

BARRE GAZETTE

USPS 044560

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

June 11, 2026 | Vol. 191, No. 10 | \$1.00

www.barregazette.turley.com

Quabbin High School graduates 103

By Ellenor Downer
Editor
edowner@turley

BARRE – After holding graduation inside last year due to heavy rain, the Class of 2026 had perfect weather for an outdoor graduation.

Led by the Quabbin Regional High School Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps Color Guard, the 103 students marched out of the front doors of the high school for the last time on Friday, June 5. School Administrators, School Committee members and faculty followed the Color Guard of Logan Bruley, Brody Faucher, Kayleigh Fuller and Jillian LaMontagne.

Leading the soon to be graduates were marshals, Madeleine Boisselle and Ella Reeves.

The Symphonic Winds under the direction of Toni Brown played the traditional “Pomp and Circumstance” by Edward Elgar for the procession to the podium and bleachers.

Garrett Erickson, Senior Class Vice President led the



Quabbin Regional High School's Class of 2026 walked out of the school for the last time as students.

Turley Photo by Mary Whitelaw

See GRADUATION,
page 16

Select board hears update on earmarks

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

RUTLAND – The Select Board met Monday, where they heard updates on earmarks, and made their recommendations for the articles on the June 16 special town meeting.

At the June 8 meeting, state Sen. Peter Durant was present to give an update on earmarks that have been submitted by the town, and whether they have been approved or denied by the state. Sheila Dibb, chair of the Select Board said this discussion was meant to give the town an understanding of how to manage the money with staff cuts coming July 1.

Durant gave an outline on how earmarks work, saying the 22 towns in the Worcester and Hampshire district meet with state representatives and senators, where they submit a list of needs, or in some cases do not request anything. He said the house and senate often approve different amounts.

He said there are three main types of earmarks: local earmarks, regional earmarks and state earmarks. Durant said Rutland sent in requests to state Rep. Kimberly Ferguson, which included \$40,000 for the pool, \$50,000 for senior center improvements and \$150,000 for a roof project.

Durant said the pool and senior center requests were approved, but not the roof. He said requests in the \$25,000-\$75,000 range are more likely to pass than requests of over \$100,000.

Town Administrator Heather Butler said the \$50,000 for the senior cen-

ter improvements are being used for an electronic door and bathroom improvements, and the senior center director is working to spend the money before the end of the fiscal year.

STM recommendations

The board voted their recommendations on each of the three articles on the June 16 special town meeting warrant. They voted for favorable action on article's 1 and 2, which are to accept the Wachusett Regional School District assessment and petition the general court for an additional alcohol license at Rutland Marketplace.

The board also voted for no action on the citizens petition seeking a public services override.

The board also went over some concerns about the warrant from the Finance Committee about transparency and communication, including providing too much information in the explanation of articles.

Butler said what Rutland provides on their warrants is much more than what is required by the Division of Local Services.

They also discussed the May 9 annual town meeting, where board member Alex Mowatt said people wanted handouts of the motions, or for them to be put on a projector.

Butler said a separate packet with just explanations could get confusing for voters if they have to go back and forth. Dibb said since this warrant is only three articles, they will experiment with putting the information on the projector.

FY 27 Select Board goals

Dibb talked about some overall goals the Select Board should try to achieve this coming fiscal year, including communication, financial

See BOARD, page 7

ATM approves budget, Quabbin resolution

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

HARDWICK – Hardwick held its annual town meeting last Saturday at Hardwick Elementary School, where 134 residents voted on the fiscal year 2027 budget, a Quabbin Watershed resolution, bylaw changes and several transfers.

FY 27 budget
Article 12 on the town

meeting warrant was for the operating budget. The Finance Committee did not recommend approval of the presented budget of \$7.295 million, which was presented by the Select Board, because it was being funded by two one-time revenues.

Christopher Culross, chair of the Finance Committee said one time revenues should go to free cash and stabilization funds, where the money can be used for capital projects.

Select Board Clerk Zack Spencer said funding the budget with one-time revenue is a standard practice, and the estimates made were conservative. He said the Select Board version of the budget keeps the town under the proposition 2.5 limit.

Select Board Vice-Chair William Tinker said the two one-time revenues estimated at \$100,000 each are expected to be received by June 30 of next year, but they are not received yet.

According to Culross, the average one-time revenue to fund budgets per year is \$50,000.

Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said portions of the Finance Committee's recommendations violate general laws, like budgeting IT expenses for less than the cost in the existing contract. Tinker said the town is supposed to be

See BUDGET,
page 18



Turley Photo by Ryan Drago

Colter, left, and East Quabbin Land Trust's Youth Education Coordinator Ellie Shea were checking for spiderwebs underneath one of the picnic tables in the field next to the Paige Memorial Library.

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

HARDWICK – Kids explored the world of bugs as the Paige Memorial Library hosted Bug Time this past week.

The library welcomed Youth Education Coordinator Ellie Shea of the East Quabbin Land Trust to teach kids about insects. The program began with a few stories as Shea read the classic story, “The

Very Hungry Caterpillar” by Eric Carle.

This classic picture book has many educational themes including the life cycle of a butterfly, which some kids hope to find later outside. Shea also read Eric Carle's “The Grouchy Ladybug”, another insect kids hoped to find when they explored outside of the Paige Memorial Library.

After story time was finished, Shea led the young explorers to the

backyard and playground of the Paige Memorial Library.

Kids shared about what their favorite bugs are. The most popular answers were ladybugs, beetles, spiders, and dragonflies.

Shea shared some of the most common areas outside where bugs can be spotted. Bugs can be found under rocks, in grass, trees and on branches.

See BUG TIME,
page 3

SB, FinCom review STM articles

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

RUTLAND – The Select Board held a joint meeting with the Finance Committee along with the Board of Assessors last Monday to discuss the special town meeting warrant for June 16, and hear about tax relief programs from the assessors.

At the June 1 meeting, the board went over four articles, three of which will appear on the town meeting warrant. There was an article on the warrant that would have spent about \$300,000 in free cash to fund July and August of fiscal year 2027, but the article did not receive a motion to be placed on the warrant.

According to the board, the funding for the two months is the amount needed to cover an entire year of the town's budget divided by 12, and then multiplied by two because it would be for two months. The funding for two months would anticipate delaying layoffs, and voting on a reduced override in the fall.

See REVIEW,
page 5



0 4 8 7 9 1 3 1 7 7 9

SPORTS

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com

Unified track holds final home meet

BARRE – On May 28, the Quabbin Regional High School Unified Track team held their final home meet of the season, concluding another excellent season for the program. The unified program will be back this fall with basketball.



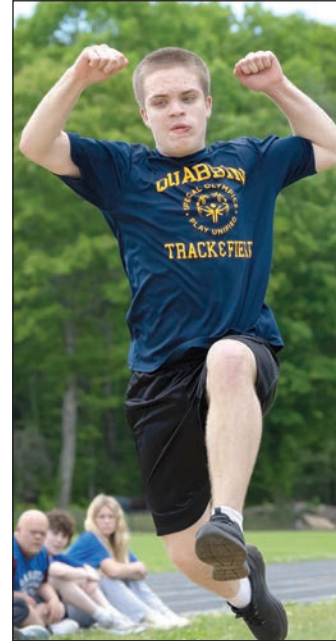
Sam Breault turns into her throw of the shot put.



Ella Reeves soars through the air in the long jump.



Janelle Hutchinson hurls the javelin.



John-Paul McDuffie launches himself in the long jump.



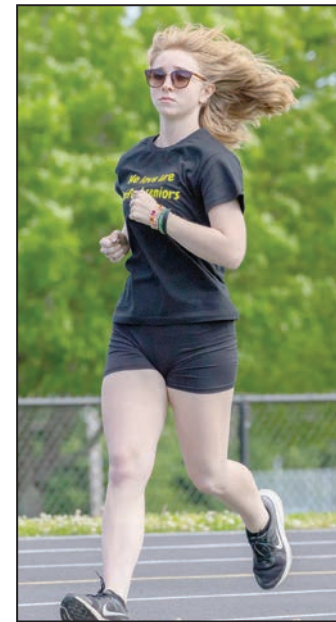
Honour Michael smiles as he nears the finish line in the 100-meter race.



Zachary Thompson, center, dashes for the finish line as the crowd cheers the racers.



Hemily Halaby gains speed in the 100-meter race.



Arianna Fargnoli runs the 800-meter race.



Kenneth Abram heaves the shot put

Newest Hall of Fame class announced

BARRE – Four athletes, two coaches, an outstanding contributor and a pair of championship teams will be honored at the eleventh induction ceremony of the Quabbin Athletic Hall of Fame to be held on Nov. 7 at Teresa's Restaurant in Ware.

Dating back to the first induction held in 2006, this will bring the total number of honorees to 82.

The individual inductees include Louis Panaccione ('75), Eugene Rich ('95), Matthew Brunelle (2008), and Steffany Halfrey ('15), coaches Cheryl Adams (golf) and Debra Spinelli (field hockey, basketball), and athletic director/contributor Ted Gumula. In addition, the 1979 District champion field hockey team and the 1998-99 District champion and State Finalist boys basketball team will also be honored.

Here is a profile of the first four inductees:

Louis Panaccione (Class of 1975)

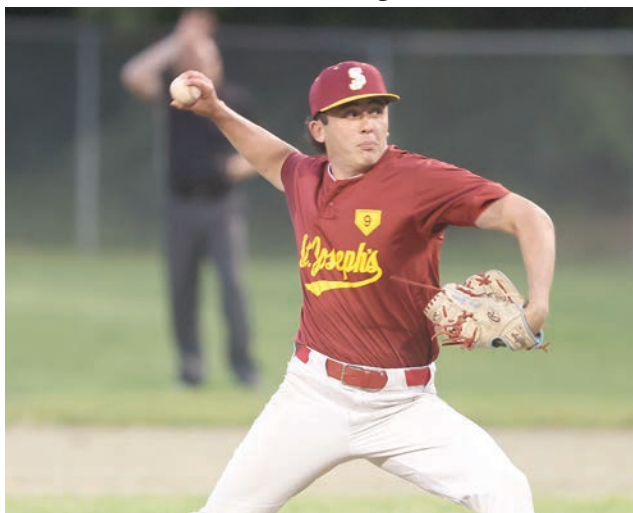
Louis Panaccione was one of the most outstanding cross country runners in the early history of Quabbin Regional High School. Often finishing one-two in most races behind teammate Dino Lamacchia, he showed vast improvement as a junior placing ahead of his teammate in several races. That year, he captured the Wachusett Invitational and helped the team to a first-place finish.

In the fall of 1974, Louie

See HALL, page 10

Tri-County Baseball season opens up

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Trey Yesu pitches for St. Joe's.

THORNDIKE – PeoplesBank has captured the Tri-County League championship title the past twelve years.

Teddy Bear Pools and Spas and the St. Joseph's Saints are two of the TCL teams looking to end the PeoplesBank dynasty this summer.

The first meeting of the regular season between the two squads was an old fashion slugfest.

Teddy Bear Pools pounded out 17 base hits leading

to a 12-6 victory over the Saints at St. Joe's Park, last Friday night.

"It's always a lot of fun whenever we play against St. Joe's, especially at this field," said Teddy Bear Pools player/coach Ryan Magni. "We had trouble scoring runs last year, but we did the job offensively, which made the difference in tonight's game."

The road win improved Teddy Bear Pools record to 2-0.

Before moving to Teddy

See TRI-COUNTY, page 10



Matt Drobiak delivers a pitch home.

Busy schedule continues for Mutiny

LUDLOW – The New England Mutiny continues double duty, playing in both the UWS and USL-W leagues. Last week, they were in action

for two games, facing both the Maine Mystics in a UWS game, then followed that with a USL-W game against rival AC Connecticut. Neither

final score was reported. The Mutiny were in action earlier this week against Hudson Valley and next face the Maine Footy on Saturday, June 13.



Jenna Kalwa settles the ball.



Laci Lewis turns play around.



Caleigh Foley sends a quick pass away.



Rachel Marchini winds up for a free kick.



Kayleigh Lukasik rears back for a touch.