

BARRE GAZETTE

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Select Board reviews revised regional school agreement

By Ellenor Downer
Editor
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BARRE – The Select Board reviewed the Quabbin Regional School District Regional Agreement at their Tuesday, Jan. 20 meeting and decided to vote on the matter at a later meeting.

Select Board Chairman Maureen Marshall said the

revised agreement updated language revisions such as changing Board of Selectmen to Select Board. It also increased the cost of emergency repairs to all the elementary school buildings in the member towns from \$5,000 to \$10,000 before the school district had to get permission from the town where the elementary school was located.

Under the agreement, the QRSD leases the elementary school buildings from the town where it is located. The Quabbin Regional Middle High School, located in Barre, was a different situation. The District owns that building.

Following the Select Board reviewing the agreement by each town Select Board, it would then need to

be approved by all five member towns – Barre, Hardwick, Hubbardston, New Braintree and Oakham – at either a Special Town Meeting or an Annual Town Meeting. Following the town meeting votes, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner must provide the final approval before ratification. Town Administrator Melanie

Jackson said she preferred the revised QRSD Regional Agreement be voted at the Annual Town Meeting.

Select Board Chairman Marshall said each town had a representative and a silent representative along with QRSD Committee members on a committee to review and revise the agreement. Sue Musnicki was the representative for Barre and Marshall

was the “silent” representative. The “silent representative attended all the meetings, but would only actively participate in the absence of the appointed town representative.

Town Administrator report
Town Administrator Jackson said Woods

See **SELECT BOARD**,
page 6

Select Board heard comments on bylaw

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HUBBARDSTON – Police Chief Ryan Couture made comments to the Select Board about a snow removal bylaw during the special meeting last Tuesday, Jan. 20.

Couture said many complaints have been coming to the Police Department about violations of the bylaw, which forbids in part blowing snow into a public road and blocking fire hydrants. Couture said that each time there is a complaint, one of his officers has to go to the scene and address it in person with the person the complaint is brought up against, as the Police Department is the “sole enforcer” of the bylaw.

He suggested that instead of the police going out and giving warnings in person, that he writes a template warning and the Town Clerk would send it out to whom-ever violates the bylaw. He said that sending the warnings through the Town Clerk would help correctly document each offense and allow the police to charge offenders accordingly.

A motion was made by Select Board member Kris Pareago to use the Town Clerk to send warnings to violators, which was passed by the board unanimously. Executive Assistant Tricia Lowe said she had reminders explaining the bylaw, which have been posted to the Hubbardston town website at hubbardstonma.gov and other social media platforms.

Finance update

The board said the books for fiscal year 2025 are still being worked on by temporary Town Accountant Marcia Bohinc and she is scheduled to give an update to the board by next week's meeting. The board said a debt impact update is also in the works, which will answer questions from taxpayers about the impacts they will face with the new tax bill.

Town Administrator Search Committee update

Select Board Chair man Jeff Williams said he received an email from Town Clerk Melody Green, stating that there were only two residents who applied to be on the committee and that she had not

See **HUBBARDSTON**,
page 7

Snow storm dumps up to two feet



Turley Publications photo by Ellenor Downer

This woods in Oakham now has over 22 inches of snow covering the ground. More snow is expected for this weekend.

FinCom continues budget meetings

By Ellenor Downer
Editor
edowner@turley.com

BARRE – Once again, the Finance Committee met with several departments to discuss their proposed budgets for Fiscal Year 2027.

First up was the Council on Aging. The COA outreach coordinator Brenda Rich recently resigned. The Town Administrator Melanie Jackson said the Board of Selectmen would be meeting on Monday, Feb. 2 to discuss a possible regional agreement with Hardwick regarding their use of the Barre Senior Center. For seven years now, Hardwick seniors participate in the Barre Senior Center activities

and attend the meal site. The Town Administrator said there is no regional agreement between the two towns. Hardwick gives Barre their formula grant funds from the state for senior activities and Hardwick provides van transportation for their seniors to the Barre Senior Center.

Town Administrator Jackson said the proposed Felton Field Commission budget was the same as last year.

Lucy Allen of the Historical Commission said the Commission would be ordering three or four historical marker signs with their funds from the town for FY 26. She

See **BARRE**, page 6

Historical Commission held ‘Save Our Structures’ session

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

RUTLAND – The Historical Commission held a public session last Saturday regarding the Department of Conservation and Recreation's proposal to demolish the cells at the Rutland Prison Camps, and fill in the root cellar.

According to Historical Commission chair Peter Pasierb, the DCR cited hate speech, vandalism and safety concerns in their proposal.

Pasierb began the meeting by reading an email from DCR representative Dan Clark in response to an email the commission sent to DCR asking for specifics on instances of hate speech, injuries, and claims

filed against the state or DCR. The email said that DCR “has painted over hate speech many many times,” and their position on demolition had not changed since their original proposal in 2021, and that Clark did not recall any discussions regarding saving the structures as they are without “offering a realistic solution to address DCR's concerns.”

A resident asked what counts as hate speech, and the commission said they were unaware as DCR had not given them specifics as to what they have observed, or how often.

Pasierb suggested a “three-pronged approach” as a potential solution to DCR's concerns including mitigation, education, and stewardship.

One of the main concerns from DCR is people trespassing on the property. The commission suggested installing motion sensing cameras, or cameras with cellular connection. They also suggested placing barriers, including boulders, near the entrance of the property to prevent vehicle access, in order to deter potential vandals.

The commission also discussed community painting days, which can be used to cover up the hate speech, and create new art. Member Michele Van Reet said the town has painting supplies from a previous grant.

One resident suggested the town hire a local artist to paint a mural related to

PRISON CAMPS page 6

Boiler article failed to pass at STM; new cruiser OK'd

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HARDWICK – A special town meeting was held in the Select Board's meeting room at the municipal building in Gilbertville last Thursday evening.

There were three articles on the warrant, including finding money for a police cruiser, finding money for a new boiler at Hardwick Elementary School, and

authorizing the town to maintain a portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail in Gilbertville.

Police cruiser article

The first article was to transfer money from the capital stabilization fund for the purchase of a new police cruiser at a cost of \$39,718. Capital Planning Committee chair Mark Korzec said the committee voted unanimously to approve the purchase. Select Board Vice-

Chair William Tinker said the town received a grant which paid for half the cost of the cruiser.

When asked about the reason why the town needs a new cruiser, Chief of Police Kevin Landine said it is typical to replace cruisers after they reach 100,000 miles, and the vehicle being replaced has 135,000 miles on it.

“It's starting to break down,” Landine said.

Landine was also asked by a resident about why officers bring the cruisers home with them. He said that having the vehicle on site quickens the response time in emergencies.

The motion to transfer the funds to purchase the cruiser passed by majority.

Boiler replacement

The second article was to appropriate funds for the purchase of a boiler for the elementary school, at

a cost of \$59,573.73, with the specification that if borrowing the money, the vote must be two-thirds majority to pass.

One of the school's two boilers failed on Jan. 12, just 10 days prior to the special town meeting.

Korzec said the Capital Planning Committee did not have a recommendation for this article due to a lack of

See **HARDWICK**, page 7



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News of the Towns



ROUND TOWN

by Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com

Woman's Club holds meeting

Barre Woman's Club meets Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 6 p.m. in the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road, for a public event focused on protecting seniors from online scams. Featured speaker Dr. Brian Bisceglia, a nationally recognized cybersecurity expert and law enforcement officer, will share vital tips and real-world insights on online safety. Dr. Bisceglia holds a Ph.D. in cybersecurity management from Nova Southeastern University, with research focusing on the human element of security, social engineering, and SMiShing (SMS phishing) susceptibility. He has developed cybersecurity training curricula for vulnerable groups like seniors, and his work has appeared in academic publications examining persuasion principles and user behavior during cyber-attacks. Dr. Bisceglia also earned a Master's degree in applied computer science and a Bachelor's in electronic engineering technology from Wentworth Institute of Technology.

Plastic recycling

Home Depot in Worcester actually collects certain plastics used to make a composite product, that is used in decking. Items acceptable are pellet bags that are free of debris, clean produce bags, grocery bags, paper towel and toilet paper wrapping, bread bags and thin plastic film, such as dry cleaning comes in. People may bring these items to Higgins Energy Alternatives, where they are collected in a dark gray tent, which is behind a Pellet Shed, located to the left of the main entrance of Higgins, 140 Worcester Road. They will be transported to Worcester Home Depot by volunteers. Every little bit of plastic recycling helps.

Church meeting

This is a reminder that the Barre Congregational Church Annual Meeting has been postponed until Sunday, Feb. 8 at 11 a.m. after the church service.

Circle of Song rehearsals

The start of the Circle of Song choral season has been delayed from Thursday, Jan. 22 until Thursday, Jan. 29 from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Barre Town Hall.

Quabbin Athletic Hall of Fame Nominations

The next induction for the Quabbin Athletic Hall of Fame will take place in the fall. The committee is currently taking nominations of former athletes, coaches, teams and outstanding contributors to be selected for the next induction. To be considered, athletes must be out of high school for ten years, coaches retired from their respective sport and contributors considered for their positive support of the Quabbin athletic program over the years. Athletic teams should have advanced to the highest level in district or state competition. Nomination forms are available on the qrsd.org athletic website. On the athletic page, look for Hall of Fame and AHF Hall of Fame form. Deadline for applications is March 1 and forms can be mailed to QRHS Hall of Fame Committee, P.O. Box 874, Barre, MA 01005.

Town Election deadlines

Town Clerk Ellen Glidden announces election deadlines for the Annual Town Election on Monday, April 6 from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. The Town Clerk's Office, located in the Henry Woods Building basement at 40 West St., will be open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on the following dates for the following Town Election deadlines. Nominations papers are now available. Thursday, Feb. 12 is the last day/time to take out nomination papers. No papers can be issues after 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 17 by 5 p.m. is the last day/time for candidates to file Town Election nomination papers for verification of signatures. Wednesday, March 4 by 5 p.m. is the last day/time for candidates to withdraw from ballot. Friday, March 27 by 5 p.m. is the last day/time to register to vote. Monday, March 30 by 5 p.m. is the last day/time to request an Early Vote By Mail ballot. Friday, April 3 by 5 p.m. is the last day/time to apply for Absentee Ballot to vote in person. The Test Deck for this election will be run on Wednesday, March 25 at 1 p.m. at the Town Clerk's Office. For questions relating to the Town Election, people may email the Town Clerk at clerk@townofbarre.com or call 978-355-2504, extension 5.

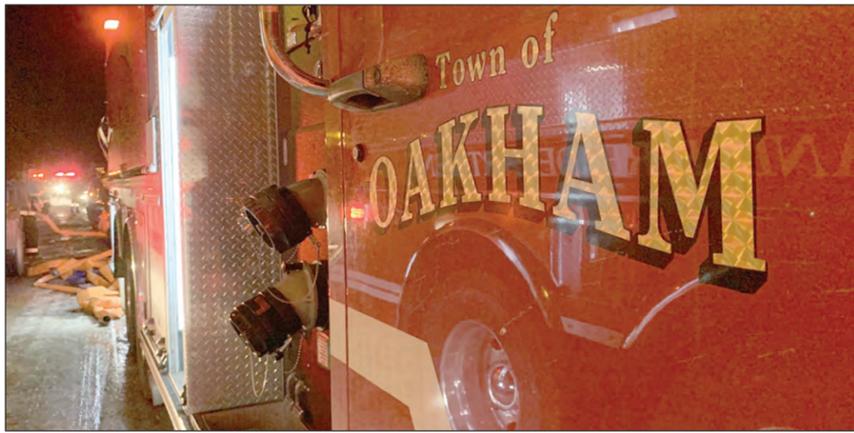


Photo courtesy of Oakham Fire Departments

Oakham and surrounding town firefighters faced ice and freezing temperatures while fighting a four alarm fire at a residence on Skyline Drive early Wednesday morning on Jan. 21.

Fatal fire on Jan. 21 under investigation

OAKHAM – Jack Wark, Public Information Officer for the Department of Fire Services posted the following announcement about a four alarm fire on Skyline Drive on the town website at www.oakham-ma.gov.

One resident is deceased after an early morning fire that broke out in a single-family home, said Oakham Fire Chief Timothy Howe, Oakham Police Chief Frederick J. Gehring, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine and Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr. "Our hearts go out to the family that lost a loved one this morning," said Chief Howe. "This is a sad day for them and the community."

The Oakham Fire Department responded to 67 Skyline Drive following a 9-1-1 call from a neighbor at about 12:45 a.m. on Jan. 21. On arrival, firefight-

ers observed heavy smoke and flames and learned that a Rutland Police officer had already attempted to gain entry, but was forced back by conditions inside.

Firefighters immediately began to attack the fire in about six inches of snow amid temperatures of about 4°F, which froze hose lines and caused dangerously icy conditions at the scene. They struck multiple alarms to bring additional resources, including numerous tankers carrying water and battled the flames for about an hour before bringing them under control. Firefighters remained at the home through the morning extinguishing hot spots and conducting overhaul.

One adult, the home's sole resident, was found deceased inside. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine the cause and man-

ner of death.

The origin and cause of the fire are being investigated by the Oakham Fire Department, Oakham Police, State Police fire investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and State Police Detectives assigned to the Worcester DAs office. They are supported by the Department of Fire Services' Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit and Special Operations team, which delivered a drone unit to gather aerial and interior imagery.

The fire departments of Rutland, Spencer, New Braintree, Athol, Brookfield, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, Paxton, Hardwick, Hubbardston, Orange and Warren provided mutual aid. A DFS rehab unit responded to support firefighter health and safety at the scene.

Town Clerk lists town election information

BARRE – Town Clerk Ellen Glidden announced the following candidates took out nomination paper for the annual town election on Monday, April 6.

Candidates taking out nomination papers include Mark A. Regienus, 300 Spring Hill Road, Select Board for three years – candidate for re-election; Michael G. Landry, 463 West St., Board of Assessors for three years – candidate for re-election; Michael Collins, 55 Eagle Drive, Board of Health for three years; John J. Pimental, Jr., 785 Williamsville Road, Water Commissioner for three years – candidate for re-election; Catherine P. Chase, 120 Hardwick Road, Library

Trustee for three years – candidate for re-election and Dylan S. Clark, 218 Walnut Hill Road, Library Trustee for three years – candidate for re-election (two positions); Jane M. Lynds, 872 Wauwinet Road, Felton Field Commissioner for two years and Frank E. Whitney, 148 Hancock Road, Felton Field Commissioner for one year.

Current elected officials for the following positions are not seek re-election and no papers have been taken out for the following positions at this time. The positions include: Sewer Commissioner for three years, Constable for two years, Barre Housing Authority for five years, Felton Field Commissioner

for three years, Planning Board Member for five years, Planning Board Associate Member for one year and Quabbin Regionals School Committee Member for three years.

Nomination papers are available at the Town Clerk Office, 40 West St., lower level until Thursday, Feb. 12 by 5 p.m. the last day for candidates to return their nomination papers is Tuesday, Feb. 17 by 5 p.m. The last day for candidates to withdraw their name from the ballot is Wednesday, March 4 at 5 p.m. For more information, people may email the Town Clerk at clerk@townofbarre.com or call the office at 978-355-2504, extension 5.



OAKHAM

by Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com

Assessor list office hour change

The Oakham Board of Assessors have new office hours on Tuesdays from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Previously the office hours were on Thursdays.

Smoke and CO detectors

Fire Chief Tim Howe will give a presentation on Wednesday, Feb. 4 at 1 p.m. The subject will be smoke and CO detector use and maintenance, in conjunction with outside venting safety and proper use of generators and wood stoves. People may sign up in the Senior Center or call 508-882-4073 to let them know they would like to attend.

Oakham COA events

On Monday, Feb 9 and Feb. 23 podiatry takes place from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Reservations are required. On Thursday Feb. 12 at 11:15 a.m. there will be a blood pressure clinic. On Friday Feb. 13 at noon the Council on Aging meets in the Senior Center on the lower level of the Town Hall. Lunch Bunch meets the third Friday, Feb. 20 at 12:30 p.m. in the Hitchcock Tavern, Route 9, West Brookfield. People may sign up at Senior Center sign up in the main room of the Senior Center.

On going activities include Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-noon puzzling; Monday through Thursday at 9 a.m. walking group (meet at Senior Center); Tuesday through Thursdays at 11 a.m. walking group (meet at Senior Center); Tuesdays yoga \$40 for eight classes in Senior Center multi-purpose room, registration required; Wednesdays at 8:45 a.m. Zumba Gold in New Braintree Town Hall – \$3 donation per class; Thursdays at noon Weigh in at the Senior Center support weight loss group and Fridays at 10.30 a.m. Functional Fitness at the New Braintree TownHall – \$3 donation per class. For walking groups, people may ask to be added to the text MSG group by calling the Senior Center at 508-882-4073 and leave their name and cell phone number.

Hot lunches

Hot lunches are offered at the Senior Center dining area Monday through Thursday at 11.30 a.m. Reservations are needed at least two days in advance and can be made through the Congregate Meal

Coordinator from 9 a.m.-noon by calling 508-882-4072.

Woman's Club hosts online scams program

BARRE – The Barre Woman's Club meets Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 6 p.m. in the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road, for a public event focused on protecting seniors from online scams.

Featured speaker Dr. Brian Bisceglia, a nationally recognized cybersecurity expert and law enforcement officer, will share vital tips and real-world insights on online safety. Dr. Bisceglia holds a Ph.D. in cybersecurity management from Nova Southeastern University, with research focusing on the human element of security, social engineering, and SMiShing (SMS phishing) susceptibility. He has developed cybersecurity training curricula for vulnerable groups like seniors, and his work has appeared in academic publications examining persuasion principles and user behavior during cyber-attacks. Dr. Bisceglia also earned a Master's degree in applied computer science and a Bachelor's in electronic engineering technology from Wentworth Institute of Technology.

Correction

In the Jan. 15 Barre Gazette an article on the Barre Finance Committee incorrectly states the Federal 1 government reimburses the town 75% for veterans benefits. It is the state of Massachusetts, which reimburses the towns for veterans benefits.

Editorial deadline reminder

Deadline for e-mailed press releases is noon on Monday. Deadline for hard copy is noon on Friday.

Barre Dining Center

BARRE — Elder Services of Worcester Area Nutrition Program welcomes guests to dine at the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road. The following meals will be served for the week of Feb. 2. Lunches are back at the senior center, but require a pre-sign up. Volunteers are needed at the Barre dining site. Volunteers are needed for Meals on Wheels (mileage reimbursement) and in the kitchen. People should contact 978-355-5027.

MONDAY – Chicken Tiki Masala, Couscous, roasted California blend vegetables, Lorna Doones, pumpernickel bread

TUESDAY – Meatloaf with gravy, garlic mashed potatoes, green beans, butter-scotch pudding diet = sugar free vanilla pudding, whole wheat bread

WEDNESDAY – Roast turkey with gravy, apple cornbread stuffing, roasted Brussels sprouts, fresh fruit, Italian bread

THURSDAY – Teriyaki beef, steamed rice, broccoli with red peppers, pineapple, fortune cookie, whole wheat bread

FRIDAY – Honey mustard pork, mashed sweet potatoes, Scandinavian vegetables, baked apples, marble rye bread

*Higher sodium entree Meal includes milk and margarine. Menus are subject to change. All meals are served at about 11:45 a.m. each weekday. Reservations should be made the day before by calling 978-355-5027 before 10:30 a.m. The donation of \$3.00 per meal helps keep the program running.

Submissions are always welcome.
Send your stories and photos to edowner@turley.com



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News of the Towns

PUBLIC MEETINGS

BARRE

Quabbin Regional School District Budget Subcommittee – Jan. 29 at 5:30 p.m.
 Council on Aging – Jan. 30 and Feb. 4 at 12:30 p.m.
 Select Board – Feb. 2 at 5 p.m.
 Board of Assessors – Feb. 3 at 6 p.m.
 Felton Field Commission – Feb. 3 at 6:30 p.m.
 Finance Committee – Feb. 3, Feb. 24, March 3, March 17 and March 31 at 6:30 p.m.
 Planning Board – Feb. 3, Feb. 17 and Feb. 19 at 7 p.m.
 Water Commission – Feb. 8 at 5:30 p.m.
 DPW Commission – Feb. 9 at 6 p.m.
 Board of Health – Feb. 11 at 5 p.m.
 Cable Advisory Committee – Feb. 10 at 7 p.m.
 Conservation Committee – Feb. 10 at 7 p.m.
 Library Trustees – Feb. 11 at 6:30 p.m.
 Barre Housing Authority – Feb. 12 at 1 p.m.
 Historical Commission – Feb. 12 at 2 p.m.
 Barre Common Oversight Committee – Feb. 12 at 5 p.m.
 Cemetery Commission – Feb. 26 at 11 a.m.
 Master Plan Steering Committee – March 12 at 5:30 p.m.
 Town Election Day – April 6 from 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

HARDWICK

Council on Aging – Jan. 30 and Feb. 4 at 12:30 p.m.
 Board of Health – Feb. 5 at 6:45 p.m.
 Paige Library Trustees – Feb. 5 at 7 p.m.
 Gilbertville Public Library – Feb. 11 at 3 p.m.
 Conservation Commission – Feb. 11 at 6:30 p.m.
 Master Plan Steering Committee – Feb. 12 at 6:30 p.m.
 Gilbertville Water District – Feb. 17 at 5:30 p.m.
 Capital Planning Committee – March 16 at 3 p.m.

HUBBARDSTON

Local Emergency Management Planning Committee – Feb. 3 at 3 p.m.
 Municipal Complex Building Committee – Feb. 3 at 6 p.m.
 Planning Board – Feb. 4 at 6:30 p.m.
 Board of Library Trustees – Feb. 5 at 7 p.m.
 Board of Health – Feb. 10 at 7 p.m.
 Conservation Commission – Feb. 17 at 7 p.m.
 Board of Assessors – Feb. 18 at 6 p.m.
 Planning Board – Feb. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

Finance Committee – Jan. 29 and Feb. 3 at 4 p.m.
 Capital Improvement Planning – Jan. 29 and Feb. 3 at 4 p.m.
 School Committee – Jan. 29 at 6 p.m.
 Rep. Berthiaume Office Hour – Feb. 12 from 11 a.m.-noon
 Planning Board – Feb. 18 at 6 p.m.
 Library Trustees – Feb. 2 at 6:15 p.m.

OAKHAM

Select Board – Jan. 30 at 9 a.m.

PETERSHAM

Select Board – Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, Feb. 19, Feb. 26 and March 5 at 5:30 p.m.
 Board of Assessors – Jan. 30 at 9 a.m.
 Open Space and Recreation Committee – Feb. 3 at 6 p.m.
 Conservation Commission – Feb. 3 at 5:30 p.m.
 Council on Aging – Feb. 9 at 10:30 a.m.
 Cemetery Commission – Feb. 10 at 10 a.m.
 Petersham Historic District – Feb. 19 at 6 p.m.

RUTLAND

Finance Committee and Select Board Joint Meeting – Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, Feb. 19 at 6 p.m.
 Bylaw Committee – Jan. 29 at 7 p.m.
 Select Board Hearing – Feb. 2 at 6 p.m.

Noah lands another whopper bass



Noah Bachant caught another whopper bass while ice fishing on Lake Dean in Oakham on Sunday, Jan. 4.



Noah Bachant stands next to his grandfather, Paul Zack, who proudly holds his grandson's catch.

Photos by Tom Rawinski

HUBBARDSTON

by Ellenor Downer
 edowner@turley.com

Library offers scholarship

It's scholarship season again. The Hubbardston Public Library Trustees are offering up to two \$500 scholarships for 2026. Hubbardston resident who is pursuing an undergraduate, graduate or technical school program are eligible to apply by visiting <http://tiny.cc/HPLScholarship>. Applications must be submitted by Sunday, March 1. People may email hubtrustees@gmail.com if they have any questions.

Pie for Breakfast

Pie for Breakfast will be held at Hubbardston Senior Center, 7 Main St., on Saturday, Feb. 14 from 9-11:30 a.m. Cost is \$10 per person and free for children under 5. Tickets are available at the Senior Center. There will be a Valentine Day raffle, a value of \$230, sponsored by the Friends of the Hubbardston Senior Center. Tickets are \$2 each, three for \$5 and six for \$10.

DPW reminder

The Hubbardston Department of Public Works reminds residents of important winter by-laws and safety practices to ensure efficient snow removal and safe travel for all.

Parking During Winter Storms

Vehicles must not be parked on public streets during snowstorms or snow removal operations.

Overnight parking is restricted for more than one hour between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. from Dec. 1 through March 31. Vehicles that impede snow removal may be towed at the owner's expense.

Snow Removal and Public Ways

Pushing, shoveling, or snow blowing snow into public roadways or sidewalks is prohibited. Snow forts, tunnels, or other obstructions on public rights-of-way are not permitted. No person may obstruct a public way or sidewalk without written permission from the Select Board.

Mailboxes and Property

The town may repair or replace a mailbox if it is determined that a plow physically struck it.

Damage caused by snow discharge or unsecured items in the town right-of-way is typically the property owner's responsibility. Items placed in the town's right-of-way are at the owner's risk.

Residents may take up to two (2) 5-gallon pails of sand for walkways and stairs only.

Sand is available 24/7 at the entrance to the Recycling Center driveway, just south of the DPW Garage at 68 Worcester Road. Sand is not available for driveways.

Communication and Assistance

For road condition concerns, people may call the DPW at 978-928-1400, extension 400 during business hours from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. After-hours emergencies, they should call Rutland Dispatch at 508-886-4033.

All concerns are typically addressed within 24-48 hours after a storm.

Senior Center events

All artists are welcome to attend the art group at the Hubbardston Senior Center every Friday from 9-11 a.m. A new activity at the Senior Center is the Creative Needle and Thread activity every Friday from 9 a.m.-noon. All are invited to bring projects, such as embroidery, cross stitch, sewing and quilting. Questions may be directed to Michelle at 508-450-4476. Yarn-It-All group meets from 10 a.m.-noon. Knitting and crocheting projects will be worked on, and those who have questions will get help from others who attend. Games of Pitch are held the second and fourth Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. and the first and third Fridays at 6:30 p.m. Cribbage is played every Thursday at 12:30 p.m., Bingo is every Monday at 12:30 p.m. and Wii Bowling is every Monday and Thursday at 9 a.m. Functional Exercise Classes are held at the Senior Center Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Local dancer returns with professional dance company

HARDWICK – Explore the depth of human emotion and connection this February. Nova Linea Contemporary Dance will present "some wounds never heal" at The Center at Eagle Hill, 242 Old Petersham Road on Saturday, Feb. 7 at 7 p.m.

Nova Linea Contemporary Dance is Wisconsin's premier contemporary dance company. Known for their emotionally-provocative performances, it is Nova Linea's mission to provide accessible and relatable stories through dance to the communities it performs for.

Nova Linea has a local connection as well – Avree Gundersen, a dancer with the company, grew up dancing

in West Brookfield at Betty Gundersen Studio of Dance.

In this evening of dance, Nova Linea will present "some wounds never heal". Choreographed by Artistic Director Jared Baker, this piece delves into the emotional landscape of loss, portraying a poignant story of feeling frozen and unable to move forward. It examines how grief shapes us, posing profound questions about resilience and healing.

The piece emphasizes the importance of community and empathy, inviting the audience to reflect on their own experiences and find solace in shared understanding. This powerful work encourages us to confront our pain, seek connection,

and leave with a renewed sense of strength.

Tickets are \$35 for adults, \$30 for student and seniors. The Center also offers discounted \$10 tickets to EBT cardholders through Massachusetts' Card to Culture Program.

For tickets and information, visit www.thecenterateaglehill.org or call the Box Office at 413-477-6746.

About The Center
 The Center at Eagle Hill is a performance venue in central Massachusetts presenting world class music, dance, theatre, and comedy. For more information about this, and other events please visit our website at www.thecenterateaglehill.org.



Submitted Photo

Nova Linea Contemporary Dance is a professional dance company from Wisconsin, and features Better Gunderson Studio of Dance alum and West Brookfield native, Avree Gundersen.

Plastic items disposal tent at Higgins Energy

BARRE – Home Depot in Worcester actually collects certain plastics used to make a composite product, that is used in decking.

Items acceptable are pellet bags that are free of debris, clean produce bags, grocery bags, paper towel and toilet paper wrapping, bread bags and thin plastic film such as dry cleaning comes in.

People may bring these items to Higgins Energy Alternatives, where they are collected in a dark gray tent, which is behind a Pellet Shed, located to the left of the main

entrance of Higgins, 140 Worcester Road. They will be transported to Worcester Home Depot by volunteers. Every little bit of plastic recycling helps



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WORK DAYS
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 Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28

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 SAT. 8 A.M. TO NOON




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The Barre Gazette will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2. To request a correction, send information to Editor Ellenor Downer at edowner@turley.com or call 413-283-8393. Corrections may also be requested in writing at Barre Gazette, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Opinion

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

Claiming Social Security early and investing it

Dear Rusty:
I am a 63-year-old single lady and I have questions regarding Social Security "early retirement," though I will still be working full time.

I know there is a maximum allowable income limit and, if I exceed that, I will need to return probably 2/3 of my received Social Security benefit. I'm thinking about taking those early SS benefits about \$1,400 per month and putting them in my high yield savings or CD where I can gain the interest on it and have it stay "liquid" so I can return what I need to.

My current interest rate is 3.65% on the savings and over 4.25% on CD, with options for 3,6,9 mos. or longer- but I want to be able to access the money to pay Social Security back at the end of the year. Can you advise me on this? Signed: Still Working but Wondering

Dear Still Working:

I commend you, for investigating your options before claiming early Social Security benefits while still working. FYI, the 2026 annual earnings limit for those collecting early SS benefits is \$24,480 (changes annually). If your 2026 work earnings exceed the annual limit, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. The annual earnings limit lasts until you reach your Full Retirement Age and the limit is about 2.5 times higher during the year you attain FRA.

FYI, when you apply for benefits, Social Security will ask if you are working and, if so, how much you make. Using that information, they will evaluate whether you can take benefits now and, if so, how many months they can actually pay you benefits.

For example, if your projected 2026 earnings are, say, \$100,000, you would be about \$75,000 over the annual limit which means that half of that \$37,500 would need to be paid back to SS. Since your monthly SS benefit at your current age would be about \$1,400 per month, Social Security will say that you are temporarily ineligible to collect early benefits because you cannot pay back within one year what you would owe for exceeding the limit. In other words, they won't pay your SS benefits just yet because your earnings are too high and they do not want to overpay benefits, which you will only need to return.

For additional perspective, if your expected 2026 earnings are less say about \$50,000 that means you would be about \$25,000 over the limit about half of that (about \$12,500) would need to be paid back to SS.

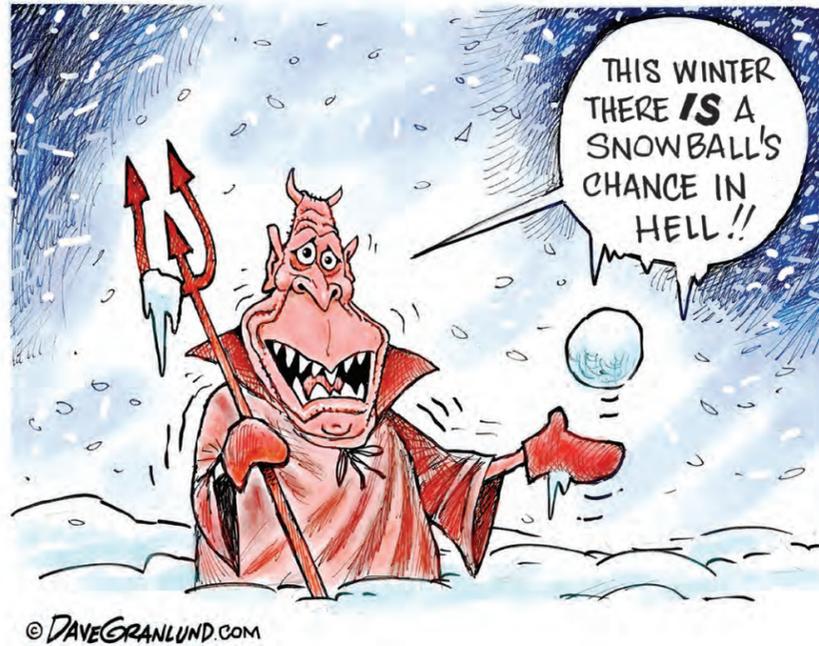
In that event, SSA would tell you they will withhold nine months of your SS payments in advance and pay your benefits for only 3 months. This because the overpayment, with your current benefit of about \$1,400, could be recovered by withholding your SS payments for nine months. They do not want to intentionally overpay your SS benefits.

So, despite your best repayment intentions, Social Security will not favor intentionally overpaying your benefits. Historically, overpayment of benefits due to exceeding the annual earnings limit has been a notoriously difficult issue for the Social Security Administration. So, to get your early SS benefits while you are working full time, you would likely need to lie about your anticipated 2026 earnings on your application for SS benefits, which we strongly discourage.

Keep in mind that this all changes when you reach your FRA (67), because the earning limit goes away entirely when you reach FRA and the limit goes up by about 2.5 times in the year you attain full retirement age. So, depending on your earnings level, you may wish to either wait until your full retirement age, or until you stop working full time, to claim SS.

Now, as for the general idea of taking early benefits and investing them, many have said they wish to do that and we understand that logic. Our caution is that it requires religious discipline to put the SS money into a higher yield investment vehicle to accomplish the goal of beating the SS increase realized when you wait to claim. Many who try it succumb to the temptation to use the invested funds for emergency needs and sometimes non-emergency needs. I offer this only as something to be aware of, as some have shared that they failed in their investment objectives with their Social Security money.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



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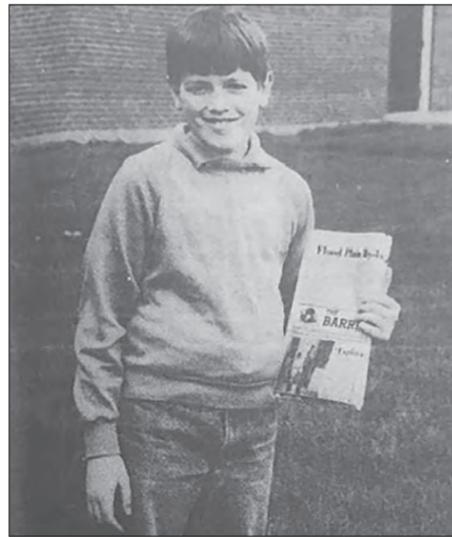
In Past Pages

5 years (Feb. 4, 2021)

Barre Town administrator, Jessica Sizur, said Phil Hubbard inquired about the Quork Walker marker, which was located on the Broad Street side of North Park. She said it was damaged in a car accident, which occurred during the Barre Common project. The town stored it in the old police office in the Henry Woods Building. She said the company, which made the marker, was no longer in business. She said the marker was sizable, 3' by 4' tall and impressive. Quork Walker of Barre was a slave, who sued for his freedom in 1781. He worked on a farm in Barre as a slave. He won his case and became a free farmer. The Barre Historical Commission and Common Oversight Committee planned to place a new marker on the Broad Street side of North Park, but farther from the road. They planned to use one of the granite blocks currently located on Exchange Street for the marker. Sizur said the project would be completed by summer.

Barre Town administrator Jessica Sizur said there was a lot of development at the state level with vaccine distribution. She said the state process "was less than reliable" and getting the vaccine was difficult. She said town offices received a lot of emails and phone calls about getting vaccinated. She said the state set online registration only. It proved difficult for the elderly to use so the state will have a phone registration as well. She said the town placed an order for vaccine last week

Look Back Paper Boy – 1984



File photo

Daniel Fontaine, or Danny, as we all call him, is The Barre Gazette's one and only paperboy. He serves eight customers on School Street after school each Thursday. Danny is a fifth grade student at Ruggles Lane School and is the son of Martha Shepardson, Barre and Arthur Fontaine of Athol. Danny does his job very well and we're real proud of his stick-to-it-iveness and so aren't his customers.

and was waiting for confirmation. She said, "There was large demand and smaller supply [of the vaccine.]" She said the Moderna vaccine did not require as cold temperature as the Pfizer vaccine and could be stored in town. Rutland has the type of freezer to store the Pfizer vaccine. Sizur said the town currently had 16 active cases. Some of the cases were multiple family members.

During the North Brookfield School Committee meeting of Jan. 25 School Superintendent Richard Lind discussed the preliminary fiscal 2022 budget. Lind said that this year they have 524 students, down 46 students from last year. Of those students, 36 attend Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School, five are out-

See PAST PAGES, page 5

Sow onion seeds to get the season started

If you are sick and tired of winter, and want to get the gardening season going already, why not sow some onion seeds?

Onions are the first seeds I sow each year and I always welcome this task as a true harbinger of spring! Many gardeners only know of growing onions from sets, but you can indeed start them from seed, both indoors in the garden.

Read on for more information on growing onions from start to finish, right out of the archives.

First it's important that we "understand the onion," in other words, come to know its life cycle. Onions are biennial.

We are all familiar with biennial flowers like foxglove, hollyhock and Canterbury bells, who develop foliage the first year of their lives and bloom and set seed in the second, but few gardeners today ever experience a biennial vegetable. That wasn't always the case. Just visit the Freeman Farm at

Old Sturbridge Village where in the summer you will see beets, parsnips, onions and more in year two of their life cycle, complete with seed heads.

As the seeds ripen, 19th century gardeners would have stored them away for use the following spring.

So



then, if the onion is a biennial and its goal is to make seeds the second season of its life, what is it trying to accomplish in its first? Exactly what you and I want: a big bulb!

The bulb is the food storage unit for the plant during its dormancy period- the winter between years one and two. A big bulb gives the second year plant a good head start and almost always directly relates to increased seed

production as compared to smaller bulbs.

For me, understanding this concept was one of those "ah ha" gardening moments. It all really came together when I recognized that big bulbs are a direct result of lush top-growth.

Just imagine the green part of the plant photosynthesizing, drawing in all of that wonderful energy from the sun and turning it into a big, fat onion! Luckily, we gardeners can provide just the right conditions for lush top growth.

Get an early start
All onions have a built-in mechanism that triggers "bulbing up" in response to warmer temperatures and increased daylight hours. Likewise, as daylight begins to decrease, the onion is cued into dormancy.

If lush tops are our first goal, we have to get our onions in early, so that they achieve lots of top growth before being prompted to bulb up. Those of us who garden

See GARDEN, page 5

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As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a "people news" form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content.

For more information, or to submit people or milestone news for the Barre Gazette, please email edowner@turley.com.

Serenity Hill Sampler

by Jane McCauley

I am writing this before the storm starts on Sunday so I will be sure to get this in on time.

We are expecting up to 20 inches of snow and for once I hope the weather people are wrong.

Luckily, we have a very good plow man and hope he comes a couple of times. It is important that we get out of our long driveway in an emergency.

I spent most of the week picking over paper supplies and things we no longer need. The office gets so full of such stuff. I also inventoried my watercolor books and put them in a bookcase in my sewing and painting room. Now I call it my Project room as I do so many things there.

One of the collection I have are darners. I have a book that tells about them and they are made in wood, glass, stone, ivory and white

hen eggs. They come in various shapes also including ones for gloves.

My mother used to darn for all the relatives. I have her equipment and includes, darning cotton, needle, darning and a wooden block to pound the area that is mended. The mending is a woven area where the hole was. She also had a big cake of bees wax that she used to use on the thread when sewing.

I have a display of about 15 different style darners. We are now a "throw away society" so very few people darn things. Socks are not the only thing that can be darned. Holes in knitted sweaters can be repaired.

When cleaning out the paper items I found this recipe for homemade laundry soap. Ingredients are

colorless dishwashing liquid detergent, Borax and washing soda or baking soda. I have not tried this and it

does not say the amounts of each. I guess you just estimate.

This and That

My daughter took our car to have the oil changed so that was a good thing done this month. We seldom drive it and it needs to be. Last winter the battery went dead because we did not drive it. We are lucky to have workers, who do errands for us and get our groceries.

We are trying to stay in the house we had built for retirement and it would not be possible if it was not for the helpers. Almost daily we get a call asking us if we wanted to sell. My answer is usually not until we die. But they still call.

I'm getting papers for the yearly tax reports so it is important to get the mail daily and the helpers do that for us also.

I hope you all have a safe time after the storm.

PAST PAGES from page 4

of-district special education students, 10 attend a charter school, 116 School Choice out to another district, 53 School Choice into North Brookfield, 52 home school and seven attend a private school. Lind said the biggest number that has changed in this breakdown, is the number of students being homeschooled, which is 30 more than last year. He said most of those students being homeschooled is due to the pandemic and that he is hopeful they will return to school in the future. Chapter 70 Aid funding did not increase from last year to this year. Lind said the Student Opportunity Act will help. The approved town budgets for North Brookfield over the last eight years averaged an increase of 1.2% a year, even though the average rate of inflation is 2%.

10 years (Feb. 4, 2016)
Not Available

25 years (Feb. 1, 2001)

At the Petersham Special Town Meeting held Thursday evening, Petersham chose to support the renovation and expansion project for the Ralph C. Mahar Regional High School. With Orang already casting affirmative votes, the decision now lies with the small towns of New Salem and Wendell, which make up the four town region. Proceeding the opening of discussion on the article, reports were heard from Finance Committee and from the town committee on regionalization as well as the Petersham Center School Principal Raymond Grogan

presenting the status of the new elementary school soon to take shape here.

State Senator Stephen M. Brewer (D-Barre) has a lot of experience on Beacon Hill and that experience was rewarded most recently with his elevation to vice chairman of the Joint Committee on Public Safety. He was also named chairman of the Senate Steering and Policy Committee, a post he held during the previous two-year legislative session. In that capacity, Brewer worked closely with Senate leaders to help see the agenda.

A small plane with two people aboard landed illegally on the frozen Quabbin Reservoir late last week and the pilot is expected to face charges soon. According to State Police Sgt. Ronald Sieberg, Bernard Paradis, 50, of Fitchburg, was at the controls of a 1977 PA28 Piper Cherokee and made a landing on the ice. It wasn't an emergency landing on the ice, Sieberg said and no one was hurt. "I think he was just practicing some kind of landings," Sieberg said, noting the plane after landing became stuck in the snow. A passenger flying with Paradis, a 41 year old woman from Lunenburg was also uninjured.

38 years (Feb. 4, 1988)

Hardwick voters will go to the polls this coming Wednesday, Feb. 10 to decide whether the town will allow a debt exclusion for the new school bond. A "yes" vote on this exclusion will allow the town the town to separate the debt, a probable 20-year

repayment schedule, for the school building from other town spending. The school building expenditures will exceed the limits set forth in proposition 2 1/2, but other town spending will stay within limits. This referendum is the final step in the long process of approval of the new school.

At its annual meeting held last Friday evening in the Woods Memorial Library, the Barre Thief and Rogue Detecting Society, believed to be the oldest continuously operating organization of its type in the United States, elected Charles M. Wyman of Pleasant Street to be president for 1988. Larry Thibault of Britton Road was elected vice president. In his acceptance remarks, Wyman, in a phone interview last Saturday, made the surprising announcement that he had received a request from a group of residents of Hanover, near Boston, seeking permission to organize a local chapter of the Barre Thief and Rogue Detecting Society in that community. Barre would thereby become the national headquarters of the society.

State Auditor A. Joseph DeNucci has determined the town of Barre is entitled to a state reimbursement of \$1,000 for costs incurred by complying with mandated ambulance service regulations. The state funding results from a ruling by Auditor DeNucci's Division of Local Mandates that the Department of Public Health ambulance and emergency medical car regulations imposed new local implementation costs in violation of Proposition 2 1/2.

should be hardened off for a week by gradually acclimatizing them to outdoor conditions. When they are ready, seedlings are sunk into 1" furrows 3-4" apart and watered carefully; they can be protected from sun and wind off and on for the first week should it seem necessary; here a floating row cover supported by wire hoops would come in handy, but old pots or trays would work fine too. Additional rows should be one foot apart.

Stayed tuned for part two of this column next week, and extra-large onions will be yours come fall!

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.

Sewing, crafting and nature journaling at Paige Library

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

HARDWICK – There was a lot happening at the Paige Memorial Library in Hardwick this past weekend.

During the winter on Saturdays, the library is pleased to welcome back Pam Hinckley who offers activities for kids and adults.

On Saturdays, Hinckley offers a sewing workshop for kids where children will learn basic sewing and embroidery skills and then introduce them to learning how to use a sewing machine. This workshop is for kids aged 7-12 and Hinckley feels sewing is a good life skill for kids to learn.

Each kid is supplied with their own sewing kit as well as a stitch book. Library Director Julie Bullock was amazed by the phenomenal work Hinckley does and how much fun both the kids and adults have during these workshops.

"There's so much laughing and teaching going on," Bullock said.

The adults craft group is a group of folks who can come in every week and work on a project. Many of the adults bring their own project to work on and either knit, sew, crochet, bead, or quilt.

While working on their projects, Hinckley is always open to offering any tips or taking any questions adults might have about their projects.

The staff at Paige



Turley Photos by Ryan Drago

A banner made by Pam Hinckley, advertised her kids sewing workshop and adult handcraft group on Saturdays at the Paige Memorial Library in Hardwick.

Memorial Library certainly appreciates Hinckley and her workshops. By the front entrance is a banner that was quilted by Hinckley and has messages highlighting her workshops that she has offered at the library for the last several years.

It is a fun social environment for the adults who get to connect with other crafters. The children learn to sew and end up taking on their own project they made thanks to the guidance of Hinckley.

The following dates are when the next workshops by Hinckley will be at the Paige Memorial Library. The workshops are held on these Saturdays: Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 14, Feb. 21, Feb. 28, March 7, and March 14. Kids can sew from 9-10:30 a.m. Class size is limited to six students ages 7-12, pre-registration is required.

Knitting and Handcrafts for adults take place from

10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. For more information, contact Hinckley at 413-477-6004 or email pahinckley@gmail.com.

Another activity was taking place this past weekend at the library, nature journaling. Giving the instructions for nature journaling was Ellie Shea, a Youth Education Coordinator for the East Quabbin Land Trust.

Shea said nature journaling is really open ended and is about getting outside into nature and being engaged with it.

In addition to journaling, Shea also explained the description of nature poetry. It is created based off observing what is happening around you. For example, the sound, feeling, and hearing of nature.

According to Shea, nature poetry isn't just about rhyming but also about writing about your observations. Shea brought examples of tree leaves, branches, pinecones, flowers, and bones of various species.

This activity was fun for both kids and adults. Shea will be offering the same program, Nature Journaling, at the Ware Library on Feb. 18.

For more information and events at the Paige Memorial Library, visit www.paigelibrary.com. Contact the library at director.paigelibrary@gmail.com or 413-477-6704.



Each kid is provided with a sewing kit and a stitch book to learn various pattern

GARDEN from page 4

in the north choose "long day" onions, while southern gardeners opt to grow "short day" types.

Long day onions bulb up when day length reaches 14-16 hours per day; short day begin at 12-13 hours. If we plant short day in our locale we'd end up with fat scallions, but not much more, so choose accordingly.

Reputable seed companies will list the type of onion it is next to the variety name, or feature them under appropriate headings.

Choose your method

There are three ways onions can be grown: by seeds sown directly in the garden, from transplants started indoors, or from sets, which are tiny onions. One huge advantage of utilizing seeds is the variety at your disposal as compared to sets.

They are also less expensive. Some folks even argue that onions sown from seed store longer. The rest of this article will be devoted to starting onion seeds indoors, which is best accomplished

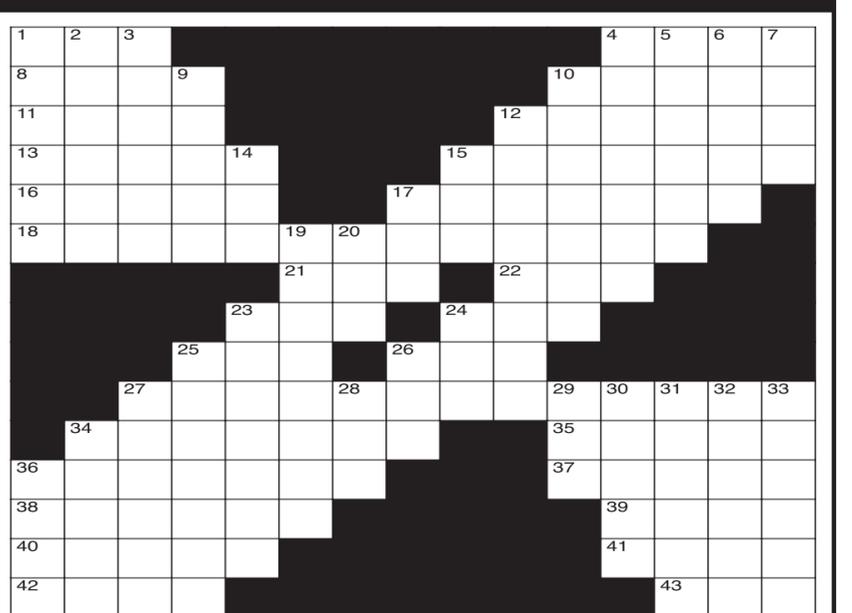
in late January through Valentine's Day- good news for those of you itching to get your hands "dirty!"

Onion seeds are sown indoors in small flats filled with moist soilless growing medium. Spacing can be a little closer than prescribed for outdoor germination, with sowing at 1/4" apart. The use of heat mats set at 72 degrees is helpful, but not entirely necessary; regular room temperatures will also encourage sprouting.

Supplemental lighting is vital, however, so that the onions grow straight and strong. Once onions are up, thin seedlings 1/2" to 1" apart from one another – onions hate competition, so this step is important!

I generally cut out the extras using scissors, right at the soil line so as not to dislodge the roots of those we are growing on. As the seedlings continue to grow, keep them trimmed at 3" tall; this will encourage strong roots and a straight, bulky plant.

About a month prior to the last frost, the transplants



- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| CLUES ACROSS | north and northeast | CLUES DOWN | 20. Cannot be found |
| 1. Racket sport pros | 26. High schoolers' test | 1. Type of bomb | 23. One's internal body parts |
| 4. Make tea | 27. Does not accept responsibility | 2. South Pacific islands | 24. Tell on |
| 8. City South of Moscow | 34. One who prepares | 3. Celestial body | 25. North American peoples of southwest |
| 10. Spanish bullfighting term | 35. Gout-indicative deposits | 4. Negotiates | 26. Soviet Socialist Republic |
| 11. Egg-shaped | 36. Place to play games | 5. Consider in a specified way | 27. Extract used for jams and jellies |
| 12. Could not remember | 37. Book of Genesis character | 6. Type of group in organic chemistry | 28. Greek goddess of the dawn |
| 13. French modernist painter | 38. Cleans oneself | 7. Buddhist monasteries | 29. Old English letter |
| 15. Persons | 39. Unloaded for money | 9. Inhabitant of Bering Sea island | 30. A way to exaggerate |
| 16. Painful intestinal obstruction | 40. Genus of flowering plants | 10. Body part | 31. Get up and leave |
| 17. Professions | 41. Take a puff | 12. Milestone birthday | 32. "Boardwalk Empire" character |
| 18. Is up to the task | 42. Congressmen | 14. Thyroid-stimulating hormone | 33. More generous |
| 21. Wood or metal bolt | 43. God of battle in Scandinavian mythology | 15. More (Spanish) | 34. Hanging cloth used as a blind |
| 22. Tax collector | | 17. Chicago ballplayer | 36. Ancient Greek sophist |
| 23. A way to save for the future | | 19. Leaves a place | |
| 24. Georgia rockers | | | |
| 25. Midway between | | | |

DCR offers Massachusetts Indigenous History at children's library

BOSTON — The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation announced the start of the First Peoples First Stewards Children's Library, a new initiative available at nine DCR properties, designed to promote youth-focused written works by Native American authors.

Featuring more than 20 titles, the reading library program celebrates the region's Indigenous communities, histories and their enduring relationship to the lands and waters that make up the nearly half a million acres that DCR stewards across Massachusetts.

"Massachusetts' history began long before the arrival of colonists, with Indigenous communities who cared for

the land and continue to do so today. As stewards of this land, DCR has a responsibility to preserve and uplift the stories of our first and continuing stewards," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "By making this history accessible at DCR properties, we hope visitors gain a deeper understanding of what these lands represent -and the people who have been connected to them for generations."

"I am delighted visitors are being welcomed across Massachusetts with Indigenous-created books through DCR's First Peoples First Stewards Children's Library," said Traci Sorell, author and Cherokee Nation citizen. "I am honored some of my books are included but especially heartened that

creators from local Native Nations have titles provided too. Wado (thank you)."

In many Indigenous traditions, winter is a time when communities come together to tell stories and pass knowledge onto younger generations. This winter, the First Peoples First Stewards Partnership Program invites the public to nine visitor centers at parks and watersheds throughout Massachusetts to have an experience grounded in that tradition. Each library will feature works of fiction and non-fiction depicting accurate, first-hand accounts of Indigenous history, culture and lived experience, available for reading on site.

Visitors will be able to peruse titles in the new reading libraries and sit

with their family members to enjoy stories in the following visitor centers: Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge; Blackstone River Greenway Visitor Center at Worcester; Blue Hills Reservation in Milton; Borderland State Park in North Easton; Breakheart Reservation in Saugus; Fall River Heritage State Park; Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls; Mount Greylock State Reservation in Lanesborough and the Quabbin Reservoir in Belchertown.

The reading library locations were intentionally chosen to provide experiences across various geographical areas of the state. FPFS will continue to evaluate other potential sites for additional

libraries at DCR properties.

"Developing the First Peoples First Stewards Children's Library for DCR visitor centers is a project that has brought me joy and is near and dear to my heart. As a former educator specializing in Indigenous content, it is vital that the Indigenous visitors see themselves represented at DCR properties, and that non-Indigenous visitors can be introduced to Indigenous literature and experience in a matter of minutes an Indigenous perspective on life, the environment and community," said DCR Indigenous People's Partnership Coordinator Leah Hopkins and a citizen of the Narragansett Indian Tribe. "The books in each of the libraries tell both

traditional and contemporary stories and not only represent local Indigenous voices but also stories from other parts of Turtle Island (North America). They all share common themes of community, resilience and connection to the land-concepts we can all connect to."

The First Peoples First Stewards Children's Library represents an important step in FPFS and DCR's ongoing commitment to promote and provide space for public dialogue on Indigenous experiences in a way that is respectful and interactive. The books provided at each location were thoughtfully curated to ensure accurate, first-person representations of Indigenous culture, history and stories.

SELECTBOARD from page 1

Memorial Library Director Joseph Hood received a grant for 30 laptops. Ten of those laptops would be available for patrons to check them out from the library.

She said in the event of a snowstorm, the Department of Public Works must remove snow from all of the town roads before plowing town building parking lots.

She said in her report, the town received \$20,415 and change for reimbursement of Ambulance Services for the seven month period for ambulance services provided to the Wheelwright section of Hardwick. Hardwick Select Board opted to use West Brookfield ambulance service for their entire town. Barre would continue to provide ambulance service under Mutual Aid when West Brookfield was unable to provide an ambulance.

The Town Administrator meet with the Sewer and Water Commission to discuss the restructuring of the Department of Public Works Commission. Restructuring of the DPW was part of the State Inspector General's recommendation following his investigation of Barre's DPW last year. Information on those meetings must be sent to the Inspector General.

Town Administrator Jackson said she was in negotiation with the Teamsters Union. She said she met with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation regarding right of ways for Coldbrook Road Bridge work. She would be following up with KP Law, town counsel, on this.

FY 2027 budget

Select Board Chairman Marshall said the [Select Board and Finance Committee] would have to make cuts. [There] were "some difficult decisions

during this budget year." Many of the snow storms and weather events so far this year have been on weekends. This means overtime pay at time and half after eight hours per day and double time on Sundays and holidays.

Town Election warrant

The Select Board voted to sign the Annual Town Election warrant as presented by the Town Clerk. The town election will be held on Monday, April 6 with the polls open from 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Police Chief Budget disclosure

Following legal advice, Police Chief James Sabourin presented the Select Board with a conflict of interest disclosure when he participated in the budget discussions of the police budget as the budget included his salary.

Three year moratorium draft

Select Board Member Richard Stevens presented

the board with a three year moratorium by law on new large industrial, commercial and residential buildings. This moratorium would not affect building of single resident dwellings.

Stevens said the town needed to establish a third well as one of its three well was not operating. If one of the two functioning wells went down, there would not be enough water to service the town. He said hydrology testing would identify three to five possible well sites within the next few months. He said the town might need to take land for the well by eminent domain.

The Select Board approved a motion to move forward with the process for the three year moratorium and to forward to Town Counsel for review. The process would require Planning Board approval, a public hearing, a town meeting vote for the moratorium

and approval by the state Attorney General.

Citizen Committee for Right of First Refusal

The Select Board discussed the forming of a Citizen Committee for Right of First Refusal. The yoped for three members and would not vote on establishing the committee until they receive the charge from the Town Administrator.

Other business

The Select Board authorized the Town Administrator to consult with the DPW Superintendent to determine if a delay or closure of town buildings should be warranted. They also authorized the Town Administrator to negotiate a contract with C J Group up to \$20,000 for an annual audit.

The Select Board discussed a senior work off program This would allow eligible senior citizens to work up to 100 hours at the rate of \$15 per hour for the town

to help pay their real estate taxes. They also renewed Class II licenses for Spring Hill Auto Salvage and A & B Auto Marketing. Select Board Vice Chairman Mark Regenius abstained from voting. All three board members approved the renewal of Common Victualler licenses for Insight Meditation Society Forest Refuge, Insight Meditation Society Retreat Center and Mullen's Tea House.

The Select Board approved a wage authorization of Step I firefighter/paramedic for Christine Gustafson. They appointed Elizabeth Newall to the Council on Aging. They approved the use of Town Hall for Circle of Song for rehearsals on Thursdays from 7-8:30 p.m. and for a concert on Saturday, May 16 from 6-9 p.m.

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FINCOM from page 1

said the cost was about \$200 per sign.

She said the Commission voted as a priority work to create a black history trail in Barre. She said records prior to 1800 on Afro-Americans were sparse. A sign commemorating Quork Walker, a slave from Barre who won his freedom in a court case, received extensive damage during the Barre Common construction. The Commission plans to replace it.

She also discussed the need for repairs and maintenance of the Prince Walker Cemetery. The town owns the cemetery, but it is surrounded by Department of Conservation and Recreation land. It is located on a steep hill, which

makes access difficult. The Commission is looking into an agreement with the DCR concerning the cemetery and putting the cemetery under DCR ownership.

Another commission project was the creation of a virtual Revolutionary War monument, which would list the 350 names from Barre, who fought in that war. The Barre Plains Common also needs a new sign as their old one rotted. A member of the Finance Committee said, [He] was always amazed how the [Commission] spend their \$1,200 budget.

A spokesperson for the Wachusett Greenways attended the meeting. They have received for many years \$1,100 to help with care of the Central Mass. Rail Trail. She thanked the committee for the support

from the town. She said there were plans to expand the trail across the Ware River at the White Valley Bridge. The expansion depended on acquiring easements from both private and public sectors. The expansion area included traveling near "live" railroad tracks.

After meeting with these various departments, Town Administrator Jackson showed the Finance Committee new budget sheets she developed for this year's budget. She said the sheets included the prior year spending. She said at some point she planned to provide spending history for three years, but said it would be on a separate sheet and not part of the budget sheets she just showed them.

PRISON CAMPS from page 1

the town. Van Reet said that some of the graffiti is anti-DCR, and suggested that art done by a local artist may be respected by the graffiti artists.

The commission discussed placing the prison camps on the Massachusetts Register or Historic Places, which would effectively ban demolition, explaining that the process is starting, but

it is cumbersome, and one barrier is the town's historic inventory. The commission said many towns in the state have hundreds of sites on their historic inventory, while Rutland has only about 20.

A resident also suggested getting the prison camps on Preservation Massachusetts' list of endangered sites (<https://www.preservationmass.org/mer>), which could attract more visibility. Historical commission member Lindsay Maus said that

if a site is in "imminent danger" of destruction, that site could be expedited onto the registry of historic places.

A resident also suggested spreading awareness about the prison camps. The commission said a letter campaign in support of saving the prison camps has been sent to DCR, and they have a petition posted in various parts of the town on a QR code.

Attendees also discussed the possibility of school events, raising awareness for children.

History of the Rutland Prison Camps

Maus gave a brief history of the prison camps, saying that they were opened in 1903 to house minor offenders. They operated a farm, which sold milk to Worcester, and had a tuberculosis hospital on site to treat the inmates on site.

She said the prisoners were treated well, and there were barriers to prevent escape, and the inmates learned skills and trades at the camps. The camps were abandoned in 1934.

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DCR lists programs at Quabbin Visitor Center

BELCHERTOWN – The Department of Conservation and Recreation list presentations at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center Winter.

All programs are scheduled for 2 p.m. In person seating is limited to 45 people. In case of bad weather, they will convert to 100% virtual program. People should follow link to register or visit <https://www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events>.

On Sunday, Feb. 15 from, 2-3 p.m. the presentation will be Safeguarding Quabbin- The Work of a DCR Watershed Ranger. From before the sun rises to well after it sets, DCR Watershed Rangers dutifully safeguard

the over 80,000 acres of land and water within the Quabbin Watershed. In this presentation, Ranger Hoy will share an in-depth look into how the ranger division keeps the public and the natural/cultural landscape safe while providing insights into what a day-on-the-job looks like as a ranger.

Register here at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/019b0ed2266f7f4580fe0fa186d6ff87>.

On Sunday, Feb. 22, 2-3 p.m. the program is The Frozen Quabbin: Glacial Geology in Our Watershed

This program explores the genesis of some of the landforms exhibited in the Quabbin and Ware River

Watersheds, discuss diagnostic tools used both in the field and at home, and use sediments and geomorphology to try and recreate the ancient landscape from the time when Quabbin was frozen.

Register here: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/019b0ed7b1e77fc832e9ac8187bc>

On Sunday, March 1 from 2-3 p.m. the presentation is Respect What You Find: DCR's Office of Cultural Resources Stewardship Mission. Cultural Resources are non-renewable material evidence of our past relationships to the lands and waters of Massachusetts over many generations. DCR Office of Cultural Resources archaeo-

logical staff will share teachings on how to recognize and respect what you may see while out and about as part of being a good cultural resource steward.

Register here: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/019b0ef3a4577bdbba8e4b80db474311>.

On Sunday, March 8 from 2-3 p.m. the program is The Bear Necessities - Get to Know Your Neighbors. Black bears are becoming more common in Massachusetts, but how much do you really know about them? How much food do they eat in a day? How big are cubs when they are born? Are

See DCR, page 8



Submitted photo

Muriel Holden, Chairman of the Mahar 50+ Club, recently donated a check for \$9,726 to Jeff Cole, president of the Orange Scholarship Committee. This check, along with the \$880 already sent to Orange Scholarship Foundation this year, brings to \$10,606 the funds raised by Mahar Alumni for scholarships.

Mahar 50+ Club donates to scholarship

ORANGE – The 50+ club holds a dinner fundraiser each year on the third Saturday of September. Several raffles are held, with all proceeds going to scholarships. During Covid, donations were solicited from alumni, but no dinner was held.

Over the past eleven years, the association has donated \$61,731 to schol-

arships. Membership in the association is offered to anyone, who attended Mahar with classes graduating more than 50 years ago.

Each class has a representative on the planning committee and attempts are made to contact each graduate and invite them to attend the reunion in September.

HUBBARDSTON from page 1

received any interest from town employees or board members.

Select Board member Heather Munroe said she thinks there are more than two residents, who applied, but they are in a folder located in the town administrator email, which is now controlled by interim Town Administrator Sean Fitzgerald. Munroe also said she has received interest from Town Accountant Elizabeth Clemence and Finance

Committee Chairman Seth Knipe.

Personnel updates

The board voted to appoint Christine Clark as assistant Treasurer/Collector at a rate of \$23 per hour, and 32 hours per week, contingent on background checks, with Parego abstaining from the vote. The board said Fitzgerald is going to talk to Salisbury and Pepperell officials to better understand the legality and processes regarding potentially appointing Bob Garside as Building Commissioner, as he runs an LLC.

Executive assistant

Select Board Vice-Chairman Katie Young said she conducted second round interviews for executive assistant and expects to have a recommendation at their next meeting.

Other business

Young said the process for the annual town report is starting and each report is dedicated to someone, and asked the board to think about who it should be dedicated to.

Williams suggested dedicating it to a group of employees and boards.

Munroe said she prefers the tradition of dedicating it to an individual. She suggested each board member send a recommendation and choose someone based on those recommendations.

Approval of meeting minutes

The meeting minutes from Jan. 12 were not sent out to all board members, according to Munroe. She said she would get them to the board and the board tabled approving the minutes until the next meeting, scheduled for Jan. 26.

HARDWICK from page 1

quorum. He explained that this is an emergency purchase, and that funds cannot be appropriated without a quorum unless it is an emergency. One resident suggested the town look into the Mass Save program, which could provide grants, or utilize Green Communities funding.

A representative from the Quabbin Regional School District, Kevin Clark, said both boilers are original to the school that was built in 1992, and both have received repairs over the years. He said the school needs both of

them functioning to heat the entire building.

Residents asked Clark if he had looked into options for replacing it, to which he said the school does not solicit options, and it is the town's responsibility.

Resident Rebecca Bottomley asked what the chances of the pipes freezing as a result of the failing boiler.

Clark said he could not provide an answer, and he also said he could not provide an answer to a question posed about how warm the school has to be inside in order to be safe for students. He noted that the gymnasi-

um temperature was about 57 degrees.

Clark also could not give an estimate on the likelihood of the remaining boiler failing, but noted its age and condition.

"The one that is running is in similar condition," Clark said.

Clark also said there is no redundancy with the school's heating system without the second boiler. He said the remaining boiler was "running a lot harder with a higher chance of failure," without the second boiler.

Tinker asked Clark if the school district had looked

into the use of a temporary boiler, and Clark said that option had not been discussed.

Some residents said they believed the town was rushing the decision on the boiler, and suggested waiting until they have more information on the options before moving forward with replacement, saying that experts have not had a chance to do their due diligence.

Residents also brought up concerns that the school is the official emergency shelter for the town, and could be the only source of warmth for children. Clark said if both boilers fail, the school

will close until they are repaired, and that there is no room in other schools in the district to bring the students if that happens.

Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said the town is "maxed out" for short term borrowing to pay for the boiler replacement, and the almost \$60,000 loan would need to be borrowed long term, over 20 years.

"This was the best solution we had for the situation at the school," she said.

The motion to appropriate money for the boiler did not reach the two-thirds majority needed for borrowing, receiv-

ing 19 votes in favor, and 13 votes opposed.

Rail trail easement language

The last article was to amend language for a permanent easement for a section of the rail trail at 31-33 Main St.

Bottomley, who is also the Vice-Chair of the Conservation Commission, said the parcel was gifted to the town by Josh and Sarah Kemp, and the motion was previously approved in 2022, but there was a typo in the article, which was corrected prior to the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

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Tax-saving moves you can still make for 2025

Tax season is upon us, and while April 15 may seem like it's right around the corner, you still have time to make some strategic moves that could lower your 2025 tax bill. Whether you're looking to reduce your taxable income or set yourself up for a more secure financial future, these options are worth considering.

Contribute to an IRA. One of the most popular tax-smart moves is contributing to an Individual Retirement Account. You have until the April 15 filing deadline to contribute to an IRA for the 2025 tax year. You can contribute up to \$7,000, or \$8,000 if you're 50 or older.

If you choose a traditional IRA, your contributions may be tax-deductible depending on your income level and whether you participate in an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Your earnings grow tax-deferred until you withdraw them in retirement. With a Roth IRA, you won't get an immediate tax deduction, but your earnings can grow tax-free if you follow the withdrawal rules.

Max out your Health Savings Account (HSA). If you're enrolled in a high-deductible health plan, a Health Savings Account offers triple tax advantages. You can still make HSA contributions for 2025 until April 15. The limits are \$4,300 for individual coverage and \$8,550 for family coverage. If you're 55 or older, you can contribute an additional \$1,000.

HSA contributions reduce your taxable income, the money grows tax-free, and withdrawals for qualified medical expenses are never taxed. Plus, HSAs have no "use it or lose it" rule. Your savings roll over year after year, making an HSA a valuable tool for building resources to cover healthcare costs in retirement.

Self-employed? Consider a SEP IRA. Business owners and self-employed individuals have another powerful option: the SEP IRA. You can make contributions for 2025 up until your business tax return deadline, including extensions. For 2025, you can contribute up to 25% of your compensation, with a maximum of \$70,000. This can significantly reduce your taxable income while building your retirement nest egg.

Don't forget required minimum distributions. If you turned 73 in 2025, make sure you've taken your Required Minimum Distribution from your traditional IRA or 401(k) for 2025. Missing this deadline can result in a steep penalty, so it's important to verify that if your 73rd birthday was in 2025, your RMD has been withdrawn before April 1, 2026.

Consult a professional. While these moves can help reduce your tax burden, everyone's financial situation is unique. Before making any major financial decisions, it's wise to consult with a tax advisor or financial advisor who can provide guidance tailored to your specific circumstances.

The April 15 deadline is fast approaching, but you still have opportunities to make smart choices that could benefit both your current tax return and your long-term financial health. Don't let this window of opportunity close without considering your options.



Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

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Calendar of Events

THURSDAY, JAN. 29

35TH ANNIVERSARY ART SHOW sponsored by the Princeton Arts Society at the Gallery at Briarwood, 65 Briarwood Circle, Worcester. Art work will be on display now through March 5. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The show is open to all Princeton Arts members. Artist can become a member anytime by visiting www.princetonarts.org. For detailed information about the show, people may visit www.princetonarts.org.

CIRCLE OF SONG REHEARSALS starts their winter-spring session today from 7-8:30 p.m. at Barre Town Hall, 2 Exchange St. Rehearsal will be every Thursday between now and Thursday, May 14 with the concert on Saturday, May 16 at 7 p.m. at the Barre Town Hall. Circle of song is particularly in need of altos this session. Singers of all ages and experience are welcome. The chorus sings in four-part harmony and there is a modest sliding scale membership fee with deep discounts for students. People may email director Julie Rawson at julie@mhof.net or call 978-257-1192.

SATURDAY, JAN. 31

THEATRE AT MOUNT AUDITIONS for "Willy Wonka Jr." will take place today by appointment at the Theatre at the Mount, 444 Green St., Gardner. Roles are available for children and teens. All experience levels are welcome. For more information and to schedule an audition, people may email box-office@mwcc.mass.edu or call 978-630-9388. Vocal auditioners will be asked to sing a short vocal selection, which will be taught at the audition. All auditioners including chorus will participate in a dance audition. The combination will be taught at the audition. They should wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Some performers may be asked to do cold readings from the script. Rehearsals begin in early February with performances scheduled for April.

SUNDAY, FEB. 1

SNOW MOON WELLNESS WALK will take place today at 4:30 p.m. at Mandell Hill Preserve, 660 Barre Road, in Hardwick. This 1.5-mile easy-to-moderate walk on the blue Loop Trail will cross open fields, transitioning to woodlands with moderate grade changes and emerging once again in open fields for unobstructed views of the full "Snow Moon." Participants should dress for the weather and bring water. Some sections of the walk may be icy; if they have traction cleats and/or hiking poles as well as a headlamp, they should bring them. All are welcome. RSVPs required email atrevvett@eqlt.org.

SATURDAY, FEB. 7

A **MARDI GRAS PANCAKE SUPPER** will be held today from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Rutland, 264 Main St., Rutland. Menu includes pancakes (gluten free will be available) bacon, sausage and fruit. There will be live music

Where is this?



Turley Publications photo by Ellenor Downer

This week's mystery photo is from North Brookfield. If any readers know where this photo was taken, they may email edowner@turley.com or call the Barre Gazette at 413-967-3505, extension 100 with their answer by noon on Monday, Feb. 2. Bill Bowles, Peggy Civilik and James Laramee correctly identified the photo. The photo last week was Kip's Christmas Tree Farm located on Utley Road in the center of New Braintree.

and raffles. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and free for ages 3 and under. Reservations can be made by calling the church office at 508-886-4453.

BIRD BANDING WITH FEZATTE, entitled "Its Origins, Uses and Future in Conservation," and originally scheduled for Jan. 17, was postponed due to weather to today at 10:30 a.m. at the Rutland Public Library, 280 Main St., Rutland.

SUNDAY, FEB. 8

'PATHWAY TO FREEDOM IN WORD AND SONG,' a program in celebration of Black History month, the Lancaster Historical Society will take place today at 2 p.m. at the First Church of Christ, Unitarian, 725 Main St., Lancaster. Vocalist and Lancaster native Dr. Lanu Stoddart will be accompanied by pianist William Ness. Snow date is Sunday, Feb. 22. A tour of this iconic "Landmark" church venue is also available at 1:15 p.m. preceding the program. These events are free and open to the public. To make a tour reservation, people may call 978-621-7600. For general information, they may call 978-733-6907.

VALENTINE'S DAY ICE CREAM SUNDAY CELEBRATION will take place today from 1-3 p.m. in the New Braintree Historical Society Museum, 10 Utley Road, New Braintree. This is a free, all you can eat ice cream sundaes. There will be children's craft of making an old-fashioned paper Valentine. Materials are supplied. People can craft their favorite ice cream sundae with a choice of toppings.

TUESDAY, FEB. 10

THE STORY EXCHANGE, a new storytelling group, will hold its organizational meeting today at 6 p.m. at the Merrick Public Library Annex, 18 Common St., Brookfield. Participation will be limited to six to eight storytellers per session. There is no cost to participate, but advance registration is required.

Interested individuals should send a brief introductory email to joe.klimavich@gmail.com and indicate whether they are interested in sharing a story during the first meeting. Following the organizational meeting, The Story Exchange will meet on the first Tuesday of each month at the Merrick Public Library Annex.

BARRE WOMAN'S CLUB meets today at 6 p.m. in the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road, Barre for a public event focused on protecting seniors from online scams. Featured speaker Dr. Brian Bisceglia, a nationally recognized cybersecurity expert and law enforcement officer, will share vital tips and real-world insights on online safety. Dr. Bisceglia holds a Ph.D. in cybersecurity management from Nova Southeastern University, with research focusing on the human element of security, social engineering, and SMiShing (SMS phishing) susceptibility. He has developed cybersecurity training curricula for vulnerable groups like seniors, and his work has appeared in academic publications examining persuasion principles and user behavior during cyber-attacks. Dr. Bisceglia also earned a Master's degree in applied computer science and a Bachelor's in electronic engineering technology from Wentworth Institute of Technology.

SATURDAY, FEB. 14

EQLT WELLNESS WALKS will be held today at 9 a.m. at the Pynchon's Grist Mill Preserve, 165 Wickaboag Valley Road, West Brookfield; Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 11:45 a.m. at Grenville Park to Church Street via Mass. Central Rail Trail meet at Grenville Park parking lot, 73 Church St., Ware; Sunday, March 8 at 9:30 a.m. at Deer Park Preserve and Coxhall Kitchen Garden, 481 Barre Road, Hardwick; Wednesday, March 18 at 2:30 p.m. at Patril Hollow Preserve, 1015 Hardwick Road, Hardwick. RSVP to East Quabbin Land Trust is requested, but not required by emailing atrevvett@eqlt.org.

FRIDAY, FEB. 20

NATIVE ANIMALS PROGRAM will be held today at 1 p.m. in the East Quabbin Land Trust Office, 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick. Wild life expert Bethany Boucher will talk about native North American animals. Participants will also meet some of these animals courtesy of Amazing Animal Ambassadors. Sign up is required as the event is limited to the first 40 guest, who register. Registration deadline is Saturday, Feb. 14. People may email Ellie at eshea@eqlt.org to register. They should include name and age in the email.

SATURDAY, FEB. 21

THE PARKINGTON SISTERS CONCERT sponsored by the Princeton Art Society will be held today at 4 p.m. in the First Congregational Church, 14 Mountain Road, Princeton. The public is invited to this concert; a donation of \$10 is suggested. The Parkington Sisters create a beautiful, textural blend of indie-folk and chamber pop, carried by their signature rich harmonies and evocative storytelling, weaving together classical roots with Americana charm and a touch of melancholy.

The Sisters, Rose, Sarah and Ariel, are songwriters and dynamic multi-instrumentalists who play guitar, piano, violin and viola. This concert is made possible in part by grants from the Barre Bank Charitable Foundation and the Princeton Mass. Cultural Council. Princeton Arts is a nonprofit organization supporting the arts in Central Massachusetts.

Calendar Policy

POLICY: Our calendar section is intended to promote "free" events or ones that directly affect a volunteer-driven organization that benefits the community. Paid events that are not deemed fund-raisers or benefits do not qualify. Non-charitable events that charge the public to enter are not allowed as we consider that paid advertising. The deadline to submit calendar items in the mail, by fax, or emailed in Word document format is Monday at noon or sooner. We usually print one week in advance of an event, and the listings should be brief, with only time, date, location, brief activity explanation and contact information.

EQLT hosts 'Snow Moon' walk on Feb. 1

HARDWICK – The East Quabbin Land Trust is hosting a "Snow Moon" full moon walk on Sunday, Feb. 1, at 4:30 p.m. at Mandell Hill Preserve located at 660 Barre Road.

This 1.5-mile easy-to-moderate walk on the blue Loop Trail will

cross open fields, transitioning to woodlands with moderate grade changes, and emerging once again in open fields for unobstructed views of the full Snow Moon.

RSVPs are required; please email atrevvett@eqlt.org. Participants should plan

to dress for the weather and bring water.

Some sections of the walk may be icy. Warm boots, traction cleats and/or hiking poles are recommended. Participants should also plan to bring a headlamp, if they have one.

St. Aloysius School's Open House rescheduled to Feb. 2

HARDWICK – St. Aloysius Catholic School is hosting an Open House on Monday, Feb. 2 from 3-5:30 p.m.

The Open House was intended to happen a week prior but was canceled due

to the snow storm and subsequent school closure that day.

Prospective families are encouraged to visit the school, located at 52 Church St., in Gilbertville, where they can tour the classrooms, meet the teachers and learn

more about the great educational and faith filled experiences that await.

For more information, please call the school and speak to Roberta McQuaid, Enrollment Coordinator, at 413-477-1268.

DCR from page 7

bears true hibernators? This program will take a lighthearted look at some of the fun and amazing facts about one of the largest residents of the state.

Register here: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/019b0ef9944176d7ba1296104d38babf>.

Museum sells rare artifact to secure future preservation efforts

NEW SALEM – The Swift River Valley Historical Society, the leading resource in preserving the artifacts, stories and records of the lost towns of the Swift River Valley, has announced the successful sale of a seventeenth century artifact from its collection.

The Symon and Rebeckah Horne Pilgrim Century valuables cabinet, attributed to the Symonds shops of Salem and dated 1677, was sold by Sotheby's in New York, achieving \$1.6

million.

The decision to sell the piece was made after a thorough review by the museum's board of directors. The cabinet, while valuable and historically significant, was owned by a family that moved to the Swift River Valley from eastern Massachusetts, and did not directly support the museum's core mission to preserve and interpret the history of the Swift River Valley towns that were destroyed to build the Quabbin Reservoir, Boston's water supply.

"This is not a decision the board made lightly," said Judith McIntosh, Chair of the SRVHS Board of Directors. "We are deeply committed to our mission to preserve the history of the Swift River Valley. The sale allows us to strengthen our operations, make much-needed capital improvements, and expand educational programming that serves the greater community."

Proceeds from the sale will be used to make capital improvements and accessibility updates to the Whitaker-Clary House, fund long-term maintenance of museum buildings, and implement a new strategic plan.

"We understand that the community places great trust in us as stewards of Quabbin history," said McIntosh. "This sale ensures that we

can devote greater resources to fulfilling our mission."

The Swift River Valley Museum is open during the summer season and by appointment. For a glimpse into the life of each of the four lost towns, visit the Whitaker-Clary House, Prescott Church Museum, and Carriage Shed at the historical society's location at 40 Elm St.

About the Swift River Valley Historical Society

The Swift River Valley Historical Society is the leading resource in preserving the artifacts, stories and records of the towns that were lost in order to create the Quabbin Reservoir water supply that serves eastern Massachusetts: Prescott, Dana, Enfield, and Greenwich.

SRVHS collaborates with communities, organizations and agencies to provide educational opportunities and programs about the history of this region and to ensure appropriate management and protection of those resources and artifacts, including the Quabbin watershed, to engage public interest and support.

The Swift River Historical Museum is open Wednesdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. from June to September. Admission to the museum is free. Read more at www.swiftrivervalleyhistorical.org, or on Facebook at Swift River Valley Historical Society.



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Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Tommy Schoonmaker looks to shoot.

Middle school boys action

BARRE – Last Thursday afternoon, the Quabbin Regional Middle School boys basketball team was in action. The Panthers took on West Boylston in a matchup that saw the boys get a dominant win



Liam Shaw comes up with a rebound.



Preston D'Amato sails an inbound pass away.



Bryce Pariseau gets the easy layup.



Cameron Bruley dekes around his opponent.



Richard Valcourt hustles down the court.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Bree May slows up with pressure coming on.

Middle school girls action

BARRE – Last Thursday afternoon, the Quabbin Regional Middle School girls basketball team was in action. The Panthers took on West Boylston in a tough matchup that was even for much of the first half.



Juliana Nickson hustles toward the paint.



Addy Barringer heads across midcourt.

Pioneers turn on offense in win over Turners



Megan Clark shoots with pressure on.

PALMER – Last Tuesday evening, Pathfinder girls basketball defeated Turners Falls 52-28. The Pioneers did an excellent job on defense, limiting Turners to single



Ciara Green makes a pass in transition.

digits in every frame of the game. Addison Doktor had a great game with 22 points while Megan Clark contributed 21 points for the Pioneers. Pathfinder is an even 5-5 this season.



Jinx Ripley goes for the three-pointer.



Ellery Silva sends a long pass away.



Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com
Anabelle Ickler tries to overcome the pressure and shoot.



Julia Montague starts a play on offense.



Sophia Giangrande goes for the offensive rebound.

Indians score big in win

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Last Friday evening, North Brookfield High School girls basketball picked up its sixth win of the season over Sizer School. It was the third straight victory for the Indians, who also beat Trivium and Immaculate Heart of Mary during the past week. North Brookfield is now 6-3 this season.



Milcaila Ayala works around the perimeter.



Sophia Giangrande goes for the offensive rebound.



Sarah Monsin passes on the run.



Olivia Holmes tries to get around an opponent.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Whitney Reno makes her way across midcourt.

Sports

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Bondsville League

WARE – It is week 19 of the Wednesday Night Bondsville League at Roll-A-Way Lanes in Ware.

After 19 weeks, Fire Mountain maintains the #1 seed overall and in their division. Fire Mountain has a record of 84.5 wins and 48.5 losses. Night Hawks are in second place with a record of 78-55. Ironmen are in third place with a record of 76-57 and Sandri has the same record as Ironmen and are leading in the west division.

During week 19, Night Hawks bowled against The Snappers at Roll-A-Way Lanes. In game one, Snappers began the match with a win over Night Hawks, 493-451. Eddie Stachowicz of the Snappers was on fire with an opening game of 139.

In game two, Night Hawks snapped out of their first game slump and beat the Snappers, 501-474. Every Night Hawk bowler exceeded the century mark with scores of 129, 118, 108, and 103.

In game three, Night

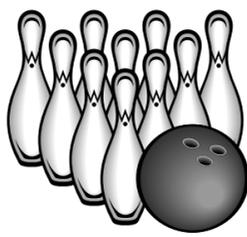
Hawks won the last game by a score of 448-431. Gavin Sinclair of Night Hawks finished strong with a final game of 122. The high three-game series on the Night Hawks was bowled by Darryl Sinclair (340), and the highest series for Snappers was Stachowicz (311).

The final score was 1400-1398 in favor of Night Hawks.

Ironmen bowled against Spare Parts Bud during week 19. In game one, Spare Parts Bud defeated the Ironmen by a score of 491-469. Pete Swistak of Ironmen began the match with 119 in a losing effort. John Jebb of Spare Parts Bud maintained the lead and began with 99.

In game two, Ironmen defeated Spare Parts Bud by a score of 464-459. Ryan Drago of Ironmen finished with 119 to hang on to a slim lead. Jebb had to throw back-to-back spares in the final two frames to catch up to Drago and only got one spare.

In game three, Ironmen won by a score of 525-498. Steve Swistak of Ironmen bowled well over his average with 124. Drago finished with the highest game of the match, 143. Jebb finished



strong bowling well over his league average by scoring 114.

The final score was 1458-1448 in favor of Ironmen.

Cannonballs bowled against P&J Meats in week 19. In game one, P&J Meats defeated Cannonballs by a score of 436-430. In game two, Cannonballs defeated P&J Meats by a score of 464-448. Micah Hinkley of Cannonballs responded with 112 in game two.

In game three, P&J Meats won by a score of 448-445, the closest game in the match. The final score was 1339-1332 in favor of Cannonballs.

Fire Mountain bowled against Flaming Bowling Balls on lanes 9 and 10 at Roll-A-Way Lanes. In game one, Fire Mountain won the first game by a score of 482-443. Rick Trott of Fire Mountain began the match with 128.

The final score was 1437-1379 in favor of Fire Mountain.

Baldwin to chase unprecedented third straight SMART Modified Tour Championship

Sadler-Stanley Racing announced Wednesday that Luke Baldwin will return to the Pace-O-Matic No. 7VA for another season of SMART Modified Tour racing in 2026.

Baldwin will be searching for an unprecedented third straight championship on the SMART Modified Tour powered by Pace-O-Matic, after capturing the title in his rookie season in 2024, and following it up with another crown in 2025.

Baldwin won three of 13 series events in 2025 to go along with top-10 finishes in all but two races. Baldwin also won twice during the 2024 season, including capturing the \$20,000 to win 'King of the Modifieds' at South Boston Speedway in its inaugural season as his first career win.

The team will continue with a PSR Chassis, partnered with Pace-O-Matic.

"What Luke has accomplished both on and off the track the last two years has been impressive and fun

to watch," Sadler-Stanley Racing co-owner Hermie Sadler, said. "Luke has a great future ahead of him and it will be exciting to watch him race in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, along with on the SMART Modified Tour. We are truly excited to have him back in the Pace-O-Matic Modified in 2026 trying to chase some history."

"Going back to Sadler-Stanley Racing for a chance to win a third consecutive SMART Modified Tour championship - it's incredible," Luke Baldwin said. "Hermie and Bill took a chance on me, and it has paid off in many ways. I expect no different in 2026."

"We are just thrilled that Luke will lead Sadler-Stanley Racing for the 2026 SMART Modified Tour season, and run for this third consecutive championship," co-owner Bill Stanley said. "He brings excitement and a winning attitude to the track every week, and we can't wait to

get the season started with him behind the wheel of the Pace-O-Matic 7VA."

"Pace-O-Matic is proud to once again be the premier sponsor of the SMART Modified Tour and Sadler-Stanley Racing for 2026," Paul Goldean, President and CEO of Pace-O-Matic, said. "The SMART Modified Tour is an exhibition of cutting-edge innovation and excitement, just like the skill games we develop. We are excited to watch Sadler-Stanley Racing pursue a historic third consecutive championship, and we wish all the drivers luck this season."

Information on the driver lineup for the No. 16 Pace-O-Matic entry for the 2026 season will be released in the coming weeks.

The SMART Modified Tour 2026 schedule includes 14 events at 13 different tracks. All SMART Modified Tour races are streamed live on FloRacing.

Ott named new head coach of T-Birds

SPRINGFIELD – St. Louis Blues President of Hockey Operations and General Manager Doug Armstrong announced today that Steve Ott will assume the role of head coach for the team's AHL affiliate, the Springfield Thunderbirds, for the remainder of the season. Ott replaces Steve Konowalchuk, who has been relieved of his duties. Current Thunderbirds assistant coach Chad Wiseman will serve as the interim head coach for today's Thunderbirds game against the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins until Ott can join the team later this week.

"The Blues want to thank Steve Konowalchuk for his contributions to our organization over the last two years and wish him all the

best moving forward," said Armstrong. "We're looking forward to Steve Ott taking over in Springfield to push our young players to get better every day and further their development path to become St. Louis Blues. The current staff will take over his duties with the Blues for the rest of this season."

Ott, 42, has nine seasons behind the Blues' bench after first joining the staff as an assistant in the summer of 2017. During his tenure, the Summerside, PEI, native has helped the Blues compile a 350-244-74 (.588 points percentage) regular-season record and four postseason appearances. In 2018-19, just his second season as a coach, Ott played an instrumental role in helping the Blues make a historic rise in

the standings during the regular season, ultimately capturing the 2019 Stanley Cup championship. Ott becomes the fifth head coach in Thunderbirds history

As a player, Ott enjoyed a 14-year NHL career, including 122 games with the Blues from 2014-2016. Overall, he accumulated 288 points in 848 career regular-season games, including stints with Dallas, Buffalo, St. Louis, Detroit, and Montreal.

Konowalchuk, 52, was in his second season as head coach of the Thunderbirds and has recorded an overall record of 47-50-4-8 (.486 points-percentage) during his time in the organization, including a record of 13-18-4-2 (.432) this season.

Registration set to open Feb. 1 for Quabbin

SOUTH HADLEY – On Sunday, Jan. 11, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

At the meeting it was determined registration for players will open up on Sunday, Feb. 1.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a week-night game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game with an opponent to be determine as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a roster spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice.

The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall

league last year, the league will also have a fall league in September and October this season.

The registration link will be live on Feb. 1 at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

Aside from the weeknight and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August.

This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

In the Classroom



Submitted photo

Paramedic graduates back row from left, are James Baxley, John Smith, Joshua McGrath, Ryan Hendrickson, Owen Anderholm and Joseph Larson and front row from left, are Michael Ashe, Maze Cruz and Christina Gustafson.

Mount Wachusett Community College holds pinning ceremony for paramedics

GARDNER – Mount Wachusett Community College celebrated the achievements of Paramedic Class 7 with a traditional pinning ceremony on Friday, Dec. 12, 2025, at the college's Gardner campus.

Paramedic graduates and their hometowns are: Owen Anderholm of Athol, Michael Ashe of Sturbridge, James Lucas Baxley of Gardner, Maze Cruz of Worcester, Christina Gustafson of Hubbardston, Ryan Hendrickson of Orange, Joseph Larson of Warwick, Joshua McGrath of New Salem, Keith Patch of Oxford and John Smith of Orange.

Along with family and friends, the graduates were congratulated

by Paramedic Program Chair Peter Laitinen, Dean of Nursing & Health Professions Kimberly Shea, Clinical Coordinator John Bresnahan, Adjunct Professors Brendan Hurley and Tyler Schwabe and Lab Assistants Lorenzo Sordoni, Joe Bernardini and Kyle Daniels.

"You have successfully completed a challenging program, committing yourselves to a profession where you will be there for others during the most difficult moments of their lives," said MWCC President James Vander Hooven. "You have earned this distinction and now carry a great responsibility."

"We are thrilled to celebrate this significant

moment in your lives," noted Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences Kimberly Shea. "This achievement was no small feat, it is testimony to your dedication to a profession that saves lives and strengthens the community. You enter a world that desperately need your talents, and for that we thank you."

Additional guest speakers were Tina Dixon, Executive Director of the Central Mass EMS Corporation and Lorenzo Sordoni, Firefighter/Paramedic and EMS Coordinator for the town of Templeton. Clinical Coordinator John Bresnahan lead the graduates in the reading of the paramedic pledge.

STCC announces fall 2025 Dean's list

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College announces the students named to the fall 2025 Dean's list.

Local students making fall Dean's list are: Allan Stanley Gustafson of Gilbertville, Lindsay Kellaher of Gilbertville and Faith Elizabeth Holmes of North Brookfield.

To be considered, degree seeking students must earn 12 or more college level credits in the current semester, or a total of 12 or more combined college-level credits earned during the fall and spring semesters and achieve a 3.3 or above grade point average.

S T C C , t h e Commonwealth's only technical community col-

lege, continues the pioneering legacy of the Springfield Armory with comprehensive and technical education in manufacturing STEM, healthcare, business, social services and the liberal arts. Founded in 1967, the college, a designated Hispanic Serving Institution, seeks to close achievement gaps among students, who traditionally face societal barriers.

WE'RE ALL EARS

Questions? Comments? Story Ideas?

Let us know how we're doing.

Your opinion is something we always want to hear.

Contact edowner@turley.com

Barre Gazette, 24 Water St., Palmer • 413-283-8393



PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Church News

Local pastor offers sermon

Healthful Resolutions Part 5

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) was an American revivalist, philosopher and theologian who served as a key figure in the Great Awakening.

Each New Year I entertain his writings, as he wrote at length on the theme of healthful resolutions. Please consider the following as we conclude our extended series.

1) Time
What did he resolve on the theme of time and the maximization thereof? "Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can." Edwards was a man who knew he had but a finite span of time to accomplish the good will and purpose of the Lord.

Therefore, real thought had to be given to the proper use of such a precious commodity. To what degree are you mindful of the time you have been granted? Are you diligent or indifferent? Do you realize that Christ Himself was concerned with the stewardship of His time? Note His words in the Gospel of John:

John 9:4 (NKJV)
4 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."

I also call you to consider the musings of the apostle Paul on this matter. I find his inspired words to be sobering yet insightful.

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NIV)
15 Be very careful, then, how you live-not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Remember what Henry David Thoreau commented: "You can't kill time without wounding eternity."

2) Affliction
What did Edwards resolve on the handling of affliction and adversity? "Resolved, after afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them, what good I have got by them, and what I might have got by them." That is, Edwards was a man who realized that earthly suffering, as difficult as it might be, could provide genuine spiritual benefit (i.e., if properly navigated).

No one likes to suffer, but this does not change the fact that we do. As the Book of Job declares: "Man is born to trouble, as surely as sparks fly upward" (5:7). Yet this does not mean that we cannot derive advantage(s) from negative experiences. If I were to share all that Scripture presents on this theme, we would be here for many more editions! I offer these alone:

Romans 8:28b
28 . . . we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

James 1:2-4
2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Romans 5:1b-5
1 . . . since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

As you enter 2026, make the most of your time and even the afflictions of this life, watching what the Lord can do in kind! Thank you for taking the time to read this publication. Should you have any comments or questions, feel free to contact me at your convenience using the information below.

Also, feel free to check us out online at www.NewLifeBarre.org or visit us each Sunday at 10:30 am. We hope to see you soon.

Pastor James Foley
New Life Assembly of God
60 Main St., South Barre
jamesfoley@newlifebarre.org
978-355-6407

Public Notices

BARRE PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

The Barre Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Henry Woods Municipal Building, 40 West Street, Boards' Office, 3rd Floor, requested by Jesse M Klayman, Moonlight Run Farm LLC for a special permit for a commercial kennel for property located at 1140 South Street, Assessors Map G, Lot 430 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds Book 63284, Page 16.

Anyone wishing to comment on this matter should attend the hearing or submit comments in writing prior to the hearing to the Planning Board, 40 West Street, Suite 5, Barre, MA 01005 or send email to barreboards@townofbarre.com. 01/29, 02/05/2026

Barre Housing Authority Temporary Shoring Installation Project #021074 Section 00 11 13

ADVERTISEMENT TO BID MGL c.149 Over \$150K
The **BARRE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Temporary Shoring Installation at State Aided Development: Bradford Apartments (705-1) in Barre, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **NAULT ARCHITECTS INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to:

Installation of temporary wood beams, columns and related items in an occupied 3-story apartment building to shore and support portions of compromised framing.

The work is estimated to cost **\$173,800.00.**

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 02/06/2026 at 12:00PM EST for general bids.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §§26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work, **General Building Construction**, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement.

General Bids will be received until **11 February 2026 at 2:00PM EST** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

Filed Sub-bids for the trades listed below will be received un-

til NULL at NULL and publicly opened online, forthwith.

Filed sub-bidders must be DCAMM certified for the trades listed below and bidders must include a current DCAMM Sub-Bidder Certificate of Eligibility and a signed DCAMM Sub-Bidder's Update Statement.

TRADES - NONE
General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates) and made payable to the **BARRE HOUSING AUTHORITY**. Note: A bid deposit is not required for Projects advertised under \$50,000.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost.

General bidders must agree to contract with minority and women business enterprises as certified by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO). The combined participation benchmark reserved for such enterprises shall not be less than 13% of the final contract price including accepted alternates. **Request for waivers must be sent to EOHLC (Chad. Howard@mass.gov) 5 calendar days prior to the General Bid date. NO WAIVERS WILL BE GRANTED AFTER THE GENERAL BIDS ARE OPENED.**

The Contractor and all sub-contractors (collectively referred to as "the Contractor") agree to strive to achieve minority and women workforce participation. The Workforce Participation benchmark is set at 6.9% for women and 15.3% for minorities. The Workforce benchmark percentages are a statutory requirement under MGL c. 149 § 44A(2)(G).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled Date and Time: 02/04/2026 at 9:00 AM EST

Address: 39 Main Street, Barre, MA 01005

Instructions: Non The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

Nashoba Blue Inc.
433 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
978-568-1167
01/29/2026

PUBLIC AUCTION NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN PURSUANT

TO THE PROVISIONS OF M.L.C. 225 SEC.39A THE FOLLOWING VEHICLES WILL BE SOLD

ON February 7, 2026 AT A SALE TO SATISFY OUR GARAGE LIEN THEREON FOR TOWING & STORAGE CHARGES AND EXPENSES OF SALE AND NOTICE:

2018 Toyota RAV4
VIN JTMBFREV7J254848
2016 Jeep Grand Cherokee
VIN 1C4RJFCG2GC505286
2003 Mazda Mazda6
VIN 1YVFP80D835M34692

2006 Jeep Liberty
VIN 1J4GL48K66W206572
2019 Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross
VIN JA4AT4AA8KZ001447
2017 Hyundai SONATA
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2012 Cadillac
VIN SRX3GYFDE35CS649838
2018 Honda Accord
VIN 1HGCV1F34JA170753
2018 Toyota Tacoma
VIN 5TF5Z5AN4JX126280
2002 Honda Accord
VIN 1HGCG66832A123685
THE SALE WILL BE HELD AT EARLY'S ON PARK AVE. 536 PARK AVE WORCESTER, MA 01603
01/22, 01/29, 02/05/2026

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF ADESIGN PUBLIC HEARING Project Description: Barre - Bridge Replacement, Br# B-02-004, Old Coldbrook Road over Prince River Project File No. 612084

A Design Public Hearing will be held to present the design for the proposed project in Barre, MA.

WHERE: Barre Town Hall, Selectboard's Room
40 West Street
Barre, MA 01005

WHEN: Thursday, February 12, 2026 @ 6:30PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of a full bridge replacement is of Bridge # B-02-004, Old Coldbrook Road over the Prince River. The project limits extend approximately 150 feet in either direction from the ends of the current bridge. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities do not exist within this area; however, accommodations are currently being considered in the design. Options are also being investigated on routes that may be necessary for a detour during construction.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The town is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 612084. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on the MassDOT website listed below.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

In case of inclement weather, a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER
01/29, 02/05/2026

BARRE PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

The Barre Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Henry Woods Municipal Building, 40 West Street, Select Board Room, Floor 1, Barre, MA on the application for Approval of Definitive Plan filed by Rotokawa Estates, LLC on January 13, 2026 in accordance with GL. c41, 81K-81GG relative to property located on the Southerly side of Wauwinet Road, Parcels D-71 and E-59 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds Book 45829, Page 319.

Copies of the application and related materials can be viewed at the Boards' Office, Floor 3, Henry Woods Building, 40 West Street, Barre, MA. Anyone wishing to comment on this matter should attend the hearing or submit comments in writing. The plan can be viewed at the Boards' Office, 3rd floor.

Floyd Kelley, Chairman
01/29, 02/05/2026

BHN launches treatment program for youth and families

SPRINGFIELD - Behavioral Health Network, Inc., the designated Community Service Agency for Western Massachusetts, has announced the launch of its Family-Based Intensive Treatment program.

This new service expands BHN's commitment to delivering essential behavioral health care to children, youth, and families through a community-centered approach.

The FIT program helps families in crisis to stabilize by providing intensive home-based support. FIT serves youth under age 21 with MassHealth insurance.

Each family is supported by a dedicated team, providing clinical support, 24/7 availability and peer support from someone with lived experience. The team teaches practical skills to help children thrive at home and connects families with commu-

nity resources for long-term success.

FIT is part of a full continuum of child and family support services, available to families in the following communities of Hampden and Worcester Counties, ensuring that families across Western and Central Massachusetts have access to timely, compassionate care: Ware, Warren, Barre, Hardwick, Oakham, West Brookfield, East Brookfield,

Brookfield, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Rutland and Hubbardston.

"FIT expands the continuum of care within BHN's child and family programs, ensuring families receive intensive, home-based support when they need it most. These programs reflect our commitment to building stronger, healthier communities," said Michelle Michaelian, Senior Vice President of Child and

Family Community-Based Programs.

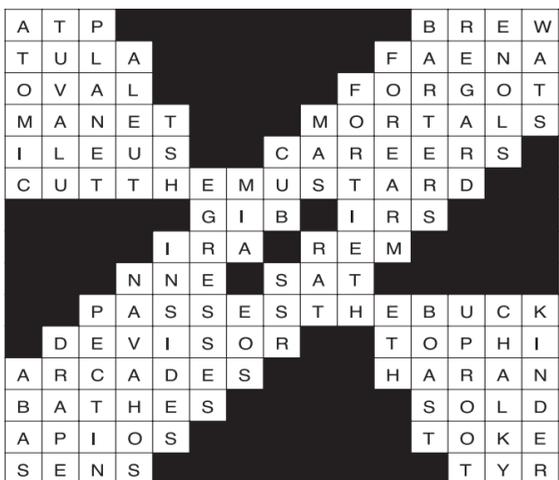
Families interested in learning more about the FIT program can call 413-301-9355 or visit www.bhninc.org.

About Behavioral Health Network

Behavioral Health Network, Inc. is a nonprofit regional provider of comprehensive behavioral health services for adults, children, and families. Originating

from the Child Guidance Clinic established in 1938, BHN has grown into a network that serves communities across Massachusetts.

BHN offers a wide range of community-based services, including innovative, integrated whole-health models, traditional clinical and outpatient care, therapeutic services, day treatment, addiction services, crisis intervention, and residential supports.



Barre Gazette

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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Donald Roy (860) 874-8396

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