

- community -

Cultural Council lists FY 25 grant awards

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The North Brookfield Cultural Council is pleased to announce the approved grants for fiscal year 2025: Davis Bates- Celtic Celebration; Friends of the Town House-Cool Kids Choir and art show display racks; Friends of the Stone Church-Spring 2025 Concerts; Haston Public Library: Gravestone Girls, One Up Games, Castle Nitro; Nick Kachulis - Life with

Bill: A New Model for Aging; Sue Lewandowski - NBCARES2HELP- Community Resource; Music Dance- Ron-dae Drafts- Hip Hop Chair Dance for Seniors; North Brookfield High School Student Council- Christmas in North Brookfield; Deborah Roberts Kirk- Intro to Watercolor; Athol Historical Society- Uniquely Quabbin Magazine; and Dennis Wise- The Theft of Dignity.

Blood drive to take place at QRHS on Feb. 27

BARRE – A blood drive will take place on Thursday, Feb. 27 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Quabbin Regional Middle High School, 800 South St., in the high school gymnasium.

Ellie Frost, a senior at Quabbin Regional High School, is putting on a blood drive at the high school in partnership with the Rhode Island Blood Center.

Walk-ins are welcome if space per-

mits, but they ask people to sign up at ribc.org/drives and use sponsor code M102.

Sixteen year old donors need parent/guardian permission. Permission slips are available at ribc.org/permission.

Donors should eat, drink and bring ID with their name and photo. Blood donation takes about an hour. People may also call 800-283-8385.

The Jazz Bones will perform free concert at Trinity Episcopal

WARE – The Jazz Bones will present a music concert on Sunday, Feb. 23 at 4 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Park St.

This concert is open and free to the public. This concert will benefit S.O.N.G. (Supporting Orphans, Nationally & Globally).

The trombone ensemble has a powerful five-part harmony whether they are playing a hard swing, fast jazz or a sweet ballad and backed by a first class rhythm section to drive the beat.

Music you may hear: “Eleanor Rigby”, “All of Me”, “On A Clear Day”, “Don’t Get Around Anymore”, “Bad Bad Leory Brown”, “Here’s That Rainy Day”, “Bye

Bye Blackbird”, “Polka”, “Fly Me to the Moon”, “Battle of Jericho”, “Old Devil Moon”, “Bill Bailey”, “Satin Doll”, “California Dreaming”, “Indiana”, “Tie A Yellow Ribbon” and “America The Beautiful”.

Please visit the Jazz Bones web site to listen to the group: www.Premierentertains.com. For more information about the Jazz Bones contact David Neill by calling 413-686-5027 or emailing tb8@aol.com. The program is supported in part by the Ware Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Oliveira leads call for urgent review of energy rate increases

BOSTON – In response to unprecedented spikes in energy bills across Massachusetts, state Sen. Jake Oliveira (Hampden, Hampshire & Worcester District) is leading a coalition of state legislators to jointly call on the Department of Public Utilities to immediately reassess recent rate hikes approved for investor-owned utility companies, including Eversource and National Grid.

In a letter addressed to DPU Chair James Van Nostrand, Oliveira was joined by more than 80 legislators who expressed grave concern over the financial strain these increases place on households and small businesses.

“Residents across our districts have reported alarming increases in their utility bills, with some seeing their costs double,” said Oliveira in the joint letter. “A senior constituent of mine’s Eversource bill jumped to \$449.91 in January, nearly \$300 of which was due to supply costs alone. These excessive rate hikes are unsustainable for working families, seniors, and small business owners who are already struggling to keep up with the rising cost of living.”

The letter highlighted the burden on vulnerable residents, including seniors on fixed incomes who are experiencing an astonishing 27% increase in their heating costs. De-

spite claims from Eversource that the spikes are due to colder temperatures and increased usage, many ratepayers who have maintained consistent energy consumption are still seeing drastic hikes.

“Families are having to make the impossible decision between putting food on the table and heating their homes. This is unacceptable,” he said.

Oliveira and the legislators are demanding that the DPU conduct a comprehensive and transparent review of Eversource’s pricing structure to determine whether these rate increases are justified.

“Time and again, we see profits prioritized over the well-being of Massachusetts families,” said Oliveira. “We cannot allow utility companies to impose unpredictable and excessive financial burdens on ratepayers without proper oversight. The DPU must act now to protect consumers and ensure fairness in energy pricing.”

As winter continues, Oliveira and the legislators are calling on the DPU to take immediate action to hold Eversource accountable and implement measures that prioritize affordability for all Massachusetts residents.

Second Chance urges community to consider adopting or fostering pets

EAST BROOKFIELD – Second Chance Animal Services is calling on the community to help pets in need by adopting now.

With adoptions slowing and pet surrenders rising, the Second Chance Adoption Center is full, leaving some pets waiting behind the scenes for a space to begin their search for a forever home. The nonprofit is also welcoming new fosters to help care for shelter pets.

“Our adoption center is filled with wonderful pets ready for loving homes, but until they find families, we can’t bring in more pets who need us,” said Sheryl Blancato, CEO and founder of Second Chance. “Right now, we have pets waiting in areas not open to the public, simply because there isn’t enough space. Every adoption not only changes the life of one pet, but it also makes room for another pet to start their journey to a better life. Recently we had to turn down a transport of pets from overcrowded southern shelters because space hasn’t opened quickly enough.”

Second Chance is a no-kill shelter with an over 99% save rate, meaning they never give up on pets. Whether it takes days, weeks, or even months, every pet receives the care, time, and attention they need to find a loving home.

To encourage more adoptions, Second Chance is reminding the public that its adoption center is open weekdays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and Thursday evenings from 5-7 p.m. The Thursday evening hours, which have been quieter, offer a great opportunity for adopters to meet pets in a more relaxed setting.

The number of pets waiting for a home reflects a growing nationwide trend. Shelters across the country, including Second Chance, are seeing a surge in pet surrenders due to financial hardships, housing challenges, and other factors, while adoption rates have slowed. This means pets are waiting longer to find homes, creating a bottleneck that prevents shelters from helping more animals in need.

Even as a leader in surrender prevention with access-to-care hospitals and programs that keep pets and people together, Second Chance is feeling the impact of the current trend.

Fostering can also ease the strain on shelters and give pets a better chance at finding a home. Even a short-term foster placement-just a few weeks-can make a world of difference for a pet struggling with the stress of a shelter environment. By opening their home to a foster pet, individuals can help free up space for incoming animals while giving a pet the comfort and care they need to thrive. Second



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Coda, a one-year-old Anatolian Shepherd mixed breed dog, is just one of the many pets waiting for a home at the Second Chance Adoption Center.

Chance provides all necessary supplies, making it easy for fosters to step in and make an immediate impact.

Second Chance has dogs, cats, rabbits, and guinea pigs of all ages, sizes, and personalities waiting for their second chance. Those considering adoption can view available pets on the Second Chance website or visit the adoption center in person.

“If you’ve been thinking about adding a pet to your family, now is the time,” Blancato emphasized. “Every adoption makes a difference-not just for the pet you bring home, but for the next pet waiting for their chance.”

To see available pets looking for homes, visit www.secondchanceanimals.org/adopt. If you’re interested in making a difference by fostering, you can learn more at www.secondchanceanimals.org/foster-care/.

About Second Chance Animal Services
Second Chance Animal Services is a nonprofit animal welfare organization founded in 1999. Second Chance began as an animal shelter and grew to help more pets in need.

Today Second Chance operates Community Veterinary Hospitals in North Brookfield, Southbridge, Springfield and Worcester providing access to the highest-quality veterinary care for all. Subsidized rates are provided to underserved communities to ensure access to care for all pets in need.

Last year Second Chance helped over 56,000 pets live better lives through full-service veterinary care, spay/neuter services, adoption services, community and educational outreach programs, training, and a pet food pantry.

For more information, visit Second Chance’s website at www.secondchanceanimals.org. Follow Second Chance on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/secondchanceanimals> or on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/secondchanceas>.

- public notices -

LEGAL NOTICE: TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, 18-25, as amended by Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2009, The Wetlands Protection Act, the West Brookfield Conservation Commission

will hold a public hearing on **WEDNESDAY, March 5, 2025 at 6:00 pm** in the first floor meeting room, West Brookfield Town Hall, 2 East Main Street.

6:00 – Public Hearing:
RDA – 78 Lake View Ave –
Brisbois – Stair and Deck Repair
NOI – 78 Lake View Ave –
Brisbois – Enclosing area under
deck

NOI – 90 Lake View Ave –
Butland - Addition to existing
dwelling and retaining wall
NOI – Leland Road - Water
Department – Construction of
new water treatment facility
NOI – Rte 9/West Main Re-
construction – Continuation –
Phase 2
02/21/2025

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- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

SOCIAL SECURITY | FROM PAGE 4

urity office, or you could choose to increase your income tax withholding at work or, alternatively, pay estimated income taxes quarterly.

So, whether you can claim Social Security now depends entirely on how much you will earn from working full time prior to your FRA. If you exceed the annual earnings limit before your FRA, SS will take away some of your benefits or, if you greatly exceed the earnings limit, you may even be temporarily ineligible to get benefits until you either reach your FRA or earn less. But note, if you decide to claim early and any SS benefits are withheld because you exceeded the earnings limit, you will get credit for that in the form of a slightly increased benefit after you reach your full retirement age.

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 or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Saturday, February 22 ~ 7pm-11pm

Uncle Country

Wednesday Nights ~ 7pm-10pm

Mix Tape Music Bingo/Prizes!

Friday Nights ~ 8pm-11pm

Karaoke

Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 29th
7pm-11pm

A.S.B.

EVERY SUNDAY
DARTS
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