

WARE RIVER NEWS

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www.warerivernews.turley.com

Fire Chief shared concerns about high call volume

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Fire Chief James Martinez made a recommendation to the Selectboard to discontinue the ambulance subscription program.

Currently, residents pay

\$50 a year for the ambulance subscription program, which prevents the department from balance billing any additional costs not covered by insurance.

At the Feb. 17 meeting, he said the program was successful when it first came out, and it didn't impact the

department from a financial standpoint as much as it does today.

"We were not experiencing quite as many people using the service multiple times over the course of the year," Martinez.

Martinez shared billing offset data from the years

2024 and 2025. In 2024 there were 98 subscriptions totaling \$4,900 with offsets of \$9,391.81 leaving a net loss of \$4,491.81. In 2025, there were 113 subscriptions for a net loss of \$4,026.98.

He said while the numbers are not dramatic, he was concerned about the

financial impact of frequent ambulance trips to housing developments. He said the department responded to Cedarbrook 1.8 times a day last year for a total of 657 calls.

"Of that, 462 we were able to cover, 195 we did not or we lost...35 transports and

115 lift assists, which are not revenue-generating things for us," he said. "They still generate a cost to the town by going out."

These costs include wear and tear on vehicles, overtime for staffing and more.

Please see **WARE BOS**, page 5

Open meeting law complaints addressed

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Correspondent

HARDWICK – The Select Board continued to address open meeting law complaints at their meeting last Wednesday, where emotions boiled over for much of the meeting.

William Tinker, Vice-Chair of the select board, said there are multiple meeting minutes from past meetings which have not been approved and posted to the town website. Tinker made an inventory of missing minutes, and said there are multiple open session and executive session meetings that have not been approved, dating as far back as May of 2024 for executive sessions, and February of 2025 for open sessions.

According to Tinker, it is required by law to post minutes within a timely manner. Tinker called for the board to pass a policy or regulation to ensure the board stays current on their meeting minutes.

Select Board member Jeffrey Schaaf said every Select Board meeting except for one is posted on the Hardwick YouTube page, and available for public viewing. Schaaf said he agrees that it is lawful to post minutes, but suggested since most meetings are on YouTube, it is not as urgent.

Tinker said it is inaccurate

Please see **OPEN MEETING**, page 7

Wildlife on Wheels

returned to Ware Library

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Ware Library welcomed the animal ambassadors of Wildlife on Wheels during school vacation week.

Wildlife on Wheels is an educational outreach program from the Zoo in Forest Park out in Springfield.

Bringing Wildlife on Wheels is Animal Keeper

and Educator, Cameron Gilbert. Children's Room Librarian, Cathy Goulet, had over 40 sign ups for Wildlife on Wheels. The event was held inside the Reading Room of the Ware Library as the stage was set for these animal ambassadors.

The first animal friend to appear was Monty the ball python. Gilbert held

Please see **WILDLIFE**, page 15



Meatball the lionhead rabbit visited the Ware Library during the Wildlife on Wheels program.

Submitted Photos
Cheese the rooster visited friends at the Ware Library.

The Next Watershed Moments...

By Keith Davies
Coordinator, Chicopee
4Rivers Watershed Council
Guest Contributor

Editor's Note: This is the third and final part in a multi-part series about the Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council.

So, what's next for these four rivers: Swift, Ware, Quaboag, and Chicopee? C4R has got the ball rolling, but it won't keep rolling if there is no push behind it.

Who pushes? Leaders and volunteers, communities.

During 2026, C4R will hold a series of community information sessions to highlight our potential and vision. The first will be a spring kick-off event at the Palmer Historical Cultural Center, 2072 Main St., in Three Rivers on Sunday, March 22 at 2 p.m.

Throughout the year, C4R will have fun paddles, nature paddles, clean ups (suggested sites?), water quality monitoring, and more.

We hope to post on our website our events schedule by March 22. These events and the meetings will be a good opportunity to see our rivers, meet others and hear how we can together Care 4 rivers-C4R.

Our needs: we need to strengthen our leadership team, add qualified and committed people to help with organizational, communication, database and financial management. People with water resource and aquatic biological savvy can also help. We have reached a

Please see **WATERSHED**, page 7

Healthy relationships, healthy community

DV task force celebrated major milestones over 25 years

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – The Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force celebrated its 25th anniversary last year, and its members are continu-

ing its mission to prevent and respond to domestic violence in the community.

Since it was formed in 2000, the task force has partnered with the towns of Ware, Warren and Hardwick to form a network of agencies, organizations, community members and allies to provide support for survivors of domestic violence.

Monica Moran, coordinator of the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force, said many people saw a need in the community, and decided to band together.

"I think there was a concern in the community, that people couldn't access resources," she said.

In the first year of the task force, over 200 community members and local professionals – ranging from police officers to healthcare providers to teachers – received training to identify and respond to domestic violence.

Melissa Hutchins, who is a member of the task force through the Behavioral Health Network, said it's this diverse membership that keeps the task force growing.

"Any kind of collaboration makes you better and stronger, and reach more people," she said.

By 2004, two Ware Police officers were designated as the department's domestic violence liaisons, and now, each town's department receives regular training through the task force. Later this spring, police officers will participate in a training about coercive control legislation and domestic violence resources.

This training comes after changes were made to the abuse prevention law known as chapter 209A of

Please see **DV TASK**, page 6



Turley File Photo
Ware High School Domestic Violence Task Force members led the annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk down Pulaski Street in 2023.



Country Bank announced new chair and vice chair of board

WARE – Country Bank announced the appointments of Ted Noonan, President of Noonan Energy, as Chairman of the Board, and Steve Musso, former COO of FinPro, as Vice Chair of the Board.



Ted Noonan, President of Noonan Energy as Chairman of the Board.

Both appointments reflect the bank's continued commitment to strong governance, strategic leadership, and long-term stability.

Noonan succeeds James Phaneuf, who has served as Chairman of the Board for the past four years. Phaneuf will continue serving on the board, providing valuable institutional knowledge and ongoing leadership support.

"Ted's appointment as Chairman brings thoughtful, steady leadership at a time when community banking continues to evolve," said Mary McGovern, President and CEO of Country Bank. "His experience and deep understanding of our mission position him well to guide the board as we continue to focus on growth and on delivering on our strategic plan."



Steve Musso, former COO of FinPro as Vice Chair of the Board.

As Vice Chair, Musso will support the board's leadership and governance, leveraging his experience and perspective to advance the bank's strategic priorities. "Steve's collaborative leadership style and industry knowledge make him an excellent choice for Vice Chair," said Phaneuf. "Together, Ted and Steve will help ensure continuity, strong oversight, and alignment with our long-term vision. I am confident these two appointments will strengthen the Board and the Bank for years to come."

The board also recognized Phaneuf for his 29 years of leadership and service on the Board, including four years as Chairman, and noted his role in guiding the bank through a period of change, growth, stability, and strategic focus.

"Jim's leadership as Chairman has been instrumental in strengthening the bank's foundation," said McGovern. "We are grateful that he will continue to

serve on the board and share his experience as we move forward."

These leadership appointments underscore Country Bank's commitment to sound governance and to being Made to Make a Difference for its customers, communities, and stakeholders.

About Country Bank

Established in 1850, Country Bank has a rich history of supporting personal and business banking customers through financial solutions with FDIC and DIF insurance for added security.

Country Bank is a full-service \$2 billion mutual community bank serving Central and Western Massachusetts with 15 banking centers and two business offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton, Springfield, Uxbridge and Worcester.

With a commitment to personalized service and community involvement, Country Bank offers individuals, businesses, and municipalities a comprehensive range of banking products and services. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network.

Country Bank can be reached at 800-322-8233 or online at countrybank.com.

Hope Walks Here

Suicide awareness walk returns to Grenville Park May 2

People can register at afsp.org/ware or scan the QR code.

This event was established in 2024 by School Resource Officer Jeannine Bonnayer and Ware Public Schools Food Service Manager Kristen Murphy, to help to bring awareness to and start a conversation about suicide. In March of 2023, Murphy's son Ethan Donnelly died by suicide at the age of 24.

Murphy died in February of 2025, after a brief but fierce battle with a rare and aggressive cancer. This walk fundraiser was a cause very close to her heart, and a way she could honor her son's memory.



WARE – During Mental Health Awareness Month, community members and students from Ware Public Schools, will gather at Grenville Park for the third annual Out of the Darkness Campus Walk to benefit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

The 5K walk will be held at Grenville Park, 73 Church St., on Saturday, May 2, with check-in starting at 9 a.m. and the walk at 10 a.m.

Town Clerk releases 2026 dog licensing information

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

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

If you are licensing in person the Town Clerk's Office will be open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday each week during business hours. Town Hall

Please see **DOG LICENSE**, page 7

Are You Old News?



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

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



File Photo Last week's photo from 2021 showed Workshop13 members Roc Goudreau, Loretta Medeiros, Chris and Lisa Dimarzio and Pat Goudreau at the Annual Northeast Fine Arts exhibition. They were correctly identified by Lynn Park.

Ware Senior Center NEWS

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

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

ACTIVITIES

- Thursday, Feb. 26**
- 9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
 - 9 a.m. Walking Club (weather permitting)
 - 9:30 a.m. Line Dancing for Beginners
 - 10 a.m. Line Dancing
 - 10 a.m. Scat
 - 11:30 a.m. Lunch
 - 12:15 p.m. Art Class

Friday, Feb. 27

- 9 a.m. Tai Chi
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lori
- 6 p.m. Pitch (Doors open at 5 p.m.)

LUNCHES DINE IN 11:30 a.m.

All meals \$3.50 unless otherwise noted

Required: call 413-967-4595 by noon on the business day before, to put your name on the lunch list.

Thursday, Feb. 26

Beef and Broccoli over Rice, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day

Friday, Feb. 27

Baked Fish, O'Brien Potatoes, Veggie of the Day, Dessert of the Day

Open burning permits available

WARE – Open burning season is open now through April 30, during the hours of 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Permits will be available online only at ware.firepermits.com. In order to obtain a burning permit, please go to ware.firepermits.com and register for the site.

If you are already registered for the site from last year's season, you only need to log in and apply for a 2026 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.

Beaver Lake Club Corporation offers scholarship

WARE – Beaver Lake Club Corporation of Ware announces its annual Louis H. Healy Scholarship of up to \$1000.

These scholarships will be presented to deserving high school seniors or current college students who are residents of the town of Ware or who are a member of the Beaver Lake Club Community.

The scholarship is given in the memory of Louis Healy a long time and well-respected member of the Beaver Lake community and the town of Ware. Lou was an active leader and participant in both town and community matters and his family and friends continue to celebrate his thoughts, ideals, and memory by awarding this yearly academic scholarship.

The application deadline is April 17, 2026 and applications must be postmarked by that date. The selected recipient will be and the scholarships will be awarded in early June.

Applications and information can be obtained by sending an email to ctrietsch22@gmail.com or by mailing a request to BLCC: P.O. Box 253, Ware, MA 01082

JOIN THE TEAM!

JP McCarthy & Sons is now hiring great van drivers to help transport the students of the Quabbin Regional School District.

Beginning July 1, 2026, McCarthy will be adding van service to serve the District. Vanpool drivers are encouraged to apply and will get preferred assignments!

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STM to be held March 2

Staff Report

WARE – The Selectboard decided to proceed with Special Town Meeting on Monday, March 2.

Despite the absence of state-certified free cash, Selectboard member Kenneth Willette stated that the town has other funding sources and needs to move forward with town business. Other board members agreed that the Stabilization Fund could be utilized for some of the articles.

The articles on the posted warrant to be considered are articles 2, 7, 8, 12 and 13. Article 2 will provide funds to departments for current fiscal year shortfalls. Specifically funds will be used for the Treasurer's department for postage and tax title work, for the sewer department for staffing, and for the water department for system maintenance.

Article 7 will authorize the spending needed for the restoration of the park roads in Grenville Park. The town has received a grant that will pay for seventy percent of the project. The total project costs \$82,500.

Article 8 will fund \$127,000 to replace three sludge pumps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Article 12 provides additional funding for the chiller system at the Ware High School. Town Meeting originally voted \$250,000 for the project, but bids for the replacement system came in high requiring an additional \$300,000.

Article 13 will provide \$200,000 for the fire hydrant repairs of the past two years. Thirty-four hydrants in poor condition have been replaced.

In the event that free cash is certified by the end of this week, additional articles including design for the Reed Memorial Swimming Pool and funds to preserve farmland may be considered. If free cash is approved later, it will be used to restore the Stabilization Fund.

Special Town Meeting is scheduled for Monday at 6:30 p.m. at the Ware High School Auditorium. A quorum of 80 voting residents is required.



Submitted Photo
John John Brown will perform "Songs, Stories & Art: Lessons From Strangers" at Workshop13 on Saturday, Feb. 28.

John John Brown brings 'Songs, Stories, & Art' to Workshop13

WARE – Workshop13 welcomes award-winning songwriter John John Brown for a performance of his emotionally rich live show, "Songs, Stories, & Art: Lessons From Strangers."

This all-ages event takes place in Workshop13's Grand Hall at 13 Church St. on Saturday, Feb. 28. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the performance begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and are available at www.workshop13.org.

In recent years, Brown has been chosen as a Kerrville New Folk winner and an Emerging Artist at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival. Most notably, in concert, he is known for mixing storytelling songs with the visual arts creating "an

imaginative musical performance woven into a unique visual experience."

With only a guitar, a projector, and a storyteller's heart, Brown guides audiences through 14 compelling character portraits – each one brought to life with original hand-drawn comics and narrative-driven songs. It's part concert, part illustrated story hour, and unlike anything else on stage today.

About Workshop13

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

Polar Plunge to benefit Special Olympics on March 21

WARE – The Ware ice dependent. It is subject to change if the ice is not melted.



Check-in for the plunge is at 11 a.m. and the plunge will take place at noon.

This event is weather/

To register, scan the QR code or visit www.polarplungema.org.

School Committee heard special education update

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Director of Student Services Dr. Ginger Coleman gave an update to the School Committee about the special education audit that was held in March of last year.

One of the findings in the audit was about the filing of student records. She said all of the reorganization was completed last summer and the system is color coded and contains three years worth of active files.

At the Feb. 11 meeting, Coleman said the reorganization has been wonderful and has helped streamline their system. She said they have also worked on improving the organization of their archived files.

Another finding in the audit was regarding the use of evidence based evaluations.

"We use all evidence based evaluations unless of course we need to switch to a dynamic assessment, but that would be only after any standardized measure had been attempted and then been unsuccessful," she said.

In terms of instructional support and substitutes, Coleman said she reviews every schedule and offers feedback to the administrative team.

"I look at every schedule of special ed. to make sure we're aligned, we're in compliance," she said.

Coleman said processes are clear now, and they have been working well.

For professional development, Coleman said the special education department has attended crisis prevention training. She said this training teaches staff de-escalation techniques and restraints for students in crisis.

"We talked about different strategies that you can use to de-escalate a situation," she said.

Coleman said the school district is currently going through its civil rights and special education audit. She will be meeting with a representative from the state and interviews and observations will be held this month.

Interim Superintendent Michael Wood said this is something that all school districts have to go through.

Coleman said the Special Education Parent Advisory Council is still holding monthly meetings, but that attendance is low. She welcomed and encouraged participation from parents.

She said the SEPAC recently had a presentation about youth substance use by the Behavioral Health Network.

Superintendent's report

Wood said staff recently met to go over the school district's safety plan and procedures. He said the school district has software called Raptor that includes the evacuation process and procedure.

"We went over that and just refreshed our memories," he said. "We also talked about safety procedures in general around entrance to our schools."

Wood said they want to be as welcoming as possible, while still positively identifying people entering the building, even if that person is known by the staff.

"We're going to try to get back in the practice of asking everybody for their ID and show it in the camera in the door," he said.

Signage will be purchased to alert people of the questions that will be asked when they arrive to pick up a student. He said these are the same questions that staff have always asked of new people picking up students.

Wood said they are also making sure information in the iPass system is up-to-date and accurate. He said the staff keep written record as backup as well.

Wood said the ventilator project at Ware Middle School is almost finished and that the thermostats are working as well. He said there is a metal plate that needs to be rebuilt to complete the project.

He said they are working to fill vacant positions in the school district, including a speech pathologist. He said Coleman reached out to an agency to continue these services for students.

Wood said they have a candidate for the eighth grade math teacher position, through the agency. He said they recently hired a long-term substitute teacher for the computer science class at the high school.

Wood said they are working to finalize a draft of the fiscal year 2027 budget to present to the School Committee.

He said he attended a regional meeting of school superintendents and municipal officials to get an update on the Governor's budget proposal, and how communities are addressing financial cliffs. A luncheon will be held with the legislative group in March.

"We need to help inform them of the needs that we have as school districts around Circuit Breaker, special education transportation, which really effect everybody; and then Rural Aid which Ware used to get but we no longer do because we don't meet the criteria...the state really just has not funded it at a level that makes a huge difference," he said.

High school principal position

Wood said Assistant Principal Megan Sears will be appointed to serve as acting Principal in Ware Jr./Sr. High School for the remainder of this school year into the 2026-2027 school year.

"A high school principal is hard to find and she has graciously accepted," Wood said.

Superintendent search

Mel Whitham, chair of the superintendent search subcommittee, said they interviewed four candidates, and they will soon be deciding which candidates to present to the School Committee for final interviews.

Use of facilities approval

The School Committee approved the use of the school grounds for the town's annual fireworks display to be held on Saturday, Aug. 1. Rain date for the fireworks will be Sunday, Aug. 2.

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viewpoints

GUEST COLUMN

New pool again!

At the last Town Meeting on Nov. 17, 2025, the Reed Pool Subcommittee sponsored an article to borrow \$200,000 to complete design and estimates for a new swimming pool and operating costs.

This project would include add-ons for a splash pad, temporary enclosure for added use hours, parking, security, and bathhouse. It would also address safety and sewage problems, which should be the responsibility of the Water and Sewer Division of our DPW.

At the time of this meeting Free Cash had not been certified by the State, and several articles had to be tabled to the upcoming meeting on March 2.

We had hoped that the town would borrow the funds requested so we could have a plan ready for the Annual Town Meeting in May 2026. That was not to be.

67 out of a mere 130 attendees voted against borrowing the funds. We have over 7,000 registered voters in town.

While campaigning for Park Commissioner, I spoke with many people, a majority of which were asking for the reopening of our swimming pool. So, we will try again. We plan to use newly found funds, reduce costs, and request \$90,000 from Free Cash for this article.

Years ago, Ware residents had several choices for recreational swimming: Red's off Malboeuf Road, Sandy Bottoms on Upper North Street, Snow's Pond on Pleasant Street, and the Reed Swimming Pool on West Main Street. Over the years these swimming areas closed one by one leaving only the Reed Pool

until its closure in 2018, and with that, the end of swimming and water safety lessons for the children of Ware.

The Town of Ware seems to have an image problem, and the more things we can do to let people see us in a more positive light, the better.

We need to grow our community. Only a few new homes were built this past year. We need to show families why Ware is a good place to live and raise their children. I am urging townspeople to attend this meeting and make themselves heard.

There is another article sponsored by the Selectboard that would have the pool filled in and the buildings razed under the guise of safety. The design ideas currently in consideration suggest using some of these buildings and the existing footprint of the pool to keep costs down.

If the pool were to be filled in and the buildings razed, that would effectively put the pool project "on the back burner" and add significant cost increases to any future proposals.

Ware has always been known as "The Town That Can't Be Licked." However, with the closing of the Reed Pool, our hospital, and the giving of Mary Lane land and endowment funds to Baystate, it seems that all we're doing is licking our wounds and giving up.

Please don't be a nay sayer. There are many ways to make Ware a great place to live. Please attend our next Town Meeting and vote.

Thank you,
Ken Higney
Ware

Snow flowers for an impending storm

As I write, we are expecting a blizzard. More snow in a winter that has already provided plenty, at least in my humble opinion.

Instead of focusing on all of that depressing news, why don't we "think spring" by focusing on bulbs that appear just as the snow is melting.

Perhaps the earliest and best known of the spring harbingers is the Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*). Toughened points on the leaf tips make it possible for the snowdrop to push through the crusty soil of late winter. Two or three strappy leaves grow from each bulb; most often there is just one flower.

You'll notice three white outer petals first and upon closer inspection you'll see green tipped inner petals. The flowers are held on the stem in a nodding fashion and in my experience they stay in bloom for upwards of three weeks.

Reportedly they are well adapted for bees, at least those that are brave enough to venture out of the hive in search of pollen during the warmest days of late winter!

Snowdrops will naturalize if happy, increasing in numbers both above and below the ground! Although we "deadhead" most bulbs, keeping spent flower heads of this genus in place will allow seeds to ripen and new plants to form. It is interesting to observe the process of a snowdrop self-sowing.

Once the flower has gone by a large seed will form; because of its weight, the stem will bend toward the

ground dropping its ripe seed at a perfect distance from the mother plant. Under no circumstances should the foliage

be mowed until the foliage has yellowed or mowed high to miss the foliage.

Another one of my favorite harbingers is the Snow Crocus (*Crocus tommasinianus*). Not to be confused with the large Dutch crocus, Snow Crocus is typically lilac in color and has white stems.

They grow about three inches tall and naturalize well with daughter corms forming around the mother corm. They are both squirrel and deer resistant.

Native to Hungary, Snow Crocus are sometimes called "Tommies" thanks to their species name, which was a tribute to Muzio G. Spirito de Tommasini, a Hungarian botanist. Years ago we had these beauties in a sequence of spring bloomers that started with Snow Drops, moved on to the Snow Crocus, then on to a Daffodil and then finally the Spanish bluebell. The combination spanned March through May.

Just the thought of that versus what we are expecting in terms of weather has lightened my mood some; I hope it has done the same for you.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



age of a bulb be removed until it is brown and dry.

It may not be the most beautiful to look at, but all the while that it is green it is making and storing food for next year's flowers.

Glory of the Snow (*Chionodoxa luciliae*) is also one of the first spring bulbs to appear, sometimes right through the melting snow. Most common in periwinkle blue with a white center, these six inch tall, six petaled flowers also appear in pink and white.

They thrive in full to part sun situations, whether it be the rock garden, at the base of shrubs or deciduous trees or even when planted in the lawn! They naturalize easily, forming large colonies by bulb offsets and self-sowing. They are deer resistant.

Glory of the Snow stay in bloom upwards of two weeks, maybe longer if temperatures don't spike. Like other spring bloomers, the bulbs go dormant after the foliage ripens. It does not stick around long enough to be much of an eyesore in the garden.

One word of caution for those looking for the blue flowered lawn effect: don't

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or via email to:
pouimette@turley.com

The deadline for submissions is Monday at noon.

Turley Election Policy

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

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



SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

My friend is 65; shouldn't she be exempt from Medicare payroll taxes?

Dear Rusty:
My girlfriend is 65 and she just enrolled in Medicare.

She is still working full time as a nurse, but they are still deducting Medicare taxes from her paycheck. I thought as soon as you started Medicare, that they would no longer take any Medicare taxes from her paychecks. Is that not correct?

Signed: Concerned Friend

Dear Concerned Friend:

Your understanding about Medicare payroll tax is, indeed, not correct. Medicare taxes are levied on everyone, who works and earns, regardless of whether or not they are currently enrolled in the Medicare program. That is how Medicare has worked since it was first enacted in the mid-1960s and how it still works today.

For Your Information, everyone who works for an employer must pay Federal Insurance Contributions Act payroll tax of 7.65%. Most (6.2%) of that payroll tax goes to support Social Security, but 1.45% goes to support Medicare Part A. Self-employed individuals must also pay this tax under the Self-

Employed Contributions Act, which is equivalent to FICA, except the self-employed individual must also pay the employer portion of the payroll tax. The Social Security portion of the FICA/SECA tax has an earnings cap (\$184,500 in 2026), but there is no cap on earnings for the Medicare portion of the FICA/SECA payroll tax. FYI, employers pay an equivalent amount of Social Security and Medicare taxes and the Medicare portion of the payroll tax is paid on all earnings. There is no cap on earnings from which the Medicare payroll tax is withheld.

To ensure understanding, Medicare Part A provides healthcare coverage for inpatient hospitalization services and Medicare Part B provides coverage for outpatient medical services (doctors, medical tests, etc.). That 1.45% of the FICA and SECA tax for the self-employed is paid by those who work to help fund the Medicare Part A program, which is premium-free for most Americans after age 65. For Medicare Part B, there is a separate pre-

Please see **SSI**, page 13



By Ellenor Downer

On President's Day I saw a northern flicker fly up into a tree as I traveled in Barre.

The white rump patch was clearly visible. A Brimfield resident said he has a friend in Belchertown, who occasionally has a flicker come to his suet feeder. Four or five bluebirds also frequent his suet feeder.

Northern flickers are a fairly, large woodpecker about 11 to 12 inches long. They are larger than a hairy woodpecker and smaller than a pileated woodpecker.

They appear brownish overall with a white rump patch that's is conspicuous in flight and often visible when they perch. The undersides of the wing and tail feathers are bright yellow for eastern



Northern flicker

birds or red for western birds. The brown plumage has black spots, barring and a black "bib." The sexes are similar, but the male has a black mustache.

Flickers spend a lot of time on the ground and like many woodpeckers fly in an undulating up and down path with flapping and gliding. They make a repeated flicker or

"wicka-wicka-wicka" call and a loud "kleer."

They inhabit open forests, woodlots, groves and semi-open country. The female lays five to eight eggs sometimes more. Both sexes incubate the eggs with the male incubating at night and part of the

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 12

Annual Town Election will be held April 13

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

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

The last date to register to vote is Friday, April 3.

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

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

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

Friends of Ware Town Hall offer Spring Lotto Calendars

WARE – The Friends of Ware Town Hall are now selling Spring Lotto Calendars to raise money to restore the beautiful large windows in the Great Room of the Town Hall.

Lotto Calendar sales will continue through March 31. Drawings will be made weekly beginning April 1 and winners will be notified by phone.

The cost of each calendar is \$10 and there are multiple chances to win since winning stubs will be put back into the drawing. Cash prizes range from \$25 to one \$500 prize on the final day of drawing, April 30.

Calendars may be purchased from members of

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

Anyone who would like to purchase a calendar but is unable to do so locally can mail a check for \$10, payable to Friends of Ware Town Hall, along with their address and phone number to: Friends of Ware Town Hall, P.O. Box 692, Ware, MA 01082. The calendar will be mailed to you.

Planning Board OK'd ADU site plan

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Planning Board discussed a site plan review for an accessory dwelling unit for 127 Church St.

An ADU is a residential unit located at the same lot as an existing single-family home or duplex.

Speaking on the project was Building Commissioner Anna Marques, who has been in contact with the engineer for the project and has reviewed the site plan review.

When asked about the setback for the project, Marques says the intention was to have a 25 foot setback. Research on deeds for the property was being done to see if this project would affect other properties.

There were questions regarding the right of way for the property and the distance from the road to the street. The deed dates back to 1939 and the Assistant

to the Director of Planning, Katlyn Lucis, shared some history about the lot.

The Planning Board was not given the deeds and wanted to know if the lot is good under the provisions of Section 6. According to Lucis, the lot was sold off and split up back in the 1930s. The town voted to accept the road.

There was something in someone's land record from the 1940s, which is currently in the registry of deeds.

"The town never took it, the town doesn't own it," according to Lucis. The town never went further on a legal basis to take the parcel.

After hearing this information, the Planning Board members believe it's best to reference this record from the 1930s. In the plan, the meeting was held back in 1939. The Planning Board wanted to know if it's okay to follow the Building Commissioners plan.

Director of Planning & Community Development,

Paralee Smith, said it's best to do the site plan review for now. Smith heard back from Town Manager Stuart Beckley, who said it's easier and helpful to go ahead and get the plan approved.

From what they heard, the Planning Board doesn't seem to mind the ADU going forward.

"There's no real reason to have to access that piece of land," says Planning Board Chair, Kenneth Crosby.

Marques asked if there could be a condition worded as where a stamped site plan be provided to meet this requirement but serve as an as-built. The Planning Board had a motion in mind but continued discussing the dimensions and distances.

The sideline set back on the plan is listed as 25 feet. The garage is roughly 15 feet from the street. When it comes to requirements, the board can ask for reasonable plan modifications and believe there is no real hardship regarding this site plan

review.

According to Planning Board member, Richard Starodoj, the plan appears really simple.

"The proponent is proceeding at their own risk," Starodoj said.

The motion made is to approve the plan as presented with the condition that the east side of the ADU is moved and to be even with the east side of the garage. The motion passed and the site plan review was approved by the Planning Board.

Public hearing continued

The Planning Board was scheduled to hold a public hearing for a special permit for 275 Malbouef Road for a common driveway. The applicant is looking to return at the next Planning Board meeting on March 5.

The board continued the public hearing until their next meeting.

Reservations for DCR's campgrounds now open

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation announced that reservations for the 2026 state park camping season will open to the public on Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 9 a.m.

Camping season at DCR's 25 campgrounds will begin in April and continue through October.

"Camping at a DCR park

is a cherished tradition for families and friends from all over – many of whom return to the same campground year after year, and in some cases for decades," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "Spending time together outdoors strengthens relationships, creates lasting memories, and helps foster the vital connection between people and nature, along with a shared respon-

sibility to care for these special places."

Campers should note the following prior to booking a reservation:

Reservations are available up to four months in advance of arrival. Same-day reservations are available until 2 p.m. daily through ReserveAmerica.

Campers should fill out all required fields of the reservation application at the

time of booking to ensure a smooth arrival. Visitors without a reservation are not allowed in campsites; however, day-use areas are available for gathering and outdoor activities.

All pets must have physical proof of valid rabies vaccination. Entry may be denied at check-in if paper

Please see **CAMPGROUND**, page 13

WARE BOS from page 1

"That would negatively impact us to an outstanding level," Martinez said.

Martinez said increasing the cost of the subscription could initially reduce the net loss, but it may not solve the problem long term.

The board will continue discussion about the subscription service as well as ambulance billing rates at a future meeting. The ambulance billing rates have not increased for at least three years.

The chief will provide data from other towns which also utilize a subscription program.

Fire Department staffing

Martinez said the Fire

Department had over 3,100 calls in a year for the first time ever. He said when he came to the department 26 years ago, call volume was under 1,000.

Staffing has also change, with far fewer call firefighters and no per diem EMS staff.

He said the department has a chief, deputy chief, 18 full-time firefighters and seven call firefighters. Only one call firefighter is certified as an EMT.

"The shifts can drop and often do drop to a two-person minimum," Martinez said. "Most shifts are at least three-person."

He said this only covers one ambulance, and not the second one that needs to be

covered at all times due to the high call volume.

Martinez said last year, they were short on shifts for 159 days and at minimum staffing for 42 days.

He said backfilling the shifts with staff getting paid overtime would cost the town about \$239,940 just to maintain the staffing level they need to be at. He said they are relying on recall to handle daily operations.

Martinez said he recommended doing a study to determine the staffing needs of the department.

Request to rescind override vote

Town Manager Stuart Beckley presented a request to the Selectboard to consid-

er putting forward an override question on the annual town election ballot in April to undo the override which has been in place since 2023.

He said the budget gap for fiscal year 2027 is approaching \$2 million.

Beckley said many communities are facing a budget gap and looking at overrides.

The board members said they felt this question appearing on the April ballot would be too short of notice to voters.

Selectboard Chair Nancy Talbot said the question could also appear on the state election ballot in November.

Comments and concerns

Cindy Allen Bourcier spoke about a need for

more transparency from the Selectboard regarding communication with Baystate Health.

"It would be great if when you have those meetings if you could summarize something, put something into writing, there's a lot of confusion concerning what is Baystate actually promising for when they open up a Convenient Care in the town of Ware," she said.

Bourcier said Baystate Health's proposal for a Convenient Care location has "contradictory mixed messages" about what the site will offer in terms of services and hours of operation.

"We need black and white promises, commitments, from Baystate," she said.

"These things are concerning."

Ann Bigda asked if there would be changes made in how the Selectboard tracks progress on projects and shares information. She said Bourcier had previously made suggestions to the board on how to make improvements.

Safe Streets grant

Beckley said the town was awarded a Safe Streets for All grant to make pedestrian and traffic improvements to the intersections of Pleasant and Church streets, Pleasant and North streets, as well as Anderson Road and Route 9.

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warren

Annual Town Election to be held May 5

WARREN – Town Clerk, Laura J. Stockley said the Town Election will be held on Tuesday, May 5.

Appearing on the ballot will be the following:

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

Nomination papers must be filed with the Board of Registrars, in the Town Clerk's office, for certifica-

tion on or before Tuesday, March 17 at 5 p.m. Final day to withdraw as a candidate is Thursday, April 2 at 5 p.m.

The Quaboag Regional School District positions will also be incorporated on the Town Ballot. Two members from the Town of Warren for a three-year term and two members from the Town of West Brookfield for a three-year term. Deadline for returning nomination papers is Friday, March 20 by 4 p.m.

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

Lucy Stone tells her story on March 7 at Senior Center

WARREN – Join the Warren Public Library at the Senior Center in celebration of Lucy Stone Day on Saturday, March 7 at 3:30 p.m.

As part of the library's ongoing 150th anniversary celebration, storyteller Judith Black will be appearing as Lucy Stone to give an engaging presentation for all ages about the life and legacy of the influential women's rights advocate and abolitionist.

Meet Lucy Stone (1818-1893) and enter her world as he yearns for an education deemed unacceptable

for girls, obstinately rejects the idea of marriage, and overcomes every obstacle to become a "shining star" of the antislavery and women's rights movements.

Featured on stages from the Montreal Comedy Festival to The Smithsonian Institution, Black has appeared 15 times at the National Storytelling Festival and is the winner of the Oracle Award, storytelling's most coveted laurel.

Sponsored by the Warren Public Library with a grant from the Quaboag Historical Society.

DV TASK from page 1

Massachusetts General Laws, which grants restraining orders to survivors of abuse from the person using abuse against them.

"We've grown and learned," Hutchins said. "We can educate our officers and provide them with resources."

Since September of 2024, the form for restraining orders now lists coercive control as a type of abuse. Last spring, the task force held a training for its members and about coercive control, and how it is defined by the law.

Mark Ames, Register of Probate for Hampshire County and a member of the task force, said the task force's pamphlet on how to fill out a 209A affidavit, has been helpful in the courthouse. He first became involved with the task force after meeting Moran at Ware's National Night Out celebration.

"The pamphlet is a really great resource," Ames said.

Hutchins said this pamphlet has also been used by police officers to help survivors of domestic violence.

Hannah Moore of the YWCA of Western Massachusetts said the task force has helped to bring resources to people in the county where she works.

Jenny Raiche of Hillside Village and Highland Village in Ware said the task force helps to facilitate a connection between the community members and the police force as well.

The task force has also focused on education and spreading awareness of domestic violence in addition to these trainings, by working with local high school students and teachers.

Formed in 2010, the Ware High School Domestic Violence Task Force has had about 30 students participating each year, providing thought-provoking writing prompts to their peers about healthy and unhealthy relationships, making videos, and leading the annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk.

"It's asking the student what they think about bound-



Turley File Photos
Community Legal Aid Attorney Esther Tutu led a training about coercive control with members and allies of the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force at Ware Town Hall in March 2025.



aries and consent," Moran said.

Task force member Jennie Simmons said the high school task force was the first of its kind in the state.

Ames said the task force's work through the school has been important for sharing its message in the community, starting with the younger generation.

"It's just been really impressive," Ames said of the high school task force's mission. "It really is about planting the seed."

Sue Lewandowski, also a member of the task force, said, "It starts a whole new generation that'll know what to do."

The students in the high school task force have taken the lead at the annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk, which was created by Simmons over 10 years ago as a way to show support for survivors in the community. The students emcee the event, create posters, and walk together around the downtown area.

Simmons said the first year of the walk, the task force had to ask for support, but now, it has become something that is readily offered.

"There's kind of a level of trust from a lot of people who show up to walk," she said.

Simmons recalled walking with a survivor during one year's event, and how they walked by the house of the survivor's abuser.

"I was really glad I was with her," Simmons said. "The whole experience of the walk helped her and who knows how many other people."

The task force has also started a successful book campaign, sharing more than 100 picture books about healthy boundaries and consent to local schools, preschools, family centers and libraries.

Hutchins and fellow task force member Deb Shepard have visited locations across the task force's communities distributing these books, and reading them to children and their caregivers.

"It was received very well and the parents were very excited," Shepard said. "We went back to a few places again and again."

Lewandowski said it is important to have advoca-



Each place setting represents a person who lost their life to domestic violence.

cy at a young age, from an addiction standpoint, as it may help them to develop stronger coping skills when faced with trauma of domestic violence.

"Being able to address domestic violence at an early age may decrease addiction as a coping skill for the trauma," she said.

The task force has also been working to help survivors, by stopping abuse at the source.

During the pandemic, the task force looked for ways to offer help to those living in a domestic violence situation, by providing hotline support for people using abuse. The town of Ware led 26 rural towns for the launch of the Call for Change Helpline – the first of its kind in the nation, which is now a statewide resource.

"The main thing we need to be doing is asking people to stop using abuse," Moran said. "It was a hard idea for people to accept."

The response to the hotline was greater than the task force had imagined it would be, receiving five times the call volume expected.

In 2025, the task force helped launch The Rural Network to End Domestic Violence, a group of six rural task forces in the state that work together on regional issues and advocate for rural communities statewide.

This year, the task force will continue to grow and build – and continue to advocate for healthy communities starting with healthy relationships at home.

"This is a group that people want to be in," Hutchins said. "They want to learn

more and help...everyone has a place at our table."

The task force is open to anyone who lives or works in the towns of Ware, Warren or Hardwick. Moran said the strength of the task force lies in its diversity.

"Everyone has a different perspective," she said. "It's a very welcoming and warm group. We are always open to community members."

About the task force

The Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force serves Ware, Warren and Hardwick and is made up of community members as well as representatives from several organizations. The mission of the task force is to prevent and respond to domestic violence in these towns with community-led, community driven initiatives.

For more information, follow the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force on Facebook, visit www.waredvtaskforce.org, call 413-758-0605 or email wrvdvtaskforce@gmail.com.

How to get help

If you are experiencing domestic violence, you can contact BHN's DV Program by calling 413-967-6241 or 413-262-7103 (cell); Alianza DV Services (Spanish speakers) 24 hours a day by calling 877-536-1628; or Safelink (a statewide service) 24 hours a day by calling 877-785-2020.

If you are using abuse and need help to stop, call A Call for Change helpline from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at 877-898-3411 or email acallforchangehelpline.org; or contact Proteus Intimate Partner Abuse Education Program at 413-896-7231.

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

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

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

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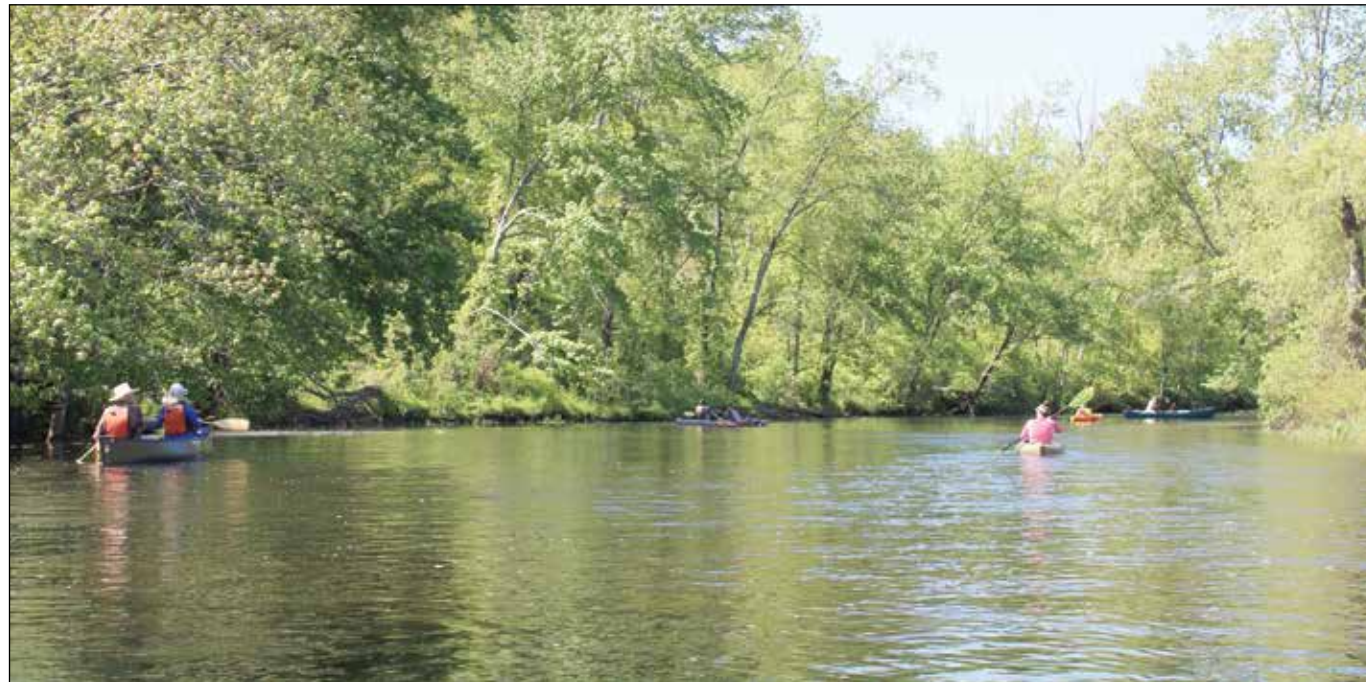
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Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council Coordinator Keith Davies prepared paddlers for the inaugural launch on the Lower Ware River Blue Trail in spring 2023.



Paddlers explored the Ware River from the Robbins Road launch site in Ware to Bennett Street in Palmer.



Cub Scouts are shown cutting the ribbon to officially open the Lower Ware River Blue Trail. Both of these Cub Scouts volunteered with C4R to establish the Robbins Road launch site and test the water quality.



Cub Scouts worked to remove a tire from the riverbank.

WATERSHED from page 1

point where we can do more as a community group to Care 4 rivers.

Our vision is to promote stewardship, conservation, enjoyment, and restoration of the rivers, ecosystems and wildlife habitats of the Chicopee-4 Rivers basin, while balancing and fostering river friendly city and town economies and community life.

We have planted the seed for this with our basic monitoring and paddling trails. But sprouts need more to grow.

We could go to the next level by adding broader water quality monitoring (adopt a stream, macroinvertebrates), trail teams, storm water education and action efforts, wildlife monitoring, annual rivers report card, restoration efforts, and perhaps a rivers celebration event!

We could be the source for Caring for our local 4 Rivers. Now we're talking!

Sounds inviting? Something inside you saying: "yes, I feel I want to help and make a difference!" Our local rivers are beautiful and magical places, places to discover – but also to care for.

Rivers have been the lifeblood of New England for centuries, likely thousands of years. They still are and can continue to sustain us and wildlife as we live in balance with them.

C4R is a means to gather us together to do that, albeit in a humble way. We invite you to join in the vision, let's C4R!

For more information about C4R and to get involved, people may visit www.c4rivers.org, email chicopeewatershed@gmail.com, or mail C4RWC, P.O. Box 126, Three Rivers, MA 01080.



A Cub Scout picked up litter and scrap metal at Ware River Park in Gilbertville, near the Blue Trail launch site.

Turley File Photos

OPEN MEETING from page 1

to say there is only one meeting missing.

Schaaf said that since recordings are posted, they are being transparent.

"Let's not make it seem like we're hiding something," Schaaf said.

Tinker said there is a list of meetings from the summer of 2025 that are not visible on the YouTube page. Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said "a couple" are missing as a result of broken equipment.

Tinker suggested the rest of the board look at the YouTube channel to see which meetings are missing.

Jeffrey Smith, the resident who has filed the open meeting law complaints, said the video postings are "inadequate" because the Attorney General cannot rely on YouTube videos.

With this comment, tempers in the meeting flared, when Schaaf raised his voice, and repeatedly told Smith to

"shut up." Schaaf suggested that Smith "should be leaving this meeting."

Completion plan

Tinker proposed a plan to remediate the missing meeting minutes, which involved utilizing Microsoft Copilot, which is an AI assistant, to create a draft of meeting minutes using YouTube transcriptions paired with the agendas. He brought in a sample draft, and said it worked well.

Tinker's plan also involved utilizing the Town Administrator to assist with the technological and administrative needs that are involved with creating minutes.

When Tinker outlined this plan, Caggiano said it was not her responsibility to do minutes, and suggested the board "review [my] contract" if there were questions. One resident noted that a Town Administrator is required to take direction from the Select Board, and Tinker agreed

that they can direct the Town Administrator.

Resolution

The board voted to work on rectifying meeting minutes as they go, and said they would approve executive session minutes by April

30, one day before the town election. This decision was made because Select Board Chair Eric Vollheim needs to approve executive session meetings he was involved with, and may vacate office on May 1.

DOG LICENSE from page 2

is now closed to the public on Wednesdays. If you are licensing by U.S. Mail, the licenses must be purchased prior to March 31, and your envelope must also be post-marked by March 31 or there will be a late fee.

Fees for licensing your dog are male/female \$15; spayed/neutered \$10.

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

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

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

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

postage to your envelope to insure delivery.

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

Contact the Town Clerk's Office at 413-967-9648 extension 177 if you failed to license in 2025 so that we may inform you what is owed in entirety to license for 2026.

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

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

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

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SUMMER CAMP



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Registration open for HCC Summer Youth Programs

It's still winter, but it's not too early to start thinking about summer.

Registration is now open for 2026 Summer Youth Programs at Holyoke Community College.

Starting July 7 and running through August 8, HCC will offer 16 week-long, in-person summer programs for youth aged 8 to 16.

For more than 40 years, HCC has offered fun, challenging summer education activities for youth, providing early opportunities for students to experience a college environment guided and encouraged by experienced professionals.

HCC's 2026 on-campus

summer youth programs run Monday through Friday, some for a full day and others for a half day.

All in-person programs will be held on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave., except for cooking classes, which are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St., Holyoke:

July 6-10:

Cooking without Borders with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16): In this lively hands-on camp, young chefs will team up to chop, stir, and create tasty dishes from around the world. Each day brings a new theme and a chance to dis-



cover fresh ingredients, cool cooking techniques, and the joy of working together in the kitchen. By week's end,

they'll walk away with new cooking skills, delicious recipes to show off at home, and plenty of tasty memories. (9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

Fun Bites with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16): Join us for an exciting week of hands-on culinary fun, where young chefs will discover the joy of cooking delicious, easy-to-prepare meals to share with family and friends. Participants will work together to chop, season, cook, and taste a variety of recipes – all made from scratch. Each day introduces new menu themes, ingredients, and techniques designed to build confidence in the kitchen. (9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

July 13-17:

Cooking without Borders with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

Fun Bites with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

ROBLOX Coders (ages 8-10; 11-14): Discover the Lua coding language while designing experiences in ROBLOX, an online universe where you can create anything you dream of. New developers will learn to use ROBLOX's Studio software to reimagine the popular game genres with their own custom code. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. to noon for ages 8-10; 1 to 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199)

July 20-24:

Around the World with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16): Cuisine around the world serves as a universal language that unites people across cultures through shared flavors, traditions, and stories. Learn to prepare full-course meals from Asia, Puerto Rico, Greece, Italy,

and New Orleans. (9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

Make Your First Video Game (ages 8-10; 11-14): Go beyond the limitations of traditional 2D game design classes and create an immersive 3D world. Students will learn the physics behind 3D games, explore beginner event scripting, level design, controlling the flow of gameplay, and storytelling. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. – noon for ages 8-10; 1 – 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199)

Passport to Flavors with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16): This hands-on cooking camp takes kids on a delicious journey across global cuisines, exploring flavors, techniques, and ingredients that make each culture unique. Dive into fun daily themes like diner classics, Mexican favorites, Mediterranean feasts, Filipino street bites, and southern comfort food, all while building confidence one tasty dish at a time. (9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

July 27-31:

Around the World with

Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

Minecraft Designers (ages 8-10; 11-14): Learn how to create a custom map, design structures to share between worlds, build with Redstone and Command blocks, and create custom textures for you to import at home or share with friends. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. – noon for ages 8-10; 1 – 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199)

Passport to Flavors with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., \$425)

August 3-7:

Python Programmers (ages 8-10; 11-14): Learn the world's fastest-growing programming language favored by Google, NASA, YouTube, and the CIA. Learn how to code with Python to create engaging apps and games. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. – noon for ages 8-10; 1 – 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199)

For more details or to register for Summer Youth Program classes, please go to: hcc.edu/summer-youth.

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August 3-7, Python Programmers (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 20-24, Make Your First Video Game (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 13-17, ROBLOX Coders (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 6-10 and 13-17, Fun Bites with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
July 20-24 and 27-31, Around the world with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
July 6-10 and 13-17, Cooking without Borders with Chef Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)
July 20-24 and 27-31, Passport to Flavors with Chef Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)

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Indians set for D5 tournament



Troy Jurczyk drives into the arc. Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Brady Guimond shuffles toward the paint for a bank shot.



Kaleb Kanozek goes for a jump shot.



Dalton Marquis flies for a shot.



Jack Gaudreau tries to overcome a hold for short-range shot.

WARE – The Ware High School boys basketball finished with a .500 record but also qualified to host a home game in the Division 5 State Tournament. Ware was narrowly defeated by Greenfield 62-57 in the Western Mass. Class C Tournament. Jack Gaudreau, Ware's 1,000-point scorer, had 14 points to lead the Indians. Brodie Koczur had 12 points. The Indians drew a local opponent in the opening round, with Renaissance visiting Ware earlier this week. The winner will go into the Round of 32 to face Boston English on the road on Thursday, Feb. 26 at 6:30 p.m.



Abby Rogowski holds the ball away from the opposition.



Panthers pick up win over Narragansett

Aubrey Thorpe tries to come up with a rebound.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

BARRE – Last Tuesday evening, the Quabbin Regional High School girls basketball team picked up a victory, defeating rival

Narragansett 45-26 in a nonplayoff matchup. The Panthers had more game to play the following night against Monty Tech.



Pioneers edged by Franklin Tech in final home game

Dustyn Cook prepares to shoot a three-pointer.

PALMER – On Thursday, Feb. 12, Pathfinder Tech boys basketball was in nonplayoff action and faced Franklin Tech and fell 53-49. Pathfinder got off to a slower start, trailing 16-9 early. They came back slowly and nearly pulled off the win, but came up just short.

Cassian Kowalik had 28 points to lead all scorers in the game. Dayne Shoney scored eight points. Pathfinder had one final nonplayoff game last week, also against Franklin Tech.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Makenzie Casey sends a pass inside.



Izzy Doty tries to steal the rebound away.



The defense sets up for the Panthers.



Maddox Baer inches toward the hoop.



Cassian Kowalik gets ready to shoot.

sports

Candlepin League NEWS

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Bondsville League

WARE – Week 23 of the Wednesday night Bondsville League is now complete and has a new #1 seed.

Sandri pulled ahead of the pack and is now in first place with a record of 97-64, just half a point ahead of Fire Mountain (96.5-64.5). The league will wrap up in March following two weeks of playoff matches.

During week 23, Zeke's Freaks bowled against Team UMass. In game one, Team UMass was the winner by a score of 453-434. In game two, Team UMass won again by a score of 497-486. Zeke Sicard of Zeke's Freaks had a good game of 107.

In game three, Zeke's Freaks won by a score of 498-454. Sicard had another good game of 106. The final score was 1418-1404 in favor of Zeke's Freaks.

Flaming Bowling Balls bowled against Fire Mountain this past week. In game one, Flaming Bowling Balls squeezed out the win, 450-447.

In game two, Flaming Bowling Balls won again by a score of 502-489. Ryan McCarthy was the hero of the team with 126.

The final game was won by Flaming Bowling Balls, 472-466. The final score was 1424-1402 in favor of Flaming Bowling Balls.

Night Hawks and Ironmen of the eastern division bowled against each other during week 23. In game one, Night Hawks reigned supreme by a score of 454-400. Gavin Sinclair of Night Hawks began the match with 125.

In game two, Ironmen won by a score of 479-470. Ryan Drago of Ironmen regained the lead with two spares and a strike in his back half to score 141. Sinclair remained consistent and scored another 125.

In game three, Night Hawks held on to a slim lead and defeated Ironmen 440-434. The final score was 1364-1313 in favor of Night Hawks.

Snappers bowled against the Cannonballs in week 23. In game one, Micah Hinkley scored 116 during his team's victory over Snappers, 470-468. Kevin Krasnecky had a strong start with an opening game of 130.

In game two, Snappers won by a score of 456-442. Eddie Stachowicz of Snappers had the highest game of 105, the same game he scored in game one.

In game three, Snappers defeated Cannonballs by a score of 450-423. Stachowicz finished the match with 109 and a series of 319. The final score was 1374-1335 in favor of the Snappers.

Sandri bowled against Slow Burners during week 23. In game one, Sandri put up some high scores and won, 511-442. Brandon Lane of Sandri had the highest game of 131 and Nate Orszulak of Slow Burners had the highest score of 119.

In game two, Sandri won again by a score of 486-482. Rich Picotte of Sandri scored 116 and Dean Koczur of Slow Burners had the highest score of game two, 130.

In game three, Sandri won for a three-game sweep over Slow Burners, 446-432. Picotte finished with a 104 and a three-game series of 329. The final score was 1443-1356 in favor of Sandri.

Spare Parts Bud bowled against P&J Meats. In game one, Spare Parts Bud won by a score of 461-456. In game two, Spare Parts Bud won by a score of 459-417. Game three was won by Spare Parts Bud by a score of 511-455.

The final score was 1431-1328 in favor of Spare Parts Bud, who move to fourth place with a record of 84-77.

Registration for Pioneer Valley Baseball opens

SOUTH HADLEY – The Pioneer Valley Baseball League, an adult baseball league for players who are age 18 and over, has just opened up its registration for the 2026 season.

The adult league will be administered by the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, and a registration link is on the home page of the league's website www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Thought it will be under the Quabbin umbrella, there will be no major changes in how the league is operated.

This year, the PVBL will have a 22-game regular season schedule followed by a double-elimination playoffs. The league, which had five teams last year and had to utilize multiple byes throughout the season, will be fielding a sixth team this season.

There are several spots open for that sixth team, so players interested in joining the league should get signed up as soon as possible to claim a spot.

The league is a wood-bat only league utilizing playing under regular baseball rules though all players do bat. The league operates on a Saturday-Tuesday schedule. Games are played on Saturday mornings with 10 a.m. starts typical and on Tuesday evenings with start times in the 5:30 to 6 p.m. range. The league will start play in late April and running through the end of August. There are slots open for both full-time players and part-time players. The fee for full-time players will be \$260 with part-time players getting up to 11 games for \$130. Fees paid go toward the operation of the league, paying for insurance, umpires, fields, and baseballs and no one profits in any way.

In addition to the new sixth team, there are limited

Please see **REGISTRATION**, page 11


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Athlete of the Month

Kaleb Kanozek

Ware High School



In Ware's quarterfinal sectional win, Kanozek would contribute 11 points for the Indians to help get them to the semifinals and qualify for the state tournament.

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

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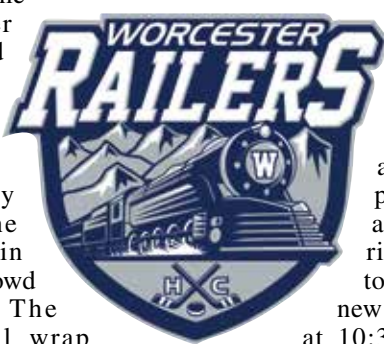
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Railers score win in overtime

RAPID CITY, SD — The Worcester Railers HC (23-19-5-1 pts) grabbed a 5-4 overtime victory over the Rapid City Rush (21-23-4-0) on Friday, February 20th at The Monument in front of a crowd of 3,409. The Railers will wrap up their three-game road series against the Rush on Saturday, February 21st, with puck drop at 7:05 p.m. MST.



Rapid City struck first with back-to-back goals from Briley Wood (2-0-2) in the opening half of the first period. Matt DeMelis (1-1-2) got Worcester on the board with a one-timer at 9:35 in the second. Drew Callin (3-0-3) kept it rolling for Worcester with two goals for the Railers, the latter of which was on the power play to put the team ahead 3-2 heading into the final period of play. Rapid City's Ryan Chyzowski (1-1-2) tied the game for the Rush once more at three

apiece early in the third. Linemate Blake Bennett (1-0-1) put Rapid City ahead for the second time of the evening with a power play shot atop the right circle to make the new score 4-3 at 10:31. Callin scored his first hat-trick as a Railer and pushed the night into overtime with a quick shot off from the left faceoff circle over the shoulder of Nathan Torchia (4-4). Anthony Repaci (1-1-2) lit the lamp for a final time for the Railers just fifty-nine seconds into OT and picked up the 5-4 victory off a pass from DeMelis.

Rapid City established an early two-goal lead for themselves with back-to-back unanswered goals at 7:05 and 9:43 in the first, both from Briley Wood. Wood (7th) deked out goaltender Tristan Lennox and created an opening along the right side of the Railers' net to score the Rush's first

tally. Wood (8th) followed up the play with a second unanswered goal for the team three-and-a-half minutes later, a shot that snuck its way in between the pads of Lennox (0-2). Worcester was unable to respond to the new lead before the horn sounded. No penalties were called in the period. Worcester led in shots on goal with 13 to Rapid City's 6.

The second period was Worcester's turn to chase down the Rush's lead and take the game for themselves. In the span of six minutes and twenty-four seconds, Worcester went from trailing by two to a three-goal lead. Matt DeMelis (14th) got the scoring streak going with a quick one-timer assisted on by a pass through the crease from Riley Ginnell at 9:35 (1-2). Drew Callin (16th) capitalized on a center ice breakaway as Rush goaltender Nathan Torchia was unable to block the push (2-2). Khristian Acosta was then sent down to the ice on the next play as he collided

Please see **RAILERS**, page 11

T-Birds come up with win in shootout with Isles



SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (19-25-4-2) rode a turbulent night to an eventual 5-4 shootout win over the Bridgeport Islanders (21-21-3-4) on Friday night inside the MassMutual Center.

Unlike their last contest on Wednesday, the T-Birds and their opposition had a much slower start to the night offensively, with a scoreless struggle carrying late into the first. Thomas Bordeleau finally broke the ice at 14:54, winning a draw and darting to the right wing circle and rifling home a feed from Calle Rosen to give Springfield a 1-0 advantage.

Just 1:16 later, and less than half a minute into their first power play of the night, the T-Birds built a cushion as Chris Wagner jammed a loose puck through the legs of Marcus Hogberg from the blue paint to make it 2-0.

Bridgeport's power play provided a response at 19:05 when Julien Gauthier intercepted a loose puck deep in the offensive zone before sifting a forehander over Vadim

Zherenko to make it a 2-1 game into the first intermission.

Zherenko proved to be pivotal in the second, especially when he made a lurching post-to-post skate save on Matt Maggio to keep his team in front. Later in the same sequence of play, Matt Luff hit Alek Kaskimaki on a 2-on-1 pass, and Kaskimaki picked the glove-side corner on Hogberg, making it 3-1 for Springfield at 6:53 of the second.

Down 3-1 heading into the third, the Islanders turned the game upside-down in the span of just over six minutes. After Springfield killed two straight Islander power plays, Hunter Drew finally got Bridgeport's second goal of the night at 5:02, moments after Hogberg kept Springfield from goals on two straight odd-man rushes.

Liam Foudy followed Drew's lead with a sneaky wrist shot from the left side at 8:42, tying the score at 3 before Pierrick Dube got a fortuitous bounce in the slot

and whistled a shot over Zherenko's blocker at 11:31 to get Bridgeport its first lead of the night, 4-3.

In desperate need of a momentum shifter, Hugh McGing delivered just that for Springfield, crashing the low slot area and firing a forehander over a fallen Hogberg at 14:28 off a centering pass from Juraj Pekarcik.

For a fourth time in 10 meetings, overtime was needed between the clubs, and for a third time, it reached the shootout. Bordeleau put his stamp on the night with a gorgeous backhand deke to beat Hogberg in the opening round. Zherenko then stood his ground and made three successive saves on Adam Beckman, Gauthier, and Dube to secure Springfield's first shootout triumph of the season.



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School Committee ended tuitioning-out talks

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – School Committee Chair Matt Grant said the committee members would discuss and vote on whether or not to enter into a tuition agreement with a neighboring school district for students in grades seven through 12.

The School Committee received tuition agreement proposals from both Quaboag Regional School District and Quabbin Regional School District. A task force worked with a consultant to compare the potential financial impact of each proposal, as well as the cost of keeping the high school students in district.

At the Feb. 18 meeting, School Committee Kristen Giangrande said several open forums were held over the past week, allowing staff, community members, parents and students to ask questions and share feedback and concerns.

“Regionalization versus tuition agreement was discussed lightly,” she said. “Several parents shared their positive experiences in North Brookfield and shared their concerns about a tuition agreement.”

Grant said about 20 students attended an open forum that past Friday and they heard a lot of questions and concerns.

Committee discussion

Grant asked the committee members to share their input prior to taking a vote about a tuition agreement.

Grant discussed a recent correspondence he received from Quaboag Regional Superintendent Stephen Duff regarding special education costs.

He said the school district’s special education department analyzed the cost of services for special education students and estimated it to be \$1.2 million. He said the proposal from the Quaboag Regional School District estimated the cost to be around \$450,000.

He said the committee could utilize the services of independent consultant TMS, Inc. to review the special education needs of the students. This would take about two weeks and cost up to \$8,000.

“Certainly, I think we do need to understand...how does one special education department look at one thing and get a number and how does one get a vastly different number?” Grant asked. “Just understanding that would help us all get to a realization.”

Director of Student Services Dr. Michael Baldassarre said his department never received a methodology from the Quaboag Regional School District to calculate special education spending.

“We were given a rate sheet with hourly rates and that was it,” he said. “Nothing in writing that spells out anything whatsoever about how the costs would be calculated. I still don’t have that to this day.”

Baldassarre said his department was told that the cost would be an hourly rate based on the state’s in-district Circuit Breaker rates. He said they utilized service delivery grids from student IEPs and calculated the hourly rates.

“We felt that those were inline with that actual cost of special education children in Massachusetts,” he said.

He said the Quabbin Regional School District’s estimate for the cost of special education services was in a “few percentage points” of his calculations.

“I’ve been in special education now for two decades and I don’t understand how its possible to provide special education services to our high school at such a significantly discounted rate as we do and every school district in the state does as well,” he said. “The calculation that we did was appropriate and it was inline with what we were given verbally, but I have yet to be given a written methodology of how those costs would be calculated.”

Baldassarre said the Quabbin Regional School District proposal tells them “almost to the penny” how much special education services would cost the school district.

He also shared concerns about the school district having to pay for special education services at the discretion of another school district.

School Committee Vice-Chair Tim Canada said the reason the task force looked

at tuition agreements with other school district was due to financial reasons. He said the cost of special education services is part of the big picture.

He said he was in support of regionalization when it came up, but he didn’t feel comfortable entering into a tuition agreement contract and closing the high school. He said the town as a whole, needs to “buy-in” to the school district and support and promote it.

“The kids should feel like the town has their back when they’re in this school; not that they are a burden to the town,” Canada said.

Giangrande said she does not feel comfortable taking away educational choices from the families of North Brookfield by entering into a tuition agreement. She said the financial savings to the town are also less than expected.

Superintendent Timothy McCormick spoke of the need to create a strategic plan to bring the North Brookfield Public Schools “to the next level.”

Grant said the school district also needs to communicate with the town in order to move forward. He said they need to develop a solid plan to boost enrollment and help the school district to thrive.

“We just have to figure out what path, and what’s realistic,” he said.

Public comment
Deb Arnold spoke about the 2011 educational task force report. She served on the committee with three other residents.

She said it took a year to research and create the report, at the Board of Selectmen’s request.

“I think you’re coming to some of the same conclusions,” Arnold said to the School Committee.

Arnold said they need a vision and a plan to move

forward positively.

Student Dante Giangrande said the opportunities at North Brookfield High School are different than those at either the Quaboag or Quabbin school districts. He described his school as a family.

“That is what we are and that is what we have become,” he said.

School staff and parents shared concerns about students getting overlooked in the larger school districts, and missing out on key leadership and athletic opportunities.

Town Accountant Shiela LeBlanc said the town is facing a \$700,000 deficit in the town budget.

She said there needs to be a plan to bring students back to the school district, that is followed through by the School Committee members.

“You’ve got to get people back here and that’s the plan you have to work on, but with no money,” LeBlanc said.

LeBlanc said she understands that many of the students like the smaller population in their high school, but she questioned if this fully prepared them for attending college after graduation.

“I think we should encourage the kids that they can do it in a bigger school...they can work hard, they can make these teams...look at maybe getting a late bus to come home for the sports or the afterschool things,” she said. “Everybody wants everything but no one wants to pay for it and there’s just no money.”

Rich Rigney, president of the North Brookfield Teachers Association, said the School Committee needs to support the staff and teachers.

“We are willing to work to keep the school open, we just need to be empowered to do so,” he said.

Please see **NB TALKS**, page 13

DESE lists MCAS results for 2025

BOSTON – The Department of Elementary and Secondary Schools listed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test results for 2025.

A chart listed below showed local school districts scores. Quabbin, Quaboag and Ware all scored below the state average in all three categories, which was 494 for English Language Arts, 494 math and 494 science. Of the three school Quabbin scored the highest for ELA 491, then Ware at 489 and Quaboag at 486. In math, Quabbin scored the highest at 489 and Quaboag and Ware both scored 488.

placed the highest at 492, Quaboag 485 and Ware 167.

DESE listed the number and percentage of local students meeting or exceeding expectations. Quabbin had 353 students or 36% meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA, 297 or 30% students meeting or exceeding expectations in math and 121 or 37% in science.

Quaboag had 137 or 26% of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA, 165 students or 31% in math and 47 or 27% in science. Ware had 143 or 29% of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA, 113 or 23% in math and 57 or 34% in science.

2025 MCAS SCHOOL DISTRICTS CHART

School	Subject	#students	% participation	Average scaled score
Quabbin	ELA	989	99%	491
	Math	989	99%	489
	Sci	327	99%	492
Quaboag	ELA	537	99%	486
	Math	536	99%	488
	Sci	173	99%	485
Ware	ELA	127	26%	489
	Math	125	26%	488
	Sci	36	22%	167
State totals	ELA	396,309	99%	494
	Math	396,348	99%	494
	Sci.	32,011	98%	494

Find it in the Classifieds

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24 Water St., Palmer • 80 Main St., Ware

RAILERS

from page 10

with the Rush’s net. The act put the Railers on their first extra-man advantage of the night as Mitchell Smith headed into the box for roughing. The two minutes with the man-advantage proved fruitful as Callin (17th) nabbed a second tally, his fourth in two games. Amidst heavy traffic, Callin finished off a rebound and put the puck into a wide-open Rush net, which gave Worcester their 3-2 lead as the second frame of play came to a close. Shots on goal once again favored Worcester 15-9. Smith’s penalty was the only one called for the period.

Rapid City quickly re-tied the game for the second time early in the third. The goal was tucked into the Railers net by Ryan Chyzowski (21st) at 4:18. Rapid City then reclaimed the game lead at 10:31 with a top-shelf shot atop the right circle from

Blake Bennett (18th) (4-3). The play came from an man-advantage delivered by a tripping penalty called on Railers’ defenseman Adam Samuelsson at 9:35. Drew Callin (18th) kept a victory in the Railers sights with a late-game hat-trick as netminder Lennox was called to the bench to give Worcester the extra body. Callin drove the puck from the left faceoff dot over the shoulder of Torchia, and both teams skated into overtime, nodded up at four apiece. As the overtime clock began to count down, it was Anthony Repaci (15th) who claimed the game winner just fifty-nine seconds into play. Repaci tipped a backhanded pass from DeMelis out in front to claim the Railers’ second victory in South Dakota with a 5-4 final score. Worcester put up 53 shots on goal to Rapid City’s 20. Worcester and Rapid City each collected one penalty in the third.

REGISTRATION

from page 10

open roster spots on the other teams in the league, so get your registration in as soon as possible to participate in this season.

Games are played at ballfields throughout the region from as far south as

Southwick’s Whalley Field, through South Hadley’s Beachgrounds and up north at Frontier Regional High School in South Deerfield.

For any questions, please go to the league website for more information. The league hopes interested players will come out and join the fun this spring and summer.

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- Full page ad with story (Two 9.75" x 12.75") \$650

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Hardwick Crossing Country Club
GILBERTVILLE – The former Dorothea Country Club, a 9-hole golf course, reopened at 262 Lower Road, known as “Hardwick Crossing” and has a five-star quality restaurant without the price tag.
The newly renovated restaurant, known by regulars as “The Clubhouse,” opened in September 2022 and provides a full service bar and gourmet food. Choices include steak, lobster, clam chowder, prime rib, fish and chips, Buffalo chicken dip, Buffalo tenders, Gnocchi, Bourbon steak tips and salmon.
The executive chef is Thomas Simons. He was at Entico Brick Oven Pizzeria for eight years as well as Tower Hill Botanical Gardens for many years. Their Sous Chef Neil Anderson took over that position when Simons got promoted to executive chef. Anderson comes from Sunbridge Hotel and Entico’s and has been at Hardwick Crossing from the beginning.
A 3,600 square foot banquet venue, which seats 170 people is open for special events and weddings. It has a panoramic view of the golf course. Chef Jeff Nicholas assists in the regular kitchen and runs the events and weddings kitchen. They also have outdoor seating for 125 overlooking the golf course.
The menu they follow at Hardwick Crossing is ingredients are “from the sea, from the table” and “from the family” so fresh and local products are a top priority. General Manager Courtney Letourneau said the restaurant has food delivered six days a week. Alex Symons is Assistant Manager and Cassandra Hobbs, Bar Manager. They offer products and produce from Gibson Farms, Midtown Meats, West Boston Seafood, local farm stands, Front Yard Farms.
The restaurant is open Sunday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. People may follow them on Facebook and Instagram at hardwickcrossing.com.

HARDWICK CROSSING COUNTRY CLUB
262 Lower Road, Gilbertville
774-757-8907 • Pro Shop 774-261-2634
hardwickcrossing.com
OPEN 7 DAYS FOR LUNCH, DINNER & GOLF
Specials Posted on Facebook & Instagram
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public safety

Ware Police Log

During the weeks of Feb. 8-17, the Ware Police Department responded to 16 miscellaneous calls, 33 administrative calls, nine traffic violations, nine emergency 911 calls, one theft/larceny, three harassments/stalks/threats, one motor vehicle accident, two fires, two damage/vandalisms, one trespass, one breaking and entering, five animal calls and 21 motor vehicle stops in the town of Ware.

Sunday, Feb. 8
 2:45 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 4:20 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 4:26 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Vigeant Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 5:06 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 9 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, North Street, Appears Secure After Check
 4:17 p.m. Warrant Service, West Main Street, Arrest Made

Monday, Feb. 9
 1:18 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, South Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 2:19 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Warren, Assist Given
 3:41 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 3:49 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Gareau Avenue, Parking Ticket Issued
 7:49 a.m. Traffic Violation, Greenwich Road, Report Made
 10:24 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Old Belchertown Road, Assist Given
 6:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Gould Road, Citation/Warning Issued
 8:34 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 8:52 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Belchertown Road, Citation/Warning Issued

Tuesday, Feb. 10
 8:51 a.m. Traffic Violation, Pulaski Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 11:13 a.m. Traffic Violation, South Street, Vehicle Towed
 11:32 a.m. Assist Other Agency, North Street, Assist Given
 5:07 p.m. Warrant Service, Hillside Village, Arrest Made
 6:41 p.m. Abandoned 911

Call, North Street, Dispatch Handled

Wednesday, Feb. 11
 2:36 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Cottage Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 6:38 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, North Street, Appears Secure After Check
 9:40 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Vernon Street, Citation/Warning Issued

Thursday, Feb. 12
 12:14 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Palmer Road, Investigated
 1:50 a.m. Bylaw Violation, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 7:05 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Fisherick Road, Citation/Warning Issued
 12:54 p.m. Damage/Vandalism, Eddy Street, Could Not Locate
 1:11 p.m. Damage/Vandalism, West Street, Advised
 10:39 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 11:21 p.m. Trespass/Unwanted, Walnut Street, No Action Required

Friday, Feb. 13
 12:54 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Walnut Street, Services Rendered
 2:50 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Walnut Street, Services Rendered
 4:05 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Walnut Street, Services Rendered
 6:35 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued
 10:57 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, East Street, Canceled En Route
 2 p.m. Disturbance, East Street, Arrest Made
 4:42 p.m. Warrant Serve, Malboeuf Road, Arrest Made

Saturday, Feb. 14
 12:52 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Otis Avenue, Advised
 11:34 a.m. Smoke Investigation, Gilbertville Road, Investigated
 4:56 p.m. Warrant Service, West Main Street, Arrest Made
 6:18 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, Cherry Street, Services Rendered
 6:41 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Criminal Complaint Request

Sunday, Feb. 15
 3:18 a.m. Bylaw Violation,

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.

Pulaski Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 3:26 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 3:36 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Vigeant Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 3:49 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 4:24 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Bank Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 4:29 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Gareau Avenue, Parking Ticket Issued
 4:34 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 5:12 a.m. Assist Other Agency, North Street, Advised
 1:59 p.m. Abduction, Main Street, Investigated
 2:39 p.m. Disturbance, Otis Avenue, Services Rendered
 8:16 p.m. Traffic Violation, Gilbertville Road, Investigated
 8:37 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, East Street, Investigated
 9:36 p.m. Disturbance, Parker Street, Advised
 11:09 p.m. Disturbance, Otis Avenue, Investigated

Monday, Feb. 16
 4:14 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Parking Ticket Issued
 12:58 p.m. Breaking and Entering/Burglary, Osborne Road, Appears Secure After Check
 2:49 p.m. Disturbance, South Street, Advised
 4:17 p.m. Structure Fire, Gilbertville Road, Extinguished
 8:03 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Main Street, Assist Given
 8:43 p.m. Theft/Larceny, West Street, Report Made

Warren Police Log

During the week of Feb. 1-7, the Warren Police Department responded to 152 building/property checks, 19 community policings, 10 emergency 911 calls, three complaints, four parking issues, one safety hazard, one trespasser/prowler, one fraud/forgery, one fire, one larceny/theft, one motor vehicle accident, two animal calls and 11 motor vehicle stops in the town of Warren.

Sunday, Feb. 1
 2:03 a.m. Falls, Mechanic Street, Transported to Hospital
 2:52 a.m. Parking Issues, Moore Avenue, Citation Issued
 7:46 a.m. Hazmat Incident, Bridges Avenue, Referred to Other Agency
 9:30 a.m. Complaint, Milton O. Fountain Way, Report Filed
 9:50 a.m. Chest Pain/Heart Problem, School Street, Transported to Hospital
 1:58 p.m. Noise Complaint, Main Street, Negative Contact
 3:50 p.m. Breathing Difficulty, Brimfield Road, Mutual Aid Transport

Monday, Feb. 2
 12:12 a.m. Parking Issues, North Street, Citation Issued
 12:21 a.m. Parking Issues, Main Street, Citation

Hardwick Police Log

During the week of Feb. 9-16, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 84 building/property checks, 36 directed/area patrols, nine radar assignments, eight traffic controls, six emergency 911 calls, one citizen assist, two assist other agencies, two complaints, one safety hazard, two motor vehicle investigations, one fire, one burglary, one harassment, one motor vehicle accident, one animal call and 19 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

Monday, Feb. 9
 8:33 a.m. Fire/Other, Church Lane, Investigated
 7:08 p.m. 911 Burglary/Breaking and Entering, Main Street, Report Taken

Tuesday, Feb. 10
 2:03 a.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Main Street, Officer Handled

Issued
 9:24 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, South Street, Citation Issued
 10:43 a.m. Allergic Reaction, Yankee Drummer Drive, Transported to Hospital
 10:56 a.m. Wires Down, School Street, Referred to Other Agency
 9:28 p.m. Welfare Check, River Street, Report Filed

Tuesday, Feb. 3
 1:43 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Citation issued
 2:16 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Old West Brookfield Road, Written Warning
 5:09 p.m. Suspicious Vehicle, High Street, Report Filed

Wednesday, Feb. 4
 9:24 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Spring Street, Transported to Hospital
 10:23 a.m. Trespasser or Prowler, Old West Warren Road, Arrest(s) Made
 4:31 p.m. Structure Fire, Boston Post Road, Fire Extinguished
 6:14 p.m. Larceny or Theft, Main Street, Report Filed

Thursday, Feb. 5
 8:54 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Vehicle Towed
 9:17 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Criminal Complaint

9:50 a.m. Unconscious/Unresponsive/Syncope, School House Drive, Mutual Aid Transport
 11:02 a.m. Erratic Operator, Main Street, Investigated
 11:51 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
 4 p.m. Unwanted Party, Boston Post Road, Report Filed

Friday, Feb. 6
 9:39 a.m. Sick/Unknown, Nelligan Terrace, Transported to Hospital
 11:39 a.m. Safety Concern, Dunham Road, Officer/Chief Advised
 1:05 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Old West Brookfield Road, Call Transferred
 5:32 p.m. Assist Other Police Department, Washington Street, Report Filed
 8:39 p.m. Noise Complaint, Coy Hill Road, Report Filed

Saturday, Feb. 7
 5:31 a.m. Bleeding, Winthrop Terrace, Ambulance Signed Refusal
 10:26 a.m. Fraud or Forgery, Milton O. Fountain Way, Report Filed
 2:44 p.m. Parking Issues, Ramsdell Street, Officer Spoke to Party
 5:38 p.m. Welfare Check, Brimfield Road, Report Filed

Friday, Feb. 13
 6:52 a.m. Motor Vehicle Investigation, Main Street, Investigated
 8:25 a.m. 911 Medical Alarm, Church Lane, Transported to Hospital

Saturday, Feb. 14
 11:45 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Lower Road, Written Warning
 1:26 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Crash, Barre Road, Citation Issued
 3:24 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
 3:37 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning

Sunday, Feb. 15
 11:50 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Prospect Street, Patient Refusal
 7:50 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Hardwick Road, No Action Required

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BACKYARD from page 4

day. Both parents feed the young by regurgitation. The young leave the nest in about four weeks after hatching, but parents feed them for whilet. Later, they follow them to good foraging sites. They mainly eat ants and other insects. They also eat fruits and berries in fall and winter.

Bird bath visitors

A Brimfield resident sent an email recently. He said, "I have a heated bird bath so I modified it by placing rocks in the center so that the only water available is near the edge and birds can't immerse themselves in water to take a bath. The birds sit on the edge of the bird bath to drink."

He also said, "I have a trail camera aimed at the bird bath. I was looking at pictures taken during December (40,000) and saw that blue jays, house finches and juncos are the most frequent birds taking a drink. Birds that show up less often are cardinals, titmouse and morning doves. Curiously chickadees drink infrequently even though they are often seen in the yard. We seldom see goldfinches drinking, but they are

not seen in the yard often. I was surprised to see a downy woodpecker show up twice to get a drink. I can't recall ever seen a woodpecker drink at the bird bath before, summer or winter."

Helping birds

The Brimfield resident said creating brush piles provides shelter for birds. The piles also provide shelter for small animals as well. He said this time of year is a good time to trim trees and shrubs, a source of materials for a brush pile.

He said someone sent him a link about the possible dangers to birds of their feathers freezing if they take a bath in cold weather. For more information, people may visit the link at <https://blog.nature.org/2022/01/31/should-you-provide-birds-water-in-winter/>.

Project Feederwatch

The Brimfield resident also said, "I recently visited the Project Feederwatch 2025 results (https://cdn.feederwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Winter-Bird-Highlights-2025_12.22.2025.pdf).

The chart shows the top

25 birds seen in the Northeast during last year. The top 11 species can be seen most days in our yard."

Here is the list: 1. chickadee, 2. dark-eyed junco, 3. northern cardinal, 4. downy woodpecker, 5. blue jay, 6. mourning dove, 7. white-breasted nuthatch, 8. American goldfinch, 9. house finch, 10. red-bellied woodpecker, 11. tufted titmouse, 12. American robin, 13. European starling, 14. house sparrow, 15. hairy woodpecker, 16. Carolina wren, 17. white-throated sparrow, 18. song sparrow, 19. red-winged blackbird, 20. common grackle, 21. American crow, 22. brown-headed cowbird, 23. chipping sparrow, 24. northern flicker and 25 purple finch.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

Tri-Parish donates to local missions

NEW BRAINTREE – Tri-Parish Community Church members voted at their Feb. 1, 2026 annual meeting to donate all the proceeds raised from the 2025 Christmas in New Braintree craft fair to the local missions supported by church.

A decision had been made in mid-2025 for the church to host the event, which had been on hiatus for several years. It was a successful event, featuring over 35 vendors and raising just over \$2,400, thanks to the hard work of many volunteers within the church and greater community.

An anonymous donor and Webster First Federal Credit Union contributed funds as well, with the donation from Webster First specifically earmarked for the Hardwick Food Pantry and the church's Mustard Seed program.

The proceeds have been distributed to the

Hardwick Food Pantry, the Church's Deacon's Fund and Mustard Seed program. The Hardwick Food Pantry, located in the Calvinistic Congregational Church in Hardwick, serves many in the communities of Hardwick and New Braintree throughout the year. The Deacon's Fund provides emergency financial assistance to individuals to help with a variety of critical needs such as the costs of heating oil, electricity or rent.

Referrals for assistance come through the Hardwick Food Pantry, church office or deacons of the Tri Parish.

The Mustard Seed program provides a monthly meal to the Mustard Seed ministry in Worcester. Volunteers meet to prepare a nutritious meal, complete with fruit and home-made brownies the third Monday of each month at the New Braintree Town Hall, which

is then transported to the Mustard Seed shelter in Worcester.

The church members are grateful for the support of the community and all the vendors, who participated in the event, enabling the church to fulfill its mission to love God and its neighbors through worship and service. Donations to these worthwhile missions can be made to the Tri-Parish Community Church with specific designation written on the memo line of the check, mailed to Tri Parish Community Church, P.O. Box 202, New Braintree, MA 01531 or through the church's website by visiting triparishcommunitychurch.org.

Those interested in participating in this year's Christmas in New Braintree, either as a vendor or volunteer, should email the church office at triparishcc@gmail.com.

Museum sells rare artifact to secure future preservation efforts

NEW SALEM – The Swift River Valley Historical Society, the leading resource in preserving the artifacts, stories and records of the lost towns of the Swift River Valley, has announced the successful sale of a seventeenth century artifact from its collection.

The Symon and Rebeckah Horne Pilgrim Century valuable cabinet, attributed to

the Symonds shops of Salem and dated 1677, was sold by Sotheby's in New York, achieving \$1.6 million.

The decision to sell the piece was made after a thorough review by the museum's board of directors. The cabinet, while valuable and historically significant, was owned by a family that moved to the Swift River Valley from eastern

Massachusetts, and did not directly support the museum's core mission to preserve and interpret the history of the Swift River Valley towns that were destroyed to build the Quabbin Reservoir, Boston's water supply.

"This is not a decision the board made lightly," said

Please see **MUSEUM**, page 15

NB TALKS from page 11

Selectman Jamie Gilman said Net School Spending won't change by entering into a tuition agreement, but he said if they can't turn things around for the high school, each year will become "more desperate than the one before."

"The conversation will never go away," Gilman said. "This hope that kids will stop leaving because we stop talking about it; we're not going to be in that position. The more desperate we get, the less bargaining power we have into any of these agreements because we are quickly going to get to the point of unsustainability."

He said eventually there will be no choice.

"What it all boils down to

is the money," Gilman said.

School Committee vote The School Committee voted 4-1 in favor of ending discussion to enter into a tuition agreement with another school district and keeping the middle/high school open. Grant was the only opposing vote.

McCormick said in a statement after the meeting: "This topic has been a significant and, at times, emotional conversation within our community since last spring. We are grateful to now have clarity and closure on this matter."

McCormick thanked the School Committee, district and school leadership and the members of the tuition task force for their efforts to research, analyze data and engage in discussions.

"Their work was thorough, transparent, and grounded in what they believed to be in the best interest of our students and community," he said.

McCormick said it is important that the school community and the town come together to strengthen and grow the North Brookfield Public Schools.

"Our district's small size is not a limitation; it is one of our greatest strengths," he said. "Now is the time to lean into those strengths while continuing to think boldly about our future. I believe it is important that we continue engaging all stakeholders in conversations about how we can innovate, expand opportunities, and build on the strong foundation that already exists."

CAMPGROUND from page 5

verification cannot be provided.

Campground-specific updates

Fans of camping at Mount Greylock State Reservation and the Boston Harbor Islands are encouraged to monitor DCR's website and social media accounts for updates on the camping schedule.

Savoy Mountain State Forest's campground will close July 31, to accommodate the construction of a new bathroom.

This season, Washburn Island will be available for camping on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The campground at Washburn Island is accessible by private boat only.

Please note that there is no on-site parking at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve or at the Town of Falmouth parking lot at White's Landing. Campers are responsible for finding suitable parking arrangements.

Since last season, DCR has made several improvements to its campsites including the new yurts at both Clarksburg State Park and Nickerson State Park.

A list of DCR campsites can be found at DCR's camping webpage. Campsites vary in offered accommodations, including showers, flush toilets, and R.V. water and power hook-ups.

Yurts can be reserved at Myles Standish State Forest, Nickerson State Park, October Mountain State Forest, Clarksburg State Park, Otter River State

Forest, Shawme Cromwell State Forest, Wells State Park and Willard Brook State Forest. Cabins can be rented at Mohawk Trail State Forest and Savoy Mountain State Forest.

For more information on camping in cabins and yurts visit DCR's cabin and yurt camping webpage.

Additionally, approximately 20 of DCR's campgrounds have accessible campsites that all provide accessible parking, accessible restrooms, and a flat, firm and stable surface for camping. For more information on accessible campsites visit DCR's accessible camping webpage.

For more information and questions about the 2026 camping season, visit the agency's website, www.mass.gov/dcr or email dcr.campinginfo@mass.gov.

paycheck is paid by everyone who has work earnings, even if they are enrolled in Medicare.

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 guid-

ance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Anna M. Doiron, 82

SANDWICH – Anna M. Doiron, beloved wife, mother, grandmother and friend, passed away peacefully on Feb. 18, 2026, at the age of 82, surrounded by her loved ones.



Born in Ware, she was the cherished daughter of the late Tadeus and Jennie Marcinek. Anna graduated from Warren High School.

She is predeceased by her husband, William J. Doiron. She is survived by her children - Deborah Tokarz of Osterville, Robert W. (Trista) Tokarz, Jr. of Marstons Mills, and Dianne (Mark) Ellis of Gray Gables; step-children: Michael Doiron of Centerville and Monique (Thomas) Ladner of Hyannis; and brother: Tadeus (Mary) Marcinek of West Warren. One of her greatest joys in life was being a Babci to her grandchildren: Aaron (Julia), Jenna, Christopher, Jack, Hope, Henry, Bridgette, Drew.

She worked for the Town of Barnstable for over 30 years where she made many lifelong friendships and met her husband, Bill.

Anna will be lovingly remembered for her kind-

ness, strength, faith, and her deep love of family. She cherished family gatherings, family traditions, and spending time with loved ones.

She enjoyed performances at the Cape Playhouse, enjoyed days out shopping and luncheons, and thrifting around Cape Cod and Nantucket.

Proud of her Polish heritage, she had a special appreciation for Polish music and cuisine.

Her presence will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who knew and loved her. Her love was the foundation of our family, and her strength will forever guide us.


Visitation for Anna M. Doiron was held at Nickerson-Bourne Funeral Home, located at 154 Route 6A, Sandwich, MA 02563, on Feb. 25, 2026 from 5-7 p.m. The Funeral Mass will be conducted at Corpus Christi Parish, 324 Quaker Meetinghouse Road, Sandwich, MA 02537, on Feb. 26, 2026 from 11 a.m.-noon. A committal service will follow at Sandwich Town Cemetery.

IN LOVING

Memory

JOHN PERRON SR.

*"A year has passed,
your voice now still,
Yet in my heart, you're
with me still.
Through days of tears
and nights so long,
Your memory keeps
my spirit strong."*



Oct. 26, 1942 - Feb. 27, 2025

MISSED BY YOUR WIFE AND FAMILY.

Death notices

Doiron, Anna M.
Died Feb. 18, 2026
Services Feb. 26, 2026

Eunice P. Sinnamon
Died Jan. 31, 2026

Ware River News OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

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

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

NOTICE

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

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
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CLUES ACROSS

1. What travelers must do
5. Calendar month
8. Hopefully quickly
12. Once more
14. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
15. "Cheers" actress Perlman
16. Astronomy unit
18. Savings vehicle
19. Get your ducks in this
20. Right away
21. Popular sports league
22. Containers
23. Entireties
26. One who wassails
30. Turned-up position
31. Extreme modesty
32. Writing utensil
33. Rewards (archaic)

34. Ancient capital
39. S. American wood sorrel
42. General discomfort
44. Philippine island
46. A witty saying
47. One who summarizes
49. Covered in
50. Mimic
51. Henry was a notable one
56. Daughter of Hera and Zeus
57. Retired NFLer Newton
58. Playground equipment
59. Concept
60. Satisfaction
61. Fishing net
62. Hammer end
63. A father's male child

64. Japanese drink
- CLUES DOWN
1. Off-Broadway figure
2. Gelatinous substance
3. Concern
4. "Lick It Up" rockers
5. Serbian river
6. Part of a hat
7. Bowl-shaped drinking vessel
8. Semitic language
9. Utter a shrill cry
10. Long times
11. Animal parts
13. Causing annoyance
17. Amorous talker
24. Attempt
25. Harmonic effects
26. Cost per mile
27. They ___
28. Bitterly regret
29. Not even
35. A way to drop

36. Title of respect
37. World leader
38. Georgia rockers
40. National capital
41. Great Plains people
42. Duck-sized dinosaur genus
43. Architectural recesses
44. Member of U.S. Navy
45. Mountainous
47. Kite bird
48. Sweetheart (archaic)
49. Popular snack made of potato
52. 70s songsters The Bee ___
53. SE China port ___ - men
54. Something to fill up
55. League of Legends character

SSI from page 4

mium which helps pay for Medicare outpatient health-care services. The standard Medicare Part B premium for 2026 is \$202.90 per month, compared to Medicare Part A which is free to all who are eligible for Social Security benefits. But the 1.45% payroll tax which is being withheld from your girlfriend's

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!

MUSEUM from page 13

Judith McIntosh, Chair of the SRVHS Board of Directors. "We are deeply committed to our mission to preserve the history of the Swift River Valley. The sale allows us to strengthen our operations, make much-needed capital improvements, and expand educational programming that serves the greater community."

Proceeds from the sale will be used to make capital improvements and accessibility updates to the Whitaker-Clary House, fund long-term maintenance of museum buildings, and implement a new strategic plan.

"We understand that the community places great trust in us as stewards of Quabbin history," said McIntosh. "This sale ensures that we can devote greater resources to fulfilling our mission."

The Swift River Valley Museum is open during the summer season and by appointment. For a glimpse into the life of each of the four lost towns, visit the Whitaker-Clary House, Prescott Church Museum, and Carriage Shed at the historical society's location at 40 Elm St.

About the Swift River Valley Historical Society

The Swift River Valley Historical Society is the leading resource in preserving the artifacts, stories and records of the towns that were lost in order to create the Quabbin Reservoir water supply that serves eastern Massachusetts: Prescott, Dana, Enfield, and Greenwich.

SRVHS collaborates with communities, organizations and agencies to provide educational opportunities and programs about the history of this region and to ensure appropriate management and protection of those resources and artifacts, including the Quabbin watershed, to engage public interest and support.

The Swift River Historical Museum is open Wednesdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. from June to September. Admission to the museum is free.

Read more at www.swiftrivermuseum.org, or on Facebook at Swift River Valley Historical Society.

Wildlife on Wheels

WILDLIFE from page 1

Monty and said he likes to look around the room. The reason for him sticking out his tongue periodically is to taste the air of the environment he is in.

Ball pythons usually eat rodents and blend very well in trees. Monty is not a fully grown ball python, and their name comes from their inclination to coil themselves into a ball.

The next animal friend was Zippy the Russian tortoise. Zippy can live up to 50 years and has a diet that includes vegetation, flowers, and some fruits.

The next animal friend was loud at the beginning of the program and Gilbert thought it may be a good time to bring him out.

"The loud one in the box," Gilbert said.

The commotion came from Cheese the white leghorn rooster. Cheese came to The Zoo at Forest Park after he was hatched as a science experiment in a local classroom.

Gilbert described Cheese as one of the friendliest roosters you will ever meet. He is about 8 years old and his species can eat just about anything they can find.

The next animal friends featured on Wildlife on Wheels are the Madagascar hissing cockroaches. These unique cockroaches, native to Madagascar, are important to the ecosystem as they are decomposers. They break down decaying plant and animal matter and return important nutrients to the soil.

Hissing helps them scare predators away. One of the kids asked if these cockroaches have any predators, and Gilbert said lemurs and monkeys will eat them. Males are distinguishable from females due to the presence of horns near their head.

The last friend to appear was the lionhead rabbit, Meatball. This rabbit gets his name due to him rolling up into a ball. The lionhead rabbit gets its name from the beard that grows around their faces.

Meatball was given to



Animal Keeper and Educator, Cameron Gilbert, held Monty the ball python.



Submitted Photos

Cameron Gilbert is shown with Zippy the Russian tortoise who lives at the Zoo at Forest Park.

the zoo in a box as a surrendered pet. Lionhead rabbits are recognized as a domesticated species and live where their human caretakers live.

Gilbert says Meatball is anywhere from 8 to 9 years of age.

For more information on Wildlife on Wheels, visit www.forestparkzoo.org.

Second Chance launches emergency fundraiser

EAST BROOKFIELD – Second Chance Animal Services has launched an urgent fundraising campaign to replace the heating system at its Adoption Center after the existing system failed and was deemed unsalvageable despite extensive repair efforts.

"The Adoption Center is home to vulnerable animals every single day, including puppies, kittens, seniors, and pets recovering from illness or surgery, all of whom rely on a warm, stable environment to stay healthy and comfortable," said Lindsay Doray, Chief Development Officer at Second Chance.

"The failure of our heating system during a period of extended cold weather makes this replacement especially urgent. We brought in professionals who explored every possible option to repair the system, but unfortunately there is no way to save it. Heat is not optional for the animals in our care, and while replacing the sys-



Submitted Photo

Second Chance Animal Services is launching an emergency fundraiser to replace the heating system at its Adoption Center in East Brookfield.

tem is a major, unexpected expense, delaying is simply not an option."

Charlton Oil, a longtime supporter of Second Chance, helped set up temporary heat to keep the building open and staff are monitoring the temperature around the clock until the new system can be installed.

In addition to serving as an Adoption Center, the building functions as an emergency placement facility for pets displaced during natural disasters and other emergencies. During events such as the historic ice storm that knocked out power for a week, Second Chance provides critical shelter and care

for affected animals.

Without a functioning heating system, the organization's ability to respond in similar situations is at risk.

Second Chance is working to raise \$14,000 to cover the cost of replacing the commercial heating system as quickly as possible. Funds raised will go directly toward installation so the organization can continue providing lifesaving care and remain prepared for emergencies.

Community members are encouraged to support the fundraiser or help spread the word.

For more information or to donate, visit givebutter.com/shelterheat.

About Second Chance Animal Services

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

Today, Second Chance

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

Last year Second Chance helped over 64,000 pets live better lives through full-service veterinary care, spay/neuter services, adoption services, community & educational outreach programs, training, and a pet food pantry. For more information, visit Second Chance's website at www.secondchanceanimals.org.

Follow Second Chance on Facebook: www.facebook.com/secondchanceanimals

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Town of Warren Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 166 Section 22, a public hearing will take place on the petition of National Grid to install 5 JO Poles on Reed St., and relocate 11 JO Poles on Reed St., beginning at a point approximately 1100 feet in a west direction. This hearing will be held on **Thursday, March 12th, 2026 at 6:00PM** at the Warren Senior Center, 2252 Main St., West Warren.

Richard Eichacker, Chairman
Board of Selectmen
02/26, 03/05/2026

TOWN OF WARE Public Hearing Monday, March 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Ware Town Hall 126 Main Street, Ware, MA or Join Online: <https://zoom.us/join> Meeting ID: 784 604 1861 Passcode: 01082

FY 2026 Town of Ware CDBG Application

The Town of Ware Community Development Authority, with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, will conduct a Public Hearing on Monday, March 9th, 2026 at 6:30 PM at the Ware Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware – Town Hall Meeting Room or via Zoom with the meeting ID and Passcode noted above.

The public is encouraged to

attend these meetings to discuss the FY26 application to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for up to \$950,000 in available Community Development Block Grant Funds. Any person with questions or comments regarding the grant application will have an opportunity to be heard. Those unable to attend can send written comments to the Community Development Authority, Planning Department, Ware Town Hall, or through email at psmith@townofware.org. All written comments will be presented during the public meetings.

The Town is seeking input on community needs and projects which would benefit from grant funding. Construction of the Cottage Street improvement project

is currently being reviewed. The CDBG application will also include a request for funding for up to five social service programs including, but not limited to, adult basic education and GED preparation, domestic violence prevention, elder services, and community health.

The Ware Town Hall is handicapped accessible. Anyone who requires special accommodation for either public meeting should contact the town at least one week prior to the hearing date at (413) 967-9648 ext. 118. For further information contact Para Smith, Director of Planning & Community Development at (413) 967-9648 ext. 118 or psmith@townofware.com or Erica Johnson at PVPC at (413) 781-6045 or ejohnson@pvpc.org. 02/26/2026

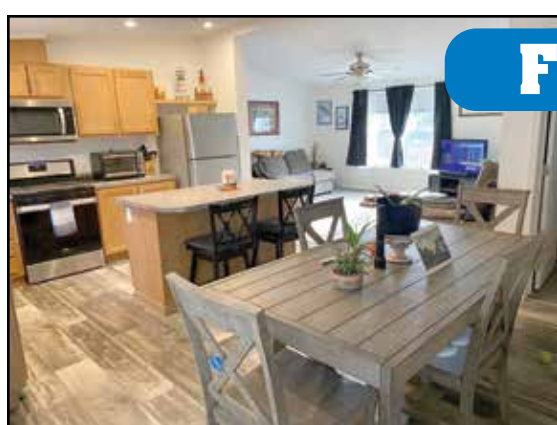
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 Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 31 Edward Lane, Barre, MA 01005. This is a 55 and better community. This home includes a wonderful floor plan with very spacious rooms. Master bedroom includes a walk-in closet. Two full bathrooms. A four-season sunroom is off the kitchen. Includes two large woodsheds and a metal garage you can park under to fend off winter weather. **Asking \$279,000.** See listing on MLS # 73433198

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 Mobile Home located in Waterwheel Village at 21 Varney Lane, Barre, MA 01005. This is a 55 and Better community. This home includes a wonderful floor plan with spacious rooms. Master bedroom includes a large attached bathroom. Two full bathrooms, large back deck, and two large wood sheds. **Asking 245,000.** See MLS#73457117.

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 EVERY SUNDAY
 2PM-4PM
 ~Starting Sunday, March 1, 2026~

KENO