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Table restoration connects community's past

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Last Saturday, members of VFW Post 3439 welcomed the return of a piece of their history that was traced back to the town's former Grand Army of the Republic, Chapter 051.

Veteran Jim Foyle said his attention was first brought to the altar-like table where the VFW members kept the Bible, because of its inscription of "GAR."

He began researching the table, and spoke with various historians, including Wendy Joseph of the GAR Museum in Lynn, Dan Hamilton of quaboag-research.org (and a lifetime member of the New Braintree Historical Society and the Quaboag Historical Society) and Brandon Avery of the North Brookfield Historical Society.

Foyle said his research found that a GAR post was formed in North Brookfield in 1868 by Ezra Batcheller. The GAR's charter was later surrendered in 1929.

Foyle said GAR posts utilized the table as an al-



Members of VFW Post 3439 are shown with craftsman Samuel Bonneau, who recently restored an over 150 year old table linked back to North Brookfield's Grand Army of the Republic Chapter.

tar to display the Bible, and during meetings, it created a space between the altar and the officer's table.

"No one was to enter this space as it was reserve for deceased comrades," Foyle said.

In 1960, the VFW Post 3439 was formed, and somehow, the GAR table found its way there. Once again, it became the location to display the Bible.

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TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

This table dates back to the Grand Army of the Republic Chapter 051 formed by Ezra Batcheller in 1868.



Board appointed ACO and driver/laborer

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – At last week's Board of Selectmen's meeting, Police Chief Mark Smith introduced Alixandra Smichinski as the candidate to be appointed to Animal Control Officer.

At the Sept. 9 meeting, Smith said Smichinski has served as an Assistant ACO in several area towns and came highly recommended from those who have worked with her.

"She has quite extensive experience or knowledge about what we're looking for and I think she'd do really well in this position," Smith said.

Smichinski said she has been the Assistant ACO in Brookfield for about eight months and has completed the ACO core class training. She works as a veterinary technician at a clinic in Rutland and is currently in school to advance her certification.

She is the Animal Inspector and Assistant ACO in the town of West Brookfield as well.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously approved her appointment.

New Highway Dept. employee

The board interviewed candidate Patrick Shea for an equipment operator/driver/laborer position on the Highway Department. Superintendent Randy Morgan said Shea will work as a driver/laborer until he gets his hydraulics license to operate the equipment.

Shea said he has his Class A CDL and a tanker endorsement. He has worked as a truck driver for Casella and has experience as a snowplow driver both locally and for the city of Worcester.

Shea said he moved to the town many years ago and he would like to work closer to home.

"I'm a third generation truck driver," he said. "I just feel I would be an asset to the Highway Department."

The board approved Shea's appointment to the position pending reference checks.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Nadia Sukharev of North Brookfield is shown with her painting of Brookfield Orchards, which can be seen during the Family Fun Fest on Sept. 28 at Bike House Brewing.

Artwork displayed during Fall Family Fun Fest

By Ryan Drago
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House presents the Family Fun Fest on Sunday, Sept. 28 at Bike House Brewing.

It will be a festive day featuring vendors, live music, food trucks, and games. This event will support the

restoration of the Town House. As part of the event there will be artwork displayed and provided by artist Nadia Sukharev.

Sukharev donated one of her artworks back in 2023, and it was a painting of the North Brookfield Town House. Sukharev is a graduate of North Brookfield

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Flea Market returns to West Brookfield common



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Colorful painted bottles created by Genie in a Bottle.

By Ryan Drago
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WEST BROOKFIELD – This annual Flea Market event which featured various goods was presented by the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield that is across the street from the common.

The First Congregational Church in West Brookfield has been running its Flea Market on the common for over 50 years. The church organizes and runs the market on an annual basis, and

it has grown well over the years.

Karen Murphy of the First Congregational Church in West Brookfield has seen various vendors participate in the Flea Market. Every year there are repeat vendors and new vendors highlighted at the market.

During the earlier years of having a flea market, the event would be held in June. However, it was moved to September due to the popularity of the Asparagus Festival that happens in June.

This year, there were

over 40 vendors set up on the common for the Flea Market. Various items were available at this year's market.

Members of the First Congregational Church had tents set up in front of the church and provided the food for the day. The menu featured hot dogs, hamburgers, BBQ dogs, colossal cookies, chips, and cold drinks.

What is new in this year's annual flea market is a tag

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Grassroots Central Mass presented immigration program

By Ryan Drago
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WEST BROOKFIELD – The Merriam-Gilbert Public Library hosted a presentation on information regarding immigration this past week.

Giving the presentation were members of Grassroots Central Massachusetts. This

organization comes together to create change through a variety of actions, most especially in the areas of climate, politics, and racial and social justice.

The Racial and Social Justice Committee of Grassroots Central Mass had an important informational meeting to present regarding the highly debated topic of immigration.

In contemporary society, immigration is a topic surrounded with facts and a lot of misinformation. This presentation provides facts, fictions, and the history of immigration in the United States.

From a historical standpoint immigration and the right to U.S. citizenship has been a complex and often contentious issue.

The presentation was prepared and given by four members of Grassroots Central Mass, Regina Edmonds, David Niles, Jasmin Rivas, and Eric von Bleicken. Packets of information were handed out to guests who attended the presentation in the exhibit room of the Merriam-Gilbert Library. The presentation was called "Immigrants: The Facts, The

Fiction."

Edmonds was the first to speak and is a former educator at Assumption University. Her studies were in trauma, psychology, and research on motherhood.

Edmonds shared some key terms revolving around immigration, including the standard definition of what an immigrant is. A person who comes to live perma-

nently in a foreign country.

"The definition is simple on the surface," as Edmonds said.

Keeping the audience in mind, Edmonds said a lot of folks have immigrants as ancestors. Immigration goes far beyond its main definition and there are amounts of ways people arrive in the

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- community -

OSV held annual kiln firing event

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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STURBRIDGE – For the second year in a row, Old Sturbridge Village hosted Concert & Kiln this past weekend.

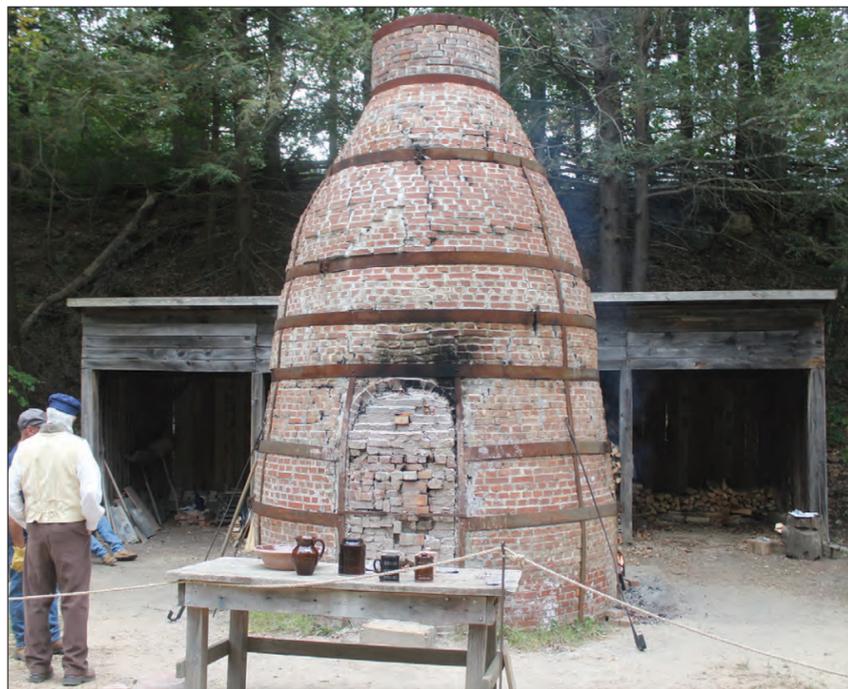
Only once a year the village fires up the kiln right across the pottery shop. This kiln is a reproduction of Hervey Brooks's kiln when he did pottery in Goshen, Connecticut. This kiln is 50 years old and is made with over 15,000 bricks.

It stands 24 feet tall and must be heated to approximately 1,900 degrees Fahrenheit during firing.

A firing for a kiln this size would take about three cords of wood. The historians at Old Sturbridge Village prepped by stacking about six cords of wood prior to the firing of the kiln.

For entertainment, the Old Sturbridge Village Singers performed for guests who attended Concert & Kiln. Guests were also greeted by music historian Tom Vaughn, who shared history of music in the 19th century. Performances took place inside the Center Meetinghouse.

Vaughn played popular early 19th-century music on a variety of historical artifact instruments, including the violin, flute, clarinet, and rocking melodeon. Vaughn



It was time to light up the kiln at Old Sturbridge Village for the annual Concert & Kiln event.

is a trained violinist and was a musician at Old Sturbridge Village, where he also recreated historical instruments.

While Vaughn was playing, there was a lot of audience participation and clapping inside the Meetinghouse.

The Village potters were busy firing up the kiln and sharing the history of 19th century pottery. The potters had

history to share with guests as well as familiar types of ceramics that would have been available in rural stores like the Asa Knight Store.

The potters took various questions from guests. Many questions revolved around how the kiln works.

There were 955 pottery pieces of various shapes inside the kiln as it was fired up. Amongst these pottery pieces were wood fired pots and mugs. Soon, what is firing in the kiln will be sold at the gift shop at Old Sturbridge Village.

There were also questions about the pottery shop and the history of Hervey Brooks Pottery. The historians said that Brooks did pottery on the side as he also operated his own farm. Brooks would mark his pottery, which was not commonly done in the 1800s.

Brooks' pottery shop was

moved to the Village back in the 1960s. Since relocating from Goshen, Connecticut, the shop is used for live demonstrations of 19th-century pottery manufacturing.

David is one of the historians at Old Sturbridge Village and has been a potter for six years. When asked about customizing pottery, he said "custom work wasn't done that often 200 years ago."

David's favorite pottery item he likes to make in the shop is a pitcher. A guest asked what is difficult to make, and David said colanders are tough to make.

Wondering how the pottery pieces were placed inside the kiln, historians pointed out the door with loose bricks. A potter showed guests where some loose bricks were by pulling one of them as the fire ignites inside with the pieces undergoing the transition. Potters



David, right, is one of the historians and potters at Old Sturbridge Village. He explained the history of redware pottery in the 19th century.



It was time to light up the kiln at Old Sturbridge Village for the annual Concert & Kiln event.



Tom Vaughn performed early 19th century music inside the Center Meetinghouse.

mentioned they don't want the kiln to get too hot, above 1900 degrees Fahrenheit, because they don't want to melt the bricks.

Cookies and cider were available for purchase during Concert & Kiln. It was warm standing by the kiln, but

there was OSV merchandise available, including mugs and sweatshirts.

It was an exciting learning experience for guests at Old Sturbridge Village as Concert & Kiln took place. The kiln will fire up next year at the next Concert & Kiln.



Examples of pottery made at Old Sturbridge Village were placed in front of the kiln, which can hold over 900 pieces.

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.

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

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

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Central Mass. photographer opens portrait studio in Fiskdale

STURBRIDGE – Central Massachusetts photographer Sue Bray is celebrating 27 years of capturing memories with the opening of a portrait studio location in Fiskdale.

Bray graduated in the top 10 of her class from the prestigious Hallmark Institute of Photography in 1996, located in Turners Falls. Following graduation, she spent nearly a decade honing her craft at Hilton Photography, where she captured everything from newborns and high school seniors to weddings, proms, and more.

Over the years, Bray has built a strong personal brand and a loyal following, earning a reputation for her warm, natural

style and genuine connection with her clients. Today, she offers on-location portrait sessions of all types – and now, she has a studio to call home.

Portraits by Sue Bray is proudly located at the Sturbridge Marketplace at the Falls in Fiskdale, 559 Main St., Unit 306 (third floor), where she welcomes new and returning clients alike.

"I create portraits that tell stories – stories meant to be shared, cherished, and remembered for years to come. My approach is relaxed and authentic; I love capturing genuine moments and 'freezing'



Sue Bray

time. Many of my clients have been with me for years, and now I have the joy of photographing their children. They're not just clients – they've become part of my extended family," Bray said in a press release. "For me, nothing is more important than people, photographs, and stories. The ability to capture moments in time is my greatest gift and reward."

For more information, visit Bray's website, www.portraitsbysuebray.com and follow her on Facebook.

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- community -

Electronics recycling event to be held Oct. 25

STURBRIDGE – The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale will host an electronics recycling event with Green Day Recycling on Saturday, Oct. 25 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. in the church parking lot, 8 Maple St.

Residents of all towns are welcome to bring their electronic items to be recycled, and the event will be held rain or shine.

The following items can be recycled for a cost: \$5 – computer towers, laptops, DVD players, VCRs, small printers, stereos, radios, alarm clocks, speakers, video game consoles, table lamps, fans, hair dryers, curling irons, projectors, paper shredders, power tools, drills, cameras, clocks, trophies, frying pans, holiday lights and other small electronics.

For \$10 – small household appliances, vacuum cleaners/Roomba, toaster ovens, ceiling fans, floor lamps, air fryers, electric grills, hot plates, small radiators, keyboard pianos, coffee makers, ice makers, small garbage disposals, sewing machines and car seats.

For \$20 – flat screen computer monitors, micro-waves, dehumidifiers, air

conditioners, water coolers, large printers/copiers, leaf blowers, chainsaws, heat lamps, artificial Christmas trees, fire extinguishers and empty propane tanks.

For \$25 – TVs up to 26 inches, CRT monitors, outdoor grill and dorm sized refrigerators.

For \$30 – TVs between 26 inches and 35 inches, white goods, washing machines, dryers, stoves, dishwashers, large appliances, large yard equipment, treadmills, exercise equipment, snowblowers, lawnmowers, rototillers, large generators, motors and water tanks.

For \$35 – TVs over 36 inches, large refrigerators and ride-on lawn mowers and for \$40 – projector TVs.

Cash is preferred, but payment via Venmo or check (over \$30) is also accepted.

The following items will be accepted for free, with cash donations appreciated: bicycles (reusable), cell phones, keyboards, tablets, video game media and accessories, wires, cables, batteries, chargers and VHS/DVDs.

For more information, email greendayrecycling-ma@gmail.com.tt

Sturbridge Historical Society hosts program on fair and fairgrounds

STURBRIDGE – Come to the Fair! – A History of the Worcester South Agricultural Society and the Sturbridge Fairgrounds will be presented by the Sturbridge Historical Society, Thursday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. at the Publick House.

Kitty Lowenthal and Sandy Gibson-Quigley will give a presentation on the history of the Worcester South Agricultural Fair and Fairgrounds.

From 1844 through 1938 Sturbridge hosted an annual agricultural fair to promote progressive farming. A locally, then regionally, popular event, the Fair outgrew the Common where it was held originally, and fairgrounds were established on Cedar Lake (on the site of the current Host Hotel). In addition to the exhibitions and contests featuring farm animals and produce, horse racing soon became one of the prime attractions of the Fair, along with other amusements – such as acrobats, balloon ascensions, and firemen musters.

This presentation will explore the origins of the Fair, its growth, and unfortunate demise, along with a brief look at the development of

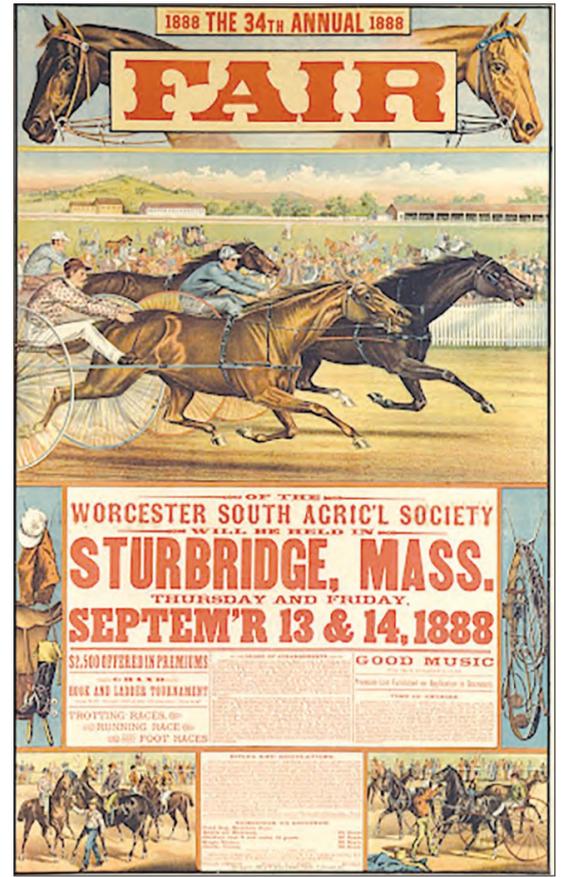
the property since 1939.

Lowenthal and Gibson-Quigley are on the Board of Directors for the Historical Society.

Lowenthal has had a lifelong passion for history. She worked as an interpreter at Old Sturbridge Village for 20 plus years, and then as a museum educator for the Deerfield Teacher Center. Almost everything she enjoys best revolves around history and the people and lives of the past, from land use and settlements, to food and textiles and crafts, and the ways people live together.

Gibson-Quigley has been involved with history and education since her college years. She worked in the Education Dept. at OSV, was the Education Director for Preservation Worcester, and then taught Social Studies at Notre Dame Academy for 26 years. She continues to enjoy exploring history as well as the built and natural environments and sharing her discoveries with others.

Please join the Historical Society at the Publick House, which graciously hosts these programs. This presentation is free and open to the public.



Submitted photo. This poster is from the 1888 Worcester South Agricultural Society Fair. The Sturbridge Historical Society will present a program on the history of the fair and the fairgrounds on Thursday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. at the Publick House. All are welcome to attend.

Historical Society presents tour of Old Burial Ground

STURBRIDGE – Join local historian Bill Barnsley on a walking tour of the Old Burying Ground in Sturbridge on Saturday, Sept. 20 at 10 a.m. covering 170 years of early Sturbridge history.

Through 24 stones, participants will explore some notable people who shaped the town, and some unique stones that illustrate the development of stone carving and beliefs in the afterlife.

Note: this tour will be "off-trail" on some very uneven surfaces. Wear your sturdy shoes.

Barnsley is a writer, storyteller, and local historian with a lifelong passion for uncovering the stories of the past. In 2018, with the help of his very patient wife, Jude MacDonald, conducted

a complete survey of Sturbridge's Old Burial Ground, documenting every gravestone and researching the lives behind them. His work connects early town families, Revolutionary War veterans, and the artistry of New England stone carvers, preserving their history for future generations.

When he isn't leading tours, Barnsley writes children's books, teaches, and volunteers in community projects.

The Old Burial Ground is located at 308 Main St. Parking is available behind the Center Office Building and along the road in front of as well as behind the cemetery. Registration is requested by emailing sgibquig@gmail.com.

Second Chance is seeking 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 found-

ed 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.

Musical bingo fundraiser to be held on Sept. 27

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Mary and Martha Sodality from Saint Carlo Acutis Parish at Sacred Heart Church, invites you to an evening of fellowship and fun on Saturday, Sept. 27 from 6-8 p.m.

The Mary and Martha Sodality will sponsor a musical bingo event in Dugan Hall, 22 West Main St., to raise funds to support its various parish and faith-based events including do-

nations to community programs throughout the year.

Your \$20 ticket includes: pizza, two tickets for wine or soft drinks, dessert, and musical bingo featuring songs from the 1940s-1960s. This over 21 event is geared to an older (but still young at heart) crowd.

For tickets, please call the parish office at 508-867-6469. For more information or questions, email maryandmartha11@gmail.com.

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.

CNEER hosts Fall Festival at the Farm on Sept. 27

WEST BROOKFIELD – Central New England Equine Rescue, 96 New Braintree Road, will host its annual Fall Festival at the Farm on Saturday, Sept. 27 from noon-4 p.m.

Come and share with CNEER over 20 years of community support rescuing

horses. There will be pony rides, face painting, pumpkin decorating, local vendors, delicious food, drinks and desserts.

Deux Amis will provide live folk and jazz music. The Hampden Mounted Police will also be present.

- opinion -



Plant exodus, coming soon

Just this past week I put a call in to the herb gardeners at Old Sturbridge Village where I work part time.

I asked them to let me know they'd like me to deliver the pots and soil for the annual "exodus." We will be moving the tender perennials from their summer residence in the herb garden to my domain, the maintenance department's greenhouse.

There are some wonderful and very familiar plants in our living collection: rosemary, bay, lemon verbena and scented geraniums are some of my personal favorites.

Before the interpreters dig up the plants, I always ask that they give them a bath to cut down on the number of insects that will be brought into the greenhouse. For the home gardener this is equally important.

I say "bath" because my pesticide of choice is a natural and fairly benign one- made of potassium salts of fatty acids (soap) that weaken the insect's outer shell and cause dehydration. It is sprayed on leaves and stems until they are soaked, and can be reapplied every seven-10 days as needed.

This product is especially effective on insects that make their home on herbs and houseplants: whitefly, aphids and mealy bugs.

Once the insects have been eradicated, it is time to get out the shovel and get to work digging up and repotting the plants. You will be amazed at how large some of them can become after only a few months in the ground.

It is important to salvage as much of the root ball as possible to minimize the shock of being potted up. To do this, position your shovel along the "drip line" of the plant and dig straight down, completely around its circumference. After you've made your way around, get your shovel underneath and lift.

Have a pot ready - one that is an inch or two bigger than the root ball is sufficient, and will allow for minimal winter growth. My container of choice is always plastic, but glazed pottery is fine too. I steer clear of clay; it dries out too quickly.

I usually put a couple of inches of moist potting soil into the container, set the plant and then fill in with more as needed before watering well. Oftentimes I leave the plants outside until a frost threatens, then I bring them in and back out until the weather turns decidedly cold.

Home gardeners of-

ten ask how to overwinter their favorite herbs without a greenhouse.

Perhaps the most cherished of all tender herbs is Rosemary (Rosemarinus officinalis), the herb of remembrance. The key to growing it successfully indoors is "cool but sunny."

My old house affords me many such microclimates. If you aren't as lucky, try for a sunny window away from dry heat, in other words far from heat vents, the wood stove etc.

Bay tree (Laurus nobilis) is another favorite and can be grown right through the winter with little or no coddling provided it is given medium to bright light and consistent watering. Do be on guard for the waxy-looking scale insect; one giveaway is leaves covered in a sticky, shiny sap called honey dew.

Try to "Q-tip" individual insects with rubbing alcohol or use insecticidal soap or horticultural oil to smother larger infestations. If the bugs have been active for awhile, sooty mold may have formed. This thick, black coating will likely need to be scrubbed off leaf by leaf to allow the plant to photosynthesize properly.

To have success overwintering scented geraniums (Pelargonium spp.) indoors, situate them in bright light where daytime temperatures are 65-70 degrees, and night temps are in the 50s. Fertilize every other month during the fall and winter.

Smaller leaved varieties will be easier to manage; large leaved cultivars will get top-heavy quickly- take terminal or "tip" cuttings of these instead.

Lemon Verbena (Aloysia triphylla) may start out looking great, but a month or so into indoor culture will likely begin to lose its leaves. Fear not, leaf drop is completely normal and to be expected! You may be tempted to throw it out; instead, position in a sunny spot, water as needed and await new growth in the spring.

Enjoy your favorite tender herbs over the winter and again come springtime and summer when they return to the garden.

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.



By Julie Midura
Correspondent

I knew going into this hike that it would require a strategy. You see, our energetic 3-year-old grandson, Levi, can play outside for hours, but walking uphill for long distances isn't his strong point. Peaked Mountain in Monson is not a long or strenuous hike, but when you're not even 3 feet tall, even 475 feet of elevation gain can feel like Mt. Everest.

He started strong, making it to the frog-filled pond with ample energy, but about a third of the way to the top, he said, "Memere, pick me up."

Since carrying my 28-pound grandson to the summit was not what I had in mind, I decided to utilize every ploy in my arsenal to ensure that he would hike the trail under his own power. I implemented Ploy #1... distraction.

"Let's look for the red blazes on the trees," I said. Levi inched his way forward in search of the large red painted circles marking the trail. "I see one!" he exclaimed each time he saw a blaze. This only distracted him for a distance of three blazes, so I needed a new distraction.

I asked him if he wanted to be a big boy and use one of my trekking poles like the 'real hikers' do. His eyes lit up. I shortened one of my poles and showed him how to use it. He wrapped his tiny hand around the handle, and for the next 5 minutes, he was so busy staring at the tip of the trekking pole with each step forward that he kept tripping on it.

Levi's first mountain



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Whereupon he decided to use the pole for more entertaining purposes. He wielded it over his head like a light saber in order to strike every large boulder he happened upon. Then he transformed it into a javelin to pierce mushrooms with. And finally he turned it into an excavator to dig in the mud and dirt.

In between the trekking pole fun, he found boulders to climb on, rocks to throw, branches to hang from, and long sticks to drag behind him. With all of the distractions, it was slow going, but at least he was moving upward on his own 2 feet. Until, that is, the trail became steeper, and he suddenly proclaimed, "I can't do it."

It was time for Ploy #2 - discoveries.

"Look, Levi! There's are more mushrooms up ahead. Let's go see them!" "What kind of animal do you think made the hole in that stump?" "Check out this stack of rocks! It's called a cairn." "Oh look! A sign! Do you want me to read it to you?"

With each step, Levi's interest was piqued, his imagination increased, and his self-confidence soared. All the way to the very top of the mountain, at 1,227 feet!

Levi seemed less than impressed with the views, but very excited to celebrate his victory with mini muffins and apple juice. Once he had popped the last muffin in his mouth, he was off like a rock-

et, exploring the summit. We allowed him the freedom to test his abilities. Levi climbed, jumped and scrambled over numerous boulders. He tripped, then righted himself. He learned what his 3-year-old self was capable of.

When he asked Tom and I if we could play hide and seek, we happily obliged. Tom and I spent close to an hour taking turns hiding so that Levi could find us. However, I drew the line when he said, "I'm going to hide by myself, and you and grandpa can come find me." Sorry little man, unless you're wired with a tracker, that's not happening!

When it was finally time to head down, Levi once again asked me to carry him. So I resorted to Ploy #3... bribery. "Levi, if you can make it all the way down to the trailhead on your own two legs, we can stop for an ice cream on the way home."

Needless to say, the vanilla ice cream with rainbow sprinkles sure hit the spot!

Spending time in nature is crucial to a child's physical health, as well as for their emotional and intellectual development. The best way for children to grow up to be healthy, well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of independence and compassion is to get them off of the screens and into nature. The benefits of outdoor play cannot be understated.

A child needs unstructured time to explore their natural environment. They need to be encouraged to play in a stream, walk through the woods, dig in the dirt, go fishing, or even climb a mountain. Many important life skills that children will need as they grow into teens and adults can be learned through outdoor activities-skills such as multi-tasking, troubleshooting, planning and prioritizing. Outdoor play also helps to build self-confidence, independence and self-esteem. It decreases stress, and increases attention, focus and motivation. I encourage every parent and grandparent to do everything you can to get the children in your life outdoors. Teaching children to appreciate our natural world and all of its wonders is one of the most amazing gifts that you can give them!



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Quaboag Current

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the Quaboag Current, please email pouimette@turley.com.



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

- community -

Free stress relief program offered at yoga studio Sept. 19

WARREN – The Centered Place in Warren is sponsoring a free Yoga for Stress Relief program Friday, Sept. 19 from 7-8 p.m.

The class will be taught by Swami Shrutananda, a yoga monk who resides at the Svaroop® Vidya Ashram in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. She travels throughout the U.S., Canada, Australia and Europe.

Swami Shrutananda

teaches yoga, meditation, yoga therapy and the sacred texts. She is a teacher trainer at the ashram.

Before becoming a monk, she was a research scientist. In those days, she was experiencing physical pain from stress and pushing her body through extreme sports.

She said, “I had a hard time finding meaning to my life...Yoga and meditation gave my body back to me,

plus I have a quieter mind. My life now has meaning and more. It is ‘The More’ that has inspired me to teach others all the wonders that yoga promises.”

Swami Shrutananda will discuss the causes and symptoms of stress. She will then lead you through a few user-friendly yoga poses. In just a few minutes, you will discover how easily you can reduce your stress.

The yoga style she teaches (as does The Centered Place) is easily accessible and slower-paced. Every pose is customized to your individual needs. No previous yoga experience is required.

To register for this event, or for more information, email phil@thecenteredplace.com or call 413 436-7374.

Swami Shrutananda is also presenting a program

from 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 20. The program gives you “an adult time-out” – an opportunity to stop the world for a day. Leave your worldly concerns behind and bring a “new you” back into your life. There is a fee for this program. For more information, email phil@thecenteredplace.com or call 413-436-7374.

The Centered Place yoga

studio has served the local area since 1988. It was founded by Nancy A Nowak, who co-directs and teaches along with her husband, Phil Milgrom. The studio was voted Best in Yoga by Sturbridge Times readers for several consecutive years before the magazine was discontinued.

The physical address of the studio is 286 Bridge St. The web address is www.thecenteredplace.com.



Jim Foyle read a citation presented to Samuel Bonneau (center) while VFW Post 3439 Commander Arthur Deome looked on.

TABLE FROM PAGE 1

“There’s a lost time from 1929 to 1960,” Foyle said of the table’s whereabouts. “I have no idea where the table was...it showed up when the Post first came into existence.”

The table was recently cleaned and restored by New Braintree craftsman and history enthusiast Samuel Bonneau.

Foyle said in speaking with Joseph, it was determined that cleaning and then sealing the wood with beeswax was the best way to preserve the table.

Bonneau said he worked on the over 150 year old table for about three weeks,

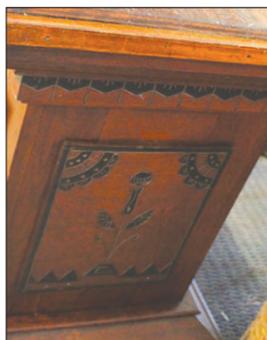
carefully cleaning it to remove paint splatter and pieces of tape, and fix some of the scratches – all while still keeping the aged patina of the mahogany wood.

Bonneau, who was a dairy farmer turned carpenter, said while he isn’t an expert on historical restorations, he has worked on a number of vintage pieces, including a 1700s French highboy, which took several months to complete.

Bonneau spoke about the details of the table, including the imagery inlaid on the sides of the table.

“The table has a lot of fine detail,” Bonneau said. “Whoever did it was a real artist. It’s one thing to be a woodworker; it’s another to be an

artist.”



A thistle plant inlay on the table could reference Scottish ties.

Foyle said the table has no identifying features that point to who the artist was who crafted it, but an inlay of a thistle plant gives clues that the table may have ties to someone with Scottish ancestry.

Foyle credited Bonneau for his time and care to restore the table while keeping it historically accurate.

“He’s a common sense restorer,” Foyle said of Bonneau, who donated his services to restore the table. “Sam was tremendously generous enough not to charge us.”

Foyle and VFW Commander Arthur Deome presented Bonneau with a plaque thanking him for his work restoring the table and giving new life to a piece of the town’s history.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Get your holiday shopping done by going to the flea market.

FLEA MARKET FROM PAGE 1

sale inside the church itself. Folks entered the church and saw three tables full of items that could use a new home. All these items were donated to the church, and some items have been around for years.

The idea of a tag sale started last year as the Flea Market is a fundraiser to benefit the First Congregational Church.

In addition to the tag sale, the church also had a bake sale taking place inside. Guests also participated in a raffle. A handmade quilt was the raffle prize inside the church and was made by Mary Deotte.

For all the items available at the tag sale, Murphy said “all of it” should go to a new home as the Flea Market goes on.

Aside from attracting a variety of vendors, Murphy said the annual Flea Market draws “so many people” from other communities to just shop, explore, and meet new people.

There were several vendors representing nonprofit organizations. One vendor that is a regular at the Flea Market supports Wickabog Lake. Another nonprofit organization that attended



A quilt raffle took place inside the church. This quilt was handmade by Mary Deotte.

this year’s Flea Market is Second Chance Animal Services.

Terry Hall of the First Congregational Church was welcoming vendors at the common for set up. There were guests up early to get

some shopping done at the Flea Market. Hall complimented the vendors who showed up in this year’s market and got a sneak peak of some of the interesting items that were available.

“A lot of interesting stuff this year,” Hall said.

The weather couldn’t have been more perfect this past Saturday as the sun shined over the common.

The annual Flea Market on the common is a place where sellers of all kinds were welcome. There were flea folk, antique sellers, crafters, product vendors, and many who wanted to empty out basements and attics.

The First Congregational Church appreciates the support from the community as they host the annual Flea Market. For more about the church and for future events, visit westbrookfieldcongre-



A table of free stuff included radios, household items, and a doghouse.

N BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

Energy management program

Roger Brooks presented the board with a draft of an authorization letter for the Massachusetts Energy Insight program.

“It’s a program for energy efficiency that is processed through the Department of Energy Resources,” he said.

Brooks said the authorization letter would grant them access a report that would provide past historic consumption of the accounts, and put together a decarbonization/energy efficiency program.

“It can also lead to other programs within the Mass Save/Energy Efficiency division at Mass DOER,” he said.

Brooks said the program they are looking at is grant funded through National Grid and Mass Save, and includes the towns of Athol, Royalston and Berlin as well as North Brookfield. He said there is no financial commitment from the town, and the grant is for a three-year period.

The grant includes the evaluation of each town-owned building for energy efficiency and consumption.

Brooks said since the School Department has the two largest buildings in town, the program would start there before expanding to other facilities including the Water Department.

“This is a real positive program for the town,” he said.

The board members agreed to sign the letter.

Senior Center survey

Board of Selectmen Clerk Ralph Kay said 1,141 surveys were mailed to residents aged 60 and over regarding the Senior Center. He said so far, they have received 37 responses back.

Kay also clarified that the North Brookfield Community Food Collaborative and the Senior Center are two separate entities and not one organization.

“They’re not the same,” he said.

Grant award

Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said the town was awarded a Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association Risk

Management Award in the amount of \$8,819.85 to cover the cost of a lockout/tag-out kit for the Sewer Department, as well as confined space safe entry equipment.

He said the town received grant funding to cover the cost of training for a safety care trainer for dysregulated students in the school dis-

trict.

Surplus item auction

An online auction of surplus items will be hosted by GovDeals.com/northbrookfield starting Sept. 15 and running through Sept. 29. Items will be available to bid starting at 8 a.m. and the live auction will begin at 8 p.m. with five-minute staggering

end times between auction items.

Surplus items include a 1947 Buffalo engine, a 1994 pump truck, two Ford Crown Victorias, a 1995 International with sander, 76 lengths of firehose and more.

Website change

The town is in the process

of finding a new platform for its website, as the current platform is no longer a supported technology.

Upcoming agenda item

Petraitis said the board will be discussing the possibility of shifting to quarterly invoices for the Sewer and Water departments at a future meeting.

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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 en-

trance 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 laserklaus@gmail.com. Or visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club website at <https://sturbridge-rotary.com>.

East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of Aug. 18-23, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 145 building/property checks, 52 directed area patrols, 23 radar assignments, five traffic controls, 11 emergency 911 calls, five citizen assists, one assist other agency, one investigation, one motor vehicle investigation, one disturbance, one fraud, one trespass, one fire/illegal burn, one safety hazard, one motor vehicle accident, six animal calls and 48 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Monday, Aug. 18

2:04 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, High Rocks Road, Transported to Hospital

8:23 a.m. Fraud, Connie Mack Drive, Report Taken

8:50 a.m. Investigation, Connie Mack Drive, Arrest(s) Made

10:12 a.m. Trespass, Connie Mack Drive, Services Rendered

10:55 a.m. 911 Suspicious Activity, Podunk Road, Services Rendered

12:07 p.m. Assist Citizen, South Pond Road, Services Rendered

12:08 p.m. 911 Misdeal, Podunk Road, Investigated

2:18 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, East Main Street, Transported to Hospital

6:41 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Pleasant Street, Transported to Hospital

5:33 p.m. Fire/Illegal Burn, Harrington Street, Investigated

6:03 p.m. Assist Citizen, Route 49, Services Rendered

9:30 p.m. Disturbance, Connie Mack Drive, Report Taken

Tuesday, Aug. 19

7:26 a.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued

7:30 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

7:40 a.m. Motor Vehicle

Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

8:36 a.m. Radar, Podunk Road, Citation Issued

8:39 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Podunk Road, Citation Issued

12:14 p.m. Suspicious Activity, West Main Street, Spoken To

5:28 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Sturbridge Road, Written Warning

6:30 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Harrington Street, Officer Handled

9:43 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Podunk Road, Transported to Hospital

Wednesday, Aug. 20

7:38 a.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued

7:54 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

8:21 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

10:28 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

12:28 p.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued

12:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

1:12 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Podunk Road, Citation Issued

10:10 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Crash, West Main Street, Services Rendered

Thursday, Aug. 21

8:27 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Harrington Street, Services Rendered

11:02 a.m. Safety Hazard, Podunk Road, Officer Handled

11:07 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

11:16 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

11:43 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

11:57 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

12:08 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield

Road, Citation Issued

12:21 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

12:32 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Maple Street, Citation Issued

12:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

1:30 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

1:49 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

2:19 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

6:52 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued

8:02 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued

Friday, Aug. 22

8:20 a.m. Radar, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued

8:22 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

9:54 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, South Pond Road, Transported to Hospital

3:01 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Bridge Street, Transported to Hospital

3:05 p.m. Assist Citizen, Howe Street, Services Rendered

4:28 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Investigation, Rice Road, Report Taken

6:24 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued

10:36 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Arrest(s) Made

11:33 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Saturday, Aug. 23

10:30 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

12:04 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

6:21 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Second Chance's Cruise for Critters fundraiser takes place Sept. 20

MONSON – The 13th annual Cruise for Critters will return to Westview Farms Creamery on Saturday, Sept. 20, bringing together car lovers, families, and animal advocates for a day of fun with a purpose.

The show is organized by longtime supporter Al Widlan, owner of Service Connection, who has devoted more than a decade to turning his passion for cars into lifesaving support for pets in need. What began as a community car show has grown into a tradition that helps provide medical care and resources for pets across Massachusetts.

This year’s Cruise for Critters will feature an expanded mix of attractions. Guests can browse a vendor fair, enjoy delicious bites

from local food trucks, and of course, treat themselves to Westview’s famous homemade ice cream.

Families can also take part in fall favorites like pumpkin picking, wagon rides, and the farm’s corn maze. Live music from the Barberic Band will set the tone for a lively day that also includes raffles and more.

“Cruise for Critters make a real difference for pets who need a second chance,” said Lindsay Doray, Chief Development Officer at Second Chance. “We are so grateful to Al, Westview Farms Creamery, and our community for continuing to rally behind this event. Every car and every supporter help ensure pets get the care they deserve.”

The festivities run from 10

a.m.-3 p.m. Spectators can attend free of charge, while car owners are encouraged to participate with a \$20 entry fee per vehicle, with proceeds going directly to Second Chance’s programs.

The event is proudly sponsored in part by Ted & Barbara Hebert of Teddy Bear Pools & Spas, Embie Industries, and TRM Knives. Local businesses and vendors interested in joining the cause can find sponsorship and participation details at secondchanceanimals.org/events/cruise.

A rain date is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 27. Whether you come for the cars, the food, the music, or the mission, Cruise for Critters promises an unforgettable day in support of pets in need.

FUN FEST FROM PAGE 1

Junior Senior High School and currently attends Mount Wachusett Community College, participating in the school’s arts program.

Sukharev was doing an art show at her high school and met Eva Brown, who is an advocate for the Town House. Brown inspired Sukharev to continue to show her artwork in the community. Soon, Sukharev thought of the idea to donate her art to help benefit the Town House.

This year she wanted to help again, and she will have a painting of Brookfield Orchards. Sukharev’s main art medium is paint, and her paintings consist of acrylic paint. Sukharev also does a lot of sketches using pencils.

Sukharev will have her artwork displayed in a tent during the Fun Fest, where raffle tickets will be sold



A painting of the North Brookfield Town House created by Nadia Sukharev, which was donated for a raffle to help benefit the restoration of the Town House.

there.

Sukharev is a triplet and has lived in North Brookfield for eight years. Her mother, Rebecca and her family are proud of her work and for her contributions to help support a beloved building in the community.

“Proud to see her contribute,” Rebecca Sukharev said. Sukharev will have prints

of her work available during the Fall Family Fun Fest, taking place on Sept. 28, from 12pm - 4pm at Bike House Brewing, 31 East Brookfield Road. Friends of the North Brookfield Town House, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and its members are looking forward to this community event.

GRASSROOTS FROM PAGE 1

United States.

Various definitions were shared regarding how people from various nations make their way to the country. A migrant is a person who moves from one place to another, either within their own country or internationally, for a variety of reasons including work, family, education, and seeking a better life.

There are also refugees, asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, DACA recipients, and TPS. TPS is a temporary status protecting a person fleeing war, natural disaster or other disasters from deportation.

There are various reasons why immigrants leave their homeland. Reasons include better economic opportunities, pursuing education, reuniting with family, fleeing natural disasters, escaping discrimination, and overall looking for better quality of life.

The history of immigration in the United States dates back to the 19th Century, where the country saw huge numbers of immigrants come to America, mostly from Europe, Asia and Latin America. In this time, there was a lot of prejudice and hardship for folks of various nationalities who left their home in pursuit of a better life in the United States of America.

Rivas came up to speak and shared a poem called “Home” by Warsan Shire. This poem explains the desperation that drives people to become refugees and leave their home country. This story focuses on the struggles refugees and asylum seekers face after their own homeland becomes dangerous to their way of life. An asylum seeker is a person who leaves their country due to strike and crosses on their own into another country and seeking safety.

To try and answer the question of why there is a

lot of undocumented immigrants in the United States, a statistical study in the presentation explains the cause. Many immigrants try to enter the country legally, but due to immigration court backlog, it becomes challenging to be granted citizenship.

According to the study, court backlog has doubled since 2021, increasing case-loads to around 4,500 per judge.

Another delay in the process is the rules for immigration keep changing. With this information, these members of grassroots ask the public how they can figure out to help immigrants who are trying to follow the rules and legally enter the United States.

von Bleicken came up to share the history of immigration in the United States. Bleicken describes this as “a complicated history.” From 1924 to the present, there have been a series of legislation regarding immigration. This historical synopsis was provided in the handout

during the Grassroots Central Mass presentation.

For example, legislation was established during World War II to hire millions of workers in agriculture. The ability to cross the border legally to work on farms expired in 1964.

In the 1980s, to humanely curtail illegal immigration Ronald Reagan helped pass legislation, granting a path to citizenship for nearly three million people. However, illegal immigration continued to rise through the 1990s.

During the Joe Biden’s run as president, he reversed many policies first established by the Trump Administration and there was a large immigration surge in recent history. The average of legal and illegal immigration went up and was around 2.4 million people per year for most of Biden’s term.

Niles spoke on common myths and problematic misconceptions regarding immigration. Niles shared statistics that help support the

facts regarding immigrants who live in the United States.

One fact listed is that immigrants contribute more in taxes than they receive in benefits. A graph Niles shared had a list of the number of immigrants per state that are paying taxes.

Another fact Niles wanted to highlight is that non-citizens are not allowed to vote in state or federal elections. This statement is in response to the listed common myth of undocumented immigrants vote illegally.

Niles listed the due process in the U.S. Constitution, related to the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment. In his presentation, Niles mentioned he has many friends who have immigrated to the U.S. and feels folks from all walks of life make big contributions and a difference in the communities they live in.

When it comes to immigrants, Niles believes we should “give them the same respect we give everyone.” Grassroots Central Mass

SPORTS

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Panthers, Cougars battle to 3-3 draw



Christian Marshall goes after the loose ball.

WARREN – Last Monday afternoon, Quabbin and Quaboag boys soccer battled it out at Quaboag's home turf with the teams going back and forth before the game ended in a 3-3 tie. For Quabbin, it was their first non-loss of the season and they followed it with their first win 6-1 over West Boylston on Sept. 9. For Quaboag, they are 1-0-1 as they tied Quabbin and then defeated David Prouty last Wednesday 2-0.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Jacoby Dilling is pressured as he holds possession.



Greyson Mullins makes a stop on defense.



Connor Sray goes after the loose ball.



Joseph Cook tries to settle the ball.



Ailey Majay tries to steal the ball away.



Maya Putnam is pursued as she heads up the field.

WARREN – Last Monday evening under the lights at Quaboag Regional High School, both Quabbin and Quaboag managed a goal in 1-1 draw, making it two ties in the doubleheader between the two schools. Quabbin improved to 2-1-1 on the season. Quabbin defeated West Boylston 3-1 last Tuesday afternoon. Quaboag is 2-2-1 so far. The Cougars defeated Bay Path 2-1 last Wednesday and lost to Uxbridge last Friday 7-0.



Allie Lipiec tries to pass ahead of an oncoming opponent.



Gabriella Riandeau is pressured by a pair of Quabbin defenders.



Sadie Kennan is pressured by a pair of Cougars.



Brielle Gerulaitis makes a throw-in.



Julia Queiroga gets a foot on the loose ball.

Warriors boys soccer ties Wachusett in regular season game

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

HOLDEN—The Tantasqua boys' varsity soccer team will finish the 2025 regular season with at least one scoreless tie for the third consecutive year.

The Warriors dominated the first 40 minutes of their non-league road match against Wachusett Regional on Saturday, Sept. 6, but they couldn't put the ball into the back of the net.

Neither team scored after halftime and the contest,

which was held at Hal Lane Field in Holden, ended in a 0-0 draw.

"We had a lot of scoring chances in the first half. One of our shots hit off the post. We also had a direct kick which went straight to their goalie," said Tantasqua head coach Matt Guertin. "You're never satisfied unless you win, but I thought the boys played very hard in today's game."

During the 2023 regular season, the Warriors played a scoreless tie at home against Nipmuc Regional in a non-

league match. They also played a 0-0 tie at Millbury last September.

Tantasqua finished the first week of the 2025 regular season with a 1-0-1 record. The Warriors kicked off the new season by posting a 4-0 shutout victory at Shepherd Hill on September 2.

The Mountaineers (0-1-1) lost, 1-0, in their season opener at Shepherd Hill two days later.

"When I looked at the score from Wachusett's game against Shepherd Hill, I thought we would have a little

bit of an advantage coming into today's game," Guertin said. "They've always been a very good soccer team, so I knew that this was going to be a hard fought battle."

Because the Wachusett boys' soccer team competes at the Division 1 level and Tantasqua is a Division 3 team, the tie should give the Warriors extra points in the power rankings.

"Whenever we play teams like Wachusett, it makes us a much better team," Guertin added. "We're hoping to qualify for the Division 3

state tournament and win a league title."

The Warriors used to be members of the Southern Worcester County League.

The SWCL, along with the Colonial Athletic League, Dual Valley Conference, Inter-High, and Worcester County Athletic Conference, disbanded at the end of the 2024-25 school year. The 34 high schools from those leagues have joined the newly created Central Massachusetts Athletic Conference. It's very similar to the Mid-Wach League, which is made up of

several different Divisions.

The Warriors boys' soccer team are members of the CMAC A. The other four teams in the CMAC A are Worcester South, Doherty, Sutton, and Blackstone Valley Tech.

"All of the teams in our new league are very good," Guertin said. "It's a powerhouse Division. We'll be playing the other teams in CMAC A twice."

The other teams listed on the Warriors regular sea-

See WARRIORS PAGE 8

WARRIORS FROM PAGE 7

son schedule are Leicester, Nashoba Regional, Auburn, Nipmuc, Grafton, Worcester North, Marlborough, and Northbridge.

In last Saturday's match, Tantasqua sophomore goalie Brayden O'Keefe only had to

make six saves in posting his second consecutive shutout.

"Brayden plays for a high level club team during the off-season," Guertin said. "He always makes very good decisions. This is his second shut-out of the season. He played very well in today's game."

O'Keefe, who became

the Warriors starting goalie during the middle of last season, plays for a Western United Pioneers soccer team, which is based in Ludlow.

The Warriors senior captains are Randy Guzman-Perez, Andrew Ticlea, Cole Pattee, and Logan Oko.

The other senior listed on

the Warriors varsity roster is Todd Derosé.

One of Tantaqua's best scoring chances against Wachusett took place during the 14th minute of the opening half. Sophomore Jake DeLong fired a wide open shot attempt that deflected off the left post. Wachusett senior

goalie Noah Miller tried to make the save, but the ball bounced over the end line resulting in a corner kick.

The Warriors failed to convert on all eight of their corner kicks during the opening half.

A little more than ten minutes into the second half,

a free kick taken by Pattee sailed high over the crossbar.

During the 63rd minute, Oko made a crossing pass to Pattee, who put a low shot on goal which was saved by Miller.

Neither team could break the deadlock during the final 15 minutes of regulation.

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