

BARRE GAZETTE

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Board designate top three needs

By Ellenor Dower
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OAKHAM – In response to a letter from state Sen. Peter Durant asking the town for their top requests for state aid, the Select Board selected three at their Feb. 17 meeting.

First on the list was \$32,000 for the Jaws of Life for the Oakham Fire Department. The second item was \$25,000 to replace the service elevator at the Fobes Memorial Library. Finally, they decided to request \$200,000 for legal fees regarding a Battery Energy Storage System on Coldbrook Road in town. Another item presented by the assessors was an increase in the Payment in Lieu of Taxes the state pays to the towns.

This was not specific to Oakham only, but to all the cities and towns, which have state owned land.

Highway Superintendent and Town Clerk vacancies

The town received two applicants for Highway Superintendent and one for Town Clerk. Vice Chairman Micheal Brunelle suggested running a newspaper ad outside the Barre area in hopes of getting more applicants.

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Young author finishes second book

By Ellenor Dower
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BARRE – Twelve year old Rosalie S. Strzelecki of Barre believes the world needs more books.

She is helping to fill that need after just completing her second book in a trilogy. Her second book “The Guardian’s Sword: The Royal Prisoner” now joins her first book “The Guardian’s Sword: The Dawn of the Guardian.” She is already working in the third and final book in the “The Guardian’s Sword” series.

The home-schooled student says, “I always wanted to be an author, but I didn’t originally set out to write my first book.” She sketched a scene of two knights dueling and began



Submitted photo

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Rosalie S. Strzelecki holds her two books, “The Guardian’s Sword: The Dawn of the Guardian” and “The Guardian’s Sword: The Royal Prisoner.”

Fire Chief proposed merging fire departments

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

NEW BRAINTREE – New Braintree Fire Chief Dennis Letendre proposed merging the New Braintree and Hardwick fire departments during a joint meeting between the two town’s select boards on Monday night.

Letendre said the idea was originally proposed during the last meeting of the New Braintree Select Board when they signed the intermunicipal police

department agreement, which was also signed by Hardwick at the Monday meeting.

Letendre said both town’s fire departments are struggling with staffing and financial restraints, and they cannot afford full time firefighters. He noted that in the past, the fire departments were well staffed, with 25-30 members of each fire department until the 1990s, and their training nights were well attended.

He said enrollment in the department has cut in

half since then.

Proposal

Letendre said his proposal is to merge the two town’s fire officials to provide better coverage, training, and community access to firefighters. He said the firefighters from each respective town would still be assigned to their current station to prevent confusion. He also proposed becoming a member of the regional technical rescue team, as technical calls are currently handled by other munici-

palities, he specifically mentioned the town of Holden as an example.

He said the towns currently do not have enough money to buy the technology required, and merging the budgets could provide purchasing power.

Additionally, he proposed combining CPR and first aid training to cut costs, facilitating the recording software for writing incident reports, com-

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Select Board appoints new police officer

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HUBBARDSTON – The Select Board officially appointed Zackary Wright to the Police Department at their Monday, March 2 meeting.

Police Chief Ryan Couture highlighted Wright’s hard work and determination in completing the academy, and said he also has committed his service to the Army National Guard. Wright was joined by his fiancée and friends, and was read the ceremonial oath by Town Clerk Melody Green.

Williamsville Road closure

Couture said that there will be a full closure of Williamsville Road for bridge repairs starting March 3 and the closure is likely to last 14-18 months. Couture said the detour is going to be along Thompson and Kruse roads and he said they are narrow, and not well suited for large amounts of traffic.

He said pedestrians should be aware of the increase of traffic to avoid any accidents. He said the department will be increasing patrols in the area, and strictly enforcing a 30 mph speed limit through the detour.

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Selectmen heard update from downtown committee

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Sheila Orsi, chair of the Downtown Development Committee gave an update to the Selectmen about the committee’s efforts over the past eight years, and its need for new members to continue moving forward.

Orsi said the Downtown Development Committee was formed in October of 2018.

“Our mission was to create a vibrant atmosphere of the downtown and to rejuvenate our town center,” she said at the Feb. 24 Board of Selectmen’s meeting.

Orsi said at the beginning, the committee worked with a District Local Technical Assistance grant in the amount of \$21,000 and its members visited the Upton town hall, which had the same architect as the Town House. She said the committee has worked directly with the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House.

“One of our strategic goals is to revitalize that ‘Town House,’” Orsi said.

In 2019, the committee worked with Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission

to create a strategic plan, which is posted on the committee’s Facebook page.

“Our strategic goals are walkable downtown, connected trails, Town House revitalization, downtown development (generally) and business investment,” Orsi said.

Orsi detailed some of the highlights of the committee over the years, including receiving numerous grants.

Orsi said the majority of the committee members took a traffic counting course through the Department of Transportation to work toward applying for the Complete Streets grant program to redevelop the downtown’s sidewalks and crosswalks.

The committee also hosted business spotlights through live-feed interviews before the pandemic. She said she would like to see this come back.

Orsi said during the pandemic, the committee received a grant from the Cultural Council to host outdoor movies, and the committee partnered with the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House for its CATLab program.

In 2021, the Downtown Development Committee was awarded the

See N BROOKFIELD, page 6

Lots of snow and effort create feline sculpture



Eli, a 14 foot snow sculpture, is shown with a head, but no body. Steve Grady of McEvoy Road in New Braintree and his neighbors created this sculpture.



Submitted photos

The group of artists used a ladder to put in the cat’s eyes. They used two empty cans and painted the eyes. Eli’s whiskers are metal rods used by lawn care companies.



Eli the cat sculpture is shown with Goose the kitten in his paws. Steve Grady invites people to come visit Eli before he melts away.



This shows the finished piece which contains Eli, named for a neighbor’s kitten, complete with two mice and a litter box in the background.



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SPORTS

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Season concludes with three straight wins



Quabbin Girls B
Abby Rogowski passes out of the paint.

BARRE – The season has come to a conclusion for Quabbin Regional High School girls basketball. The Panthers would end up finishing with games against Narragansett and then Montachusett Tech. Both, combined with a win against Ayer Shirley were also wins. The Panthers would beat

Monty Tech 50-35 on Feb. 18 to finish off the season with a 6-14 record overall. Unfortunately, the Panthers were not able to make the playoffs this year, and their season ended without a state playoff appearance. There was also no Central Mass. tournament this season.



Makenzie Casey is all alone looking for a layup.



Aubrey Thorpe makes a three-point attempt



Mia Ducos heads down the court during late-season action.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Hubbardston resident running for the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge team

Raising funds for cancer research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

BOSTON – On Apr. 20, Carly Williams from Hubbardston, Massachusetts, is running to defy cancer as a member of the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge team in the 130th Boston Marathon presented by Bank of America, along with more than 500 Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge teammates from across the country and around the world, will run Massachusetts' historic marathon route from Hopkinton to Boston to collectively raise more than \$8.75 million for cancer research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

This year marks the 37th annual running of the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge (DFMC), the largest and longest-running

charity team for the Boston Marathon. One hundred percent of the funds raised by the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge team benefit Dana-Farber's Claudia Adams Barr Program in Innovative Basic Cancer Research, which enables promising scientific research in its earliest stages. The Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge has raised more than \$140 million for the program since 1990.

Runners include cancer survivors and patients, and family and friends of those who have been affected by cancer. Each team member must fulfill a basic fundraising commitment:

Invitational runners - runners who receive their entry from Dana-Farber have a minimum fundraising commitment of \$12,000

Own entry runners - runners who have joined the DFMC team after obtaining their own race entry have a fundraising commitment of \$4,000.

Dana-Farber was among

the first charity organizations to be recognized by the Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.), which organizes the Boston Marathon. The Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge team offers its members extensive fundraising support, team training runs, exclusive Dana-Farber events, and a post-race recovery zone. Celebrating his 50th anniversary of winning the 1976 Boston Marathon Men's Open Division, Jack Fultz will serve as the team training advisor for the 37th time. Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge runners who are not time-qualified for the Boston Marathon receive an invitational entry into the race.

To contribute to the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge, visit RunDFMC.org or contact the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge staff at (617) 632-1970 or dfmc@dfci.harvard.edu. Follow DFMC on Facebook: www.facebook.com/marathonchallenge.

Amherst-Pathfinder co-op hockey falls in WMass tourney

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

AMHERST – Senior assistant captain Andrew Holton had a team-leading 13 goals and 12 assists for the Agawam hockey team this winter. Holton's final high school goal was very memorable.

The Western Mass. Class B quarterfinal match between the fifth-seeded Brownies and the fourth-seeded Amherst Hurricanes was tied 4-4 a minute into overtime. That's when Holton received a pass from junior Kaeden Clifford before firing a shot into the net past Amherst senior goalie Jason Kim (34 saves), which gave the Brownies an exciting 5-4 victory at Orr Rink located on the Amherst College campus on Presidents Day, Feb. 15.

"I've never scored a game winning goal before and it's just an amazing feeling," said Holton after celebrating with his teammates. "We worked very hard in tonight's game."

Holton, who joined the varsity squad as a freshman,

described his first career game-winning goal.

"After Kaeden passed me the puck, I cut to the middle of the slot and fired a shot. I just knew that the puck was going into the net," said Holton, who also assisted on two goals. "This was one of the best hockey games that I've ever played in. We're now hoping to win another Western Mass. title this year."

Agawam, who wrapped up the regular season with a 4-3 overtime loss against Chicopee two days earlier, posted a 6-1 victory over Taconic in last year's Class B finals.

Unfortunately, the Brownies (3-15) didn't make it back to the championship match again this year. Their season came to an end 24 hours later following a 5-2 semifinal loss to top-seeded McCann Tech at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield.

The other seniors listed on the Brownies hockey roster are Jackson Lariviere, Noah Beavis, Joey Wilkinson, Gavin Ogorzalek, Nick

Brown, Brady Blanchette, Casey Thomas, who's an assistant captain, and team captain Anthony Barbarini.

"We have a total of nine seniors on this year's team," said Agawam head coach Todd Rowley. "We had an up and down season, but those guys never quit. They work very hard at practice and in every game. I'm very proud of them. It took a total team effort to win tonight's game."

Blanchette, who's the Brownies starting goalie, was credited with a total of 17 saves against Amherst.

The Hurricanes finished their season with a 6-12-2 overall record. They tied Chicopee (4-4) and Taconic (2-2).

"I thought my players played very well in tonight's game, but it just came down to one shot in overtime," said Amherst head coach Michael Rousseau. "That was the difference maker."

The Hurricanes senior captain is Ethan Mooney,

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T-Birds score much needed win over Checkers

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (21-25-5-2) overpowered the Charlotte Checkers (30-18-4-0) on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center on Military Appreciation Night, coming away with a 5-1 victory.

Zach Dean provided instant offense on Friday night, and the third-year pro experienced deja vu on this night, jabbing home a 2-on-1 pass from Hugh McGing just 2:20 into the action to give Springfield a 1-0 lead.

Unlike a night earlier, Steve Ott's team was able to build upon its early lead with two successful penalty kills, followed by a power-play redirection by Matthew Peca at 18:57 of the first, as the captain tipped a Calle Rosen shot through Kirill Gerasimyyuk. The T-Birds' offense

proved to be far from finished, as Alek Kaskimaki took a breakaway pass from Otto Stenberg at 4:30 of the second and stayed with his initial shot to cash in on a rebound past Gerasimyyuk, extending the lead to 3-0.

Charlotte finally got on the board just 52 seconds later when Noah Gregor crashed the net to chip a Brian Pinho pass over the shoulder of Will Cranley, but it proved to be just a small blip on the T-Birds' radar in what would evolve into a firestorm of offense for the home team.

Only 1:03 of game time passed before Springfield had restored its three-goal advantage, as Jakub Stancl circled the offensive zone to the right circle before firing the puck back toward the goal mouth. Dylan Peterson parked himself

See T-BIRDS, page 10

HCC Women celebrate final home game with 67-56 win



Tatiyana Zuniga passes in transition.

HOLYOKE – Women's basketball played their last regular season game on Friday evening, Feb. 20, hosting regional opponent Bunker Hill CC. The Lady Cougars defeated their opposition 67-56 to earn their seventh straight win. Holyoke's two second-year players, Emily McGrail (Ware, MA / Ware HS) and Erin Bullough (South Hadley, MA / South Hadley HS), were honored with a sophomore night that included a pre-game ceremony recognizing the athletes and their accomplishments. Posters, photos and decorations were hung on the walls and in the stands around Golas Court.

McGrail led the Cougars in blocks during Friday's game and was second in rebounds, tallying six of each. She leads Holyoke in blocks this season with 59 and blocks per game, averaging 3.5. McGrail is sixth



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Erin Bullough, of South Hadley, tries to overcome pressure.

in NJCAA Division III in blocks and third in blocks per game. Bullough sunk the Lady Cougars first basket of the game on Friday. She leads Holyoke in three-point shooting percentage this season and is second in three-pointers made. Bullough has made 41.3% of the three-point shots she has attempted this

year, ranking her fourth in NJCAA Division III. She has drained 31 total shots from long range on the year. Anastacia Dixon (Keene, NH / Keene HS) had an outstanding game in the regular season finale, leading

See HCC WOMEN, page 10