live at Johnson’s equestrian center, Stoney Hill Farm in Barre.

Berry and Pomponio credit CNEER’s numerous volunteers and supporters for helping the rescue continue its mission. It’s also about family, and Berry said she couldn’t do it without her daughter, her son Tommy, son-in-law Marty and grandsons Derek and Devin.

“It’s just incredible what they do,” Berry said, including loading the loft with hay for the winter and taking care of downed trees.

Being at the rescue brings a sense of peace and belonging to anyone who visits, Pomponio said.

“Everything about it feels right in here,” she said, pointing to her heart. “I’m supposed to be here.”

Fall Festival at the Farm

The Fall Festival at the Farm will be held on Saturday, Oct. 14 from noon-4 p.m. Students from Ware High School will be assisting visitors with parking.

Stoney Hill Farm will provide pony and horse rides in the arena. Students of Stoney Hill Farm will put on demonstrations as well.

The Worcester Mounted Police are expected to return this year, setting up in the round pen and patrolling the grounds of the farm during the event.

There will also be raffles, a 50/50, T.C. Scoops ice cream truck, pumpkin decorating, facepainting, ornament decorating, coloring and other children’s activities and many vendors. CNEER will be selling T-shirts and other apparel as well.

Leah Concetta Shattuck and her team of draft horses will give wagon rides during the event.

Deux Amis, made up of musicians Sam Politz and Betsy Bronstein (who is also a CNEER volunteer), will provide live music throughout the day.

Vendor space is still available, and people should call 413-265-3270 for more information about signing up.

For more information about CNEER, visit cneer.com or follow them on Facebook.



Little Jack shares a moment with Central New England Equine Rescue, Inc. volunteer Sari Pomponio. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE



Central New England Equine Rescue, Inc. Vice-President Vicky Berry, left and volunteer Sari Pomponio visit with Daisy.



Captain Jack was bound for slaughter before Central New England Equine Rescue, Inc. was able to save him.



Gia (left) and Zinga graze in the field.

GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

texture to the fall garden. The same planting instructions apply here, but I have found that they can be finicky about water.

Consistent overwatering and they rot; giving them too little and they wilt. The best advice: test them before you get out the hose by inserting your finger into the top couple inches of soil.

Kale and cabbage need little in the way of grooming other than an occasional bottom leaf removed. Slugs do tend to enjoy the foliage, however, so set up some traps or barriers nearby.

The color on cabbage and kale will intensify as the weather gets colder, and the plants will continue to look good well into December, provided we don’t

get an early long standing snow- it will eventually make the leaves mushy. While it’s tempting to leave them in your containers and add greenery and such for the holidays, it’s not recommended unless the planters are in a protected spot.

Plant now for your garden’s last hurrah of the season- you’ll be glad you did!

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

- sturbridge -

Phantoms by Firelight returns to Old Sturbridge Village

STURBRIDGE – Halloween programming returns to Old Sturbridge Village on weekend evenings in October.

Phantoms by Firelight returns to Old Sturbridge Village for 12 nights this fall. Ticket sales for the popular Halloween program are on sale now with special early access and a discounted rate for Old Sturbridge Village and Coggeshall Farm Museum Members.

For more details on the event or to purchase tickets visit: www.osv.org/phantoms.

New 2023 featured performances

For 2023 there will be four completely new acts added to each nightly show. These include:

Hand balancing and Cyr wheel performances by circus artist Joel Herzfeld.

Kyle Breen will be spinning and dancing with fire.

Kayla Ernst-Alper will perform high above the crowds with mesmerizing aerial silks on a Lyra (aerial hoop).

Andre Sguerra will be entertaining

crowds on stilts and the unicycle.

Returning acts from 2022

Classic ballet dancers turned circus performers, Richard Hanks and Ashlee Montague have performed in Cirque du Soleil's Broadway Show Paramour among other accolades and will be returning for this year's performances.

Bryce Crumlish will bring back an even spookier performance. Crumlish will be joined by Jade Genga.

These two experienced Ringmasters will entertain visitors each step of the way throughout the evening performances.

At Phantoms by Firelight visitors can also:

Learn about the history of Halloween traditions, as well as coffin making, diseases and cures, funeral practices, and more.

Play classic outdoor games like corn-hole or attempt stilt walking.

Listen to haunting ghost stories by the bonfire.



Phantoms by Firelight returns to Old Sturbridge Village Oct. 6-29. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Meet author of "A Guide to Haunted New England", Thomas D'Agostino on select nights.

Come dressed in costume and participate in the Village's version of trick-or-treat, Clues & Candy.

Create photo opportunities and join a Spooky Selfie contest.

Enjoy a seasonal menu of hot and cold and savory and sweet items as well as on-theme adult and non-alcoholic beverages.

Shop in Miner Grant and the Ox & Yoke Mercantile for all your seasonal and holiday home décor.

Phantoms by Firelight Schedule

Phantoms by Firelight will be held Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, Oct. 6-29 from 4:30-9 p.m.

Ticket sales began Aug. 25 for members only and opened to the general public on Sept. 9.

Membership to Old Sturbridge Village includes perks like 10% off on food, beverage, and retail items in our shops plus additional discounts for Christmas by Candlelight 2023.

Learn more about all the membership benefits online at www.osv.org/membership/become-a-member/. For more details on the event or to purchase tickets visit: www.osv.org/phantoms.

QUABOAG | FROM PAGE 1

years of experience," he said. "We don't have 'green' people here. They may be 'green' to Quaboag, but they know what they're doing, and I'm really excited to see what's going to happen this year."

Duff also introduced the new Director of Technology, Chris Lajoie.

Lajoie was previously a teacher in the Auburn School District for 19 years.

"He's come in and hit the ground running," Duff said of Lajoie. "Chris has learned quite a bit in his first month and a half."

Lajoie said he previously lived in Warren for 13 years and loved the area. He's also worked in corporate information technology.

"I'm really excited for this job," Lajoie said.

Dress code and cell phone policy

Middle High School Principal Casey Handfield discussed some proposed changes to the language in the student handbook. This includes revision of the dress code and the cell phone policy.

Changes to the dress code policy, will "just make it conform in a fashion that is representative of kind of today's day and age...for all of our students," he said. The cell phone policy currently applies to grade seven students, and the revision would have it across all grade levels.

Handfield said they are looking at an "away for the day" cell phone policy, teaching the students to use their cell phones appropriately, allowing them to use them before school, between classes, lunchtime, or anytime that teacher's feel it is appropriate to use for educational purposes.

The revised cell phone policy also includes restricting "wearables" or cell phone accessories, during class time.

"We don't expect to see them in classrooms," Handfield said of cell phones.

He said there are multiple layers of discipline for students who violate the cell phone policy.

Handfield said they are trying to be reasonable and responsible with their approach to cell phone use.

The School Committee approved the Middle High School student handbook for the 2023-2024 school year with these amendments.

Elementary student handbook

West Brookfield Elementary School Principal Melissa Provost and Warren Community Elementary School Principal Kevin Slattery presented changes to the student handbook for the 2023-2024 school year.

Provost said there are a lot of changes to language and formatting in the student handbook. She said language has been added about homeless students, as well as the code of conduct and progressive discipline per state laws.

Outdated language has been removed, and the handbook has been edited to be more "user friendly."

The School Committee approved the elementary school student handbook with these amendments.

Free school meals

Duff said Gov. Maura Healey has made breakfast and lunch free for all students for the entire school year.

He said they are looking into having an additional freezer outside of the Middle School cafeteria due to the surplus of food.

Duff said thanks to District Nutrition Director Melissa Mansfield's efforts, they are able to cover the cost of the freezer through the food service department's budget.

He said the school district also needs

a state recognized point of sales system in order to be eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision. The school district is required to shift the point of sales vendors from Titan to SchoolCafé, which will cost about \$9,000.

"This is one of those unfunded mandates, where the state's telling us that we have to use this specific vendor," he said. Duff said it's up to the school district to fund the added expense.

Communication with towns

Duff said he will attend monthly Board of Selectmen meetings and he is meeting with Warren Town Administrator James Ferrera every two weeks. He has been in contact with West Brookfield Town Administrator Ron San Angelo as well.

"Part of my goals will be communication and collaboration within the towns to help facilitate the budget process," Duff said. He will also communicate what is going on in each school to the town officials.

Green Communities projects

Duff said the Green Communities HVAC project at Warren Community Elementary School is about four to five weeks behind schedule.

He said the workers will continue work on the project on the second shift, starting at 4 p.m.

Duff said they are hoping to have the project done by the first week in October.

Duff said the town of West Brookfield is looking into a lighting upgrade project at West Brookfield Elementary School, using the Green Communities grant program.

Regional agreement

Schwenker gave an update on the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee.

He said West Brookfield's legal counsel has reviewed changes made to the regional agreement between the towns of Warren and West Brookfield, to include North Brookfield. North Brookfield's legal counsel will be reviewing the agreement next.

Sidewalks

Schwenker said both elementaries schools have had new sidewalks installed leading into the buildings.

New playground

Slattery thanked volunteers for installing new playground equipment over two Sundays at Warren Community Elementary School.

Correspondence


A Warren resident read a letter he submitted to the School Committee the previous month regarding a comment he made about the school district using one-time funds to cover normal budget expenses.

The resident apologized for his comment about the decision, and any personal offense that occurred because of it.

"It is not really my desire to be derogatory to any individual in a personal way," he said.

He said he "will endeavor to express my thoughts in the future, especially when disputing, with a focus on the issue and not on any person or persons."

The resident reminded those in public roles, that receiving criticism is expected, and can provide valuable input.



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Summer soccer camp scores with area youth

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Ware Soccer Club continued its back-to-school tradition with its four-day Summer Camp at Memorial Field last week.

This was the Summer Camp's third year back after a hiatus, with interest in the sport increasing post-pandemic.

Attendance continues to grow at the Summer Camp, said Head Coach and Ware Soccer Club Board Member Herb Foley. This year was well attended, with 36 players signing up this year; and despite rainy weather, each child had a lot of fun and learned new skills.

"We're seeing a lot of new and familiar faces at the camp," Foley said.

Several of those familiar faces come in the form of coaches, including Ware Soccer Club alums Aaron Bateman and Jess Burke.

Bateman said this is his second year coaching, and he plays for the Ware High School soccer team. Having the Summer Camp active again has been a huge boost for middle and high school soccer programs, he said.

"In past years, we haven't had a lot of people on teams," Bateman said. "It grows the teams."

Burke, a recent graduate from Westfield State University and now a labor and delivery nurse, returned for her third year to help coach the Summer Camp.

Burke said she played soccer for Fo-



Coaches Lily Gianfriddo (left) and Paige Leach stand with soccer players ages 5-8.

ley as a young child, and went on to play for Ware High School as well.

Despite her busy schedule and having just started her career, Burke said it's important for her to volunteer at the Summer Camp, and help teach younger players about the sport of soccer.

"I like that it's getting kids more involved at a younger age," she said, adding that it also gives children a chance to socialize and just have fun.

"It's great to get the kids making friends outside of school," Burke said.

For 11-year-old Whisper, scrimmaging against her friends is her favorite part of Summer Camp, which she has attended for two years.

With three years of soccer playing experience on Ware Soccer Club's recreational and travel teams, Whisper does

not shy away from competition.

"I always give it back," she said.

Three members of the Quaboag Regional High School's varsity soccer team also helped coach this year, Evelyn Doe, Lily Gianfriddo and Paige Leach.

Doe is a senior at Quaboag, and this was the first year she joined her friends and fellow teammates at the Summer Camp.

"Soccer camps like this bring a lot of kids together, and they realize how fun soccer can be," Doe said.

Gianfriddo is also a first-year coach and said she's been playing soccer since she was in kindergarten. She said the Summer Camp is a useful tool for young athletes.

"The kids can experience it and learn how to work together," she said.

Leach helped coach at last year's Summer Camp and agreed with Doe and Gianfriddo.

"It helps kids start to like soccer and find the fun in it before it gets super competitive," Leach said.

On the last day of Summer Camp, players enjoyed a pizza party, made possible by the generosity of local businesses, including Sunny Side Storage, Pioneer Valley Environmental, Country Bank, Ware Service Center, Brookside Mart, Lazer's Pizza, Soccer City and Woodland Massage Therapy and Wellness.

The sponsors not only helped to provide refreshments and T-shirts for each player, but they also helped the club purchase equipment.

Foley thanked the Parks and Recreation Commission for allowing use of Memorial Field, as well as Norm St. Dennis, Quaboag's varsity girls' soccer coach for supplying a solid coaching crew year after year.

Ware Soccer Club is now gearing up for the fall soccer season.

Volunteers are always needed to help with coaching and more. Training is available for people that are interested in coaching.

For more information about volunteering, people may contact Foley at 413-221-1800. People may also visit waresoccer.org or find them on Facebook for registration information and updates.



Coaches (from left) Jess Burke, Evelyn Doe, Aaron Bateman and Herb Foley stand with the soccer players ages 9-12. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

AUTHOR | FROM PAGE 1

When she was 16, Buzzell joined her coworker, Larry and his brother Russ on an outing, and her coworker asked her to sit with Larry, which she did. Buzzell and Larry hit it off, and began seeing each other soon after.

Buzzell shared Larry's comment he made to his brother, Ralph, when he first introduced her to the family: "Isn't she the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?" To which Ralph responded as any teasing brother would, "Why is she with you?"

Now married for 50 years, the couple has built a family and a lifetime of their own memories, which Buzzell shares in her book. But it was memories of Larry's family and life on their farm that inspired Buzzell to preserve them as stories for all to enjoy.

"Call me an author," Buzzell said. "I'm not a writer."

Much like the authors of the books in the Bible, Buzzell describes herself as more of a scribe, sharing the stories that already exist.

Buzzell was inspired to start writing her book "The Artist, The Farmer, The Hunter, and the Good Guy" back in 2015 when her brother-in-law Russ presented on the massacre at Wheeler's Surprise in New Braintree. She learned things she didn't know.

"It took about a year to put all those ideas together," she said, in talking to

the family. After attending a funeral, she realized she needed to put more into the book and continued writing.

Capturing these memories on paper goes beyond the Buzzell family, she said.

"The best way to learn history, and culture, is by listening to people and learning their stories," Buzzell said.

Buzzell recently presented her book at the North Brookfield Senior Center, where many of those in attendance remembered some of the landmarks and people preserved forever between its pages.

"Who remembers this building being IGA?" Buzzell asked, which most of the audience did.

They all shared memories of Grove Street High School and Elementary School, as well as Miss O'Coin.

"She was 'Miss' and proud of it," Buzzell said, adding that her book's editor kept trying to change "Miss" to "Ms." which Miss O'Coin wouldn't have tolerated.

Buzzell said the book covers memories of Old Sturbridge Village, hayrides at Salem Cross Inn, Brookfield Orchards and more.

"It's all in this book...you might be too," Buzzell said.

Many of the stories in the book center around the animals on the Buzzell farm, including cows and horses.

"The Buzzells wouldn't be Buzzells without horses," she said.

Buzzell shared a story of brothers Russ and Jack accompanying their father to hay a field one summer.

"That night, cutting hay had to be done one way or another," she said.

She said their mother wasn't home that night, and each boy sat atop one of the horses as their father drove them through the field in the dark. Russ remembers his father instructing the boys to stay awake and not let go of the horses.

Fireflies lit up the sky as Russ and Jack listened to the swishing of the horses tails as they laid on their sweaty backs.

"It was almost more beauty than a little boy could imagine," Russ recalled.

Running one of the towns 50 plus dairy farms was hard work for the Buzzell boys, who had barn chores that needed to be completed early each morning.

Larry said it took an hour to feed all 20 hungry, impatient calves and clean their pails before getting ready for school. But that was if everything went right.

Larry said the farm children would often be teased at school, for being dirty or smelling like the barn, and he always took extra care to be presentable.

One day, Larry released a cow from the chute before detaching the milking machine, causing her to take off bucking and running across the pasture, leav-

ing a trail of machine parts in her wake.

After finishing his milking duties and collecting the parts of the broken machine, Larry was very late to arrive at school, much to the displeasure of Mrs. Murphy. He remembers being dragged by his ear to the principal's office, where he had to explain in detail the reason why he was late.

"He burst out laughing," Larry said of the principal's reaction. "He had been a farmer."

While most of the dairy farms are now gone and the fields have grown into forests, at least the memories of North Brookfield's farm life live on.

"It's never going to be the same again," Russ said.

Buzzell said she has seen the hand of God working in her life, sharing her battle with cancer and the scars it has left her.

"For me, my scars are milestones," she said.

Buzzell encouraged all in attendance to write down their own family stories and keep their history alive.

"God wanted me to write this book," she said

About the book

Published by Christian Faith Publishing, "The Artist, The Farmer, The Hunter, and the Good Guy" is available for purchase at thriftbooks.com, Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

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SPORTS

Quaboag football set for action

WARREN – Following a couple of preseason scrimmages, Quaboag football is set for their regular season opener. The Cougars will face Ludlow High School on the road at 6:30 p.m. Ludlow, a Western Mass. opponent, is one of a couple Quaboag has regularly faced in recent years.



The Cougars are contending for the Division 8 state tournament again this year. TURLEY PHOTOS BY JACK CASCIO NEAP:SMUGMUG.COM



The Cougars are still a Central Mass. team despite facing some Western Mass. opponents in recent years.



Quaboag will have a Week 1 matchup on the road.



Quaboag football had a scrimmage at home last Saturday.

Pioneers test their mettle



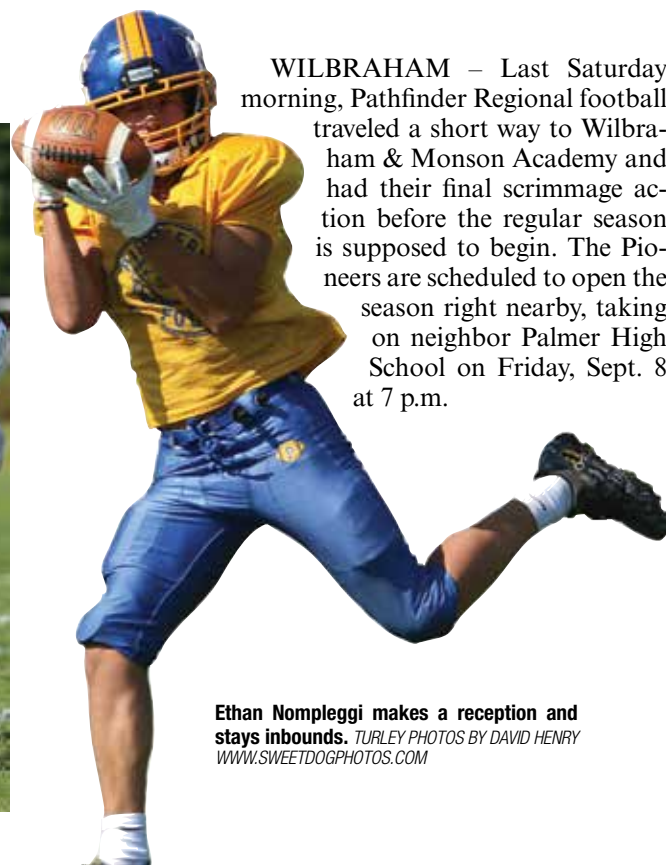
Hunter Griswold looks to make a decision with the ball in traffic.



Jarrett Skowyra jumps to make the catch.



Aiden Girard blocks for the Pioneers.



WILBRAHAM – Last Saturday morning, Pathfinder Regional football traveled a short way to Wilbraham & Monson Academy and had their final scrimmage action before the regular season is supposed to begin. The Pioneers are scheduled to open the season right nearby, taking on neighbor Palmer High School on Friday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m.

Ethan Nompleggi makes a reception and stays inbounds. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Cecil Burgess-Bruso tries to avoid a tackle as he runs toward the sideline.



Nicholas Pfisher makes a throw.

- sports -

Panthers scrimmage Abby Kelley



The coaching staff has a word with the players. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RAY DUFFY



Luke Salvatore rushes up the middle.

BARRE – Last Saturday, Quabbin football geared up for their regular season opener with a scrimmage against Abby Kelley High School. The Panthers are loading up for a regular season run, which starts off on the road at Gardner High School on Friday, Sept. 8. Game time is set for 7 p.m.



A run up the middle for the Panthers.



Jake Leazotte tries to bat away a pass.

Pioneers cap season with Festa match

LUDLOW – After another season with a playoff appearance in the USL-2 League, many members of the Western Mass. Pioneers got together one last time for the annual Friendly Festa game on Sunday afternoon. The entire team was put together by the Lusitano Club of Ludlow. The exhibition has been happening for the past several years during the town's Festa celebration.



Kyle Tomas winds up for a long kick. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Monson's Connor Hicks receives a pass and makes his way up the field.



Noah Rivera stops the ball.



Max Robbins looks to catch up with the ball.

Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching "turleysports." We will regularly feature samples of

photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and share with your friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of

our sports sections, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

Local residents participate in Spencer Fair

SPENCER – Many residents from surrounding towns entered their animals, vegetables, eggs, crafts, tractors and more at this year’s Spencer Fair, a longstanding Labor Day weekend tradition.

Over five days, fairgoers could visit with a variety of farm animals, including dairy and beef cows, chickens, geese,

ducks, horses, donkeys, rabbits, goats and more. Tractor pulls and demolition derbies gathered a full crowd, as did the rides and games of the midway.

People of all ages entered their prized vegetables, baked goods, canned goods, giant pumpkins, hay, artwork, crafts and tractors for judging, hoping to bring home a top ribbon.



Rose of Madd Hatter Rabbitry sets up an obstacle for her English Lop.



Pirate Man Dan’s ship left a splash of bubbles in its wake as it traveled the grounds of the Spencer Fair. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA QUIMETTE



Cory Kibbe of Ware entered his Allis-Chalmers 190 and 620 tractors.



New Braintree residents took second and third place for their giant pumpkins at this year’s Spencer Fair. Earning second place was Rhonda Howe with her 68 pound pumpkin; and third place was Grace Wagher with her 64 pound pumpkin. Earning first place this year was Scott Lehto of Fitchburg and his 222 pound pumpkin.

Brookfield Orchards hosts fall festivities

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

NORTH BROOKFIELD – On Labor Day, Brookfield Orchards hosted live music by musician Wibble and Hardwick Vineyard & Winery had a table with bottles of wine to pair with any of the Orchard’s offerings.

Brookfield Orchards has faced a sad hit to their picking orchard, so there won’t be any picking for the season. However, despite the frost, the Orchard has much more to offer for the fall season.

Store manager Diana Nydam is very proud and excited about all the new things brought to the Orchard and its upcoming events for people to come to and enjoy.

“This place is my home, and I love every part of it,” she said.

Apple cider donuts are back on the menu with their delicious kettle popcorn. There are also bags of apples for purchasing, and on weekends, the Orchard will have a “pack-your-own” apple bags so that the experience of having your own bag won’t be missed.

The Orchard will be hosting a craft fair, the eighth year so far, and will host over 90 vendors between Sept. 9-10. The fair will feature food trucks and many local wineries and breweries.

The weekend after, on Saturday, Sept. 16 will feature an Author’s Fair of more than 15 local authors with their books. There will be more events featuring live music, kettle corn, local beer and wine, crafters, and wagon rides (weather permitting) to come.

For the third year, the Orchard will have its new fudge shop open, featuring a variety of flavors including cookies

and cream, raspberry cheesecake, caramel apple pie, peanut butter, and the fudge of the month, apple cider donut.

The most exciting news, however, is the grand opening of the Orchard’s partnership with Fay Mountain Farm and will now cohost a pumpkin patch. The opening will be held on Saturday, Sept. 23, and you won’t want to miss it.

To go with the launch of the new pumpkin patch, there will be a launch of new pumpkin flavored fudge available at the candy shop.

Nydam is excited for all of this and more and hopes that everyone who attends these events will love and remember them for the years to come.

“One of my favorite things is hearing from customers how much the Orchard means to them. I love hearing about family traditions at the Orchard a part of their tradition,” she said.



Courtney McGraw works at the fudge counter. Her favorite flavor is cookies and cream.



Joanna Morales-Bradford and her granddaughter, Shanelle Morales had fun at Brookfield Orchards this past weekend.



Hardwick Vineyard & Winery was on hand with several selections of bottled wine.



Talented musician, Wibble, sang and played popular country songs.

- community -

Legislators hope to head off more attempts to ban books

By Michael Harrison
Correspondent

LUDLOW — A proposal that could have created a book banning policy in local school libraries may have stalled last spring, but a pair of state legislators with shared roots have introduced a bill intended to stay ahead of any future attempts.

The legislation, SD.2679, titled “An Act protecting against attempts to ban, remove, or restrict library access to materials,” was referred to the Joint Committee on Rules on July 6. Its sponsors, Sen. Jake Oliveira and Rep. Aaron Saunders, both said they are confident it will proceed on a track that will lead to an eventual public hearing.

“The situation in Ludlow was unfortunate to say the least, but we shouldn’t have to wait for the next time opponents of First Amendment freedoms attack another one of our towns,” Saunders said.

“The real value of this library protection bill is that it is a proactive measure that will provide our public libraries with a measure of protection against book banning efforts.”

According to Oliveira, “I’ve found attempts to put in place policies that could lead to book bans growing across the country for some time, but once it arrived here in Ludlow, I knew it was time to take immediate action.”

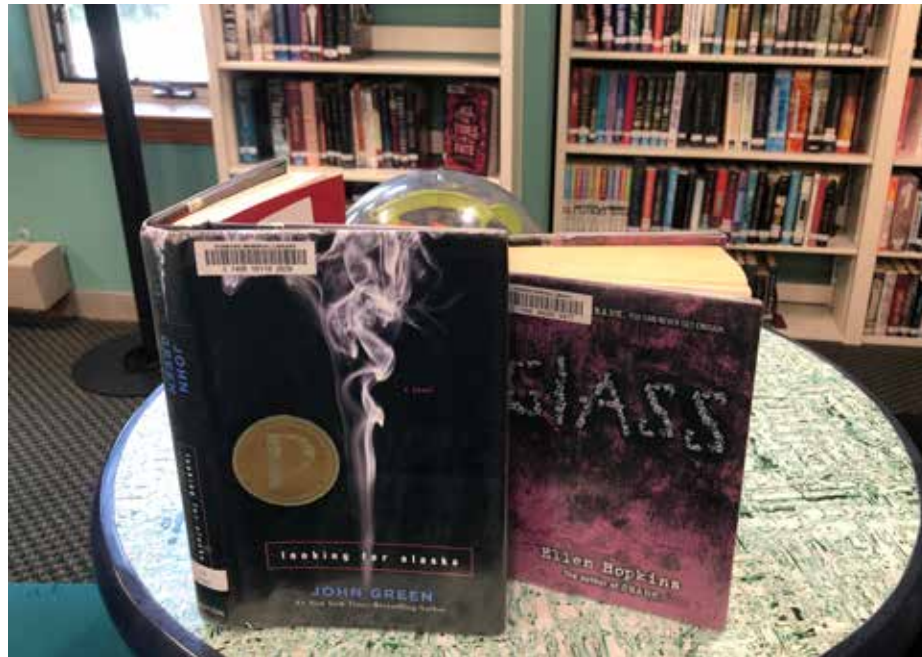
Last spring, after prior public discussions over the appropriateness of certain books in Ludlow schools, School Committeeman Joao Dias made a motion during a meeting to enact a new policy that could have removed a pair of young adult novels — “Crank” by Ellen Hopkins and “Looking For Alaska” by John Green — and possibly dozens of other titles from school libraries.

The motion did not receive a second and never came to a vote.

Neither Dias nor any other Ludlow School Committee member responded to a group email sent to all of their official accounts seeking comment. Committee member and Secretary Jeffrey Stratton, reached by text, declined to comment.

Committee Vice Chair Sarah F. Bowler did not respond to a text. Ludlow Superintendent of Schools Frank Tiano did not respond to a voice message left on his extension at the district office.

During discussions earlier this year, Dias said he modeled his policy proposal on one he read about online when it was enacted by the Central Bucks School District in Pennsylvania. That



Copies of “Crank” by Ellen Hopkins and “Looking For Alaska” by John Green borrowed from shelves at Hubbard Memorial Library last week. Those are two of the books that could have been removed from Ludlow school libraries if a proposed policy was approved last spring. TURLEY PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARRISON

policy has since been challenged in a federal lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union.

“These attempts, like the proposed Ludlow School Committee policy ripped off the internet from a school district in Pennsylvania, could censor age-appropriate materials because of a political or xenophobic viewpoint,” Oliveira said.

“What’s happening in our public schools could easily happen in our public libraries. I am proud to partner with Rep. Aaron Saunders to protect our libraries from these attempts to censor books. It’s a strong bill that I’m incredibly proud to sponsor. I’m prepared to champion it until we get the results needed to protect our literature and free thought from extremists pushing a fringe political agenda.”

The two legislators behind SD.2679 are Ludlow natives. Oliveira still resides there while Saunders resettled his family in Belchertown. Both said they want to head off any statewide movement toward censorship in school and public libraries.

Oliveira, who served 12 years on the Ludlow School Committee before he was elected as a state representative in 2020, also has a background in higher education, serving as assistant executive officer of the Massachusetts State Universities Council of Presidents.

Saunders is a former Ludlow Select Board member, former chief of staff to state Sen. Gale Candaras and is a co-founder of Loophole Brewing. He also served on the staff of former U.S.

Senator John Kerry.

Oliveira, who was first elected to the School Committee in 2009, said he recalls past discussions over books.

“During my time on the committee, removal of books in school libraries started to bubble up in Ludlow when national politicians began making this a wedge issue,” he said.

“When a challenge to certain books in a school library was brought to the attention of the school committee, we followed our district politics and formed a review committee with parents, teachers, administrators and librarians to review the challenged books. I sat on that committee and read personally the challenged material and shared it widely with friends with children and the committee determined unanimously that most materials were age-appropriate.”

Oliveira said his background in education “certainly informs my position, but this goes far beyond education.”

The bill he filed with Saunders “focuses on our public libraries,” he said.

“I have been working with colleagues in the legislature on other legislation focused on our public-school libraries. This legislation is needed across the commonwealth because it’s about protecting not only our students’ education but also free thought, freedom of expression, diversity and marginalized communities that the proponents of the proposed book bans can’t accept.”

Both said they have received positive feedback from constituents and fellow legislators.

“The book banning effort in Ludlow



Jake Oliveira

Aaron Saunders

was a wake-up call to ensure that the Legislature is doing everything it should to protect our public libraries,” Saunders said.

“The bill Senator Oliveira and I filed will help provide those protections.”

According to Oliveira, “Since these aggressive attempts to put in place narrow-minded policies have been proposed, I have received messages of concern from parents, students, teachers, community members and colleagues from across the state. I have received an overwhelmingly positive response from constituents and from members of the State Library Board of Commissioners. They want to see books kept on the shelves at our public libraries and schools.”

He added that, “Book bans are nothing new. They are ways to suppress free thought and have been employed by Communist China, the Soviet Union, and Nazi Germany.”

Kristin Santos, youth services assistant at Hubbard Memorial Library, said she’s aware of the proposal the school committee ultimately did not vote on and the controversy over “Crank” and “Looking For Alaska”, which she said have been increasingly checked out by local adults.

“People do come into the library to check out books that are being questioned to see what’s going on inside and decide for themselves if they are appropriate for their own children,” Santos said.

The mother of a local middle school student herself, “I didn’t read ‘Crank’ — I listened to ‘Crank’ because I didn’t have a lot of time to sit down and read the novel, but I listened to it to make my own decisions on the book,” Santos said.

“You can read a part of a book but that doesn’t mean you understand the whole book. I need, by myself, to make those decisions for my child.”

She declined to share her personal opinion of the book.

6th annual Alex Cordy Memorial Golf Tournament Sept. 16

OAKHAM — Knights of Columbus Council # 11080, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish, Brookfield/West Brookfield, is having its 6th Annual Alex Cordy Memorial Charity Golf Tournament at Quail Hollow Golf and Country Club, 1822 Old Turnpike Road, on Saturday, Sept. 16.

Check in begins at 7:15 a.m., with a shotgun start at 8 a.m. Awards and a meal will follow in the clubhouse.

Proceeds from this event benefit local scholarships and youth activities.

For more information and to register, please call 413-813-8100 or email wallyconnor122@gmail.com.

KAT STEWART | FROM PAGE 2

be her. It was inspired during a particularly hard stretch at the hospital when a security guard, seemingly at random, stopped by to give her some words of encouragement that ended up being put around the angel: “Life is better when you are happy, but life is at its best when others are happy because of you. Living for others is a rule of nature. Be an angel for someone around you.”

The quote is very meaningful to her because of where she was in her life. It was a reminder that even during her darkest of moments, God was with her and present in her life.

The security guard’s words were so impactful and meaningful, that she knew that there was no way that it was coincidence. “It was a security guard in a hospital telling me God was going to use my voice and my music,” she said.

Stewart knew that once she was out of that hospital bed, she would need to

dedicate truly and completely all she had to God. It was then that she began to create her music with more earnest to reflect her faith.

Stewart’s life hasn’t been easy, but she has not let it in any way define her as a person. With every step, performance, and all the time she spends, she makes sure that her faith is what drives her.

Even with all of her performances and singles and opportunities to travel, she makes certain that her songs mean something to someone and can reach them in a truly meaningful way.

“My music and what I write is meant to show love and the grace that God has given me. It allows me to reach out and show people the relationship with God that I have and inspire to want that as well,” she said.

She values music and its place in this world and wants to use any and all music that she creates in order to communicate with those around her in ways

she wouldn’t be able to with just words alone. Music is in and of itself a “unique language”, and she wants to use it in order to bless and encourage all who hear it.

The angel she drew in the hospital became the album cover and art for her first single she had ever released, called “Pass Me By”. It told the story of how she overcame her autoimmune disease — and kept overcoming trials in her life — and moves forward with grace and faith in what the future holds for her.

She is a truly inspirational person and strives to show all who hear her songs that they too can move forward.

Stewart will be having a concert this Friday, Sept. 8 at Brookfield Congregational Church, 8 Common St. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and the concert will begin at 7 p.m.

She will open the worship night, and the church’s band will also play. Admission is free.

- community -

PRINCIPAL | FROM PAGE 1

passion for our students and our faculty," McCormick said. "I'm really excited about what's going on in the High School...I think we're going to do some great things this year with John at the helm."

Diorio said he is looking forward to a great year.

"The staff have been working hard... the classrooms look great. This is just a beautiful school," he said.

Diorio said 90% of grade seven students attended orientation. The Student Council gave a tour and all students participated in team building/bonding activities.

He said they are looking to form a "best buddies" program between High School and Elementary School students and start a unified sports program

McCormick said orientation for new teachers was held Aug. 23-24, welcoming 10 new staff members.

McCormick said the school district is still operating with three bus routes this year, after reducing from four last year.

He said the school district is preparing to launch its new website, making it much more user friendly. The new website also features an app for families.

McCormick said the High School received a Project Lead the Way grant back in June. The computer lab will be turned into a robotics lab for students in grades six through 12.

"This is kind of phase one in building a pathway for our students in STEM education," McCormick said.

McCormick said the Champions before and after school program will start this fall in the Elementary School, offer-

ing extended hours and more instruction for students.

A new student information system will be phased in for the 2024-2025 school year. McCormick said the school district is also now able to track attendance electronically.

McCormick said a candidate has accepted an offer to fill the Director of Student Services position, pending negotiations.

McCormick said the school district still needs to fill two special education teacher positions. One of the special education teachers in the High School will be shifting to the Elementary School while the school district works to fill the vacancies.

Walkthrough

School Committee Chair Ron Ryel thanked Facilities Manager Ray Quintanilla and McCormick for leading a walkthrough of the school, and showing some of the improvements made over the summer and other things that still need addressing.

McCormick is working with local veteran Joe Jablonski to get American flags in every classroom.

Ryel asked that people using the schools be respectful of the space and work together to maintain the buildings.

IT report

Technology Coordinator Justin Hackenson shared projects that were completed over the summer, in addition to the new website.

He said projectors were ordered and three have been installed. Extra Chromebook chargers have also been ordered to replace those lost or damaged.

Hackenson said the staff will now have digital time off requests, rather than using paper forms. He said digital report cards will also replace paper report cards.

He said leased copy machines throughout the school district have been replaced as well.

Recognitions

McCormick said Quintanilla and facilities staff did a lot of "great work" over the summer to make sure the two buildings were clean and ready for the school year. He said the school district's grounds are "quite extensive" and he credited the staff for maintaining them, as well as the athletic fields.

The Extended School Year program was held from early July through early August at the Elementary School.

"It was overall a fantastic program," McCormick said. "I think our students received a lot of personalized instruction."

McCormick also thanked Donna Holmes for helping to secure free breakfast and lunch for North Brookfield students, prior to the state granting this to all students across the commonwealth.

He also thanked the administration and Central Office staff for all of their efforts this summer.

"We got a lot accomplished for this coming school year and it's all due to their hard work," McCormick.

Regionalization update

McCormick said after a hiatus, the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee between the towns of North Brookfield, Warren and West Brookfield has met several times since June.

Knights host spaghetti dinner Sept. 23

WEST BROOKFIELD – Knights of Columbus Council 11080 is sponsoring a spaghetti dinner on Saturday, Sept. 23 in Dugan Hall, Sacred Heart Church, 10 Milk St.

Proceeds from this event will help provide support to those in need in our local communities.

Dinner includes pasta fagioli, garden salad, meatballs and sausage, spaghetti and sauce, Italian bread, dessert, water, soda and coffee. Cost is a \$15 donation and \$8 for children under 12 years old.

Take-out is available at 6 p.m. and sit-down dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. Admission tickets are also good for entry for a special door prize.

Raffle tickets for a 50/50 raffle and more will be available. Advance ticket purchase is encouraged and appreciated.

Tickets are available from any Knight or by calling 508-612-1649 or 508-867-7878 or by emailing bobfalder@gmail.com. or s.rust@comcast.net. Tickets will only be available at the door while they last.

Community Newspaper EDITOR WANTED

Turley Publications is looking for a "hands on" energetic candidate who loves telling stories to be the editor for two weekly publications. This position will include managing and coaching a small news staff that will provide the community with a great local newspaper.

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- Proficiency in Associated Press style
- Management experience and/or experience managing content for a print publication.

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The position works under the general supervision of the Town Manager in cooperation with the elected Town Planning Board. Please go to **www.townofpalmer.com** for a full job description. Send resume and cover letter to **rmcnuitt@townofpalmer.com** or to 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069. Salary commensurate with experience.

This position requires a Bachelor's Degree in planning or related field and five years' experience in municipal planning, or any equivalent combination of education and experience. Strong interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills and a working knowledge of MS Office and ArcView GIS.
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Exhibit brings 'aWAREness to Recovery'

WARE – The “Bringing aWAREness to Recovery” exhibition will be open until Sept. 17, on Saturdays and Sundays only from 1-5 p.m., at ArtWorks Gallery, 69 Main St.

This exhibition is a partnership between the Recovery Center of HOPE and ArtWorks Gallery/Workshop13, a cultural arts and learning center located in Ware.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Ware Cultural Council, a local agency that is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. RCH is a program of the Western Massachusetts Training Consortium and was founded by the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance. This exhibition celebrates a positive view of recovery to reduce stigma, a serious obstacle in the way of people seeking treatment or other help for substance use disorders.

Artists share not only their artwork but also their statements that speak to the challenges and rewards of recovery.

These are displayed alongside the artworks in the gallery and are captured in an exhibition booklet that is distributed to participants and visitors to the gallery.

Fireworks at Quaboag Regional Middle High School Sept. 9

WARREN – The Parks & Recreation will host the annual fireworks at Quaboag Regional Middle High School, 284 Old West Brookfield Road, on Saturday, Sept. 9.

Musical entertainment will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the fireworks will go off at dark. Refreshments will be available to purchase, with the proceeds benefiting student groups at the High School.

For more information, follow Warren Parks Department on Facebook.

- legal notices -

TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN NOTICE IS HEREBY

GIVEN that the North Brookfield Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing to consider a petition to locate poles, wires, cables, and fixtures, including the necessary anchors, guys, and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures, brought before it by National Grid and

Verizon **Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 6:15 PM** at the Police Department, 55 School Street, North Brookfield, MA 01535.

The pole location that will be considered is as follows:

Brickyard Rd-National Grid to install 1 JO Pole on Brickyard Rd beginning at a point approximately 25 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Brickyard Rd and continuing approxi-

mately 25 feet in a south direction. Install new Pole # 2-1, 50' south of Pole # 2 on Brickyard Rd.

Said hearing will begin at 6:15 PM and continue until completion, and will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 166.

Jason M Petraitis, Chairman
John H Tripp
E. Brooke Canada
09/01, 09/08/2023

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Aug. 28-Sept. 4, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 18 building/property checks, 47 directed/area patrols, 10 traffic controls, three radar assignments, two emergency 911 calls, three citizen assists, one assist other agency and four motor vehicle stop in the town of New Braintree.

4:01 p.m. Assist Citizen, Hardwick Road, Services Rendered
6:48 p.m. Assist Citizen, Hardwick Road, Services Rendered

Tuesday, Aug. 29

3:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Ravine Road, Citation Issued

Thursday, Aug. 31

3:47 p.m. 911 Assist Citizen, Barre Cut Off Road, Officer Handled

Friday, Sept. 1

3:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Ravine Road, Vehicle Towed

Monday, Aug. 28

11:48 a.m. 911 Misdiagnosed, Oakham Road, Checked/Secured

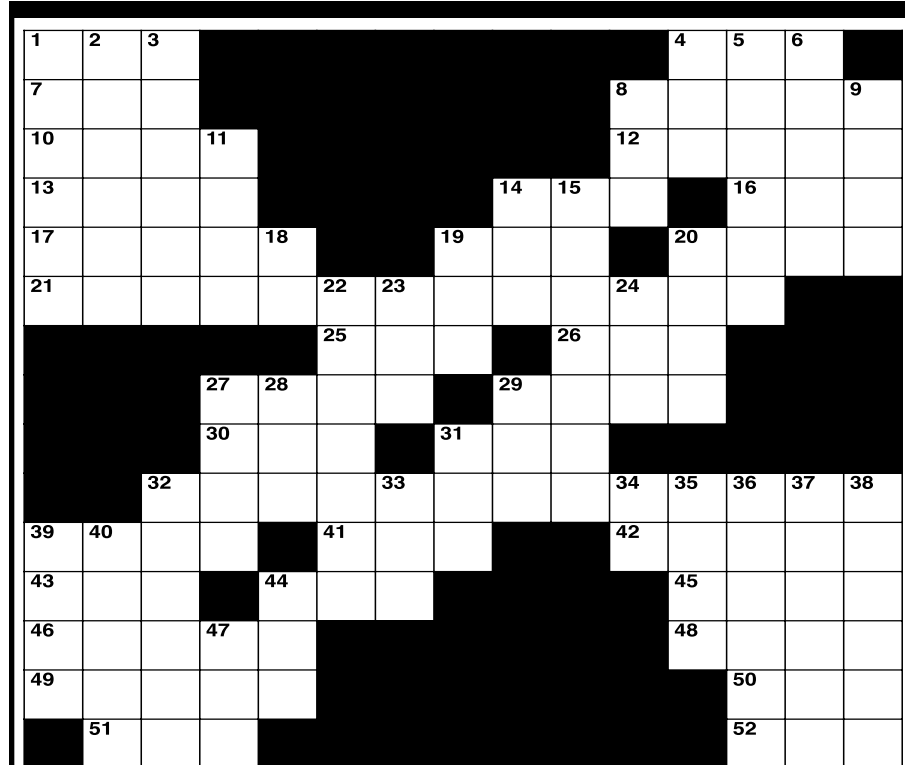
12:33 p.m. Serve Restraining Order, Hardwick Road, Arrest(s) Made

2:29 p.m. Assist Other Agency, New Braintree, Investigated

Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging receives grant



The Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of Massachusetts and Rhode Island recently presented Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging with a \$25,000 grant to support the organization. CMAA provides resources for elderly residents in all the Brookfields and New Braintree. PLAN of MA & RI Executive Director Joan McGrath is pictured with CMAA President and CEO Dr. Moses Dixon. A Quincy-based nonprofit, PLAN of MA& RI is recognized as an expert in operating special needs trusts and, since 2020, has granted more than \$1 million to nonprofits supporting individuals with disabilities. Learn more at www.planofma-ri.org. SUBMITTED PHOTO



CLUES ACROSS

1. Second sight
4. Standard electrode potential
7. Type of gibbon
8. John Joseph ___: American industrialist
10. Manning and Whitney are two
12. Abrupt
13. Baroque musical instrument
14. Post-burning residue
16. When you hope to arrive
17. Sign up (Brit. Eng.)
19. Sun up in New York
20. Employee stock ownership plan
21. Where people live
25. Method to record an electrogram
26. Angry
27. No longer living
29. Simple
30. Swiss river
31. Portion of a play
32. It's under the tree
39. Wood sorrels
41. No (Scottish)
42. Dialect of English
43. Former Steelers' QB
44. Popular beer
45. It can make you sick
46. Tropical tree and fruit
48. Company officer
49. Contact lens term
50. Your consciousness of your own identity
51. "Ghetto Superstar" singer
52. Piece of turf

CLUES DOWN

1. Number of players on each side in a football game
2. Containing salt
3. Reasoning or knowledge: a ___
4. Car mechanics group
5. Leave a place
6. Southern Colombian capital
8. Old English letter
9. Tide
11. Walk heavily
14. Chemical compound (abbr.)
15. Artificial openings
18. Luteinizing hormone
19. Unit of energy
20. Circular movement of water
22. A way of holding
23. Popular book of words (abbr.)
24. States' group
27. Dashes
28. Body part
29. Electronic countermeasures
31. Consumed
32. Small bird
33. Unhappy
34. Football's big game (abbr.)
35. Valued object offered in good faith
36. Wild goats
37. Precede in place
38. Small edible fish
39. Notice of death
40. Body cavity of a metazoan
44. Partner to cheese
47. Not around

Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

FULL-TIME

Planning/Building Secretary

The Town of Warren is seeking qualified applications for the position of Secretary to the Planning/Building Department. This position is a permanent full-time (29 hours) Town benefited position.

Monday through Thursday schedule with occasional evening meetings. The successful candidate will perform clerical duties and provide excellent customer service in the Town's Planning and Building Department. The pay scale ranges from \$18.36 to \$24.67/hour based on relative work experience and educational background. For a full job description please visit the Town's website www.warren-ma.gov.

Please submit your resume and cover letter to Jim Ferrera, Town Administrator, townadministrator@warren-ma.gov.

Resumes will be accepted until Friday, September 15, 2023.

The Town of Warren is an Equal Opportunity Employer

QUABOAG CURRENT

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| BROOKFIELD Songwriter performs at Congregational Church p2 | NORTH BROOKFIELD Senior Center roof repairs begin soon p5 | WARREN Quaboag soccer players camp p8 | Editorial/Opinion 4 Sports 9 Classifieds 14 Police Logs 15 |
|---|--|--|---|

Volume 16, Number 41

Friday, September 8, 2023

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