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‘History At Play’ brings back memories Jan. 28

By Eric Goodhart
Correspondent

RUTLAND – It has been twelve days since Judith Kalaora, creator and artistic director of “History at Play,” delivered one of her most remarkable performances in the fourteen-year history of plays she has written highlighting women in history.

The play highlights the accomplishments of a woman, who lived in New Hampshire just 25 years ago.

This time, Kalaora put her talents into telling the story of a truly unique young woman. Following the introduction by the President of the Rutland Historical Society Carolyn Semon, Christa Corrigan appeared from behind a screen in a Scout uniform.

As I learned later, most audience members, including this writer, had to fight back tears after just the first ten minutes. Why? Anyone over 35 could answer that question. The play Kalaora wrote, produced and acted in was about an extraordinarily



Christa McAuliffe, left, is shown with her mother, Grace Corrigan, died in 2018 at age 94. Her mother was a popular speaker on the tragedy for 28 years.

passionate school teacher’s inspirational, but tragically short life. Many there that evening believe her teaching philosophy must be shared with millions of others, who

aspire to become teachers or leaders in any career involving humans.

Christa Corrigan was born in Massachusetts in the late summer of 1948. Christa

McAuliffe died tragically in late January 1986 on an unusually icy day in Florida.

As special as a teaching

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Special town meeting set for May 9

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – At its April 8 meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted to hold a special town meeting on Friday, May 9.

said the purpose of this meeting is to clear up any negative departmental budgets. She said this will give the Town Accountant more time to make transfers and correct budgets prior to the annual town meeting.

“This will quickly clear up all negative balances, any transfers that need to be made, stuff like that,” Barre said.

Members of the Capital Improvement Planning Committee have requested to place articles on the special town meeting warrant as well, and approached the board to discuss this.

Committee Chair Jamie Gilman said it was reestablished in September 2024, and they have been collecting capital requests from the town’s various departments.

“We got four requests,” Gilman said. “With money being what it is right now... two were kind of picked out

to be kind of highest priority and ones that potentially could be approved with the financial situation this year.

The first request was for a new “jaws of life” hydraulic rescue tool for the Fire Department. The estimated cost of this tool is \$15,600.

Fire Chief Darin Anderson said the department’s current “jaws of life” tool is from 1987. He said last year, the department responded to 34 car accidents, of which three required use of the tool.

“This will quickly clear up all negative balances, any transfers that need to be made, stuff like that.”

Administrative
Assistant Ashley Barre

“We had one failure of our power unit at one of those calls,” Anderson said. “We were able to get it somewhat repaired, but it’s still not perfect.”

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Public hearing held for proposed campground special permit

By Ryan Drago
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HARDWICK – The Planning Board met on April 8 for a public hearing on a potential campground being proposed in town.

The meeting was held at the Hardwick Town House and many residents attended the public hearing to hear the special permit proposal and address any questions, com-

ments and concerns. The applicant seeking a special permit is Quabbin Glamping and Camping, LLC at 3305 Greenwich Road on 80 acres of land.

Presenting the project was John Samek, the proprietor of Hardwick Vineyard & Winery at 3305 Greenwich Road. Joining Samek during the presentation was Libby Talbot, who is a partner in the project.

The applicants are proposing a campground on two par-

cels of land in West Hardwick and have narrowed down to having possibly 50 campsites on location. These campsites will feature cabins, treehouses, tents, parking, and sites for RVs and campers.

Samek said he is aware of the neighbors of the site and has kept them informed on his proposed project for a campsite on his land.

Copies of the plan were provided for the Planning Board to review and Samek

also provided copies for the public to review and a map of the site as well.

“We understand this is a big deal,” Samek said.

The applicants said they are confident that a campsite will help promote tourism and support local businesses in Hardwick.

Some neighbors are visible to the site according to Samek. When asked how many cabins will be on site as part of the campground,

Samek said he’s looking to have a total of 10 cabins.

After Samek’s presentation, the Planning Board began with their own questions. Members asked about the lighting situation of the campsite.

With the site being off grid, Samek is looking for exterior lighting and will have solar lighting in place that is compliant with the local bylaws.

The board asked if Samek

intends to have events at the campground and believes events are likely to happen in the future. The biggest issue the Planning Board and the public addressed was excessive traffic and could drive through neighboring roads.

Samek says his proposal for a campground is not looking for an event atmosphere and is more of an economic

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Town looks into tuition agreement with regional school

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Board of Selectmen Chair Jason Petraitis said there has been discussion about entering into a tuition agreement with Quaboag Regional School District.

“We’re not obligated to anything, it’s just something that came up,” Petraitis said at the April 8 meeting.

He said Superintendent Stephen Duff had reached out to members of the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee about the possibility of entering into a tuition agreement with the school district.

Petraitis said members spoke to Duff and it was also brought up at the school committee meeting a few weeks ago.

“Last week, Mr. Duff hosted a Zoom meeting where the chairs of the School Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen and the Town Accountant, were able to ask questions about some things” Petraitis said. “The hope of

that meeting is that the various boards will figure out what those outstanding questions are...and there’s lots of them.”

Petraitis said it’s not something they are hoping to jump right into, as they need to determine if this agreement would be both financially sound and beneficial to the students.

“They knew that it was starting to get more and more difficult to sustain the level of education with the money that we have available in this town.”

Selectmen Chair
Jason Petraitis

He said back in 2009, the School Committee had requested the board form an education task force. He said Jim Metcalf was the chair of the task force and he said its goal over the two plus years it met, was to seek the best route forward for North Brookfield Public Schools.

“They knew that it was

starting to get more and more difficult to sustain the level of education with the money that we have available in this town,” Petraitis said.

He said over the years the budget has increased, but student enrollment has dropped. He said the town has also looked into the possibility of regionalization with other school districts.

“Hopefully the various committees will put their heads together...before we decide whether or not we would entertain actually entering into a tuition agreement with somebody,” Petraitis said.

Petraitis said the board will discuss this tuition agreement at its next meeting.

Social media comments

Judy Manning, chair of the Council on Aging, joined by council members Mary Waytina and Diane Hopkins, said there have been a lot of negative contacts scrutinizing the COA Director Courtenay Rivera and the COA on social media.

Manning said these comments are upsetting to the COA, the director and the Friends of the COA.

“We feel that Courtenay is

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Diane Buzzell shared a presentation of past local authors of North Brookfield during the Local Author Showcase presentation held at the Haston Free Public Library.



Turley Photos by Ryan Drago
Kristi Lee Seymour read a passage from her book “Deeply Rooted”.

Local Author Showcase

Library event
featured work of
several writers

By Ryan Drago
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Haston Free Public Library hosted a Local Author Showcase this past weekend and brought many local writers together.

This event was a celebration of the local authors who once called North Brookfield their home. There were book excerpts and poetry readings shared by many talented authors who attended this

showcase.

“Without authors, there are no books. Without books, there are no libraries” said Diane Buzzell, an author based out of North Brookfield and a current member of the Haston Free Public Library’s Board of Trustees.

A historical display of past local authors and poets could be seen at the Haston Free Public Library and many historical facts about each author were shared by Buzzell at the beginning of the Local Author Showcase. Buzzell read numerous historical facts of each local author that are honored in the rich literary history of North Brookfield.

The local authors acknowl-

edged in the historic display included Amasa Walker, Francis Amasa Walker, William Cullen Bryant, Tryphosa Bates-Batcheller, George Michael Cohan, William Cary Duncan, Tim Parker and Richard Johnson. The display featured not only photographs and historical facts of each author, but copies of their work as well.

Buzzell found it important to share all these facts about these writers who are connected to North Brookfield. Their work and connection to the town adds to its unique history.

Buzzell made the audi-

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SPORTS

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Panthers leave runs on base in loss to Clinton

:By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

CLINTON—If they could've come up with a couple of clutch hits with the bases loaded against Mid-Wach rival Clinton, the Quabbin Panthers would've probably had a 3-1 record instead of being at the .500 mark.

The Panthers left the bases loaded in four of their first five at-bats during last Friday's 5-4 loss to the Gaels

on a chilly afternoon at the Clinton Veterans' Athletic Complex.

"We did have a ton of scoring chances," said Quabbin varsity baseball coach Mark Battista. "We left the bases loaded in four innings. We also made a couple of mistakes in the field that also hurt us."

Quabbin (2-2) hasn't won more than five games during the regular season since they qualified for the 2021 Central Mass. Division 3 tournament

with a 7-6 record.

The Panthers began the 2025 regular season with a 14-1 non-league home win over Quaboag on April 1. They also defeated rival Gardner, 5-2, in another home game twenty four hours before making the 45-minute van ride to Clinton. Their other loss was at home to Oakmont Regional, who are the two-time defending Division 3 state champions.

The Panthers loaded the bases for the first time against

Clinton (3-1) with one-out in the top of the first inning.

Freshman left fielder Abe Brown swung at a strike three pitch thrown by junior righthander Aiden Dubois leading off the frame. Brown was safe at first base following a wild pitch. After the next batter hit a fly ball caught by the centerfielder, Brown stole second base. Then junior Adam Adams, who was Quabbin's starting pitcher, drew a walk and junior second baseman Sam

Morgan lined a single into left field.

Dubois got out of the jam without allowing any runs with the help of a 6-4-3 inning ending double play.

With two-outs in the following inning, Quabbin junior third baseman Wes Sanderson and sophomore right fielder Zach Mielnicki drew back-to-back walks. Then an infield hit by Brown loaded the bases for the second time.

This time, the Panthers took a 1-0 lead when junior

centerfielder Chase Talbot hit a ground ball to the Gaels first baseman which should've been the third out. The first baseman's toss to the pitcher was a tad late resulting in an infield hit. Sanderson scored on the play. The visitors did leave the bases loaded once again.

While the Panthers offense failed to score more than one run during the first two

QUABBIN BASEBALL
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Josie Castell blocks a short hop pitch.

Middle school softball action

BARRE – The Quabbin Regional Middle School softball team got their season going earlier this week.

The Panthers took on Murdock on their home

diamond at Quabbin. While the Panthers put up a nine-run first inning, the game had to be called earlier as torrential rain came into the area during the third inning.



Aubrey Pope delivers a pitch.



Maggie Leander hustles down the line.



Aimee Ickler fields a grounder to first.



Amelia Breault sends a throw to first.

Orioles score opening win over Pioneers



Lianna Carrasquillo fields a throw to third.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN—The Pathfinder Tech and Belchertown softball teams are both hoping to finish in first place in the Tri-County League standings this spring.

Belchertown, who scored five runs in the second inning, defeated the Lady Pioneers, 7-2, at home on a sunny and cool afternoon, last Wednesday.

"We're hoping to contend for the league title this year, so this is a very exciting win for us against one of our biggest rivals," said Belchertown head coach



Kendra Burke winds and fires to the plate.



Michael Lafayette. "We lost both games we played against Pathfinder last year.

The Lady Orioles (1-1) began the regular season with

a 7-5 non-league home loss to Monson on April 2.

Pathfinder Tech, who played their season opener versus Belchertown, won both

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Offense struggles in fourth loss



The Mustangs attempt to recover a ball on defense

MONSON – Last Wednesday afternoon, Monson boys lacrosse, which co-ops with Pathfinder Tech, fell at home to Granby 12-2. Monson suffered its fourth loss of the season without a win. The Mustangs search for their first win in their next matchup on April 18 at home against Northampton at 5 p.m. They host Central on Apr. 22 at 4 p.m.



Players on both teams go after a loose ball.



Talon Clarke emerges with the ball.



Goalie Riley Hurst goes low for a save.



Tyler Rodrigues goes for the goal.



Brennan Pederson makes a pass.