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

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Senate candidates attend forum

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

State Sen. Peter Durant and Shannon Teabo participated in a Meet the Candidates forum on Oct. 21 hosted by the Ware Business & Civic Association and Beyond, Ware Community Television and Turley Publications.

WARE – State Sen. Peter Durant of the Worcester & Hampshire District and challenger Shannon Teabo participated in a Meet the Candidates forum at Cedarbrook Village at Ware last week.

The Oct. 21 forum was hosted by the Ware Business & Civic Association and Beyond, Ware Community Television and Turley Publications.

During the forum, each candidate was given the opportunity to introduce themselves and answer a set of questions.

Ballot Question 5 proposes capping the growth of state revenues, including revenue from the recently adopted Fair Share or millionaire's tax. What are your thoughts and how would you work to reduce costs?

Durant said Massachusetts has the highest cost of living in the U.S.

"Question 5 actually looks to make it a little bit easier to get refunds," he said. "I completely support this question…I've always felt that it's much better for us that you spend your money, rather than the government."

Durant said he has advocated for lower costs for expenses, including for utilities, and reducing the gas tax.

"We've advocated for money to come back for the cities and towns and for the state to spend your money wisely," he said.

Durant said costs need to come down for residents and the state needs to work within a budget, just like taxpayers do.

Durant said they will not be able to tax themselves into prosperity, and the focus needs to be on making it easier for everyone to make a living.

"That's what we advocate for and that's what I'm always going to push for," Durant said.

Teabo said Question 5 does include taxes from the Fair Share amendment, and people who pay more, get back more.

"They will be the ones that benefit from this and now we are losing essential revenue that could be paying for the things that we need," she said.

Teabo said raising taxes on certain people won't meet every need, but it is a w"step in the right direction," and that regressive

See CANDIDATES PAGE 6



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Ariel, age 10, displayed a pumpkin she decorated for the Brookfield Cultural Council's Pumpkinfest held on Oct. 24.

Pumpkinfest

Annual event lights up common

BROOKFIELD – The Brookfield Cultural Council held its Pumpkinfest event on the common this past Saturday.

The event on Oct. 24 began with face painting by Miss Riley, hay rides around the common, spooky story time with Scoutmaster Jay from Troop 238, as well as

See PUMPKINFEST PAGE 5

Community Heart and Soul launches project

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

NORTH BROOFKIELD – The first phase of the Community Heart and Soul project has launched in North Brookfield.

The program is designed to revitalize communities and foster engagement among every member of the community. One of the core questions asked is "What do you love about your community?"

Catherine Ingraham-White is the certified coach with the organization who is working with North Brookfield, and she said the three principles of the project are to involve everyone, focus on what matters most and play the long game.

Susan Orpilla is the project leader for North Brookfield.

There are dozens of Community Heart and Soul communities across the nation, including some in Massachusetts including Amherst, Leicester, Pepperell and Winchendon.

The project comes in three phases. The first one the town is in right now is called "imagine," which usually takes about two or three months.

In this phase, North Brookfield will gather a core team of volunteers, set goals for the future and build interest among the community. This phase is also a time where a census of stakeholders in the town takes place, including those who live, work and play in the community.

The team will also seek to bring voices to those who may not always have a chance to show up, according to White. The team will look at demographics like age, geography, gender, income, time in the community, income and race or ethnicity.

The community network analysis asks a few questions to gauge what organizations and people are part of the town including whether they

See HEART AND SOUL PAGE 9

Haunting at the Haston



Hazel, age 2, dressed up as Sleeping Beauty at the 2nd annual Haston Haunted House held this past Friday evening.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

The Priestess 7776 gave tarot card readings to visitors at the Haston Free Public Library. See more photos on page 8.

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library hosted its 2nd annual Haunted House – providing thrills and chills for patrons of all ages.

Held on Oct. 23, the Haunted House featured a "scare" floor on the bottom level, where those brave enough to enter, followed a tour guide through the darkness to encounter many scary sights.

On the main floor, library patrons could enjoy snacks, a photo booth with props and take chances on raffle items. The Priestess 7776 offered tarot card readings as well.

Upstairs in the Children's Library, patrons were able to make Halloween crafts and paint pumpkins, as well as play some festive games.

All proceeds from the Haunted House benefited the Friends of the Haston Free Public Library.

The Friends of the Haston Free Public Library is a nonprofit organization that was formed in 1991 to stimulate the interest of the community in the services and needs of the library, to enrich the cultural life of the community and to provide a program of assistance through volunteer help and fundraising that enables the library to keep pace with the growth of the town.

For more information about the Friends or the Haston Free Public Library, 161 North Main St., visit northbrookfieldlibrary.org.

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

Peter Durant — ★★★★ — State Senate



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- ✓ Fighting for increases to Local Municipal State Funding
- ✓ Securing Budget Earmarks for Local Police and Fire Departments

PROTECTING OUR RIGHTS
- ✓ Supporting our sportsman and protecting their rights
- ✓ Support small business

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- community -

Food collaborative Thanksgiving distribution is Nov. 19

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – It was announced at the Board of Selectmen's meeting last Tuesday that a Thanksgiving food distribution will be held by the North Brookfield Community Food Collaborative on Nov. 19, one week before Thanksgiving Day.

The distribution is set to start after 2 p.m. on that date.

Karen Farrington, the director of the volunteer organization, said the collaborative has been feeding about 174 people per week for the last two years, and many of the people being served are seniors or families.

"Food insecurity does not discriminate," Farrington said.

She said the projected meals this year is 240, up from 220 last year, and they will get the turkeys delivered, but are looking for donations for the rest of the meal such as stuffing, green beans, cranberry sauce and instant mashed potatoes.

The board approved a town-wide food drive with boxes to be placed at the town offices, police station, fire station, library, senior center and post office.

The collaborative says yes to everyone, Farrington said, and serves many neighboring towns because volunteers are "road warriors," and drive out to people in need. She said the collaborative is sustained by rescued food from all over the state.

Project updates

Executive Assistant Mary Beth Kularski gave an update on projects happening around town. The Gilbert Street and North Main Street paving project extending past Ward Street should be finished by the end of the month.

Kularski said a Shared Streets and Spaces project for sidewalk improvements on School Street was awarded to contractor MEC Industries, and they have to complete a retaining wall design before the project is shovel ready.

Kularski said a pavement management project is being done with Stantec, and it will develop a 10-20 year plan on improvement priorities along with identifying funding needs. She said fieldwork for this project is set to begin in November with completion by April of next year.

She said a presentation will be done at a Board of Selectmen meeting at some point in the process.

The board approved a 10 foot easement for a Lashaway substation project being done by National Grid at the request of the Sewer Commissioners, who said the 20 foot easement would restrict the town's ability to use the area.

Kularski also went over a Community Development Block Grant project for phase two of a Mt. Pleasant Street project. She said the lowest bidder for the Request for Proposal was M.L. Partlow and Son, but their mobilization fee was 4% when the maximum in the RFP was 3%, there were unfavorable references and there was a lack of similar project information.

The board approved a rejection to that bid for those reasons, and Kularski said she will work with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission for next steps.

The contractor submitted a request for reconsideration saying the mobilization cost was an error made during preparation of the bid, and that it should not be indicative of their ability to do the work. The company also attached comparable projects to their response letter, stating the original information submitted were of older projects.

The contractor also wrote that the poor references should have been contextualized, and the projects referenced involved the same engineering firm. The updated references included Baron Road improvements in Franklin, work at the Duggan Academy in Springfield, North Street improvements in Southbridge and work at the Uxbridge Housing Authority in Uxbridge.

Financial items

The board approved two spending requests from the Fire Department, including $468 to vendor Firematic for a new sensor on the five gas meter and $515 to vendor Ballard Diesel to install an actuator on Engine 1.

The board also approved a request from the Highway Department in the amount of $7,800 to vendor Straight Line Auto Sales for a snow plow on the 2011 F350. Highway Superintendent Randy Morgan said it got destroyed last year, and the board approved the request with the understanding that he would have a conversation with the Town Accountant about potentially taking that cost from snow and ice.

The board also approved a Chapter 90 reimbursement of $90,265, which was from phase one of a Complete Streets project.

Administrative items

The meeting minutes of Sept. 22 regular and executive session, Sept. 29 regular and executive session and Oct. 6 regular meeting were approved.

The board approved a class 2 automotive license for Stephen Woods for a property at 322 North Main St., where he plans to locate some cars for sale. The board also approved a 10 year Massachusetts Department of Transportation contract amendment for Chapter 90.

Appointments

The board appointed Justin Stearns as a grade four driver and laborer at the Highway Department and Kelly Rockwood to the Decorate our Town Committee.

Donations

The board accepted three donations to the Parks and Recreation Department including $1,900 from Still Harts Inc., $100 from 501 Disc Golf and a donation of 21 cases of candy from the North Brookfield Food Collaborative.

The board also accepted two donations to the Council on Aging including four boxes of butternut squash from Heaven's Harvest Farm, valued at $160 and a $200 donation from Paul and Elaine Allen.

Fall Fest Church Bazaar & Bake is Nov. 21

BROOKFIELD – Community members are invited to shop, browse, and enjoy the Fall Fest Church Bazaar & Bake Shop on Saturday, Nov. 21 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at Brookfield Congregational Church, 8 Common St.

Hosted by the church's Helping Hands group, the event will feature a variety of handmade crafts, seasonal decorations, homemade baked goods and unique gifts-perfect for holiday shopping or finding something special for your home.

Shoppers can look forward to wreaths, centerpieces, sewn and crocheted items, ornaments, Mason jar soup and cookie mixes, baked goods, themed gift baskets and much more. Gift basket themes will include popcorn and movie night, pet lovers, gardening and other fun ideas.

The bazaar will also offer opportunities for local crafters and small businesses to showcase their products. Six vendor spaces are available for $35 per table.

Interested vendors are encouraged to contact the church office at 508-867-6262 or email bccucc1857@gmail.com for more information.

The Fall Fest Bazaar is a great opportunity to connect with the community, discover handmade treasures, enjoy homemade treats, and get a head start on holiday shopping.

All proceeds from the event will benefit Brookfield Congregational Church's general fund and church repairs.

The entire community is warmly invited to attend and support this special event.

For additional information about the event or vendor spaces, contact the church office at 508-867-6262, email bccucc1857@gmail.com, or visit www.bcc1857.org.

New Braintree Library lists preschool events

NEW BRAINTREE – On Monday, Nov. 9 at 10:30 a.m. the New Braintree Public Library, 45 Memorial Drive, hosts a CFCE MOC coordinated science playgroup at the library.

The target age group is 6 years and under.

The playgroup will visit Kip's Christmas Tree Farm across the street from the library to explore how trees grow. They should dress for the weather.

All are welcome and parental supervision is required.

On Monday, Nov. 23 at 11:30 a.m. the library holds its November monthly preschool story hour. There will be a story, craft and independent playtime. All are welcome and parental supervision is required.

On Monday, Nov. 23 at 11:30 a.m. the library holds their November monthly preschool story hour. There will be a story, craft and independent playtime.

Halloween Happenings

Saturday, Oct. 31

BROOKFIELD

Trick or Treat will be held town wide from 5:30-7 p.m., followed by a parade from the Fire Station to Lewis Field where a costume contest will be held for anyone who wants to join. Please gather at the pavilion for judging. The costume contest will be followed by a bonfire, weather permitting.

EAST BROOKFIELD

Trick or Treat will be held townwide from 5-7 p.m.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

Trick or Treat will be held town wide from 5:30-7:30 p.m., rain or shine. Trunk or Treat will be held at the same time on the Common.

WEST BROOKFIELD

Trick or Treat will be held town wide from 5-7 p.m.

STURBRIDGE

Trick or Treat will be held town wide from 5-7 p.m. Sturbridge Fire Department will hold their annual Horrible's Parade starting behind the Town Hall at 7 p.m. That will be followed by a costume contest with prizes, hot chocolate and cookies. The Sturbridge Firefighters Association is sponsoring this event.

Jazz pianist Stephen Page performs Oct. 30

WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC announces a series of jazz concerts that will be performed in October, December, and in the spring of 2027.

The first in the series will be held on Friday, Oct. 30, at 7 p.m. Please join the church for this rare opportunity to listen in depth to jazz piano by Stephen Page.

Page has performed up and down the eastern seaboard, with top names in the jazz world. Experience the delight of the music, the excitement of his playing, and songs to entertain and inspire you.

Refreshments will be served after the program. All of these concerts are free of charge, sponsored by a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

The second concert in the series is scheduled for Dec. 21. The church is wheelchair accessible.

For more information, call the church at 508-867-7078.

Knights to host spaghetti dinner on Nov. 14

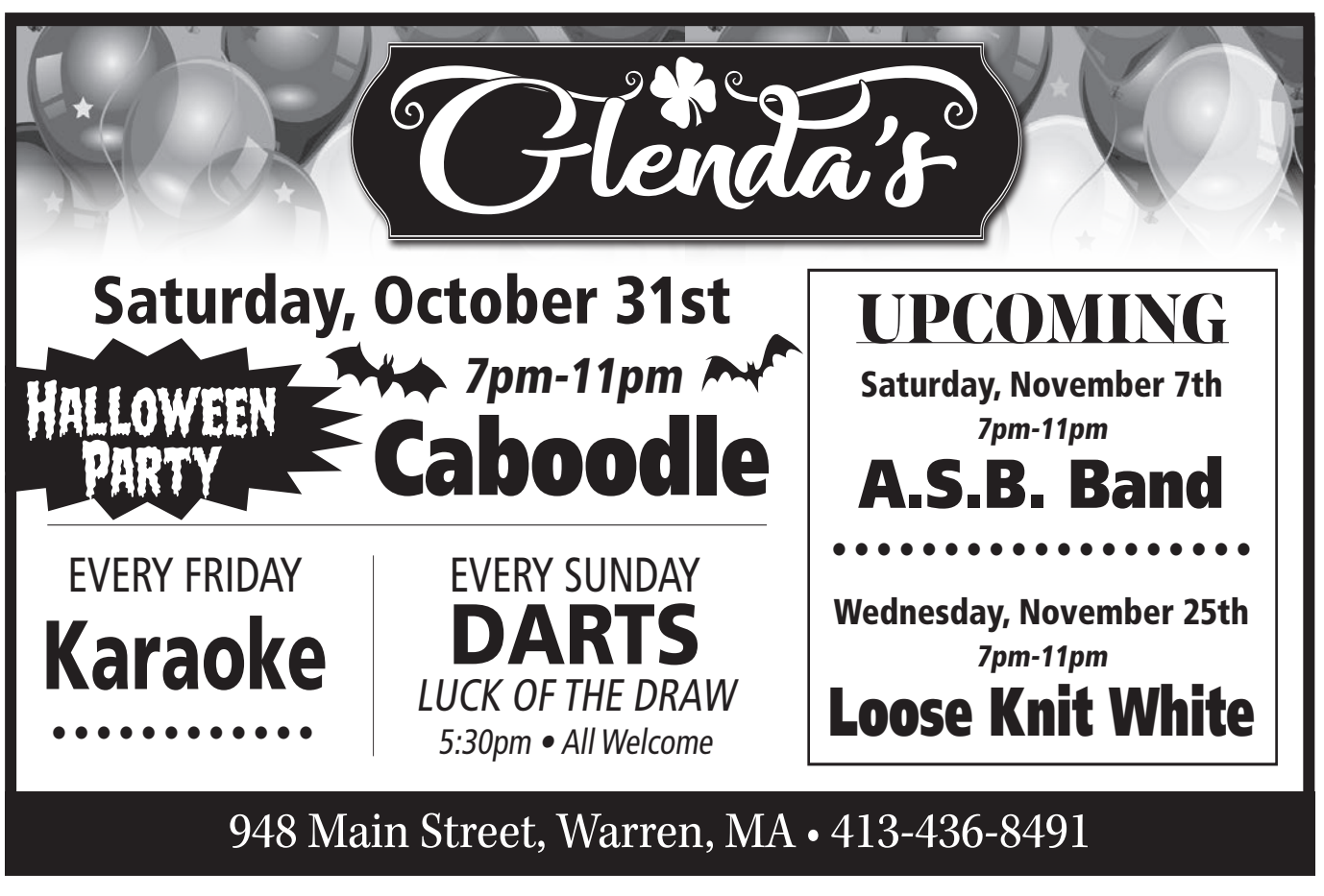
WEST BROOKFIELD – Knights of Columbus Council 11080 is sponsoring a Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, Nov. 14 in Dugan Hall, Sacred Heart Church, 10 Milk St.

Take out begins at 5:30 p.m. and sit down dinner at 6 p.m. Proceeds from this event will benefit local charitable needs.

Dinner includes pasta fagioli, garden salad, meatballs and sausage, spaghetti and sauce, Italian bread, dessert, water, soda and coffee. Cost is a $15 donation and $10 for children under 12 years old.

Admission tickets are also good for entry for a special door prize. Raffle tickets for a 50/50 raffle and more will be available.

Advance ticket purchase is encouraged and appreciated. Tickets are available from any Knight, by calling 413-813-8100 or by emailing wallyconnor122@gmail.com. Tickets will only be available at the door while they last.



Wildwood Acres to host Enchanted Forest Winter Faire Nov. 14

WEST BROOKFIELD – Wildwood Acres Farm & Forest School, 147 Wigwam Road, invites families to the Enchanted Forest Winter Faire, a wintery Renaissance faire where kids take center stage on Saturday, Nov. 14 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Rain date is Sunday, Nov. 15. Admission is free and food and drink will be available.

Wander a forest village filled with skilled artisans and traditional vendors, plus the Kids Medieval Makers Market, where young merchants sell goods they made themselves.

Wandering characters, storytellers and performers bring the woods to life throughout the day, and King Winter will be holding court. Children can try hands-on crafts and make their own magical and medieval treasures, visit the Winter Wish House and toast s'mores by the fire.

Costumes are highly encouraged. Kings, queens, fairies, jesters and every kind of magical creature are welcome.

For more information, visit https://wwoodacres.com/events, follow on Facebook and Instagram or email coop@wwoodacres.com

- community -

SB hears department reports

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – The Select Board heard departmental reports from the Department of Public Works, water and sewer and facilities at a meeting last Monday.

DPW report

DPW Director Heather Blakeley spoke about private road plowing during her report, saying now is the time for residents on those roads to start maintaining them so they are up to the department's standards of safety for plowing. This includes cutting back branches and overhangs and picking up things on the road like basketball nets.

Blakeley said the department is going to work to address situations where they are virtually plowing a private driveway, as there are cases where a private road splits off into an area leading to just one house. She said in concept, the department would plow to the property line of the first house and not go forward.

Blakeley said maintenance of these roads is important, because if a plow truck gets damaged, it can take up to two weeks for parts to come in to repair it. Additionally, Blakeley said the department has been finishing paving projects, picking up leaves on town property and doing street sweeping per stormwater requirements.

Water/Sewer report

Water and Sewer Superintendent Shane Moody said the plants are running well, and they are working on projects like clarifier painting and a study for the technology needed for a new plant.

Moody said he met with engineers about a water tank project at Stallion Hill Road, the Route 20 plant project is in motion, a relining of the sewer on Route 131 is coming and a Church Street tank design is coming.

Moody said hydrant flushing and winterizing is continuing along with smoke testing at the sewers. He said well levels remain good.

Facilities report

Facilities Manager Jeremy Jalbert said an HVAC warranty at the Senior Center has been extended on the Mitsubishi side, and the elevator installation went well.

Jalbert said a new shower was installed at the police station and it came in 33% under budget.

He said a library deck and ramp project has a design going and an elevator project at the library is out to bid.

Other projects starting include Center Office floor tile installation, automatic doors at the town offices and a new fence around the HVAC unit at the town offices. He said throughout the year, boilers, pressure vessels, fire extinguishers and sprinklers were inspected and replaced as needed and there were normal plumbing, HVAC and electrical fixes to do.

Pole hearing

The board held a pole hearing for five jointly owned poles to be placed on Warren Road beginning about 700 feet from the centerline of the intersection with Brookfield Road and heading 1,100 feet west.

Representatives from National Grid said this is a reliability project to upgrade infrastructure like poles and the cables on the poles, and there will be 150 feet between them per new standards. The board approved the poles.

Timber harvest hearings

The board held two hearings for timber harvests, the first on Podunk Road submitted by Casedei Forestry for a property owned by Robert Moynagh.

Chris Casedei from the Casedei Forestry said the property is an operating tree farm under active management with another forester and this will continue that management. He said there's a good network of roads, trails and landings on the property, and working hours will be 7 a.m.-7p.m.

The board approved the plan.

The second timber harvest hearing was for 175 Arnold Road submitted by Hull Forest Products for a property owned by the Tweedy McDonald family.

Austin Harmon with Hull Forest Products said this is a cut to length timber harvest for overmature and diseased trees to promote growth and resilience in the future. He said there are some intermittent stream crossings that will utilize corduroy or bridge mats, and it has been accepted by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Harmon said this is expected to take one or two months. The plan was approved by the board.

Town Administrator's report

Town Administrator Robin Grimm said she is working with the owners of Hobbs Brook Plaza to discuss their installation of speed bumps and extra stop signs in the plaza, which was not done in accordance with their site plan.

She also said Fire Chief John Grasso is in the executive fire officer program now.

Contracts

The board approved multiple agreements at the Oct. 19 meeting including a proposal from 469A Main St. trail and bridge bidding and construction proposal for administration, construction phase services and post-construction environmental monitoring in the amount of $218,300 with Tighe & Bond.

Several other contracts were awarded to Tighe & Bond including $158,800 for influent screens and screening room HVAC upgrades at the wastewater treatment facility, $29,800 for a mixed sludge pump study at the wastewater facility, $29,600 for a plant water system study at the wastewater facility and $90,000 for PTU #3 painting and rehabilitation at the wastewater plant.

Resignation

The board accepted the resignation of Lori Williams, Assistant Conservation Agent effective Oct. 23.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shown from left are Sergeant Kendall Perrault, Brookfield Lions Club member Bill Cass, and Chief Nathan Hagglund. The Brookfield Lions Club recently made donations of $250 each to the West Brookfield Police Department for their Halloween and Christmas events.

Brookfield Lions Club donates to police department events

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Brookfield Lions Club recently made donations of $250 each to the West Brookfield Police Department for their Halloween and Christmas events. The Club also donates to departments in North Brookfield, East Brookfield, Brookfield and New Braintree.

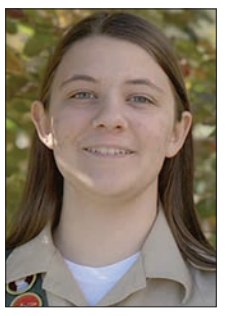
Lydia Metcalf earns Eagle Scout rank

STURBRIDGE – Lydia Metcalf of Charlton, a member of Scouting America Troop 163 of Sturbridge, has earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

She passed her board of review on Sept. 25. She is the tenth member of the troop to become an Eagle Scout since the troop's founding in 2019.

For her Eagle project, Metcalf led the upgrading of a trail section at Hodges Village Dam, installing rope railings to make the trail accessible for the visually impaired people and adding a box with 3D-printed materials used as aids in helping visually impaired people understand what they hear and experience along the trail.

Metcalf joined scouts in 2022 and held various positions in Troop 163, including patrol leader and troop guide, and also worked as a junior staff member at Camp Wanocksett in New Hampshire. She earned 41 merit badges, and honors including the Historic Trails Award and the National Outdoor Achievement Award for Camping,



Lydia Metcalf

A recent graduate of the Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science at WPI, Metcalf was the co-leader of the school's community service club, and CEO of her junior year assistive technology school project.

She also volunteered as a math tutor and SAT tutor, and as a camp counselor at Starbase, a STEM-based academy, and was an intern at the Charlton Public Library. Metcalf currently attends UMass Lowell, where she is studying engineering and computer science. She is passionate about STEM and improving accessibility, and hopes to work with robotics to design assistive technology, as well as to continue working with scouts as a merit badge counselor.

Troop 163 is a Scouting America troop for girls ages 11-17. The troop is based in Sturbridge but has members across southern Worcester County.

To learn more about scouting or Troop 163, email troop163sturbridge@gmail.com.

East Brookfield library lists fall events

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Public Library will play the movie "It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown" at the library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, on Thursday, Oct. 29 starting at 3:30 p.m.

After the movie, children in costumes can then Haunt the Town Hall.

Thanksgiving Center Piece

Come to the library to make and create your own centerpiece Thanksgiving Center Piece Display on Thursdays, Nov. 5 and 12 at 3:30 p.m. This project will take two weeks to complete; you must be able to attend both programs.

All adults are welcome to attend. Sign-up at the library is required.

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.

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.

Annual postcard show takes place Nov. 7

BARRE – The Central Mass. Postcard Club and St. Joseph's Catholic Church are co-sponsoring the 42nd annual postcard and ephemera show on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the church at 29 South St.

This will feature ten dealers from four states offering for sale old postcards of local town scenes and numerous topics. Admission is $3 and the church will offer good home-made food for sale at lunchtime.

Free appraisals of postcards are offered. For more information, people may email show manager J.R. Greene at jrg01331@webtv.net.

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.**

Trunk or Treat to be held on Halloween night

NORTH BROOKFIELD – North Brookfield Parks and Recreation is please to announce Trunk or Treat will be held on the town common, located on Grove Street, on Saturday, Oct. 31 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

There will be music, candy and free hot dogs (generously donated by Hannaford's Supermarkets) on the common. The Fire Department and Police Department will be there to ensure safe celebrating.If you want to set up a trunk, please arrive by 4:45pm.

The North Brookfield Senior Center, located at 29 Forest St., will hand out free cookies.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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USDA INSP. VIRGINIA HAM $3.99 lb
USDA INSP. MUENSTER CHEESE $4.99 lb

TAILGATE SPECIALS
USDA INSP. STOREMADE KOREAN MARINATED BONELESS PORK BUTT STRIPS $3.35 lb
USDA INSP. STOREMADE TERIYAKI MARINATED CHICKEN TENDERLOINS $3.69 lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF STRIP LOIN CUT FREE WHOLE OR HALF $7.49 lb
USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP ROUND ROAST or LONDON BROIL $7.44 lb
USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 80% LEAN GROUND BEEF $4.28 lb 7 LB BAG

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN TENDERLOIN 10 LB BAG $1.66 lb
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USDA INSP. FROZEN FULLY COOKED JONAH CRAB $6.99 lb

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- opinion -

A fall question and a request for the Garden Lady

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



Karen, who reads the column, wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady: "Should you remove all the blossoms from Hydrangeas before the snow falls?"

What a great question and the perfect time to tackle it. Here are some post bloom tips for the beloved hydrangea.

To first answer Karen's question, you can snip off the flowers but you don't have to! If you like a tidy look, trim off the spent flowers right below the bloom and above the first set of healthy leaves.

You can also choose to leave the flowers in place. They add a bit of winter interest and some experts say that they insulate next year's flower buds.

While we are thinking about next year, continue to water your hydrangea bushes, especially if Mother Nature is stingy with rain. Concentrate your watering efforts at the base of the plant.

Refreshing bark mulch now will also help seal in moisture and offer a measure of winter protection. Leave the stems intact – don't cut them back to the ground even though they may look like rigid sticks all winter.

For hydrangeas that bloom on old wood, you definitely want to keep "old wood" in place.

A long time reader of The Register, Frank, asked for more recipes from the harvest. He said that he didn't try the pickle recipe that I published this summer, but that it did inspire him to make his own long-standing recipe.

That's great. I am happy to inspire.

So Frank, here is a recipe that I just happen to be making today, Butternut Squash soup, originally shared with me by my sister. You don't need to use butternut, either. Really any winter squash or pumpkin will do!

Now that my stash is in storage it's time to get creative and enjoy it, and this is one of my favorite recipes. First we have to cook it! Any squash or pumpkin can easily be cooked up by roasting.

Don't go through the trouble of peeling and cubing then boiling. Simply cut in half, scoop out the seeds and bake cut side down in an oiled glass pan or on a cookie sheet at 375 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour.

A fork should go into the non seeded part of the squash easily. Once cooled, scoop out the flesh and it's ready for all sorts of seasonal delights.

To make the soup, first, sauté a chopped onion, one stalk of chopped celery and one clove of minced garlic, a half teaspoon of salt and a teaspoon of finely minced rosemary in a couple of tablespoons of olive oil. Let this fragrant mixture cook for about 10 minutes, until the onions are transparent.

Once it has cooked, add about two pounds of squash and 32-ounces of chicken broth. I always tend to have some broth in the freezer from my last chicken dinner.

If you purchase broth, go for the low salt option or adjust the salt in this recipe to your taste.

After it comes to a boil, simmer for a few minutes and then ladle the chunky soup into a blender. You will likely have to do this in two or three batches.

Return to the pot or serving bowl and enjoy! Some folks like to garnish with parmesan cheese or toasted pumpkin seeds, but I am more of a soup drinker, so I like it just fine in its plain state.

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.

in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer



White-breasted nuthatch

Recently, I watched a pair of white-breasted nuthatches climbing up and down an oak tree in the yard.

They have a gray/blue back with a white face and black cap. They are a small, compact bird with a long, sharply pointed bill and short tail.

Females look similar to the males, but have a gray cap rather than a black one. Both sexes have white bellies and a chestnut colored patch on the lower belly and near the tail. The head is large and they have almost no neck.

They are about 5.1 to 5.5 inches long. White-breasted nuthatches are agile birds that creep along trunks and large branches, probing into bark furrows with their straight, pointed bills.

Like other nuthatches, they often turn sideways and upside down on vertical surfaces as they forage. A friends mother called them "upside down birds" for that reason. Unlike woodpeckers, they don't lean against their tails.

They inhabit mature woods and woodland edges particularly deciduous stands like maple, hickory, basswoods and oak. They also are found in coniferous forests.

White-breasted nuthatches eat mainly insects including weevil larvae, wood boring beetle larvae, other beetles, tree hoppers, scale insects, ants, gall fly larvae, spiders, caterpillars including spongy moth (also known as Gypsy moth) and tent caterpillars.

They cache food typically hiding it under a piece of bark, lichen, moss or even snow.

They also eat seeds and nuts including acorns, hawthorn, sunflower seeds and sometimes crops such as corn. At feeders, they like sunflower seeds, peanuts, suet and peanut butter.

White-breasted nuthatches are cavity nesters and sometimes use nest boxes. The female builds the nest and lines the nest cavity with fur, bark and lumps of dirt. She builds a cup nest of fine grass, shredded bark, feathers and other soft material. They reuse their nest holes in subsequent years. The female lays five to nine eggs and raise one brood per year.

Eastern phoebe

An Oakham couple saw an eastern phoebe on Tuesday, Oct. 13. They were surprised the bird was still around and had not headed south by now. The phoebes, which nest every year near me, left last month.

eBird sightings

eBird sighting on Sunday, Oct. 18 included a Carolina wren and a common raven in Hardwick and a yellow-billed cuckoo at Longmeadow flats. Pontoosuc Lake in Pittsfield had a spotted sandpiper.

Common raven

Monday, Oct. 19 I heard and then saw a common raven. It frequents the woods behind the house. Sometimes I spot it flying, but mostly I hear its low, gurgling croak.

Dark-eyed juncos

I spotted my first juncos on Oct. 10. I saw a small flock take flight as I drove on a country road in Barre. I noticed their white tail feathers.

They are one of my favorite winter birds. I enjoy watching them pick up seeds dropped by other birds at the feeder. They also come for suet.

A few days later, I saw two or three in the yard. They flew up when I drove into the driveway.

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

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

For our rural way of life in changing times

Thoughts on our Community Resilience

By Rita-Renee Toll-Dubois

Ecological resilience is the capacity of an ecosystem to absorb disturbances and reorganize while undergoing change, so the community's needs are well met for the present and future generations.

The Earth has experienced multiple mass extinctions, severe disturbances due to climate change, asteroid impacts, vast volcanic eruptions and has recovered, producing diverse and complex ecosystems.

What does it mean in terms of human community resilience? Perhaps it, too, is the capacity to move forward after a major disruption – such as a natural or financial disaster; a major global supply chain rupture; a major war or genocide and ethnic cleansing; or a global or national epidemic/pandemic.

People, as a species, and as nations, have survived and recovered, but there has been tremendous loss of human life, territory, culture, language, safety, identity, or quality of life. Not everyone who survived these disasters survived healthy, intact and able to return to a state of equanimity.

Does our own community have the resilience and capacity to bounce back, to endure, to thrive? And if so, can it adapt and respond quickly and efficiently?

This is a relevant question given the state of the U.S. and the world at this moment, with climate change intensifying storms, with our national economic picture, healthcare system, even some might say, our political system, not serving us well.

The capacity of any entity to carry on depends in part on its ability to adapt to new realities, fulfill the tasks of daily/weekly/yearly existence, and the strength, abundance and quality of the resources available.

Is Barre a resilient community? To answer this question, we have to know whether it is able financially, socially, governmentally, and environmentally to care for all its residents and carry out effectively and efficiently the tasks that a town needs to address.

Does Barre have the necessary resources to withstand a natural disaster, a major global supply chain rupture, an epidemic, a military conflict, a governmental, institutional, communications, or electrical infrastructure collapse?

We are a community that came together as best we could during COVID, yet as time wore on there were simmering tensions. Among the residents we have many tools and a lot of know-how and experience fixing things, keeping things going.

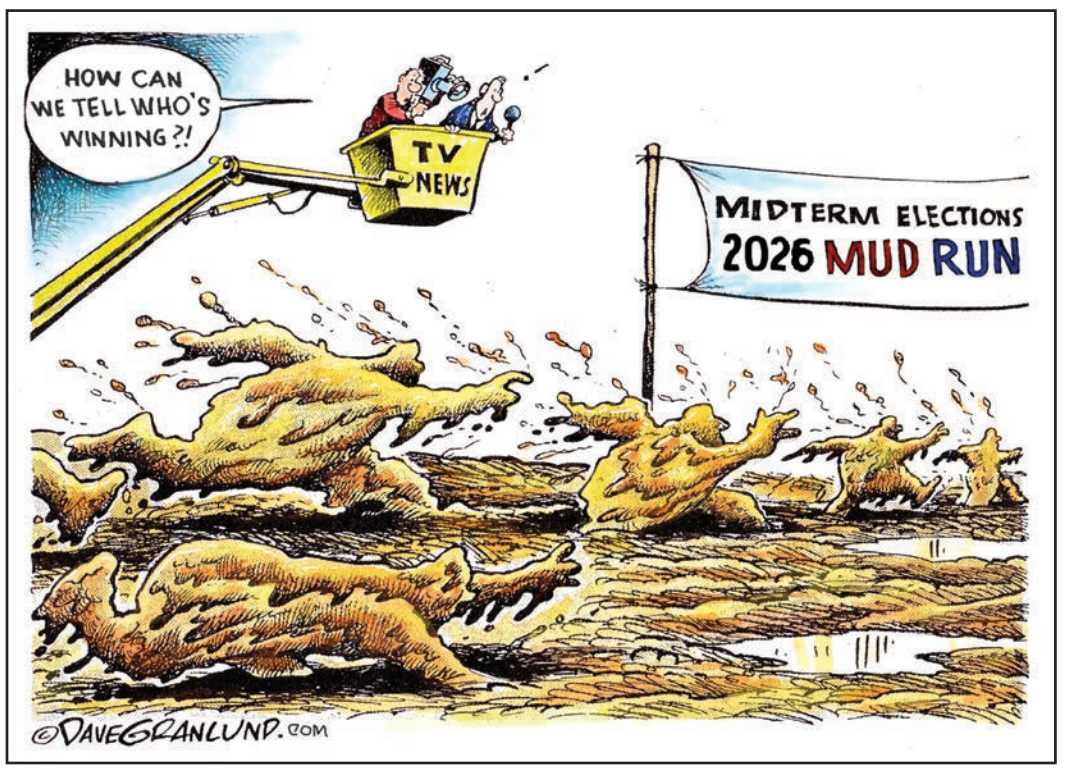
We have a culture of neighborliness.

Yet I wonder: do we know where the community members live who are unable to evacuate a building by themselves? Are we set up to be sure they get out safely and have what they need to live?

Do we know who is willing to share the food they grow so others do not go without? Will it be enough? How and where will it be distributed? To whom? By whom?

Do we know how we would stay informed if the communications and/or electrical systems failed, as they did recently in Gary, Indiana, where tornados knocked out electricity for whole neighborhoods for three weeks and large trees fell on houses, cars as well as power lines, making it

See COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PAGE 5



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

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.
One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.
The other is a **Paid Obituary,** costing $275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

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

- community -

Pumpkinfest



TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Scoutmaster Jay from Troop 238 gave a high-five to a young child who was ready to hear him tell stories.



Each jack-o-lanterns entered in the contest was unique.



Jack-o-lanterns were lined up by the gazebo.



Athena, age 7, had her faced painted like a princess.

PUMPKINFEST
FROM PAGE 1

games and treats.

A jack-o-lantern contest was held for all ages, with many unique entries. As the sun began to set, the jack-o-lanterns were lit and they illuminated the common.

To end the night, Tim Loftus and John Ebersold took to the gazebo to perform live music.



Miss Riley held up a mirror so Elizabeth, age 7, could see her spider face paint.



Xena, age 5, gets a pumpkin painted on her face by Miss Riley.



Jack-o-lanterns were lit on the Brookfield common for Pumpkinfest.



Tim Loftus and John Ebersold performed during Pumpkinfest.



These jack-o-lanterns had a skull and a pirate theme.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
FROM PAGE 4

impossible for emergency vehicles to reach folks for medical assistance.

Do we know who are medical practitioners who could care for the wounded in the event that emergency services are not available? Are necessary medical supplies available? Is there back up if there is no fuel available for emergency vehicles?

I think it important to accept, if not at least consider, that there may be an emergency so grave, so large, so unfamiliar and unexpected that the folks trained and equipped to help will not be able to do all that is needed. What then?

I know in Ashville, North Carolina, during the flood that wiped out so much, people had to help each other survive.

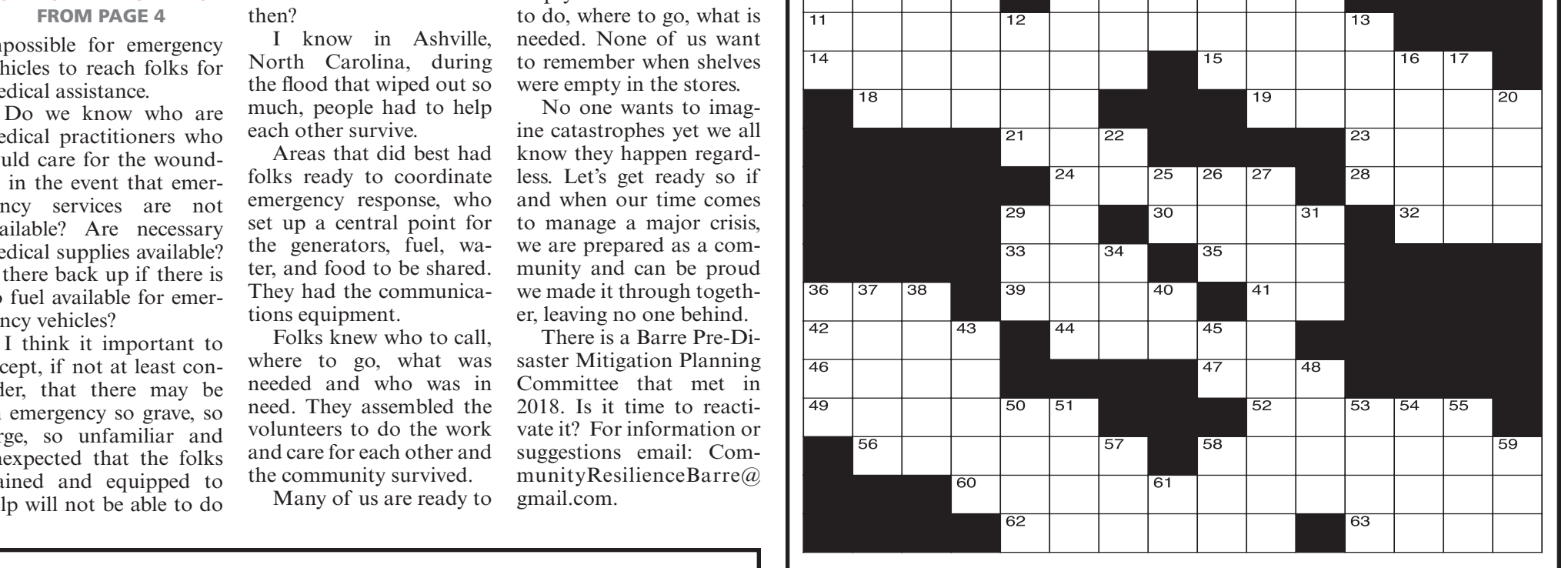
Areas that did best had folks ready to coordinate emergency response, who set up a central point for the generators, fuel, water, and food to be shared. They had the communications equipment.

Folks knew who to call, where to go, what was needed and who was in need. They assembled the volunteers to do the work and care for each other and the community survived.

Many of us are ready to help yet are not sure what to do, where to go, what is needed. None of us want to remember when shelves were empty in the stores.

No one wants to imagine catastrophes yet we all know they happen regardless. Let's get ready so if and when our time comes to manage a major crisis, we are prepared as a community and can be proud we made it through together, leaving no one behind.

There is a Barre Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Committee that met in 2018. Is it time to reactivate it? For information or suggestions email: CommunityResilienceBarre@gmail.com.



CLUES ACROSS

1. El Dorado High School
5. A sculpture representing a human or animal
11. A type of return
14. Tie the knot again
15. Washington city
18. Hairlike structures
19. Mark used over a vowel
21. Explosive
23. Popular 500 car race
24. Pile up
28. Currency
29. Commercial
30. A minute amount (Scottish)
32. Mass of fish eggs
33. Baseball stat
35. Licensed accountant
36. Japanese classical theater
39. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
41. Blood group
42. Assist in wrongdoing
44. Language of Cameroon
46. Grayish-white
47. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
49. Microorganism
52. Strong social customs
56. Calm and dependable
58. Congressman
60. Force
62. As a result of this document
63. A main branch of Islam

CLUES DOWN

1. Make a mistake
2. American DJ Rick
3. Fictional Asimov planet
4. Coughed out
5. Singing to one's lover
6. Scotland's longest river
7. One of the six noble gases
8. Body art
9. Two-toed sloth
10. Electronic counter-countermeasures
12. A foolish person
13. Of the wind
16. Mansion
17. Sound
20. English river
22. Business symbol
25. Exclamation of surprise
26. Pouch
27. Individually
29. Satisfaction
31. The bill in a restaurant
34. Japanese delicacy
36. Port in southern Japan
37. Double-reed instruments
38. Center
40. "The Mount Rushmore State"
43. Soldier
45. Indicates position
48. Beauty treatment: __-pedi
50. Nonsense (slang)
51. Republic of Ireland
53. Ballplayers' tools
54. American state
55. Clusters of a fern frond
57. Patriotic women's group
58. A person's brother or sister
59. Breed of sheep
61. Of I

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- community -

CANDIDATES
FROM PAGE 1

tax cuts, such as a reduction in the income tax, "also loses us revenue."

"I don't want the ultra wealthy to not be paying their fair share because they should be, they can afford it," Teabo said.

Teabo said the median income in a town like Ware is $58,750 and with the reduction of income tax, that average household would have a savings of $487 a year. For someone making the minimum threshold for the Fair Share amendment, they'd be saving $10,744 annually.

"Tax cuts don't benefit us as much as people would like to think," Teabo said. "Taxing the wealthy does work…holding people that can afford to give more accountable, helps us. Instead of trying to give tax breaks that benefit them and not us – we should be holding them to their fair share so that all of us can benefit."

What programs would you support that would provide assistance and incentives for businesses to stay open, grow, and locate in the region?

Teabo said there are a lot of programs offered by the state that can help small businesses, but many small businesses owners don't know about them.

"Creating an assistance program that facilitates in between the legislator and the town, so that we can have a streamlined permitting process, we can have a single access point for all the resources and grants and programs that business can access," she said.

Teabo said making public transportation more robust will help get people into towns that need to grow their small business community. She said finding reuse for vacant buildings is also challenging due to the upfront costs.

"Upfront costs are a huge portion of that and a lot of small business owners cannot afford those upfront costs," she said.

Teabo said grants and legislative action can help fill some of these gaps and reduce the upfront costs.

She said the pandemic closed a lot of small businesses, and it has been more difficult for new ones to open.

Teabo said there are programs that help businesses upgrade their energy infrastructure, including refrigeration, heating and cooling. She said the government (mostly on the federal level) can invest in more renewable and sustainable energy sources to reduce fossil fuel dependence.

Durant said the commonwealth has one of highest energy costs in the U.S. and it is a "big burden" for business owners. He said manufacturers have had to leave the state because of the energy costs.

Other states are offering tax breaks to manufacturers.

He said there needs to be a partnership between the state and businesses.

Durant referenced a partnership with the town of Templeton to repurpose an old school building into an apartment complex. He said the partnership resulted in both affordable and market rate apartments in the complex.

He said in addition to fostering private/public partnerships, the state needs to cut regulations.

"In Massachusetts, it costs more than $50,000 additional in regulations to build a new house," Durant said.

Durant said this doesn't impact the wealthy developers as much as it does the smaller family businesses. Those extra costs get added onto the price of the house, which makes it unaffordable to homebuyers.

"They can't afford the price that comes with it, so they leave the state," he said. "Massachusetts is not competitive and that's what we need to work on."

Durant said renewable energy is a good thing, but it won't solve the state's problems. He said they need things like natural gas and services that people can rely on.

What programs or actions would you support to increase the region's labor force?

Durant said it needs to be easier to start a business in the commonwealth. He said there is also a shortage of tradespeople, including plumbers, carpenters and electricians.

"What we need to do is increase our vocational education…we're doing some great jobs doing that," he said.

Durant highlighted some of the school districts and community colleges that provide programs, including Mount Wachusett Community College's EV automotive program. This program is so successful, that students are being offered jobs before even completing the program.

"It's about an environment we create where businesses can grow, where businesses can thrive, without being punished," he said.

Durant said they need to cut regulations and red tape to make that happen.

Teabo agreed that the focus should be on vocational schooling and real-life skillsets. She said a college degree is a wonderful path, but so is a vocational education.

"Really uplifting our current vocational schools and adding vocational programs to other high schools so that you can have an option of both," she said.

Teabo said she has talked with unions, who are in support of a government job system (similar to Job Corps), where students receive qualified, ethical training in trades.

"That provide the training and the background and send these people out to get well-paying jobs and contribute to our economy," Teabo said.

Teabo said it is hard to open and run a small business, and right now, it's the people who don't have enough who are helping the other people who don't have enough.

"We're all struggling… we're all struggling to pay our utilities and buy groceries, let alone help a small business," she said.

Teabo said there are programs that can help the small business labor force that many people don't know about, including accessible childcare.

"Making people aware those programs are available is a huge step," she said.

Teabo said having a "one stop shop" for business owners on a town's website can help guide them in the right direction.

"So that everybody has a chance to start a small business if they want to," she said.

What will you do to assure that the State's resources are equitably distributed to the small towns of Central Massachusetts?

Teabo said school funding is one of the priorities in her campaign, including reforming the Chapter 70 funding formula. Reforming the watershed PILOT program to reflect the actual value of the land, is another priority.

She said the region is getting the "short end of the stick" in terms of the acreage value.

"We have hundreds of thousands of acres out here that owned by DCR [Department of Conservation and Recreation] that are not getting adequately paid through this PILOT program and it needs to be reformed so that these town's can get their money," Teabo said.

Teabo said the state budget is "our moral compass."

"We determine what is worth funding," she said.

Teabo said rural towns already have an overburdened tax base and cannot afford overrides. She said the money these towns need is in the state.

"We need more out here," Teabo said. "I plan to advocate for our communities out here to make sure that we get all that we need, and the budget is the way to do that."

Durant agreed with Teabo that rural communities aren't getting enough, especially with Chapter 70 funding.

He said about seven years ago, they looked at the Chapter 70 funding formula through the Student Opportunity Act, which resulted in the formation of the Rural Educational Commission.

"That Commission came back and said 'what we need to do is fund our rural schools at a level of about $60 million a year,'" he said. "That was five years ago… so what have we done? This year we put $20 million in… we put a third of what needs to go in there."

Durant said he and his House colleagues filed an amendment to the budget asking to fund rural schools fully at $60 million, but it was voted down along party lines.

"It was voted down by Democrats who have rural communities," he said.

Durant said even Democrats who co-sponsored the amendment voted against it, because that's what they were told to do.

Durant said he is going to continue to advocate to make sure rural communities get the funding they deserve, including the watershed PILOT program.

What programs would you support, create or enhance to invest in infrastructure and capital needs?

Durant said he supports programs that lower barriers to replace aging infrastructure, and referenced the Small Bridge program.

Durant said he has also advocated for more Chapter 90 funding, which is money from the state to municipalities to repair roads and bridges.

"That number has not gone up significantly in the past 10 years," he said. "We're going to continue that fight."

Putting money into infrastructure is the "best return on our investment" that the state can make with tax dollars.

Teabo said towns such as Ware don't get enough Chapter 90 money to make repairs to their roadways.

"You can't repair major roadways with $21,000, it's not enough," she said.

She said the Chapter 90 formula needs to be looked at.

Teabo talked about electrical infrastructure, and said the district is served by two for-profit utility companies, Eversource and National Grid, and they should be held accountable for repairing and adding infrastructure.

"When the priorities are profits over people we lose sight of what it's like to care for each other," she said.

Teabo said the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority serves Boston-Metro West, which provides water to those residents at a much lower cost than what people pay for water in the Worcester & Hampshire District. Despite this, the region is tasked with safeguarding this water supply with little benefit.

"We should be taking care of our resources and our people out here," she said.

What can the State do to maintain or grow health care, including primary care, mental health services, vision, dental and urgent care for residents and employees of the region's businesses?

Teabo said the closure of Mary Lane Hospital created a loss of healthcare services, as well as a loss of jobs for residents.

"We have closed more hospitals and services than we've opened," Teabo said. "In the 22 cities and towns in this district as it encompasses, the only hospital we have is Heywood in Gardner…you have to travel all the way to Worcester to get any maternity care and we have a significant lack of prenatal care, children's and pediatric services, and other primary care services."

Teabo said her town's healthcare clinic just recently closed, further limiting local services.

"My goal would be, not to necessarily build new hospitals…but the hospitals that are still there, making sure that we can adequately fund those services, reopening those departments that have closed, so that we can have access to healthcare in our district," she said.

Teabo said the average person in this district travels 11 miles to reach healthcare services, and a lack of public transportation creates more barriers.

She said urgent cares can help provide services, but it is "only a Band-Aid."

Teabo said Medicare for All is a fiscally responsible way to help get quality, low-cost healthcare for residents.

"While we add several new smaller taxes to your income taxes, you are reducing all out-of-pocket costs, all premiums, all copays," she said. "Instead of paying for all of that, you have a flat rate."

Durant said healthcare in the region is at a pivotal point, and he agreed that opening an urgent care is not a long-term solution.

Durant said he is working with stakeholders to spend $160 million from the Rural Health care initiative.

"This actually is for building-out infrastructure, this actually is to put hospitals here…in rural areas," he said.

Durant said talks have been had with Heywood Hospital in Gardner and UMass Medical in Worcester, and they are interested in expanding services this way.

He spoke about a program UMass has piloted to remotely monitor about 70 patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The monitors utilize AI to track the patients, and find problems before they become apparent.

"They can adjust the medications and if they need to, they can send out specialized paramedics and nurse practitioners to go out to your home and assist you," he said.

Durant said UMass was interested in bringing something similar to the region.

"We're making amazing strides here…things are happening," he said.

What would you do to increase housing in the region as a means to attract and retain residents?

Durant said lowering the fees would make it easier for people to build houses in the commonwealth. He talked about the drawbacks of relying on electric utilities, such as mini-splits, which can help with cooling but become cost prohibitive for heating.

He said propane and natural gas can be very expensive to add to new construction.

"Housing is fundamentally a problem of supply and demand," he said. "We need to make it easier for people to build houses. Pure and simple."

Durant said adding more subsidies will not help bridge the housing gap problem.

He said while rent vouchers can help people secure housing, they also drive up the cost of housing.

"If we give 'free money,' what do we think happens to the cost? It goes up," Durant said.

Teabo said Question 7 allows the building of a single family home on a 5,000 square foot lot. She said she is torn about this question, and what the consequences would be on rural communities with limited resources and infrastructure.

"Addressing the housing crisis is not an easy answer," Teabo said. "I'm not sure building new houses would help either…building materials are exorbitantly high… tariffs have thrown all of these costs onto the people who buy these items, and we can't afford to continue building homes."

Teabo said reusing existing buildings for housing, including old mills, creates opportunities and there are tax incentives and programs for builders.

"But again, easier said than done," she said. "I think the housing crisis has so much more nuance and complications than any of us can really fathom and I don't think that there's a super clear way forward…a lot of us can barely afford the homes we're in now."

Teabo talked about expanding the heating assistance program by raising the eligibility threshold and including cooling in the summer months.

What are your thoughts on green energy including siting and environmental concerns? What are the best options for locating alternative energy in this district?

Teabo said the state needs to transition away from fossil fuels and other energy sources that deplete the planet's resources, but she said it's not an easy thing to accomplish.

She talked about the town of Oakham's ongoing issue with a for-profit million dollar company wanting to put a large battery energy storage system in the middle of wetlands, and clear-cutting forests.

"All against the will of the townspeople," she said.

Teabo said these batteries are being branded as "clean, green energy" which they are not. She said these batteries can work in some places, but not a town like Oakham.

"We need to go forward with solutions like, maybe getting more off-shore wind farms," she said. "If we do nothing, we're going to continue spiraling down this climate disaster…we are experiencing the effects of our planet warming every day, and we need to do something to mitigate it and that's finding alternative sources."

Teabo said building pipelines can create jobs, but it also does harm to the planet.

"We can't rely on a finite source that we keep mining for until it's gone and our planet's dead," she said.

Durant said cities and towns should have a right to decide what happens on their land, and projects such as the one in Oakham, are a result of the Governor "pushing the green agenda."

Durant said he and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume have been helping the town fight this project, every step of the way.

"It is the worst possible place to put this battery storage park," he said.

Durant said he spent 25 years in energy conservation, and he supports green energy, but it can't be "green or nothing."

"We cannot put enough solar panels, clear-cut farms…and get enough electricity," he said.

Durant said renewing nuclear power in the commonwealth will provide clean energy and help drive down the cost of electricity.

"We need this 'all of the above' approach," he said.

What is your opinion on legislative earmarks? If favorable, how would you prioritize earmarks to benefit local communities and businesses?

Durant said earmarks prioritize public safety and infrastructure capital needs first, including boilers for school buildings, police cruisers and more. Durant said there isn't enough money to address all of these needs each year.

"All these kinds of things that are one-time expenses that our towns may need," he said.

Teabo said earmarks help towns with one-time expenses but they are not a "fix-all."

She said capital expenses should be priority and she agreed with Durant about the focus of earmarks.

About the State Election

Polling hours for the State Election will be from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 3.



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SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

Warriors fall to B-Town 1-0

BELCHERTOWN – Last Friday afternoon, the Belchertown field hockey team defeated Tantasqua Regional 1-0. The lone goal of the game came from Jocelyn McMahon with Gianna Zenon getting the assist in the second half. The two teams battled scoreless in the first half. Belchertown lifted their record to 9-3-3. The Warriors are 8-5-2 and will make the state tournament this year.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Olivia Fiske makes a kick save.



Emille Dart goes after the ball.



Bryn Carey makes her way up the field.



Dessa Demears is pressured while possessing the ball.



Liana McCarthy tries to make a steal.



Sophia Bochicchio tries to make a play on the backhand.

Panthers enter final week undefeated

BARRE – Last Tuesday, the Quabbin Regional High School girls soccer team defeated Clinton 5-2. Two days later, the Panthers scored an 8-2 win over Ayer Shirley, also at home. The Panthers are 13-0-1 and have yet to suffer a loss in 2026. The Panthers have three more games scheduled in the regular season before starting the state tournament. Up next, the Panthers face Monty Tech on Thursday, Oct. 29 at 6 p.m. on the road.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY JEFFREY HAYNES



Saylor Bissonnette elevates to win control of the ball.



Larrah Gagne looks around the defender for her options.



Ellery Sylvia wins her one-on-one battle.



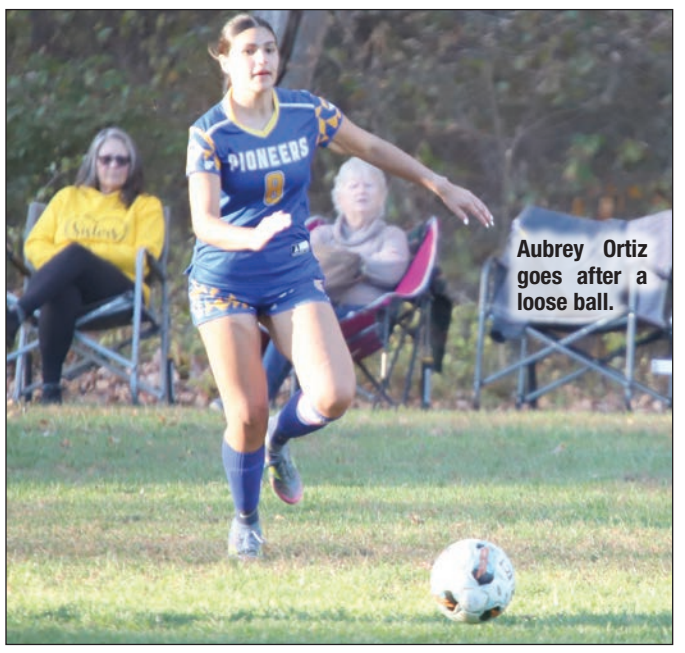
Maya Putnam jumps up to redirect the ball.



Allie Lipiec heads the ball upfield.



Saylor Bissonnette powers home a scoring shot.



Aubrey Ortiz goes after a loose ball.

Pioneers fight to scoreless draw

PALMER – Last Monday afternoon, the Pathfinder Tech girls soccer team had a 0-0 tie against Smith Academy and are 7-2-2 for the regular season. Pathfinder did not qualify for the Western Mass. Tournament, but will make the state tournament this year. The girls will have nonplayoff matchups against Hampden Charter, Cape Cod Tech, and Mt. Everett to close out month before facing an opponent in the state tournament.



Josephine Boyko tries to make a stop on defense.



The Pioneers face Athol last Monday afternoon.



Whisper Wagher fights with an opponent for the ball.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Amber Roman tries to clear the ball away.

- public notices -

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by DANIEL F. LEAHY to COUNTRY BANK FOR SAVINGS, dated July 1, 2005 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 36723, Page 29, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at **Public Auction** at 11:00 a.m., on the 3rd day of December, 2026, on the mortgaged premises believed to be known as 14 Maple Street, Brookfield, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

"The land in Brookfield, Worcester County, Massachusetts, being a certain tract or parcel of land with the buildings thereof situated on School Street, now called Maple Street, in the center village of said Brookfield and bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at the southwest corner thereof by land formerly of Charles Collar;

THENCE by said street, northerly one hundred one (101) feet to land now or formerly of Charles Collar;

THENCE easterly parallel with the house seventy-three (73) feet;

THENCE southeasterly eighty-four and one-half (84-1/2) feet by land formerly of Thomas Vizard;

THENCE southerly one hundred two and one-half (102-1/2) feet to stone bound set in the ground;

THENCE westerly one hundred seventeen (1117) feet to the place of beginning.

BEING the same premises conveyed to us by deed of David Long and Patricia Long dated June 19, 1978 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 16497, Page 359."

The premises will be sold subject to any and all restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax titles, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, and existing encumbrances of record superior to the Mortgage, if any. Said premises will also be sold subject to all leases and tenancies having priority over said Mortgage, to tenancies or occupation by persons on the premises now and at the time of said auction which tenancies or occupation are subject to said Mortgage, to rights or claims in personal property installed by tenants or former tenants now located on the premises, also to all laws and ordinances including, but not limited to, all building and zoning laws and ordinances. It shall be the purchaser's sole responsibility to ascertain all items described in this paragraph and no representations are made concerning compliance with applicable zoning, building, sanitary or other state and/or municipal regulations.

TERMS OF SALE: TEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 ($10,000.00) DOLLARS will be required to be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier's check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale, said deposit to be increased to an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of the purchase price, within five (5) business days of the sale, to be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier's check by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price in connection with the sale shall be paid in cash, or by certified or bank cashier's check within thirty (30) days of the date of the sale and the Deed transferred contemporaneously therewith. A buyer's premium equal to five percent (5%) of the successful bid will be paid by the successful bidder and incorporated within the purchase price. The purchaser at the sale shall be required to sign a Memorandum of terms of sale containing the above terms at the Auction sale. The purchaser will be responsible for all closing costs, Massachusetts deed excise stamps and all recording fees.

The sale may be postponed or adjourned from time to time, if necessary, by the attorney for the mortgagee at the scheduled time and place of sale. The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, will be announced at the sale.

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By:
/s/Jonathan C. Sapirstein
Jonathan C. Sapirstein
SAPIRSTEIN & SAPIRSTEIN, P.C.
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P.O. Box 15408
Springfield, MA 01115-5408
Tel.: (413) 827-7500
Its Attorneys
Date: October 16, 2026
10/30, 11/06, 11/13/2026

- public safety -

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Oct. 19-26, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 24 building/property checks, 21 directed/area patrols, seven radar assignments, three traffic controls, two complaints, one motor vehicle investigation, one missing person, two suspicious activities, one animal call and five motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, Oct. 19

9:06 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, McEvoy Road, Citation Issued

8:24 p.m. Complaint, Sibley Road, Dispatch Handled

Tuesday, Oct. 20

1:17 p.m. Complaint, West Road, Officer Handled

8:40 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Prouty Road, Negative Contact

Wednesday, Oct. 21

4:14 p.m. Soliciting, Scott Road, Referred to Other Agency

Friday, Oct. 23

6:59 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Cemetery Road, Unfounded

Sunday, Oct. 25

1:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Worcester wRoad, Officer Handled

5:17 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Thompson Road, Vehicle Towed

5:47 p.m. Missing Person, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital

Music & Movement at 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.

Haunting at the Haston



The tour guide was ready to bring brave guests to the "scare" floor



Karen Bessette helped families make Halloween crafts during the annual Haston Haunted House.



Nancy greeted visitors to the Haston Free Public Library's annual Haunted House.



Bryan Counter and Fiadh, age 15 months, enjoyed Halloween fun at the Haston Free Public Library.



Lisa Keay had mini pumpkins ready to be painted

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HEART AND SOUL
FROM PAGE 1

are under-represented, have anything unique about them, what demographics are part of the group, who the group's connection is, where the organization is found in the community and how to reach or engage them.

The entire project from start to finish usually takes about two years, although this can vary by town according to White.

After phase one is finished around the start of the new year, the second phase, "connect," will start. In this phase, the volunteers will gather stories from the residents about the things that matter most to them about North Brookfield and find a common ground between the residents.

This will culminate in "heart and soul statements." This phase takes about six to eight months.

The third phase is called "plan." This is where an action plan is created and goals are prioritized.

White said this can be done by physical polling or online votes. This phase takes about four to six months.

The final phase is called "act," which is where all of these goals are put into a comprehensive plan and transition North Brookfield into a "heart and soul community."

During the kickoff meeting, residents called out some overall goals for the town, including volunteer engagement, spreading the positive news of the town, connecting organizations and events to bring more people to them, expanding the music and the arts, larger gatherings, expanded technology access, supporting and promoting local business, makerspace programs, safe walking spaces and a town block party type of event.

- community -

Federated Church Pumpkin Patch 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 Friday from 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 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.

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.

Hardwick Memorial Handbell Choir performs Nov. 7

BARRE – Woods Memorial Library, 19 Pleasant St., is delighted to welcome back the Hardwick Memorial Handbell Choir for another special musical performance on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 11 a.m.

The talented ensemble will present a selection of musical pieces showcasing the artistry, precision and beautiful harmonies of handbell ringing. Audiences of all ages are invited to enjoy this unique and engaging musical experience.

Following the performance, attendees will have the opportunity to try ringing the handbells themselves under the guidance of the choir members. This interactive experience offers a rare chance to learn about the techniques behind handbell music and discover firsthand the skill and coordination involved in creating its distinctive sound.

Whether you are a lifetime music lover or simply curious about this unique art form, this special program promises to be an enjoyable experience for the whole community.

All ages are welcome. For additional information, people may call the library at 978-355-2533, extension 102.



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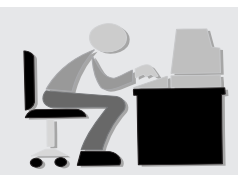
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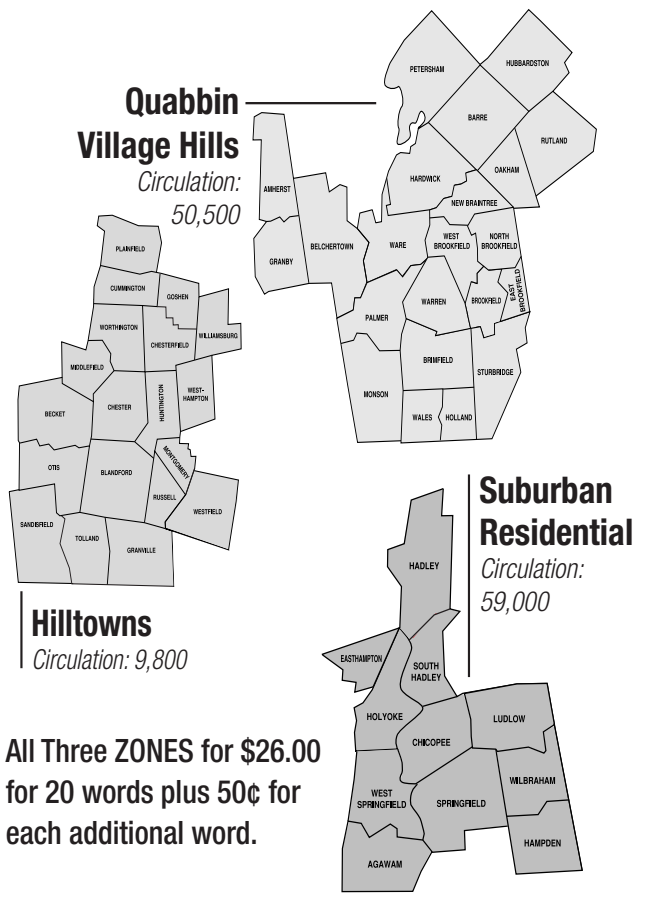
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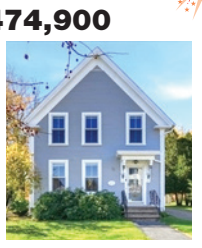


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1. Are you sick and tired of health insurance companies denying or delaying your treatments and claims ?
2. As prices go higher and higher, should your household income be free of federal income taxes up to $100,000.00 ?
3. Do we need to get the millions and millions of corporate PAC money out of our political system ?
4. Should we invest our tax dollars here in western Massachusetts and in solving America's problems, not in endless foreign wars ?
5. Do you believe the pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness applies to all of us, not just the rich elite ?
6. Should we cap runaway rent increases, and make housing more affordable by banning corporate land speculators from buying up our neighborhoods ?
7. Do we need more doctors in western Massachusetts so you can get appointments and see specialists when you need them ?
8. Do you support a woman's right to make her own health care decisions ?
9. Should we make our medicines here in western Massachusetts so we aren't dependent on foreign drug manufacturers and supply lines, as happened during COVID shortages ?
10. Do you believe there should be term limits in Congress ?
11. Do we need to stop our elected officials and their families from enriching themselves at taxpayer expense while in office ?
12. Has Richard Neal been in Congress too long and is he unresponsive to people in western Massachusetts ?
13. Do you believe both major political parties are broken and that we should elect more Independents who aren't under their control ?

Congress needs a big shake-up. And it's not going to happen if we keep re-electing people who've been there since the 1980s. There's no mistaking where Nadia Milleron stands on the issues. And if you stand where she stands, make your voice heard on Tuesday. Get to your polling place and vote to take your government back from the career politicians who have ruined it.

NADIA MILLERON
INDEPENDENT
FOR CONGRESS

NadiaforCongress.com

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