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Quaboag Current
Newspaper

WEST BROOKFIELD
Body camera grant
p2

NORTH BROOKFIELD
Haston library events
p3

EAST BROOKFIELD
Kitting group and book
club p2

Editorial/Opinion 4
Sports 9
Legal Notices 13

Classifieds 14
Police Logs 15

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Friday, December 20, 2024

New Braintree resident celebrated 100th birthday

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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NEW BRAINTREE – This past Sunday, the town’s oldest resident and Boston Post Cane holder Stephanie Benoit celebrated her 100th birthday at home, surrounded by family and friends.

Born on Dec. 15, 1924, in Florence, New Jersey, Benoit served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II, from the age of 20 until the war ended.

During her time in the military, Benoit wrote letters to many young men serving overseas, including Norman Benoit, who went on to become her husband on April 12, 1947.

The couple started their lives in New Braintree moving from the Benoit Farm to the Gleason House, then to Daley’s Blacksmith Shop then to the “Old Cold House” before building their forever home on Hardwick Road, where Benoit still lives today.

The couple had 10 children, Christine, Norman Jr., Chris-



Stephanie Benoit of New Braintree celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends on Dec. 15. SUBMITTED PHOTO

topher, David, Paul, Justin, Gregory, Timothy, Jason and Christian.

Benoit’s four surviving children, Paul Benoit of Hardwick, Jason Benoit of New Braintree, Justin and Gregory all celebrated their mother’s centennial birthday along with extended family members, who took time to reflect on some of her many remarkable achievements.

In 1970, Benoit was the first woman to serve on the Board of Selectmen in town, and the second to hold that position in the commonwealth. A proud

Republican, Benoit was eager to see who won the Presidential Election this year.

“She was heavily involved in local politics,” Paul said.

This included successfully fighting against the placement of a prison in town, on property that is now the State Police Academy. She also rallied against illegal dumping and groundwater pollution.

Last year, she received an award from the town’s Board of Selectmen, recognizing her

See BIRTHDAY | PAGE 12

Elementary school held craft fair during White Christmas

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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WEST BROOKFIELD – Over 50 vendors flooded the West Brookfield Elementary School cafeteria, gymnasium and hallways last weekend.

It was all part of the White Christmas in Town. West Brookfield Town Clerk Heather Gough was excited to see a busy craft fair in the school and a lot of participation throughout West Brookfield.

Gough recalls last year’s White Christmas in West Brookfield encountering rain. This year, the annual White Christmas event was blessed with sunshine.

“We’re here this year with the sun and no rain,” Gough commented. “Its all part of White Christmas in West Brookfield.”

Gough is part of the White Christmas Committee along with Amanda Wodyga, President and Chair, and Treasurer Melannie Waugh. The town has now reached its 32nd annual White Christmas celebration and the town had a lot to offer.

When it comes to holiday shopping, the elementary



Christmas characters in decorative jars really stood out during the White Christmas craft fair. TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

school had many crafts available. One of the cool vendors had sculptures of many superheroes. Many of them glow in the dark. Residents could buy sculptures of Spiderman, Hulk, Wolverine, Deadpool, Batman and Minions.

For a new set of mittens, one vendor had plenty of colorful mittens and gloves for sale. These were made from upcycled sweaters.

Members of the North Brookfield Girl Scout Troop

See FAIR | PAGE 8

Voters approve transfers at STM

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – At a special town meeting held on Dec. 4, voters approved the transfer of \$50,000 from Stabilization to Capital Stabilization to help cover the cost of capital projects.

Capital Improvement Planning Chair Jamie Gilman said

the town has restarted the Capital Improvement Plan and there is currently \$104,000 in the Capital Stabilization fund. The Capital Improvement Plan will identify capital needs across various departments in the town in the coming years.

“When there is a need for a capital replacement, that’s all there is,” he said of the current balance.

See VOTERS | PAGE 7

History of Holland’s 18th century pottery kiln explored

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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STURBRIDGE – At its final meeting of the year last month, the Sturbridge Historical Society presented a program about the John Hinds pottery kiln site, led by Doug Lyon and Mike Forand.

Lyon said Hinds was a previously unknown potter in the town of Holland, whose kiln site was discovered in the 1980s by himself and Forand.

“We came across his site looking for bottles in the woods,” he said.

While searching through a cellar hole, they discovered pottery, including flat pieces of fired clay which he said were a bit of a mystery. Lyon brought these pieces to his friend, a curator at Old Sturbridge Village, who had them identified by the late John Worrell, the archeologist at the museum.

Worrell had identified the

See POTTERY | PAGE 12



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- community -

Over \$69 million in grants awarded for municipal water projects

BOSTON – State Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg, Chair of the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust (Trust) Board of Trustees, announced on Dec. 4, that \$69.2 million in grants were awarded for 52 projects in 42 communities across Massachusetts.

The grant funds will help cities, towns, counties, and water utilities pay for the \$481.8 million in total project cost for improvements to drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

Local towns receiving grant funds include East Brookfield for the West Street Iron and Manganese Water Treatment Plant in the amount of \$9,501,538 (total loan forgiveness is \$1,919,321). The project is to provide treatment to the sole well field in town to remove iron and manganese that is required under an administrative consent order.

The funding for these grants is available from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which provided additional federal funding to the Trust with a requirement that part of the funding be provided as grants.

“These grants will support vital water projects throughout our state,” said Goldberg. “By using federal funding, we can reduce costs for our local communities and create positive impacts statewide, particularly in communities that need improvements most.”

“Clean water and reliable water infrastructure are vital to the health and resilience of Massachusetts communities,” said Governor Maura Healey. “These grants demonstrate our administration’s commitment to winning every federal dollar available for Massachusetts, and the projects they fund will ensure the access to clean water that our residents deserve. Thank you to Treasurer Goldberg and the Board of Trustees for their leader-

ship in the process of securing these funds.”

“These grants represent a meaningful step toward addressing the pressing water infrastructure needs of 42 communities across Massachusetts,” said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. “By reducing the financial burden, especially for towns facing environmental and economic challenges, we are ensuring that critical projects move forward without compromising local budgets. This initiative underscores our commitment to clean, safe water for every resident, while building a more resilient and equitable future.”

The grants will be provided as loan forgiveness and are part of a larger low or no-interest loan. The grants were awarded by project category and provide much needed financial assistance towards high-priority projects.

Additionally, communities that qualify as “Disadvantaged Communities”, determined by an affordability metric that ranks each community in the Commonwealth, have received additional loan forgiveness funds to ensure that funding is given to the communities that need it most. The Trust understands that certain communities face exceptional environmental and financial challenges.

By utilizing loan forgiveness, this can minimize the fiscal impact of these vital water infrastructure projects.

“These grants reflect the shared commitment between our administration and Massachusetts municipalities to secure federal resources that enable tangible benefits for residents,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew J. Gorkowicz. “I look forward to seeing these funds deployed in cities and towns across Massachusetts, where they will improve safety and quality of life.”

The Trust, in collaboration with Mass-DEP, helps communities build or replace water infrastructure that enhances ground and surface water resources, ensures the safety of drinking water, protects public health, and develops resilient communities. It accomplishes these objectives by providing low-interest loans and grants to cities, towns, and water utilities through the Massachusetts State Revolving Funds.

The SRF programs are partnerships between the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. SRFs function like an environmental infrastructure bank by financing water infrastructure projects in cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

For more information

For more information on our different loan programs, please visit the SRF Programs page at <https://www.mass.gov/srf-programs> and for more information on the Loan Forgiveness Program, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/the-disadvantaged-community-loan-forgiveness-program>. To learn about past meetings or find project descriptions, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/board-of-trustees-meeting-information>.

For information on how to apply for an SRF loan, please visit MassDEP’s website at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/state-revolving-fund-applications-forms>

About the Clean Water Trust

Since its establishment in 1989, the Trust has loaned nearly \$9.1 billion to improve and maintain the quality of water in the Commonwealth. An estimated 97% of Massachusetts’ residents have benefited from the financial assistance of the Trust.



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Library hosts knitting group and book club

EAST BROOKFIELD – The East Brookfield Library’s Knitting Group and the Book Club are each looking for new members.

The Knitting Group meets at the library, 122 Connie Mack Drive, on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. All skill levels are welcome. Bring a current project or check out our many pattern books for inspiration.

The library’s Book Club meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 11 a.m. Stop by the library and pick up the book in advance. Patrons are welcome to pick up the book even if they are not attending the discussion.

West Brookfield awarded \$12,321 for body worn camera upgrades

BOSTON – State Sen. Peter Durant, R-Spencer, State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume, R-Spencer and West Brookfield Police Chief Nathan Hagglund announced this week that the West Brookfield Police Department has received a \$12,321 grant from the state-funded Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Program.

The grant was awarded by the state-funded Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Program, in the second round of awards for Fiscal Year 2025. The grant will be used for several items including new “redaction software” which will help the department streamline the process of fulfilling public records requests, Hagglund explained.

Durant said the body worn camera grants are a “win-win” for police departments and

the public.

“Having a video record of every police encounter protects both the officers and the people they interact with,” Durant said. “The cameras are an added layer of protection against false allegations from either side and can also deescalate situations by their mere presence.”

Berthiaume said that upgrading the technology is necessary and recalled that West Brookfield Police have been using the cameras for many years.

“West Brookfield Police were in on the ground floor when it comes to body cameras,” Berthiaume said. “In smaller departments these cameras are even more important because officers are sometimes working alone. They are also useful for training purposes so

that real-life situations can be reviewed.”

Hagglund said the funding will also allow for the purchase of new hardware to attach the cameras to an officer’s gear, 16 new batteries so that every camera will have a backup power supply and charging units for each police cruiser.

“As the batteries age we find they do not last as long,” Hagglund said. “Often officers working longer shifts will have to power off their camera to preserve the battery. That is problematic because the cameras take a moment to turn on, causing a delay in filming.”

Hagglund said the footage from body worn cameras is used as evidence in judicial proceedings, for training and on social media channels to inform the public.



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- community -

Haston Free Public Library lists events

NORTH BROOKFIELD— The Haston Free Public Library will be closed Tuesday, Dec. 24 and Friday, Dec. 25 in observance of Christmas and Tuesday, Dec. 31 and Wednesday, Jan. 1 in observance of the New Year.

The Friends of the library are conducting their annual fundraising appeal. The Friends of the Haston Library are conducting the annual fall fundraising appeal as we continue to support the library and its many programs and activities.

The Friends help fund the library's annual budget for books and materials as well as the library pass program which offers patrons free or reduced admission to sites such as the Worcester Art Museum, Ecotarium and Tower Hill Botanic Garden. The Friends of the Haston Free Public Library, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization; donations to the Friends are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. People may visit the library's website at www.northbrookfieldlibrary.org or call the library at 508-867-0208.

The Book Group will meet Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. at the library. The book is "Indian Horse" by Richard Wagames.

Notch Visitor Center open for winter 2024-2025

AMHERST – Winter at the Mount Holyoke Range is a magical experience, and a visit to the Notch Visitor Center, 1500 West St., Route 116, is the perfect way to enjoy it.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Mount Holyoke Range State Park is ideal for hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. The Notch Visitor Center enhances your park experience with engaging exhibits that highlight the unique features of the Mount Holyoke Range.

Special public programs provide a broader perspective of the park, and staff are on hand to offer trail information and hiking suggestions. There's something for everyone, from beginners to seasoned adventurers.

Free admission and parking. The center is open Tuesday through Sunday, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

For more information and upcoming programs, call 413-253-2883 or visit <https://www.mass.gov/locations/mount-holyoke-range-state-park>.

St. Aloysius Catholic School lists honor roll

HARDWICK – St. Aloysius Catholic School in Gilbertville lists students named to the first trimester honor roll.

Honors

Sophia Adams, Hannah LaRochelle, Rose Theriault, Jackson Boudreau, Alex Velez and Connor Shunaman.

Free yoga and meditation class offered Jan. 9

WARREN – Welcome the New Year and experience an inner depth filled with peace and joy with Yoga & Meditation: For Vibrant Health & Peace of Mind on Thursday, Jan. 9 from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Centered Place, 286 Bridge St. and via Zoom.

Yoga and meditation are clinically tested for reducing stress and improving health. Enjoy a slower-paced yoga practice with simple poses that are easy and work like magic. Relieve back, neck and shoulder tension.

Improve mobility, vitality and stamina. Learn how to relax-stay calm and breathe easy even amidst the challenges that come with the holidays and the times we live in.

The event is free and for all ages, 14 and up. No previous yoga experience necessary. Attend in person or online.

Registration is required by calling 413-436-7690 or emailing warrenpubliclibrary@hotmail.com register. Zoom link will be provided upon request when registering. If attending via Zoom, have a chair handy (folding chair is best).

This workshop will be presented by Phil Milgrom of the Centered Place in Warren, and is sponsored by the Warren Public Library with a grant from the Warren Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the MA Cultural council, a state agency.

Quabbin Middle School lists sixth grade honor roll

BARRE – Quabbin Middle School announces the sixth grade honor roll.

Grade Six, High Honors

Nevaeh Andrews, Ava Blancato, Jaysen Cassano, Ayla Clark, John Cook, Anna Coomey, Grayson Eddy, Colby Hill, Madilyn Houle, Brady Malin, Theodore Minton, Catheryn Racine, Liam Shaw, Zachary Thompson and Brady White.

Grade Six, Honors

Destiny Aiken, Lyric Alves, Aubrianna Babineau, Elijah Baptiste, Zachary Barre, Julianna Bienvenu, Talasyn Boissoneau, Alistair Bombfield, Caleb Caban, Josie Castell, Cameron Charpentier, Charley Chauvin, Ryan Colgate, Ella Critelli, Joey DeMalia, Hannah Dias, Ethan Donaldson, Matthew Flamand, Andrew

Fuller, Jude Gomes, Brynnley Gould, Lincoln Graves, Afina Griffith, Joseph Haley, Silas Howe, James Jackson, Adrian Johnson, Colin Kania, Nathan Kearchner, Levi Kniskern, Ryan LaRange, Walker Larson, Marishao Lee, Ilyanna Lynch, Adalyn McHugh, Kayla McHugh, Lucy Merrill, Sawyer Minton, Annaleigh Moncoeur, Nolan O'Connor, Chevy O'Shea, Evelyn Palladino, Ximena Palomera-Espinoza, Bryce Parisseau, Bentley Parker, Chloe Phillips, Deegan Pope, Oliver Poulin, McKenna Rengo, Lillian Roohan, Cooper Sampson, Ava Sherblom, Andie St. Clair, Brayden Surprenant, Landon Swindlehurst, Kenzie Thorpe, Regan Toohill, Hana Mae Tousignant and Everett Weisman.

Cold weather clothing drive ongoing through spring

WARE – The Recovery Center of HOPE and the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance will be hosting a Community Cold Weather Drive to benefit local individuals and families facing hardships.

They will be accepting new and gently used gloves, mittens, scarves, sweaters, blankets, base-layers, jackets and coats and new beanies and socks.

Items will be collected through the spring and can be dropped off at the following locations: Town Hall, 126 Main St., Mondays and Tuesdays from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Recovery on Main, 78 Main St., Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m.; Ware Library, 37 Main St., Thursdays from 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; and Recovery Center of HOPE, Fridays from 2-4 p.m.

EQLT holds New Year's Day walk

NEW BRAINTREE – East Quabbin Land Trust will start off 2025 with a New Year's Day walk, Wednesday, Jan. 1 at noon at the New Braintree Trail Station Site, 1700 Hardwick Road.

This will be a casual walk on the Mass Central Rail Trail in New Braintree and Hardwick. EQLT will also dedicate the Terry Briggs Memorial Bench in Wheelwright.

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merry christmas

- opinion -



Coriander makes a great cookie

Today was the designated day to begin to bake like crazy. Personally, I wish we could cull the number, and honestly the sheer volume of Christmas cookies we make, but if the kids or my husband hear of that I will be banished to Grinch status.

It's a tradition to go through the recipes ahead of time and decide what cookies we'll bake.

One of my all-time favorites, and one I would never consider culling, is the coriander cookie. My family tried a sample at Old Sturbridge Village's Christmas by Candlelight some years back and enjoyed it so much we added the recipe to our repertoire. Yummy indeed!

You may be surprised to learn that Coriander sativum is the Latin name for two herbs. Confused? Most folks are when they learn that the seeds of this plant are called coriander, while the leaves are known as cilantro.

Both have been used for culinary purposes since the beginning of time! All portions of the plant are edible but some argue that the green portion is barely that.

Read on. I liken cilantro to be the "marigold" of the herb world. Either you love it or you hate it. I, for one, immensely dislike it and if given the chance to pick it out of my salsa I will certainly do it! Even in a restaurant.

I found it interesting to learn that some people possess a genetically predisposed aversion to it, according to studies by Charles J. Wysocki of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia.

To me it has a bitter taste that I have a hard time describing beyond that. Dirty? Soil-like?

Most people that do dislike it have a similar lack of descriptive ability; they just can't put their finger on it, but they don't like the taste...or the smell of it.

As I mentioned, cilantro is often used in salsa and other Mexican, Asian and Italian dishes including curries, sauces, salads and soups. If you prefer to grow the plant more for its greens and less for its seeds, manage it as you would spinach.

Sow seeds in the ground in the cool of the season and in succession every two weeks. It dislikes being transplanted but doesn't mind pot culture. Harvest greens rather aggressively – about one-third of the plant at a time.

Just like spinach, there are slow-to-bolt varieties to choose from such as aptly named "Slow Bolt" and "Longstanding."

Coriander seeds, on the other hand, have a pleasant (at least to me!) fragrance once dried. The scent is easier to pin-point too; nutty and spicy (ever so slightly) come to mind.

Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits and herbal liqueurs, and cookies.

It's funny that I can like one part of the plant and not the other. Coriander seed can be eaten whole, crushed or powdered.

The Herb Society noted that during World War II the seeds were coated in white or pink sugar and thrown from carnival wagons, earning the name "confections" or "confetti!" When the seeds were replaced by balls of

See GARDEN | PAGE 13



LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR

Resident responds to letter about Presidential Election

The winners know already. We don't have to wait. We can feel it.

The folks with money and influence? Right. We're the only ones who voted for evil orange man.

We're the ones who avoided any real choice? What choice did the Democrats have? How many people got to choose their Democratic nominee? Oh, that's right. zero. Kammy was anointed.

The one's who committed crimes on his behalf? That's rich. Hunter Biden comes to mind. So does Garland and Mayorkas.

You want to know who lost? You did. And for good reason. Wake up. As an educator, I'm not surprised you feel this way.

This is why kids do as poorly in school as they do. They need an education, not an

indoctrination.

Lying, cheating, abuse of women? Hunter Biden comes to mind again, as well as Joe himself. Sorry. We all didn't lose, you lost. And you lost big. You were completely destroyed.

Seven swing states, the popular vote, the electoral college, the Senate. I can't possibly fit in everything I need to say. Stay in Massachusetts. You'll be right at home with all the woke people.

Sit back and watch Trump destroy democracy and jail all his enemies, blah blah blah. You people have no joy in your lives. MAGA.

Thomas Bibo
West Brookfield

ten white eggs. When prey is abundant the clutch size is larger. They make barking noises during breeding, but are quiet in winter.

They inhabit the open tundra and when they move south, they inhabit airports, beaches, marshes and open fields.

Many years ago, a snowy owl appeared in Oakham during the winter. I was lucky to see it perched on a fence post near an open field in the daytime. People came from all over to see this rare visitor. Logan Airport is a popular winter stop over.

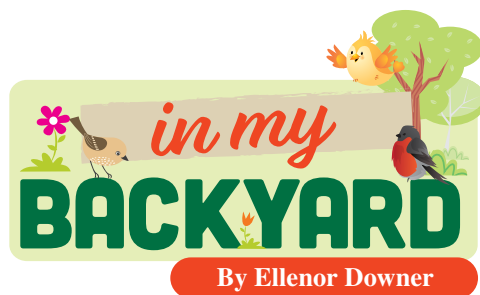
Bald eagle sighting

On Dec. 2 I received an email from a Brimfield resident. He said, "I've been checking the local ponds but not a lot happening. However, I have seen a bald eagle or two at the pond on New Reed Street four time in the last two weeks and another birder I met there reported seeing eagles there that I missed. On one visit two adult bald eagles were sitting in the same dead tree about fifteen feet apart."

Christmas Bird Count

He plans to participate in the Allen's Bird Count Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, Dec. 14. National Audubon Society 125th Christmas Bird Counts take place Saturday, Dec. 14 through Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025. This is one of the most popular birding events of the year. It is rarely held on the actual designated holiday itself, counts are scheduled

See BACKYARD | PAGE 5



Snowy owls have already been spotted in Massachusetts this year.

They come from the tundra area of Canada into the United States during the winter. Usually, the snowy owls that head to this area are immature. This irruptive behavior may or may not be coordinated with the lemming cycle, one of their primary foods especially during their breeding cycle.

The snowy owl is about 24 inches long and primarily white, yellow eyes and variable amounts of black spots and barring. Immatures are darker than adults and females darker than males.

Snowy owls frequently hunt during the day. Their diet is mainly rodents, Arctic and snowshoe hares, fish, birds including waterfowl and carrion.

They nest on the tundra in a shallow depression on a mound on top or on a gravel mound. They line the nest with feathers and bits of moss. The female lays three to



Snowy owl

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.

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Quaboag Current Newspaper

- community -

A wintry hike on Mount Monadnock

By Julie Midura

“I don’t think we’re on the trail anymore.”
Tom and I drove to Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire last week following a recent snowstorm. After parking our car at the trailhead, we made quick work of the road walk to the old Halfway House site, where we had a choice to make.

We could continue straight ahead onto the well packed out and very popular White Arrow Trail, or hang a sharp right onto the lesser used and more difficult to follow Hello Rock Trail.

We paused when we reached the junction. One look in the direction of Hello Rock Trail told us that we would have our work cut out for us if we chose that route.

Not only was the snow much deeper than we expected, but there were no other boot prints in sight. We would be breaking trail.

After not hiking anything strenuous in weeks and feeling less than confident in our ability to tackle some moderate trail breaking, I hesitated for a fraction of a second. I took a deep breath, exhaled slowly, then turned right towards Hello Rock Trail.

No time like the present to see just how out of shape we were!

As we broke through the calf-deep, thick blanket of white that covered the tread-way, the path was fairly obvious- four feet wide and slightly lower than the earth on either side. But we continued forward, undaunted by the fact that we were fairly certain we were no longer on the actual trail.

After all, if we couldn’t locate the path, we’d just follow our footprints in the snow back to where the trail was more obvious, and then attempt to find the spot where we had made a wrong turn. In the meantime, we enjoyed moving through the Narnia-like forest of white.

I was in the lead when I stopped suddenly at the base of a very steep rock outcropping. The thought of going up the hill made my heart rate soar.

However, the hope that we might be able to catch sight of the trail from the top and reconnect with the path we were supposed to be on helped assuage my fear. I ignored my rapidly beating heart, slammed my trekking poles into the snow-covered rock, kicked my spike-clad boots into the snow, and hauled myself up.

Only to realize that “You can’t get there from here.”

Upon reaching the top of the snow covered ledge, we discovered that we were mere feet from a sheer vertical drop-off. At this point, we had three options. Well, in reality, just two, since plunging off the ledge onto the jagged rocks below was never really a viable option to begin with.



Julie smiles brightly at the top of Mount Monadnock.



Tom takes in the beautiful snow covered view.

One, continue bushwhacking upwards in an attempt to see where we would end up. The hope being that we’d eventually find Cliff Walk Trail. (Tom’s idea)

Two, turn back and try to find where we zigged when we should have zagged, and get back on the actual trail. (My idea)

One of the great things about hiking with a partner is that when one of you has a harebrained, cockamamie, dare I say utterly ridiculous idea, the more rational one can help you dial back the crazy, so to speak

Now I’m not saying that I’m always the logical part of the equation. Quite the contrary. I’m usually the one who likes to push the envelope when we hike together. You know – find out just how much we are capable of.

In those instances, Tom graciously offers his unsolicited advice, both for the betterment of our marriage, as well as to ensure that we aren’t put into a perilous situation by my occasionally wacky ideas.

On Saturday, however, it was my turn to be the sensible half of our partnership. With temperatures in the teens, I had no desire to continue bushwhacking in an area where a magnitude of snow had effectively erased the crevices and deep holes surrounding the enormous boulders which were lying in wait to swallow a leg or twist an ankle. And after only mild persuasion on my part, Tom agreed.

Needless to say, “self-preservation” won over “adrenaline rush” and we turned back, eventually finding the sharp right turn we had missed earlier.

And at the end of the day, the summit was reached, views were had, pizza was consumed, hot cider was enjoyed, joy was found. And we lived to hike another day.

Honestly, what more could we possibly ask for? See you in the wintry wild places, my friends! Follow Julie and Tom on Instagram @morethanthemountain for more of their hiking adventures.

BACKYARD | FROM PAGE 4

to take place on various days surrounding Dec. 25 within the official count period noted above. Counting takes place anytime during the 24 hours, midnight-to-midnight.

The goal is to find, identify and count all birds within a 15-mile diameter “count circle.” All are welcome. Compilers do their best to make sure that beginners join a group with at least one experienced birder. Locations in late December include: Quabbin on Saturday, Dec. 28 compiler Scott Surner at ssurner@aol.com and Westminster on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025 compiler Charles Caron at 978-874-5649 or caronev@aol.com.

People may visit <https://www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count> to read about CBC history, science and data.

Juncos and snow

The Brimfield resident noted a large flock of jun-

cos about 40 the day before the Dec. 5 snow storm. He said, “Storms a commin’ I looked out near where the feeding stations are located and where I spread mixed seed on the ground and a quick count resulted in 40 junco. And chickadees and titmice were constantly back and forth to the black oil sunflower seed feeder.” I also saw a large flock of juncos on my daughter’s lawn in Barre on that Wednesday.

Pond visits

The Brimfield resident makes frequent trips to ponds in his area. He found most of them frozen over on Dec. 4. He did count 12 hooded mergansers at Holland Pond, a large group of mallards over 200 and three black ducks at Sherman Pond.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

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Sweeping economic development bill passes legislature

BOSTON – State Sen. Adam Gomez (D-Springfield), State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) and the Senate unanimously passed a comprehensive economic development bill that makes bold investments in life sciences, climate tech, and small businesses, building on Massachusetts’ national leadership and creating an environment where businesses and workers thrive.

The \$3.96 billion in bonds authorized in An Act Relative to strengthening Massachusetts’ economic leadership will stimulate new and proven industries, support workforce development and talent retention, and modernize economic growth strategies. This includes nearly \$10 million in bonding for projects in Springfield and \$1.5 million in Chicopee, as well as nearly \$40,000,000 for a new quantum innovation hub in the Pioneer Valley if authorized, working on topics including information sciences, therapeutic biomanufacturing, and creating alternative proteins.

“This bond bill and the funding path laid out for the coming years reflects our state’s commitment to reinvesting in items that will benefit people and businesses in a way that is sustainable and on the forefront of science, technology, and health,” said Gomez. “I am proud to see the goals to create new innovation hubs, including one in the Pioneer Valley, which promise to bring high-paying jobs to our region, and I am grateful for the ways that our body prioritized

regional equity in our approach today. I look forward to fighting for this bond funding to be released, and seeing these ideas come to fruition.”

“Today, we take a significant step forward in ensuring that the benefits of economic growth reach every corner of our Commonwealth, especially Western Massachusetts. This economic development package reflects our commitment to regional equity, fostering job creation, supporting local businesses, and investing in the strengths of our unique communities,” said Oliveira. “I’m proud to have worked with my colleagues in the Western Mass delegation and the Legislature to prioritize innovation, workforce development, and sustainable practices. Together, we are laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and balanced economy that uplifts all regions and ensures prosperity for generations to come.”

Highlights from the bill include:

Educator diversity

Allows the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop an alternative certification process for teachers who may face challenges passing the educator certification exam but can otherwise demonstrate their competence as teachers. The change will help Massachusetts diversify the K-12 educator workforce.

Climate-tech investments

Provides \$400 million in capital resources to the (Massachusetts Clean

Energy Center to utilize over the next ten years, with \$200 million authorized to support innovation and deployment of climate-tech technologies and \$200 million to support the offshore wind industry.

It also establishes a new tax credit to invest in climate-tech companies.

A new program housed at MassCEC will develop and expand employment opportunities in climate-tech and promote climate-tech-related economic development by supporting and stimulating research, development, innovation, manufacturing, deployment and commercialization in the climate-tech sector. The credit will be subject to a \$30 million annual cap.

Life sciences

Authorizes \$500 million over ten years for the Life Sciences Breakthrough Fund to reauthorize the Commonwealth’s life sciences initiative.

Known as Life Sciences 3.0, the reauthorization adds health equity, biosecurity, digital health, and artificial intelligence to the mission of the Life Sciences Center. The bill increases the annual tax credit authorization for the life sciences industry from \$30 million to \$40 million.

Support for small businesses

Restructures two quasi-state agencies that are designed to be the gateway for access to state resources, the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation and Massachusetts Development Finance

Agency.

The legislation also authorizes a five-year pilot program for the Commonwealth to assist small businesses in acquiring surety bonds.

Large capital projects, whether public or private, often require retention of a surety bond by the contractor as financial security. Historically, economically and socially disadvantaged businesses often cannot acquire these bonds because of a lack of credit history or collateral.

This program creates a self-sustaining state assistance program to open doors for more of these businesses.

Live theater tax credit

Launches a new tax credit of up to \$7 million annually to support local live theater productions. The credit will help Massachusetts artists working towards Broadway or off-Broadway launch a national tour.

Craft beer at farmers markets

Updates the law to allow for locally produced craft beer to be sold at farmers markets, like wine and cider currently.

Ticketing transparency

Requires ticket sellers to clearly disclose the actual ticket price when listing tickets online and bans automated ticket purchasing software, otherwise known as bots. Bots drive up prices in the secondary market by creating artificial scarcity when fans try to purchase tickets from the artist or venue.

See BILL | PAGE 7



Logan Distler

September 22, 2024

Parents: Daniel & Lisa Distler, Brimfield
Grandparents: Christopher & Michele Mues, Warren Carole & (the late) Bruce Distler, Rocky Point, NY



Scarlett Legasey

January 25, 2024

Parents: Thomas & Jessica Legasey, Rutland
Grandparents: Donald & MaryAnn Dunbar, Ware Thomas & Sharon Legasey, Spencer



Thomas Kelly

April 13, 2024

Parents: Liza & Russ Kelly, Ludlow
Grandparents: Susan Raymond, Ludlow



Elliot Peter Trainor

September 11, 2024

Parents: Ben & Jess Trainor, Spencer
Grandparents: Paul & Joanne Wyman, Ware Peter & Christine Trainor, Spencer



Finley Jameson Neylon

February 15, 2024

Parents: Brennan & Brittany (Wokoun) Neylon, Boling, TX
Grandparents: Nancy Wokoun, Pomeria, SC Peter & Amy Wokoun, Brookshire, TX Matthew & Anne Neylon, Oakham, MA Beth & Bill Hallene, Quinneboag, CT
Great Grandparents: Donna Neylon, Charlton, MA

BILL | FROM PAGE 6

Everett soccer stadium

Allows for the construction of a professional soccer stadium and waterfront park on a parcel of land in Everett by removing the parcel's classification as a designated port area. The change is expected to have positive environmental and economic impacts in surrounding communities as well as improve public transit connectivity.

Public funding for the construction of the stadium is not allowed, and funding for public infrastructure improvements associated with the stadium would require matching private funds. The language also requires community mitigation agreements with the cities of Everett and Boston.

Strengthening local and regional public health systems. Overhauls the state's fragmented public health system to ensure strong public health protections for all residents regardless of race, income, or zip code.

Pathway for foreign-trained physicians

Creates a pathway in Massachusetts for physicians previously authorized to practice medicine outside the United States to practice in an underserved region of the Commonwealth.

Nurse licensure compact

Includes a provision to admit Massachusetts in the national nurse licensure

compact, which will help alleviate the critical workforce challenges facing the health care sector.

Civil service reforms

Modernizes Massachusetts civil service laws to give communities more options in filling vacancies while giving qualified job seekers more opportunities to find a match.

Data centers tax credit

Creates a new tax credit to attract investment in qualified data centers.

Childcare as campaign expense

Removes current limitations on political candidates using campaign funds for childcare services that occur because of campaign activities.

FAFSA

Requires each school district to notify students prior to graduating from high school of the availability of Free Application for Federal Student Aid and to provide students with information on financial aid options.

Liquor license equity

Removes archaic requirement that a restaurant liquor license holder be a United States citizen, thereby creating a pathway for other qualified immigrants.

Project labor agreements

Authorizes public agencies and municipalities to enter into project labor agreements for public works contracts when such an agreement is in the best

interest of the public agency or municipality.

Sustainability for farmers

Allows farmers to diversify how they use their farms, including using land for agritourism and selling goods made from produce they have grown themselves.

Regional equity

The legislation reflects the different needs of different communities and ensures none of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns are left behind.

This will partly be accomplished through statewide targeted infrastructure improvements, with the bill authorizing \$400 million for MassWorks public infrastructure projects that spur economic development and help support job creation, \$100 million for the Rural Development Fund to provide financial assistance for infrastructure and community planning efforts in rural communities, \$100 million for local economic development grants for economic development in cities and towns, \$90 million to support the redevelopment of underutilized, blighted, or abandoned buildings, and \$10 million for the Broadband Incentive Fund for the capital maintenance of the MassBroadband 123 middle mile network.

In addition to infrastructure, the legislation recognizes the importance of

local cultural and economic sites, providing \$150 million for capital grants for public libraries, \$50 million for the Cultural Facilities Fund, \$40 million for Destination Development grants to support capital improvements of tourism assets, \$15 million for a capital grant program to support the Commonwealth's agriculture, commercial fishing, and cranberry growing industries, and \$8 million for historical preservation grants through the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Capital authorizations

The legislation includes a total of \$3.96 billion in capital authorizations for leading Massachusetts industries like life sciences and climate tech.

Additional authorizations include:

\$400 million for the MassWorks Infrastructure Program to support public infrastructure projects and create jobs

\$150 million for library construction projects

\$103 million for artificial intelligence in systems across the state

\$100 million for infrastructure improvements in rural communities

\$21 million for resilience in agriculture and fishing

\$40 million for food science innovations, including \$10 million to support the state's nascent alternative protein industry

VOTERS | FROM PAGE 1

Residents talked about the need to build the Stabilization fund, in the face of budget constraints. Some mentioned that the town has had to take money out of Stabilization in order to balance the budget, and has been able to replenish it with Free Cash.

Town Accountant Shiela LeBlanc said, "As a community, we have to stop living off our Stabilization...If we can't fund what people need in a budget, then how are we going to make these capital purchases?"

Currently, the Stabilization balance is \$1,388,596.85, LeBlanc said.

LeBlanc stressed the need to include the cost of maintenance for a capital purchase in a department's budget prior to getting approval for it.

"It has to be part of their budget, has to be part of the purchase before we take it to town meeting," she said.

Capital Improvement Planning member Brandon Avery said the town does not have any borrowing capacity and has no extra source of income. He said the town has "been lucky" in years past with receiving extra income, including \$500,000 from Green Gold, around \$500,000 from COVID-19 funds and approximately \$1.4 million from American Rescue Plan Act funds.

"Those funds are gone

and they're not coming back," he said. "We need to get to a point where we can save a little money for the future. If we don't, we're going to be in serious trouble when something comes up that we really need, we're going to be between a rock and a hard place."

Avery said the departments have to live within their budgets without dipping into Stabilization. He said the transfer will help the departments with capital needs.

The motion to approve the transfer passed by a two-third majority vote.

Fire Department hoses

Voters also approved the transfer of \$7,180 from Fire Assistant Chief's Salary to Fire Supplies to replace the Fire Department's hoses, which failed a recent inspection. Fire Chief Darin Anderson said any hose older than 1987 is considered "no good" and some of

the department's hoses date back to the 1970s.

He said eight nozzles also failed the inspection

"We are trying to replace hose," Anderson said. "We had catastrophic failures...this is allowing us to buy at least some hose to help get us through."

Anderson said the department is working to secure a grant to replace the remaining hoses. He said the department will be able to purchase 100-foot long four-inch hose for \$600 each, which is a savings from the average cost of \$750-900.

"Luckily we worked with our vendors and a town had ordered some and then decided they didn't want it," Anderson said. "And they knew the desperation we were in."

Anderson said the department needs about \$50,000 worth of hoses and noz-

zles.

"This gets us a fraction of the portion," he said.

Police overtime

Voters approved the transfer of \$7,000 from Police Career Incentive to Police Overtime.

A resident asked why there have been so many transfers to the overtime account this year.

LeBlanc said the department has been without a full-time police officer since the beginning of the fiscal year. A full-time police officer was recently appointed to fill that vacancy and there are no part-time officers on the department.

Article 1

Voters were in favor of a motion made to pass over article 1, to rescind a portion of the vote from the Nov. 15 special town meeting that raised and appropriated \$66,564 to Group Health.

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North Brookfield Girl Scouts kept busy during the craft fair. TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

FAIR | FROM PAGE 1

64831 were selling products they made themselves. The Girl Scouts had pillows, cards, and miniature ornaments in the shape of snowmen and hats available.

Other items guests can shop for included home decor, Christmas decor, ornaments, crochet items, candles, jewelry, needle felted items, paper crafts, bakery items, dog treats and accessories, 3D printed items, t-shirts, wooden signs, farmhouse decor, cutting and charcuterie boards, homemade soaps and beauty products, tumblers, children's gifts, clothing, art of all types, kitchen accessories, honey and maple syrup products, essential oils and accessories.

There was also a raffle to help support the West Brookfield Elementary School PTG and students. Outside the school was a food truck from Fry'd Guys and a stand for fresh kettle corn.



A tree with plenty of ornaments available.



Nativities and wool slippers were for sale at the craft fair.



Guests got to participate in raffles during the craft fair.



These crafts were handmade by the North Brookfield Girl Scouts.



There were plenty of precious gifts to win during the fair's raffle.



It's time to keep warm and these mittens were made from upcycled sweaters.



Superhero sculptures were being sold at the White Christmas Craft Fair at West Brookfield Elementary School. Some even glow in the dark.

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SPORTS

Cougars back on the prowl



The Cougars opened up their season later in the week. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

WARREN – Last Thursday night, Quaboag girls basketball got their regular season going with a 46-21 win at Marlborough. The Cougars did not make tournament last season, but are hoping to get back in this year after missing out by just one win. Quaboag also had a Saturday matchup against the Advance Math & Science Academy. They were edged in that contest 41-38. Quaboag had its home opener on Dec. 18 against Southbridge, then has an extended break until Dec. 30 against Bay Path at 6:30 p.m.



Quaboag is on the road for their first three games.



Their home opener is on Dec. 18 against Southbridge.



Quaboag girls basketball continued its preparation for the regular season last week.



The Cougars had a tri-scrimmage last week with Granby and host Belchertown.

Pioneers don't have answer for Duggan

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent



Grayson Griswold sends up a three-point attempt. TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE

PALMER— First-year Pathfinder Tech boys' varsity basketball coach Ethan Ortyl is hoping to win a lot of games during his coaching career. He had to wait a little bit longer before celebrating his first career victory.

The Pioneers suffered an 80-18 non-league home loss to powerhouse Duggan Academy in the season opening game, last Thursday night.

"This game was a good test for us against one of the best teams that we're going to play all season," said Ortyl, who replaced Zac Button as the Pioneers varsity coach. "The players continued to play hard in tonight's game, and they care about each other. We're going to bounce back and keep battling in every game that we play this season. I just love this group of players."

It was also the first varsity start for all five of the Pioneers starters. Those five players are junior Dustyn Cook, junior Dayne Shanley, junior Aiden Girard, sophomore Cayden Bousquet, and freshman Cassian Kowalik.

"We've only had four practices, which doesn't include tryouts, before tonight's game. The players are still learning a new system and I'm still learning what they're capable of



Dayne Shanley takes a mid-range shot.

- sports -

Panthers open 2024-2025 season



Quabbin's is looking for a return trip to the state tournament this year.

BARRE—Last week, Quabbin Regional High School basketball transitioned from the end of their preseason quickly to their first regular season game. The Panthers started out by taking on Palmer High School in a preseason scrimmage last Tuesday evening. After two more days of practice, the Panthers would open their regular season on Friday, Dec. 13 and defeated Narragansett 44-31. Quabbin, now 1-0, had three games this week before the Christmas break. Next weekend, the Panthers will take part in the Gardner Holiday tournament.



The Panthers faced Palmer in a scrimmage last week. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



It was Quabbin's final scrimmage before starting the season.



The Panthers opened their regular season with a win last Friday.



The Quabbin High School girls basketball team continued its work to prepare for the season.

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WNECA Doubles at Bogey Lanes

EAST BROOKFIELD – Bogey Lanes in East Brookfield was the host of the most recent Western New England Candlepin Association doubles tournament this past weekend.

WNECA is dedicated to promoting the game of candlepin bowling throughout western Massachusetts. For years, Bogey Lanes has been a gracious host for tournaments and continues to support tournaments through the WNECA.

The doubles tournament this past weekend was a great success with over 30 teams showing up over the course of four shifts. The results are in, and the winning team was Brandon Martins and Rob Poirier.

Both bowlers regularly bowl out of Agawam Bowl in Agawam, and bowled excellently during day one of the tournament. Along with their handicap and scratch totals the team of Martins and Poirier combined for a score of 893 to win the doubles at Bogey Lanes.

It was a good day on the lanes for Martins as he bowled a series of 409. This was the second time Brandon Martins bowled a 400 series during the WNECA tournament series.

The team who finished in second place were Jason Gauthier Sr. and Tiffany Gauthier with a combined score of 850. In third place, the team of Erica and Craig Beaudry scored an 839.

A total of nine teams placed in the doubles tournament at Bogey Lanes. The teams who finished fourth through ninth were within fifteen points of

each other. Chris and Laurie Lafreniere finished in fourth with an 830, Robby Wood and Nick Brown with a 826, Stacy Bloomberg and Steve Champagne with a 823, Tharen Ring and Chris Cincotta with 820 and the team of Cody Brunelle and Kyle Wilder tied at 815 with Trever Kenneson and Sophia Hearnlaye.

The point standings for the tournament series have been posted on the WNECA Facebook page. After the doubles event at Bogey, Brandon Martins is leading in points as the #1 seed. His teammate from the doubles Rob Poirier is currently in third place.

The WNECA will host a championship bracket tournament featuring the top 24 bowlers after the conclusion of the tournament series. After a successful doubles tournament, Martins and Poirier are in good shape to compete in the championship tournament at the end of the year.

The next WNECA tournament will be in January at the Turn Hall in Adams and the event will be singles.

Commercial Elks League

PALMER – Compression bowled against Last in Line this past Tuesday night in the Commercial Elks League.

In game one, Last in Line defeated Compression by a score of 362-318. In game two, Compression bounced back with a win of their own, 409-342. In game three, Last in Line took the final game 396-350. Vinny Navarro of Last in Line finished with a 117 and his teammate Jeremy Laduke finished with a 114.

The final score was 1100-1077 in favor of Last in Line and the team received three points.

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.

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- sports -

PIONEERS | FROM PAGE 9



Cassian Kowalik tries to avoid having his shot blocked. TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE



Dustyn Cook goes low to avoid a defender.



Cayden Bousquet keeps the ball away from his opponent.



Aiden Girard heads down the court.

doing,” Ortyl added. “We’re going to work hard at practice before our next game against Pioneer Valley Christian Academy on Monday night. There are a lot of things that we need to work on. Everyone just needs to keep improving, including myself.”

Girard (3 points) and senior Matthew Vanasse (2 points) are the Pioneers co-captains.

Duggan, who posted an 18-2 regular season record a year ago, also didn’t have very much trouble dispatching the Pioneers in their previous two meetings on the hardwood.

With the help of several turnovers, the Jayhawks were able to build a 27-0 lead at the end of the opening quarter in last Thursday’s game, and they never looked back.

Junior Isaiah Rodriguez scored 19 of his game-high 23 points for the visitors from Springfield during the first eight minutes of the contest.

Duggan’s other two double digit scorers were junior Allen Miranda, who scored 11 of his 21 points in the third quarter, and senior Kyle Combs (12 points).

The Pioneers, who beat Duggan by 14 points during the 2022 regular season, finally broke the ice with six minutes left in the first half when a steal by freshman Grayson Griswold led to a Bousquet lay-up basket.

Bousquet, who was the Pioneers leading scorer with four points, also made another lay-up a minute later following another steal from Griswold.

In the middle of the second quarter, Griswold scored his first career varsity points on a lay-up.

The home team was trailing, 40-6 at halftime.

Pathfinder Tech’s only made baskets of the third quarter were from Vanasse and Girard.

The Jayhawks only outscored the Pioneers, 10-7, during the final eight minutes of the contest.

Pathfinder freshman Jordan Mbi made an old fashion three point play with 5:47 remaining in regulation, which gave the home fans something to cheer about. Kowalik also hit a runner in the lane. Girard and Shanley each made a free throw.

The Pioneers players and supporters were looking to celebrate a win at home against PVCA on Monday night.

Coaching classes available

Coaches hired after Aug. 1, 1998 are required to take a coaching course to be eligible to coach high school sports in Massachusetts.

According the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Association, all coaches hired prior to Aug. 1, 1998 are exempt from taking the Fundamentals of Coaching Course. Coaches hired after that and before July 1, 2005 must have completed the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course with the exception of Certified MA teachers.

All coaches (stipend or volunteer) first serving as an interscholastic coach after July 1, 2005 must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course, and an approved Sports First Aid course.

The NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course requirement must be met through attending an MIAA sponsored Fundamentals of Coaching Class with MIAA Certified Instructors. Must be completed and passed prior to coaching a second year.

The NFHS Sports First Aid may be met by completing on-line courses with the NFHS www.

nfhslern.com. Must be passed prior to coaching a third year.

Additional requirements for all coaches:

Massachusetts requires coaches to be certified in CPR per Section 1. Section 47A of chapter 71 of the General Laws. Additionally, AED training is required and will

most likely be done in conjunction with the existing mandated CPR training.

All MIAA member school coaches (stipend or volunteer) are required to take annually the on-line National Federation Concussion Course, or other MA Department of Public Health recognized education program, prior to the start of

their season. Rugby Coaches must see Rule 76.2 for additional coaches’ education information.

Any questions, please call Donna Harrington at 508-541-9804 or email dharrington@miaa.net.

Fundamentals of coaching classes are being offered on Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2025 from

4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 8, 2025 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Classes are open until capacity is reached and then a waiting list is established. There are online components to the course once the classroom portion is completed

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POTTERY | FROM PAGE 1

pieces as kiln furniture, which is only found in kilns. Kiln furniture is also known as saggars, supports or shelves, and was used to stack pottery inside the kiln to keep the pieces from sticking together.

In an article Worrell printed in the Society for Industrial Archeology, New England Chapters, he described the findings: "Thousands of artifacts were excavated and recorded stratigraphically from the Hinds site, the bulk of them being vessel sherds and stacking furniture...Hinds' vessels display some variation, especially in decoration, than do the other potters whose sites have been thus far investigated...In addition to the usual undecorated utilitarian wares, Hinds was producing various slipped wares (painted, trailed, dipped), and some very thin-walled, etched hollowware having metallic black glaze."

"It's just pieces of clay shaped differently to allow the heat to get between the pieces as being fired," Forand said. "Different types of kiln furniture worked for different vessels."

Lyon said anything could be used as kiln furniture, and Hinds used pressed clay which contained his fingerprints.

"It doesn't look like much," Lyon said of a piece he held up. "And yet I think it's one of the more important pieces that we found because it identified the site as a kiln site."

Lyon said according to records, Hinds was born in 1714 and was originally from Cambridge. In 1750, he held his first deed in Holland (known at the time as South Brimfield) where he is listed as a potter from 1750-1793.

"Now that's significant because John

Worrell said that we would probably never see him listed on paper as a potter because people of the time, they were farmers," Lyon said. "Everybody was a farmer...if they did something on the side (like a sawmill, or potting or blacksmithing) you would still see them listed as a farmer."

In 1754-1763 Hinds served in the French and Indian War with his oldest son, and there are several mentions of Hinds in Martin Lovering's book, "History of the Town of Holland Massachusetts".

Until recently, Lyon believed that Hinds had died in 1793 due to a deed which mentioned him as "recently deceased" and his wife, Judith, as a widow. He said Holland's online town records list Hinds, Judith and one daughter as "paupers" as late as 1815, which places his death much later.

Hinds' kiln site was located close to Sturbridge, along the Connecticut border. Now, the kiln site is part of the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary.

While excavating the kiln site, Forand said they discovered countless pieces of pottery shards, which have been stored at Old Sturbridge Village.

Lyon said they never discovered any intact pottery pieces, as most of them were discarded or broken. Beside the kiln furniture, they discovered kitchenware and tableware.

"We try to guess what it was," he said of the pieces.

A special type of pottery they found at the site was black incised, which they believe could have been Hinds' experimental attempts to create something similar to stoneware or porcelain. This pottery was black, like it had been

overfired (intentional or not), thin and carved into.

"It's thin, it's tea cup-like...we only found a few pieces. We've not found it anywhere else other than John Hinds," Lyon said.

He said some of the common pottery items they didn't find at the site included tiles, bedpans, flowerpots and tobacco pipes. He said the lack of tobacco pipes led them to believe that Hinds was probably not a smoker.

Lyon said they also discovered the fieldstone base of the kiln, and were able to determine the kiln's wall by the way the heat altered the rocks, as well as where the fire box and loading door were located.

"Heat would, like it does with clay, it would turn it red," he said.

The kiln itself was more than likely made from brick and Forand said there were many bricks found at the site.

Lyon described Hinds' pottery style as "simple and modest" in decoration, which would have been used for everyday use. His pottery ranged in color from brown to black to yellow and red.

Hinds also used slip to decorate his pieces, which is a white "watery" clay that turned yellow when fired. He would embellish the pieces with loops and dots.

"His slipware is simple and two-color," Lyon said. "Decorative, but simple."

Forand said the kiln site hasn't been fully explored yet, but there have been two separate excavations including the original one in the 1980s with Old Sturbridge Village, and a more recent one with the permission of the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary.

"There's a lot more there that could be explored and a lot of questions still

to be answered," Forand said.

Forand asked the audience to check their records of general store purchases from this time period, to see if there is any reference to Hinds selling his pottery. Forand and Lyon have not found any record of Hinds selling or distributing his pottery.

For more information about the Hinds kiln site, people may visit the Hinds Site Facebook group or read Worrell's article "John Hinds Pottery Kiln" in the Society for Industrial Archeology, New England Chapters, Volume 7, Number 3 from 1987 at <https://nec-sia.org/ne>. Information can also be found on Old Sturbridge Village's website, www.osv.org.

Upcoming programs

The Sturbridge Historical Society will continue its monthly programs in 2025 at the Publick House on the third Thursday of each month, starting at 7 p.m. All programs are free to attend, and the meeting room and refreshments are provided courtesy of the Publick House.

On Jan. 23, Bob Arnold will present about a trip his grandparents took in 1927 in a Model A across the country; on Feb. 27, Rich Paradise will present about covered bridges in New England; on March 27, Bill Reid will present "Notables and Notorious" depicting characters from the Last Green Valley; April 24, Doug Quigley will present on the Revolutionary War; and May 22, Walter Hersee will present on Sturbridge's 1938 celebration of its 200th anniversary.

For more information about Sturbridge Historical Society and its programs, people may join its group on Facebook.

BIRTHDAY | FROM PAGE 1

"outstanding contributions and selflessness in the face of political adversity."

"She also designed the town flag," Jason said.

Benoit is known for her poetry and artistic talent, with many of her bucolic oil paintings displayed in her home and throughout the town, including at the New Braintree Historical Society Museum.

"She tried to preserve local buildings around town," Paul said of her paintings.

Benoit was also a film star, having lent her voice to Geraldine the Cow in the educational children's movie "Hey, That's My Hay".

At the age of 98, Benoit was awarded the town's Boston Post Cane, at a ceremony that was well attended and enjoyed by all. Along with the cane, Benoit received official citations from the Senate and House of Representatives.

Benoit continues to hold the cane and the title of oldest resident as she has now rounded out a full century of birthdays.

Hope Your Holiday Season Is **Extra-Extra Happy!**



Thanks to all of our readers and advertisers for supporting our publication and the future of local community journalism. We value our role in this community, and we're committed to keeping you current in 2025 and beyond with a focus on the local news and events that matter most to you.

We wish you an informed and fabulous new year!

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GARDEN | FROM PAGE 4

colored paper the name confetti stuck. Take this one to your next game of Cruise Ship Trivia!

It is easy to harvest the seeds. Simply let the heads dry to brown right on the plant. Clip them and place inside a paper bag; as they dry further they will open and the seeds will pop out.

Even if you are only interested in harvesting the seeds, multiple plantings (or a big garden patch) are necessary to get a decent-sized harvest.

No matter how you like your Coriander sativum, sow the seeds in a sunny, well-drained spot in place for the best success. If you let a few drop their

seed each year, chances are you will be blessed with volunteers.

Enough writing, I have four batches of cookies to get in the freezer!

Merry Christmas to all of my gardening friends out there!

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.

- legal notices -

TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the North Brookfield Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing to consider a petition to locate poles, wires, cables, and fixtures, including the necessary anchors, guys, and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures, brought before it by National Grid

Monday, December 30, 2024 at 6:15 PM at the Police Department, 55 School Street, North Brookfield, MA 01535.

The pole location that will be considered is as follows: Smith Hanson Road—National Grid to install 4 JO poles on Smith Hanson Road beginning at a point approximately 550 feet Northwest of the centerline of the intersection of Collins Road. Extend

pole line for new residential home.

Said hearing will begin at 6:15 PM and continue until completion, and will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 166.

Jason M Petraitis,
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The Town of Worthington is soliciting letters of interest from qualified candidates to fill a part-time (six hours a week) **Administrative Assistant** position in the Town Highway Department. Duties include providing customer service, handling department's incoming and outgoing correspondence, processing payroll and maintaining records. The pay rate range for this position is \$18.16/hour to \$26.26/hour. A more in-depth job description can be found on the Town's website: www.worthington-ma.us. Questions will be answered by Highway Superintendent Devon Wolf - telephone number 413-685-5949. Please send letter of interest, resume and three (3) references with relevant contact information to: worthingtonhighway@gmail.com or to **Worthington Highway Department, PO Box 643, Worthington, MA, 01098.** This posting will remain pertinent until the position is filled. *The Town of Worthington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

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East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of Nov. 25-Dec. 1, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 159 building/property checks, 69 directed area patrols, eight traffic controls, five radar assignments, nine emergency 911 calls, two citizen assists, one assist other agency, one fire, seven complaints, three motor vehicle accidents, one vandalism, two investigations, one larceny/theft/shoplifting and 30 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

Monday, Nov. 25

2:45 a.m. Parking Complaint, East Main Street, Written Warning
 2:51 a.m. Parking Complaint, East Main Street, Written Warning
 3 a.m. Parking Complaint, East Main Street, Written Warning
 3:04 a.m. Parking Complaint, East Main Street, Written Warning
 3:22 a.m. Parking Complaint, East Main Street, Written Warning
 11:54 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, East Main Street, Transported to Hospital
 12:46 p.m. Vandalism, South Pond Road, Report Taken
 1:43 p.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, East Main Street, Taken/Referred to Other Agency

1:56 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Podunk Road, Transported to Hospital
 2:26 p.m. Investigation, Out of Town, Officer Handled

Tuesday, Nov. 26

9:48 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 9:58 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 10:02 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Spoken To
 10:19 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued
 10:28 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Harrington Street, Citation Issued
 10:40 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Howe Street, Citation Issued
 11:57 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Shore Road, Citation Issued
 12:18 p.m. Assist Citizen, Unknown Location, Unknown Outcome
 1:02 p.m. Larceny/Theft/Shoplifting, East Main Street, Officer Handled
 8:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued
 10:38 p.m. Safety Hazard, Podunk

Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency

Wednesday, Nov. 27

5:56 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Flagg Road, Officer Handled
 1:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 1:13 p.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, East Main Street, Taken/Referred to Other Agency
 2:46 p.m. Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Podunk Road, Negative Contact
 4:15 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Citation Issued
 7:34 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation issued

Friday, Nov. 29

1:09 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency,

East Main Street, Transported to Hospital

Saturday, Nov. 30

11:24 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Vehicle Towed
 5:10 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To
 7:58 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Harrington Street, Report Taken
 9:32 p.m. Investigation, Harrington Street, Officer Handled
 11:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Podunk Road, Report Taken

Sunday, Dec. 1

1:17 a.m. 911 Fire/Structure, Harrington Lane, Extinguished

New Braintree Police Log

During the week of Dec. 2-9, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 10 building/property checks, 11 directed area patrols, two radar assignments, three traffic controls, four emergency 911 calls, one assist other agency, five safety hazards, two motor vehicle accidents and one animal call in the town of New Braintree.

Wednesday, Dec. 4

11 a.m. Safety Hazard, Gilbertville Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency

Thursday, Dec. 5

7:16 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Gilbertville Road, Vehicle Towed
 7:27 a.m. Safety Hazard, Gilbertville Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency
 7:40 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident,

West Brookfield Road, Investigated
 8:45 a.m. Safety Hazard, Wine Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency

Friday, Dec. 6


4:32 a.m. Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital
 9:08 a.m. Safety Hazard, West Brookfield Road, Dispatch Handled
 11:37 a.m. Assist Other Agency, West Brookfield Road, Dispatch Handled

Sunday, Dec. 8

8:03 a.m. 911 Runaway, Barre Road, Report Taken

Monday, Dec. 9

7:23 a.m. Safety Hazard, Dennis Whitney Road, Officer Handled



Early Deadlines

for all LEGAL NOTICES...

All Papers Will Deadline Thursday, Dec. 19 at Noon for Publication Dec. 23-27

Happy Holidays!

Happy New Year!

All Papers Will Deadline Friday, Dec. 27 at Noon for Publication Dec. 30-Jan. 3

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| 68 | | | | | | 69 | | | | | 70 | | |

CLUES ACROSS

1. Miller beer variety
4. Member of people inhabiting Bering Sea islands
9. Stomach
14. Investment vehicle
15. Fictional soccer coach Ted
16. Irregular in botanical parlance
17. Cease standing
18. "American Horror Story" actress
20. Grow milk teeth
22. Plant parts
23. Snow house
24. Most contemptuous
28. Note to repay
29. Old English
30. Wings
31. Financial institutions
33. Parks and Lopez are two
37. Mr. T's "The A-Team" character
38. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
39. Give off
41. Semitic alphabet letter
42. Farm state
43. Actress Sarandon
44. Back parts
46. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
49. Touchdown
50. One point north of due east
51. Refurbishes
55. Silver and Dogg are two
58. Former Tigers catcher Alex
59. Type of envelope
60. Seriously considered
64. Unhappy
65. Past (archaic)
66. Asian wild dog
67. Old English letter
68. Young domestic sheep
69. Football players need to gain them

CLUES DOWN

1. Dormant Peruvian volcano
2. Norwegian composer
3. Indicates location
4. Pubs
5. Unable to walk easily
6. Electronic warfare-support measures
7. World leader
8. Midsection
9. Jewish calendar month
10. Urological condition
11. A small quantity of anything
12. Mountain Time
13. Affirmative
19. Word element meaning ear
21. Carried away
24. Short-billed rails
25. Newborn child
26. Sword
27. Groups of people
31. Prickly, scrambling shrubs
32. Become less intense
34. Polishes
35. Indicates position
36. Songs sung to one's beloved
40. The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet
41. Insects
45. Israeli politician
47. Pre-digital
48. Roaming
52. Ambience
53. Brew
54. Late
56. Make ecstatically happy
57. Semitic alphabet letter
59. Blend
60. Dash
61. Self
62. Exclamation of satisfaction
63. Hill or rocky peak

QUABOAG CURRENT

WEST BROOKFIELD
Body camera grant
p2

NORTH BROOKFIELD
Haston library events
p3

EAST BROOKFIELD
Kitting group and book
club p2

Editorial/Opinion **4**
Sports **9**
Classifieds **14**
Police Logs **15**

Volume 18, Number 4

Friday, December 20, 2024

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