

QUABOAG CURRENT

STURBRIDGE

5K finishers listed

Page 2

WEST BROOKFIELD

Radio club meeting

Page 6

REGION

Rotary Club collects shoes

Page 9

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Friday, November 7, 2025

School Committee heard update from task force

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – School Committee Chair Matt Grant, who is also the tuition task force chair, said the task force’s work is just “a piece of the

puzzle” in terms of exploring a tuition agreement with another school district.

At the Oct. 20 meeting, Grant said the task force was formed after the joint regionalization committee with the Quaboag Regional School District failed to move forward after repre-

sentatives from the Quaboag Regional School Committee voted against bringing the topic of regionalization to a town meeting vote. The North Brookfield School Committee had voted unanimously in favor of it.

“A couple of months after regionalization was voted

down by Quaboag, Superintendent [Stephen] Duff from Quaboag reached out to North Brookfield School District to present a potential option of the tuition agreement,” Grant said.

Grant said the task force was formed in Mary 2025 to gather more information

about a potential tuition agreement, and how it would impact the town’s students.

“This isn’t something anybody’s taking lightly,” he said.

Grant said the task force worked to gather information and complete fact-finding about tuition agreements

with other school districts. He said this is different than regionalization, as the school district would still maintain a school for kindergarten through grade six students.

“If North Brookfield

See **SCHOOL COMMITTEE** PAGE 6



URILEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Brittany Sargent as Olaf, Asher Sargent as Elsa, Lily Sturges as Anna, and Braiden Bradley as Kristoff are shown alongside the Frozen trunk during Trunk or Treat.

Trunk or Treat

Annual Halloween celebration took place at Quaboag

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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WARREN – The Trunk or Treat at Quaboag Regional Middle High School

was held this past weekend. Over 15 cars entered in this year’s Trunk or Treat and was organized by the PTOs of West Brookfield Elementary School and Warren Community Elementary School. Tracy Colangelo of the WCES PTO said the Trunk or Treat has been going on for at least 10 years, maybe even longer.

Both elementary schools played host to Trunk or Treat and soon made their way to Quaboag for more space and parking.

Country Bank donated cider and cider donuts for guests to enjoy during the Trunk or Treat. Country

See **TRUNK OR TREAT** PAGE 5

First Congregational Church welcomed new pastor

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, recently welcomed Dr. Douglas J. Williamson to serve as its pastor and guide the faith community toward reaching its goals.

Williamson, who is a native of Needham, accepted the three-year position as part-time pastor, and started in his new role at the beginning of September.

He moved to nearby Barre with his wife Karen, relocating from Marblehead, Ohio, where he also served as a pastor in a local parish.

Williamson said he and his wife have lived a variety of places since they met in college at Rockford University in Illinois, and spent the



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Dr. Douglas J. Williamson has been named the pastor at the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC.

last 10 years in Ohio to be closer to his wife’s family.

“This has been nice,” Williamson said of the move back to New England, and his time spent at the West Brookfield church. “People here have been great.”

Williamson wasn’t always

interested in being a local pastor in a church, and he didn’t initially choose the ministry as his focus in college. Originally he pursued a degree in early education, but with one year to go before graduation, he decided to switch his major to religion.

He went on to attend the Harvard University of Divinity and received his Ph.D. in church history from Boston University.

Williamson was ordained through the United Methodist Church in 1980 and has over 30 years teaching history, ethics and religious studies at higher-level institutions across the northeast.

“I’ve spent most of my life in academia,” Williamson said.

In 2013, Williamson

See **NEW PASTOR** PAGE 9

Sturbridge launches ‘Keep Sturbridge Beautiful’ chapter

Search underway for volunteers to create steering committee

Submitted Article

STURBRIDGE – Take a quick peek at any roadside, park, beach or public space in Sturbridge, and chances are that you will see something that doesn’t belong there: litter.

In fact, cigarette butts, plastic beverage containers, aluminum cans, and fast food trash are common sights Sturbridge.

To address this problem, Town Administrator Robin A. Grimm, along with the Sturbridge Selectboard, has announced the launch of a

new Keep Sturbridge Beautiful chapter and is looking for steering committee members to help lead this group.

Keep Sturbridge Beautiful will be a volunteer-led effort to organize local volunteers interested in cleaning up and beautifying Sturbridge public spaces. Keep Sturbridge Beautiful is one of 42 local chapters that are organized under the umbrella of the statewide nonprofit Keep Massachusetts Beautiful.

The mission of Keep Sturbridge Beautiful is to instill accountability through action and foster social responsibility by urging res-

See **STURBRIDGE** PAGE 9

Local musician highlighted featured artist

Artist of the Month

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Every month the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House highlight a featured artist in their community.

For the month of November, the Artist of the Month is musician and singer Susan Lyons. Originally from Washington, D.C. Lyons currently resides North Brookfield, a place she has called home for over 40 years.

She has performed a lot in her lifetime and is proud of her work as a musician.

Lyons has performed in various venues while living in the D.C. area and used to perform in the North Shore

area of Massachusetts during her residency in Salem.

“Whenever there was an opportunity to perform, I would always jump on it,” Lyons said.

Lyons’ music journey started with playing drums with her father, who was a jazz pianist and played with jazz groups. Lyons soon got interested in playing guitar after she began hearing folk and country music.

Lyons got her first guitar when she was 15.

As of now, Lyons still performs periodically and is trying to book more performances at local breweries and wineries. When Lyons got the announcement that she was going to be the



Sue Lyons

month of November’s featured artist, she was flattered by the news.

She was contacted by Marilynn Borst, vice president of the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House. Lyons expressed how much she would like to play in the great hall of the Town House.

Lyons played a few songs there a couple years ago.

Lyons describes the acoustics inside the Town House as phenomenal and would love to see the building restored to the point where it can be a destination for community events.

Growing up, Lyons loved listening and playing a lot of folk music. Her big-

gest inspiration in music is Bonnie Raitt, a singer and guitarist, who plays a lot of blues.

As a guitarist, Lyons likes to play slide guitar. This style of guitar playing requires a bottleneck that goes up and down the guitar to give a blue sound.

Lyons plays original songs while she performs and plays anywhere from seven or eight of her own songs during a performance. Her original songs include, “I Love your Laughter”, “Where Are You Now”, and “Over the Hillside”.

Lyons shared that she comes from a musical family. Playing music for family is one of Lyons’ favorite memories, especially with

See **FEATURED ARTIST** PAGE 9



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- community -

Rotary Club of Sturbridge announced 5K finishers

Submitted Article

STURBRIDGE – The fifth annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K and Fun Walk was held on Oct. 26 according to race director Klaus Hachfeld.

The family-friendly event included a 5K Trail Race, a 1K Road Race, and a 5K Trail Fun Walk using the Old Sturbridge Village Education Center on Old Sturbridge Village Road and the Arbutus Park Trail in the Leadmine Mountain Conservation Lands. The event also included free games for younger children, organized by student members of the Interact Club at Tantasqua Regional High School, who also helped set up for the event.

“The sunshine, smiles, Halloween costumes and community spirit made this year’s race unforgettable,” Hachfeld said. “With the help of wonderful volunteers, generous sponsors, and runners of every age in their best costumes, we celebrated another truly successful year—our fifth in a row!”

The results below were timed and tabulated by on-line service GetMeRegistered:

Top male finishers in the TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K Trail Race included first place, Michael Spillane (22:14), second place, Evan Elston (22:26), and third place, Gabriel LaFrance (22:33). Top female finishers included first place, Kristina Garrant (24:09) second place, Janine Adamo (26:30), and third place, Carolyn Bressette (27:20).



M&M&M&M...shown in the back row are Taylor Welch, Mollie Leonardo and Stephanie Welch; and front row, Emma Leonardo, the youngest 5K runner and Parker Leonardo.



This year's 5K runners turned out in some great Halloween costumes

UNSUBMITTED PHOTOS

Top finishers by age category included Brenden O’Gara and Elise Servant (19 & under); Martin Beckerle and Hayley Peterson (20-29); Anthony Sullivan-Vo and Alex McConnon (30-39); Timothy Haringa and Julie O’Gara (40-49); Richard Flanagan and Roseann Cushing (50-59), and Bob St. John and Anne-Marie Pastorkovich (60+).

Top finishers in the 1K Pre-Teen Race included first place Theo Haringa (4:56); second place, Xavier Chamberlain (5:23), and third place, AJ Haringa (5:45).

The youngest runner to complete this year’s 5K Race was Emma Leonardo, while the oldest runner was Howard Bottomly.

The Trek Sturbridge Hal-

loween 5K & 1K and Fun Walk is a Sturbridge Rotary Club fundraiser, with profits going to local student scholarships and other community needs projects.

Sponsors for the event included Gold Sponsor: Old Sturbridge Village; Silver Sponsors: Condesa Mexican Restaurant, Hearstone Market & Catering, JARS Café & Bakery, Joe Klimavich Public Relations, Marino Law, P.C., Public House Historic Inn, Southbridge Credit Union, and Bronze Sponsors: Cormier Jewelers, Dave’s Pest Control, Dexter-Russell Inc., George & Davis, Attorneys at Law, Gido’s Brick Oven Pizza & Ice Cream, Starkweather & Shipley Insurance, Tasse Crowley Energy, Tutti Quanti Italian Market,

and Big Bunny Market. Additional sponsors included Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, Jeffrey M. Chasse, Attorney at Law, Applebee’s Grill & Bar, Cracker Barrel - Old Country Store, Kaizen Sushi Bar & Grill, Unique Hair by Chrissy, Cook’s Orchard, and G&R Fish Market.

Prizes and refreshments for this year’s race were provided or supported by Applebee’s Grill & Bar, Big Bunny Market, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Kaizen Sushi Bar & Grill and the Sturbridge Rotary Club.

About Rotary International

Rotary International is a worldwide service organization of men and women united to provide Humanitarian Service, encourage High Ethical Standards in all vocations, and help build Goodwill and Peace throughout the world. The



The face painter was a big hit with Elijah Iyell, Hazel Iyell, and Sebastian Chavannes

Tantasqua Regional High School Interact Club is a Rotary-sponsored organization that brings together young people ages 12-18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of Service Above Self.

The Sturbridge Rotary Club meets for dinner at 6 p.m. on the first and third

Tuesday of the month at the Public House Historic Inn on Sturbridge Common, Route 131, Sturbridge. New members are welcome.

For additional information, visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club website at <https://sturbridgerotary.com/> or Klaus Hachfeld at laserklaus@gmail.com.



Even the canines came in costume. With Anthony Sullivan-Ho, Timothy Haringa, Eliana Predella, AJ Chamberlain and Alex McConnon



Tantasqua Interact Club members helped with traffic detail and kids games

NOTICE

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Red Door Fayre will be held Saturday

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 133 North Main St., will host its Red Door Fayre on Saturday, Nov. 8th, 9:30-2:00.

There will be raffles, an

Exquisite Table, Christmas Table, craft table, bake table, pies and interior plants. A homemade luncheon of soups, sandwiches and apple crisp will be available.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Historical Commission presents Jacob Knight exhibit

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Historical Commission is proud to present “A Jaunt with Jacob, New England Through an Artist’s Eyes,” a retrospective exhibition honoring the artistry and legacy of renowned local artist Jacob Knight.

This multifaceted exhibit offers a personal and powerful glimpse into Knight’s creative world.

The exhibition will feature prints of Knight’s depic-

tions of local New England towns, some never before exhibited photographs capturing Knight’s world by local photographers and members of his circle, a collection of curiosities and ephemera from his past, video interviews with some of Knight’s family and friends, and audio recordings of his poetry slams and music jams.

This celebration of Jacob Knight will offer a vibrant window into the soul of a beloved artist and communi-

ty member.

The opening and reception will be held on Sunday, Nov. 9, from noon-4 p.m. at the Ruth Wells Center for the Arts, 111 Main St., Southbridge.

Show dates are Saturdays and Sundays, Nov. 9 through Nov. 29 from noon-4 p.m., and weekdays by appointment. Call 508-764-3341 to make an appointment.

All are welcome to attend and encouraged to bring a friend.



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- community -

The Joy of Beans Coffee Shop will host Coffee & Art Jubilee on Saturday, Nov. 8.

Coffee & Art Jubilee is this Saturday

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Joy of Beans Coffee Shop invites the community to gather in the heart of West Brookfield, for the upcoming Coffee & Art Jubilee on Saturday, Nov. 8, from 3-7 p.m., at 12 East Main St.

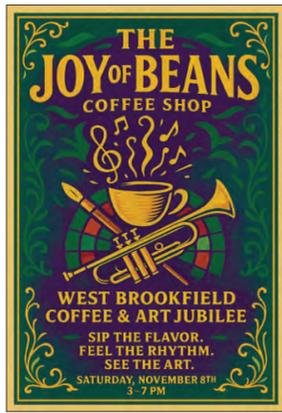
This lively celebration will feature local art, live music, and freshly roast-

ed coffee in a charming, New Orleans-inspired atmosphere.

Guests are encouraged to sip, shop, and experience the spirit of community while exploring one-of-a-kind gifts perfect for early holiday shopping.

It's more than just a cup of coffee – it's a celebration of artists and community spirit.

For more information, please contact thejoyofbeans21@gmail.com.



Library welcomes Yankee Magazine editor

WEST BROOKFIELD – Longtime Yankee Magazine writer and editor, Mel Allen, will present his new book "Here in New England" at Merriam-Gilbert Public Library in West Brookfield, Thursday, Nov. 13, at 6:30 p.m.

The event is free. Books will be available for \$20.

Allen will share photos, stories, and reflections on his time as a writer and editor at Yankee Magazine. The author will answer questions from the audience and sign books.

"Here in New England, Unforgettable stories of people, places, and memories that connect us all" is a collection of stories selected from the hundreds that Allen has written for Yankee Magazine over the past 48 years.

"I see the stories in these pages as miniature pictures of New England that reveal a larger life around them. To tell these stories, I have entered the lives of people for hours or days-and when they open their own lives, their hearts, the words they

speak become intimate albums. They tell me details of their lives that they may not tell anyone else. And it is up to me to treat those words with deep respect. The most important words in this book's title for me are "that connects us all," Allen said.

"We live now in a time where division has become the backdrop to our lives. But when I look at the stories here about people overcoming seemingly impossible obstacles, of others reaching out to help their neighbors, of entire communities pulling together when all seems lost, or of thousands of people searching a wilderness for a lost child, I see a common humanity that has always been part of the New England landscape."

There are other stories about famous New Englanders, but most are about everyday New Englanders and the plac-



Mel Allen

es they live. In all these, Allen reveals the extraordinary character and grit and kindness of the region he's dedicated his life to writing about.

Allen taught fourth grade in Maine for three years and believes that his education as a writer began when he had to hold the attention of 27 children through months of Maine winters.

From his first two stories in Yankee's December 1977 issue to a January day in 2025 when he closed his office door for the last time, he spent nearly half a century finding people and places whose stories he wanted to know and assigning countless others to the finest writers in New England.

Wings of Song hosts 6th Fall Auction

STURBRIDGE – Wings of Song, is sponsoring a fund-raising auction on Saturday Nov. 8 at the Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale, 8 Maple St.

A preview of the items will be at 6:30 p.m. and the Auction will run from 7-9 p.m. Light refreshments and musical entertainment will be performed by Wings of Song and several other local ensembles.

Admission is free, and bidding paddles will be available at the door. Proceeds will help Wings of Song continue making wonderful music for you.

Join Wings of Song in the entertainment, the excitement of a live auction and the opportunity to bid on high-quality items, gift certificates and services from popular retailers and venues. Donations range from sporting equipment, musical instruments, col-

lectible, antiques, hand-made crafts and baked goods.

You might leave with a new treasure, a laptop, mandolin, wine decanter or a holiday performance by a Barbershop Quartet.

Wings of Song is a community chorus that has been performing in the greater Sturbridge and Southbridge area for over 25 years. The band of 60 singers is comprised of mostly highly skilled amateurs with a few seasoned professionals mixed in.

Director, Nym Cooke is a scholar of early American sacred music, conductor, arranger and retired college professor. He is the very affordable treasure to the chorus in its seasonal preparations.

This season's theme is "Night, Moon, Stars". In addition to pieces composed by three of our current members, there'll

be country gospel music, French Baroque music, rural English music, late-Romantic German music, native American music, Danish Christmas music, and more -- including two pieces composed or arranged by John Rutter. (Don't worry--all the texts we'll be singing are English-language.)

Of the 23 pieces on the program, five compositions or arrangements will be world premieres. It's not every community chorus that offers fare as distinctive as this.

Performance dates are Saturday evening, Dec. 13 and Sunday afternoon, Dec.14. There is no charge for admission. Free will donations are encouraged.

For more information, making a donation or becoming a Friend of the Chorus, visit wingsofsong.org or email Carol Curtin, carolcurtin77@gmail.com.

Grassroots Central MA hosts three-part film series

STURBRIDGE – A free community film series "Regenerating Life: How to Cool the Planet, Feed the World, and Live Happily Ever After," a movie by John Feldman, will be presented in three parts by Grassroots Central MA at the Joshua Hyde Public Library, 306 Main St.

The first is on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 3-4:30 p.m. and introduces concepts of our ecological situation, providing a solid understanding of the social and environmental crises that

confront us.

Parts two and three will be presented Dec. 6, and Jan. 10, 2026. These two parts continue the examination of the prevailing climate change story and offer new, attainable solutions.

The film covers our understanding of how life regulates the climate through photosynthesis, the carbon cycle, the water cycle, the dung cycle, and the interconnected soil network of fungi, microorganisms and plant roots. The pho-

tography is beautiful, the information is clear, and the information presented welcomes us to rethink everything we do.

A discussion will follow each presentation and light refreshments will be served.

An on-line option is also available. If you would prefer to join virtually, please contact Sherry at sherryzitter@icloud.com for details.

A preview of the movie can be found on link (<https://hummingbirdfilms.com/regeneratinglife/press-kit/>)

N Brookfield Senior Center lists upcoming events in November

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Senior Center, located at 29 Forest St., will offer the following events and activities during the month of November.

Free art classes will be held on Thursdays with wreath ornaments on Nov. 20 at 11 a.m. A free drawing class will teach how to create landscapes on Nov. 13.

Music bingo will be held

on Monday, Nov. 17 at 10 a.m.

A presentation by Home Health Agency will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 12 at 11:30 a.m. and a fraud presentation by North Brookfield Savings Bank will be Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 11 a.m.

A Thanksgiving luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at noon. There is limited seating and the luncheon is first come, first served.

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Many thanks to our generous community for supporting the 2025 Pumpkin Patch, whether you volunteered, bought pumpkins, or just stopped by. We look forward to seeing you in October 2026.

The Sturbridge Federated Church Pumpkin Patch Committee

Community Newspaper **ADVERTISING Works!**

- opinion -

LETTER TO EDITOR

Brookfield welcomes new Postmaster

To the Editor:
I'm honored to introduce myself to the community as your new Postmaster.

My name is Devashree Shah, and I'm excited to begin this journey serving the residents and businesses of Brookfield.

The U.S. Postal Service has a long-standing tradition of connecting people-through letters, packages, and reliable service.

Under our ambitious Delivering for America plan, I'm committed to upholding that tradition while working to enhance customer experience in every way possible. Whether it's ensuring timely deliveries, improving our retail services, or listening to your feedback, my goal is to make our post office a place of trust and support for ev-

eryone.

To this role, I bring a commitment to operational excellence and genuine community engagement. I want the post office to be more than just a place to mail a letter - I want to be a trusted, reliable hub that directly supports the quality of life for every person and business in this community.

I encourage you to stop by the Post Office, say hello, and share any questions or ideas you may have.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I'm proud to be here and look forward to working together to keep our community connected.

Sincerely,
Devashree Shah
Postmaster
Brookfield Post Office

The trials of the Appalachian Trail



By Julie Midura
Correspondent

"Bees! Run!" It was midafternoon on the fourth day of our backpacking trip through New York State on the Appalachian Trail. A 93-mile hike from the New Jersey border to the Connecticut border in early October.

The first three days had confirmed what others had warned us-the trail through New York would not be easy. Especially this year, when most of the "reliable" streams were bone dry due to the drought. Many days, we were forced to detour off the trail and hike into towns to procure water.

With temps in the 80s, dehydration was an ever-present worry. In addition, the added weight of up to 6.6 pounds of water on our backs made the technical scrambles up steep rock ledges even more precarious.

On day four, we were hustling, intent on hiking as many miles as possible so that we could reach a reliable water source-a water spigot at a pump house-before pitching our tent for the night. We were 12 miles into our day when the unimaginable happened.

Tom was about 75 feet ahead of me, when he suddenly paused and turned back to make sure that I was still behind him. When he saw me a short distance away, he continued on.

Fifteen seconds later, I reached the spot where he had momentarily stopped, and I felt a red-hot sensation on my right arm, followed by another on my left arm. Before I even looked down, I knew that I had just been stung by Yellow Jackets...the most despicable spawn of Satan that has ever inhabited this planet.

Tom must have unknowingly stepped on a ground nest, and they were coming out for vengeance as I walked past.

I screamed in agony as a swarm of them descended upon me-stinging my ankles, thighs, and arms. It felt as though someone was



Tom and Julie hiked through New York on their 93-mile trek from New Jersey to Connecticut

shooting red-hot flaming arrows directly into my skin.

A sound that was unrecognizable even to my own ears came out from somewhere deep inside of me. A guttural sound. Like a deep moan intermingled with a high-pitched wail. It bordered on primal.

Tom turned at the sound-later telling me that he thought the sound was coming from a wounded animal. I screamed to Tom to "Run!" at a decibel that could be heard from miles away, since Tom is deathly allergic Yellow Jacket venom. With adrenaline coursing through my body, I raced along the rock-strewn path like an Olympic medalist, waving my arms to ward off the monsters that were attacking me.

When it seemed as though I was no longer being chased, I finally stopped and bent down to swipe off a dozen Yellow Jackets that were still clinging to my merino wool socks. The pain in my ankles was excruciating, and I began screaming and crying all at once.

I unclipped my pack and dropped it to the ground so that I could pull out my first aid kit. Within seconds, more yellow jackets were upon me.

"They smell the pheromones!" Tom yelled. With no thought of his own safety, he flailed his arms to ward them off and screamed, "Run Julie!"

Leaving my pack behind, I ran like the speed of light until the wasps finally gave up their chase.

A few minutes later, Tom came barreling up the trail with my enormous backpack in hand. His concerned face was filled with desperation when he saw me.

I had been stung over two dozen times. Tears were rolling down my face.

My arms and thighs were already swelling from the venom, and my ankles were so swollen, they were unrecognizable.

Tom insisted I use his EpiPen, since I had a severe reaction to Yellow Jacket venom in the past. I refused.

"We still have 4 more days out here. If YOU get stung, it's life or death. If my throat starts to close, you can inject me. If not, we're saving the EpiPen in case you get stung," I said.

Fortunately, we were only a mile and a half from the water spigot at the next road crossing. Once we got there, I took off my shoes and socks and ran cold water on the stings in a vain attempt to reduce the pain and swelling.

I even went so far as to text my kids to ask them to google whether or not urine could reduce the pain and swelling of Yellow Jackets venom. (Desperate times call for desperate measures!) Alas, they responded that it was just a fallacy. Tylenol was my only option.

Needless to say, I spent a pretty sleepless night in our tent that night due to the pain. The intense itching would begin the following morning. Oh, the joys!

Our seven-day hike through New York State was definitely the single most challenging backpacking trip we have ever taken.

But each trial made us even more grateful for the blessings we encountered along the way. The sunrises and sunsets. The conversations with fellow hikers around a campfire. The enormous trees. The rare flowing stream.

Even the bear encounter while we were brushing our teeth at a primitive tent-site on our second night on trail seemed like a gift.

But that's a story for another day. Let the adventures continue!

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Garden Lady follow up

Martha wrote in after my column on Stinging Nettle. As you may recall, a reader had reached out about this plant and how it had begun to grow rampant in her field.

She was nervous about coming in contact with it, and nervous for her dog, as well, who likes to run in the tall grass. Her main concern was eradicating it, and although I gave her some advice on how to do that, I should have also given the plant a little more well-deserved recognition.

Herbalists and others interested in the nutritional value of nettle often plant it "on purpose."

This is what Martha had to say: "I did, indeed, plant nettles; they are in a part of the yard where their growth will be somewhat controlled. But are they not an excellent source of calcium, and have plenty of other health benefits, besides? It seems we are quick to 'eradicate' the less tame plants, which, upon investigation, can prove to be beneficial."

Martha, your point is well-taken! I guess it goes along with the old saying, "one person's trash is another person's treasure." Or better yet, how about "one person's weed is another person's medicine?"

Along similar lines, this question came in from Steven, who lives in Becket. He wrote to the Garden Lady curious about the late blooming perennial, Monkshood.

First he provides some background; "My wife was starting to clear a small flower area we have next to the driveway two weekends ago. She was cutting down daisies that we didn't even plant there. I saw a flower next to the daisies, which I had never seen before and asked her what it was. She said she had no idea, that she'd never seen it before either. I took some pictures, and every search I did on them said that they're Monkshood. I told her that the search said they're poisonous.

I walked away and then read a little more and found out that they're poisonous to the touch. I went back to tell her and she had cut them down without

touching them because she was scared our dog would get into them. We just left them where they're lying. The stems are still sticking out of the ground. What are your thoughts? Is that what you think they are too? My research didn't show them growing in this area. Also, thoughts about how we should handle them if they are indeed poisonous?"

Monkshood (Aconitum) is a pretty perennial that has blue "hooded" flowers along two-four foot spikes. It is a cottage garden favorite because it is one of a few flowers that do bloom in blue shades, and it blooms towards the end of summer, when few other plants are in their glory. Due to the unique flower shape, the plant is mainly pollinated by "long tongued" bumble bees, who pry open the flower to get at the pollen. With all this said, the plant sounds great!

Now here comes the "but..." Caution should indeed be exercised around Monkshood. It goes by other common names that are more telling of its true nature, Wolfsbane and Devil's Helmet among others.

The plant contains a deadly toxins, aconitine and diterpene alkaloids that can result in death if ingested. It is even advised to use gloves when handling the plant, even its roots if you were to dig it up, because of absorption that can occur through the skin.

Most experts recommend not growing it in gardens that pets or children may frequent.

I hope this answers your question, Steven. I do think that you were on target to be concerned, especially because of your dog.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.



OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500 and 800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamatory of character. Send opinions to: Letters to the Editor, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082 OR e-mail to pouimette@turley.com. Deadline for submission is Monday at noon for the following week's edition.

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- community -



It was time to go "Back to the Future" with Warren Police dressed as Doc and Marty with the DeLorean as part of their car for Trunk or Treat at Quaboag Regional Middle High School.



Don't say it a third time at this Beetlejuice trunk.



A skeleton party and DJ show was provided by Cornwell Quality Tools.

TRUNK OR TREAT FROM PAGE 1

Bank also sponsored the pumpkin contest that was held during the Trunk or Treat. Entries had the opportunity to win prizes such as gift cards.

Providing the music and candy at his booth was DJ Tabby LeBlanc. The DJ

dressed up for the Trunk or Treat and went as Big Bird from Sesame Street.

"A big shout out to DJ Tabby LeBlanc for his time," Colangelo said.

LeBlanc played all the Halloween themed classics, including "Thriller" by Michael Jackson. In addition to the live DJ, there was also a dead DJ jamming in the park-

ing lot. A spooky DJ booth was operating thanks to Cornwell Quality Tools. Skeletons were having a dance party.

The parking lot housing all the cars for trunk or treat were soon lost in fog. The fog was provided by the Warren Fire Department.

This year's Trunk or Treat featured some traditional Halloween themes as well as film

classic themes. The Warren Police Department decided to go "Back to the Future" by decorating the car with another car, the DeLorean. Warren Chief of Police Gerald Millette went as Doc from Back to the Future and was joined by Marty.

The idea of choosing "Back to the Future" came from this year marking the movie's 40th anniversary, premiering in theaters in 1985, starring Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd.

There was also a "Monsters Inc." trunk for Trunk or Treat. Mike and Sully made an appearance and decorated a replica of Boo's door next to their car.

There was a contest taking place at the Trunk or Treat and the top two best cars won prizes. The winners received school apparel, such as jerseys and hats. Dunkin' in Warren also donated gift cards and cups to the Trunk or Treat.

Despite being rained out on their originally date, the Trunk or Treat at Quaboag Regional Middle High School lucked out with beautiful weather over the weekend.



The Vikings arrived at Quaboag Regional Middle High School for Trunk or Treat. Laura Marino, left, and Matt Marino



The skeleton crew was ready to work. Truck display provided by Jim McKeon.



Kendra as Mike and Jess as Sully from Monsters Inc. attended the Trunk or Treat.

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- community -

Amateur radio club November meeting Nov. 25

No Towers, No Problem: Unlocking Big Scores with Backyard Ingenuity'

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club welcomes all amateur radio operators and those interested in the hobby to its monthly meeting, where members explore a wide range of topics related to ham radio, public service, and emergency communications.

This month's meeting will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 25 at 6:30 p.m. The

meeting takes place at the West Brookfield Senior Center, 73 Central St.

Think you need stacks of antennas and multiple towers to crack the contest leaderboards? Think again. Join John, NIPGA as he discusses his ever-evolving antenna farm—consistently landing Top-5 contest scores without a single tower in sight.

Whether you're working with a postage-stamp backyard, planning a stealthy vacation rig, or gearing up for Field Day, POTA, or SOTA, this session will challenge your assumptions about the

need for a tower and spark fresh ideas. You'll leave inspired, informed, and ready to rethink what's possible with some home-brew antennas, rope, creativity, and a little RF magic.

QVARC meetings are open to all—whether you're a licensed ham, studying for your license, or simply curious about the world of amateur radio. The club also offers regular license testing for those looking to obtain their amateur radio license.

For more information about the club, upcoming events, or licensing opportunities, visit QVARC.com.

Fanfare Brass Ensemble to perform Nov. 30



The 10-piece group, Fanfare Brass Ensemble will perform a Christmas Sing Along on Sunday, Nov. 30 at 3 p.m. at the Federate Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale.

STURBRIDGE – All are welcome to a Christmas Sing Along by the Fanfare Brass Ensemble on Sunday Nov. 30 at 3 p.m. at The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale, 8 Maple St.

The 10 part group's program includes "O Come

All Ye Faithful", "Three Ships", "Three Kings", "Westminster Carol", "Jingle Bell Rock", "Twelve Days of Christmas", "Away in the Manger", "A Christmas Cannon", "Jingle Bells", "White Christmas", "Sleigh Ride", "Oh Holy Night", "Rockin'

Around the Christmas Tree", "Angels from the Realms of Glory", "All I want for Christmas", "O little town of Bethlehem", "We Need a Little Christmas", "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer", "Stars and Stripes for Christmas" and more.

Christmas in New Braintree takes place Dec. 6

NEW BRAINTREE – New Braintree is kicking off the holiday season with its "Christmas in New Braintree" on Saturday, Dec. 6.

The event will include a craft fair hosted by the Tri Parish Community Church from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the New Braintree Grade School and Town Hall, both located

on Memorial Drive, photos with Santa from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and crafts for children.

The New Braintree Congregational Church will be holding its traditional cookie sale and cafe during the craft fair.

The New Braintree Historical Society will be hosting a Holiday Open House at the

museum at 10 Utley Road from 4:30-6:30 p.m., and there will be a town tree lighting ceremony at the town hall to bring an end to the festivities. All are welcome.

Anyone who would like to participate as a vendor or volunteer please contact Bonnie St. Cyr at 443-835-7530 or bonniestcyr@yahoo.com.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE FROM PAGE 1

were to enter into a tuition agreement, we would no longer operate our junior/senior high school," he said.

Grant said the task force has communicated with Quaboag and Quabbin school district, and also with the Nahant and Swampscott school districts, which have operated under a tuition agreement since 1982.

He said the task force has also reviewed information with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as well as reviewed student exit surveys from the past several years.

A school district study was completed in 2011, and a regionalization study was completed in 2021.

Grant said a total of 205 students in town opt to school choice out of the school district, with 72 going to Quaboag, 58 to Quabbin, 21 to Tantasqua, and the remainder to other districts.

There are currently 397 students in the school district throughout all grade levels. During the 2002-2003 school year, there were 810 in-district students.

Grant said over 20 school districts in the commonwealth operate with a tuition agreement. Most of them are small towns with lower student enrollment.

Grant said the task force is still waiting for firm numbers about the financial benefits or drawbacks of entering into a tuition agreement, including the cost to educate each student.

He said the school choice

rate set by the state is currently \$5,000 per student. He said this amount was set in 1991 and many school districts are pushing to have that amount increased.

The next step for the task force includes reviewing formal proposals from both Quaboag and Quabbin school districts, and scheduling informational meetings with the community.

"We should always be talking about what can we do better for our students," Grant said.

Public comment

North Brookfield Teachers Association President Damian Sarrette expressed concerns about the task force formed to explore a tuition agreement with another school district.

Sarrette acknowledged that the school district was in "dire straits," but he was not in support of closing the high school.

He said the task force meetings were difficult to attend, and his requests for virtual access were not met.

Sarrette said tuitioning out the high school students is not the right decision for the school district.

Special education paraprofessional Margaret Hanson said she doesn't believe the true cost of tuitioning out the students is known, especially in terms of special education.

"My deep feeling is that we cannot fully comprehend what it is going to cost us if we tuition out the kids," she said. "I cannot support tuitioning the kids out."

STEM presentation

Superintendent Timothy

McCormick said the school district has had significant growth in the area of STEM education.

He said last spring and this fall the school district received funding from the state to support an Innovative Career Pathways in Advanced Manufacturing. This has allowed the school district to expand its STEM offerings without impacting the local budget.

"That designation allows our students to take STEM courses in grades nine through 12 to receive credentials for real world experiences for the work force while graduating with distinction," he said.

McCormick invited students enrolled in the first year of the program to speak to the School Committee about their experiences.

Sixth grader Michael shared that STEM has taught him a lot of skills, which he will be able to use in his future career. He showed the committee his 3D models he was able to design and print on one of the school district's six 3D printers.

Michael said he has even started his own 3D printing business and is earning money to buy a dirt bike.

Eighth graders Noah and Vincent said they have been learning about robotics and how it relates to factory jobs.

"You really get a scope for how it impacts the world and how you can integrate yourself into some of those jobs," Noah said. "You can learn problem solving, time management, and overall just the construction of how these things are made."

Vincent said the robotics program gives the students a head start in their careers.

Ninth grader Dante said the goal of the Advanced Manufacturing pathway is to prepare students for careers in these fields.

Superintendent's goals

McCormick shared his five goals for the 2025-2026 school year. His goals include increasing accountability and achievement in English Language Arts and mathematics, monitoring progress and alignment to the District Strategic Plan, implementing a district wide data cycle process, engaging in continuous leadership development and advancing Universal Design for Learning and high-quality instructional materials.

Administrators' reports

Elementary School Principal Arthur Murphy said the next free senior citizen breakfast will be held Monday, Nov. 17.

He said the school has developed an Instruction and Data room for monthly afterschool meetings of the leadership team. He said staff use this room and meeting time to review student data.

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SPORTS

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Cougars win over Ware clinches state tourney spot



Bielle Gerulaitis Retains control as she moves the ball down field.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARE—Not only did the Quaboag girls' varsity soccer team join a brand new league this fall, they'll also be competing in the Division 4 state tournament for the first time.

Quaboag had played in the Division 5 state tournament four times since the MIAA changed the postseason format in 2021.

The Lady Cougars, who are members of the new CMAC D league, made the jump up a division prior to the start of this season. They clinched a berth in the Division 4 state tournament following a 5-0 shutout victory against the Ware Lady Indians on a damp evening at Veterans' Field in Ware on Oct. 20.

"We've been able to qualify for the state tournament each year that I've been playing for the varsity soccer team," said Quaboag senior



TURLEY PHOTOS BY JACK CASCIO NEAP:SMUGMUG.COM

Madelyn Bagg heads the ball as she jumps above the fray.

Maddy Bagg. "We'll be competing in the Division 4 state tournament this year. We're very glad that we've qualified for states again and we want to make a deep run in this year's tournament."

The Lady Cougars (9-6-2) were ranked 34th in the Division 4 power rankings. The top 32 teams automatically qualify for the state tournament, along with the other teams that finish the regular season with a .500 or better

record.

It was also the fourth consecutive year that Quaboag has posted a shutout against Ware on the soccer pitch.

"This is a big rivalry game for us, and we've always enjoyed playing against Ware," Bagg added. "We've never lost to them."

Ware, who are members of the Pioneer South Division, saw their overall record fall to 5-8-3 following the home loss.



Isabelle Manzano kicks the ball, bringing it down field.

Despite having a below .500 record, the Lady Indians are still hoping to qualify for

See **COUGARS**
PAGE 8

Warriors fall to Doherty, make state tournament

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WORCESTER —Both the Tantasqua Regional boys' soccer and football teams suffered shutout road losses to Doherty Memorial High School on back-to-back days at the end of last week.

The Highlanders soccer team clinched the inaugural CMAC A Division title by posting a 6-0 shutout win over the Warriors at Foley Stadium, last Thursday afternoon.

A little more than 24 hours later, the Warriors football team made another trip to Worcester and suffered a 31-0 loss to the Highlanders, which was played on Doherty's brand new turf field.

Doherty held a 3-0 lead late in the second quarter before scoring touchdowns on a pick-6, a punt return, and on a two yard run following a blocked punt, which pretty much sealed their victory at halftime.

"The last three minutes of the first half killed us," said Tantasqua head coach Nate Orzech. "I thought we would still be in the game at halftime, they just exploded against us."

The Tantasqua football team, who also lost at home against Auburn in another CMAC A contest a week earlier, had a 4-4 overall record and a 1-2 league mark.

The Warriors also lost their first road game of the regular season. Their three road wins came against East Longmeadow (17-14), Nashoba Regional (35-21), and Worcester South (40-7).

The Tantasqua players and coaching staff made the bus ride back to Fiskdale not knowing if they had qualified for the Division 4 state tournament or not.

"I'm not really sure if we're going to still make the playoffs," Orzech said. "I think we deserve to make the playoffs, but I don't think we competed

very well in our last two games. We just have to wait until 1pm on Sunday afternoon to find out if we did make it or not."

The good news for the Warriors supporters is that their football team earned the 16th seed in the state tournament. They're scheduled to play at top-seeded Scituate High School at 7pm on Friday night. The Sailors, who are the defending Division 4 state champions, currently have a 7-1 record. They've won four games in a row since losing, 20-15, at Plymouth South, on October 3.

Tantasqua also qualified for the Division 4 state tournament a year ago as the ninth seed. They lost, 41-12, at eighth-seeded Canton in a first-round game.

Doherty (4-4), who lost four of their first five games this season, squeaked into the Division 3 state tournament as the 15th-seed. The Highlanders are also 2-0 on their new football field, which is located on the site of the old high school and next to the brand-new school, which opened a year ago. Their first game on the new field was a 38-8 win against Westborough High School.

The Highlanders, who celebrated their senior night, took a 3-0 lead against the Warriors when senior Thomas Kursonis made a 31-yard field goal with four minutes remaining in the first quarter.

The Warriors offense responded with a 12-play series.

On the first play of the second quarter, sophomore QB Jack Nichols threw a pass to junior Sean Allen for 20 yards, which moved the ball to the Highlanders 40. Four plays later, the Warriors were forced to turn the ball over on downs.

Allen and senior Gabe Lopez had interceptions

See **WARRIORS**
PAGE 8

Pioneers beat Orioles in first conference matchup between the teams

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER—The previous 23 games on the gridiron between Belchertown and Pathfinder Tech have taken place on Thanksgiving morning.

The two squads, who first faced each other in 2001, will be facing each other at Belchertown High School on



Cassian Kowalik takes the ball through the middle of the field.

Thanksgiving morning, but they're also members of the Tri-County League.

The league contest took place Oct. 24 at Legion Field in Palmer.

The Pathfinder Tech Pioneers celebrated their senior night with a 40-25 victory over the Orioles before a large crowd.

"It did feel like a Thanksgiving Day game tonight," said Pathfinder Tech head coach Bill Darling. "They made a comeback against us in the second half, but we never relinquished the lead. I'm very proud of the players."

The seniors listed on the Pathfinder Tech football roster are Dustyn Cook, Ethan Mooney, Stephen Curtis, Brandy Wilson, Aiden Girard, Brandon Charron, Jaideen Ambrose, Wyatt Breault, Amias Kowalik, Jaycub Parker-Gregory, Harold Black, and Jarett Skowyra.

"It's nice that we could beat our rivals on senior night," Darling said. "They'll



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Anthony Arventos and Mason Baer combine for a tackle.

probably remember tonight's game forever."

The two teams are heading in opposite directions.

While the Pioneers (3-4) won their third game in a row, the Orioles (4-3) have lost three straight games.

"I'm very frustrating because we began the season with a 4-0 record and we've lost our last three games," said Belchertown head coach Keith LeBeau. "We've lost all of our fundamentals. We have a lot of things to work on. Give Pathfinder a lot of credit because they

made the plays."

Belchertown won the coin toss, and junior Avery Cote returned the opening kickoff to the Pioneers 35 yard line.

The Orioles offense put together a four minute drive which was capped off with a one yard TD run by junior quarterback Coleman Longley.

Junior Leandro Martins made the extra point attempt.

Pathfinder sophomore

See **PATH FOOTBALL**
PAGE 8

Strong finish for field hockey

BARRE — Last week, Quabbin Regional High School field hockey finished up its regular season with two wins in its final three games. The Panthers defeated Clinton 3-0 and Marlborough 2-0 to go with against Leominster. The regular

season ends with a 14-3-1 regular season record. Quabbin awaits its seeding in the Division 4 state tournament. They are currently ranked No. 7 in the division, though play has to complete this week for that or another seed to lock in.



Abby Rogowski winds up for a long free hit.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Veanna Salvadore tries to keep the ball away from the opposition.



Makenzie Casey looks to make a play on the ball.

- sports -

Railers fall against Reading Royals 5-1

WORCESTER – The Railers fell Saturday night with a 5-1 loss to the Reading Royals.

Worcester's lone goal was scored by Drew Callin to make it 3-1 in the third period. There was a little bit of history there, since it had been 1,411 calendar days since his last goal for the Railers on Dec. 8, 2021.

Callin spent almost all of that span in the American Hockey League.

Reading got two goals from Carson Golder. Massimo Rizzo, Brandon Saigeon, and Sawyer Boulton each had one apiece.

Vinnie Purpura got the win in net with 25 saves. Tristan Lennox took the loss and stopped 27 shots.

The game ended in messy fashion with altercations

all over the place late as the teams totaled 103 PIM in the third period. The 117 PIM overall were the third most in team history, the most ever at the DCU Center.

Including two video reviews, the game time was 2:51, second most in team history for a regulation game and tied for the longest at the DCU Center.

The Railers seek to regroup next weekend as they play their first three-in-three of the season. All three games are with Maine. Friday night the teams are in Portland, the next two at the DCU Center.

Worcester was outshot by two and outscored by two in the first period.

Rizzo scored from between the circles at 9:12. There was a lot of traffic in

front of Lennox and the officials looked at possible goalie interference, but the score was still 1-0 after the review.

The Royals increased their lead to 2-0 at 15:37 on a goal by Saigeon. He got the puck against the far left board, perhaps 40 feet from the net, and sent a wrist shot inside the far post.

In between the goals, Railers forward Lincoln Hatten took on Reading's Boulton in a quick, intense fight. How time flies. Boulton is the son of Eric Boulton, a legendary battler whose career pro PIM totals were in four figures.

Eric Boulton spent part of 1998-99 with the AHL Kentucky Thoroughblades. On Jan. 29, 1999 in Kentucky he and IceCats forward Reed Low engaged in arguably the

best fight in Worcester hockey history, a Rocky vs. Apollo Creed battle.

Coincidentally, or maybe not, Kentucky's coach that season was Roy Sommer.

Golder finished off the odd-man rush that made it a 3-0 game in the second period. Reading played the break perfectly as Golder converted Cam Cook's pass with a re-direct that Lennox had no chance on.

Callin scored from in close with Worcester on a power play at 4:51 but Boulton blunted any chance at a comeback by popping home a rebound at 7:40. Reading got a 5 on 3 chance later in the period and took 11 seconds to convert it for the game's final goal.



Ava Ostrout maintains ball control as she maneuvers downfield.

COUGARS FROM PAGE 7

the Division 5 state tournament. They were ranked 28th in the power rankings.

"Losing 5-0 is going to hurt our power rankings," said Ware head coach Morgan Toelken. "We didn't play in the state tournament last year and it would be nice to get back there again this season."

A couple of days later, Ware lost, 3-1, to Hopkins Academy in the quarterfinals of the Western Mass. Class D tournament. Senior Isabella Cotaj scored the Lady Indians only goal in that match.

Western Massachusetts is the only section of the state that still holds a sectional tournament prior to the state tournament.

"We're the last region that still has a sectional tournament," Toelken said. "I know we're trying to keep the nostalgia, but I think we need to align with the rest of the state. Quaboag still has a couple of regular season games left."

The Lady Cougars outshot the Lady Indians, 10-3.

One of Ware's shot attempts was taken by senior Olivia DiRienzo early in the opening half.

The only other Ware senior is Madisyn Slattery.

The home team also had a free kick before the Lady Cougars took over the match.

During the sixth minute, senior Gabrielle Riendeau split a pair of defenders before firing a low shot into the left corner of the net past junior goalkeeper Emily Jones (6 saves).

Less than ten minutes later, Bagg, who assisted on the Lady Cougars' first goal, made the score 2-0 by putting another shot into the left corner.

Bagg is planning to continue playing soccer at Bates College next year.

Quaboag's final two goals of the opening half were scored by senior Maddie Potvin and freshman Julia Queiroga.

Potvin also netted the Lady Cougars final goal six minutes into the second half, which was unassisted.

Junior Brielle Sullivan had a couple of shots on goal for the visiting team in the middle of the second half, but Jones managed to make the saves.

It was a homecoming game for Quaboag assistant soccer coach Michelle Zawalski, who graduated from Ware High School in 2017.

Thunderbirds pick up point against Islanders

BRIDGEPORT, CT – The Springfield Thunderbirds (1-6-1-1) rode a terrific afternoon from their starting goaltender into a shootout before falling 2-1 to the Bridgeport Islanders (2-5-1-0) on Sunday afternoon inside Total Mortgage Arena.

Bridgeport entered the game as one of the league's most potent first-period offenses with 14 tallies in its first eight opening frames of the season. That trend continued at 8:54 of the first when rookie Joey Larson deflected a Sean Day point shot through Vadim Zherenko, giving the Islanders the 1-0 advantage.

The T-Birds once again

showed good resilience and timely power play success at 17:03 to tie the score. Matthew Peca won the opening draw of the advantage, allowing Samuel Johannesson to get a shot into the blue paint. Marcus Hogberg made the first stop, but Matt Luff was on the scene to jab a backhand rebound home to tie the game, 1-1. The goal, Luff's team-leading fourth of the season, was also his fourth point in the last two games.

Zherenko and Hogberg rose into the spotlight in the second period, as neither team could take advantage on a plethora of power play opportunities. Bridgeport went 0-for-4 on

man advantages in the first 40 minutes, including an 0-for-3 spell in period two. Springfield, meanwhile, was unable to break the 1-1 tie on their one chance in the middle stanza.

Zherenko and the T-Birds' penalty kill continued to rise to the occasion in the third, stonewalling the Bridgeport power play once more in the final period to complete a perfect 5-for-5 day. Zherenko went the final 51:06 of regulation without allowing a tally.

As the 1-1 tie carried into overtime, the netminder only raised his game further, as Zherenko came up with high-danger saves

on both Marshall Warren and Alex Jefferies in the 3-on-3 proceedings, allowing the T-Birds a chance to win in the shootout. After Chris Terry and Luff traded shootout goals through the first two rounds, the game came down to the third round. After Hogberg turned away Nikita Alexandrov, former T-Bird Matthew Highmore stepped up and whistled a perfect forehand off the inside of the post to ice the game for Bridgeport.

The T-Birds and Islanders renew acquaintances as the two clubs meet at the Thunderdome on Friday, Nov. 7 for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop.

PATH FOOTBALL FROM PAGE 7

quarterback Grayson Griswold completed a couple of passes

to Skowyra before sophomore Cassian Kowalik powered his way seven yards into the endzone with 1:31 left in the first quarter.

Kowalik also scored a rushing touchdown on the two-point conversion, which gave the Pioneers an 8-7 lead.

Following an interception by junior Anthony Arventos, the home team put together a nine play scoring drive.

Just when it looked like Griswold would be sacked, he managed to toss the ball to sophomore Trevor Alexander, who made the catch in the endzone completing the 9-yard touchdown pass with 8:14 remaining in the first half.

There was a fumble on



Grayson Griswold goes for the quarterback keeper.

the two-point conversion play, which left the Pioneers holding onto a 14-7 lead.

With a little more than a minute left in the half, Cassian Kowalik scored his second rushing touchdown

on an 11-yard scamper up the middle.

Holding a 20-7 half-time lead, the Pioneers put six more points on the old scoreboard in the middle of the third quarter.

Griswold completed a 44-yard TD pass to Kowalik, who made an over the shoulder catch before sprinting into the endzone.

Trailing by 19 points, the Orioles scored the next three touchdowns which closed the gap to one point.

The comeback started when Longley threw a screen pass to senior Adam O'Rourke, who ran into the end zone behind a wall of blockers completing the 63-yard scoring play.

The extra point attempt was blocked.

After the Pioneers offense were forced to turn the ball over on downs, Cote scored a 34-yard rushing touchdown with three

minutes left in the third quarter.

A pass on the two-point conversion play was incomplete in the endzone.

With 1:12 left in the third quarter, Longley called his number in the huddle and scored his second rushing touchdown on a six yard run.

Longley also carried the ball on the conversion play, but he was tackled in the backfield by Charron, which allowed the Pioneers to keep the lead.

Sophomore Caleb Crum and Griswold sealed the Pioneers victory with rushing touchdowns during the final quarter.

Belchertown will be looking to get back into the win column when they travel to McCann Tech on Saturday night, while Pathfinder Tech will be playing at Monument Mountain on Friday night.

Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching "turleysports."

We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis.

Please follow and share with your friends and loved ones.

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

WARRIORS FROM PAGE 7

another touchdown.

Things didn't get any better for the visiting team, as junior Max Haire blocked a punt leading to a two-yard TD run from sophomore Andre Perkins.

Perkins also scored on a 10-yard run with 8:29 left in the third quarter.

The Warriors will need to play a perfect game if they want to pull off the upset victory on Friday night.

Things didn't get any better for the visiting team, as junior Max Haire blocked a punt leading to a two-yard TD run from sophomore Andre Perkins.

Perkins also scored on a 10-yard run with 8:29 left in the third quarter.

The Warriors will need to play a perfect game if they want to pull off the upset victory on Friday night.



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Have you taken photos at a local sports event and want to see them published in this paper? Email your image(s) with description to:

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WARE: 214 OLD BELCHERTOWN RD - Beautiful log home set on 5+ acres near the Quabbin, oversized two car garage with workshop area. Open living room area, granite counters, lower-level family rooms, enclosed four season sunroom on the front. **\$585,000**

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- community -

Students and Rotarians completed footwear drive

Tantasqua Regional High School collected 549 pairs of footwear during the October drive in partnership with the Rotary Club of the Brookfields and Planet Aid.

Students and Rotarians completed footwear drive

The students of Tantasqua Regional High School and Quaboag Regional High School once again showed their amazing spirit, helping their world by participating in an "Environmental Project," partnering with the Rotary Club of the Brookfields and Planet Aid (a nonprofit organization that has collected 70 million pounds of textiles in 2024 alone).

The project was a new and used Sneakers/Foot-



Planet Aid employee Mike, Rotarian Christine Gagne, Tantasqua Regional High School student Paige Rosen and H.Rotarian John Gagne, collected donated footwear from the high school

wear Collection Drive that the students ran from Oct. 14-29. Paige Rosen, the student running the project at

Tantasqua, reported their final count on collected footwear was 549 pairs. Quaboag Regional High

School reported that they had four of the large Planet Aid Boxes filled. Quaboag High School had placed one large Planet Aid box in West Brookfield Elementary and one in Warren Community Elementary School as well as two at the High School in support of the project.

Planet Aid will take the footwear to be refurbished and given to people in need or recycle those that cannot be, into other needed products.

Thank you to everyone who donated clothes or footwear. Together, the community can divert tons of textiles from landfills, which is a win for people and the planet.



H.Rotarian John Gagne, Planet Aid employee Amie Trombly and Rotarian Christine Gagne stand next to donation bins.

NEW PASTOR FROM PAGE 1

decided it was time for a change and he took a position as a local minister at a UCC church in Vermont and for the past six years, he was the pastor at a church in Marblehead, Ohio, which is located on a peninsula of Lake Erie with a population of just 900 people.

"I started looking to see what was possible," he said of local ministry. "It's been a shift in my career."

In addition to his success in academia, Williamson gained notability for his skills as a soccer coach, mainly in developing and growing winning programs from the ground up.

"I have loved that part of my life," Williamson said of coaching. "I tell people I have these three critical parts of my career: teaching, coaching and being a pastor."

Williamson developed his love of soccer in his youth, having played on Needham's first state championship team in 1968. He was even paid to play soccer on the Chicago Amateur League for two summers in

1975 and 1976.

"I played into my late 30s," he said. "I was lucky that way."

Williamson talked about his high school soccer coach, Don Brock, and how he is a living legend in the sport, coaching for over five decades and leading his teams to close to 700 wins.

He also spoke about his teammate Robbie Ftorek, who went on to gain fame in the National Hockey League and World Hockey Association.

"He was a three-sport athlete and I learned a lot from him," Williamson said. "I played two years with him and I was very fortunate."

Williamson said while he misses coaching, he will apply his same teambuilding skills and leadership to helping the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield reach its goals to become more of a presence in the community and it increase its membership and ministries. He noted that the church and its members are already a major presence at community events, offering its famous aspar-

agus chowder at the annual Asparagus Festival and much more.

"We'd also like people to become more aware that this is a welcoming church and it has an ability to provide community for folks and be supportive," he said.

Williamson said the church would also like to increase its ministry offerings, by expanding the Sharing Cupboard, which already serves many people in the community.

"It's a vital ministry in this church," he said.

The church will continue to work with Dismas House in Oakham, hosting alternating meals with the residents at the farm.

Williamson said he and the church members would like to add more related programs to the church's offerings, through Bible study, music, and more. He said the church would also continue to be a witness on social justice issues.

"I really want to support the church in terms of its goals," Williamson said.

Williamson said he has a plan for renewal, hope and joy, and also finding con-

nection between scripture lessons and modern day issues.

"How the gospel speaks to a contemporary situation...that's important," he said.

Williamson said he will also focus on faith and young families, adding that studies have looked at how many people at that stage in life are experiencing higher levels of unhappiness.

"There should be a sense of joy when you come to worship," Williamson said, and that is something that is immediately felt when walking through the doors of the church.

About the church

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, is located at 36 North Main St. with worship services offered each Sunday at 10 a.m. All people are welcomed and encouraged to attend, no matter where they are in their faith journey.

For more information, stop by a worship service, visit westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org, call 508-867-7078 or email fcwv-worship@gmail.com.

STURBRIDGE FROM PAGE 1

idents and visitors not to litter and to organize events and programs to clean up litter across the town. The steering committee will develop the Sturbridge chapter, collaborate with local stakeholders, and organize litter cleanups and other community improvement events.

This will be a volunteer-led organization that works alongside the Sturbridge Department of Public Works, the Town Administrator's office, other municipal leaders, and local businesses.

"We are excited to create this community-led Keep Sturbridge Beautiful chapter committed to enhancing our public spaces and environmental health," said Grimm. "This initiative will help keep our streets, parks, and neighborhoods litter-free, clean, and safe, while promoting pride in our community. It's a win-win for Sturbridge residents, businesses, and the local environment."

"I am excited to see the positive impact that Keep Sturbridge Beautiful will

make in the community," said Neil Rhein, found and executive director of Keep Massachusetts Beautiful. "Across Massachusetts, our local chapters are mobilizing volunteers and local businesses to clean up and green up their communities. In the process, they also forge more community connections and foster increased local civic engagement."

Residents who are interested in joining the Steering Committee or participating as volunteers can email Sturbridge's Economic Development Coordinator, Terry Masterson at tmasterson@sturbridge.gov for more information.

Keep Sturbridge Beautiful is a chapter of Keep Massachusetts Beautiful, a statewide nonprofit that is working to build cleaner, greener, litter-free communities across our state.

About Keep Massachusetts Beautiful

Keep Massachusetts Beautiful is a nonprofit organization that is taking action to make Massachusetts a cleaner, greener, place to live, work, and play. Learn more at www.keepmass-beautiful.org.

FEATURED ARTIST FROM PAGE 1

family she still has in Maryland.

"We're all musical, one way or another," Lyons said.

One time in Vermont, Lyons was playing songs by Fleetwood Mac during a campfire. Many people nearby heard the music and began to believe Fleetwood Mac was in Vermont. The songs Lyons enjoys playing from Fleetwood Mac include "Landslide" and "Leather & Lace".

While living in Salem, Lyons recalled her music being recognized in some local publications. Her most common venues in Salem that she would perform in included the Hawthorne Inn and In a Pig's Eye.

The honor of being the featured artist meant a lot to Lyons as it also highlights the town she calls home.

"I love the Town of North Brookfield," Lyons stated. "I watched it change and evolve over the years."

Lyons, like many North Brookfield residents, is saddened to see some deterioration of the Town House. It's an important landmark that the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House are working hard to try and preserve.

Lyons is proud to be a part of supporting the Friends and the preservation of this beloved building.

"Being the artist and bringing attention means the world to me," Lyons said.

Lyons would like to see the Town House operational

again and be able to perform her music there.

"That Town House has a lot of history and needs to be preserved," Lyons said. "I'm honored that they made me the artist of the month."

About Artist of the Month Program

The seed was planted at a Downtown Development Committee meeting during the pandemic, grew into a

YouTube channel with the help of a Local Cultural Council grant for "Virtual Programming to Highlight the Local Arts Community", and finally blossomed as Artist of the Month on the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House Facebook and website pages.

The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House em-

phasize the rich cultural nature of the area and pointing out the possibilities that exist for programming when the Town House is restored and once again hosts workshops and performances.

Today, the Friends are spotlighting an area artist each month on their website, with the artist's own page, telling their own story, and calling atten-

tion to their special talent. The Friends of the Town House website's Artist of the Month page may be accessed by going to nbtownhouse.com/featured-artists.

Visit the website to learn more about this month's featured artist, Susan Lyons. The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the

purpose of raising funds and promoting public support and awareness for the renovation and restoration of the historic North Brookfield Town House and the Town House Great Hall in order for it to be a civic and cultural center for the town of North Brookfield and surrounding communities.

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- community -

Annual Holiday Fair to be held on Nov. 22

WEST BROOKFIELD – The George Whitefield United Methodist Church, 33 West Main St., will host its annual Holiday Fair on Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., featuring baked goods, hand knits and crafts, jams, fudge, holiday décor and

Thrift Store.

Coffee and Donuts will be available in the morning and a lunch of homemade soups and hotdogs will be served from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
For more information you may call Heidi at 978-989-5736.

New Braintree Craft Fair seeks vendors and crafters

NEW BRAINTREE – Christmas in New Braintree Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, Dec. 6 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the New Braintree Grade School and Town Hall.

The craft fair is being sponsored by the Tri-Parish Community Church. Eight foot by eight foot spaces are still available.
To reserve, call 443-835-7530



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Handcrafted stained glass items and jewelry by Bonnie Waterhouse will be one of the many items available at the Christmas in New Braintree Craft Fair to be held on Saturday, Dec. 6 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

CHECK OUT ALL THE

Turley Publications

www.newspapers.turley.com

White Christmas returns on December 7

WEST BROOKFIELD – Please join the town of West Brookfield, as it kicks off the 33rd Annual White Christmas celebration on Sunday, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

There will be fun for folks of all ages going on throughout the day.

The West Brookfield White Christmas Committee encourages everyone to come out and enjoy the town's annual kick-off of the holiday season by touring the historic town, strolling the downtown district, exploring local businesses and open houses, decorating gingerbread houses in the Great Hall, meeting Santa for a

quick picture, as well as dropping off those letters headed directly to the North Pole.

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

There will be plenty for the entire family to come and enjoy. If you are lucky, you may just see Father Christmas strolling the streets and greeting our visitors in town. Stick around to close the day with our holiday concert

located in the Great Hall of the Town hall to hear some lovely voices, courtesy of the Saint Thomas Aquinas School Choir.

Members of the West Brookfield White Christmas Committee 2025 are excited to be able to share this fun-filled day with both residents and non-residents alike. This is a free event brought to you courtesy of local businesses and town supporters.

The committee encourages everyone from all walks of life to come and enjoy the town, and kick off the holiday season with lots of festive events throughout town to interest everyone.

Maps of town open houses and vendors can be picked up in various local business, by accessing the Facebook page ("33rd Annual White Christmas in West Brookfield") or by emailing: whitechristmas-wb@gmail.com.

Committee members look forward to seeing everyone explore West Brookfield and all the excitement the holiday season brings. They remind folks to be mindful as the health and safety of all guests is priority in West Brookfield.

Parking is available free throughout town and shuttle services are available outside Gavitt Wire.

TipTop Co-Op takes action to fight hunger

BROOKFIELD – With food costs skyrocketing and the federal government cutting off SNAP benefits right before the holidays, TipTop, a food co-op located near the Brookfield Common, has taken action.

At the most recent board meeting, members voted to implement a program to support the less fortunate. TipTop will allow low-income shoppers to receive \$40 worth of produce for \$20 once per week.

Support for this program will come from the Sarah Heller Fund for as long as it is sustainable. Heller ran TipTop Country Store for 20 years before she passed away in February 2025 and it was her hope to see the store's doors stay open as a co-op.

In addition to taking monetary donations for the Sarah Heller Fund, the co-op is also taking food donations for Tantasqua Regional School District's Pages and Packs

Pantry. This is a collaboration between the Joshua Hyde Library of Sturbridge and the public school district to support families in need of nutritious meals.

Should TipTop shoppers purchase non-perishable food items for donation, they will receive 20% off their donated purchase through the end of 2025.

"We know it's not much but every little bit helps during these difficult times. The store will do what we can for the

community" said Barbara Marderosian, TipTop Co-Op president.

TipTop Co-Op is located at 8 Central St. To contact TipTop Co-Op for further inquiries about this program, please email: tiptopbrookfield@icloud.com

To learn more about the Double Up Food Bucks program and its partners:

https://www.needhelp-payingbills.com/html/double_up_food_bucks_program.html <https://doubleupamerica.org/>

Home of the Brave 5K run returns for 7th year

STURBRIDGE – The Sturbridge Special Events Committee will host the 7th annual Home of the Brave 5K fun walk/run to benefit local veterans on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 8-11 a.m. on the Town Common.

Race entry is \$25, with a special military price of \$10 for servicemembers.

The event will be at-

tended by DJ Ellis Cropper and Flutie Star Reagon Bush.

The committee is currently seeking veteran resource vendors, donations for raffles, swag, and event volunteers.

For more information or to register, visit ww.5KGP.com.

3rd Annual Jewelry Show features local artists

WEST BROOKFIELD – Jewelry makers Cassandra Goldwater and Cathie Palo are returning for their 3rd Annual Jewelry Show at West Brookfield Art & Frame Gallery, 10 East Main St., with an opening reception on Friday,

Nov. 7 from 5-7 p.m.

All are encouraged to attend the opening reception and meet with Goldwater and Palo, while also enjoying complimentary wine and cheese and a welcoming sense of community.

EARLY DEADLINES FOR ADS & LEGAL NOTICES

Thanksgiving will bring early deadlines for all legal notices to run in TURLEY PUBLICATIONS the week of November 24-28, 2025.

Thursday, Nov. 20 at 2 PM for November 27 issue

- Agawam Advertiser News • Country Journal
- The Register • Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Friday, November 21 at 2 PM for November 27 Issue

- Sentinel • Quaboag Current

Monday, November 24 at 2 PM for November 27 Issue

- The Journal Register • Ware River News • Barre Gazette

Tuesday, November 25 at 2 PM for November 28 Issue

- Town Reminder • The Holyoke Sun • Chicopee Register

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Deadline for photos and forms is Friday, December 12, 2025

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CREW LEADER Sturbridge Department of Public Works

The Town of Sturbridge Department of Public Works (DPW) is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of Crew Leader. This is a full-time role with competitive benefits. Starting pay rate of \$34.11/hr, with yearly step increases.

- Key Requirements:**
- Valid Class A or B CDL
 - Equipment Hydraulic License 2A (required)
 - Equipment Hydraulic Licenses 4G and 4E preferred, with the ability to obtain within 6 months)
 - Effective communication skills.
 - Two years of supervisory experience in the construction field or municipal.
 - Proficiency in operating all DPW equipment, including but not limited to: grader, loader, roadside mower, excavator, backhoe, and street sweeper.
- Application Details:
- Application and job description are available on the Town of Sturbridge website under job opportunities <https://www.sturbridge.gov/your-government/pages/job-opportunities>
 - Interviews will begin on November 4, 2025, and will continue until the position is filled.

Additional Information:

- The DPW operates as a union shop.
- The Town of Sturbridge is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE).

For more information, please refer to the job description or contact the Sturbridge DPW directly at **508-347-2515** or dpw@sturbridge.gov.

Job Posting: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS Town of Sturbridge, MA

The Town of Sturbridge is seeking a dynamic, experienced, and highly qualified professional for the position of Assistant Director of Public Works. This is a senior-level, management position that will support the Director of Public Works in overseeing the planning, administration, and daily operations of the Public Works Department.

About our community
Sturbridge is a welcoming community known for its picturesque landscapes, historic charm, and vibrant local attractions. As Assistant DPW Director, you will play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing the Town's infrastructure, ensuring a high quality of life for our residents.

Key responsibilities
The Assistant Director will provide a variety of engineering and administrative services under the guidance of the DPW Director, with a primary focus on:

- Conducting plan reviews for subdivisions, site plans, roadways, water, sewer, and stormwater designs.
- Managing all stormwater permitting activities associated with the NPDES MS4 General Permit.
- Supervising and overseeing the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Coordinating snow and ice removal activities.
- Addressing resident inquiries related to town projects, utilities, and permitting.
- Presenting engineering reports to and responding to inquiries from town boards and committees, including the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Conservation Commission.

Qualifications

- Education and Experience: A bachelor's degree in civil/environmental engineering or a related field from an accredited four-year college or university is required. Candidates must have two to five years of related public works experience and/or training, or an equivalent combination of •
- Technical Knowledge: Knowledge of public construction bidding and Massachusetts procurement laws is essential.
- Computer Skills: Proficiency in spreadsheet software, GIS software (such as ESRI), and word processing software is required.
- Communication Skills: Strong verbal and written communication skills are necessary to interact effectively with town staff, other agencies, and the general public.
- Licenses: Must possess a valid Driver's License.

Benefits
The Town of Sturbridge offers a competitive salary and a comprehensive benefits package that includes:

- Salary up to \$100,000 DOQ
- Health Insurance,
- Paid time off and paid holidays
- Retirement Plan

How to apply
Submit a cover letter, resume, and Town job application to Frances Wychorski, Constituent Liaison in the Town Administrator's Office, via email at bosadmin@sturbridge.gov or via mail at **308 Main St, Sturbridge, MA 01566**. This position will remain open until filled. *The Town of Sturbridge is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and/or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development - HUD - toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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Absolutely gorgeous manufactured home (60x28) at Brookfield Meadows 55+ community. 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, kitchen loaded with cherry cabinets, formal dining area, breakfast nook, 2x6 construction, 4 season heated room with gas fireplace (stove) on thermostat. TONS of improvements - windows, furnace, hot water heater and central air done in 2023, new side deck with composite wood, newer flooring throughout. Generac generator 2018. Master bath has double vanity, huge linen closet and skylight, oversized living room with vaulted ceilings and tons of natural lighting. Storage shed with new roof and electric, patio sitting area out back with room for small garden. Lots of beautiful mature plants and flowers.

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WATERWHEEL REALTY Paul Varney Sr.
 Real Estate Broker and Owner paulraymondvarney@gmail.com

NO ENTRANCE FEE
 Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 31 Edward Lane, Barre, MA 01005. This is a 55 and better community. This home includes a wonderful floor plan with very spacious rooms. Master bedroom includes a walk-in closet. Two full bathrooms. A four-season sunroom is off the kitchen. Includes two large woodsheds and a metal garage you can park under to fend off winter weather. Asking \$295,000. See listing on MLS # 73433198

NO ENTRANCE FEE
 Brand New Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 37 Gauthier Rd., Barre. This is a 55 and better community. This home features an open kitchen/living room concept, perfect for family gatherings. Two large bedrooms on opposite ends of the home. Master bedroom has a walk-in closet and large attached bathroom. Just off the kitchen is a laundry area with door leading to back deck and yard. There is a monthly HOA fee of \$675 per month which includes water, sewage, rubbish removal, and taxes. All exterior and interior doorways are 36" wide. Asking \$225,000. See listing on MLS # 73397436

NO ENTRANCE FEE
 Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 32 Edward Lane, Barre, MA 01005. This is a 55 and better community. Includes large carport and two large garden sheds. Approx. living area 1,000 SqFt. Asking \$144,900. See listing on MLS # 73398863.

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