

BARRE GAZETTE

USPS 044560

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

August 20, 2026 | Vol. 191, No. 21 | \$1.00

www.barregazette.turley.com



A child prepared their cow for showing

Turley Photos by Mary Whitelaw



Jakob LaDue competed in the chainsaw competition.

Planning Board discusses aquifer bylaw

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

HUBBARDSTON – The Planning Board held a brief meeting on Aug. 5 to discuss the aquifer favorability protection bylaw, which according to the zoning bylaws, are areas on the aquifer map as prepared by Places Associates out of Littleton.

The current bylaw is designed to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater, and limit the development that can be done in areas with a “high degree of potential groundwater yield.”

Building and use permits are reviewed by the Building Commissioner to see if the parcel is connected to or on an aquifer favorability area, and applicants can seek the services of site data from a hydrogeologist if they do not believe the parcel is on an aquifer favorability area.

Some uses are permitted if the applicant gets a special permit, such as golf courses, storage of toxic or hazardous material greater than normal household or on site agricultural use, disposal of sewage and wastewater up to 15,000 gallons per day and package sewage plants up to 15,000 gpd.

Prohibited uses include

See AQUIFER LAW, page 11

Hardwick Community Fair

Tradition continues for 264th year

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Community Fair took place this past weekend during a historic year of anniversaries.

Before the Declaration of Independence and even before Lexington and Concord, the town started its own annual agricultural fair, with the first dating back to 1762. The annual fair features two days of festivities and highlights locals who make the fair great year after year.

The annual Hardwick Community Fair is made possible by the volunteer run organization, the

Hardwick Community Fair Association. The Fair Board along with numerous volunteers help put the fair together and continue its historic traditions.

Every year, the Fair Board dedicates the Hardwick Community Fair to someone during the opening ceremonies. The 2026 Hardwick Community Fair was dedicated to Pam Hinckley, who was honored by this

incredible recognition.

Hinckley was born in Worcester and came to town for her first teaching job in the elementary school. Though she eventually left her teaching job, Hinckley still found herself in a teaching role.

In the winter months, she still teaches sewing and knitting at the Paige Memorial Library. Hinckley has been involved with knitting and sewing since the age of

5 and she still has the first piece of embroidery she ever worked in her possession.

Her skills in the fiber arts were learned thanks to the teachings of her mother and grandfather. Hinckley was initially surprised by the news that this year’s Hardwick Community Fair was going to be dedicated to her.

See HARDWICK FAIR, page 6

Board interviews town adminstator candidate

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

HUBBARDSTON – The Select Board interviewed the final interim Town Administrator candidate, Timothy Bragan at its meeting Monday, who will serve a maximum of six months as a search committee seeks out a permanent administrator.

Bragan is retired and has 31 years of town administrator experience, including 17 years in Harvard, 12 years in Sterling and two years in Townsend. Bragan said he would help transition and guide a permanent town administrator once they are found, and would be willing to help with the search committee in the hiring process. Select Board Chair Katie Young described Bragan as knowledgeable, calm and well spoken.

Contracts and policies

Board of Assessors Clerk Leanne Moses presented a recommended contract with permitting software Permitlink. She said this was at the recommendation of Building Inspector Robert Garside, who has used this software in the past.

Moses said the town is currently using a software called Civic Plus Optimize, with the

Optimize part being for the permitting, and the Civic Plus portion being the website.

The town will continue using Civic Plus for the website for about \$5,000, but the Optimize part costing the town over \$23,000.

She said using the new software for permitting is a savings of about \$15,000, but it decreases to \$10,000 if the cost to run the site is considered.

Permitlink will be live on Sept. 9 and the Civic Plus Optimize contract ends in November. Moses said Permitlink also comes with a \$12 fee for building, electrical, plumbing and gas permits. The board approved the new contract unanimously, and approved the new fee schedule 3-1.

Moses also said the senior work-off policy has been done through the Treasurer Collector’s office, after being taken out of the Senior Center purview, but she said in most towns, it is done through the human resources department.

In Hubbardston’s case, this would be Executive Assistant Christina Ellis. The responsibilities of onboarding have been assigned to Ellis.

TA search committee and job posting

The board appointed Bill Mayrose, Kristofer Munroe, Ryan Couture, Elizabeth

See HUBBARDSTON, page 7

Zoning bylaws get approved at STM

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

HARDWICK – Voters approved six new zoning bylaws at a special town meeting last Wednesday, including accessory dwelling units, earth removal and importation and farm animals.

All articles passed unanimously, and the zoning bylaws were previously presented at a public hearing in May.

The accessory dwelling units article allows these structures to be built by right, as it is now a requirement of the Massachusetts General Laws.

The Hardwick option allows for more than one

unit on a parcel, units of greater size than the state minimum and phased development of ADUs. The article also removes a section from the zoning bylaw about accessory apartments, since it is superseded by the general laws.

A description of ADUs was provided in the warrant. They are separate homes with sleeping, cooking and sanitation on the same lot as a principal dwelling, or a house, and have separate entrances from the principal dwelling.

Protected use ADUs, as governed by the general laws, are no larger than 900 square feet or one half of the gross area of the principal dwelling, and the local option can approve by spe-

cial permit an ADU of up to 1,200 square feet.

Earth removal and importation

This bylaw is designed to regulate the importation, removal and filling of any material to protect health, public safety and the natural biodiversity of the town of Hardwick including aquifers, water bodies and wetlands, per the description in the warrant.

The bylaw requires a special permit to remove or bring in more than 100 cubic yards of material in or out of the town over a one-year period.

The permit would last for two years and come with a fee as decided by the planning board.

The work is subject to inspection by an engineering consultant, and there are exemptions for permits already issued, municipal uses, ecological restoration, normal agriculture and cemeteries.

Farm animals

This article establishes guidelines for the keeping of poultry and waterfowl on parcels of 0.5 acres or more. The bylaw allows structures to quarter up to 16 poultry or waterfowl with setbacks from the property lines of 25 feet in the front, 15 feet in the rear and 10 feet at the sides, and the maximum square footage of the structure is 200 square feet.

The poultry and water-

See HARDWICK, page 7

BOH discusses cease and desist at 358 Coldbrook

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

OAKHAM – The Board of Health met two weeks ago where they discussed an enforcement order at 358 Coldbrook Road, the site of a former junkyard, and where the proposed battery energy storage system is set to be placed.

According to members of the board, the property owner had not responded to requests from the Leicester Regional Public Health Coalition, so the town

acquired an administrative investigative warrant from superior court, and conducted an investigation with a site professional on July 13, followed by two more days of investigation by town officials.

The goal of the cease and desist, per the board, is to attempt to stop any more damage to the land and water supply, and to not allow a “speck of dirt” to be moved without board approval.

There was a slideshow showing pictures of the property, where there

were significant amounts of debris scattered along the 42 acre parcel of land, including tires, canisters, car parts, glass, rubber, metal and even an entire car. One member of the board said there are areas of the property where there is an odor of fumes.

An inspector with the LRPHC said it appeared the owners had a habit of bulldozing, as there were piles of earth above the natural grade, and the inspector was concerned about what could be beneath the surface and not visible to the naked eye

in an inspection.

There will be another phase of inspection where a site professional tests the ground and water, but the board is attempting to shift the burden of pay to the property owner rather than the town.

Health Inspector Mishel Caisapanta with the LRPHC said there is no biodiversity or signs of life on the property, not even good soil.

Board member Barbara Piucci read the results from the site professional who

See OAKHAM, page 11





sports@turley.com



@turleysports



facebook.com/turleysports

SPORTS

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com

Quabbin Soccer Academy has successful session

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – During the past 15 summers, the Quabbin Soccer Academy has held clinics in Ware and Belchertown.

The two soccer clinics this summer were held at the Chestnut Hill Community School in Belchertown.

“We held our first clinic in Ware in 2011,” said Matt Schiffer, who’s the Director of the Quabbin Soccer Academy. “We moved the clinics to Belchertown in 2014. The clinic has grown substantially since 2021. We had over 100 kids sign up for the clinics that year. I thought it was going to be a one-time thing, but we’ve had between

80 and 100 kids sign up each year since.”

A total of 85 kids, who are between the ages of 4 and 13, attended the second soccer clinic, which took place from August 10-14. Most of the campers were from Belchertown.

“Originally, we only had one clinic each summer,” Schiffer said. “The parents

suggested that we do two clinics each summer and it has worked out very well during the past few years.”

Schiffer described the typical day at the clinic.

“It’s a six-hour camp and we just want to make it fun for the kids,” he said. “We do some skill development, but we also play some fun games. We also play scrimmages.”

The kids are split up into four groups depending on their age.”

The full day soccer clinic went from 9am to 3pm each of the five days. There were also two other time options from 9am to 10:30am and 9am to 12:30pm.

“All of the kids have the options to attend the clinic during the three time peri-

ods,” Schiffer said. “The parents like it very much.

Schiffer was aided at the second soccer clinic by 18 coaches. The members of the coaching staff are Briana Haley, Jill DeBarge, Timmy Haley, Adam Stahl, Amalie Martins, Ashlynn Brunell, Austin Raymer, See **SOCCER ACADEMY**, page 10

Forge Baseball Clinic returns to Western Mass.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – One of the last sports camps of the summer of 2026 was held at Spec Pond in Wilbraham from August 10-13.

A total of 57 baseball and softball players between the ages of 6-16 from Wilbraham and the surrounding communities attended the four day clinic.

“This is our fourth year conducting the baseball clinics, and this is probably the best one yet,” said camp director Dustin Brisson “We have almost 60 kids, including a couple of softball players for the first time, this week. It’s the most campers we’ve ever had at this clinic and I’m very pleased.”

Brisson, who is the owner of Forge Athletics, was born in Florida and played college baseball at the University of Central Florida from 1997-2000. The first baseman was drafted by the Boston Red Sox in the 15th round of the 2000 MLB draft.

Brisson, who played 345 minor league games, advanced to Double A Portland. His baseball career came to an end due to an injury.

“I was blessed to have the opportunity to play professional baseball,” Brisson said. “I’m doing what I can to give back to these kids.”

Some of the camp instructors were Lindsay Beer, David Wendt, Ace Adams Chade Shade, who’s the head coach of the Springfield College baseball team, Pat Strange, who’s the pitching coach at Westfield State University, Dan Gomez, who’s the head baseball coach at Western New England University, and Terry Doyle, who’s the the baseball coach at New England College.

“It’s an honor to have these coaches working at our clinic this year,” Brisson



Ryan McLane does a running drill.



Adam Smola swings off a tee.



Campers receive some instructions from one of the coaches in the Forge Baseball Clinic.

said. “They want to help these kids. This is a high level skills clinic. I just want the older kids to have the opportunity to work with the college coaches.”

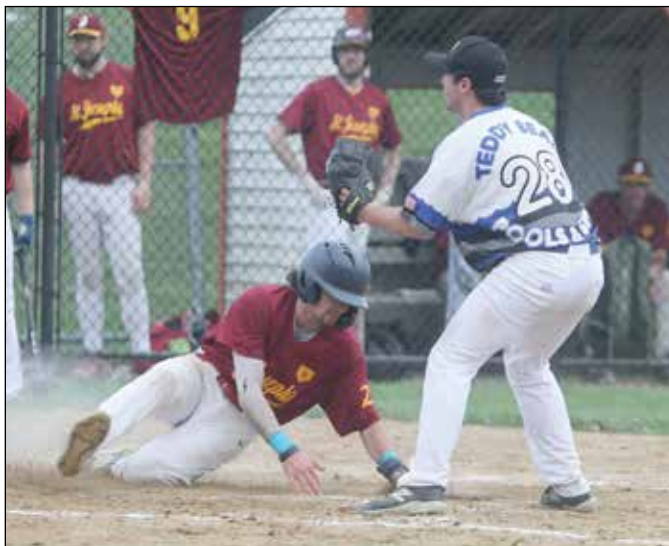
A couple of the guest

speakers at the clinic were Brandon Seymour, who’s the general manager of the Valley Blue Sox, Nancy Street, who’s a board member of the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, and

Duke Castiglione Jr who’s a sportscaster at a television station in Boston.

Ray Fagnant, who grew up in Chicopee and is the Boston Red Sox Northeast

See **CAMP**, page 10



Turley photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Nate Carrill slides safely home.

Tri-County finals forced to a deciding game three

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY— Third-seeded Teddy Bear Pools & Spas had a golden opportunity to sweep the top-seeded St. Joseph’s Saints in the Tri-County League championship series.

Teddy Bear held a 1-0 lead entering the top of the third inning in game two.

St. Joe’s rallied for three runs in the third and fourth innings and they evened the best-of-three series at 1-1 following a 6-3 victory at South Hadley High School Friday, Aug. 7.

The game came to an end after five innings due to darkness, which didn’t please the Teddy Bear players and their supporters.

“It’s a very frustrating situation,” said Teddy Bear player/manager Ryan Magni. “I think we should’ve been able to finish the final two innings of tonight’s game at St. Joe’s Park before playing the deciding game tomorrow night.”

The baseball field at South Hadley High School doesn’t have any lights and the first pitch of game two was thrown by Teddy Bear righthander Sean Rosemond at 5:55p.m. The three umpires made the decision to end the game at 7:45 p.m.

“The pace of tonight’s game was very slow,” said St. Joe’s manager Paul Marcinek. “We were very



Greg Vouros fires a throw to first base.



Ray Toth makes a throw on the run.

See **TRI-COUNTY**, page 10

Lusitano keeps the soccer going, hosts collegiate match

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – In what could become an annual tradition, the UConn and UMass women’s soccer teams met in an exhibition match in front of a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium on Aug. 5.

Neither team was able to find the back of the net during the contest, played in three 30-minute intervals, but it was still a memorable evening at the 108-year-old stadium located on Winsor Street in Ludlow.

“It’s very exciting to be hosting a college soccer match here at Lusitano Stadium,” said Joe Ferrara Jr., who’s the Managing Director of the New England Mutiny and the General Manager of the Western Mass. Pioneers. “Both

UConn and UMass have been very supportive of the Mutiny over the years. I also have a personal relationship with both coaching staffs.”

The last time a college soccer match was held at Lusitano Stadium was on October 17, 2018.

On that fall evening, the Worcester State University Lancers squared off against the Western New England University Golden Bears in a non-conference men’s match-up.

Cyrus Raines, a Belchertown High School graduate, delivered his first collegiate goal during the second half, which lifted the Lancers to a 1-0 shut-out victory. Raines, who’s a defender, finished his college soccer career with three goals.

The Worcester State head coach at that time was

Jason Willis, who’s currently an assistant coach for the Western Mass Pioneers. He also coaches a Western United Pioneers team.

Willis graduated from Ludlow High School, and he helped the Lions boys’ soccer team win two state titles and three Western Mass. titles back in the 1990’s.

Ferrara, who also graduated from Ludlow High School in the 1980’s, played many soccer games on the grass stadium field.

“I recall scoring a lot of big goals on this field while I was in high school,” Ferrara said. “I also played for the Lusitano Whites, which won the first ever summer league championship on this field. I hope the college players appreciate the history of this place.”

This past spring, Ferrara approached UMass head

coach Jason Dowiak about playing the exhibition match against UConn at Lusitano Stadium.

“Because it was UMass turn to host the exhibition, I asked coach Dowiak if he would be interested in playing the game here this year,” Ferrara said. “He thought it was a very good idea.”

It was something that Dowiak, who was hired as the UMass women’s soccer coach in 2017, had always wanted to do.

“I’m beginning my ninth season as the UMass women’s soccer coach and this is something that I’ve always wanted to do,” said Dowiak following the scoreless draw. “I’ve watched several Mutiny games here in the past and this was really a very special night for us.

See **LUSITANO**, page 10



Ramon Jimenez takes a swing.