

# QUABOAG CURRENT

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Friday, May 29, 2026



Sydney and AJ led the singing of the National Anthem.



Burgess Elementary School students prepared to place geraniums on the graves of Revolutionary War soldiers.

## SB votes on TA, reviews ATM warrant

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis  
Staff Writer  
zachf@turley.com

**BROOKFIELD** – The Select Board met last Wednesday where they voted on a town administrator and made final edits to the annual town meeting warrant, for the town meeting scheduled on June 4.

At the May 20 meeting, two weeks following the interviews with town administrator candidates Blythe Robinson, David Snowdon III and Eric Weiss, the board voted to offer the position to Robinson.

Select Board member Richard Chaffee said there was still the possibility of waiting to appoint the town administrator until after July 1, and using the money allocated in the TA budget to the end of the current fiscal year.

Select Board member Beth Coughlin said the sooner they appoint someone to the position, the better it is for the town fundamentally, and Select Board Chair Sarah Campbell said

## Burgess Students honor soldiers of the Revolution

By Richard Murphy  
Correspondent

**STURBRIDGE** – On May 21, a celebration took place at the Sturbridge Old Burial Ground that may not be Memorial Day but is a special memorial event.

The day remembers the veterans of the Revolutionary War from Sturbridge who answered the call to Lexington and Concord.

Bob Briere, U.S. Air Force veteran of the Korean War, was attired in his non-commissioned officer's

uniform and would emcee the day's event.

Briere serves as unofficial Sturbridge town historian and may know more about the town and its lore than anyone. It is due to him that today's ceremony was resurrected.

He remembered it from his childhood school days when the students at the old Sturbridge Center School would be led by their teachers, Agnes Dumas and Maude Callahan, to the Old Burial Ground on the last day of school before

Memorial Day to decorate the revolutionary veterans' graves.

Years ago, Briere suggested the ceremony be revived and approached

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## Advisory Committee holds budget hearing

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis  
Staff Writer  
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**BROOKFIELD** – The Advisory Committee held a presentation last Thursday at the Brookfield Elementary School to explain the fiscal year 2027 budget and warrant articles, which will be voted on at the June 4 annual town meeting.

At the May 21 meeting, Advisory Committee member Tom Regan talked about operating budgets, warrant articles, and how much money each group of line items is using.

Regan said the operating budget is time limited, and runs through the fiscal year from July 1 to June 30. He said there are some extensions for things like prior

year unpaid bills, which is typically an article at annual town meeting.

He said the operating budget is primarily funded through property taxes.

Warrant articles are another source of funding, Regan said, that do not increase the tax rate for that fiscal year. He said some accounts are self-funded, or funded by revenue.

Regan said an example of a self-funding budget this year is the ambulance budget.

He said free cash is generated from good budget management, if revenue comes in higher than expected or departments can underspend on expenses.

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TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

The North Brookfield High School band performed patriotic songs under the direction of Chelsea Saunders.

## North Brookfield observes Memorial Day

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
pouimette@turley.com

**NORTH BROOKFIELD** – The rain didn't stop North Brookfield from honoring those who gave

their lives to defend our freedom this past Memorial Day.

Master of Ceremonies Bill Cass of the Sawyer-Mathieu-Kearns American Legion Post 41 welcomed veterans and

community members to the service, which was held inside the sanctuary of the First Congregational Church.

Before the service, fallen service members were honored at Walnut Grove

and St. Joseph's cemeteries. Cass said this ritual of remembrance was important to observe every year.

"Today is a sacred day in our nation's history," Cass

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TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Members of the William Diamond Junior Fife & Drum Corps of Lexington performed during the Memorial Day ceremony at West Brookfield Elementary School.

## Community honors the fallen on Memorial Day

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

**WEST BROOKFIELD** – It was a day of remembrance and community as West Brookfield celebrated Memorial Day.

The ceremony and parade were held at West Brookfield Elementary School with the celebration taking place inside the school gymnasium. The speaker for the ceremony was American Legion

Post 244 Commander David Tebo.

The history of Memorial Day started as Decoration Day back in 1868 after the American Civil War. Memorial Day would then be recognized as a national and federal holiday in 1971 and would be held on the last Monday in May.

Tebo spoke on how Memorial Day is used as

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- community -

# A decade of faith, learning and community

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
pouimette@turley.com

**HARDWICK** – It's been 10 years since St. Aloysius Catholic School opened its doors, and the "little school that could," continues to grow and offer a learning experience that is enhanced with community activism and faith.

Back in the spring of 2016, parents from St. Mary's School in Ware searched for a space to start a new Catholic school, following the announcement that St. Mary's School will be closing.

They soon settled on the vacant St. Aloysius School at 52 Church St. in Gilbertville.

St. Aloysius School provided an education to area children from around 1900 to 1970, before closing. Since that time, it sat mostly unused in the shadow of St. Aloysius Catholic Church, just overlooking the Ware River.

St. Aloysius Catholic School Finance Manager/Enrollment Coordinator Roberta McQuaid and other parents visited the school and knew it would be the right fit for their vision. Being vacant for so long, there was plenty of work to be done in order to open in time for the start of school at then end of that summer.

When St. Aloysius Catholic School first opened, there were only three classrooms and 38 students. There was a preschool class, and combined kindergarten through third grade and fourth through sixth classes.

Today, the school serves students in preschool through eighth grade.

"Now every inch of the building is full," McQuaid said. "We're projected at 90 [students] for next year... this will probably be our biggest kindergarten class so far."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Catholic schools were able to fully reopen, instead of having remote and hybrid learning. This was a big draw for families in the area, McQuaid said.

"Since the COVID years we've been hovering around 82-85 students," she said. "This year we've seen an uptick...people are just looking for something different."

Not only has the school grown in numbers, but it has also grown in its Catholic



French teacher Elizabeth Blake is shown giving a lesson to students at St. Aloysius Catholic School. All students, even preschoolers receive French lessons.

faith. "We have a motto: stop, drop and pray," McQuaid said.

McQuaid said there is a whole-school assembly each morning to pray. As well, students say the Pledge of Allegiance and sing a patriotic song. They also use this time to celebrate birthdays.

Students of all faiths attend the school.

The students also attend and assist with Mass each week at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, which is adjacent to the school. They also perform a Nativity pageant each year at the church before Christmas.

"Our Head of School Dawn Rudnansky joined us in year two, and really brought a love of the rosary and the saints," McQuaid said.

The preschool program is run by teacher Jennifer McNally, who joined St. Aloysius Catholic School after working at St. Mary's School for nearly eight years before it closed. McNally utilizes themed teaching, and incorporates all of the learning standards required by the Archdiocese of Hartford into the curriculum.

"The faith is woven in throughout the day," McQuaid said of McNally's program.

McQuaid said the academics at St. Aloysius Catholic School are rigorous, and the small class sizes allow for students to have a more personalized learning experience.

The students have a traditional foundation in math and English Language Art, which includes learning cursive and having written



The classrooms at St. Aloysius Catholic School are bright and inviting to students.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

assignments. There is also science, music, art and gym.

The school has technology available to every student, giving them the best of both worlds.

"We're old-fashioned but we're up to date," she said.

All students receive French lessons, giving them an early start to learning a foreign language.

Students enjoy field trips, and hands-on learning experiences such as Nature's Classroom.

The school has a full-time nurse, and an after-school program.

Students come from all of the Quabbin-area towns, as well as the Brookfields, Petersham, Spencer and Ware.

McQuaid said the school's graduates have gone on to earn high scores on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test, which gave them free tuition to any state colleges and universities, and others have gone on to be named salutatorian of their high school graduating class.

The school also offers two whole-school recess periods on its recently completed playground, dedicated to the memory of Joe Knight, a founding member of the school.

This playground was the result of years of fundraising by the school and its dedicated Parent Teacher Organization, as well as donations.

"We have an incredible playground," McQuaid said. "It's a credit to them [PTO] that the kids are able to enjoy it."

Commitment to the community is also important for students at St. Aloysius



This display shows the work that went into renovating the school building.

Catholic School, including organizing food drives for area food pantries.

"Children are taught to think beyond themselves," she said.

### Anniversary celebration

The anniversary of the school's reopening is Saturday, June 6, which will be celebrated with a chicken barbecue fundraiser sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council #183 at St. Mary's Church Hall in Ware on that date from 1-4 p.m.

There will be a DJ, all sorts of fun for the kids, basket raffles, a 50/50 and more. Tickets are \$25 for a chicken dinner or \$5 for a hot dog and chips.

Purchase tickets by calling the school at 413-477-1268 or by reaching out to PTO President Megan Morrison by phone or text 978-751-1211.

Proceeds from the fund-

raiser will go into the school's general fund to help maintain and improve the historic building and support its operating costs. As is true with public schools, operational costs are always rising.

"We continue to seek out benefactors who support faith-based education in order to continue the great work we've done in the last 10 years," McQuaid said. "At St. Aloysius Catholic School faith and academics are our top priority."

McQuaid credited St. Mary's Church and the Knights of Columbus for being "wonderful and supportive" of the school's mission.

### Enrollment information

St. Aloysius Catholic School is still accepting applications for its preschool program, which is open to children who are potty-trained and age 3 by

Aug. 31.

The kindergarten is open to children who are age 5 by Aug. 31.

Tuition payments are spread out over 10 months and an annual fund drive from mid-December through March, can reduce tuition by as much as \$300 per student, thanks to the generosity of a benefactor that offers a full match to money raised during the drive (up to \$40,000).

Financial aid is also available through the Worcester Diocese, and students do not need to be part of a church to apply. St. Mary's, All Saints and other local parishes also offer financial assistance for students within their respective parishes.

For more information about the school, visit their website, staloyuscs.com or Facebook page, or call 413-477-1268 Monday through Friday from 7:20 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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## PTO hosts summer 5K and family festival

**WEST BROOKFIELD** – The West Brookfield Elementary School PTO is hosting a summer 5K and family festival on Saturday, June 20.

The event will include a 5K, a fun run for kids, family games and activities, food trucks, vendors

and more.

The PTO is looking for sponsors to help make this event memorable for everyone. In return, sponsor's logos will be placed on runner's T-shirts.

Sponsorship tiers include bronze \$100, silver \$200, gold \$300, diamond

\$1,000. If you are interested in being a sponsor or a runner please email wbrookfieldpto@gmail.com

Proceeds of the 5k event go to the nonprofit WBES PTO to fund a variety of student events throughout the year.



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# - community -



The General Henry Knox Regimental Color Guard fired a salute.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RICHARD MURPH

## Farmers Market lists vendors for 2026 season

WEST BROOKFIELD – The West Brookfield Farmers Market returns on Wednesday, June 3 on the beautiful West Brookfield Common for its 16th consecutive season.

The 2026 Season market will feature 15 vendors with a wide array of locally grown and made goods including three new vendors sure to please customers.

The West Brookfield Farmers Market is held every Wednesday afternoon from 3-6 p.m. on the West Brookfield Common starting on June 3 through Oct. 7, rain or shine.

2026 featured vendors and crafters include Autumn Leaf, mushrooms all sorts, eggs, microgreens; Roundtable Cheese; Bucha Bros. kombucha; \*Dragonfly Flower Farm, freshly grown flowers – treat yourself; Flourish Farms, organic vegetable and herb plants, microgreens, turmeric and ginger root, figs in season; Grime's Apiary, honey, honey sticks, bee pollen, hand cream, whipped honey; \*Hoffman Breads, artisanal breads, pastries; JARS, savory pastries, premade foods, baking and soup mixes; Joy of Beans, fresh roasted coffee, whole bean or ground, specialty teas; Kate Bakes, sweet baked goods; Naultaug Farm, maple syrup; \*Stillman Farm, fresh produce, vegetable and fruits; Thompson's Maple Farm, ice Cream, roasted maple pecans, bourbon aged maple syrup; Chairman of the Board, cutting boards, birdhouses, garden trellis; and B & D enterprises, turned wood products, beautiful salad forks, knives and ink pens.

### BURGESS STUDENTS FROM PAGE 1

Kathy Pelley, Burgess principal, to that end, and it has been.

This day, the young pupils were brought to the burial ground to do what Briere, and his classmates had done in his childhood.

At 10 a.m. Briere would begin, welcoming everyone to the event.

He would speak of the Daughters of the American Revolution's gift of a plaque commemorating 250 years on the gate of the Old Burial Ground.

Next, as it is a bit of tradition, Ryan Grimm, Town Administrator would speak commending the few who recognize the Revolution.

We would then sing the National Anthem, led by a two Burgess Students, Sydney and AJ.

The assembled also pledged allegiance.

After the anthem, representing State Senator Ryan Fattman, Amanda Hellyar would bring his greeting.

State Representative Todd Smola would speak and began by thanking Briere for breathing new life into the remembrance, and the resolve of the men who answered the call.

Smola brought the Governor's proclamation.

On hand, as usual were members of the Massachusetts State Sons of the American Revolution. The men of the General Henry Knox Regimental Color Guard were resplendent in their Revolutionary uniforms and were ably led by their commander, Christopher Tourtellot.

As he does every year, Tourtellot recited a rousing toast to the flag.

Next to the Knox Guard



A bugler sounded, "Taps" at Old Burial Ground.



Bob Briere is shown with Wally Hersee.



The militia prepared to present arms.

stood a few members of the Sturbridge Militia. They were not as formally dressed as the guardsmen, but more

bridge's Revolutionary War Honor Roll.

By the time this edition

everyone for coming. May we all return in another year.

## Church hosts solstice concert on June 20

WEST BROOKFIELD – The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, 36 North Main St., will host a concert on Saturday, June 20 at 7 p.m., preceded by a social hour from 6-7 p.m.

"Solstice Sing for Peace and Justice - Songs to Cultivate Community, Compassion, and Commitment" will feature local singing group, A Chorus for These Times, directed by Nym Cooke with instrumentalists and guest artist Leslie

Sweetnam.

All are welcome and snacks will be served.

There is no admission charge but donations will be accepted to support Abby's House, Worcester's largest provider of affordable housing specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children.

For more information, call the church at 508-867-7078, or contact Karen Murphy (kmurphy718@charter.net) or Nym Cooke (nymcooke@gmail.com).

## Warren Library hosts owl program at Senior Center

WARREN – The Warren Public Library will host an owl program at the Warren Senior Center, 2252 Main St., West Warren, on Saturday, June 6 at 1 p.m.

Owls are all over New England, but how often do you get to see them up close? Join the Warren Public Library at the Warren Senior Center and meet six live owls.

They will be joined by naturalist and teacher Marcia Wilson, and author, photographer, and natural-

ist Mark Wilson of "Eyes on Owls," an educational duo that have been sharing their passion for owls since 1994.

Learn how to find signs of owls in the wild, get tips on how to attract and protect owls near you, and practice your hooting.

This program is free and open to the public, and is ideal for ages 4 and up. There is no registration required, so stop by and meet some owls up close.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.



Christopher Tourtellot gave a toast to the flag.

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- opinion -

# Should I collect SS now or wait two years until age 70?

**Dear Rusty:**  
I am 67 and 9 months old, collecting a modest SS survivor benefit with plans to collect my own much larger benefit at age 70.

I was confident this plan was a good one, but recent turbulent events make me nervous that cuts could come to Social Security at any time without warning. Would it be prudent to file for my own Social Security as soon as possible so that my benefit might be "grandfathered" in before any sudden and drastic cuts occur? I do not generally panic, but these are unprecedented times. I would be quite comfortable with the benefit listed on my 2024 statement for my current age; I was just hoping to maximize the benefit by waiting.

When I go to the Social Security website to view my 2025 annual statement to see the personalized monthly retirement benefit estimates for ages 68, 69 and 70 that section no longer shows. This omission makes me uncomfortable. Can I find out what my current benefit estimate would be for ages 68, 69 and 70? Or should I just rely on the 2024 statement?

**Signed:**  
**Nervous in Portland**

**Dear Nervous:**

Please do not be nervous that recent "turbulent events" pose a threat to your future Social Security benefits. Those events do not, in any way, jeopardize your future Social Security benefits, because Social Security is completely separate from all other federal political issues and finances. The primary problem with Social Security became an issue long before the current administration took office.

The Trustees of Social Security have been warning Congress for decades that Social Security's finances require Congressional attention. The fact is that Social Security revenue (as predicted decades ago) became insufficient to pay all benefit obligations in about 2021. Since that time, money from Social Security's reserved funds (Trust Funds) has been used to pay full benefits to all.

In 2020, there was nearly \$3 trillion in SS reserved



funds, but that has now dwindled to about \$2.5 trillion as reserves are used to supplement SS payments. And that problem continues. The Trustees of SS now predict that the reserves will be fully depleted in about 2032, at which time, lacking program reform by Congress, Social Security will be forced to pay out only what it receives in revenue. And that would mean an estimated cut of about 23% to everyone's monthly SS benefit. In the unlikely event that happens, wouldn't a 23% reduction to your larger age 70 benefit be better than a 23% cut to your lower age 68 benefit?

No one wants those cuts to happen least of all politicians because it would amount to political suicide (seniors are, after all, a very large voting bloc). Thus, we believe that Congress will act to reform Social Security to prevent any general benefit cuts from happening. It will, however, require Congressional bipartisanship because the reforms needed for Social Security are likely unsavory to some.

Those reforms may include SS tax increases and changes to the basic structure of the SS program to align it with today's demographic reality. The program needs reform, which Congress has, unfortunately, neglected to provide for many years.

And this neglect will likely also continue, at least through the forthcoming mid-term elections. It seems the nature of Congress is to wait until the last possible moment to offer corrective legislation.

Here's what to keep in mind: Congress already knows how to reform Social Security to avoid any future benefit cuts; they just lack the bipartisanship to accomplish that reform. For our part, the Association of Mature American Citizens has offered to Congress a commonsense reform plan via its "So-

cial Security Guarantee." AMAC's proposal has received a positive reception in Congressional circles and we are optimistic that the proposal will provide financial stability to the program for generations. AMAC continues to advocate for SS reform in Washington, D.C. on a regular basis, even more intensely as the depletion of the SS Trust Funds grows closer.

We do not suggest changing your strategy for claiming Social Security benefits based upon fear the program will cut benefits. That's because it's unlikely that all benefits will be cut because we believe Congress will eventually enact reform. And even in the unlikely event that Congress neglects to reform the program by 2032, the percentage of reduction to a higher monthly SS benefit amount would be better than a similar reduction to a lower benefit amount. In other words, your original plan is still a prudent one.

Regarding your question about your estimated benefits, I expect your most recent SS statement didn't include future benefits because you are already collecting SS survivor benefits. You can contact SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to obtain the future SS retirement estimates you seek.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



## The fragrant five

I have fond memories of the patterned herb garden I created at my old house. Gone are the days of having an entire garden devoted to "useful plants."

Now I tuck them in here and there among the veggies in my raised beds. While I harvest some herbs for culinary purposes, most are grown for the olfactory experience.

Here are my favorite fragrant five.

Lemon Balm is a member of the mint family (Labiatae). Look closely at the plant and you will see the characteristic four-sided stems.

Although many mints possess the bad reputation of running rampant in the garden, lemon balm does not; it increases in girth but manages to stay where planted. It is easy to grow, and like most herbs, it will thrive in a well-drained sunny spot.

Many gardeners think lemon balm looks weedy and unkempt by midseason. I tend to agree, but this negative feature can easily be remedied with a hair cut, nearly to the ground, after flowering. Not long afterwards it will rebound and once again look respectable in the border.

Speaking of flowering, bees love the white, tubular flowers that appear in early summer. Botanists of old must have recognized this centuries ago, since its genus name "Melissa" actually means bee!

Lemon balm's claim to fame is not its appearance, or its flowers, but its scent—best described as lemony with a hint of mint. Crush a leaf between your fingertips to get full effect.

Another favorite fragrant herb is Anise Hyssop, again a well-behaved member of the mint family. This plant can grow quite tall, upwards of three-four feet, and has lilac-purple flowers from midsummer on.

The individual flowers are borne in whorls that can grow as long as six inches if left to mature on the plant. Bees, butterflies and hummingbirds all love them!

For years I carefully picked the young flower heads and dried them for use in everlasting wreaths and arrangements, now I simply enjoy rubbing the foliage between my fingers for an amazing rush of licorice scent.

If you have ever grown Anise Hyssop you will likely agree that this herb is showy enough for the flower garden. It self-sows a bit, but never becomes a pest.

Simply pull up unwanted seedlings.

What would an article on fragrant herbs be without mentioning Lavender? Its early summer flowers are a claim to fame, but honestly, the foliage smells great too.

Probably the biggest drawback to this plant is how it looks (dead!) after the winter has run its course. Don't expect the gray foliage to show signs of new growth until mid-May or even later, and you may have to cut deep within the plant to find it.

An application of fertilizer and lime as well as some extra water for a time will result in spry plants once more. And in the event you are wondering, Lavender is also technically a mint, but it differs from the others in that it is more shrub-like and generally does not die completely to the ground over the winter.

The last two herbs I will mention are annuals. The first is Sweet Marjoram.

I have a hard time explaining what this low growing, small leaved plant smells like. A fine cologne? A pizza topping? A nice smelling bug spray?

As the Latin name of Origanum Majorana, suggests, oregano is a close relative, so pizza topping may be a good guess, but it also has undertones of balsam and spice...Hmmm.

To keep the plant producing its wonderfully scented leaves, pinch off the flowers as they form. It is a great candidate for growing in mixed herb planters or individually in small pots.

Last but not least is my all-time favorite fragrant herb: Cinnamon Basil. Like its pesto-producing cousin, this variety can be used in cooking, mainly where its cinnamon scent would complement the cuisine, such as fruit salads or vinegars.

I have honestly never grown it for culinary use, but when some herbal renewal is needed it sure serves a purpose. One sniff will give me a burst of energy, enough to tackle that last garden chore. See for yourself!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



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Letters to the Editor, 80 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082 OR e-mail to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com). Deadline for submission is Monday at noon for the following week's edition.

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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

**Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.



### NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the Quaboag Current, please email [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com).

Find it in the **Classifieds**



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# Join the Sturbridge America250 Parade scheduled for June 27

STURBRIDGE – The Sturbridge America250 Committee is moving forward with plans for a parade and festival on Saturday, June 27 – rain or shine.

The parade will step off from the Old Sturbridge Village Museum Education parking lot at 10:30 a.m. It will proceed on the OSV access road to Route 20, then to Route 131 and end at the Town Common.

Bill Emrich will emcee the parade. The parade will include marching bands,

entertainers, antique cars, floats made by local businesses, and area groups.

Bob Briere, recognized by many as the town's historian, is the parade Grand Marshal. Virginia Jalbert, the town's oldest resident at 101, is the guest of honor.

There is still time for businesses or groups to get involved – with a float, vintage car, or marchers. Children are invited to decorate their bikes or scooters and ride in the parade (helmets are required and a parent/

guardian must walk alongside their child throughout).

Anyone wishing to participate can email sturbridge250@gmail.com.

Following the parade there will be a Festival on the Common. This festival will include historical reenactors, entertainers, patriotic music, a reading of the Declaration of Independence, a cherry-pie eating contest and other participatory activities and food trucks.

# Relay for Life fundraiser concert May 30

STURBRIDGE – The 10th annual Rocking for a Cure will be held on Saturday, May 30 from noon-9:30 p.m. at Hyland Orchard & Pavilion, 199 Arnold Road, Fiskdale.

The event is a fundraiser for Relay For Life of Southern Worcester County team, Battling Sox. All proceeds go to the American Cancer Society.

There will be two stages this year, one for acoustic performers and one for bands. There will be a battle of the bands contest, one for acoustic and one

for bands. The event is rain or shine. Bring a chair or blanket.

The event organizers ask for a \$10 donation for entry. There will be a raffle table.

There will be food for sale from Paradise BBQ and Catering and sweet treats to purchase from Glazed Gourmet Bakery. Beer and wine will be for sale at the pavilion bar.

The schedule is as follows but is subject to change: noon-12:30 p.m., Emma; 12:30-1:30 p.m.,

Back Seat Boogie; 1:30-2 p.m., Steve Robinson; 2-3 p.m., Shedding Zen; 3-3:30 p.m., Mama Kilsmith and the unofficial T.Swift Experience; 3:30-4:30 p.m., SuperChild; 4:30-5 p.m., FM Radio; 5-6, The Vig; 6-6:30 p.m., Princess Pupule and the Pineapple Cowboy performing "Barefoot in Margaritaville"; 6:30-7:30 p.m., Wonderland Mafia; and 8-9 p.m., Vivi and Da Funk.

Join the event for live music, come for your favorite or stay for the day. Sound provided by Flip Flop Entertainment.



Boy Scouts of America marched during the Memorial Day parade.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO  
Nora Roth and Bella Messier are shown during a reading of the Gettysburg Address.



American Legion Honor Guard Commander Dave Tebo was the speaker during the West Brookfield Memorial Day ceremony.



Pastor Sandy Dam provided a prayer during the Memorial Day ceremony at West Brookfield Elementary School.

al Middle High School Band also performed music during the ceremony with James Joinville conducting. The Warren/West Brookfield Youth Cheer Squad also got to perform a cheer during the Memorial Day Ceremony at West Brookfield Elementary School.

"Taps" was also performed during the ceremony. The celebration would conclude at the American Legion Post 244 where guests and participants of the parade enjoyed a lunch of hot dogs and hamburgers.

## W BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

a moment of widespread participation and a time to remember the men and women who gave their lives for the freedoms we express today. Memorial Day is a day to remember the loved ones who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces.

Tebo spoke about the essential values of Memorial Day that are expressed as we celebrate what unites us as a nation.

"Patriotism is an essential value of Memorial Day," Tebo said.

This celebration on Memorial Day was an opportunity to come together as a community as Tebo thanked all who participated in this ceremony.

The next to speak was Pastor Sandy Dam of the George Whitefield United Methodist Church. The audience of the ceremony



Warren/West Brookfield Youth Football & Cheer marched during the Memorial Day parade.

ny joined Dam in a special prayer in honor of Memorial Day.

The National Anthem was performed by the Wil-

liam Diamond Junior Fife & Drum Corps based out of Lexington. This group is the largest junior fife and drum corps in New England.

As part of the celebration, Nora Roth and Bella Messier came up to read the Gettysburg Address. The Quaboag Region-



The Quaboag Regional Middle High School Band performed with James Joinville conducting.



Warren/West Brookfield Youth Cheer Squad gave a performance during the Memorial Day Ceremony.

## BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

if they hire her to start on the week of June 1, they would only have to pay her for the month of June out of this fiscal year's budget.

There would be no time for Robinson to get trained that week though, Town Accountant Laurie Bartkus said, because there will be auditors on site that week. Bartkus said the only day she is in the office that week would be spent with the auditors, and there is also town meeting that Thursday.

Coughlin said it would be beneficial for Robinson to sit in on town meeting as town administrator to

get an understanding of the town, and during that first week she could read emails, get set up with a computer and get familiar with the employee handbook and town policies.

The vote to offer the job to Robinson was unanimous after discussion.

### ATM warrant

Bartkus read through the articles on the town meeting warrant, of which there are about 30, with half a dozen citizens' petitions as well. One of the articles is recommending \$100,000 toward a chairlift in the town hall, and was put on the warrant by the town's grant writer, Bartkus said.

Coughlin said this article

was approved at a previous town meeting around when COVID-19 started, but the contractor never did the work. Chaffee said the previous price was closer to \$60,000, but Coughlin said there has been inflation.

Chaffee and Campbell were both against recommending this article on the town meeting warrant, but Coughlin said since it was previously approved, she wouldn't feel comfortable striking it. The board said they would keep the article on the warrant, with the specification that the Select Board does not recommend favorable action, to keep the decision up to the voters.

Another article that drew discussion was \$1,500 worth

of longevity for the library director. Chaffee said he was not in favor of keeping this on the warrant because no other employees of the town get longevity, and he said it was not fair.

Coughlin said the longevity is included in the contract, but the board voted to not recommend it and leave it up to the voters.

The remaining articles are mostly standard transfers, with a few notable dollar amounts being \$52,000 for snow and ice wage deficit, \$120,000 for snow and ice expense, and \$175,000 for insurance.

Bartkus said there would be a line of at least \$60,000 for the treasurer on the warrant, and said without a treasurer for the past several

months, the town had some dental and vision insurance accounts shut off due to three months of non-payment. She also said they had fallen behind to last December on the books, and as of the May 20 meeting the treasurer firm had caught up to March.

Bartkus said the citizens petitions revolve around longevity, firearms, the discontinuation of Quaboag Street, a bylaw about public hearings, a bylaw prohibiting scheduling meetings at the same time, a citizens review committee, town owned vehicles and a commission on disability.

### Other budget discussion

The board said they agreed that the cost of liv-

ing adjustment would be at 3%. Bartkus said the Advisory Committee voted to reduce the fuel budget from \$50,000 to \$45,000 and the board voted to support that.

The Advisory Committee also got justification from the tax collector to increase their budget to \$14,000 from \$12,500, according to Bartkus.

The Select Board also supported that number because of the justification. Bartkus said there was also a request from the Cultural Council to set aside \$20,000-\$25,000 for 250th events, which the board supported.

The warrant was finalized and sent to legal counsel for review, and must be posted by May 28.

# - community -

## East Brookfield Police Log

During the week of May 11-17, the East Brookfield Police Department responded to 152 building/property checks, 133 directed area patrols, 22 radar assignments, 10 traffic controls, 10 emergency 911 calls, seven citizen assists, four assist other agencies, one safety hazard, one fire/illegal burn, one property damage, three animal calls and 31 motor vehicle stops in the town of East Brookfield.

### Monday, May 11

8:48 a.m. Medical Emergency, East Main Street, Transported to Hospital  
9:25 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Services Rendered

9:53 a.m. Fire/Illegal Burn, Howe Street, Extinguished

11:25 a.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

3:19 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Harrington Lane, Officer Handled

9:58 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

### Tuesday, May 12

8:48 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

9:08 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Maple Way, Transported to Hospital

11:48 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Harrington Lane, Negative Contact

2:31 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Spoken To

3:32 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, East Main Street, Officer Handled

4:06 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Podunk Road, Criminal Complaint

4:18 p.m. Assist Citizen, Connie Mack Drive, Referred to Other Agency

8:12 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued

8:18 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Route 49, Citation Issued

### Wednesday, May 13

9:49 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Connie Mack Drive, Services Rendered

4:29 p.m. Assist Citizen,

Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

5:25 p.m. 911 Assist Citizen, East Main Street, Services Rendered

6:20 p.m. 911 Misdiagnosed, West Main Street, Spoken To

### Thursday, May 14

10:34 a.m. Assist Citizen, Draper Road, Officer Handled

12:15 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Connie Mack Drive, Officer Handled

4:35 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Oakwood Drive, Transported to Hospital

### Friday, May 15

10:25 a.m. Welfare

Check, Park Street, Investigated

7:49 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Mechanic Street, Written Warning

8:21 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Brookfield Road, Written Warning

### Saturday, May 16

10:57 a.m. Property Damage, Podunk Road, Report Taken

11:26 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Lashaway Drive, Transported to Hospital

12:11 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, Prospect Street, Report Taken

3:43 p.m. 911 Disturbance, East Main Street, Report Taken

4:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

4:30 p.m. Directed/Area Patrol, Podunk Road, Citation Issued

4:35 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Podunk Road, Citation Issued

6:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation Issued

### Sunday, May 17

9:37 a.m. Medical Emergency, Flag Road, Transported to Hospital

11:55 a.m. Safety Hazard, Route 49, Officer Handled

## Concerts on the Common scheduled announced

**NORTH BROOKFIELD** – North Brookfield Parks and Recreation, in conjunction with North Brookfield Cultural Council, will be hosting Concerts on the Common this summer season.

A Mass Cultural Council grant is making these concerts possible for all residents to enjoy.

Dates and bands include May 30 from 6-8 p.m. – North Brookfield High School band, followed by DJ Tabby LeBlanc; June 20 from 6-8 p.m. – Ravenwood, an easy listening blue grass band; July 25 from 6-8 p.m. – Sue Lyons, an acoustical guitar player and vocalist; Aug. 15 from 6-8 p.m.

– Stan Matthews, country music with some exceptional Johnny Cash tunes; and Aug. 29 from 3-5 p.m. – the Superchargers, a fun rock and roll band.

All concerts are free, they are held on Saturdays and start at 6 p.m. and end around 8 p.m. Food will be available for purchase but folks are welcome to bring their own. Feel free to bring chairs, blankets, bug spray and sunscreen – whatever makes you comfortable.

The playground is right on the common, located on Grove Street in town.

There will also be games for families to enjoy and some surprise craft tables during some concerts.

### N BROOKFIELD FROM PAGE 1

said. “We are gathered here today to pause and reflect...and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice.”

VFW Post 3439 Chaplain Frank Potter gave the opening prayer and said, “Let us be mindful of each sacrifice made on behalf of the American people.”

Reading President Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address was North Brookfield High School Class of 2027 President Whitney Reno.

The church bells were then rang seven times with seven seconds between each ring. Each toll represented a different stage in a veteran’s life, including a willingness to serve, camaraderie, patriotism, community respect, dignity, honor and remembrance.

Representing the Board of Selectmen was Chair Jamie Gilman, who said it was an honor to speak during the Memorial Day service.

Gilman said he wasn’t sure how to find the right words to say on Memorial Day, but his thoughts kept coming back to those who survived battle and came home, and those who did not.

He then came upon the poem by John McCrae, “In Flanders Fields”.

It is this poem that made the poppy flower a symbol of remembrance and sacrifice for veterans.

Next to speak was Pastor Nate Hayman of Pilgrim Baptist Church, who said he was proud to see so many young people and children attending the Memorial Day service.

“As freedom-loving Americans we’re glad for our freedom and those freedoms are hard fought,” he said.

Hayman spoke about



TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE  
Carleen McQuaid sang the National Anthem during the Memorial Day services held on Monday.

a graveside service he attended for a family member of one of his parishioners, Bob Knight. Knight’s brother, Billy, had been killed at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea, and his remains had recently been recovered.

Billy’s bones were found in a mass grave in Korea by a farmer. It took 10 years to identify and return every fallen soldier to their families.

Hayman said Knight didn’t think a lot of people

would attend the service, but Billy’s homecoming attracted people and veterans from all over, TV crews and more.

“It was a privilege to do Billy’s funeral,” Hayman said.

Hayman said many people go to war and bring a lot home with them, including the invisible wounds of trauma. But some don’t come home at all.

“We’re grateful of those who paid the ultimate price,” Hayman said.



Richard LeBlanc led the singing of “America the Beautiful”. He is shown alongside Master of Ceremonies, Bill Cass.

## public notices

### North Brookfield FY27 School Budget Public Hearing

A public hearing on the proposed North Brookfield Public School budget for the 2026-2027 school year will be held on **Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**, at the North Brookfield High School, KIVA, in ac-

cordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, s.38N. Copies of the proposed budget are available from the Office of the Superintendent, 10 New School Drive.

Matthew Grant, Chairman  
North Brookfield School Committee  
05/29/2026



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### ADVISORY COMMITTEE FROM PAGE 1

Regan said free cash is usually saved in stabilization accounts to pay for large capital projects, like vehicles or building repairs.

Regan said there are three main sources of revenue for the town, including local receipts from things like water revenue, permits and motor vehicle taxes. The second main source is state aid, and he said the largest source is the tax levy, which is controlled by proposition 2.5.

Regan said the town does not anticipate needing an override this year.

Regan said there are eight main groups that are funded by the operating

budget year over year, including schools, general government, public safety, public works, health and sanitation, culture and recreation, water and debt and assessments. He said the school budget is by far the largest chunk of the operating budget.

Regan said there are some large percentage increases this year, including the general government group as a result of sufficiently funding a previously underfunded technology line. Another group with a large increase is debt and assessments from retirement and insurance costs, he said.

Regan said there was a mid-year increase in the health insurance rate, but the town is staying with

the provider because they expect that increase was a one-off.

The final large increase is from the water department, which is up 20% to fund for a part-time secondary operator. Regan said the water increase is a large percent, but they only take up \$200,000 in the overall budget of about \$11.4 million.

Select Board member Beth Coughlin was in attendance, and said the budget presented that night may not necessarily be the one voted on at town meeting, because the budget is in the motion, which can be changed right up to a motion on town meeting floor, within reason.

There is an article on the warrant for a chairlift at town hall, which

Coughlin said is not supported by the Select Board and Advisory Committee Chair Jeff Clark said was not voted on by the Advisory Committee. Coughlin said the Select Board decided to keep the article on the warrant since previous town meeting decisions were in support of the chairlift.

She said this gives the town a chance to see how much traffic is utilizing it for the second floor, to decide whether an elevator should be installed, and she said the town is also applying for an Americans with Disabilities Act grant.

The Advisory Committee said there were still some articles they had to vote recommendations on prior to the June 4 town meeting.

# SPORTS

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## Boys track hosts Lunenburg

BARRE – Last Wednesday afternoon, Quabbin Regional High School boys track had a home meet, hosting Lunenburg High School. The boys had won two of their first three meets so far this season. The final score of the meet was not reported as of press time.



Jaymeson Pina builds up momentum for an airborne launch in the triple jump.



Owen Twarog bends over backwards as he sails over the high jump.



Matthew Labrousse gets the leverage he needs to clear the bar in the pole vault.



Sadiki Francis bolts for the finish line in the 100-meter hurdles race.



William O'Neill coils up as he gets ready to send the discus flying.

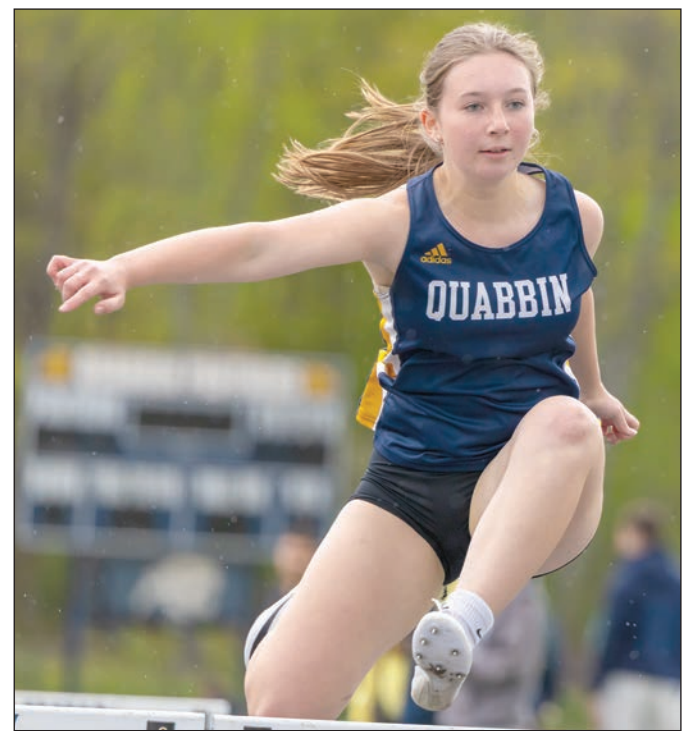


TURLEY PHOTOS BY JEFFREY HAYNES  
Robyn Waltz propels herself upwards in the pole vault.

## Quabbin girls track takes on Lunenburg

BARRE – Last Wednesday afternoon, Quabbin Regional High School girls track had a home meet, hosting Lunenburg High School. The girls had won

two of their first three meets so far this season, beating Hudson and Groton-Dunstable. The final score of the meet was not reported as of press time.



Olivia Abbas-Peck flies over a jump in the 100-meter race.

## Monson boys lacrosse falls to South Hadley

MONSON – Last Tuesday afternoon, Monson High School met a tough challenge, losing 13-3 at home. South Hadley got a huge game from Tyler Quist with seven goals and five assists. Gavin Quist and Mason Peters had two goals each. South Hadley, which now co-ops with Granby, is 9-7, while Monson, which has been co-oping with Pathfinder for the last few years, is now 9-6 on the season.



Landon Couture runs into traffic.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Riley Hurst gets ready to pass.



Dom Menard runs through the middle of the field.



Brennan Peterson runs for the goal.



Audrey Niles easily clears the bar in the high jump.



Katy Twarog goes flying for distance in the triple jump.



Sarah Jean-Francois spins into her throw as she hurls the discus.



Juliana Tweedell extends her arm as she throws the shot put.

- sports -

- community -

# Spring Bonfire held on Sturbridge Common

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

fault.aspx.

The food and beverage vendors were parked on the Common as well during the Spring Bonfire. Guests could enjoy B.T.'s Smokehouse, Altruist Brewing Company, Kettle and Pine, Suzy Q's Ice Cream and Cookies by Ray.

The bonfire warmed up hundreds of guests around the Common, as it was a cool spring evening this past weekend in Sturbridge.

The next bonfire on Sturbridge Common will be on Sept. 5.

STURBRIDGE – It was a relaxing Memorial Day Weekend as patrons gathered at Sturbridge Common for the Spring Bonfire.

This spring event was made possible by the Sturbridge Recreation Department. Hundreds of patrons gathered with their lawn chairs and picnic blankets to relax on the Sturbridge Common for a night of music, snacks, beverages and a cozy bonfire.

Recreation Director Andrew St. George said the town has been doing a spring bonfire for the last 10 years. This event can be described as “a summer kick-off” event.

The Recreation Department also puts together a bonfire in the fall on Sturbridge Common.

Every bonfire features some food and beverage vendors as well as a band to perform under the gazebo. This spring bonfire welcomed the Sunshine and Blue Skies Band to the Sturbridge Common, who played during the entire evening.

The bonfire was set up in the middle of the Common with the Highway Department helping with setting up. The bonfire was managed by members of the Sturbridge Fire Department. Firefighters Wesley Peterson and Cameron Courtney would occasionally add pallets to the fire and did a great job managing the bonfire throughout the evening.

Anywhere from 300 to 400 people gather on the Common for a relaxed evening during the bonfires on the Common. The Sturbridge Recreation Department has a lot in store this year, including their 2026 Summer Concert Series, Farmers Markets and Summer Recreation Programs. For more information, visit the Sturbridge Recreation Department website, <https://sturbridge-ma.myrec.com/info/de->



Patrons gathered by the fire with their lawn chairs and picnic blankets to keep warm during the Spring Bonfire.



Firefighter Cameron Courtney put a pallet on the bonfire.



B.T.'s Smokehouse had a food hut set up on the Sturbridge Common during the Spring Bonfire.



Cookies By Ray had a variety of cookies available during the Spring Bonfire.



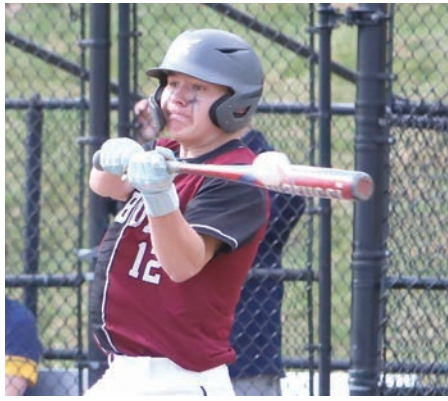
The Sunshine and Blue Skies Band performed under the gazebo of Sturbridge Common during the Spring Bonfire event this past weekend.



Sturbridge Firefighters Wesley Peterson and Cameron Courtney managed the bonfire.

## Turleysports

Athlete of the Month



NAME: Thomas Bellizzi  
SCHOOL: Quaboag

Bellizzi has turned in a great season for Quaboag Regional High School baseball, including some time spent at the leadoff position.

To nominate someone for Athlete of the Week, contact Managing Sports Editor Gregory A. Scibelli at 413-283-8393 ext. 258 or send an e-mail to [gscibelli@turley.com](mailto:gscibelli@turley.com).

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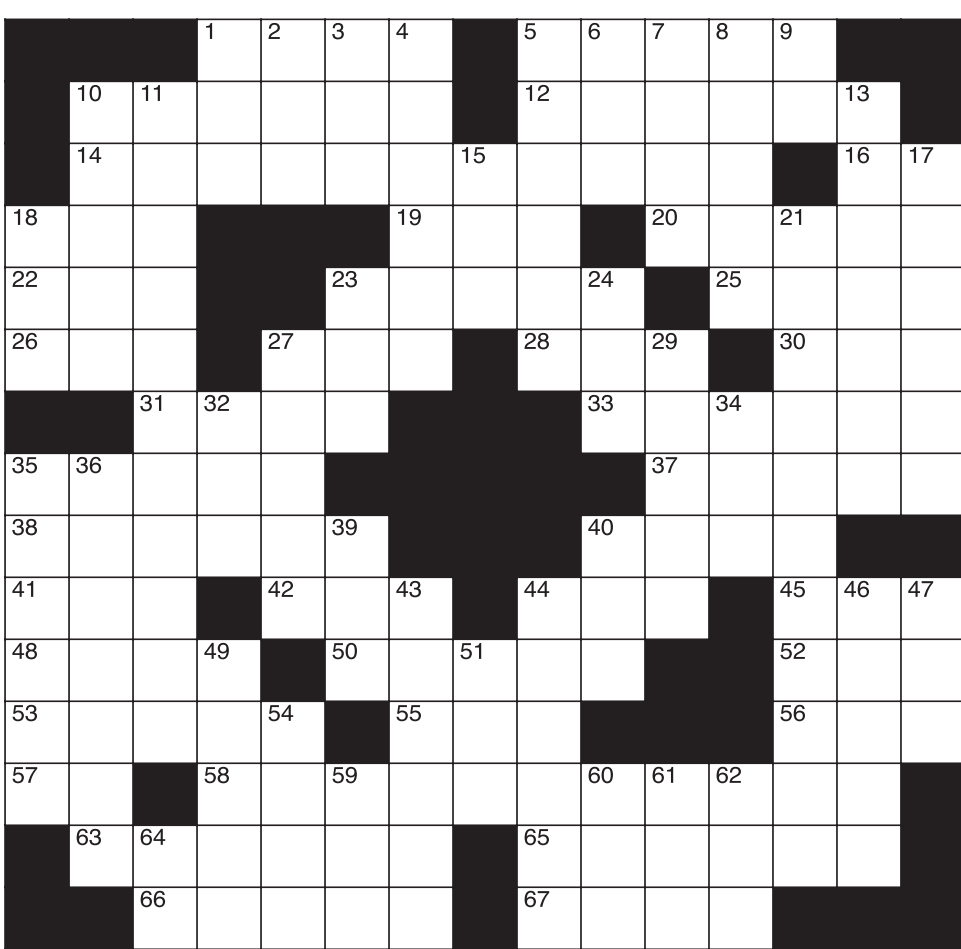
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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Streetcar
5. Take \_\_ of it!
10. SW Asia peninsula
12. Beating wings to escape from a perch
14. One who revitalizes
16. Indicates position
18. Dishonorable man
19. Singer King Cole
20. Short-tailed marten
22. One point east (clockwise) of due north
23. The god of the underworld in ancient mythology
25. Dirt
26. Superconducting super collider
27. Not good
28. A way to sink
30. Unwell
31. Follow orders
33. Deep ravine

**CLUES DOWN**

35. Perfumery practice
37. Indian film director
38. Member of U.S. Navy
40. Wing-like
41. Very fast airplane
42. Slang for cigarette
44. Most cars still need it
45. Political war chest
48. Cools down
50. Diminish toward one end
52. Indigenous person of Thailand
53. Combined
55. Container
56. Expression of satisfaction
57. Thou
58. Return a favor
63. Go over once more
65. Removed
66. "Silence of the \_\_"
67. Comedian Rogen

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Children's game
2. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
3. Own (Scottish)
4. Female follower of Bacchus
5. Subsidies
6. Protects from weather
7. Spanish municipality
8. Supermarket chain
9. Domain name
10. Semitic peoples
11. Designs anew
13. City associated with Jesus
15. Cool!
17. Bank employee
18. Central nervous system
21. Standardized piece of text
23. A type of fever
24. Baglike structure in a plant or animal
27. Threaten persistently
29. Aspirations
32. Baby's eating accessory
34. Actress Thurman
35. Turn into bone
36. One who saves you
39. Consume
40. Swiss river
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Categories
46. Expressed amazement
47. It's important in respiration (abbr.)
49. Greek war dance
51. Bland, semi-liquid food
54. Regard in a specified way
59. Taxi
60. Naturally occurring solid material
61. Feline
62. Post-burning residue
64. Elevated railroad

TURLEY PHOTOS BY RYAN DRAGO

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