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Newspaper

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Friday, October 25, 2024

An evening with Bob Briere

Historical Society program recognizes 'Mr. Sturbridge'



Bob Briere (left) talks about his life during the Sturbridge Historical Society's program last month with host Wally Hersee.
TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – A full audience had the unique opportunity to sit down and hear from longtime Sturbridge res-

ident, 90-year-old Bob Briere. "Bob has lived in Sturbridge for one-third of Sturbridge's existence," host Wally Hersee said at the Sturbridge Historical Society's program on Sept. 26 held at the Publick House.

Hersee said in speaking with Briere's partner Sylvia Buck prior to the event, he learned that Briere's motto is "I can do that."

"All your life you've done

See PROGRAM | PAGE 13

Senate candidates discuss key topics at forum

By Abby McCoy
Correspondent

and the issues that resonate with voters.

WARE – In a recent forum hosted by the Ware Business & Civic Association and Beyond, Republican candidate state Sen. Peter Durant and Democratic candidate Sheila Dibb engaged in a lively discussion that tackled pressing issues facing Massachusetts, particularly in its rural areas.

At the Oct. 16 forum, the candidates presented their perspectives on key topics, including health-care access, economic development, infrastructure needs, and more. Here's a detailed overview of the debate, highlighting their positions



Candidate Sheila Dibb is running against state Sen. Peter Durant in this year's election.



State Sen. Peter Durant is seeking re-election to represent the Worcester and Hampshire district.

A complete recording by Ware Community Television is available at waretv.org.

Opening statements

The forum opened with remarks from both candidates. Durant, who was elected as a state senator about a year ago during a special election after a long career in public service, including 12 years as a state representative and time as a selectman in Spencer, expressed his enthusiasm for the role.

He stated, "When you elect someone, you're not just getting them; you're

See FORUM | PAGE 12

Joint meeting discusses regionalization update

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen held a joint meeting with the School Committee to discuss the update from the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee.

At the Oct. 14 meeting, School Committee member Tim Canada said the RAAC voted to approve the draft of the regional agreement to include North Brookfield Public Schools in the Quaboag Regional School District.

He said the draft will now go before each school committee for approval, then before voters at a future town meeting. If the regional agreement

is approved by voters from the towns of North Brookfield, Warren and West Brookfield, a transition period would be expected to take place spanning from January 2026 to June 30, 2027, Canada said.

"Were this regional district to form, there would be a nine-member school committee, three from each town," Canada said.

He said school committee elections would coincide with the biannual state election schedule.

"It would be three members basically running every two years to stay on the committee," Canada said.

Canada said during the See MEETING | PAGE 5

13th annual Station Loop Ramble

Family-friendly race event benefits local land trust

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NEW BRAINTREE/HARDWICK – The East Quabbin Land Trust hosted its 13th annual Station Loop Ramble starting and finishing at the site of the former New Braintree Train Station.

Over 75 runners and walkers participated in this year's event, which serves as one of the biggest fundraisers for the

land trust, celebrating fun and fitness and encouraging families to experience the natural beauty of the region.

New this year, were two separate races for youth including a Kids 200-Foot Dash and a Kids ¼ Mile Run. Participating in the first event were Aspen Collette, Eileen Keleher, Wren DeTour, Romi DeTour, Althea Senese, Michael Staback and Juliana White; and in the second event, Devon Bjorklund, Parker Bottomley, Ryan Bottomley, Elise Rodier and Jack Savary.

Running the 5-Mile Clas-

See RAMBLE | PAGE 8



Michael Staback races to the finish line in the Kids 200-Foot Dash.
TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE



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- community -

Class of 2025 embraces senior year

From the desk of Colleen Mucha, Superintendent of Quabbin Regional School District

Being a member of the class of QRSD 2025 has had a few disappointments.

In the spring of their seventh grade year the students experienced school shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic and this group of students was not able to attend the annual eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C.

They still long for the opportunity and talk about it with great sadness.

However, the students have embraced their senior year with great enthusiasm and excitement. They are determined to make meaningful, lasting memories and contributions to their school community.

At the start of this school year, students embarked upon a weekend school trip to New York City. They were able to see various landmarks and enjoy fun activities together.

They toured the 9/11 Memorial and visit-



On Friday, Sept. 20 members of the Class of 2025 watched the sunrise together. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

ed the Statue of Liberty. They even enjoyed a dinner cruise.

Seniors again came together for their annual Senior Sunrise event. Yes, if you can imagine it, dozens of teenagers crawled out of their cozy beds to watch the sunrise together on Friday Sept. 20 at 6 a.m.

They played music, laughed and enjoyed great food that was donated by their families and cooked by a couple of seniors' "dads."

What a fun time for all!

At this point in the year, some are busy with athletics, jobs, and future plans. Many are taking SATs or preparing college applications, and all are looking forward to an amazing year at Quabbin Regional High School.

They are committed to spending quality time with one another and truly enjoying their remaining time at QRHS. They can be found both on and off our athletic fields, in our classrooms and out in our communities, performing on our stage and showcasing talents across our

towns. Should you run into any of our seniors, be sure to ask them, how are things going for you? What is one thing you want to accomplish before you leave QRSD?

While our seniors are already looking towards their future, they are also committed to cherishing what is left of their time here at Quabbin. Let's enjoy these moments together.



The Class of 2025 look at the Statue of Liberty in New York during a weekend in New York City at the start of the school year.

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Ware River News cover featuring 'RideN2B on the MCRT' article.

Commission reviews role in demo delay. By Ryan Drago. Ware - The Ware Historical Commission met on Sept. 23 for their monthly meeting.

Wright's Mill Recovery Master Plan meeting held. By Ryan Drago. Ware - The opening meeting of the Wright's Mill Recovery Master Plan was held at the Senior Center last week.

Selectboard discusses ARPA uses and more. By Paula Ouimette. Ware - Selectboard members discussed ways they could use American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Inside this edition: Viewpoints 4, Public Notices 14, Sports 9, Police/Fire 12, Obituaries 13, Classifieds 14.

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St. Joseph's Christmas Fair is Nov. 2

NORTH BROOKFIELD - A Christmas Fair will be held in St. Joseph's Parish Hall, 296 North Main St., on Saturday, Nov. 2 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

There will be a bake sale, handmade crafts, jewelry and raffles. Lunch will be served from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., offering homemade soups, sandwiches and apple pie.

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- community -

Scarecrows return to Publick House

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com



Whoopie Doo & Cupcakes Too designed this Cake it Easy scarecrow.



Jeepers Creepers is a tall scarecrow made by Venture Community Day Program Members.



These Batman and Joker scarecrows were designed by state Sen. Ryan Fattman's Senate Youth Council.



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STURBRIDGE – The Annual Scarecrow Decorating Contest at the Publick House Historic Inn returned this past weekend.

All the entrants were on display for guests to see as they strolled around town common and the front field of the Publick House. This annual scarecrow decorating contest is run by the Sturbridge Recreation Department.

The scarecrows were on display from Oct. 6-18 and many scarecrows were still on display during the annual Harvest Festival at the Town Common. There were several categories for the contest with winners for youth, adults, groups and business.

One of the creative scarecrows was called "Batman & Joker", created by state Sen. Ryan Fattman's Senate Youth Council. The adult category featured "Wicked" by Joan Boisvert, "TreeQuinox" by the Collette and Skowyra Family, "Senator Batman" by Fattman's Senate Youth Council, "The Banshee" by Kevin, Patrick, and Stanley Kubik, Unnamed Scarecrow by the Banks Family, and "Jeepers Creepers" by Venture Community Day Program Members.

The businesses category featured "Cake it Easy" by Whoopie-Doo & Cupcakes Too, and "Scariest Thing in the World" by McCurdy Group.

The groups category featured "Crafty Scarecrows" by My Little Sunshine Daycare and the youth category featured "Chef Brown 'E'" by Girl Scouts Brownie Troop 65342.

QR codes were displayed along the front lawn of the Publick House for guests to vote for their favorite scarecrow in each category. The voting concluded on Oct. 22 and the winners will be announced soon.

The Sturbridge Recreation Department is also hosting is also hosting Spooky Nights 2024.

The 3rd Annual Halloween Decorating Contest for residents and businesses. Categories include a Pumpkin Award, Harvest House Award, and Horror House Award. Contest Dates are Oct. 25-28, 5-8 p.m.

For more events visit www.sturbridge.gov/recreation.



This tree stump with a face blended in nicely on the front lawn of the Publick House.



Get a glimpse of this "Wicked" scarecrow.



My Little Sunshine Daycare designed crayon scarecrows with some in the box and many lying on the ground.

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- opinion -



Pretty leaves make great mulch and more!

Even though we thought it was going to be a year of drab fall foliage, the colors this past weekend surprised me.

I saw so many neat plants doing their thing in response to the shorter days. When chlorophyll is broken down as a result of less daylight, lots of other colors take the place of green in the leaves.

We have our oranges and yellows from the carotenoids, the purple and red shades from the anthocyanins and the rusts and browns from tannins, and then there are plants that look ghost-like because the green color is just plain gone!

Besides enjoying great foliage, I saw the start of some very large leaf piles. I know that raking up fallen leaves are not everyone's favorite task, but gardeners should rejoice!

Read on to learn about the many uses of leaves, straight from the archives.

Consider for a moment the forest, and how stands of trees grow successfully without any input from us. Why is that so?

It is thanks to nature's own process of decomposition. Leaves, branches, and pine needles, etc., fall onto the forest floor where microbes such as fungi and bacteria break them down into humus.

Humus works between the mineral particles and air spaces in the soil, helping it to retain moisture yet drain readily. It also helps to enhance overall soil fertility by making nutrients available to plants in a form they can readily use.

Worms and other macro-organisms aerate the soil and disperse the humus around plant roots, making a self-perpetuating system. We can apply this lesson from nature to our own situation, making for more successful gardens and healthier lawns, and all by the use of leaves!

Perhaps the easiest way to deal with a small amount of leaves is to mow over them several times with the lawn mower. Soon the tiny pieces will disappear into the soil adding valuable nutrients as they break down.

The lawn mower also comes in handy after piles have been made. Mow over low piles or chop them up with a shredder, then they can be used for a variety of purposes.

Once the soil has frozen, chopped leaves make an excellent protective winter mulch for any type of garden. They won't mat down and rot the crowns of your favorite perennials the way whole leaves might, but they will moderate soil temperatures enough to prevent them from being heaved out of the ground during normal cycles of freezing and thawing.

When spring arrives just pull back the mulch off the tops of the plants. It can stay in place covering bare soil, all the while conserving moisture, preventing weeds, and making humus!

If the "natural look" is unappealing to you apply a thin coat of bark mulch over chopped leaves to dress things up a bit. Repeat this drill every year for your own self-perpetuating garden.

You can also incorporate chopped leaves right into the vegetable garden each fall. The use of a rototiller makes this job a snap.

Most will have decomposed by spring, but till the garden again a month or so before planting to finish the job.

Chopped leaves make a great addition to the compost pile.

See GARDEN | PAGE 5



Letter-to-the-Editor

A clear choice on election day

Dear Editor,

As we have watched the devastation from hurricanes unfold in North Carolina and Florida this fall, bringing flashbacks to recent flooding much closer to home, we know that anywhere could be the next place to be hit by climate change.

Wouldn't you want your elected officials to take that threat seriously?

Voters in the Worcester & Hampshire Senate District have a clear choice when they vote for their next State Senator. They can choose Sheila Dibb – an effective local leader who will put the communities of cen-

tral Massachusetts first and act to curb the impacts of climate change, water pollution, and other environmental problems that affect daily life.

Or voters can choose the incumbent who was one of only two senators to vote against climate legislation earlier this year. Massachusetts Clean Water Action Vote Environment PAC chooses Sheila Dibb for State Senate.

Elizabeth Saunders
Chair, Massachusetts Clean Water
Action Vote Environment PAC

Guest Column

Fear and blame overshadow Presidential election

I have a question: After all the information out there about what Trump has done and what he plans to do to people who disagree with him, to leaders who warn against him, to nonpartisan reporters who simply report facts, and for convicted criminals who commit crimes on his behalf, what motivates those on the Right to continue their support of him?

There is plenty of denial and rationalization going on but, I'm sorry, at this point it seems there must be some additional analysis needed to explain the Right's unshakable allegiance to the MAGA movement and their leader.

My friend drives by a flag every day that has the usual TRUMP 2024 lettering, but on this flag there is the subtitle - Make Liberals Cry Again.

Of course, I thought that this element of the flag was unnecessarily nasty. However, after some thought, it just may have provided me with at least a partial answer to my question.

It feels like that second part of the flag should be the heading and not the subtitle.

My guess is that in some ways this election is not really about Trump. It's about what he enables.

He allows supporters to blame everyone but themselves for what they don't have, what they can't do, what they don't know, or what they can't seem to achieve. Just like him!

It's not their fault. It's some conspiracy-driven thing that "snowflakes" are doing to them or to their world that, in their mind, prevents America from being "Great Again."

Adopting that attitude is so much easier than accepting the truth. To simply blame others and throw the gameboard on the

floor because the other side is "cheating" is so much more convenient than taking steps to try to overcome the obstacles they may face.

But, if Trump wins it won't be just liberals who will be crying.

It will be many more women who will lose their right to their own bodily autonomy when faced with horrible circumstances like rape or even a choice of their own survival. It will be immigrants who have come to America, legally or otherwise, to escape harm or seek a better life. It will be journalists who lose their jobs or who are forced to print only what they are told.

It will be Democratic, Independent, and Republican leaders who have dared to speak what they know to be the truth. It will be seniors who will lose Social Security and Medicare benefits. It will be children who are not taught the truth about their ancestors because it will be eliminated from the educational system. It will be young people who are not allowed to be who they truly are because they don't fit in with someone's idea of "normal."

It will be anyone who follows their own religious convictions if they happen to be anything other than the Right's version of "Christian!"

So, what is the motivation for his supporters to pull the lever for him?

At this point, it seems to me there is a strong case to be made for the theory that stirring fear of and diverting blame onto others is a powerful piece of it. For me, that strong impulse, seen so often in the talk on the Right, is the deepest tragedy facing us as a nation right now.

Regina Edmonds
Warren

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Ferrante and Gusev to perform at Stone Church Nov. 17

HARDWICK – Maria Ferrante, soprano, and Ivan Gusev, pianist, will perform a program featuring “Poem of Love and of the Sea” [Poème de l’amour et de la mer] by French composer Ernest Chausson (1855-1893); four Impromptus D 935 by Franz Schubert; and “Music for A While” by Henry Purcell, at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 17 at the Stone Church Cultural Center, 283 Main St., Gilbertville.

Tickets are \$25 at the door or online at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/friendsofthestonechurch/1256705>

Ferrante, a true “singing actress,” maintains a full schedule of performances on both the local and international stage. Her name has become familiar to audiences the world over.

A winner of the Mario Lanza Voice Competition, she has been acclaimed in The Washington Post and by Richard Dyer in The Boston Globe. Her performances have delighted audiences from New York to the Virgin Islands, in Prague, Japan and London as well as in Boston venues Jordan Hall and Sanders Theater.

Ferrante also teaches Master Classes in Voice and is an engaging, enthusiastic

teacher and coach.

Originally from Kazakhstan, Gusev earned Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees with highest honors from the Moscow State Conservatory, then completed a Master’s of Music program at Mannes School of Music in New York. He performed at Carnegie Hall, and has won the 3rd Gershwin International Music Competition (2017), was a prize winner at the Chopin International Piano Competition (2018) and has earned other awards including the Steinway award for outstanding Mannes graduates.

Gusev lives and teaches in the Boston area, and performs frequently, most recently this fall for the Frederick Collection in Ashburnham.

“Music for a while shall all your cares beguile” (published in 1702) will introduce the early holiday season concert. This soothing da capo aria by English Baroque composer Henry Purcell features solo voice with a ground bass and subtle harmonies.

Ernest Chausson composed music for “Poem of Love and of the Sea,” his Opus 19 for voice and orchestra over a period of ten years, 1882-1892. The



Pianist Ivan Gusev will accompany singer Maria Ferrante for a pre-holiday concert, “Music for A While.” SUBMITTED PHOTOS

1876 text by French poet Maurice Bouchor (1855-1929) describes a woman walking by a seaside radiant in sunshine, the air heavy with the fragrance of lilacs, and her long hair sparkling in the breeze as the sun dances on the waves, while the observer, to whom she is unknown, imagines he is her true love.

To quote Wikipedia, Chausson’s music “bridges the gap between the ripe Romanticism of Massenet and Franck and the more introverted impressionism of Debussy.” Chausson died at 44, leaving only 39 opus-numbered works.

The 17th arrondissement of Paris is named in his honor. With Ferrante’s dramatic singing style, this piece will be moving and filled with the Romantic joy and longing its composer intended.

Gusev has become known for his distinctive performances of Romantic piano repertoire, notably Schubert, Chopin, Rachmaninoff and Debussy.

For this concert, Gusev will deliver a treat of four melodic and dramatic works composed by Schubert in the



Soprano Maria Ferrante will perform at the Stone Church Cultural Center on Sunday, Nov. 17.

last year of his life and published posthumously. These are among the finest pieces composed for solo piano in the early 19th century.

This is a wonderful opportunity to hear the 1924 Boothman Steinway piano, donated by Kaye Boothman and family to the Friends of the Stone Church.

For both artists, it will be the fourth appearance at the Stone Church. The concert is sponsored by Monson Savings Bank. Partial support for this series has been committed from the Mass Cul-

tural Council, a state agency.

About FOOSC

Friends of the Stone Church, Inc. is a public charitable corporation and community group organized in 2015 and open to all. Its mission is to preserve and protect the Gilbertville Stone Church Cultural Center and to make it available as a place of community enrichment.

The friends welcome donations toward the ongoing preservation project online at www.FriendsoftheStoneChurch.org or by mail to FOOSC, P.O. Box 347, Gilbertville, MA 01031.

GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

Layer brown, carbon rich ingredients (such as chopped leaves) with green, nitrogen rich ingredients (such as grass clippings, vegetable scraps, non-weedy plant parts) together to get the pile cooking. Add a shovel full of garden soil or finished compost per layer to inoculate it with microbes and water well.

Let the pile sit for a year or turn it frequently for faster results. Compost is a near neutral source of humus, a well-balanced fertilizer and soil tonic, good for all types of gardens and even the lawn.

If you are too busy to layer and shredding sounds like a messy job, simply pile the leaves, moistening as you go. The resulting leaf mold is another healthy addition to the garden.

Research has proven that members

of the cabbage family respond especially well to this type of humus. Keep in mind that oak leaves are more acidic than other leaves of trees native to our area.

If you use more of these in any of your gardening situations, adjust liming accordingly.

So get out the rake and improve your landscape!!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 32 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.

MEETING | FROM PAGE 1

transition period, a transitional school committee will be formed with the existing members of both school committees, in addition to one North Brookfield selectman.

Superintendent Timothy McCormick said even if all votes pass, this changes to the school district wouldn’t take place until the 2027-2028 academic year.

Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Pe-traitis said the draft regional agreement will be posted on the town’s website, northbrookfield.net.

School budget update

McCormick said all three rounds of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds have been expended and will not be available to support the school district’s budget in the next fiscal year.

He said the cost of out-of-district placements, which increased by 14% two years ago, has continued a downward trend since last year and is estimated to only increase by 4% this year.

“It’s still an increase to the district, but it’s not as egregious as 14%, so that’s a good thing,” he said.

McCormick said contract negotiations will be starting soon with both the teachers’ union and custodial union. Both contracts are ending this year.

McCormick said the school district entered into a five-year contract with its

bus company to provide transportation. He said the cost of transportation increases by about 6% each contract year.

“Those are some of the biggest drivers,” he said, of the budget.

McCormick said while there is an increased cost for supplies and materials, the school district was able to save money by locking into a lower heating fuel rate through a bid for services.

“We’re not seeing huge increases with our fuel costs for the two schools,” he said.

McCormick said the school district still has some work to do with the budget, and he welcomed ideas and input from the town.

“We’ve done a pretty good job in the last couple years of looking at what grant opportunities can we utilize to bring additional funding for some of our programs, but that’s not a way that we can fully balance a budget,” he said.

McCormick said there’s been discussion for the past couple of years about the possibility of having an override to help balance the town’s budget. He said if it’s something the town wants to explore, the committees should begin conversations soon.

McCormick said an override would impact the entire town’s budget, not just the school district’s.

“It’s a conversation that the town needs to have,” Canada said.

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34th annual Harvest Festival returns to Sturbridge Common

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – This past weekend featured the 34th annual Harvest Festival at Sturbridge Common.

The annual Harvest Festival on the Sturbridge Town Common is a family fun tradition. The event includes countless local crafters, artisans, specialty food vendors and farm fresh harvests.

The event is run by the Chamber of Central Mass South and the Harvest Festival is the chamber's biggest fundraiser of the year.

According to the Chamber's Executive Director Alexandra McNitt this year's Harvest Festival has grown in size with more vendors and entertainers. The Harvest Festival offered various goods and services from local crafters from all over Massachusetts and the rest of New England.

One of the new additions of this year's Harvest Festival was the entertaining group in the Southern New England Witch Dancers Troupe. This group has been around for a few years and to perform the original choreography of the Witches Dance by the Wolfshager Hexenbruts of Germany.

This group is known for their dances and costumes to go with their performance. Dances include The Healing Dance, Sacred Stones, Blessed Are We, Cauldron of Changes, Calling In the Elements and Fire



The 34th annual Harvest Festival took place this past weekend at the Sturbridge Town Common. A sign featuring Oktoberfest beverages from the brewery Opa Opa. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

Transform Me. The Southern New England Witch Dancers enjoyed their first time at the annual Harvest Festival and come from all over Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Everyone got into the spirit of Halloween as the Witch Dancers performed at Sturbridge Town Common.

"They drew a huge crowd," McNitt said.

New additions to this year's Harvest Festival included axe throwing provided by Into the Grain Axe Throwing and a bounce house.

There was also a magic show with Ryan Lally. The magician provided two hours of roving magic on both Saturday and Sunday.

There were several live music performers throughout the Harvest Festival weekend. On Saturday, October Mountain and the Erin Harpe Country Blues Duo performed under the gazebo and on Sunday, after the Harvest Festival debut of the Southern New England Witch Dancers Troupe, the Pioneer Valley Flamethrowers performed.

McNitt said the annual Harvest Festival is a great event and is one of the oldest fall themed festivals in the region. This year's event had 12 more vendors than last year.

The food trucks that were stationed on the Town Common included Sun Kim Bop, Off the Hook, Grub Guru, Honest Town Pizza and Tambo's Kitchen.

Supporting sponsor of the Harvest Festival was the Sturbridge Tourist Association. There was a total of 74 craft vendors and four food trucks in this year's Harvest Festival.

The Central Mass South Chamber of Commerce had a booth of their own selling soft drinks and water and providing information for all the guests and crafters.

See MORE PHOTOS | PAGE 7



The Southern New England Witch Dancers troupe were new to this year's Harvest Festival.



The staff of Park Place Salon, left to right, Harmony, Dani, Bella and Macy were keeping busy and giving out hair tinsel during Harvest Festival.



Cookies By Ray had a variety of cookies that were a must try at Harvest Festival.



A unicorn themed bounce house was new in this year's Harvest Festival.



Pioneer Valley Flamethrowers performed on Sunday during the Harvest Festival. This was their first year performing for the Harvest Festival.



Macy helped Harmony out by adding some gold hair tinsel.

- sturbridge -

Rotary Club presents TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K & Fun Walk

STURBRIDGE – The Rotary Club of Sturbridge is delighted to announce that its popular TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K, and Fun Walk will return on Sunday, Oct. 27, according to race director Klaus Hachfeld.

The family-friendly event offers two timed races, including a 5K Trail Run & Fun Walk, and a 1K Road Race.

The timed 1K Road Race (\$20 registration) for pre-teens (12 years old and under) starts at 9:15 a.m. It will be a road race along Old Sturbridge Village Road, making it accessible to persons with mobility challenges.

The timed 5K Trail Run (\$35 registration) & Fun Walk (\$30 registration) will start at 10 a.m. using Old Sturbridge Village Road and the Arbutus Park Trail in the Leadmine Mountain Wildlife Conservation Lands.

An awards ceremony will follow at 11:15 a.m. starting with a competition for best Halloween costume for all registered runners and walkers. Judging will be by popular choice.

The event also includes free children's game start-

ing at 9 a.m. at the Education Center, organized by a volunteer team from Burgess Elementary School. No pre-registration is required for the children's activities.

All activities begin at the OSV Education Center on Old Sturbridge Village Road (not to be confused with Old Sturbridge Village Academy at the main entrance to the village). Parking will be available in the Education Center lot.

Pre-registration is now available on the Race-Wire website at <https://www.racewire.com/register.php?id=14151>

All participants who pre-register by Oct. 21 will get a 2024 TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K & Fun Walk tee-shirt. On-site registration will also be available starting at 8:30 a.m.

The Trek Sturbridge Halloween 5K and Fun Walk is a Sturbridge Rotary Club fundraiser, with all profits going to the organization's community needs projects.

For additional information, or to sign on as an event sponsor, email the race director at laserklaus@gmail.com. Or visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club website at <https://sturbridgerotary.com>.

Pumpkin Patch continues at Federated Church

STURBRIDGE – The Pumpkin Patch at the Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale is open to visitors Monday through Friday from 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. (weather permitting) through the end of October.

The front lawn of the church has been transformed into a festive fall wonderland, brimming with pumpkins and gourds of all shapes and sizes. Convenient payment options include cash, credit cards, Venmo, and PayPal, making it easy for everyone to join in the fun.

For more information on the Pumpkin Patch or other upcoming events, visit the Church's website at sturfed.org or contact the Church office by calling 774-304-1021 or emailing churchoffice@sturfed.org.

The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale welcomes everyone to celebrate Christ's presence and God's grace in their lives. Members of the community are welcome and invited to join in worship on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m.

HARVEST FESTIVAL | FROM PAGE 6



Home Based Art Studio provided a booth for kids to make their own bracelets, paint their own kindness stone or make leaf scratch art.



A bullseye was hit at the axe throwing cage provided by Into the Grain Axe Throwing.



Some of the witch dancers were thirsty and visited the Deep Roots Distillery booth.



The chefs at Honest Town Pizza kept busy and had fun during Harvest Festival.

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

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

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

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

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Upcoming Events

Saturday, November 9th
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A.S.B. Band

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DARTS

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RAMBLE | FROM PAGE 1

sic were Matthew Twarog with a time 31:44; Andrew Wiewel, 36:17; Alice McKeon, 39:12; Joshua Savary, 39:29; Nicole Keleher, 39:54; Nicholas Hintlian, 39:57; Robbie Rostami, 40:00; Tom Bockus, 40:47; Tim Hawley, 41:05; Jeffrey Spencer, 42:11; Audrey Snay, 42:31; David Maher, 44:28; Toni Brown, 44:50; Kristin Hintlian, 45:08; Kevin Loggie, 46:38; Adeline Ford, 46:43; Evan White, 47:22; Steve Prouty, 48:49; Melissa White, 50:30; Jenni DiMauro, 50:51; Michelle Sheperd, 53:33; Mike Cavanaugh, 53:54; Pam Clark, 53:56; and Rachel Wilson, 59:59.

Results of the 5K Run/Walk are as follows: Walker Larson, 28:00; Hazel Larson, 28:06; Parker Bottomley, 28:12; Rachel Ross, 28:58; Mark Kablack, 29:21; Elizabeth Bottomley, 31:13; Brian Savilonis, 31:49; Lynne Feldman, 31:54; Elise Rodier, 32:17; Clayton Larson, 32:29; David Larson, 32:31; Timothy Messer, 32:46; Kent Rissmiller, 33:28; Paula Ouimette, 33:41; Claire Norberg, 34:15; Emily Savary, 34:52; Calia Rich, 39:26; Catriona Standfield, 41:16; Ann Neubeurg, 43:00; Gary Benedetti, 42:52; Katherine Benedetti, 45:54; Mike Messer, 45:59; Meghan Rodier, 46:20; Kristine Gaffney, 49:27; Joann Crain, 49:29; Paula Ye, 52:38; Marcia Messier, 53:00; Dawn Gray, 55:07;

Kathy Scheriff, 55:13; Brittany Gray, 55:17; Kasey Dorsch, 55:22; Rich Dorsch, 55:23; Denise Arginlo, 55:24; Leslie Barone, 55:46; Marjorie Crogan, 56:27; Sharon Hanson, 56:28; Sheila Malie, 56:30 and Mike Stoll, 58:30.

Event sponsors include Berube Real Estate, Senator Stephen Brewer, Ware River Power, Blue Darner Granola, JP Petraglia Real Estate Services, Dresser & McGourthy, LLP, The Center at Eagle Hill, Pioneer Valley Environmental, Atlantic Capital Strategies, Inc., SFS of New England, Inc., Hardwick Sugar Shack, Sugar Maple Trailside Inn, Country Bank, E.P. Wine, The Centered Place, Kip's Christmas Tree Farm, Stillman's, West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, Bell & Hudson, Lost Towns Brewing, Cornerstone Bank, Rose32 Bakery, Landry & Melius, LLP, Hardwick Farmers Co-Op, Higgins Powersports, Salvatore Family of Dealerships, Ragged Hill Orchard, Ahearn Equipment, North Brookfield Savings Bank, Lamoreux Ford, Quirk Wire Co. Inc., R.N. Glidden Landscaping Services, Sherman Oil, Gavitt Wire & Cable Co. and W.R. Robinson Lumber.

For more information about the East Quabbin Land Trust, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary, visit www.eqlt.org.



Devon Bjorklund earned second place in the Kids ¼ Mile Run. *TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE*



Walker Larson took first place male and first overall for the 5K Run/Walk with at time of 28:00.



Hazel Larson finished six seconds behind her brother, Walker, for first place female and second place overall.



Calia Rich completed the 5K Run/Walk with a time of 39:26.



The 5-Mile Classic mixes the scenic hills of New Braintree farmland with the flat speed of the Mass Central Rail Trail.



Evan White pushed his daughter in a stroller on the 5-Mile Classic.



Runners take off during the Kids ¼ Mile race as part of the 13th annual Station Loop Ramble held on the Mass Central Rail Trail in New Braintree.



Juliana White gets ready to finish the Kids 200-Foot Dash and receive her medal.



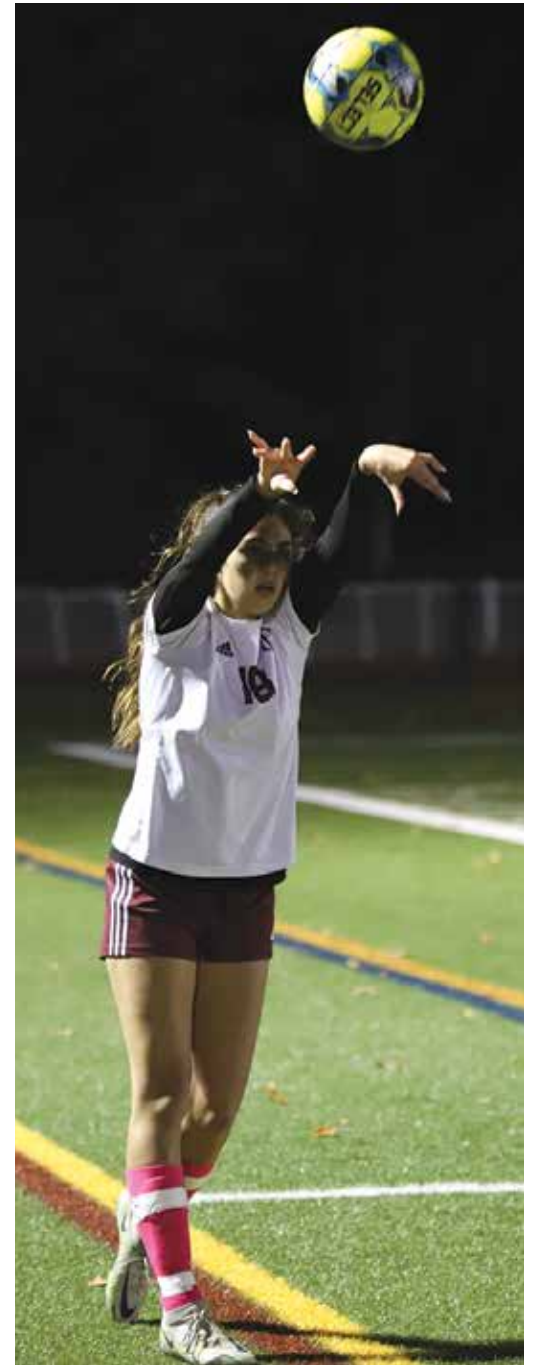
Parker Bottomley earned first place in the Kids ¼ Mile Run. Parker also finished third overall in the 5K Run/Walk.

SPORTS

Warriors score win over Cougars



FISKDALE – Last Wednesday night, Tantasqua Regional High School girls soccer defeated Quaboag 4-2. The Cougars fell to 5-8-2 on the season, but are in prime position to make the state tournament with the No. 15 ranking. Tantasqua Regional is in excellent shape, with an 11-3-1 record. They are likely to make the Central Mass. tournament as well as the state tournament.



Asher Sargent reaches out to take possession. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Madelyn Bagg punts the ball away.



Brielle Gerulaitis attempts to steal the ball.

Panthers fall in tough matchup

BARRE – Last Tuesday afternoon, Quabbin Regional boys soccer had a tough matchup with visiting Bromfield. The Panthers fell 10-2, falling to 2-12-1 on the season. The regular season concluded with a matchup with Uxbridge. Quabbin will not make the state tournament.



James Cook goes after the loose ball.



Owen Twarog is pressured by an opposing midfielder.

Panthers get shutout over Quaboag

By **Tim Peterson**
Sports Correspondent

WARREN—Quabbin Regional head coach Shelly Zalneratis and Quaboag Regional head coach John O’Neill are two of the veteran field hockey coaches in Central Massachusetts.

The longtime friends have always enjoyed competing against each other.

The only meeting of the regular season between the two squads took place on Columbus Day and the Quabbin Lady Panthers posted a 4-0 road victory over the Quaboag Lady Cougars.

“I always love playing against John’s teams,” Zalneratis said. “We’re longtime friends and we’ve been competing against each other for many years. It’s a great rela-



Alijah Flint sends the goal kick away. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Jacoby Dilling fights to keep the ball.



Kevin Boles makes his way up the field.

- sports -

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Turleysports

Athlete of the Month

NAME: Josie Hescock
SCHOOL: Quaboag

Hescock had a pair of goals scored in a 4-1 win over Quaboag earlier this month over Tanta-squa.

To nominate someone for Athlete of the Week, contact Managing Sports Editor Gregory A. Scibelli at 413-283-8393 ext. 258 or send an e-mail to gscibelli@turley.com.



Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Thursday Night Mixed League
EAST BROOKFIELD – The Thursday Night Mixed League at Bogey Lanes bowled week four of the season. The standings as of Oct. 17 had Scorpion Bowlers in first place with a record of 30-2. Team Four is a close second place team with a record of 29-3. Hogs are in third place with a record of 28-4. Team Eleven, Glen Echo Bowlers and Team Seven are tied for fourth place at 16-16.

Team Seven bowled against Team Twelve this past week. In game one, Team Seven was victorious 384-376. In game two, Team Seven won again 411-397. In game three, Team Seven won again for a sweep over Team Twelve, 406-405. The final score was 1201-1178 in favor of Team Seven.

Team Five bowled against the #1 seed Scorpion Bowlers. In game one, Scorpion Bowlers took game one 409-383. In game two, Scorpion Bowlers won again by a score of 393-385. Scorpion Bowlers won the final game 397-380. Final score was 1199-1148 in favor of Scorpion Bowlers who are successfully defending their #1 seed.

Team Nine bowled against the Glen Echo Bowlers. In game one, Team Nine was victorious 411-390. In game two, Zo Nowak of Glen Echo Bowlers scored a

124 during the team's win over Team Nine, 439-396.

In game three, Nowak bowled a 117 as the Glen Echo Bowlers won again 424-402. The final score was 1253-1209 in favor of Glen Echo Bowlers.

Team Four was victorious in all three games during week four. Aaron Fontaine was having a successful night by bowling a series of 413. Fontaine's scores consisted of 146, 141 and 126.

Team Four had scores of 453, 464 and 439 for a final score of 1356.

Team Eleven bowled against Team Six. In game one, Team Six was victorious 424-393. Logan Kellaher of Team Six started the night with a 116 and his teammate Jay Wassmer started with a 109.

Team 11 was victorious in game two, 387-383. In game three, Team Six won 396-370. Team Six also won total pinfall by a final score of 1203-1150.

The #3 seed Hogs bowled against the B Team. In game one, the B Team was victorious 382-370. In game two, The Hogs won 390-374. Drew Kolb of B Team bowled a 117.

In game three, The Hogs won again and took six points in their match against the B Team. The score in game three was 393-375 in favor of the Hogs. Total pinfall was won by the Hogs with a final score of 1153-1131.

Bogey Lanes is located at 199 North Brookfield Road. The lanes can be reached by calling 508-867-6629.

PANTHERS | FROM PAGE 9

tionship. Quaboag is a very young team this year and they play an extremely difficult schedule, but the future does look bright for them."

Quaboag had a 7-5 overall record following the home loss, which was played on a gloomy morning.

"I thought we played well in today's game," said John O'Neill, who's wrapping up his 42nd season as the Lady Cougars head coach. "We played better defense in the second. It's always fun to play against Quabbin.

O'Neill couldn't remember the first time that he coached against Zalneratis.

"Shelly is always trying to improve as a head coach by going to clinics," O'Neill said. "She's a student of the game. I've really enjoyed competing against her teams over the years."

The Lady Cougars entered the match-up having outscored their previous three opponents, 13-3.

The shutout victory improved the Lady Panthers overall record to 7-5-2.

"This win is very good for our confidence," Zalneratis added. "We also had the opportunity to work on several different things in today's game."

Quabbin has now won the last four meetings in the rivalry series. They celebrated a 3-1 home win a year ago.

"We've been able to win the past couple of games against Quaboag, but the series has gone back and forth over the years," Zalneratis said. "This series will continue as long as I'm coaching here."

With a little more than ten minutes remaining in the first quarter, Katelynn Swistak, who's the only senior listed on the Lady Cougars roster, fired a shot on goal, but Quabbin sophomore goalie Aubrey Thorpe was able to make a kick save. It wound up being Thorpe's only save of the entire match. It was also her fifth shutout of the regular season.

The members of the Lady Panthers defensive unit are sophomore Violet Kelley, junior Madelyn Stauder, senior Sydney Slattery, and senior Kylie George.

Down at the other end of the field,

Quaboag sophomore Riley Gray made seven saves in the non-league contest.

A couple of minutes later the Lady Panthers took a 1-0 lead when sophomore Abigail Rogowski delivered a pass from the left side to junior Farrah Wojcik, who banged a wide open shot into the cage.

"Scoring the first goal of the game is definitely something we've worked on all season long," Zalneratis said. "Abi made a nice pass to Farrah, who scored our first goal."

During the final seconds of the first quarter, which is 15 minutes long, Wojcik sent a pass to classmate Olivia Breault, who scored Quabbin's second goal.

After failing to score on their first five penalty corners, Quabbin converted a goal on their sixth corner with nine minutes left in the first half. Wojcik inserted the ball from the left side of the cage. After a pass went to Rogowski, sophomore Makenzie Casey fired a shot which was tipped into the cage by junior Alyssa Ebert.

At the end of the first half, the Lady Cougars had a penalty corner opportunity. The ball was inserted by seventh grader Stephanie Swistak, but it was quickly cleared away by the Quabbin defense.

Neither team scored a goal during the third quarter.

The Lady Panthers final goal of the match, which was unassisted, was scored by freshman Kayla Curran with 6:36 remaining in regulation.

"We had four different goal scorers in today's game," Zalneratis said. "It's something that we'll need to do in the postseason tournament."

While the Lady Cougars are wrapping up their regular season this week, the Lady Panthers were scheduled to host Saint Paul Diocesan of Worcester in the semifinals of the Central Mass. Athletic Directors Association tournament on Wednesday afternoon.

Quabbin and Quaboag could face each other again in the Division 4 state tournament.

T-Birds offense stymied in Providence

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - The Springfield Thunderbirds (2-3-0-0) could not solve the Providence Bruins (2-2-0-0) and their goaltender Michael DiPietro, falling 3-0 on Sunday afternoon inside Amica Mutual Pavilion.

Colten Ellis earned a second consecutive start after defeating the Bruins an evening earlier, and the young goaltender was kept busy in a first period that saw Providence outshoot Springfield 12-4.

The Bruins eventually cracked the ice at 12:17 following an extended shift in the offensive zone. Veteran blueliner Jordan Oesterle located open ice in the left circle, stepped up, and slapped a one-time feed from Fabian Lysell over Ellis's shoulder, giving the Bruins the 1-0 edge.

5:42 later, in his second tour of duty as a Bruin, Vinni Lettieri continued his lengthy history of success against the T-Birds when he one-timed a shot through Ellis to extend the Bruins lead to 2-0 heading into intermission.

Springfield came out hungrier in

the second period, but DiPietro was equal to the task, as he calmly stood tall against 10 T-Birds attempts. His best save came past the midpoint of the second, when he came out to challenge Aleksanteri Kaskimaki on a 4-on-2, denying the rookie his first AHL goal.

As the game moved to the third, the T-Birds tried to up the ante on offense, and Marcus Sylvegard had the best chance of the day with a breakaway bid, but DiPietro had the answer to turn aside the man who had the game-winning goal a night earlier.

In the end, despite a perfect 4-for-4 showing by the Springfield penalty kill and a 31-save performance from Ellis, the offensive drought proved costly, and Patrick Brown sealed matters with an empty-netter in the final 90 seconds to seal it up for the Bruins.

The T-Birds return home to begin another three-game weekend on Friday, Oct. 25 against the Grand Rapids Griffins. Puck drop is set for 7:05 p.m. at the Thunderdome.

- sports -

Regular season concludes with win



Adonis Dupre steals the ball. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEET-DOGPHOTOS.COM



Justin Davis chases down the ball.



Brody Wetnicka chases after a loose ball.

WARREN – Last Friday, the Pathfinder High School boys soccer team borrowed Quaboag’s stadium field to play its final home game, scoring a 6-1 win over Athol. In the win, Jaleel Roman had two goals for the Pioneers. Evan Costa, Adonis Dupre, Talon Clark, and Cayden Bousquet had the other goals for the Pioneers. Pathfinder, which co-ops with Palmer, finishes the regular season at 9-5-1. The Pioneers are guaranteed a Division 5 state tournament spot, and will wait to learn if it made the Western Mass. tournament. If the Pioneers do not play in the section tournament, they will play a couple of non-playoff games this week.



Owen Pear passes ahead of pressure.



Evan Costa sends a quick pass away.



Cayden Bousquet clears the ball away.

College: Owls comeback falls short

WESTFIELD – Westfield State senior Dylan Disabella (Granby, Conn.) ran for 130 yards and caught a touchdown pass in his debut as the Owls’ feature back, but it wasn’t enough as Framingham State foiled the Owls homecoming with a 21-7 win.

Both teams are now 2-4 on the season and 2-3 in the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference.

Westfield got on the scoreboard first, with QB Gabe Fernandez (Holyoke, Mass.) finding Disabella for a 13-yard scoring strike with Disabella leaping into the endzone to punctuate a 9-play, 82-yard drive.

Turnovers again punished the Owls, as Framingham’s first score came on an 11-yard Carl Renaudin (Waltham, Mass.) scoop and score fumble recovery touchdown, on a busted toss run for the Owls.

Westfield had a chance to take a lead into the half, after Tafari Proctor (Amherst, Mass.) intercepted his third pass of the season, and returned it 59 yards to the Framingham 3, but on the ensuing play Framingham forced a fumble and the Rams recovered to keep the score 7-7 heading to the half.

The Rams grabbed a 14-7 lead midway through the third quarter with a 25-yard TD toss from Luke Thompson (West Islip, NY) to Elijah Nichols (Burlington Twp., NJ), capping an 11-play, 79-yard drive.

Early in the fourth quarter, Westfield had a chance to tie as the Owls marched the ball from their own 28 yard line all the way to the Framingham four yard line, but the Rams forced a fumble with Ronyel Pena (Lawrence, Mass.) slashing between the Owls offensive line to force a fumble.

Framingham added a 2-yard touchdown run from Jaheim Daniels (Norwalk, Conn.) with 46 seconds left in the fourth quarter to put the game out of reach, after the Rams defense forced a 4-and-out from the

Owls. Westfield had their backs against the wall with a drive that started inside their own 10-yard line with less than two minutes to play.

Disabella had a big day on the ground in his first action as the feature back in the Owls triple-option attack. He played two seasons as a tight end for the Owls before moving to wing back in the offense this season, but moved behind the quarterback for today’s game for the first time with Owls regular starter Sean Willis out with an injury. The Owls played with three offensive regulars sidelined by injury today.

Fernandez finished 7-20 passing for 66 yards, with 1 td and 1 interception. Jacob Swinehart (Holyoke, Mass.) caught two passes for 23 yards and added six carries for 27 yards.

Blake Simpson (Bellingham, Mass.) and Corey Henderson (Gardner, Mass.) led the Owls with eight tackles each. Henderson added a sack and Cade Nelson (Shrewsbury, Mass.) had 1.5 sacks for the Owls.

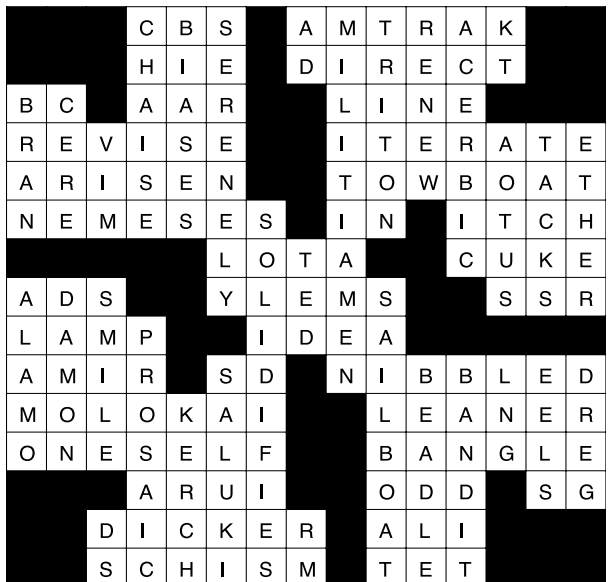
Framingham QB Thompson finished 11-27 passing for 169 yards with a TD and an interception. Nichols led the Rams with eight catches for 90 yards and a TD. Daniels finished with 52 yards rushing on seven carries.

Pena was the man of the hour for the Framingham defense, getting in on 17 tackles (9 solo), with four for losses and a sack. Renaudin had the fumble recovery for TD and a 22-yard interception return.

The Owls ran 75 offensive plays to the Rams 52, and Westfield outgained the Rams 246-219 and held a 37-23 edge in time of possession, but the key turnovers hampered the Owls chances to win.

Westfield will travel to Plymouth State for a MAS-CAC game next Saturday, Oct. 26 at noon. Framingham will next host Mass Maritime on Noon on Oct. 26.

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Town Clerk announces election information

NEW BRAINTREE – The 2024 Presidential Election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 5 with polls open from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. at the New Braintree Town Hall, 20 Memorial Drive.

The last day and time to register to vote in the election is Saturday, Oct. 26 from 9-11 a.m. and 3-5 p.m. in the Town

Clerk's office in the Town Hall. People may also register online at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>

In person early voting will take place in the New Braintree Town Hall on the following dates: Saturday, Oct. 26 from 9 a.m.-11 p.m. and Monday, Oct. 28 from 7-9 p.m.

To vote by mail, New Braintree residents should apply with the Town Clerk in person, by returning the postcard that was mailed by the state or by downloading and mailing back an application. Applications may be downloaded by visiting the [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) website.

All applications must be received by

Tuesday, Oct. 29 by 5 p.m. in order to receive a vote by mail ballot. People may call the Town Clerk's Office at 508-867-2071 or email townclerk@newbraintree.org with any questions or concerns.

FORUM | FROM PAGE 1

getting the people that come along with them.”

Durant emphasized the strength of his team and expressed eagerness to address the community's concerns.

Dibb began by shared her background, noting that her great-grandparents immigrated from Canada and her father from India in 1964. After attending school in Boston, she settled in Rutland, where she has a deep commitment to local governance.

Dibb said, “My passion from day one has been local government,” citing her 13 years on Rutland's select board and her involvement in significant projects such as water, sewer, and infrastructure improvements.

She conveyed a vision for revitalizing small towns like Ware, stating, “We just need a chance to bring life back to it. Ware could be a gateway town.”

Rural healthcare needs

A key concern in the district is the lack of medical services, with many towns described as healthcare deserts. This issue was brought to the forefront by the recent closure of Mary Lane Hospital.

Durant referred to this closure as “tragic,” emphasizing its historical significance and the impact on the community. He noted that the CEO is committed to working with the Historical Commission and “does not want to demolish the building at this time.”

He also highlighted the broader issue facing community hospitals, stating, “Nearly 30% of community hospitals are in danger of failing.”

Durant shared his experience working to keep Harrington Hospital operational and emphasized the need for collaboration with larger healthcare networks like UMass and Baystate to address the gap left by Mary Lane's closure. He proposed looking to Gardner as a model, a town with more urgent care facilities than hospitals.

Dibb agreed on the importance of Mary Lane Hospital, calling it the “center of the community for over 100 years.” She discussed potential models for healthcare delivery, suggesting a focus on urgent care and smaller clinics that can better serve the needs of local residents.

Dibb stressed the distances that Ware residents must travel to access adequate medical care and advocated for reinventing healthcare services at a local level.

Support for small businesses

As economic pressures on small businesses continue to grow – due in part to rising rent, insurance, and energy costs – both candidates shared their visions for supporting local enterprises. Dibb described Ware as a “gateway community” and advocated for the creation of opportunity zones and revitalization of Main Street.

She emphasizes the need to ensure that grants and resources are accessible to all businesses, particularly those that may lack the knowledge or power of larger corporations. Dibb identified the need for improved communication about available grants as a crucial factor in supporting local businesses.

Durant took a different approach, highlighting the establishment of the Community One Stop for Growth grant application process during the Baker administration, which he believes has

helped businesses navigate funding opportunities more effectively.

He pointed out that the criteria for gateway cities to access some state programs are often too stringent, which can disadvantage smaller towns. He noted that the “priorities of the state tend to get skewed because it's way too expensive to build a house with some of these regulations.”

Durant called for a reduction in regulatory burdens, specifically mentioning the no fossil fuels rule in new buildings as an example of regulations that drive up costs and hinder development.

Rural Policy Plan

With 17 of the 22 communities in this Senate district classified as rural, the candidates were asked to discuss amendments to the Rural Policy Plan and how to ensure equitable resource distribution.

Durant highlighted the Quabbin watershed, stating, “Quabbin provides 100 billion gallons of water a day for the people in Boston.” He underscored the importance of preserving this resource and suggested implementing a fee for taking water from the watershed, proposing a sort of “pennies on the gallon fee” to create a fund that could support the communities impacted by water extraction.

Dibb echoed Durant's emphasis on the Quabbin, advocating for increased education about the communities surrounding the watershed and the work they do to maintain water quality.

She stated, “Rural aid needs to be codified,” pointing out the necessity of addressing challenges like waste management from Boston and the protection of farmland. Dibb noted that 17% of Massachusetts is farmland, with 460,000 acres currently unprotected, highlighting the need for stronger policies to safeguard these vital resources.

Balancing development and green space

As Massachusetts grapples with new housing and energy legislation, the candidates were questioned on how to balance the need for housing and clean energy with the preservation of green space.

Dibb expressed her concern about solar farms taking up farmland, arguing, “Solar is great, but there's plenty of other options.” She proposed innovative solutions such as installing solar panels on rooftops and above roads and parking lots, stating, “Two birds, one stone: less heat on the pavement or weather on cars plus the benefits of solar power.”

Dibb acknowledged the progress made by the climate bill but emphasized that solar installations should not come at the expense of valuable agricultural land.

Durant addressed the complaints surrounding solar installations, arguing that landowners often prefer solar projects due to existing ownership structures. He pointed out the potential for solar energy generation without sacrificing agricultural land.

Durant also brought up the importance of exploring alternative energy sources, including “small modular nuclear” options, and called for a focus on promoting natural gas to lower energy prices while meeting housing production needs.

Infrastructure investment

Both candidates recognized the urgent need to address aging infrastructure across the state. Durant highlighted

the high costs associated with road repairs, noting that Massachusetts ranks among the highest in the nation for repair costs per mile.

He attributed part of this to Project Labor Agreements that inflate expenses.

“We need to focus on programs to finish projects quicker,” he said, referencing a bridge project he once worked on. He argued that more efficient project execution could lead to significant cost savings.

Dibb pointed out that many towns rely heavily on Chapter 90 funding for road maintenance, which often only addresses the most critical issues. She called for an increase in Chapter 90 funding at the state level and advocated for greater inclusion of towns in the Transportation Improvement Project process, arguing that “we need more towns on TIP” to ensure broader access to funding for infrastructure improvements.

State and local government relations

The dynamic between local and state government was another focal point of the forum. Dibb lamented the occasional disconnect, stating, “Only sometimes do local and state come together.”

She cited the cooperation seen during the COVID-19 pandemic as a positive example but emphasized the need for ongoing collaboration.

“The state doesn't just stop at 495 and start back up again at Northampton and the Berkshires,” she said, calling for a representative who understands the unique needs of western Massachusetts.

In contrast, Durant defended the relationships he has cultivated with state and local officials.

He stated, “This is where we're going to diverge because that's completely wrong.” He cited his ability to secure nearly a million dollars in earmarks for public safety and public works, emphasizing that building relationships is essential in government.

“It's all about knowing people,” he noted, adding that he has acquired nearly \$10 million in bonds for the district.

Immigration

The candidates also addressed the complex issue of supporting migrants while ensuring that local communities' needs are met. Durant raised concerns about the financial implications of the Right to Shelter act, asserting that it has led to increased crime in Massachusetts.

He stated, “New England ICE says a huge uptick in crime is only happening in Massachusetts due to our Right to Shelter act.”

He expressed a desire to support only legal immigration, arguing that illegal immigration strains local resources, noting, “There's a 1.2 billion dollar fund for the care of these people.”

Dibb offered a contrasting view, sharing her father's immigrant story and emphasizing the contributions that immigrants make to the community. She pointed to the need for adaptable support systems, stating that as more people immigrate, “we change the laws again and again to make more hoops to jump through.”

Dibb highlighted the consequences of the Baker administration's decision to require an eviction notice for state rental assistance applications, which she believes exacerbated homelessness.

She stated, “When state rental assistance dropped after COVID in April

2022, in June 2022, homelessness numbers doubled.”

Addressing crumbling foundations

Crumbling foundations emerged as a critical issue in the district, particularly affecting homes built with defective concrete due to one specific company hailing from Connecticut. Dibb highlighted the severity of the problem, citing potential deterioration due to pyrrhotite in the concrete.

“The damage is irreversible,” she warned, noting that replacement costs can reach around \$200,000. She coins it as this generations lead paint and asbestos and states even if is not physically harming someone the debt this kind of thing incurs could cripple someone.

Dibb mentions a failed legislation brought on by former state Sen. Anne Gobi that was modeled after the fund in Connecticut to help people with these issues. Gobi campaigned for seven years for it and it died on the senate floor and Dibb expresses disappointment for this fact.

Durant responded by acknowledging the ongoing challenges related to crumbling foundations, asserting that the legislation Dibb mentioned failed because it was not well-crafted. He emphasized the importance of creating a fund to address the issue, stating, “We came up with a workable solution to create a fund and put money into it.”

He noted that when a revised proposal was presented, it received unanimous support, countering the perception that a Republican cannot get things passed. He quoted an unnamed Democrat who opposed the initial bill, claiming, “I don't care about these people,” to illustrate the challenges faced in legislative processes.

Closing statements

In their closing remarks, both candidates summarized their visions for the future.

Durant expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve as a senator, stating, “Being a senator, first and foremost, has been the greatest honor of my life.” He emphasized the importance of holding the government accountable and expressed concern over the immigration crisis, stating that it costs “billions and billions every year.”

He called for a representative who can effectively advocate for the district's needs, emphasizing the relationships he has built in government.

Dibb concluded by reflecting on her pragmatic approach, stating, “I'm honestly not sure how I feel about earmarks.” She reiterated the importance of addressing crumbling foundations as a pressing issue, likening it to lead paint and asbestos.

Dibb emphasized her commitment to looking at long-term solutions, saying, “The idea of saving a dime today just to know you're going to spend a dollar later because you didn't look long-term at the way some of these issues affect us is not the way I operate.” She underscored her focus on the big picture and long-term projects that would ultimately benefit the community.

As the forum concluded, it became clear that both Durant and Dibb offer distinct approaches to governance and the challenges facing their district. Their differing perspectives on local issues will undoubtedly influence the upcoming election and shape the future of Massachusetts' rural communities.

PROGRAM | FROM PAGE 1

that. You've done all these things in town. History, everything else you've done...for the town, for all of us," Hersee said to Briere.

The early years

Hersee asked Briere about his early years in Sturbridge, starting with his birth in the neighboring town of Southbridge in a three-decker. Briere's family moved to Sturbridge when he was 3 years old.

"I'm not sure how my father got the job he got," Briere said. "He became the caretaker I guess, of the fairgrounds."

Briere recalled the fairgrounds, including the half-mile dirt racetrack built in 1868 which saw countless sulky races. The fairgrounds are now the home of the Sturbridge Host Hotel, and the track is now the location of CVS.

Briere shared a photograph, which showed a large house just to the right of the racetrack, where his family lived. He said the house had five rooms and the back end had a space his mother called "the loft" which had a number of trapdoors to feed hay to the prized racehorses housed below.

He said the sulky racers were "true gentlemen," both with the public and with each other as competitors.

Military service and honoring veterans

Hersee also drew attention to Briere's service in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War.

Briere said the Korean War was still going on when he left in February, before the armistice in July.

He said when all of the aircraft and personnel were moved to Japan, he found out his unit would be going back to the U.S. to Florida. When he went to process out, he was told he was flying back to the U.S., when he was supposed to be taking a ship.

Briere said he was supposed to be traveling by ship as a courier and the person who told him he was flying said, "Oh you're right, you're going back by ship."

Correcting this error saved his life.

"We were mid-Pacific Ocean," he said, when a loudspeaker announcement came over the ship about the plane he was supposed to be on. "They hit a mountain and everybody on board was killed...I'm glad to be here tonight."

He also dedicated many years to rebuild and reinstall the Veterans Memorial in front of the Town Hall. In 1948, a new honor roll was made out of native stone and placed in front of Town Hall to replace the original wooden one.

Briere said one day he went by Town Hall while it was under construction, and the honor roll was destroyed, and the stones were piled in pieces on the front lawn. He said the honor roll was supposed to be moved, but the person in charge of moving it, smashed it instead.

Briere explained how the town's honor roll has a unique feature that he hasn't seen anywhere else; the inclusion of five dogs who were donated by their owners to assist in the war effort.

As a young child, Briere remembers being at home and hearing a plane flying overhead, followed by a loud boom. His father said, "he crashed!" after hearing the noise.

The next morning, the news reported a plane crash in East Brimfield and his father, a member of the State Guard, was called up to help search for the wreckage and missing pilot.

"My father came back with a couple of pieces of airplane, small pieces," he said.

Briere said the plane was flown by a rookie pilot, Lieutenant Charles Collins of the U.S. Army Air Force. He was running out of fuel while flying through a storm on a training flight, and had to bail out of the aircraft.

"It took 10 days to find his body," Briere said. "Those 10 days there were an average of about 1,100 searches."



State Sen. Ryan Fattman (left) and state Rep. Todd Smola presented a joint resolution to Sturbridge resident Bob Briere. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA QUIMETTE



Attendees of the Sturbridge Historical Society's program enjoyed a cake courtesy of the Publick House.

Briere said Collins' family members attended a memorial dedication in his memory, and he was able to give them the pieces of the airplane his father had found.

Briere also resurrected a tradition he had enjoyed as an elementary school student, decorating the Old Burial Ground gravestones with geraniums for Memorial Day. The tradition has now expanded to include Veterans Day and involves representatives from both the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution.

Social and civic involvement

After his military service, Briere was active in the Anacreontic Society, a music group named after the Greek god Anacreon. The society's official song later became the tune for "The Star-Spangled Banner".

He has also been a 50 plus year member of the Lions Club, and was key to securing a meeting location for the club in the town's old, unused fire station.

Briere said he was proud of the club's work to build a bandstand on the common, which was a project that took many years to see to completion.

"We had just been formed in 1966 and were looking for a project," he said.

Briere said the selectmen were supportive of the idea, as were the parks and recreation committee. He said the next step was holding a public hearing.

"Who shows up? The 'no's,'" Briere said.

Many who lived on the common were "not pleased" with the idea, Briere said, fearing children would play on the bandstand and it would be vandalized. He said the Lions Club pledged to maintain the bandstand after it was built.

He said a newspaper reported it would take "an act of the Legislature to put a bandstand on the Sturbridge Common."

Twenty-six years went by after the project was initially proposed and stalled, when Briere was approached by a stonemason who took a renewed interest in the project while at a concert on the common.

Briere said every day that summer, people worked to build the bandstand.

He said this bandstand was bigger than what the Lions Club had originally planned decades prior.

"They built what we see today," he said.

Briere also helped the Police Department with its K-9 unit, laying scent trails through the woods and finding a vehicle to transport the K-9s in.

"I was always amazed at how well a bloodhound could track," he said.

Hersee listed a number of awards Briere received, recognizing his civic engagement including the Firefighters Benefit Association for his unselfish effort for the town of Sturbridge; the Tri-Community Exchange Club, "Book of Good Deeds"; recognition from the town of Sturbridge for dedicated service on the Heritage Festival Committee; the Rosario Chamberland Award for outstanding service to the community and the youth in overseeing the building of the bandstand; the Lions Club for helping the past governor assemble the 1985 All Star Band; and an official citation from the state Senate.

"There's so many more that you have done," Hersee said to Briere.

The most recent honor Briere received was awarded at Fort Devens this past summer when he received the Star Award from the Massachusetts History Alliance.

"You don't do it for awards or rewards," Briere said. "You do it because you want to."

Briere was also heavily involved with planning the town's 250th anniversary in 1988.

Sometimes it pays to lose

Briere recalled a time he lost a bet during the 1960 presidential election.

"That was the year of Kennedy and Nixon," Briere said.

He got into an argument with a fellow firefighter about who the winner would be.

"I said, 'I'll bet you loser takes the winner from the Town Hall at high noon on Saturday and wheels him all the way up to Fiskdale to the fire station,'" Briere said. "You know, Kennedy won, and I'm not going to back down."

He pushed his fellow firefighter in a wheelbarrow to the fire station and

back, while his friend carried a sign that said, "He voted for Nixon."

"Our sides were so sore from laughing," Briere said. "We had a great time... sometimes it pays to lose."

Careers

Briere's career with the U.S. Postal Service was highlighted by the creation of his alter ego "Captain Safety," to conduct safety trainings in a NASCAR-inspired jumpsuit of red, white and blue.

Briere was also a school bus driver in town for over 20 years, piloting the "The Happy One," and "The Happy One II."

"Those were the happy days," Briere said.

Briere said he needed a part-time job to help support his family and three children, and heard the school needed bus drivers. He was assigned to bus number one.

He said he asked a painter to write "The Happy One" on the front bumper of his bus.

"They're really a good bunch," he said of the students on his route. "They're happy, I'm happy...I'm happy because they're happy. I'm on the 'happy one.'"

Over the years, the students on the bus participated in a number of activities, including planting trees on the common, taking ski trips and having dances.

Briere said the students told him that the school was no longer having dances, and he decided to help them plan a dance in the Town Hall, enlisting the help of the girls to bake cookies and other treats to serve to dancegoers, and the boys helped find a band to play music.

One of Briere's former students who attended Sturbridge Historical Society's program said riding on his bus, "was a great time."

In the winter, the students asked Briere if he would take them to Mount Snow in Vermont to go skiing and he agreed. He said they made this trip three times, and the only time he ran into an issue was when his daughter was late making the 3 p.m. return time after being delayed when she lost her glasses on the mountain.

Briere said it was important to keep his word to the students.

"When I say something, I mean it. If I say something, I'll do it," he said.

Recognition from town and state

Hersee said Briere has done a multitude of things, including being a tour guide, school bus driver, mail carrier, historian, moderator and selectmen to name a few.

"From all of us, Bob, to you, thank you for all you've done," Hersee said.

Board of Selectmen Chair Jamie Goodwin presented a citation to Briere for his hard work and dedication to the town and its residents.

Briere also received a joint resolution from state Sen. Ryan Fattman and state Rep. Todd Smola at the conclusion of the program. Smola said a joint resolution is a rare recognition and is part of the historical record of the commonwealth.

"It's pretty impressive," Smola said.

Smola said he has known Briere since he was a legislative aide to former state Rep. Reed Hillman.

"What a relationship it has grown into over the course of the last 25 years," he said. Smola said he is "absolutely amazed" at the number of issues he has addressed with input from Briere.

"We are blessed to have Bob Briere as a son in this community and we're fortunate to have him in this commonwealth," Smola said.

Fattman said it was an honor to be able to present the joint resolution to Briere.

"This man has given the service to his community, to his country, and to all of us," Fattman said. "They build the back of a community on men like him and women like him, and so we should be very grateful that people like Bob exist because they make our lives greater and better."

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- community -

RAAC accepts final draft of regional agreement

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Regional Agreement Amendment Committee met this past week to review the final draft of the regional agreement.

This committee consists of representatives from the towns of Warren, West Brookfield and North Brookfield who have been exploring the possibility of North Brookfield Public Schools joining the Quaboag Regional School District.

This committee has been operating for several years to help format an agreement that all parties involved would agree to the formation of two school districts becoming one district in the future.

The committee has three members representing each of the towns. Members of the committee shall be elected with residency requirements in district wide elections to be held at the biennial state elections.

All members are to serve until their respective successors are elected and qualified.

While reviewing this final draft of the regional agreement, several members including Chair Andrew Schwenker, who is also the chair of the Quaboag Regional School Committee, wanted to confirm the appropriate number of members serving the appropriate length of terms.

Schwenker insisted that there will be times that a vacancy will come up in the committee and a fair process should be followed when filling any vacancy.

“There should be a process to fill that vacancy,” Schwenker said.

One member of the RAAC Derick Veliz mentioned that in the past some committees do not have enough bodies to fill a committee.

“Sometime its hard to get people to participate in these committees,” Veliz said.

In some cases the committee would have to write people to fill a vacancy.

In section one part C of the draft states that if a vacancy were to occur the Select Board from the respective town from whose membership the vacancy occurred and the remaining committee members of the said town, shall within 30 days appoint a member to serve until the next biennial state election.

The RAAC members noticed a few errors during the review of the draft and involved the years of the transition period when both school districts regionalize. The correct time frame of the transition period will be in place from Jan. 1, 2026 until June 30, 2027.

The transition committee will end on July 1, 2027. The Transition Committee will consist of a chair, vice-chair, treasurer and secretary.

The RAAC members voted to accept the regional agreement as presented. Moving forward, this agreement draft would be part of the agendas for all

of the school committees in the three towns.

If all school committees are satisfied with the agreement, the draft would then go before a town meeting for each town.

The Quaboag Regional School Com-

mittee’s next meeting will be held on Oct. 21 and will have the regional agreement draft on its agenda. If no vote is passed, the draft will return to the RAAC for further discussions.

- public safety -

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Oct. 14-21, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 13 building/property checks, 18 directed/area patrols, three radar assignments, three traffic controls, three emergency 911 calls, three citizen assists, one assist other agency, two motor vehicle investigations, one complaint, one motor vehicle accident and three animal calls in the town of New Braintree.

Tuesday, Oct. 15

9:47 a.m. Suspicious Activity, Memorial Drive, Spoken To

Wednesday, Oct. 16

9:51 a.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Officer Handled
12:05 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Moore Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency

Thursday, Oct. 17

7:53 a.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Accident, Barre Road, Services Rendered

Friday, Oct. 18

6:15 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital
7:03 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Barre Road, Dispatch Handled
5:13 p.m. Assist Citizen, Memorial Drive, Services Rendered

Saturday, Oct. 19

2:38 p.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, West Brookfield Road, Officer Handled

Smola announces grant awards for Sturbridge and Quaboag schools

BOSTON – State Rep. Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Ways & Means Committee) is pleased to announce that Quaboag Regional School District and Sturbridge Public Schools have been awarded significant federal grants through the Fiscal Year 2025 Promoting Safe and Healthy Learning Environments: Elevating Student Voice and Well-Being program.

Quaboag will receive \$42,000, while Sturbridge has been awarded \$79,500.

These competitive federal grants, under FC 0127/0644, aim to support school districts in fostering safe, supportive, and healthy learning environments for students from preschool through 12th grade. The grants are designed to help schools elevate student voice and promote student well-being, ensuring that their academic, social, and emotional needs are being addressed.

“These grants represent an important step forward in creating environments where students not only feel safe but

are empowered to express their needs and take an active role in their learning and development,” said Smola in a press release. “With the funds awarded, both Quaboag and Sturbridge will be able to participate in professional development, coaching, and the development of resources that will help educators better engage students and improve their overall well-being.”

The funding will be used to enhance professional development for educators and administrators, equipping them with the tools and training necessary to create opportunities for student voices to be heard. This grant will allow school leaders to implement new strategies to strengthen the academic, social, and emotional well-being of students, leading to more positive and inclusive school environments.

For additional information please contact Smola at by emailing Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov or calling 617-722-2100.

Apple Run/Walk returns for 18th year

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The 18th annual 5 mile Apple Run/Walk for diabetes will be held Saturday morning, Oct. 26 at Brookfield Orchards, 12 Lincoln Road.

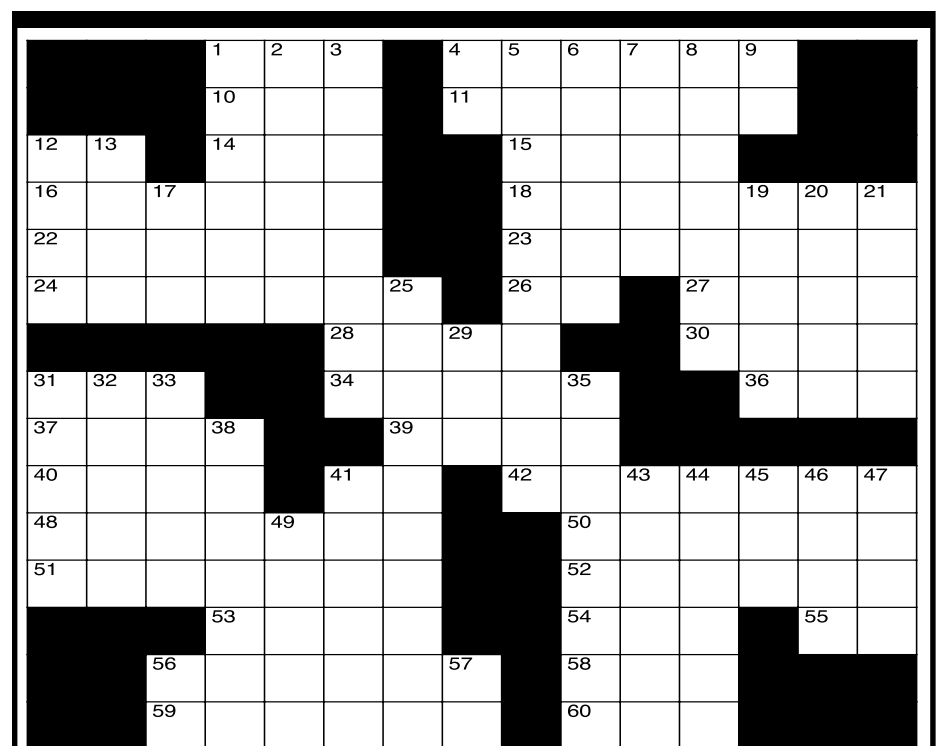
The event is hosted by the Lions Club of the Brookfields. All proceeds will benefit the Clara Barton Diabetes Camp in Oxford and the Diabetes Research Team at UMass.

The event in prior years has raised over \$37,000 in donations for these two organizations. The race is professionally timed, and cash prizes will be awarded to the men’s and women’s first and second place finishers.

Registration will be from 9:30-10:30 a.m., with walkers beginning the course at 10:30 a.m. and runners at 11 a.m. Early registration entry fee is \$20 for adults and \$15 for children age 17 and younger (race day registration is \$5 extra).

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

Further information and link to online registration (as well as a downloadable registration form) can be found at <http://brookfieldlionsclub.org>.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. “60 Minutes” network
- 4. Train line
- 10. Go quickly
- 11. Straightforward
- 12. Canadian province
- 14. At any rate (abbr.)
- 15. Genealogy
- 16. Make changes
- 18. Utter repeatedly
- 22. In a way, turned up
- 23. Type of ship
- 24. Agents of one’s downfall
- 26. Not out
- 27. Something to scratch
- 28. Round water pot
- 30. Refreshing green fruit (slang)
- 31. Promotions

- 34. Primordial matters
- 36. One-time world power (abbr.)
- 37. Source of illumination
- 39. The content of cognition
- 40. An Arab ruler
- 41. South Dakota
- 42. Gnawed at with teeth
- 48. Hawaiian island
- 50. Smaller
- 51. Of a single person
- 52. Rigid bracelet
- 53. Barbary sheep (Fr.)
- 54. Not even
- 55. Specific gravity
- 56. Engage in petty bargaining
- 58. Boxing’s “GOAT”
- 59. Split between parties

- 60. Notable offensive
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. A place to lounge
 - 2. Skewed views
 - 3. Peacefully
 - 4. Commercial
 - 5. Auxiliary forces
 - 6. Large mollusk
 - 7. Take out again
 - 8. Sharp and forthright
 - 9. Knight (chess)
 - 12. Source of fiber
 - 13. Flesh covering some birds’ beaks
 - 17. Energy
 - 19. Night monkeys genus
 - 20. Small, sharp nails
 - 21. Pleasant-smelling liquid

- 25. Affirms one’s hold
- 29. CNN’s founder
- 31. Texans can’t forget it
- 32. “Oppenheimer” actor Matt
- 33. Expression
- 35. Vessel
- 38. Lacking poetic beauty
- 41. Tall, swift and slender dog
- 43. Sports personality
- 44. Robber
- 45. Liquefied natural gas
- 46. Snake-like fishes
- 47. The most worthless part of something
- 49. City in Crimea
- 56. Bad grades
- 57. Reichsmark

QUABOAG CURRENT

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Apple Run/Walk is
Oct. 26 p15

STURBRIDGE
Chamber hosts Harvest
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