The ONLY local coverage in Sturbridge - Brookfield - West Brookfield - East Brookfield - North Brookfield & New Braintree

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Get ready for the 46th Annual Apple Country Fair

Celebrate fall with local flavor and family fun

BROOKFIELD – One of Central Massachusetts' favorite fall traditions returns Saturday, Oct. 11 as the 46th Annual Apple Country Fair takes over the Historic Brookfield Town Common from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Hosted by the Brookfield Community Club, the Apple Country Fair brings together the best of small-town charm with a vibrant marketplace featuring more than 90 local crafters, artisans, and bakers. Visitors can explore booths filled with hand-knit clothing, pottery, wooden décor, homemade soaps, maple syrups, beaded jewelry, locally-harvested honey, and

See APPLE COUNTRY FAIR PAGE 5

CNEER held successful Fall Festival at the Farm

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – There were signs all over the Brookfields, as well as Ware, and as far as Palmer, that an event was coming up on Sept. A poster announced a Fall Festival at the Farm.

What farm was that, and why a festival?

If you turn off at 96 New Braintree Road in West Brookfield, a little up the driveway, there is pasture that this day was serving as a parking lot. This is the farm of Central New England Equine Rescue.

The name says it all. Central New England Equine Rescue, Inc. or CNEER, has as its mission "to rescue abused, abandoned, neglected, and slaughter-bound equines."

Upon arriving, we were directed where to park and immediately after exiting the vehicle, a young man driving a golf cart offered a ride,

See FALL FESTIVAL PAGE 5

TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY

Central New England Equine Rescue volunteers Brenda and Barbara are shown with some of their equine friends.

Fall Family Fun Fest held to support North Brookfield Town House

TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Bruce Arnold of North Brookfield is shown alongside his Infrared Obsessions photography display.

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House welcomed guests to Fall Family Fun Fest this past weekend.

The event was held at Bike House Brewing in North Brookfield and featured music, food, vendors and art. Members of the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House shared information with guests regarding the Town House and what this organization does to help support the beloved building in their town.

This group is a dedicated non-profit organization committed to restoring and revitalizing this historic landmark. At their table, there was a dollhouse sized model of the Town House, which also served as a donation box.

The Friends also hosted a raffle during Fall Family Fun Fest, and it featured over 20 prizes. Various gift certificates were available and one lucky winner would win tickets to a Worcester Red Sox game.

The Fall Family Fun Fest was supported by various sponsors including Cuddy Insurance Agency, Inc, MAXMIA Properties LLC, Theatre Guild of North Brookfield, Country Auto Body, Country Bank, Smokestack Lightning, Inc, Brookfield Orchards, Howe Lumber Co., Jim's Pizza, Laflin-Waugh Insurance, North Brookfield Savings Bank, and Still Harts Inc.

The Friends thanked Bike House Brewing for being the host of the event. The brewing company had a vending booth selling merchandise, including old shirts of Common Ground Ciderworks.

The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Richard "Tabby" LeBlanc, who gave announcements throughout Fall Family Fun Fest. The first music guests were Fusion Junction followed by Derek

See FUN FEST PAGE 6

Assessors explained revaluation results

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Assessors attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting to provide an update on the five-year revaluation.

"It's a more comprehensive one than we do every year," Assessor Sheila Buzzell said at the Sept. 23 meeting. "Of all real and personal property in the town."

Buzzell said the Assessors provide information to the Department of Revenue, which is then reviewed by an employee of the DOR. She said this includes sales, review of properties, and an analysis of the different types of houses being sold.

"All the different sales are taken into consideration for the years '23 and '24," Buzzell said.

Buzzell said the new values were posted on the website for review, as required by the DOR. She said some residents came into their office with questions about their property values, and the Assessors went to those properties.

She said housing sales in 2023 and 2024 were "over the top;" with some houses selling well over their assessed value.

Buzzell said the DOR employee believed the town's property values were low compared to the sales prices during that time.

A resident of Old East Brookfield Road shared concerns about how much his taxes will increase with his new property assessment.

"How is this going to impact people that are on fixed incomes?" he asked. "Where they have just enough to pay their tax bill they have now, never mind a 20-25% increase. We're getting to the point where some people in

See N BROOKFIELD PAGE 6

Local crafters held weekend shopping event

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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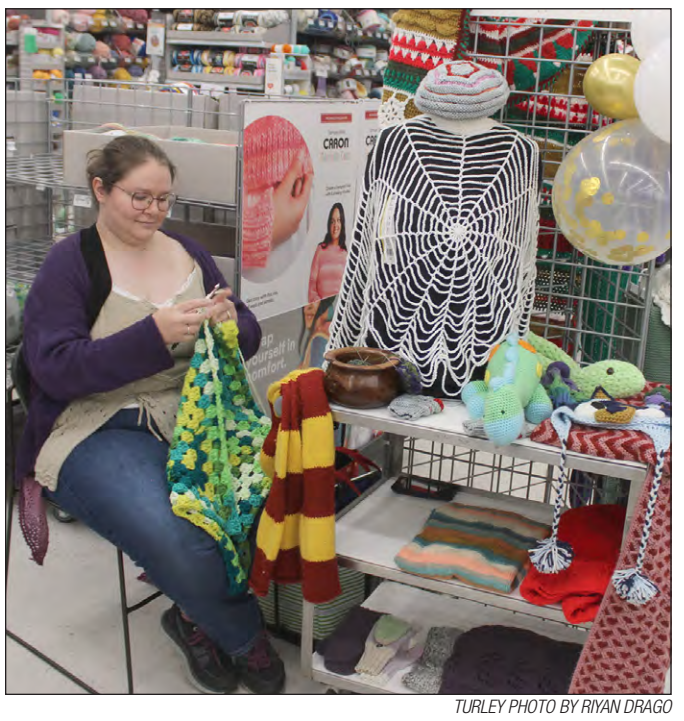
STURBRIDGE – Michael's in Sturbridge hosted a great event for local crafters to share their work this past weekend.

These crafters had the opportunity to set up tables throughout the store, and some were able to provide demonstration of their respected craft.

With customers entering the store the first thing they would come across are food and beverage vendors. There was freshly squeezed lemonade and ice pops available during the warm Sunday afternoon.

The Boy Scout Troop #7 of Brimfield was selling a variety of popcorn to support their Scout fundraiser. Running the Boy Scout booth was Jones Reith-Lowery and Phineas Reith-Lowery. Michael's staff welcomed guests by the entrance who could participate in a raffle for a chance to win a $100 Michael's gift card.



TURLEY PHOTO BY RIYAN DRAGO

Stefanie is shown with a yarn demonstration during the Michaels crafter event.

Several staff members offered fun activities for kids such as face painting and a kid's class where they could craft Halloween haunted lanterns. There were many local crafters who live within the community and some love shopping at Michaels.

Patricia LaFountain of Tricia's Treasures had a table set up in the store and had multiple items of jewelry, art and home decor on display.

LaFountain has been doing her own crafts for over 10 years and focuses mostly on acrylic paint pouring. Her work comes in the form of canvasses, coasters, and ceramic pumpkins.

LaFountain also works part-time at Michaels and was excited to share her work during this crafting event.

Several crafters had done some demonstrations during the event. Leslie Tracy did a paint demonstration by creating a flower themed oil painting on a canvas.

Tracy is an artist specializing in portraits, landscape, and special orders. Tracy also gave art lessons at her home for 25 years and has participated in various art shows.

Tracy has been painting and drawing since she was a child and got to share her work at Michaels. Customers got to watch Tracy bring a beautiful art piece to life.

Close by was a yarn demonstration by Michaels staff member Stefanie, who is an expert in knitting and crocheting. There was a booth decorated with var-

See CRAFTERS PAGE 6

- community -

Husband and wife Americana duo to perform in Hardwick

HARDWICK – Watching Maggie McClure and Shane Henry (The Imaginaries) perform together, you instantly see the chemistry and the deep commitment they share with each other and to their music.

The Imaginaries will bring their Americana/Roots-Rock sound to The Center at Eagle Hill, 242 Old Petersham Road, on Saturday, Oct. 18.

Formed on the open plains of their home state of Oklahoma, The Imaginaries is composed of husband-and-wife duo McClure (piano, vocals) and Henry (guitar, vocals). The Imaginaries blend Henry's guitar-slinging, blues-rock roots with McClure's boldly vulnerable singer-songwriter sensibility. The results are a pop-Americana aesthetic that evokes Tom Petty, Fleetwood Mac, The Civil Wars, and Bonnie Raitt.

Their 2021 self-titled debut album, The Imaginaries, marked the beginning of their journey as a band after individual successes as solo artists; their sophomore album, Fever, was just released in August of 2025. Together, McClure and Henry wrote and produced the soundtrack for the feature film "A Cowgirl's Song", and they have shared the stage with Judy Collins, The Gatlin Brothers, John Waite, Sixpence None the Richer, and more.

Their live performances promise mesmerizing vocal harmonies, driving pop-rock tunes, heartfelt singer-songwriter ballads, delicious guitar tones, and dazzling solos.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Maggie McClure and Shane Henry of The Imaginaries will perform at The Center at Eagle Hill on Saturday, Oct. 18 at 7 p.m.

The Imaginaries will perform at The Center at Eagle Hill on Saturday, Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. Tickets are $35 for adults, $30 for students and seniors.

The Center also offers discounted $10 tickets to EBT cardholders through Massachusetts' Card to Culture Program. For tickets and information, visit www.thecenterateaglehill.org or call the Box Office at 413-477-6746.

About The Center

The Center at Eagle Hill is a performance venue in central Massachusetts presenting world class music, dance, theatre, and comedy. For more information about this, and other events please visit www.thecenterateaglehill.org.

Pumpkin Walk & Carving Contest comes to Riverlands Oct. 18

STURBRIDGE – The Sturbridge Conservation Department is thrilled to host this brand-new community event – the first ever Sturbridge Pumpkin Walk & Carving Contest – a glowing night of fall fun at the Riverlands.

The event will be held on Saturday, Oct. 18 from 6-8 p.m. at the Riverlands Trail, 52 Stallion Hill Road.

A half-mile loop will be lined with glowing carved pumpkins. There will be contest categories for kids, teens, adults, and local businesses, and there will be a special category for hand-painted pumpkins (ages 5 and under)

This event is free to attend and fun for all ages.

Want to enter? Register your pumpkin at the Conservation Commission's page at https://www.sturbridge.gov/conservation-commission/pages/great-sturbridge-pumpkin-walk-carving-contest-2025.

Pumpkin drop-off is 4:30-5:30 p.m. on the event day. A complete list of contest rules is posted on the above website.

Volunteers are welcome to help make this magical night happen. For more information, contact Lauren Vivier at 508-347-2506 or LVivier@sturbridge.gov.

Electronics recycling event to be held on 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, microwaves, 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

Registration open for EQLT's Station Loop Ramble

NEW BRAINTREE – The East Quabbin Land Trust will holds its 14th annual Station Loop Ramble on Sunday, Oct. 19 beginning at 9:30 a.m. with the start on Depot Road at the intersection of West and Hardwick Roads on part of the Mass. Central Rail Trail.

This is a new course due to construction. The five mile classic is a hilly road race with a flat fast finish on Hardwick Road. The Kids Run and 5K run/walk are entirely on a flat course on the Mass Central Rail Trail.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. The race begins and ends at the site of the former New Braintree Train Station, travels past scenic farmland, through deep woods and skirts the Ware River. Adults must accompany children running this course. Each mile is marked and mid-run water supply is provided.

Start times are 9:30 a.m. for five and under 200 foot dash and 9:40 a.m. for the ¼ mile 6-12 year old run. The 5K starts at 10 a.m. and the 5 mile classic at 10:05 a.m.

There will be post race refreshments, games, entertainment and more. Award ceremony is at 11 a.m. Entry fee is free for ages 5 and under, $10 for ages 6- 12, $25 early bird online registration by Friday, Oct. 17 (10% discount for seniors, veterans and first responders) and $30 day of race. A family registration for up to six members is $35.

For more information, people may visit www.EQLT.org/station-loop-ramble/ or call 413-477-8229.

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

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

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

- community -

Worcester Winds to perform in Gilbertville Oct. 18

HARDWICK – Worcester Winds, a dectet of professional music teachers and musicians from Worcester County, will perform at the Stone Church Cultural Center, 283 Main St., Gilbertville, on Saturday, Oct. 18 at 3 p.m.

Presenters Friends of the Stone Church will serve snacks at a reception following the concert. Tickets are $25 and can be purchased at the door or through Friends of the Stone Church website under the concert season listings at friendsofthestonechurch.org.

Conducted by Luis Torres, the group consists of two flutes, two clarinets, two oboes, two bassoons, and two French horns. They will perform the "Barber of Seville Overture" by Gioachino Rossini, "Masques et Bergamasques" by Gabriel Fauré, "Serenade, Op. 104" by Solomon Jadassohn, "Excursion" by Patrick Glenn Harper (b. 1977), "On Music" by Arthur Sullivan by Robert Spittal (b. 1963), and "The Teddy Bear's Picnic" by John Brattan.

Performers include Toni Brown, Deborah Cole, Lucy Colwell, Ray Cox, Glenn Godfrey, Meredith Lord, Brian Repeta, Judy Schmitz, Sarah Smongeski, and Jessica Stolecki. The groups's website is worcesterwinds.org.

FOSC is pleased to be participating in the Card to Culture program of the Mass Cultural Council, by extending discounts to EBT, WIC and ConnectorCare health plan insurance cardholders. Eligible participants may request up to two free tickets at the box office on the day of the event. Bring EBT, WIC or Connector Care health plan card for 2025.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Worcester Winds, a dectet of professional music teachers and musicians, will perform at the Stone Church Cultural Center on Saturday, Oct. 18.

This concert is funded in part by a grant from the Hardwick-New Braintree Cultural Council, a local agency which receives funding from the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Library hosts annual craft fair on Oct. 18

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, will hold its Annual Craft Fair on Saturday, Oct. 18 from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Stop by to support local artists and start your holiday shopping early. There will be knitters, doll makers, candles, woodwork, adult clothing protectors, painters and many more.

This program is free and open to the public.

Gallery to host reception for artist Friday

WEST BROOKFIELD – Petersham artist Abigail Rorer will present a solo show, "Books, Engravings & Drawings" at West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, 10 East Main St., opening on Friday, Oct. 3 from 5-7 p.m.

This is Rorer's first solo show at the gallery, where she has been a member for the past several years, and it will display her intricately detailed and moving works of art, many of which focus on nature and animals.

All are welcome to attend the opening reception and meet with the artist and enjoy friendly fellowship (along with wine and cheese). "Books, Engravings & Drawings" will be on display through the month of October.

For more information about Rorer and her work, visit her website www.theloneoakpress.com.

EQLT to hold harvest dinner on Oct. 5

HARDWICK – East Quabbin Land Trust, 120 Ridge Road, will hold a harvest dinner on Sunday, Oct. 5 from 4-7 p.m. at the Petersham Town Hall, Main Street, Rte. 32, Petersham.

This supper will be to support and to celebrate building improvements at the Petersham Country Store. There will be a silent auction.

Tickets are $35 per person purchased before Sept. 29 or $45 at the door. Children 10 and under are $20. Dinner will be served at 5 p.m.

The menu includes chicken stew with potpie topping (vegetarian option available), roasted harvest vegetables with rice and apple crisp with donated apples form Pease Orchard.

Live music is at 5 p.m. by the Evening Standard Jazz. There is a cash bar with donated beverages from Berkshire Brewing, Red Apple Farm and Stone Cow Brewery.

To purchase tickets online, people may visit https://crm.nonprofiteasy.com/8133/Pages/Events/#/Details/14677//.

Pumpkin patch returns to Federated Church for 8th year

STURBRIDGE – The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale is once again bringing the season to life with its 8th Annual Pumpkin Patch, open now through Thursday, Oct. 31.

The church's front lawn at 8 Maple St., has been transformed into a festive fall destination, filled with pumpkins, gourds, mums, hay bales, corn stalks, and loose hay for scarecrows. You'll also find cookbooks to spark your fall kitchen creativity. Whether you're decorating for Halloween, preparing a cozy harvest table, or just looking for the perfect pumpkin, the Patch has it all.

The Pumpkin Patch will be open Monday–Friday: 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday: 9 a.m.–6 p.m., and Sunday: 11 a.m.–6 p.m. (weather permitting). Payment is easy with cash, credit, Venmo, and PayPal all accepted.

A series of special events will also take place at the Pumpkin Patch throughout the month, including a visit from the Central Mass Plein Air Painters, a group comprised of local artists who enjoy painting live on site, on Saturday, Oct. 4.

The Pumpkin Patch supports the church and local ministries. A portion of proceeds helps the Navajo Nation in Farmington, New Mexico, where the event's supplier, Pumpkins USA, employs more than 700 Native Americans each harvest season and maintains a full-time, 100% Native American staff year-round.

For additional details on the Pumpkin Patch or other upcoming events, visit sturfed.org or contact the church office at 774-304-1021 or churchoffice@sturfed.org.

Home of the Brave 5K returns for 7th year

STURBRIDGE – The Sturbridge Special Events Committee will host the 7th annual Home of the Brave 5K fun walk/run to benefit local veterans on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 8-11 a.m. on the Town Common.

Race entry is $25, with a special military price of $10 for servicemembers. T-shirts are included for those who register by Oct. 27.

The event will be attended by DJ Ellis Cropper and Flutie Star Reagan Bush.

The committee is currently seeking veteran resource vendors, donations for raffles, swag, and event volunteers.

For more information or to register, visit www.5KGPT.com.

East Brookfield library lists upcoming events

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, will host Movie Time on Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m.

Movie Time will be held on Oct. 28, and Nov. 25. Stop by the library with your lunch and enjoy a blockbuster movie and meet new friends.

Adult board games

Join library staff for an afternoon of games and snacks on the first Tuesday of every month at 1 p.m. If you like to play games and want to meet new people from the community, this program is for you.

This program is for adults 18 years or older. Walk-ins are welcome but registration is preferred so staff can plan accordingly for the snacks and number of games.

West Nile Virus confirmed in mosquitoes in Sturbridge

STURBRIDGE – The Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced recently that West Nile virus has been detected in mosquitoes collected from Sturbridge.

In 2024, 8,597 mosquito samples were tested in the Sstate for WNV and 333 samples were positive. Sturbridge had 0 WNV positive mosquito samples identified in 2024.

WNV is most commonly transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquitoes that carry this virus are common throughout the state and are found in urban as well as more rural areas.

While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe infection. By taking a few, common sense precautions, people can help to protect themselves and their loved ones:

Avoid mosquito bites

Apply insect repellent when you go outdoors. Use a repellent with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions on the product label.

DEET products should not be used on infants under 2 months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under 3years of age.

Permethrin products are intended for use on items such as clothing, shoes, bed nets and camping gear and should not be applied to skin.

Clothing can help reduce mosquito bites. Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

Be aware of peak mosquito hours – the hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. When risk is increased, consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning and if you are outdoors at any time and notice mosquitoes around you, take steps to avoid being bitten by moving indoors, covering up and/or wearing repellant.

Mosquito-proof your home

Drain standing water – many mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or getting rid of items that hold water.

Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools and change water in birdbaths frequently.

Install or repair screens – some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all your windows and doors.

While the Sturbridge Health Department continues to work closely with MDPH, MDAR, Central Mass Mosquito Control Project, and other agencies; locally they authorized an insecticide treatment in and around the Breakneck, Mashapaug and South Road areas, Turner and Barn municipal fields, and the school campuses at Burgess Elementary, Tantasqua Regional Junior and Senior High Schools.

The Central Mass Mosquito Control Project also does larvicide treatments and public outreach and education with regards to personal protection against mosquitoes and ticks.

- opinion -

in the Garden by Roberta McQuaid

Live in the moment but plan for winter!!

Hasn't the first week of autumn been beautiful weather-wise? Warm and sunny days will have us completely spoiled!

Summer annuals continue to bloom even as we harvest our pumpkins and corn stalks. But alas, while we are enjoying, we must simultaneously prepare for what inevitably will come.

My big task for today was deconstructing a combination planter so that I could (hopefully) overwinter the summer plants indoors. These included a Hypoestes (Polka dot plant), two Fuchsias, and an Ivy Geranium.

Over the years I've had good luck overwintering regular geraniums, Gerber daisies and fuchsias, but I have never tried ivy geraniums or the finicky polka dot plant. According to my research, ivy geraniums are handled in a similar manner as regular or zonal geraniums.

I typically overwinter them as a houseplant, in a bright sunny window. Sometimes they delight me with flowers through Christmas!

When I was trying to separate the plants from my big planter, though, the amount of roots I was able to get from the ivy geranium was honestly pathetic. The plant looked big enough on top to fit in a ten inch pot, but the root ball, maybe enough roots to fit in a four inch pot.

What am I to do? First thing would be to prune the top growth. So few roots would have a difficult time supporting all of that foliage. I will take off one third to one half of the top growth. And from this foliage, I will take some cuttings.

Regardless of my predicament, cuttings are a good option if you are short on space in front of sunny windows – you can root them in a three or four inch pot placed in indirect light until they begin to grow!

You can also store geranium stock plant out of your living space. Here is how: Cut the plants back to a couple of inches above the crown and set them in the cellar, unheated rooms, enclosed porches or other spaces that don't freeze and aren't too damp. Check them every few weeks and water sparingly if necessary, never letting the soil dry out completely.

When spring comes, gradually begin to introduce sunlight and the plant will commence growth. Once the threat of frost has passed the plants can go outside for the summer months. If last year's potting soil is "exhausted" of nutrients, carefully repot the plant into new soil.

Prune away any weak branches and give it some liquid fertilizer. For this situation, storage temperatures can go as low as 45 to 50 degrees.

My fuchsia extraction went much better than the geranium one did. I have equal roots to foliage and flowers. I am going to try and overwinter this plant in a northeast window, knowing that fuchsias don't like bright sun.

The last time I overwintered one of these I got the plant to live into the late winter, long enough to take a cutting. The offspring thrived! The mother plant looked pretty woody, but apparently, if I had waited a little bit longer and gave it a light fertilization, new supple growth would have ensued.

Live and learn.

Aside from a part sunny window, fuchsias can also be overwintered out of the main living space, following my recommendations above.

The polka dot plant is another story all together. The roots were massive and the top growth the same. Although the plant looked diminutive at purchase, there was no saying that now. It became the "hog" of the pot.

I pruned both the roots and the top growth, cutting it back to healthy growth just a four inches tall, settling on an eight inch pot for the three original cuttings that made up the one plant. I don't have high hopes for overwintering, because, I guess, this plant has always been a finicky one as a seedling in the greenhouse.

It looks dry so you water it, only to find out it has root rot and now you've killed it.

My research indicates that overwintering temperatures should be warmer than what you would use for geraniums or fuchsias. We are talking 65 to 75 degrees. Another point of interest is that the plant likes humidity.

Putting the pot in a tray of wet gravel will provide some humidity to the immediate area and may help, especially since winter air tends to be dry. Indirect light is best for these plants as well. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

Be adventurous, by trying to overwinter some annuals. You just may make it a little easier on your wallet come spring, especially if your favorites are growing strong right in your own house!

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.

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profi les, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, fi nance, 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.

A TURLEY PUBLICATION
www.turley.com

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters
By Russell Gloor

I'm still confused about Medicare Part A and Part B enrollment

Dear Rusty:

I'm 64 and still working full time, and plan to continue working at least until I'm 70 ~ it's a good job, and I enjoy it.

My job comes with health insurance, so I don't really need additional coverage, but I understand I will be required to sign up for Medicare Part A anyway when I turn 65 next year. What I don't understand is Part B: A colleague of mine, who is a little older than I am, said she signed up for Part B because a penalty will be incurred if we wait until we retire from our jobs and actually need the additional insurance. I'm not sure she's right. Can you explain what I should do?

Signed:

Confused About Medicare

Dear Confused:

We're happy to assist you with understanding this. First, enrolling in Medicare Part A (coverage for inpatient hospitalization service) is mandatory to collect Social Security after age 65. If you do not plan to take your Social Security benefits yet, you can defer enrolling in Part A until you claim Social Security. But Medicare Part A is also free to those eligible for Social Security, so there is little reason not to enroll in Part A at age 65 and, when you claim Social Security, you will be automatically enrolled.

Part B, which is coverage for outpatient healthcare services (doctors, medical tests, etc.), is different. Part B is always optional because there is a premium associated with it (standard premium is $185/month in 2025), but nearly everyone over age 65 requires healthcare coverage. If, however, you are employed and have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer ("creditable" is a group plan with more than 20 participants), then you can defer enrolling in Medicare Part B until your creditable employer coverage ends. And you can do so without incurring a "late enrollment penalty" for enrolling in Part B outside of your Initial Enrollment Period. When your creditable coverage from your employer ends, you will enter an 8-month Medicare "Special Enrollment Period,"which permits you to enroll in Part B without penalty.

Thus, as long as your employer coverage is "creditable," you can defer enrolling in Part B without penalty. FYI, you can also enroll in Part B a couple of months prior to your employer coverage ending, asking that your Part B coverage starts when your employer coverage ends, to avoid any gap in healthcare coverage. Note you will likely need your employer to provide you with proof of creditable coverage when you later enroll in Part B.

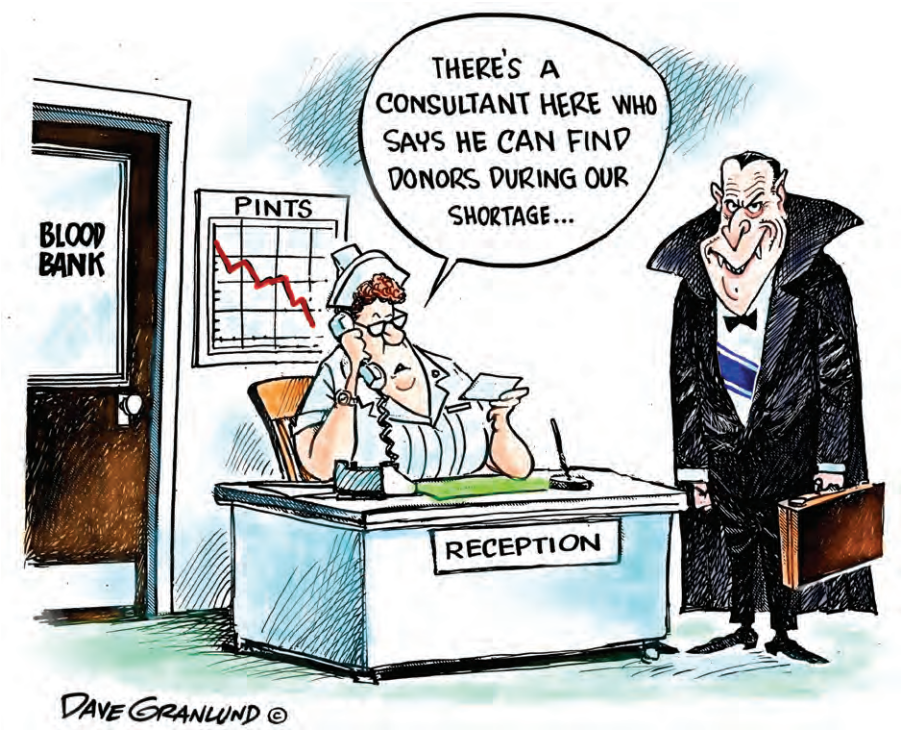
A couple of extra thoughts:

If you require prescription drug coverage when your employer coverage ends after age 65, you only have 63 days to acquire that drug coverage without incurring a "Part D" (drug plan) late enrollment penalty. So, if needed, you should not wait to get insurance coverage for prescription drugs after you employer coverage ends.

If you now have a Health Savings Account through your employer, you should discontinue any HSA contributions well before (perhaps as much as six months before) your enrollment in Medicare Part A. That's because Part A is not considered a "high deductible" insurance plan (a "high deductible" plan is a requirement for having a Health Savings Account). If you do not have an HSA, you need not be concerned about this. If you do, we can also provide you with more info on this.

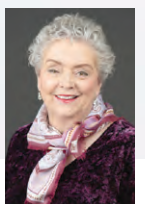
I hope this answers your questions, but we are always here to assist if you need anything further. Contact us at SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org or at(800-750-2622.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



A different kind of concierge medicine

The rise of concierge medicine shows no signs of slowing down. Frustrated with long wait times for appointments, waiting room delays and only brief conversations with their doctor, those who can afford it are shelling out hundreds of dollars each month for faster care and attention, 24-hour access and personalized health programs.

It's understandable that, in our fractured health-care system, people would start looking for alternatives. There are some drawbacks to concierge care, however.

Many don't accept insurance, in order to keep their own costs low. You will still need to pay for insurance in case a serious illness or injury requires hospitalization or a specialist. And not all concierge docs have hospital privileges, which may complicate care coordination – especially important for someone with multiple chronic illnesses.

It's that coordination, or "wraparound care," that sets private patient advocates apart from concierge doctors. Both offer concierge-style service, but a patient advocate goes above and beyond. When you pay for a patient advocate, you can expect them to be there when you need them, anticipate your needs, cut through red tape and run interference with hospitals and insurance companies.

Here are some scenarios where I think the concierge services of a nurse patient advocate may exceed those of concierge doctors.

When an aging loved

See YOUR HEALTH PAGE 8

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- community -

FALL FESTIVAL
FROM PAGE 1

which, ignorant of the lay of the land, we accepted.

We were deposited at the top of the hill, at which point, after meandering around, as there was a lot to see, we asked someone who was in charge and were told that Laurie, with the "beautiful blue eyes" was the one to ask.

Laurie was found at the 50/50 raffle table and when approached as the lady with the stunning eyes, told us "flattery will get you everywhere," and she referred us to Vicky.

Laurie herself, while enthusiastically working at CNEER, is the impresario of Field of Dreams Therapy Farm, LLC, up in Paxton, not too far away. Paxton is close compared to the distances traveled by many other volunteers. Brenda came from Ashburnham, Michelle from Marlboro and Emily from New Hampshire, and many others from all over, but Kori, up from New York City, won the distance crown.

There are no employees in this volunteer driven organization, and the vast enthusiasm was almost palpable. Mark, from Millbury summed up his feelings that CNEER is "a people rescue."

Vicky Barry, was a wealth of information, and though having much to do took time to speak with us. The lady, with her daughter, Betsy Johnson, was the founder of the rescue. Her son, Tom, would also be active this day.

Vicky's prayers for no rain were answered. The showers of the previous days stopped, and the weather would be glorious on Saturday.

A young rider demonstrates her skills during the Fall Festival at the F

Deux Amis et un autre ami. The musicians provided lively entertainment during the event.

Vicky and Betsy began Central New England Equine Rescue in 2003 with two horses. CNEER, Inc. was incorporated in Massachusetts as a 501(c)3 nonprofit in that year. There are stories that pull at the heartstrings such as the forgotten slaughter-bound palomino, Daisy who was covered in manure and cleaned and nursed back to health.

The horses are from everywhere. Vicky adopted Greta, a beautiful black horse near the point of starvation. After two weeks of good food, Greta turned it around.

The term "slaughter-bound" came up a few times regarding what might have been the fate of some of the rescued animals. Horses can be auctioned and sent to slaughterhouses. Here in Massachusetts, horse meat is not found in supermarkets, so where does the product go? The answer was Canada and Mexico.

The stalls in the barn were just about all empty as the horses and donkeys were happily out enjoying each other's company in the paddock.

Attendance continued to grow all through the day. On the side of the barn was a tent with three musicians playing Cajun tunes. The music of Southern Louisiana was being done fluently by a native of Acadiana. Deux Amis is the duo of Sam Politz, from down south, and Betsy Bronstein. They would be accompanied by Marty Ayotte. Sam's button accordion allowed one to imagine they were in Cajun country.

An array of vendors was set up around the yard supplying interesting victuals and products to attendees.

Two expert young horsewomen, Kyley and Riley put on a display of equestrianship in the latter part of the event.

Eventually, it would be time for picking the winners of the raffles. So much had been donated, that it would take some time to go through all prizes. Vicky set to work, and it did take a while, but she was tenacious.

It was quite a day, and all seemed to have a good time, but it did come to an end.

If you want to know more about Central New England Equine Rescue, there is a website, https://centralnewenglandequinerescue.com/ as well as a Facebook page.

Maybe you would like to adopt?

Laurie and Vicky helped sell raffle tickets.

CRAFTERS
FROM PAGE 1

ious knitted and crochet projects Stefanie had done. There were hats, mittens, sweaters, and crochets of dinosaurs and other miniature animals.

One of her proudest projects is a scarf representing the colors of the House Gryffindor from the Harry Potter book series.

Another unique craft spotted at Michaels was terracotta pot designs. These were created by local crafter Denise Senosk of Brookfield who has her own crafting business, Grammy's Gifts.

Senosk has been designing these pots since 2020 and usually shops for the pots at Michaels. The idea of these crafts came from shopping at Michaels and soon Senosk began designing.

The pots are put together and later painted to make familiar characters. There were a lot of Halloween and sports themed pots available at Grammy's Gifts.

The name was inspired by Senosk's grandchildren, and she says she's "a very proud grammy."

There was a cake decorating demonstration provided by Sue Gaulin of Let's Cake Decorate. Gaulin made a pull apart cupcake scarecrow design, which is one of her popular decorating workshops.

Gaulin teaches cake decorating throughout central Massachusetts and enjoys teaching folks how to decorate cakes and cupcakes.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Jones Reith-Lowery and Phineas Reith-Lowery represented Boy Scout Troop 7 and were selling varieties of popcorn to support their Scout fundraiser.

Tricia's Treasures featured jewelry, painted home décor and ceramic pumpkins.

Terracotta pot designs were made by Grammy's Gifts of Brookfield.

For jewelry enthusiasts, Kayleigh Norris and her mother Michelle were crafting jewelry. Norris has been crafting jewelry for over a year and runs Kay's Kreations. The booth had handcrafted jewelry and lip gloss keychains available.

APPLE COUNTRY FAIR
FROM PAGE 1

delicious small-batch treats – perfect for early holiday shopping or treating yourself.

But the fair is more than just shopping – it's a full day of entertainment and activities for all ages. Enjoy live music by local favorites Chuck and Mud and Spooner Well, let the kids enjoy lawn games and face-painting, and dig into delicious bites from a variety of food trucks.

Don't miss the raffle drawings held throughout the day, including a classic 50/50 raffle and chances to win great prizes like family passes to regional museums, gift certificates to local restaurants and shops, and the ever-popular community-stitched quilt.

One favorite Fair activity is the Apple Pie Baking Contest. This contest is open to all bakers, and judged categories include youth and adult age ranges. Dust off your best pie recipe, and bring your handmade classic apple pie to impress the judges and claim your bragging rights. Complete details about the contest can be found at www.facebook.com/applecountryfair01506

Rain or shine, the Apple Country Fair is a cherished Brookfield tradition that not only celebrates the season but gives back – proceeds from the fair help fund local community service projects through grants organized by the Brookfield Community Club, which has been running the event since 1979.

This year, the Brookfield Community Club has been awarded grant money from both the local Brookfield Cultural Council, and the Mass Cultural Council's Creative Experiences program. These funds will be used to help offset the operating costs of the fair, as well as enhance the fair-goers experience.

The Brookfield Community Club is grateful for the members of the Brookfield Cultural Council for the community opportunities and programs offered. They also thank both the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the State Legislature for their strong, bipartisan support for the Mass Cultural Council, and its programs and services in the FY26 state budget.

Mark your calendar, gather your friends and family, and come celebrate fall in Brookfield. For more information visit AppleCountryFair.com.

– community –

Bike House Brewing had a booth and was selling cool merchandise and remaining Common Ground Ciderworks merchandise.

URLEY PHOTO SBY RYAN DRAGO

Fusion Junction was the first band to perform during Fall Family Fun Fest.

FUN FEST FROM PAGE 1

& Friends.

The Fall Family Fun Fest featured several special guests with unique displays and offerings. There was an art raffle and prints of paintings created by Nadia Sukharev of North Brookfield. Sukharev is passionate about creating art and has had the opportunity to share her creations with the community.

Petunia the Clown was dancing around with bubbles.

Sukharev's most recent artwork is a painting of Brookfield Orchard. The painting was being raffled off during the Fall Family Fun Fest to help raise money to support the renovations of the Town House.

In 2023, Sukharev did a painting of the North Brookfield Town House and raised $800. In addition to the painting raffle, Sukharev had prints of her work for sale including smaller prints of the Town House.

Close by was a photography display by Bruce Arnold of North Brookfield. The theme of the display is Infrared Obsessions due to Arnold's use of infrared photography. Arnold also shared that his work is also being exhibited at Rapscallion in Sturbridge.

His favorite photo in the Infrared Obsessions display is a photograph of an old tree off a road in New Braintree. According to Arnold, it is one of the oldest trees in the town, approximately 150 years old.

Arnold says he is "always taking pictures" and will continue to share his photography with the community.

Guests who brought their dogs to the event were able to experience the work of Homestead Farm Nosework. Mary Jo Lavin of Homestead Farm Nosework invited folks and their dogs to try out the game called K9 nosework. K9 nosework is a popular scenting game where dogs use their incredible sense of smell to find hidden objects.

Roxy is a border collie shepherd trying out K9 nose work provided by Homestead Farm Nosework.

Lavin set up the course with various boxes placed on the ground and would drop dog treats in some. The dog's job was to use its nose skills to find them.

Thor is a standard poodle who loves to play his favorite game, K9 nosework according to his owner Lynn.

The Theatre Guild of North Brookfield attended Fall Family Fun Fest to promote their upcoming shows this fall and winter. The guild also had games and animal balloons for kids. Shelley Ingalls of the Theatre Guild went as Petunia the clown and made animal balloons for the kids.

"I like to clown around," Ingalls said.

There were some haunting characters wandering around the grounds of Bike House Brewing, due to the Theatre Guild promoting their upcoming haunted hayride show. Guests will ride on a tractor pulled wagon into the dark and mysterious Brookfield Orchard, the areas most haunted orchard.

A model of the North Brookfield Town House, which held donations during the Fall Family Fun Fest held at Bike House Brewing.

There were haunting characters around Bike House Brewing as the Theatre Guild of North Brookfield promoted their upcoming Haunted Hayride event.

The Haunted Hayride will be held at Brookfield Orchards on the evenings of Friday, Oct. 17 and Saturday, Oct. 18. Tickets are available on www.theatreguildofnorthbrookfield.com.

The Fall Family Fun Fest brought the community together and the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House appreciated the support. More about the organization can be found on nbtownhouse.com.

N BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

town that own their houses, they're basically renting them from the town now to pay their taxes."

The resident asked what the town could do to address this.

Selectmen Vice-Chair Jamie Gilman said the median increase in property values is about 17%. He explained that the town can only increase the tax rate by 2.5%, and the revaluation impacts how this increase is distributed across property owners.

Gilman gave an example showing how those with higher property values would pay more than someone who has a lower property value.

"If my house value went down, per se, and your house value went up, that overall tax burden as a whole gets redistributed," Gilman said.

Gilman said the tax rate has not yet been set to determine the actual cost of property taxes. He said there are also debt exclusions that will impact residents' taxes.

Buzzell said anyone with questions about their property values should stop by the Assessors office or email to make an appointment for a review by the board.

Quarterly billing for water/sewer

The Board of Selectmen discussed the potential of switching to quarterly billing for the Water and Sewer departments.

The Sewer Commissioners said many people in town have difficulty paying larger bills for the utility, and switching to quarterly billing would help to make that payment amount smaller.

"I think it should be done quarterly," Sewer Commissioner Don Smith said.

Another meeting will be set up with the Water and Sewer Commissioners to determine the next steps and if this switch is feasible.

Sewer upgrade and rate increase

Smith said the recent wastewater upgrade will cause the sewer rate to increase in order to pay for the cost of the loans. He said the rates are still one of the lowest among area towns.

The minimum charge for sewer users is $100 and the cost of loan repayment is about $130 per user.

He said the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant was mandatory, and a requirement by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"We have to do what we have to do, to make ends meet," Smith said.

Decorate Our Town Committee

The board appointed Mark Anderson and Leslie Murray to the Decorate Our Town Committee.

Murray said she is a retired schoolteacher, and she is looking forward to helping decorate the town for the holidays. Anderson said he volunteered with the committee last year and he had a great time doing so.

The committee is planning a Christmas event on Saturday, Nov. 29. This event is expected to include a visit from Santa, a parade, a tree lighting, children's games, music provided by a DJ, hot chocolate and refreshments.

National Grid easement

Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said National Grid will be attending the Board of Selectmen's meeting in the future to continue discussion of an easement for a proposed substation at 39 East Brookfield Road.

He said he expects to hear from a representative from the utility company later in the week.

Abatement request

A resident requested a sewer abatement for water used to water his lawn. Petraitis and Gilman said they would have no way to determine how much water was used to water the lawn and how much entered the sewer system.

The resident said he paid the water bill, and said it was "common sense" that not all of the water he used went into the sewer.

Gilman said the sewer bills are based on how much water is used.

"Your sewer bill is based on your water bill," he said.

The resident said the Sewer Commissioners agreed to sign off on the abatement request.

Sewer Commissioner Smith said they have granted abatements for water leaks in the past. Gilman said a leak is a situation, which is beyond the homeowner's control.

"That's a different scenario then what we're talking about here," he said.

Gilman expressed concern about the abatement process, especially with the inclusion of the new finance charge for the cost of the wastewater upgrade loan.

The board voted to reject the abatement request.

Senior Center update

Board of Selectmen Clerk Ralph Kay said they have received good feedback from the Senior Center survey.

He said the Senior Center is also looking for donations of wheelchairs, which he said are "really appreciated."

Kay said the Senior Center will host a flu clinic on Tuesday, Oct. 7 at 9 a.m.

Resignations

The board accepted the resignations of Robert Filipkowski and James Meccariello from the Town Administrator Search Committee.

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SPORTS

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SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

Cougars suffer three straight defeats

WARREN – Last week, the Quaboag Regional High School field hockey suffered a 5-1 defeat against Northbridge.

It was the third straight as they also suffered losses against Nipmuc and Blackstone Valley.

The Cougars are now 2-4-2 on the season. The Cougars will travel to Leicester on Friday, Oct. 3 at 3:30 p.m. On Tuesday, Oct. 7, the Cougars will have a rematch against Nipmuc on the road

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Stephanie Swistak receives a pass.

Jose Hescock keeps the momentum going up the field.

Kynlee Miller makes the backhand stop.

Lexi Kelly makes a defensive play and heads up the field.

Lexi Gauthier makes the stop.

Offense soars in Pathfinder boys soccer win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER—The weather might have been a little bit gloomy last Wednesday afternoon, but it was all sunshine for the Pathfinder Tech boys' varsity soccer team.

Led by senior Adonis Dupre, the Pioneers overcame an early 1-0 deficit to defeat the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School Dragons, 7-1, in a non-league home match.

"They scored an early goal against us, but we weren't really nervous about it," Dupre said. "We were able to take control of the game very quickly after that."

It turned out to be a very memorable afternoon for Dupre, who finished the home contest with a career-high four goals and two assists.

"I've never scored four goals in a game before," said Dupre, who recorded his first hat-trick in another one-sided home match against

See PATHFINDER SOCCER PAGE 8

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Silas Howe sends a pass back.

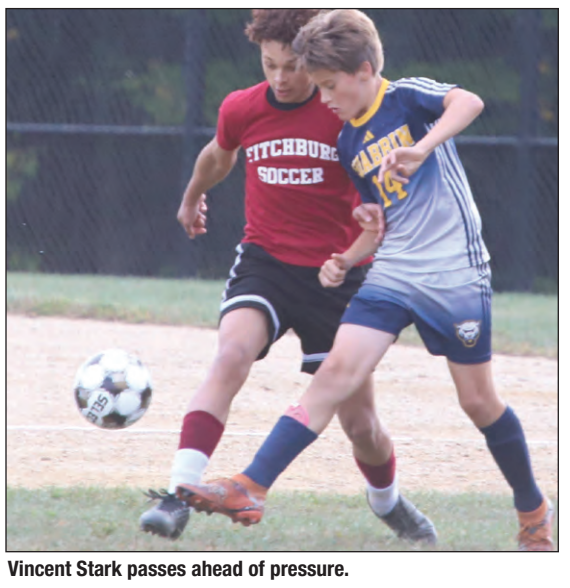
Jacob Blanchard tries to overcome a larger opponent.

Middle school boys soccer hosts Fitchburg

BARRE – Last Monday afternoon, Quabbin Regional Middle School boys soccer had a home game, facing off with Fitchburg. The Panthers will next be in action on Monday, Oct. 6 against Murdock High School on the road at 5 p.m.

Cameron Charpentier makes a stop.

Joseph Haley sends a pass away.



Vincent Stark passes ahead of pressure.

Middle school girls soccer action

BARRE – Last Monday afternoon, Quabbin Regional Middle School girls soccer was in action, facing off with Fitchburg. The Panthers will next be in action on Monday, Oct. 6 against Murdock High School on the road at 4 p.m.

McKenna Rengo sends the ball ahead of an opponent.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Maggie Leander makes a quick pass.

Kayla Despres takes the ball and heads toward the opposite end.

Adalyn McHugh makes her way through a pair of defenders.

Hazel Serra advances forward after evading a defender.

Ayla Clark heads off a defender.

- sports -

Robie and Zullo crowned champs at Monadnock

WINCHESTER, N.H. - Monadnock Speedway closed out its 55th summer of racing Saturday, with a huge crowd cheering as solid car counts in seven unique divisions battled for the final points and bragging rites earned during the long and successful summer of excitement on the high banks of the Great Race Place.

Along with Weekly Racing Series championships and memorable high finishes atop the 2025 divisional points parades to be decided at the speedway;s 2025 season finale at the storied quarter-mile, the Teddy Bear Pools and Spas Triple Crown final event, postponed by rain a week earlier, was at stake too.

Longtime pace truck driver Leo Martin led the All States Material Group 604 Modifieds to the green for the final time Saturday, Andrew Brousseau and Joey Jarvis, both 2025 feature winners, sat up front. But not for long.

Blasting off from fourth on the grid, Leary was in front before lap one was completed, and he'd never look back en route to victory. Having early set fast time with a lap of 12.207 seconds, Leary was untouchable.

Ty Leclerc kept him close until giving way to Robie, who'd started at the back after missing qualifying, on lap 32 but Leary would not be denied. Robie's strong run netted him the 2025 track championship as well the Teddy Bear Pools crown, and Leclerc ended his season in third.

A year ago, Chris Riendeau had a magical season en route to the Monadnock Speedway Super Street championship. This summer, that magic belonged to second-generation ace Dylan Zullo.

Firing from row three in the Twin State Truck Services 50-lap main event, Zullo took the lead from JD Stockwell Saturday and soared off to his sixth win of the season and, with it, his first career track championship. Justin Beecher's runner-up finish earned him the Teddy Bear Pools title, and Stockwell held strong for third.

Cameron Sontag closed out his Fabian Fuels Mini Stock season with a flourish Saturday. Taking the lead from Claremont regular Dick LaMotte on lap 18, the Sterling, Mass. hot shoe outran Jon Fultz to the checkers and his second win of the season.

Fultz's second-place run earned him his first Monadnock track championship and the Teddy Bear Pools & Spas Triple Crown championship, and Julia Kendall was a strong third in the season finale.

Markus O'Neil led early in the Brattleboro Towing and Recovery Pure Stock feature, but he had a swarm of potent challengers flying in his shadow, none more ominous than the dynamic duo of Kyle Kenny and Carlos Grenier as the 20-car field went to war.

Kenny held the deuce spot by lap five, but Grenier had plans of his own. Gordon Farnum's bid for four wins in a row fell by the wayside in a lap-three caution, and Grenier - crowned champion of Claremont's Ridge Runners the night before, took charge on lap 13 and never looked back.

Kenny's second-place finish earned the talented young Green Mountain State pilot his first career track championship, and O'Neil's rock-solid night's work brought him home third, just ahead of Kyle Boniface and Jimmy Zellman. Grenier captured the Teddy Bear Pools & Spas Triple Crown championship.

Travis Hollins earned the 2025 Six Shooter championship by the slimmest of margins. Entering Saturday's season finale, he trailed 2024 champ Michael Yeaton by two points, then pulling even with his heat race win to be dead even as the feature went green.

Hollins led all the way in the Six Shooter main event, holding off the hard charging Yeaton to win his first career championship. With Yeaton second, Josh Brigham was third in Saturday's 25-lapper.

Matt Robinson took the lead on lap 11 of the Pro V8 Sportsman feature and sped off to his first career win on the high banks. Scott Riggleman - a regular at Wall Stadium in New Jersey, was second, and Stephen Dubois came home third. The exciting full-fendered division will compete eight times next summer on the high banks.

Sofia Rego led all the way in the final Doug's Auto Body Young Guns event of the year. It was Rego's fourth victory in the youth division. Maya Bell was second Saturday, and seven-time 2025 winner Hunter Duquette was third, before later scoring a top ten finish in the Pure

Extra roster spots open in fall baseball league

SOUTH HADLEY – The Quabbin Valley Baseball League fall session is underway with just two games played. Due to injuries and other obligations, a small number of roster spots have opened up on teams and the league would like to add a few more players for the remainder of the fall campaign.

Games are Sundays at 10 a.m. for the remainder through Nov. 2. Anyone interested in registering can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org and click on the registration link. There are six games remaining in the season and the fee to play in the remaining games will be prorated for any player who joins. Players looking to join should be age 28 or older.

For more information or to ask any questions, contact Greg Scibelli at GScibelli22@yahoo.com.

PATHFINDER SOCCER
FROM PAGE 7

Drury High School last October. "I'm very grateful to have this opportunity to play for this soccer team."

Dupre is one of the four players listed on the Pathfinder Tech boys' varsity soccer roster who attends Palmer High School, which is located about a mile down the street. They're allowed to play for the Pioneers, who are coached by David Wilson and Joe Bouchie, as part of a co-op.

"I love playing soccer and I wish that we had our own soccer team at Palmer High School, but I'm very thankful for this co-op," added Dupre, who joined the varsity soccer team as a freshman. "When I was a freshman, I didn't realize that Palmer had a co-op with Pathfinder, so I joined the soccer team a couple of games into the season. I've improved a lot during the past four years."

The other three players from Palmer High School listed on this year's Pioneers varsity soccer roster are senior Jaleel Roman, junior Owen Pear, and freshman Abees Castillo-Clotter.

Dupre, Pear, and Roman are the Pioneers captains, along with junior Cayden Bousquet.

While the other three captains were selected by the coaching staff prior to the start of the regular season, Dupre was named as a captain before his team's road match against Bi-County East rival Ware on September 18. That match ended in a 2-2 draw.

During the winter, Dupre is a member of the Palmer boys' varsity basketball team, but soccer has always been his favorite sport.

The home victory against the Dragons improved the Pioneers overall season record to 3-4-1. They had gone 0-3-1 in their previous four matches, which were all played on the road.

The Pioneers have qualified for both the Western Mass. tournament and the Division 5 state tournament each year Dupre that has been a member of the varsity soccer team.

Roman and Matthew Kenyon are the other two seniors listed on the Pioneers roster.

Because the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School doesn't have a girls soccer team there are several girls listed on the boys varsity roster.

The visitors from Hadley took a 1-0 lead during the eighth minute of the opening half when senior Aidan Betournay received a pass from junior Kai Petit-Darling before putting a wide open shot into the right corner of the net past freshman goalie Elijah Hodge, who made three saves.

Hodge was replaced by junior Gavin Peters (2 saves) during the 63rd minute.

In a span of two minutes, the Pioneers went from trailing 1-0 to taking a 3-1 lead.

Dupre began the scoring spree with a shot attempt that deflected off the hands of freshman goalie Grace Rachele (7 saves) into the right corner of the net tying the contest at one.

Junior Brody Wetnicka, who had been a defender, was a starting midfielder for the first time against the Dragons (2-4). He was credited with the assist on Dupre's first goal of the match.

About a minute later, Dupre fired another shot into the back of the net giving his team a 2-1 lead.

Then Castillo-Clotter, who assisted on the Pioneers' second goal, scored the first of his two goals thirty seconds later. Dupre was credited with the assist.

The Dragons had a couple of scoring chances late in the first half, but the Pioneers held a 3-1 halftime advantage.

Castillo-Clotter netted his second goal of the match, which was assisted by junior Ian Sauri-Neves, on a floater that landed in the left corner three minutes into the second half.

Then Dupre delivered a pass to Wetnicka, who blasted a shot into the back of the net extending the Pioneers advantage to 5-1 during the 49th minute. It was also Wetnicka's first goal in a varsity game.

Pathfinder Tech's final two goals of the match were scored by Dupre, who entered this week's action with a team-leading eight goals.

Roman, who assisted on Dupre's final goal, scored four goals in the first eight regular season matches.

- obituaries -

Barbara J. (Meier) Haddock, 94

DEATH NOTICE

Haddock, Barbara J. (Meier)
Died Sept. 19, 2025
Services Oct. 6, 2025

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Barbara J. (Meier) Haddock passed away peacefully on Sept. 19, 2025, surrounded by her family at Quaboag Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center.

Barbara is survived by her husband of 69 years, Charles Haddock; her daughter, Lorraine Sawyer; and two sons, Dennis Haddock and Stewart Haddock and his wife, Patricia. Barbara also leaves behind five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. Her daughter, Cheryl Haddock, predeceased her.

Barbara graduated from Saint Vincent School of Nursing in Staten Island, New York in 1953. She began her nursing career at the New York State Rehabilitation Hospital in Haverstraw, New York.

After her marriage and while she was raising her four children, she worked part-time at Nyack Hospital. The family moved up to Massachusetts in 1969, at which time she helped build and maintain the Long View Motel and Campground in Brimfield, while continuing her nursing career at Harrington Hospital in Southbridge.

She worked for 27 years in ICU/CCU on the midnight shift until her retirement in 1996.

Barbara spent her life caring for people. She was very active in her church, as a member of the Episcopal Women's Club, the Altar Guild, and the choir. She made clam chowder for the annual Red Door Fair, which people still ask for!

Barbara enjoyed traveling the world with her husband, skiing in Switzerland, and their Australia trip were among the highlights. She also enjoyed local trips with friends and family.

Holiday parties were always celebrated at the lake. The neighborhood progressive Christmas dinner party was an annual event for many years.

Family always gathered for Christmas and Fourth of July to spend time with each other. These gatherings were always the best for Barbara; she loved having her family close.

There will be a Memorial Service on Monday, Oct. 6, 2025, at 1 p.m. in Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 135 North Main St., North Brookfield, MA. A Celebration of Life will be held at Bike House Brewery, 31 East Brookfield Road, North Brookfield, MA immediately following the service.

Arrangements are being made with Varnum Funeral Home, West Brookfield.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 135 North Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535.

YOUR HEALTH
FROM PAGE 4

one is on their own: Very often, patient advocates are hired by family members trying to care for an elder who lives far away and may not have family close by. We are their boots on the ground, their eyes and ears, and their go-between with the medical professions caring for their loved one.

When you feel the hospital medical staff isn't hearing you: It's not uncommon for patients and patients' families to feel like their concerns are being overlooked or, worse, dismissed. A medically trained patient advocate speaks the language and can build bridges, mediate conflict and dial back the drama.

When your insurance claim is denied: Insurance documents can be wildly confusing. It helps to have someone on your side who can read through the mumbo-jumbo and explain whether an appeal may be successful. A patient advocate can also help prepare an appeal.

When a "simple" medical procedure turns into a nightmare: One of my clients was a 75-year-old gentleman who developed complications after a procedure. Unfortunately, the hospital and his physicians didn't meet the standard of care, leading him to have a stroke, internal bleeding, dehydration and a host of problems. He became delusional after days in the hospital and was given antipsychotic drugs. I was able to intervene with the care team, and his condition improved.

When a patient isn't ready for discharge: Hospitals very often want to get chronically ill patients out of their beds and into a nursing facility. Sometimes this is the right thing to do, but sometimes it isn't. A nurse patient advocate can evaluate a patient and work with the care team to make sure it's the proper course, and then help with the transition.

When a college student with a medical condition is away from home: It's unlikely that the typical 18- or 19-year-old has the maturity to advocate for themselves in a medical crisis. Parents may not be there to give their student the personal attention they may need to understand their treatment, speak with medical staff and schedule tests and appointments. A patient advocate in the student's location can help.

When there's no one to go with you to a doctor appointment: Doctor appointments these days can feel rushed, and often patients are confused about what they're supposed to do next, what medications are changing and what prescriptions need to be filled. Anyone can accompany you to an appointment to take notes, but if you're on your own, a patient advocate can explain the details.

The most important aspect of a patient advocate's "concierge service" is that they work for the patient, their client – not the hospital, not the insurance company. If you need help, find a board-certified patient advocate in your area by visiting Greater National Advocates (gnanow.org) or the National Association of Healthcare Advocacy (nahac.com).

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, is a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate and founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to Turley Newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com

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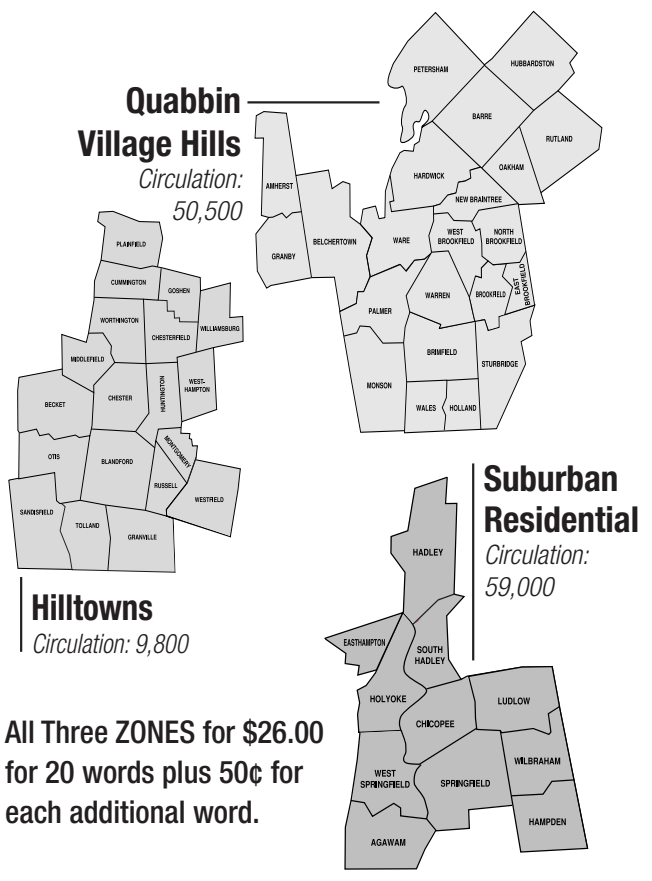

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