

BARRE GAZETTE

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Voters pass two articles at STM

Town moves forward with purchase of new fire pumper truck

Staff Report

HARDWICK – A total of 89 voters cast votes at the town's special town meeting held at Hardwick Elementary School last Thursday evening.

Moderator Ryan J. Witkos called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and voters spent just under an hour discussing the two articles on the warrant, both of which passed.

A moment of silence was held to honor the recent passing of Hardwick historian Emily Bancroft, Chair of the Historical Commission and past president of the Hardwick Historical Society.

Article 1 asked voters to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow a sum of money to fund the purchase and equipping a new fire pumper truck for the use of the Fire Department, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto provided that this appropriation shall be contingent on the passage of a Proposition 2½ debt exclusion ballot question; or to take any other action relative thereto.

See HARDWICK, page 5

Mysterious Massachusetts

Presenter shares stories of the unknown in the Bay State

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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BARRE – You may wonder what mysteries Massachusetts has that have yet to be solved.

This past week, the Woods Memorial Library welcomed Sarah Hodge-Wetherbe who provided a presentation called "Mysterious Massachusetts: A history of the unknown in the Bay State."

Hodge-Wetherbe is the head librarian for teen services with the Springfield city library. When she's not at the library she tours all over New England for lectures on various aspects of "geek" culture.

In this presentation, it was all about the unknown and unusual sightings that have occurred in the Bay State.

Hodge-Wetherbe has always been a fan of the "strange" and a comic book fan as well as her first love, stories. To her, stories are very important, and telling these stories about the mysteries of Massachusetts is what she wanted to present.

"These are my favorite stories to share," Hodge-Wetherbe said.

The presentation began with



Turley Photos by Ryan Drago

Sarah Hodge-Wetherbe presented "Mysterious Massachusetts" at Woods Memorial Library. Hodge-Wetherbe shared stories about the unknown happenings in the Bay State.

a word that is not officially considered a science, cryptozoology. It is the search for animals which are considered to be mythology by mainstream biology.

The task is to search for evidence of surviving members of a

species.

This word falls under the study of beings that are considered mythical and the first one Hodge-Wetherbe talked about were Bigfoot sightings in Massachusetts.

According to research, there have been Bigfoot sightings in every U.S. state, except Hawaii. Hodge-Wetherbe said

See MYSTERIOUS MASSACHUSETTS, page 5

Health insurance rates increase for town's retirees

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – Town Administrator Michael Szlosek said he was "a little disappointed" by the rate increase from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association for retiree health insurance.

At the Oct. 22 Board of Selectmen's meeting, he said the current monthly rates for various plans will increase anywhere from 10:28% to 24.02%. The greatest increase (24.02%) is for Blue Med RX, shifting from \$173 a month to \$215.

Szlosek said the board has until the first of November to accept the new rates.

"These are large increases," Szlosek said.

The board approved the new rates. Vice-Chair Elizabeth "Brooke" Canada said the board should look into other health insurance options for next year to see if lower rates are available.

Sewer Department update

Sewer Superintendent Eric Cardenas said Tristan Gilman was hired as an operator. Cardenas said the department hadn't received a lot of interest in the position for seven months prior to hiring Gilman.

"We decided to go with Tristan," he said. "We thought it would be nice to have somebody local."

Cardenas said the department has added about 50% more equipment and Gilman will start training on all of it.

"It made a lot of sense," Cardenas said, to hire Gilman.

Cardenas said Gilman will be paid out of the assistant's salary line item in the budget.

Appointment

The board appointed Ashley Place to the Library Board of Trustees at the Hoston Free Public Library. Place said her family has recently moved to town and that she has an extensive background in municipal government and libraries.

"I thought it was great fit to get to know our town by serving the community from our beautiful building down here," she said.

Sidewalk project

Canada said Vibram has offered financial support for engineering to complete sidewalks from School Street to North Main Street. This project will be added as a change order to phase one of the Complete Streets project.

Brandon Avery, a member of the Downtown Development Committee, said the original phase one project came in under budget and additional funds became available. He said Vibram worked with the Complete Streets engineer to combine both projects.

Szlosek said Vibram's contribution to the engineering of the project was very beneficial to the town.

Canada said construction of the phase one project will be starting soon. Szlosek said copies of the plans for the project are available

See NORTH BROOKFIELD, page 9

School Committee reviews regional agreement

By Paula Ouimette
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – School Committee Vice-Chair Tim Canada said the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee voted to approve the agreement between the Quaboag Regional School District and North Brookfield Public Schools and present it to the towns.

At the School Committee's Oct. 21 meeting, he said the agreement has been posted on the school district's website, nbschools.org, for community members to read.

In order for the two school districts to move ahead with regionalization, residents would need to pass articles at town meetings for each respective town.

Canada said the agreement includes the formation of a new regional school committee, which would feature three representatives each from Warren, West Brookfield and North Brookfield. Elections for two-year terms would be held biannually, based on state elections.

"If a vacancy occurs, the select board chooses a replacement for that person who has left the committee, within 30 days," he said.

Canada said organization, powers and duties, quorum, etc., of the new regional school committee would operate the same way the current school committee does.

He said the biggest difference is the formation of a transitional school committee, which will have 18 members, including all current school committee members from each school district, along with one representative from the North Brookfield Board of Selectmen.

"The earliest we would become a part of the Quaboag district, would be July 1, 2027."

School Committee Vice-Chair Tim Canada

Canada said each district town will have its own elementary school serving grades kindergarten through five; students in grades six through eight will attend middle school at the current North Brookfield Jr./Sr. High School and students in grades nine through 12 will attend the current Quaboag Regional Middle High School in Warren.

"The earliest we would become a part of the Quaboag district, would be July 1, 2027," Canada said, pending town meeting votes.

Administrator's report

Elementary School Principal Arthur Murphy said Measures of Academic Progress testing has almost been completed in the school.

"This gives our teachers information right away, that they can utilize to make informed decisions

in the classroom," he said.

Students have been engaged in the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports incentive program and have turned in well over 1,000 tickets to trade in for prizes. He said a school store is open once every other week and each class can go and trade in their tickets earned for positive behavior.

Murphy said prizes range from glow sticks to pencils to fun experiences, such as being principal for the day, riding to school in a police cruiser and more. He thanked the members of the Police Department for their support with this program.

"It's been a great start to the year," he said. "Anything that we can do to have our kids feel happy and part of our school, it's fantastic."

Murphy said the Creative Action Thinking Laboratory has been a positive experience for the kindergarteners, and the second grade is preparing to study math fluence with the CAT Lab through music, dance and art.

Murphy said he has met with the PTO and the community is lucky to have adults who care about the students. He said the PTO is working hard on spirit week, a Veterans Day breakfast, food drive and more.

"There's a multitude of things going on in our school that the PTO really works hard on," he said.

Murphy provided his

See SCHOOL COMMITTEE, page 6

Hospital Review Committee discusses use of trusts

By Paula Ouimette
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WARE – Town Manager Stuart Beckley gave an update from legal counsel to the Hospital Review Committee at its recent meeting.

At the Oct. 16 meeting, Beckley said the two attorneys representing the town in regard to Baystate Mary Lane Hospital, Nicole Costanzo of KP Law and Patricia Davidson of Mirick O'Connell, will each focus on a different task.

Davidson will contact Baystate Health Attorney Vanessa Smith and Costanzo will work on drafting a memo based on the recommendations of the Historical Commission about memorialization of the hospital site.

"They both recommend the town, residents, and committee, describe a plan they would like to bring to the Attorney General," Beckley said.

The plan should describe "broadly, but clearly" what the priorities are for future use of the trust funds, including the Lewis Gilbert trust.

"Primarily, the use which I think we all agree on, is healthcare," Beckley said.

Hospital Review Committee Chair Howard Trietsch said the committee members agree that the trust money should be used as seed money to bring healthcare to the region.

"The priority is getting healthcare in the area," he said.

Committee member Nancy Talbot said providing the Attorney General with clear and concise

information will make the determination easier.

Trietsch motioned to use the trust fund to be mainly and mostly used as seed money for an urgent care or primary care on the site but not restricted to the site. The committee members present approved the motion unanimously.

Friends of Mary Lane Hospital

Cindy Allen Bourcier, chair of the Friends of Mary Lane Hospital, said her group also had its own motion in front of the Attorney General already, and that getting on the same page is important.

Bourcier said Friends member Peter Thamel continues to communicate with both the Greater Worcester Community Foundation and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

Stephen Granlund spoke about a recent meeting with the Planning Board regarding a potential zoning change to protect the hospital site.

"That's something that they were very supportive of," Granlund said.

Both Granlund and Bourcier asked the committee members for their views about land restrictions at the Mary Lane Hospital site.

Trietsch said he would need more information about zoning before the committee makes a decision about it.

Healthcare centers

Trietsch said Kennedy Community Health Center has pulled out of possibly developing the site.

See MARY LANE, page 9



Peter Durant
State Senate

PROTECTING OUR WALLETS

- ✓ Earned a perfect voting record of protecting taxpayers from tax increases
- ✓ 100% rating in standing up for local small businesses
- ✓ Working to stop the migrant crisis
- ✓ Fully funding our schools
- ✓ Sponsored legislation for Crumbling Foundations

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STOPPING ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

- ✓ Only candidate to vote against licenses for illegal immigrants
- ✓ Fought against taxpayer funded benefits for illegals
- ✓ Filed legislation to amend the Right to Settle law to require legal residency

PROTECTING OUR RIGHTS

- ✓ Supporting our sportsman and protecting their rights
- ✓ Support small business

GETTING THE JOB DONE FOR US



PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO RE-ELECT PETER DURANT

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Panthers advance to Central Mass. title game

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE—Rich Zalneraitis has been keeping track of his wife, Shelly's, wins, losses, and ties since she took over as the varsity field hockey coach at Quabbin Regional High School in the fall 1994.

The top-seeded Lady Panthers advanced into the Class B finals of the Central Mass. Athletic Directors Association tournament for the second consecutive year with a 3-0 home shutout victory over the fourth-seeded Saint Paul Knight, last Wednesday afternoon (Oct.23). It was also the 400th career victory for Shelly Zalneraitis.

"I've been able to watch just about every game Shelly has coached here. I also watched her when she played field hockey here at Quabbin," said Rich Zalneraitis, who has won about 100 games as the boys' varsity basketball coach at Narragansett Regional. "I always try to give her some advice, but she doesn't usually take it. She's the best coach that I know and winning 400 career games is just an amazing accomplishment."

Shelly Zalneraitis, who began her coaching career as the Quabbin junior varsity field hockey coach in the fall of 1988, is wrapping up



Makenzie Casey attempts to clear the ball away.

her 31st season as the varsity coach. She has a 400-137-82 overall varsity record.

The Lady Panthers have qualified for the postseason tournament every year and they've also captured numerous league titles.

In Shelly's second season as the varsity field hockey coach, the Lady Panthers finished with a 19-2

overall record. The 2015 squad also won 19 games, which is the most wins she's had in a season.

A year ago, the Lady Panthers defeated Clinton High School, 2-1, in the C.M.A.D.A. Class B finals.

"The thing that she does better than any other high school coach I've ever seen is she looks at what she has for talent and ability and

adjusts to what that is for each year," Rich Zalneraitis said. "She and her assistant coaches figure it out and they're always a much better team when the season ends."

October 23 has become a very memorable day for the Zalneraitis family during the past decade.

See PANTHERS, page 8



Haley Ayer chases down a loose ball.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Kailynn Schuster looks to make a play.



Dayton Ford squares up a shot on goal.

Indians beat Worcester Tech, await tournament seeding



Sarah Monsin tries to chase down a loose ball.

N O R T H B R O O K F I E L D – On Oct. 15, North Brookfield field hockey defeated Worcester Tech 4-0. The Indians would follow with wins over Burncoat and Montachusett. The Indians are 9-4-2 and await their seeding in the Division 4 state tournament. As of press time, North Brookfield was ranked No. 29.

Quabbin football improves to 5-2

BARRE – Last Friday night, Quabbin Regional High School football scored a huge win over Narragansett High School 24-14. With the win, Quabbin improved to 5-2 on the season.

Heading into the final week of the regular season, Quabbin was ranked No. 25 in Division 6, though their fifth win had not been figured into the power rankings.

If the Panthers were to win this

week, they would potentially have a shot at breaking the top 16 and qualifying for the tournament. The Panthers will face Littleton, a 3-4 squad, on Halloween, Thursday, Oct. 31 at 6 p.m. on the road.

Pioneers shut out Sizer

PALMER – Last Monday afternoon, Pathfinder girls soccer picked up a 10-0 shutout of Sizer School, a Central Mass. school. The Pioneers scored early and often and were in control of the game throughout. The Pioneers improved to 2-10-1 and were scheduled to have non-playoff games earlier this week.



Autumn Doktor traps the ball for the Pioneers.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Samantha Lowe goes after the loose ball.



Taylor Allen turns play around.



Noah Gillette chases after a loose ball.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Sophie Dufresne tries to pass ahead of pressure.



Danielle Croteau nearly collides with an opponent.



Hannah Mellor makes a stop on defense.