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Friday, October 10, 2025

School Committee heard presentation about Crew Program

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Teacher and class advisor Caitlyn Malone gave a presentation about the high school's Crew Program to the School Committee, which she said will help cultivate a culture of belonging for students with the guidance of teachers.

At the Sept. 22 meeting,

she said the Crew Program includes workshops to develop skills, utilizes the Project Adventure program and course, develops student portfolios, as well as uses My Career and Academic Plan and Second Step.

Malone said the Crew Program will also offer students time for reflection.

"Reflections are super, super important with this type of education and thought process," she said.

Malone said they are still in the early stages of rolling out the Crew Program but she plans to have Crew competitions, monthly challenges, Crew "siblings," service projects, off-campus trips and more.

Superintendent's report

Superintendent Timothy McCormick said he is "very pleased" to start the school year with few vacancies, a challenge many school districts faced. He credited the

principals and directors for their hard work to hire staffing.

"We're in a very good spot," he said.

McCormick said the school district is receiving a state grant in the amount of \$40,000 to go toward professional development for the leadership team and data cycles for teachers.

"Looking at all kinds of student data and making sure we're becoming more

of a data-minded school district," he said.

McCormick said the school district will be working with a software company to track attendance and provide real-time feedback. He said the software is also linked to the school district's high school math curriculum.

"What this program will do is guide our teachers and help our students with some in real time supports,"

he said. "It gives students questions, response to their answers, gives them feedback on their answers... it doesn't give them the answers, but it helps support them in their learning." McCormick also noted that he was selected as one of 24 superintendents to serve on the Mass Superintendents Support Network. He said

See NB SCHOOL COMMITTEE PAGE 5



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

The Joshua Hyde Public Library hosted Book Bedazzling in their meeting room last Thursday.

Books get bedazzled at JHPL

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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STURBRIDGE – The Joshua Hyde Public Library hosted a fun tweens and teens craft activity known as Book Bedazzling.

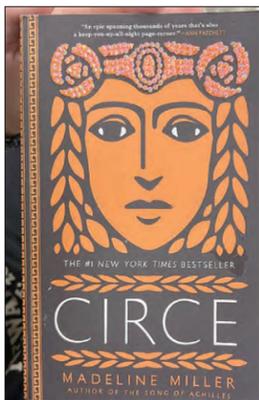
Children's Librarian Meredith Fournier ran the event in the meeting room of the library and had a great turnout of creative teens, tweens, and adults.

The library wanted to offer something appealing for tweens and teens and have a monthly craft on Thurs-

days. Book Bedazzling was a popular trend spotted on TikTok, and it would soon make its way to the Joshua Hyde Public Library for the first time.

This event was part of the monthly craft event Tween Thursdays. Guests got to bring their own books to bedazzle, and the library provided the decorating supplies. For book bedazzling, tweens and teens were using colored gems, craft

See BEDAZZLED PAGE 5



The front illustration of this book got a bedazzled crown.

Fundraiser benefited longtime bowling coach Bob Brown

By Ryan Drago
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EAST BROOKFIELD – Bogey Lanes in East Brookfield hosted a doubles tournament this past weekend to help benefit Bob Brown.

This tournament featured a total of four shifts over the course of two days. The teams could be any doubles combination, men, women, or mixed. A third of each entry went directly to Bob Brown, who is currently going through cancer treatments.

Brown is well known and loved in the candlepin bowling community and has committed many years of coaching the next generation of bowlers.

Brown served as the Director of the Northeast Youth Travel League, which was based out of the Boston area. For years, many youth bowlers who represented Bogey Lanes in East Brookfield traveled to participate in this regional youth league.

Brown, for many years, served as a coach at the Woburn Bowladrome in Wob-



TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Nathan Fontaine warmed up on the lanes prior to bowling in the doubles tournament.

burn, where he also worked. Not only did he stand behind and coach his kids, but he also stopped and offered advice to any youth bowler that wanted it.

"He encouraged all and made them all feel like they belonged," said Christina Halbedel, whose kids bowled in youth programs and saw Brown as a mentor.

One of Halbedel's kids, Aaron Halbedel, works at Bogey Lanes and was run-

ning this tournament to help support Brown and his fight. There were bracelets being sold to help benefit Brown as well and have the statement "Together We Fight" written on them.

In addition to bowling and bracelets, there were raffle prizes available and were part of the benefit for Brown. The event offered a

See BOWLING PAGE 6

Haston library hosted first Author's Roundtable

By Ryan Drago
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library hosted an Author's Roundtable for the first time this past week.

Conducting the roundtable was Diane Buzzell of the Library Board of Trustees, who provided all attendees with a list of questions to address and ask.

Buzzell recently had a book published, "The Artist, the Farmer, the Hunter, and the Good Guy", and admitted she originally never intended to write a book.

Prior to writing, Buzzell used to tell stories to her friends and were about her and her husband Larry Buzzell's family. With many stories shared, one of Buzzell's friends suggested that she should write a book featuring these stories.

Writers of the round table shared their backgrounds on how they got into writing. Several of the writers who

attended focused on various genres and forms of writing.

There were several poets at the author roundtable as well. Larry Buzzell said he got into poetry and enjoys history writing.

Buzzell went over the roundtable questions, beginning with the questions of what made the writers decide to write a book and how long did it take them to write it. The writing process is a long process from start to finish and part of the process is trying to get work published.

Buzzell and the Author's Roundtable then moved on to the publishing questions and if there were any writers who have experienced the publishing process. Buzzell said there are two main avenues a writer can take; publish independently or find an agent.

"Most traditional publishers don't look at a book without an agent," Buzzell said.

See HASTON LIBRARY PAGE 6

North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival for the 27th year

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

It started over a potluck in 1998. Ricky Baruc and wife, Deb Habib, woodworker Jim Fountain and wife Alyssa with neighbor Lydia planned a festival.

From such a small beginning something unique arose.

On Sept. 27 and 28 of this year, The North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival

celebrated 27 years.

Your correspondent was at the first event. It took place after a horrendous rain storm the previous night that did augur well, but the sun came out and the day turned out lovely.

And so, it has gone on.

This year saw beautiful weather and temps that made it seem summery rather than autumnal, and there was not a sweater in

sight.

To those not from the North Franklin County area, the venue might seem out of the way, but the instructions on the website are clear. Carpools and disabled can park at the site. The main parking lot is a seven-minute ride away by shuttle bus. It is an efficient system, with two vehicles constantly picking up and dropping off.

When one exits the bus and comes to the festival entrance, there is another pleasant surprise.

Inflation never stops, and as prices rise for fairs and festivals, the Garlic and Arts Festival holds the line, and is run without corporate sponsorship or sales of alcohol. The adult admission was still \$10. Students and seniors as well as EBT, WIC, and Health Connector customers are charged \$5. Under 12 also \$5. Come on Saturday and that pays for Saturday.

Once in the festival, you notice that it is much the same as other years, but there is always something new.

There is somewhat of a 1960s vibe. One might hesitate to say that as many if not most of the attendees were born well after those years. Still, the counter culture feel is there for everyone.

Rick and Deb have a tent with all things garlic. Their Seeds of Solidarity Educa-

See GARLIC FESTIVAL PAGE 6



TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY

Residents of Wendell took a stand against battery storage farms.

- community -

Fall Maker's Market



Amanda Cardenas of Petals & Loops Shoppe arrived at Oakholm Brewery for the Fall Maker's Market.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Brewery hosted local crafters and artisans

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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BROOKFIELD – It's fall season as Oakholm Brewing Company hosted a fun Fall Maker's Market this past weekend.

The brewery started off the weekend with a market featuring local crafters and artisans who come from various surrounding towns. There were also local farms that attended the market and had various goods for sale.

Deere Creek Farm of Granby attended the market and had fresh flowers, maple syrup, and reusable bags featuring their logo. The farm was opened over five years ago by Naomi and Jon Szymonik.

The farm in Granby is an event space and features livestock, farm stand, raised beef, sugarhouse, pick-your-own flower field, and Christmas trees and wreaths.

Petals & Loops Shoppe is based out of Sturbridge and is operated by Amanda Cardenas, who was running her booth during the maker's market. Cardenas has had this company for 13 years and has been design-



Deere Creek Farm had pure maple syrup available during the Fall Maker's Market.

ing T-shirts for five years. Her booth was covered in beautifully designed tie-dye shirts, specialized prints, and crystal healing candles.

There were two tie-dye shirts Cardenas had that are her most popular items. One says "Stay Trashy" with a raccoon, skunk, and a possum on it wearing sunglasses and the other is a motivational tie-dye shirt with the saying, "Be the Energy you want to attract".

Petals & Loops Shoppe also had bleached flannel shirts available as well.

Brookfield Orchards had a stand during the maker's market. Ginny Sears of Brookfield Orchards said all the goodies from the orchard were available including bread pudding, apple cake, and the famous fudge. A new flavor was avail-



Pumpkin pie themed earrings were made by The Northern Venture.



Fresh flowers were provided by Deere Creek Farm of Granby.

able during the maker's market, dill pickle. Sears said there were plenty of flavors of fudge available and many that are familiar favorites.

"All the favorites," Sears said.

For pets, Willy Bear Designs of Belchertown attended the market and sold handmade scrunchie pet bandanas. There were plenty of pet bandanas available made by Willy Bear De-

signs' owner, Julie Miller.

The Northern Venture of Belchertown had plenty of gorgeous holiday themed jewelry available. For fall, there were slices of pumpkin pie earrings and turkey earrings.

It was beautiful fall day at Oakholm Brewing and guests got to shop at the maker's market for products provided by local farms and artisans.

Inaugural Quabbin Days launches on Oct. 10

BELCHERTOWN – The inaugural Quabbin Days celebration (www.quabbindays.org) will have its official launch ceremony on Friday, Oct. 10 at 10 a.m. at the Quabbin Reservoir Les and Terry Campbell Visitor Center, 100 Winsor Road.

The opening ceremony will feature remarks by Quabbin Region state senators, representatives and other invited guests.

Running Oct. 10-13, at the height of New England's breathtaking foliage season, Quabbin Days is a four-day celebration designed to highlight the natural beauty, cultural heritage, and community spirit of the Quabbin Region. It is a project of the Friends of the Quabbin (www.friendsofquabbin.org) and is being supported through a grant from the Mass Cultural Council's Creative Experiences program.

A celebration of the Quabbin Region

Quabbin Days brings together towns, organizations, and businesses across the region to host activities that showcase what makes this area so unique. From historical tours and outdoor adventures to local arts, food, and culture, the Quabbin Region (www.quabbindays.org/region) offers something for everyone.

Visitors can use the event website, www.QuabbinDays.org, to browse a growing calendar of activities and explore an interactive map to plan their own

adventures. Participation is open and flexible, and any town, business, or community group can add an event to the lineup.

History and inspiration

The Quabbin Reservoir, created in the 1930s, is one of the largest man-made public water supplies in the United States. Today, it provides pristine drinking water to 2.7 million people, primarily in the Metro Boston area, while serving as a haven for wildlife and outdoor recreation.

Managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, the Quabbin Reservoir and its surrounding lands stand as a model of conservation.

For hikers, anglers, nature photographers, and history enthusiasts, Quabbin Days is an invitation to experience this extraordinary landscape at its most vibrant.

For the full schedule of events, visit www.QuabbinDays.org.

About the Friends of the Quabbin

The Friends of the Quabbin (www.friendsofquabbin.org) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the natural, cultural, and historical significance of the Quabbin Region. Through advocacy, education, and community partnerships, the organization works to protect the watershed and share its stories with future generations.

Pumpkin patch returns to Federated Church

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 Plain 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.

Registration open for EQLT's Station Loop Ramble

NEW BRAINTREE – The East Quabbin Land Trust will hold 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. En-

try 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.

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- community -

Mystics & Makers: The Enchanted Market is Oct. 12

BROOKFIELD – Brookfield will soon be buzzing with magic, community, and creativity as Mystics & Makers: The Enchanted Market makes its debut on Sunday, Oct. 12 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Brookfield Rod & Gun Club, 56 Webber Road.

This unique event brings together artisans, healers, psychic readers, and craft makers from across the region for a full day of mystical shopping, holistic experiences, and community connection.

The Enchanted Market is the vision of two local business owners, Candace Ouillette Gaumond of Spiritology by Candace and Lauren Ayer of Lulu's AvalonRose Cottage. Together, they wanted to create an event that would showcase the talents of local craft makers, healers, psychics

and herbalists while also offering a space for spiritual exploration and soulful connection.

"Brookfield and the surrounding communities have such a wonderful community spirit, and we wanted to bring something magical to the area," said Gaumond, who offers Reiki, shamanic and sound healing, psychic mediumship, and spiritual guidance through her practice, Spiritology by Candace. "The Enchanted Market is about supporting local artisans, herbalists, psychics and healers, but also about bringing people together to celebrate creativity and wellness."

Ayer, owner of Lulu's AvalonRose Cottage, echoed the sentiment: "This event is a true labor of love. We've gathered an incredible variety of vendors, from handcrafted jewelry

and herbal products to tarot readings, energy healing, and unique mystical gifts. We hope people come not just to shop, but to experience the magic and community we're creating."

Visitors can expect more than 25 vendors offering handmade goods, mystical services, and spiritual tools, as well as opportunities to receive intuitive readings and healing sessions. Food and refreshments will also be available on-site, making it a perfect day trip for families, friends, and seekers alike.

Admission to the Mystics & Makers: The Enchanted Market is free and open to the public.

For more information about the event, contact Spiritology by Candace at 413-537-5715 or Lulu's AvalonRose Cottage at 774-745-8550.

First ever poetry contest open to Worcester County residents

The Bill Tremblay Poetry Prize will be awarded during the Jacob Edward Annual Poetry Contest

SOUTHBRIDGE – The Jacob Edward Annual Poetry Contest: The Bill Tremblay Poetry Prize is open to all members, Worcester County current and former residents and students, and employees of Worcester County businesses.

Winning poems and poets are honored with a winners' reading, including a brief reading by Bill Tremblay, to be held on Jan. 29, 2026.

To enter the Jacob Edward Library annual poetry contest, you must be either a resident of Worcester County, or a student or employee of institutions within Worcester County. First Place winners of previous JEL annual poetry contests are not eligible to enter.

Submissions will open

on Oct. 1 and close on Nov. 28 for the inaugural Annual Contest. No poems will be considered with a postmark later than Nov. 28.

Contest guidelines

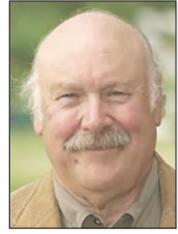
Poems must be the entrant's original work in English and must not be previously published. Poems composed using AI will not be accepted.

Submit no more than three poems in any form.

Paper submissions must not be stapled or attached in any way and poems must be formatted for 8 1/2 inch x 11 inch paper.

Do not put your name on the individual poems; entrants will be judged anonymously. Include a cover sheet with your name, address, telephone number, email address, and the title of each poem.

Submissions should be mailed to: Bill Tremblay Poetry Prize, c/o Jacob Edwards Library, 236 Main



Bill Tremblay

St., Southbridge, MA 01550. Submissions will not be returned.

Winners will be listed on the JEL website and announced via the library's Instagram and Facebook pages.

Entry fee

There is a modest entry fee of \$10 to submit. Checks or money orders only made out to the Jacob Edwards Library, please. Please note the submission or the contest fee on the check or money order.

Judging and awards

First Place is a \$100 prize; Second Place, \$75; and Third Place, \$50. Winning poets will also receive a signed copy of Bill Tremblay's book, "Southbridge: My Triggering Town".

Contest winners will be announced in December 2025. The Winners' Reading & Award Reception will be on Jan. 29, 2026 at the Jacob Edwards Library, at 6:30 p.m.

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 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 homemade 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.

Jeff Belanger explores the unexplained on Oct. 16

WARREN – The Warren Public Library will sponsor a multi-media experience presented by Jeff Belanger – a noted storyteller and researcher of lore and legends on Thursday, Oct. 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Warren Senior Center, 2252 Main St., West Warren.

Prepare to explore the unexplained with Belanger, the host, writer, and producer of the New England Legends series on PBS and is the author of over a dozen books. He also hosts the popular New England Legends weekly podcast.

This event is free. Sponsored by the Warren Public Library with a grant from the Warren Cultural Council and the MA Cultural Council

QHS sponsors program on history of apples

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Quaboag Historical Society is pleased to sponsor a free talk by Christie Higginbottom, a horticultural historian and former noted plant expert at Old Sturbridge Village, entitled "An Infinite Variety of Fruit: Historic New England Apples."

This presentation will take place at the West Brookfield Senior Center, located at 73 Central St., on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 1 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. Higginbottom's talk

will focus on the 19th-century history of apples in New England. Hundreds of varieties originated in historic orchards throughout the area and had evocative names such as Westfield Seek-No-Further, Sheepnose, and Maiden's Blush.

Come by and learn about the history of heirloom apples and sample some unique varieties.

The QHS is dedicated to promoting and sharing local history through talks, events, and activities. The QHS museum is also a wonder-

ful place to learn about the six towns in the Plantation, which include East Brookfield, Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, Warren, and New Braintree.

The organization always welcomes local historians and specialists to share their knowledge and ideas so that they can build stronger community connections through a shared history.

Please register for the event by contacting Ed Londergan at ed.londergan@gmail.com or 508-864-8685.

Benefit spaghetti dinner will be held Oct. 25

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Knights of Columbus Council 11080 and the Mary Martha Sodality are sponsoring a Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, Oct. 25 in Dugan Hall, Sacred Heart Church, 10 Milk St.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the Blessed Carlo Acutis Parish. Dinner includes pasta fagioli, garden

salad, meatballs and sausage, spaghetti and sauce, Italian bread, dessert, water, soda, and coffee.

Cost is a \$15 donation and \$10 for children under 12 years old. Take-out is available at 6 p.m. and sit-down dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. Admission tickets are also good for entry for a special door prize.

Raffle tickets for a 50/50 Raffle and more will be available. Advance ticket purchase is encouraged and appreciated. Tickets are available from any Knight or Sodality member or by calling 413-813-8100 or by emailing wallyconnor122@gmail.com. Tickets will only be available at the door while they last.

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- opinion -



How do I apply for Social Security and receive my payments?

Dear Rusty:
I'm ready to apply for my Social Security benefits, and I'm aware of how my benefits are calculated. What I would like to know about is how the application process actually works and how my benefits are received.
Signed: Ready to Collect

Dear Ready to Collect:
Essentially, you have two main options for applying for Social Security benefits, and also two separate options for receiving your payments:

To apply for benefits, you can either contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to make a telephone appointment to complete your application while speaking to an SSA representative on the phone or you can submit your application for SS benefits online.

When using the telephone option, you will be guided by an SSA agent while completing your application and can discuss your benefit options directly with that agent, just be sure to be available to receive SSA's call at the scheduled time. You can also make an appointment by calling your local SS field office directly get the number for your local SS office at this link: www.ssa.gov/locator. It is not usually necessary to visit your local SSA office in person to apply.

If you are reasonably proficient with computers, you can, instead, apply on-

line, but you will first need to create your personal SSA account online at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Once you have your personal account set up, you will be able to see your estimated benefit amount at different claim ages, which should help you decide when it is best to apply. Here is a short video which explains the process for applying for benefits online: https://www.ssa.gov/hlp/video/iclaim_r01.htm.

If applying online, you can start your online application at www.ssa.gov/apply and re-access it multiple times as needed until you are ready to submit it; just be sure to write down the "reentry code," which is provided when you begin your online application.

When you are ready to submit the application, just select "Submit" and your application will be sent to SSA's application processing unit for review. They will contact you if there are any questions about your application or if any additional documentation is needed. Note that it typically takes a couple of months for your payments to start and note that payment is made in the month following the month earned. For example, if you begin your benefits in August your first payment will be received in September on either the second, third or fourth Wednesday of each month thereafter, depending on your birthday.

For receiving your monthly SS payments: you

will (on you application) be able to specify how you wish your monthly payments to be made. The preferred option used by most beneficiaries is to have your monthly Social Security payment deposited into a financial (e.g., bank) account, details for which you will specify when applying. However, you can also choose to receive your monthly payments in the form of a debit card called "Direct Express," which will be replenished monthly. If you choose to have your payment deposited in your bank account, be sure to have your bank account information ready when you apply. Note that Social Security no longer issues payments via printed checks except in rare circumstances.

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.



By Ellenor Downer



Red-bellied woodpecker

On Sept. 30, I saw two red-bellied woodpeckers fly from one tree to another.

Since I do not feed the birds suet or seeds until winter due to bears, I had not noticed them before. The red-bellied woodpecker has a black and white barred back and a pale belly. Males have a red crown and nape and the females have just a red nape, but no crown.

These woodpeckers cling to tree bark and use their stiff tail feathers for support while they probe into the bark for insects. White is visible on their wings in flight. They are about nine inches long, the same size as the hairy woodpecker.

Like other woodpeckers, they have an undulating flight. They pick at the bark rather than drill into it like many other woodpeckers. They inhabit woodlands and forests from old stands of oak and hickory to young hardwoods and pines. They also appear at backyard feeders especially for suet.

They nest in a cavity excavated in dead wood. Males may begin cavity excavation with the female selecting one of the holes and completing it. The female lays two to six eggs. There most common call is a shrill rolling "kwirr" or "churr" given by both sexes. They also make a "cha cha cha" sound.

Helping birds

Another way to help birds is to plant native trees, shrubs and plants in ones yard. Many provide a food source and others become a nesting site or shelter. Leaving a section of yard not mowed and letting it "run wild" also attracts birds, but provides food, nesting sites and shelter. Putting out bird feeders and water sources also bring birds to one's yard, but they also attract black bears and other unwanted visitors.

Blue jays

I heard blue jays squawking away on Sept. 30. I looked toward the noise and saw four blue jays flitting about among the trees. They were near a winter feeding spot. In winter, I put out shelled peanuts, which is a favorite of blue jays and tufted titmice to name a few. The first year I fed peanuts, I put out unshelled peanuts. They make a mess with the peanut husks, but I enjoyed watching them fly off with a whole peanut and opening it

to get the peanuts inside.

Brimfield birds

A Brimfield birder, who emails regularly said, "In the yard most summer visitors have headed south but catbirds are still around and a couple of male towhees were seen last week. Also a male and female common yellowthroat visited the bird bath."

He said, "I filled the hummingbird feeders last week but haven't seen a hummingbird in several days and the feeders haven't been used much because they are still almost full."

He reported he had to take down my feeders because bear were visiting during the day. He had planted a couple dozen sunflowers in the yard and last week he cut the seed heads off and hung them in the garage to dry. He attached a few of the seed heads to the poles where he hangs his bird feeders. A pair of cardinals, at least three titmice and a black capped chickadee came for the seeds.

Trip to Norwottuck Rail Trail

The Brimfield resident in his email of Sept. 30 said, "Last Saturday a friend and I spent a couple of hours walking on the Norwottuck Rail Trail, Station Road in Amherst. It was a beautiful day to be out and about. We didn't see song birds but a few ducks, a couple of great blue herons, three green herons (good looks at one quite close) and one horned grebe. A pair of beaver were out enjoying the nice day and we got good looks at them. A few people walking the trail had never seen beavers before and were quite excited and asked lots of questions. Do they eat fish?"

Warren ponds

The Brimfield resident frequently visits ponds in Warren. He saw a bald eagle one day and yesterday (Sept. 29) in addition to three great blue herons I saw a northern harrier and two male turkeys.

Trail camera

The Brimfield resident said in his email, "The trail camera near the bird bath captured a visit by a bear one night. Three days later a bear visited again and chewed open a pumpkin and ate the seeds and then went to one of the poles with sunflower seed heads and knocked the pole down. It didn't bother another pole with seed heads."

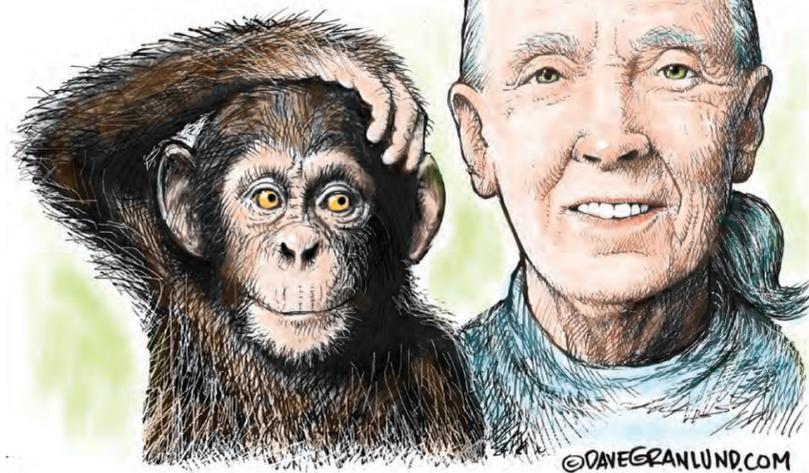
People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

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As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a "people news" form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content.

For more information, or to submit people or milestone news for the Quaboag Current, please email pouimette@turley.com.

Jane Goodall
1934 - 2025



LETTER TO EDITOR

Second Chance thanks community for support

Dear Editor,
On behalf of all of us at Second Chance Animal Services, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who made the 13th Annual Cruise for Critters such a tremendous success.

It was a beautiful day, and thanks to the dedication of Al Widlan's Service Connection, who organizes this event each year, and the incredible support of our community, we celebrated a record-breaking turnout with 151 cars on display.

We are so thankful to

Westview Farms Creamery for welcoming us back again this year, to the Barberic Band for keeping the crowd entertained all day, and to K-9 & Pets Dog Training for their amazing demo with the Amherst and Leicester K-9s.

A big thank you also goes out to the vendors and volunteers who gave their time to help make the day run so smoothly.

Most of all, we're grateful to the car owners, families, and pet lovers who came out to be part of this special day. Because of you, every car entry, every pur-

chase, and every donation will go right to helping pets in need get the care and second chances they deserve.

We would also like to recognize our generous sponsors, including Embie Industries, Ted and Barbara Hebert of Teddy Bear Pools & Spas, and TRM Knives. Your partnership helped make this year's Cruise for Critters our best yet.

With deepest gratitude,
Lindsay Doray
Chief Development
Officer Second Chance
Animal Services

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Quaboag Current

- community -

Haston library lists October events

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library, 161 North Main St., lists upcoming events and programs for the month of October

New England Ghosts

Jonah Knight and the Haston Library present New England Ghosts on Monday, Oct. 20 at 5:30 p.m. “New England Ghosts” is a one-hour, interactive presentation by award-winning writer and performer Knight.

The program weaves together legends of ghosts and unexplained phenomena from every New England state. You’ll hear chilling tales, learn the history behind each one, and experience paranormal effects designed to bring the stories to life.

The show is perfect for history buffs, ghost story fans, and anyone curious about the unexplained. It’s more than a just a spooky show, it’s a bridge: history + mystery + local curiosity. Designed not just to entertain, but to encourage attendees to dive deeper into our region’s stories and our library’s collections.

This is a free event and registration is required.

Adult craft night

Make an autumn wreath during the adult craft night on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 6 p.m. Registration is required.

Book group

A book group discussion of “Sing, Unburied, Sing” by Jesmyn Ward will be held on Thursday, Oct. 28 at 7 p.m.

“Cook the Book” Club

“Cook the Book” Club will meet on Thursday, Oct. 30 at 5:30 p.m. Select a recipe from this month’s featured cookbook (available at the circulation desk), cook it up and bring it to the potluck and discussion.

Haston Haunted House

The library will be hosting the Haston Haunted House at a date and time to be announced later. There will be a child friendly floor, refreshments, tarot readings, and more. Wear your costume and volunteer to set up or scare.

Please register for programs by calling the library at 508-867-0208 or by emailing hastonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com.

Electronics recycling event October 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 elec-

tronics.

For \$10 – small household appliances, vacuum cleaners/RoboVac, 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 greendayrecyclingma@gmail.com

BEDAZZLED FROM PAGE 1

glue, and applicator pens to help place the gems carefully on the cover of the book.

This fun activity not only brought tweens and teens to the library, but the adults got involved too. Fournier was pleased to see both kids and adults enjoy the craft and have bedazzled books to take home.

“It’s fun and its creative,” Fournier said.

There was one book with the cover featuring an illustration of a character wearing a crown. The crafter added gems to make the crown bedazzle. Lillian, age 10, brought a copy of one of the Harry Potter books, “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince”, and did an amazing job adding bedazzling gems to the title of the book. The name “Harry Potter” was bedazzled with various colored gems.



Lillian is shown with her bedazzled copy of “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince”.

The Joshua Hyde Public Library is looking forward to celebrating Halloween with a variety of events happening this year. On Oct. 30, crafters will be making creepy eyeballs out of needle and wool felting.

On Oct. 24, the library will be hosting a cemetery scav-

enger hunt at the Old Burial Ground across the street. The themes of the scavenger hunt are based off the burial ground itself.

The Joshua Hyde Public Library is located at 306 Main St. For more activities at the library, visit www.sturbridgelibrary.org.

MWCC lists Class of 2025 nursing graduates

GARDNER – On May 15, Mount Wachusett Community College celebrated the accomplishments of its Class of 2025 Associate Degree in nursing graduates at their traditional pinning ceremony.

The pinning ceremony, held at Mount Fitness on the Gardner campus, marks a significant milestone in the journey of these dedicated nursing students as they transition from academic preparation to professional practice. Fifty-eight graduates were pinned. Among the 58 graduates was Erin Rose Shea of East Brookfield.

Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences and MWCC Alumna Kim Shea welcomed guests and congratulated students saying, “To-

day is a day of celebration and recognition of your perseverance, resilience, and unwavering dedication. Over the past two years, you have taken one of the most rigorous and demanding programs in higher ed. The curriculum challenged you; the clinical hours stretched you; and the exams tested every ounce of your knowledge and determination. Through every triumph and trial, you were never alone, we saw your strength and we saw you. You gave grace to one another and you led with compassion. You fought for this and you won.”

The ceremony, attended by faculty, staff, families, and friends, highlighted the dedication, hard work, and resilience of the graduates throughout their nursing

education. Each graduate was individually recognized and presented with a nursing pin, symbolizing their readiness to uphold the highest standards of patient care, compassion and professionalism. The students shared words of thanks with those who supported them through their education.

The Class of 2025 Associate Degree in Nursing graduates were supported by clinical partners AdCare Hospital, Baldwinville Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Clearbrook Treatment Center, Heywood Hospital, Seven Hills, Tara Vista Behavioral Health, The Highlands, UMass Memorial Health Alliance Clinton-Leominster Hospital, and UMass Memorial Medical Center.

NB SCHOOL COMMITTEE FROM PAGE 1

each month, the network meets and works through issues.

“It’s another way for us to kind of be connected with members of other communities in the state, and also for me to have some thought partners when issues come up that I don’t have the answer to,” he said.

McCormick said the school district received 31 robot kits for elementary students from True Robotics, a Worcester-based company. He said the middle and high schools have their own robotics kit already.

Vocational school policy

McCormick said this past spring, the commonwealth passed new regulations regarding the lottery system for vocational schools.

“They want a clear policy,” he said.

McCormick said things won’t really change from what the school district is doing right now. He said receiving vocational school, Bay Path, will continue to fund a bus to pick up any interested North Brookfield students to provide them with a tour of the vocational school and its programs.

He said the school district will continue to support equitable access to vocational schooling for students.

Administrators’ reports

Elementary School Principal Arthur Murphy said Measures of Academic Progress testing was held Sept. 22-Oct. 2. He said the testing measures student achievement and growth in the areas of reading, math, language usage and science.

“These tests are used by schools to gather data,” he said.

Murphy said students will also be tested in the winter

and spring to track patterns and trends from the fall test.

Murphy said the school continues to partner with Novak Education for the implementation of the Universal Design for Learning framework.

“UDL is a standards-based curriculum framework that ensures that all students have options and choices for learning,” he said.

High School Principal Brian Beck said the 10th and 11th grade students attended a college fair held at Mount Wachusett Community College and the ninth graders attended the Mass Makers Innovation Challenge at the Basketball Hall of Fame.

Beck said there are currently 30 students in the high school’s band program and the donation of musical instruments would be beneficial to increase the band’s inventory.

“There are a lot of people who have instruments lying around in their house...and they can put it to good use passing it on,” he said.

Director of Student Services Dr. Michael Baldassarre said grant applications were submitted and the school district was successfully awarded its allocations for the school year.

Baldassarre said he is part of a regional collaboration of special education directors working to improve transportation for students.

He said the students in town are picked up by one van company to transport them to out of district placements. He said it may be possible to share resources with other districts that are transporting students to the same locations.

“We might be able to save some of our resources and reallocate them toward other needs and support services, basically to the benefit of the

students,” he said.

Baldassarre said the school district has two audits taking place this year, including the English Learner Program and the Special Education Program. He said the school district will also have a visit from the Department of Education in January 2026.

“There’s a lot of preparation that goes into that,” Baldassarre said.

Task force update

School Committee member Matt Grant said the tuition agreement task force met on Sept. 3 to review the cost of tuitioning out to other school districts. He said the task force also spoke with a representative from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Grant said the task force expects to present its final report to the School Committee in October.

Student Council update

Student Representative Noah Gillette spoke about the sixth grade orientation,

which was held at the end of August.

“We invited the upcoming sixth graders to an orientation...to show them around the high school, teach them how to open their lockers and teach them about their schedule as well as answering questions they may have about what school’s like in this building,” Gillette said.

He said the annual activities fair was held for high school students to sign up for clubs and sports, as well as create clubs students would like to see.

A homecoming dance was held for students in grades nine-12, and included pizza, snacks and ice cream. Homecoming continued with a Spirit Week held Sept. 22-26.

Class elections were scheduled to be held during the first week of October.

Gillette invited all community members to follow the Student Council on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. Meetings are open to the public and held every

other Monday, starting on Sept. 29, in the high school kiva from 6-7:30 p.m.

“Please feel free to join us if you have anything you would like to discuss or just like to see how things are run,” he said.

Financial report

McCormick reported three financial transfers to the committee. The transfers moved money from the General Fund to the Athletic Revolving account in the amount of \$27; to Grant 309, \$1,320; and Rural School Aid, \$26,056.01.

McCormick said the reason the transfer to Rural School Aid was so high was because the school district had not set up a Rural School Aid fund yet.

“It is now set up and we’re accessing that money to offset parts of the budget that we had talked about going back to last spring,” he said.

Reorganization

The committee reorganized with Grant appointed to serve as chair; Tim Cana-

da as vice-chair; and Kristen Giangrande as secretary.

Canada and Woodward will serve on the Policy Subcommittee, Grant and Giangrande will serve on the Curriculum Subcommittee, Dan Riendeau and Giangrande on the Building and Grounds Subcommittee and Canada and Grant on the Negotiations Subcommittee.

Recognitions

McCormick and Murphy recognized Kelly Cederlund for her efforts to organize and run the book fair this year.

“Every year we have a different parent who kind of organizes the event,” McCormick said.

McCormick said Cederlund “did a fantastic job” to organize the book fair, which was well attended and successful. Murphy said the book fair earns the school “Scholastic Bucks” which can be used to purchase books to enhance classroom libraries.



Saturday, October 11th 7pm-11pm
A.S.B.

EVERY SUNDAY 5:30pm
LUCK OF THE DRAW Darts All Welcome

Friday Nights ~ 8pm-11pm
Karaoke Saturday Nights also if no band

Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 25th
7pm-11pm
Caboodle

Friday, October 31st 7pm-11pm
- HALLOWEEN PARTY -
Uncle Country

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- community -

BOWLING FROM PAGE 1

basket raffle with a total of five prizes and a 50/50 raffle. Many of the prizes were donated by members of Brown's family.

Over by the raffle tickets and prizes was a bright orange T-shirt that reads "Split Happens" with candlepin bowling pins on each side, making up a split. Participants of the tournament got to sign the shirt and then Halbedel would have the shirt sent to Brown as a gift.

Fifteen teams participated in this benefit tournament and the winner of the



A "Split Happens" T-shirt for Bob Brown was signed by many participants of the Any Doubles Tournament Fundraiser.

tournament was the doubles team of Tammy and Keith Butler with a combined score of 1249. In second place was the team of Ken

Halbedel Sr. and Aaron Halbedel with a combined score of 1241. In third place was the team of Amber and Evan Mazzaferro with a



Bogey Lanes in East Brookfield had a basket raffle and 50/50 raffle available during a benefit tournament to support Bob Brown.

1225. Between the raffles, bowling, and the bracelets, the event raised over \$2,400 to help benefit Brown. Halbe-

del sent out a message to the candlepin bowling community expressing thanks for the support and helping with raising money to sup-

port Brown. "Thank you to everyone who came out this weekend," said Halbedel. "Was definitely a success."

GARLIC FESTIVAL FROM PAGE 1

tion Center has the ethos of "Grow Food Everywhere."

Most of the old food vendors are back, but there are some new ones. No one needs to stare.

Wandering around the grounds, one comes across well-known vendors and exhibitors, some that are new and others that are old friends.

There is White Buffalo Herbs, down from Warwick. Carol Joyce is a community herbalist with vast knowledge. If you have it, she treats it.

Continuing to meander, there was a booth where a couple was going about bringing something from the past into the future. The American Chestnut was



The Moon Shells performed during the festival.

near extinction, but valiant efforts to save it have long been ongoing. Lois and Dennis Melican were at the festival to spread the word. There are lovely trees in New England, but the return of a beautiful native would be

welcome. Fortunate were we to arrive at the table of Sam Scherer. After a teaching career, he learned to turn wood into bowls on a lathe from mentors, and is himself an accomplished artisan, but it is his manner of interacting with customers and friends that captivates festival goers.

In front of Sam's booth was a field with children playing hula hoops, a festival tradition provided by Shenandoah of "Alotta Hoopla."

Catching the eye was a booth with the logo, New England Mineral Extractor. The name sounded a bit industrial for Garlic and Arts. Nope, it was not some huge machine digging into the ground to haul out interest-

ing crystals. Rather, Jason James and wife search info from geographic databases such as Mindat.com and then go and dig up the intriguing specimens.

Rambling along, there is the Portal to the Future. Enter and you won't all of a sudden see your great great grandkids, but a metaphorical distance where "art, food, small-scale farming, renewable energy, smart transportation, care for the land, and hand skills all contribute to community-building and local resilience."

EVs from cars to tractors, solar info and garlic ice cream from Batch were all there.

There was a wonderful discussion about pollinators with Grow Native Massachusetts Executive Director Heather Pruisksma, and Pollinator Advocate Heidi Dollard. In the Portal to the Future, pollinator insects and birds on our plants better be forever.



The Seeds of Solidarity logo.



A wall of garlic was displayed at the 27th annual North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival.

Out of the Portal and up the hill to listen to poets and performers at the Spoken Word stage. Then over to the band stand where the Moon Shells were performing.

Still there was much more

to see and experience, but there is never enough time.

Oh well, The North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival 2026 is less than a year away.



There were many varieties of garlic to try.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10		
11					12				13		14		
15									16		17		
	18				19				20		21		
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47	48				49				50	51	52	53	54
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59					60					61			
62					63						64		

CLUES ACROSS

- Comedic actor Rogen
- Bits per inch
- Tire pressure measurement
- Angels great Mike
- Own (Scottish)
- Notable FI racing team
- Upper bract of grass
- Tax collector
- Electronic counter-countermeasures
- Informal loan clubs
- Skeletal muscle
- Popular fish type
- Salts of acetic acid
- Arriving early
- Worded
- Single Lens Reflex
- Amphibians
- Warm greeting

CLUES DOWN

- Engine additive
- Amounts of time
- Fragrant brown balsam used in perfume
- Color properties
- One who hands over
- Thieves of the sea
- Put in
- Nocturnal rodents
- Pouches
- Systems, doctrines, theories
- Greek alphabet letter
- Greek goddess of youth
- Satisfy
- Partly digested food
- Dictator
- Parts per thousand (abbr.)
- Tall, slender-leaved plant

CLUES DOWN

- A major division of geological time
- Angry
- St. Francis of
- Romanian monetary unit
- Stale
- Go quickly
- Commercials
- Canadian city
- One who slices
- Perform perfectly
- Nest of pheasants
- Tactile sensations
- Sword
- Climactic
- Adrenocorticotrophin
- Fisherman's tool
- Swiss river
- Plant that makes gum
- A French abbot
- One point east of northeast
- Get free of

HASTON LIBRARY FROM PAGE 1

For improvements to writing, Buzzell did recommend Grammarly or any related autocorrect system. Buzzell said Grammarly was helpful.

There was also a discussion on vanity publishing that helps with editing, layout, and cover of the book. Buzzell did mention publishing through Amazon and their designs on books are simple.

Buzzell brought her book to share that is over 400 pages and features a lot of pictures. According to Buzzell, pictures are helpful to include in a book.

Several poets attended the first Author's Roundtable and were excited to find out that there is a poetry book at the Haston Free Library featuring various poems.

The book is called "North

Brookfield's Favorite Poems" and it features members of the community sharing their favorite poems they've ever read, or poems written by local writers. Larry Buzzell found one of his favorite poems that was about his granddaughter. The poem was read out loud and guests enjoyed hearing it as Diane Buzzell read it aloud.

Another topic addressed is the idea of launching a book. Many writers tried to find ways to promote their stories and Buzzell mentioned a website or a Facebook Page. Another idea is for writers to start an email list.

What the Author Roundtable wanted to address most importantly is the threat of scams. They are out there and Buzzell mentioned they can be identified. Speaking from experience, Buzzell has

had fake phone calls and emails cross her path and it is important to look out for them.

When submitting one's work, there are writer's markets out there, especially in digital form.

"Everybody has stories," Buzzell said. "You should write something."

Buzzell finds it important for folks to record stories about their life and families and help encourage the next generation. Whether it is sharing with the rest of the world or for you and your family, it is important to write your story.

The next Author's Roundtable will take place sometime in January. More updates can be found on www.northbrookfieldlibrary.org. The Haston Free Public Library is located at 161 North Main St.



Lois supported the return of the American Chestnut tree.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPHY

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Quaboag girls soccer defeats Oxford in first meet

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WEBSTER—The first meeting of the regular season between the Oxford and Quaboag Regional girls' varsity soccer teams was tied 1-1 at halftime.

The Lady Cougars managed to score two second half goals leading to a 3-1 victory over the Lady Pirates, which was held at Bartlett High School, last

Wednesday afternoon. The reason why the Central Mass. Athletic Conference (D) match-up was held in Webster is because Oxford co-ops with Bartlett High School.

"This team has a way of responding and I thought we played a lot better in the second half," said first-year Quaboag head coach Joe Mooney. "It always feels very nice to come away with the win."

Mooney, who also coached the Lady Cougars varsity soccer team twelve years ago, replaced Norm St. Denis, who stepped down as the Lady Cougars varsity soccer coach prior to the start of the regular season.

"I missed coaching soccer, and I really enjoy working with these kids," Mooney said. "Norm certainly prepared the girls well. He's an outstanding soccer coach." St. Denis informed his

players at the end of last season that he wouldn't be returning as the varsity coach.

"Coach St. Denis did tell us that he was leaving," said Quaboag senior captain Maddie Bagg. "It has been a big change for us, but coach Mooney is a very good coach. We're learning about each other together. It has been an enjoyable experience so far."

The road victory improved Quaboag's overall

season record to 5-3-1. The Lady Cougars defeated Worcester Doherty in their previous game. They've won back-to-back games for the first time this season.

"This was our second win in a row," Mooney said. "I think we're heading in the right direction."

The Lady Pirates (3-5-1) grabbed a 1-0 lead during the fifth minute of the opening half following a goal from freshman Amira Sed-

diki. It was the only goal allowed by Quaboag junior keeper Persepho Piermari, who didn't have to make very many saves.

The Lady Cougars scored the tying goal less than ten minutes later.

Senior Maddie Potvin drove down the middle of the field before firing a low shot into the left corner of

See QUABOAG PAGE 8



Goalie Kelsey Allen throws the ball to a teammate.



Maya Putnam heads up the field.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Offense shines in shutout win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE—Following back-to-back home shutout losses to North Middlesex and Clinton, the

Quabbin girls' varsity soccer team entered their first ever meeting with Ayer Shirley looking to get back into the win column again.

In a battle of two teams nicknamed the Lady Pan-

thers, Quabbin netted four goals in each half en route to an 8-0 shutout victory in a Mid-Wach D contest held at Alumni Field, last Tuesday afternoon.

"We hadn't scored a goal in our past two games. We had several different players score goals in today's game, which was very nice to see," said Quabbin head coach John Gillis. "We played really well, and we were able to finish our chances against a very good soccer team."

Quabbin's second home win of the regular season improved their overall record to 5-3-1.

The Quabbin Lady Panthers are trying to qualify for the Division 3 state



Katy Twarog tries to settle the ball.

See QUABBIN GIRLS PAGE 8

Boys soccer stays undefeated

WARREN – Last week, the Quaboag Regional High School boys soccer team scored three more wins, including a 2-0 shutout of Montachusett. The Cougars

also beat Oxford 4-2 and Blackstone Valley 3-0. The Cougars are a very impressive 11-0-1 and next face David Prouty on Saturday at 2 p.m. at home.



Mason Ostraut sprints to maintain control of the ball.



Brayden Lopato heads the ball during early play.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY JACK CASCIO NEAP.SMUGMUG.COM



Reece Minor maneuvers the ball onto mid-field.



Jacoby Labillois readies to pass the ball.

Pioneers have no answer for Holyoke offense

HOLYOKE – Last Tuesday afternoon, Pathfinder boys soccer, which co-ops with Palmer High School, suffered a 5-0 loss at Holyoke High School. Holyoke, which improved to 8-5-1 and is headed for the tournament, got two goals each from Xevier Davila and Ryan Kennedy. All of Holyoke's scoring came in the second half. Pathfinder fell to 3-6-1 on the season.



Christian Riberio sends a pass up the field.



Brody Welnicka focuses on keeping possession.



Abces Castillo-Clotter looks to get around a Holyoke defender.



Owen Pear advances the ball up the field.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

William Wright chases down a loose ball on defense.



Cayden Bousquet shuffles a pass to his left.

- Sports -

Tbirds score win over Bruins

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds picked up a 2-1 overtime victory on Sunday over the Providence Bruins inside the MassMutual Center to close their preseason slate.

The Bruins picked up the first goal of the afternoon on a power play with 1:08 remaining in the first, as Lynden McCallum lifted a one-timer over the right shoulder of Vadim Zherenko to give Providence the 1-0 lead at intermission. That came less than a minute after Hugh McGing was awarded a penalty shot, but could not get the puck past Simon Zajicek in the Bruins goal crease.

Springfield had an answer from one of their veterans at 3:53 of the second when Corey Schuene-man lifted a point wrister through traffic and past Zajicek to tie the score. Mc-



Ging had what appeared to be the go-ahead goal on a power play at 14:07 of the period, but after replay, the officials waved it off, saying that the T-Birds forward had directed the puck in with a kicking motion.

Zherenko's night was complete after 40 minutes and 20 saves on 21 shots. Gage Alexander came on for the third period and overtime and stopped all nine shots he faced.

After neither team could break the ice in the third period, the T-Birds picked up the triumph in the extra frame as Nikita Alexandrov fed a saucer pass to McGing's blade

at 3:32, and McGing got enough of it to beat Zajicek upstairs to finish the game.

The T-Birds now prepare themselves for the regular season slate, beginning with MGM Springfield Opening Night on Saturday, Oct. 11, at 6:05 p.m. against the Charlotte Checkers inside Thunderdome.

The action starts with the Community Bank N.A. Block Party from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Plaza at MGM Springfield, featuring live music from Moonlight Saints.

Fans are encouraged to arrive at the MassMutual Center early for pregame ceremonies, including full team introductions, which will begin promptly at 6 p.m. - all fans in attendance will receive a T-Birds 10th Anniversary Banner and a magnet schedule.

Railers roster taking shape

WORCESTER – The Worcester Railers Hockey Club (@RailersHC), proud ECHL (@ECHL) affiliate of the New York Islanders (@NYIslanders), and Head Coach & General Manager Nick Tuzzolino, announced today that goaltenders Henrik Tikkanen and Tristan Lennox were assigned to the Worcester Railers from the Bridgeport Islanders by the New York Islanders.

Tikkanen, 25, arrives in Worcester in second all-time in franchise history in wins (31), shutouts (4), minutes played (3794), and saves (1889), while being third in games played (65). The 6'9", 223 lb goaltender spent the 2024-25 season largely with the Bridgeport Islanders of the American Hockey League, playing in 30 games with a 4.12 goals against average and a .865 save percentage. All-time in

the AHL, Tikkanen has a 14-24-6 record with a .332 GAA and a .890 SV%.

With Worcester, the Lohja, Finland native has a 3.02 GAA, a .908 SV%, and a 31-28-4 record across three seasons with the club. Tikkanen (31) is 13 wins behind Mitch Gillam (44) as of the start of the 2025-26 season for first all-time in team history. Tikkanen is the first goaltender in franchise history to play parts of four seasons with the Railers.

Lennox, 22, comes to Worcester for the first time since the 2023-24 season, where he appeared in 13 games for the club. Across his time with Worcester, the 6'4", 196 lb goaltender owned a 2.94 goals against average with a .909 save percentage and a 5-6-1 record. The former 93rd overall selection from the 3rd round of the 2021 NHL entry draft

made his National Hockey League debut for the New York Islanders on Thursday, April 10th against the New York Rangers. He is the third ever Railer to debut in the NHL following time spent in Worcester.

Prior to professional hockey, the Ottawa, ON native played in 121 games for the Saginaw Spirit of the Ontario Hockey League. At the junior level, Lennox owned a 3.26 GAA, a .887 SV%, and a 59-45-7 record.

Worcester Regional Airport is the official airport of the Worcester Railers HC and presenting partner of all Railers transactions.

The Worcester Railers HC 2025-26 Opening Weekend at the DCU Center is Saturday, Oct. 18 and Sunday, Oct. 19 against the Maine Mariners and Adirondack Thunder. The 508 Club is now on sale for the 2025-26 season.

QUABOAG FROM PAGE 7

the net past Oxford senior goalie Paige Reynolds for an unassisted goal.

"Maddie Potvin always finds the back of the net," Bagg said. "We knew that we could make a comeback after falling behind early in the game."

In the middle of the first half, Potvin had another shot attempt, but Reynolds made a diving save which kept the contest tied.

The visitors from Warren took the lead for the first time during the 51st minute when Bagg put a set-shot into the right corner for an unassisted goal.

"I just had an open shot and decided to take it," said Bagg, who only plays soccer. "It felt very good to score the go-ahead goal."

Bagg has committed to playing soccer at Bates College, which is in Lewiston, Maine.

The other seniors listed on the Lady Cougars varsity roster are Hayssa Freitas, Serenitee Gagnon, Briana Hawk, Olive Moulton, Ava Ostrout, Gabrielle Riendeau, and Makayla Savoie. The seniors have never lost to the Lady Pirates on the soccer pitch.

"We do have a large senior class this year," Bagg said. "Most of us have been playing soccer together for many years. We're looking forward to our senior night game in a couple of weeks."

The Lady Cougars senior night is scheduled to be held on October 15 against rival Tantasqua.

During the 76th minute, Potvin delivered a crossing pass to Riendeau, who put a shot into the back of the net sealing Quaboag's fifth win of the season.

The Lady Cougars are scheduled to host Oxford on October 11.

QUABBIN GIRLS FROM PAGE 7

tournament for the first time since the MIAA changed the postseason format in the fall of 2021. The last time that Quabbin played in a postseason tournament match was in 2019. They defeated Hudson, 2-0, in a Central Mass. Division 3 first round game that season before losing to Bromfield in the quarterfinals.

"It has been a long time since we've qualified for the postseason tournament. This win moves us two games over the .500 mark, which is very important," Gillis said. "We have a very big game at Fitchburg on Thursday night. We just need to keep playing the same way as we did in today's game."

The Quabbin Lady Panthers suffered a 2-0 loss against the Red Raiders and were ranked 58th in the MIAA power rankings. The top 32 teams in each of the five Divisions automatically qualifies for the state tournament.

The Ayer Shirley Lady Panthers had a 2-7 record following the road loss.

In last Tuesday's match, Quabbin was led offensively by junior Ailey Majoy, who recorded her first hat-trick of the regular season.

"Ailey has been putting the ball into the net a lot more than she did last season," Gillis said. "She scored a hat-trick, which was our third one so far this season."



Sadie Kennan heads up the field with the ball.

Senior co-captain Abigail Falconi, who's Quabbin's leading goal scorer, and freshman Allie Lipiec have also recorded hat-tricks this fall.

Elizabeth Matheson, who's Quabbin's other senior co-captain, is sidelined with an injury.

Down at the other end of the field, senior goalkeeper Kelsey Allen, who's a first-



Grace Vanoudenhove steals the ball and turns play around.

to make any saves.

The anchors of Quabbin's defensive unit are junior's Grace VanOudenhove and Sienna Shaw.

Their other two starting defenders are senior Anna Labrousse and eighth grader Katy Twarog.

Majoy scored her first goal of the match by putting a shot into the right corner of the net past Ayer

right corner of the net giving her team a 2-0 advantage.

Falconi scored the first of her two goals during the 33rd minute by putting a low shot into the left corner.

Quabbin's final goal of the opening half came on a corner kick two minutes later.

Junior Sadie Kennan booted the ball into the box from the left corner. The ball bounced back out to Kennan. She then fired a perfectly placed shot into the upper right corner.

"That was a very nice shot by Sadie in the corner kick goal late in the first half," Gillis said. "She works so hard and I'm very happy for her."

Majoy completed her hat-trick in the middle of the second half with a high shot attempt that deflected into the net off the goalie's hands.

Falconi increased the lead to 6-0 by scoring her second goal in the 67th minute.

Rounding out the scoring for the home team was Lipiec, who netted a pair of goals with less than five minutes remaining in the contest.

Quabbin will be looking to sweep the season series when they travel to Ayer Shirley on Oct. 23.



Anna Labrousse clears the ball away.

year starter, made a total of 14 saves in posting her third shutout of the season.

Allen was replaced with eight minutes remaining in regulation against Ayer Shirley by freshman Zoey Salvador, who didn't have

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELL

Shirley freshman goalie Sophia DeBlasio for an unassisted goal during the 12th minute of the opening half.

Three minutes later, junior Maya Putnam sent a pass to Majoy, who fired a breakaway shot into the

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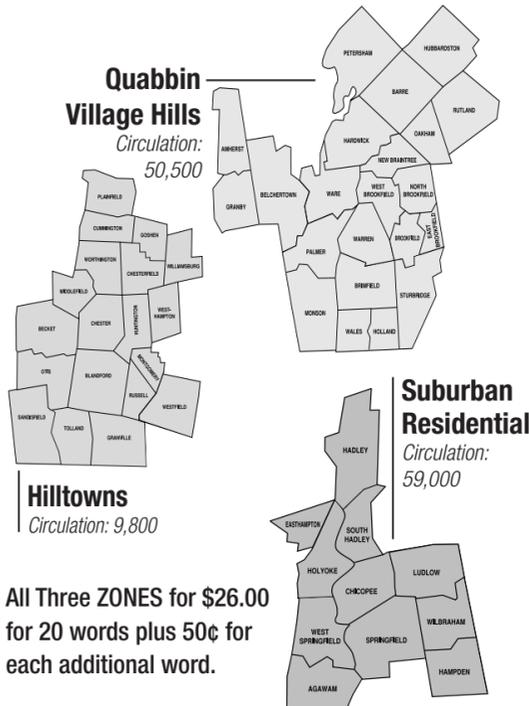
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 While Supplies Last!

Weekly Events

- Every Wednesday**
 \$5.99 Burgers at 4PM & Musical Bingo at 6:30
- Every Thursday**
 \$6 Pizza at 4PM & Opinionation at 6:30
- Every Friday**
 Live Entertainment, Weekly Specials & Fried Seafood Favorites

Function Room Available

OPEN FOR LUNCH Wednesday - Friday at 11:00AM
Dinner Served
 Wednesday - Friday at 11:00 AM
 Saturday from 11AM- 10:00PM
 Sunday from 12:30PM - 9PM

Spiritology by Candace presents

DINNER WITH SPIRIT

Sunday, October 26, 2025, 6pm at

91 Main Street, Ware, Ma.

Enjoy an evening with a comforting meal & connecting with, & receiving messages from, your loved ones in Spirit with Rev. Candace Ouillette Gaumond, International Psychic Medium, in a gallery performance full of love, compassion & healing.

\$65, limited seating available. Tickets to the dinner & mediumship gallery can be purchased at Hanna's on Main. For more information contact @ 413-277-0009.

NEW EVENT!
 ~ Every Other Wednesday ~
 Musical Bingo from 12 noon - 2pm

Receive a 10% Senior Discount on all Lunch Items during the lunch show!