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Apple Country Fair

Annual event raises money for community grants

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

BROOKFIELD – The annual Apple Country Fair returned to the historic common for its 47th year this past Saturday, offering a day filled with sunshine, music, shopping and a sense of community.

The Oct. 10 fair had close to 100 vendors as well as many food trucks – each one offering something to please every shopper (and palate).

Hosted by the Brookfield Community Club, this fair is known to bring together the best of small-town charm with a vibrant marketplace, while also supporting the club's mission to provide grants for community service projects.

"We give out as much money as we can back to the community," Brookfield Community Club member Sue Finney said. "It allows us to support the community."



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Brookfield Community Club members Sue Finney and Lindsay Jaffarian are shown with the quilt that was raffled at the annual Apple Country Fair held on Saturday. This year's quilt had a patriotic theme for the nation's 250th anniversary of independence.

During the Apple Country Fair, the club offers a raffle with about 30 items donated by local and area businesses to support the cause, including sports memorabilia from the Boston Red Sox, Boston Bruins and Boston Celtics.

Brookfield Community Club member Lindsay Jaffarian said the raffle is one of the big draws to the Apple Country Fair.

There is also a raffle featuring an item from each vendor at the fair – all donated to help raise money for the club's grants.

"It's like a preview for the shoppers," Finney said of the vendor raffle table.

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PAGE 6

Durant and Teabo vie for senate seat

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

Two candidates are running for the State Senate seat for the Worcester & Hampshire District at the upcoming Tuesday, Nov. 3 State Election.

Incumbent Peter Durant of Spencer is seeking reelection and he is being challenged by newcomer Shannon Teabo of West Brookfield.

A Meet the Candidates forum will be hosted by the Ware Business & Civic Association and Beyond, Ware Community Television and Turley Publications on Wednesday, Oct. 21. The forum will be broadcast on Ware Community Television (www.waretv.org), and an article will appear in the

See CANDIDATES
PAGE 5

Stan Matthews is October's featured Artist of the Month

By Ryan Drago
rdrago@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Musician and singer Stan Matthews was selected as the October Artist of the Month by the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House.

Matthews was born in Worcester and he has lived in North Brookfield for seven years. His father worked as an air traffic controller, which made his family move quite a bit growing up.

Matthews began taking guitar lessons at the age of 12. His best friend lived across the street and they did everything together.

One memorable day, the two friends decided to try and play guitar.

Matthews took guitar lessons in Worcester at the YWCA for a couple of years to learn how to play acoustic guitar. His main focus was to transition into playing the electric guitar and in his teen years, Matthews went to Union Music in Worcester.

In high school, Matthews and some classmates decided to start a classic rock cover band. Their most frequent covers were songs by the Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix and many other rock legends.

"I knew music was going to be my life," Matthews said.

During high school Matthews also played in the jazz band. He decided to go to college and attended Berklee College of Music in Boston.

While studying, Matthews learned that Berklee was looking for traditional jazz music. Guitarists would study musicians from the 1930s and 1940s.

He learned a lot despite playing in a different genre.

Matthews said the Boston music scene was huge back in the 1980s and he met a lot of Boston-based musicians and bands.

Back home, Matthews decided to write his own songs, tried playing more instruments and began singing.

He recorded a demo at a new recording studio in Worcester and those songs did get some airplay on radio stations WAAF and WBCN. Matthews even ventured out to record companies in New York and London to shop his songs.

He met someone at Long View Farm Studio in North Brookfield. Many popular bands included the Rolling Stones recorded music there.

Matthews eventually found a producer.

Around 1986-1987, Matthews joined a band called



SUBMITTED PHOTO BY SHANIA DEFAZIO

Musician and singer Stan Matthews is the featured Artist of the Month by the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House for October.

See ARTIST
PAGE 10

West Brookfield wood turner returns to gallery

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WEST BROOKFIELD – Local wood turner and carver Frank White is returning to West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, 10 East Main St., for a show to feature his latest pieces.

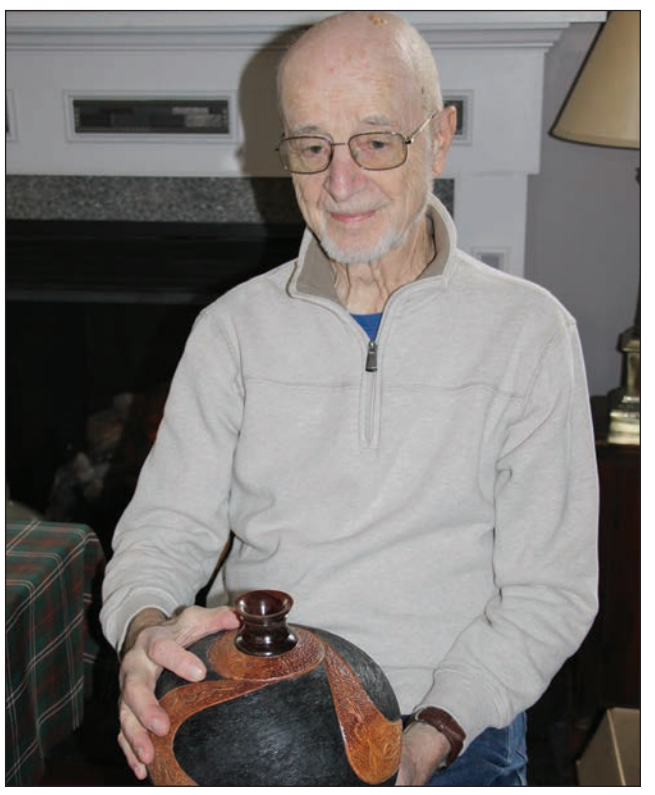
An opening reception for the show will be held on Friday, Oct. 23 from 5-7 p.m. All are welcome to attend the reception and enjoy artwork, wine, cheese and friendly fellowship.

"I wasn't doing much turning for quite a while as I had other responsibilities," White said. "I find that I'm a lot slower. Things aren't nearly as easy as I remember them to be."

Despite this, White has created an impressive assortment of wood pieces that are both decorative and functional.

To prepare for the show, White has created several hollow form turnings, including one that is about nine inches in diameter and about a foot tall.

"It's a combination of texturing and carving," he said.



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

West Brookfield wood turner and carver Frank White is shown with one of his hollow forms that will be featured at the West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery. An opening reception for White's show will be held on Friday, Oct. 23 from 5-7 p.m.

The piece features S-shaped strips, that have carvings of vines with small flowers and leaves in the natural cherry color of the wood. The space in between the strips the wood is textured with a V-cutter and painted with black gesso.

"That makes the cherry color stand out," White

See WOOD TURNER
PAGE 6

Election letters must be received by Oct. 19

The Quaboag Current welcomes readers to participate in this year's state election by writing letters to the editor for publication.

Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Quaboag Current, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to pouimette@turley.com by noon on Monday, Oct. 19 to be published in the Friday, Oct. 23 edition. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

Letter writers need to provide their name and the town they reside in.

Please include a daytime telephone number (for verification purposes only) when submitting your letter. Your phone number will not be printed.

- community -

Select Board discusses opioid settlement funds

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen met last Tuesday and discussed the first steps in figuring out where to spend money that was acquired by the town through a federal opioid settlement, according to Chair Jamie Gilman.

There was not a specific number given at the Oct. 6 meeting as to how much the town received, but Gilman said there was a preliminary meeting of officials that could become an opioid task force in the future.

Gilman said the meeting, which happened in mid-September, consisted of Peter Orsi, who is an EMT and a selectman in town, representatives from the Haston Free Public Library, the principal of the North Brookfield High School, and other non-profit representatives from North Brookfield and other areas.

Gilman said the meeting talked about opioid addiction and its effect on North Brookfield, and the school was advocating for drug education.

There are seven strategies for the funds that were outlined at the meeting including treating opioid disorder, supporting those in recovery, finding connections to care and harm reduction, assisting those in the criminal justice system, supporting pregnant or parenting women and their families, including babies with neonatal absence syndrome, preventing the misuse of opioids and implementing prevention education.

Gilman and the board also outlined the work the library does, and read a statement from Library Trustee Chair Harbour Hodder which outlined, in part, that they welcome those in vulnerable situations including substance abuse, food insecurity and domestic abuse.

The statement read that the staff is trained for emergency situations regarding substance abuse, and there are pamphlets with sources around the library, including at the circulation desk and in the restrooms.

COA report

Council on Aging Director Courtenay Rivera gave a report about the Senior Center and noted 319 sign-ins for August with 54 unduplicated and 396 sign-ins for September with 49 unduplicated.

Events over the months included two strength and flexibility classes with 32 total participants, a Bemis workshop with 18 participants, a Quaboag River cruise with 10 participants, a coffee and craft event with 11 participants, a bingo night with 18 participants, a performance from the Greendale Friends Chorus with 16 participants, an event with the Registry of Deeds with 14 participants and the end of summer luau with 20 participants.

The report noted the set time for events at the center, including walking clubs on Mondays and Thursdays at 9:30 a.m., food distribution on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m., lunch on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at noon, drawing club on Thursdays at 11 a.m., gentle yoga Thursdays at 11 a.m., functional fitness Fridays at 9:30 a.m., foot care clinics on the first Friday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., manicures on the third Thursday, blood pressure clinic on the second Wednesday at 11 a.m. and blood pressure plus glucose clinic on the fourth Wednesday from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Highway Department report

Highway Department Superintendent Randy Morgan gave the department's September report and noted roadside clean-up like whacking, mowing, trimming and guardrail cleaning taking place. The department has been grading dirt roads including Douty Road and patching potholes as needed.

The report noted the department is initiating the setup of the brine system for the winter, and cleaning catch basins. The department jetted out clogged pipes on Conroy Avenue and there are some paving projects on North Main Street, which start on Oct. 19 and Stoddard Court and Chase Road which are scheduled for later this year.

Police Department report

Police Chief Ryan Daley gave the department's September report and noted 1,242 calls for service, nine arrests/summons/custodies, 14 civil citations, five parking tickets, seven protection orders and three car accidents.

The department secured a $10,506 grant to be used toward traffic enforcement, field sobriety test training, child passenger safety technician training and national night out funding. The report noted an officer attending a wellness class identifying stress, critical incidents, mental health, peer support and crisis intervention.

The department is one officer down, soon to be a second due to an officer departing, and they are working on filling those positions.

Town House paving

Executive Assistant Mary Beth Kularski put out a statement saying the town, by requirement of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, will have to do some paving in the parking lot of the Town House.

According to Kularski, this is due to subsurface petroleum and hydrocarbon release, and the soil underground has to be contained per the regulations. The town has to adhere to these regulations as they could face potential monetary fines if not.

Donations

The board accepted a $10,000 donation to the library through the Florine E. Martell trust and an anonymous $30 donation to the COA.

Appointments

The board appointed Melissa Magario, Shelly Fullam and Pam Farley as election workers along with Richard Litchfield as a mechanic to the Highway Department.

Select Board delays superintendent choice

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

BROOKFIELD – The Select Board met last Thursday with an agenda item of a possible vote for highway superintendent following the interviews of four candidates on Sept. 30.

Following the interviews, one of the applicants, Sergio Freitas withdrew, according to Select Board member Beth Coughlin. That left the board to deliberate about Devin Saunders, Thomas Degnan and Mark O'Donnell.

The board scheduled for the candidates to come in and test the equipment following the first interviews, but that did not come to fruition.

Coughlin said in speaking with the candidates, all of them except Freitas were willing to take on the challenge of getting the department ready for the winter season. She said Degnan and Saunders have good operator qualifications, with Saunders having nearby contacts and understanding the value of older equipment. She said O'Donnell is a good operator, mechanic and foreman. Coughlin said that Degnan has good experience with welding and doing both horizontal and vertical repairs.

Select Board member Richard Chaffee said he was concerned with Degnan and Saunders because they lack the mechanical skills to make repairs to things like sprockets, chains and brakes, and they'd likely be subbing that work out to a third party. Chaffee said that could cost a lot of money.

He said that O'Donnell could do all of those repairs, and in his opinion, the least important part of the superintendent's job is the paperwork side of things. Chaffee said the town has a history of working superintendents.

Chaffee said it would not make sense to have the superintendent in the office when the town could hire an administrator position for less, and said that O'Donnell would get the town through the winter. He said out of the five trucks in the highway barn, only one of them is likely operable, and having someone able to work on the equipment is valuable.

Coughlin had a different point of view, saying the other candidates, Saunders and Degnan would not spend most of their time in the office, saying they both estimated to her that no more than 10% of their time, or four hours per week, would be spent doing office work. She said they both understand how to prepare a department for the winter.

Coughlin said she agreed that O'Donnell could rescue the town this winter, but the town could be trading a less expensive first winter for future challenges.

It was noted in the meeting by Chaffee that the members of the highway search committee all had recommendations for O'Donnell, and he said the members of the committee worked the Highway Department when it was at its best.

Resident Jeff Clark, who sits on the advisory committee, said the town needs someone with financial knowledge. Another resident, John David Holdcraft, said the committee was filled with knowledgeable people with experience, and recommended O'Donnell, noting the department needs to have a mechanic and he'd be good for the town even after winter ends.

One member of the board, Sarah Campbell, was not present for the meeting and the two remaining members could not come to an agreement as to whom to appoint, so the decision was delayed to a future meeting.

Chaffee said waiting just another week with the winter season coming could be detrimental.

The board also voted to get someone on site to inspect the equipment in the interim, and voted to post a position for mechanic.

Betty Gundersen Studio of Dance offers Dance Discovery Week

WEST BROOKFIELD – Betty Gundersen, director of the Betty Gundersen Studio of Dance, is pleased to announce that the studio will be holding Dance Discovery Week from Oct. 26-31.

"During Dance Discovery Week, current students of the studio are invited to 'bring a friend' to take a free class and experience what we're all about," Gundersen stated in a press release. "And, if you or your child don't yet have a friend at the studio, you are welcome to join us too! We offer classes for children starting at pre-school and continuing through high school and above."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Students are shown at the barre in the Betty Gundersen Studio of Dance in West Brookfield.

The Betty Gundersen Studio of Dance offers a full range of classes designed to nurture local boys and girls at every age and stage. All classes in the studio's regular schedule – jazz, acrobatics, contemporary, hip-hop, ballet, tap and adult tap, Zumba – will be available for this free-trial participation.

"Dance is for everyone," said Gundersen. "This week is our way of opening our doors – no pressure, just movement, music, and meeting new people. This is a great opportunity to meet our talented instructors, explore a dance style you've never tried, see our facilities and perhaps begin a dance journey – or simply have fun and see what it feels like."

Parents of interested students may view the entire week's schedule online at bettygundersendance.com to plan which class or style they would like to try. You will also be able to download a copy of the parent permission slip that is required for all participants in Dance Discovery Week.

For additional information, or to reserve your, or your child's free trial spot in a regularly scheduled class, please call the studio at 508-867-8925, or send an email to bgstudioofdance@gmail.com and include the name of the participant and their preferred class.

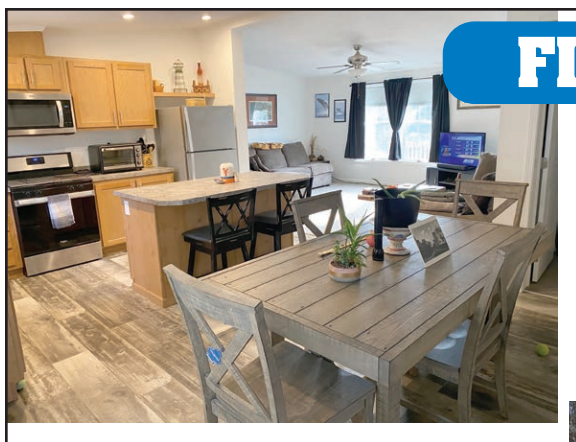
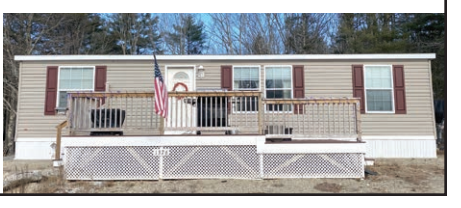
Christ Memorial Church tag sale is Oct. 17

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The tag sale at Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 133 North Main St., will be held Saturday, Oct. 17 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., rain or shine.

There will be plants, puzzles, books, clothes, kids' stuff, kitchen and household items, treasures and more. Name your own price.

Help support the North Brookfield Food Collaborative by bringing non-perishable items. Use the Spring Street door should the weather force the tag sale inside.

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- community -

Friends of the Poor Walk to be held on Oct. 18

STURBRIDGE – The St. Vincent de Paul Society in Fiskdale will host its third annual Friends of the Poor Walk, on Sunday, Oct. 18, at noon at the Sturbridge common during the harvest fest.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will go toward supporting local individuals and families in need across Brimfield, Brookfield, Holland, Sturbridge, Wales and other nearby towns.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society in Fiskdale provides practical assistance throughout the year, including emergency housing, rental and utility help, food, clothing and other essential needs – serving people of all backgrounds and faiths.

The Fiskdale conference raises funds through parish poor boxes, public donations and events such as this one.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul operates in 153 countries, with more than 4,000 local conferences, and is run entirely by volunteer members committed to tackling poverty in all its forms.

Residents are encouraged to come to the harvest fest and join the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the walk for their neighbors in need.

For more information contact svdpfiskdalepr@gmail.com. To make a donation, visit svdpfiskdale.org and click on the "Donate" button.

Mystics & Makers: The Enchanted Market is Oct. 17

BROOKFIELD – Mystics & Makers: The Enchanted Market will return for its second annual event on Saturday, Oct. 17 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Brookfield Rod & Gun Club, 56 Webber Road. Admission is free.

The Enchanted Market brings together the worlds of handmade artistry, holistic wellness and spiritual exploration in an autumn market designed to appeal to the curious as well as the committed enthusiast.

This year's event will feature approximately 30 vendors, eight psychics and a healer, creating one of the market's most diverse lineups yet. Visitors can browse everything from handcrafted and artisan creations to herbal and apothecary products, jewelry, crystals, seasonal pieces, and mystical and spiritual goods.

A food vendor will be on site throughout the day as well.

For visitors interested in a more personal experience, psychic practitioners will offer a variety of intuitive services, including tarot, mediumship, astrology, oracle readings and other forms of spiritual guidance. A healing practitioner will also be available.

Psychic readings and healing sessions will be offered at a standardized rate of $25 for 15 minutes, giving guests an opportunity to explore different practitioners and modalities throughout the day.

For additional information, contact: Spiritology by Candace, Candace Ouillette Gaumond at 413-537-5715, or Lulu's AvalonRose Cottage, Lauren "Lulu" Ayer at 774-745-8550.

QVARC amateur radio club meeting set for Oct. 27

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club will hold its upcoming membership meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 27, at the Senior Center at 73 Central St.

Doors open at 6 p.m. with the meeting starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

The presentation at the meeting this month will be "Using AI to Design a Ham Shack". The presentation will be done by one of the club members, Liam, KC1YRP.

The summary of his presentation will be location topography analysis to antenna optimization to rig recommendations. AI can be a great tool to assist a new, a novice or an experienced ham design his or her shack.

Outline: Brief summary of AI tools selection and AI best practices, site topography analysis, antenna recommendations and design, gear research and selection and shack layout and setup

QVARC warmly welcomes area hams and anyone curious about amateur radio to reach out and get involved. Whether you're a licensed operator, a lapsed one looking to get back on the air, or simply curious what ham radio is all about, there's a place for you in the club as it heads toward its 40th year.

For more information about QVARC, upcoming events, or how to get involved, visit www.qvarc.com or find the club on Facebook at Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club.

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Select Board places articles on STM warrant

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – The Select Board placed several articles on the special town meeting warrant, which is scheduled for Nov. 16 at 7 p.m. at Tantasqua Regional High School.

The first article placed by the board was for easements on Walker Pond for a culvert repair, as it is deteriorated, but there are some portions of the project on private property.

The next article placed was for phase two of a sidewalk project on Cedar Street. This article is meant to prepare for a grant application for work to be done. The first phase of the project was from Route 20 to the Burgess Elementary School, and phase two will go from Burgess to Cedar Pond.

The next article placed was for regulations for battery energy storage systems, which Town Administrator Robin Grimm said the Planning Board is in support of, and allows the town to have some control as to where these systems go. She said if the town does not have any bylaws on them, the project goes to state control.

Grimm noted that even under this bylaw, if a permit is not given by 18 months, the developer can appeal to the state and put them under control.

"We are trying to protect deforesting and farmland being eaten up," Grimm said.

The board also placed a temporary moratorium on data centers on the warrant, since the town's bylaws are currently silent on them.

The board placed an article for Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act permitting on Douty Road because the size of the property is large enough to trigger that, and they cannot clear trails until the permitting process is through. Grimm said this funding can also start planning use of fields, parking and stormwater considerations, and the funding needed is $350,000.

Other articles placed on the warrant included heating work at the wastewater treatment plant, a generator, a Route 20 pumping station replacement design and Department of Public Works contracts. With these items being added, the board closed and signed the warrant for the meeting, along with signing the state election warrant.

An engineer with Tighe & Bond was present at the meeting to discuss the Route 20 pumping station, and said the idea is to keep it where it currently is, rather than a previous plan which was to move it.

The representative said keeping it where it is saves about $3 million because there is a lot of concrete under the building, going about 20 feet underground, and there would be other costs like easements that would add up.

He said there were conversations with FEMA to design it so if there is a flood, the building stays anchored into the ground. The pumping station is nearing 60 years old, being finished in 1969.

Town Administrator's report

Grimm used her report to thank Becky Plimpton and Andrew St. George for their help in putting together a healthy living event on the common, that had a turnout of about 90 people.

Contracts

The board accepted a contract with Tighe & Bond for stormwater permit assistance for $80,000, a contract with Markings Inc. not to exceed $35,000 and a contract with Tighe & Bond for the Stallion Hill water storage tank replacement project for $438,000.

According to DPW director Heather Blakeley, the original article for that project was $3.3 million, and after this is through, they will re-evaluate to make sure there is enough funding for further phases of the project.

Appointments and resignations

The board appointed Gil Cooper as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission for a term to end Oct. 5, 2029 and accepted the resignation of Rebecca Gendreau from the Open Space Committee.

Upcoming events

There will be a 5K road race fundraiser for the Old Sturbridge Academy on Nov. 15 from 8-10 a.m., and comedy nights at Pickleball U on Oct. 23, 24 and Nov. 21 from 6-9 p.m.

Proclamation

The board proclaimed Oct. 14 as Rotary Friendship Day between the rotary clubs of Sturbridge, and Stourbridge, England.

Announcements

Hydrant flushing is continuing through Nov. 20 and there is early voting starting Oct. 17 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. with the same hours on Oct. 24, and regular business hours on the weeks of Oct. 19 and 25.

National Grid will be conducting electrical line maintenance throughout area towns.

The next scheduled meeting of the Select Board is Oct.19.

Historical Society hosts talk on Lucy Danforth Colman

STURBRIDGE – On Thursday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m., the Sturbridge Historical Society presents an illustrated talk, "A Moral Fire: Lucy Danforth Colman-Abolitionist, Women's Rights Activist & Free Thinker," by local historian Wally Hersee at the Publick House, 277 Main St.

The program is free and open to the public.

The talk highlights Sturbridge-born Lucy Danforth Colman, a 19th-century abolitionist, feminist campaigner, educator and freethinker. Colman worked tirelessly to advance women's rights and build support for the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery.

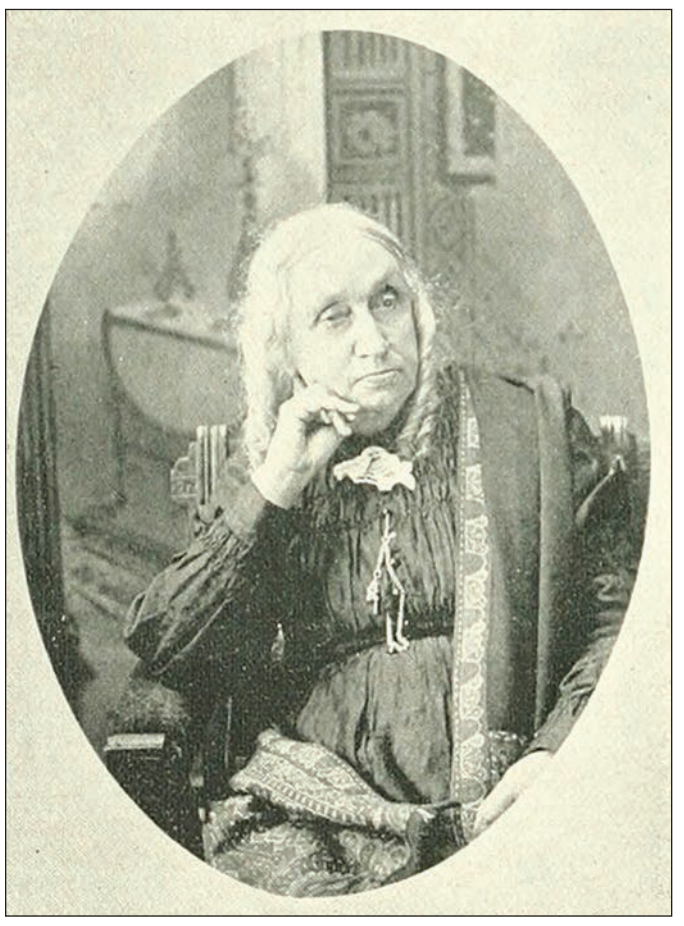
In her later years, she advocated for free thought, marriage equality and practical reason over dogma.

Hersee is a retired registered nurse and author dedicated to uncovering forgotten New England history. His research has brought to light forgotten Revolutionary and Civil War veterans, abolitionists, educators, inventors and local leaders in Sturbridge.

He also serves on local organizations focused on historic preservation and planning. Find out more about Hersee, his work and his publications at Heritage Oak Press, heritageoakpress.com.

The Society is hosting a food drive during the event to support the Joshua Hyde Public Library's Pages and Packs Pantry. Attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable, non-expired food items.

This program is graciously hosted by the Publick House.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The Sturbridge Historical Society will present a program by Wally Hersee about Lucy Danforth Colman on Thursday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. at the Publick House.

Music & Movement returns to Merrick library

BROOKFIELD – Music & Movement with Julie has returned to the Merrick Public Library, 2 Lincoln St., on Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m.

Join Julie for songs kids know and love. Stretch, move, sing, and dance – all while developing early literacy skills through music and rhythm.

This program is free and no registration is required. Recommended for children ages 0 to 5.

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- opinion -

in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer



Dark-eyed junco

Every fall I look for the return of the dark-eyed juncos, also known as "snow birds" in the middle latitudes.

Over most of the eastern United States, they appear as winter sets in and then retreat northward each spring to breed. Other juncos are year-round residents, retreating into woodlands during the breeding season or, like those of the Appalachian Mountains, moving to higher elevations during the warmer months.

I have not seen any yet, but I keep an eye out for them. Often my first sighting of the year is along the side of the road when I spot their white tail feathers as they fly.

Dark-eyed juncos are little sparrows with gray plumage and white outer tail feathers and white underneath. Females and juveniles are slightly browner and duller.

They breed in forests including coniferous and deciduous types and can be found at elevations from sea level to over 11,000 feet. Typically, the female lays between three to six eggs per clutch. She usually lays one egg per day until the clutch is complete

Their diet primarily consists of seeds and insects, adapting to available food sources throughout the year.

Juncos are social birds, often seen in flocks during winter and they exhibit a distinctive hopping behavior on the ground. They flit about forest floors of the western mountains and Canada, then flood the rest of North America for winter.

They are among the most abundant forest birds of North America. They come to feeders and like many sparrows feed on the ground to glean seeds dropped there by other birds.

They prefer open, partially wooded areas with understory for cover. They also have a twittering call or trilling song. If flushed from the ground, they appear gray or dark brown overall with visible white outer tail feathers.

The dark-eyed Junco is one of the most common birds in North America and can be found across the continent from Alaska to Mexico, from California to New York. A recent estimate set the junco's total population at approximately 630 million individuals.

The oldest recorded dark-eyed Junco, originally banded in 1991, was at least 11 years, 4 months old when it was recaptured and rereleased during banding operations in the same state of West Virginia in 2001.

Large flock of sparrows

Recently, while driving to the bus stop to pick up my grandson, I flushed a large flock of sparrows along the side of the road. A large number of them flew across the road in front of the car. It happened quickly so I was not able to identify them. They were not juncos as they did not have white tail feathers

New bird feeder

A man, who attends meals at the Oakham Senior Center, built a feeder from tubing someone gave him.

He filled it with seed and put it outside. It took a few days for the birds to arrive, but he has a lot of birds coming to it now.

eBird sightings

Recent eBird sightings included a Cape May warbler on Oct. 6 in Belchertown and an American redstart and a black-bellied plover, both spotted in the northeast Quabbin area on Oct. 6.

People may report a bird sighting by emailing edowner@turley.com or calling or texting 774-262-5882.

When to wash and when not to wash, that is the question

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



This is one of my more funnier titles, isn't it? It occurred to me that not everyone knows which fruits or vegetables should be washed prior to storage.

Just yesterday I was pondering this topic myself, wondering if my fresh picked apples should be washed before I stored them away in the fridge.

Read on to learn the answer to that question as well as the same for other crops. While we're at it I will provide additional tips to help achieve lengthy storage.

Apples should not be washed prior to storage. There is a protective waxy covering over the fruit that helps to increase its shelf life.

Experiments prove that washing it off caused the apples to spoil much more quickly. Placing unwashed apples in a plastic bag that is either left open or has perforations in it then putting the bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator will give them the best chance at longevity. This method provides both air flow and humidity.

Want to store carrots or beets? Use the same method.

You will have to cut back the greens first, however. If you leave them on they will pull moisture from the roots rendering them limp. Cut back to a half inch or so.

If your carrots or beets are super muddy it's best to let them air dry briefly to get some of the extra dirt off, but just like apples, that protective waxy layer should not be washed off. If you are hoping for a long storage life, it makes sense to go through your bags of produce to remove any that begin to rot so that they won't infect their neighbors.

There is something to be gleaned from the old adage "one bad apple spoils the whole barrel."

Likewise, never wash potatoes before putting them in storage! Gently brush off dirt and store them in a single layer in the darkness around 55 degrees.

Darkness will prevent greening, which renders potatoes inedible. Potatoes should not be stored in the refrigerator. It changes their texture and makes them prone to rot.

I think it's safe to say that we would never consider washing onions or garlic prior to storage. We should, however, gently brush off the dirt near the roots and bottom portion of the bulb. After onions are properly cured, store them at temperatures close to 40 degrees.

Place apples, bananas, and tomatoes away from onions, these vegetables excrete ethylene gas as they ripen, causing onions to sprout prematurely. Ethylene will also encourage potatoes to sprout.

Use onion bulbs that have two centers first; they won't store well. Garlic stems should be cut back to a couple of inches before storing for the winter in a cool and dry location in mesh bags or on slatted trays etc.

Softneck types of garlic have pliable foliage that lends itself well to braiding.

In any case, allowing for good air circulation will ensure a long storage life.

Keep your garlic fists intact; once broken apart, individual cloves do not keep as long.

Gently wash winter squash in a 10% bleach solution prior to storing at temperatures between 50 and 60 degrees; in this case it will help prevent rot.

The flavor of many of our favorite squashes only improves with age. The same advice for washing prevails for pumpkins and gourds.

As the harvest season continues, may these tips help to ensure that you get the longest possible storage life. A much deserved reward after all of your hard work!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.

When Will Congress Repay Social Security Money Taken Years Ago?

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

Dear Rusty:

I seem to remember that Congress borrowed a total of 4 trillion dollars from SS back in the 1980s and 1990s. When will this be repaid with interest?

Signed: Concerned Senior

Dear Concerned Senior:

I'm afraid your recollection is not correct – no politicians (Congress or Presidents) have ever taken money from the Social Security Trust Funds – not in the 1980s, nor 1990s, not ever.

Congress and Presidents are prevented by law from using Social Security money for any purpose other than paying SS benefits to beneficiaries and for paying the operating costs of administering the program.

Some significant changes to the Social Security program were, indeed, made in the years you mention, but those changes essentially saved Social Security from defaulting on monthly SS payment obligations.

In 1983, Congress and President Reagan enacted some income tax on received SS benefits for those with higher incomes and which added to Social Security's revenue, thus avoiding a benefit cut.

Then in 1993, Congress and President Clinton expanded that legislation to increase the taxation of received Social Security benefits to provide additional SS revenue.

What you may be remembering is the political rhetoric from those days, which opined that Congress had stolen, squandered or borrowed (and should repay) Social Security money used for other purposes.

And that rhetoric originated because of the way received SS revenue from payroll FICA tax is invested.

Social Security revenue, when received, is immediately invested in special-issue government bonds, which pay interest (just like normal government "T-bills").

The difference is that these SS bonds are redeemable, with interest, upon demand and as needed by SSA to pay monthly benefits. This means that SS gets additional interest income from these investments accounting for about $69 billion in extra SS income in 2025.

Some folks, however, feel that because the U.S. Treasury gets the actual cash received for those SS investments, that the money is used by the Treasury for other purposes. Which is, of course, true – just as the government uses all income received from all revenue sources to pay for government programs.

So, rather than viewing those SS bonds as investments, some view them as "money borrowed" and sometimes call the bonds "worthless IOUs." This, of course, is not at all the case, because every dollar invested in those special issue government bonds has been (and still is) used only for valid Social Security purposes and results in extra SS revenue from interest.

Nevertheless, those accusations were prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s when the changes to tax SS benefits were enacted. Indeed, we still regularly hear and refute similar rhetoric these days in our capacity as Social Security Advisors.

We've written many articles on this topic, all of which are available at the AMAC Foundation's two main websites at www.amacfoundation.org, and www.SocialSecurityReport.org.

To answer your specific question "when will this (money) be repaid with interest?" The answer is - there is nothing to repay. All mon-

See SOCIAL SECURITY PAGE 5

- Letter to Editor -

Letter of support for Shannon Teabo

Allow me to share the main reason I am wholeheartedly supporting Shannon Teabo for State Senator for the Worcester and Hampshire District in Massachusetts.

Yes, Shannon gets high marks for her platform in my opinion. Affordability is her primary target.

Yes, she talks about how she will work to make healthcare more affordable and accessible. I like that she speaks of her struggles as a working mother and of her commitment to deliver affordable access to childcare.

I appreciate that, as a native of rural Central Mass, Shannon has experienced first-hand the results of funding shortfalls in our area. She is committed to helping create and support legislation that will more equitably distribute state funding for education to rural schools.

Furthermore, I am confident that Shannon will be a strong advocate for the local control of our environment in the face of corporations seeking profit over the well-being of communities. All of this is extremely important for Central Mass.

Now, let me tell you the main reason she will have my vote. I believe her! Shannon is genuine.

I have seen her humanity. Her deep sense of fairness. I have observed her selflessness.

I am exhausted by politicians who smile and publicly make promises simply to get elected; the type of political appointee that shows up only when there is a local issue from which they can benefit. It's dishonest.

In Shannon I see integrity and honesty. That is the most important reason I will vote for Shannon Teabo for State Senate on Nov. 3. I hope you will do the same.

With respect,
Eric von Bleicken
West Brookfield

QUABOAG CURRENT

We Want to Hear From You

EDITOR
Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Dan Flynn
dflynn@turley.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

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WEB
quaboagcurrent.turley.com

PHONE
(413) 283-8393

ADDRESS
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

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www.turley.com

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Send opinions to:
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Quaboag Current

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Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

- community -

Community Heart & Soul launches Oct. 21

Residents are invited to shared ideas, stories

NORTH BROOKFIELD – For many years, town organizations have worked individually to meet the needs of various segments of the community – seniors, veterans, business owners, youth and faith-based groups, neighbors in need of food and fuel assistance.

Now there is an opportunity to join together in a town-wide effort to identify North Brookfield's strengths and weaknesses, form a consensus and put these efforts toward meeting the most pressing needs of the entire community

If you care about your town and the people in it come join others on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 6-7:30 p.m. at the North Brookfield Junior Senior High School Kiva Room for the launch of North Brookfield's Community Heart & Soul initiative.

Come learn about the CH&S program, share your ideas, and see what you can do to help chart the future of North Brookfield.

Over the course of the Community Heart & Soul project, which is expected to take up to two years to complete, those involved will attempt to reach every resident in North Brookfield to gather their stories. From these stories, they hope to find common themes of what residents love most about the area and their hopes for the future.

These themes will become the guide and be used to identify needs, improve connections, and develop a long-term action plan for the future of the community. In this way North Brookfield residents will be directly involved in shaping their town's future and working together to achieve it.

Come meet your neighbors and talk about your town. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm.

Pizza, salad and fall treats will be served.

Free premiere of 'The American Constitution' film on Oct. 25

NEW BRAINTREE – Explore the origin story of the American system of government at a free public screening of the new documentary film, "The American Constitution", on Sunday, Oct. 25, 2-4 p.m. at New Braintree Town Hall, 20 Memorial Drive.

The film, from award-winning filmmaker David Garrigus, dramatizes the creation of one of history's most influential documents. Using only the Framers' own words drawn directly from the historical record, an impressive cast portrays the impassioned debates between figures like George Washington, James Madison and Benjamin Franklin.

Following the screening, attendees will have the special opportunity to participate in a live Q&A session with the film's writer and director, and a legal expert.

The event is free and open to all. For more information, visit ConstitutionMovie.com.

CANDIDATES
FROM PAGE 1

Oct. 30 issue of the Quaboag Current.

During the forum each candidate will be given the opportunity to answer questions and talk about themselves.

Below are the statements submitted by each candidate, explaining their reasons for seeking election to the State Senate.



State Sen. Peter Durant



Shannon Teabo

State Sen. Peter Durant

For the past three years, I have had the privilege of serving the 22 communities of the Worcester and Hampshire District.

In that time, we've made real, meaningful progress, and I'm running for reelection because there's still so much more we have to get done.

My public service started in local government, when I sat on the Finance Committee and became a selectman in my hometown of Spencer, after years as a small business owner. That's where I learned the struggles of a small town, what town budgets look like from the inside, and what happens to that budget when Beacon Hill issues a mandate but doesn't pay for it.

I took those lessons to the State House in 2011 as a state representative, and on my very first day, a tornado ripped through the towns I represented. I learned very quickly how diverse and complex this job is, and that more often than not, the issues find you, not the other way around.

Since that day, through 12 years in the House and now in the Senate, I have been on the ground every day working for the people I serve.

Sometimes that means helping families who never expected to need it. When homeowners across the district found themselves at risk of losing their homes to foundations crumbling from pyrrhotite-tainted concrete, I championed legislation to help them, and we passed it through the Senate unanimously.

I am pressing hard for it to become law. We're also working on PFAS contamination in the water supply of several of our towns, and a lack of healthcare options in the western part of the district.

I take watching over your tax dollars seriously, which is why I continue to push for the legislative audit voters demanded. I'm also working toward a fairer formula for towns with PILOT agreements, where large shares of state-owned land leave them with a fraction of what full taxes would bring in.

And I've put that Spencer lesson to work pushing back when Beacon Hill oversteps. When one town didn't adopt the zoning the MBTA Communities Act requires, the state moved to withhold funding from the Wachusett Regional School District, punishing students in five towns for a decision none of their school committees made. I called that out publicly, and the administration reversed course.

If the state will do that to one school district, it will do it to yours.

The same goes for towns facing state decisions they never asked for. In Oakham, a developer is seeking state approval for a large battery storage facility, and the process has moved forward even though, as we've argued, eight of the nine required permits were never applied for.

I'm fighting it, because a town's future should be decided locally, not with an unaccountable board in Boston.

I also sit on the recently formed school funding commission, specifically to fight for aid that's fair to every community.

This year I sought full funding for Rural School Aid, which the state's own study showed our smaller districts need. It failed strictly along party lines.

Our towns need a senator who will stand up for them even when Beacon Hill's leadership won't.

Every session, Beacon Hill rolls out something it calls new, and far too often it reaches your wallet as another tax, another fee or another unfunded mandate. Our communities don't need more of that, no matter who's selling it.

There's plenty of work still to finish. I'm not asking you to trust a promise.

I have a record of showing up and delivering for this district, and I'm proud of it. I'd be honored to have your vote.

Shannon Teabo

I'm a mother, a Central Massachusetts native, and a first-time candidate for State Senate in the Worcester and Hampshire District.

I am running because our district needs a senator who answers to them and who lives with the same bills and worries as her neighbors.

I am a community member and an organizer, and have spent my time getting neighbors together around the issues that affect daily life in our towns. That work taught me that problems get solved when people speak up and someone is willing to listen.

I grew up in Northborough, graduated from Algonquin Regional High School, and earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Worcester State University.

I have worked in the service industry, customer service, a veterinary hospital and human services. Those jobs showed me how many people keep our communities running while stretching budgets of their own.

Seven years ago, my husband and I settled in West Brookfield, for the rural beauty and a place to raise our family.

Like many families here, we feel the cost of living every month. Groceries, heating, childcare, utilities, and healthcare take a bigger bite out of each paycheck, and I hear the same thing from my neighbors.

That is why affordability is the center of my campaign. I want working families, seniors and young people to have a fair chance at a stable life in the towns they call home. I support stronger oversight of utility companies, including limits on yearly rate increases and more transparency when increases are proposed.

I want more help for households struggling with heating costs and with staying cool as summers get hotter. I want Massachusetts to invest in affordable childcare, improve access to healthcare, and bring down prescription drug costs.

No one should have to choose between filling a prescription and paying another bill.

In West Brookfield, we have seen what happens when the state does not keep up. West Brookfield Elementary School closed at the end of June. Residents voted down a Proposition 2½ override in May, and the Quaboag Regional School Committee voted unanimously to close the school and send our students to Warren Community Elementary.

Up to 30 staff positions were cut across the district.

Towns like ours keep going back to voters with overrides to pay for essential services, and every override lands on neighbors who are already stretched.

Boston and the State House must be accountable to the specific needs of rural districts like ours. I will fight for more local aid and for reform of the formula the state uses to distribute it, so it reflects the real circumstances of small, rural towns.

I support investment in public education, affordable housing, roads and bridges and reliable water infrastructure. The communities that help protect the Quabbin and Wachusett watersheds, which supply drinking water to millions of people, deserve the resources to maintain their own infrastructure.

I support new technology that comes with protections for workers and local communities, so residents are never left paying for decisions made by powerful corporations. I believe government should be open about what it is doing, answer for the results and respond when people call.

What can I offer voters? A fighter and advocate for this district.

I am a working mother who organizes with my neighbors, raising my family in a small town and dealing with these costs myself. I have no political career to protect, and I will never forget who sent me to Boston.

When a bill about heating costs, childcare, or local aid comes up for a vote, I will know what it means for a household like yours, because it means the same thing for mine.

If you want a state senator who knows what it costs to live here and knows how to bring people together, I would be honored to have your vote on Tuesday, Nov. 3. To learn more or get in touch, visit teaboforsenate.com.

SOCIAL SECURITY
FROM PAGE 4

ies ever received for Social Security purposes have been invested in special interest-bearing government bonds, which are redeemed (with interest paid) weekly as needed to pay Social Security benefits to those who have earned and are entitled to them.

These bonds are secured by the "full faith and credit of the U.S. government," a financial designation which is globally considered to be "exceptionally low risk."

FYI, the SS Trust Fund reserves held about $2.5 trillion in investments as of the end of 2025, down from about $2.9 trillion in 2020. The Trust Fund total is now being regularly depleted because incoming SS revenue has not been sufficient to pay 100% of SS benefit obligations since 2021, so Trust Fund reserves are now being used to pay full benefits.

And therein lies the crux of the Social Security solvency issue, which is why the program so urgently needs Congressional reform before the SS reserves in the Trust Funds run dry in 2032, after which everyone would see a cut in their monthly SS benefits. Congress must enact SS reform now.

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

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

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

Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661.**



- community -



TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Chuck & Mud and The Buds performed during the Apple Country Fair on the Brookfield common.



Close to 100 vendors set up on the Brookfield common for the Apple Country Fair hosted by the Brookfield Community Club.

APPLE FAIR
FROM PAGE 1

Another main attraction for the Apple Country Fair is the handmade quilt, which is sewn by three Brookfield residents, including Finney. This year's quilt had a patriotic theme for the nation's semiquincentennial.

"The 250th was our inspiration," Finney said.

Throughout the day, live music was performed by local favorites Spooner Well and Chuck & Mud and The Buds.

The Brookfield Community Club has been organizing the Apple Country Fair since 1979. The money raised at the Apple Country Fair has generated grants for community service projects and the Diane Martell Community Service Award for a graduating Brookfield senior.

The Brookfield Community Club is now accepting applications for the 2027 Community Grant Program, by visiting AppleCountryFair.com/Grants. The application deadline is Nov. 10.

The club is also accepting vendor and food truck applications at AppleCountryFair.com/Applications for the 48th annual Apple Country Fair to be held on Saturday, Oct. 9, 2027. Applications will be accepted until all vendor spaces have been filled.



Students from Willow Brook Academy displayed apple-themed artwork.

For more information about the Brookfield Community Club and the Apple County Fair, visit AppleCountryFair.com or follow the club on Facebook.



Firefighter Philip Chaffee took a turn in the dunk tank to raise money for the Fire Department.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Shown are some of the wood turned bowls Frank White created.

WOOD TURNER
FROM PAGE 1

said.

The top of the piece has a collar made of rosewood. White uses exotics, like rosewood and African blackwood as accents to go with more common woods, like cherry, maple or walnut.

"It gives sort of a more formal appearance," he said.

White said he has made hollow forms like this before, but the decorations and strips on this large piece are different.

White will also feature a walnut hollow form in the upcoming show, standing roughly nine inches tall.

"When I got it finished, about two-thirds of it was walnut, but the one side was kind of blotchy because it was the outer new growth… and not very attractive. I did a spray of a small branch with leaves and then put in the veins on the leaves so they showed the walnut color in a lighter color," he said. "I didn't like it at first, but when I put the veins in and did some stippling and texturing, I liked it."

White said he has also created two smaller butternut hollow forms, which highlight the wood's grain.

White created another hollow form that he wood burned six blue jay feathers into. He also has one made from a "mystery" wood that he picked up years ago at a wood swap.

"It is a very light-colored wood, like white ash, but much more dense and heavy," White said.

He also has a couple of pieces made from pecan wood.

White said for this show he has made a lot of hollow forms, and he explained the process to create one.



Frank White works with a variety of wood types.

"The hollow forms in a way are more iffy as the hollowing is done sort of blind," White said. "You're working, shaping, the inside and you have to be careful not to cut through."

White said aside from that, it's about the same difficulty level as making a bowl, with the main difference being the direction of the grain of the wood. Bowls are usually cross-grain and hollow forms vertical.

"The hollow forms, they are a vertical piece and formed from the wood as it grows in the tree vertically," White said. "And bowls usually you take a chunk of wood and cut it in half and you make two bowls out of the pad. And also you can use wet or green wood more readily in the hollow forms partly because of the way the grain is oriented as it doesn't change shape as much."

Upcoming events at the gallery

Upcoming shows at the gallery include a special "The State of our Union" show will be held and is open to anyone. An opening reception will be held on Friday, Nov. 6 from 5-7 p.m.

The public is encouraged to submit a piece of work. All entries will be hung unless they are inappropriate for children.

Artwork must meet the following requirements: the theme of the art is "The State of our Union;" the format is six inches by six inches; and the artwork must be mailed to West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, P.O. Box 102, West Brookfield, MA 01585 or dropped off at the gallery during open hours before Oct. 30.

Artists can use any medium of their choosing.

Gallery owner Fay said, "You don't have to be an 'artist' or an adult to participate, and it doesn't matter what you like or don't like. All work submitted will be respected."

A fine art benefit auction will be held on Friday, Nov. 20 from 5-7 p.m. with proceeds going to the Sharing Cupboard food bank in West Brookfield. Artists will be donating their works for a silent auction.

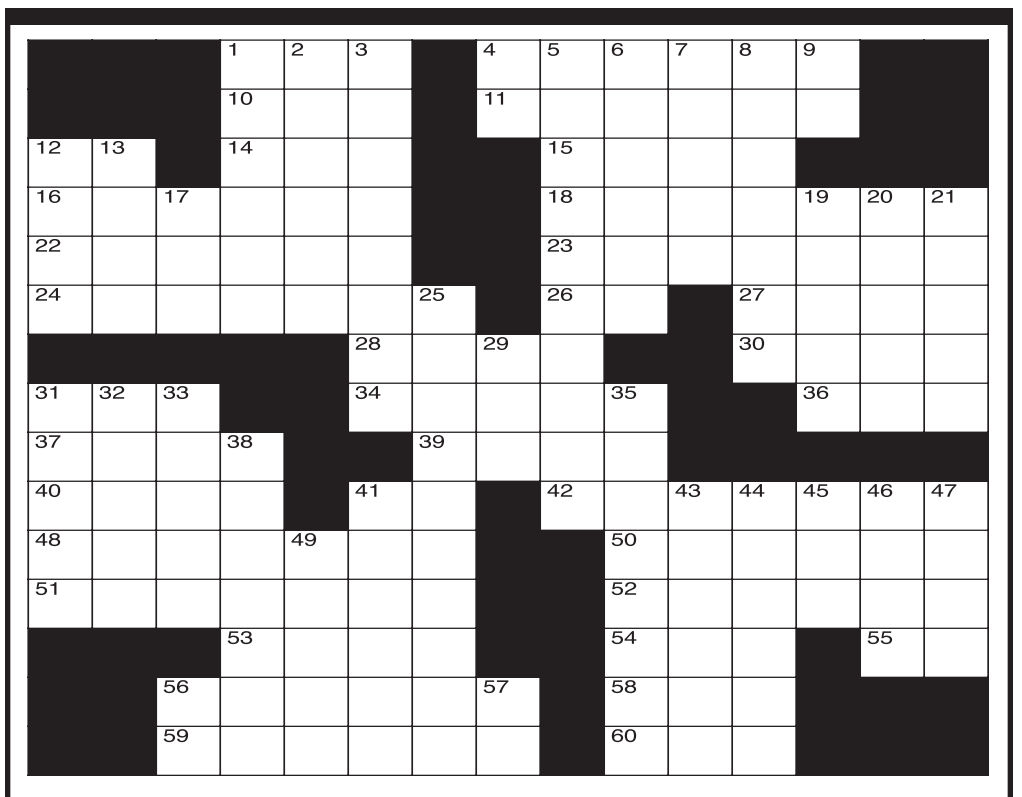
The "Tiny Works Holiday Group Show" will close out the year with a reception on Friday, Dec. 4 from 5-7 p.m. This annual show features small works by gallery artists just in time for the holiday gift giving season.

About the gallery

For more information and a complete listing of gallery happenings, call the gallery at 508-753-8604, email yafacceber@hotmail.com, visit westbrookfieldartandframe.com or stop by the gallery during open hours, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.



This wood turned vase has a dark, contrasted collar.



CLUES ACROSS
1. Small Eurasian deer
4. Province in Northern Ireland
10. A major division of geological time
11. Broadway actor Lane
12. Canadian province (abbr.)
14. Human gene
15. Two
16. A notable one was "blue"
18. Utter repeatedly
22. Ring-shaped objects
23. Sullies
24. Occurs
26. Commercial
27. Near
28. Tools you may need
30. A pledge
31. They start the alphabet
34. Silk garments
36. Soviet Socialist Republic
37. Longtime mayor of Rio
39. Hot meal
40. A type of gin
41. Atomic #84
42. $10 bill
48. About ground
50. Medicine man
51. Seedless raisin
52. National capital of Albania
53. Appendage
54. OJ trial judge
55. European government entity (abbr.)
56. Bike parts
58. Friend to "Barbie"
59. Stretched to see or hear
60. Commercials

CLUES DOWN
1. Make up for
2. Baltimore ballplayer
3. Wages
4. International organization of countries
5. Engravers of gems
6. Declared as fact
7. One who steals
8. Jewelry
9. Hospital worker
12. Nonsense (slang)
13. Town in Galilee
17. Value
19. Alternative identity
20. Sheep in their second year
21. Town in Surrey, England
25. Appropriate to a time of year
29. Creative work
31. Recesses
32. Largely forested municipality in Germany
33. Rider of Rohan
35. Ancient symbol co-opted by Nazis
38. Pioneer
41. Scribe
43. Painted a bright color
44. Member of British nobility
45. "Pulp Fiction" actress Thurman
46. Helps people walk
47. Crest of a hill
49. People of southeastern Alaska
56. One's own device
57. The Mount Rushmore State

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SPORTS

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SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS



Blake Lopato sends a goal kick away.

Cougars fall at home

WARREN – Last Friday afternoon, Quaboag boys soccer was defeated by Burncoat 2-0.

The Cougars had won their first game of the regular season over Abby Kelley early last week, and are now just 1-7-1 on the regular season. Quaboag is back in action on Friday, Oct. 16 against Monty Tech at 4 p.m. on the road.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Leo Paquette chases down a loose ball.



Hunter Dodson passes ahead of a defender's pressure.



Lincoln Brown plays a pass on the run.



Christian Marshall clears the ball out of the defensive end.

Warriors battle to 1-1 draw with Doherty

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

FISKDALE—Matt Guertin began his coaching career almost 20 years ago as the Tantasqua girls' varsity soccer coach. He switched over to the boys' side in the fall of 2013.

In Guertin's first season leading the boys' varsity soccer team, the Warriors didn't qualify for the postseason tournament, buat they've been postseason regulars ever since.

"We finished with an 8-10 record and just missed making the postseason tournament in my first season as the boys soccer coach," Guertin said. "We've been able to qualify for the playoffs every year since, and that's something I'm very proud of."

The first month of the 2026 campaign didn't exactly go Tantasqua's way.

The Warriors had a 2-6-2 overall record and a 1-3-1 record against Central Mass. Athletic Conference (A) opponents following a 1-1 home draw against the Doherty Highlanders on Oct. 5.

"We just need to have a good October. This is a very good result for us because Doherty is a very good soccer team," Guertin added. "We've been in every game so far this season, but we just haven't gotten over the hump yet. I think we still have a chance to qualify for the state tournament, but we need to start fitting the pieces of the puzzle together."

The only match that the Warriors lost by more than two goals was a 3-0 setback in their first meeting against the Highlanders (5-1-4, 2-0-3), who are currently in first place in the CMAC (A) standings.

Tantasqua's first two victories came on the road against Northbridge (1-0) and Blackstone Valley Reg Voc/Tech High School (4-2). They also tied Shepherd Hill (2-2) at home in their previous match.

The Warriors were ranked 40th in the MIAA Division 3 state power rankings released on October 9. The top 32 teams in each of the five Divisions automatically qualify for the state tournament. The other teams, who finish the regular season with a .500 or better record, will also be competing in the state soccer tournament, which is scheduled to start on November 6.

The Warriors were trailing 1-0 against the Highlanders with a little more than twenty minutes remaining in regulation before senior tri-captain Easton Ferro netted the tying goal.

"I just ran towards the ball and was able to put it

See WARRIORS PAGE 8

Panthers shut out West Boylston

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE—For the first time in six years, the Quabbin boys' varsity soccer team is on track to finish the regular season with a .500 record or better.

A convincing 5-0 victory over Mid-Wach (D) rival West Boylston at Alumni Field last Tuesday afternoon moved the Panthers within two wins of securing their first .500-or-better regular season record since 2020. The Panthers had a 6-2-1 overall record and a 4-1-1 league mark following their third shutout victory of this fall. They're also seeking to make their first appearance in the Division 3 state tournament.

"We only need two more wins to qualify for the state tournament for the first time," said second-year Quabbin head coach Bill Crowther. "If we do earn a postseason berth, I'll be thrilled for the entire team, particularly the four seniors who have helped lead this group. It's been an exciting season so far."



TURLEY PHOTOS BY JEFFREY HAYNES

Jacoby Dilling collides with the goalie after sprinting towards a potential shot.

Quabbin finished the 2020 campaign with a winning record, but the postseason tournament wasn't held that season due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

The Panthers finished the 2019 regular season with an 8-7-1 overall record and earned the No. 8 seed in the Central Mass. Division 3 Tournament. Their season ended in heartbreaking fashion, however, with a 3-2 penalty-shootout loss to ninth-seeded Northbridge in a first-round match at home.

This year's team was ranked 44th in the MIAA Division 3 state tournament power rankings that was released on October 9. The top 32 teams in each division automatically qualify for the state tournament, along with the other teams, who finish the regular season with a .500 record.

The Panthers senior tri-captains are Logan Bruley, Jacoby Dilling, and Owen Twarog, who's sidelined with an injury.



Joseph Cook chase down a loose ball through defenders.

See PANTHERS PAGE 8



Owen Pear sends the free kick deep.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Owen Marion chases down a loose ball.

Knights take victory over Pathfinder boys

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER—For the second straight season, the Holyoke boys' varsity soccer team came away victorious in its second regular-season showdown with Bi-County East rival Pathfinder Tech.

The Purple Knights struck twice in the first 10 minutes and then withstood a challenge from the Pioneers to earn a 3-2 victory on Oct. 5 at historic Legion Field in Palmer.

"We played two competitive games against Pathfinder last year. Our first meeting of this season ended in a tie," said Holyoke head coach Cam Rivest. "We were able to take an early lead in tonight's game, and we didn't let it slip away like we've done a few times this season."



Brodey Williams is pressured by a Holyoke paper.

Holyoke didn't have very much trouble posting a 5-0 home shutout over Pathfinder Tech in their second meeting of last season.

Back in the middle of September, the two squads battled to a 1-1 draw.

Following their second meeting of this season, the Purple Knights had a 3-5-2 overall record, while the Pioneers saw their overall record drop to 7-3-1.

"This is a difficult loss for us," said Pathfinder Tech head coach Dave Wilson. "We were just flat tonight.

See PATHFINDER PAGE 8

- community -

Pumpkin Patch is open through Oct. 31

STURBRIDGE – The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale, 8 Maple St., is hosting its 9th annual Pumpkin Patch through Saturday, Oct. 31, with pumpkins, seasonal displays and a growing schedule of activities for the community.

The Pumpkin Patch will be open Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Sunday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., weather permitting. Payment may be made by cash, credit card or Venmo.

Proceeds help the Federated Church support a variety of local missions and ministries, including Sturbridge Girl Scout and Scouting America troops, both of which meet at the church, the local Veterans Association and the church's ecumenical work with other area congregations.

A portion of the proceeds supports the Navajo Nation in Farmington, New Mexico, where Pumpkins USA grows the pumpkins and provides seasonal and year-round employment.

October will be a particularly active month at the Federated Church. In addition to the Pumpkin Patch, the church will host the Koinonia women's group Rummage Sale on Oct. 23 and 24.

For additional information about the Pumpkin Patch, October activities or volunteering to help with unloading and setup, visit sturfed.org, call the church office at 774-304-1021 or email churchoffice@sturfed.org.

East Brookfield library lists fall events

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library's annual Fall Craft Fair will be held at the library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, on Saturday, Oct. 17 from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Movie Time

Stop by the library with your lunch and enjoy a block buster movie and meet new friends. The next movie is "The Librarian" on Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 1 p.m.

Haunt the Town Hall/ movie

The library will play "It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown" movie starting at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 29. Children in costume can then Haunt the Town Hall after the movie.

A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving

The Charlie Brown Thanksgiving movie will be played on Thursday, Nov. 19 at 3:30 p.m. A Charlie Brown Feast will be served.

PANTHERS
FROM PAGE 7

"Not having Owen on the field is a huge loss for us," Crowther said. "He's a center midfielder and he's a physical player. He was also our second leading goal scorer behind Jacoby."

Dilling entered the match with 15 goals and 4 assists for a total of 19 points.

"Jacoby has the nose for the goal," Crowther said. "Teams are double-teaming Jacoby, but he's still scoring goals. We always try to hide him on the field.

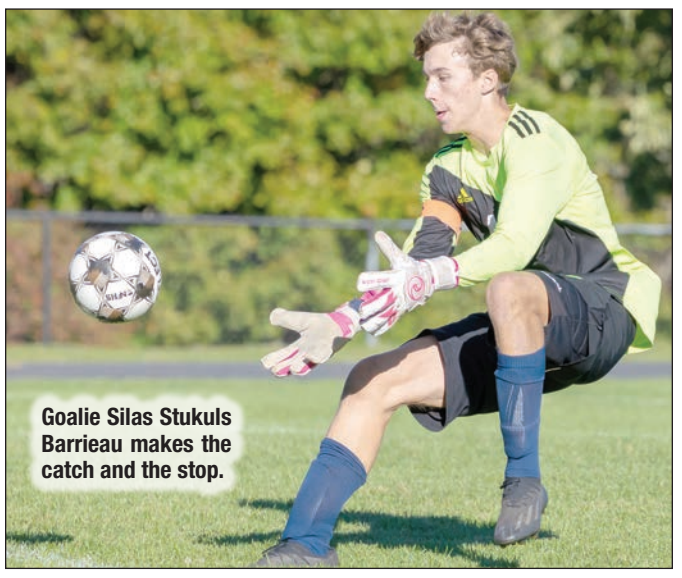
Bruley is also the Commander of Quabbin's ROTC program.

"Logan is an outstanding leader," Crowther added. "He anchors the defense."

The other Quabbin senior is Nate Cruz, who scored a tap in goal at the start of the second half against the Lions (0-8-1).

Junior goalie Silas Stukulus Barrieau, who was recently named as a team captain by Crowther, made only five saves in the shutout.

"This is Silas first season as our fulltime goalie," Crowther said. "He was a defender last year and was our most improved player. He has been doing a very good job this year and I love having him back there."



Goalie Silas Stukuls Barrieau makes the catch and the stop.

Barrieau received plenty of support from his defensive unit, which is led by junior Jake Doty, junior Abe Brown, sophomore Greyson Mullins, and Bruley.

While the Panthers seniors are leading the way this fall, the younger players have also been doing their part. Four sophomores contributed with either a goal or an assist in the Panthers second home win of the regular season. Gavin Rivard and Nate Gingras each scored a goal. Gingras was also credited with an assist. Bobby Tobin also chipped in with an assist, while Joseph Cook added two assists.

"We do have the pieces," Crowther said. "I just want to continue to develop the younger players for the future."

The Panthers recorded an 8-2 win at West Boylston at the beginning of the regular season.

"We also beat them soundly in our first meeting and this could've been a potential trap game for us. It's something that we've talked about," Crowther said. "We won the first meeting of last season against West Boylston without much trouble, but we tied the second meeting. We must be ready to play every game."

The Lions had several scoring chances during the opening 40 minutes of the match, but the Panthers held a 2-0 advantage at halftime.

The Panthers got on the scoreboard for the first time during the 17th minute. Dilling fired a shot on goal from the right side, which deflected away from junior goalie Alex Silver. Rivard, whose father, Jeremey, is the Panthers junior varsity soccer coach, knocked home the rebound shot.

Two minutes later, Dilling, who also plays basketball, fired a low shot into the right corner giving the home team a 2-0 lead.

The Panthers pulled away during the second half with goals from Cruz, Gingras, and Dilling.

Quabbin was scheduled to begin this week's action with back-to-back non-league home games against Quaboag Regional and Worcester Tech before facing league rival Gardner in another home match at 5pm on Thursday.

The Panthers players and coaching staff are also looking forward to playing first place Clinton in a very important road game on October 20.



Wyatt Grillo fights for possession near the sideline.

WARRIORS
FROM PAGE 7

into the net," Ferro said. ""We lost to Doherty earlier in the season, so we'll take this tie

Ferro's fourth goal of the regular season was unassisted.

"Ethan has had many scoring chances so far this season and he's capitalized on a few of them," Guertin said. "He's a very strong soccer player and we put a lot on his shoulders."

Doherty broke the ice with an unassisted goal from sophomore Henrique Almeida during the 26th minute of the opening half.

The other two Warriors senior captains are Conor Boivin and Jax Buday.

Rounding out the Warriors senior class are Jeremy Mrotek, Jeremy Shea, Graydon Curboy, Matt Santos, and Nico Fazzuoli.

Mrotek and Buday are starting defenders, along with junior Evan LaFountain and sophomore Ethan Melidone.

The four Warriors defenders made things easy for junior goalie Brayden O'Keefe, who only needed to make a handful of saves against the Highlanders.

Less than ten minutes into the opening half, O'Keefe made an outstanding diving save following a corner kick, which kept the match scoreless.

The Warriors' other junior starters in the home match against Doherty were Nathan Cutler, Griffin Chase, and Jacob Delong. Another junior is Nathan Regan, who's a reserve player.

The Warriors' head coach is related to two members of the sophomore class.

Matt Guertin Jr. is his son, while Jason Guertin is his nephew.

Rounding out the varsity roster are sophomore Owen Gendreau, sophomore Henry Cournoyer, and freshman Ben Henry Cournoyer

Tantasqua returned to the win column two days later, squeaking out a 3-2 road victory over Worcester North at Foley Stadium. Ferro, Cutler and Matt Guertin Jr. each found the back of the net for the Warriors.

PATHFINDER
FROM PAGE 7

This was a game that we should've won. Give them all the credit."

Pathfinder was ranked 22nd in the MIAA Division 5 state power rankings that were released on October 9.

Holyoke, who graduated seven players from last year's squad, defeated Mohawk Trail Regional, 5-2, on the road and posted a 4-2 home win versus Ware.

The Purple Knights scored their first goal against the Pioneers during the third minute of the opening half when senior Nayan Tabin unleashed a shot from about 25 yards out. The ball deflected off the right post before bouncing into the net past sophomore goalie Elijah Hodge (5 saves) for an unassisted goal.

Five minutes later, Holyoke junior Isiah Frazer received a pass from senior Xevier Davila before scoring a break away goal by firing a shot into the right corner of the net.

After failing to convert on a couple of corner kicks, the Pioneers sliced the deficit in half when senior Cayden Bousquet, who leads the Pioneers with 24 goals this season, dribbled down the left side before delivering a shot into the right corner past junior keeper Rikendy Jean (11 saves). Senior Brody Wetnicka was credited with the assist.

In the middle of the first half, Jean made a diving save on a shot attempt taken by sophomore Abees Castillo-Clotter, which enabled the Purple Knights to keep the one goal lead.

Castillo-Clotter is one of three Pathfinder Tech players who attend Palmer High School, joining seniors Owen Pear and Dylan Holbrook. The three players suit up for Pathfinder Tech through a co-op between the two neighboring high schools.

Bousquet came close to finding the equalizer on two occasions late in the first half, but Holyoke held on to a slim 2-1 lead at halftime.

The trio of Castillo-Clotter, Bousquet, and sophomore Owen Marion had shots on goal during the first five minutes of the second half.

Seven minutes after halftime, Holyoke regained a two-goal cushion. Following a throw-in from the left sideline by Tabin, Davila found the back of the net for his first goal of the season.

In the middle of the second half, Pathfinder Tech closed the gap again when Bousquet scored a rebound goal.

Just like in the first half, the Pioneers were unable to score the tying goal, as the Purple Knights players enjoyed their bus ride home.



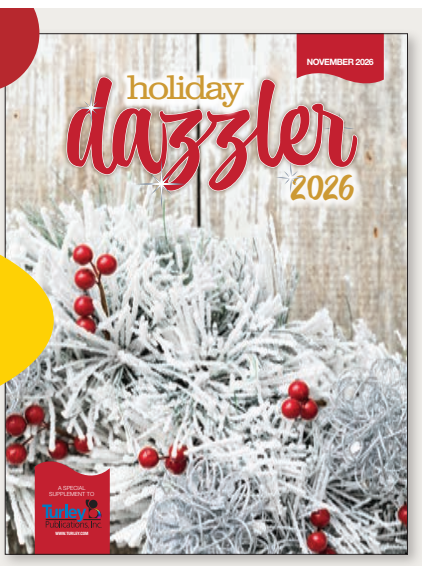
Cayden Bousquet turns play around after getting possession.



Ian Sauri-Neves makes a throw-in.



Goalie Silas Stukuls Barrieau makes the catch and the stop

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Celebrate Women in BUSINESS week

Women-owned businesses are thriving

Women entrepreneurs are not to be underestimated. Data affirms that women-owned businesses are growing and thriving.

According to North One banking, women-owned firms account for more than 12 million businesses in the United States. In addition, the 2024 Wells Fargo Impact of Women-Owned Business Report, in partnership with Ventureneer, Core Women and Women Impacting Public Policy, found the number of women-owned business increased at a rate of 4.5 times between 2019 to 2023. Women-owned businesses are driving economic growth, and a deeper look at some of the numbers supports that notion.

• The Women's Business Enterprise Council says there are 12.3 million women-owned businesses in the U.S., which comprises about 40 percent of the total number of businesses.

• Women-owned businesses bring in nearly $2 trillion every year, says the National Women's Business Council.

• During the pandemic, women-owned businesses added 1.4 million jobs and $579.6 billion in revenue to the economy, says Wells Fargo.

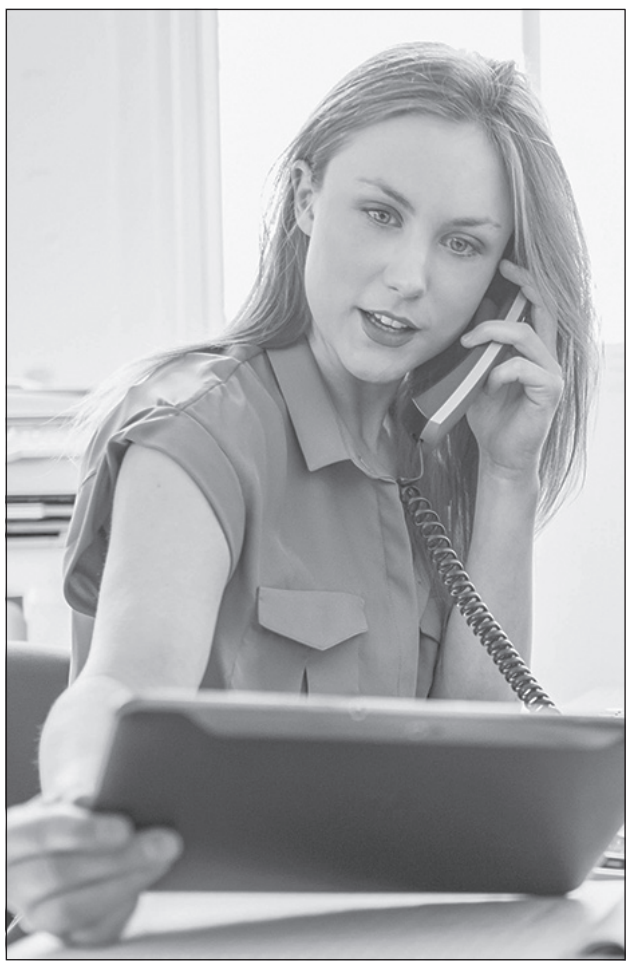
• World Bank indicates that roughly one-third of principal owners of all businesses are female.

• WBENC advises that 64 percent of new women-owned businesses are started by women of color.

• Women's Business Enterprises Canada says more than 85 percent of buying decisions are influenced by women. The Canadian Minister of Small Business notes that women business ownership is growing. In 2023, approximately 18.4 percent of all businesses in Canada were majority owned by women, compared to 15.6 percent in 2017.

• According to Forbes, women-led tech companies achieve a 35 percent higher ROI. A Forbes study with First Round Capital, a venture capital firm, found female-founded businesses in their portfolio outperformed male-founded companies by more than 60 percent.

Women-owned businesses are making a large impact on North America and around the world. Such firms continue to employ millions of people and foster strong economies.



Women-owned businesses are driving economic growth, and a deeper look at some of the numbers supports that notion.

Cassie Paolucci has been a fixture in the local business community for more than two decades.



In 2002, Paolucci and her husband, John, opened Main Street Liquors in West Brookfield

In 2005, Paolucci received her realtor license and began selling real estate for Quaboag Valley Real Estate. Paolucci earned her broker license and opened Post Road Realty in 2013 with husband John.

"I love meeting people and helping people with one of their biggest purchases in life," said Paolucci. "I maintain relationships, not just clients but friends. I value all my past and future clients and have worked hard to have solid friendships,"

Paolucci also operates Post Road Storage, which has just expanded to Post Road Storage & Billboards. "It's a resource that Post Road can offer their clients, storage space, either before the move in or move out stages. And now, we offer billboards which opens doors to local businesses to market themselves."

Paolucci also has rental properties, which are often used as a benefit to the buyers or sellers of the properties. "This option opens up time frames for selling or buying a home, and help cover that possible crossover time between transactions," said Paolucci.

With a strong knowledge of the construction industry, Paolucci has built new homes and renovated homes for resale. "Knowing the contractors and the costs of building, helps me provide a stronger input to a seller or buyer that they can count on," said Paolucci.

Paolucci gives a lot of credit for the success and efficiency of the Post Road office operations to her administrative assistant, Deb Provencher. Provencher came to work for Post Road Realty five years ago.

"I had retired after teaching kindergarten for twenty years, before that, I had worked in the insurance and banking industries," said Provencher. "Retirement wasn't sitting well with me so I went looking for a part time position. I had seen the position for Post Road Realty available. It turns out that Cassie and I had known each other well, as I had been her children's teacher," said Provencher.

Provencher said she enjoys her job so much that she earned her real estate license. "I enjoy the administrative responsibilities of the office, though it's a challenge to navigate the ups and downs of the real estate markets. It's very rewarding to me personally when I can assist a client check off any requirement in any process." On Provencher's off duty time, she enjoys ship cruising, friends and family, the New England Patriots, though the beach is her "happy place."

Paolucci serves on the West Brookfield Town Common commission. "It is special to me that I can help where I grew up. The common means a lot to so many family and friends. Getting the fountain working is a task but we make it happen," she said.

Paolucci has a daughter, Isabella, and a son, Vinny, and three dogs, Gino, Enzo and Rocko. On her off time, she enjoys gardening and camping. She also has chickens and three beehives.

"Professionally, what I do isn't just a job, it's a passion. This job is not all roses but the satisfaction of helping a family makes it right for me,'" said Paolucci. "Post Road Realty is generational. We commit to helping clients, not just as clients but as friends and we assist those friends throughout the years present and to come."

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Country Bank President & Chief Executive Officer

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Mary McGovern brings more than 36 years of experience in the financial services industry to her role as President and Chief Executive Officer of Country Bank, where she is proud to serve as the institution's first female leader. A results-driven executive, Mary is recognized for her authentic leadership style that blends innovation, collaboration, and compassion.

Since stepping into the role, she has embraced opportunities to inspire others and elevate women in leadership, from speaking engagements to mentorship. She currently serves on the boards of the Massachusetts Bankers Association, the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts Housing Authority, extending her impact beyond banking into community well-being.

Mary's leadership and achievements have been recognized by both the Worcester Business Journal and Hannaford Supermarkets, honoring her as one of Massachusetts' outstanding women in business. She remains dedicated to advancing Country Bank's mission while empowering its people, customers, and communities to thrive.

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- public safety -

East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of Sept. 13-20, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 201 building/property checks, 97 directed area patrols, 10 radar assignments, 16 traffic controls, 10 emergency 911 calls, four citizen assists, four assist other agencies, one complaint, one motor vehicle accident, one suspicious activity, one disturbance, six animal calls and 34 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Sunday, Sept. 13

4:10 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Services Rendered

5:12 p.m. Assist Citizen, Howe Street, Voice Message Left

8:02 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Park Street, Transported to Hospital

9:55 p.m. Assist Other Agency, East Main Street, Officer Handled

Monday, Sept. 14

8:09 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

8:29 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, West Sturbridge Road, Transported to Hospital

11:19 a.m. Assist Citizen, Howe Street, Officer Handled

3:10 p.m. 911 Disturbance, Jean Avenue, Transported to Hospital

3:54 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

4:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued

4:11 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

4:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

4:26 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

4:50 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Street, Citation Issued

5:02 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

6:59 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

9:52 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, East Main Street, Transported to Hospital

Tuesday, Sept. 15

5:30 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, East Main Street, Vehicle Towed

Wednesday, Sept. 16

11:58 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To

12:48 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Services Rendered

5:27 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

7:35 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

7:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

11:28 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Drake Lane, Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Sept. 17

8:24 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Blaine Avenue, Transported to Hospital

11:05 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Connie Mack Drive, Services Rendered

Friday, Sept. 18

12:14 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Connie Mack Drive, Services Rendered

7:11 p.m. Directed/Area Patrol, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued

7:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued

7:26 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued

7:55 p.m. Radar, Route 49, Citation Issued

7:59 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued

8:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

Saturday, Sept. 19

12:29 a.m. Complaint, North Street, Officer Handled

6:36 p.m. 911 Suspicious Activity, Harrington Street, Officer Handled

9:15 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Faith Drive, Transported to Hospital

Sunday, Sept. 20

8:45 a.m. Traffic Control, East Main Street, Citation Issued

8:55 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

9 a.m. Traffic Control, Mechanic Street, Citation Issued

9:33 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Mechanic Street, Citation Issued

11:34 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

11:39 a.m. Directed/Area Patrol, Podunk Road, Citation Issued

12:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Shore Road, Citation Issued

2:41 p.m. Directed/Area Patrol, East Main Street, Citation Issued

2:44 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

5:09 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, West Main Street, Officer Handled

7:25 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation Issued

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Sept. 28-Oct. 5, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 18 building/property checks, 15 directed/area patrols, five radar assignments, one traffic control, four emergency 911 calls, one assist other agency, one safety hazard, two disturbances, one motor vehicle crash, one complaint, two suspicious activities, one fire, two animal calls and two motor vehicle stop in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, Sept. 28

11:37 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Services Rendered

Tuesday, Sept. 29

2:42 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Scott Road, Transported to Hospital

7:20 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Crash, Prouty Road, Summons Issued

Wednesday, Sept. 30

1:27 p.m. Disturbance, Gilbertville Road, Served in Hand

Thursday, Oct. 1

8:58 a.m. Parking Complaint, Memorial Drive, Spoken To

8:43 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Unitas Road, Negative Contact

Friday, Oct. 2

2:13 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Unitas Road, Officer Handled

4:39 p.m. Safety Hazard, Ravine Road, Officer Handled

Saturday, Oct. 3

7:44 a.m. 911 Disturbance, Hardwick Road, Services Rendered

9:21 p.m. 911 Fire/Other, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled

Senior Center lists upcoming events in October

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Senior Center, located at 29 Forest St., will offer the following programs during the month of October.

Activities and events include Tech Help with Alex on Oct. 26 at 10 a.m. Tri Valley Nutrition Program – Healthy Eating on a Budget on Oct. 27 at 1 p.m.; Fraud Prevention by Joseph Early's Office on Oct. 28 at 11 a.m.; Blood Pressure/Glucose Clinic on Oct. 28 from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Ed Spater, Medicare Specialist on Oct. 29 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. by appointment only; and a Free Art Class on Oct. 29 at 11 a.m.

Weekly programs and activities include daily coffee; Walking Club on Mondays and Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; Food Distribution (for North Brookfield and Brookfield residents) on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m.; lunch on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at noon; Crafting Group on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.; Gentle Yoga on Thursdays at 1 p.m. ($5 fee); and Functional Fitness on Fridays at 10:30 a.m. ($5 fee).

- public notices -

TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on **Monday, October 26th, 2026 at 6:00pm** in the first floor meeting room, West Brookfield Town Hall, to act on an application for a Special Permit, for Robert and Jennifer Dold, for the property located at 207 Shoreline Dr, West Brookfield. The applicant wishes to rebuild a house that was demolished due to failing foundation. A Special Permit is required per Section 1.52. Non-Conforming Structures. Please note this public hearing was previously advertised for Tuesday October 12th 2026, which was incorrect.
10/09, 10/16/2026

ARTIST OF MONTH
FROM PAGE 1

Bronz Adventure and played heavy metal. He performed with the band for about a year and a half and then decided to take a step back from music.

Matthews found a career as a truck driver and started a family. What pulled him back into music happened after he heard Johnny Cash's American Series.

He was also encouraged by his wife Tonya to play again. After not touching a guitar for nearly 20 years, Matthews began playing again around 2010-2011.

To get a sense of performing in front of crowds, he started attending open mics. He admired the open mics that were run by Bill McCarthy. He would get to play for a full half hour and McCarthy hosted open mic across several venues in Worcester.

Matthews got into playing country music by several of his inspirations: Johnny Cash, Hank Williams and Willie Nelson.

Matthews wrote a song, "Having Faith", in the memory of a child he and hist wife lost and got it recorded at Wachusett Recording in Princeton. The owner of the recording studio asked if Matthews had other songs so he could have them recorded.

Matthews has recorded four CDs at from 2015-2021.

He soon got in contact with his old band buddy Bruce Pierce, who has his own studio, Mooncusser Recording Studio, in Upton.

Now that he is semi-retired from truck driving, Matthews had a few new songs to share and record and he started playing at open mics again. He has been performing open mics at Lost Towns Brewing since 2024.

He plays regularly with John Fuller, David Clarke and Karen Gallant at Lost Towns Brewing.

"My 'Cheers' place," Matthews said about Lost Towns.

Matthews also played music alongside Bob Sarkala, who is the current manager of Union Music in Worcester. Sarkala is a lifelong musician who has played lead guitar backing up Matthews' music, including in all his recordings going back to 2019.

This year, Matthews has been branching out and performed during the Ramblin' Roads Country Fest in Vermont. He also performs at singer-songwriter events and usually plays his own music in addition to classic country covers.

Matthews is currently working on a new song with Pierce at Mooncusser Studio.

One of his favorite songs he sings and wrote is "Truck Driving Man". In this song you hear a truck start in the beginning.

The song is a solute to his truck driving career and the other truck drivers he met over the years.

The inspirations behind his country music include grittiness and honesty of Johnny Cash, fitting poems into songs and the blue-collar life.

Themes of his songs revolve around the challenges you encounter in life, and you doing the best you can through those hard times.

"I did my job," Matthews said. The way he always looked at both music and real life.

Matthews' music can be heard on all listening platforms. More about Matthews can be found at www.stanmatthewsmusic.com.

About the friends

The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House is a nonprofit organization focused on restoring, preserving, and sustaining the Town House as a cultural center of North Brookfield.

More information can be found at nbtownhouse.com.

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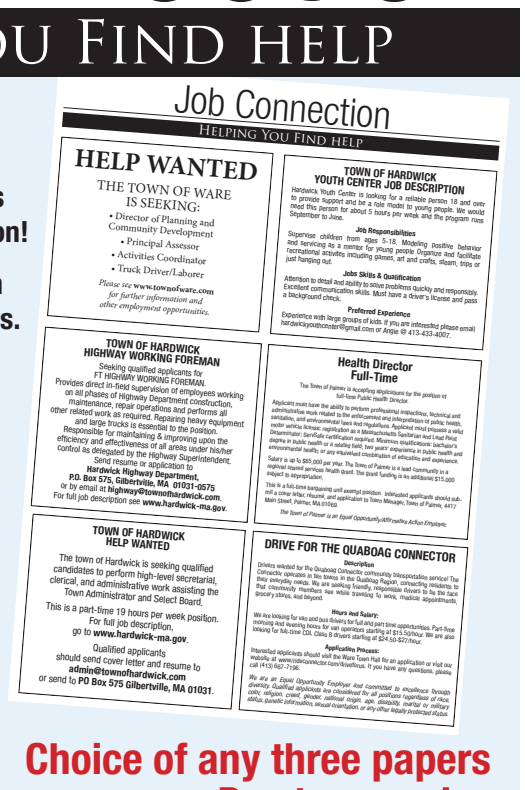
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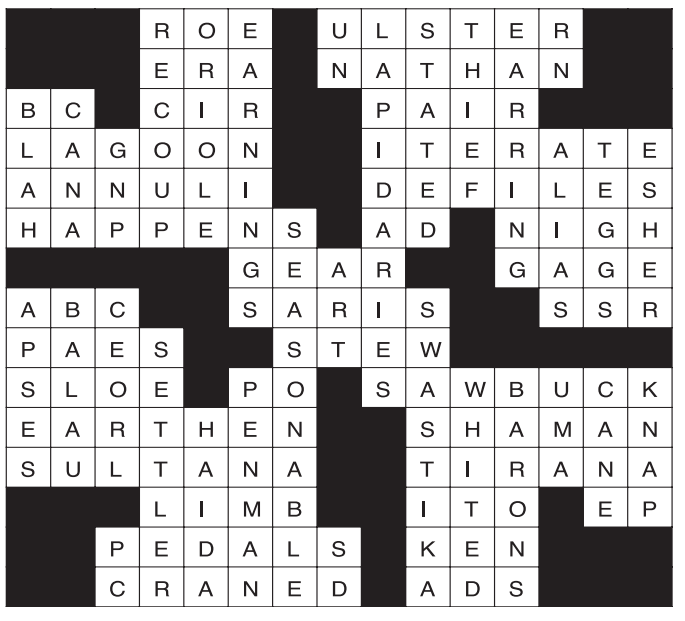
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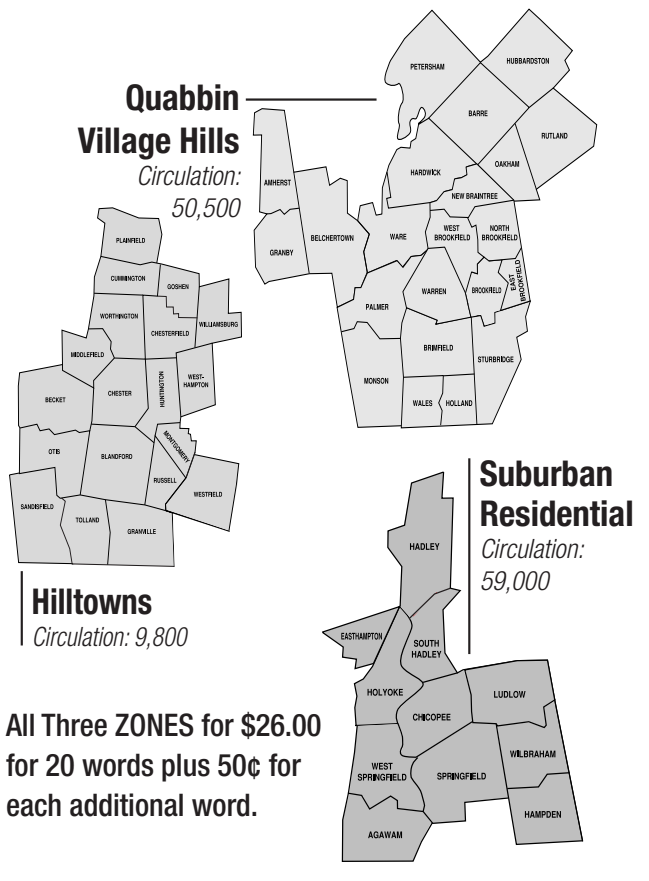
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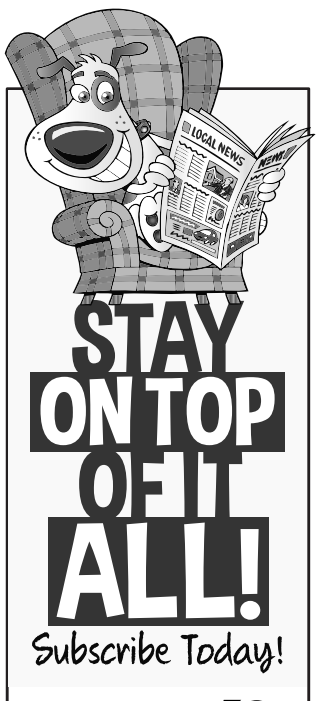
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- community -

Annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K & Fun Walk

STURBRIDGE – Runners, walkers, families and Halloween enthusiasts are invited to hit the trails again this fall when the Rotary Club of Sturbridge presents its annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K and Fun Walk on Sunday, Oct. 25.

Pre-registration is now open for the family-friendly event, according to Race Director Klaus Hachfeld. Participants can pre-register at RaceRoster.com by entering "Sturbridge" in the search field.

Those who register before Oct. 19, will receive this year's free collectible TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K T-shirt.

All activities begin at the Old Sturbridge Village Education Center on Old Sturbridge Village Road. Participants should note that the Education Center is not the Old Sturbridge Village Academy located near the village's main entrance.

Parking will be available in the Education Center lot.

The event features a timed 5K Trail Run, a Fun Walk and a timed 1K Pre-Teen Run. In keeping with the Halloween spirit, participants are encouraged to come in costume. Activities begin at 9 a.m. with a free costume parade, relay races and organized games for young children at the Education Center.

The timed 1K Pre-Teen Run begins at 9:15 a.m. and is open to children ages 12 and younger. Registration is $20, and the course is accessible to participants with mobility challenges.

The timed 5K Trail Run and Fun Walk begin at 10 a.m. The course follows Old Sturbridge Village Road and the Arbutus Park Trail through the Leadmine Mountain Wildlife Conservation Lands.

Registration is $35 for the 5K and $30 for the Fun Walk.

Registered runners and walkers can also compete in the Best Costume competition prior to the 11:15 a.m. awards ceremony, with winners selected by popular choice.

Race-day registration will be available beginning at 8:30 a.m. Participants may register on their own devices using a QR code available at the site.

Paper registration forms will also be available for those unable to register online.

The TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K & Fun Walk is a fundraiser of the Rotary Club of Sturbridge, with proceeds supporting the club's scholarships for local students and other community service projects.

For additional information or to become an event sponsor, contact Race Director Klaus Hachfeld at laserklaus@gmail.com or visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club website at https://sturbridgerotary.com.

Flu clinic offered at senior center

WEST BROOKFIELD – Mill Towns Public Health will provide several flu clinics in local communities this fall.

The West Brookfield Senior Center, 73 Central St., will offer a clinic on Monday, Oct. 19 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are preferred.

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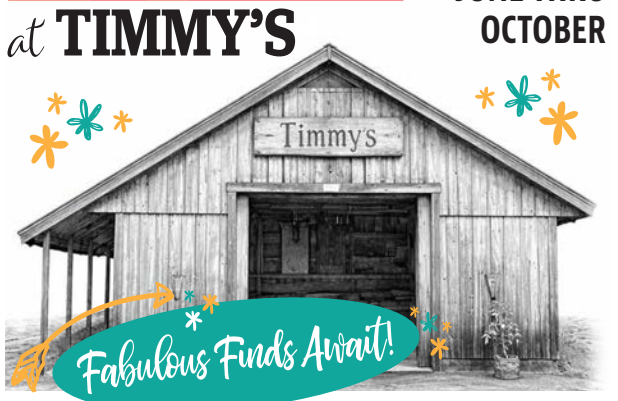
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Open Daily 9-5 • 508-867-2187
Ragged Hill/John Gilbert Rd., W. Brookfield
www.raggedhill.com
Directions From Rte 9, take Pierce Rd. to Ragged Hill Rd. or take Snow Rd. to Wickaboag Valley Rd. to Ragged Hill Rd.

SUMMER FLEA MARKET at TIMMY'S
EVERY SATURDAY 7AM-2PM JUNE THRU OCTOBER


20'X30' AREA ON GRASS
Most have shades & tables
$20.00 Cash To Set Up
1042 West St. (Rt. 122) Barre
2 mi. north of Barre center
CONTACT: Text: 978-257-9461
Facebook: @timmy.s.996763