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Volume 16, Number 50

Friday, November 10, 2023

Police Department welcomes new four-legged member



By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Police Department has a new addition to the force, and that is Labrador retriever Finn, an emotional support dog.

Finn has many trainings, which he goes through with his human counterpart, Officer Brandon Hill, with the official completion of the AKC Star Puppy Training and will begin therapy training at the end of the month.

Finn loves to train with Hill, and definitely loves his treats, too.

Hill started the Comfort Dog Program out of feelings of compassion for the community he serves.

“I am very community driven. A comfort dog is a great outreach tool for us to connect with other towns. We’re here to talk, here to listen, here to help,” he said.

See **POLICE** | PAGE 2



East Brookfield Police Department's emotional support dog Finn visited Worcester State University last week to provide comfort to the students there following a fatal shooting incident. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Finn is shown at the East Brookfield Police Department's first ever Trunk-or-Treat.

Daylight Savings Time

Professor Johnson wants to set the right standard

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

The changeover from Daylight Savings Time is done, sort of.

As this is being written, one still sees the odd clock at the wrong hour, but we are back to Standard Time.

Except our bodies and minds are not yet perfectly

aligned to it due to something called circadian rhythm. Circadian rhythm regulates daily body cycles.

The changeover to standard time from daylight savings time and vice versa will put our circadian rhythm out of sync.

Over a short time, most of us will adjust to whatever our clocks say. That does not mean

See **STANDARD** | PAGE 12

Local crafters attend Tantasqua's 11th annual fair

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

STURBRIDGE – The holiday season is quickly approaching, and the craft fair season has come on in full swing.

The many talented artists and vendors at the 11th annual Tantasqua Craft Fair at high school in Fiskdale, brought their all and their talents this past Saturday.

Linda Brown, who has been

See **FAIR** | PAGE 6



Caitlyn Siwek showed off her grandmother, Patricia Siwek's beautiful paintings and adorable gnomes. TURLEY PHOTOS BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

Planning Board approves site plan for bank construction

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

STURBRIDGE – A public hearing was held for a site plan review at Cornerstone Bank, 200 Charlton Road.

At the Oct. 24 Planning Board meeting, engineer James Bernardino from CMG joined Cornerstone Bank representatives Arthur Breault and Kevin St. Pierre to present a proposal to demolish the bank's existing

See **BOARD** | PAGE 12

School district's MCAS scores show 'work in progress'

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Superintendent Timothy McCormick shared the school district's results from the spring Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System testing.

At the Oct. 26 School Committee meeting, McCormick said MCAS has been around for over 20 years now, and this spring, all students across the commonwealth tested on Next-Generation, which was launched in 2017. The original MCAS test is now known as Legacy.

Next-Gen is more focused on critical thinking and the test became more rigorous. Testing is also done solely on a computer.

McCormick said that since questions on Next-Gen are more in-depth, students that may have scored "proficient"

See **SCHOOL** | PAGE 13



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- community -

Be Seppe Strong

Community comes together to support family

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

SPENCER – The American Legion Post 138 hosted a fundraiser for 10-year-old Giuseppe “Seppe” Struppa with a spaghetti dinner, raffle, and live music to raise money for brain cancer treatment.

Struppa was diagnosed in September, and the family has since been surrounded by a large web of people to love and support him in any way he needs.

“The biggest thing we need is prayers so that we can find that miracle,” Seppe’s dad, Michael, said. “We would love all the sup-

port we can get.”

The family at this time is looking for any help and support that they can get and are looking to find someone else who had a miracle and can come alongside Seppe to give him encouragement and support.

“The Fire Department made sweatshirts, and everybody has been amazing,” Michael said.

Jeffrey Perron, a member of the Legion, talked about how much he admires the Struppa family and their friendship as both members of the Legion and veterans. “We are trying to help as much as we can.”

Seppe is a wonderful kid and brings a

smile to everyone’s face, family and friends said.

“He is the most kind and gentle kid,” his dad said.

The family is trying to get to Germany for treatments for Seppe, and any form of help is welcome in the form of gift cards for gas and groceries. Donations can be made through Venmo @seppstrong and checks can be mailed to Seppe Strong Fund, c/o Southbridge Fire Department, 24 Elm St., Southbridge, MA 01550.

But most importantly, the family asks that people keep the Struppa’s in their thoughts and in their prayers.



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POLICE | FROM PAGE 1

Finn has visited many places to provide some puppy therapy including the East Brookfield Elementary School, the car show and other events in town.

Most recently, on Nov. 2, Finn went to the campus of Worcester State University to visit with and bring comfort to the students who dealt with the trauma of the fatal shooting that occurred on campus at the end of October. He brought out many smiles from the students that day.

“I want the Comfort Dog Program to help with community outreach,” Hill said. “I want people to know they can be comfortable and know we have Finn. The bonds people have with dogs is crazy awesome.”

Finn is set to come to many more events in the future, letting people smile and bring hope and comfort to victims at the station, as well as teach others about how to reach out to the police station for any help they may need.

Cool Kids to perform in North Brookfield on Nov. 17

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Cool Kids Choir will perform a show beginning at 6 p.m. at the North Brookfield Elementary School Auditorium on Friday, Nov. 17.

In addition to the energetic and enthusiastic singing and dancing of the Cool Kids, the concert will feature an original song written and performed by the fifth and sixth grade ALOT Kids (All Leaders of Tomorrow) and a special performance by Cool Kids’ Director Channing LeBlanc.

Cool Kids Choir is an award-winning ten-week program for elementary school aged children in grades two-six

who love to move and love music.

The after-school workshop utilizes popular music to inspire and empower children to be the best version of themselves while giving them opportunities to feel pride. Singing, moving, listening, speaking, being silly and being in control, showing respect and kindness - life skills are taught and reinforced through songs the children know and love.

CKC is sponsored by the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House as part of its ROAR program. The Friends are grateful for the support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

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- community -

Oliveira presents funds to honor Revolutionary veterans

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – State Sen. Jake Oliveira, along with state Rep. Aaron Saunders (D-Belchertown), presented a check for \$5,000 to the Friends of Quabbin for the construction of a bronze plaque to honor the 41 Revolutionary War veterans buried in Quabbin Park Cemetery.

“This project is something that is really important to the American Revolution,” Oliveira said. “This December we celebrate a milestone of the Revolution; the Boston Tea Party, 250 years ago.”

Saunders thanked Oliveira for his commitment to the towns of the Quabbin Watershed, in which many of the towns Saunders represents are located.

“Not every state Rep. is as blessed to have a partner in the Senate,” Saunders said.

Oliveira has special ties to the Quabbin Reservoir, as his grandfather worked to create it in the 1930s. Accompanying Oliveira to the ceremony on Oct. 27, was his mother – the daughter of the man who helped form one of the largest water supplies in the U.S.

Joining Oliveira and Saunders were Betty Allen Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution Regent Denise Kindschi Gosselin and Chair of the America 250! Chapter Committee Cher A. Nicholas.

Saunders said its important that the region’s public representation is taken care of for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, and he thanked the DAR for helping them achieve this goal.

“We couldn’t do it without you,” Saunders said.

Oliveira thanked state Reps. Todd

Smola and Donnie Berthiaume, along with state Sen. Jo Comerford, for their support, as well as former senator Anne Gobi.

Oliveira said he and Gobi had always worked to ensure that each community in the district had what it needed.

“In the FY 24 budget, we worked together to secure dollars for things,” Oliveira said. “Small dollars for the State can go a long way.”

Friends of Quabbin President Gene Theroux is “no stranger” to cemeteries Oliveira said, noting Theroux’s work to repair and restore cemeteries across the commonwealth, including the Quabbin Park Cemetery.

Theroux has secured grant funding, including Community Preservation Act funds, for his hometown of Westfield and he has worked throughout the years to honor the final resting place for members of the “Lost Towns” of the Quabbin Reservoir; hailing from Dana, Enfield, Greenwich and Prescott.

“Gene, you’re always there to tell us where we need to support you,” Oliveira said.

Theroux said 108 of his relatives have been laid to rest in the Quabbin Park Cemetery. Both of his grandfathers served in France during World War I, and both originated from Enfield.

One of his grandfathers never got over the loss of his beloved town when it was disincorporated to create the Quabbin Reservoir.

“I think he was bitter until the day he died,” Theroux said.

Theroux pointed to the patina on the monument, noting that it was nearly impossible to read the names on it. The new bronze plaque will remain clear and strong for generations to come, withstanding New England’s weather



State Sen. Jake Oliveira, center, spoke about his grandfather’s involvement in creating the Quabbin Reservoir. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

extremes. Friends of Quabbin Treasurer Paul Godfrey was with Theroux to accept the check, and Theroux said Godfrey has worked with him “every inch and every trench.”

Theroux also thanked the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Dan Clark and former senator Stephen

Brewer. Clark has been a good partner, working with the Friends of Quabbin, Theroux said.

Accepting the check along with Theroux and Godfrey were Ware Town Manager Stuart Beckley, Ware Selectboard member Josh Kusnierz and Belchertown Select Board Clerk Peg Louraine.



State Sen. Jake Oliveira presented a check for \$5,000, secured through the fiscal year 2024 budget, which will be used to purchase a bronze plaque to commemorate and recognize the 41 veterans of the Revolutionary War buried at Quabbin Park Cemetery.

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You can also contact the New Braintree Highway Superintendent by calling 508-847-2628.

- opinion -



Two ways to enjoy bulbs next spring

My spring bulbs are almost all in the ground.

That is saying a lot, considering at work I plant over 2,000 of them! Daffodils, tulips and hyacinth will all welcome visitors to the museum in April and May.

Bulb planting is a ritual that I have come to love. I think in part because the process assists Mother Nature in her efforts to usher in springtime and all of its glorious color!

Did you ever wonder why certain bulbs bloom in the spring? Once you understand the life cycle of specific bulbs you can succeed with bulbs outdoors as well as inside.

Most spring flowering bulbs are native to areas of the world where the fall and winter is cool, and rainfall is abundant. Summers are typically hot and dry.

During the summer bulbs lie dormant, but when temperatures drop and rain moistens the soil each fall, they are awakened and begin to grow new roots and mature their flower buds. Roughly three months later, as soil temperatures rise, bulbs send up foliage and flowers.

When spring rains cease and the soil dries out, bulbs are cued into dormancy once again - their foliage yellows and disappears and the bulbs wait out the arrival of fall to start the cycle all over again.

What this tells us is that we should plant our bulbs before the mercury dips too low. This will give them a chance to root.

Soil temperatures of 50-55 degrees are ideal. If the fall is dry, providing supplemental watering is also a good idea to encourage the rooting process...this year we don't have to worry about that.

What do roots do exactly? You know that they provide food and water to the bulb, but in addition, they anchor it into the soil - very necessary during the freeze/thaw cycles of winter and early spring.

We also learned that there are two times when the bulb is in active growth - when it is rooting, and again in the spring when it sends up its leaves and flower stem. Feeding during these periods is most effective.

I generally broadcast a small amount of organic, well-balanced granular fertilizer into the garden, turn over the soil and plant my bulbs, usually in clumps of at least five bulbs, two-three times their width apart and the same for depth. If you are careful about marking where you've planted them, a top dressing of fertilizer can be added in early spring.

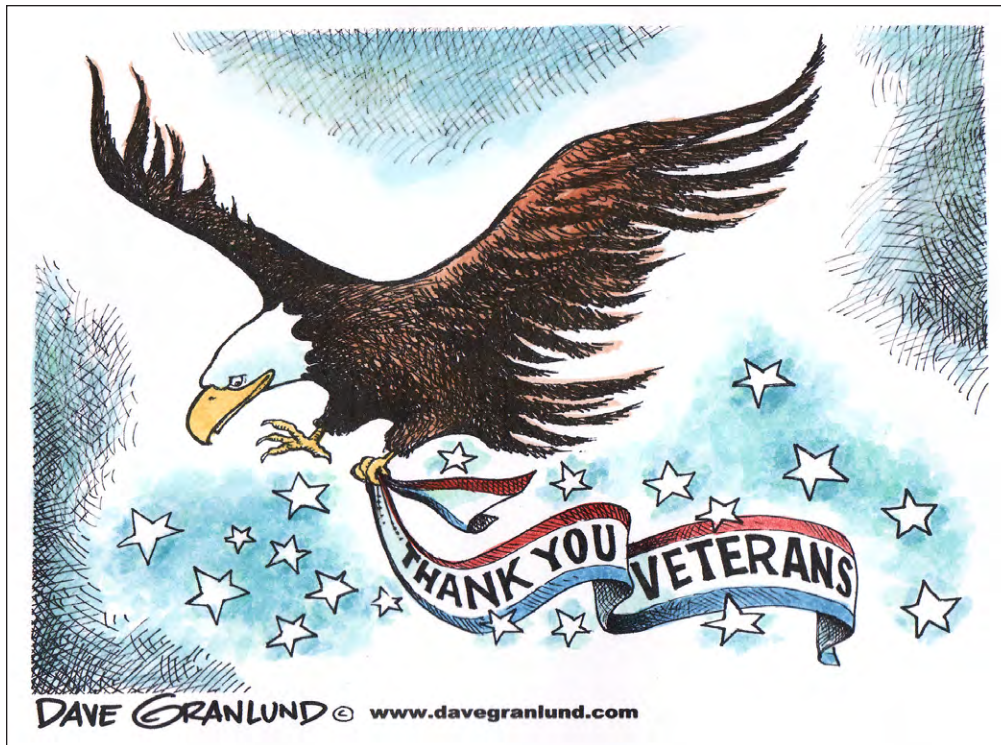
Likewise, you could also wait until you see the first stems poke through the ground and feed them.

I'm sure many gardeners never even thought about what flower bulbs did during the summer months. Now that we understand that they are dormant, merely waiting, we can plant them accordingly, away from spots that pool water and that stay as dry as possible.

Now that we understand a bulb's life cycle, how can we use it to ensure some indoor cheer?

Bulbs need anywhere from 11-20 weeks of chilling and a few more thereafter to bloom. This guide can be used: Crocus require 15 weeks of cold; hyacinth 11-14 weeks, daffodils 15-17 weeks and tulips 14-20 weeks (depending upon season of bloom).

See GARDEN | PAGE 5



State Auditor's monthly update

Reforms sorely needed at the Sex Offender Registry Board

By Diana DiZoglio, Massachusetts State Auditor

Serving as Massachusetts State Auditor doesn't just mean reviewing finances.

A big part of my role, as I often speak about with folks across the state, is reviewing the performance and efficacy of the Commonwealth's agencies and entities. A great example of the responsibility to look beyond number crunching is our office's recently released audit of the Sex Offender Registry Board.

People are familiar with the concept that Massachusetts registers convicted sex offenders, maintaining a database of where such people live and work in an effort to maintain public safety. This system of public safety is maintained by SORB, a seven-member board appointed by the Governor and staffed by more than 70 individuals.

Our recent audit looked at SORB's operations from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021. Covering that two-year period, my team honed in on whether SORB classified sex offenders at least 10 days before they were released from custody, thus ensuring they were assigned an appropriate level.

Further, we looked at whether SORB used all the resources at their disposal to accurately identify sex offenders who were in violation of maintaining their registration.

I was disappointed to find that SORB underperformed in a way that could have a negative impact upon the public.

While incarcerated sex offenders are supposed to be assigned a classification at least 10 days prior to their release, per state law, SORB failed to do so with approximately 1/3 of those released during our two-year review window. More concerning, 77 offenders didn't receive their classification until after they were released.

This lax approach to the law meant those sex offenders' names, addresses, offenses, and registration statuses were not appropriately posted to SORB's website for level 2 and 3 sex offenders and were not otherwise available to the public.

Our audit team also identified other vulnerabilities regarding how SORB tracked offenders who have been released from incarceration. Namely, SORB's database was

not kept up to date in all situations, with approximately one out of five offenders showing incorrect addresses when compared against records maintained by other state departments (such as the addresses the Department of Transitional Assistance records).

Part of the benefit of SORB is that it tracks the location of high level offenders.

By not ensuring that it has the current addresses of sex offenders considered in violation, SORB is not able to consistently communicate information about sex offenders' whereabouts, their offenses, and their classifications to local law enforcement agencies and the general public.

What's disturbing is that some of these issues were identified the last time my predecessor audited SORB. These issues must be immediately addressed.

Our office has recommended that SORB increase their collaboration with correctional facilities to establish more reliable procedures for providing anticipated release dates for incarcerated offenders. We've also recommended the implementation of a tracking process that identifies any delays or issues that may arise, to ensure that all sex offenders are assigned final classifications prior to each offender's release.

For ensuring residential address accuracy, SORB needs to not only work more closely with other state agencies to verify addresses – SORB must also make a point of updating those addresses in their system when they are found.

We will continue to work with SORB and encourage their adoption of practices that maximize public safety.

As always, please feel free to contact my office at any time for more information at auditor@sao.state.ma.us and 617-727-2075.

The Office of State Auditor Diana DiZoglio conducts audits, investigations, and studies to promote accountability and transparency, improve performance, and make government work better. DiZoglio is the 26th Auditor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, sworn into her first term on Jan. 18, 2023. She is committed to help move Massachusetts forward by working to increase transparency and accountability in state government.



OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

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

Send opinions to: 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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Quaboag Current Newspaper

- community -

Red Door Fayre is Nov. 11

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, 133 North Main St., will host its Red Door Fayre on Saturday, Nov. 11, from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

There will be raffles, an exquisite table, a Christmas table, a bake table, pies and a craft table. A homemade luncheon includes soups, sandwiches and apple crisp. Free lunch served to all veterans.

GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

Pick a date which you'd like the bulb to bloom and count backwards. Hypothetically if I want hyacinths to bloom in time for Valentine's Day, planting them within the next week or two would be right on target.

Bulbs can be planted quite close to one another in regular potting soil and your choice of pot. Clay is not recommended because it will dry out readily.

Water lightly to settle the soil, then place the container in a cold, dark location where temps fall between 38 and 45 degrees. One year I used an old refrigerator; another year the crawl space under our office.

I even tried placing pots of bulbs under the bottom steps of my bulk head. Each worked at maintaining low temps, but did have its own idiosyncrasies.

Keep bulbs away from fruit in storage- especially apples, whereby ethylene gas could disfigure the bulbs, and also be on the lookout for rodents looking for lunch.

Daffodils and hyacinth are usually unappetizing.

Check bulbs often, especially as the chilling period draws to a close. You will know the bulbs are close to being ready to move to a new location when sprouting occurs and roots are visible through the drainage holes; soon after, the top will start to grow as well.

After the top has put on an inch of growth, move it to a cool, bright location, about 50-55 degrees. Stems will elongate and flower buds will form after a few weeks.

When in flower, keep the plants cool to prevent legginess - consider enjoying them in your living spaces during the day, but moving them to a cooler climate at night for increased longevity.

It's about now when the garden centers begin their mark-down of spring bulbs. Try your hand at forcing one and it will become your annual ritual!

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

Country Bank and Bank Director announce first fully certified Board

WARE – Country Bank Board Chair, James Phaneuf, is pleased to announce that the Bank's Board of Directors recently became the first fully certified Board through Bank Director's Certification Program.

The certification provides participants with a thorough grounding in corporate governance and important industry issues that greatly enhance the performance of individual directors. The Board completed the comprehensive training program this past year and was certified in September.

Participants must complete 31 designated online training videos and board briefs focused on the role of the Board, audit and risk, compensation, governance, and fiduciary responsibilities. In addition to Bank Director's Online Training Series, participants must attend a day-long Corporate Governance Workshop in the Bank Director Certification Program or, alternatively, complete a virtual version of the program.

Completing the program and becoming a certified bank director sends a clear message to state and federal regulators that board members take their fiduciary duties seriously and want to be top-performing members of the Bank's Board.

"Country Bank's Board of Directors is deeply committed to the Bank's continued growth and prosperity. They understand their responsibilities to ensure Country Bank remains one of the strongest Community Banks in the region. I look forward to the future with great optimism, knowing that we have such a dedicated group of business professionals and the difference they make for the Bank's long-term success," said James Phaneuf in a press release.

"Bank Director is grateful for Country Bank's enthusiastic support for the Certification Program," said Editor-at-Large Jack Milligan, who created the course curriculum. "This sends a very powerful message that



Country Bank Board Members are Elizabeth Rappaport, Theresa Grove, Stacey Luster, Kathryn Crockett, Richard Maynard, Kenneth Riley, Jr., James Phaneuf, Edward Noonan II, Ross Dik, Robert Haveles, Steven Musso and Keith Blanchette. SUBMITTED PHOTO

the Country Bank Board of Directors takes its governance responsibilities seriously. It is a testament to our motto that "Strong Boards Build Strong Banks."

About Country Bank

Country Bank is a full-service \$1.8 billion with 17.0% Tier 1 Capital mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton and Worcester. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF and the SUM network. Country Bank can be reached by calling 800-322-8233 or visiting countrybank.com.

About Bank Director

Bank Director reaches the leaders of the institutions that comprise America's banking industry.

Since 1991, Bank Director has provided board-level research, peer-insights and in-depth executive and board services. Built for banks, Bank Director extends into and beyond the boardroom by providing timely and relevant information through Bank Director magazine, board training services and the financial industry's premier event, Acquire or Be Acquired.

For more information, visit BankDirector.com.

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.

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- community -

FAIR | FROM PAGE 1

going to the craft fairs at Tantasqua for five years, had her beautifully made wreaths and other handmade décor for Thanksgiving and Christmas. She loves craft fairs and has always enjoyed the ones held at Tantasqua.

One crafter had beautifully made textiles including baby blankets, kitchen towels, hats, scarves, and her popular washable dish “scrubbies” that can replace traditional sponges.

Sam Barrus, the creator of these hand-sewn and crocheted pieces, also makes doll clothes, jewelry, purses, and other accessories.

Steerage Rock Stitching is owned and operated by Gail Modugno, and her daughter, Jessica Kold, and granddaughter Grace Kolb.

The family operates their business out of Brimfield and sells handmade rolls of reusable cloth towels that can replace full rolls of paper towels, making a positive impact on the environment.

A stay-at-home mom who followed her passions, Rona T. Roy opened her own business, featuring her beautifully sculpted pottery. Her business, located locally in Fiskdale, is called Twiddle T’s

Pottery, and can also be found on Facebook.

Francis Bousquet, owner and operator of Crows Feet Primitives Candle Company, creates her own candles with soy and other all natural ingredients like fresh herbs and coffee grounds. Her jars are all hand-painted and can be kept as a treasured keepsake when the candle is gone.

Artist Patricia Siwek’s booth featured her beautiful paintings, and some adorable Christmas gnomes. Her granddaughter, Caitlyn Siwek, accompanies her to craft fairs and is the perfect partner for all of her grandmother’s events.

Josh and Jean McCrillis, owners of No Way Hose J, use retired fire hoses to create screen-printed wall décor. They also have squeaky dog toys, key chains, and can cozies made from the recycled hose material.

The craft fair featured dozens more artists and vendors who had anything from tasty treats, to farm fresh honey, to jewelry. Make sure to get to next year’s craft fair at Tantasqua to see more amazing artists like them.



Francis Bousquet is shown with her beautiful hand painted jars holding her homemade candles with all natural ingredients. TURLEY PHOTOS BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS



Grace and Jessica Kolb, a mother daughter team, ran Grace's grandmother's, Gail Modugno, booth selling her beautifully made reusable towels.



Jean and Josh McCrillis displayed their homemade signs using retired fire hoses and wood.



Rona T. Roy, owner of her small business, Twiddle T's Pottery, featured her beautiful hand-sculpted mugs and dishes.



Linda Brown is shown with her beautiful display of homemade holiday décor.



Sam Barrus stands proudly with her handmade textile creations.

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Daniel and Jennifer Brevik perform Winter Songs

FOSC host concert to welcome the holiday season Dec. 10

HARDWICK – Daniel Brevik, bass-baritone and Jennifer Fijal-Brevik, mezzo-soprano, will present a medley of stunning vocal performance of classical, musical theater, and holiday season songs, accompanied by pianist Ania Bostock, at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10, at the Stone Church Cultural Center, 283 Main St., Gilbertville.

A public reception will follow the concert. Tickets are \$20 at the door or through <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/friendsofthestonechurch/888277>. Youth under 18 and holders of the Mass Cultural Council “Card to Culture” will be admitted at no charge.

American bass-baritone Daniel Brevik is praised for having a “massive, focused, rich warm timbre.” Boasting a fan base of over 60,000 monthly listeners on Spotify and more on TikTok, his singing in classical and popular genres reaches audiences on a global scale.

A recipient of Opera Theater of Saint Louis’ Richard Gaddes Career Grant and the Wendy Shattuck Presidential Scholarship at the New England Conservatory, Brevik was hailed by The Washington Post for having “an impressive, sonorous voice” while Opera Today claimed he could “rattle the rafters one moment and be lullingly conversational the next.”

A Massachusetts resident, Brevik has made lasting impressions as a soloist in Boston performances of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Handel’s Messiah, and the Mozart Requiem.

Jennifer Fijal-Brevik, mezzo-soprano, holds a bachelor’s degree in vocal performance and pedagogy from Plym-

outh State University and a master’s degree in voice and opera from the New England Conservatory, where she performed in the American premiere of Rossini’s historic opera La Gazzetta.

She sang in Don Boothman’s quartet at “Let Joy Resound,” the re-opening concert for the Stone Church in April of 2016. She has appeared in Friends of the Stone Church concerts twice since that time.

Fijal-Brevik grew up in Palmer and was mentored by Boothman, a renowned baritone and Hardwick resident for many years. She serves as Music Minister at First Presbyterian Church in Hartford, Connecticut, teaches voice, and is the Director of Education at Falcetti School of Music.

Piano instructor and collaborative pianist Ania Bostock won the New England Piano Championship in 2001 and started teaching music at age 16. She is Music Director of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church in South Hadley.

Bostock is faculty pianist at several local schools and colleges and teaches at Falcetti School of Music.

When the Breviks last appeared together at the Stone Church, in December of 2019, audience members expressed awe at the quality of their performance.

This concert will open with a pair of classical gems: Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Samuel Barber’s 1958 English-language aria “Must the Winter come so soon?” and “Aleko’s Cavatina” from Sergei Rachmaninoff’s first opera. These lyrical songs of nature and tragic love will resonate with listeners ap-



Daniel Brevik, bass-baritone and Jennifer Fijal-Brevik, mezzo-soprano, will present a medley of stunning vocal performance accompanied by pianist Ania Bostock, at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10, at the Stone Church Cultural Center, 283 Main St., Gilbertville. SUBMITTED PHOTO

proaching a New England winter.

The program will then switch magically to Disney-inspired songs: Liz Calloway’s show-stopping “Once Upon a December,” nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Original Song, and the transformative “Evermore,” as Beauty and the Beast’s title character learns to love and expresses his heartbreak and loneliness for the first time. Delights continue with beloved gems from musical theater.

In the second half of the program, the talented singers will open up their gifts for holiday season listening.

This concert is supported in part by a grant from the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

At home viewers may enjoy watching recordings of previous concerts through links on the Friends of the Stone Church website: [FriendsoftheStoneChurch.org/music/](https://www.friendsofthestonechurch.org/music/).

About FOSC

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

The FOSC are currently in Phase 4 of stabilizing the stone tower, with funding, in part, from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, a program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, administered through a collaborative agreement between MassDevelopment and the Mass Cultural Council.

Donations toward the ongoing preservation project and FOSC programs can be made by visiting [FriendsoftheStoneChurch.org](https://www.friendsofthestonechurch.org), or by mailing to FOSC, P.O. Box 347, Gilbertville, MA 01031.

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Turley Publications is looking for a “hands on” energetic candidate who loves telling stories to be the editor for two weekly publications. This position will include managing and coaching a small news staff that will provide the community with a great local newspaper.

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Mustangs on the Mountain

Sarat family holds annual costumers appreciation event

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

PALMER – The Sarat family invited customers of their three car dealerships to Palmer Motorsports Park for the third annual Mustangs on the Mountain event.

Mustangs on the Mountain is a celebration of one of most popular high-powered workhorses in the auto industry – the Ford Mustang.

Despite the return of rainy weather, about 175 Mustangs traveled to the Whiskey Hill track on Oct. 29 for a chance to take parade laps around the most breathtaking views the region has to offer.

For many car owners, this was the first time their Mustang had ever seen rain; and it was worth it.

Jack Sarat, Dealer Principal of Sarat Ford Lincoln said one customer from Boston contacted him the day of the event and said, “I don’t care if it’s raining or not.”

Jack left his Mustang back home, a 2005 50th anniversary model that has 50 miles on it. Only 1,965 of these cars were made.

Founded in 1929, Sarat Ford Lincoln is overseen by Jack and his sons Jeff, Chris and Scott. The Sarat family also owns Family Ford of Enfield and Ford of Northampton

Mustangs on the Mountain is a customer appreciation event, Chris said.

“We invited all of our Mustang costumers,” he said. “People come from all over...one guy said this is the first time his car has ever seen the rain.”

The Sarat family brought several Ford vehicles with them, including a Mach E, an all-electric crossover; a 2024 Mustang and a 2023 Bronco.

Chris said the Mach E came out in 2021 and can be all-wheel drive or rear-wheel drive. The Bronco returned to production after a hiatus since the mid-1990s.

Mustangs continue to be a popular purchase at the Sarat family’s dealer-

ships, Chris said, with the GT and the Shelby being top picks for motorists.

Mustangs on the Mountain is an event that the Sarat family and their customers look forward to each year.

“It means a lot, we’re just happy to be here with our cars,” Jack said. “They’re all Mustang enthusiasts.”

While many of the participants at Mustangs on the Mountain have been longtime customers of the Sarat family, some are new to the Ford family, including Patrick Zambri of Portland, Connecticut who just bought his 2019 Ford Mustang Bullitt three weeks ago.

“It’s a special edition, based on the Steve McQueen movie ‘Bullitt,’” Zambri said.

Painted Dark Highland Green, Zambri’s six-speed manual only has 2,800 miles on it.

“We got three laps in already,” Zambri said. When asked if he planned to return for next year’s event, he said, “absolutely.”

John Blessis of Granby, Connecticut brought his 2015 Ford Mustang GT, as he has for all three years the event has been held.

The GT is his primary car, and he drives it all year round, even through the winter.

“Just put some snows on it and it goes...you’ve got to drive it in the snow,” Blessis said.

For the second year in a row, proceeds from the Mustangs on the Mountain event helped benefit a local nonprofit organization, Central New England Equine Rescue in West Brookfield.

CNEER has been rescuing horses, ponies and donkeys since 2003, having helped hundreds of animals in need.

Volunteers from the organization were on hand to share information about their work, the horses on the farm, and also sell merchandise.

For more information about CNEER, visit centralnewenglandequinerescue.com or find them on Facebook.

Providing food during the event was Dunkin’ and North Elm Butcher Block



Three generations of the Sarat family, owners of Sarat Ford Lincoln, hosted the Mustangs on the Mountain customer appreciation event at Palmer Motorsports Park on Oct. 29. Shown in the back row from left are Jeff Sarat, Jack Sarat and Chris Sarat. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE



Central New England Equine Rescue volunteers Lynne and Jerry Doble represented the organization at the Mustangs on the Mountain event.

out of Westfield.

About Palmer Motorsports Park

Palmer Motorsports Park has been rated “One of the top 10 road courses in North America” by Road & Track Magazine. Its unique setting and challenging road course draw club members

and visitors from New England and beyond for racing, research, recreational, and business-related activities.

For more information, visit palmermotorsportspark.com or find them on Facebook.



The fall foliage matched the color of these Ford Mustangs.



This vibrant yellow Ford Mustang was one of the pace cars on the track.



Sarat Ford Lincoln brought this 2024 Ford Mustang convertible to the third annual Mustangs on the Mountain event.



This sleek gray Ford Mustang was also used as a pace car.

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SPORTS

Cougars get by McCann in first round



WARREN – Last Thursday afternoon, Quaboag boys soccer began the state tournament, facing off against McCann Technical, a Western Mass. team. The Cougars, which went 4-7-3 in the regular season, defeated McCann 3-1 and advanced into the Round of 32.



Brayden Lopato plays the ball on defense. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Reed Waz stops an opposing player's progress.



Ryan Miner corrals the ball before turning around and moving upfield.



Jacoby Labillois sends a pass away.



Hart Waz makes a throw-in.

Panthers win Central Mass. title



Annabelle Magil challenges the defender for the ball. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RAY DUFFY



Farrah Wojick races to beat the Clinton defender.

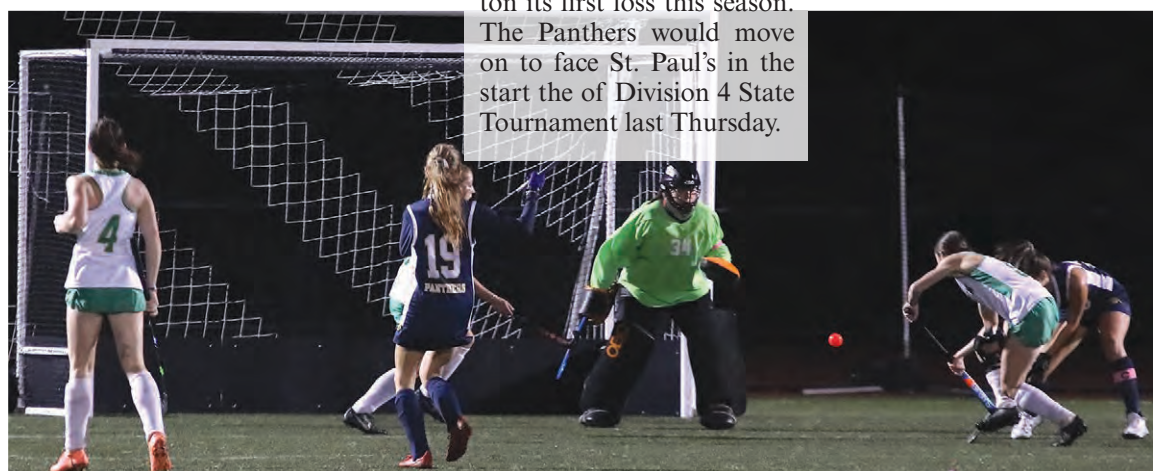


Makenzie Casey carries the ball past the Clinton defenders.

CLINTON – Last Monday night, Quabbin field hockey captured the Central Mass. Athletic Director Tournament championship, defeating Clinton 2-1. Makenzie Casey and Kylie Casey scored the goals for the Panthers. Quabbin handed Clinton its first loss this season. The Panthers would move on to face St. Paul's in the start of the Division 4 State Tournament last Thursday.



Madylin Berault goes stick to stick to come up with the ball.



Jullianna Stanger comes out of the net to make a save.

- community -

Costa scores pair in playoff win



Ethan DeBettencourt catches up to the ball. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEET-DOGPHOTOS.COM



Talon Clark goes after a loose ball.

PALMER – Last Friday afternoon, Pathfinder defeated Hoosac Valley, another Western Mass. team, in the opening round of the Division 5 State Tournament. Evan Costa scored twice while Riley Sanderson and Jaleel Nevue-Roman scored single goals. Richie Gula had eight saves while getting the win in goal. The Pioneers moved on to play Douglas in the next round.



Owen Pear sends a shot away.

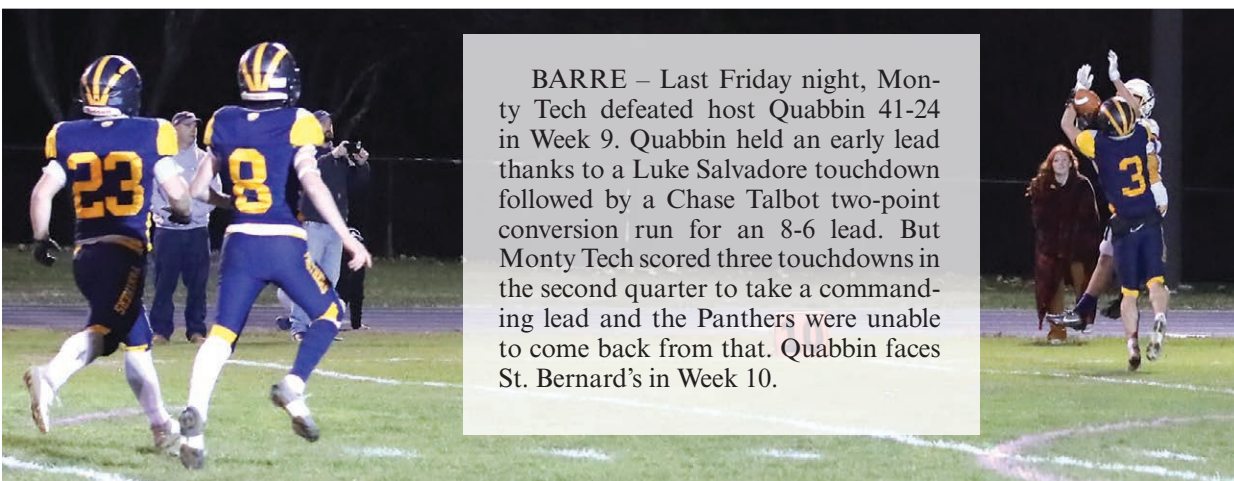


Jaleel Nevue-Roman separates from his opponent.



Evan Costa plays the ball off his side.

Monty Tech best Quabbin in nonplayoff action



Connor Breeds breaks up the pass. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RAY DUFFY

BARRE – Last Friday night, Monty Tech defeated host Quabbin 41-24 in Week 9. Quabbin held an early lead thanks to a Luke Salvatore touchdown followed by a Chase Talbot two-point conversion run for an 8-6 lead. But Monty Tech scored three touchdowns in the second quarter to take a commanding lead and the Panthers were unable to come back from that. Quabbin faces St. Bernard's in Week 10.



Ed Geurtin takes the kickoff.



Adam Adams drops back to pass.



Chase Talbot runs in for the two-point conversion.

- sturbridge -

Rotary Club announces 3rd annual TREK Sturbridge winners

STURBRIDGE – A heavy downpour didn't dampen the spirits of runners and walkers in the third annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K and Fun Walk that was held on Oct. 29.

According to race director Klaus Hachfeld, the event went on with much enthusiasm and only minor inconvenience to the more than 100 participants and race volunteers.

The family-friendly event included a 5K Trail Run, a 1K Road Run, 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, a costume parade, and relay races organized by a volunteer team from Burgess Elementary School.

"What's a little rain when you have such wonderful volunteers, supportive sponsors, and delightfully costumed runners of all ages," said Hachfeld. "Thanks to everyone who helped make this event so successful for a third consecutive year."

The results below were tabulated by Jody Kingman for RaceWire:

Top male finishers in the TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K Trail Race included first place, Cole Cashman (18:38), second place, Andrew Herzog (19:52), and third place, Joshua Aliengena (20:46). Top female finishers included first place, Ann Considine (25:28); second place, Jessica Billings (27:25), and third place, Carolyn Bressette (28:56).

Top finishers in the TREK Sturbridge Halloween 1K Pre-Teen Road Race included first place, Brooks

Billings (age 4); second place, River Gendron (age 5); third place, Eli Aliengena (age 5); fourth place, Zachery Barberio (age 12), and fifth place Reagan Herzog (age 5).

The TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K and Fun Walk is a Sturbridge Rotary Club fundraiser, with all profits going to local student scholarships and other community needs projects.

Sponsors for the event included Big Bunny Supermarket, ClearCom IT Solutions, Cook's Farm Orchards, Cormier Jewelers, Cornerstone Bank, Dave's Pest Control, G&R Fish Market, George & Davis Attorneys at Law, Hearthstone Market, I Am T Shirts, Jeffrey N, Chasse Attorney at Law, Joe Klimavich Public Relations, Marino Law P.C., McCurdy Insurance, Old Sturbridge Village, Publick House Historic Inn, RE/MAX Professional Associates, Southbridge Credit Union, Studio 20/20, Tasse Fuel Corporation, Teddy G's Pub & Grille, and Unique Hair by Chrissy.

Rotary International is a worldwide service organization of business and professional 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 Sturbridge Rotary Club meets for dinner at 6 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of the month at the Publick House Historic Inn on Sturbridge Common, Route 131. New members are welcome.

For additional information, visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club website at sturbridgerotary.com.



Brooks Billings (Age 4) came in first in the pre-teen category. SUBMITTED PHOTO



Eli Aliengena, age 5, joined his dad, Josh, with a "best costume" award. SUBMITTED PHOTO



First place finisher Cole Cashman (18:38) crosses the finishing line. SUBMITTED PHOTO BY RACEWIRE



First place woman Ann Considine (25:28) crosses the finish line. SUBMITTED PHOTO BY RACEWIRE



National Honor Society students from Tantasqua Regional High School volunteered at the event again this year. SUBMITTED PHOTO



"Pink Bunny" Josh Aliengena (third place) and "Care Bare" Andrew Herzog (second place). Aliengena also took home a prize for best costume. SUBMITTED PHOTO

- community -

First ever Willowfest celebration benefits charities

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer

BROOKFIELD – Oakholm Farm hosted its first ever Willowfest with their Highland cow, Willow, as the star of the show.

This was the farm's first Willowfest, and it went on with great success.

The farm had many things to do and see for all including live music, food trucks, hay rides, face painting, a bag pipes performance, a small craft fair with talented artists, and a kid's farm animal costume contest.

There were several fundraisers going on, and one was for the Boston Children's Hospital to fund Kelly Austin for the Boston Marathon coming in 2024. She had a candy fundraiser, selling full sized candy bars, and another, where people could "adopt" a stuffed Highland cow.

The Highland cow stuffed animals available for adoption included one that looked just like the farm's Willow, and another bull from Pine Hollow Farm Animal Sanctuary named Ferdinand.

The farm also hosted a "cow chip" contest, which was used to determine which charity got the fundraised money determined by Willow's, well, cow chip.

"I've always wanted to do a cow chip, and we got the opportunity to do it with Pine Hollow Sanctuary," Christina Predella, the owner of the farm said, excited about the opportunities for fundraising.

Predella's main goal with the event was achieved.



Emily Orth giving Willow the Highland cow some well-deserved scritches. TURLEY PHOTO BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

She wants all who come to the farm to have fun and feel welcome and was so happy to see the amount she was able to raise in the fundraising events for the Boston Children's hospital and the Pine Hollow Sanctuary.

The farm will also be having its annual Christmas tree sales beginning on Black Friday. The workshop will also be open to vendors and craftsmen to get some Christmas shopping done.

Stay tuned to learn about more fun opportunities for all to join in on at the farm.

STANDARD | FROM PAGE 1

it is a great idea.

Daylight Saving Time was and is a wrong idea and an example of one of humanity's worst afflictions, overthinking.

It has some bad aspects according to Karin Johnson.

Johnson is a professor of neurology at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School-Baystate and medical director of the Baystate Health Regional Sleep Program.

She is co-chair of the Coalition for Permanent Standard Time, and also vice-president of the non-profit, nonpartisan Save Standard Time. Johnson is creator and host of its educational video series The Science of Clock Change.

In an Oct. 25 news article Johnson made the point that not just the changeover, but Daylight Savings Time itself is more than just a few restless nights:

"Every year more scientific data is uncovering the hidden harms of Daylight Saving Time. Most people think it is just the clock change that is harmful (it is), but they do not realize the greater harms of living with delayed clocks throughout Daylight Saving Time, which increase the risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, depression, suicide, fatal motor vehicle crashes, and decreased workplace productivity and academic achievement. These impacts are disproportionately felt by teenagers, night owls, and workers and parents who have to wake up by 8 a.m. (worse for those with earlier start times), more often minorities and those with lower socio-economic status."

Proposals for taking up Daylight Savings Time go back well over a hundred years. Mostly they were associated with an economic benefit, Germany and Austria took it on for a military advantage during World War I.

It certainly caught on here and is almost universally observed.

Will that change now that it is known that health can be impacted by the practice?

Johnson seems to hope so from her article. She mentions a bill submitted by State Rep. Angelo Puppulo of Springfield and State Senator Patrick O'Connor of Weymouth.

The bill, submitted by Puppulo, and O'Connor, would allow Massachusetts to adopt permanent Standard Time.

It seems a worthy idea, but even if it passes, unless bordering states take it up, it will have to wait for implementation according to the professor, "Wary of economic and transportation impacts due to misalignment with border states, many time bills, including the Massachusetts bill, link implementation to similar bills in other states."

Still, it's a start, and should you wish to see it pass, contacting your rep or senator may be in order.

Going in a completely opposite direction, however, are Florida Republican Senator Marco Rubio and Massachusetts Democratic Senator Ed Markey.

Rubio and Markey support the Sunshine Protection Act that proposes permanent daylight savings time.

One is tempted to say the two are trying to give bipartisanship a bad name, but of course, they claim all kinds of improvements as well. The Rubio bill's benefits would be mostly economic.

Evidence seems more on Johnson's side.

Police Association seeks donations for Toys-For-Joy

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Police Association Toys-For-Joy program is asking for donations of new, unwrapped, toys, games, crafts and sporting equipment for children of all ages.

Cash and check donations (made out to North Brookfield Police Association) are also welcomed. These toys are distribut-

ed to families in need within the community.

The "Stuff-the-Bus" event will be held Saturday, Nov. 25, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Hanaford parking lot.

AA transportation will provide a school bus and driver so that members of the community can come and stuff it full of their toy donations. This event is an

overwhelming success every year as citizens come out in droves to show their support and generosity.

As always, gift donations will also be accepted in the North Brookfield Police Station lobby, Dollar General and North Brookfield Savings Bank (Gilbert Street location).

BOARD | FROM PAGE 1

ATMs and teller window facility and replace with interactive teller machines and a new canopy.

Town Planner Jean Bubon said the project has been reviewed by all staff and no major concerns were noted. The Conservation Commission has already approved the project, as has the Design Review Committee.

"The project will result in a net decrease in impervious area, and has added additional landscaping," she said.

Bernardino said the side of the building has two drive-up ATMs under a canopy, and there is a mix of two-way and one-way circulation throughout the site.

"The proposal is to relocate it to the back of the property," he said. "For the day-to-day ATM drive-up operations, it will be in the facility in the back. The front will have a nighttime secure drop-off for after hours.

The impervious area will have a net decrease of just over 2,000 square feet. He said they will incorporate additional landscaping including shade trees, plantings and a landscape island.

Bernardino said some of the pavement will be re-

placed to allow for new curb lines and construction. Construction includes demolishing the existing canopy.

A new 28 by 40-foot canopy will house two ITMs, which connect customers to live customer service representatives, in addition to a standalone ATM. It will be disconnected from the building.

The driveway circulation will also be reconfigured. The Planning Board closed the hearing and approved the site plan.

Town Planner's report

Bubon said Escape the Pike, located at 179 Main St., is expanding into the 1,100 square foot suite formerly occupied by Max Impact Nutrition.

"This will actually allow them to add three additional games," Bubon said. "It's nice to see the space filled so quickly after somebody moving out."

Bubon said the town has recently finished the preservation plan, which will be available soon.

She said the town is also working with Jennifer Doherty from the Massachusetts Historical Commission to develop an action plan in order to implement the preservation plan.

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Senator advocates to make daylight savings permanent

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Edward J. Markey (D-Massachusetts) released a statement recently on making daylight saving time permanent and ending the antiquated practice of changing the clocks twice a year.

Markey, along with Senator Marco Rubio (R-Florida), is an original sponsor of the Sunshine Protection Act, which unanimously passed the Senate in March 2022 but was never brought up for a vote in the House.

“When we ‘fall back’ and lose the extra hour of daylight saving time on Sunday, we are sacrificing energy savings, crime reduction and economic benefits for darkness,” Markey said. “Over the years, I’ve fought and won to extend daylight saving time-adding two months’ worth of sun to the American people’s calendar, which saves the same amount of electricity as used by over 100,000 households for an entire year. It’s past time for Congress to take up

the Sunshine Protection Act and make daylight saving time permanent to keep the sun shining.”

Studies show that making DST permanent would have positive impacts on public health, the economy, and climate change. Representative Vern Buchanan (Florida-16) introduced companion legislation in the House.

As part of the Energy Policy Act in 2005, then-Representatives Markey and Fred Upton (Michigan-06) amended

the Uniform Time Act of 1966, extending the duration of DST in the spring by changing its start date from the first Sunday in April to the second Sunday in March, and in the fall by changing its end date from the last Sunday in October to the first Sunday in November.

In 1985, then-Representative Markey also partnered with Representative Carlos Moorhead (California-27) to extend DST by three weeks.

SCHOOL | FROM PAGE 1

on Legacy, may not score “meeting expectations” on Next-Gen.

“The test itself is more challenging,” he said.

McCormick said the spring MCAS scores are a “work in progress.”

All grade levels are currently scoring below the state average in English Language Arts. Science is also below the state average for all grade levels.

For math, grade four scored higher than the state average, while other grades continue to need work.

Data collected from 2021-2023 looks at growth. Grade six showed growth in ELA, but most grade levels for the past two years have “trickled off.”

McCormick said growth could not be calculated for classes with less than 20 students.

“Right now, North Brookfield is in the ‘limited to no progress toward targets’...we’ve been kind of in that spot for a couple years now. We have not made enough growth to move us up toward ‘moderate progress toward targets’ or ‘substantial progress toward targets,’” he said.

McCormick said chronic absenteeism is a concern that is impacting learning.

“We have too many kids who are at 10 or more absences for the year,” he said.

McCormick said the High School received four out of four points for advanced coursework completion.

“That was an asset to our High School,” he said.

Compared to similar school districts, North Brookfield is ranked at 23% for “meeting or exceeding” in ELA for grades three through eight. The lowest scoring in the cohort of school districts is North Adams at 22% and the highest being Hull at 47%.

Quaboag Regional School District ranked at 36%.

For meeting or exceeding in math for grades three through eight, North Brookfield ranked 22%, compared to North Adams at 17%, Hull at 44% and Quaboag at 28%.

Grade 10 ranked 38% for ELA and 30% for math. Grades five through eight ranked 23% for science.

“This is not where we want to be,” McCormick said. “What we really need to stress are the next steps and what we are doing right now and what we’re doing the next couple years.”

McCormick said there are some positives to recognize in the data, including increased participation in taking the MCAS test, along with some age groups scoring above the state average. He said the school district gained accountability points for ELA and math growth in the Elementary School, as well as for low chronic absen-

teeism and advanced coursework completion in the High School.

McCormick said the school district is working with outside agencies, New Hope and Behavioral Health Network, to provide in-school counseling for over 20 students.

Superintendent’s report

McCormick said strategic planning sessions were held over three days. A consultant helped participants during the first two meetings to frame the work.

“Through this work, we were able to kind of narrow our focus down. We looked at our vision, our mission. We looked at our core values as a district... and we also looked at what our major overarching initiatives were going to be, plus our strategies to get there,” McCormick said.

Individual action steps for each initiative are fluid and may change over the years., McCormick said.

“This team did a fantastic job,” he said.

School Committee Vice-Chair Tim Canada said there was a good group of people participating in the strategic planning sessions, with many different opinions. He said they constructively worked together, and he liked the formatting of it.

The strategic planning sessions were comprised of school administrators, teachers, school committee members, students and community members.

McCormick said there were about 20 people involved in the sessions.

Recognition

McCormick recognized four teachers for volunteering their time to work with stakeholders to help plan the future of the school district.

The teachers recognized were Margaret Hanson, Channing LeBlanc, Shelly Lacaire and Caitlyn Malone.

School choice numbers

McCormick also shared school choice numbers compared to last year’s. He said last year 170 students opted to school choice out of the district and 42 opted to school choice in.

Now, 156 students are going out and 39 are coming in.

“There’s money attached to school choice,” McCormick. He said there are about 438 students in the district according to data from SchoolBrains.

Administrators’ reports

High School Principal John Diorio said a homework help group is open to students in grades seven through 12 after school. He said it is usually staffed by teachers, administrators or college student tutors to help in all subjects.

He said the math department began collaborating on lesson studies. ELA will begin collaboration next.

Diorio said Middle School students were awarded student of the month certificates. This will happen monthly, and Diorio thanked McCormick and the families for supporting the students.

Diorio also congratulated student Diego Cruz who was selected as the first senior of the week.

In High School, grades nine through 12 held a monthly attendance party. Grade 10 won last month, with an attendance rate of 97%, which is over the state average.

Ian Fantasia was selected as North Brookfield’s Project 351 ambassador.

Diorio said five Middle School students attended a leadership conference, where they participated in personal reflection, group challenges and dynamic discussions.

Elementary School Principal Sarah Priestley said grade six students attended Nature’s Classroom and they bonded as a class.

“They had a great time,” she said.

Priestley said staff in the school are really focusing on using intervention time effectively, after looking at the MCAS results.

Director of Student Services Ann Knapp said she reviewed physical restraint procedures with Priestley to ensure they meet changing guidelines from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The updated procedures have been added to the school’s

website, staff and student handbooks.

The School Committee voted to accept the new restraint policy.

She said preschool screenings were also held.

Student Council update

Student Representative Olivia Giangrande said the homecoming games had to be canceled due to the weather, but the dance was still held. Spirit week was held the week leading up to the dance.

An ice cream bar was set up at the homecoming dance and the Student Council raised a good amount of money.

Halloween room decorating was held, and each grade decorated their advisor’s classroom. A Halloween dance was held for students in grades seven to 12.

Students donated canned goods and nonperishable food items for the school’s food pantry. Giangrande said donations can be made to the food pantry at any time, by dropping them off at the Main Office.

The Giving Turkey will be set up to collect donations for Toys for Tots for the month of November.

“Students are encouraged to take a feather from the turkey, and then buy whatever item is written on that turkey,” she said. “At the end of the event, the grade with the most items donated will receive spirit week points.”

The Student Council has several upcoming conferences, including on Nov. 16 at Tantasqua Regional High School. There are also conferences in March and April.

Giangrande said Student Council meetings are usually held every other Monday and all are welcome to attend. She encouraged people to follow the Student Council on social media.

New webpage

McCormick said the new webpage has been launched and is very user friendly. An app will be launched soon to access the site through mobile photos.



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Town of Monson is accepting applications for PT opening, 2-5 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday w/some flexibility. Must be in good standing with MA Gas and Plumbing Licensing Board. \$45/per inspection For job description and requirements visit the Employment Opportunities page at <https://www.monson-ma.gov/humanresources/news/employment-opportunities> for and application. Interested candidates must submit an application to gbingle@monson-ma.gov.

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HELP WANTED

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT
Brookfield is seeking a full-time Highway Superintendent. Full job description and application details at brookfieldma.us. Deadline to apply is November 20th or when position is filled, whichever is longer.

WINTER PLOW DRIVERS - LABORER. The town of New Braintree is seeking non CDL and CDL drivers to plow & treat roadways with our trucks. Salary dependent upon experience. Further details & applications are available at Selectment's Office, 20 Memorial Dr., New Braintree or contact Highway Superintendent, **508-847-2628.**

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Public workshops address air pollution in central Mass.

WORCESTER – The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission is exploring ways to address air pollution across the central Massachusetts region.

Workshops are being held across the region, the public can share their ideas or concerns regarding waste management, industry, buildings, agriculture/natural and working lands, transportation, and electricity in central Massachusetts.

The public is invited to register in advance online for the following workshops: Wednesday, Nov. 15 at 6 p.m., West Brookfield Town Hall, 2 East Main St., West Brookfield; Thursday, Nov. 30 at 6 p.m., Shrewsbury Public Library, 609 Main St., Shrewsbury; Thursday, Dec. 7 at 6 p.m., Gladys E. Kelly Library, 2 Lake St., Webster; Tuesday, Dec. 18 at 6 p.m., Quabbin Regional High/Middle School, 800 South St., Barre; and Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024, at 6 p.m., WPI's Campus Center Building, 79 Park Avenue, Worcester.

RSVP by visiting www.cmrpc-cprg.com/calendar.

The Climate Pollution Reduction Grant is a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency program funded through

the Inflation Reduction Act. The program aims to develop regional short- and long-term climate plans with a goal to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A total of \$5 billion is allocated for this program and \$250 million to eligible entities as planning grants. A total of \$1 million will be allocated to the Worcester, MA-CT Metro Area and the 66 other most populous metropolitan areas in the United States.

It is a four-year planning grant to develop a Priority Climate Action Plan, a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan and a Status Report. The CMRPC is the lead organization.

About CMRPC
Founded by the Legislature in 1963, CMRPC provides a variety of services to its constituencies and brings a regional perspective to planning and development.

One of 13 Regional Planning Agencies in Massachusetts, CMRPC serves the City of Worcester and 39 surrounding communities in the southern two-thirds of Worcester County. CMRPC's programs include Transportation, Regional Collaboration and Community Planning, and Geographic Information Systems.

Historical Society hosts 'Sturbridge: Then and Now' on Nov. 16

STURBRIDGE – On Thursday, Nov. 16, at 7 p.m., at the Publick House, the Sturbridge Historical Society will present "Sturbridge: Then and Now", a pictorial history of Sturbridge showing the changes and evolution of the Town over the years.

The program will be presented by Bob Arnold, and Wally Hersee, both of Sturbridge.

Arnold is a freelance photographer, amateur historian, and avid collector of all things Sturbridge. In addition to serving clients throughout New England, Arnold has been documenting life in our community since he and his family moved here in 1970.

His work over the past 50 plus years has yielded a unique perspective on the commercial, cultural, and environmental changes in our community. Arnold still lives in town with his wife, Susan, their dog, Jesse, and thousands of images.

Hersee grew up in Medfield, where he refined his interest in local history. Having moved to Sturbridge it was only a matter of time before he took an active part in Sturbridge history.

A photographer for more than 45 years, his 2017 book, "Follow the Light", tells of his photographic journey. Hersee retired as a registered nurse in 2019.

Today, he lives in town with his wife, Mary, and is active on town boards, volunteers at Tanglewood, and writes for the Sturbridge Historic Society on their Facebook page.

Arnold and Hersee will be sharing a delightful portion of their collected photos and knowledge, which are guaranteed to enlighten, and to generate reminiscences and discussions.

The program is free and open to the public, and is generously hosted by the Publick House.

New Braintree Police Log

During the weeks of Oct. 23-Nov. 6, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 34 building/property checks, 53 directed/area patrols, seven traffic controls, five radar assignments, four emergency 911 calls, one assist other agency, one complaint, one motor vehicle investigation, one trespass, one hazardous incident, one motor vehicle accident, two animal calls and six motor vehicle stops in the town of New Braintree.

Monday, Oct. 23

12:23 p.m. 911 Animal Call, Barre Cut Off Road, Dispatch Handled

Thursday, Oct. 26

9:15 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Sibley Road, Services Rendered

Friday, Oct. 27

11:45 a.m. Complaint, Ravine Road, Merge
1:33 p.m. 911 Suspicious Activity,

Padre Road, Spoken To

Saturday, Oct. 28

4:24 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Accident, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital

5:29 p.m. 911 Animal Call, West Road, No Action Required

Sunday, Oct. 29

11:23 a.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Barre Road, Investigated

4:08 p.m. Trespass, Padre Road, Services Rendered

Saturday, Nov. 4

12:13 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Barre Road, Services Rendered

9:55 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Old Turnpike Road, Citation Issued

Sunday, Nov. 5

2:18 p.m. Hazardous Incident, West Brookfield Road, Removed Hazard

68th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

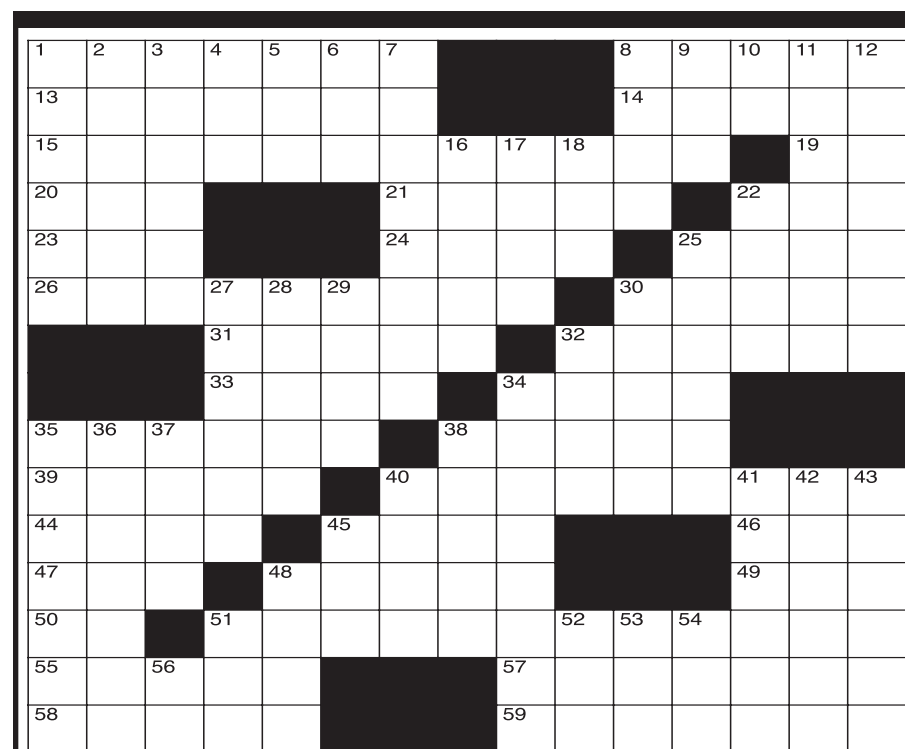
DANIELSON, CT – The Temple Beth Israel Preservation Society and the Federated Church of Christ welcome all to the 68th annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, Nov. 21 at Temple Beth Israel, 39 Killingly Drive, at 7 p.m.

Temple Beth Israel is handicapped accessible

This beautiful interfaith service will be hybrid so you may attend in person or view the live-streamed service. Fol-

lowing the service there will be refreshments and socializing.

Monetary donations collected at the service (or mailed to TBIPS, P.O. Box 105, Taftville, CT 06380 by Nov. 30) will be given to a local charity. Please bring non-perishable food items (canned, boxed, or bagged items) especially high protein items such as meats, poultry, fish, nut butter and/or personal hygiene items, diapers, etc. which will be donated to the Friends of Assisi Food Pantry.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Happen again
- 8. Large flightless birds
- 13. A type of account
- 14. Beyond what is natural
- 15. Beloved comfort food
- 19. Rural delivery
- 20. Belonging to us
- 21. Typical
- 22. Pie ___ mode
- 23. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- 24. Not us
- 25. Discharge
- 26. Made empty
- 30. Fishing net
- 31. Fast-moving, harmless snake
- 32. Analyzed into its parts
- 33. In a way, chilled
- 34. Hindu queen
- 35. Circles around the sun
- 38. Used for emphasis
- 39. Reactive structures
- 40. Recommendations
- 44. Feel intense anger
- 45. Puke
- 46. Rural Northern Ireland community
- 47. Naturally occurring solid material
- 48. British watch brand
- 49. Toddler
- 50. Integrated circuit
- 51. Being revered
- 55. "Pets" you can grow
- 57. Continual
- 58. Puts together in time
- 59. Houses temporarily

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Vital public document
- 2. Disinter
- 3. Musical performances
- 4. After B
- 5. Every body has one (abbr.)
- 6. Utilize
- 7. In a way, disproved
- 8. Fisherman's tool
- 9. Of she
- 10. Trauma center
- 11. Commercial flyer
- 12. Administered medicine to calm
- 16. Popular R&B performer
- 17. Regretted
- 18. Leg (slang)
- 22. "Night Train" author
- 25. More supernatural
- 27. Baltimore ball-player
- 28. Shoe parts
- 29. Scores perfectly
- 30. More lucid
- 32. Trim by cutting
- 34. Disreputable people
- 35. Dramatic behaviors
- 36. Disorder
- 37. Private box in a theater
- 38. More dried-up
- 40. Raw
- 41. In operation
- 42. Pillager
- 43. Butterflies with brown wings
- 45. Disallow
- 48. Own up
- 51. Hungarian city
- 52. A way to condemn
- 53. Tax collector
- 54. Lease
- 56. Not out

EARLY DEADLINE

In observance of **THANKSGIVING**

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QUABOAG CURRENT

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Cool Kids Choir performs
Nov. 17 p2

STURBRIDGE
Rotary Club's TREK
winners listed p11

WEST BROOKFIELD
CMRPC hosts air
pollution workshop p15

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Friday, November 10, 2023

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