

WARE RIVER NEWS

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Boiler article failed to pass at STM; new cruiser OK'd

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HARDWICK – A special town meeting was held in the Select Board's meeting room at the municipal building in Gilbertville last Thursday evening.

There were three articles on the warrant, including

finding money for a police cruiser, finding money for a new boiler at Hardwick Elementary School, and authorizing the town to maintain a portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail in Gilbertville.

Police cruiser article

The first article was to

transfer money from the capital stabilization fund for the purchase of a new police cruiser at a cost of \$39,718. Capital Planning Committee chair Mark Korzec said the committee voted unanimously to approve the purchase. Select Board Vice-Chair William Tinker said the town received a grant which paid

for half the cost of the cruiser.

When asked about the reason why the town needs a new cruiser, Chief of Police Kevin Landine said it is typical to replace cruisers after they reach 100,000 miles, and the vehicle being replaced has 135,000 miles on it.

"It's starting to break down," Landine said.

Landine was also asked by a resident about why officers bring the cruisers home with them. He said that having the vehicle on site quickens the response time in emergencies.

The motion to transfer the funds to purchase the cruiser

passed by majority.

Boiler replacement

The second article was to appropriate funds for the purchase of a boiler for the elementary school, at a cost of \$59,573.73, with the spec-

Please see **HARDWICK BOS**, page 6

Souper Bowl OF CARING

United Church collects cans of soup for Jubilee Cupboard

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The United Church of Ware, 49 Church St., is hosting a soup can drive to benefit the Jubilee Cupboard.

Kelly Trim has been a member of the United Church of Ware since 1995, and talked about the various missions the church has been involved in. According to Trim, the United Church of Ware and its members have done various missions over the years.

This year, during the winter, the church has chosen to participate in Souper

Bowl of Caring Soup Drive, which began in the early 1990s. Souper Bowl of Caring happens nationwide as thousands of groups and food charities across the country come together to tackle hunger and provide canned goods to those in need.

The drive is done during wintertime and around when the Super Bowl takes place. Trim shared that one year the United Church of Ware participated in a soup can drive and raised 800 cans.

"Soup is a hug on the inside," Trim said.

The church is happy to bring this drive back to support the community. This soup can drive hasn't been done in a few years but has now returned in 2026.

Please see **SOUPER BOWL**, page 3



The United Church of Ware is collecting cans of soup to benefit the Jubilee Cupboard. Drop off spot is in the lobby of the church, 49 Church St.

Selectboard and FinCom reviewed STM articles

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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Editor's Note: The Special Town Meeting originally scheduled for Monday, Feb. 2 has been postponed, and will now be held on Monday, March 2 at 6:30 p.m. at the Ware High School auditorium.

WARE – The Selectboard met with members of the Finance Committee and Moderator Kathleen Coulombe to review the articles on the warrant of the Special Town Meeting.

At the Jan. 20 meeting, Town Manager Stuart Beckley said if Free Cash was not certified in time, the town meeting would need to be postponed and rescheduled.

Article 1 will ask voters to approve the payment

of unpaid bills from a previous fiscal year totaling \$306,91.

Article 2 will ask voters to amend or adjust line items on the fiscal year 2026 budget using available Free Cash in the amount of \$27,500 to Treasurer Purchase of Services; Sewer Reserve, \$24,500 to Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Salaries; and Water Reserve, \$80,000 to Water Purchase of Services.

Articles 3, 4 and 5 will ask voters to transfer 15% of Free Cash to Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund, 5% of Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund; and 5% of Free Cash to the Capital Stabilization Fund, respectively. Beckley said the Free Cash amounts are unknown at this time and

Please see **ARTICLES**, page 5

Ware STM to be postponed

WARE – The Special Town Meeting scheduled for Monday, Feb. 2 will be postponed. According to Town Manager Stuart Beckley, the town has not finalized and certified the funding needed to pay for Town Meeting's 15 articles. Town Moderator Kathleen Coulombe, Town Clerk Nancy Talbot and Beckley will be present on Monday to postpone the meeting only.

The proposed new date for the Special Town Meeting is Monday, March 2 at 6:30 p.m. at the Ware High School auditorium.

Crafters made heart window decorations

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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WARE – The Ware Library Children's Room hosted a Saturday Morning Craft this past weekend.

With Valentine's Day right around the corner, Children's Librarian Cathy Goulet prepped the room for a heart-themed craft. This morning craft features heart window decorations.

"These could hang by the window or be decorations," Goulet said.

The parts to a heart window included self-adhesive gems, heart shaped decorations, embroidery hoops, buttons, stickers, confetti and stamps. It is all up to the crafters' imagination on how they put their heart window

decorations together.

These heart window crafts would make excellent decorations by your window or would make a cute Valentine's Day gift. The Saturday Morning Craft had over 10 people in attendance decorating these heart windows.

The hearts of various designs were donated to the Ware Library.

To give the crafters an idea of how they turn out, Goulet made some samples of heart window decorations. Kids also stuck around after crafting to explore the library and read with their parents.



Turley Photos by Ryan Drago

Examples of heart window decorations were made by Children's Librarian Cathy Goulet. INSET: A nicely crafted heart window decoration was made by Kaylah.

at 10:30 a.m. This activity is for ages 2 to 5.

Wildlife on Wheels makes its return to the Ware Library on Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 3:30 p.m. This is an education-

al outreach program where animal ambassadors from the Zoo in Forest Park in

Please see **CRAFTERS**, page 6



Each kid is provided with a sewing kit and a stitch book to learn various patterns.

Sewing, crafting and nature journaling at library

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

HARDWICK – There was a lot happening at the Paige Memorial Library in Hardwick this past weekend.

During the winter on Saturdays, the library is pleased to welcome back Pam Hinckley who offers

activities for kids and adults.

On Saturdays, Hinckley offers a sewing workshop for kids where children will learn basic sewing and embroidery skills and then introduce them to learning how to use a sewing machine. This workshop is for kids aged 7-12 and Hinckley feels sewing is a good life skill for kids to learn.

Each kid is supplied with their own sewing kit as well as a stitch book. Library Director Julie Bullock was amazed by the phenomenal work Hinckley does and how much fun both the kids and adults have during these workshops.

"There's so much laughing and teaching going on," Bullock said.

The adults craft group is a group of folks who can come in every week and work on a project. Many of the adults bring their own project to

Please see **PAIGE**, page 7



community

Friends of Ware Town Hall offer Spring Lotto Calendars

WARE – Pat Skutnik, President of Friends of Ware Town Hall, announced they will soon be selling Spring Lotto Calendars to raise money to restore the beautiful large windows in the Great Room of the Town Hall.

“This is a huge project for us but a very necessary one,” Skutnik said. “The calendar was a fun and successful fundraiser for us in the past, and we are once again offering cash prizes ranging from \$25 to one \$500 prize on the final day of drawing, April 30. The cost of each calendar is \$10 and there are multiple chances to win since winning stubs will be put back into the drawing.”

Sales will begin Feb. 1 and will continue through March 31. Drawings will be made weekly beginning April 1 and winners will be notified

by phone.

Skutnik further stated the calendars are not only fun to buy for yourself, but they make wonderful Valentine’s Day or birthday gifts, or “just a nice surprise for anyone. Everybody loves a game of chance.”

Calendars may be purchased from members of Friends of Ware Town Hall, as well as the following locations in town: Ware Town Hall, Town Clerk’s Office; It’s Wine O’clock; Crystal Springs Dairy Bar; Ware River Club; Ware Senior Center; Changes Hair Design; Ware Library; Moulton Insurance Agency; Nat Falk; Otto Florist; and Silhouettes on Main.

Anyone who would like to purchase a calendar but is unable to do so locally can mail a check for \$10, pay-

able to Friends of Ware Town Hall, along with their address and phone number to: Friends of Ware Town Hall, P.O. Box 692, Ware, MA 01082. The calendar will be mailed to you.

Skutnik added, “We have recently been notified by Big Y that \$1 from each sale of their reusable tote bags sold at the West Street, Ware store under the sign with our name during the month of February will be donated to the Friends of Ware Town Hall – what a generous gesture! A strong, reusable tote bag with a Lotto Calendar inserted inside makes a perfect gift! We thank all the people who have supported us in the past, we know they share our love for this historic building and we hope they will continue to support us...good luck to all who purchase a calendar!”

Are You Old News?



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 2023 showed members of Ware High School Class of 2024 at the annual craft fair fundraiser. If you recognize the folks in this week's photo, please send their names and your full name to pouimette@turley.com.

Local dancer returns with professional dance company

HARDWICK – Explore the depth of human emotion and connection this February. Nova Linea Contemporary Dance will present “some wounds never heal” at The Center at Eagle Hill, 242 Old Petersham Road on Saturday, Feb. 7 at 7 p.m.

Nova Linea Contemporary Dance is Wisconsin’s premier contemporary dance company. Known for their emotionally-provocative performances, it is Nova Linea’s mission to provide accessible and relatable stories through dance to the communities it performs for.

Nova Linea has a local connection as well – Avree Gundersen, a dancer with the company, grew up dancing in West Brookfield at Betty Gundersen Studio of Dance.

In this evening of dance, Nova Linea will present “some wounds never heal”. Choreographed by Artistic Director Jared Baker, this piece delves into the emotional landscape of loss, portraying a poignant story of



Nova Linea Contemporary Dance will present “some wounds never heal” at The Center at Eagle Hill on Saturday, Feb. 7.

feeling frozen and unable to move forward. It examines how grief shapes us, posing profound questions about resilience and healing.

The piece emphasizes the importance of community and empathy, inviting the audience to reflect on their own experiences and find solace in shared understanding. This powerful work encourages us to confront

our pain, seek connection, and leave with a renewed sense of strength.

Tickets are \$35 for adults, \$30 for student and seniors. The Center also offers discounted \$10 tickets to EBT cardholders through Massachusetts’ Card to Culture Program.

For tickets and information, visit www.thecenterateaglehill.org or call the

Box Office at 413-477-6746.

About The Center
The Center at Eagle Hill is a performance venue in central Massachusetts presenting world class music, dance, theatre, and comedy. For more information about this, and other events please visit our website at www.thecenterateaglehill.org.

Nomination papers for election now available

WARE – The Annual Town Election will be held on Monday, April 13.

Offices which will appear on the ballot are: Selectboard, three-year term, vote for two; School Committee, three-year term, vote for one; Board of Assessors, three-year term, vote for one; Board of Assessors, one year unexpired term, vote for one; Board of Health, three-year term, vote for one; Park Commissioner, three-year term, vote for one; Cemetery Commissioner, three-year term, vote for one; Planning Board, five-year term, vote for one; Ware Housing Authority, five-year term, vote for one.

The last date to register to vote is Friday, April 3. The last date to obtain and file nomination papers (49 days prior to the Annual Town Election) is Monday, Feb. 23 by 5 p.m.

The last date to file nomination papers with the Town Clerk (35 days prior to the Annual Town Election) is Monday, March 9. The last date to object to filing of nomination papers or withdrawal of papers filed (33 days prior to the Annual Town Election) is Wednesday, March 11.

The last date for file an application for Vote by Mail (five business days prior to the Annual Town Election) is Monday, April 6 by 5 p.m.

Anyone interested in running for public office must be a registered voter in Ware.

Nomination Papers may be picked up as of Jan. 18 during normal business hours – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Questions may be directed to the Town Clerk, Nancy J. Talbot, at 413-967-9648 extension 103.



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The Ware River News will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 3. To request a correction, send information to pouimett@turley.com, or call 967-3505. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Ware River News, Attn: Editor, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

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Drinking water information session to be held Feb. 5

WARE – A Drinking Water Community Information Session will be held on Thursday, Feb. 5 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Road.



All are welcome to join this event to learn about the Town's (public) water supply, and to share how you get information about town water and what more may be helpful to you in understanding about the water that flows to your tap.

You'll hear from Ware DPW and have the opportunity to share comments and questions, and help the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission develop an approach toward greater understanding about drinking water.

Food and beverages will be provided.

Register today by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/youkekhp> or scanning the QR code. The first 20 participants to sign up and attend will receive a gift card as compensation for attending.

Need transportation? Contact the Quaboag Connector at 413-544-3401 by Feb. 4.

United Church to hold take-out turkey dinner

WARE – The United Church of Ware will hold a take-out turkey dinner on Monday, Feb. 2 from 5-6 p.m. or until food runs out.

Drive up to the Church Street side of the church and a runner will take your food order and bring it to your car. The cost is \$15 per meal paid by cash or check.

The meal includes turkey and all the fixings, potatoes, stuffing, veggies, roll, coffee, tea and dessert. No reservations necessary.

Infrastructure Committee discussed ongoing projects

Staff Report

WARE – On Tuesday evening the Ware Infrastructure Assessment Committee met to hear updates on ongoing projects.

Kenneth Willette presented a survey that will be mailed to residents to gather perceptions regarding the Town's water system. Residents will receive the survey in the mailed annual town census.

The survey will also be available on the Town's website, www.townofware.com.

Members were introduced Ken Calder, interim director of public works, and John Stanton the Water/Sewer operations manager. Calder gave an update on the project to restore and repaint the two Town water tanks. The work at the Church Street tank has been completed, but the department is working on a list of requirements pro-

vided by the Department of Environmental Protection, including fencing and tree removal.

Jeff Falkner of the engineering firm Tighe and Bond stated that the work on the Anderson Road tank will continue in the Spring. Generators will be added to each tank.

The Committee reviewed lessons learned from the Church Street project to be considered for the Anderson tank. The Town's bi-annual flushing will continue after the tank projects are complete in spring. Flushing did not occur in the fall.

The town is working with Tighe and Bond to place two wells that were drilled 10 years ago online. A required pump test has been approved by DEP for the week of Feb. 9. This will test how the groundwater and existing wells will react when the pumps are in operation.

The preliminary design for connecting the wells to

the pump station and abandoning the cistern is underway. The cistern contributes to some of the town's water quality issues, according to Falkner. Treatment and permitting is a three to four year process.

The pumps and wells may be operational in eight months.

While studying the water system, the Town is studying the PFAS levels in the town system. PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a water contaminant.

The Town applied for a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, issued through the DEP. Falkner estimated a grant of \$500,000 may be possible for the design to address treatment. The grant funders requested a scope of work for the design.

he Town's water meets PFAS regulations currently, but John Stanton explained that the standard may become more stringent.

The Town is conducting two asset management studies which review current systems. The studies inventory town assets in order to plan for future improvements in the wastewater and water systems.

Town staff are collecting the base information with computer tablets. The studies will include priorities and cost estimates for future improvements.

The screen at the wastewater plant is operating. Operator Jeff Tweedie explained the amount of rags being pulled out of the system is large. The screen is pulling twice the expected solids from the treatment plant in its first weeks of operation.

The Infrastructure committee will look to the department leaders and Tighe and Bond to identify future large projects to bring to Town Meeting for consideration and funding. These projects will be described

in the asset plans to be completed in six months. Increased maintenance of sewer pipes was discussed.

Stanton presented a staffing plan for regular pipe cleaning maintenance with the sewer "jetter" which clears obstructions in the collection pipes. Tweedie stated that records show that it has been a year since maintenance around town.

Calder updated the committee that notices went out to residents regarding the rate increases to be included in the water and sewer bills being mailed in early February.

Town Manager Stuart Beckley notified the committee of a listening session for the public to learn about the Town's water system and plans for improvement. The session will be held on Thursday, Feb. 5 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Senior Center on Robbins Road.



Tai Chi classes are held at the Ware Senior Center every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9-10 a.m. with instructor Rhonda Shea. *Submitted Photo*

Senior Center offers health care for the new year

WARE – It is never too late to start the year off right with getting healthy.

The Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Road, offers many programs to reach your goals.

Tai Chi takes place every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-10 am. with Rhoda Shea as the instructor.

Tai Chi is a low impact "meditation in motion" practice that improves balance and risk of falling, physi-

cal strength, and flexibility while reducing stress and anxiety and involves a lot of bending and stretching. It also improves cardiovascular health.

Along with Tai Chi the center offers Chair Yoga every Wednesday and Friday with instructor Laura Wickers from 1-2 p.m.

This involves performing yoga poses while sitting in or holding onto a chair for balance.

It eliminates the need to get up and down from the floor. It will improve flexibility, mobility, strength, balance, stability, mental health, heart health and confidence.

If you prefer using equipment like a treadmill, bike etc. the center has a mini gym area that can be utilized Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. And there is no membership fee for using the equipment.

So when the weather doesn't cooperate because of snow and ice, you have no excuse not to do something to improve your health. Come to the senior center.

After you finish exercising, feel free to stop in at the Thrift Store Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-noon.

All of the above is open to the public.

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

Thursday, Jan. 29

- 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. 30

- 9 a.m. Tai Chi
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 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 your name on the lunch list.

Thursday, Jan. 29

Stuffed Pepper, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day

Friday, Jan. 30

Turkey Waldorf Sandwich, Veggie Salad, Dessert of the Day

SOUPER BOWL

from page 1

The United Church of Ware has supported the Jubilee Cupboard for decades. The church has done amazing work and encourages people to donate to their local food pantry. If you have cans of soup to donate and want to have them picked up, text Trim at 413-404-3113 and provide the address for pickup.

The church has a goal to collect 200 cans of soup and have them donated to

the Jubilee Cupboard. Other drives the United Church of Ware has participated in include blankets for Ukraine, toiletries for Hope Totes, and many more.

The United Church of Ware is looking forward to participating in soup can drives for years to come. The church will be collecting cans of soup until Sunday, Feb. 8, which is Super Bowl Sunday. Cans of soup can be dropped off inside the lobby of the United Church of Ware, anytime the church is open.

For more information on Souper Bowl of Caring, visit tacklehunger.org.

The Jubilee Cupboard is located at 80 Pleasant St. There are nearby churches and local charities also participating for Souper Bowl of Caring: Tri-Parish Community Church in Hardwick, First Congregational Church/Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry in West Brookfield, Brookfield Ecumenical Food Pantry in Brookfield, and St. Joseph's Food Pantry in North Brookfield.

East Quabbin Land Trust hosts 'Snow Moon' walk on Feb. 1

HARDWICK – The East Quabbin Land Trust is hosting a "Snow Moon" full moon walk on Sunday, Feb. 1, at 4:30 p.m. at Mandell Hill Preserve located at 660 Barre Road.

This 1.5-mile easy-to-moderate walk on the blue Loop Trail will cross open fields, transitioning to woodlands with moderate grade changes, and emerging once again in open fields for

unobstructed views of the full Snow Moon.

RSVPs are required; please email atrevett@eqt.org. Participants should plan to dress for the weather and bring water.

Some sections of the walk may be icy. Warm boots, traction cleats and/or hiking poles are recommended. Participants should also plan to bring a headlamp, if they have one.



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viewpoints

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

Claiming Social Security early and investing it

Dear Rusty:

I am a 63-year-old single lady and I have questions regarding Social Security "early retirement," though I will still be working full time.

I know there is a maximum allowable income limit and, if I exceed that, I will need to return probably 2/3 of my received Social Security benefit. I'm thinking about taking those early SS benefits about \$1,400 per month and putting them in my high yield savings or CD where I can gain the interest on it and have it stay "liquid" so I can return what I need to.

My current interest rate is 3.65% on the savings and over 4.25% on CD, with options for 3, 6, 9 mos. or longer - but I want to be able to access the money to pay Social Security back at the end of the year. Can you advise me on this?

Signed: Still Working but Wondering

Dear Still Working:

I commend you, for investigating your options before claiming early Social Security benefits while still working. FYI, the 2026 annual earnings limit for those collecting early SS benefits is \$24,480 (changes annually). If your 2026 work earnings exceed the annual limit, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. The annual earnings limit lasts until you reach your Full Retirement Age and the limit is about 2.5 times higher during the year you attain FRA.

FYI, when you apply for benefits, Social Security will ask if you are working and, if so, how much you make. Using that information, they will evaluate whether you can take benefits now and, if so, how many months they can actually pay your benefits.

For example, if your projected 2026 earnings are, say, \$100,000, you would be about \$75,000 over the annual limit which means that half of that \$37,500 would need to be paid back to SS. Since your monthly SS benefit at your current age would be about \$1,400 per month, Social Security will say that you are temporarily ineligible to collect early benefits because you cannot pay back within one year what you would owe for exceeding the limit. In other words, they won't pay your SS benefits just yet because your earnings are too high and they do not want to overpay benefits, which you will only need to return.

For additional perspective, if your expected 2026 earnings are less say about \$50,000 that means you would be about \$25,000 over the limit about half of that (about \$12,500) would need to be paid back to SS. In that

event, SSA would tell you they will withhold nine months of your SS payments in advance and pay your benefits for only 3 months. This because the overpayment, with your current benefit of about \$1,400, could be recovered by withholding your SS payments for nine months. They do not want to intentionally overpay your SS benefits.

So, despite your best repayment intentions, Social Security will not favor intentionally overpaying your benefits. Historically, overpayment of benefits due to exceeding the annual earnings limit has been a notoriously difficult issue for the Social Security Administration. So, to get your early SS benefits while you are working full time, you would likely need to lie about your anticipated 2026 earnings on your application for SS benefits, which we strongly discourage.

Keep in mind that this all changes when you reach your FRA (67), because the earning limit goes away entirely when you reach FRA and the limit goes up by about 2.5 times in the year you attain full retirement age. So, depending on your earnings level, you may wish to either wait until your full retirement age, or until you stop working full time, to claim SS.

Now, as for the general idea of taking early benefits and investing them, many have said they wish to do that and we understand that logic. Our caution is that it requires religious discipline to put the SS money into a higher yield investment vehicle to accomplish the goal of beating the SS increase realized when you wait to claim. Many who try it succumb to the temptation to use the invested funds for emergency needs and sometimes non-emergency needs. I offer this only as something to be aware of, as some have shared that they failed in their investment objectives with their Social Security money.

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.

Sow onion seeds to get the season started

If you are sick and tired of winter, and want to get the gardening season going already, why not sow some onion seeds?

Onions are the first seeds I sow each year and I always welcome this task as a true harbinger of spring! Many gardeners only know of growing onions from sets, but you can indeed start them from seed, both indoors in the garden.

Read on for more information on growing onions from start to finish, right out of the archives.

First it's important that we "understand the onion," in other words, come to know its life cycle. Onions are biennial.

We are all familiar with biennial flowers like foxglove, hollyhock and Canterbury bells, who develop foliage the first year of their lives and bloom and set seed in the second, but few gardeners today ever experience a biennial vegetable. That wasn't always the case. Just visit the Freeman Farm at Old Sturbridge Village where in the summer you will see beets, parsnips, onions and more in year two of their life cycle, complete with seed heads.

As the seeds ripen, 19th century gardeners would have stored them away for use the following spring.

So then, if the onion is a biennial and its goal is to make seeds the second season of its life, what is it trying to accomplish in its first? Exactly what you and I want: a big bulb!

The bulb is the food storage unit for the plant during its dormancy period - the winter between years one and two. A big bulb gives the second year plant a good head start and almost always directly relates to increased seed production as compared to smaller bulbs.

For me, understanding this concept was one of those "ah ha" gardening moments. It all really came together when I recognized that big bulbs are a direct result of lush topgrowth.

Just imagine the green

part of the plant photosynthesizing, drawing in all of that wonderful energy from the sun and turning it into a big, fat onion! Luckily, we gardeners can provide just the right conditions for lush top growth.

in late January through Valentine's Day - good news for those of you itching to get your hands "dirty!"

Onion seeds are sown indoors in small flats filled with moist soilless growing medium. Spacing can be a little closer than prescribed for outdoor germination, with sowing at 1/4" apart. The use of heat mats set at 72 degrees is helpful, but not entirely necessary; regular room temperatures will also encourage sprouting.

Supplemental lighting is vital, however, so that the onions grow straight and strong. Once onions are up, thin seedlings 1/2" to 1" apart from one another - onions hate competition, so this step is important!

I generally cut out the extras using scissors, right at the soil line so as not to dislodge the roots of those we are growing on. As the seedlings continue to grow, keep them trimmed at 3" tall; this will encourage strong roots and a straight, bulky plant.

About a month prior to the last frost, the transplants should be hardened off for a week by gradually acclimatizing them to outdoor conditions. When they are ready, seedlings are sunk into 1" furrows 3-4" apart and watered carefully; they can be protected from sun and wind off and on for the first week should it seem necessary; here a floating row cover supported by wire hoops would come in handy, but old pots or trays would work fine too. Additional rows should be one foot apart.

Stayed tuned for part two of this column next week, and extra-large onions will be yours come fall!



Get an early start

All onions have a built-in mechanism that triggers "bulbing up" in response to warmer temperatures and increased daylight hours. Likewise, as daylight begins to decrease, the onion is cued into dormancy.

If lush tops are our first goal, we have to get our onions in early, so that they achieve lots of top growth before being prompted to bulb up. Those of us who garden in the north choose "long day" onions, while southern gardeners opt to grow "short day" types.

Long day onions bulb up when day length reaches 14-16 hours per day; short day begin at 12-13 hours. If we plant short day in our locale we'd end up with fat scallions, but not much more, so choose accordingly.

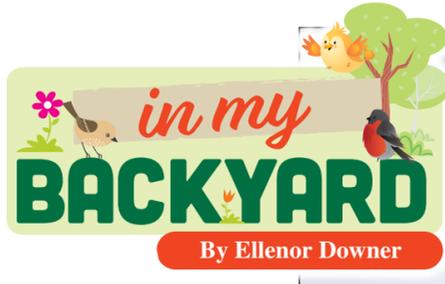
Reputable seed companies will list the type of onion it is next to the variety name, or feature them under appropriate headings.

Choose your method

There are three ways onions can be grown: by seeds sown directly in the garden, from transplants started indoors, or from sets, which are tiny onions. One huge advantage of utilizing seeds is the variety at your disposal as compared to sets.

They are also less expensive. Some folks even argue that onions sown from seed store longer. The rest of this article will be devoted to starting onion seeds indoors, which is best accomplished

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.



Snowy owl

In late December of last year and early January of this year, a snowy owl has been seen at Northampton Airport and in a cornfield.

The snowy owl is an irruptive species from the tundra. Usually, it is the young snowy owls that head this way. There have

been reports of snowy owls at Plum Island this month. Logan Airport is another common location for them.

The snowy owl is large and white. The mature males have a lot of white. Females and juveniles have dark

brown and black barring. Living in the Arctic, it is well adapted to cold with dense feathers including feathers on their feet. They hunt rodents

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 6

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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.



Book Review

By **Richard Murphy**
Correspondent

Do Vampires actually exist? Well, yes and no.

As to a species in nature, there is no proof. How about co-workers or acquaintances who one might opine, suck the life out of others.

There is a lot of daylight between the fictional Debby Downer and Vlad the Impaler.

Thus, we have "The Vampires of York, Maine: A Modern Crime Story", By Jonathan Cook.

Cook was for many years resident in our region, who, with his wife, Suzanne LePage, ran the popular and much missed Homefield Kitchen and Brewery in Sturbridge. COVID-19 did it no favors. When that ran its course, there would be a new adventure up to the Maine Coast.

They opened The Sundrop Cafe and Brewery in York, Maine. The town is a lovely summer spot, and it is understandable that it would be a place to restart and so they did.

A few years later, the world is presented with a book set in a town with a venue that one might not be

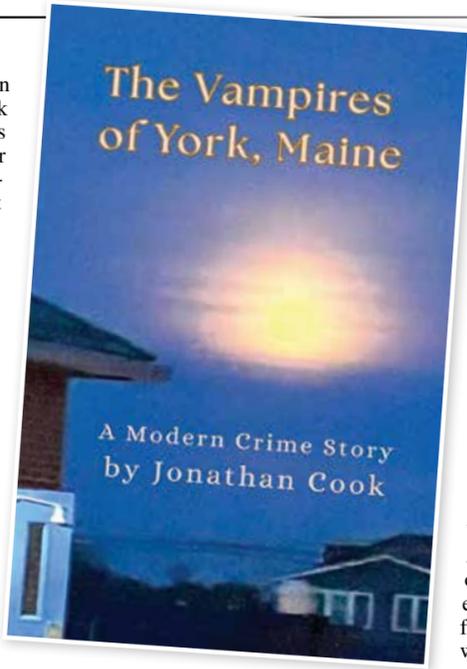
going off the rails in supposing that Cook drew on it to fill his pages. The author makes clear, however, "Vampires" is not a roman à clef, but fiction.

Yet, he has woven a tale that feels it and might convince a reader.

Many of us, born and bred Bay Staters, have memories of the trips up the coast of our daughter state. My family never got much past Portland, but two spots remain in memory. Old Orchard with its garish (aren't they all), if small amusement park, and York.

Cook's account of a nor'easter in the early part of the book may not be of a certain storm, but he had to be paying attention to more than the weather station as to the course of events he relates:

"Somewhere in the neighborhood of fifty thousand feet above sea level at no less than 65 degrees below zero, the storm breaks like a sudden anguish and falls screaming to the earth with



'The Vampires of York, Maine: A Modern Crime Story,' by Jonathan Cook.

inconsolable grief."

There are five paragraphs of the storm, and it's vivid.

The book itself is not about weather. Jerry O'Shaughnesy, with his wife Sherry, run the "Galley." He describes it as a place for "Great food, great music, great vibes, It's a goddam lovefest every night, that's

all. With a bay breeze."

In the second chapter, a hard-boiled, well as hardboiled as they get in Maine, ex gumshoe walks into the Galley, and while consuming beer, starts asking questions.

Arnie is a retired Maine Statie, now working for a non-profit agency that searches for missing people. Many years before a girl from Jamaica disappeared one night and the ex-cop is going to find her no matter what it does to Jerry who becomes part of the quest.

"Vampires" does not lack for characters, some pleasant, others not. The York chief of police incurs Jerry's dislike, and pays for it:

"I slammed my laptop closed. Oftentimes the law seemed to help the guilty.

"I still had one task to brighten my day. On plain paper, I printed several identifiable pictures of Chief Bradford at the health club, folded them into an enve-

lope with no return address and dropped them in the box outside the York Harbor Post Office. I'd addressed them to the Town Manager.

Fun, I remember thinking."

Who woulda thunk it in quiet old Maine?

There are allusions to a regional sports mogul who had been caught in another state with his pants down, so to speak.

In the end, justice will be served, somewhat. The bad guys are done in, but Jerry is brutalized in the process. He will get a journalistic payday for injuries received, but life answers?

"Vampires" is fast paced and has interesting characters. The evil are evil, and the good, not without flaws.

Also, as someone who remembers as a boy the signs on shops and restaurants that read "On Parle Français ici", I got a chuckle out of "York, Maine, the Miami of Canada."

So, that's it for Maine. Cook, back living in Central Massachusetts with Suzanne, has a couple of more offerings in the works. We can expect one in this year and the next.

Deadline for 'Winter' art entries is Feb. 12

WARE – ArtWorks Gallery invites artists of all mediums from throughout the northeastern U.S. to explore the theme of "Winter."

The deadline for entry is Feb. 12 by midnight. The entry form and full details can be found on workshop13.org.

ArtWorks Gallery is located at 69 Main St. "Winter" will be on display from March 7 through April 4, opening with a reception on Saturday, March 7, from 3-5 p.m. Gallery hours are Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m.

The juror for "Winter" is Susan Tilton Pecora.

About ArtWorks Gallery

ArtWorks Gallery is Workshop13's gallery on Main Street. This space features numerous art exhibitions each year and is also available to rent for individual or group shows.

Workshop13 is a dynamic center where arts, culture, and community converge – expanding access to the arts and nurturing creativity and self-expression in the rural region. For more information visit workshop13.org, or call 413-277-6072.

ARTICLES from page 1

the Selectboard and Finance Committee held off on voting to recommend these articles.

Article 6 will ask voters to transfer \$12,500 from Free Cash to purchase an Agricultural Preservation Restriction to conserve Letendre Farm, a 78-acre property. This will preserve the land as a farm and protect it from future development.

Beckley said the current farmer would continue to farm the property and the state has requested a 5% contribution from the town for the restriction.

Article 7 will ask voters to transfer \$82,500 from Free Cash to provide funds for a Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities grant for the purpose of planning, designing, improving and restoring park roads in Grenville Park. Beckley said it has been almost 10 years since the roads were repaired.

He said the state is requiring that the town appropriate the whole cost of the project, even though the state will be covering 70% of it.

Article 8 will ask voters

to transfer \$127,000 from Sewer Enterprise Reserves to replace the Wastewater Treatment Plant's RAS pumps. The pumps were a critical need for the plant and have already been ordered.

Article 9 will ask voters to transfer \$70,000 from Free Cash to purchase and equip a police cruiser.

Three Selectboard members were not in favor of recommending the article, one was in favor of and one abstained. The Finance Committee members did not recommend the article.

Article 10 will ask voters to transfer \$80,000 from Water Enterprise Reserves to purchase and equip a pickup truck for the Water Department.

The Selectboard and Finance Committee members voted against recommending the article.

Article 11 will ask voters to transfer \$17,500 from Water Reserves and \$17,500 from Sewer Reserves to purchase and equip an administrative vehicle for the Department of Public Works, for use by the Operations Manager.

The Selectboard and

Finance Committee members voted against recommending the article.

"It's a deserving need, I just think it belongs at Annual Town Meeting," Selectboard member Ken Willette said.

Article 12 will ask voters to transfer \$300,000 from Free Cash to purchase and install a chiller for Ware Jr./Sr. High School. This project was originally funded for \$250,000 at a previous town meeting, and bids came in much higher than was allocated.

Beckley said the project was re-bid, and the total cost of the project is now \$550,000.

Article 13 will ask voters to transfer \$200,000 from Water Reserve Fund to purchase and install fire hydrants to complete the ongoing upgrade project.

"This is for the work that's been done," Beckley said.

He said the Water Department had enough money to close out the project, and this article will refund the department.

Article 14 will ask voters to transfer \$90,000 from Free

Cash to design and engineer a splash pad and the replacement of the Reed Memorial Pool. The Parks Commission has also committed \$30,000 in trust funds for the design.

Beckley said a previous town meeting article requested \$200,000 through borrowing for the design and engineering, which did not pass by the required two-thirds majority. He said this article would utilize Free Cash and trust funds to cover the expense instead of borrowing.

The design and engineering would finalize a design for the pool and splash pad, and give a final cost estimate for the project.

In the event article 14 fails to pass, article 15 will ask voters to transfer \$175,000 from Free Cash for the demolition of the Reed Memorial Pool and bathhouse.

Health insurance update

Allison Genetelli of Maplewood Benefits, said there is "an awful lot of pressure in the healthcare marketplace," for municipal employees, and there has been a continuing trend of double-digit increases in rates year to year.

"The expectation is that that's going to continue... there aren't strong solutions on the horizon," she said.

Genetelli said the cost drivers for municipal healthcare include longer acute care hospital stays, and a dramatic increase in pharmacy and outpatient services. She said the stigma around mental health services has decreased and more people are seeing therapists regularly.

She said people are living longer and being treated for chronic diseases, including cancer, heart failure and more. She said the average cost of prescription drugs has increased 54% from 2018 to 2022.

Another cost driver is the use of GLP-1 medications for weight loss and to treat diabetes.

"There's a dramatic increase in the prescribing of GLP-1 medications," Genetelli said. "The town of Ware will be looking at that to be addressed for July 1."

Genetelli said GLP-1 medications are commonly being used for weight loss. She said if the medication were used to treat diabetes,

it would still be covered by health insurance.

"It is somewhat controversial," she said of this decision.

Genetelli said the anticipated increase in healthcare costs for the next fiscal year is 15%.

Town Manager's report

Beckley said the cost of regional dispatching services through Westcomm may be reduced if another user is added to the district, but as of now, the cost is about double last year's cost.

Beckley said streetlight repairs should occur in early February. He said another streetlight was damaged in the downtown area following a recent car accident.

Sewer abatements

The Selectboard reviewed sewer abatements for 151 East St. and 55 North St. Beckley said both abatement requests were due to leaks at the properties.

The abatement request for the East Street property was \$56.39 and North Street was \$1,306.68.

The Selectboard approved both abatements.

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warren

Nomination papers for upcoming town election available Feb. 2

WARREN – Town Clerk, Laura J. Stockley, announces that Nomination Papers are available on Monday, Feb. 2 for the upcoming Town Election to be held on Tuesday, May 5.

These papers must be filed with the Board of Registrars, in the Town Clerk's office, for certification on or before Tuesday, March 17 at 5 p.m. Final day to withdraw as a candidate is Thursday, April 2 at 5 p.m.

Appearing on the ballot will be the following:

Moderator, three-

year term; Selectman, three-year term; Board of Health, three-year term; Assessor, three-year term; Park Commissioner, three-year term; Cemetery Commissioner, three-year term; Sewer Commissioner, three-year term; Planning Board, five-year term; Housing Authority, five-year term; and Housing Authority, two-year term.

The Quaboag Regional School District positions will also be incorporated on the Town Ballot. Two members from the Town of Warren for a three-year term

and two members from the Town of West Brookfield for a three-year term. These nomination papers are available on Feb. 2 at the Superintendent's office at 284 Old West Brookfield Road, Warren. Deadline for returning these papers is Friday, March 20 by 4 p.m.

Last day to register to vote before the Town Election is Friday, April 24 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Town Clerk's office in the Shepard Municipal Building.

'Teenage Life in the 19th Century' program is Feb. 7

WARREN – Celebrate 150 years of the Warren Public Library with stories from a historic diary of Warren teenager Nellie O. Northrop on Saturday, Feb. 7 at 3:30 p.m.

Northrop grew up in Warren in 1875. As a teenager, she received a diary as a New Year's present from her grandmother, with whom she lived.

She wrote in the diary almost every day, and through the pages of the diary we learn much about the life of a typical but remarkable young woman and about the wonderful town in which she lived.

The event will be held at the Warren Public Library, 934 Main St. For more information, email warrenpubliclibrary@hotmail.com or call 413-436-7690.

HARDWICK BOS from page 1

ification that if borrowing the money, the vote must be two-thirds majority to pass.

One of the school's two boilers failed on Jan. 12, just 10 days prior to the special town meeting.

Korzec said the Captial Planning Committee did not have a recommendation for this article due to a lack of quorum. He explained that this is an emergency purchase, and that funds cannot be appropriated without a quorum unless it is an emergency. One resident suggested the town look into the Mass Save program, which could provide grants, or utilize Green Communities funding.

A representative from the Quabbin Regional School District, Kevin Clark, said both boilers are original to the school that was built in 1992, and both have received repairs over the years. He said the school needs both of them functioning to heat the entire building.

Residents asked Clark if he had looked into options for replacing it, to which he said the school does not solicit options, and it is the town's responsibility.

Resident Rebecca Bottomley asked what the chances of the pipes freezing as a result of the failing boiler.

Clark said he could not provide an answer, and he also said he could not provide an answer to a question posed about how warm the school has to be inside in order to be safe for students. He noted that the gymnasium temperature was about 57 degrees.

Clark also could not give an estimate on the likelihood of the remaining boiler failing, but noted its age and condition.

"The one that is running is in similar condition," Clark said.

Clark also said there is no redundancy with the school's heating system without the second boiler. He said the

remaining boiler was "running a lot harder with a higher chance of failure," without the second boiler.

Tinker asked Clark if the school district had looked into the use of a temporary boiler, and Clark said that option had not been discussed.

Some residents said they believed the town was rushing the decision on the boiler, and suggested waiting until they have more information on the options before moving forward with replacement, saying that experts have not had a chance to do their due diligence.

Residents also brought up concerns that the school is the official emergency shelter for the town, and could be the only source of warmth for children. Clark said if both boilers fail, the school will close until they are repaired, and that there is no room in other schools in the district to bring the students if that happens.

Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said the town is "maxed out" for short term borrowing to pay for the boiler replacement, and the almost \$60,000 loan would need to be borrowed long term, over 20 years.

"This was the best solution we had for the situation at the school," she said.

The motion to appropriate money for the boiler did not reach the two-thirds majority needed for borrowing, receiving 19 votes in favor, and 13 votes opposed.

Rail trail easement language

The last article was to amend language for a permanent easement for a section of the rail trail at 31-33 Main St.

Bottomley, who is also the Vice-Chair of the Conservation Commission, said the parcel was gifted to the town by Josh and Sarah Kemp, and the motion was previously approved in 2022, but there was a typo in the article, which was corrected prior to the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Western Mass snowmobile trails now open

Effective immediately, the Department of Conservation and Recreation has opened snowmobile trails in Western Massachusetts including: Monroe State Forest, Savoy Mountain State Forest, Mohawk Trail State Forest, Windsor

State Forest, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) State Forest, Dubuque State Forest, Beartown State Forest, Sandisfield State Forest, Pittsfield State Forest, October Mountain State Forest, Tolland State Forest and Chester-Blandford State

Forest.

Snowmobiling will only be accessible as conditions allow in compliance with DCR regulations. Please check the website, www.mass.gov/dcr for updates or email mass.parks@mass.gov with any questions.

BHN launches treatment program for youth and families

SPRINGFIELD – Behavioral Health Network, Inc., the designated Community Service Agency for Western Massachusetts, has announced the launch of its Family-Based Intensive Treatment program.

This new service expands BHN's commitment to delivering essential behavioral health care to children, youth, and families through a community-centered approach.

The FIT program helps families in crisis to stabilize by providing intensive home-based support. FIT serves youth under age 21 with

MassHealth insurance.

Each family is supported by a dedicated team, providing clinical support, 24/7 availability and peer support from someone with lived experience. The team teaches practical skills to help children thrive at home and connects families with community resources for long-term success.

FIT is part of a full continuum of child and family support services, available to families in the following communities of Hampden and Worcester Counties, ensuring that families

across Western and Central Massachusetts have access to timely, compassionate care: Ware, Warren, Barre, Hardwick, Oakham, West Brookfield, East Brookfield, Brookfield, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Rutland and Hubbardston.

Families interested in learning more about the FIT program can call 413-301-9355 or visit www.bhninc.org.

About Behavioral Health Network
Behavioral Health Network, Inc. is a nonprofit

regional provider of comprehensive behavioral health services for adults, children, and families. Originating from the Child Guidance Clinic established in 1938, BHN has grown into a network that serves communities across Massachusetts.

BHN offers a wide range of community-based services, including innovative, integrated whole-health models, traditional clinical and outpatient care, therapeutic services, day treatment, addiction services, crisis intervention, and residential supports.

Fire vs. Police basketball game Feb. 7 at Ware High

WARE – The Fire Department and Police Department will face off on the court for the annual basketball game in the Ware High School gym on Saturday, Feb. 7 at 6 p.m.

The cost of admission is \$5 at the door and all

proceeds will benefit the Class of 2026.

There will be food and beverages available for purchase. A half time show will be performed by dancers from Limelight Dance Center.

CRAFTERS from page 1

Springfield arrive and meet at various venues such as schools and libraries.

Registration is required for Wildlife on Wheels as

space is limited. To register, call 413-967-9691 or email guletc@cwmars.org.

The Ware Library will be hosting Nature Journaling on Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 2 p.m. Youth Education Coordinator at the East Quabbin Land

Trust, Ellie Shea will be running this activity and teaching kids about nature journaling, which is about finding and recording what is found in nature.

Kids will learn how to sketch plants, animals, and

include notes. Materials such as paper, basic art supplies, and natural materials will be provided.

Visit the Ware Library at 37 Main St. or visit warelibrary.org for more information.

St. Aloysius School's Open House rescheduled to Feb. 2

HARDWICK – St. Aloysius Catholic School is hosting an Open House on Monday, Feb. 2 from 3-5:30 p.m.

The Open House was intended to happen a week prior but was canceled due to the snow storm and subsequent school closure that day.

Prospective families are encouraged to visit

the school, located at 52 Church St., in Gilbertville, where they can tour the classrooms, meet the teachers and learn more about the great educational and faith filled experiences that await.

For more information, please call the school and speak to Roberta McQuaid, Enrollment Coordinator, at 413-477-1268.

BACKYARD from page 4

like lemmings in open tundra. They have exceptional sight and hearing.

Their flight is silent allowing them to catch unsuspecting prey. They hunt during the day, a rarity for most owls. They expand south during winter food scarcity in the tundra. It is one of North America's heaviest owls with a wing span of 4.5 to 5.5 feet.

They are generally solitary, but form pairs. They build nests in the ground in shallow scrapes. The female lays three to 11 eggs, the number of eggs depending on food availability. Males bring food and the females

incubate and feed the chicks.

Helping owls

Here are some tips if you see a snowy owl. Keep a safe distance to observe quietly. Do not play bird calls from your phone or other device. Don't feed the owls. Avoid flashes when taking photos. Keep noises to a minimum. If you find an injured owl: contact your state wildlife agency or local rehabilitator. If you find a dead owl: contact your state wildlife agency.

Also people should avoid using rodenticides; they are poisonous to birds and other animals even a pet.. If an owl or other birds of prey eat a rodent that ingested, it will kill them.

Evening grosbeaks

A Worthington resident reported a friend saw two evening grosbeaks on Tuesday, Jan. 6. He said in

his email he remembered when they used to be in giant flocks. He asked if they were rare out my way. I have not seen evening grosbeaks in sometime. Other people in Central Massachusetts have seen them recently. The Massachusetts Audubon Society reported six evening grosbeaks in North Brookfield.

Mass. Audubon sightings

Recent Mass Audubon sightings include western grebes, eared grebes, tufted ducks and sandhill cranes as well as an unusual visitors, a scissor-tailed flycatcher, a rare state record and a rosy-billed pochard. Other sightings include goldeneye, mergansers, horned larks, and wintering raptors like Northern harriers in Massachusetts in early January.

On Jan. 6 and again on



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Town Clerk releases 2026 dog licensing info

WARE – Massachusetts State Law, Chapter 140, §137, requires that all dogs six months of age shall be licensed each year.

Dog licenses are now available for sale and must be purchased by Tuesday, March 31.

If you are licensing in person the Town Clerk's Office will be open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday each week during business hours. Town Hall is now closed to the public on Wednesdays. If you are licensing by U.S. Mail, the licenses must be purchased prior to March 31, and your envelope must also be post-marked by March 31 or there will be a late fee.

Fees for licensing your

dog are male/female \$15; spayed/neutered \$10.

On April 1 there will be a late fee of \$15 per dog in addition to the licensing fee.

Rabies Certificates for each dog must be presented at the time of licensing as in the past.

If your dog was licensed in 2025, check the license to see if the Rabies Certificate is current (the information is on your 2025 license); it is current, simply come into the office to license in person or license by U.S. Mail. If licensing by mail, you must provide a self-addressed, postage paid envelope in order for us to return the license and tag to you.

If licensing more than one dog, be sure to add sufficient



postage to your envelope to insure delivery.

Checks are payable to the Town of Ware for the appropriate amount. All Rabies Certificates supplied will be returned to you with the dog license.

Contact the Town Clerk's Office at 413-967-9648 extension 177 if you failed to license in 2025 so that we may inform you what is

owed in entirety to license for 2026.

There is also a blue drop box outside the lower-level offices at Town Hall for those of you who wish to drop off your request for licensing. Address the envelope to Town Clerk/Dog Licenses.

If you are licensing your dog for the first time, be sure to supply the owner's name, address and contact telephone number; a copy of the current Rabies Certificate and if the dog is neutered/spayed also send this certificate unless it is stated on the Rabies Certificate.

Question may be directed to the Town Clerk's Office at 413-967-9648 extension 177.

Annual Hearts for Heat Spaghetti Dinner is Jan. 31

NORTH BROOKFIELD – North Brookfield Hearts for Heat is hosting its 18th Annual Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 5-7 p.m. in the North Brookfield Elementary School cafeteria.

The dinner is \$12 per person with a cap of \$36 for a family of four or more. Takeout available.

Tickets are only available at the door.

Sponsored with the Hayden Masonic Lodge and supported by Hannaford Supermarket, this is truly "community helping community."

Big ticket raffles include: Celtics team signed basketballs, WooSox Family Pack-tickets for four and other paraphernalia, Marks of Asgard Tattoo \$100 gift certificate. Local gift certificates donated so far include: Angel Nails, Bike House Brewery, Bogey Lanes, Boston Bruins signed puck, City of Smoke, Connect Restaurant, Inishowen Farms, JARS Café & Bakery "Tea for Two," Jim's Pizza, Joy of Beans, NB Liquors, Salem Cross Inn, Second Chance Animal Shelter, Shaman's Closet, Springfield

Thunderbird Hockey tickets, Strandz Hair Salon, Subway, and Whitco. The Door Prize is a Mr. Coffee 10-Cup Optimal Brew Coffeepot.

The Otters will provide musical ambiance all evening.

Students from the North Brookfield High School

National Honor Society and Valley View School will assist. The dinner's snow date is the following Saturday, Feb. 7.

NB Hearts for Heat is a 501(c)3 charitable organization to help North Brookfield residents in need of emergency home heating assistance for oil, propane, natural gas, electric, pellets, or cord wood. 100% of donations are used for fuel purchases. Hearts for Heat has assisted 345 families since 2009.

Donations can be mailed to NB Hearts for Heat, P.O. Box 44, North Brookfield, MA 01535. North Brookfield Savings Bank will match the first \$3,000. Thank you also to Monson Savings bank for their \$2,000 support.

To access the printable 2025-2026 application, visit <https://www.heartsforheat.org/NorthBrookfield/index.html>



PAIGE from page 1

work on and either knit, sew, crochet, bead, or quilt.

While working on their projects, Hinckley is always open to offering any tips or taking any questions adults might have about their projects.

The staff at Paige Memorial Library certainly appreciates Hinckley and her workshops. By the front entrance is a banner that was quilted by Hinckley and has messages highlighting her workshops that she has offered at the library for the last several years.

It is a fun social environment for the adults who get to connect with other crafters. The children learn to sew and end up taking on their own project they made thanks to the guidance of Hinckley.

The following dates are when the next workshops by Hinckley will be at the Paige Memorial Library. The workshops are held on these Saturdays: Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 14, Feb. 21, Feb. 28, March 7, and March 14. Kids can sew from 9-10:30 a.m. Class size is limited to six



Turley Photo by Ryan Drago

A banner made by Pam Hinckley, advertised her kids sewing workshop and adult handcraft group on Saturdays at the Paige Memorial Library in Hardwick.

students ages 7-12, pre-registration is required.

Knitting and Handcrafts for adults take place from 10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. For more information, contact Hinckley at 413-477-6004

or email pahinckley@gmail.com.

Another activity was taking place this past weekend at the library, nature journaling. Giving the instructions for nature journaling was

Ellie Shea, a Youth Education Coordinator for the East Quabbin Land Trust.

Shea said nature journaling is really open ended and is about getting outside into nature and being engaged with it.

In addition to journaling, Shea also explained the description of nature poetry. It is created based off observing what is happening around you. For example, the sound, feeling, and hearing of nature.

According to Shea, nature poetry isn't just about rhyming but also about writing about your observations. Shea brought examples of tree leaves, branches, pinecones, flowers, and bones of various species.

This activity was fun for both kids and adults. Shea will be offering the same program, Nature Journaling, at the Ware Library on Feb. 18.

For more information and events at the Paige Memorial Library, visit www.paigeliibrary.com. Contact the library at director.paigeliibrary@gmail.com or 413-477-6704.

Library hosts annual Jigsaw Puzzle Swap this Saturday

WARE – The Ware Library, 37 Main St., will be having its Annual Jigsaw Puzzle Swap on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Bring as many gently used puzzles as you want to trade for new to you puzzles. The library has a

large selection of puzzles that have been donated for the swap, so you are sure to find something you will love.

Please call the library at 413-967-5491 or check out its Facebook page for more details.

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.



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



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Singer Songwriter Series highlights local musicians

WARE – Workshop13 is excited to highlight seven local and regional musicians in the second session of their Singer Songwriter Series.

Musicians will include Dan Frost, Tasteless Jack, Dave Herrera, Carly Lara, and featured artist Seth Newton. This event takes place in Workshop13's Grand Hall at 13 Church St., on Saturday, Jan. 31. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the perfor-

mance begins at 7 p.m.

Tickets are priced on a sliding scale and are available at www.workshop13.org.

Enjoy photo ops, meet and greets, food for purchase (free popcorn), and a cash bar. The performance will feature sound design by Brian Jyringi and be hosted by Amanda Meli and MC'd by Kevin Wherry. Singer-songwriters will share their



Tasteless Jack

original songs and the stories behind them, "in the round" style.

This performance format brings a group of singer-songwriters together sharing the stage, with each artist delivering songs one after another. After intermission, enjoy a special featured per-

formance by Newton followed by a powerful second round, a group curtain call, and a community meet-and-greet with all performers.

Newton is an American singer songwriter who's been active for decades, performing internationally in well-known music circuits



Seth Newton

throughout the globe. Known for his strong, uniquely dynamic four octave vocal range and ethereal atmospheric rock songwriting style, this modern-day vagabond delivers a live experience that resonates long after the final note is sung.

About Workshop13

Workshop13 is a dynamic center where arts, culture, and community converge – expanding access to the arts and nurturing creativity and self-expression in our rural region. For more information visit workshop13.org, or call 413-277-6072.



Dan Frost

Drinking Water Community Information Session

We want to hear from you!

DATE

February 5, 2026
5:30-7:30 p.m.

LOCATION:

Ware Senior Center
1 Robbins Road, Ware MA 01082

Need transportation? Contact the Quaboag Connector at 413-544-3401 by February 4, 2026.



All are welcome to join this event to learn about the Town's public water supply, and to share how you get information about town water and what more may be helpful to you in understanding about the water that flows to your tap.

You'll hear from Ware DPW and have the opportunity to share comments and questions, and help the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission develop an approach toward greater understanding about drinking water.

Food and Beverages will be provided

The first 20 participants to sign up and attend will receive a gift card as compensation for attending!



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Ware defense strong in win over Monson



Dalton Marquis readies to shoot a three-point attempt.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Brodie Koczur flies for the hoop.



Kaleb Kanozek sends a pass away ahead of a potential block.



Brady Guimond heads down the court.



Matthew Skutnik is pressured near the corner.



Jack Gaudreau comes up with an offensive rebound.

Offense can't keep up in Cougars loss

WARREN – Last Wednesday night, Quaboag Regional girls basketball kept opponent Doherty below 40 points, but their offense could not matchup as they lost at home 37-28. The Cougars are now 2-9 on the regular season.



Caitlyn Toomey passes inside around an opponent.



Maddie Potvin eyes the hoop to shoot.



Evelyn Potvin gets around an opponent and heads for the hoop.



Anabelle Ickler tries to overcome the pressure and shoot.



Bree May slows up with pressure coming on.



Juliana Nickson hustles toward the paint.



Middle school boys action

BARRE – Last Thursday afternoon, the Quabbin Regional Middle School boys basketball team was in action. The Panthers took on West Boylston in a matchup that saw the boys get a dominant win.

Bryce Pariseau gets the easy layup.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Riley Corder looks to shoot as she focuses on the hoop.

Middle school girls action



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Waverly Rivard sends an inbound pass away.



Julia Montague starts a play on offense.



Liam Shaw comes up with a rebound.

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 10



Isabelle Manzano has her way blocked.

sports

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Bondsville League

WARE – It is week 19 of the Wednesday Night Bondsville League at Roll-A-Way Lanes in Ware.

After 19 weeks, Fire Mountain maintains the #1 seed overall and in their division. Fire Mountain has a record of 84.5 wins and 48.5 losses. Night Hawks are in second place with a record of 78-55. Ironmen are in third place with a record of 76-57 and Sandri has the same record as Ironmen and are leading in the west division.

During week 19, Night Hawks bowled against The Snappers at Roll-A-Way Lanes. In game one, Snappers began the match with a win over Night Hawks, 493-451. Eddie Stachowicz of the Snappers was on fire with an opening game of 139.

In game two, Night Hawks snapped out of their first game slump and beat the Snappers, 501-474. Every Night Hawk bowler exceeded the century mark with scores of 129, 118, 108, and 103.

In game three, Night Hawks won the last game by a score of 448-431. Gavin Sinclair of Night Hawks finished strong with a final game of 122. The high three-game series on the Night Hawks was bowled by Darryl Sinclair (340), and the highest series for Snappers was Stachowicz (311).

The final score was 1400-1398 in favor of Night Hawks.

Ironmen bowled against Spare Parts Bud during week 19. In game one, Spare Parts

Bud defeated the Ironmen by a score of 491-469. Pete Swistak of Ironmen began the match with 119 in a losing effort. John Jebb of Spare Parts Bud maintained the lead and began with 99.

In game two, Ironmen defeated Spare Parts Bud by a score of 464-459. Ryan Drago of Ironmen finished with 119 to hang on to a slim lead. Jebb had to throw back-to-back spares in the final two frames to catch up to Drago and only got one spare.

In game three, Ironmen won by a score of 525-498. Steve Swistak of Ironmen bowled well over his average with 124. Drago finished with the highest game of the match, 143. Jebb finished strong bowling well over his league average by scoring 114.

The final score was 1458-1448 in favor of Ironmen.

Cannonballs bowled against P&J Meats in week 19. In game one, P&J Meats defeated Cannonballs by a score of 436-430. In game two, Cannonballs defeated P&J Meats by a score of 464-448. Micah Hinkley of Cannonballs responded with 112 in game two.

In game three, P&J Meats won by a score of 448-445, the closest game in the match. The final score was 1339-1332 in favor of Cannonballs.

Fire Mountain bowled against Flaming Bowling Balls on lanes 9 and 10 at Roll-A-Way Lanes. In game one, Fire Mountain won the first game by a score of 482-443. Rick Trott of Fire Mountain began the match with 128.

The final score was 1437-1379 in favor of Fire Mountain.



Ciara Green makes a pass in transition.



Megan Clark shoots with pressure on.



Cassandra Nykiel goes for a jump-shot.



Pioneers turn on offense in win over Turners

PALMER – Last Tuesday evening, Pathfinder girls basketball defeated Turners Falls 52-28. The Pioneers did an excellent job on defense, limiting Turners to single digits in every frame of the game. Addison Doktor had a great game with 22 points while Megan Clark contributed 21 points for the Pioneers. Pathfinder is an even 5-5 this season.

RIGHT: Jinx Ripley goes for the three-pointer.

Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com

LEFT: Addison Doktor shoots near the free-throw line.



Registration set to open Feb. 1 for Quabbin Valley

SOUTH HADLEY – On Sunday, Jan. 11, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

At the meeting it was determined registration for players will open up on Sunday, Feb. 1.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game with an opponent to be determined as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a roster spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and

Please see **QUABBIN VALLEY**, page 11



Tommy Schoonmaker looks to shoot.



Middle school boys action

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Preston D'Amato sails an inbound pass away.

LEFT: Cameron Bruley dekes around his opponent.



Cameron Charpentier holds the ball away from his opponent.



Richard Valcourt hustles down the court.

Steve Ott named new head coach of T-Birds

SPRINGFIELD – St. Louis Blues President of Hockey Operations and General Manager Doug Armstrong announced today that Steve Ott will assume the role of head coach for the team's AHL affiliate, the Springfield Thunderbirds, for the remainder of the season. Ott replaces Steve Konowalchuk, who has been relieved of his duties. Current Thunderbirds assistant coach Chad Wiseman will serve as the interim head coach for today's Thunderbirds game against the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins until Ott can join the team later this week.



"The Blues want to thank Steve Konowalchuk for his contributions to our organization over the last two years and wish him all the best moving forward," said Armstrong. "We're looking forward to Steve Ott taking over in Springfield to push our young players to get better every day and further their development path to become St. Louis Blues. The current staff will take over his duties with the Blues for the rest of this season."

Ott, 42, has nine seasons

behind the Blues' bench after first joining the staff as an assistant in the summer of 2017. During his tenure, the Summerside, PEI, native has helped the Blues compile a 350-244-74 (.588 points percentage)

regular-season record and four postseason appearances. In 2018-19, just his second season as a coach, Ott played an instrumental role in helping the Blues make a historic rise in the standings during the regular season, ultimately capturing the 2019 Stanley Cup championship. Ott becomes the fifth head coach in Thunderbirds history

As a player, Ott enjoyed a 14-year NHL career, including 122 games with the Blues from 2014-2016. Overall, he accumulated 288 points in 848 career regular-season games, including stints with Dallas, Buffalo, St. Louis, Detroit, and Montreal.

Konowalchuk, 52, was in his second season as head coach of the Thunderbirds and has recorded an overall record of 47-50-4-8 (.486 points-percentage) during his time in the organization, including a record of 13-18-4-2 (.432) this season.

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public safety

DA's office awarded \$60,000 for violence prevention

NORTHAMPTON — The Northwestern District Attorney's Office has been awarded a \$60,000 grant through the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program. Administered by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security's Office of Grants and Research, the grant assists with a wide range of public safety efforts, from officer training and community-based violence prevention programs to technology upgrades and forensic improvements. The \$60,000 awarded to the NWDAO will support several critical public safety initiatives, including: Proactive Investigations: The Massachusetts State Police Hampshire/Franklin Detective Unit and the Northwestern District Anti-Crime Task Force in partnership with NWDAO prosecu-

tors, will continue proactive efforts to identify and disrupt online criminal activity involving exploitation of minors and vulnerable adults. Technology & Evidence Management: NDATAF will acquire secure storage equipment to preserve seized mobile devices during long-term digital investigations. Domestic Violence & Coercive Control Training: NWDAO will train law enforcement on recognizing and responding to reports of coercive control and other non-physical abuse in intimate partner relationships. Emergency Medical Professional Training: Funding will support training for emergency medical personnel on intimate partner violence and non-fatal strangulation. Public Awareness

Campaign: NWDAO will develop and distribute intimate partner violence awareness posters on local bus routes ensuring that victims and survivors have access to resources and support information in the community. District Attorney David E. Sullivan stated, "Online exploitation and domestic violence occur at an alarming rate, often out of public view and behind closed doors. This funding is critical to our efforts to address these serious issues and strengthen the community safety net for our most vulnerable residents." The NWDAO serves Hampshire and Franklin counties and the Town of Athol, working to ensure public safety through prosecution, prevention, and community partnership.

Warren Police Log

During the week of Jan. 4-10, the Warren Police Department responded to 115 building/property checks, one community policing, 12 emergency 911 calls, one parking issue, one vehicle fire, two structure fires, one burglary/breaking and entering, two larcenies/thefts, two motor vehicle accidents and six motor vehicle stops in the town of Warren.

- Sunday, Jan. 4**
4:17 p.m. Motor Vehicle Collision, Ware Road, Ambulance Signed Refusal
- Monday, Jan. 5**
12:08 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint
6:04 p.m. Open Door, Elm Street, Report Filed
8:15 p.m. Burglary/Breaking & Entering, Elm Street, Report Filed
- Tuesday, Jan. 6**
2:52 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Brimfield Road, Ambulance Signed Refusal
10:28 a.m. Sick/Unknown, North Street, Transported to Hospital
1:13 p.m. Larceny or Theft, School Street, Officer

- Spoke to Party
1:51 p.m. Sick/Unknown, South Street, Transported to Hospital
- Wednesday, Jan. 7**
2:22 a.m. Falls, Winthrop Terrace, Ambulance Signed Refusal
4:11 a.m. Motor Vehicle Collision, Southbridge Road, Removed from Scene
5:33 a.m. Headache, Chapel Street, Transported to Hospital
8:49 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Bemis Road, Written Warning
9:20 a.m. Stroke (CVA), Brimfield Road, Transported to Hospital
9:34 a.m. Abandoned Vehicle, Main Street, Report Filed
10:21 a.m. Breathing Difficulty, Comins Pond Road, Mutual Aid Transport
1:58 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Boston Post Road, Arrest(s) Made
4:12 p.m. Suspicious Person, Bragg Road, Report Filed
7 p.m. Vehicle Fire, Town Farm Road, Report Filed
- Thursday, Jan. 8**
6:27 a.m. Motor Vehicle

Hardwick Police Log

During the week of Jan. 12-19, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 45 building/property checks, 33 directed/area patrols, nine radar assignments, five traffic controls, five emergency 911 calls, three citizen assists, four assist other agencies, three complaints, one safety hazard, one trespass, one motor vehicle accident, four animal calls and six motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

QUABBIN VALLEY from page 10
locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice. The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall league last year, the league

Written Warning
2:29 p.m. Assist Citizen, High Street, Officer Handled

Wednesday, Jan. 14
10:17 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Church Street, Citation Issued
4:01 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Joslyn Road, Citation Issued
6:57 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, Petersham Road, Vehicle Towed

Thursday, Jan. 15
9:05 a.m. Officer Initiated, Church Street, Citation Issued
12:32 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Church Lane, Transported to Hospital
12:48 p.m. Assist Citizen, High Street, Officer Handled
3:44 p.m. Assist Citizen, High Street, Officer Handled

Friday, Jan. 16
12:39 a.m. Parking

Complaint, Bridge Street, Officer Handled
1:29 a.m. Assist Other Agency, East Street, Services Rendered
8:54 a.m. Assist Other Agency, High Road, Services Rendered
9:47 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Barre Road, Services Rendered
12:52 p.m. Medical Emergency, Petersham Road, Transported to Hospital
2:42 p.m. Trespass, Out of Town, Officer Handled
9:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Lower Road, Written Warning

Saturday, Jan. 17
3:47 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Bridge Street, Transported to Hospital
8:06 p.m. Parking Complaint, Lower Road, Dispatch Handled

will also have a fall league in September and October this season. The registration link will be live on Feb. 1 at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed. Aside from the weeknight

and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August. This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

Robert Joseph Bready, 87



MONSON — Robert Joseph Bready, of Monson, passed away peacefully on Jan. 19, 2026, at Life Care Center of Wilbraham, surrounded by his daughter, Kristal, who was his caregiver. He was 87 years old.



Robert was born in Springfield on June 26, 1938, the son of the late Joseph and Lillian (Nash) Bready. He was raised in Springfield, and a graduate of the Springfield school system. Robert had an honorable discharge from the United States Army in 1962. He continued his education at Western New England College, where he earned his bachelor's degree in engineering.

After graduating from college, he met his wife and moved to Somers, Connecticut where they made their first home. They raised their children in Ware. While living in Ware, he served on the police department as a special police officer and was the tax assessor for several years. Robert was employed for many years as a Senior Project Manager with the Physical Plant at UMass Amherst, where he was known for his dedication, professionalism, and strong work ethic.

In 2000, he and his wife retired on the Cape where his love for golf took off. Robert was also an avid Red Sox and Patriots fan. After his wife, Roberta, passed away he moved back up to Monson to be near his daughter, which is where he met his girlfriend, Shirley, and spent many years with her. In his free time, Robert enjoyed golfing and playing bluegrass music with his cousin, Pat. He also found simple joy in the

occasional scratch ticket. He was a proud member of the Masonic Lodge where he was a past master of Eden Lodge, an organization that held special meaning to him. He was a member of the Shriners and served on the director's staff.

In addition to his parents, Robert was predeceased by his beloved wife, Roberta J. (Rice) Bready, his two brothers, Richard and Joseph Bready, and his girlfriend, Shirley Connors. He is survived by his two daughters, Kristal S. Bready and her fiancé, Billy Manegre of Monson and Sharon Carey of Skokie, Illinois, his five grandchildren, Lily, Matthew and Sean Carey ("The Trips") and Jacob and Travis Rock, his former son-in-law, Dan Carey (Terri) of Sturtevant, Wisconsin, he also leaves his cat, Cecil at home, along with extended family and friends who will miss him dearly.

His daughter, Kristal, would like to thank the staff at Life Care Center for the endless phone calls and support throughout his time there. She would also like to thank all the staff at D'amour Cancer Center, including Gary, who was the chocolate dealer for "Chocolate Bob."

Family and friends are invited to gather on Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, from 1-2 p.m. at the Byron Keenan Funeral Home and Cremation Tribute Center, 1858 Allen St., Springfield, followed by Masonic Service and Funeral Home Service. A private burial will be held at a later date in Hillcrest Park Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

Death notice

Bready, Robert Joseph
Died Jan. 19, 2026
Services Jan. 31, 2026

Ware River News OBITUARY POLICY

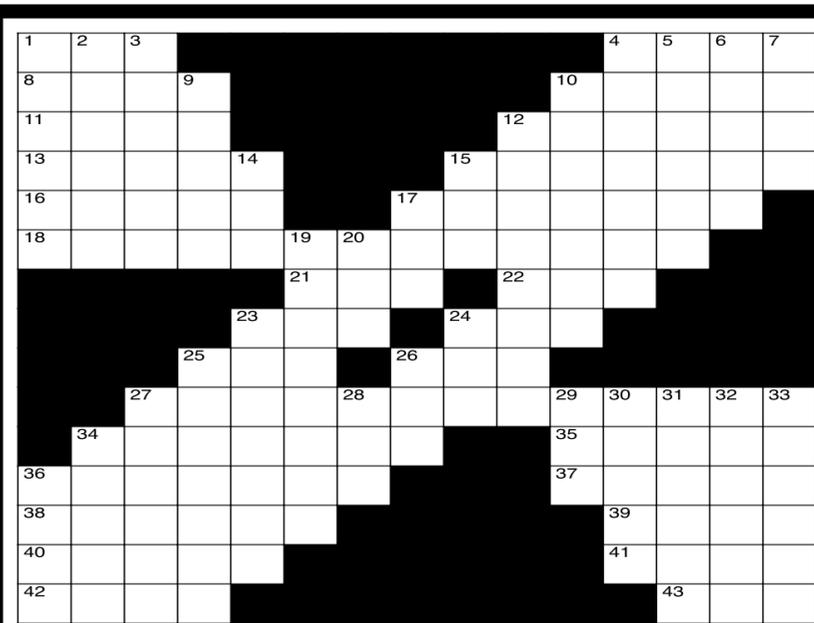
Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with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

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| CLUES ACROSS | north and northeast | CLUES DOWN | 20. Cannot be found |
| 1. Racket sport pros | 26. High schoolers' test | 1. Type of bomb | 23. One's internal body parts |
| 4. Make tea | 27. Does not accept responsibility | 2. South Pacific islands | 24. Tell on |
| 8. City South of Moscow | 34. One who prepares | 3. Celestial body | 25. North American peoples of southwest |
| 10. Spanish bullfighting term | 35. Gout-indicative deposits | 4. Negotiates | 26. Soviet Socialist Republic |
| 11. Egg-shaped | 36. Place to play games | 5. Consider in a specified way | 27. Extract used for jams and jellies |
| 12. Could not remember | 37. Book of Genesis character | 6. Type of group in organic chemistry | 28. Greek goddess of the dawn |
| 13. French modernist painter | 38. Cleans oneself | 7. Buddhist monasteries | 29. Old English letter |
| 15. Persons | 39. Unloaded for money | 8. Inhabitant of Bering Sea island | 30. A way to exaggerate |
| 16. Painful intestinal obstruction | 40. Genus of flowering plants | 9. Body part | 31. Get up and leave |
| 17. Professions | 41. Take a puff | 10. Milestone birthday | 32. "Boardwalk Empire" character |
| 18. Is up to the task | 42. Congressmen | 11. Thyroid-stimulating hormone | 33. More generous |
| 21. Wood or metal bolt | 43. God of battle | 12. Chicago ballplayer | 34. Hanging cloth used as a blind |
| 22. Tax collector | in Scandinavian mythology | 13. Leaves a place | 36. Ancient Greek sophist |
| 23. A way to save for the future | | | |
| 24. Georgia rockers | | | |
| 25. Midway between | | | |

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Wilbraham United Church is hiring a part-time, experienced **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/BOOKKEEPER.** Apply to **Wilbraham United Church, Attention: Alesia; 500 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095.** More information at www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/

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West Brookfield Winter Farmers Market *is back*

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – The start of the day was not promising with snow coming down at speed on Jan. 7, but by 11 a.m. it was over and the sun came out so that by 3 p.m. it would be time for the first West Brookfield Winter Farmers Market of 2026, held at the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield.

On entering, it was the same warmth experienced in the old year with vendors set up and doing business.

Coming inside the hall on the left was Joy Hinton of Joy of Beans, famous for coffee from all over the world. Moving along on the right was Robyn Scott and her Blair House Blooms with beautiful tulips on her table.

Next would be Linda Fuchs of Flourish Farms. Linda has been coming to the market for several years and also comes to the West Brookfield Summer Farmers Market. This day, her table had microgreens, and ginger as well as turmeric.

Other vendors that have been here for a few years include Rich Laba and Farm46 from Charlton. He brings his specialty pork products.

Making specialty products out of scrap wood is veteran market man Bernie Wilson of B&D Enterprises. Years ago, he brought pens and has since expanded the variety of products.

Thompson's Maple Farm came from up in New Braintree. They bring maple syrup and other maple products, but also many flavors of ice cream.

In the center of the hall was Still Life Farm as usual with Halley and Curt Stillman. Still Life Farm was busy, as customers were lining up to buy the winter produce.

Autumn Leaf Farm is the purveyor of locally grown microgreens and is the vendor of a variety of mushrooms. Gail was staffing the table this Wednesday. We asked her why shrooms?

Gail told us she did not find anyone else doing them and could not find them in stores. About a year ago she started teaching herself.

She usually has five types, but this day there were Shiitake, Blue Oyster and Pioppino. These are customer favorites and they looked beautiful.



Ryan Laurie and Bucha Bros are vendors at the West Brookfield Winter Farmers Market.

Also on the table were lovely colored eggs from Autumn Leaf Farm's Golden Comet Chickens. It's a breed of Golden-Brown color that is a prolific layer and popular at the market.

To the left of Autumn Leaf Farm was Bucha Bros. Their motto is "In Gut We Trust." What the heck does that mean?

There is an explanation. Kombucha is a beverage that has taken off in popularity in the last several years. It is a fermented beverage that is beneficial for a person's gut health.

We spoke with Ryan Laurie, co-founder with Edward Fisher.

Bucha Bros Kombucha is produced at the Worcester Food Hub. Unlike much of what is on sale in grocery stores, Bucha Bros is not pasteurized. "Pasteurization kills the billions of tiny good bacteria that call Kombucha (and your gut) home."

Bucha Bros is here at the winter market and several others through the year.

On Jan. 14, we again crossed East Main Street and entered the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield. The church has been hosting the West Brookfield Winter Farmers Market for several years now, generously so.

So, at 3 p.m. vendors are already set up along the church hall as patrons arrive. On this day, we arrived

mid-market to see sellers and shoppers happily interacting.

Coming in the hall, on the right, were the lovely tulips of Robyn Scott's Blair House Blooms. Though Robyn is usually greeting shoppers, she was absent this week. That was no problem as her son, Adam, on duty, competently serving the needs of customers wanting to take some color home.

Turning the corner, we came to Kelly Homestead Apiary from Charlton. Again, in the church was Ginger, who was assisted by her daughter. The table had more than a little honey and related products. Infused hot honeys or with garlic are new this year.

Next, back this week is Rich Laba, well known for the pork products he brings from Farm46 in Charlton. There are eggs and pastured poultry, but the jowl bacon is sublime.

The Chairman of the Board was next. It is not in the corporate sense that Wayne Boulette does this, nor is it in the sense Frank Sinatra was. Wayne does boards, that is making cutting boards and other useful kitchen utensils that are brought to market. The man is a dog lover and has a couple of poodles at home, and part of the chairman's profits go to support the ASPCA.

New this year is JARS Bakery & Café down from 23 Summer St., in North Brookfield. Representing JARS at the Market was



Gail of Autumn Leaf Farm offered mushrooms and eggs at the first market of the season on Jan. 7.



Turley Photos by Richard Murphy
Chloe and JARS Bakery & Café are new vendors at the West Brookfield Winter Farmers Market.

Chloe Fredette.

Chloe came with a good selection of pastries. There was banana chocolate chip bread, cinnamon rolls with cream cheese frosting, as well as apple turnover and chocolate chip cookies.

Not looking for something too sweet, a spinach feta croissant looked good.

Soup was also available. The choices were creamy tomato basil and Loaded potato soup.

To the left was an array

of "gifts in a jar." There was drink mixes, soup mixes and various seasonings.

The café is open 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Sunday.

They have variety of coffees and teas and other beverages.

On the first Sunday of each month at the café there is "Tea for Two Sundays," with a selection of sandwiches, fresh pastries and desserts as well as teas.

JARS also strives to accommodate allergies and dietary restrictions.

Also, a first-year vendor at the winter market is Golden Grain Artisanal Bread. We spoke with Bryan who is co-owner, with Leidy, of the business.

Bryan is a self-taught artisanal baker, who wanted a break from a previous endeavor. Bryan is without formal training but is not without dedication.

Starting out by utilizing tutorials, cookbooks, "and relentless trial-and-error testing, it would become a true fascination with food."

Bryan brought the results to market. On the table was Rustic Sourdough that was fermented for the better part of three days. He explained that depending on the humidity, fermentation time could vary greatly. A humid summer day could see it happening in four hours, whereas in winter it could be two and a half days.

Whole lot of science in baking.

Also at the market, Bryan had a couple of focaccias, and brown butter chocolate chip cookies. Shok Up An is a Japanese milk bread.

Such was the mid-February day at a market. It's a welcoming venue, so come next Wednesday as the end in March will be here before we know it.

public notices

TOWN OF WARE
Public Forum
Monday, February 9, 2026
at 6:30 PM
Public Hearing
Monday, March 9, 2026
at 6:30 PM
6:30 PM Ware Town Hall
126 Main Street, Ware, MA
or
Join Online:
<https://zoom.us/join>
Meeting ID: 784 604 1861
Passcode: 01082
FY 2026 Town of Ware CDBG
Application
The Town of Ware Community Development Authority, with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a

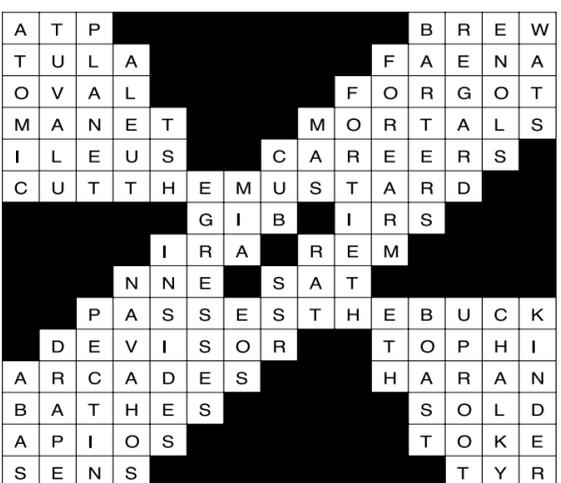
Public Forum on Monday, February 9th, 2026 at 6:30 PM and a Public Hearing on Monday, March 9th, 2026 at 6:30 PM at the Ware Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware – Town Hall Meeting Room or via Zoom with the meeting ID and Passcode noted above.
The public is encouraged to attend these meetings to discuss the FY26 application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for up to \$950,000 in available Community Development Block Grant Funds. Any person with questions or comments regarding the grant application will have an opportunity to be heard. Those unable to attend can send

written comments to the Community Development Authority, Planning Department, Ware Town Hall, or through email at psmith@townofware.org. All written comments will be presented during the public meetings.
The Town is seeking input on community needs and projects which would benefit from grant funding. Construction of the Cottage Street improvement project is currently being reviewed. The CDBG application will also include a request for funding for up to five social service programs including, but not limited to, adult basic education and GED preparation, domestic violence prevention, elder services, and

community health.
The Ware Town Hall is handicapped accessible. Anyone who requires special accommodation for either public meeting should contact the town at least one week prior to the hearing date at (413) 967-9648 ext. 118. For further information contact Para Smith, Director of Planning & Community Development at (413) 967-9648 ext. 118 or psmith@townofware.org or Erica Johnson at PVPC at (413) 781-6045 or ejohnson@pvpc.org. 01/29/2026
Storage Auction
In accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Gen-

eral Law 105A, in order to satisfy past due rents and other expenses, the contents the contents of Jason Strmiste, Tracy Pilch and Brian Tinker will be auctioned off at Secure Storage, 70 Boston Post Rd Warren, MA on **February 14, 2026 at 9:00 AM**.
The contents of Kaylee Louvittakis, Adam J. Perez, Kelley Sullivan, Eric Young and Don Aubin will be auctioned off at Secure Storage, 167 West St., Ware, MA on **February 14, 2026 at 9:45 AM**.
Any questions or inquiries call 413-800-6278. 01/29, 02/5//2025

TOWN OF HARDWICK
BOARD OF HEALTH
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
The Hardwick Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.** at the Municipal Office Building, 307 Main Street, Gilbertville, MA.
The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comment on proposed regulations for Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products.
Interested parties are encouraged to attend. Copies of the proposed regulations may be requested at Town Hall or by email to boh@hardwick-ma.gov. 01/22, 01/29/2026



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