

WARE RIVER NEWS

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School Committee responds to union's allegations

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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WARE – School Committee Chair Brian Winslow said the committee has written a response to the complaints and allegations presented to them by the Ware Teachers Association against Superintendent Dr. Michael Lovato.

“We’ve looked at everything we’ve been given,” Winslow said at the Jan. 30 meeting. “We even ran it by our legal who in turn ran it by another lawyer whose specialty is HR [human resources].”

Winslow said the union gave the committee a page and a half of concerns and they have come up with answers, but there is still information that hasn’t been received yet.

“There’s some information that we’ve requested, which we haven’t received,” he said. “This is not from the union...this is from other people who have said they have information, and we have not received it.”

Winslow said the committee will continue to look at information as they receive it.

“This is a response, at this time, to what we have so far,” Winslow said, regarding the union’s allegations.

School Committee Vice-Chair Aaron Sawabi said the School Committee received the union’s documented complaints early in December of last year, and have heard from people during meetings as well. He said this is the first time in open session the committee members have been able to talk about it.

Winslow read through the list of complaints and allegations, and the determination of whether or not they were able to be substantiated.

In terms of work environment, including allegations that Lovato fostered a hostile work environ-

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 7

Boston Post Cane Award



103-year-old recognized as town’s oldest resident

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – The Selectboard continued its longstanding tradition of awarding the Boston Post Cane to the oldest resident in town recently.

103-year-old Jennie Kapinos was presented with a replica of the cane at a celebration held at Cedarbrook Village at Ware on Jan. 25, surrounded by family, town and state officials, staff and many well-wishers.

Born on March 12, 1921, Kapinos will soon mark her 104th

birthday.

“This is really an important occasion,” Selectboard Chair Nancy Talbot said at the celebration.

Talbot said the Selectboard hasn’t presented the cane in

Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette
State Sen. Peter Durant presented Jennie Kapinos with citations from the Senate and House of Representatives.

Please see **CANE**, page 8

Coming next week
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Parks commission delays closing of Memorial Field

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – The Parks and Recreation Commission met with Athletic Director Tom Shangochian, coaches and members of the Ware High School baseball team to discuss the use of Memorial Field for the spring season.

“For this year to shut it down, would be detrimental.”

– Scott Slattery

“We listened to what was going on and the concerns from the school,” Imbier said, of the field’s condition. “We’ve heard a lot of news about how bad it is...now we’re taking action.”

Baseball coach Scott Slattery asked the commission members to delay closing the field until after this year’s baseball season ended in late spring. He said the school district is willing to partner with the Parks and Recreation Commission to lay sod in the infield.

Slattery said the high school’s junior varsity baseball field is no longer in playing condition and could not be used in place of Memorial Field for this season. He said the school district would also need time to explore other field options, including having to bus athletes out of town.

Slattery said if the commission members are able to delay the field’s closing until the end of this year’s baseball season,

Please see **FIELD**, page 5

At a previous meeting, the commission members had determined there was a need to allow the field to rest for a year, in order to reseed the grass and address issues with the baseball infield.

At the Jan. 27 meeting, Commission Chair William Imbier said the members had talked about resting the field for a year over the past several months. Previous attempts to improve the field with reseeding had not produced the desired results.

Selectmen discuss Classification, Compensation Study

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Board of Selectmen met at the end of January to discuss the Classification and Compensation

Study with Town Administrator James Ferrera.

The study was done at the Collins Center at UMass Boston for a review of job titles and pay structures. The purpose of these studies is to ensure that jobs are fairly compensated, and that the

organization can attract and retain employees.

Ferrera explained the process to the Board of Selectmen and how the study determined the scales of pay and job descriptions to provide equity, career progression, external competitiveness, and

addressing recruiting needs. This process began back in September of 2024 featuring surveys, interviews with staff and then the creation of accurate job descriptions.

Ferrera hopes the Board of Selectmen will consider the recommendations and implementa-

tions of the study.

Ferrera wants to make sure “we’re ensuring that position descriptions are accurate, duties and responsibilities are accurate,” Ferrera said.

Please see **WARREN**, page 13

A sweet introduction to maple sugaring

Co-Op welcomes Deer Meadow Farm

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Farmers Co-Op Exchange hosted a maple syrup workshop this past weekend.

Presenting an introduction to maple sugaring is the Julian Family, the operators of Deer Meadow Farm in Warren. Richard, Debra and Kylee Julian were at the Co-Op as it was their farm’s second year providing a workshop.

Richard Julian began the work-

Please see **MAPLE**, page 6



The Julian Family are the proud operators of Deer Meadow Farm in Warren and brought samples of their maple syrup during the workshop.

QHMA hosted Baystate CEO at breakfast

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – Last Tuesday morning, the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce hosted its Chamber Breakfast at Christopher Heights of Belchertown, with guest speaker Peter Banko, president and CEO of Baystate Health.

Chamber CEO James Przypek opened the event by acknowledging and thanking the event’s presenting sponsor, Superior Plus Propane, and underwriters Country Bank, J. Stolar

Insurance Agency, Monson Savings Bank, Behavioral Health Network, Christopher Heights of Belchertown and Westfield Bank.

Przypek also welcomed state Rep. Todd Smola to speak at the breakfast, sharing an update about the climate of state and local government, and the importance of having access to health-care and how the closure of Mary Lane Hospital in Ware has affected the region.

“We’re very much impacted by the closure of that facility,” Smola said.

Smola also spoke about the

Please see **BREAKFAST**, page 11



Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette
Baystate Health President and CEO Peter Banko was the guest speaker at the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce’s breakfast held at Christopher Heights of Belchertown on Jan. 28.

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Ware River News OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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 1989 showed Joshua McNaulty, age 2, son of Mary Ann and Rickie McNaulty of Gilbertville. Joshua had recently placed first in the Baby Division of the Hemisphere Pageant Regionals held in Hyannis.

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

Baystate offers free virtual heart and vascular health series

SPRINGFIELD – Baystate Health will offer its popular free Virtual Heart & Vascular Health Lecture Series during the month of February.

The Virtual Heart & Vascular Health Lecture Series, presented by the Baystate Heart & Vascular Program as part of American Heart Month, will focus on the latest advances in heart and vascular care.

All events are virtual and available to the general public.

The free lecture "Boost Your Heart Health with the Power of Nutrition," will be offered on Feb. 9 from noon-1 p.m. Participants can join Brandy Sarrette, RDN, LDN, Clinical Dietician, and discover how nutrition, such as intermittent fasting and the Mediterranean diet, can be a game-changer for your heart health. Explore the vital connection between behavioral health and dietary choices.

The third lecture, "Revolutionizing AFib Treatment: Discover the New Farapulse Technology," will be offered on Feb. 16 from noon-1 p.m.

Kyle M. Gobeil, DO – Electrophysiology, Cardiology,



Brandy Sarrette, RDN, LDN, Clinical Dietician



Kyle M. Gobeil, DO, Electrophysiology, Cardiology



Anusha Ganapati Bhat, MD, Cardio-Oncology, Cardiology

will discuss a breakthrough in treating Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) with Farapulse, the innovative new FDA-approved technology that offers a unique approach compared to traditional ablation procedures. Find out what this cutting-edge treatment could mean for your health.

The last virtual program offered in this series, "Cancer Drug Therapy and Heart Health," takes place on Feb. 23 from noon-1 p.m.

In this lecture participants will hear from Anusha Ganapati

Bhat, MD – Cardio-Oncology, Cardiology, and learn about the life-saving collaboration between oncology and cardiology. As cancer drug therapies can put added strain on the heart, a multidisciplinary approach is essential to help patients manage the cardiovascular effects of the treatments.

All lectures will begin at noon followed by a question and answer session.

Registration is required for each session by visiting: BaystateHealth.org/HeartSeries.

Friends of Ware Town Hall offer spring 2025 lotto calendars

WARE – Pat Skutnik, president of Friends of Ware Town Hall announced their annual Lotto Calendar campaign is beginning.

She described it as a "fun fundraiser."

"These Lotto Calendars are very popular," said Skutnik in a press release. "We've had a tremendously positive response to them in the past. Our group is currently raising money to restore the Town Hall windows – it's a big goal but a very necessary one. We know we can do it with the continued support of our townspeople who share the same love and respect for this historic building as us. Work has already begun on the smaller windows, once that phase is finished, we will move

on to restoration of the beautiful larger windows in the Great Hall".

Calendars are \$10 each, with drawings beginning April 1 and ending April 30 and prizes range from \$25-\$500.

"Each person who buys a calendar has multiple chances to win, since winners names are put back into the pool," she said.

"These calendars are not only fun to buy for yourself but also to give. They always put a little sunshine in someone's day – everyone likes a game of chance," said Skutnik, adding that "they make great gifts for Valentine's Day, birthdays or for tucking into Easter baskets".

Calendars are being sold locally at the following locations:

Changes Hair Salon, Crystal Springs Dairy Bar, It's Wine O'clock, Moulton Insurance Agency, Nat Falk, Otto Florist, Platform Hair Design, Silhouettes on Main, Talk of the Town, This n That 2, Ware Library, Ware River Club, Ware Senior Center, Ware Town Hall, Town Clerk's Office and Wilton Children's Store.

Skutnik added, "anyone from out of town wishing to purchase a calendar may do so by mailing a check for \$10 for each calendar to: Friends of Ware Town Hall, P.O. Box 692, Ware, MA 01082. We will be happy to complete the calendar stub with your information and mail you the calendar. Good luck to all!"

Trombone ensemble performs benefit concert

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

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

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

Music you may hear: "Eleanor Rigby", "All of Me", "On A Clear Day", "Don't Get Around Anymore", "Bad Bad Leory Brown", "Here's That Rainy Day", "Bye Bye Blackbird", "Polka", "Fly Me to the Moon", "Battle of Jericho", "Old Devil Moon", "Bill Bailey", "Satin Doll", "California Dreaming", "Indiana", "Tie A



The Jazz Bones will perform a free concert at Trinity Episcopal Church on Sunday, Feb. 23.

Yellow Ribbon" and "America The Beautiful".

Please visit the Jazz Bones web site to listen to the group: www.Premierentertains.com. For more information about the Jazz Bones contact David Neill by calling 413-

686-5027 or emailing tbn8@aol.com.

The program is supported in part by the Ware Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Veterans eat lunch free at Ware Senior Center

WARE – Now through May 31, 2025, veterans of the U.S. armed services can enjoy a homemade lunch for free at the Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Road.

This meals are provided by the generosity of former Ware Selectboard member John Morrin,

the Ware Veteran Fund and the Ware Veterans Carnival.

For veterans to take advantage of this offer they must call the Ware Senior Center 413-967-9645 by noon the business day before they wish to come for lunch and place their name on the list. Meals

are served daily, Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m.-noon.

Menus and more information are available on the Council on Aging page of townofware.com or by stopping by the Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Road, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.



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 pouimette@turley.com, or call 967-3505. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Ware River News, Attn: Editor, 80 Main St., Ware, MA 01082.







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Paul, Bill, Jenn, Juliana & Victoria



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MARKET SPOTLIGHT

An apiary from Charlton and a bakery from Monson

Editor's note: The Ware River News will regularly feature a spotlight story on different farmers market vendors. Learn about the people that bring food and locally sourced items to your community.

By Richard Murphy
Correspondent

WEST BROOKFIELD – Early afternoon, Wednesday, Jan. 29 saw a vigorous snow squall descend on West Brookfield.

As quickly as we started to think, "boy, are we in for it," it was over and the sun returned, though slightly overcast. The temperature moderated and it was going to be a wonderful afternoon to mosey on down to the Winter Farmers' Market at The First Congregational Church, 36 North Main St. from 3-6 p.m.

There was something a bit different this Wednesday. Joy Hinton, impresario of Joy of Beans Coffee, is the manager of the market and has provided vendors and shoppers with a variety of recorded music, mostly great jazz.

On the 29th Heavygrass came to play. It was the string duo of Ron Garceau and Jeff Robbins entertaining the shoppers. We moved around the market, and as is typical on Wednesday, the usual suspects were present. One could procure delicious foods and vegetables from our region.

Across the hall from the entrance and back again for another year at the Winter Farmers Market is Kelly Homestead Apiary. It is wonderful to have beekeepers at a market, but that is only the start of what this operation located in Charlton does.

Staffing the table, as usual, was Ginger Kelly. This day she was ably assisted by her daughter, Faith.

Of course, honey was on offer, but there was more. The Kelly Homestead operation also has 100 hens producing organic eggs, and they also raise chicken for sale, as well as turkeys seasonally.

The Kellys have 80 hives which may not be agribusiness, but it is a serious operation. Ginger could be described as a renaissance woman.

While farming, and raising children she went back to school and ended up with a law degree.

The homestead in Charlton is about 2.7 acres. Some of the hives are on the land of others, giving the honey a variety of flavors.

The Kelly family estimates they produce 30% if their food. The Homestead does a lot of raising, canning, and preserving, and aims to have about a year's supply on hand for the family.

But the family does have plans. As noted last year, they had purchased raw land in Franklin County with the idea of making pollinator meadows. The property is 47 acres in the lovely town of Warwick on the New Hampshire border.

There will be an orchard, and apiary as well. They plan to pursue the art of raising queens.

Other than that Ginger, husband Ken, and family spend their days in idleness.

Kelly Homestead Apiary is online at: <https://www.kellyhomesteadapiary.com>

Traveling around the room, we came up to the table of Girlie's Cakes. Girlie's Cakes is the enterprise of Alysse out of Monson.

Girlie's is somewhat unique in that it is both vegan and gluten free. Vegan bakeries abound and gluten free businesses can easily be found, but a bakery that combines both? That is rare.

What is on the top of the table looks delectable. When asked her



Alysse is shown at the Girlie's Cakes Table.

Turley Photos by Richard Murphy

favorite creation Alysse said that it is Apple Pie Crumble Bars. Why? "It gives the feeling of eating home-made apple pie." It certainly looked inviting.

Alysse started baking with her great-grandmother, and pursued it as a hobby before going into business.

In a previous market she let us

know she will be opening a shop in Palmer. That should keep her out of trouble.

Girlie's is on Facebook, and Instagram. TikTok is coming.

As the season is heading toward the halfway point, the Winter Market continues Wednesdays through March 12. We'll have updates each week.



Faith and Ginger are shown at the Kelly Homestead Apiary table.



The Heavygrass lads, Jeff and Ron.

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.

Senior Center.
9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing for Beginners
10 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Scat
11:30 a.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Cornhole
2:30 p.m. Art Class

ACTIVITIES
Monday, Feb. 10
9 a.m. Tai Chi
10 a.m. Scat
11:30 a.m. Lunch

Tuesday, Feb. 11
9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
9 a.m. Movin & Groovin to the Oldies with Lisa. \$3 per class
9:30 a.m. Quilting Club
10 a.m. Scat
11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Valentine's Party. Music by Stephen George. Tickets are \$5 and must be purchased by Feb. 7.
1 p.m. Cornhole
5:30 p.m. Scrapbooking. \$3 per class
6 p.m. Pitch (doors open at 5 p.m.)

Wednesday, Feb. 12
10 a.m. Scat
10-11:30 a.m. Kirsten Krieger, Quabbin Region DPH Nurse office hours
11:30 a.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Chair Yoga
2:30 p.m. Knit-Crochet-Laugh

Thursday, Feb. 13
8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Mobile Dental Hygiene Clinic. Call 413-967-9645 for an appointment.
9 a.m. Tai Chi
9 a.m. Walking Club. Meet at

Friday, Feb. 14
9 a.m. Tai Chi
10 a.m. Scat
10:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Food Bank of Western MA Brown Bag Program
11:30 a.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Chair Yoga
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.

Monday, Feb. 10
Open Faced Turkey Sandwich with Gravy, Veggie of the Day, Dessert of the Day

Tuesday, Feb. 11
Valentine's Party
BBQ Spareribs, Baked Beans, Corn, Dessert and Entertainment by Friends of Ware Seniors, Inc.

Wednesday, Feb. 12
Chicken Jambalaya, Caesar Salad, Dessert of the Day

Thursday, Feb. 13
Grilled BLT Sandwich, French Fries, Dessert of the Day

Friday, Feb. 14
Baked Fish, Au Gratin Potatoes, Veggie of the Day, Dessert of the Day

Ware Library lists upcoming programs

WARE – The Ware Library, 37 Main St., welcomes 2025 with some exciting new programs for families and community members.

All programs are free to the public, no library card necessary. Some programs require advanced registration (they will be noted if so), otherwise just drop in.

Follow the library on Facebook for updates, or you can grab an event calendar at the library. Call 413-967-4858 or email warelibrary1881@gmail.com with any questions.

"Travel" to Peru

Tuesday, Feb. 11 at 2 p.m.
Join library staff and "escape" the cold during a live remote tour of Cusco, Peru. Cusco is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the Western Hemisphere. Formerly the capital of the extensive Inca empire, it retains much of its highly crafted early stone architecture. For patrons who are unable to make it to the library, staff can send you a link to participate from home - email warelibrary1881@gmail.com if interested.

Evening Craft:
Faux Stained Glass

Thursday, Feb. 13 at 5 p.m.
This is the library's first adult/teen evening craft. This particular craft will have the end result of looking like beautiful stained glass, and each piece will be unique to the maker. The project will take about one hour to complete. Plus, there will be snacks. This event is for ages 13 and up. Registration is required by emailing rdiemand@cwars.org or calling 413-967-4858.

Cooking Demonstration and Nutrition Education Program

Tuesday, Feb. 25 at 5:45 p.m.
Join library staff as they welcome a Nutrition Coordinator from the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. There will also be a budget-friendly cooking demonstration. The Food Bank of Western Mass, in partnership with SNAP-Ed, offers free nutrition education programs to member agencies. Learn about MyPlate healthy eating guidelines, decipher nutrition labels, and more. Reservations requested by not required. Contact Cathy Goulet by calling 413-967-9691.

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USDA GOVT INSP FRESH SHAVED STEAK (FREE PACKAGE BERNADINO'S ROLLS 6PK WITH PURCHASE)	\$7.99 lb	USDA INSP. CHICOPEE PROVISIONS BLUE SEAL KIELBASA	\$5.55 ea		

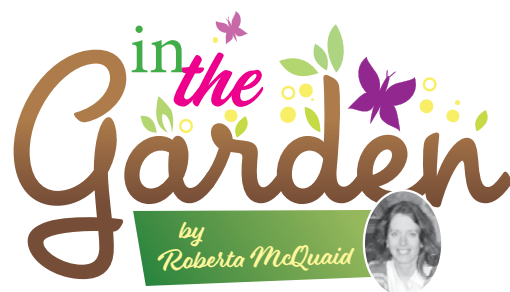
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Neal releases statement about Palmer rail stop site

PALMER – Congressman Richard E. Neal released the following statement after the Massachusetts Department of Transportation announced it has selected South of Palmer Yard as the site of the future Palmer train station this past Monday.

“After years of advocacy by the residents of Palmer, they are one step closer to realizing their goal of a Palmer train station. This announcement follows a fair and thorough review by MassDOT, one that has been transparent throughout the decision-making process. Located just half a mile from the downtown area, this site will play a critical role in unlocking economic growth in the Town of Palmer and surrounding communities, while providing the space needed to accommodate the demand for increased passenger rail.

“We are fortunate to have two leaders in Governor Healey and Lieutenant Governor Driscoll who have been steadfast in their support of improving and expanding passenger rail service throughout the Commonwealth. With Massachusetts receiving more than \$9 billion in federal funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we have made substantial progress in advancing key rail projects, enhancing connectivity, and modernizing our transportation network. Today marks yet another significant milestone in making West-East Rail a reality.”



‘Spring’ into action with these tasks

The groundhog determined we would have six more weeks of winter. Is that really a surprise to anyone?

I mean, as I write, it is only Feb. 2. But we gardeners are an impatient lot, and we so want to get our hands back into the soft earth.

There are many tasks, albeit those that are behind the scenes, that can be done now, so that when warmer weather does arrive, we can “spring” into action.

Take inventory
Last month I talked a lot about prepping for indoor seed starting, first by taking inventory of our seeds and then gathering the necessary supplies that go along with that task. But what about our outdoor ventures?

I have been busy shopping around for new IRT mulch, greenhouse supplies and amendments. How are you set on lime, grass seed, and fertilizers?

Plan to take advantage of preseason sales by knowing what you need ahead of time. Also, assess the condition of your tools. Is your rototiller working its best? Mine needs to be serviced.

By taking it to the repairman now, I’ll beat the spring rush and avoid having to turn the garden over by hand! The same goes for lawn mower blades. Have these sharpened yearly for the healthiest possible turf.

Practice good garden hygiene

Regularly inspect summer bulbs that have been stored away for the winter. Throw away any that are rotten or moldy.

If you find a lot of these, consider moving what is left to a drier location. On the other hand, dahlia tubers will shrivel when conditions get too dry, mist them with clean water to rehydrate.

It is also a good idea to take a close look at vegetables in storage. Squash with signs of rot can be cooked and the flesh frozen for later use. Sprouts that appear on potatoes should be rubbed off and used before they soften.

Experiment with onions that have sprouted by planting them outside once the ground thaws. This vegetable is a biennial and will produce seed during its second season.

If the sprouts come from an heirloom or open pollinated variety, save a few seeds come July and start them this time next year! In the seedling stage, onions thrive on ample nitrogen to develop thick tops that will feed what we hope are big bulbs.

Perform appropriate garden chores

I am usually negligent in cutting down asparagus foliage in the fall. Weather permitting I will get out there and cut it back to its base soon, then haul off the branches to prevent any bugs that overwintered there from infesting this year’s spears.

It is also time to prune blueberries, apples and grapes. Pruning can vary depending on the age and health of your specimens. If you are not experienced at it, consult any number of good books on the subject before you head outdoors with your pruning shears and loppers.

Do make sure your tools are sharp, and if there is any hint of disease, be sure to disinfect in between cuts or at least in between specimens. If any of your fruit trees have old fruit, called “mummies” hanging from the branches, be sure to get rid of them for fear of overwintering pests.

Hang tight

Winter will be gone soon enough. Come out of hibernation and accomplish preseason gardening tasks now, before the spring rush but also remember that this is a season of rest and taking care of yourself is a good thing too.

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.



Reader asks about Social Security benefits for someone with multiple ex-spouses

Dear Rusty:

If a financially well-off individual had multiple ex-spouses, could it happen that the multiple ex-spouses could each be collecting Social Security based on their own financial situation as compared to their rich ex-spouses?

Thus, multiple payouts by SS? Just curious, because there are probably many people in this situation as a result of the ever-increasing number of people involved in multiple marriages that each lasted more than ten years.

Signed: Curious Ex-Spouse

Dear Curious Ex-Spouse:

A former spouse can only collect one SS benefit either their own SS retirement amount, or an amount as an ex-spouse if the marriage lasted 10 years or more. And it is possible for multiple ex-spouses of a marriage to the same person to qualify for benefits from those unions, if each marriage lasted at least 10 years. But each ex-spouse can only qualify for one benefit payment either their own earned SS

benefit, or their benefit as an ex-spouse.

In other words, someone with two or more ex-spouses might have their ex’s collecting full benefits on their record, provided that each marriage lasted at least 10 years. But an ex-spouse can only get one benefit—their own SS retirement amount or an ex-spouse amount, whichever is higher.

It’s possible, also, that an ex-spouse can collect benefits from a former spouse at the same time as a current spouse is also collecting spouse benefits on the same record. And there is no detriment to either’s amount because multiple spouses or ex-spouses are collecting on a one person’s SS record (Social Security is, after all, a means for spouses, or ex-spouses, to avoid poverty). However, an ex-spouse’s own SS retirement benefit from their personal lifetime work record must be less than any ex-spouse benefit they are entitled to from a former spouse. Essentially, if the “10-years-married” rule is satisfied, ex-spouses are subject to the same benefit rules as a current spouse.

You are correct that we see some cases like this these days, but each eligible ex-spouse can only get one benefit and their ex-spouse benefit is always offset by any personal SS retirement benefit the ex-spouse may also be entitled to on their own lifetime work record.

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 ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

MassDOT announces selection of Palmer train station site

PALMER – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation is announcing that it has selected South of Palmer Yard as the best site for the future Palmer train station, a critical milestone in the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s efforts to advance West-East Rail.

The site, located about a half mile from downtown Palmer, was chosen following months of extensive review that included community engagement and feedback from local stakeholders.

Based on the comparative evaluation of sites, this site offers the amount of property needed for a platform to accommodate ADA needs and passenger train length, and, of nine alternative sites evaluated, is a preferred site as it will have fewer permit requirements and will be more affordable to build.

Of the sites included in the Level 2 Comparative Evaluation, public feedback also favors Site B, for its relative proximity to downtown. The site will now advance to the conceptual design phase.

“We’re thrilled to have reached another milestone for West-East Rail and our efforts to expand rail service across the state with the selection of a preferred site for Palmer Station. This is going to be a major boost for Western Mass and for our state’s economy,” said Governor Maura Healey. “We’re grateful for all of the input we received from community members that helped us choose the best site for the station.”

“Expanding rail capacity and connectivity in Massachusetts is essential if we want to remain economically competitive,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. “We applaud the efforts that have culminated in the selection of a Palmer Station location and look forward to seeing this component of West-East Rail advance to completion.”

“We are very pleased to see ongoing progress in the advancement of the Compass Rail program, which will give residents the passenger rail connectivity they need and deserve,” said Transportation Secretary Monica Tibbitts-Nutt. “Throughout the planning and design

phase for Palmer Station, we have been committed to working with the community to make a site selection that reflects their needs in the decades ahead. We appreciate all the feedback and look forward to continuing this dialogue.”

“The South of Palmer Yard location has great potential as a future stop within the Compass Rail network, and the local stakeholders’ feedback has been invaluable in helping us reach an informed decision,” said MassDOT Rail and Transit Administrator Meredith Slesinger. “The site’s strategic location within Palmer and its cost-effective geography are significant benefits for the community both short- and long-term.”

The project team will now begin to develop a conceptual design which will allow MassDOT to engage with railway owner CSX, the site property owner, and proposed service operator, Amtrak, on the feasibility of constructing a future station.

Compass Rail is made up of existing and proposed West-East and North-South services intersecting at a robust hub in Springfield. Compass Rail – Passenger Rail for the Commonwealth – is a vision for intercity passenger rail within Massachusetts and beyond.

The goal of Compass Rail is to enhance mobility, expand transportation choice, and support economic development goals through transportation investments. Compass Rail integrates existing MassDOT-supported services with new, proposed services in a unified vision.

Existing services supported and managed by MassDOT under the Compass Rail banner include the following Amtrak-operated routes:

Vermont through Washington, D.C. and St. Albans, Vermont with Massachusetts stops in Springfield, Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield

Valley Flyer between New Haven, Connecticut and Greenfield with Massachusetts stops in Springfield, Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield

Hartford Line and Northeast Regional between Springfield and New Haven,



Palmer Yard, on South Main Street, has been selected as the site for the proposed train stop for the East/West Passenger Rail.



A slide from MassDOT, indicating where in town the train station will land and where the track runs.

Connecticut or Washington, D.C.

Berkshire Flyer, a seasonal, pilot service, between Pittsfield and New York City.

West-East Rail represents proposed, new Compass Rail services that focus on improved connections between western and eastern Massachusetts. These routes include:

Inland Route to operate between Boston and New Haven, CT via Springfield

Boston & Albany Corridor via Pittsfield.

It is expected that future passenger service through Palmer would be included in

the proposed West-East routes, which would be operated by Amtrak and would include an Inland Route between Boston and New Haven through Springfield and a Boston and Albany route. Both routes would use the Boston and Albany Line owned and operated by CSX Transportation.

“We are excited to see West-East Rail mark this milestone and move forward with the conceptual design of the project. We look forward

Please see **SITE**, page 5

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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:
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Letter to the Editor
80 Main Street
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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.

Select Board approves contracts for Assessors

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

HARDWICK – The Select Board reviewed new business regarding contracts for the Board of Assessors.

The Select Board had two discussions and possible votes on Q Properties LLC contract for the Board of Assessors and a CAI Maintenance contract for the Board of Assessors. Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said these were requests from the Board of Assessors who sent out recommendations and letters for their GIS services and CLE inspections.

The Select Board accepted both contracts.

Gift acceptance

The Select Board would move forward and vote to accept \$900 gift from the East Quabbin Land Trust. The Select Board appreciated the generous gift and decided to allocate the funds to the Parks & Recreation Department.

Easement

The Select Board had a vote and approved an easement for 17 Maple St. This project is a sewer project taking place in Wheelwright.

Committee vacancies

Caggiano spoke with the Select Board to remind them about com-

mittee vacancies. There are currently several committee vacancies on the Youth Commission, Open Space Committee, and Parks & Recreation Committee. This was an announcement for the Select Board and Caggiano mentioned these vacancies are listed on the town website, www.hardwick-ma.gov. These three commissions and committees are looking for members.

Town Administrator Report

Caggiano shared her report with the Select Board and began by mentioning new phones being installed in the municipal building. There will be a department meeting for department members to attend a demonstration on the new phone system.

Caggiano also mentioned the purchasing process for a new firetruck for the fire department. The process is currently in progress and hoping to be completed soon.

Caggiano said she attended a Zoom meeting regarding the solar field project. The Town Administrator will be receiving a lease from the company.

Select Board Chair Kelly Kemp recalled the project going on prior to joining the Select Board.

"This has been a long process," Kemp said.

Caggiano also mentioned that there is a vacant truck driver laborer position posted.

Volunteer committee meets at Ware Library

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – A volunteer committee put together by the Community Action Group for Ware & Surrounding towns met on Jan. 30 at the Ware Library.

The first order of action as a volunteer committee is to take care of the Ware Dreams Come True/Robert J. Beauregard Memorial Playground. The Chair of the committee is Adrienne Clark who welcomed many community members to touch base on the current condition of the park and how it can be preserved.

The playground is viewed as a historical playground with some components still being usable. The condition of the playground is under review as it has aged over-

time. The playground was built about 30 years ago and it hasn't been redone since 2016.

Clark believes it is important to have this park preserved as it is part of the community and is in a neighborhood of Ware that deserves a welcoming destination.

"They deserve a nice park in that side of town," Clark said.

The committee wants to check with the Parks & Recreation Commission about their thoughts on the park and Clark mentioned they have a meeting on March 3 at the Town Hall. The committee is looking to possibly register as a nonprofit and wants to have community events and fundraisers.

There is a structural engineer currently reviewing the current condition of the park, which has a special connection with the fire department. The committee wants to keep the name of the playground

and wants to know if the fire department wanted to get involved in planning a preservation plan for the playground.

Clark encouraged those who attended this Jan. 30 meeting to brainstorm fundraising ideas and reach out to anyone who wants to get involved and whoever does should attend the meetings. The committee is thinking about ideas for pamphlets and wants to organize outlets to spread more awareness about their goals and hear from people who want to contribute.

No matter what the plans are for preserving the park, Clark said they still want to "honor the fallen firefighter".

Other goals, in addition to helping with the preservation of the playground include getting fundraising done and get people to show up at their meetings. This

was a good starting point for the volunteer committee as Clark took names and contact information of all who attended and hopes to have a bigger attendance at the next meeting.

The next meeting for this volunteer committee will meet on Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. The committee is still waiting for confirmation on the location for the next meeting. For more information visit the Facebook page Community Action -Ware & Surrounding Towns.

The committee is hoping to connect with a diverse group of people from all backgrounds, with different views and opinions to help create an all-inclusive team that focuses on bridging the gap between the town issues and the people of the community.

Durant and Berthiaume list office hours for February

Staff from the offices of state Sen. Peter Durant and state Rep. Donnie Berthiaume will hold office hours at the locations listed below in February.

Feb. 10, 9:30 a.m. East Brookfield Senior Center, 10:45 a.m. Brookfield Town Hall, noon West Brookfield Senior Center; Feb. 12, 9:30 a.m. North Brookfield Senior Center, 10:45 a.m. Richard Sugden Library, Spencer with State Rep. John

Marsi's Chief of Staff Tammy Ruda), noon Leicester Senior Center

Constituents are welcome to drop in to meet with Donna Farmer, Chief of Staff for Rep. Berthiaume, along with Sen. Durant's District Liaison Jared Grigg and Communications Director Kim Mongeau who are available to discuss legislative concerns and ideas or assist with matters involving state agencies.

In cases of inclement weather when schools are closed in the towns where hours are being held, office hours will also be cancelled. The staff will make every effort to quickly reschedule should that happen.

Staff members from both offices are also available by phone or email and can arrange to meet with you privately, if you desire.

COLLEGE NEWS

Andrew Soltys named to Springfield College Dean's list

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield College has named Andrew Soltys from Ware to the Dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester.

Soltys has a primary major of mathematics.

The criteria for selection to the Dean's List are as follows: The student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term.

The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term. Student must not have been barred from Dean's list due to disciplinary action.

FIELD from page 1

the school district will be able to make alternate plans to accommodate practices and games for 2026. He said he will schedule all of the team's away games for the start of the 2026 season, to allow the field more time to rest.

"For this year to shut it down, would be detrimental," Slattery said.

Parks Manager John Piechota said Memorial Field is a town field used by multiple youth sports programs, including the high school baseball team, soccer and youth football. It is also the site of the town's annual Veterans Carnival.

Memorial Field is in almost continuous use from April until November. The condition of the grass has been negatively impacted by this, Piechota said.

"It's from overuse, nonstop," he said. "It gets no rest for us to do work on it."

Piechota said he and the commission members were unaware that the school's JV baseball field was no longer maintained, and would have factored that information into their decision to close Memorial Field.

"We didn't know that field was unplayable...that field has been there 30 plus years," he said.

Imbier said in speaking with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Lovato, the school district

will need a year to prepare the JV field for play.

"The school can't play on it this year, it's not ready," Imbier said.

Piechota said the Parks Department also needs to address other needs at Memorial Field, including weeds, grubs and lips in addition to the grass condition. This will also be the first year the new irrigation system will be in use at the field.

"Treating the field requires it to be shut down...it's not as simple as a lawn at your house," Piechota said.

Commission member Ryan Mulligan said Memorial Field's playing condition "is not great right now," and said it was necessary to allow it to rest to bring it back to ideal condition.

"If we're going to do it right, do it right," he said.

The commission members agreed to delay the closing of Memorial Field until after this year's baseball season. The condition of the field will be closely monitored to determine if it will be ready for use for the 2026 spring athletic season.

Slattery said the baseball team will work with the commission and Piechota and that he is "grateful to have another year."

Grenville Park pavilion

The commission members accepted a bid to construct a timber

pavilion at Grenville Park by Ware Built Timber Frames.

Tree removal and stonewall damage

Piechota said tree removal has been ongoing along the upper road of Grenville Park.

"Every day it's cleaner and safer and better," he said.

Piechota said there was damage to the stonewall bordering the park at the Upper Church Street exit, after a car drove into it.

Beauregard playground update

Town Manager Stuart Beckley said he attended a site visit to Robert J. Beauregard Memorial Park to assess the needs of the playground with volunteer Adrienne Clark and others. He said Clark has a structural engineer looking at the playground structures to determine what is salvageable.

NOTICE

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TOWN OF BARRE Cemetery Clerk

The Town of Barre is seeking qualified applicants for the part-time position of Cemetery Clerk. This position is approximately 10 hours per week and the minimum hourly rate is \$15.00/hour and the maximum hourly rate is \$18.02/hour. A full job description is available upon request. Applicants must have HS Diploma or GED, with a minimum of two to three years' experience in office setting, or equivalent combination of education and experience.

Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest to: Tammy Martin, Town Administrator, 40 West Street, Suite 697, Barre MA 01005 or townadmin@townofbarre.com. For further information, please contact the Board of Selectmen's Office at (978) 355-2504 x135. A.A. / E.O.E.



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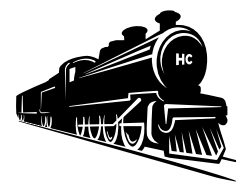
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warren

Planning Board reviews draft zoning diagnostic presentation

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Planning Board discussed the draft zoning diagnostic presentation with Land Use Manager from Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, Jane Wyrick.

The board had Wyrick on Zoom for the review of the draft zoning which featured comments and suggestions about the zoning bylaw. Planning Board Chair Richard Eichacker wanted to review the definitions and put them together with some unexplained parts of the bylaw and Wyrick from the CMRPC would share her notes with the board.

Eichacker mentioned the bylaws have been around for a while and may have some items that could be removed. For example, Eichacker brought up a tourist court and thought that could be removed.

There were other items about combining single family homes, defining housing and multiple units. Wyrick would bring up the town maybe adopting a fee schedule. This schedule is a documented list outlining the specific costs associated with various services provided by a municipality or

local government.

The board also discussed storm water bylaws. Wyrick confirmed that there are grants for storm water. Eichacker brought up oils and hazardous materials.

The concerns the board had were about turbines being damaged and leaks occurring. Some suggestions made by Wyrick included installing a fire suppression system and other communities have backup generators and fuel tanks.

When it comes to having wind turbines and wind energy, Planning Board member David Dufresne believes wind energy is expensive to produce. Vice Chair Ed Londergan was absent at the Jan. 27 meeting but will be emailing comments on the diagnostic presentation.

So far, the Planning Board believes the comments look good for the draft zoning diagnostic.

One section that is worth looking at is the earth removal and gravel pit. The board said there are two separate things listed in the bylaw, but it is worth discussing when protecting properties and homes in Warren.

Dufresne and Eichacker thought it would be good to have some sort of screening called out in the bylaw for protecting prop-

erties.

“Earth removal allows up to the property line,” Dufresne.

The bylaw also doesn’t address the situation at all and they don’t want homeowners to be put in a bad situation. Wyrick said she will be implementing the updates prior to the next steps of the draft zoning.

Wyrick would then discuss selected tree cutting with the Planning Board. This topic was focused on protecting any water runoffs.

A logging permit is needed when tree cutting, but the property should be looked at when considering any possible water runoff streams. According to Dufresne, streams can be made by the heavy weight of the logging trucks that can drive through a property where cutting is being done.

The Planning Board wants to find out if there is control and buffer zones for select tree cutting. Wyrick suggests the Board look at erosion control measures as well.

The Planning Board appreciates the help from Land Use Manager Jane Wyrick and will meet with her again to further discuss the next steps in the Draft Zoning Diagnostic.

Local author presents writing/publishing workshop on March 9 at Salem Cross Inn

WEST BROOKFIELD – “Everyone has a story to tell,” said award-winning author Ed Londergan.

His ninth annual creative writing and publishing workshop will be held on Sunday, March 9, from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Salem Cross Inn.

“The writing workshop aims to help those who want to write but don’t know where to start or who have had an idea for a story that’s been bubbling in their head for years and finally want to put it on paper. I also help people who have written something and need to know how to move ahead,” said Londergan, who provides a full day of information.

“The workshop will cover the entire process of writing and publishing, including idea development and sources of inspira-

tion, drawing from storytelling traditions, developing the story, structure, and flow, conceiving and bringing characters to life, dialogue, editing, short fiction, writer’s block, and the publishing process,” Londergan said. “The publishing process can be confusing and frustrating. I’ll take the group through the various publishing options available. There will also be some fun writing exercises.”

Past workshops have been attended by people of all ages and occupations, from 12-year-old students to 75-year-old retirees.

“Five attendees have written books and had them published while others have had stories and articles placed in various publications,” said Londergan.

“One of the things past attendees have enjoyed and learned

from is the writing exercises,” Londergan said. “The writing exercises this year are different than what I’ve done in the past. I enjoy seeing the creative ideas that come out of them.”

“Back-and-forth discussion is always a popular part of the day. Attendees learn from each other. Individual issues or problems anyone has with their writing are discussed, and the group helps them with suggestions and observations. At times, a lot of ‘here’s what happened to me, and here’s what I did,’” he said.

The workshop is limited to 14 participants. The cost is \$110, and lunch is included.

Registration is required, and the deadline is Febr. 28. To register, email ed.londergan@gmail.com or call 508-864-8685.



The Julian Family, Kylee (left), Debra and Richard ran a Maple Syrup Workshop at the Hardwick Farmers Co-Op Exchange this past weekend.



Kylee Julian handed out samples of their maple syrup made at Deer Meadow Farm in Warren.

MAPLE from page 1

shop by sharing the history of maple sugaring.

The process of maple sugaring was not new to Massachusetts when the Pilgrims landed in 1620. Native American have been making sugar from the sweet sap of maple trees for years.

One of the most popular stories about the origin of maple sugaring is an Iroquois legend about Chief Woksis’ tomahawk. Another known historical fact is the sweetness was discovered by eating “sapicles,” icicles of frozen sap from the end of a broken twig.

Richard Julian also explained the reasoning behind why the process is known as “sugaring” and not “syruping.”

Cane sugar was produced in the British Caribbean using slave labor and taxes were high on the sugar. In the late 18th century, Quakers began to promote maple sugar as an alternative to slave-produced cane sugar. Around 1880, the cane and maple sugar became almost equal in price.

Pure maple syrup is made by concentrating the slightly sweet sap of the maple trees. Julian said there is no set time when a sugar maker must tap the trees. In Massachusetts, the time is usually around the months of February and March.

The types of trees to tap are maple trees, but there are numerous types of maple trees that are used to collect sap. Sugar maples, for example produce the best sap for sugaring because the sap has a higher concentration of sugar than other maple species. Typically, around 2% according to the research by Deer Meadow Farm.

Other maple trees to tap include red maple, silver maple, striped maple and mountain maple. There is also Norway maple, however the sap from it is not commonly used to produce maple syrup.

Some of the tips provided by Deer Meadow Farm are general tips when looking for maples that could be tapped. These include keeping an eye out for opposite branches and the bark texture on the trees. Another helpful tip involves the leaves. According to Julian, the leaves are the easiest way to identify maple trees.

“We tap everything that is a maple,” Julian said.

The sap flow from sugar maples is entirely temperature dependent. There were samples of tools shared during the workshop and were passed around for guests to see. Julian had some spits passed around and these come in all forms from plastic, aluminum and stainless steel.

Bags or “sap sacks” are used and are gaining in popularity. These bags can be easily replaced each year and take up less space in the off season. These bags are useful tools for sap collecting.

For sap storage, Deer Meadow Farm suggests using clean plastic, metal tubs, pots, large pails or food-



Richard Julian spoke during the workshop and exchanged helpful tips for those who may be interested in producing their own maple syrup.



Guests who attended the workshop lined up to purchase some of Deer Meadow Farms’ delicious maple syrup.

grade tanks. Other tools needed include metal pans and an evaporator.

Deer Meadow Farm also shared ways maple syrup makers can improve as they increase production.

The Julian family was very specific on all their suggestions in their presentation. For them, it was a learning experience when getting involved with maple sugaring. The Julian family shared a story about going to a course that featured multiple maple sugar producers. The family was blown away on how many trees some of the other producers had.

Deer Meadow Farm was a smaller operation at the time, and they had a sample of dark syrup and it was the only sample that got a perfect score.

Though they have a lot of competitors in the maple syrup making business, the Julian Family said they have met a lot of people who were helpful and gave them advice on how to improve their maple syrup production.

At these gatherings, “everybody is willing to help each other out,” Richard Julian said.

Deer Meadow Farm got started in sugaring when both Debra and Richard’s fathers tinkered with making syrup on a very small scale. In 2015, the Julian family purchased one of the woodlots next to their farm. After developing a forestry

plan for managing the forest, the family had several acres featuring sugar maples.

The family showed Deer Meadow Farm’s growth timelines. In 2016, the farm had 11 taps and 2,625 gallons made. As time went by the production of maple syrup grew. In 2024, Deer Meadow Farm had 500 taps and is the first Massachusetts farm to be certified as a “Bird Friendly” maple producer by Massachusetts Audubon.

The family made 85 gallons last year, which is a new record.

Deer Meadow Farm is located at 60 Reed St. in Warren. In addition to 100% pure maple syrup the farm also offers feed hay. Many local stores sell maple syrup that is made by Deer Meadow Farm and is adored by their customers.

The Julian family had samples available for guests to try out and also got to try maple cream, which is a new product Deer Meadow Farm made this year. Richard and Debra’s daughter Kylee Julian makes cupcakes with maple syrup.

Many guests lined up after the workshop and purchased some items from Deer Meadow Farm. There were brochures available featuring recipes.

Deer Meadow Farm can be followed on Facebook and are currently working on their website. The farm can be reached by calling 413-436-0088.

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Nat Falk has been in business for more than 88 years, offering the best in men's clothing, along with personalized service at competitive prices. The business was started on Main Street by Nat Falk in 1936, with Joe Lark becoming the owner in 1977, and his son, Charlie, buying the business in 1989. Since then, Charlie has continued the hallmark of the store, offering the alterations (with some exceptions) in the store with prices at or below its competitors for the same service. Nat Falk offers customer service that is second to none while still offering prices that cater to working people. To hold a number of competitors inflating their prices and then raising the same sales week after week, Nat Falk offers everyday great values. We don't play the pricing game," Charlie said. "We offer the best in personalized service at workday prices."

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Zoning Board continues with ZPT public hearing

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Zoning Board of Appeals met on Jan. 29 and continued the public hearing on Remanded Variance Application by ZPT Energy Solutions, Inc.

The public hearing was about the application on the property owned by HA Coy Hill Road, LLC on Coy Hill Road in Warren. This application is for relief from Solar Energy Setback and Density Requirements, Section 12.3.7 of the Town of Warren Zoning Bylaw.

The public hearing was continued from the Jan. 15 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Joining the meeting was Jim Vevone of Sedar & Chandler, LLP and was representing ZPT Energy Solutions, Inc. Vevone briefly read about the petition in front of the Zoning Board during the public hearing.

“We’re seeking this variance for setback relief and buffer relief,” Vevone stated.

The board was satisfied with the petition and agreed unanimously to accept the agreement. The board checked with Town Council Dave McKay about what the next step would be for them to take. McKay said the Board can approve the variance and issue the amended

decision as drafted and attach to the settlement agreement.

The board would then authorize their Chairperson Richard Czaporowski to sign the amended decision. The public hearing was then closed after the vote for the Zoning Board Chair was authorized to sign the decision. The board will give the signed amended decision to the town clerk.

Reorganization of the board

The Zoning Board of Appeals briefly discussed about the possibility of reorganizing the board. The board decided to keep the board as it is and hope to find an additional member who could serve as clerk.

As of now, the board remains the same with Czaporowski as the Chair, Ronald Leger as Vice Chair with members Martha Giguere and Kerry Schmidt.

The Zoning Board of Appeals is appointed by the Board of Selectmen to hear, deliberate and decide upon petitions for Zoning Variances and Administrative Appeals of decisions by the Building Inspector and the Planning Board in accordance with the Town Zoning Bylaws and the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A.

Aromatherapy 101 program to be held March 1

WARREN – Learn the history and health benefits of essential oils and healing botanicals at the Warren Senior Center on Saturday, March 1 at 2 p.m.

This free program is sponsored by Warren Public Library with a grant from the Warren Cultural Council and the MA Cultural Council. Craft and take home an aromatherapy dream pillow, bath salts and soap.

Space is limited, please register by calling 413-436-7690

Quaboag hosts annual craft and small business fair Feb. 8

WARREN – Quaboag Regional Middle High School, 284 Old West Brookfield Road, is bringing back its annual Craft & Small Business Fair on Saturday, Feb. 8 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

With Valentine’s Day fast approaching, this fair is a perfect opportunity to shop local and get some gifts for your loved ones. This annual fair is hosted by Quaboag’s Student Council.

Library hosts book club starting Feb. 8

WARREN – A new event is happening at the Warren Public Library – the new Warren Public Library Book Club.

Come to the library on Saturday, Feb. 8 at 1 p.m. for refreshments and the first meeting. This first session will be a meet-and-greet for patrons to get to know each other, share their favorite genres, choose their upcoming reads, and set the schedule for monthly meetings going forward.

Anyone who cannot attend the first meeting can join the club anytime. The library will keep everyone up to date on each monthly read both in person and on Facebook, and there will be copies of the books available at the Circulation Desk for check out.

Nomination papers for town elections now available

WARREN / WEST BROOKFIELD – The Town Clerks’ of Warren, Laura Stockley, and West Brookfield, Heather Gough, announce that nomination papers are available for the Annual Town Election, which will be held on Tuesday, May 6.

Office hours in the town of Warren are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and Thursday from 1-6 p.m.; and for the town of West Brookfield, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Quaboag Regional School Committee nomination papers

will be available for pick up on Tuesday, Feb. 4 at the Quaboag Regional Middle High School front office between the hours of 8 a.m.-3 p.m. School Committee positions open are: two members from Warren for a three-year term and two members from West Brookfield for a three-year term.



Names sought of craftswomen who made 1991 town quilt

WARREN – The Warren Town Quilt has come out of its resting place and is now hanging in a brand new case on a wall at the Shepard Municipal Building.

A celebration of its being hung in this beautifully crafted case will be scheduled in a few weeks.

A plaque is planned to list all the craftswomen who worked on the quilt to celebrate the Town’s

250th Anniversary in 1991. If you, or someone you know (or knew), worked on the Warren Town Quilt in 1991, please contact Historical Commission Chair, Sylvia G. Buck sgibuck37@verizon.net and include a telephone number at which you can be reached. Use “Warren Town Quilt” in the subject line to verify your intent.

SCHOOL from page 1

ment and bullied and targeted staff, were both deemed unsubstantiated claims as no additional documentation was provided to support the allegations. The union also stated that Lovato allowed and enabled Clark Consulting to intimidate and attempt to discipline teachers, but documentation was not provided.

Complaints and allegations that are not under the control or jurisdiction of the school committee, are deferred to the superintendent. Of the 25 complaints/allegations, 13 were deferred to the superintendent.

“Nothing has been substantiated except for the items where we are taking action,” Sawabi said. “Anything that’s getting deferred to the superintendent, by law we have no choice but to defer it to the superintendent.”

Sawabi said anyone can make a complaint, but that people need to follow the proper channels. Winslow said all complaints should be received in writing.

The School Committee will continue discussion on eight of the 25 allegations provided by the union.

School Committee member Michael DuBois said allegations 7 and 8 were “egregious claims” and he would like to see evidence of these claims provided by the union. Allegation 7 said the Lovato “favors certain staff, predominantly men” and allegation 8 said he “displays a consistent pattern of retribution and rewards.”

Lovato said he agreed that the allegations regarding his treatment of staff were not minor, and they should be backed up with facts.

“If you’re going to accuse somebody of that, then you better have some facts to back it up...as long

as there’s not facts, it’s slander,” Lovato said.

He suggested the school district seek an independent investigation to look at these allegations, in order to give him due process. Lovato also requested to review any documentation that was reviewed by the School Committee.

The School Committee will consult with their lawyer to determine the best way to move forward with Lovato’s requests.

Comments and concerns

WTA President Amber Boucher said the union has never filed a vote of no confidence in her 20 years working for Ware Public Schools.

“The fact that we are doing that should say to you that there really are significant issues,” she said.

Boucher said the union will try to bring more specific evidence to back up allegations made against Lovato.

Teacher and parent Deanna Horn said she has been working for the district for 19 years and she said the morale is “drastically different” and she is fearful that students will be leaving the school district.

Resident Doug Koczur said he is part of a group that has worked with Lovato over the past months. He said one major concern his group has is that a faculty member left their position on their own accord, signed a nondisclosure agreement, and is still being paid by the school district.

“It disappoints myself, the group, for all the work that we’ve been trying to do to, to then find these things out,” he said.

Resident Jessica Rohan said according to town records, the school district has paid that faculty member over \$24,000 since they

left their position.

“That’s a lot of money...that’s a lot of money for a school district that is struggling,” she said.

Paul Skutnik, who is also part of that group, spoke about the necessity of training for and practicing lockdown drills.

“There needs to be better plans in place, and they need to be worked on throughout the school year,” he said.

Several residents spoke about how much they appreciated the teachers at Ware Public Schools and how the teachers support the students.

Carolanne McGrail said she has had six children attend the school district and said that no one is thinking about the children, who she said are suffering because of this.

A senior at the high school said she wasn’t informed about a recent school closure after a pipe burst in the school. She said the school closure was only posted on Facebook.

“Communication...really, really, really terrible,” she said.

Special education audit update

Desjardins said revisions were made to the special education audit contract, and an end date was added. He said the auditors will be able to speak with administration, staff, parents and students throughout the process.

Desjardins said the School Committee was notified that Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative’s director had previously worked with the school district’s Director of Student Services, Dr. Ginger Coleman.

“I did reach out to him and asked that he recuse himself from any participation in the audit because I wanted to make sure that this audit is 100% transparent

and I didn’t want any improprieties whatsoever in the audit, and well, he basically refused,” he said. “I’m asking for permission from the School Committee to invite him to step down from the audit and terminated if he would like to.”

Desjardins said he was concerned that the director’s involvement would “cast a shadow” over the audit.

“I want to make sure that this audit goes through as it’s intended,” he said.

Winslow agreed that the director’s involvement would be a conflict of interest.

The committee voted to require the director of LPVEC to recuse themselves from the audit due to this.

Desjardins said an email was created for parents who would like to participate in the audit: lpvecwp-saudit@lpvec.org.

Parents should also email cdesjardins@ware.k12.ma.us, separately, to notify him that they have emailed the auditor. He asked that parents not include the name of their student(s) when contacting him for privacy reasons.

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Boston Post Cane Award



Selectboard member John Desmond presents the town's oldest resident, Jennie Kapinos, with a replica of the Boston Post Cane during a celebration at Cedarbrook Village at Ware on Jan. 25.

CANE from page 1

quite a few years, and that Selectboard member John Desmond spearheaded an effort to resume this honor, which towns across the commonwealth have taken part in for well over a century.

In 1909, publisher of the Boston Post newspaper, Edwin A. Grozier, sent 700 canes to towns in New England to be presented to the oldest male citizen. In 1930, women became eligible to receive the cane as well.

The original canes were made from ebony shipped from the Congo in Africa and decorated with a 14-carat gold head. Many of these canes have gone missing or been destroyed over the years, but the town of Ware was lucky to receive a number of replicas crafted by students from Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical School.

Kapinos has lived in town most of her life and worked for many years in the cafeteria at Ware Public Schools, including the South Street School, where Cedarbrook Village at Ware is now located today.

"She's been a wonderful addition to the community, and I know her heart is in Ware," Talbot said.

Kapinos credited her long life to having worked on a farm.

Selectboard Vice-Chair Josh Kusnierz gave Kapinos flowers on behalf of the town, and Desmond awarded her the replica of the Boston Post Cane. Senior Center Executive Director John Zienowicz was also in attendance at the celebration, and he congratulated Kapinos on behalf of the Ware Senior Center.

State Sen. Peter Durant presented Kapinos with citations from the Senate and House of Representatives.



Jennie Kapinos is shown with Selectboard member John Desmond (front row from left) and Selectboard Chair Nancy Talbot. In the back row are Selectboard member Jack Cascio, Senior Center Executive Director John Zienowicz, Selectboard Vice-Chair Josh Kusnierz and state Sen. Peter Durant.



Selectboard Vice-Chair Josh Kusnierz gives flowers to Jennie Kapinos on behalf of the town. *Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette*



Jennie Kapinos celebrated receiving the Boston Post Cane with her family.

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Families needed to host exchange students

World Heritage International Student Exchange Program, a nonprofit, public benefit organization, is seeking local families to host foreign exchange students this coming school year.

World Heritage students come from a variety of countries worldwide: Italy, Denmark, Spain, France, Germany, Ukraine, Japan, Australia, to name just a few.

Students are between the ages of 15 and 18 years, and they are enthusiastic and excited to experience American culture, family life, school, sports, etc. They also love to share their own culture and language with their host families, who welcome the students into their home, not as a guest, but as a family member, giving everyone involved a rich cultural experience.

Host families may be single parents, couples and single persons.

The exchange students have pocket money for personal expenses and full health, accident and liability insurance.

World Heritage students are carefully selected based upon academics and personality, and host families choose their student from different backgrounds, countries and personal interests.

World Heritage also offers qualified American students the opportunity to learn another language and culture by spending a school year, semester or a summer with a host family in another country.

If interested in hosting an exchange student or becoming an exchange student abroad, please call Debra at 1-800-888-9040, visit www.world-heritage.org or send an email to info@world-heritage.org to request more information or start the application process.

Students are eager to learn about their American host family, so begin the process of welcoming your new son or daughter today. The memories and the relationship you create with your exchange student will stay with you forever.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN!

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Gathering

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Indians take down Sci-Tech



WARE – Last Saturday afternoon, after falling behind early in the matchup, Ware girls basketball shot its way back into the game and scored a 50-45 win over visiting Sci-Tech. In the win, Amelia Orszulak had a huge game with 21 points scored. Reese McKeever, Gloria Cotaj, and Madisyn Slattery all scored nine points each. The Indians, who also defeated Pioneer and Ludlow during the past week, are now 10-4 on the season and are definitely headed for the Division 5 State Tournament. The 10 wins could also get the Indians into the Western Mass. Tournament.

Tory Finocchio sends a pass toward the corner.

Shelby Hogan heads down the court to start a play.

Gloria Cotaj thinks about her next move.



Kyla Campbell takes a shot from the free throw line.



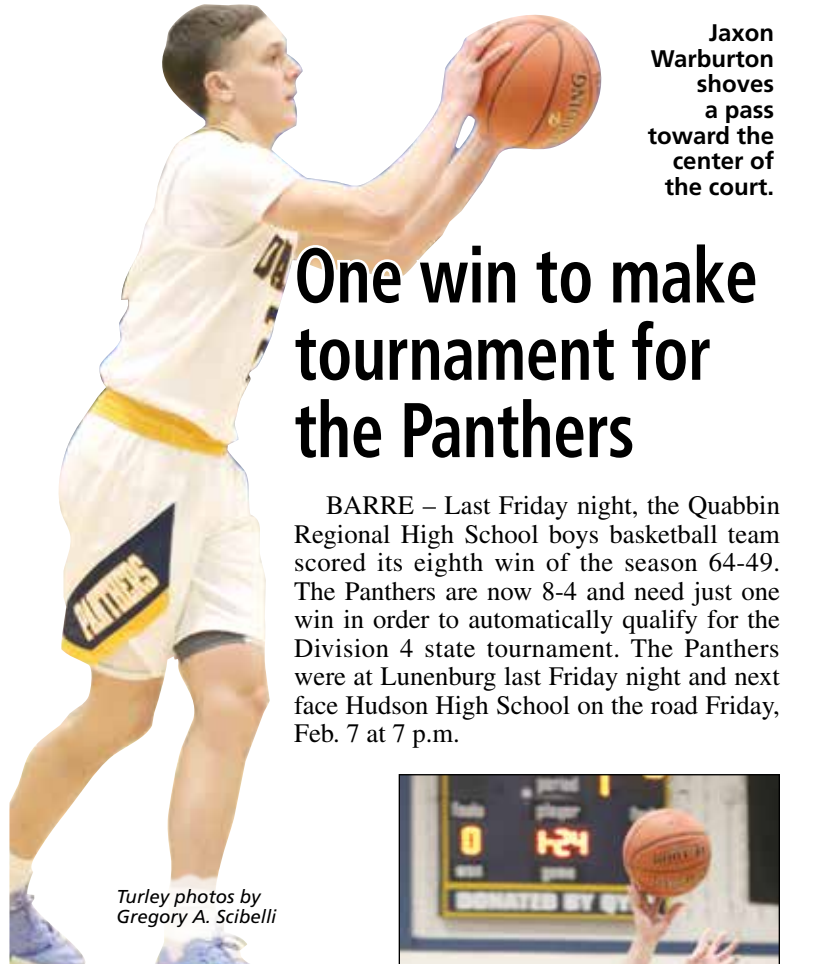
Madisyn Slattery makes her way down the court.



Reese McKeever gets ready to shoot.

Indians score OT win over Hoosac

WARE – Last Tuesday night, Ware boys basketball went on an impressive 11-4 run in the four-minute overtime in order to defeat Hoosac Valley 73-67. Jake Gaudreau had a huge night with 35 points to lead the team. Owen McKeever added 17 points to account for most of Ware's scoring in the matchup. Ware improved to 12-2 on the season. Coming up, the Indians will face Smith Vocational on Monday, Feb. 10 at 7 p.m.



Jaxon Warburton shoves a pass toward the center of the court.

One win to make tournament for the Panthers

BARRE – Last Friday night, the Quabbin Regional High School boys basketball team scored its eighth win of the season 64-49. The Panthers are now 8-4 and need just one win in order to automatically qualify for the Division 4 state tournament. The Panthers were at Lunenburg last Friday night and next face Hudson High School on the road Friday, Feb. 7 at 7 p.m.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Brady Patchen gets through the defense and heads into the lane.



Kyle Clark takes a free throw.

Outstanding regular season continues for Pathfinder girls basketball

PALMER – The Pathfinder Regional girls basketball picked up two more wins, defeating Smith Academy and Gateway Regional on Jan. 23 and 27, respectively. The road trip continues for the Pioneers, but their road will eventually lead to the state tournament as Pathfinder has reached 11 wins on the season against just two losses. Pathfinder's win over Gateway was a great defensive effort. The Pioneers held Gateway Regional to just 10 points. Coming up, the Pioneers will face Hampden Charter School on Feb. 6 at 6:30 p.m.



Desiree Croteau starts a play for the Pioneers.



Greenly Lagimoniere makes a pass toward the corner.



Megan Clark enters the paint.



Taylor Allen gets ready to attempt a three-pointer.



Quinn Geary looks to drive the lane.



Anthony Quarterone rears back to make a pass.



Cullen White heads up the ice for Gardner.

Gardner bests Agawam in independent matchup

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WEST SPRINGFIELD—The non-conference high school hockey game between Gardner and Agawam had as many twists and turns in it as one of the roller coasters at the Six Flags Amusement Park. Agawam, who trailed by two goals twice, managed to take the

lead in the middle of the third period, but the Brownies didn't keep the lead for very long. After tying the score for the third time, the visitors from Northern Worcester County netted the go-ahead goal on a power-play with 47 seconds left in regulation, giving them a 6-5 victory at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield, Saturday, Jan. 25. "We didn't play our best game

of the season tonight, but we still had a chance to win it in the third period," said Agawam head coach Todd Rowley. "We took the lead before losing our top three scorers." The Brownies played the final 1:46 of the third period without seniors Landon Ashford, Cole Buffum, and Aiden Pisanio. The trio were sent to the locker room after receiving game misconduct penalties from the referees. They were

involved in a fight that took place in front of the Gardner goalie. "The three players, who received the game misconduct penalties, would've been on the ice during the Gardner power-play late in the third period," Rowley said. "I thought we held the momentum before the fight." The Brownies, who are a

Please see **HOCKEY**, page 10

sports

T-Birds get huge weekend sweep

DES MOINES, IA — The Springfield Thunderbirds (21-17-2-2) got points from 14 of their 18 skaters in a 7-2 drubbing of the Iowa Wild (14-26-2-1) on Saturday night inside Wells Fargo Arena.

The T-Birds wasted little time jumping in front for a second straight night, as Simon Robertsson and Hugh McGing capped a 2-on-0 with McGing cashing in on a one-timer past Jesper Wallstedt just 1:22 into action. Otto Stenberg also picked up an assist as all three players on the line broke point droughts of three or four games.

Sam Bitten, playing in the building his brother Will called home for three seasons, joined the fun at 5:47 with a perfect bar-down wrist shot from the right circle to push the lead to 2-0 off setups from Samuel Johansson and Leo Loof. Johansson has now registered a point in five of his last six games.

Vadim Zherenko drew the starting assignment in net and held his own with 16 stops in the opening period. Johansson provided a helping hand after Zherenko made a mini-breakaway save on Hunter Haight, and the young blueliner successfully kept Mikey Milne from cashing in on a rebound to keep the score deadlocked.

Iowa finally would break through on its 16th shot of the period as Travis Boyd crashed the far post to tap home a 2-on-1 pass from Matthew Sop to get the Wild deficit down to 2-1 heading into the first intermission.

There were more parallels from Friday's game early in the second period, as McGing unleashed a perfect shot under the crossbar at 2:23, beating Wallstedt for his second of the evening and restoring the two-goal lead, 3-1.

Iowa put together their best push of the night over the next five minutes, culminating in a tally by Luke Toporowski to cut the margin back to a single goal, 3-2, at 7:26.

Just as it appeared the Wild would change the tide of the game, the T-Birds had other plans as Nikita Alexandrov drove the net front from the right circle and beat Wallstedt to the near post to make it 4-2 just 17 seconds after the Toporowski goal.

The Springfield attack poured in on from there. Michael Buchinger announced his presence at 8:49, jumping into a play as a trailer before snapping a wrist shot past Wallstedt to make it 5-2 off a cross-ice setup from Matthew Peca.

Another potential momentum shift came at 13:39 of the second when Dylan Peterson barreled in on net, taking a shot on Wallstedt before colliding with the Iowa netminder. Peterson was given a five-minute charging major, setting the stage for the Wild power play to try to climb back into the game. Wallstedt was forced to leave the game as Samuel Hlavaj came on in relief.

Instead of the moment sparking the home team, the T-Birds only further added to their lead when

Peca intercepted a pass in the neutral zone, skated into the zone on the right wing, and snapped another perfect shot upstairs past Hlavaj for his team-leading 16th goal, making it a 6-2 game heading into the third.

The Wild had no answers for Zherenko in the third, despite Iowa throwing 16 pucks on the T-Birds net and 50 total by the night's conclusion. The third-year goalie finished with a season-high 48 stops to earn the win, and Alek Kaskimaki capped off the offensive onslaught with his second goal in two nights at 17:12 of the third to round out the scoring.

Dalibor Dvorsky will be in action on Sunday and Monday at the AHL All-Star Classic presented by Spotlight 29 Casino in Palm Springs, California. The rookie star will first participate in the AHL All-Star Skills Competition presented by Silvercrest on Sunday, Feb. 2 (9:00 p.m. ET). Then, on Monday, Feb. 3, Dvorsky and the Atlantic Division will look to take home the 3-on-3 crown in the 2025 AHL All-Star Challenge presented by Spotlight 29 Casino at 9:00 p.m. ET. Both events can be seen on NHL Network and AHLTV powered by FloHockey.

Springfield next takes to the ice on Friday, Feb. 7 to begin a home-and-home set against the Providence Bruins at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

Baldwin adds schedule for tri-track series

Ryan Preece Racing announced today that Luke Baldwin will compete in the full Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series schedule during the 2025 season. Baldwin will drive the No. 40 for Preece in eight of the 10 events and will pilot the No. 7NY for Tommy Baldwin Racing in the other two races, allowing him to compete for the championship.

The Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series 10-race schedule includes events at seven different tracks in four different states in the New England region. The schedule is the largest in the history of the series, founded in 2014.

"The competition level on the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series continues to grow," Ryan Preece, NASCAR Cup Series driver for RFK Racing, said. "The series has a great payout for asphalt modified racing and with the jump to 10 races, they have established a strong schedule that we want to

support. Luke has continuously shown his ability to win races and we're all excited to be behind him in this effort in 2025."

Luke is ready for the challenge. "Being able to head up north a few extra times this year, it's going to be awesome," Luke Baldwin said. "Tri-Track is rapidly growing and it has some of the strongest competition in modified racing, so it will be tough. Working with the whole Preece family will be special - our relationship has been strong for years."

The season-opener will take place at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park on Saturday, March 29 as part of their Icebreaker weekend. The series will continue with a second event at Thompson on May 14, followed by Thunder Road (May 24), White Mountain (June 7), Seekonk Speedway (June 25), Stafford Speedway (July 16), Star Speedway (August 2), New

London Waterford Speedbowl (August 23), Stafford (September 27) and Seekonk (October 25).

Jeff Preece, Ryan's father, will crew chief the car.

"I worked with Luke a few years ago at New Smyrna and he's a great kid," Jeff Preece said. "He has a hard-work ethic. I expect good things from us."

"The opportunity to work with Ryan came up and we couldn't pass it up. We are excited to see Luke race at some new tracks in New England against a competitive field of cars," Tommy Baldwin Jr. said. "The Tri-Track Series has some great drivers and a diverse schedule this year with more races than ever before."

"Our entire team is excited to get to work at Thompson for the first time in March," Preece said. "Our goals every time we go to the race track are to win and we feel Luke is ready for the challenge."

Railers score win over Mariners

PORTLAND, ME — The Worcester Railers HC (18-19-2-4 42pts) took down the Maine Mariners (16-23-3-0, 35pts), on Sunday afternoon by the final score of 5-2 in front of a crowd of 4,421 at Cross Insurance Arena. The Railers are back on the ice next at the DCU Center taking on the Atlanta Gladiators on Wednesday, February 5th at 7:05 p.m. EST.

Worcester scored first Sunday afternoon when Matt Ustaski (1-0-1) scored 5:23 into the first. Maine answered back with a goal of their own from Wyllum Deveaux (1-1-2) to tie the score at 1-1 heading into the second. Connor Welsh (1-0-1) was the second period's lone scorer giving the Railers the 2-1 lead. Maine tied it early in the second period with a goal from Lynden McCallum (1-0-1), but shortly after the Railers grabbed the lead right back when Cole Donhauser (1-1-2) scored a short-handed goal to give the Railers the

3-2 lead. The Railers finished the third period by scoring two more goals, the first scored by Mark Cheremeta (1-0-1) 15:52 into the third, and the second an empty net goal from Matias Rajaniemi (1-0-1) giving the Railers the 5-2 victory.

The scoring got started by the Railers 5:23 into the first when Matt Ustaski (2nd) found the back of the net off a pass from Jordan Kaplan. Maine tied the score at 1-1 just under ten minutes later off the stick of Wyllum Deveaux (8th). Shots favored Worcester 20-10 in the first period.

It took nearly 17 minutes of second period action for either team to score. It was Connor Welsh (5th) who scored giving the Railers the 2-1 lead. His shot from the left point deflected off of a Maine Mariner and beat Bischel high. Shortly after the Railers goal, they went on the penalty kill following a five-minute major for boarding called on Griffin

Loughran. The Railers successfully killed the first 2:32 of the Maine power play to wrap up the second period. Worcester outshot Maine 31-17 in the second period.

The Railers started the third period by killing the remainder of the Maine power play, but shortly after the penalty expired Maine was able to net one. It was Lynden McCallum (15th) who scored for the Mariners. The Railers did not wait long to regain the lead, as Cole Donhauser (5th) forced a turnover at center ice and took it all the way home and scored the shorthanded goal giving the Railers the 3-2 lead. Mark Cheremeta extended the Worcester lead to 4-2 with his breakaway goal 15:52 into the third period. Matias Rajaniemi (2nd) capped off the Railers five goal night with his empty net goal 17:27 into the third, securing the 5-2 win for Worcester. Shots favored Worcester 8-7 in the third and 40-25 in regulation.

DCR lists upcoming winter hybrid presentations

BELCHERTOWN — The Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center, 100 Winsor Dam Road, announces the schedule for winter hybrid presentations.

All programs are scheduled for 2 p.m. In person seating is limited to 45 people. In case of bad weather, the programs will only be held virtually. Please register for any of these events by visiting <https://www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events>.

History of Rutland Prison Camp

Sunday, Feb. 16 from 2-3 p.m.
Fresh air, three home-cooked meals a day, comfortable sleeping

quarters and a private hospital - sounds like a delightful retreat for a prison? Indeed, it was!

This presentation will tell the story of this surprisingly successful social experiment nestled within the Ware River Watershed.

Microscopic world of the Quabbin Reservoir

Sunday, Feb. 23 from 2-3 p.m.
What's in the water? Learn about the microorganisms that live in the water, and how they can impact water quality.

This presentation will cover phytoplankton and zooplankton found in the Quabbin Reservoir

with a live microscope demo.

Quabbin Reservoir and Watershed Protection

Sunday, March 2 from 2-3 p.m.
Engineering, forestry, wildlife and aquatic biology, carpentry, mowing and snowplowing...how do all of these things combine to protect the water supply of over three million people in Massachusetts? How do they benefit the region around the reservoir?

This presentation from the Visitor Center staff explores how the many different goals of DCR staff all support one goal, Quabbin watershed protection.

HOCKEY from page 9

Division 2 team, have a 8-5 overall record. They're currently sitting in second place behind Amherst in the Fay-Wright Conference standings with a 7-2 record. After having a week off, the Brownies are scheduled to host McCann Tech in a conference game at 6:30 on Saturday night.

"We need to win two more games to guarantee a spot in the state tournament," Rowley said. "This was a non-league game, so it doesn't affect our standings in the Western Mass. tournament."

The top four teams in the Fay-Wright Conference standings will play in the Western Mass. Class B tournament.

It was the second-ever meeting between the two hockey teams.

Two years ago, Gardner posted a 3-0 victory over Agawam in the championship game of the Chicopee Holiday Tournament.

In last Saturday's match, the Brownies were trailing, 4-2, with eight minutes left in the third period when Buffon and Pisano scored a pair of goals in a span of ten seconds tying the score at 4-4.

A little more than a minute later, Agawam took a 5-4 lead following a goal by senior A.J. Robbins, which was assisted by Ashford.

With 4:54 left in regulation, Gardner senior Gavin Richard scored a power-play goal tying the score at 5-5.

Following the fight, Richard's scored another power-play goal, which was unassisted, with 47 seconds left on the scoreboard giving his team a 6-5 lead.

The Brownies had a chance to tie the score, but they couldn't put the puck into the net past Gardner senior goalie Cohen Veilleux (15 saves) before the final buzzer sounded.

Gardner took a 2-0 lead in the middle of the opening period following goals by senior's Josh Crotty and Michael Lucas.

The Brownies cut the deficit in half when Ashford fired a shot into the net with 6:16 left in the opening period. Junior Anthony Barbarini was credited with the assist.

Seven minutes into the second period, a shot attempt by Agawam sophomore Camden Saltmarsh fell out of the Wildcats goalie's glove and the puck bounced into the net which tied the score for the first time.

Gardner retook the lead at 3-2 with 2:40 remaining in the second period following a goal by sophomore Matt Whaley.

Less than four minutes into the third period, a goal by junior Aiden LaPointe gave the visiting team a two goal lead for the second time.

LaPointe is also one of the three Gardner players who attend Quabbin Regional High School in Barre.

The other two Quabbin players listed on the Gardner hockey roster are senior Cullan White, who's a captain, and senior Kevin Thompson, who's the back-up goalie.

Agawam starting goalie Frankie DiSanti, who's a senior, made a total of 26 saves.

The Brownies battled back during the third period, and they took the lead, but it quickly slipped away from them.

"This loss hurts right now, but we'll be fine," Rowley said. "At the end of the day, it's only one game out of 20."

The Brownies will be looking to get back into the win column against McCann Tech on Saturday night.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Aiden Lapointe looks to clear the puck away.



Lapointe is a Quabbin student who is part of the co-op hockey program.



Gardner, which co-ops with Quabbin, recently defeated Agawam.

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Nomination papers available for annual town election

WARE – Nomination Papers are now available to any interested individual who are registered voters in the Town of Ware.

Nomination Papers are available for the following elected offices which will appear on the Annual Town Election Ballot of April 14.

Selectboard, one seat, three-year term; School Committee, two seats, three-year terms; Board of Assessors, one seat, three-year term; Board of Health, one seat, three-year term; Park Commissioner, one seat, three-year term; Cemetery Commissioner, one seat, three-year term; Planning Board, one seat, five-year term; Planning Board, one seat, unexpired term, four years; Ware Housing Authority, one seat, five-year term; and Ware Housing Authority, one seat, unexpired term, one year.

All incumbent office holders have been notified of their term's expiration. Current office holders are as follows: Selectboard – Joshua Kusnierz, School Committee – Christopher Desjardins and Brian Winslow, Board of Assessors –

Gerald Fountain, Jr., Board of Health – Jennifer McMartin, Park Commissioner – Ryan Mulligan, Cemetery Commissioner – Paul Harper, Planning Board – Kenneth Crosby, Ware Housing Authority – Nancy Brown.

The Planning Board seat which has an unexpired term of four years is due to the resignation of Shane Millier and the Ware Housing Authority unexpired term of one year is due to the appointment made by the Selectboard to last only until the next Annual Town Election.

Nomination Papers are available at the Town Clerk's Office during normal business hours Monday through Friday. Deadline to apply and return Nomination Papers is Monday, Feb. 24.

Interested individuals may contact the Town Clerk Nancy J. Talbot by calling 413-967-9648 extension 103 to discuss further or ask questions as needed.

Information will appear on the Town of Ware website, www.townofware.com and in the Ware River News and TV 15.

2025 dog licenses are now available

Licenses must be purchased by March 31 to avoid late fees

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 Monday, 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 license must be purchased prior to March 31 and your envelope must be also postmarked 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 2024 check the license to see if the Rabies Certificate is current (the information is on your 2024 license); if it is

current, simply come into the office to license in person or license by 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 additional 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 your dog license.

Contact the Town Clerk's Office by calling 413-967-9648 extension 177 if you failed to license in 2024 so that we can inform you what is owed in entirety to license for 2025.

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 for the first time, be sure to supply the dog owner's name, address and contact telephone number; a copy of the Rabies Certificate and if the dog is neutered or spayed (please also send this certificate unless it is stated on the Rabies Certificate).

Questions can be directed to the Town Clerk's Office by calling 413-967-9648 extension 177.

Birds on the Range offered Feb. 15

AMHERST – Birds on the Range will be held on Saturday, Feb. 15 at 1 p.m. at The Notch Visitor Center, Holyoke Range State Park, 1500 West St., Route 116.

Get a close-up look at owls and other birds of prey with Tom

Ricardi, a licensed rehabilitator and wildlife biologist, and learn about the great work being done at the Massachusetts Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center, which cares for injured birds.

Come and see what birds can be found here on the Range.

Steaming Tender discussed as potential site for local passenger rail stop

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – On Jan. 27, a presentation was hosted at Steaming Tender Restaurant to discuss the location of the train stop for the East/West passenger rail.

The presentation was held by Blake and Scarlet Lamothe and John McElduff, who discussed the benefits to using the restaurant as a train stop. An animated slideshow of photos, data, and potential designs was projected for the attendees to see, and as the presenters spoke, cargo trains passed behind them on the existing rails.

Blake Lamothe, owner of Steaming Tender, expressed his opinion that the Department of Transportation is "operating out of their jurisdiction on this line."

"It's called compass rail for a reason; north, south, east, west," said Scarlet Lamothe. "However, MassDOT is ignoring the compass. They are ignoring the central corridor rail line that connects Brattleboro, Vermont, out to New London, Connecticut."

At the previous meeting with the public, representatives from MassDOT expressed that Steaming Tender could not accommodate the high-level platforms required by current project designs. However, Lamothe proposed accommodations for a low-level platform that would more easily fit into the current site.

"We could have low-level platforms with a handicapped lift, those are the requirements on this line as it exists," Blake Lamothe said. "Or we could do a gauntlet track, which has been done on many railroads, which supersedes the freight. Those are tracks that lay in a little bit, so that when the freight passes, it keeps it so the freight doesn't hit the abutment."



Blake Lamothe advocated for Steaming Tender as the site for the train station for the upcoming East/West Passenger Rail stop.



Scarlet Lamothe talked about the need to put the train stop close to downtown in order to bolster economic growth.

Lamothe was dismissive of concerns over the South Main Street bridge as an obstacle to construction, which he called a "false narrative."

"It can be done at our location," Lamothe said.

tion to using the historic site for the train stop.

"It's not about leaving Palmer, it's about bringing people into Palmer and creating economic growth for us," Lamothe said.

Blake Lamothe said that the previous initiatives had factored in these concerns when dealing with the FRA. During McElduff's presentation, he talked about the ways that are being pursued to convince MassDOT to reconsider, including political action, legal action, and local engagement.

"This would be a possible non-binding vote on where we should put the station," McElduff said. "Should we put it here, in the central business district, or out on the edge of town?"

By a show of hands, McElduff confirmed that the majority of the attendees preferred the station being placed downtown.

"We have a letter that's been sent to the new administration's Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy, and we're looking forward to an appointment in Washington," Lamothe said.

In addition to these methods, McElduff said there will also be collaborations with state legislators and the governor's office.

"We can't settle for the short end of the stick here, and they're not making it any better for Palmer," Blake Lamothe said. "North/South is as important as East/West. Let's get back to common sense here; let's build a robust town again with hotels, trade schools, shops and restaurants, and create commerce here."

"Let Palmer take advantage of the railroads as it once did before," Lamothe said.

If you'd like to get involved with the Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop group, you can check out their Facebook page.



Part of the proposal for the Steaming Tender train station would be to reopen the sealed accessway on Bridge Street.



The restaurant was full of attendees eating complimentary food while they listened to the presentation.

Turley Photos by Marcelo Gusmão

BREAKFAST from page 1

importance of the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce and its support of local businesses.

"The chamber is strong," Smola said, crediting Przypek for the chamber's continued growth.

Przypek then welcomed Banko, who recently pledged to identify a space in Ware to house a Convenient Care facility, staffed with up to three physicians.

"We think about healthcare a lot," Przypek said, referencing staff shortages, the COVID-19 pandemic, rising prescription costs and hospital closures. "It's a statewide and national condition."

Banko, who is the fourth CEO for Baystate Health and the first to be hired from the outside, spoke about Baystate Health's role as an academic medical center and its affiliation with the UMass Chen Medical School. He said Baystate Health also invests about \$50 million in research.

"We've got a lot of great physicians," Banko said, adding that Baystate Health provides a "community safety net" through behavioral health services and more.

"If you can't get it at Baystate, you're likely going to Boston," he said.

Banko spoke about some of the changes that have occurred at Baystate Health since he took over its leadership in June of 2024, including the decision to keep its not-for-profit health insurer Health New England, after its \$165 million sale to Point32Health was announced in February of 2024.

Bank said Baystate Health is planning to invest in Health New England.

"The intent is to grow it," Banko said of Health New England.

Banko noted the "intense pride and loyalty" found within Baystate Health, but how it has faced many challenges including financial strains and meeting the needs of an aging and declining population.

"Massachusetts is a tough state to operate in," he said. "We've had our financial challenges here over the last three years."

Banko said the 65+ community is growing, and more so the 75+ and 85+, all of which presents unique challenges to healthcare.

"The older you get, the more likely you are to have a chronic condition," he said.

Banko touched on some of the areas where Baystate Health needs to improve, including increasing outpatient services and keeping current with the digital age of health-

care.

Baystate Health has also embarked on a financial journey, which Banko said is "causing us to make a lot of tough decisions."

He said this includes selling assets, such as Baystate Health's laboratory to Labcorp in 2024, and the now reversed decision to sell Health New England.

Banko said Baystate Health is looking at fixing its financial situation to the tune of \$225-250 million over the next few years, adding that two-thirds of its expenses are its staffing. He said part of the plan is to look at corporate overhead.

The closure of Mary Lane Hospital in Ware was "an unfortunate situation," Banko said, with about 30% of small hospitals at risk of closing nationwide.

"We've been working since August or September to try and get healthcare back [in Ware], Banko said.

Banko said while Baystate Health is looking at possible sites in Ware, there may also be some opportunity to do something with the Wetherby building on the Mary Lane Hospital campus.

"The primary focus is we're looking for a site that doesn't take a lot of work to get in," he said.

Opposition to Baystate Health's

presence in town from the Friends of Mary Lane Hospital has resulted in a cease and desist being served to that organization's leadership, Banko said.

"We should be working together," he said.

Banko said Baystate Health has work to do within its hospitals and clinics, with strategic planning ongoing since this past October.

"Access is our biggest opportunity," Banko said. "Access and coordinating care. We've got access issues...there aren't enough providers."

Banko talked about the wait time to see a provider, including an average of eight months for a primary care physician, nine months for a dermatologist and one year for a procedure such as a colonoscopy.

Because of these waits, Baystate Health is losing a lot of commercial insurance patients to medical facilities in Boston.

"We need to make sure you don't have to leave the community to get care," he said.

Banko also addressed Baystate Medical Center's "D" rating from The Leapfrog Group.

"We want to be a great place for our physicians and staff to work," he said.

Banko said Baystate Health is

also focusing on growing its specialty care, including oncology, cardiovascular care, neurosciences, orthopedics and rehabilitation. This includes moving many of these specialties from Baystate Medical Center back to the community hospitals.

"The intent is, we've got capacity at Wing [hospital] that we need to be utilizing," he said.

Banko also talked about improving ties with local school districts to train students for gateway positions in the healthcare field.

"We're going to have to grow our own workforce, and we've got that opportunity," he said.

About QHMA

The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce was established in 1978 to assist businesses in the Quaboag Hills Region, serving the towns of Belchertown, Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick, Holland, Monson, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Palmer, Spencer, Wales, Ware, Warren, and West Brookfield.

Its mission is to advance economic growth and tourism in the region, to be an advocate for policies that achieve the development goals of the communities, and to advance the interests of its members.

The Quaboag Hills Chamber of

Commerce offers more than just networking opportunities. It helps the business community from the smallest entrepreneurs to the largest corporations; through trainings, seminars, and more.

The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce is located at 4 Springfield St., Suite 525, Three Rivers. For more information, visit qhma.com, call 413-283-2418 or email info@qhma.com.

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public safety

Person injured in early morning house fire

HARDWICK – On Tuesday, Feb. 4 at 12:20 a.m. New Braintree Regional Dispatch center received a 911 call from 8-10 Lower Road in Gilbertville reporting a fully involved house fire with a person trapped on the second floor.

New Braintree Dispatch dispatched Hardwick Fire, Hardwick-New Braintree Police along with mutual aid New Braintree Fire and West Brookfield Ambulance. With the known information dispatch automatically started a second alarm fire response bringing mutual aid to the scene.

Hardwick-New Braintree Police Officer Andrew Ronnau arrived in under two minutes of dispatch confirming the working structure fire and that the house was fully engulfed. Ronnau forced entry in a back door but was unable to make entry because of the heavy smoke and fire.

Finding an adult female trapped on the second floor of the house by a window Ronnau was able to get the female to jump out of the window to him. Ronnau then dragged the victim away from the back of the house, up an embankment to the roadway where he began rendering first aid.

Officer Kendall Perrault of the West Brookfield Police arrived

and began assisting in medical aid.

Hardwick Fire Deputy Chief Nicholas Gaumont arrived and requested a third alarm assignment with Hardwick Fire Chief Josh Pease arriving shortly after him. Aggressive defensive fire attack was started by Hardwick and New Braintree Fire units waiting on their mutual aid partners.

West Brookfield Ambulance arrived taking patient care from the police officers. The victim was transported to a local landing zone where LifeStar Helicopter transported her to Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston for treatment.

Her current condition is currently unknown.

Hardwick Fire and mutual aid companies remained on scene until 11 a.m. The building collapsed during the start of the fire; Hardwick Highway responded with heavy equipment to assist the fire departments on scene.

This fire is under investigation by Troopers assigned to the State Fire Marshals Office, Hardwick Fire and Hardwick-New Braintree Police. No cause has been determined.

Hardwick-New Braintree Police were also assisted by Massachusetts State Police as Route 32 was closed until 5 a.m.

Hardwick Police Log

During the week of Jan. 27-Feb. 3, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 41 building/property checks, 29 directed/area patrols, five radar assignments, eight traffic controls, 10 emergency 911 calls, three citizen assists, two assist other agencies, one complaint, five safety hazards, one motor vehicle accident, one motor vehicle investigation, one threat and 10 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

Monday, Jan. 27
9:42 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Barre Road, Written Warning
9:57 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Barre Road, Written Warning
4:32 p.m. Safety Hazard, Petersham Road, Services Rendered

Tuesday, Jan. 28
8:14 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Lower Road, Report Taken
10:01 a.m. Assist Other Agency, North Street, Dispatch Handled
10:42 a.m. Safety Hazard, Delargy Road, Officer Handled
10:58 a.m. Safety Hazard, Ridge Road, Officer Handled
11:25 a.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, Main Street, Report Taken
8:42 p.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Officer Handled

Wednesday, Jan. 29
2:02 a.m. Safety Hazard, Main Street, Dispatch Handled
11:56 a.m. Assist Citizen,

Gaudet Road, Officer Handled
1:14 p.m. 911 Complaint/Motor Vehicle Operations, Bridge Street, Negative Contact
1:39 p.m. 911 Assist Other Agency, Mill Street, No Action Required
7:12 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Joslyn Road, Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Jan. 30
7:54 a.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Spoken To
9:12 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Simpson Road, Transported to Hospital

Friday, Jan. 31
10:17 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Church Lane, Services Rendered
10:44 a.m. Threat, School House Drive, Officer Handled

Saturday, Feb. 1
3:57 p.m. Safety Hazard, Taylor Hill Road, Dispatch Handled
5:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Lower Road, Written Warning

Sunday, Feb. 2
5:26 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Ruggles Hill Road, Services Rendered
8:51 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Jackson Road, Transported to Hospital
3:06 p.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Barre Road, Officer Handled
9:11 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital

HCC accepting scholarship applications for '25-'26

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College Foundation has begun accepting scholarship applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.

The deadline to apply is Friday, March 14.

Last year, the HCC Foundation awarded 388 scholarships worth about \$350,000 to 323 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Some students received multiple scholarship awards. The average scholarship award is typically around \$900.

"Awarding scholarships to deserving students has been a cornerstone of the work of the HCC Foundation since its founding," said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. "Scholarships established by donors celebrate academic achievement, community service, and civic engagement, and, most importantly, these funds

ensure hundreds of students have the resources they need to complete their college degree."

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships.

"While the recent launch of MassEducate, the state's free-community-college-for-all program, has made HCC accessible to more individuals, that only means we have a greater responsibility to ensure students make it to the finish line," Sbriscia said. "Tuition and fees represent only a portion of the cost of being a college student today, and, oftentimes, a donor scholarship can truly change a student's life."

Applicants only need to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students

Open burning season now open through May 1

WARE – Open burning season is now open by permit and runs through May 1.

Permits will be available online only at ware.firepermits.com. If you are already registered for the site from last year's open burning season, you only need to log in and apply for a 2025 burn permit.

Please make sure you link your bank account for UniPay for a smoother process. The bank requires time to process your payment and your permit will be inactive until payment is approved.

Cash will not be accepted at the fire station for a burn permit. All processing fees are required through the online website.

Blood drive to be held at Wing Hospital on Feb. 12

PALMER – The community is invited to celebrate Valentine's Day and National Heart Month by giving the gift of life by donating blood at the Baystate Health blood drive held on Wednesday, Feb. 12, at Baystate Wing Hospital from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Additionally, blood drives will be held every other month on Wednesday throughout the year in 2025, on April 16, June 11, Aug. 13, Oct. 15 and Dec. 17.

"There continues to be an urgent need for blood! When you donate blood to Baystate Health, your precious gift remains in our local communities," said Nicole VanZandt, MLT III, Supervisor, BRL Blood Donor Services. "Please help us to ensure a safe and adequate blood supply is available by donating blood with the Baystate Health Blood Donor Program.

"There is no substitute for human blood," said VanZandt. "Blood donations take approximately one hour to complete, including the interview, donation, and refreshments. To donate blood, you must be at least 17 years old; weigh at least 110 pounds, have a photo ID; be in good health (no colds, or sore throat); and have not donated blood within the past eight weeks."

Blood drives will be held at Baystate Wing Hospital, 40 Wright St., in Snow Conference Room C. In appreciation, all eligible donors will receive a \$10 gift card.

For more information or to book an appointment to donate blood, please call the Blood Donor Center at 413-794-4600. Please be sure to note the Baystate Health hospital location where you would like to make your donation when you make your appointment.

Ware Police Log

During the week of Jan. 26-Feb. 4, the Ware Police Department responded to 19 miscellaneous calls, 27 administrative calls, nine traffic violations, 17 emergency 911 calls, five harassments, five motor vehicle accidents, two safety hazards, one trespass, one vehicle fire, three thefts/larcenies, five animal calls and 47 motor vehicle stops in the town of Ware.

Sunday, Jan. 26
2:51 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Clifford Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
3:23 a.m. Trespass/Unwanted, Hillside Village, Advised
4:38 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Hillside Village, Investigated
12:25 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, West Street, Dispatch Handled
4:36 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, North Street, Dispatch Handled
6:30 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued

Monday, Jan. 27
7:43 a.m. Vehicle Fire, Gilbertville Road, Services Rendered
3:25 p.m. Traffic Incident/Crash, West Street, Services Rendered
5:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
6:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued
7:57 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Gould Road, Citation/Warning Issued
10:17 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Belchertown Road, Citation/Warning Issued

Tuesday, Jan. 28
3:34 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Aspen Street, Citation/Warning Issued
8:11 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Aspen Street, Advised
2:01 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, West Street, Services Rendered
3:09 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Otis Avenue, Services Rendered
3:29 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued
6:59 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop,

Gould Road, Citation/Warning Issued
8:23 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued
8:46 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Belchertown Road, Citation/Warning Issued

Wednesday, Jan. 29
2:17 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued
5:08 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
5:49 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
6:37 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Knox Street, Citation/Warning Issued
1 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Otis Avenue, Report Made
2:23 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Valley View, Services Rendered
9:08 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, South Street, Citation/Warning Issued
9:40 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued

Thursday, Jan. 30
4:17 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Pulaski Street, Citation/Warning Issued
5:26 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Pleasant Terrace, Investigated
5:50 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Aspen Street, Investigated
7:13 a.m. Traffic Incident/Crash, Palmer Road, Report Made
8:28 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, West Street, Services Rendered
5:10 p.m. Traffic Incident/Crash, Otis Avenue, Report Made
5:51 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Belchertown Road, Citation/Warning Issued

Friday, Jan. 31
3:50 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Otis Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
3:55 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Vigeant Street, Citation/Warning Issued
8:57 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Valley View, Services Rendered
2:59 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, West Street, Services Rendered
5:26 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop,

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

Maple Street, Citation/Warning Issued
5:48 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Palmer Road, Services Rendered
9:40 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Fisherdick Road, Dispatch Handled
10:47 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Convent Hill Road, Could Not Locate

Saturday, Feb. 1
3:54 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Otis Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
6:54 a.m. Traffic Incident/Crash, Upper North Street, Assist Given
10:18 a.m. Safety Hazard, River Road, Services Rendered
2:55 p.m. Traffic Incident/Crash, Palmer Road, Services Rendered
7:09 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued

Sunday, Feb. 2
3:27 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Clifford Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued
4:45 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Otis Avenue, Services Rendered
7:32 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Gilbertville Road, Citation/Warning Issued
3:46 p.m. Safety Hazard, Palmer Road, Investigated
7:45 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued
8:06 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, River Road, Investigated

Monday, Feb. 3
1:13 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Convent Hill Road, Could Not Locate

Warren Police Log

During the week of Jan. 25-Feb. 1, the Warren Police Department responded to 185 building/property checks, 55 community policings, 25 emergency 911 calls, three threats, two parking issues, two safety concerns, one structure fire, two motor vehicle accidents, one animal call and 23 motor vehicle stops in the town of Warren.

Saturday, Jan. 25
8:14 a.m. Safety Concern, Keys Road, Report Filed
10:57 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Forest Avenue, Transported to Hospital

Sunday, Jan. 26
8:40 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Southbridge Road, Written Warning
11:19 a.m. Breathing Difficulty, Winthrop Terrace, Transported to Hospital
12:24 p.m. Structure Fire, Crescent Street, Investigated
6:55 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning

Monday, Jan. 27
1:39 p.m. Unattended Death, Old West Brookfield Road, Report Filed
6:51 p.m. Seizures, Liberty Street, Transported to Hospital

Tuesday, Jan. 28
9:30 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Boston Post Road, Written Warning
11:10 a.m. Breathing Difficulty, Southbridge Road, Transported to Hospital

Hospital
11:30 a.m. Suspicious Activity, Old West Brookfield Road, Investigated
3:02 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
3:57 p.m. Motor Vehicle Collision, Main Street, Report Filed
6:45 p.m. Unconscious/Unresponsive/Syncope, Milton O. Fountain Way, Transported to Hospital

Wednesday, Jan. 29
12:11 a.m. Parking Issues, Nelson Street, Citation Issued
5:45 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
5:57 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
6:16 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
8:13 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
1:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint
2:41 p.m. Safety Concern, Main Street, Removed Hazard
6:19 p.m. Breathing Difficulty, Walkeen Koziol Road, Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Jan. 30
6:56 a.m. Power Lines Down, Dunham Road, Referred to Other Agency
9:25 a.m. Diabetic, South Street, Transported to Hospital
9:46 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint
10:37 a.m. Sick/Unknown,

Winthrop Terrace, Transported to Hospital
10:43 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint
11:29 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint
11:59 a.m. Threats, Southbridge Road, Officer Spoke to Party
5:16 p.m. Unconscious/Unresponsive/Syncope, South Street, Transported to Hospital
7:34 p.m. Threats, Devils Lane, Report Filed

Friday, Jan. 31
1:42 a.m. Parking Issues, North Street, Citation Issued
5:49 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Citation Issued
6:23 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
8 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Brimfield Road, Mutual Aid Transport
8:39 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint
2:24 p.m. Threats, Chapel Street, Report Filed
6:06 p.m. Unconscious/Unresponsive/Syncope, Keyes Street, Transported to Hospital
7:39 p.m. Motor Vehicle Collision, Main Street, Report Filed

Saturday, Feb. 1
6:33 a.m. Road/Traffic Hazard, Nelligan Terrace, Citation issued
10:42 a.m. Bleeding, High Street, Transported to Hospital
6:22 p.m. Fire Investigation, Main Street, Investigated

Cold weather clothing drive ongoing through spring

WARE – The Recovery Center of HOPE and the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance will be hosting a Community Cold Weather Drive to benefit local individuals and families facing hardships.

They will be accepting new and gently used gloves, mittens, scarves, sweaters, blankets,

base-layers, jackets and coats and new beanies and socks.

Items will be collected through the spring and can be dropped off at the following locations: Town Hall, 126 Main St., Mondays and Tuesdays from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Recovery on Main, 78 Main St., Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m.; Ware Library, 37 Main St., Thursdays

from 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; and Recovery Center of HOPE, Fridays from 2-4 p.m.



Nomination papers available for Hardwick May 3 town election

HARDWICK – Nomination papers for the 2025 Annual Town Election on Saturday, May 3 are now available.

Offices for election and those presently holding the office are as follows: Select Board, Kelly Kemp, three-year term; Assessor, Lucinda J. Childs, three-year term; Constables, James D. Swett, Eric Vollheim and Ryan J. Witkos, (three) three-year terms; K-12 Quabbin School Committee, Jennifer E. Garvey, three-year term and Kristyl B. Kelly, unexpired two-year term; Board of Health, Ernest J. Warburton, three-year term; Paige Agricultural Fund Trust, Stephen A. Prouty, five-year term; Paige Memorial Library Trustee, Stacey

A. Hill and Eric Vollheim (two) three-year terms; and Planning Board, John J. Samek, three-year term.

All deadlines below are 5 p.m.: Last day to obtain and submit nomination papers to the Board of Registrars for certification, Friday, March 14; last day to file nomination papers with the Town Clerk, Friday, March 28; last day to object or withdraw nomination papers, Tuesday, April 1; last day to register voters for the Annual Town Election, Wednesday, April 23; and last day to apply to vote by mail (if haven't already), Monday, April 28.

Voter registration
Voter registration will be held

in the Myron E. Richardson Building, 307 Main St. on Wednesday, April 23, from 9-5 p.m. This is the last day and hour to register voters who wish to vote at the 2025 Annual Town Election.

Mail-in voter registrations will be accepted if postmarked no later than the April 23 deadline.

Financial statements
Financial statements must be filed by all candidates for election by the following dates even if the candidate has no financial activity to report: #1 pre-election report, eight days prior to election, Friday, April 25; and #2 post-election report, 30 days after election, Monday, June 2.

EQLT to host 'Kids' Wonder Workshop' on Feb. 20

HARDWICK – The East Quabbin Land Trust will host a Kids' Wonder Workshop during school vacation week, on Feb. 20 from 1-3 p.m., at EQLT's office, 120 Ridge Road.

Open to children of all ages, activities will be held indoors and outside and include:

Sap to Syrup – a demonstration of a small-scale "backwoods approach" to selecting and tapping a tree, drawing sap and creating syrup.

Exploring the Forest Play Trail – the Forest Play Trail, created for elementary-aged children, is a discovery trail near the EQLT office that kids can visit anytime, year-round.

Rock Painting – after discovering and gaining inspiration from the Kindness Rocks along the Forest Play Trail, children will have the opportunity to paint their

own Kindness Rocks to take home.

Who Goes There? Animal Tracks & Wildlife Sign – see and learn about various animal tracks and specimens indoors, then head outside to look for animal tracks and other wildlife sign.

S'mores Making – creating these timeless treats over an open, outdoor fire. Other healthy snacks will also be available.

The outdoor activities will be held on the hillside next to the EQLT office in both wooded and open grassy areas. Children should have sturdy, warm footwear, be dressed for the weather...and bring their curiosity!

Please RSVP to atrevvett@eqlt.org if you would like to attend. In the event of inclement weather, the Kids' Wonder Workshop will be moved to the following day, Feb. 21, from 1-3 p.m.

About the East Quabbin Land Trust

The East Quabbin Land Trust fosters a meaningful relationship with the natural world by conserving, connecting with and caring for the farmlands, woodlands and waters in the East Quabbin region of Massachusetts.

Celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2024, EQLT was formed in 1994 out of concern for the loss of farmland and wildlife habitat to unplanned sprawl in and around Hardwick. Since 1998, EQLT has expanded its protection efforts to Barre, Petersham, New Braintree, North Brookfield, and other nearby towns.

By working cooperatively with property owners, government agencies, conservation groups and other land trust organizations, EQLT has been able to protect over 6,200 acres in the region.

Zonta Club to celebrate women at annual dinner

LUDLOW – Each year in March, the global community recognizes women for their achievements regardless of national, ethnic, linguistic, economic or political divisions.

The Zonta International community also celebrates Zonta Rose Day, a time to reflect and give tribute to the women who have empowered us.

In this spirit, the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley proudly announces its Women Making a Difference Award dinner on March 10, at the Ludlow Country

Club.

As the theme of this year's International Women's celebration is accelerate action, the club has chosen a keynote speaker who heads an organization fueling progress toward gender equity by funding the most promising solutions, collaborating with results-oriented partners, and by elevating the collective power of local women to take charge, and to lead with purpose; and four women leaders in the community deserving of recognition for exemplifying the ideals of Zonta

and inspiring inclusion in their day-to-day work and volunteer efforts.

The public is invited to join the Zonta Club in celebrating women on March 10. There will be a reception at 5:30 p.m. dinner at 6 p.m., followed by the program.

Please RSVP by March 4 by emailing info@zontaqv.org. Pay at the door for the buffet (\$30 for table of eight; \$35 individual) or pay online. Details at www.zontaqv.org/women.

Linda A. (Cienaski) Jones, 67

PALMER – Linda A. (Cienaski) Jones, 67, of Palmer, passed away at UMass Memorial Medical Center University Campus in Worcester on Friday, Jan. 31, 2025.



She leaves her beloved husband of 49 years and the love of her life, Richard C. Jones; her children, Michael E. Jones of Georgia, and Angela B. Jones of Ware; her sister, Laura Mankin and her husband, Richard, of New Braintree; as well as her grandchildren, Anthony and Logan Jones, Zachary Prefontaine, and Julie Hittle.

She was born in Springfield, daughter of the late Edward W. and Joan A. (Novotny) Cienaski.

Linda graduated from Ware High School in 1975. She worked at Tambrands in Three Rivers for many years, until the business closed.

She then went on to work for Vibram USA, the former Quaboag Corporation, as a product inspector – practicing quality control for their shoe sole manufacturing for over 20 years. She considered herself a "sole saver" – and she was, until her retirement at 65.

Unapologetically kind and caring, she was the type of woman who always put the needs of others before her own. Her mother taught her how to bake and how to cook, and she carried those memories in the kitchen, and her culinary talents with her through life; keeping those around her, friends, family, and loved ones well-fed.

She loved her trips to the beach, especially those on the Cape, and the

Salisbury and Hampton beaches. She was a collector of fascinating shells, lobster traps, and sand dollars, and she would fill the house with her collection over the years.

She was an avid fan of the lobster at Brown's Lobster Pound in New Hampshire, and she loved her camping trips to Salisbury State Park. She enjoyed visiting the White Mountains with Richard; hiking and taking in the beautiful scenery as they

went. She was a talented craftswoman and was quite skilled with her crocheting, and her beading, and she enjoyed making jewelry and other creations for her friends and loved ones. And although she was allergic to them, she adored her cat Stewie and her many dogs.

She will be sorely missed by all who knew her, and will continue to be forever loved.

A Calling Hour for Linda will be held on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2025, from 10-11 a.m. in the Charbonneau Funeral Home, 30 Pleasant St. in Ware. A Funeral Service will be held at 11 a.m. in the funeral home, immediately following the Calling Hour. Burial will be held in Aspen Grove Cemetery following the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Linda's memory may be made to a charity of your choice.

Charbonneau Funeral Home, 30 Pleasant Street, Ware, MA 01082, is honored to serve the Jones family.

An online tribute page is available at charbonneauhf.com

Death notice

Jones, Linda A. (Cienaski)
Died Jan. 31, 2025
Services Feb. 8, 2025

Ware River News OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

QHMA invites public to Bingo Night fundraiser

PALMER – The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce, the non-profit organization that promotes business and development within surrounding communities of Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester counties, has announced its Handbag & Hand Tool Bingo Night fundraiser.

The event will take place on Friday, March 21 at AMVETS Post 74 in Three Rivers. The Chamber will produce 10 exciting bingo rounds, each with a grand prize featuring one of seven designer handbags or one of three premium tools up for grabs.

"The Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to provide a fun filled and inclusive night out for all, while highlighting local businesses who spon-

sor the grand prizes," said James Przypek, Chief Executive Officer for the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce. "The Chamber was poised to launch its first bingo event in 2020 until COVID related gathering restrictions caused the Chamber to postpone its plans, which has given us a chance to regroup and put together an even bigger and better event than originally planned."

Tickets can be purchased on QHMA.com. The registration fee is \$40 per person and includes 10 bingo cards, bingo dauber, delicious snack platters, bonus raffle ticket and a cash bar.

Proceeds from the bingo event will benefit the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce and its on-going mission to assist its

more than two-hundred member businesses succeed and grow with programs and initiatives throughout the year.

About the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce

Established in 1978 and headquartered in Palmer, the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce's purpose is to advance economic growth, interests and tourism for our members through policies, programs and development in the Quaboag Hills region, including the 15 towns of Belchertown, Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick, Holland, Monson, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Palmer, Spencer, Wales, Ware, Warren and West Brookfield.

WARREN from page 1

A lot of information was reviewed in surrounding communities to help figure out the accuracy of job descriptions and making sure pay scales are fair and equal to neighboring communities who have jobs with higher pay.

"Scales can be different," Board of Selectmen Clerk David Dufresne said. "No one is going to lose money."

Ferrera responded that this study would help making sure no one is losing a paygrade up and there is no confusion on the pay scale steps. These steps are a process employees can take to improve their pay and have career progression as they move up and stay in the position they're in much longer.

Ferrera said they're just changing the process of the steps and Ferrera hopes the Selectman will take this recommendation into consideration. As an example of grading job descriptions, Ferrera suggested that a highway foreman and mechanic should be at a grade B. Also, a sewer operator and mechanic should be a grade C.

"Competition becomes more fair," Board of Selectmen Chair Derick Veliz said in response to the Classification and Compensation study. The board and Ferrera believes a 15-step process is a good idea for movement and longevity of a person's role in their respected job.

"It's nice to be able to get more pay as you proceed in your career," Dufresne said. "Allow people to stay more."

A copy of this study has been sent to the Finance Committee for review. Ferrera had his recommendations included in the study. The Board of Selectmen will wait to get the input from Finance Committee and from all the Selectmen before making a final decision.

Review of computer upgrade plan

The Board of Selectmen had an initial review of the computer upgrade plan with a review of a proposal from Entre Technologies. Ferrera explained the work being done moving forward with an upgrade to the desktops to go along with their cybersecurity plan.

Entre Technologies has identified computers that need attention right away as well as additional tools such as microphones and speakers. Ferrera mentioned a grant they received in the amount of \$24,700 that could help pay for 21 computers. The phase one project is in the amount of \$38,930 and \$24,700 could help cover the majority of the new computers.

The sewer department is in need their computers as their current ones are out of date and have issues with updates. The Sewer Commission will be reviewing the proposal at their next meeting.

Ferrera views this upgrade plan as essential for the town and the employees who rely on this technology for their own cybersecurity and security for the Town.

"We're protected, more efficient and speed worthy comput-

ers...it's protecting our system," Ferrera said.

The second phase of this project is not currently needed but Ferrera advised the Selectmen that will be needed soon. There was also a recommendation of getting laptops for some of the staff.

Currently the town is looking to purchase a total of nine laptops. One laptop will be needed in the Board of Selectmen's room. The board expects a lot of equipment swapping around as some staff prefer having a keyboard and mouse connected to their laptops.

Veliz mentioned some workers prefer having a keyboard with the numbers on the side.

This review is currently tabled and will be brought up in a future Board of Selectmen meeting.

Selectmen's budget request

The board began reviewing their fiscal year 2026 Selectmen's Budget Request. Karen Dusty, Board of Selectmen's Secretary, reviewed some budget items with the board and mentioned she is waiting for numbers and raise of costs for certain projects.

One of the items are hydrant installations. The cost is going up, but according to Dusty she is not sure how much the cost is going to increase. The Town is currently renting some hydrants from the water department.

Town Administrator's report

Ferrera shared some project updates currently taking place in Warren. There are several proj-

ects taking place at the Senior Center including a kitchen project that is currently underway.

According to Ferrera, the kitchen project is roughly 95% complete.

A contractor had wooden cabinets removed to help prepare the space for a sanitation area. There was a dishwasher that has rotted underneath the floor and will have to be replaced. Ferrera said new flooring will be put done soon.

Ferrera also brought up the Wrights Mill Master Recovery Plan with Weston & Sampson that will be taking place on Feb. 26 at the Senior Center.

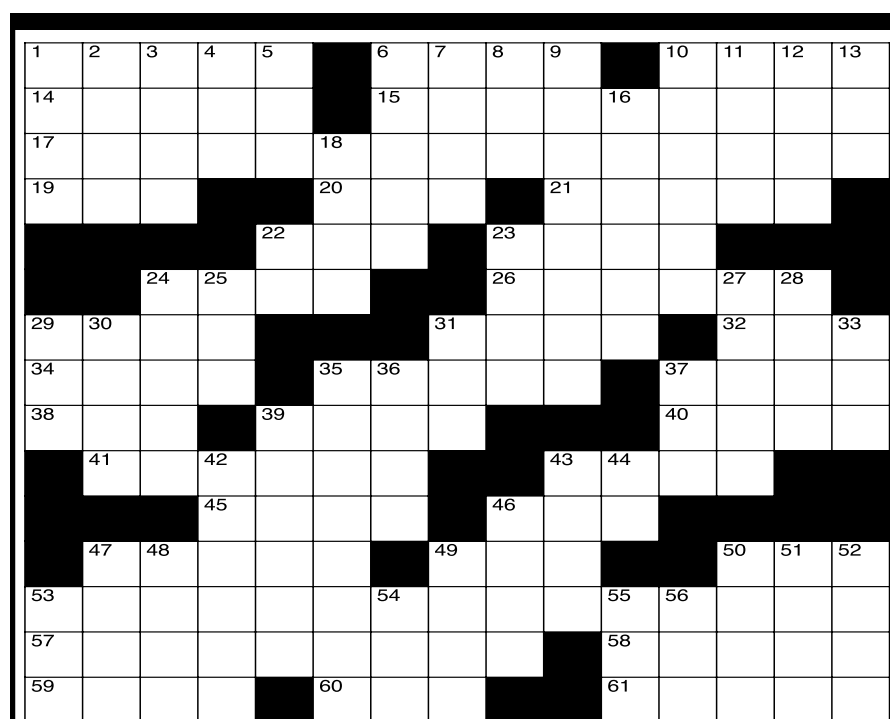
This meeting was potentially going to happen at the mill where the public could weigh in on the potential development opportunities they could have. However, it was decided to host the meeting again at the Senior Center.

The grant supporting this process for the master recovery plan for the Wrights Mill is about to wrap up in June.

Ferrera said notices have been posted inside town businesses, town buildings and libraries.

Ferrera also discussed the requests for qualifications for the River Street and Central Street Improvement Project through the Community Development Block Grant funds. Ferrera said the town is currently looking for an engineering firm for the design of both streets.

The town has received two responses, one from Waterfield Design Group and another from Weston & Sampson.



CLUES ACROSS

1. "The Las Vegas of the East"
6. Cook
10. Manning and Wallach are two
14. Chameleon
15. A way to fill up
17. What MLBers hope to play in
19. Unhappy
20. Indefinite period of time
21. Excites
22. Males
23. Mongol leader
24. Turfs
26. Soda comes in them
29. Not nice
31. Professional organization
32. Part of a play
34. Sea eagle
35. Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
37. Beige

CLUES DOWN

1. Mouths
2. Buffalo
3. You plug it in
4. Each
5. Largest English
38. Mental sharpness
39. Valley
40. Alcyone's husband
41. A place to gamble
43. Flightless Australian birds
45. Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
46. US spy group
47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour
49. Swiss river
50. Disfigure
53. Have surgery
57. Formal withdrawal
58. Early English council
59. Square measures
60. 2,000 lbs.
61. Siskel and __, critics

CLUES ACROSS

6. King of Thebes
7. English name meaning "mythical hunter"
8. Indicates near
9. More herbaceous
10. Gas-powered cars need one
11. Dishonest individual
12. Systems, doctrines, theories
13. The woman
16. The whole of one's holdings
18. Witnessess
22. Doctor
23. Paul __, Swiss painter
24. Kids look for him on December 24
25. Single
27. Competitions
28. Predict the future
29. Cage for trained hawks
30. Musician Clapton
31. Frozen water
33. Semi-formal men's

35. Most worn
36. Common soap ingredient
37. Former EU monetary unit
39. Provisions
42. Book parts
43. Republic of Ireland
44. Partner to "Pa"
46. Sammy __, songwriter
47. Dutch colonist
48. Clare Booth __, American writer
49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
50. Minute arachnid
51. From a distance
52. Monthly apartment cost
53. Young women's association
54. Tourist destination
55. "Woman" in Ojibwe language
56. Pointed end of a pen

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COA COORDINATOR for Town of Westhampton. Description available online at **www.westhamptonma.gov**. Applications accepted until position filled.

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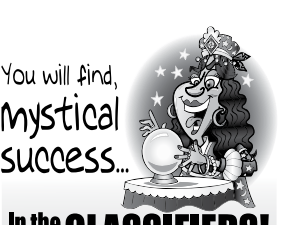
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Oliveira applauds passage of the PACT Act

BOSTON — State Senator Jake Oliveira (Hampden, Hampshire & Worcester District) and his colleagues in the Massachusetts State Legislature celebrated the successful passage of the PACT Act, or An Act Relative to Pharmaceutical Access, Costs, and Transparency, landmark legislation aimed at improving the affordability and accessibility of prescription medications for residents of the Commonwealth.

Sponsored by Senator Cindy F. Friedman (4th Middlesex District) and Representative John J. Lawn, Jr. (10th Middlesex District), this transformative bill reflects a unified effort to combat rising drug costs and ensure transparency in the pharmaceutical industry.

“This legislation marks a critical step forward in making life-saving medications affordable and accessible to everyone in Massachusetts,” said Oliveira. “The people of the Commonwealth should not have to choose between their essential prescriptions and the other necessities

needed to live a healthy and fulfilling life. With these reforms, we are holding pharmaceutical companies accountable while protecting the health and well-being of our communities.”

Approximately 9% of Massachusetts residents have been diagnosed with diabetes, and 6.2% of adults over 35 live with heart disease. In 2015, more than 10% of residents lived with asthma. Black residents face these conditions at even higher rates — over 12% live with diabetes, and nearly 14% of Black adults live with asthma.

The legislation is designed to address these disparities, ensuring access to life-saving medications for communities disproportionately impacted by chronic illnesses.

Key provisions of the bill include:

Cost-sharing caps for chronic illnesses: Insulin co-payments are capped at \$25 for a 30-day supply, with coverage guaranteed for one generic and one brand-name drug for diabetes, asthma, and chronic

heart conditions.

Equity in cost sharing: The bill ensures that out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs do not exceed retail prices, offering immediate financial relief to patients at the pharmacy counter.

Creation of the Office for Pharmaceutical Policy and Analysis: This new office within the Health Policy Commission will monitor pharmaceutical trends, spending, and affordability. It will also publish annual reports with recommendations for mitigating pharmaceutical spending growth and promoting accessibility.

Expanded oversight of Pharmacy Benefit Managers: PBMs will now be licensed and regulated by the Division of Insurance. They must also report cost data and are prohibited from engaging in practices that inflate drug prices or harm consumers and independent pharmacies.

MassHealth and GIC Reforms: These reforms aim to reduce financial barriers to vital medications

for low-income residents and state employees.

Transparency through hearings and reporting: The Center for Health Information and Analysis will collect detailed drug cost data, while pharmaceutical manufacturers and PBMs will participate in the Health Policy Commission’s Annual Health Care Cost Trends Hearing. Public testimony will illuminate factors influencing drug costs.

The legislation also addresses broader systemic issues in the pharmaceutical industry, such as the influence of Pharmacy Benefit Managers, and empowers agencies like the Division of Insurance and the Center for Health Information and Analysis to regulate, audit and analyze data.

Implementation timelines for the various sections of the bill ensure a phased approach. Cost-sharing caps will take effect on July 1 and PBM licensing will begin in January 2026.

COLLEGE NEWS

Colleges and universities announce President’s and Dean’s lists

President’s list Nichols College

Dudley
Riley Bassett of Gilbertville and Edward Guertin of Ware

Plymouth State University

Plymouth, New Hampshire
Luke Guertin of Ware, community media studies major and Tanner Lockwood of Ware, exercise and sport physiology major

Dean’s list

American International College
Alexys Prouty of Gilbertville, majoring in general business

Roger Williams University

Bristol, Rhode Island
Madison Barre of Ware

University of Rhode Island

Kingston, Rhode Island
Jen Hall of Wheelwright

Anna Maria College announced Dean’s list

PAXTON — Anna Maria College recently announced academic honors for students named to the Dean’s list for fall 2024 semester.

Anna Maria College awards Dean’s list recognition to students enrolled in a full-time undergraduate day program in good standing who have attained in the previous semester a GPA of 3.5 with no grade lower than “B” for a minimum of four courses.

Robert Bruso of Ware achieved Dean’s list recognition.

Emmet Wright named to WPI’s fall 2024 Dean’s list

WORCESTER — Worcester Polytechnic Institute has announced that Emmet Wright of Andover, a member of the class of 2026 majoring in mechanical engineering, was named to the university’s Dean’s list for academic excellence for the fall 2024 semester.

The criteria for the WPI Dean’s list differ from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average. Instead, WPI students

are named to the Dean’s list based on the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and hands-on projects.

A total of 2,393 undergraduate students achieved these criteria for WPI’s fall 2024 Dean’s list.

Endicott College announces local Dean’s list students

BEVERLY — Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its fall 2024 Dean’s list students.

In order to qualify for the Dean’s List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below “C,” have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

The following Ware students have met these requirements: Abigail Gaudreau, nursing, daughter of Heather Gaudreau and Chad Gaudreau; Kyle Gordon, nursing, son of Lisa Bail and Charles Gordon.



DCR offers February vacation program on tracks and scat

BELCHERTOWN — The Department of Conservation and Recreation will host a February Vacation Program “Tracks and Scat” on Monday, Feb. 17 from 10-11 a.m.

Although we may not see them often, our native wildlife is all around us. Come learn to recognize some signs of wildlife through a fun and informative

indoors activity.

Meet at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center in Belchertown. Great for all ages, children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information, call 413-323-7221. To register visit <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/250b6dcbefc4f30a4da5b-0f86abc4f3>.

MGH and Matthew Perry Foundation announce fellowship in addiction medicine

The Matthew Perry Foundation Fellowship will honor Matthew Perry’s vision of increasing education on the disease and combating stigma.

BOSTON — The Matthew Perry Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital, a founding member of the Mass General Brigham healthcare system, today announced the establishment of the Matthew Perry Foundation Fellowship in Addiction Medicine for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The fellow will join a highly competitive Addiction Medicine fellowship program, which is one of only 105 available in the United States and trains physicians who have completed an accredited residency program to become specialists and leaders in Addiction Medicine. The fellowship focuses on developing clinical expertise, leadership skills, and training on effective systems of care.

The goal is for graduating fellows to be trained to provide much-needed access to high quality treatment and provide guidance and mentorship in the communities where they ultimately practice.

Sarah “SK” Kler, MD, the inaugural fellow, was selected from a pool of more than 60 applicants and will receive comprehensive training in the delivery of high-quality addiction care to a diverse population of patients.

“The Matthew Perry Foundation is honored to be in collaboration with Massachusetts General Hospital’s Addiction Medicine Fellowship program. Matthew believed deeply in eliminating the stigma surrounding the disease of addiction and, with that in mind, we are proud to lend our name to this important work,” said Doug Chapin, the Foundation’s Chairman of the

Board and Lisa Kasteler Calio, its Executive Director.

Nearly 50 million Americans struggle with substance use disorders and hundreds of thousands of Americans die from alcohol and drug use each year despite evidence that addiction is a chronic, treatable health condition.

“Continuing to silo addiction care outside the rest of medical care and marginalize addiction as a social problem outside of the domain of physicians will only exacerbate stigma and inequities and increase the deadly impact of this epidemic,” said Sarah Wakeman, MD, Senior Medical Director for Substance Use Disorder at Mass General Brigham and program director of the MGH fellowship. “It is vitally important for the medical community to address substance use disorder using effective, holistic, wraparound services across medical settings. The training provided through the MGH fellowship will allow the next generation of physicians to provide and continually improve this care.”

The Matthew Perry Foundation was established to honor Matthew Perry’s unwavering commitment to helping those struggling with the disease of addiction. Drawing inspiration from Mr. Perry’s life, words, and personal experiences, the Foundation works to raise awareness and foster understanding about the nature of addiction and eliminate stigma and the barriers that prevent people from seeking and receiving care.

Dr. Kler’s training will commence on June 30, 2025. She received her medical training at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University and currently serves as the Chief Medical Resident in Internal Medicine at MGH.

Dr. Kler worked with Boston Healthcare for the Homeless during her residency and, prior to medical school, she was a case manager in White River Junction, Vermont, providing case management to older adults who were homeless, insecurely housed, or living in subsidized housing. A compassionate and skilled clinician, Dr. Kler is known for her steadfast advocacy for her patients.

With the support of the Matthew Perry Foundation, coupled with continued funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Mass General will welcome three candidates into the 2025/26 program. Over the course of a year, the fellows rotate throughout various departments across MGH, as well as Mass General Brigham’s regional partnerships, allowing them to gain the necessary skills needed to become expert clinicians and leaders in the field of Addiction Medicine.

While curriculum is tailored to each individual fellow’s interests, core clinical rotations for all fellows include the full range of innovative clinical programs developed at Mass General Brigham, such as the inpatient Addiction Consult Team, the Bridge Clinic, the HOPE clinic for pregnant patients and families, the alcohol-related liver disease clinic, and working in integrated addiction teams in primary care.

“Mass General will work in close collaboration with the Matthew Perry Foundation to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and, most importantly, offer hope to those of every age, background and experience who are struggling with

substance use disorder,” said Dr. Wakeman.

Mass General Brigham is an integrated academic health care system, uniting great minds to solve the hardest problems in medicine for our communities and the world. Mass General Brigham connects a full continuum of care across a system of academic medical centers, community and specialty hospitals, a health insurance plan, physician networks, community health centers, home care, and long-term care services.

Mass General Brigham is a non-profit organization committed to patient care, research, teaching, and service to the community. In addition, Mass General Brigham is one of the nation’s leading biomedical research organizations with several Harvard Medical School teaching hospitals. For more information, please visit MassGeneralBrigham.org.

The Matthew Perry Foundation is the realization of Matthew’s enduring commitment to helping others struggling with the disease of addiction. The Foundation is guided by his words and experiences and inspired by his passion for making a difference in as many lives as possible.

With an emphasis on maximizing access to recovery in underserved communities, prioritizing youth prevention and early intervention programs, and providing non-judgmental support, the Foundation is committed to building a community where every individual has the opportunity to thrive. Please join us at MathewPerryFoundation.org.

Notice of Public Hearing Planning Board LEGAL NOTICE

This is a Notice of Public Hearing. Pursuant to MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 5, the Ware Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, February 20, 2025** during their normally scheduled meeting starting at 7:00pm in the **Town Hall meeting room, 126 Main Street, Ware MA.** The purpose of this hearing is to consider the proposed new Zoning District “Health Care Services”, amendments to the Zoning Map regarding the Health Care Services district, which will include the former hospital site at 85 South Street, and various adjacent parcels, and Sections 2.2 (Definitions), Sections 3.1 (Zoning Districts), Sections 4.8 (Special Use Regulations), Sections 5.1 (Area Requirements), and Sections 5.3 (Height and Coverage Requirements) of the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Ware.

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this hearing will be conducted in person and via remote means as a courtesy in accordance with the applicable law. Should there be technical issues, the meeting will proceed at the scheduled time. This means that

members of the Planning Board as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means. In person attendance will be held in Town Hall Meeting room, 126 Main Street, Ware MA. It is possible that any or all members of the public body may attend remotely, with in-person attendance consisting of members of the public. The meeting may be accessed remotely via Zoom. Go to <https://zoom.us/join> or join by phone. Phone Number: 929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 784 604 1861; Password: 01082.

A complete copy of the proposed changes can be found at the Planning & Community Development Department Office and on the department web page at www.townofware.com. Anyone interested or wishing to be heard should appear at the time and place designated. All interested parties are invited to attend. Please contact the Planning and Community Development Director with any questions. (413) 967-9648, ext. 118. psmith@townofware.com
WARE PLANNING BOARD
Kenneth Crosby, Chair
01/30, 02/06/25

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampshire Division
Docket No. HS24P0721EA**
Estate of:
Amelia Alice Kowalski
Also Known As:
Mimi Kowalski;
Amelia Kowalski
Date of Death:
August 5, 2024
**INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLIC NOTICE**
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Ann Garstka of Gilbertville, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate. **Ann Garstka of Gilbertville, MA** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the admin-

istration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
02/06/2025

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