

WARE RIVER NEWS

SERVING THE WARE REGION FOR 129 YEARS

Vol. 139 No. 47

USPS 666100

\$31 PER YEAR - \$1.00 A COPY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2026

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

www.warerivernews.turley.com

2025 Year in REVIEW



Jennie Kapinos is shown with Selectboard member John Desmond (front row from left) and Selectboard Chair Nancy Talbot. In the back row are Selectboard member Jack Cascio, Senior Center Executive Director John Zienowicz, Selectboard Vice-Chair Josh Kusnierz and state Sen. Peter Durant. Kapinos was presented with a replica of the Boston Post Cane during a celebration at Cedarbrook Village at Ware on Jan. 25. Kapinos passed away on May 9 at the age of 104.



Turley File Photos

Jhan Caro sets up to take a shot during the Ware High School Class of 2026 basketball game fundraiser where the Police and Fire departments faced off on the court. Last year's game resulted in a win by the Fire Department team, breaking a three-year winning streak held by the Police Department.

WARE: A YEAR IN REVIEW

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

New zoning district

WARE – Residents and town officials continued to work to find a way to bring healthcare back to the community, following the closure of Baystate Mary Lane Hospital.

A new zoning district was created at the former hospital site, limiting its future use to healthcare only. Use of the Lewis Gilbert Trust funds were also heavily debated.

The town also saw the departure of its school superintendent and the search began to find a replacement.

The town's landscape also changed, with the demolition of the majority of the hospital's buildings, and a town meeting vote to demolish fire-damaged buildings on Main Street.

A special town meeting drew a record crowd of approximately 530 voters to take action on six articles, including article 6, which would create a Health Care Services District on South Street.

Article 6 asked voters to approve the creation of a Health Care Services District for parcels located at 73 South St., 25 Marjorie St., 85 South St., Marjorie St. and 89 South St., which is the site of the former Mary Lane Hospital.

The article would restrict the uses allowed at the site to include assisted living residences, charitable institutions/organizations, clinical medical laboratories, continuing care retirement communities, emergency depart-



At the beginning of 2025, volunteers began focusing on revitalizing the Robert Beauregard Memorial Park, also known as Ware Dreams Come True playground. The playground features wooden play structures and many were constructed in the 1990s. Later in the year, the condition of the wooden structures caused the playground to be temporarily closed until it could be replaced.

ments, hospitals, intermediate care facilities, medical clinics or urgent care clinics, medical/dental centers or offices, memory care communities, museums, nursing homes and research and development laboratories.

Prior to the town meeting vote, the area was zoned as Suburban Residential, which allows for a mixture of uses, including a variety of housing options and senior housing, as well as health services and professional offices.

The purpose of the Health Care Services District as outlined in the article is to "promote hospital uses, related to health services, clinics and treatment facilities, offices

Please see **WARE**, page 5



The firing detail gave the salute at the World War II memorial in Wheelwright during Hardwick's Memorial Day observances.

HARDWICK: A YEAR IN REVIEW

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

HARDWICK – Residents continued to take steps to preserve the town's heritage, by working to protect its open space, its water sources, as well as finding new use for vacant town-owned buildings.

The community also honored Police Chief James Ayotte on his retirement, and promoted Lieutenant Kevin Landine to be his successor.

Muddy Brook aquifer

The Board of Health heard from a panel of experts about the importance

of the Muddy Brook aquifer and its watershed. The aquifer provides drinking water to the town of Ware's well on Barnes Street.

Board of Health Clerk Richard Romano said of the Muddy Brook area, "It's a vital resource; it's a vulnerable resource."

The first expert to speak at the July 31 meeting was Scott Horsley, a hydrologist with over 30 years of experience in his field.

He said watersheds are the areas surrounding a body of water that drain precipitation into streams and rivers. The Muddy Brook area contains a lot of "gaining streams," those that continue to flow even without rainfall due to the discharge of groundwater.

Gaumond, Almstrom received life-saving award

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HARDWICK – Deputy Fire Chief Nick Gaumond and Police Detective Patrick Almstrom received the life-saving award at the Select Board meeting on Dec. 22, presented by Chief of Police Kevin Landine.

According to Landine, dispatch received a call on Wednesday, Nov. 26, when a car crashed into a tree and caught fire on Petersham Road, at the Hardwick common. Landine said that Almstrom and Gaumond arrived nearly at the same time, and immediately started working together to extricate the driver of the car, who was trapped within the burning vehicle.

They worked together to successfully drag the man out of the car, which was explod-

ing around them, and started performing life-saving measures immediately thereafter, Landine said.

"These actions of Det. Almstrom and Deputy Chief Gaumond were not only heroic, but saved the life of the operator," Landine read from a letter written by Sgt. Ryan Gentile.

Select Board Chair Eric Vollheim also presented Almstrom and Gaumond with an award.

"I want to thank each of you for being heroes and working for us, protecting us," he said.

This is the second time that Gaumond and Almstrom have received the life-saving award together, as they were involved in a cardiac arrest save two years ago, Landine said.

Please see **BOS**, page 2



Submitted Photo

Detective Patrick Almstrom (left) and Deputy Fire Chief Nick Gaumond (right) are shown with Police Chief Kevin Landine at the Dec. 22 Select Board meeting. Almstrom and Gaumond were both recognized for their heroic actions at the scene of a car accident.



Shown from left are Marilyn "Twiggy" Obrzut, Kathy Holmes, and Ann Clough enjoying a high tea at the Warren Senior Center.

WARREN: A YEAR IN REVIEW

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARREN – The community continued to engage in discussions about the feasibility of constructing a public safety complex, and the limitations of the town's current Police and Fire buildings.

Town officials also looked

at ways to improve the town's outdoor space, including the town common and Cutter Park. Work to improve the condition of town buildings such as the Shepard Municipal Building and the Senior Center continued.

The town also addressed a number of tax-delinquent

Please see **WARREN**, page 8



Please see **HARDWICK**, page 7

Ware Senior Center news

WARE – The Ware Senior Center, located at 1 Robbins Road, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

The thrift store is open each of those days from 9 a.m.-noon. Donations to the store are only accepted by Sue LaBarge, who can be reached by calling 413-544-1574.

ACTIVITIES Monday, Jan. 5

- 9 a.m. Tai Chi
- 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Foot Nurse Allison Williams. Call 413-967-9645 for appointments.
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lisa

Tuesday, Jan. 6

- 9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
- 9 a.m. Movin & Groovin to the Oldies with Lisa. \$3 per class.
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 5:30 p.m. Scrapbooking. \$3 per class
- 6 p.m. Pitch (Doors open at 5 p.m.)

Wednesday, Jan. 7

- 9 a.m. Tai-Chi
- 9 to 3 p.m. Foot Nurse Allison Williams. Call 413-967-9645 for appointments.
- 9:30 a.m. Quilting Club
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 12:30 Knitting – Crochet Laugh
- 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lori

Thursday, Jan. 8

- 9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
- 9 a.m. Walking Club (weather permitting)
- 9:30 a.m. Line Dancing for Beginners
- 10 a.m. Line Dancing
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 12:15 p.m. Art Class

Friday, Jan. 9

- 9 a.m. Tai Chi
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Food Bank of Western MA Brown Bag Program
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lori
- 6 p.m. Pitch (Doors open at 5 p.m.)

LUNCHES DINE IN 11:30 a.m.

All meals \$3.50 unless otherwise noted
Required: call 413-967-4595 by noon on the business day before, to put you name on the lunch list.

Monday, Jan. 5

American Chop Suey, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day

Tuesday, Jan. 6

Teriyaki Chicken Wings, Spanish Rice, Veggie of the Day, Dessert of the Day

Wednesday, Jan. 7

Stuffed Shells, Chef Salad, Dessert of the Day

Thursday, Jan. 8

Cheesy Sloppy Joe over Texas Toast, French Fries, Dessert of the Day

Friday, Jan. 9

Brunch
French Toast, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Dessert of the Day

Planning Board OK'd site plan for ADU

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Planning Board had a site plan review at its Dec. 18 meeting for an accessory dwelling unit at a property located at 42 Monroe St.

An engineer for the project was present alongside the property owner and explained the purpose of the ADU. According to the engineer, the applicants were looking to put a 900 square foot ADU on their property off Monroe Street.

The applicants are going through the permitting process and they are in discussion with other departments as part of the process, including the Conservation Commission. The description of the house was shared and it is around 120 years old and is over 4,000 square feet.

The board seemed satisfied with what the engineer shared, and Planning Board Vice-Chair Chris Dimarzio made the motion to “approve the site plan as presented.” The board members voted unanimously and approved the site plan.

Public hearing continued

The board members voted to continue the public hearing for the special permit and site plan review for the hybrid marijuana establishment, after the applicant did not show for the hearing.

Director of Planning & Community Development Paralee Smith said she emailed them earlier in the week and asked if they were attending the meeting, but

there was no response. The board members hope to hear back from the applicants on when they can be present for a future planning board meeting.

The applicant is seeking a special permit and site plan review for a hybrid marijuana establishment located at 50 East Main St. One of the subjects to be discussed regarding the site plan was the proposed entrance and whether it was acceptable or not.

Tax title property review

The Planning Board had a tax title property list to review and had ideas on what properties to keep or sell. The board members wanted more clarification as to what they were reviewing and Smith asked the Assistant to the Director of Planning Katlyn Lucis, who attended the meeting on Zoom.

Lucis read a note from the treasurer that stated they wanted to get input from the board as to what properties to keep or sell “for the purpose of open space, future use or community benefit.”

In other words, the Planning Board’s input would help to see what properties could be used to help benefit the town.

Planning Board member Richard Starodoj showed interest in one property that has potential.

“Does the town want to keep it or sell it,” Starodoj said.

Without further comments, Planning Board Chair Kenneth Crosby made the motion to consider the one parcel Starodoj suggested and the motion passed.

Resident concerns

One resident requested an update on where the town is in the re-bidding process for the Town House project. Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said that she has not heard anything back from the state or from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, and that she did not have an update to share, other than the earliest the re-bidding could start is in January. The resident also said that she believes the board is endangering the grant from the Pioneer Valley Venture Center, and said she wishes the board would adhere to their rules and timelines. Caggiano said she applied for the grant, and knows the deadline is Aug. 1, 2026.

Resident Jeff Smith said that he thinks that every other board that meets should be recorded so more residents can participate in the meetings.

Resident Liz Cyran said that she requested a copy of the bids of the Town House from Caggiano two weeks ago, and had not received them. Caggiano said she would send those over.

Cyran also suggested separating the Town House proj-

Are You Old News?



If you recognize the folks in this week's photo, please send their names and your full name to pouimette@turley.com.

Each week the Ware River News digs into its submitted photo archives and selects a people photo to publish. We need your help to help identify those pictured.



File Photo
Last week's photo from 2022 showed mother and daughter pair, Marge Lavossiere (left) and Luann Lauzier wearing Santa hats, and Richard Lauzier, enjoying the Christmas party at the Ware Senior Center. Luann identified herself, her mother, and her father-in-law.

Warren Library holds open house for 150th

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – 2026 will be the year of celebrating incredible anniversaries and Warren has one involving its beloved library.

While the entire United States will be celebrating its 250th anniversary, the Warren Public Library will be celebrating its 150th anniversary starting this month. The celebration will begin with an open house held at the library, 934 Main St., on Saturday, Jan. 17, from 4-7 p.m.

This was the day (Jan. 17) that the library was first incorporated 150 years ago.

The Warren Public Library is in the center of the community and is excited to reach this incredible milestone.

Join the library as they offer an open house featuring music, refreshments, and guest speakers while celebrating the library's history.

For more information, call the library at 413-436-7690.



EQLT hosts First Day walk on Jan. 1

WARE – The East Quabbin Land Trust will kickoff the New Year with a First Day walk on the Mass Central Rail Trail, Thursday, Jan. 1 at noon.

The walk will be held on the Church Street segment of the Mass Central Rail Trail in Ware. Well-behaved dogs on leash are welcomed.

For more information, visit eqlt.org or follow East Quabbin Land Trust on social media.

Free yoga program offered on Jan. 8

WARREN – Enjoy a slower-paced yoga practice with simple poses that are easy and work like magic with Yoga & Meditation for Vibrant Health and Peace of Mind on Thursday, Jan. 8 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Join Phil Milgrom at The Centered Place for this free event that is appropriate for ages 14+. This program will be held in person at The Centered Place, 286 Bridge St., or online via Zoom.

To register, contact the Warren Public Library at 413-436-7690 or warren-publiclibrary@hotmail.com. The Zoom link will be provided after registration.

This program is sponsored by the Warren Public Library with a grant from the Warren Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the MA Cultural Council, a state agency.

Visit us at
www.turley.com

St. Barnabas Anglican Church



18 Park Street (on the Common) Belchertown
Weekly Mass Saturdays 4 p.m.

Rev. Thomas T. Stockton • Rt. Rev. Brian R. Marsh

stbarnabasbelchertown.org

~ All Are Welcome ~



Professional - Reliable - Fully Insured

Tree Trimming and Removal
Emergency Tree Work • Stump Grinding
Crane Service • Firewood Delivery

All Major Credit Cards Accepted

100% Financing Available

162 Sturbridge Road, Brimfield, MA 01010
508-641-5249 • office@robinsontreeservice.net
www.robinsontreeservice.net

School Committee heard from grade six students

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Quaboag Regional School Committee met prior to holiday break and began with a presentation by grade six leadership students.

Superintendent Stephen Duff explained that grade six leadership is an opportunity for students from both Warren and West Brookfield elementary schools to present what is happening at their schools. Teams come together to present a PowerPoint to the School Committee.

Two students from Warren Community Elementary School came up for this month's meeting and began sharing updates.

Students receive classroom jobs and help students in the younger grades, kindergarten through fourth grade. The students also talked about their helpful community programs such as recycling pickup and can tab collections. The tabs are collected and shipped to Shriner's to help them raise money to support children.

Other jobs students help with is flag patrol and some working the daily podcast. This is a student run daily podcast where students connect with their school and share what is happening at WCES. The committee members were impressed by the presentation and asked the students about their favorite jobs.

Duff said these students' contributions are being celebrated.

"Contributions you make to your community are being celebrated," Duff said. "Selected as being leaders of the future."

Duff encouraged these students to continue to be involved in their community when they arrive at Quaboag Regional Middle High School. Duff expressed that he was incredibly proud of these students as the committee gave them a nice round of applause.

Superintendent's report

Duff came before the committee and began his report with announcing the Worcester County Superintendent Association Scholar of the Year.

Every year a Worcester County Superintendent has to select a student that represents the values of their school. This year, Duff announced the district has selected one student, who is considered a role model and volunteers a lot of her time for volunteer work and community service work.

The selected student is senior Olive Moulton, who got the opportunity to speak to the School Committee during their Dec. 15 meeting. Moulton believes "it is important to get involved cause it helps grow your community" and "grow as a person".

Moulton is involved in various clubs at the school including Community Service Club, involved with National Honor Society, and also helped with wrapping holiday gifts for kids during the annual toy drive. The committee congratulated Moulton on this announcement.

North Brookfield update

Duff shared an update on a potential tuition agreement with the town of North Brookfield, which has been on the committee's agenda for a while. Duff attended a meeting with the North Brookfield Superintendent, the Special Education Director of North Brookfield, and the Finance Director of West Brookfield to discuss a potential tuition agreement.

North Brookfield has collected information from both Quaboag and Quabbin school districts and will have a vote at their next committee meeting. As for this continued discussion, Duff said they won't have any further information on North Brookfield until April or May. Therefore, North Brookfield won't be included in the school budget.

Student engagement coordinator

The district has hired a student engagement coordinator through title one funds. The coordinator is there to help with guidance and administration and reports to the building principal.

Zoom phone system

The Zoom phone system was brought up, and Duff feels the district needs to get a system that is more complete for the entire school district. Zoom allows staff to communicate between the buildings through only dialing extensions, rather than the entire number.

The plan is to get this done for the next school year, but the problem with some of the school buildings is wiring. Duff wants to get all three buildings done at once for this project.

Student assessment update

The School Committee reviewed packets detailing the student assessment update

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 11

EQLT hosted 'SPACE NIGHT'

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HARDWICK – Two PhD candidates from Georgia State University visited the East Quabbin Land Trust's office at 120 Ridge Road last Friday to give a presentation about their astronomical research.

Maura Shea and Aman Kar each research outer space, including galaxies, planets, and stars.

Shea grew up in Hardwick, and graduated from Wellesley College here in Massachusetts in 2020 with a degree in astrophysics. Her research at Georgia State centers around active galactic nuclei, where she works under Professor Mike Crenshaw.

Her main research centers on a cluster of galaxies called Stephan's Quintet, because they have high rates of interaction with one another.

Kar's research centers around red stars, and he received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wyoming in 2019, where he studied exoplanets and their atmospheres. He has been at Georgia State since 2022, where he studies M dwarf stars. He is part of the RECON team, where he works with Dr. Todd Henry.

The presentation started with Shea and Kar explaining the newest technologies that are being used in space observation, including the James Webb Space Telescope. According to their presentation, the JWST was launched in 2021 as a direct successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, which is still sending back photos to this day.

The JWST though, can see more than Hubble can, as it observes in the infrared light scale, which is not visible to human eyes without assistance from technology. They said that JWST can look further back in time, as when the universe expands, light starts to get more red, which is why it needs to observe in the infrared.

In addition, the JWST can see through space dust better than Hubble.

Shea and Kar also noted that the JWST is a high risk, high reward project.



Aman Kar described the construction of the James Webb Space Telescope.

It was launched to a part of the solar system where it will not be possible for NASA scientists to service it if something were to go wrong, but is more efficient than Hubble. The project cost 10 billion dollars.

They said the JWST is now sending back photos of distant dwarf galaxies, created 400 million years after the big bang, where Hubble could not see any dwarf galaxies. One other telescope they noted was the Chandra telescope, which looks in the X-ray scale, another scale humans cannot see. This allows for viewing of supernovas, they said.

Shea presented many pictures that the JWST has sent back so far, including some Einstein Rings. In the picture, it shows an elliptical galaxy surrounded by a spiral galaxy, with the spiral galaxy appearing more red in color, signifying the spiral galaxy is older.

Einstein Rings are named after scientist Albert Einstein's theories about light bending.

She also presented a picture of Stephan's Quintet, which she is studying for her PhD. In this cluster of galaxies, their gravitational pulls are strong enough to interact with each other, and pull them apart, according to the presentation.

In the picture, there is an area of red, which is a star forming area with dust. The areas of blue are stars not surrounded by dust, and green areas are hydrocarbons.

In addition to galaxies, Shea presented star forming



Maura Shea, a doctoral student at Georgia State University and Hardwick native, presented a "Space Night" at the East Quabbin Land Trust last Friday night.

regions, including the Pillars of Creation region. It is called this because it resembles a hand and fingers.

Another star forming region is called Rho Ophiuchi, and it is the closest star forming region to Earth, but is also relatively small, she said. In addition to stars forming, they highlighted stars dying, including the Red Spider nebula. These happen when giant red stars die, and it will be the same thing that happens when the sun dies.

Another type of star they presented are called Wolf-Rayet stars, which are even more impressive than the Sun, as they are 20 times the size of it. Since they are so large though, they are relatively short lived in terms of chances to observe it.

Kar talked about some of the missions that are

happening or in planning, including a plan to drop a lander on Titan, one of Saturn's moons, to observe whether there are any life forms on the moon. He said there are observed oceans, lakes, and other bodies of water, but they are all made of liquid methane.

Kar said life can form wherever it sees fit, so researchers want to know if anything can live in that liquid methane. He also said that the JWST has just seen Neptune's rings for the first time in decades, and it is being used to determine what is in the atmosphere of a planet.

All of the images featured in the presentation, and more, can be found on the NASA website (<https://science.nasa.gov/mission/webb/multimedia/images/>).

www.warivernews.turley.com

McNeely Tree Service

Insured • References

- Hazardous Tree Removal
- Bobcat Work
- Lot Clearing
- Emergency Services
- Firewood \$265/cord
- 101 ft Aerial Lift Rental POR
- Credit Cards, Cash & Venmo Accepted
- 100% Workers Compensation

H: 508-867-6119 • C: 978-888-1693

FOR RENT

Quabbin Estates

41 Church Lane, Wheelwright, MA 01094

Accepting applications for wait list. The apartment features - w/w carpeting, kitchen appliances, maintenance coverage, laundry facilities. We specialize in Senior Housing and "Barrier Free" accessible units. Rent is \$810/mo. or 30% of income, whichever is lower. RD regulations. Handicap Accessible apartments when available.

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT
413-477-6496
TDD (800)439-2379

Junk & Bulk Trash Removal

Clean Out Solutions

Basement, Attic, Shed & Whole House Cleanouts

Shed, Pool & Hot Tub Removals Arthur "Skip" Gervais (774)397-6500

Palmer U-Haul

D & M Auto

MEGAN JENSEN • NATE JENSEN

Make your reservation with us and earn \$\$ back!! Best price guaranteed!!!

Ask Us How!

413-283-6882
413-636-2929

1422 Park St. • 1116 Park St. PALMER, MA 01069

LOWER PRICES TO BOOST YOUR BUDGET! INFLATION PRICE BUSTERS PRICES IN RED ARE AT OR BELOW LAST YEAR'S PRICES!

USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN ASSORTED PORK LOIN CHOPS.....	\$1.82 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF STRIPLOIN CUT FREE.....	\$7.77 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP ROUND ROAST OR STEAKS.....	\$5.99 lb
USDA INSP. FROZEN BONELESS CENTER CUT PORK LOIN.....	\$1.77 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN BEEF CHUCK ROAST OR STEAKS.....	\$6.29 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST 10 LB BAG.....	\$1.66 lb
USDA INSP. FROZEN BABY BACK PORK RIBS.....	\$3.25 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH TURKEY BREAST.....	\$4.99 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS 10 LB. BAG..	75¢ lb
USDA INSP. SWISS CHEESE.....	\$4.44 lb	USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 80% LEAN GROUND BEEF 7 LB BAG.....	\$3.99 lb	USDA INSP. HOT POCKETS STEAK & CHEDDAR 18 OZ.....	\$3.99 ea
USDA INSP. STORE MADE KOREAN MARINATED BONELESS PORK BUTT STRIPS.....	\$3.79 lb	USDA INSP. STORE MADE ITALIAN MARINATED 1/2 CHICKEN.....	\$2.99 lb	USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN • 12 OZ. BOX TEMPURA BREADED SHRIMP....	\$3.99 ea

SALE DATES: 1/1/26-1/7/26

90 Meat Outlet 90 Avocado St. Springfield 413-737-1288 www.90meat.com

HOURS: Mon. - Wed. 8-4 Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3

BUY DIRECT FOR SAVINGS • SELECTION • SERVICE

viewpoints

in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer



Sora

ed chat in South Orleans, a common yellowthroat and for northern shovelers in Harwich and a short-eared owl.

Birds

The Massachusetts Audubon Society reported a sighting of a sora on Nauset Beach in Orleans on Cape Cod between Dec. 10 and 16.

Soras are small, chubby, chicken like birds with long toes and between eight to ten inches tall. Their stubby bill distinguished them from other rails in the United States and Canada, which have longer bills. They also frequently hold their short tail cocked up showing their white patch under the tail.

Soras are mottled gray and brown with white-edged feathers, but the feature that stands out the most is their yellow candy-corn bill. Other field marks include a black mask, throat patch and vertical white lines on the sides. Females tend to be less brightly colored than males and have less black on the face and throat. Juveniles also lack the black mask.

Soras have a distinct walk pushing their head forward with every step while nervously flicking the tail upward, exposing the white under tail feathers. They tend to forage in dense vegetation, but also venture into open areas from time to time. Their long toes help them walk on top of floating mats of vegetation. Soras make their homes in freshwater wetlands with emergent vegetation such as cattails, sedges and rushes. During migration and winter, they also use brackish marshes, flooded fields and wet pastures.

The Sora makes its presence known with plaintive whistles and whinnies rising from the marshes all across North America. Despite its abundance, it is not often seen: As with other rails, it spends most of its time hidden in dense marshy growth or wet meadows. Occasionally it will walk about in full view at the edge of a pond, delighting any birders, who happen to be nearby. Although Soras might seem like weak fliers when seen fluttering over the marsh, they regularly migrate long distances, many going to South America for the winter.

Cape Cod bird sightings

Besides the sora, the following sightings were reported between Dec. 10 and Dec.16. A western tanager was found at Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay sanctuary. The male painted bunting continued at a feeder in Brewster. Other bird sightings included a clapper rail and six western willets in South Chatham, two common terns in North Chatham, a blue-headed vireo and a yellow-breast-

seen at Race Point in Provincetown were a black guillemot, 200 razorbills, 13 dovebies, three common murrelets, 45 black-legged kittiwakes, six Iceland gulls, a red-necked grebe and 75 northern gannets.

Other sightings around the Cape included two continuing Eurasian wigeon in Yarmouth Port, two Barrow's goldeneyes at Loop Beach in Cotuit, a great egret at Mass Audubon's Skunknet River sanctuary in Barnstable, a Nashville warbler reported at a house in Yarmouth, continuing unseasonably large numbers of tree swallows in various places including over 50 in Falmouth, two western willets in Chatham and an American golden plover in North Truro.

Christmas bird count

From Dec. 15 to Jan. 5, the Christmas Bird Count will commence in the U.S., Canada and 18 other countries in the Western Hemisphere. Countries are divided into geographical regions with 35 in Massachusetts and each region will pick a single 24-hour period to count birds. Data from the CBC can be utilized in many ways, including to monitor trends in bird populations, document range shifts over time and examine how climate change may impact the winter distributions of birds.

CBC data has been used in hundreds of analyses, peer-reviewed publications and government reports over the decades.

Birds likely seen in Massachusetts are chickadees, titmice, many species of woodpeckers, bluebirds, Carolina wren and many raptors. Migrants from the north include kinglets, some raptors, snow bunting and some sparrows. Waterfowl seen mostly along the coast are dabbling and diving ducks. Irruptive species that are only present in some years are evening grosbeak, red crossbill, white-winged crossbill, redpoll, pine grosbeak and red-breasted nuthatch.

Helping birds

People may help birds by participating in the Christmas Bird Count. It is an important source of data on birds.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

Testing and taking inventory of seed is a good practice to start the new gardening season off right

I don't know about you, but I have been caught up in spirit of the holidays. It's been fun to indulge in family time and try and get caught up on much-needed rest.

I have given myself this last week of the year to continue to take it easy before I hit the "to do" list.

One of the big things I have been procrastinating on at work is taking inventory of all the seeds I have left from the last couple of years. The box holds a hundred or so different varieties of seeds, mostly heirloom, open-pollinated types.

There is something refreshing about accomplishing this task soon into the new year; a seasonal habit I've had for the last four decades give or take. To me, it means spring is not far behind.

I begin by organizing the seeds first by category: vegetable, flower or herb, then alphabetically. After those piles have been made, I go back and decide which packets are no good or no longer of use.

No matter how well they are stored, some seeds won't germinate well past the year in which they are sold for. Based on my experience these include hybrid onions and parsnips. Carrots can be iffy.

In the herb category dill, caraway, parsley, angelica and chives come to mind. Year old garden heliotrope, feverfew and bellflowers can be stubborn germinators as far as flowers go.

As a general rule I keep seed that is less than three years old, unless the variety in question is rare. Even spotty germination is better than nothing when it comes to seed that is hard to find.

You can save yourself dis-

appointment at planting time by performing a simple germination test on questionable seed.



by Roberta McQuaid

Place a few seeds in a moist paper towel. Roll it up and seal it in a plastic bag in a warm location.

Instructions in the seed catalog or on the packet should tell you how long it takes for germination to occur, as well as inform you of the initial germination percentage. Once the necessary amount of time has elapsed unroll the paper towel and determine how viable your seeds are by observing the sprouting that has occurred.

Based on the results you may decide to sow the seed more thickly or just start over with a fresh batch.

Last year I did my own version of a germination test by sowing few seeds of questionable varieties in pots, and placing them on a shelf near my wood stove. I learned which seeds were worth the effort of sowing in the garden and which I needed to discard and order new.

Although viability decreases as seeds age, proper storage can insure that you will get at least three years worth of sprouting out of many of your favorites. It is important to fold over used seed packets and seal them with tape after use, and if you are just getting to it now, it's better late than never. Put them in a location that is cool and dry.

Since temperatures around 37-41 degrees are ideal, many people assume that storage in the refrigerator is preferred. It is, as long as the seeds are first placed in an airtight container along with a desiccant to absorb moisture.

Desiccants such as silica gel are available in the floral section of craft shops, or you can reuse the pouches of silica that come in vitamin bottles or shoe boxes.

If you'd rather not take up space in your fridge, storing the container of seeds in a cabinet in a dry part of the house will also work.

Whatever you do, don't put them in a hot attic or damp basement! It is also not a good idea to purchase seeds from stores that have their seed displays in greenhouses. Temperature and moisture extremes can affect viability even if the seeds are brand new!

Some seed companies sell their seed in foil-lined packets. These are very good at keeping them fresh for the longest amount of time - especially if they are unopened.

Now that you have inventoried your seeds, it will be a whole lot of fun to order exactly what you need. That's what I will be doing after one more family game night and that last Christmas movie!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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 with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

WARE RIVER NEWS TEAM



EDITOR
Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com



ADVERTISING SALES
Dan Flynn
dfflynn@turley.com



SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com



STAFF WRITER
Ryan Drago
rdrago@turley.com

The Ware River News (USPS 666100) is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069.



@WareRiverNews



www.warivernews.turley.com

PATRICK H. TURLEY
CEO

KEITH TURLEY
President



www.turley.com

Turley Publications, Inc. cannot assume liability for the loss of photographs or other materials submitted for publication. Materials will not be returned except upon specific request when submitted.

OPINION POLICY

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and "Your Turn" guest column between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

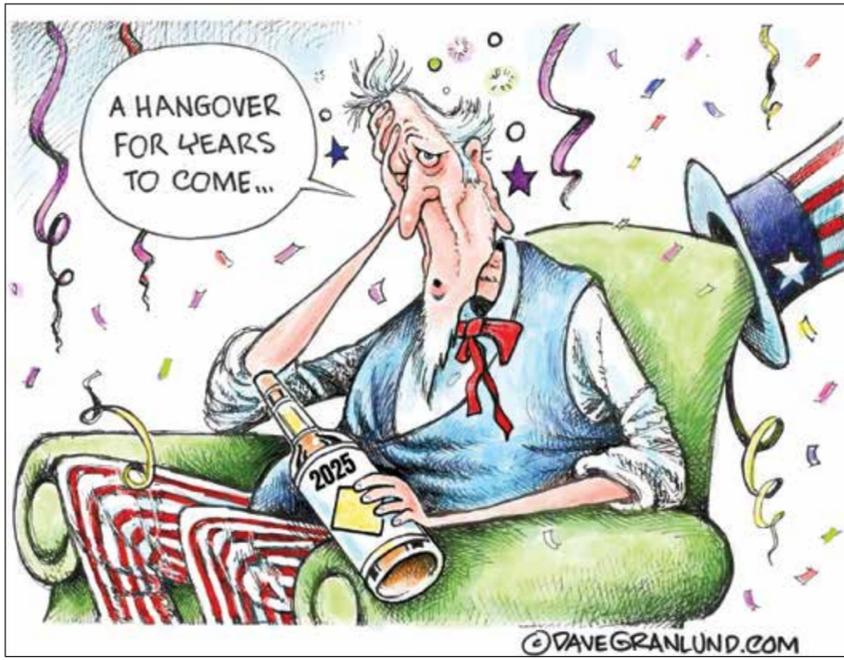
Send opinions to:
Ware River News
Letter to the Editor
80 Main Street,
Ware, MA 01082
or via email to:
pouimette@turley.com

The deadline for submissions is Monday at noon.

Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.



I'm on SS disability; should I switch to regular Social Security?

Dear Rusty:

Should I take my Social Security now at age 62, or wait till I am 65?

I've been collecting SS disability due to health issues and was curious if I should wait or claim my regular Social Security retirement benefits now.

Signed: Disabled but Wondering

Dear Disabled but Wondering:

If you are now collecting Social Security Disability Insurance benefits and you are still disabled, it would be a disadvantage to claim your SS retirement benefits at this time age 62 or even at age 65. That's because your SSDI benefit is the same as your Full Retirement Age amount, as calculated for you at the point you became disabled. Born after 1959, your FRA

is age 67, but you are already receiving your FRA benefit

get about 87% of what you are now receiving on Social Security disability.

In other words, as long as your disability continues and you remain eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance benefits, you should not switch to your normal SS retirement benefit, because you would get less money. And the resulting benefit reduction would be permanent.

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.



while on SS disability even though you have not yet reached your full retirement age. That full SSDI benefit will automatically convert to become your SS retirement benefit when you reach your full retirement age.

If you were to claim your normal SS retirement benefit any earlier than your SS full retirement age of 67, the amount you get would be reduced for claiming early. At your current age, you would likely get between 75% and 80% of what you are now receiving on SSDI (depending on your exact age in the month you claim and at age 65 you would



2025 Year in REVIEW

WARE from page 1

of health practitioners, nursing homes, continuing care retirement facilities, daycare facilities and laboratories for research and development.

A motion to move the question passed, and voters approved of the creation of the Health Care Services District by a vote of 357 in favor to 129 opposed. The article passed by the required two-thirds majority required for zoning amendments.

Hospital demolition and ownership

Hospital Review Committee Chair Howard Trietsch said Baystate Health was willing to consider saving the Wetherby Building, if that is what the town wants to do. He said HKT Architects looked at the estimated costs if the town were to take over the building and reuse it.

"Their answer was \$9 to \$12 million," he said.

The lower cost would make the building usable for general office space and the higher cost would ready it for medical purposes.



Jean and Stan Ciukaj enjoyed their stuffed chicken meal prepared by the Knights of Columbus at St. Mary's Church Hall.

In the spring, the Selectboard received a memo with two proposals from Friends of Mary Lane Hospital Chair Cindy Allen Bourcier regarding the repurposing of several buildings at the Mary Lane Hospital property.

At the April 1 meeting, Town Manager Stuart Beckley said there have been several discussions about whether or not the town should have interest in the buildings or property of Mary Lane Hospital. He said the Hospital Review Committee has spent four years reviewing potential uses of the property.

"They're conclusion was...that the property should not be taken due to liability," he said.

Bourcier said it is time

to preserve and protect the buildings at Mary Lane Hospital.

"People need to stop talking," Bourcier said. "Let's make action plans."

Bourcier said the proposal she submitted to the Selectboard was intended to "stimulate other people coming up with proposals," including property owner Baystate Health and the town.

"I just think it would be great if people could get together, roll up their sleeves, and come up with a real plan before the next annual meeting," Bourcier said.

Bourcier said there has been interest in the site, including from neighboring Cedarbrook Village.

"There's been a lot of interest, but nothing can be done until we figure out how to make a new owner, whether it's the town taking it over or some other entity," she said. "It would be good if we could try to figure something out and how we can try get the healthcare back to that site and there's a lot of options."

Talbot said currently, Mary Lane Hospital is private property, and the town has been working with Baystate Health to bring healthcare back to town.

Beckley said both attorneys hired by the town to review the ownership of the property, have agreed that Mary Lane Hospital is private property owned by Baystate Health. He said



Community readers at Ware Middle School posed for a photo before heading to their respective classrooms. Shown front row from left are Dr. Ginger Coleman, Chris DiMarzio, Fire Chief Jim Martinez, Elena Palladino and Sheriff Patrick Cahillane. Back row from left are Justin Gonsor, Jim Lawless, Boomer and Lieutenant Matthew Simpson.

when it comes to turning over ownership of the property to the town, Baystate Health is "not considering that as an option right now."

The Selectboard voted to end discussion about taking ownership of the Mary Lane Hospital property and took no further action.

At the May annual town meeting, voters failed to pass article 33, a citizens' petition to place a two-year easement on the Mary Lane Hospital property.

Proponents of article 33, Cathy Buelow-Cascio and Bourcier, said they put this article forward to grant the town more time to find a healthcare entity interested in the Mary Lane Hospital site, which is owned by Baystate Health.

"It's a temporary easement, not ownership," Buelow-Cascio said.

The article asked voters to approve the use of \$30,000 from free cash and \$25,000 from taxation to appropriate the funds necessary to move forward with the temporary easement.

Buelow-Cascio said "many are interested" in the South Street property, and "there's lots of things we're working on" in terms of finding healthcare for the site, which Baystate Health has

slated for demolition.

According to the article put forward by Buelow-Cascio and Bourcier, the purpose of the easement is to "occupy, test and evaluate all aspects of the buildings and land and to conduct engineering, environmental, public necessity and all other feasibility studies, testing and exploration with respect to the suitability of said property for hospital, medical clinic or other mental or physical health clinic purposes and/or uses."

They said the easement would allow the town to have anyone interested tour the property without Baystate Health officials being present.

During the annual town meeting, Beckley said that Baystate Health officials have always allowed access to the property, and that it didn't need to cost the town \$55,000 to continue to have access. He also noted that this cost doesn't pay for the engineering or testing outlined in the article.

"This money doesn't address the other costs," he said.

The article failed to reach a two-thirds majority vote required to pass, with 74 voters opposed and 38 in favor.

By August, Baystate

Health began demolition of the hospital site, leaving just the Wetherby Building and the attached Storrs Building remaining.

According to a Nov. 30 press release, Baystate Health had completed its full due diligence on the Storrs Building at the Baystate Mary Lane campus, working closely with public safety officials, structural engineers, and other partners to assess site conditions.

With this work now complete, the demolition of the Storrs building and final weatherization of the Wetherby Building was set to begin in December.

Baystate Health representatives state they remain committed to ensuring that all work is completed safely, responsibly, and in accordance with town requirements.

Lewis Gilbert Trust funds

Buelow-Cascio and Bourcier hosted a community meeting to discuss the trust funds associated with Mary Lane Hospital.

At the June 24 meeting, Buelow-Cascio said they had

Please see **WARE**, page 6



An excavator moved a pile of debris during the August demolition of the former Mary Lane Hospital. The Wetherby Building will be all that remains of the century old institution at 85 South St.

Join the trend with these New Year resolutions

With the new year around the corner, many people are setting goals for 2026. After months of rising prices on everything from milk to mortgages, money-related resolutions are prominent.

One out of four Americans (27%) plan to make 2026 the year of their financial comeback, according to 2025 research from Edward Jones and Morning Consult. Others will continue with previous goals (21%), start from scratch (20%) or catch up on missed goals (14%).

Here are their top three financial goals and what to consider if you make one or more of these yours.

Boost your income: Get creative with your time and interests. Consider side hustles such as delivery driving, pet sitting or tutoring. Perhaps you can sell things online that you no longer need. And if you traditionally get a refund on your tax return, consider adjusting your withholdings so less is taken from your paychecks.

To indirectly increase your income, cut your expenses. Every dollar saved effectively increases the "income" side of your budget. The biggest categories Americans plan to cut are restaurants and subscriptions.

Build up savings: Whether you're planning for a vacation or creating an emergency fund, having accessible cash means you're less likely to rely on credit cards. And credit cards can incur interest charges if you don't pay the full amount due every month.

To save for something specific, calculate how much you'll need and by when. Then break it down into monthly targets to help make your goal tangible and achievable.

For an emergency fund, build toward three to six months of living expenses. And remember: an emergency fund is for true emergencies – think medical bills, major auto or furnace repairs, not a TV on sale.

Pay off debt: Every payment brings you closer to a life of financial freedom. Start by listing all your debts and their interest rates. Then choose one of these payoff strategies.

The Avalanche Method: You'll pay off the debt with the highest interest rate first. With that paid, you'll move on to the next highest. This reduces the amount of interest you pay over time, which generally means a lower total cost and often a shorter payoff period.

The Snowball Method: You'll pay off the card with the lowest balance first, then move to the next smallest balance. This may offer quicker gratification as the number of creditors can dwindle faster.

The Consolidation Method: You may be able to bundle and refinance high interest credit card debts to a 0% bank card for 12 months or longer.

With any of these methods, don't ignore your other debts. You'll still need to pay the minimum balances due on mortgages, auto loans and other credit cards to keep interest rates and late payment fees from accruing and your credit score from dropping.

Ready to join the trend? Across the country, millions of people are committing to improving their financial situation, and ultimately their financial future. By joining this trend, you're not just setting goals—you're shaping a life of freedom and possibility.

www.edwardjones.com Member SPIC
Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.
Edward Jones, Member SIPC



SMART MONEY

MOULTON Insurance Agency

Our Family Cares About Your Family.
HOME – AUTO – BUSINESS – LIFE

What credits and discounts do you qualify for?
We invite you to stop in or call for a quote.

Very Competitive Rates • Experienced Professional Staff
99% Customer Satisfaction Rate • On-site Registry Processing
Moulton Insurance is proud of its family tradition of serving both individuals and businesses since 1952. Protecting clients throughout Massachusetts, Moulton Insurance individually tailors policies to maximize your credits and give your family and business our most competitive rates.

143 West Street
Ware, MA 01082
413-967-3327

45 North Main Street
Belchertown, MA 01007
413-323-7229

www.moultoninsurance.com • 1-800-521-5787



CHANTEL BLEAU ACCOUNTING SERVICES

For Full Accounting, Bookkeeping & Tax Service
Call For An Appointment

228 WEST STREET
WARE, MA 01082

413-967-8364



Edward Jones



Lucille Germain

1448 Main St.
Palmer, MA 01069
413-289-1875

lucille.germain@edwardjones.com

Member SPIC

> edwardjones.com

REMEMBER!
When You Buy From A
SMALL BUSINESS
YOU'RE HELPING
A little girl get dance lessons!
A little boy get his team jersey!
Moms & Dads put food on the table!
AND, you won't be helping a CEO buy a 3rd vacation home...
SHOP LOCAL!

**2025
Year in
REVIEW**

WARE from page 5

hoped to have Megan Burke, president of the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, join them to explain how the foundation works, but she was unable to attend.

Bourcier said Burke spoke with representatives of Bank of America, which oversees the Lewis Gilbert Trust, and she said there was concern regarding the letter sent by the Selectboard to Bank of America.

Bourcier said when the hospital closed, they needed to find a new beneficiary of the trust funds. Currently, the trust benefits Mary Lane Hospital through the care of Baystate Health.

"We searched around trying to find the best solution, different foundations all over Massachusetts," she said. "The money needs to go to a nonprofit."

She said they looked at three community foundations, with two based in Worcester County and also the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. She said this foundation was the "best fit" to meet both the needs of Ware and Gilbertville residents.

Buelow-Cascio said the foundation would hold the trust money and invest it annually, then the interest goes to the beneficiary to



Community Legal Aid Attorney Esther Tutu (shown seated in the front row, left) led a training about coercive control with members and allies of the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force at Ware Town Hall on March 6.

be distributed. She said the beneficiary would be the proposed Mary Lane Hospital Association Foundation, which would be made up of representatives from the towns.

Bourcier and Buelow-Cascio said the Selectboard's letter stating it was in support of the trust staying under the care of Bank of America has "squashed" the shift to this new proposed model involving the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

Several residents attended the July 1 Selectboard meeting to ask the board members to reconsider their vote in support of keeping the care of the Lewis Gilbert Trust under current trustee, Bank of America, with Baystate Health as its beneficiary.

Bourcier along with sev-



Lisa Barr received a hug and a carnation from Rockies player Brayden Kosla at Ware Youth Baseball's opening day parade and ceremony held in May.

eral other residents, spoke in support of naming the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts as the new trustee.

Bourcier said Bank of America made a decision on April 6 to turn the funds over to the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

Baystate Health Attorney Ryan Berry said if the town supports Baystate Health's Convenient Care site with use of the trust funds, Baystate is "ready to go" with the opening of the site.

"If Baystate no longer has the benefit of the Gilbert trust funds, that Convenient Care clinic is not getting built," Berry said. "There's nobody else as far as I'm aware that's waiting in the wings. No other healthcare organizations have stepped up to my knowledge...it's either healthcare provided by



Lieutenant Jason McNeaney used the "jaws of life" hydraulic tool to pry open a door on a car that was used in a mock crash event held at Ware High School. Shown with him are firefighters Daniel O'Brien and Matt Gambino.



Close to 50 people braved the frigid water of Beaver Lake for the annual Polar Plunge event to support Special Olympics Massachusetts.



Team Walk for Ethan led the second annual Out of the Darkness Campus Walk to benefit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention held at Grenville Park this past May.



Parishioners of Trinity Episcopal Church and members of the community stood outside the new Jubilee Ministries building located at 80 Pleasant St.

Baystate Health or nothing." Berry said Baystate Health would keep the Mary Lane name at its Convenient Care site and also welcomed the creation of a community advisory board with representatives from Ware and Hardwick.

Berry said Bank of America and the Attorney General are both in support of Baystate Health using the trust funds to move forward with the Convenient Care site.

"Both are completely satisfied with the way that Baystate has used the Gilbert trust over the years," Berry said.

Trietsch said Baystate Health's proposal will only work with the support of the community.

Talbot said she believes that Baystate Health's proposal is "the best and only option at this time" to provide healthcare to residents.

Search for new superintendent

School Committee Chair Brian Winslow read a statement announcing the resignation of Superintendent Dr. Michael Lovato, following a leave of absence from his position.

The statement cited health-related reasons for his decision to step down from his position. Lovato stated he was "thankful for his opportunity to have served the Ware school community and deeply values the time he spent supporting its students, staff and families."

At the July 16 meeting, Winslow said the School Committee will begin its search for an interim superintendent for the 2025-2026 school year. He said the interim superintendent would be a candidate with vast experience.

"We need someone I feel, that can hit the ground running, that can begin the process of bringing us back

to what we're here for and that's for kids, for students," Winslow said.

The School Committee interviewed four candidates to fill the one-year role of interim superintendent for the 2025-2026 school year.

At the Aug. 7 meeting, each of the candidates answered a series of questions and shared background about themselves and their various roles in public education.

The committee members voted to appoint Michael Wood as the interim superintendent, and finalized his contract at a subsequent meeting held on Aug. 18.

Wood has 40 years of experience in education and previously worked as superintendent in Hatfield Public Schools and Nashoba Regional School District. He has worked as a superintendent for a total of 23 years.

He is also a licensed business administrator and has extensive background in building budgets. He currently works as a consultant for TMS, Inc.

Wood said he will approach this interim role as if it is a permanent position, thinking long term while he identifies strengths and weaknesses.

Wood said he would be listening and learning about the environment and the culture of Ware Public Schools and working with the School Committee, families, students, community members and teachers to create the model of education needed for the students.

Woods said special education is his passion, and he has served as a director of special education in multiple school districts. He said it is important for the school district to work with the state to meet the needs of special education students.

"We have to be honest with ourselves in where we have deficits if we have them and again, we have to figure out where we can celebrate,"



Major General Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette arrived in Ware 200 years ago on June 14, and now a reenactment took place to highlight this moment in Ware's history.

Wood said. "It takes really a team effort when it comes to special education. You have to have your building leadership really understand how special education and special educators need support within a school to do the work that they need to do...it's really about building a culture that we support all students and that we all have special needs in some respect and we have to pay attention to the individual needs of every student... some have more."

Wood said building a culture of understanding and working toward a growth plan will help meet that goal.

"If all kids can be educated within the town of Ware in our public schools, it's better for the community in every way," Wood said.

Wood said he will bring positivity and a growth mindset to the interim superintendent role. He said this includes celebrating the schools and accomplishments of the students in the community.

He said his leadership style focuses on culture, and building a sense of belonging with his staff.

Please see **WARE**, page 7



**Top Floor
LEARNING**

**TUTORING
AVAILABLE**

Meet Your Professional & Educational Goals

Tutors Needed

**For English Language Learners,
HiSet Tutors:
English, Writing & Math**

**Call to ask about our next
Computer Security class**

**Computer
Security Class**

- Basic Computer Use —
- Resumé Building & Updating
- English Language Learning
- GED/HiSET Preparation
- Reading, Writing, Math
- Citizenship Exam
- SAT, TOEFL, etc. Test Prep

Contact Us For More Information

NEW PHONE NUMBER ▶ **413-544-6600**

email: dkimball@topfloorlearning.org

<https://topfloorlearning.org/>

We're on Facebook!



2025 Year in REVIEW

HARDWICK from page 1

The Muddy Brook aquifer is what's known as a buried river valley with fractured bedrock and glacial till. He said it is a high-yield aquifer.

"This is a pretty unique resource," Horsley said.

Horsley said the watershed is extremely important when it comes to protecting the aquifer, and that managing the land usage around it is key to safeguarding.

Horsley said the Department of Environmental Protection empowers local boards of health with the regulation and protection of drinking water. The DEP also has a model of controls, which offer a management program that the Board of Health can consider.

"It's a public health issue," he said of the protection of drinking water.

Dr. Philip Landrigan, a medical doctor who graduated from Harvard University and worked as an epidemiologist and pediatrician, spoke about the impact pollution has on drinking water and public health.

"It's so important to protect the water we drink," he said.

Water, he said, is "the single-most abundant compound in our bodies."

While essential to life, water can also be a source of disease when it is contaminated.

Landrigan gave the history of water-borne disease, including the 1800s cholera epidemic that wiped out nearly 5% of the population, or



About 40 participants joined the East Quabbin Land Trust for its annual New Year's Day hike along the Mass Central Rail Trail. This granite bench was dedicated to the memory of Terry Briggs, a longtime board member of the East Quabbin Land Trust. The bench is located at the river lookout on the Wheelwright end of the Mass Central Rail Trail.

about 400,000 people.

"That's the kinds of power that water-borne infections can have," he said.

Now, people have to worry about toxic chemicals making it into their drinking water, which can cause disease, disability and death.

Landrigan said older chemicals that can contaminate water include lead, and the newer chemicals include pesticides, herbicides, nitrogen and PFAS (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances).

"PFAS have numerous adverse health effects," Landrigan said. "It became critically important to keep chemicals out of drinking water...and to protect both surface water and groundwater. Surface chemicals can eventually reach groundwater so it's important to respect the protected zones."

Landrigan said if groundwater becomes contaminated by chemicals, it will have a negative impact that will last generations.

"Once groundwater gets



Historian Susan Gainley talked about the letters that were written by members of the Paige family dating back to the 1850s. These letters were read during a play, "Sorrow Visits the Paige Family", performed at the Paige Memorial Library.

contaminated...the contamination is going to last for decades," he said.

Michael Hugo, Director of Strategies and Government Relations for the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards offered his guidance to the Board of Health in protecting the Muddy Brook aquifer and watershed.

"You have a water source that needs to be protected," he said.

Physicians Advisory Panel member Neil Halin said it is important for the board to be proactive in taking steps to protect the Muddy Brook area. Romano agreed that it is a "tremendous" resource for both Hardwick and Ware.

Resident Judy Kohn said it would be good for the Board of Health to take samplings of water from private wells as well as soil testing to have a baseline for contamination

in the area around Hardwick Pond.

"We don't know the magnitude of the problem already," she said.

Later in October, the Select Board heard a presentation from Romano regarding the groundwater and Hardwick landfill. Romano reviewed the 2025 post closure landfill environmental monitoring report for the landfill.

"We have a groundwater contamination problem," Romano said.

At this time, Romano said, "it's about what do we do from here...The status of things right now is not good. We want to safeguard this resource the best we can."

New Police Chief

Kevin Landine was welcomed as the town's newest Police Chief following the



Hardwick Town Clerk Ryan J. Witkos gave Police Chief Kevin Landine the oath of office.

retirement of James Ayotte.

Landine joined the New Braintree Police Department after finishing the academy and now, he is the third full-time police chief of the combined Hardwick-New Braintree Police Department.

"I started as a 19 year old kid who thought I knew everything about law enforcement and was quickly humbled," he said at his pinning in September.

Landine thanked both Select Boards for appointing him, and the number of residents who wrote letters of support for his promotion.

He also thanked the members of his department and said he couldn't run the department without each of them.

A retirement party was held in October at Hardwick Crossing Country Club to honor Ayotte, who served as the police chief for the towns of Hardwick and New Braintree for over 15 years.

At the time of his retirement, Ayotte had been involved in law enforcement for over 25 years and served on the Spencer Fire Department for over 10 years. Altogether, Ayotte has committed over 40 years of public service in his respected career.

Ayotte said the department is in good hands under the leadership of Landine.

Landine said Ayotte taught him respect and empathy towards people and is dedicated to continue to support the communities as police chief and continue running the police department, which he described as the "footprint of our town."

Executive Director of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association Mike Bradley attended Ayotte's



Recently retired Hardwick-New Braintree Police Chief James "Jim" Ayotte held an official citation from the Senate he received during his retirement party at Hardwick Crossing Country Club.

retirement party and presented a watch to Ayotte during speeches. During Landine's speech, he talked about how Ayotte contributed to the police department and to the communities.

"He helped move the department forward," Landine said.

Paige building

The Select Board met at the end of February and had a discussion and vote on a request for proposal for the Calvin Paige building.

The town was requesting proposals for the acquisition, renovation and redevelopment of a town owned historic building. The Calvin Paige building was built back

Please see **HARDWICK**, page 12



Friends of the Stone Church President Judy Edington welcomed attendees to the Valentine Celebration fundraising event hosted by the Friends of the Stone Church at Hardwick Crossing Country Club last February.

WARE from page 6

"Today we're building a culture of togetherness and problem solving that's about taking a look at the best building of a foundation that you can have for the school district to thrive," Wood said.

When it comes to dealing with staff discipline, Wood said it is important to treat people with dignity and respect.

He said a superintendent in a small town school district needs to be visible and be open to talking with people and he will always have his door open.

Wood said his first priority in this role is to identify the issues the school district is facing. The physical and emotional safety of students and staff will be the first focus.



Students from the Ware Jr./Sr. High School Domestic Violence Task Force led the 10th annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk hosted by the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force this past Sunday in October.

support you as much as we can."

Imbier said there are several concerns about the condition of the existing playground structures, including the integrity of the wood. He said the project could take considerable time and money, and referenced the Grenville Park playground, which took about 10 years and cost roughly \$350,000 to complete.

"The main thing is safety," Imbier said.

The park was originally constructed in the 1990s to remember fall-

en Ware Firefighter Robert Beaugard, and built through a massive community effort.

The commissioners also worked to replace the Reed Municipal Pool, which has been closed for many years due to its poor condition.

At a Sept. 16 meeting, with the Selectboard, Talbot said the town has been unsuccessful in securing grant funding to replace the pool, and it is time to explore other options.

Imbier said the cost to replace the pool and add a splash pad was estimated to cost \$3.3 million a couple of

years ago. This cost did not include the bathhouse.

"That wasn't included in that process," he said.

Imbier said he predicts the total cost of the project now, including the bathhouse, could be closer to \$5 million. Imbier said they have applied for several grants without success, which has held up progress on the project.

"That's the next step - is funding," he said.

Imbier said when the survey was completed years ago to determine the best course of action for the pool; the engineers said the current location would be the most ideal due to its central location. He said the new pool would be in the same place as the current pool, as would the parking lot.

Parks Manager John Piechota said the estimated cost of the new pool does not include the cost to maintain and operate the pool, and hire employees to staff it.

Talbot said the closure of the pool has been problematic for the town, and securing grant funding doesn't seem to be working. She said the town is in a good position to borrow money for the project.

The Selectboard and commission members voted in favor of forming a subcommittee to continue looking into the cost to complete the project.

At the Oct. 6 meeting, Parks Commissioners Ken Higney and Kim Swarts were nominated as the chair and vice-chair of the swimming pool committee; and

Selectboard member Talbot as secretary. Other members of the pool committee include John Desmond and Imbier.

The committee voted to request \$200,000 to finalize the design plans through Capital Planning in an article on the special town meeting warrant in order to move forward with the project. This article failed to pass by the required two-thirds majority vote at the special town meeting, with 64 in favor and 67 opposed.

At the special town meeting, many people spoke in favor of the need for a design, while others felt the timing of this article wasn't ideal due to other financial needs in town, including the town's water and wastewater systems.

Memorial playground, pool

In January, the Parks and Recreation Commission met with volunteers from the community to discuss efforts to revitalize the Robert Beaugard Memorial Park, which is located behind the Reed Municipal Pool off Route 9.

Commission Chair William Imbier said the commission members are eager to work with the volunteers to make improvements at the park.

"We're totally on board," he said. "We are going to



THE CENTERED PLACE
SINCE 1988

Yoga & Meditation Classes

Offering both onsite and online classes

Voted Best Yoga in the region by
Town & Country Living Magazine 

Yoga leaves you more relaxed, centered,
open and energized.
Come experience this for yourself.

413 436 7374
286 BRIDGE ST, WARREN MA
WWW.THECENTEREDPLACE.COM

2025 Year in REVIEW

WARREN from page 1

properties through the tax-title process, which resulted in the sale of one property over the summer, and a large auction to liquidate more than a dozen later in the fall.

Public safety complex

The first Public Safety Complex Informational Meeting took place at the beginning of the year.

"This is an important initiative that is being presented," Town Administrator James Ferrera said.

Giving the presentation during this initial informational session was one of the Principals of Tecton Architects, Jeff McElravy. Prior to speaking on the various parcels in Warren that could potentially house the police and fire departments simultaneously, the meeting moved to discussing the challenges of the current facilities.

According to a study, McElravy said the size of a combined facility with both police and fire departments would consist of a building that is 25,400 square feet. Tecton also did a study of a complex featuring police, fire and town offices.

A financial advisor explained the tax impact during the informational session. All of the statistics are assumed with no future growth in the town.

There was an analysis of 20 years, 25 years and 30 years. All the interest rates listed in the analysis are all assumed as well. For example, for 20 years, \$30 million, and an assumed interest rate of 3.5%, it would be \$365 per year per \$100,000.

The third informational session was held on Sept. 27 inside the Quaboag Regional High School auditorium.

Ferrera explained that this is "a very fluid discussion" and things can change as the town collects more information that could lead to the Warren residents leading to a more informed decision.

After the first two informational meetings, town officials and Tecton have collected feedback and will present new options for the residents to look over in addition to what has been presented so far.

Ferrera mentioned that the town has been talking about getting a new police station since 1991. The study conducted by Tecton is based off the current needs of both departments.

Additional options will be addressed during this third community conversation.

A special town meeting was held on Nov. 20 and article 12 asked voters to transfer \$60,000 from Free Cash to pay for and conduct a study on the former Cornerstone Bank building located at 968 Main St. The purpose of the study is to potentially purchase and renovate the building to house the Police Department.



The ceremonial kickoff of Massachusetts Maple Season took place the first weekend in March at Deer Meadow Farm in Warren. To the left are members of the Julian family and representatives of Deer Meadow Farm. To the right of the ceremonial tapped tree is Winton Pitcoff (left), Mass Maple Producers Association President Kim Trust, and State Sen. Jake Oliveira.



Magi Bish (center) is shown with her daughter Heather and son John Jr. during the 25th anniversary vigil of 16-year-old Molly Bish's abduction from her lifeguarding job at Comins Pond on June 27, 2000.



Frizzle the Clown from Clowning for Kidz Foundation was hanging out at Mason's Grille during the annual tree lighting.



The Warren Firefighter's Association hosted their annual spaghetti supper to help raise funds for the purchase of equipment and training for the fire department.



Left to right, Quaboag Superintendent Stephen Duff, alongside Andrea Handfield, James Joinville and Julia Handfield during the Casey Handfield Benefit Concert at Quaboag Regional Middle High School. This benefit concert featured the Quaboag Regional Wind Ensemble and the Auburn High School Concert Band. All the proceeds from this event will be going to the Casey J. Handfield Memorial Scholarship in honor of Handfield who passed away back in February.

The third informational session was held on Sept. 27 inside the Quaboag Regional High School auditorium.

Ferrera explained that this is "a very fluid discussion" and things can change as the town collects more information that could lead to the Warren residents leading to a more informed decision.

After the first two informational meetings, town officials and Tecton have collected feedback and will present new options for the residents to look over in addition to what has been presented so far.

Ferrera mentioned that the town has been talking about getting a new police station since 1991. The study conducted by Tecton is based off the current needs of both departments.

Additional options will be addressed during this third community conversation.

A special town meeting was held on Nov. 20 and article 12 asked voters to transfer \$60,000 from Free Cash to pay for and conduct a study on the former Cornerstone Bank building located at 968 Main St. The purpose of the study is to potentially purchase and renovate the building to house the Police Department.

Article 12 passed with a vote of 86-35.

Article 13 asked voters to transfer \$53,000 from Free Cash to pay for and con-



Ozzie is a friendly llama who guests met at the Moonlight Run Farm Petting Zoo at the most recent Concert in the Park at Dean Park.

Jim Fountain, the owner of the bank building, said he hired an engineer to review the building and see if it was feasible. The idea was brought up to the Board of Selectmen as Fountain wanted them to consider the bank building as a "Plan B" option in addition to the options that were identified by Tecton Architects during their feasibility study to build a public safety complex.

Ferrera said this study will do an in-depth analysis of the bank building to see if it is capable of housing a modern-day police station that is aligned with modern standards. Ferrera also acknowledged the fact that the bank building is also a building that has aged overtime.

"This study is looking at a building that has aged," Ferrera said. The results of the study would help the residents and town officials figure out what they would be gaining if building does get refurbished into a police station.

Article 12 passed with a vote of 86-35.

Article 13 asked voters to transfer \$53,000 from Free Cash to pay for and con-

duct a study on Fire Station A located at 1012 Main St. The purpose of this study is to potentially renovate and add-on to the existing station.

Article 13 passed with a vote of 64-46.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the next steps for the public safety studies during their Dec. 4 meeting.

Two studies were approved by voters at the special town meeting; the first being a study on the former Cornerstone Bank building at 968 Main St. to if the building is feasible to host a modern-day police station. The other is to conduct a study for the possible extension of Fire Station A, located at 1012 Main St.

As part of the studies, the Selectmen want to identify the scope of the work that would have to be done on the fire station and the bank building if it is feasible.

Cutter Park and common improvements

There are several projects currently underway in town, including a Design



It was time to go "Back to the Future" with Warren Police dressed as Doc and Marty with the DeLorean as part of their car for Trunk or Treat at Quaboag Regional Middle High School.

Improvement Project for Cutter Park and the town common.

The public meeting was held by the Warren Town Common Improvement Project Committee on March 25 at the Shepard Municipal Building. This meeting welcomed two consultants from Weston & Sampson, who presented two conceptual designs based on input from the committee's previous meeting.

Principal Planner of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission John O'Leary introduced the two consultants from Weston & Sampson who will be presenting the two concepts that may shape the future of the common in the center of Warren. O'Leary said he hopes after this meeting Weston & Sampson will gain some feedback from the committee and from the public before finalizing the design plans.

The consultants went over the two plans that were based off the existing conditions and information of the historical background of the common. The Historical Commission provided infor-

mation to the consultants, which was considerate and well written to help them identify the historical value of the common.

In their presentation, the Weston & Sampson consultants highlighted historical objects on the common including the Hitchcock fountain and the gazebo. The consultants found it important to honor the history of the common and preserve the character of the site.

Another main topic was enhancing the functionality and accessibility of the Common.

One of the biggest goals the committee wants to see happen on the common are various events. At one point the common was a destination for events such as music and farmers markets.

The consultants still want to keep in line with what already exists on the site and possibly expand on it. Another idea mentioned in the concepts is an extension of the gazebo and possibly a pathway from the fountain towards the gazebo and towards Main Street.

The second design option talked about adding a pavilion space and a public restroom. One of the big changes featured in concept two is changing the parking spaces to add extra green space near the roadside.

There is also the idea of adding parking spaces close to the railway and a roadway can be built to lead cars into an access road to Main Street.

In May, the Planning Board heard an update from CMRPC regarding the town common redesign project.

O'Leary discussing the background of the project including receiving funds



Town Administrator James Ferrera led a press conference along with town department heads at 38 Elm St., a property that was taken in tax title for nonpayment of taxes and later sold.



Seniors enjoyed an Italian American heritage celebration and meal at the Warren Senior Center.

SPORTS

A TURLEY www.sports.turley.com SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS www.sports.turley.com

Gloria Cotaj goes for the layup.



Indians remain perfect with win over Sci-Tech

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARE—The first week of the high school basketball season was a successful one for the Ware Lady Indians.

After beginning the new season with a 29 point win at Monson High School on Dec. 12, the Lady Indians posted back-to-back days home victories against Hopkins Academy (32-21) and Quaboag Regional (26-24).

The Lady Indians had a perfect 4-0 record after squeaking out a 55-50 win versus the Springfield Sci-Tech Cybercats in a Franklin West match-up held at Paul Orszulak Gymnasium on Dec. 19.

“We won a couple of close games this week, which feels very good,” said long-time Ware head coach Dan Orszulak. “What I’m most encouraged about is that we haven’t played our best game yet, but we still have four wins. Our schedule is going to get a little bit tougher during the next couple of weeks.”

The Ware High School gymnasium is named in honor of Dan Orszulak’s father, who watched the game from the first row of the bleachers, along with

several other members of his family.

The last time that the Lady Indians had a 4-0 record was six years ago.

The 2019-20 team didn’t have any seniors. One of the six juniors was Aidyn Welsh, who finished her outstanding varsity basketball career with 1,081 points. The other five juniors were Audrey LaValley, Olivia Vadnais, Amelia Bonnayer, Chelsea Orszulak, and Lexie Orszulak.

“The players on that team had been playing basketball together since they were in the fourth or fifth grade,” coach Orszulak said. “We knew that they were going to be a very special team when they got to high school.”

Ware lost in the Western Mass. Division 4 semifinals in 2020, but they didn’t play in the postseason tournament the following season due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

A year ago, the Lady Indians captured the Franklin South League title. They lost a heartbreaker to rival Palmer (39-38) in a Division 5 state tournament preliminary round road game.

Prior to the start of this season, Ware was moved to the Franklin West Division. Their other league opponents are Amherst, Granby,



Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com
Madisyn Slattery attempts a jump shot.

Ludlow, Palmer, Monson and Sci-Tech.

“I know very little about the other teams in our new league, so I didn’t have a lot of expectations coming into this season,” Orszulak said. “We’ve been getting key contributions from several different players.”

Please see **INDIANS**, page 10



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Isabelle Manzano heads for the hoop.

Cougars fall at home to Tantasqua

WARREN – Prior to the Christmas holiday, Quaboag girls basketball faced neighbor rival Tantasqua Regional. The Warriors came in to Quaboag and played excellent defense and came away with a 43-29 win. Quaboag fell to a disappointing 0-5 on the season and next plays on Wednesday, Jan. 7 at Palmer High School at 7 p.m. The Warriors improved to 3-0 on the season with the win. The Warriors played a couple of games during the holiday break and are back in action on Friday, Jan. 2 at 3 p.m. at Fitchburg High School. They will host Belchertown on Tuesday, Jan. 6 at 6:30 p.m.



Maddie Dufresne attempts to secure the rebound.

Pioneers fall to 0-2 with loss

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Hannah Mellor fights to keep the ball.



Taylor Allen surveys the offensive end.



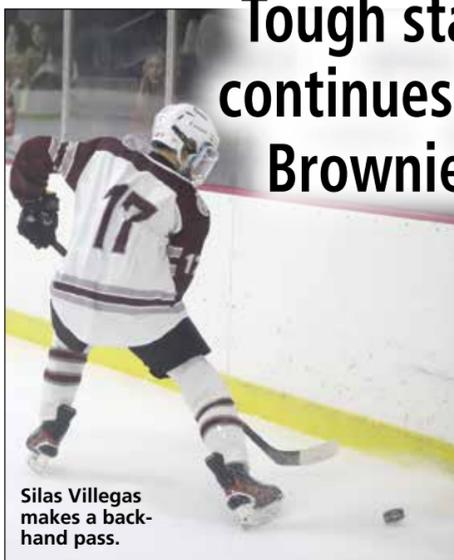
Ciara Green comes up with the rebound.

SPRINGFIELD – On Thursday, Dec. 18, Pathfinder girls basketball was defeated at Bay State Academy Charter 43-17. Pathfinder’s offense struggled in the defeat, though Addison Doktor managed double digits for the Pioneers with 11 points. Pathfinder will next travel to Duggan on Jan. 2 at 7 p.m.

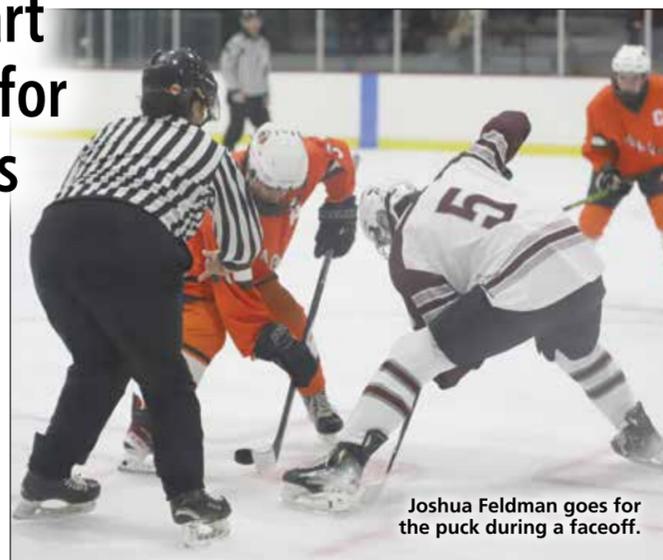


Maddie Potvin heads around the perimeter.

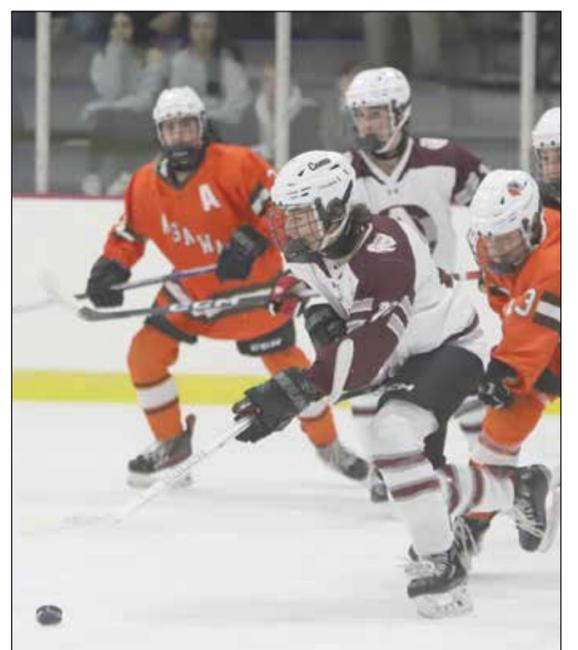
Tough start continues for Brownies



Silas Villegas makes a backhand pass.



Joshua Feldman goes for the puck during a faceoff.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Nathan Desbien tries to emerge from a crowd with the puck.

AMHERST – On Monday, Dec. 22, Agawam High School ice hockey continued to have a tough time defending goals against

the opposition in a 5-1 loss against host Amherst Regional at Orr Rink. Amherst, which co-ops with Pathfinder Tech, got off to

a slower start, but exploded for four goals in the third period to secure the win. Graham Arguin had two goals, Ethan Mooney and Joshau

Feldman had a single goal each. Anthony Barbarini had Agawam’s lone goal. Amherst is now 2-2-1 while Agawam fell to 0-5.

sports



Aiden Crane winds up to make a bounce pass.



Jacoby Dilling yells out a play.



Brady Patchen makes a pass.



Evan Sherblom receives a pass.



Isaac Patchen starts a run up the court.

Panthers suffer loss to Hudson

BARRE – On Friday, Dec. 19, Quabbin Regional High School boys basketball was defeated at home against Hudson High School 62-45. The loss made it 0-3 on the season for the Panthers. Quabbin would follow that with a defeat against Maynard High School on Tuesday, Dec. 23. Quabbin was scheduled to participate in the Gardner Holiday Tournament last weekend, with a matchup against South Lancaster to open the event. Coming up, the Panthers will host Oxford High School on Friday, Jan. 2 at 2 p.m.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

RIGHT: Jake Doty fights to get to the hoop.



INDIANS from page 9

It's still early in the season, but I really enjoy working with the players on this year's team."

The only senior listed on this year's varsity roster is Madi Slattery, who's following in the footsteps of her father (Scott), and older brothers (Devin and Dillon) as a three-sport athlete at Ware High School.

In the home win against the Cybercats, Slattery, who's a guard, scored two points, but she was credited with five assists, three steals, and two rebounds.

Slattery, who also plays soccer and softball, is a co-captain, along with junior forward Reese McKeever, who scored 17 points against Sci-Tech (1-2). She also had seven rebounds and four steals.

Sophomore forward Amelia Orszulak posted a double-double with 17 points and 10 rebounds.

"Amelia and Reese were our leading scorers last year,"



Reese McKeever gets the easy bank shot.

coach Orszulak said. "Reese made some big shots for us in tonight's game. Amelia is also a very good shooter."

Freshman guard Naomi Torres chipped in with nine points and freshman guard Gloria Cotaj scored all eight of her points during the first half.



Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com

Naomi Torres passes on the run.

The Lady Indians raced out to an 18-3 lead with 1:35 remaining in the first quarter.

Orszulak and McKeever combined to score 11 of those points.

Sci-Tech senior guard Da'Naysia Banks is normally a starter, but she didn't start

in the game against the Lady Indians.

Banks, who scored more than 400 points last year, entered the game for the first time at the end of the opening quarter and made an immediate impact. She hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key and made a lay-up, which closed the gap to 20-9 entering the second stanza.

Banks finished with a game-high 27 points. She scored 29 points in a 49-35 home win versus Monson a couple of days earlier.

Sophomore guard Ja'Nina Diaz added 14 points.

The Cybercats made four 3-pointers during the second quarter, but the Lady Indians went into their locker room holding a 31-22 halftime advantage.

Overall, Sci-Tech made a total of nine 3-pointers in first meeting against the Lady Indians.

Ware built a 50-32 lead at the end of the third quarter following a 10-0 run.

The run began with baskets from Torres and Slattery.

McKeever made a pair free throws before scoring a coast-to-coast lay-up. Then Orszulak capped it off by sinking a jumper from the right corner.

Banks, who was defended by freshman guard Daisy Laverdiere, was limited to just five points in the third quarter.

"Daisy didn't score any points, but I thought she played very well defensively against their leading scorer," Orszulak said. "(Banks) is one of the best girls' basketball players in this area."

Sci-Tech scored nine unanswered points at the start of the fourth quarter, which sliced their deficit in half.

A Diaz lay-up made the score 53-47 with 2:40 remaining in regulation, but the Lady Indians managed to keep the lead and celebrated their second league victory of the season.

Ware, who defeated Sci-Tech, 50-45, a year ago, is scheduled to make a trip to State Street in Springfield on Jan. 26.

Candidates for 2026 HoopHall announced

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the list of eligible candidates for the Class of 2026, featuring several high-profile first-time nominees.

Notable new candidates for the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2026 include the 1996 USA Basketball Women's National Team, Mike D'Antoni, Jamal Crawford, Elena Delle Donne, Blake Griffin, Joe Johnson, Candace Parker, Bruce Pearl, and Kelvin Sampson. Marv Albert, Mark Few, Doc Rivers, and Amar'e Stoudemire are among returning eligible candidates.

"The candidates for the Class of 2026 have each left an indelible impact on the game of basketball," said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. "Through defining performances, influential leadership, and achievements that helped elevate the sport on the national and international stage, this year's ballot recognizes those whose legacy continues to shape how the game is played, coached, and celebrated."

The first look at the list of eligible nominees was provided by "NBA Today" on ESPN, hosted by Malika Andrews, with Ramona Shelburne, Tim Bontemps, Kendrick Perkins, and Shams Charania in studio. A complete list of eligible candidates can be found below.

Finalists chosen from the applicable Category Screening Committees for the Class of 2026 will be announced at a later date. The entire Class of 2026 will be unveiled during a nationally televised broadcast on Saturday, April 4, during Final Four Weekend.

The Finalist and Class Announcement times and broadcast networks will be announced by Monday, Feb. 9.

Enshrinement
Please see **HOOPHALL**, page 11

2025 Year in REVIEW

WARREN from page 8

through the Community Development Block Grant program from fiscal years 2022-2023.

Weston & Sampson had a proposal for the town's Town Common Improvement Project. A consultant has completed two proposed conceptual designs that the Planning Board will review. O'Leary shared his screen and showed the anticipated schedule for this improvement project.

O'Leary talked about the key design considerations and recommendations. The biggest consideration is honoring the history and preserving character of the town common.

The character of the town common includes the tree canopy, natural minerals and gentle slopes.

The design would also explore selective tree removal



The annual Easter egg hunt was held at Lucy Stone Park in April and had an amazing turnout.

al when necessary and new tree planting to ensure ongoing canopy renewal. The design also wants to renovate or possibly replace the gazebo on the town common.

Another historical feature is to incorporate the four historic 1938 bridge lights into the new path lighting design.

The proposed conceptual design would also enhance functionality and accessibility. The town common could have accessible pathways and

placed benches to enhance comfort.

On-going parking challenges can be addressed in the town center through an improved layout and additional options. The plan could also feature fencing to enhance safety while blending in with overall design aesthetic.

The plan displays five parking spaces with an additional nine spaces that could be in a closed off section and

only be used when there is a demand for them. For example, a special event on the town common.

The board also asked about the fountain and if it could be rehabilitated. Planning Board Chair Richard Eichacker asked about the possibility of having more parking available near the already existing parking lot.

On May 19, the Town Common Improvement

Project Committee held a virtual meeting to discuss concept design ideas.

The consultants were able to clarify the exact area of where the property line is there will soon be a final design that will be presented at the town meeting. The consultants reviewed the considerations and recommendations for the town common and have implemented those into the design they had presented at this recent public meeting.

The input from the first public meeting included the fact that the existing gazebo is well liked, but accessibility improvements are needed. If there were any expansion on the gazebo, it should match the style.

Another suggestion was seat walls being added to increase seating and add gathering areas. There is also a high interest in incorporating gardens and buffer plants in the common.

The biggest topic the committee discussed with the Weston & Sampson consultants is what the savings would be for the town if it purchased the train depot, which is privately owned.

The committee feels there are a lot more opportunities for growth in the town common and the train depot could add on to having additional uses.

For the final design development, the consultants shared a map of the possible final plan for the town common. One of the biggest updates featured in this proposed plan is the additional parking spots, totaling up to 13 near the entrance way. There is also a gravel roadway with seven reinforced grass parking spots.

In July, the Board of Selectmen reviewed a presentation by Weston & Sampson consultants regarding the proposed Town Common redesign project.

In October, a public meeting was held to discuss the Cutter Park Improvement Project.

A consultant from GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. out of Springfield, Anja Ryan Duffy, attended the first meeting and provided basic concepts around how the park can be improved considering its current existing layout.

Please see **WARREN**, page 12

public safety

obituary

Ware Police Log

During the week of Dec. 14-23, the Ware Police Department responded to 37 miscellaneous calls, 39 administrative calls, nine traffic violations, five emergency 911 calls, five thefts/larcenies, three trespasses, five harassments/stalks/threats, one structure fire, two motor vehicle accidents, three safety hazards, eight animal calls and 37 motor vehicle stops in the town of Ware.

Sunday, Dec. 14
12:16 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Park Street, Arrest Made
11 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, North Street, Services Rendered
1:54 p.m. Trespass/Unwanted, South Street, Could Not Locate
7:23 p.m. Safety Hazard, Doane Road, Dispatch Handled

Monday, Dec. 15
3 a.m. Administrative, Westbrook Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
3:17 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Otis Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
11:20 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Advised
3:13 p.m. Weapons/Firearms, West Main Street, Arrest Made
5:03 p.m. Trespass/Unwanted, South Street, Services Rendered
5:38 p.m. Theft/Larceny, West Street, Services Rendered
7:29 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued

Tuesday, Dec. 16
8:20 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Walnut Street, Dispatch Handled

Wednesday, Dec. 17
4:51 a.m. Theft/Larceny, Highland Street, Services Rendered
5:43 a.m. Theft/Larceny, North Street, Unfounded
8:27 a.m. Assault, West Street, Services Rendered
9:50 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, West Street, Services Rendered
12:44 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Morse Avenue, Advised
5:25 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Main Street, Report Made

9:03 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Belchertown, Citation/Warning Issued

Thursday, Dec. 18
1:19 p.m. Drugs, West Street, City Ordinance Violation
5:47 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Services Rendered
6:14 p.m. Assault, North Street, Arrest Made
7:54 p.m. Traffic Collision, Bacon Road, Assist Given

Friday, Dec. 19
2:48 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued
9:09 a.m. Trespass/Unwanted, Osborne Road, Advised
10:41 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, North Street, Services Rendered

Saturday, Dec. 20
1:17 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Highland Street, Citation/Warning Issued
9:02 a.m. Structure Fire, Monson Turnpike Road, Investigated
6:43 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Warren Road, Citation/Warning Issued
11:24 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued

Sunday, Dec. 21
6:33 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Otis Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
4:48 p.m. Safety Hazard, Greenwich Road, Could Not Locate
4:59 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Main Street, Report Made
5:07 p.m. Safety Hazard, Greenwich Road, Advised
10:55 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Park Street, Investigated

Monday, Dec. 22
5:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued
5:36 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
10:24 a.m. Theft/Larceny, West Street, Investigated
4:19 p.m. Assist Other Agency, North Street, Arrest Made
11:17 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, Otis Avenue, Investigated

Hardwick Police Log

During the week of Dec. 15-22 the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 69 building/property checks, 31 directed/area patrols, 15 radar assignments, one traffic control, 11 emergency 911 calls, six citizen assists, two assist other agencies, one motor vehicle investigation, two complaints, one harassment, eight safety hazards, three animal calls and seven motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

Monday, Dec. 15
1:05 p.m. 911 Hang-up, Abandoned, School House Drive, Officer handled
4:44 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital
6:40 p.m. Assist Citizen, Barre Road, Served in Hand
7:18 p.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Officer Handled

Tuesday, Dec. 16
8:49 a.m. Harassment, Shore Road, Spoken To
3:38 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Arrest(s) Made
5:19 p.m. 911 Fire/Other, Hardwick Road, Services Rendered
5:42 p.m. Parking Complaint, Taylor Street, Officer Handled
8:55 p.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Officer Handled

Wednesday, Dec. 17
4:24 a.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Prospect Street, Officer Handled
10:21 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Jackson Road, Transported to Hospital
11:34 a.m. 911 Welfare Check, Greenwich Road, Spoken To

Thursday, Dec. 18
6:25 a.m. Assist Citizen, Greenwich Road, Dispatch Handled
10:16 a.m. Safety Hazard, Greenwich Road, Spoken To

Friday, Dec. 19
8:01 a.m. Safety Hazard, Goddard Road, Removed Hazard
9:53 a.m. Medical Alarm, Upper Church Street, Transported to Hospital
10:30 a.m. Utility Issues, Collins Road, Services Rendered
10:34 a.m. Safety Hazard, Greenwich Road, Officer Handled

Editor's Note: People in this country are presumed to be innocent until found guilty in a court of law. Police provide us with the information you read on this page as public record information. If you or any suspect listed here is found not guilty or has charges dropped or reduced, we will gladly print that information as a follow-up upon being presented with documented proof of the court's final disposition.

10:34 a.m. Safety Hazard, Sessions Road, Officer Handled
10:44 a.m. 911 Elevator Call/Alarms, Old Petersham Road, Services Rendered
10:52 a.m. Safety Hazard, Collins Road, Officer Handled
1:43 p.m. Safety Hazard, Pine Street, Referred to Other Agency
2:11 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Main Street, Negative Contact
2:42 p.m. Safety Hazard, Jackson Road, Officer Handled
4:15 p.m. Safety Hazard, Pine Street, Referred to Other Agency

Saturday, Dec. 20
10:40 a.m. 911 Assist Other Agency, Unknown, Dispatch Handled
10:58 a.m. Fire/Alarm, Main Street, Investigated
1:04 p.m. Complaint, Bridge Street, Dispatch Handled
2:54 p.m. Assist Citizen, Church Lane, Officer Handled
6:34 p.m. 911 Animal Call, Jackson Road, Referred to Other Agency
10:37 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, Bridge Street, Officer Handled

Sunday, Dec. 21
1:22 p.m. Assist Citizen, North Street, Officer Handled
6:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning

Monday, Dec. 22
3:51 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Ruggles Hill Road, Transported to Hospital

Cheryl J. Lemoine, 65

HARDWICK – Cheryl J. Lemoine, 65, of Hardwick, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2025, at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, surrounded by love.



Cheryl was a devoted mother, sister, and friend whose kindness and gentle spirit touched everyone who knew her. She is survived by her daughter, Melissa A. O'Brien, and her husband, Richard of Hardwick; and her longtime companion of 34 years, Paul Sloat. She was predeceased by her husband, Richard J. Lemoine.

Born into a large and loving family, Cheryl was the daughter of Harold and Joan (Martin) Boudreau and was one of ten siblings. She leaves behind her sisters, Karen Mica, Sharon Long, Shelly Boudreau, and Sherry Gould; and her brothers, Darryl, Darren, and Ricky Boudreau. She was predeceased by her brothers, Harold and Derick Boudreau.

Cheryl was a proud and loving grandmother to Dustin and Kylie Lemoine and Eithen O'Brien, who brought her endless joy. She also leaves behind

many cherished nieces, nephews, and dear friends who will miss her deeply.

For many years, Cheryl worked as a store clerk at Big Y and Walmart, where she enjoyed greeting familiar faces and sharing conversations with customers.

Outside of work, she found happiness in the simple pleasures of life —hunting and fishing in local areas, camping, peaceful walks along the ocean collecting sea glass, and quiet moments spent on her front porch swing with a good book. These were the moments that brought her comfort and peace.

Calling hours for Cheryl will be held on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, from 9-11 a.m. in Charbonneau Funeral Home, 30 Pleasant St., Ware. A Celebration of Life will follow from noon-4 p.m. at Hardwick Winery. An online tribute page is available at charbonneaufh.com.

Death notice

Lemoine, Cheryl J.
Died Dec. 17, 2025
Services Jan. 10, 2026

Trinity church hosts Candlelight Nativity walk

WARE – On Friday evening, Jan. 2 from 5-7 p.m. Trinity Episcopal Church invites the public to a Candlelight Nativity walk in the church, which will be decorated with Nativity

and creche displays from its parishioners, as well as Trinity's traditional Christmas Putz display.

There will be refreshments, hot chocolate and coffee served.

DCR announced 262-acre land acquisition in Deerfield

BOSTON – The Department of Conservation and Recreation announced the acquisition of three parcels of privately-owned land in the Town of Deerfield, representing a total 262.5 acres that will now be under the state's protection.

"Protecting this land means more places for people to hike, explore and take in the incredible views that make Deerfield Valley so special," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "We're grateful to the Rogers family for entrusting the state with this land, so we can protect local wildlife, preserve clean water and ensure that future generations can enjoy this space."

The property was acquired through DCR's Land Protection Program, which facilitates land conservation for the purposes of protecting plants and animals, conserving natural and cultural resources, and providing recreational spaces for the public.

DCR acquired the property from the Rogers family, who managed this property as part of their home and business, Hilltop Farm.

"My family has owned this forest land since the 1890s. My grandmother, my mother, and my siblings and I grew up on this land. My father farmed and forested it for 45 years," said Arthur W. Rogers II. "I am very happy that, through this sale to the State of Massachusetts, these beloved forests will be protected forever."

The newly acquired land is in close proximity to Mount Sugarloaf State Reservation and directly abuts the Pocumtuck Ridge Trail, a historic path that runs along various properties on the ridgeline, which offers views of the Deerfield Valley. The property contains rare species habitats and is a climate resilient forest of high ecological diversity due to varied terrain that includes multiple cliffs, wetlands, streams, and significant changes in elevation.

The westernmost section of the land lies at the top of the Pocumtuck Ridgeline which is visible throughout most of the Town of Deerfield and some of the surrounding towns.

Warren Police Log

During the week of Dec. 7-14, the Warren Police Department responded to 122 building/property checks, 15 community policings, eight emergency 911 calls, one burglary, three parking issues, two safety concerns and 12 motor vehicle stops in the town of Warren.

Sunday, Dec. 7
6:49 a.m. Burglary/Breaking and Entering, Cutler Road, Unfounded
8:04 a.m. 911 Hang-up/Misdial/Abandoned, Southbridge Road, Officer Spoke to Party
10:32 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, South Street, Written Warning

Monday, Dec. 8
10:11 a.m. Motor Vehicle

Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint

Tuesday, Dec. 9
6:08 a.m. Abdominal/Back Pain, Prospect Street, Mutual Aid Transport
9:19 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint

Wednesday, Dec. 10
9:07 a.m. Falls, Keys Road, Ambulance Signed Refusal
5:59 p.m. Motor Vehicle Disabled, Old West Brookfield Road, Vehicle Towed

Thursday, Dec. 11
12:42 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Brimfield Road, Transported to Hospital
5:55 a.m. Motor Vehicle

Disabled, Southbridge Road, Vehicle Towed

8:48 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Winthrop Terrace, Transported to Hospital
9:06 a.m. Mutual Aid, West Brookfield, Mutual Aid Assist
10:53 a.m. Breathing Difficulty, Brimfield Road, Transported to Hospital
6:52 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
11:13 p.m. Welfare Check, Crescent Street, Ambulance Signed Refusal

Friday, Dec. 12
7:58 a.m. Parking Issues, Old West Brookfield Road, Officer Chief/Advised
8:27 p.m. Disturbance/Disorderly, Shamrock Drive, Report Filed
10:45 p.m. Sick/Unknown,

Nelligan Terrace, Transported to Hospital

Saturday, Dec. 13
4:46 a.m. Stroke, Main Street, Transported to Hospital

8:50 a.m. Safety Concern, Milton O. Fountain Way, Officer Spoke to Party
10:50 a.m. Parking Issues, Cronin Road, Officer/Chief Advised
11:41 a.m. Parking Issues, Cronin Road, Officer/Chief Advised
4:43 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
5:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Ware Road, Written Warning
9:31 p.m. Safety Concern, Burbank Avenue, Unfounded

SCHOOL from page 3 and wondered what the current requirements are for passing. The requirements are set by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and are okay as long as it's supported by the legislative body.

PD and parent teacher conferences
Professional development and parent Teacher confer-

ences have been held, and one professional development was about Universal Design for Learning.

Duff wanted to share the success of the fire academy training that was held as students practiced search and rescue. A total of 20 kids were there including graduates of Quaboag who are now working as EMTs and fire-fighters in the local towns.

State Sen. Jake Oliveira came to witness this train-

ing and was impressed and thought of the idea of the school presenting this at the state house.

"This speaks volumes to the programming we offer," Duff said.

The wellness committee met last month, and Duff said they're crafting a policy that has to be in line with what's going on with federal guidelines.

Duff also announced that the lighting project was voted

on at the Warren Special Town Meeting.

Warren voters voted in favor of approving \$60,000 for the project. The \$60,000 is Warren's portion for the stadium field lighting and the tennis court lighting at Quaboag. Duff reminded the school committee that the tennis courts and the track are not only used by students, but also by the public, indicating the importance of the lighting project being done.

HOOPHALL from page 10
Weekend will begin at the Mohegan Sun on Friday, Aug. 14, with the Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala, followed by the Enshrinement Ceremony the next day at Springfield's historic Symphony Hall.
All VIP Packages, single-event tickets to

the Ceremony, Tip-Off Celebration, and Awards Gala, as well as other ancillary events, will go on sale on Saturday, Apr. 4. All packages and tickets will be available for purchase at hoopshall.com.

The complete listing of events and pricing will be released on Monday, Feb. 9.

2025 Year in REVIEW

WARREN from page 10

Cutter Park consists of a 1.6-acre park located on Main Street west of the town center within walking distance for many nearby residents, making it a small but vital recreational area within the town center. The park contains a baseball/softball field, playground equipment and picnic/gathering space.

The town is currently developing a master plan for Cutter Park, which will provide a vision for the park and identify future improvements for recreation, landscape aesthetics, and accessible amenities to expand user engagement.

Sue Ramsey of Warren Parks & Recreation shared some of the ideas that were shared by residents and abutters to the park property.

So far, the desired improvements to Cutter Park include better play equipment for all ages. A splash pad was brought up or some water feature that can be enjoyed during the summer months. A picnic area with a restroom or a pavilion space was also shared.

Ramsey said there was brief discussion about adding pickleball, but there will be further discussion on the idea considering noise and neighboring residencies. Further studies will be done to see if



Students of the Quaboag Entrepreneurship Club are joined by (left to right) state Sen. Jake Oliveira, Vice Principal Michael Lavelle, state Sen. Peter Durant, Club Advisor Jean DiRico, state Rep. Todd Smola and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume during the reopening of the school store.

pickleball is a good option. Parking conditions for the park were also addressed. Warren Parks & Recreation would like to have more land and provide parking for patrons.

Review of Master Plan

Residents and town officials gathered at St. Stan's Polish Club in West Warren to celebrate the completion of the town's Master Plan in September.

Giving the presentation was Sarah O'Brien, Principal Planner at Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. The development of this master plan started in January of 2024 while CMRPC

worked alongside Warren's Community Development Advisory Committee.

The presentation had a review of each chapter of the master plan and a public comment period, which is open until the end of September.

The public is able to review copies in person or can review the entire document on www.warrenmasterplan.com. There are a total of seven chapters that make up the plan and O'Brien went over each one in her presentation.

What is considered the "hard part" of the master plan process is to implement the plan, which involves various town departments and how it is tied to the budget process.

In the last few years, CMRPC has completed about half a dozen master plans, and O'Brien said her, and

her associates are passionate about completing these plans for towns in the central Massachusetts region.

"We love doing these master plans," O'Brien said.

Having a master plan helps the town pursue future grants and the plan shows the state that the town is eligible to qualify for grants.

Tax-title properties

Ferrera announcement the sale of a property the town had taken through the tax title process over the summer.

The sale closed on 38 Elm St. earlier that day, Ferrara said at the Oct. 9 press conference.

"We are pleased to report back to the town that the property has been sold,"

Ferrera said.

The property sold for \$151,000, allowing the town to recover the approximately \$80,000 owed in back taxes, interest and fees that had accrued.

"We are happy we were able to get all of what was owed back," Ferrara said.

The owner of the house at 38 Elm St. had not paid taxes on the property for 10 years when the town performed an eviction and took ownership back in August.

Ferrera said the property was purchased by a young couple looking to fix it up and make it their home.

He said it was a "very positive ending," to a difficult situation.

"It's a win for the neighborhood and the town," Ferrara said.

Ferrera thanked all of the town's departments involved with making this possible, and for getting the property back on the tax roll.

Ferrera also announced that the town will be holding a public auction on Tuesday, Nov. 18, about 45 bidders filled the gym of the Shepard Municipal Building for the opportunity to buy one of 14 tax-title properties in town at a public auction.

Ferrera said the purpose of the public auction was to sell the properties, which are owned by the town through the tax-title foreclosure process due to nonpayment of taxes.

"It is the town's goal to get these properties back on the tax roll," he said at the auction. "To sell these properties and recover some of the

costs."

The first property up for bid was a house located at 1059 Main St., which sold for a total of \$25,000.

The second property was a house adjacent to the first one, located at 1061 Main St. After some back and forth between bidders and the auctioneer, this property sold for \$9,000.

A two-family home at 38 Maple St. drew a lot of interest from bidders and eventually sold for \$52,000, one of the highest bids for the day. 71 Pine St. (a former house lot that is buildable) also sold for \$52,000.

A 2.5-acre buildable lot on Town Farm Road was next to sell for a total of \$32,000.

A 1.7-acre buildable former house lot at 64 Richardson Avenue sold for the highest amount of the day, at \$53,000.

Twenty-four acres of potentially buildable land on Cutler Road didn't get any bids the first time it was presented by Sullivan, but in the second round it sold for \$6,000.

Other sales were as follows: Crouch Road, \$7,000; High Street, \$5,000; Southbridge Road (2.2 acres), \$41,000; Southbridge Road (1 acre), \$34,000; and near Bemis Road, \$5,000.

There were no bids placed on 20 Chapel St., a 5,227 square foot potentially buildable lot and a 6,098 square foot lot on Pleasant Street.

Ferrera said pending closings, the public auction unofficially recovered just over \$320,000 for the town.

2025 Year in REVIEW

HARDWICK from page 7

in the 1930s and is located within the socially, culturally and economically emerging Hardwick Center.

The Select Board has listed the redevelopment options for the Calvin Paige building as well as uses. The preferred uses include historical, office space, studio space and community use.

At its Dec. 22 meeting, the board signed a deed on the Paige building, which will give ownership back to the Mixer Family. Select Board Chair Eric Vollheim said the Friends of the Paige Building are working together with the Hardwick Community Fair regarding the building.

PILOT policy

In January, the Select Board had a joint meeting with the Finance Committee to have a workshop on the payment in lieu of taxes policy. This policy involves payments requested by a city or municipality from a nonprofit organization that owns tax-exempt property within city or municipal limits.

Members of the Finance Committee and the Select Board joined together to research and identify the best conclusions to better understand the policy and how they should approach and negotiate with nonprofits in town and how they benefit the community.

There is a total of 33.43% of land in Hardwick that is owned by nonprofits.

In February, the Select Board voted to adopt the PILOT policy.

As part of the policy there will be a bi-annual review of the PILOT policy to see what the contributions are from each nonprofit.

According to the policy the board is considering to adopt is that each nonprofit in Hardwick will be looked at individually. Prior to reading the board agreed that all property owners should give a fair share of services.

The policy reminds the town of the critical role nonprofits play in partnerships,



The Department of Fish and Game Office of Fishing & Boating Access and Department of Conservation and Recreation celebrated the new boat ramp at the DCR's Quabbin Reservoir Fishing Area #3 this past April. Left to right stands state Sen. Peter Durant, state Rep. Todd Smola, John Scannell, Quabbin Fishermen's Association President Clayton Sydla, MWRA Director Fred Laskey, DFG Commissioner Tom O'Shea, and OFBA Acting Director Terry Smith during the ribbon cutting.

collaborative relationships, and finding way that benefits both the nonprofit and the town. Select Board member William Tinker said he believes it is essential to have a PILOT policy in place for better structure and seeing annual fees to reduce the financial burden on the town's taxpayers.

"This policy is designed to ensure that nonprofits contribute their fair share to the services they rely on, ultimately reducing the financial burden on taxpayers," Tinker said. "Our duty is to act in the best interest of the citizens of Hardwick, ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used responsibly and equitably. The pressure from nonprofit entities should not outweigh our obligation to the residents who fund and rely on town services."

Contributions will be different for each nonprofit as they will be reviewed individually.

Time capsule

A small box sat on a shelf in the town safe for 50 years, waiting to be opened the first week of June as instructed by the sixth grades students attending the Myron Richardson School (now the Municipal Building) in 1975.

As per the students' instructions, the Select Board chair had the honor of opening the tightly sealed box. Members of that class and more recent Hardwick Elementary School students waited in anticipation to open

the time capsule after the Annual Town Meeting.

Vollheim handed each item to the school principal at the time Charles LeMaitre, who came for the event.

Former principal LeMaitre gave the background on many of the items. His daughter Michele included some of her embroidery work. Russell Prouty included some of his math work in the capsule.

On a non-school related theme, Rodney Witkos placed a collection of bottle caps secured to a piece of cardboard.

There was a cassette tape and a 45 rpm record by Stevie Wonder. Some wondered if Margaret Reidy was the student, who included one or both of those items. A French horn player, she became a school music teacher and presently directs the Quabbin Community Band.

Back in 1975, several members of the class attended a Selectmen's meeting to get permission to make a time capsule, store it in the town safe and request it be opened 50 years later the first week in June 2025.

Other items in the time capsule included a GI Marine doll, a Barbie doll, a smiley face, a blank unsigned check from the Ware Trust Co., a list of first aid facts, a crochet pattern, a letter from Principal LeMaitre dated June 9, 1975, a study guide on American history, a motorcycle license, several newspapers including a June 1, 1975 copy of the Ware River News, a J.C. Whitney catalog, drawings by Richard Perry and Krystal

Minor, car keys, a drawing from a classmate and much more.

Residents' accomplishments

Hardwick resident and Quabbin Regional High School senior Ellie Frost and her team of volunteers helped to save dozens of lives on Feb. 27, when they organized an all-day blood drive in the school's gymnasium, in partnership with Rhode Island Blood Center.

This blood drive was Frost's community service project as a member of the school's National Honor Society.

"I really liked the idea of a blood drive," Frost said. "I don't think we've done one in about 11 years."

Once she settled on the idea of hosting a blood drive, Frost reached out to several blood donation centers and quickly heard back from the Rhode Island Blood Center, which was eager to be involved.

By 2:30 p.m. on the day of the blood drive, Rhode Island Blood Center had collected 52 pints of blood from students, school staff and members of the community. Frost said they had 89 people sign up in advance, which was just one person shy of the 90 person maximum for the day, not including walk-ins.

Frost said she also had 18 students sign up to volunteer during the blood drive; with each one earning community service hours.

After graduation, Frost plans to attend college in New York and study art history and anthropology.

Resident and author Lisa Janice "LJ" Cohen released her ninth novel, the first in a trilogy called "Litany for a Broken World".

Cohen began writing science fiction novels about 20 years ago, having previously worked as a physical therapist for 25 years.

Cohen said she was inspired to write "Litany for a Broken World" after hearing a story about a tent city in Boston on NPR. She decided to set her novel in the world of the unhoused.

"I thought it would be important enough to do that," she said. "As a physical therapist you worked with unhoused patients."

Cohen held a book reading and signing at the Stone Church Cultural Center on March 16, welcoming questions from the audience and sharing her creative process.

Cohen read several pages of the first chapter of the novel, which introduced the character Jace, "a lone man wandering the streets of a small, post-industrial, pre-spacefaring city." Readers learn that this city is Boston, as Jace comes upon a sign for the Boston Public Library, where he goes to seek warmth and information.

"The library was my refuge. My best place," Cohen said.

Raised by a couple of avid readers, Cohen began fully reading books by kindergarten and recalled that Meg from "A Wrinkle in Time" was a character she was very drawn to.

Cohen described the character of Meg as her friend, but added that her own characters that she has created tend to fight her all of the time. She said she "eavesdrops" on her characters having interactions to capture their authentic identity.

Cohen noted that her characters are not heroes, but rather people, with flaws like anyone else. This novel has even included the addition of an animal character.

Poplar the dog, showed up in "Litany for a Broken World" rather unexpectedly, and was not part of the original story.

"She's my favorite character," Cohen said. "I've had a lot of dogs in my life."

Cohen credited her team

with giving her the support she needs to bring her stories to life, as well as her husband, Neil, who always reads her first drafts.

"It's important to have a good team," she said.

Cohen said she originally intended "Litany for a Broken World" to be a standalone novel, but now it is the first in a trilogy with the second book, "Every Sky a Stranger" due out next February, followed by the third book, "Compass for the Lost".

"This was a hard book," Cohen said. "It took a lot out of me...I'm also really glad I wrote it."

Rural healthcare challenges

Judi Korzec provided the Select Board with an update from the Health Care Task Force regarding its efforts to create a rural healthcare model and bring services to the town.

Korzec spoke against Ware Selectboard's support of Baystate Health remaining as the beneficiary of the Lewis Gilbert Trust, and said that a Convenient Care location in Ware will not benefit the residents of Hardwick.

Korzec said there has not been a good working relationship between the two towns, and that each town has very different needs.

"The Gilbert Trust is ours and we have been completely blocked from all of these discussions," she said. "This trust needs to support our community too. Mr. Gilbert left this to us and you...this trust is for both of us."

Korzec said the town will need seed money to start its rural healthcare model, which could include a small urgent care, a floating pharmacy, eye care, mammography and more. This seed money could come from the trust if a new trustee and beneficiary was chosen.

"We are a healthcare desert," Korzec said.

The rural healthcare model would provide "something unique, rural, different," she said.

Korzec requested that the Ware Selectboard include representatives from Hardwick on the board of the trust, and to be included in meetings with Baystate Health.

"So we're building a model that works for both of us," she said.

SEE MORE PUBLIC NOTICES ON PAGE 15

public notices



COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS
ENERGY FACILITIES
SITING BOARD
NOTICE OF ADJUDICATION
AND PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING



Central-Western MA
Energy Project |
Mass.gov

EFSB 25-01/D.P.U. 25-16 –

New England Power Company d/b/a National Grid
(Central to Western Massachusetts Energy Replacement Project)

Project Summary and Public Comment Hearing Overview

New England Power Company d/b/a National Grid (“National Grid” or the “Company”) has asked the Energy Facilities Siting Board (“Siting Board”) to approve its proposal to replace two existing overhead 69 kilovolt (“kV”) transmission lines, three associated tap lines, and their supporting structures (“Existing Lines”) with new overhead 115 kV transmission lines, tap lines, and structures (“Rebuilt Lines”) in an existing transmission corridor through Millbury, Auburn, Leicester, Spencer, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, Ware, Belchertown, Pelham, Shutesbury, Leverett, Sunderland, Deerfield, Conway, Shelburne, and Buckland, Massachusetts (the “Project”). The Project would be capable of operating at 115 kV, although it would initially operate at 69 kV, as does the existing line.

The Siting Board will conduct three hybrid public comment hearings with both in-person and remote participation options, as follows:

Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Leicester Town Hall Gym
3 Washburn Square
Leicester, MA 01524

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.
Deerfield Town Hall
Main Meeting Room
8 Conway St
South Deerfield, MA 01373

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Belchertown Town Hall Auditorium
2 Jabish St
Belchertown, MA 01007

Remote attendees: join by using this link – <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87391827695> from a computer, tablet, or smart device. For audio-only participation attendees can dial in at (646) 558-8656 (not a toll-free number) and then enter the **Webinar ID: 873-9182-7695**.

See additional comment instructions and Severe Weather Notification below.

To provide oral comments at a public comment hearing (in person, on Zoom, or by telephone), notify Yonathan Mengesha at Yonathan.Mengesha@mass.gov or (617) 305-3544. Provide your name, email address, mailing address, and docket number (“EFSB 25-01”) by 5:00 p.m. **the day before the meeting**. You can also sign up in person the day of the hearing beginning an hour before the hearing. Pre-registered commenters will speak first, and others will speak next.

The Siting Board also invites written comments on the Project. Written comments will be most useful to the Siting Board if submitted by **January 28, 2026**. Persons or groups who wish to be involved in the Siting Board proceeding (beyond providing comments at the public comment hearing or in writing) may seek to intervene as a party or to participate as a limited participant. Any petition to intervene or participate must likewise be filed no later than January 28, 2026, and must follow the instructions below.

Severe Weather Notification and Alternative Dates

In the event of severe weather, the Siting Board may postpone the public comment hearing(s). Any postponement will be announced on the Siting Board’s Project website (accessible via the URL link or QR code at the top of this notice’s first page) and the Zoom link for the public comment hearing. If any of the hearings is postponed, it will be rescheduled at the location and on the planned alternate date indicated below, and the deadlines for submitting public comments and filing for intervention or limited participant status will be extended as indicated below.

Important Dates:**Leicester Public Comment Hearing:**

Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Alternate: January 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (Belchertown)

Deerfield Public Comment Hearing:

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.
Alternate: January 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (in Belchertown)

Belchertown Public Comment Hearing:

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Alternate: January 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (in Belchertown)

Written Public Comment Deadline:

Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. (Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. if any of the public comment hearings is postponed)

Deadline to file for intervention or limited participant status:

Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. (Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. if any of the public comment hearings is postponed)

Public Review of the Company’s Petitions

A description of the Project, links to the Company’s petitions, attachments and analysis, and periodic updates are electronically available on the Siting Board’s webpage for the Project at [Central-Western MA Energy Project | Mass.gov](https://www.cmatowmaenergy.com/). The Company also maintains a webpage for the Project at <https://www.cmatowmaenergy.com/>. Hard copies of the Company’s petitions and attachments are available for public inspection at the following locations:

Millbury

- Town Clerk’s Office, 127 Elm St., Millbury, MA 01527
- Millbury Public Library, 128 Elm St., Millbury, MA 01527

Auburn

- Town Clerk’s Office, 104 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501
- Auburn Public Library, 369 Southbridge St., Auburn, MA 01501

Leicester

- Town Clerk’s Office, 3 Washburn Sq., Leicester, MA 01524
- Leicester Public Library, 1136 Main St., Leicester, MA 01524

Spencer

- Town Clerk’s Office, 157 Main St., Spencer, MA 01562
- Richard Sugden Library, 8 Pleasant St., Spencer, MA 01562

East Brookfield

- Town Clerk, Memorial Town Complex, 122 Connie Mack Dr., East Brookfield, MA 01515
- East Brookfield Public Library, 122 Connie Mack Dr., East Brookfield, MA 01515

North Brookfield

- Town Clerk’s Office, 215 N Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535
- Hoston Free Public Library, 161 N Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535

West Brookfield

- Town Clerk’s Office, 2 E Main St., West Brookfield, MA 01585
- Merriam-Gilbert Public Library, 3 W Main St., West Brookfield, MA 01585

Ware

- Town Clerk’s Office, 126 Main Street, Suite F, Ware, MA 01082
- Ware Library, 37 Main St., Ware, MA 01082

Belchertown

- Town Clerk’s Office, 2 Jabish St., Belchertown, MA 01007
- Clapp Memorial Library, 19 S Main St., Belchertown, MA 01007

Pelham

- Pelham Town Office Building, 351 Amherst Rd., Pelham, MA 01002
- Pelham Public Library, 2 S Valley Rd., Pelham, MA 01002

Shutesbury

- Town Clerk’s Office, 1 Cooleyville Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072
- M.N. Spear Memorial Library, 10 Cooleyville Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072

Leverett

- Leverett Town Hall, 9 Montague Rd., Leverett, MA 01054
- Leverett Public Library, 75 Montague Rd., Leverett, MA 01054

Sunderland

- Town Clerk’s Office, 12 School St., Sunderland, MA 01375
- Sunderland Public Library, 20 School St., Sunderland, MA 01375

Deerfield

- Deerfield Town Hall, 8 Conway St., South Deerfield, MA 01373
- Tilton Public Library, 71 N Main St., South Deerfield, MA 01373

Conway

- Conway Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Rd., Conway, MA 01341
- Field Memorial Library, 1 Elm St., Conway, MA 01341

Shelburne

- Town Clerk’s Office, 51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls, MA 01370
- Shelburne Free Public Library, 233 Shelburne Center Rd., Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

Buckland

- Buckland Town Hall, 17 State St., Shelburne Falls, MA 01370
- Buckland Public Library, 30 Upper St., Buckland, MA 01338

Public Comment Hearings

At each public comment hearing, National Grid will present an overview of the Project. Public officials and members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions and comment on the Project. The public comment hearings will be transcribed by a court reporter. A recording of each public comment hearing will be posted to the Siting Board’s YouTube channel after that hearing, at https://www.youtube.com/@MaDPU_hearing.

The public comment hearings mark the beginning of a formal, state-level decision-making process in which the Siting Board will: (1) review National Grid’s proposed Project to ensure that it will provide a reliable energy supply with a minimum impact on the environment at the lowest possible cost, pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 69J; and (2) determine whether the proposed Project is necessary, serves the public convenience, and is consistent with the public interest, pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 72.

Intervention and Participation

Persons or groups who wish to participate in the Siting Board proceeding beyond providing comments at the public comment hearings or submitting written comments, may seek to intervene as a party or to participate as a limited participant.

“Intervenor” or “Party” Status: An **intervenor** can participate fully in the evidentiary phase of the proceeding, including participating in discovery (information gathering), participating in the evidentiary hearing, filing a brief, presenting comments to the Siting Board on the Tentative Decision, and appealing the Final Decision.

“Limited Participant” Status: A **limited participant** receives documents during the proceeding and may file a brief and present comments regarding the Tentative Decision to the Siting Board.

Instructions for Filing Written Comments and Requesting to Participate in the Proceeding

Any written comments on the Project and any petition to intervene or to participate as a limited participant in this proceeding must be sent to the following four email addresses: dpu.efiling@mass.gov; Daniel.W.Keleher@mass.gov; ckeuthen@keeganwerlin.com; and cbaine@keeganwerlin.com. The filing deadline is **January 28, 2026** (unless one of the public comment hearings is postponed, in which case the filing deadline will be February 11, 2026).

The e-mail accompanying the written comment or petition must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (EFSB 25-01/D.P.U. 25-16); (2) the name of the person or entity submitting the request; (3) a brief description of the document; and (4) the name, title, and telephone number of a person to contact with questions about the filing. Any petition for intervention must state and explain the way or ways in which the requester may be specifically and substantially affected by the Project. Any petition for limited participation must describe the manner in which the petitioner is interested and the purpose for which participation is requested.

For more information on the Siting Board’s procedural rules, please see the following link:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/980-cmr-105/download>.

Accommodation Requests and Language Services Requests

Reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities (e.g., Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format) is available upon request. To request an accommodation, please contact:

Melixza Esenyie - Non-Discrimination Coordinator and Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,
Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Human Resources, 9th Floor
100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114,
eeadiversity@mass.gov, 617-626-1282.

In your communication, state the accommodation you need and why you need it. Provide contact information in case the Coordinator needs more information. Provide one week’s advance notice. The Coordinator will consider but may not be able to fulfill late requests.

Language interpretation services are available upon request to Yonathan Mengesha at (617) 305-3544 or Yonathan.Mengesha@mass.gov. Include in your request the language required and your contact information. To assist us in accommodating your request, please submit it as soon as possible and at least one week before the date of the public comment hearing.

Non-discrimination Notice

The Siting Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, income, ethnicity, class, disability, religious creed or belief, gender identity, sexual orientation, genetic information, English language proficiency, or ancestry in administration of its programs or activities. See the Siting Board’s Non-Discrimination Notice at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/efsb-non-discrimination-notice-and-grievance-procedure>.

If you have any questions about this notice or any of the Siting Board’s non-discrimination programs, policies, or procedures or believe the Siting Board has discriminated against you, you may contact Melixza Esenyie (see above for contact information) for more information.

Contact

For further information about the proceeding, please contact the Presiding Officer at the address or telephone number below:

Daniel Keleher, Co-Presiding Officer
Energy Facilities Siting Board
One South Station Boston, MA 02110
Daniel.W.Keleher@mass.gov
(617) 305-3623

For periodic updates, please visit the Siting Board’s webpage for this proceeding (accessible via the URL link or QR code at the top of this notice’s first page).

Project Description

National Grid asserts that the Project, with projected costs of \$896.9 million, is needed to ensure reliable electric service to approximately 24,000 customers across twelve municipalities in Massachusetts. National Grid states that the Existing Lines were constructed in 1900, reconducted in 2001, and reinsulated in 2020 and that they are among the oldest transmission lines in New England. National Grid contends that the Existing Lines are also among the Company’s worst performing transmission lines, due in large part to the lattice design of the transmission line supporting structures. The Existing Lines, each approximately 67 miles long, pass through the towns of Millbury, Auburn, Leicester, Spencer, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, Ware, Belchertown, Pelham, Shutesbury, Leverett, Sunderland, Deerfield, Conway, Shelburne, and Buckland. The Company expects to start constructing the Project in April of 2029 and conclude in April of 2035.

The Project consists of: (1) removing existing 69 kV transmission lines and rebuilding them to a 115 kV design within the existing electric transmission right-of-way between the Millbury #305 Substation and the Deerfield #4 Substation; (2) reconstructing the Quabbin Switch Tap Line, the Shutesbury Tap Line, and the Deerfield #3 Tap Lines; and (3) improving, establishing, and constructing access roads. Future operation of the Rebuilt Lines at 115 kV would require substation upgrades that are not part of the Project. An interactive map of the Project is available at the following link: [New England Power Company - National Grid Central to Western Mass.](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/new-england-power-company-national-grid-central-to-western-mass)

Route Descriptions

Millbury: The Rebuilt Lines would begin near Branch River at the Millbury Station in Millbury, run along Providence Street, cross the Blackstone River Bikeway intersecting the Providence and Worcester Railroad, and continue along South Main Street (intersecting Woodland Street, Sycamore Street, and Singletary Brook). The Rebuilt Lines would continue north through Elm Street, where they would intersect Worcester-Providence Turnpike (State Route 146) before passing through Elmwood Street, Shaw Schools Recreational Fields, and Witter Lane. From there, the Rebuilt Lines would pass Greenwood Street and intersect Dwinell Road before entering Auburn.

Auburn: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Auburn and cross Washington Street to connect with the Pondville Substation before proceeding west, where they would intersect Ramshorn Brook, the Penn Central Railroad/Norwich, and Worcester Railroad. The Rebuilt Lines would continue west, passing through Hillside Cemetery and intersecting Central Street and Saratoga Road before crossing Interstate 90. The Rebuilt Lines would then cross Interstate 290 and pass through Auburn Recreation Complex (also known as Oxford Street Recreation Area), which is adjacent to Bayman Street. From there, the Rebuilt Lines would intersect Oxford Street, continue past Bryn Mawr Avenue, cross Dark Brook and run west, intersecting Leicester Street, Chapin Brook, Rochdale Street, Penn Central Railroad, and Drake Court. The Rebuilt Lines would cross Chapin Brook and Leicester Street before entering Leicester.

Leicester: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Leicester, transect Stafford Street and Henshaw Street, cross Grindstone Brook and Bunker Hill Road, and continue to Peter Salem Road, connecting with the Leicester Substation. The Rebuilt Lines would continue west and then transect Peter Salem Road, Pleasant Street and Memorial Drive. The Rebuilt Lines would continue southwest and cross Town Meadow Brook and Burncoat Brook, continue west, and then cross Pine Street and Charles Street before continuing northwest to pass through Burncoat Brook again as they enter Spencer.

Spencer: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Spencer and continue northwest, crossing Greenville Street, R Jones Road, Spencer State Forest and Midstate Trail (an unpaved road). The Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest and intersect Ash Street, continue to Ashview Drive connecting to Maple Street, cross Charlton Road and continue past Pleasant View Road and Bixby Road Circle and continue northwest towards the intersection of West Main Street and Bixby Road. The Rebuilt Lines would cross the intersection of Olde Main Street and Meadow Road before connecting to the Meadow Street Substation. From there, they would continue west over the Seven Mile River, crossing Smithville Road before they enter East Brookfield.

East Brookfield: The Rebuilt Lines would enter East Brookfield, continue northwest to connect to the Harrington Switchyard, and then cross over Lake Lashway before entering North Brookfield.

North Brookfield: Crossing over Lake Lashway, the Rebuilt Lines would enter North Brookfield, cross Shore Road and the Five Mile River. From there, they would transect Old East Brookfield Road, continue through a wooded area and cross over the Penn Central Railroad before crossing Dunn Brook. The Rebuilt Lines would pass through the intersection of East Brookfield Road and Donovan Road, then over the Forget-Me-Not-Brook before connecting with the Lashway Substation. From the substation, the Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest through the Donovan Road Conservation Area where they transect Fullman Road near Fullam Hill Road Conservation Area, Brookfield Road, and West Brookfield Road. The Rebuilt Lines would enter the North Brookfield Town Forest, intersecting McCarthy Road before crossing Coys Brook and continue northwest, crossing Old West Brookfield Road, Coys Brook, and Tucker Cross Road. The Rebuilt Lines then would cross Smith and Hanson Road before entering West Brookfield.

West Brookfield: The Rebuilt Lines would enter West Brookfield, cross Wigwam Road, New Braintree Road, and Birch Hill Road, enter the West Brookfield State Forest, cross Sucker Brook and Shea Road. The Rebuilt Lines would continue west and cross Madden Road, Mill Brook, Wickaboag Valley Road, Ragged Hill Road, John Gilbert Road, Lambertson Brook, Cedar Drive, and Peirce Road before passing through Rock House Reservation and Corydon W Kibbe Agricultural Preservation Restriction Area as they enter Ware.

Ware: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Ware and cross Gilbertville Road (Route 32) before connecting to the Ware Substation. From there, they would continue past the CSX Transportation Railroad, cross the Ware River, Church Street, Old Gilbertville Road, Sheehy Road, the Muddy Brook, Greenwich Road, Sorel Road, Osborne Road, and finally the Flat Brook. The Rebuilt Lines then would cross Old Poor Farm Road, King George Drive, Greenwich Plains Road, and Fisherick Road, the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed, Beaver Brook, Peppers Mill Pond, Old-Ware Enfield Road, Belchertown Road, Webster Road, and Belchertown Road again. The Rebuilt Lines would continue through the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed and cross the Swift River into Belchertown.

Belchertown: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Belchertown and continue through the Quabbin Watershed Reservoir, cross Winsor Dam Road, and then run between Blue Meadow Road and the Quabbin Reservoir, where they would connect to the Quabbin Switch Substation. The Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest, transect Cold Spring Road, then continue through the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed, crossing Warner Street, Earley Street, and Old Enfield Road before continuing north along the Quabbin Reservoir to enter Pelham.

Pelham: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Pelham and continue northwest into the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed to cross Packardville Road, Cadwell Creek, and the Daniel Shays Highway. The Rebuilt Lines would continue into the Cadwell Memorial Forest and cross Dunlop Brook and Amherst Road. They would continue northwest and cross over the Amethyst Brook and North Valley Road before continuing through the Buffam Brook Road Conservation Area and then crossing Buffam Road to enter Shutesbury.

Shutesbury: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Shutesbury, pass through the Amherst Watershed, and then cross Dean Brook, Sand Hill Road, Nurse Brook, and Pratt Corner Road before connecting to

Classifieds

12 WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS | SERVING 50 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE

Call us at 413.283.8393

FOR SALE

FIREWOOD

FIREWOOD
Fresh cut & split \$225.00
Seasoned cut & split \$325.00
All hardwood.
Tree length available
*Also have seasoned softwood for outdoor boilers (Cheap).
Quality & volumes **guaranteed!!**
New England Forest Products
(413)477-0083

MORE HEAT LESS WOOD. Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX Outdoor Wood Furnace. EPA Certified. Titanium Stainless Steel. \$2K Tax Credit.
Call (508)882-0178

WANTED

WANTED TO BUY

ALL ANTIQUES AND OLD STUFF WANTED.

BUYING Bottles, Crocks, Jugs, Pottery, Costume Jewelry, Toys, Games, coins, sterling, Glassware, Silver-plated items, watches, Musical instruments, typewriters, sewing machines, tools, radios, clocks, lanterns, lamps, kitchenware, cookware, knives, military, automotive, fire department, masonic, license plates, beer cans, barware, books, oil cans, advertising tins, hunting, fishing, signs, and more.
Donald Roy (860) 874-8396

ALWAYS BUYING ALL ANTIQUES:

Musical instruments, guitars, horns, keyboards, vintage electronics, jewelry, coins, watches, military cameras, sports memorabilia, art, sterling, signs, automotive, hunting, advertising, radios, ham radio equipment, audio equipment, toys, one item or entire estate.
Call Paul 413-206-8688.

JUNK REMOVAL

A Call We Haul FAST REMOVAL
Junk, Appliance, Cleanouts.
We load it & take it.
413-531-1936
CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

SERVICES

DRYWALL, PAINTING AND CEILINGING, plaster repair. Drywall hanging. Taping & complete finishing. All ceiling textures. Fully insured. Jason at Great Walls. (413)563-0487

Find archives of this local newspaper at www.newspapers.turley.com

SERVICES

ELECTRICIAN

PJ's Electrical MASTER ELECTRICIAN
• Licensed & Insured •
Providing safe, reliable electrical services for residential and commercial projects.
NOW OFFERING FREE CONSULTATIONS.
Call today to schedule your appointment.
(413) 366-1703
(Lic. #24046-A)

LICENSED ELECTRICIAN
I offer good quality electrical work, no project too small. Service upgrades, pools, trustworthy, dependable & insured. Master Elec. #20773A.
Text/call Luis **413-218-3301**.

ZEN ELECTRIC COMPANY LLC
Fully licensed and insured; Master Electrician on staff. Call for all your electrical needs. No job too small. Senior citizen and Veteran Discount. A veteran owned company. MA License #8101A1.
Call John at **(413)206-6509**
Every customer gets a free gem stone.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

CHAMELEON PAINTING & REMODELING
INTERIOR/EXTERIOR
Remodeling & Deck Specialists
Residential/Commercial
Fully Insured • Free Estimates
413-351-1147

BUY LOCALLY
support our community!

Walker Home Improvement
Handyman Services
Licensed & Insured
Finish Carpentry • Framing • Drywall • Painting • & more!
(413) 687-5552

SERVICES

INSTRUCTION

NRA Certified Basic Pistol Course
with Live Fire for License to Carry permit \$140.
Matt Marcinkiewicz
muscione@hotmail.com
413-537-0620

LANDSCAPING

A+ ROZELL'S LANDSCAPING & BOBCAT SERVICE
Excavator Services
Overgrown property?
Extreme Brush Cutting!
Shrub, Stump, Tree Removal
Lawn/Arborvitae Installed
Loam, Stone, Mulch, Sand
Storm Clean-up
Small Demolition/ Junk Removal
Insured
Josh Rozell 413-636-5957

MASONRY

STOP WET BASEMENTS
ABC MASONRY & BASEMENT WATERPROOFING
All brick, block, stone, concrete. Hatchway doors, basement windows, chimneys rebuilt & repaired, foundations repaired, basement waterproofing systems, sump pumps. BBB+ rating. Free estimates. Lic #14790. Call **(413)569-1611, (413)374-5377**

PAINTING

KEN'S PAINTING SERVICES. Interior painting/staining, wallpaper removal, wall/ceiling resurfacing, cabinet painting. Quality workmanship, fully insured. Free estimates. Call **413-896-8264**.

PLUMBING

GREG LAFONTAIN PLUMBING & HEATING Lic #19196 Repairs & Replacement of fixtures, water heater installations, steam/HW boiler replacement. Kitchen & Bath remodeling. 30 years experience. Fully insured. \$10 Gift Card With Work Performed. Call Greg **(413)592-1505**

SERVICES

RUBBISH REMOVAL

BOB ROBILLARD'S RUBBISH REMOVAL Attics, Cellars, Garages cleaned, Pools/Hot Tubs Removed. Family owned/operated since 1950 **(413)537-5090**

SNOWPLOWING

RESIDENTIAL Snowplowing Service. Wilbraham residential only Call or Text now. Limited space available. **413-519-5439**

TREE WORK

AAA-TROM'S TREE SERVICE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE. Residential removal of trees. Free estimates, Fully insured W/Workman's Comp. Remove them before the wind takes them down. Cordwood, stump grinding. Call **413-283-6374**.

DL & G TREE SERVICE- Everything from tree pruning, tree removal, stump grinding, storm damage and brush chipping. Honest and Dependable. Fully insured. Now offering a Senior Citizen and Veteran discount. Call today for free estimate **(413)478-4212**.

TUNE-UPS

SNOWBLOWER & LAWNMOWER TUNE UP & REPAIR
A&M TUNE-UPS
Snowblowers, Push Lawnmowers, Riding Mowers & Small Engine Repair.
Work done at your home.
Call Mike **(413) 348-7967**

STUMP GRINDING

DL & G STUMP GRINDING Grinding stumps of all sizes, insured & certified. Senior discounts. Call Dave **413-478-4212**

PETS

GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPS. Champion Czech and Belgian bloodlines. 30 years experience. 3M, 2F. Ready, w/shots. Now \$1,200. **413-218-2321**

HELP WANTED

LUDLOW PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PARA-EDUCATOR. Submit resume and letter of intent to: www.schoolspring.com

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES
FRIDAY AT 1 PM

AUTO

CASH FOR JUNK AND REPAIRABLE CARS
FREE TOWING FAST SERVICE CASH PAID AS IS
CALL OR TEXT 413-219-6839

REAL ESTATE

FOR RENT

QUAINT WEST BROOKFIELD BROOKHAVEN LAKE by babbling brook, I-shaped 2bdrm. ranch, 2full baths, finished basement, walkout slider, enclosed front porch. Enjoy nature trails, very quiet private area. \$2850/monthly rental fee. Bernice Stone **774-262-6667**.

REAL ESTATE

FOR RENT

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

HELP WANTED

ADVERTISING SALES

HELP WANTED

- Do you want to work in your community helping local businesses connect with their customers?
- Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?
- If so, then join our team! Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers. The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.

You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills. Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.
Turley Publications, a locally owned family business, offers a competitive commission structure, 401k, and health plan.

Send resume & cover letter to:
Jamie Joslyn
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069
Email: jamie@turley.com

Turley Publications, Inc.

FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 DEADLINES: **FRIDAY AT NOON**
or call: 413-283-8393

CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00
23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____
Credit Card: MasterCard VISA Discover Cash Check# _____
Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____
Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____

OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!

Quabbin Village Hills
Circulation: 50,500

Hilltowns
Circulation: 9,800

Suburban Residential
Circulation: 59,000

All Three ZONES for \$26.00 for 20 words plus 50¢ for each additional word.

GREAT VALUE!
ALL 3 ZONES NOW FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!
Make checks payable to Turley Publications

STAY ON TOP OF IT ALL!
Subscribe Today!

Turley Publications, Inc.
12 HOMETOWN NEWSPAPERS
413.283.8393
www.turley.com
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

public notices

SEE MORE PUBLIC NOTICES ON PAGE 13

PUBLIC NOTICE from page 13

the Shutesbury Substation. The Rebuilt Lines are then proposed to cross over Nurse Brook again before entering Leverett.

Leverett: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Leverett and continue northwest, crossing Roaring Brook and Cushman Road. They would then cross Doolittle Brook in the Beaver Pond Conservation Area, Depot Road, Amherst Road, Long Plain Road, and the New England Central Railroad before entering Sunderland.

Sunderland: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Sunderland through the Mount Toby State Forest and Mount Toby Wildlife Management Area before crossing Montague Road, Chard Pond, and Falls Road. The Rebuilt Lines would then run along Gunn Brook and cross over the Connecticut River into Deerfield.

Deerfield: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Deerfield, cross River Road, and then continue to the west, crossing Clapp Brook, Steam Mill Road, the Boston and Maine Railroad, and Massachusetts Route 10. The Rebuilt Lines would then cross the Fuller Swamp Brook and Mill Village Road adjacent to farmland to continue through woods and farmland and ultimately cross Interstate 91. The Rebuilt Lines would then run parallel to Sand Gully Road, cross Stillwater Road, Hoosac Road, and the Deerfield River to enter Conway.

Conway: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Conway adjacent to the Deerfield River and Mohawk Trail, cross over the South River, Bardwells Ferry Road, and the Boston and Maine Railroad before entering Shelburne.

Shelburne: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Shelburne and cross the Deerfield River near Dragon Brook and Orchard Road. They would continue northwest before crossing Barnard Road. The Rebuilt Lines would then run parallel to the Deerfield River before connecting to the Deerfield #2 Substation. They would then run parallel to the Boston and Maine Railroad, cross over the Deerfield River again and then the Mohawk Trail. From there, the Rebuilt Lines would proceed north where a tap line connects to the Deerfield #3 Substation across the Deerfield River. The remainder of the Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest before terminating at Deerfield #4 Station near Main Street.

Descriptions of Tap Line Replacements

Quabbin Switching Tap: The Project includes replacing the two tap lines in Belchertown that would connect with the Rebuilt Lines at the Quabbin Switching Tap and Tower near Blue Meadow Road. Quabbin Switching Tap extends approximately 0.1 miles to Quabbin Switching Tower in Belchertown.

Deerfield #3 Taps: The Company also proposes replacing the two tap lines that would connect to the Rebuilt Lines at the Deerfield Generating Station north of the Deerfield River in Shelburne. The Deerfield #3 Taps extend approximately 0.5 miles to the Deerfield #3 Generating Station in Buckland.

Shutesbury #704 Tap: The Company proposes replacing the two tap lines that would connect to the Rebuilt Lines at the Shutesbury #704 Substation near the Pratt Corner Road. The Shutesbury #704 Taps extend approximately 0.02 miles to the Shutesbury #704 Substation in Shutesbury.
01/01, 01/08/2026

Town of Ware Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing
The Ware Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 6:30 PM** pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. 131 c40. The hearing will include consideration of a **Notice of Intent (NOI)** by Jeremiah Boulter, for construction of a single family home at the property located at 0 Greenwich Plains Road, Ware (Map:22 Lot:12-3). Said hearing will be held in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082. To view application and related plans, contact the Conservation office at 413.967.9648. Pursuant to MGL Chapter 4, Section 13, a copy of this legal notice can be found on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website: <http://masspublicnotices.org>.
01/01/2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
Premises: 88 West Street, Ware, Massachusetts
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Thomas Hubbard to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, as nominee for Norwich Commercial Group, Inc. d/b/a TPOGO its successors and assigns and now held by Freedom Mortgage Corporation, said mortgage dated March 22, 2024, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 15094, Page 194, as affected by an Assignment of Mortgage dated December 23, 2024, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 15314, Page 312, as affected by an Assignment of Mortgage dated August 6, 2025, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 15496, Page 282, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction on **January 8, 2026 at 11:00 AM Local Time** upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

Certain pieces of real estate situated in WARE, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, known and designated as 88 West Street, being more particularly bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the northwesterly corner of the tract herein conveyed at an iron pin on the southerly side of said street; thence SOUTHERLY on line of land formerly of the Murdock Estate about one hundred (100) feet to land formerly belonging to the P.J. Crowe Estate; thence EASTERLY on land formerly of the P.J. Crowe Estate about fifty (50) feet to land formerly of Fred Burge; thence NORTHERLY on land formerly of Fred Burge one hundred (100) feet to West Street; thence WESTERLY on West Street to the place of beginning.
The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

lication.
For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated March 11, 2024, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 15091, Page 191.
TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.
TENTHOUSAND (\$10,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within forty-five (45) days after the date of sale.
Other terms to be announced at the sale.
Marinosci Law Group, P.C.
275 West Natick Road,
Suite 500
Warwick, RI 02886
Attorney for
Freedom Mortgage Corporation
Present Holder of the Mortgage
Telephone: (401) 234-9200
MLG File No.: 25-01046
12/18, 12/25/2025, 01/01/2025

PUBLIC NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROJECT: Large Scale Solar Array
LOCATION: 147 Greenwich Road Ware, MA
PROPOSER: Ware Solar III, LLC c/o Melink Solar Development
The undersigned is submitting an Environmental Notification Form ("ENF") to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs on or before 11/24/25.
This will initiate review of the above project pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act ("MEPA", M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62I). Copies of the ENF may be obtained from: Melink Solar Development, 276 North Forest Avenue, Marietta, GA 30060 Jeremy Chapman 513-432-4979.
Copies of the ENF are also being sent to the Conservation Commission and Planning Board of Town of Ware where they may be inspected.

The Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs will publish notice of the ENF in the Environmental Monitor, will receive public comments on the project for 20 days, and will then decide, within ten days, if an environmental Impact Report is needed. A site visit and consultation session on the project may also be scheduled. All persons wishing to comment on the project, or to be notified of a site visit or consultation session, should write to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 900, Boston, Massachusetts 02114, Attention: MEPA Office, referencing the above project.
By:
Jeremy Chapman
(Proponent)
01/01/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE:
Our client is proposing to construct a 180-ft monopole telecommunications tower with attached antenna array that will be located at a property along Barre Road, east of its intersection with Ridge Rd, Hardwick, Worcester Co, MA 01037 (42° 20' 48.47" N / 72° 10' 49.87" W). Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30-days from the date of this publication to: V. Schaefer, Terracon, 930 Harvest DR, Ste 430, Blue Bell, PA 19422, 267-512-7035, or vanessa.schaefer@terracon.com.
01/01/2026

er at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by wire transfer to Ligris + Associates, P.C., 1188 Centre Street, Newton, MA 02459 within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control.
Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.
Resource Capital, LLC,
Present holder of said mortgage,
By its Attorneys,
Ligris + Associates, P.C.
1188 Centre Street
Newton, MA 02459
(617) 274-1500
01/01, 01/08, 01/15/2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Kwasi Sarpong to Resource Capital, LLC, dated January 10, 2022, and recorded with the Worcester County (Southern District) Registry of Deeds in Book 66929 at Page 69, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at **12:00 P.M. on the 23rd day of January 2026**, at 29 Bacon Street, Warren, MA 01083, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,
To wit:
The land in Warren, Worcester County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:
The land in the Center Village of said Warren situated on the westerly side of Bacon Street, bounded and described as follows:
Beginning at the northerly corner of land now or formerly of William Lincoln;
Thence N. 28-3/4° E., 134 feet and 10 inches to land now or formerly of Danforth Keyes;
Thence by land of said Keyes S. 70 1/2° E. 94 feet to Bacon Street;
Thence by said Street S. 19° W. 132 feet and 5 inches to a corner of land formerly of said Lincoln and being the southerly corner of said tract;
Thence by the land of said Lincoln N. 70-3/4° W. 117 feet to the place of beginning.
Said premises are conveyed subject to the condition relative to building and fence and recited in a deed from Mary A. Ramsdell et al to Danforth Keyes dated January 1, 1866 and recorded in Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 732, Page 112, if now in force and effect.
Being the same premises conveyed by deed of Kenneth J. Buck and Russell D. Buck, Executors of the Estate of Robert A. Buck, dated October 17, 2016, recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 56155, Page 170.
Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.
Terms of sale: A deposit of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser.

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT 25 SM 003964 ORDER OF NOTICE
TO:
Steven Wedhoff
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (*et seq*):
U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as Owner Trustee for RCAF Acquisition Trust
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Ware, numbered 5 Longview Avenue, given by Steven Wedhoff to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Florida Capital Bank, N.A. dba Florida Capital Bank Mortgage, dated August 31, 2007, and recorded at Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 9255, Page 130, as affected by a Loan Modification Agreement dated September 7, 2016 and recorded at said Registry in Book 12442, Page 208 and now held by the plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.
If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **February 2, 2026** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on December 19, 2025.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
01/01/2026

ADVERTISING SALES

HELP WANTED

- Do you want to work in your community helping local businesses connect with their customers?
- Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?
- If so, then join our team! Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers. The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.

You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills.
Basic computer skills are required.
Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.

Turley Publications, a locally owned family business, offers a competitive commission structure, 401k, and health plan.

Send resume & cover letter to:
Jamie Joslyn
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069
Email: jamie@turley.com



Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

Varnum & Charbonneau Funeral Homes is seeking Funeral Attendants and Funeral Assistants
to work independently and with our team on transfers, calling hours, and funeral services.

Compensation is hourly plus stipend.
Hours are scheduled or per diem as needed depending on role.

We are looking for friendly, professional, and compassionate people.

Contact Peter Masuzzo at 508-867-2885 or pmasuzzo@varnumfh.com

An entity of Milestone Funeral Partners

NOTICE
ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 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 Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

Ware River News
OBITUARY POLICY

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 and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

BOH heard presentation on Nicotine Free Generation

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Board of Health began its Dec. 16 meeting with a presentation about Nicotine Free Generation.

The NFG is a public health strategy to end commercial tobacco/nicotine use by setting a birthdate cutoff. Presenting this strategy to the Board of Health was Ken Elstein, a member of the Board of Health for Belchertown.

Elstein began his presentation by acknowledging that “it’s really good for boards of health to talk to each other” and discuss these topics. Elstein shared that when it comes to NFG a group of volunteers throughout the state are encouraging towns to pass

NFG, which is done by the boards of health.

This public health strategy is an age cutoff restriction for sellers of tobacco/nicotine products. This cutoff is referred to as “Tobacco 21” and helps reduce the availability of tobacco to a younger age group by raising the age to 21.

Belchertown had NFG in place for nearly a year, but the Town of Brookline was the first Massachusetts municipality to implement it first.

In his presentation, after discussing Tobacco 21, Elstein said it’s a good idea to move forward considering that a lot of people start getting into using nicotine in their teens. Vaping is one example of a modern nicotine product that is used heavily by young adults.

According to Elstein, a total of 21 communities in Massachusetts have passed the NFG, despite the opposition of tobacco companies.

“This is a very tiny way of having an endgame,” Elstein said. “Ending nicotine addiction slowly, but eventually.”

Elstein said it took 175 municipalities’ boards of health to pass Tobacco 21 before the state legislature got its act in order. Teams of people are going from town to town to build support for NFG and get local legislators to support it.

Elstein provided paperwork to the Board of Health so members can further review. Also, he said he hopes the Warren Board of Health will consider this strategy and put this on their agenda for a future vote.

One of the biggest con-

cerns addressed was individuals under the age of 21 being able to go to the next town to purchase nicotine products that does not enforce Tobacco 21. It is always the case, according to Elstein, but believes this is a long-term solution. When it comes to the store staff, it’s easier to look at the year and carding customers.

According to the Board of Health, its similar to carding folks for alcohol. Elstein mentioned inspections being done to test stores, who sell nicotine products all over the state.

One example, in Ware there were four vendors who violated the rule. Elstein mentioned of 10 other inspections done and two out of them violated the rule by mistake customers of being at the legal age but were a couple

years younger than 21.

Board members asked how often inspections are being done, and Elstein said he believes Tobacco 21 inspections are done twice a year. Elstein also noted that the penalties are sufficiently low.

The Board of Health will look into this more and find out what can be accomplished. Wondering who keeps track of the compliance, Elstein told the Board of Health that the boards are the ones to decide the vendor appeals. The board members will review NFG further and come up with a list of questions to ask for the next time its brought up.

Health Inspector updates

Health Inspector Tessa Obuchowski shared her updates with the Board of Health. Well regulation edits

are being done and put into documents. Obuchowski plans to have these reviewed by the Board of Health at their January or February meeting.

The new food establishment plan review is being worked on and is more detailed. This will be in place in case new establishments come to town.

Obuchowski also shared the residential kitchen reminder for all residential kitchens. When having a permit renewal any menu change must be run by the inspector and make sure it meets the standards of a residential kitchen.

Making sure items are shelf stable, have process modifications, new ingredients are all examples. Any additions get sent to the inspector.

Your BUYLINE CONNECTION

WINTER SALE!!!!
TOY CLEARANCE SALE!
SAVE UP TO 70%!!!

OPEN NEW YEAR'S DAY 10AM-8PM!
GIANT APPLIANCE REBATES!!!
MATTRESS SALE!!!
SLEDS, SKATES, TOBOGGANS!!!

12 MONTHS 0% FINANCING
WHITCO
140 Main St., Spencer
www.whitcosales.com
508-885-9343
Open: Mon.-Fri. 9am-10pm, Sat. 9am-8pm, Sun. 10am-7pm

POST ROAD REALTY
BUYING OR SELLING...
WE HAVE THE PERFECT FIT FOR YOU!

www.PostRoadRealty.com
NEW LISTING - NEW CONSTRUCTION
\$565,000 - 95 TOWN FARM ROAD, WARREN

This impressive, newly built ranch offers easy single-level living with modern finishes throughout. A welcoming front porch and two-car garage lead to an open-concept layout featuring a fully appliance kitchen with granite countertops, dining area, and spacious living room ideal for entertaining. A slider opens to a 12x16 composite deck overlooking the backyard. The primary suite includes a full bath with double sinks and a walk-in closet, plus two additional bedrooms and a second full bath. A practical mudroom with washer and dryer hookups and ample storage closets adds everyday functionality. Central air provides added comfort during warmer months. The walkout basement features high ceilings and offers excellent potential for future finished space such as an ADU, home office, gym, or additional living area.

Cassie Paolucci
774-200-3523

Accepting New Patients
KELLY & VELÁZQUEZ
EYE CENTER

PETER J. KELLY, M.D., P.C.
LEONARDO J. VELÁZQUEZ, M.D.
DENNIS M. DORANS, O.D.
KELLY N. POULIOT, O.D.

1504 North Main St. Palmer, MA 01069 (413) 283-3511
362 Sewall St. Ludlow, MA 01056 (413) 589-7308

PALMER HOURS: Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.
LUDLOW HOURS: Hours vary, please call

FOUNTAIN
And Sons
Construction Company INCORPORATED

- Excavation Complete Site Work • Demo • New Home Construction
- Screened Loam, Sand, Stone, Gravel, Septic Sand
- Trucking • Backhoe, Dozer, Excavator Work
- Water & Sewer Line Repairs & Replacements

YOUR BUSINESS IS IMPORTANT TO US!

177 Brimfield Road, Warren, MA 01083
413-436-5705 • www.fountainandsons.com

Country Canine KENNELS

Boarding, Grooming, Daycare

- Boarding starting at \$40 a night
- Daycare starting at \$26 a day

84 Greenwich Plains Road
Ware, MA 01082
(413) 277-0334 Office Phone
countrycaninekennels@gmail.com

Get the Facts.
Subscribe Today!

413.283.8393 • newspapers.turley.com

12 HOMETOWN NEWSPAPERS
24 Water St., Palmer
80 Main St., Ware

Turley Publications, Inc.

WHERE EVERYONE GOES FOR THEIR PIECE OF THE EARTH!
LANDSCAPE STONE
White • Blue • Purple • Red
Lt Gray • Dark Gray • Beige • Rip Rap

SCREENED LOAM STORED IN BUILDING

Construction Stone • Title V & Presby Septic Sand
Concrete Sand • Chicken Coop Sand • Utility Sand
Pool Liner Sand • Stone Dust • Silt • Crushed Gravel
Crushed Asphalt • Crushed Concrete • Cold Patch

Homeowner Friendly • No Minimums
PICK-UP OR CALL TO SCHEDULE YOUR DELIVERY TODAY!

Bond
Sand, Gravel & Asphalt

98 North Spencer Rd., Spencer
bondsandandgravel.com
508-885-6100
508-885-2480

JARS Café & Bakery

23 Summer Street
North Brookfield
MA 01535

- COFFEE
- GLUTEN FREE OPTIONS
- BREAKFAST SANDWICHES
- SOUPS
- COOKIES
- MUFFINS
- PASTRIES

508-637-1577
Tues.-Sat. 8am-2pm
Sun. 9am-2pm

Bring in entire ad for one FREE Beverage with purchase of a baked good. Tues.-Thurs. 8am-10am

Adventure tours of Warren
Share the Adventure with us!

4-Day Boothbay Harbor Vacation
June 9-12
\$899

May 248-Day Bermuda & Halifax Cruise.....from \$1699
June 27....Lake George Cruise & Lunch\$185
July 11.....Provincetown by Fast Ferry.....\$220
July 19.....8-Day Bermuda & Halifax Cruise.....from \$1699
Aug 30.....8-Day Nova Scotia Cruisefrom \$1699

Share the Adventure with us soon!
For further information call Randall at (413) 436-5357 or email adventuretours@att.net or go to www.adventuretoursofwarren.com

NO ENTRANCE FEE

Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 31 Edward Lane, Barre, MA 01005. This is a 55 and better community. This home includes a wonderful floor plan with very spacious rooms. Master bedroom includes a walk-in closet. Two full bathrooms. A four-season sunroom is off the kitchen. Includes two large woodsheds and a metal garage you can park under to fend off winter weather. **Asking \$288,000.** See listing on MLS # 73433198

NO ENTRANCE FEE

Brand New Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 37 Gauthier Rd., Barre. This is a 55 and better community. This home features an open kitchen/living room concept, perfect for family gatherings. Two large bedrooms on opposite ends of the home. Master bedroom has a walk-in closet and large attached bathroom. Just off the kitchen is a laundry area with door leading to back deck and yard. There is a monthly HOA fee which includes water, sewage, rubbish removal, and taxes. All exterior and interior doorways are 36" wide. **Asking \$189,000.** See listing on MLS # 73397436

NO ENTRANCE FEE

Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 32 Edward Lane, Barre, MA 01005. This is a 55 and better community. Includes large carport and two large garden sheds. Approx. living area 1,000 SqFt. **Asking \$139,900.** See listing on MLS # 73398863.

Call Today!
978-355-4438
978-355-3454
paulraymondvarney@gmail.com

WATERWHEEL REALTY
Paul Varney Sr.
Real Estate Broker and Owner