

QUABOAG CURRENT

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Quaboag Current
Newspaper

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A TURLEY PUBLICATION
www.turley.com

Volume 16, Number 46

Friday, October 13, 2023

Community Club's 44th annual fair celebrates apple country

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

BROOKFIELD – Since its formation in 1978, the Brookfield Community Club has worked to provide grant opportunities to the town and its residents.

Its primary fundraiser is the Apple Country Fair, which started in 1979 and celebrated its 44th year this past Saturday. The inspiration for the fair and its theme came from Club co-founder, the late Christine McManus.

"There's orchards all over the place," Brookfield Community Club founding members Carol Plumb and Lois O'Leary said. "It's apple country."

Today the Community Club has eight dedicated members who have worked to give over \$300,000 in grant funding.

Many volunteers and vendors take part in making sure the Apple Country Fair is suc-

cessful, to help the Community Club continue its mission.

Cook's Farm Orchard of Brimfield has been a part of the fair since at least the early 1980s, owner Jim Lamothe said.

Lamothe has owned the orchard since 1996, when he and his wife Lisa bought it from her parents, who had operated it since 1974. He began working at the orchard in 1981, around the time the orchard began participating in the fair.

The orchard's roots date back prior to 1974, Lamothe said, with the first tree planted in 1921.

Lamothe said the orchard was still able to offer pick-your-own apples this year, despite a frost that damaged this year's harvest at many farms throughout the commonwealth.

"We did better than a lot of farms," Lamothe said.

Cook's Farm Orchard is located at 106 Haynes Hill Road,

See **APPLE** | PAGE 16



Diana Nydam of Brookfield Orchards offered a variety of home baked goods, including fudge, cookies and more. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Boosterthon Fun Run puts the 'fun' in fundraising



Sixth grade students at West Brookfield Elementary School enjoy a walking lap during the WBES Parent Teacher Group's annual Boosterthon Fun Run held on Oct. 2. TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WEST BROOKFIELD – For the second year in a row, the West Brookfield Elementary School's Parent Teacher Group held its Boosterthon Fun Run fundraiser.

On Oct. 2, students laced up their sneakers to raise money for the installation of a new playground for students in grades kindergarten through second.

Each group of students ran, walked, skipped and danced along the course for 35 minutes

See **FUN RUN** | PAGE 10

Library hosts 'Books On Tap' event

By Rowan Bernstein
Correspondent

STURBRIDGE – The Joshua Hyde Public Library recently held a "Books on Tap" event in celebration of Banned Books Week.

On Oct. 4, attendees were invited to read a banned book of their choosing, then meet at Avellino/The Duck in Sturbridge to discuss what they'd read over drinks and dinner. Library director Becky Plimpton hosted the event, which

was attended by community members of all ages, from high school students to retired teachers.

Extra chairs had to be brought in to make space for everyone, and Plimpton com-

See **LIBRARY** | PAGE 8

Turtle Rescue League celebrates two books in Southbridge

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

SOUTHBRIDGE – As our cow was walking out back, she saw something on the ground that piqued her curiosity.

Darla approached the slowly moving entity and sniffed. All of a sudden, it snapped, and Darla jumped and so did what she was approaching.

We had never seen our girl jump straight up in the air, but we had seen what had caused her to rise.

It was a turtle with a shiny black shell. It was not large, but it had certainly obtained a measure of respect from a cow.

Respect for turtles was to be found at the Southbridge Community Center on Sept. 30. Beginning in the early evening, people began arriving for an event to learn about these interesting reptiles and to support the work of the earnest members of The Turtle Rescue League.

As people drifted in, mem-

See **TURTLE** | PAGE 6



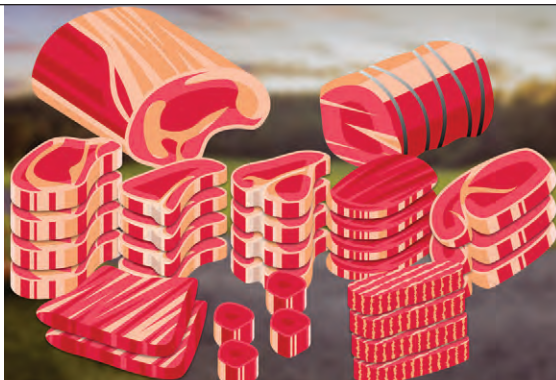
Sy Montgomery, author of "Of Time and Turtles" and "The Book of Turtles". TURLEY PHOTO BY RICHARD MURPHY



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- community -

Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield hosts SpookFest weekend

NORTH BROOKFIELD – SpookFest weekend kicks off with a spine-chilling experience on Friday, Oct. 20, from 6-10 p.m., as the Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield presents “Nightmare on Main Street,” a haunted house experience at the Emilia K. Hope Community Center, 173 North Main St.

Advanced tickets are on sale now for \$10 or pay \$12 at the door.

Then, get ready to embrace the Halloween spirit on Saturday, Oct. 21 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. with a day of family-friendly entertainment and community bonding that’s sure to delight all ages. Find tricks and treats for everyone behind North Brookfield High School, 10 New School Drive,

Look for a Food Truck Festival, a Maker’s Market filled with vendors, and tables of helpful community “Resourcerers.”

Take part in contests and win prizes for your costume or your creatively decorated car opened for Trunk or Treat. Or simply enjoy the parade of ghosts, goblins, skeletons and superheroes passing by.

Arrive early and take advantage of the ticketed Fun Zone with a variety of attractions such as a bounce house, petting zoo, pumpkin painting, exclusive games, hay pile prizes and more.

Grab your Fun Zone wristband tickets in advance for just \$5 per person or \$7 at the door and have a ghoulishly good time.

Don’t miss out on this incredible weekend of Halloween thrills, community fun and togetherness, and unforgettable memories brought to you by the Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield.

All advance ticket purchases and additional information are available at Coalitionforahealthynb.org.

Interested in being a vendor, volunteer or to help plan? Email Info@coalitionforahealthynb.org or text 774-298-0515.

The proceeds from SpookFest will help the Coalition to cultivate a healthy community by bringing much needed resources to our neighbors through the Emilia K. Hope Community Center.



Get your Halloween costumes ready for a weekend of spooky fun hosted by the Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield, starting with a “Nightmare on Main Street” at the Emilia K. Hope Community Center on Friday, Oct. 20, followed by a family-friendly festival behind North Brookfield High School on Saturday, Oct. 21. SUBMITTED PHOTOS



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VETERANS DAY SALUTE

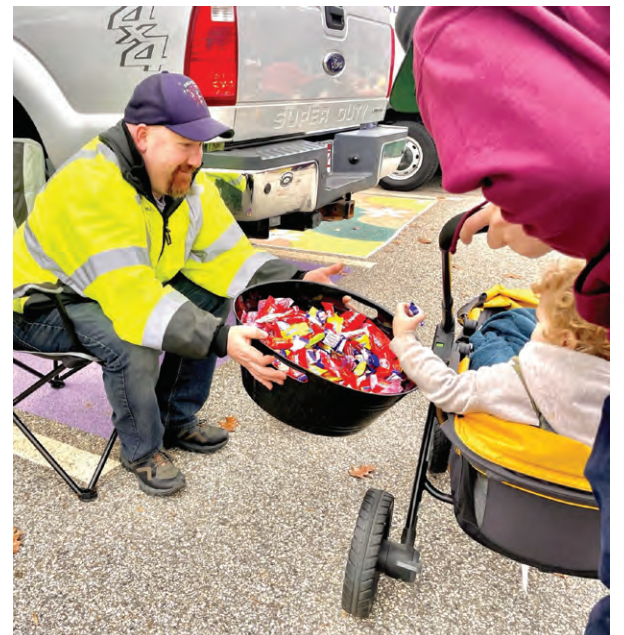
Quaboag Current ~ November 3, 2023

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

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

Please submit your photo no later than **Tuesday, October 17, 2023**

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



Candy, games, vendors, food trucks, community resources, petting zoo and more will be offered during SpookFest on Saturday, Oct. 21 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

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- sturbridge -

Annual Harvest Festival returns Oct. 14

STURBRIDGE – The annual Harvest Festival in Sturbridge returns on the weekend of Oct. 14-15, a celebration of all things autumn.

This family-friendly event on the town Common promises a weekend of festive fun and community spirit.

This year's Harvest Festival boasts an impressive lineup, featuring approximately 80 local crafters and artisans, an array of activities for kids, captivating live entertainment, and a tantalizing mini food truck festival.

Craft enthusiasts will be enchanted as they peruse a diverse array of artisanal treasures at the crafters' booths.

Meanwhile, foodies will have their taste buds delighted by the scrumptious seasonal offerings available at the mini food truck festival. Various delectable options will be served up by Fry'd Guys, J.B.'s Mobile Café, Thai Place Food Truck, Melissa Flaherty Cakes and Uncle E's BBQ Express, all of which will be at the festival on both days.



Admiring handcrafted wreaths among the vibrant tapestry of artisanal booths at Harvest Festival in Sturbridge. SUBMITTED PHOTO

JHPL lists October happenings

STURBRIDGE – The Joshua Hyde Public Library, 306 Main St., lists upcoming events and programs for the month of October.

Teeny Tiny Art Show

Pick up an entry packet for the "Teeny Tiny Art Show" now through Oct. 15. Share talents on a 3 inch by 3 inch canvas or paper board using any medium.

Submissions are due by Oct. 16. Prizes will be awarded to the winner and a runner-up in two ages groups (teens ages 13-18 and adults ages 19+).

Fall Story Times

Fall Story Times are held on Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:45 a.m. (except for Oct. 3).

Drop-in for stories, songs, rhymes and a take and make craft. Children must be accompanied by an adult caregiver.

No registration is required. Starting Oct. 17, story times will be held on the lawn in front of the library.

Read for Treats

Stop by the Children's Room between Oct. 2-31 and pick up a Halloween themed reading log to Read for Treats. Return it and receive a prize.

Friends' Book Sale

The Friends of the JHPL Bag-of-Books Book Sale will be held on Saturday, Oct. 14 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Come support the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library and buy a bag of books.

Armchair Travelers Book Group

The Armchair Travelers Book group will discuss "Challenging Boundaries - The Last Beekeeper" by Carrick Dalton on Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Senior Center.

SPOOKY BONES AND CREEPY CRAWLIES - Wednesday, Oct. 25 at 2 p.m. at the Senior Center. Explore real bones and skeletons from endemic Massachusetts animals, or hold and pet some of the biggest bugs you've ever seen. Registration is required.

Tip Top Country Store transitioning to a co-op

BROOKFIELD – Tip Top Country Store is hosting a community gathering, sharing information about transitioning to a co-op on Sunday, Oct. 15 from 2-5 p.m. at 8 Central St., in the peace garden.

There will be live music with Spoon-

er Well and Rob Marona. There will be free food and drinks, raffle basket, children's crafts and games.

For more information about the co-op, email co-op@tiptopcountrystore.com or call 617-610-2763.

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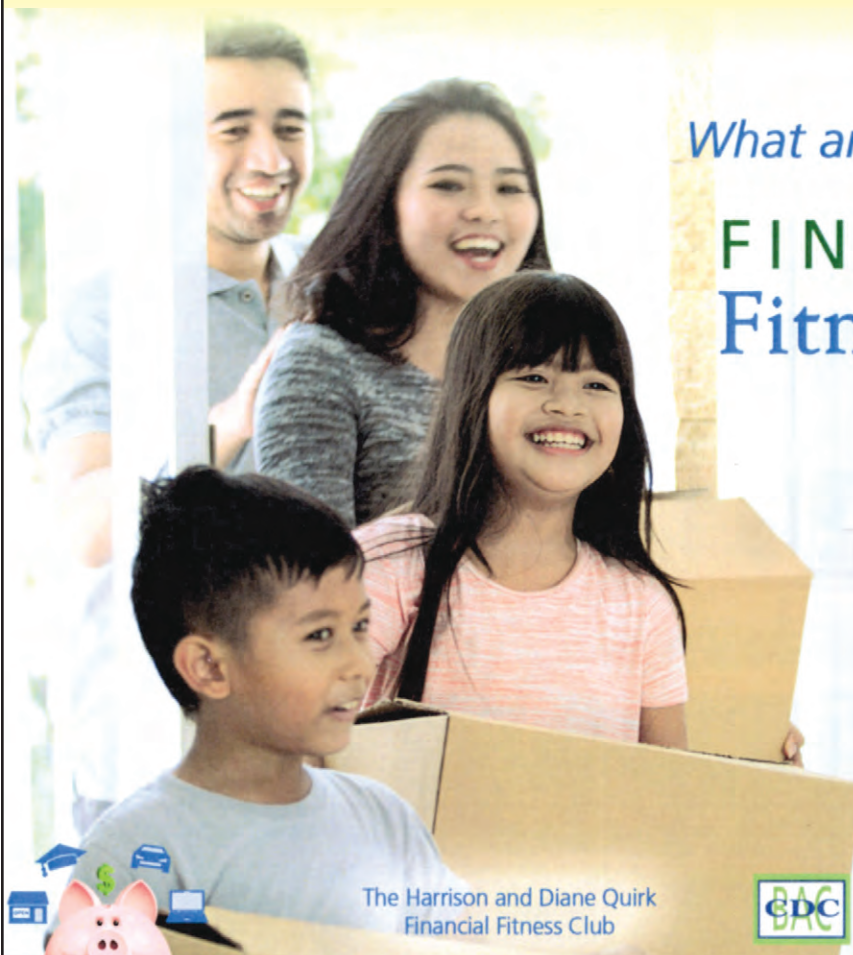
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- opinion -



Planning ahead for raised beds!

My friend Jacquie is very proud of the tomato plants she grows each year. She squeezes them into the little garden adjacent to the front door of her condo, and has even grown some in hanging containers. I received this question from her via text a few weeks back, and by the sound of it she wants to expand her gardening endeavors:

“For those of us that like to plan ahead, what are the pros and cons of raised bed gardens, and if you decide to go that route, what is the process?”

There are several advantages to gardening in raised beds. If the ground you would normally garden in is too sandy or too clayey, you can stop dealing with those troubles when you switch to raised beds!

You can carefully choose the soil that you fill the beds with. I personally love the Coast of Maine brand Raised Bed Mix, but I am sure there are resources online for mixing your own blends.

You can also plant more intensively, meaning fewer weeds! Concentrate fertilizers, lime and compost right where you need them, saving money along the way.

You can start working the ground earlier in the spring because it warms up quicker in raised beds. You don't have to worry about soil compaction as much either, because rarely, if ever, will you have to step into the beds.

You no longer have to weed the rows like you would in a normal garden, or will you have to worry about mulch or other materials to cover the rows with.

One drawback might be the cost to get started. Between the edging materials and the mix, you end up filling the bed with, it could get darn expensive.

First, you have to decide on what type of material you'll use to edge the beds with. There are pros and cons there too, but more on that in a bit.

A minimum depth of one foot is needed for most crops barring corn; that crop would need a deeper bed. On the flip side, if the ground beneath the raised beds is usable (i.e., not contaminated or pavement etc.) then you could potentially make the beds not as quite as deep, figuring plant roots will penetrate out from the walls.

Wood, stone, brick, pavers and cinder blocks are all possible edge materials. Simple raised beds can even be made within hay bales!

Beds made from pine slabs may only last a few seasons; rock type edging will last indefinitely.

One drawback to beds made out of hard-scape materials might be the fact that they dry out more readily. Although that would not have been an issue this year, it could be down the road.

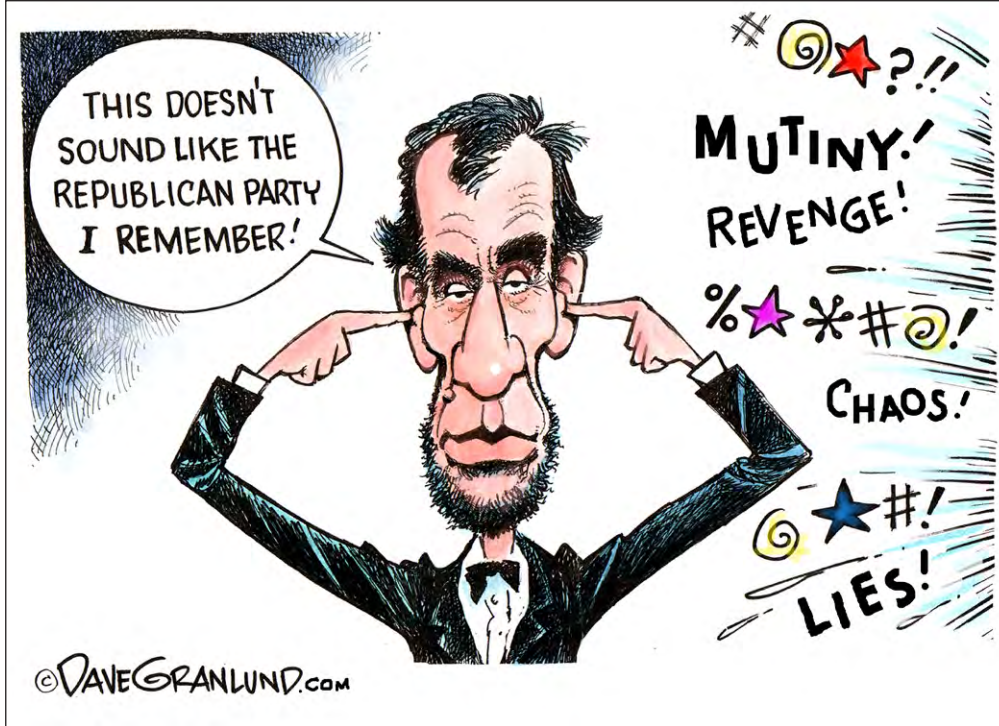
I had a number of raised beds that I made in an old tennis court on my property. They were edged in field stone because I had an endless supply on my property.

Free, yes! Beautiful, yes! But practical, not so much.

On a hot summer day, I was sometimes out there watering two or more times!

The new galvanized metal raised beds seem to be rising in popularity. I know very little about them or how readily they dry out in between waterings.

As far as bed width goes, usually no more



in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

I received an email about the sighting of a Northern harrier in Warren from a man who reports bird sighting for this column on a regular basis.

The Northern harriers is the only harrier in North America. Harriers are very distinctive hawks, with long wings and long tails. They are about 18 inches long.

The male is gray above and white underneath and the female is larger than the male and brown above and streaked brown underneath.

They are usually seen flying low over the ground in open country. At close range, the face of Northern harrier resembles an owl.

Unlike most hawks it may rely on its hearing like an owl to help it locate prey as it courses low over the fields.

Males tend to fly lower and faster than females.

The female lays four to six pale bluish-white eggs in a platform nest of sticks and grasses placed on the ground. The female remains with young most of time at first and the male brings food and delivers it to female, who feeds it to young.

After the young are about two weeks old, the female does much of the hunting for them.

They feed mostly on small mammals and birds. They also eat large insects especially grasshoppers as well as snakes, lizards, toads and frogs. May feed on carrion, especially in winter.

Ruby throated hummingbirds

Ruby throated hummingbirds are still being seen. Pittsfield and Williamstown, Gill, Longmeadow, Amherst, Princeton, Petersham reported sightings to Massachusetts Audubon Society on Sept. 25 and Sept. 26.

Loon fact

The Loon Preservation Committee provides loon facts in a newsletter. Loons usually sleep on the water unless they are incubating a nest and loon cams captured nesting loons sleeping while incubating.

To sleep, a loon will turn its head and rest it on its back, tucking its bill into its scapular feathers.

The newsletter said, “If you see a loon

sleeping during the daytime, don't worry. Loons sleep in short bursts that may happen at any time, day or night.”

Daytime sleeping bouts tend to be a little shorter, averaging 14 minutes than nighttime ones, averaging 24 minutes. Loons spend more time sleeping at night than they do during the day.

When sleeping, loons tend to prefer open water, further from the shoreline.

Sightings Warren and Brimfield

Besides seeing a Northern harrier, a birder reported in an email two great egrets at a no-named pond on New Reed Street.

He said, “On South Street at the pond with an osprey nest one juvenile, who fledged a few weeks ago, was still visiting the nest and perching in the tree with the nest. A second osprey had fledged from the nest and had left the area around the pond over two weeks ago.”

He also said, “I did see two osprey flying high over the pond on New Reed Street. The birds were quite high, well above tree top level with one bird following a couple of hundred yards behind the first. They were too far away to tell if it was an adult being followed by a juvenile.”

In another email, he said, “There was a flock of hen turkeys with some young. We have not seen many turkeys near out property for a couple of

years, probably because this area was hit by sponge moths (used to be called gypsy moths) and we haven't had a decent acorn crop in several years. “He said there were about 20 birds in all with two different age groups based on the size of the young birds.

He said, “As I was watching a young gray fox appeared and that got the turkeys even more excited. I could see the fox moving around and the turkey were running back and forth, however it didn't seem as though the fox was stalking the turkeys. After several minutes a dozen of the turkeys flew away into the woods. I didn't see where the rest of the turkeys of the fox went.”

The birder sent an email in mid-September and commented about how I like juncos. He said, “Juncos are harbingers of the coming change in seasons and my wife has the exact opposite reaction to their arrival that you do, ‘oh no the juncos are back’”

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.



Northern harrier

OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500 and 800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Send opinions to:

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THE QUABOAG CURRENT (USPS# 10860) is published weekly (every Friday) by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069. Telephone at 413-283-8393 or fax at 413-289-1977. Periodical Postage Prices are Paid at Palmer, MA.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to: Quaboag Current, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

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Quaboag Current Newspaper

Rapscallion Pub hosts 'Char-Boo-Terie' workshop

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – Guests of Rapscallion Pub attended a fun, Halloween-themed culinary workshop involving charcuterie boards recently.

Charcuterie boards have history dating back to periods of Ancient Rome, and the art was picked up by French charcutiers who captured the tradition and elevate it to an art form. Hence the term “charcuterie,” was formed and has been popular in cuisines worldwide.

The board consists of cured meats, cheeses, and a variety of sweet and savory bites as well.

Running the workshop was Paige Massey, who wanted to add a Halloween-themed feature to the charcuterie boards.

Massey is the sole proprietor of Good Graze Charcuterie and was ready to provide her first workshop. The workshop was about teaching people how to create balanced charcuterie boards and make appetizing arrangements of cheese and meats.

The spooky Halloween version provided by Massey was to teach her guests how to create a “Char-Boo-Terie” board. The finished product would

bring Jack Skellington of “The Nightmare Before Christmas” to life on the charcuterie board.

For Massey, her art is bringing themed boards to charcuterie. She is also a fan of anything Halloween related.

“Halloween is my Christmas,” said Massey.

Working as a police officer fulltime, Massey has been creating charcuterie boards for several years. Being a fan of cheese dishes and making appetizers, Massey found her creative outlet and wanted to create charcuterie boards.

Massey has also created charcuterie boards for weddings, baby showers and birthday parties. The idea of creating charcuterie boards came from Massey’s original creations of Mother’s Day themed boards.

Dozens of guests arrived in the downstairs bar of Rapscallion Pub to learn more about creating charcuterie boards. Massey provided all the ingredients and tools to allow her guests to bring their charcuterie to life.

The workshop began with guests designing the face of Jack Skellington. Massey throughout the workshop insisted that charcuterie creation is a process; a lot of features and the steps take time.

Throughout the gallery, friends enjoyed working together and sharing their designs, laughing, taking photos and enjoying the experience. Massey also insisted that her guests should not expect perfection but have fun with making



Paige Massey had her first charcuterie workshop at Rapscallion Pub. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO



The Char-Boo-Terie workshop featured guests bringing to life the beloved character of Jack Skellington from “The Nightmare Before Christmas”. The finished product of the charcuterie board consists of cheeses, cured meats, and sweet and savory bites.

their boards and enjoy crafting food.

As part of the food crafting for the charcuterie board, guests would be making a salami rose and chain. Features to go along with the familiar artistic designs from “The Nightmare Before Christmas”.

According to Massey, the rose and the chain are her favorite parts of charcuterie board. Some guests found it tricky at first, but Massey was there to slowly explain the process step by step.

When the workshop was complete, Massey passed around plastic wrap as the guests got to take their charcuterie boards home. Everyone was excited and gave Massey a round of applause and

thanked her for her help and offering the workshop.

“I want to thank Rapscallion and all of you. I appreciate the opportunity to offer this workshop,” said Massey.

Having a lot of fans who enjoy food crafting, Massey hopes this expands to more people offering these appetizing charcuterie boards and making more of them in the future.

Massey can be followed on Facebook and Instagram. Her next workshop will be a pumpkin spice fall themed workshop on Oct. 21 at Brimfield Winery.

For more information about Good Graze Charcuterie, send an email to goodgrazecharcuterie@gmail.com.

JOB OPENING

STAFF WRITER

Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

Experience in covering town government is a huge plus, and any experience in community journalism is as well. Staff writers cover all aspects of communities from features to municipal meetings to crimes and fires. Successful candidates must have people skills, plenty of curiosity and able to tell a story.

If you're a self-starter who enjoys community journalism and who can envision themselves connecting with our communities, we encourage you to apply for this position. Not a remote position.


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Please tell us in a cover letter why you would be a good fit for this position and send it along with a resume and three writing samples to




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TURTLE | FROM PAGE 1

bers of the board and staff efficiently admitted ticket holders and purchasers, and showed raffle prizes and sold tickets for the drawing.

On sale were two books that were somewhat the stars of the evening, both by noted and prolific writer, Sy Montgomery and illustrated by Matt Patterson.

“Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World Shell by Shattered Shell” is a volume intimately connected to The Turtle Rescue League.

“The Book of Turtles”, by the same author and illustrator is billed for children, but would be of interest also to a general audience.

The author was in attendance and would speak later in the evening, but thumbing through the book, it was obvious that she has an intimate connection to the Turtle Rescue League and its mission.

Soon enough, after some food, it was time for the event.

Alexxia Bell, The Turtle Rescue League president would welcome everyone and speak of the organization and its purpose and progress.

Bell is the co-founder of The Turtle Rescue League with her partner Natasha Nowick.

The two of them absorbed all the information they could find and set out to build what would “become a powerhouse in the turtle-saving community.” They train “many other turtle rehabilitators across New England, and have innovated many new rehab techniques.”

Of course, there are other stalwarts in the turtle rescue community present in the evening.

Nowick, mentioned above, is board chair, secretary and facility director.

Michael Henry, the Treasurer, came in to adopt a turtle and was so taken with the organization, he became a volunteer.

There is also board member Ayla Blyther who has been with The Turtle

Rescue League since 2011.

As the very first intern, she traveled from Vermont to help out. Blyther kept her hands in the turtle world, assisting whenever she could.

Board member Michaela Conder has a unique early connection to the cause. “Her first road rescue occurred in Kansas at age 16. She stopped her car along the highway to help a nesting mother snapping turtle, and got shocked while climbing over an electric cattle fence – mom’s pond was on the other side!”

Conder came east to intern and wanting to take on a more active role, she trained and became a clinician.

Bell introduced the aforementioned Sy Montgomery.

Montgomery is the author of many books. She is probably best known for “The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration Into the Wonder of Consciousness”.

If she can connect with something as exotic as the octopus, one should not be surprised if she had an affinity for the turtle as well.

Montgomery would proceed to speak of her experiences with turtles and a good part of that was with a rescue organization in Southbridge being celebrated in the evening.

It was a talk both factual and personal.

At the end of the presentation, a short video was played on the screen to the right of the podium. Whether or not it was meant to tug on the heartstrings, it did.

You can see the video at the homepage of The Turtle Rescue League (<https://turtlerescueleague.org/>). It is worth watching.

After that, people lined up to have their books autographed by the author and others at the head table as the winning numbers of the raffle prizes were pulled and called out.

It seemed that a majority of those in attendance purchased a book as the line was long.



Three turtle activists, Michelle, Mary and Steven.



President and Co-Founder Alexxia Bell at the podium.



Mike Henry, treasurer, and Natasha Nowick, board chair, secretary and facility director.

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The signing of the books. PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPHY

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- community -

Dusha Nelson announces resignation from Listening

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

BARRE – After nearly 11 years in her role as Executive Director of Listening Wellness Center, Laura Dusha Nelson has announced her resignation, as she prepares to start a new career path as an End Of Life Doula and a National Board Certified Integrative Health and Wellness Coach.

Dusha Nelson came to the Listening Wellness Center as a client when she had first moved to the area. She was working at a job in Worcester at the time, when one of Listening's practitioners reached out to her.

"One of the practitioners reached out to me and said the position was opening and asked if I was interested," Dusha Nelson said. "It was a very part time position at that point."

A lot has changed at Listening Wellness Center since Dusha Nelson became executive director, with the addition of new practitioners, more classes and programs, and the inclusion of mental health therapy.

Growing with Listening was the role of executive director, which became full-time as the center increased its reach in Barre and surrounding communities.

Dusha Nelson said her greatest accomplishment at Listening has been attracting and retaining new practitioners, along with networking and giving the community diversity.

"Oftentimes people don't know what Listening is or anything about it," Dusha Nelson said.

She said she never realized the positive impact she had on the community, until she announced her resignation in order to return to school.

"I never thought I made an impression," she said.

Dusha Nelson also navigated Listening into its 20th year in 2020, through the complexities of the pandemic, working with practitioners to continue offering services safely, while utilizing online platforms and social distancing.

Getting Listening Wellness Center through the pandemic, was one of the things that motivated Dusha Nelson to enter this new chapter in her life.

"It made me reflect and say, 'I want to do more and for more people,'" she said, and she would accomplish that by following her dream to become an End Of Life Doula and a National Board Certified Integrative Health and Wellness Coach.

"I had an idea prior to taking this job of going into therapy and/or coaching," Dusha Nelson said. "It's always been in the back of mind."

As an End of Life Doula, Dusha Nelson will support clients in advanced planning of their death, including legacy projects, care coordination, conducting life reviews, vigil planning and assisting with their wishes.

She said being an End of Life Doula can also involve doing things like going for a walk with clients or taking care of their relationship with their family.

"It's really about companionship, that person, and holding space for them in their family...whatever that looks like for the individual circumstance," she said.

Dusha Nelson also plans to provide bereavement support and education in the future.

"People don't talk about death and dying ahead of time. If we talk about it upfront, it makes the process so much easier for everyone," she said.

In her role as a National Board Certified Integrative Health and Wellness Coach, Dusha Nelson will help

clients reach their own goals, whether it be personal development, environment, movement, work life balance or spirituality.

"I believe that we all have what we need within us... we have the wisdom within us," she said. "We facilitate the change, and we want it to be sustainable change for them...it's really a wonderful experience, sometimes you're stuck in something and it's like a lightbulb came on and it came from yourself. You just needed to talk through it."

Dusha Nelson will continue as executive director through the end of the year as the Listening Wellness Center looks for the ideal candidate to usher the organization into the next 20 plus years and beyond.

"I hope that we find somebody who is even more community centric and passionate about serving a community...someone who can bring it to the next level," she said.

Listening Wellness Center's Board of Directors are grateful for Dusha Nelson's service to the organization and the community.

"As Listening board members and long-time colleagues of Laura's, we were excited to hear about Laura's plans for professional development and admire her for venturing out to begin her own journey as a health and wellness practitioner. We are honored to have been a part of her professional path for so many years, and are excited that she has grown her wings and is ready to fly!" Board members Dedie King, Jocelyn Langer and Renee Malowitz announced in a press release.

A complete job description for the position of executive director is available at listeningwellness.org/leadership-staff/, with applications being accepted through Oct. 20.

GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

than four feet wide is recommended. That way you can reach inside comfortably.

I have been very successful growing peppers, zucchini and onions in my raised beds. Flowers and herbs also seem to do very well.

Tomatoes perform okay, but for me, green beans seem to be unhappy. There isn't enough room for winter squash, and I've never attempted corn.

Refresh your soil each year with the addition of compost and fertilizer. Because the bed is like a big container, the soil can get exhausted after a season of use.

I would say gardening in raised beds is worth the investment. Start out small and expand if you feel you enjoy having more to take care of.

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

Lace up for Station Loop Ramble run/walk Oct. 15

NEW BRAINTRREE – East Quabbin Land Trust is getting ready to host its 12th annual Station Loop Ramble on Sunday, Oct. 15 on the Mass Central Rail Trail.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 9:30 a.m.

All events incorporate part of the MCRT and start at the intersection of West and Hardwick roads, at the site of the former New Braintree Train Station. Race routes travel past scenic farmland, through deep woods, and skirt the Ware River.

The 5-mile Classic at 10 a.m. is a hilly road and trail race with a flat fast finish on the Mass Central Rail Trail. The Kid's One Mile at 9:30 a.m. and 5K Run/Walk at 10:05 a.m. are entirely on a flat course.

Adults must accompany children running this course. Each mile is marked, and mid-run water stop provided.

Post race refreshments, games, entertainment, free raffles for all entrants, and much more.

Entry fees for online early birds (through Oct. 14)

are \$25 for adults and \$10 for children (ages 10 and under); day-of registration on Oct. 15 is \$30 for adults and \$15 for children; seniors, veterans and first responders are \$20; and family registration is \$35.

For more information or to register, visit eqlt.org and click on "Station Loop Ramble."

Ronny LeBlanc presents 'Mysteries of Monsterland'

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Hoston Free Public Library, 161 South Main St is hosting Bigfoot expert Ronny LeBlanc and "Mysteries of Monsterland" on Thursday, Oct. 19 at 5:30 p.m.

Please RSVP by calling 508-867-0208 or emailing hostonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com.

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- community -

White Christmas returns on Sunday, Dec. 3

WEST BROOKFIELD – All are welcome to join the town on Sunday, Dec. 3 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. for the 31st Annual White Christmas celebration.

There will be fun for folks of all ages going on throughout the day. Kick-off of the holiday season by touring the historic town, strolling the downtown district, exploring local businesses and open houses, decorating gingerbread houses in the Great Hall, meeting Santa for a quick picture, as well dropping off those letters headed directly to the North Pole.

There will be horse drawn carriage rides throughout the day as well as shopping with dozens of vendors set up throughout town. A puppet show, an elf hunt and ice carvings are sure to keep everyone's spirits high.

There will be plenty for the entire family to come and enjoy. If you are lucky, you may just see Father Christ-

mas strolling the streets and greeting visitors in town.

Stick around to close the day with West Brookfield's annual tradition of gathering around the largest evergreen in town (located on the town common) while it illuminates for the first time this holiday season.

West Brookfield's White Christmas Committee 2023 is excited to be able to share this fun-filled day with both residents and non-residents alike. This is a free event brought to you courtesy of local businesses and town supporters.

Maps of town open houses and vendors can be picked up in various local business, by accessing the 31st Annual White Christmas in West Brookfield Facebook page or by emailing whitChristmaswb@gmail.com.

Parking is available free throughout town.

Class of 2025 hosts Fall Bazaar Oct. 14

BARRE – The Quabbin Regional High School Class of 2025 is hosting a Fall Bazaar at the school, 800 South St., on Saturday, Oct. 14 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

There will be games, food, live music and fun.

Sponsors of the event include Fidelity Bank, Hardwick Crossing Country Club, Barre Pizza, Higgins Powersports, Meadowbrook Orchards, Wholesome Farmers Market, Old Furnace General Store, C&C Pools, J&J Family Restaurant, White Valley Motors and Hardwick Farmers Co-Op Exchange.

St. John's Harvest Thyme Craft Fair is Oct. 28

EAST BROOKFIELD – St. John the Baptist Parish, 131 Blaine Ave., will be hosting its annual Harvest Thyme Craft Fair on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Raffles, gift baskets, a lottery tree, silent auction, craft tables, jewelry, books, and attic treasures will all be offered. A café with great soups, meat pies, chili, cider, and baked goods will also be available.

Come and enjoy the fair and food. For more information, please call 508-867-6469.

Methodist church to hold Bluegrass Gospel Service Oct. 29

WEST BROOKFIELD – A Bluegrass Gospel Service is planned for Sunday, Oct. 29 at 10 a.m. at George Whitefield United Methodist Church, 33 West Main St. with local musicians on guitars, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, stand-up bass, spoons and voices.

The service will feature bluegrass gospel music with meaningful messages of faith, interspersed with background stories. These services, which are

planned for months with a fifth Sunday, have been very well attended, drawing many from the surrounding community to the music and its uplifting messages of redemption and hope.

All are warmly invited to attend. Refreshments will be served following the service.

For more information, people may call Heidi Jeldres at 978-989-5736 or email Heidi.jeldres@gmail.com.

Trunk or Treat and more at Quaboag on Oct. 14

WARREN – The Warren Community Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization, the West Brookfield Elementary School Parent Teacher Group and the Quaboag Regional Middle High School Student Council are hosting Trunk or Treat and other Halloween activities at the Middle High School, 284 Old West Brookfield Road, Saturday, Oct. 14 from 4:30-7 p.m.

There will be Spooky Friends of the QRMHS Performing Arts, Haunted Halls by the QRMHS Student Council,

a performance by the Dance Factory at 5:30 p.m., and a pumpkin carving contest sponsored by Country Bank.

Bring your pumpkin to the QRMHS cafeteria at the start of the event. Winners will be announced at 6:30 p.m.

Trunk setup will be from 1:30-4 p.m. Signup your trunk at www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D48ACAE2CABF-BC70-Trunk1.

Don't forget to wear your costumes and please bring a bag of candy to donate.

LIBRARY | FROM PAGE 1

mented on the "great turnout," remarking from one end of the long dining table that the room felt like a "very formal space for a very informal discussion."

Plimpton started off the evening with a brief explanation of Banned Books Week, an annual event held by the American Library Association that calls attention to books that have been banned and challenged across the country. She also shared a printout of the top 13 most challenged books of 2022, as well as a list of the most banned books of the last decade.

A challenge refers to anytime someone requests that a book be pulled from a library. Plimpton explained that challenges are far more common than outright bans, especially in public libraries.

"A challenge at a public library won't typically result in a pull from the shelves," Plimpton said, but "what happens in school libraries is very different."

Plimpton then started the discussion off by sharing what she had read: "Lawn Boy" by Jonathan Evison, which was the seventh most challenged book last year.

She described it as a "new adult" book, part of an emerging genre that fits in the "in-between" space of young adult literature and adult fiction. The book deals with themes of race and class, and features a gay, half Mexican protagonist.

Plimpton said that "the majority of things on [the most challenged books of 2022] list are LGBTQ," including "Gen-

der Queer" by Maia Kobabe, the most challenged book of the year.

Books read by attendees included "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian" by Sherman Alexie, which was the most banned book of the last decade, "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas, "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee, "All Boys Aren't Blue" by George M. Johnson, "1984" by George Orwell, "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison, and "Out of Darkness" by Ashley Hope Perez.

Every new book shared sparked lively discussion around the table, touching on topics like the state censorship depicted in "1984" and the bigotry shown in "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "The Hate U Give." Plimpton pointed out that many people made notes of every new book that was brought up to add to their own reading lists.

This was only the second Books On Tap event held since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, but Plimpton said to be on the lookout for more in the future.

They are not regularly scheduled events, but rather "pop-ups," held at different locations around town. Past locations have included UNO, Teddy G's, and Altruist Brewing Company.

Typically, the events are centered around discussion of a single book, although after the resounding success of the Banned Books Week edition, Plimpton said "we might have to do something like this again."



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- community -

An introductory meditation class to be offered Oct. 21

WARREN – The Centered Place in Warren is offering a free Introduction to Meditation class, on Saturday, Oct. 21, from 3-4:30 p.m.

The class will be taught by Swami Samvidaananda, who is visiting from Svaroop Vidya Ashram in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, where she serves as a Svaroop yoga and meditation teacher trainer. She teaches a wide variety of classes and workshops at the Ashram and worldwide.

Participants will learn an easy and deep method of meditation, the same method taught at The Centered Place by instructor and co-director, Phil Milgrom.

Meditation is the fastest growing health trend in the U.S. today. Contemporary scientists researching meditation have finally confirmed the benefits that practitioners have been claiming for centuries.

Some of the many benefits of meditation include reducing stress, bringing greater calm and improving sleep. It also improves memory and focus.

Swami Samvidaananda will give a discourse on yoga's ancient teachings, which are very applicable today. The program also includes chanting, which helps quiet the mind and open the heart.

For meditation, she will show participants how to sit comfortably. She will

then guide participants inward to get past the busy-mind and experience inner peace.

Swami Samvidaananda came to The Centered Place last October and was very well received. Her programs are always deep, supportive and life changing.



The Centered Place in Warren is offering a free Introduction to Meditation class, on Saturday, Oct. 21, from 3-4:30 p.m. The class will be taught by Swami Samvidaananda. SUBMITTED PHOTO

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

Anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 should follow CDC recommendations, and if COVID symptoms develop or positive test for the virus is received, please do not attend.

Swami Samvidaananda is also presenting a half-day program the same day, from 9 a.m.-1 pm. The program includes easily accessible yoga poses plus chanting and meditation. There is a charge.

For information about registering, contact phil@thecenteredplace.com.

The Centered Place yoga studio has served the local area since 1988. It was founded by Nancy A Nowak, who continues to co-direct along with her husband, Phil Milgrom.

The studio was voted "Best in Yoga" by a local magazine for several consecutive years until the magazine was discontinued.

Lions Club hosts 17th annual 5-Mile Apple Run/Walk

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The 17th annual 5-mile Apple Run/Walk for Diabetes will be held Saturday morning, Oct. 28 at Brookfield Orchards, 12 Lincoln Road.

The event is hosted by the Lions Club of the Brookfields. All proceeds will benefit the Clara Barton Diabetes Camp in Oxford and the Diabetes Research Team at UMass.

The event in prior years has raised over \$34,000 in donations for these two organizations.

The race is professionally timed and cash prizes will be awarded to the men's and women's first and second place finishers. Registration

will be from 9:30-10:30 a.m., with walkers beginning the course at 10:30 a.m. and runners at 11 a.m.

The entry fee is \$20 for adults and \$15 for children ages 17 and younger.

Oakholt Brewery of Brookfield will return as a sponsor this year, and will be onsite at the event with a complementary beer for each registered runner and walker at the completion of the course.

For more information and link to online registration (as well as a downloadable registration form) visit brookfieldslionsclub.org.

Medicare 101 educational event is Oct. 17

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Senior Center, 29 Forest St., will be hosting an educational presentation on Tuesday, Oct. 17, at 11 a.m. for current beneficiaries and for those who will soon be eligible for Medicare.

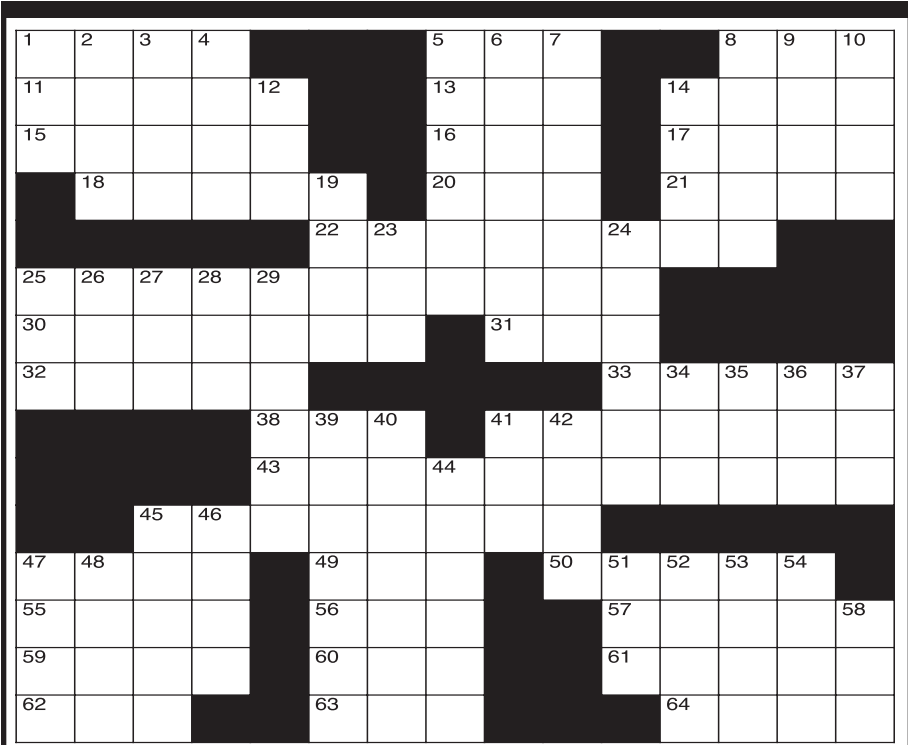
The information is specific to Massachusetts. The session will run from 1 to 1.5 hours, including time for questions.

The presentation will be conducted by Ed Spater, a licensed Insurance agent, who will explain the basics of

Medicare including:

- Why it's important to evaluate your current Medicare coverage each year.
- The pros and cons of each of your Medicare coverage options.
- What to consider when deciding which Medicare coverage option is right for you.
- Ways to save money and get better Medicare coverage in 2024.

For accommodations of persons with special needs at meetings call 774-271-5199 or 711 for TTY callers.



CLUES ACROSS

- Information
- Seaport (abbr.)
- Agricultural disease (abbr.)
- Riding horses
- Boxing's GOAT
- Hurt or discomfort
- A small sharp knife to trim vegetables
- A beaver builds one
- Horizontal passage into a mine
- Self-immolation by fire rituals
- Chain bar with lots of games (abbr.)
- Goo Goo Dolls' hit
- Agreeable
- In an early way
- In a way, struck
- It's there in the morning
- County in the S. Pacific
- Central Florida city

- Numbers cruncher
- Mexican beers
- Lawyers say you can indict one
- Capital of South Australia
- Wings
- Drug used to treat HIV/AIDS
- Fencing sword
- Capital of Qatar
- Portable bed
- Afflicted
- Lying down
- Midway between northeast and east
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- Inflamed
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Impudence

CLUES DOWN

- A way to fish

- Greek mythological figure
- Scarlett's home
- Assist
- More doleful
- Premeditated
- Dish featuring minced food
- San Diego ball-player
- Eight
- Unwelcome picnic guests
- Human gene
- Bucket
- Make full
- Dirt
- Person cited as ideal example
- A part of (abbr.)
- The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- Very long period of time
- Gas usage measurement

- North American native people
- It says "moo"
- Folk singer Di Franco
- Resinlike substance of certain insects
- Residue
- Grand homes
- Popinjays
- Man who behaves dishonorably
- Figures
- One who watches over children
- Expressed pleasure
- No longer living
- Hebrew calendar month
- Part of the ear
- Swiss river
- Prejudice
- Italian Island
- Resist authority (slang)
- Criticize



Halloween CONTEST

Send us your Halloween House Decoration photos from this year! We are looking for decor in 4 categories:

- Scariest**
People run screaming!
- Most Creative**
Best use of recycled materials!
- Kid Friendly**
Kids just want to hang out with you!
- Flashy**
Lights, lights and more lights!



Ragged Hill Orchard



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We will choose a winner in each category who will receive a gift card from one of our sponsors.

All photos will run in our paper with the winners being announced.

Please send all entries to quaboagcurrent@turley.com labeled halloween contest. All entries must be submitted by October 20th. Include Name, Address & Phone



FUN RUN | FROM PAGE 1

of “awesome fun time,” WBES PTG member and emcee for the event Amanda Wodyga said.

WBES Principal Melissa Provost said the PTG set a fundraising goal of \$20,000 to put toward the estimated \$150,000 playground project, which would provide the school’s younger students a safe and fun place to play.

“The existing one is too big for them developmentally,” Provost said of the need for an additional playground, as the current one is designed for older students.

If this year’s Boosterthon reaches \$20,000, students will get to duct tape Provost to a wall of the school. At the time of the Fun Run, students had already raised \$18,108, and donations continued to come in.

Provost said this year’s funds will

be included with the \$30,000 that was raised through last year’s fundraising efforts.

Wodyga said 157 students received pledges for the Fun Run, with donations coming from people living in 17 different states.

WBES PTG member Melinda Czub said there will also be a pie fundraiser, just in time for Thanksgiving. Orders are due by Oct. 20, so make sure to check in with any participating WBES students.

WBES PTG will also be participating in the annual Trunk or Treat community event at Quaboag Regional Middle High School in Warren on Saturday, Oct. 14 from 4:30-7 p.m.

For more information about the WBES PTG or to participate in a fundraiser, follow them on Facebook or email wbesptg@quaboagrsd.org.



West Brookfield Elementary School's Parent Teach Group and volunteers helped make the Boosterthon Fun Run a fun time for all. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE



Students enjoyed friendly competition during running laps.



Some students even showed off their ability to flip or do cartwheels.



High fives and pom-poms kept students motivated during the Fun Run.



West Brookfield Fire Chief Rich Lapierre offered his DJing skills for the Fun Run.



Lacey Beauregard and Aubrey Sargent strike a pose during one of the laps.



Students were all smiles during the Boosterthon Fun Run.



Students prepare to start the Boosterthon Fun Run.



Students held hands with their friends.



The Jogg'n' Joneses get ready to complete the Boosterthon Fun Run, helping to raise funds for a new playground for the school's younger students.



Even parents joined in on some laps.



Teachers led their students onto the field, waving homemade banners.

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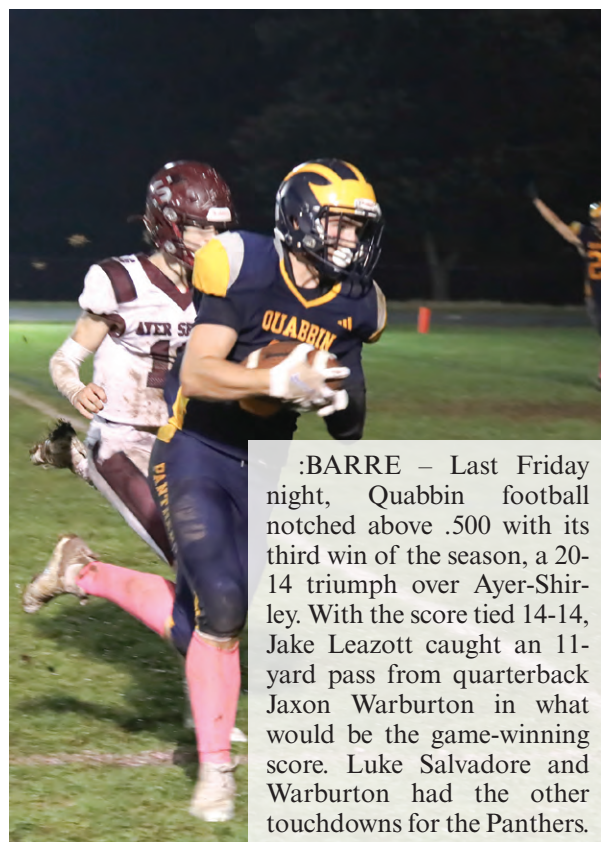
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SPORTS

Panthers get above .500



Luke Salvatore crosses the goal line for Quabbin's first touchdown. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RAY DUFFY



Jake Leazotte scores on a great pass.

BARRE – Last Friday night, Quabbin football notched above .500 with its third win of the season, a 20-14 triumph over Ayer-Shirley. With the score tied 14-14, Jake Leazotte caught an 11-yard pass from quarterback Jaxon Warburton in what would be the game-winning score. Luke Salvatore and Warburton had the other touchdowns for the Panthers.



Adam Adams attempts to get a hand on the ball.



Bryce Venne catches a game ending interception.



Ed Guertin with a flying tackle.

Casey's goal holds up in Panthers win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE — When the Lady Panthers faced Mid-Wach B rival North Middlesex in their annual senior game under the lights at Alumni Field, last Wednesday night, a member of the freshman class became the hero.

Makenzie Casey whose older sister, Kylie, is one of the Lady Panthers seniors, scored an unassisted goal late in the third quarter leading a 1-0 shutout victory over the Patriots.

"I felt very good after scoring the goal because it was a very special night for my older sister and the other five seniors," Makenzie Casey said. "I have been teammates with my sister on the field hockey team since I was the seventh grade. It has been an amazing experience to play on the same field

hockey team with her. She's one of my role models."

Kylie Casey, who joined the varsity field hockey team as a freshman, has also enjoyed being teammates with her younger sister.

"It has been awesome playing field hockey with my younger sister during the past couple of years," said Kylie Casey, who's planning to study computer science in college. "Makenzie is an incredibly talented field hockey player and it's an honor being on the same field with her. I knew that she would make the varsity team in the seventh grade."

Their mother, Jillian, is an assistant coach for the Lady Panthers varsity field hockey team. She also played field hockey at Shrewsbury High School.

The other Quabbin seniors, who were honored during the postgame ceremony, are Cam-



Makenzie Casey dribbles the ball past the defender. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RAY DUFFY

ryn Orsini, Julianna Stanger, Gracie Talbot, Annabelle Magill, and Madylin Breault, whose younger sister, Olivia, is a sophomore on the varsity field hockey team.

"It's always great whenever you win on senior night," said longtime Quabbin head coach Shelly Zalernaitis. "I've coached a lot of outstanding

See PANTHERS | PAGE 12

Cougars edged by Oxford

WARREN – Last Friday night, Oxford put up a big 20-point second quarter and rode that to a 27-21 win at Quaboag.

The Cougars, which fell to 3-2 on the season, scored throughout the game, but were not able to grab the game-tying score late in the fourth quarter. Quaboag lost to Worcester North on Friday, Sept. 29 22-6, which broke up their three-game win streak to start the season.

Quaboag is hoping to turn their fortunes around on Friday, Oct. 13 at 7 p.m. against Southbridge High School.

- sports -

Pathfinder gets two

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER—The Pathfinder Tech boys varsity soccer team posted a pair of victories against the Pioneer Valley Christian Academy Eagles in a span of 24 hours last week.

The final score of the first meeting between the Tri-County League rivals was 4-1. That contest took place at Pathfinder Tech, last Tuesday afternoon.

The following afternoon, the Pioneers, who defeated the Eagles on the soccer pitch for the first time since 2016, traveled to Springfield and posted a 4-0 shutout victory.

“This is actually the first time in my coaching career that my soccer team has faced the same opponent on back-to-back days” said Pathfinder Tech head coach David Wilson. “We’re going to play the same way in tomorrow’s game like we did today.”

The Pioneers, who also defeated Franklin Tech, 4-1, on the road last week, entered this week’s action with an 8-1 overall record, which is also their league record.

“We lost our first game of the season before putting together a winning streak,” Wilson said. “We still have a lot of work to do to get ready for both the Western Mass. and state tournaments.

Pathfinder Tech, who lost to Athol at home in the season opener, was ranked third in the latest MIAA Division 5 power rankings. Despite his team being ranked in the top five, Wilson isn’t a big fan of the power rankings system.

“I don’t really think we’re a top five team. They haven’t factored in our strength of schedule yet and our ranking will go down at that point,” he said. “I’m not a fan of the power ranking system because it favors the eastern part of the state. We tend to get forgotten about out here in the west. We just need to keep winning games.”

The score of last Tuesday’s home match was tied 1-1 early in the second half when Pathfinder sophomore Adonis Dupre took over the spotlight offensively.

“Adonis played very well during the second half of today’s game,” Wilson said. “He’s not a pure goal scorer, but he’s a pure striker. Whenever he has an op-

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Justin Davis makes his way up the left side of the field. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Issac Somers stutter-steps as he approaches an opposing player.



Evan Costa pops up the ball.



Elijah Jez fights to keep possession.



Madelyn Stauder digs for the ball. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RAY DUFFY



Senior Goalie Julianna Stanger makes a save.



Senior Annabelle Magill intercepts the pass.

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senior classes over the years, but this year’s senior class is one of my all-time favorites. I had most of them as students and it’s a great group of kids. All of them are outstanding leaders and they’ve played different roles on the team.”

During the school day, Zalernaitis is a sixth grade math teacher.

Stanger, who’s a three-year varsity player, is the Lady Panthers starting goalie. She made four of her five saves during the fourth quarter, which kept the shutout intact.

“I knew that this was going to be a close match because we tied them earlier in the season,” said Stanger, who would also like to play field hockey at the collegiate level. “I’m so happy that we pulled out a win tonight. Everyone made a key contribution.”

Kylie Casey, Orsini, and Talbot are key members of the Lady Panthers defense, along with junior Sydney Slattery and freshman Violet Kelley.

Magill and Breault are starting forwards.

The Lady Panthers, who tied the first meeting with the Patriots, 1-1 on September 14th, had a 5-2-2 over-

all record following their senior night victory.

Makenzie Casey had the Lady Panthers lone shot on goal during the first half.

Casey scored an unassisted goal following a penalty corner with 2:24 remaining in the third quarter. It was her sixth goal of the regular season.

“When I shot the ball, it went off the back of a North Middlesex player before going into the goal,” Makenzie Casey said. “The official still called it a goal because the opposing player was in the way when I shot it.”

Zalernaitis is very glad that she’ll be coaching Makenzie Casey for three more years.

“Makenzie is such a great team player because she makes the players around her better,” Zalernaitis said. “This is her third varsity season and she’s only a freshman.”

According to Zalernaitis, Melissa Shamgochain, who graduated from Quabbin Regional in 1998, was the last seventh grader to play for the Lady Panthers varsity field hockey team. Shamgochain, who was a two-time All-American field hockey player at Assumption College, was inducted into the Quabbin Athletic

Hall of Fame in 2009.

The Patriots (4-4-2) had three penalty corners during the final 15 minutes of the match. Stanger, who posted her fourth shutout of the season, made saves on each of them.

“The last quarter was very intense, and I was very nervous,” Stanger said. “I was just trying to watch the ball the entire time. It just felt great when the final buzzer sounded. We’re like one big family and this is just a very special team to me.”

A Quabbin player dribbled the ball down the field as the final seconds ticked off the scoreboard clock.

In the fall of 2027, Kylie Casey, who’s looking forward to playing field hockey at Worcester State University next year, will be sitting in the bleachers watching her younger sister play in her senior game. Makenzie Casey would probably like to celebrate a victory in that game just as her older sister did last week.

“That’s going to be another exciting night,” Kylie Casey said. “I’m really looking forward to coming back and watching my sister play field hockey.”

The Lady Panthers celebrated a 2-0 home win over Marlborough the following afternoon.

- sports -

Bubar steals show in Granite Series win

LEE, N.H. - Corey Bubar was probably not the favorite to win Sunday evening's Bosowski Properties 150. But in the season finale for the Granite State Pro Stock Series, Bubar stole the show.

The Windham, Maine, racer held off Jimmy Renfrew, Jr. to claim the \$8,500 victory at Lee USA Speedway, closing out Lee USA Speedway's year-ending Russ Conway's Oktoberfest spectacular.

And well back in Bubar's mirror, fellow Pine Tree State native Travis Benjamin drove a patient race to earn the GSPSS championship.

Sunday's season finale earned intrigue before the drop of the green, with a \$2,000 bonus offered to any top-five starter who would forfeit their position on the grid if they could come back to win. Derek Griffith, the 2015 GSPSS champion, answered the call, lining up shotgun on the 28-car field to chase the bounty.

Bubar, starting outside of Ryan Green, jumped into the lead early, building an advantage over Green in the opening stint as Griffith picked his way through traffic. When a yellow flag flew on lap 35, Griffith had already clawed his way to 12th with plenty of laps left.

On the restart, Renfrew surged to second, pursuing Bubar until a wreck in the back of the field brought out another caution on lap 47. Reigning champion Joey Doiron pitted from fifth, while Griffith cycled through to eighth for the restart. Benjamin, well ahead of challenger Brandon Barker in the title race, was tenth.

Bubar held off Renfrew's advances on the restart, but the Candia, N.H., youngster prevailed, making his way to the front and leading at halfway. A

long green-flag run allowed Renfrew to stretch the gap between himself and Bubar, but Bubar reeled Renfrew in as they diced through lapped traffic. A slow car ahead of Renfrew at just the right time gave Bubar an opening, and Bubar charged back through to take the lead.

Griffith's bid for the bounty went up in smoke with 31 laps to go, as he shredded a right-front tire running fourth. Griffith rejoined the field after a tow, but his shot at the win was all but over and he would rebound to finish eighth.

Bubar brought the field to green, and while Renfrew hassled him for a couple laps, he was able to pull away down the stretch. In his first series start of the season, Bubar raced to his second GSPSS win and his first since winning at his home track, Beech Ridge Motor Speedway, in 2021.

Renfrew followed Bubar home in second, with Green, Dave Farrington and Angelo Belsito rounding out the top five.

And with an eleventh-place finish, Travis Benjamin completed his championship season, becoming the tenth different driver to fly the GSPSS champion's banner. The Belfast, Maine, veteran, a former NASCAR racer and multi-time regional champion, won the first two outings of the season and committed to a full-time schedule that saw him finish out of the top-five only once all year.

The Granite State Pro Stock Series and president Mike Parks extend their gratitude to the tracks, teams and sponsors that made this 2023 season possible, and hope to release details on next year's schedule soon.

Cambridge half-marathon registration open

CAMBRIDGE – Registration is open for the Cambridge Half Marathon and 5K at CambridgeSide. The races are scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 5 (race begins 7 a.m. EST) on a gorgeous new course with views of the Charles River along Memorial Drive.

The Cambridge Half Marathon is a 13.1 mile fast and flat course featuring views of the MIT, John W. Weeks Footbridge, Harvard University Stadium, Charles River and more. The new 5K race also offers scenic views alongside the Charles River. Both courses are USATF certified and start and finish at CambridgeSide.

Race registration includes quarter zip

pull over (half marathon participants) or long sleeve shirt (5K participants), five complimentary CambridgeSide parking passes, training plan, race bib with timing chip, and finishing medal. Register for both races at CambridgeSide.com.

Cambridge Half Marathon and 5K at CambridgeSide race proceeds benefit Cambridge Camping (CambridgeCamping.org), City of Cambridge Scholarship Fund (Cambridgema.gov/Services/City-Scholarship) as well as other local charities. Cambridge Half Marathon and 5K is sponsored by Canam Group Inc. and training sponsor MYSTRYDE.

T-Birds fall in preseason tune-up

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - The Springfield Thunderbirds erased a 2-0 second intermission deficit before the Providence Bruins squeaked out a 3-2 overtime win in the final preseason matchup at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

Colten Ellis and Brandon Bussi kept the opposition off the board through 20 minutes before the Bruins connected for two quick goals in the second from Marc McLaughlin and Reilly Walsh respectively. Providence held the 2-0 edge into the final period of regulation.

However, the T-Birds showed some comeback magic as Drew Callin and Hugh McGing each tallied goals of

their own just 27 seconds apart, and just 4:06 into the third, the game was deadlocked, 2-2. Ellis even helped his own cause, picking up the secondary assist on Callin's marker.

Despite being outshot 35-21 in regulation, Springfield got the game to overtime thanks to 33 Ellis stops, but Providence got the last laugh as John Farinacci beat Ellis at 1:35 of OT to secure the Bruins win.

The T-Birds open their regular season slate next Saturday, Oct. 14 against Hartford, with puck drop set for 7:05 p.m. at the MassMutual Center.

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friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

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portunity, he knows how to put the ball into the net."

During the 51st minute, Dupre weaved around a couple of defenders before firing a low shot into the back of the net past Eagles sophomore goalie Andrew Vilakis (6 saves) for an unassisted goal.

Dupre scored his first goal of the regular season in a 10-1 home win versus Hampden Charter at the end of September. He's also one of the four players listed on the Pathfinder varsity soccer roster who attends Palmer High School.

The other three players from Palmer High are junior Elijah Jez, sophomore Jaleel Nevue-Roman, and freshman Owen Pear. They're able to play soccer for Pathfinder Tech as part of a co-op.

A couple of minutes later, Dupre lined a shot from the top of the penalty box into the net following a corner kick taken by senior Kenny Brouillette.

"Both of the goals scored by Adonis were well struck," Wilson added. "He's one of the smallest kids on the field, but he came up big for us in today's game. I'm looking forward to coaching him during the next couple of years."

Dupre's second goal of the match gave the Pioneers a 3-1 advantage.

The Pioneers scored their final goal during the 73rd minute.

This time, Dupre delivered a pass to junior Evan Costa whose shot attempt deflected off the goalie's

knee before crossing the goal-line.

Costa entered this week's action with a team-leading 17 goals. He scored 15 goals as a sophomore.

"Evan is our leading goal scorer this season," Wilson said. "He's a very hard worker out there."

With less than five minutes left in regulation P.V.C.A. freshman Nathan Hill was issued his second yellow card resulting in a red card. Hill was also suspended for last Wednesday's match.

"It was the first time I saw him play, but I thought he was one of their stronger players," Wilson said. "He was dangerous coming down the left side."

The Pioneers took a 1-0 lead in last Tuesday's home match in the middle of the opening half.

The scoring play began with a throw-in from the left sideline by junior Seth Mitchell. The ball bounced around the box before Costa put it into the net.

The Eagles scored the equalizer six minutes into the second half on a free kick. The kick was taken from the right sideline by freshman Jake Morozov. The shot floated into the left corner over the head of senior goalie Richie Gula (3 saves), who was looking into the bright setting sun.

The home team retook the lead again five minutes.

The four Pioneers goal scorers in the road victory against P.V.C.A. were senior Riley Sanderson, freshman Cayden Bousquet, Pear, and Costa.

Gula was credited with eight saves in his fourth shutout of the regular season.



Seth Mitchell clears the ball away. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Nonprofit organization offers smiles while helping youth

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – It is through the art of clowning that sparks the motivation of the foundation, Clowning for Kidz, a West Warren nonprofit public charity that was formed in 2008 for the soul purpose of helping children in need under the age of 16.

The founder of the organization is resident Jim Allard, who is also known as Nitwit the Clown, and he believes the world runs on laughter.

“It’s all about the kids. There are no boundaries and no borders to the help we provide to a child in need. We can help children anywhere around the world, however, much of our assistance is in the local community,” said Allard.

Not only serving local communities, Clowning For Kidz has helped children in other countries, including Haiti and the Philippines.

The foundation involves an all-volunteer group of clowns who give their time and talent to entertain and help children. The most common events the foundation participates in are parades all around New England, fundraisers such as the Annual Clowning For Kidz Foundation Car Show and Family Fun Day.

Although this year’s car show was cancelled due to the weather, the foundation still has their plans set for future events. Parades are the most popular events Clowning For Kidz participate in all year round and enjoy interacting with the crowds.

The laughter and enjoyment during the parades come from the clowns themselves. The friendly clowns range in age from young to young-at-heart and they love making children smile.

“We bring smiles to kids of all ages,” said Clowning For Kidz secretary, Tracey Mazur, who goes by the clown name, Dotz.

The clowns in Clowning for Kidz stay true to their character when they go out to bring joy and laughter to children.

Over their 15-year history, the foundation has welcomed and featured nearly 50 volunteer clowns.

The foundation also offers educational opportunities for volunteers wanting to become clowns. Classes go for about eight weeks and one of the biggest priorities in clowning for Clowning for Kidz is to be a friendly clown.

The volunteers are not only local to Warren and other neighboring communities, but the foundation has had people come from New York, Vermont, Rhode Island, and all over the commonwealth.

Clowning isn’t just for adults; children have volunteered to be clowns as well.

Over the years, the reception of Clowning For Kidz has attracted the interest of other contributors.

A local artisan, Toni Allard has donated hand knitted winter hats to the foundation to give to the children, and Springfield Technical Community College donated a bus to the foundation so that the clowns would be able to travel to numerous events including parades.

This year, Clowning for Kidz included a branded RV in their foundation as



Members of the Clowning for Kidz Foundation standing in front of their new RV that drives in parades throughout New England. SUBMITTED PHOTO BY TRACEY MAZUR

a traveling source for the clowns and to be showcased during parades.

Clowning for Kidz Foundation helps children in many ways. By providing medically recommended activities or equipment that strengthen and improve coordination: dance lessons, water therapy or horseback riding.

The foundation also enables student education, internships, or travel opportunities, as well as purchasing equipment suitable for music, safety, or sporting activities.

Clowning for Kidz can also provide basic needs, such as bedding, clothing,

or eyeglasses, and even sponsoring therapy for abused or neglected children.

Clowning for Kidz is excited to continue their efforts and is thankful for being welcomed by many communities as they have many events booked.

“We’re very thankful for all the communities and businesses who have welcomed us over the years,” Allard said.

To learn more about the foundation or get involved, visit www.clowningforkidzfoundation.org. The foundation can be reached by calling 413-454-7234 or emailing clowningforkidzfoundation@comcast.net.

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Pathfinder teacher hosts 30th and final car show

By Dallas Gagnon
Staff Writer
dgagnon@turley.com

PALMER – After 30 years of hosting Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School annual car show, Collision Repair teacher Craig Sankey hosted his final show Sept. 17 and is passing the torch.

“It’s very bittersweet...we’ve met so many wonderful people over the years and lost great people within the community,” said Sankey.

He said that after hosting the show for three decades, he and his crew believe their “time has come,” adding PRVTHS Superintendent Eric Duda “wants the show to continue,” and may form a car show committee in the future.

Jeanine Sankey, wife to Craig, said the show started off as an idea 32 years ago, to help offset the costs for students to participate in the SkillsUSA program.

Proceeds from the event have continued to provide financial support for the Collision Repair students to participate in the SkillsUSA competition as well as non-budgeted expenses such as shop shirts and sweat-shirts.

Former Collision Repair adult program student Krista Wilson said Sankey “always puts the students first,” and “is big on community.”

“They’ve done so much over the years,” said Wilson.

Sankey “deserves a lot of kudos,” for all he has done for the students and the show, she said.

In the closing remarks, Jeanine Sankey revealed that with the help of PRVTHS Vocational Director Amy Skowyr, \$4,000 worth of sponsorships were secured in addition to the funds raised from the event.

The show generates money from a \$15 vehicle registration cost, a \$3 general admission fee and optional purchases of raffle tickets.

According to Sankey, this year’s car show was the largest and final showing, with over 320 vehicles in attendance.

“Our first show had 58 cars...My wife and I did everything,” said Sankey.

Cousin to Sankey, Bonnie Spaulding, said she and



Shown from left are Debbie August, Michael Plouffe, Craig Sankey, Jason Bushey, Lauren Sankey, Tom Cote, Jeanine Sankey, Kris Spaulding, Mason Washington, Bonnie Spaulding, Marta Carrey, Glenn Sinon, Jeff Ovitt, Adam Holst and Ron Bushey. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DALLAS GAGNON

husband, Kris Spaulding, have supported Sankey with the car show since 1997, starting off as volunteer cooks.

“It went from being extremely stressful [as] cooks, to just showing up and filling in,” said Spaulding.

She added after the first eight years or so, the group went from trying to break registration from 100 cars on the lot, to trying to break 200.

“It’s pretty incredible considering how many [vehicles] showed up,” said Spaulding.

Sankey recognized several volunteers who helped make the show possible over the past three decades, and said he has received “a lot of great support,” from family and friends.

“We’ve had family by our side for 25 years,” said Sankey. “We couldn’t do it without [them].” said Sankey.

Daughter Lauren Sankey said that although her

father’s retirement from hosting the show is “bittersweet,” it will create more opportunities for the family to enjoy attending shows opposed to organizing them.

“It’s a lot of work,” she said. “It takes up our entire summer, speaking with sponsors, going out to shows... handing out fliers,” said Sankey. “Maybe my dad can restore his 1970 Dodge Dart.”

While Sankey recognized the top 40 vehicles as chosen by himself and a judging team, he showed appreciation for the people “who make things happen.”

“They say it takes a village; we definitely have a village,” said Sankey.

He recognized friends and family, including Donna and Glenn Sinon, Bonnie and Kris Spaulding, Tom Cote, Adam Holst, Jason Bushey, Debbie August, Tom Willard, Rick Bushey, Jeanine Sankey and his parents.

“We have had an amazing crew over the last 30 years,” said Sankey. “We appreciate everything.”



George Hollister stands beside his 2019 Ford Mustang Bullitt.



Corbin Cuipenski and Hailey Letourneau are shown standing beside Cuipenski’s 1965 Chevrolet Corvair Corsa.



This 1967 Ford Mustang sported a soft, metallic green paint job.



Kelly Silva and Jay Koziol of Ludlow, stand beside Koziol’s Plymouth Duster.



Seth, Savannah and Jennifer Lavallee stand before Seth’s 2002 Chevrolet S10.



A classic yellow Volkswagen Beetle was on display at the 30th annual Palmer Regional Vocational Technical High School car show.

APPLE | FROM PAGE 1

offering apples, cider, preserves and baked goods.

A newcomer to the Apple Country Fair, but with a longstanding presence in the neighboring community of North Brookfield since 1918, was Brookfield Orchards, represented by Diana Nydam.

Nydam, who is a multi-generation apple farmer, brought a selection of the orchard's baked goods, including cookies, apple breads and other desserts, and her signature fudge.

Brookfield Orchards began making and selling their own fudge three years ago, with over 20 flavors to choose from.

One of the big draws to the Apple Country Fair is "The Rapple," a large spread of raffle items donated by community members and businesses.

Included in The Rapple each year, is a quilt made by members of the Community Club.

This year, the queen-sized quilt was made by Marie Oprica, along with her mother Denise Charpentier and Susan Finney.

Oprica said she has been quilting for at least 16 years, and has lent her talents to make The Rapple quilt for the past 10 years.

She said the quilters find a pattern that they all like, and each work on different parts before they piece the quilt together. The process takes "many hours" she said.

The Rapple also included prizes from local businesses, as well as a print of famous artist Jacob Knight's painting, "An Apple a Day."

Despite a gloomy forecast, the weather held off and at least 75 vendors lined the common to sell their wares, ranging from candles to soaps, to gifts for your canine companions, knitted and crocheted items, holiday décor, aprons and potholders, clothing, books, vegetables, sweet treats and much more.

Several food trucks offered delicious food to please every palate.

The Brookfield Congregational

Church and St. Mary's Church worked together to bake fresh apple pies to sell at the fair as well.

Local band Spooner Well played a variety of songs, ranging from covers by popular artists to their own original music inspired by one of Brookfield's most infamous residents, Bathsheba (Rugles) Spooner.

About Brookfield Community Club

The Brookfield Community Club is a nonprofit, volunteer organization in the town of Brookfield established to benefit the school and community and to foster community spirit through service and fellowship.

Grant applications for nonprofit organizations can be downloaded at applecountryfair.com/grant-application-printable.pdf.

Grants applications are accepted through Nov. 10 each year. Applications can either be emailed to applecountryfair@gmail.com or mailed to Brookfield Community Club, P.O. Box K312, Brookfield, MA 01506.

The Community Club also offers the Diane Martell Community Service Award each year.

This award is for a Brookfield resident that is a graduating senior from high school. The student must have volunteered for the Brookfield Community Club at the Apple Country Fair.

It is not a scholarship, and a transcript is not required to apply.

The \$500 cash award is in honor of Diane Martell, a founding member of the Brookfield Community Club. Martell was an active member in the community and an advocate of community service.

Applications are accepted from Feb. 14-March 15 each year. Applications can either be emailed or mailed to the addresses listed above.

For more information about the Community Club or for grant and award applications, visit applecountryfair.com or find them on Facebook.



Jim Lamothe of Cook's Farm Orchard displayed an offering of fresh apples and cider at the Brookfield Community Club's 44th annual Apple Country Fair on Oct. 7. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE



Fairgoers included these four-legged friends.



Weston DeCelle, age 4, (left) plays a yard game with Lucas Bennett, age 5.



The ever-popular Spooner Well provided live entertainment throughout the day.



This year's raffle prize quilt was made by Brookfield Community Club members Marie Oprica, Denise Charpentier and Susan Finney.



Sebastian Blouin, age 3, gets ready to take his turn.

North Brookfield Savings Bank announces hires, promotion

NORTH BROOKFIELD – North Brookfield Savings Bank is pleased to announce the hiring of Katherine Meyer as its human resource director, Michelle Ramos as compliance officer, and the promotion of Ann Brady to controller and treasurer.

North Brookfield Savings Bank prides itself on not simply hiring for technical expertise, but hiring individuals whose background will add to the bank's culture; people who bring different experiences, offer unique perspectives, and create a diversity of thinking among the bank's workforce.

Katherine Meyer

Katherine Meyer, of northern Connecticut, has been hired as first vice president, human resources director for the bank.

For the past seven years, she held the role of vice president, human resources for a Connecticut-based credit union. Prior to that, she held human resource leadership roles in industries such as healthcare, hospitality, construction and manufacturing.

She serves on Lockton's Talent and Culture Advisory Board, is a member of the HR Association of Central Connecticut and looks forward to joining a local SHRM chapter in Western Massachusetts.

She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Connecticut, a master's degree in human resource management from Cambridge College, PHR certification from the HR Certification Institute and SHRM-CP certification from the Society for Human Resource Management.

"I look forward to being a part of the continued success of NBSB which is so steeped in local community history, and helping to ensure that success by attracting the best talent to serve our loyal customers," said Meyer. "I enjoy visiting our branch locations, meeting our teams, and observing the interconnectedness of all our processes. I am excited to be working among such a truly dedicated group of people."

Michelle Ramos

Michelle Ramos, of Gardner, has been hired as vice president, compliance officer for the bank. She will be responsible for oversight of the bank's compliance



Katherine Meyer was recently hired as North Brookfield Savings Bank's first vice president and human resources director.



Michelle Ramos has been hired as North Brookfield Savings Bank's vice president and compliance officer. SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Ann Brady was recently promoted to vice president and treasurer and controller at North Brookfield Savings Bank.

management program.

For the past 20 years, she has held a variety of roles for Fidelity Bank in Leominster, including eight years in retail banking, four years in corporate training, and eight years in compliance.

She is currently a part of the Finance Committee for Cornerstone Church in Winchendon. In addition, she holds certificates in deposit and lending compliance, and has earned a certificate of professional development through Nichols College.

"As the new compliance officer for North Brookfield Savings Bank, I am dedicated to upholding the highest regulatory standards and ensuring the bank's operations remain fully compliant," said Ramos. "I am excited to contribute to the bank's strong commitment to ethical banking, trust, and exceptional service while collaborating with and supporting my new colleagues."

Ann Brady

Ann Brady, of Wheelwright, has been promoted to vice president, controller and treasurer for the bank.

Previously, Brady worked for Country Bank for Savings for over 18 years, starting as a data processor before becoming the assistant accounting supervisor.

She holds an advanced financial services diploma from the Center for Financial Training. With more than 20 years of experience in the financial services field, she brings a wealth of knowledge, confidence and experience to her new role and existing team.

In addition to her previous duties, Brady will now be responsible for overseeing the accounting department and will sit on the bank's ALCO committee.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity to expand my skillset by working with our CEO at a higher level," said Brady. "The accounting team is comprised of extremely experienced and talented people, with whom I am excited to learn as we move forward." North Brookfield Savings Bank is a mutual savings bank with full-service branches in North Brookfield, East Brookfield, West Brookfield, Ware, Belchertown and Three Rivers Village of Palmer.

Send Us Your Holiday Event Information

Turley Publications will print your holiday calendar listings FREE OF CHARGE in our Holiday Dazzler Supplement which publishes Nov. 15th.

Deadline for submissions is October 16th

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SNOWPLOW CONTRACTOR WANTED:
The Town of Hubbardston is seeking a private contractor(s) to plow and sand Mile Road and Plum Tree Lane in Hubbardston for the 2023-2024 Winter Season. The Contractor will be responsible for keeping the road plowed and treated with sand/salt mixture. Minimum equipment required: 3/4-ton truck with plow and 1.3CY sander. Sand/salt mix to be provided by the Town of Hubbardston. Contract period will be 12/1/23 - 3/31/24. Insurance Certificate and Workers Compensation insurance is required from the successful bidder. The bid opening will occur on Thursday, November 2 at 10:00 AM at the Hubbardston DPW garage. The Town of Hubbardston reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and to waive minor informalities in the bids, or to accept the bid deemed best for the Town. Bids need to be marked separately for either Mile Road FY24 Winter Season or Plum Tree Lane FY24 Winter Season and can be mailed to **Hubbardston DPW 7 Main St. Unit # 6 Hubbardston, MA 01452** or hand delivered to the Hubbardston DPW garage located at 68 Worcester Rd. Hubbardston MA 01452. Please feel free to call **978.928.1408** with any questions you might have.

THE TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD is looking for part-time plow drivers. This is an on-call position. Must have a valid, clean MA Driver's License and a DOT physical car. Pay rate \$20.41/hour or \$23.38/hour with a Class B License with air brakes. Snow plowing experience is preferred but not required. Please contact: **Jim Daley, 508-867-1417 or via email jdaley@wbrookfield.com.** The Town of West Brookfield is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity at all levels of the workforce. EOE

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Ware River Watershed Public Access Plan finalized

By Eric Goodhart
Correspondent

BARRE – The people have not only spoken; they have been heard.

Efforts by the Chair of the Ware River Watershed Advisory Council, Jeffrey Schaaf along with the Council members, to continue to allow public access to the watershed paid off at the Sept. 13 meeting, held at Quabbin Regional Middle High School.

The Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Conservation and Recreation presented their final plan that night by the Director of Natural Resources, Dan Clark.

It had been almost three years since the commonwealth began the process in 2019, but the pandemic and lockdowns delayed the proceedings to review the DEP policies every 10 years. But by the time the DEP met via Zoom on Feb. 23, thousands of concerned citizens had heard that some restrictive changes to the Ware River Watershed Public use policies were planned and they were alarmed.

Many were apprehensive at the Rutland Library that night. Many citizens came to hear firsthand about the proposals reducing or eliminating some recreational uses of the Ware River Watershed to ensure that the quality of the water was never contaminated and safe to drink into the future, which appeared not to have been scientifically based on sound research over time.

The question and answer part became heated.

Particularly insightful questions and statements made from two members of the Advisory Council, Dennis Guberski, a Rutland resident and Cynthia Schlener, from Hubbardston, pointed them out.

Anne Gobi, now the newly appointed Director of Rural Affairs, but state Senator at the time, was one of several who said the monitoring and protection



The slide show presented at the Quabbin Regional High School in September lists procedural elements. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

program for both the Quabbin, and the Ware River Watershed has been exemplary year after year.

In fact, they continued to be awarded by the DEP the Public Water System award by performing above and beyond the standards required.

In a very impressive show of concern by citizens when they are informed with the facts and come together to make their views known has clearly shown what can be accomplished from the ground up. At the end of that meeting in February there were over 8,000 citizen signatures presented to the Director Natural Resources, Dan Clark to share with the MA DEP and the EPA in Boston. There were many more comments made on line for a few weeks after the February meeting on the DEP website set up for public feedback.

All of that and spearheaded by Schaaf and the WRWAC Council's efforts have clearly been influential in the overall favorable outcome in the final recommendations made by the DEP announced on Sept. 13.

They are now posted for the public

to see on the www.mass.gov website by searching "2023 Ware River Public Access Plan Final". The pdf illustrates the existing policy, the DEP first draft and the final policy.

Feedback from some of the attendees on Sept. 13, was positive rather than negative in any substantive way.

Perhaps there is still some caution and final review of the plan will be when the WRWAC meets on Thursday, Oct. 5. At that time there will be an official statement made.

Part of the reason for the delay was the newly elected Governor Maura Healey had much on her plate and did not fill the position of Massachusetts Commissioner of the DEP until March. That person is Bonnie Heiple an attorney with an impressive resume with a focus on environmental and water pro-

tection issues.

Healey has said this about her. "As commissioner, Bonnie Heiple will be focused on protecting our residents and our most precious resources from harmful contaminants and the threats of a changing climate."

It seems much state and national and global policy has its origin based on climate change.

In addition, Healey also appointed a new Commissioner of the DCR, Brian Arrigo, former Mayor of Revere. He has already said he wants to be the "longest serving" person in that office. The Commissioner has been replaced six times over the last eight years.

At the end of the Sept. 13 meeting, Clark said that the final plan included a statement that the "Division of Water Supply Protection DWSP will reserve the right to become more restrictive if access issues arise and cannot be resolved." Therefore, the members of the WRWAC urge all citizens using the beautiful natural resources of the Commonwealth, public and private to continue to be careful stewards of the land.

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TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pursuant to G.L. c. 30B, §16, the Town of West Brookfield, acting through its Board of Selectmen, hereby requests proposals from qualified bidders to lease a parcel of real estate known as 27 Front Street in West

Brookfield, MA, to operate a West Brookfield Historical Museum. The parcel to be leased is described in the deed recorded with Worcester South District Registry of Deeds at Book 8464, Page 0218.

Proposals are due no later than November 6, 2023, at 10 AM to the Town Administrator's Office, located at 2 East Main Street in West Brookfield, MA. The Proposal Packet is available on line at www.wbrookfield.com or in person in the Town Administrator's Office, Monday through Thursday, 8 AM to 4 PM.

You may contact the Town Administrator with any questions. 10/13, 10/20/2023



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