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QRSD Committee ratifies teacher contract

By Ellenor Downer
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BARRE – The Quabbin Regional School District Committee, following an executive session to discuss collective bargaining at the beginning of the April 6 meeting, returned to open session to ratify the summary for the Quabbin Regional Teachers Association contract.

The new contract will run from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

Student Advisory

Ella Reeves and Troy Budreau, both students at the Quabbin Middle School, gave a report to the school committee. Reeves said she was a school choice student at Quabbin and her favorite subject was math. She ran track and field and was on the swim team at the local "Y." She said she was recently inducted into the National Junior Honor Society and was looking forward to the upcoming eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C.

Budreau, an honor student, said he played three sports: track, indoor track and golf. He also played baseball last year. He said math was his favorite subject and he said the math department at Quabbin was one of the best.

Following their reports, school committee members asked them questions. In response to why she selected Quabbin, Reeves said it was the academics and sports. When asked what needed improvement, Reeves said the high school should offer more honors classes. Budreau said it was an important need to be comfortable while learning and liked to listen to music with ear buds.

Superintendent report

QRSD Superintendent Sheila Muir said the new strategic plan would be ready for the May school committee meeting. She said the district received a \$60,000 school violence safety grant from the Department of Justice for the middle high school only. It was one of 14 school districts in the state to receive funds, which will be used to hire a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the district's safety plan and procedures. Bids were due April 11 for the consultant.

She said the district would use rural school money to include all the district elementary schools and the Educational Support Center, which houses the district's Central Office.

The QRSD Superintendent said she attended several meetings recently with various legislators. Last Saturday, she attended a Massachusetts Municipal Association meeting in western Massachusetts. Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll and State Auditor Diana DiZoglio spoke at the meeting along with state Sen. Joe Comford and state Rep. Natalie Blais. Superintendent Muir said Lt. Governor Driscoll was "very aware" of the problems facing rural schools.

Topics of discussion included the school funding formula; the Payment In Lieu of Taxes formula, which valued state land higher in urban areas such as Plymouth compared to state land in rural areas funds to both the schools and town government. Superintendent Muir said the meeting "sent the message

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Scout Hunter Casey earns Eagle rank

By Ellenor Downer
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BARRE – Hunter Casey of New Braintree became the 77th Eagle Scout in the history of Barre Scouting and the first in the new Troop 1026.

He joins over two million Eagle Scouts since 1912 and is part of the 6% of Scouts, who earned the highest rank. Eagle Scout holders include a U.S. President Gerald Ford, actor Oswald "Ozzie" Nelson, author Clive Cussler, astronauts Neil Armstrong and James Lovell, pro basketball player Bill Bradley, Walmart founder Sam Walton and movie producer Steven Spielberg, to name a few.

Hunter started his Scouting journey in the third grade and earned numerous belt loops along the way. He crossed over to Boy Scouts May 20, 2016 and joined Troop 26 in Barre.

It was a smooth transition since he knew some of the Scouts in the troop and attended meetings for a couple of months before his cross over ceremony. Richard Stevens was Scoutmaster and continued in that role for the first year and a half of Hunter's Scouting journey. Gary Pearson also was a Scout leader. Hunter's father, Aaron Casey took over as Scout Master after Stevens and stayed until his son finished his Eagle journey.

He achieved many merit badges. An Eagle Scout must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges and 14 of those most come from a list of Eagle required merit badges. Some of his favorite merit badges included water sports, sports, shot gun, swimming, and wilderness survival.

In addition, to the required number of merit badges and Eagle Scout must show leadership. He was quarter master, patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader and senior patrol leader.

See HUNTER CASEY, page 5



Photo by Ellenor Downer
Tracy Nickerson attaches her son, Hunter Casey's Eagle pin to his uniform at his Eagle ceremony on Sunday, April 16. His father, Aaron Casey, stands by the podium.



Hunter Casey stands by part of his completed Eagle project, which included renovation of the bath house at Felton Field in Barre.



Submitted photos
The second part of Hunter Casey's Eagle project was the repairing and painting of the pavilion at Felton Field in Barre.

New Braintree celebrates its oldest citizen



Courtesy Photo

Stephanie Benoit celebrated her 98th birthday with family and friends.

NEW BRAINTREE – Family and friends gathered at the New Braintree Historical Society on April 2 to honor 98-year-old Stephanie Benoit, the town's oldest citizen.

Benoit's paintings, crafts, poetry, awards, and military and family photos were on display.

State Sen. Anne Gobi and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume attended and presented citations to her. Selectman Joe Chenervert also presented Benoit with an award for her outstanding achievements.

The whereabouts of New Braintree's Boston Post Cane, which is bestowed upon the town's oldest resident, is

unknown, so The New Braintree Historical Society gave Benoit a black cane inscribed on the handle with the words "To the Oldest Citizen of New Braintree, Mass." to commemorate the day.

Benoit entertained the gathering with stories of her first visit to New Braintree in 1947 and tales of her valiant efforts in the Dump and Prison Fights.

Guests enjoyed refreshments, and shared memories of Stephanie's influences on their own lives and the impact she has made on the town of New Braintree. The day was a well-deserved recognition of a special woman.

Duda advocates for voc-tech education

By Matty Anderson
Staff Writer
manderson@turley.com

PALMER – Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School Superintendent Eric Duda shared photos and information from his recent trip to Washington, D.C., to advocate for vocational education in the commonwealth.

Massachusetts is one of the most underrepresented states in the country in terms of vocational education, Duda said at the School Committee's April 12 meeting.

While in Washington, D.C., Duda met with Senator Tim Kaine, founder and co-chair of the Senate career and technical education, as well as Congressman Jim McGovern.

Duda explained how wonderful his experience was, and that he feels like he made real progress in representing Massachusetts' vocational scene.

HVAC Department upgrades

After receiving a half million-dollar grant, the HVAC department was completely transformed with a full renovation. HVAC will have a brand-new space, fully equipped with new tools, better ceilings, new light, better ventilation, and all new boilers.

Renovations are estimated to be completed by July 1, and there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony in August.

This renovation was much needed considering HVAC workers are in high demand at the moment and the field is predicted to keep growing.

Behavioral concerns

The school district has been facing unprecedented levels of behavioral issues, including fights amongst the freshman students.

Recent changes have proved effective in addressing the fighting,

including no more congregating for breakfast in the morning, assigned lunch seating and stricter regulation of cell phone usage.

Assigned lunch seating with no cell phone usage has proved especially effective, encouraging students to make new friends and entertain themselves in more natural ways such as playing board games.

Chronic absenteeism is at an all-time high following COVID. There are about 35-45 chronically absent students throughout the school, and faculty says that mental health issues have contributed to this issue. The School Committee is considering partnering with local police in hopes of getting this matter under control.

Behavioral issues have also extended to the school buses.

School calendar changes

The School Committee

See DUDA, page 6

Paige Memorial Library lists events

HARDWICK – Cheese and Cheese Making sponsored by the Paige Memorial Library will be held Saturday, April 29 at 1:30 p.m. at the Town House, 32 Common St.

People will learn about cheese and cheese making from Archer Meier and Marlo Stein of Round Table Farm, formerly the Robinson farm. Cheeses will be available for tasting and for purchase. Currently Round Table Farm offers four kinds of small batch, raw milk, aged cheese and specialty cut flowers. Registration is requested but not required. For more information or to register people may call 413-477-6704 or email director-

paigelibrary@gmail.com. They may visit www.paigelibrary.com and Facebook.com/paigelibrary-hardwickma for the latest information.

The Friends of the Paige Memorial Library is sponsoring a seed library and raffle. People may come to the Library, 87 Petersham Road, to choose some seeds, record what they take, plant and nurture what they have, borrow a book and buy some raffle tickets.

The raffle basket is full of valuable gardening items and a gift certificate given by the Hardwick Farmers Co-op. Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5. The will be Sunday, May 21.

Friends group to host 'Abrakaboom' magic show

NEW BRAINTREE – The Friends of the New Braintree Public Library announces "Abrakaboom" on Sunday, April 23 at 3 p.m. in the New Braintree Grade School, 15 Memorial Drive.

Award-winning performer Mike Bent will enthrall his audience with his Mad Scientist Magic Show. Bent amazes folks ages three and up with magic, science, comedy, music, storytelling and puppets. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Hardwick/New Braintree Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



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Serenity Hill Sampler

by Jane McCauley

I guess we hit some record temperatures for April this week. I had to get the fans out and started the air conditioning one day.

The ticks are out and the May flies have arrived. I went to Rietta Ranch flea market on Sunday but because they had predicted rain there were not as many set up, but I did spend \$6. I went to a table with all one dollar items so I got three things I could use and a pair of drapes I can use at the den windows for \$3. I was home by 8:30 a.m.

I met some of my old friends there. One is a lady that I always called the "hat lady" because she always wore hats according to the weather and I joked to her about it. This week she told me her name and she did not have a hat on. She also told me how to remember her name so I am sure I will never forget.

Another lady is a nurse and she gave me some telephone numbers I could call to get some home help. People can be so helpful. She also suggested that I get an alert system especially since I work outside so much.

One day last week, I spent taking out the summer clothes and sorting them. Sunday afternoon I spent ironing the tee shirts. Even though I roll them when I put them away they get very wrinkled.

On the way home from the Flea Market I noticed a new sign has finally been put up in the Lovewell Cemetery. It has been missing for a long time.

Work is continuing on the Main Street project, but I always feel sad when I see all the large trees they had to take down, all for a bicycle trail? Wouldn't the late Dot Athens be sad after her big project of having ornamental trees planted along the Main Street. Guess we don't have any more tree huggers.

Here is a recipe that my good friend and former neighbor sent me. It is a recipe that her mother used to make.

It has a recipe for one small loaf or two smaller loaves or one larger loaf. She said if you use squash instead of pumpkin to double the spices.

PUMPKIN BREAD

3 cups sugar
1 cup oil

4 eggs
2/3 cup water
1 can pumpkin
3 1/2 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon allspice

Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. To make the smaller bread, just half the recipe and for the two small loaves or one large loaf use the above recipe.

Garden News

Things are coming along fine in the gardens. Most of the leaves have been raked off except for the main hosta bed. The daffodils are in full bloom as are the hyacinths.

Inside the hollyhock seedlings are being transplanted. Foliage only on the amaryllis but hopefully the blossoms will come.

I did pick some flowering quince that the buds were showing color and put them in a vase with the daffodils.

My twin girls will be coming up during school vacation to finish raking the back gardens.

I will have to get my net hats and body suit out now in order to get out. I found two ticks on my neck while I was pruning the dead wood from the blueberry bushes.

I have a paddle that I can swing to kill the flies. It really works and I sure love to hear the buzz when I hit one. They sure can be a pest to a gardener.

I hope you get out and help clean up the road sides when you have fair weather. I wish the recycling center would open in Hubbardston. Where can you bring things that the rubbish people will not pick up.

It was a sad day when the local dumps closed. I know it is better for the environment, but then the roadsides get cluttered. How many mattresses have you seen by the roadside and now television sets. Have a good day.



Asparagus, a perennial favorite

When I was a kid, we had a big flower garden that ran the length of the gable end of our ranch house.

It was tremendous fun for mom and me each spring to mark the rows and sow the seeds of calendula, cleome, balsam and so many other interesting annual flowers.

Sometime in the mid to late 1980s, it became trendy to install perennial flower gardens. Under the guise of "less work," lots of folks traded in their marigolds and zinnias in place of daylilies and summer phlox.

Where am I going with this, you ask? Straight to an article about asparagus.

Yes, asparagus. My favorite perennial vegetable. The correlation came when I was working in my asparagus patch earlier today and I thought about just how much bang for the buck you get from established asparagus for such little annual labor.

In order to thrive, asparagus plants require full sun, fertile soil, a neutral pH, and a weed-free bed. If time allows, prepare the site in the fall prior to spring planting by removing the sod from grassy areas and by making the necessary adjustments to the soil with the addition of lime and balanced organic fertilizers.

A soil test will determine accurate amounts for your site.

Once asparagus crowns have been purchased you shouldn't wait too long to plant them, or they will dry out. At first look, the roots look like fleshy white tentacles of an octopus radiating out from its head!

If planting ASAP is unlikely store them in moist sphagnum moss until you are able to get them in the ground. New advice recommends planting the crowns in trenches 8- 10" deep.

It is helpful to incorporate additional lime and bone meal thoroughly into the bottom of the planting furrow. Set plants on small mounds of soil 12-18" apart in the row and cover with 2" of soil.

As the spears poke through this first layer of soil and begin to fern out, gradually fill in the trench with a mixture of soil and finished compost. It should take six weeks for the furrow to be completely filled in.

Water regularly and top-dress with fertilizer in August of the first year and every spring thereafter. A thick application of compost at this time will also enhance fertility, while liming annually will help keep the pH neutral.



New studies indicate that spears can be harvested for a week-long period the year after planting. Simply cut with a sharp knife at the soil surface.

The following year expand your harvest to four weeks; by year three a full harvest season of eight weeks is possible.

After harvest let the foliage grow, once winter killed it can be cut back and removed from the garden site in case it harbors insect eggs. Good hygiene and hand picking will reduce populations of the asparagus beetle and other culprits of the asparagus patch.

What was I doing out in the asparagus patch today, you ask?

Besides thinking about flowers, I was weeding, and prepping the beds for their annual application of lime and compost. It's a fair trade-off for two months of harvesting one of my favorite vegetables!

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

HUNTER CASEY, continued from page 1

He did many service projects. He helped the Veterans put together blessing bags for Veterans Inc. and met some of the men in the program. He also helped with the clothes line project at Anna Maria College to help raise awareness against domestic violence and sexual assault.

One of the last steps is the Eagle project. Hunter said someone suggested Felton Field for a project. He completed renovation of the bath house and replaced the gable ends of the pavilion at Felton Field. He then gave both structures a new coat of paint.

There were some challenges along his journey, but he persevered. Hunter is the 77th Scout to earn eagle rank in the town of Barre and the first for troop 1026 Barre.

His Eagle ceremony on Sunday, April 16 at American Legion Post 2 was the final step in the process of becoming an Eagle Scout. His mother, Tracy Nickerson, attached the Eagle pin to her son's uniform. The Eagle charge must be given by an Eagle Scout and Richard Stevens welcomed him into the brotherhood of Eagle Scout.

Hunter presented pins to his mother, father, paternal grandparents, maternal grandfather and the mentor pin to Gary Pearson. State Rep. Donald Berthiaume attended and presented Hunter with a citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives.



A photo of the pavilion before Hunter Casey began his Eagle project.



This is how the bath house looked before Hunter Casey's renovation. Submitted photos

QRSD, continued from page 1

the community was not alone." She also attended the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools with many of the districts with declining enrollment in attendance.

Directors reports

Colleen Mucha said there were a lot of field trips happening at the elementary level including a trip to Nature's Classroom the end of May. She said the district received a grant for \$300,000 over three years to focus on inclusion and co-teaching. Once again the Science Technology Engineering and Math Camp would be offered free again this summer at Ruggles Lane Elementary School and at the Quabbin Middle School. So far, over 100 students have shown interest in attending.

Joe Wyman said three students would be going to the Distributive Education Clubs of America from the district to a competition in Orlando, Florida for three days beginning April 22. The school committee gave pre-approval for the trip and voted full approval at this meeting. They said they would like a report on the DECA Competition.

Kristin Campione said the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education found no areas of non-compliance in special education. She also said she attended two unified track meetings.

Andrew Walsh said new web page access would be done by the end of the month.

Cheryl Duval, Director of Administrative Services, said she applied for a Congressional District Grant for the chiller project replacement.

Greg Devine, Director of Guidance for External Partnerships said Worcester State University has a dual enrollment program with Central Massachusetts High School students. He said the Quabbin Post Grad students planned a town wide yard sale in New Braintree. They modeled it after similar town wide yard sales in neighboring towns.

He said the Credit for Life program sponsored by Country Bank was held and students from Leicester High School and Eagle Hill School also attended.

He said Roots at Gamma offered a non-traditional therapy program, which involved an hour per week at Roots farm animal rescue located in Gardner. Clients observe and interact with farm animals that included goats, pigs, ponies, donkeys, horses, geese, etc. and then to reflect on the animals' behavior. The program provided transportation, but Superintendent Muir said she hoped to possibly offer this program to students in need of this service and to find additional transportation funds for it.

Send Us Your Summer Event Information

Turley Publications will print your summer calendar listings FREE OF CHARGE in our SUMMERFEST Supplement which publishes early June.

Deadline for submissions is April 28.

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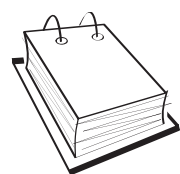
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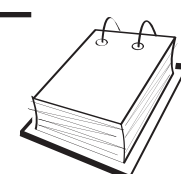
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Calendar of Events



THURSDAY, APRIL 20

CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST sponsored by the 250th Anniversary Committee is accepting submission local photographers to be used in a commemorative 2024 calendar titled, "Celebrate Barre's past, inspire Barre's future." Photographers are invited to send the committee their photographs of Barre. The committee will select twelve images to be featured in the calendar. Submissions are being accepted now through Monday, May 15. Photographers of all ages are invited to apply. The commemorative calendars will be available for purchase starting in October 2023, all proceeds from the calendar sales will benefit the 250th Anniversary Committee. All photos must be of Barre. Each photograph submitted must be the photographer's own original work and must have not been previously published in any commercial publication. The photo must be in its original state and cannot be altered, including but not limited to removing, adding, reversing or distorting subjects within the frame. All photos must be submitted in color, 8"x11," 300 dpi and landscape format. A maximum of five photos may be submitted per photographer.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN SUPPORT GROUP meets today from 9:30-11 a.m. at the Worcester Family Resource Center, 20 Cedar St., Worcester. The group meets the third Friday of every month. To register, people may call 508-796-1411 or email yiwfrcyouinc@sevenhills.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 22

RAISING ORGANIC POULTRY ON PASTURE will be held today from 10 a.m.- noon followed by a potluck lunch at Many Hands Sustainability Center, 411 Sheldon Road, Barre. Each year many Hands Organic Farm raises 500-600 birds in these range house "tractors" on pasture. Two people feed and water the animals and move their range houses by hand every day to fresh grass. Participants will be moving some for this workshop presentation, as well as building one so you can get up close and learn how it is done. Brooding, chick care, and organic feed management will also be discussed. Sliding scale price for workshop is \$25-\$75. People may register by visiting <https://mhof.net/events-workshops/>.

Where is this?



This week's mystery photo is from New Braintree. 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, April 24. The names of those that correctly guessed the location will appear in next week's edition. Stephen Craven, Evelyn Luukko, Jane McCauley, Cheryl Paul, Susan Sherman and Jeremy Varnum correctly identified the photo. Bill Bowles correctly identified the Barre photo. His name was accidentally omitted. Last week's photo was of A thyme and a place shop on Gardner Road, Hubbardston and taken from High Street.

Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

RUTLAND TOWN WIDE YARD SALE will be held today from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. rain or shine. Maps are available starting at 7:15 a.m. at the town lines and on the Town Common in front of Community Hall. Proceeds benefit the Rutland 4th of July celebration.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP TEA/LUNCHEON will be held today at noon in Fellowship Hall at the

Barre Congregational Church, 30 Park St., Barre. Tea, soup, sandwiches and desserts will be served. Before the tea/luncheon the Hubbardston Senior Singers will entertain in the church sanctuary at 11 a.m. Cost is \$25 and includes luncheon and entertainment.

CHEESE AND CHEESE MAKING sponsored by the Paige Memorial Library will be held today at 1:30 p.m. in the Town House, 32 Common St., Hardwick. People will learn about cheese and cheese making

from Archer Meier and Marlo Stein of Round Table Farm, formerly the Robinson farm. Cheeses will be available for tasting and for purchase. Currently Round Table Farm offers four kinds of small batch, raw milk, aged cheese and specialty cut flowers. Registration is requested but not required. People may call 413-477-6704 or email directorpaigelibrary@gmail.com to register. They may visit www.paigelibrary.com and facebook.com/paigelibraryhardwickma for more information.

SUNDAY, APRIL 30

PIONEER VALLEY BRASS CONCERT as part of the Vespers series of the First Universalist Parish of North Dana, will be held today at 2 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Cross Street, Gardner. This program is part of a series of Vespers programs with musical services sponsored by the North Dana Parish since 1930 when the Parish had to leave North Dana for the creation of the Quabbin Reservoir. This is the 800th such program benefitting from a trust fund set up by sisters Catherine Mason and Mary Hale to ensure that the Parish will not be forgotten. Descendants and friends of original Parish members meet annually to oversee the program. Current members of the brass quintet include Dick Tandy and Steve Babineau on trumpet, Joe Hoye on tuba, Tabitha Greenlees on French horn and Dana Tandy on trumpet. The First Universalist Parish of North Dana will also sponsor the Pioneer Valley Brass performing on Sunday, May 21 at the First Universalist Church of Orange at 2 p.m. and in New Salem at the Swift River Valley Historical Society on Sunday, July 23 at 2 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 5

PRINCETON ARTS SOCIETY presents A Tale of Two in concert today at 7 p.m. in the First Congregational Church, 14, Mountain Road, Princeton. Back by popular demand, A Tale of Two is making their second visit to Princeton. The duo combines the best of Americana and blues melodies with timeless Southern storytelling. The award-winning vocalist Stephanie Adlington and guitarist Aaron Lessard draw influence from the likes of Patsy Cline, Tom Waits and Hank Williams Sr. This Nashville Tennessee duo is making a number of stops here in the northeast. Suggested ticket donation is \$10.

SATURDAY, MAY 6

A TALE OF TWO, Nashville's duo will be sponsored by the Princeton Arts Society today at 7 p.m. and will be held in the First Congregational Church, 14 Mountain Road, Princeton. Suggested ticket donation is \$10.

THURSDAY, MAY 11

'**WILLIE WONKA**' presented by the Theatre Guild of North Brookfield will take place today; Friday, May 12; Saturday, May 13; Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, May 21 at 2 p.m. The performances will be held in the auditorium at the North Brookfield Elementary School, Oakham Road (Route 148), North Brookfield. Tickets are \$16 for adults and \$11 for seniors and students under the age of twelve. One dollar for each ticket sold will benefit The Friends of the North Brookfield Town House for the restoration of the Town House. Tickets are available by calling 508-331-9031 or at the door. The performance is supported in part by a grant from the North Brookfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

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.

DUDA, continued from page 1

approved adding half days around midterms to lower stress levels for students and staff.

Trips approved

The School Committee approved a number of upcoming field trips including April 27-29, Skills USA at Blackstone Valley Regional Technical High School; April 21-26, DECA International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Florida; May 9, New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks, Connecticut; and May 25, Brownstone Adventure Sports Park in Portland, Connecticut.

New hires

The school district looks forward to welcoming new hires Michael Forrest, Transition Coordinator/Assistive Tech and Reading Instructor; Jennifer Pytel, Paraprofessional; Tonia Speenburgh, part-time Library and Media Support.

Retirement

School Committee members recognized retiree John Weyant, Carpentry Instructor, for 23 years of great work.

Donations

The School Committee voted to accept a \$15,000 donation from the Palmer Rotary Club.

They also voted to accept a number of gifts including a Lincoln Electric AC/DC Arc Welder and some other tools from Elaine Hodgman; a 2015 Sedona from Mary K. Young; a 2009 Honda Odyssey from Darlene Henshaw; and a 2010 Ford Fusion Hybrid from Cristian Covert.

Lowe's Hardware donated tools and equipment including 49 drills.

The Polish American Citizens Club donated to the music program, and Palmer Rotary Club donated a scholarship.

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Shorthanded Panthers fall to Littleton

Panthers suffer narrow loss

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE—Prior to last Wednesday's home opener against Littleton High School, Quabbin senior captain Sydney Giorgi had only pitched one inning for the varsity softball team.

Giorgi made her first career varsity start versus the Tigers because junior Mady Breault and eighth grader Abby Rogowski, who are the Lady Panthers top two pitchers this spring, were on a class trip.

Junior Meg Doyle, who's the starting centerfielder, and sixth grader Juliana Guilderson, who normally plays for the junior varsity softball team, also pitched in a varsity game for the first time in the home opener.

The Tigers (4-1), who are the defending Mid-Wach C league

champions, took advantage of the inexperienced Lady Panthers hurlers by posting a 17-4 victory in six innings.

Despite the loss, Quabbin varsity softball coach Chris Nosek was pleased with the performance of his three pitchers.

"Being a softball pitcher is incredibly hard," Nosek said. "All of the attention is focused on you and you're trying to throw the ball into a small window. I'm very proud of the three girls who pitched for us in today's game. It was the first time that any of them had pitched at this level, and they competed very hard out there."

Besides the two pitchers, the Lady Panthers were also missing three other players for various reasons.

Giorgi, who's normally the starting first baseman, did her best during the first two innings of the game. She allowed seven runs on just two base hits. She issued nine walks and didn't record a strikeout.

"When I asked the players who wanted to be the starting pitcher, Sydney was the first person to step up," Nosek said. "She pitched an inning in a one sided game last year, but this was her first varsity start. It's a very difficult role and I'm very proud of her. She stepped outside of her comfort zone and helped the team."

Giorgi was also the captain of the Lady Panthers varsity field hockey team, which is coached by Shelly Zalneraitis, and the girls' varsity basketball team, which is coached by Evan Barringer.

"Sydney is an outstanding three-sport athlete," Nosek added. "If she decided to play tennis or golf, she would probably excel in those sports as well."

The other two senior captains of the Lady Panthers softball team are Tori Brewer and Brynn Adams,



Sydney Giorgi pitches for the Panthers.

Photos by Ray Duffy



The Panthers attempt to get an out at home.

BARRE – Last week, Quabbin fell to Leominster 3-2 in a close match. Both of the Panthers' losses this season have been by 3-2 margins. The Panthers one win was a

5-0 sweep of North Middlesex on April 6. The Panthers were off for the vacation week and are scheduled to return to action on Monday, April 24 against Gardner.



Lauren Haddad competes in a match last week.



Camryn Orsini returns a hit for the Panthers.

Photos by Ray Duffy



Meg Doyle conferences with Juliana Guilderson.

See QUABBIN SOFTBALL, page 8

Quabbin boys track wins

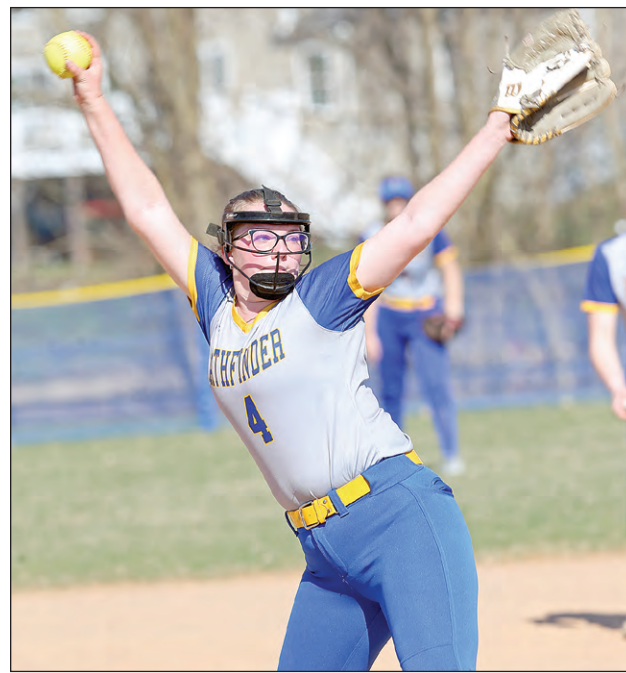
BARRE – The Quabbin boys varsity track team had their first meet against Hudson on Monday, April 10. Quabbin was able to take the win with a 90-point victory with seniors Mark Halaby and William Hood as the top scorers from Quabbin.



Submitted photos
Mark Halaby heads for his attempt at the long jump.



Colin Brown and Casey Seem compete in the 800 meter.

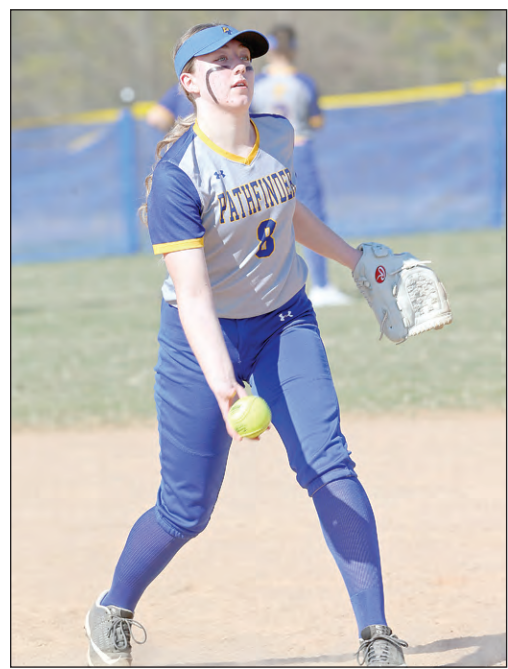


Kendra Burke fires to the plate for Pathfinder.

Pathfinder falls at Pope Francis

SPRINGFIELD – Last Thursday afternoon, Pathfinder softball suffered a tough loss at Pope Francis 16-5. In the loss, Pathfinder fell behind early as Pope Francis racked up the hits. Pathfinder would drop to 1-2 on the season.

Photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com
Bella Nompleggi catches for the Pioneers.



Brianna Beynor makes an underhand flip for the out.



Lianna Carrasquillo tries to barehand a slow roller.



Megan Bly catches an out at first base.

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Sports

T-Birds fall in finale

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - The Springfield Thunderbirds (38-26-3-5, 84 points) fell to the Providence Bruins (44-18-8-2, 98 points) in their regular season finale on Sunday afternoon by a final score of 7-3 inside Amica Mutual Pavilion.

Providence's win sealed an Atlantic Division championship; the T-Birds will be the 4-seed when they open the First Round of the Calder Cup Playoffs on Wednesday night against the 5-seed Hartford Wolf Pack.

It looked like the Bruins would run away with the game in the opening minutes, as back-to-back goals 43 seconds apart from Chris Wagner and Eduards Tralmaks staked Providence to a 2-0 lead less

than eight minutes into game action. However, the T-Birds showed their comeback fight, along with a stroke of luck, to turn the first period around. A dump-in attempt came bouncing near the back of Kyle Keyser's net. The Bruins goalie bobbed the puck, and it skittered right into the slot to Mikhail Abramov, who had a wide-open net to make it a 2-1 game at 13:58.

Just 4:04 later, and after the Bruins committed a pair of minor penalties, Will Bltten cashed in his career-high 22nd goal in the paint to tie the score, 2-2, with 1:58 to go in the frame.

Vadim Zherenko stabilized after allowing the two early goals to keep the 2-2 game heading into

the second, but Providence's power play restored the lead as Vinni Lettieri wired a slapper into the top shelf at 7:56 of the period, making it 3-2.

Once again, the T-Birds had a reply as Greg Printz whistled home a centering pass from Dylan McLaughlin with 3:23 left in the second to send a 3-3 tie into the final period.

The Bruins' offense proved to be too much in the final 20 minutes. Jack Ahcan netted a short-handed goal off a rush at 3:16, and tallies from Joon Koppanen, Marc McLaughlin, and a second goal of the afternoon from Wagner helped secure the division title for Providence.

Railers win to get last chance at playoffs

GLENS FALLS, N.Y. - Worcester has taken things down to the absolute wire after losing to the Adirondack Thunder Saturday night, 5-1, at Cool Insuring Arena.

With the victory, the Thunder jumped over the Railers into the fourth and final spot in the North Division. Adirondack has 73 points, Worcester 72 with one game left in the regular season. That will be here Sunday afternoon and in order to qualify for post-season play the Railers have to win in regulation time since Adirondack gets the tie-breaker.

"(Sunday) is a Game 7," coach Jordan Smotherman said. "That's what it comes down to. There is no carryover. It's a fresh day."

It won't be easy. The Thunder is one of the best home ice teams in the league. Adirondack has won six straight home games overall and is 20-10-4 here for the season. The Thunder has beaten the Railers five straight times here and outscored them, 22-6, in those games.

Adirondack scored twice in the first period and three times in the second. The Thunder had a 5-0 lead before the game was half over. Brent Beaudoin scored the only Worcester goal in the first

minute of the third period, converting a great pass from Andrei Bakanov, but the game was out of reach by then.

That was the one pleasant note for the Railers on the night. It was the 20th goal of the season for Beaudoin, one of the ECHL's most under-appreciated players.

Patrick Grasso scored twice for the Thunder. Sebastian Vidmar, Dajon Mingo and Shawn Weller had the other Adirondack goals. Mike Robinson stopped 22 of 23 Worcester shots. Robinson had surrendered 16 goals in three previous games prior to this one.

"We didn't attack. That was the problem," Smotherman said.

The first four Thunder goals were against Henrik Tikkanen, the last against Ken Appleby. Smotherman changed goaltenders after Grasso made it 4-0 at 5:20 of the second period, although he did not blame Tikkanen for the Railers early problems.

"I just wanted to change the whole thing," Smotherman, "and get a free timeout just in case we were gonna climb back into that game."

Vidmar gave the Thunder a 1-0 lead at 8:31 of the first peri-

od as he converted a pass from Ryan Smith. Vidmar had time and space from the right circle and put a snap shot inside the near post before Tikkanen could get over.

It could easily have been 2-0 three minutes later but Tikkanen made a big stop on Mingo's re-direct from about 10 feet in front. He was not to be denied on his next good chance, though, which came at 15:58. He took a feed in the left circle, closed on Tikkanen a bit, and beat him with a wrist shot to the far post.

The period also featured a fight at 15:07 although it was not ruled one, apparently since neither combatant required CPR. Railers rookie defenseman Artyom Kulakov battled Matt Jennings. Punches were thrown and landed but both players wound up with simple roughing minors.

Worcester came out with some energy to start the second 20 minutes. It evaporated quickly and the game was essentially over before 30 minutes had elapsed.

Grasso scored at 4:49 and again at 5:20. Weller made it a 5-0 game with a power play goal at 9:20 and the only question left was if Worcester could bounce back on Sunday.

Roster spots remain open in Quabbin League

More players are needed for the Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League as it seeks to infuse new talent into its league for the 2023 season.

The league recently held its open practice, but still has plenty of open roster spots remaining to fill for the 2023 season.

Registration for the 2023 season remains open and any interested players can go to [www.quabbinval-](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org)

[leybaseball.org](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org) to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information about the upcoming season.

The season is scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 23. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically

fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South Hadley normally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2023.

Education

Oakham Center School students answer a challenge



Photo Submitted
Addyson Barringer, from left, Helen Poirier of the General Ebenezer Learned DAR Chapter and Sophia Dittami show books about women, who helped the cause of the Revolutionary War. Not shown is Elizabeth Welch. The girls are fifth graders at Oakham Center School.

OAKHAM - Three Oakham Center School students took up the challenge given to them by the Reading Across America community reader, Helen Poirier of the General Ebenezer Learned DAR Chapter who read to the fifth grade class on March 2. Revolutionary Prudence Wright: Leading

Women the Minute Women in the Fight for Independence was read to the students, then a challenge was issued to find other women who helped the cause of the Revolutionary War and tell how the women helped. Elizabeth Welch told about Anna Strong, Sophia Dittami found Nancy Hart,

and Addyson Barringer told about Deborah Sampson. The young ladies all wrote letters to Mrs. Poirier explaining how the women they found aided the cause. The students were presented books about their revolutionary patriot on Wednesday, April 12 at the Oakham Center School.

Mattison Albano inducted into honor society

WORCESTER - Mattison Albano of Oakham has been inducted into Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha) Honor Society, a national honor society recognizing the achievements of first-generation students, alumni, staff, faculty and administrators.

Albano, a member of the Class of 2025, was one of 67 students inducted into Delta Omicron, the honor society's Holy Cross chapter. Founded in 1918, Tri-Alpha promotes academic excellence and provides members with a multitude of benefits, including opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, campus and community service and the opportunity to receive mentoring from more senior first-generation students, as well as faculty, staff and alumni who were first-generation students.

To qualify for induction into

Tri-Alpha students must meet the following criteria:

The student has completed at least three full-time terms of study.

The student has achieved an overall grade point average of at least 3.2 on a 4.0 scale.

Neither the student's parents, nor step-parents, nor legal guardians, completed a bachelor's degree.

In addition to the student inductees, two members of the college community were inducted as honorary members: Adriana DiPasquale, associate director for training and clinical services, Counseling & Psychological Services and Patricia Kramer, assistant dean, Office of the Class Deans, and associate professor, Department of Psychology. Tri-Alpha is one of 20 honor societies on the College of the Holy Cross campus.

Alexia Topor makes Husson University Dean's List

BANGOR, MAINE - Alexia Jordan Topor of Ware was recently named to Husson University Online's Dean's List. Topor was enrolled in Husson's Bachelor of Science in psychology program.

Full-time online students, who earn Dean's List recognition must be enrolled as an undergraduate, carry a full-time load of 12 credit hours over the course of 21 weeks, complete all attempted courses in the time allotted and achieve a 3.60 to 3.79 semester grade-point average. Credits from pass/fail classes do not qualify toward meeting the minimum credit hour requirement.

Courses for full-time online undergraduate students are offered over the course of seven weeks. This accelerated timeframe provides adult learners with an opportunity to balance existing personal and professional commitments as they complete their studies.

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QUABBIN SOFTBALL, continued from page 7

who started the home opener in left field.

"All three of our senior captains have done a lot of wonderful things during their varsity careers," Nosek said. "They're tremendous leaders on and off the field."

Adams finished the first home game with three base hits, which were all singles. She also scored two runs.

Doyle, who replaced Giorgi at the start of the third inning, allowed seven runs on four hits over 2 2/3 innings. She walked seven batters and struck out three.

"Meg had never pitched in a softball game at any level before today," Nosek said. "I told her that I needed a couple of innings. She did a good job."

Doyle also contributed offensively with two hits and two RBIs.

"We always want to have runners on base whenever Meg comes up to bat," Nosek added. "She's a very dangerous hitter for us."

The trio of Adams, Doyle, and sophomore shortstop Ana Dunn had eight of the Lady Panthers nine base hits against Littleton junior Ella Gearty, who went the distance.

After the Tigers scored three runs in the top of first inning, Adams led off the bottom half of the frame with an infield hit. She scored the Lady Panthers first run on Doyle's triple to left field.

Two innings later, Adams hit a flyball single to right field and crossed the plate when Doyle lined a single into center field. Doyle scored the Lady Panthers third run following another single to center by Dunn, who also went 3-for-3. She also scored a run in the sixth inning.

Guilderson was Quabbin's third pitcher against the Tigers, who scored at least one run in every inning that they batted. She allowed three runs on two hits and issued only one walk over the final 1 1/3 innings.

With two-outs in the bottom of the sixth, Guilderson came up to the plate and smacked an RBI single into center field. It was her first base hit and RBI in a varsity softball game.

"It was very cool seeing Juliana get her first varsity base hit in the final inning," Nosek said. "She'll probably remember it for a very long time."

Another j.v. player, who played in the home opener for Quabbin was sophomore catcher Makaylah Kingsbury.

Nosek is expecting a much closer game when his squad makes the hour long bus ride to Littleton High School on May 5.

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