

# WARE RIVER NEWS

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## Selectboard candidates shared reasons for seeking office

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Three candidates are running for two seats on the Selectboard at the upcoming Monday, April 13 Annual Town Election.

Incumbent Nancy Talbot is seeking reelection and newcomers Valerie Granger and Steven Hawk are also seeking election. Current Selectboard member Jack Cascio is not seeking reelection.

A Meet the Candidates forum will be hosted by Ware Community Television and the Ware River News on Saturday, March 28. Each candidate will be given the opportunity to answer questions submitted by members of the community.

The forum will be broadcast on Ware Community

Television, and an article will appear in the April 2 issue of the Ware River News.

Below are the statements submitted by each candidate, explaining their reasons for seeking election to the Selectboard.

### Valerie Granger

My name is Valerie Granger, and I'm running for the Ware Selectboard.

I was born and raised here in Ware. I attended the Ware school system.

I come from a military family and had a very strict upbringing. We learned respect and responsibility.

After graduating, I went into the United States Army and upon my discharge date,

Meet the Candidates Forum  
Saturday, March 28

I returned to Ware, married, and raised my family here. I worked in the medical field for 30 years, much of that time at Mary Lane Hospital.

I serve on the Ware Housing Authority, Ware Council on Aging, Ware Community Development Authority and the Charter Review Committee.

I love the town of Ware. It was the best place to grow up. There have been many changes over the years not always for the better, but I still love living here.

I have many concerns over the direction the town has taken. I have many changes that I would like to

Please see **CANDIDATES**, page 13

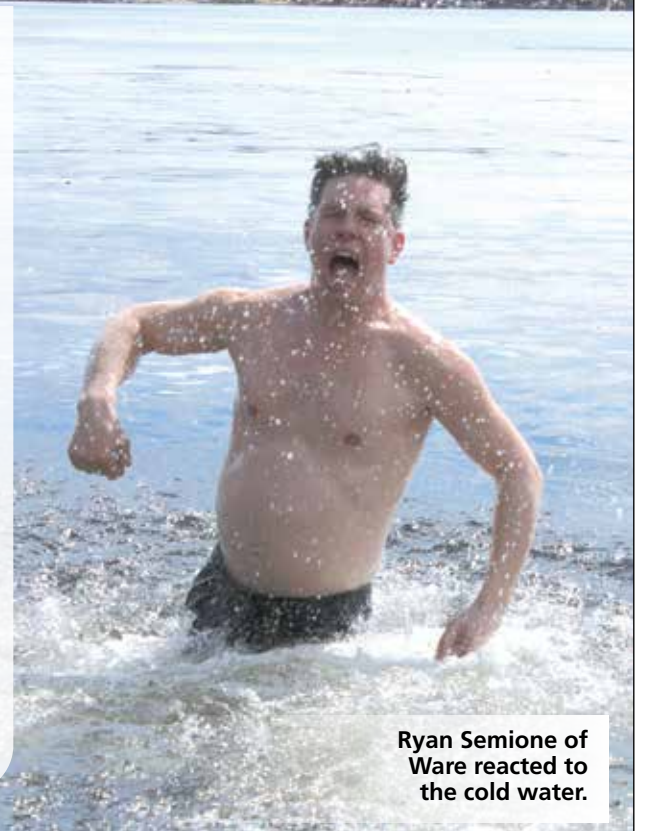
## Polar Plunge

### Community supported Special Olympics

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Ware Police Officer Jeannine Bonnayer organized another success Polar Plunge for the eighth year, with proceeds to benefit the Special Olympics of Massachusetts.

Please see **PLUNGE**, page 7



Ryan Semione of Ware reacted to the cold water.

## Community Reading Day celebrated



Turley Photo by Ryan Drago

Community Reading Day was held last Friday at Ware Public Schools. Ware Police Officer Jeannine Bonnayer read to Maggie Orzulak's second grade class at Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School.

### Long-standing tradition continues

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – Each year around the time of Dr. Seuss's birthday, Ware Public Schools celebrate literacy

with Community Reading Day, an event part of Read Across America Week.

Both Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School and Ware Middle School welcomed guest readers from all over the region and from within the community.

Guest readers were treated to a breakfast held at each school's library and waited

for students to escort them to the classrooms.

Jan Yardley is the Director of Accountability for Ware Public Schools and has been running Community Reading Day for the last 25 years.

Community Reading Day is considered a "long-stand-

Please see **WARE READING**, page 8

## C4R looks to the future

Volunteers needed to continue watershed council

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
pouimette@turley.com

PALMER – The Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council held its spring kickoff meeting to reflect on the work that has been done to ensure the health of the area's rivers, and also to look ahead to the future.

Community members and volunteers joined Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council Coordinator Keith Davies and Events Coordinator Jim Emerson at the Palmer Historical Cultural Center in Three Rivers on Sunday afternoon, close to where the rivers in the watershed meet up. These rivers include the Swift, Ware,

Please see **C4R**, page 11

## Questions needed for 'Meet the Candidates'

WARE – Ware Community Television and the Ware River News will be hosting a "Meet the Candidates" forum prior to the April 13 election, and we need questions from the community.

Select questions will be asked to each candidate running for the Selectboard during the March 28 forum.

Please send your questions by email to pouimette@turley.com by March 27.



Turley Photo by Ryan Drago

Ware Lions Club members Jeannie Odiorne (left), Judy Fair (President), and Mark DeSantis cooked chicken pot pie at the American Legion during a Veteran Appreciation Dinner held Monday night.

## Appreciation dinner for veterans hosted by Lions

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Ware Lions Club hosted a Veterans Appreciation Dinner Monday evening at the American Legion hall.

The purpose of this meal was to honor, support and celebrate with the local veterans and acknowledge them for their service to the nation. The meals were prepared by members of the Ware Lions Club.

Representing the Ware Lions Club was President and Zone Chair Judy Fair, Secretary Bill Munsell, Jeannie Odiorne, Deb Ernest, Mark DeSantis, along with several volunteers. This appreciation dinner featured a menu of chicken pot pie, soft beverage,

and cake for dessert. The Ware Lions Club has been using the American Legion as a meeting space and the members wanted to put together a meal to support and thank the veterans.

Fair made the final call to have the inaugural meal be chicken pot pie. The Ware Lions Club plans to offer this dinner once every three months. If the event gets busier or attracts more interest, the Lions will plan to offer it more often.

The Ware Lions Club participate in various events throughout the year. These

Please see **DINNER**, page 2

## Community members modeled the importance of reading



By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The students at Warren Community Elementary School were excited to meet members of their community during Community Reading Day.

Organizing the event for WCES was Special Education Teacher, Linda Beaudry, who has overseen Community Reading Day for the school since 2013.

Anywhere from 15-20 people throughout the community show up and read to the students.

This year's Community Reading Day brought members of the community who have been reading to stu-

dents for many years, and some newcomers. Beaudry shared that the biggest benefit the students get from Community Reading Day is "having these people modeling the importance of reading."

Community Reading Day is also about learning the jobs community members have and they teach students the importance of being a good community member. The books they read follow along the themes of kindness, friendship, and the actions that impact others around you.

WCES kindergarten teacher, Heather Gaudreau,

Please see **WARREN READING**, page 8

Town Administrator James Ferrera read "Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed" to Heather McKusick's fourth grade class during Warren Community Elementary School's Community Reading Day.



# Ware Senior Center NEWS

WARE – The Ware Senior Center, 413-967-9645, located at 1 Robbins Road, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

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

### ACTIVITIES

- Monday, March 30**
- 9 a.m. Tai Chi
  - 10 a.m. Scat
  - 11:30 a.m. Lunch
  - 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lisa
  - 6-8 p.m. Ware Grange Hall Fundraiser Dinner
- Tuesday, March 31**
- 9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
  - 9 a.m. Movin' & Groovin' to the Oldies with Lisa. \$3 per class.
  - 10 a.m. Scat
  - 11:30 a.m. Lunch
  - 5:30 p.m. Scrapbooking. \$3 per class
  - 6 p.m. Pitch (Doors open at 5 p.m.)
- Wednesday, April 1**
- 9 a.m. Tai-Chi
  - 9:30 a.m. Quilting Club
  - 10 a.m. Scat
  - 11:30 a.m. Lunch
  - 12:30 p.m. Knit-Crochet-Laugh
  - 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lori
- Thursday, April 2**
- 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, April 3**
- 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.

- Monday, March 30**  
Steak & Cheese Sub Sandwich with Peppers and Onions, French Fries, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day
- Tuesday, March 31**  
Shepherd's Pie, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day
- Wednesday, April 1**  
**Brunch**  
Blueberry Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs, Sausages, Hash Browns, Dessert of the Day
- Thursday, April 2**  
Chicken Quesadilla, Spanish Rice, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day
- Friday, April 3**  
**Good Friday**  
Baked Fish, Rice, Veggie of the Day, Dessert of the Day

## St. Aloysius Catholic School lists honor roll

HARDWICK – St. Aloysius Catholic School, 52 Church St., Gilbertville, announced the students who achieved the honor roll for the second trimester.

### High Honors

Jakob McBride, grade four; and Connor Shunaman, grade five.

### Honors

Juliana Moryl, grade four; Anthony Prentiss, grade four; Ellie Matt, grade six; Lilliana Soja, grade six; Alexander Velez, grade six; Grant Verham, grade six; Jackson Boudreau, grade eight; Hailey Casiello, grade eight; Gavin Letendre, grade eight; and Noelle St. Jacques, grade eight.

# Are You Old News?



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

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



File Photo  
Last week's photo from 2022 showed Arlene Kusek of Auburn, Elaine Siok of Ware and Becky Bottomley of Hardwick working with a large group of volunteers to clear invasive plants and litter from the area around the gazebo at New Furnace Landing in Gilbertville. Lynn Park correctly identified twins Arlene and Elaine.



Back row from left: Judy Fair, Mark DeSantis, Ware Lions Secretary Bill Munsell, Jeannie Odiorne, and Deb Ernest alongside veterans and Ware AMVETS members, who enjoyed a meal put together by the Ware Lions Club.



Third grade students of Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School provided coloring sheets to thank the veterans. These sheets are hung up inside the American Legion.

## Recycling Center offers bulk waste day April 18

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Recycling Center, 2011 Barre Road, will hold a Bulk Waste Collection Event on Saturday, April 18 from 8 a.m.-noon.

This event is open to the residents of Hardwick and surrounding towns. A recycling center sticker is not required.

Please note, there are fees per item charged to cover the cost of hauling and processing.

Prices are as follows: mattress/waterbed mattress/futon, \$30; couch, \$30; sleeper sofa bed/pull-out couch, \$40; loveseat/upholstered chair, \$25; pool table, \$25; wall unit cabinets, \$20; large entertainment center, \$20; sink,

\$15; ceiling fan/upright fan/box fan, \$10; toilet, \$20; carpeting/foam carpet backing, \$15; kitchen/dining table, \$15; bookcase/bureau, \$15; trash compactor, \$10; wooden chair/end table/coffee table/night stand, \$12; car seat (baby/child), \$7; bulk Styrofoam (bagged), \$5; and suitcases, \$5.

The staff and volunteers reserve the right to price or reject other items not listed above accordingly on site.

For more information, people can email recycling@townofhardwick.com or stop by the Hardwick Recycling Center during open hours. Volunteers are also needed during the Bulk Waste Collection Event.

### DINNER from page 1

events include Concerts at the Park at Grenville Park, hosting an annual golf tournament, and meals with Santa Claus during the holidays.

The Ware Lions Club is looking to grow their Leo's Club, a youth group for kids in grades seven up to senior year. The Ware Lions Club is looking to start promoting this youth group with Ware Junior/Senior High School.

The Ware Lions Club is looking at ways to partner up with other organizations to help more in the community. The Lions work hard to support the youth and seniors of the community. Recently, the club helped install a ramp for one senior resident in town.

"All to support the Veterans," Munsell said, who is also a veteran.



A table full of veterans enjoyed chicken pot pie for dinner and cake for dessert at the Veteran Appreciation Dinner hosted by the Ware Lions Club.

For more information about the Ware Lions Club, visit their Facebook page, "Ware Lions We Serve."

Lions Clubs International includes over 1.35 million members worldwide and operates as an international organization that serves a world in need.

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# Resident shared concerns about healthcare, legal fees

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Resident Cindy Allen Bourcier shared concerns about meeting minutes, legal fees and bringing healthcare back to town at the Selectboard’s meeting last week.

At the March 17 meeting, Bourcier said the legal fees spent on Attorney Patricia Davidson total about \$35,000, and the Selectboard had previously approved \$7,500 for the retainer. Davidson was hired to research the Lewis Gilbert Trust and trust related to Mary Lane Hospital.

Bourcier said she has asked for details of the Davidson’s invoices from Town Manager Stuart Beckley, but he has to verify that this does not violate the town’s attorney/client privilege.

She also has requested a notice of claim form to alert the town of a potential lawsuit regarding the Selectboard’s vote to support Baystate Health’s proposal to establish a Convenient Care site in town.

“It’s not a lawsuit...it’s just saying ‘I’ve got an issue with the town,’ whether or not something comes of it,” she said. “But people are looking into different ramifications of the determination.”

She said she wants the Selectboard to have a “resident talk” with town counsel KP Law regarding these ramifications.

Bourcier said a lot of towns have such a form, but

Beckley said the town does not.

Selectboard member Ken Willette asked Bourcier if she was stating that the board’s certificate of vote regarding Baystate Health’s proposal, influenced the court to keep Baystate Health as the beneficiary of the Lewis Gilbert Trust, to which Bourcier replied “yes.”

Willette said trustee Bank of America may have chosen to submit the certificate of vote, but it may not have had any impact in the court’s determination to keep Baystate Health as the beneficiary. Willette and Selectboard Chair Nancy Talbot said a document the board received seemed to indicate that.

Bourcier said she wants to make sure the Selectboard is taking the open meeting violation seriously.

Willette said the board takes the open meeting violation filed by Bourcier seriously, and they are working together as a board. He asked her what “ramifications” she was referring to.

Bourcier said she believes the board members made an intentional violation of the open meeting law regarding the vote. She also said if Baystate Health’s proposal isn’t successful, “these funds were wasted.”

Willette asked how applying time and energy for something that hasn’t happened yet, would help get healthcare back to town in reference to the future success or failure of Baystate Health’s proposal.

“If Baystate does not live

up to its obligations...we would deal with that at the time it’s apparent to us,” he said. “Baystate has presented a plan and we expect them to deliver on that plan...they have committed to bringing healthcare to Ware.”

Willette said he didn’t know how they could speculate on “ramifications” over something that hasn’t happened yet.

Willette said through the work of the Hospital Review Committee, Beckley, Talbot and Dr. Howard Triestch, Baystate Health has given a proposal for a healthcare site, rather than just walking away.

“The town through its actions has done a tremendous amount of work and we are much better for it today,” he said.

Willette said he hopes the board has an update from Baystate Health in the next 45 days regarding the location of the Convenient Care and its opening.

Selectboard Vice-Chair Josh Kusnierz said Baystate Health needs to be clear with what the Convenient Care will offer, and it needs to include urgent care.

“Physicians only don’t suit the need of this town,” he said.

Bourcier she is working with Healthy Quaboag to establish the Ware Regional Health Coalition. She said a meeting was held with area representatives at the beginning of February.

“There’s a lot of people pulling together,” she said. “There’s a lot of buzz going on.”

Bourcier said the coalition could be helpful to Baystate Health’s proposal.

Willette asked if Baystate Health was invited to the February meeting, and Bourcier said “no” and said it was because “we’ve got to build up a love for Baystate...there’s a lot of people in that meeting...the towns are not happy, do not trust Baystate at this point, plus they don’t have anything here and they’re also saying contradictory information.”

Beckley said the coalition needs to create a mission statement, before it begins to move forward with a plan that can be funded by the Rural Health Transformation money. He said Baystate Health would be one of the partners in the coalition, in addition to Healthy Quaboag and others.

Willette asked if this coalition has been endorsed by leadership in other towns, or if it was an ad hoc group. Beckley said it started as ad hoc, but some Worcester County towns have moved forward with something similar.

Willette asked Bourcier if the Selectboard was invited to the February meeting. Bourcier said she reached out to all of the select boards of area towns, including Ware. She said Selectboard member Jack Cascio attended the meeting.

Talbot said the Selectboard did not receive an invitation. Bourcier said she did not send one to the board, but had invited Cascio directly.

Talbot asked which

towns had representation at this meeting. Beckley said the towns of Warren, New Braintree, Hardwick and Belchertown did.

“We really should know who is going to be part of that group and who is representing each community,” Talbot said.

### Draft letter

The Selectboard approved having Beckley draft a letter, which will seek a change in the existing payment in lieu of, taxes program with the Quabbin Reservoir and its watershed.

Beckley said each town in the Quabbin Reservoir watershed area will be submitting letters to seek more funding through the PILOT program.

“Ultimately I think it’s communities in the rural area adjacent to the Quabbin Reservoir, recognizing that they’re not receiving just compensation for the land that was being used,” he said. He said the town gets around \$380,000 per year from the land use for the Quabbin Reservoir. This letter will also be added as an article on town meeting warrant.

### Town Manager’s report

Beckley said himself, the Police and Fire chiefs, along with representatives from Palmer and Warren met to discuss public safety concerns during certain events held last year at Palmer Motorsports Park.

He said they had a conversation with the property owner, and the town of Palmer will set conditions

or require a new or amended special permit.

Beckley said interviews began to fill two vacancies on the Fire Department.

He said the deadline for the owner to demolish the vacant buildings on Main Street has since passed, and the town can now go in and conduct a hazardous materials test.

Beckley said bids will be opened for the trail connection project in Grenville Park.

He said himself, along with Talbot and Selectboard member John Desmond, attended the first presentation of the town’s pavement management plan.

Desmond said there was a lot of good information in the plan, but funding these projects will be a challenge for the town.

### Vacancy

The Selectboard voted to advertise a vacancy on the Ware Housing Authority. A joint meeting with the Housing Authority board will be held on April 7 at 6:45 p.m. to make an appointment to fill the vacancy.

### Election hours

Polls will be open at the Town Hall from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. for the Annual Town Election on Monday, April 13.

### Petty cash policy

The Selectboard approved the Police Department’s petty cash policy after removing a paragraph that had contradictory monetary amounts in it.

## Gilbertville library rededication to be held Sunday

HARDWICK – The anniversary celebration of the Gilbertville Public Library’s dedication will be held on Sunday, March 29 from 2-4 p.m. at the library, 259 Main St., Gilbertville. There will be food, music and a show. All are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Parking is available at the library, and at the adjacent Stone Church Cultural Center, and the Whistle Stop Restaurant across the street.

## Town Clerk shared Annual Town Election info

HARDWICK – Town Clerk Ryan J. Witkos announced there will be two contested races on the ballot at Hardwick’s Annual Town Election on Saturday, May 2.

Polling hours will be from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Hardwick Elementary School, 76 School House Drive.

Elizabeth V. Cyran of Hardwick Pond Road, and Zachary E. Spencer of Barre Road will face off for a three-year term on the Select Board. The incumbent, Eric Vollheim is not seeking re-election.

Heidi Johnson of Lyman

Road, and Lisa J. Nash of Charity Hill Road, will face off for a three-year term on the Board of Health. The incumbent, Paul Mailhot is not seeking re-election.

Those running unopposed are as follows: Ryan J. Witkos\*, Town Clerk, three years; Jennifer S. Kolenda\*, Assessor, three years; Colin R. Brown, K-12 Quabbin Regional School Committee Member, three years; Lisa Gaskill\*, Barry P. Koch, Paige Memorial Library Trustee (two positions); Paige Agricultural Fund Trustee, Stanley D. White\*, five years; Ryan J. Witkos\*,

Moderator, three years; Harry T. Comerford\*, Jennifer E. Garvey\*, Planning Board (two positions.) \*denotes incumbent.

The last day to register to vote for the Annual Town Election is 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 22.

The vote by mail application deadline is Monday, April 27 at 5 p.m. Those voters qualified to vote absentee should contact the Town Clerk’s office.

Voter registration will be held at the Myron E. Richardson Building, 307 Main St. on Wednesday, April 22 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

## Dog licenses are due by April 1

HARDWICK – The Town Clerk would like to remind residents of the April 1 deadline to register their dog(s) or be subject to a \$10 late fine per dog.

A valid rabies certificate is necessary to license any dog and the dog officer receives a list of owners whose dogs are not registered as of April 1. Owners

may be subject to fines issued by the animal control officer for dogs that are unregistered, unvaccinated, and/or running at large.

Please also note the Town of Hardwick has a 24-hour leash law.

Dogs spayed or neutered cost \$8 each and those still intact are \$15 each. Cash or checks are accepted.

### 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.

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**Glenda's**

Saturday, March 28th 7pm-11pm

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Upcoming Events  
Saturday, April 4th 7pm-11pm

## Pure Country

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# QRSD budget information meeting held

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Quaboag Regional School Committee held an informational meeting regarding the fiscal year 2027 school budget this past Monday

Director of Finance at Quaboag, Nicole Goncalves, said the informational meeting will go over three versions of the budget, and will list some contributing factors.

According to the data collected by the Quaboag Regional School District, enrollment since 2007 has gone down to about 500 students. Students who attend also include school choice.

Another contributing factor is state and other aid, which goes over Chapter 70. True revenue for Chapter 70 is net of school choice sending and charter school sending tuition.

Transportation is based of reported expenditures in the FY 25 end of year report. Chapter 70 FY 26 cherry sheet estimate is listed at \$10,600,000.

The Governor's FY 27 local aid proposal is listed at \$10,676,590; a \$76,000 increase. Goncalves shared that the healthcare increase alone is more than that amount.

With school choice, the school receives revenues from the students that come into the school district and send money out for students going out of district. Looking at both estimates the net receipts are up roughly \$600,000. Chapter 70 is going up in small increments.

Town contributions are also a contributing factor. A required minimum contribution is the amount that is calculated from the state that a town is required to pay to the school. The town must pay this amount or could face fines, withholding of funds or other consequences.

The above required minimum contribution is the amount the town is agreeing to pay to the school. However, they are not required to contribute over the required amount.

Goncalves said this includes the assessment for transportation, which is also rising in cost.

An increase in students placed out of district means an increase in transportation services needed for students. The increase for student transportation for FY 27 is about 5%. The budget increase for FY 27 is just over \$300,000.

The transportation reimbursement is based on an 85% return to district.

Health insurance is another contributing factor for the FY 27 budget. Health care costs are rising and lower reimbursements create a revenue gap.

Specialty medications are costly as well as GLP I Class medications are soaring in popularity. Goncalves even

added that retirees are living longer which increases costs as population ages.

"Costs are just increasing in general," Goncalves said.

These include utilities, paper goods, technology, salary increases, cleaning products, repairs and maintenance and a lot of other factors.

For the level service budget, expenditures for operation and capital is listed at \$24,190,847, which is up \$1,796,488 from FY 26, an 8% increase.

The next piece of the presentation looked at the possibility of restructuring the elementary school. This involves having West Brookfield Elementary School house students in grades K-three, and Warren Community Elementary School housing grades four-six.

There is also the possibility of closing one of the elementary schools, West Brookfield Elementary School in particular.

If this were to occur, the above minimum contribution would decrease to \$872,459 from \$1.3 million in FY 26.

A FY 27 budget comparison slide was shared listing the FY 26 approved budget, the FY 27 level funded budget, the FY 27 restructured elementary school budget and the FY 27 budget if WBES closes.

The School Committee will be meet on Monday, March 30 to vote on a budget.

QRSD Superintendent Stephen Duff spoke about where the school district is at and how these certain budget factors impact it.

To Duff's knowledge, from 2012 to today, enrollment has decreased by over 325 students.

He said receiving school choice students has been considered a "lifeline" for the district. As the school district takes kids in, they use the funds to help support the education children are receiving.

"Why enrollment matters," Duff said.

The formula for the foundation budget is enrollment times foundation rate. However, costs continue to rise regardless of enrollment. The revenues decline while expenses continue to increase.

Over the years, the Quaboag Regional School District has made significant reductions, with ties to staff. Duff said he believes there have been over 30 positions eliminated during his time in the district.

Despite these reductions, he said the school district remains one of the top-ranked districts in Massachusetts.

"We are the top performing district and we do it with very little," Duff said.

The communities have supported education over the years and Duff feels that partnership is the school's strength. This success reflects hardworking students, dedicated teachers, strong administrators, supportive families, and communities.

Though education is about supporting students, it also includes the schools having a financial system that must be sustainable. With costs in all areas continuing to rise, revenue from the state has not kept pace.

For transportation, if elementary schools split, the district may have to add a third tier of transportation. When adding a tier, you add additional transportation, but don't realize the savings until the following fiscal year.

Duff explained some of the one-time funds that have been used to stabilize the budget. Funds such as COVID relief, Free Cash, Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funding, American Rescue Plan Act funding, and school choice funding have been supportive temporary funding sources.

Duff describes these funds functioning as a savings account. Once the savings are used, they no longer exist. Yet, the ongoing expenses remain the same or increase as they are doing.

Each town is required to contribute a minimum amount to the school district. West Brookfield's required contributions increased by \$302,000, with transportation increasing by approximately \$200,000.

The current challenge is that West Brookfield is facing a significant financial constraint. Free Cash has been used extensively over the last several years to help fund the operating budget. With funds extremely limited, the \$530,000 above minimum from last year is not available.

The challenge of some educational considerations the school district has made is teachers are spread across multiple buildings, which makes collaboration difficult.

Though these budget decisions are difficult decisions for the School Committee to make, there are some benefits to some of them. For reconfiguration or closing of a school, benefits could include better student groupings, more effective interventions, stronger teacher collaboration, improved curriculum consistency, better access to instructional coaching, and more efficient use of staff.

However if the district chooses to reconfigure, class sizes will go up.

Duff said the school district's commitment will always be put students first, supporting the staff, and working collaboratively with the two towns.

### Public comment

The School Committee opened the floor for questions from the public about the presentation.

One person asked about what would happen to the teachers if WBES closed. Duff addressed this and said there is a process to follow, but a lot of teachers will be able to remain a part of the

district.

Duff said the school district does its best to take care of their people, but unfortunately there will be some tough decisions to make.

Some residents in the school district addressed concerns about kids being placed in reduced classrooms. The idea of 30 kids in a classroom appears rough for both the students and the teachers. Duff clarified that grade six will not move to middle school.

One West Brookfield parent asked if there was a plan to try and increase enrollment. After the presentation, there seemed to be no clarification on how to turn enrollment around for the better. Duff pointed out that 60 of the 249 students at WBES are school choice.

Duff said he sees students coming to Quaboag because of the excellent education system. The school district has come a long way over the years offering new programs that keep students in the district.

He said closing a school is one of the last things the district wants to happen, but it does fall into a scenario the School Committee has found.

Duff said the amount per student for school choice (\$5,000) hasn't changed in 20 years. When asked about the possibility of cutting sports and programs, Duff shared he is a big believer that sports, music, art and theater are critical components of some of the school's academic classes.

Some residents asked about the Proposition 2 1/2 override in West Brookfield. If the override goes through, the numbers that are currently on it will not be sufficient to maintain the level service budget that the school needs for West Brookfield's assessment.

The town would need a \$1.6 million override for one year. The override is not only for the schools, but for the entire town and their departments.

Rural Aid was also brought up during the question period of the informational meeting. The school district could reach out as much as possible to their State Legislators for support. Rural Aid is a huge benefit, considering the subject Duff made about how 57 of the towns in Massachusetts are facing a potential override.

A parent asked about IEPs and school programs, before and after school. Duff said they're looking at putting things together to keep these valuable school programs.

"It's a very difficult decision that our school committee is going to have to make," Duff said. "The state is not funding the way they need to fund."

# DiRico named MASS CPA Educator of the Year

WARREN – Jean DiRico, a dedicated business education teacher at Quaboag Regional Middle High School has been honored with the prestigious MASS CPA Educator of the Year Award.

This award recognizes outstanding contributions to accounting education and the promotion of financial literacy in the community.

"Jean has always been an incredible advocate for her students, making sure they take advantage of every opportunity that comes their way," said a representative from MASS CPA. "Her dedication, enthusiasm, and genuine love for teaching make her truly deserving of this honor."

Throughout her career, DiRico has demonstrated commitment to student success, innovative teaching methods, and fostering a deep understanding of personal finance and business principles.



Jean DiRico

"I am truly honored to receive this recognition from MASS CPA," said DiRico. "Teaching is my passion, and inspiring students to succeed both academically and in life is the greatest reward."

The award will be formally presented at a networking event hosted by MASS CPA at Braeburn Country Club in May, where DiRico will join fellow leaders in the accounting and education fields to celebrate excellence in teaching.

# 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.

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.

# Easter egg hunt at Lucy Stone Park on April 4

WARREN – The annual Easter egg hunt will be held at Lucy Stone Park on Saturday, April 4 with a rain date of April 11.

Egg hunts will be organized by age group with children ages 5-7 starting at 10:30 a.m.; ages 8-10

starting at 10:45 a.m.; and ages 4 and under starting at 11 a.m. Please bring your own Easter basket.

There will be prizes, an Easter raffle, refreshments and a chance to have your photo taken with the Easter Bunny.



## HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL CHOICE OPENINGS 2026-2027

Hadley Public Schools grades PK-12 is now accepting School Choice Applications.

They can be found at [www.hadleyschools.org](http://www.hadleyschools.org).

The cut-off date for applications is April 15th.

Hadley Public Schools offers the following advantages:

### HADLEY ELEMENTARY

- Small Class Sizes
- Art, Band, Chorus
- Tech & Makerspace Lab
- World Language Lab
- 7:30am Homework support (free)
- Afterschool Clubs: Newspaper, Equestrian, Board Games
- Inclusive Special Ed Services
- New Playgrounds
- Project Lead the Way distinguished school

\*Open spots in grades K-2.  
Limited spots grades 3-5.  
Grade 6 closed.

### HOPKINS ACADEMY

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- Advanced Course Offerings
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- Career Pathways in: Business & Finance, Clean Energy, Manufacturing & Engineering, Information Sciences, Social Assistance & Health Care, Life Sciences
- Extracurricular Offerings: Athletics, Band, Chorus, Drama, Equestrian, Leadership
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# SB discussed town-owned properties

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

**HARDWICK** – The Select Board began its March 23 meeting with a discussion regarding 179 Main St., Gilbertville.

Speaking about the property during the meeting was Felix Wamburu, who owns a property near the building. Wamburu was doing work on his own property when he came across 179 Main St. and soon wanted to learn more about it.

After speaking with the Highway Superintendent, the neighboring property owner got word that the building had been abandoned for quite some time. Wamburu wanted to come before the Select Board and get an idea of any interest the town may have and help him decide on what to do with the building.

On his proposals is pursuing the building to be renovated into some form of housing. Wamburu wanted to put out some suggestions and see if this proposal would be something that is beneficial for the town.

The Select Board and Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said they could do an request for proposal but wanted to know what kind of housing Wamburu was considering.

Wamburu wants to look at the footprint of the building to see if the space is appropriate for apartments

or possibly condos. If so, how many condos or apartments could go in.

He is aware that the building at 179 Main St. is a historic building and he said this proposal is in the very beginning stages of any potential plan.

Wamburu is looking at the building and what can be preserved. He is not looking for any drastic modifications.

"It's preliminary," Select Board Vice-Chair William Tinker said.

The Select Board also discussed the Ruggles Hill Street School after receiving a letter from resident Elizabeth Cyran to put this discussion on the agenda. There are several components tied to the school building, including what is said in the deed and the Mixer Trust.

The Select Board did receive a response from town counsel regarding the deed, which they have a copy to review. One idea is to start a draft of an RFP, as the board doesn't wish to endure a lot of legal fees like the Town did when they were addressing the Paige Building.

The board wants to make sure the title is clear and what to specifically put in the RFP before moving forward. Caggiano said she'd be happy to start a draft of an RFP, but wants direction from the Select Board first.

Cyran spoke about the building and what she heard

from DEP. One of the projects is to take the setback out of the building.

Cyran says the group interested in the school building wants to "stay within the general makeup of what that building has always been." It was space of learning and education.

The Select Board wants to investigate more with DEP and follow the advice they received from town counsel. The board also thought of reaching out to the Mixer Trust.

Select Board Clerk Jeffrey Schaaf said, "We should be looking at the 179 Main St. RFP, because it's clear...we own the building."

Schaaf said the board needs to find out more about Ruggles Hill Street School before doing any kind of RFP.

The board will review the deed, contact the Mixer Trust, and contact DEP regarding the school. The board will talk more about Ruggles Hill Street School at their next meeting.

The board agreed to a draft an RFP for 179 Main Street.

### Cemetery Commission

The Select Board heard from Paula Roberts of the Cemetery Commission, starting with the Revolving Account. In year's past, the Cemetery Commission only withdrew \$5,000 out of the revolving account.

For fiscal year 2026, the revolving fund has \$11,767, but the Commission can only spend up to \$5,000.

Roberts is asking both the Select Board and the Finance Committee for approval to spend up to \$11,000 in the fiscal year. Roberts updated the board and said it has been a busy first six months in the fiscal year for the Cemetery Commission with various projects at the cemetery.

Tinker confirmed with Roberts that the actual spending number she is asking for is \$11,500. This spending would take effect once accountant gets vote from the Finance Committee and the Select Board.

The board does have

a joint meeting with the Finance Committee in one week after this meeting (March 23). This subject could be brought up then as well to let the Finance Committee know.

Seeing no concern, the board voted to raise the limit of the Cemetery Commission Revolving Account to \$11,500 and passed. The Cemetery Commission is just waiting for the approval of the Finance Committee.

Roberts would then discuss the mowing contract. The Cemetery Commission voted to award the bid to a mowing service they've used in the past, Lori Crevier. The contract is up to \$25,500.

The Select Board approved the mowing contract.

The board would then discuss the appointment of Frank Hansen to the Cemetery Commission. There has been a vacancy on the commission for over a year. Roberts said the Cemetery Commission is a working board, and their candidate has appeared to be willing to put in the time to help. The board appointed Hansen to the Cemetery Commission.

### Town Administrator's report

During her report, Caggiano shared that she and the Board are working well with the Finance Committee on the FY 27 budget. The Town Administrator feels the town has a good grasp of where they are with debt.

The joint meetings with the Finance Committee have proved to be helpful in discussing the budget.

Caggiano met with the Highway Superintendent to discuss an item to declare gravel surplus. This will be put on the Select Board's next meeting.

The next Select Board meeting with the Finance Committee will be Monday, March 30 at 6 p.m., and will be discussing the general government section of the FY 27 budget.

# Board heard proposed habitat project

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

**WARE** – During new business, the Planning Board heard a proposal from Fred Smith, who owns property on Greenwich Road.

Smith was at the March 19 meeting to discuss a proposed habitat project that may be suitable for the land. Smith partnered up with Mass Wildlife to do a project beneficial for the habitat. Part of the proposal is to extract some gravel and donate the land to Mass Wildlife.

According to Smith, the back half of the property is not permitted and had some of the protected habitat there. The landowner met with Mass Wildlife back in December, on site, and discussed conceptual ideas for habitat improvements. This would be a restoration project to improve the land and the existing habitat.

This area is bounded by the Muddy Brook Corridor. In the end, the habitat does benefit from this sort of work. The land is described as a unique habitat type, featuring sandy soils and an area for turtles.

There are some gravel sites and abandoned pits to take care of and Smith shared that gypsy moths have done a hefty job on the oak trees. In other words, the mess out there really shows itself.

"There's no habitat, in my opinion, there now," Smith said.

The Planning Board asked how much gravel Smith would remove. Smith said a fair amount and is looking to do about 25 feet of cutting. The plan will go through Mass Wildlife for review to be sure it's appropriate for the project.

Mass Wildlife is doing similar projects throughout the State, including one in Sterling. Open gravel soils is what they seek, according to Smith and his associates. Species need that kind of soil. For example, wood turtles, which are endangered, use open space to easily nest.

From the Planning

Board's viewpoint, this project could be done in a couple of ways. According to Vice-Chair Chris Dimarzio it may require a special permit for earth removal. If it is done all at once and not a mining operation, it seems possible.

Smith shared that this project would be done in phases, as it is a wildlife enhancement project. Smith intends to bring a plan forward in phases, but wanted to hear the Planning Board's feedback beforehand.

The board would like to see further information on if there is no impact on anything else, such as the water supply. Smith will spend time fortifying an argument that will enhance the habitat and not hurt anything else on the land. The Planning Board will revisit this again.

### Appeal questions

Next under new business was Maxwell LaBier's discussion for decision appeal for 120 Church St. for a home occupation. LaBier shared about wanting to appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Before going forward, LaBier wanted to go to the Planning Board and see if this was the correct approach.

From what the Planning Board heard, LaBier is not really appealing, but asking for a variance from the rules in place. The applicant seems to be starting over on a project, and the board suggests that he apply for a variance.

"You're asking for a variance at this point," Kenneth Crosby said, Planning Board Chair.

Prior to going to the ZBA, the Planning Board suggested LaBier provide a compelling argument the ZBA would consider.

### Public hearing

The Planning Board held a public hearing for an ANR and Special Permit for 275 Malboeuf Road for a common driveway. The applicant, Shawn Crevier, is looking to create two 10.65 acre lots for the ANR.

Please see **PROJECT**, page 8

## Open House at St. Aloysius Catholic School is April 6

**HARDWICK** – St. Aloysius Catholic School is hosting an Open House on Monday, April 6, from 3-5 p.m.

Prospective families are encouraged to visit the school, located at 52 Church St. in Gilbertville, where they can tour the classrooms, meet the teachers and learn more about the

rich, faith-filled educational experiences that await.

For more information, please call the school and speak to Roberta McQuaid, Enrollment Coordinator, at 413-477-1268. Or apply on line at <https://www.staloyisus.com/join-our-family/application/>.



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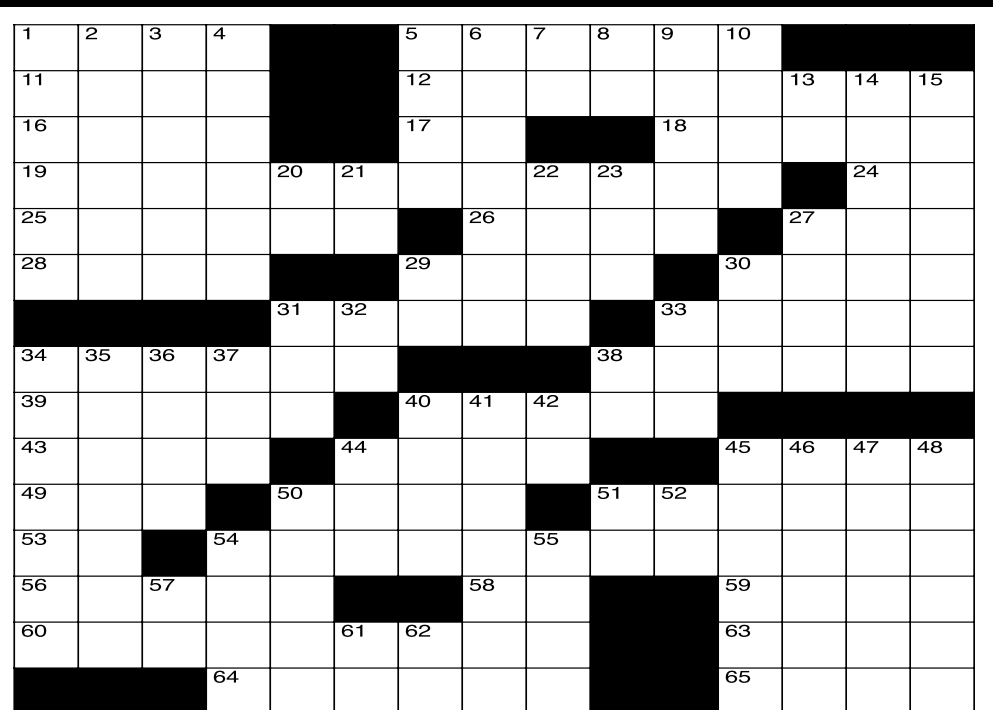
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### CLUES ACROSS

1. "Bird of Paradise" constellation
5. Red Sox WS winner Bronson
11. Whirl
12. The State Dept. has a notable one
16. Energy, style and enthusiasm
17. Part of the mind
18. Mountainous country
19. Type of beverage
24. Atomic #109
25. Opposite of falsities
26. Female sheep
27. Rocky peak
28. Sensitive information sharing environment
29. Ethnic group of Thailand
30. Patron saint of Rome Philip
31. Psychedelics
33. Japanese pine

### CLUES DOWN

2. Intestinal openings
3. Distant planet
4. Assembly possessing high legislative powers
5. Genus of typical owls
6. One with distinctively colored hair
7. Red cross
8. An alternative
9. Abominable snowmen
10. About ear
13. The opening letters
14. Feeling of regret
15. Atomic #39
20. Luteinizing hormone
21. Atomic #55
22. Carries a debt
23. Albanian monetary unit
27. Semitic abjad letter
29. Yes
30. Negative
31. Earn a perfect score
32. Connecticut

### CLUES ACROSS

34. Have an impact on
38. Violent disorder
39. A French river
40. Early Mesoamerican civilization
43. Messenger
44. ribonucleic acid
45. Ancient Greek sophist
49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
50. Valley
51. A way to unwind
53. Atomic #93
54. Recommending
56. Indigo bush
58. Larry and Curly's pal
59. Off-Broadway theater award
60. Fencers
63. Small Eurasian deer (pl.)
64. Relating to songbirds
65. A way to assign

### CLUES DOWN

33. Partner to cheese
34. Snack nuts
35. Quadruped's body part
36. Locate
37. Pitching statistic
38. "\_, myself and I"
40. Utah city northwest of Provo
41. Football players in the trenches
42. One who runs the show
44. Wood
45. Performing artists
46. Slang for a cut
47. More breathable
48. Most crafty
50. Provokes into action
51. University of Dayton
52. Sodium
54. Large fish of the mackerel family
55. Not one
57. \_ and behold
61. Sports highlight show
62. "The Great Lakes State"



# COMMUNITY READING DAY



Ware Police Chief Shawn Crevier took questions prior to reading.



Ware Fire Chief Jim Martinez talked about fire safety during Community Reading Day.



Donna Lee Honeywell read to Sara Stoddard's third grade class at SMK Elementary.

## WARE READING

from page 1

ing tradition" and according to Yardley it has been acknowledged by Ware Public Schools for at least 40 years. Folks from all walks of life in various occupations donate their time to read to the next generation of readers.

Ware Town Manager Stuart Beckley has been participating in Community Reading Day for over a decade and usually reads at Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School. This year, Beckley found himself reading at Ware Middle School in Kayla Haley's sixth grade class.

Also representing the community of Ware was Police Chief Shawn Crevier, who has been chief for nine years.

Community Reading Day featured many special guests. Morning News Anchor from WWLP 22 News, Julia O'Keefe was in

her second year participating in Community Reading Day. O'Keefe said it is important for the kids to have role models, and the readers can talk to the students about the roles they play in the community they live in.

O'Keefe shared that her favorite book series growing up is Junie B. Jones.

O'Keefe read to Jessica Walker's fourth grade class at Ware Middle School. Other news anchors who attended Community Reading Day were Sloane Wick from Western Mass News, and 22 News Meteorologist Adam Strzempko. Radio personality Bruce Marshall of The Valley's Classic Hits on 97.7 FM was reading to Liz Musnicki's fifth grade class.

Jim Lawless and Boomer from the Springfield Thunderbirds were reading to Ally Woodward's second grade class. After reading, Boomer held a dance party with the kids.

Ware Fire Chief Jim Martinez read "No Dragons for Tea" to Tyler Darling's



Ware Town Clerk Nancy Talbot took questions from Shannon Foley's fourth grade students at Ware Middle School.

third grade class. The kids asked Martinez a lot of fire safety questions.

Over 30 readers participated in Community Reading Day at Ware Public Schools and enjoyed their time getting to know the students through reading and learning.

The readers were given gift bags as a thank you for joining Ware Public Schools for Community Reading Day.

Boomer from the Springfield Thunderbirds had a great time inside Ally Woodward's second grade classroom at SMK Elementary School



22 News Morning News Anchor Julia O'Keefe participated in Community Reading Day.

RIGHT: Sylvia Cummings read "The Good Egg" to Kristi Kenyon's first grade class.



Submitted photos

LEFT: Community member Anne Banville, left, and Warren Town Treasurer Dawn Swistak read to Karen Bys' kindergarten class.



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## WARREN READING

from page 1

had her students share their thoughts on how much they enjoyed Community Reading Day. Warren Chief of Police, Gerald Millette, and library assistant, Rowan Bernstein, both read to Gaudreau's class.

The kids got to ask questions about their jobs, and the readers also asked the kids questions, including what they would like to do when they grow up. Many of Gaudreau's students said they want to be police officers.

Sixth grade teacher, Dan Howe, had Joseph Ribeiro from North Brookfield Savings Bank read to his students. Ribeiro read "Oh, the Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss, and shared his life's journey and how he got to his current role at the bank.

He also took questions from Howe's students, which

were about his job and responsibilities.

"He did a great job," Howe said. "Community Reading is good for these kids."

WCES had a lot of returning guest readers who love supporting the school and the students. Warren Fire Chief Adam Lavoie has been participating in Community Reading Day every year for over a decade. Sylvia Cummings of the West Warren Public Library and the Warren Cultural has been a part of WCES Community Reading Day for many years, and so is Town Historian, Sylvia Buck.

The school received a call from Marlene Fortin, who wanted to volunteer for Community Reading Day. Fortin is also doing the Earth Day Clean Up, and brought a fun book to read, "Happy Clean Earth Day".

"The people who do this want to come back," Beaudry

shared.

New to this year's Community Reading Day was Susan Teixeira, EVP at North Brookfield Savings Bank. Senator Jacob Oliveira also participated in Community Reading Day, and his assistant, Noah Green, also got to be a part of it.

Beaudry thanked Dunkin in Warren for donating coffee, hot chocolate, and donuts for the readers.

The students of WCES also provided gifts for their guests. Over 260 bookmarks were made and given to the readers as a thank you for coming to their school.

Community Reading Day is held every spring at WCES. For those interested in reading next year, contact Warren Community Elementary School at 413-436-5983 or email [amcdermott@quaboagrsd.org](mailto:amcdermott@quaboagrsd.org).

## PROJECT

from page 6

The surveyor for this ANR is Robert H. LeMaitre of R. H. LeMaitre, PE, PLS and shared plans of having access to these parcels. There is a barn that is not considered residential and is a space for a few horses and goats on the field. The lots mentioned are basically estate lots.

Crevier's next step is dis-

cussing conservation and is waiting on the designs for conservation and arrangements with the Wetland surveyor are lined up already. The Planning Board views this project as a straightforward ANR.

"This meets the criteria of the Bylaw," Dimarzio said. "I believe it does."

Given the states push to create density and more

housing on property. The board thinks this is a good way to add more use to the land.

The Special Permit proposal for the same applicant is for a shared driveway. Since no concerns were brought up by the public or by the Planning Board, they approved both the ANR and the Special Permit.

# SPORTS

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Perfect day for a road race:

## Holyoke runs 49th holiday 10K

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – A warm and hot day is not ideal for running long distances, but give a harrier a 40-50-degree day, and it's the perfect environment make great time.

Louis Serafini, of Cambridge, experienced that as he completed a sub-30-minute 10K in the 49th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race last Saturday afternoon. Serafini completed the hilly course throughout downtown Holyoke in 29:45. He had a great pace going, averaging 4:47 a mile with thousands of people cheering him on as he completed the course 50 seconds ahead of the runner-up.

Yankarlos Diaz was the second-place finisher. He comes from Manchester, CT. He completed the 6.3-mile course in just 30:35.

This year's top female finisher was Rachel Schilkowsky. She comes from Providence, RI and placed 12th overall. She completed the course at 34:03, winning the race for the very first time.

Among local finisher, Monson's Matt Provost came in at 34:15. He had a pace of about 5:30 per mile.

According to the results provided by Presidential Timing, which took over the timing of the race last year, nearly 4,900 runners, male, female, and many children and teenagers, completed the 10K race.

In addition to the ideal temperature for running, the day was sun-splashed and beautiful, making for a great setting for the running of the race, which had more than 6,200 runners signed up.

The race included multiple waves of competitors, and also included a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem by a member of the Holyoke Grand Colleen Court, Bridie Bowler.



Mike Siok, of Ware, heads for the finish.

Crews in the city did an excellent job preparing for the race, getting the course prepared despite a lot of snowfall during the past couple of months.

While there were plenty of local runners, race results

Please see **RACE**, page 10



The runners are off in the 49th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race.



Dylan Tenczar, of Ware, is all smiles as he gets to the end of the 10K.



Brian Farmer gets set to cross the finish line.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli  
Shawn Clark finishes off his race.

## Bay State Games announces leadership changes

BOSTON – Bay State Games has announced new staff appointments and board leadership changes leading into the 2026 Summer Games.

Alanis Tirabassi has been promoted to deputy executive director. Alanis has been with Bay State Games since 2017, when she began as an intern while attending Salem State University. She was hired full-time as sports coordinator in 2020 and later promoted to director of operations before her recent promotion.

She joins Kevin Cummings, who has been with the Bay State Games since 1984 and has served as executive director since 1999, as part of the organization's two-person full-time staff.

In addition to her role with Bay State Games, Tirabassi serves as a committee chairperson for the National

Please see **GAMES**, page 10

## Senior All-Star games at HoF

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD— One year ago, Gene Rich, the head coach of the Ware boys' varsity basketball team, had the opportunity to watch Justin Grout participate in the Western Massachusetts Class C and D Senior High School All-Star Basketball Game. The All-Star game took place on the renowned Jerry Colangelo Court of Dreams, located inside the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield.

Two Ware seniors were selected to play in this year's All-Star game, which was held at the Hall of Fame on March 20.



Jack Gaudreau maneuvers near the paint.



Brady Guimond flies for the hoop.

Brady Guimond finished the game with 11 points for the green team, while Jack Gaudreau scored 10 points for the white team, which celebrated a 112-87 victory.

"I'm very happy for both Brady and Jack," said Rich, who was recently notified that he'll be inducted into the Quabbin Regional Athletic Hall of Fame in the fall. "It's a little bit strange watching them play for opposing teams tonight. I had a lot of fun coaching them during the past four years. Not only are

Please see **HOF**, page 10

## Safety first: Extra bag coming to baseball

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

Over the past decade, safety has been a key theme for many of the rule changes that come through either the National Federation of High Schools, or the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Rule changes have centered around taking care of athletes, limiting unsafe play, and especially anything that can result in concussions.

Years ago, softball implemented an orange bag, a safety bag, at first base. It's more commonly known as a double bag since there are literally two. The orange bag is directly to the right of first base and is mostly for the runner's use.

Any runner running out a ground ball in a way where they would run through first base, utilize the second bag, typically colored orange. The runner is required to step on the orange bag while the fielder can use the standard white bag. The purpose has been to avoid collisions between a hustling runner and the

first baseman, who could get carried in a different direction by an errant through. The second bag puts a little space between the runner and the fielder.

After seeing success with safety in softball, the double bag is coming to high school baseball. The NFHS is making the base a requirement for high schools beginning in 2027. However, several high schools, including Agawam and South Hadley, have opted to install the double bags this season and implement the new rules to help high school students get used to playing with them before the rule is fully implemented.

Some schools will wait until next year depending on the time it takes to install another anchor for the double bag.

High school umpires are also being educated on the new rules concerning using the double bag in a baseball game. Andy Rogers, who is the coordinator and assignor for high school games, said it has been a part of recent meetings with umpires to prepare for

Please see **SAFETY**, page 10

# sports

## Candlepin League NEWS

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

### Bondsville League

WARE – The regular candlepin league season has completed as Roll-A-Way Lanes prepares for the playoffs.

The teams who qualified for the playoffs are Sandri, Night Hawks and Fire Mountain. The final wildcard spot will be awarded to either Team UMass, Spare Parts Bud, or Ironmen.

During the last week, Ironmen bowled against Fire Mountain. In game one, Fire Mountain defeated Ironmen by a score of 477-442. Rick Trott of Fire Mountain began with 108. Pete Swistak of Ironmen began with 116.

In game two, Fire Mountain won again by a score of 478-463. Ryan Drago of Ironmen had the highest score of 118.

In game three, Ironmen pulled off a victory with a score of 466-462. Swistak finished strong with 127 and a three-game series of 352.

The final score was 1417-1371 in favor of Fire Mountain. After losing two out of three games, Ironmen isn't eligible for the playoffs.

Team UMass bowled against Flaming Bowling Balls (FBB) during the final week. In game one, Team UMass won by a score of

511-479. Kevin Trott led Team UMass to victory with 116 in game one.

In game two, FBB defeated Team UMass, 489-449. Ryan McCarthy of FBB bowled 108 and Don Paulus bowled 103 after beginning with 113.

In game three, FBB won by a score of 472-456. McCarthy finished with 112 and a series of 315. The final score was 1440-1416 in favor of FBB.

Zeke's Freaks bowled against Night Hawks during the final week. In game one, Night Hawks won 460-450. The second game was won by Zeke's Freaks, 458-424. The final game was won by Zeke's Freaks, 504-443. Tony Burke of Zeke's Freaks finished with 127 as his team win with a final score of 1412-1327.

Sandri finished the regular season with a match against P&J Meats. In game one, P&J Meats won by a score of 520-516. Ron Gouin of Sandri had a triple strike while bowling 145.

In game two, P&J Meats won again by a score of 463-432. The final game was won by Sandri, 457-454. Gouin finished with 120 and a three-game series of 367. The final score was 1437-1403 in favor of P&J Meats.

Slow Burners bowled against Cannonballs in the final week. In game one, Cannonballs won by a score of 476-441. The sec-

ond game was also won by Cannonballs, 470-465. The final game went to Cannonballs, 456-440, for a three-game sweep over Slow Burners. The final score was 1402-1346 in favor of Cannonballs.

The Snappers bowled against Spare Parts Bud in the final week. Snappers took game one by a score of 492-445. Kevin "Kras" Krasnecky began with 122 during a Snappers victory. John Jebb of Spare Parts Bud began with 107.

In game two, Spare Parts Bud got the victory, 467-458. Krasnecky followed up with 115. In game three, Spare Parts Bud pulled off the victory, 496-492. Jebb finished with an over average game of 109. The final score was 1442-1408 in favor of Snappers.

After tallying the regular season standings, Team UMass was awarded the final birth into the four-team playoff round. The playoffs will begin the following week with two division winners and two wildcard teams.

The #1 seed, Sandri, will bowl against the #4 seed, Team UMass in the playoffs. The other playoff match will be Fire Mountain (2) against Night Hawks (3). The remaining eight teams will bowl against each other in a roll off during the playoffs. The finals will be held on April 1.

### HOF from page 9

they outstanding basketball players, they're also great kids. I'm sure they'll remember this night for the rest of their lives."

Gaudreau, who's a starting center, led the Indians with 390 points this past winter. He finished his varsity basketball career with a total of 1,116 points. He's the sixth member of the Indians boys' team to score 1,000 career points since 1975.

"Jack is one of those basketball players who plays with his back to the basket," Rich said. "He scored the majority of his points on inside baskets."

Just like Grout, Gaudreau was the starting goalie for the Indians boys' soccer team.

Guimond, who's a starting small forward, was switched to the point guard position by Rich at the end of the season. He scored more than 250 points this year and more than 800 during his varsity career.

"Brady played on the wing, but I decided to switch him to point guard for our last eight games of the season," Rich said. "We were struggling scoring and I thought it would help us offensively. He handled the position very well. I think

Brady has the potential to play college basketball."

The other four seniors listed on the Indians boys' varsity hoop roster are Kaleb Kanozek, Alex Orsulak, Brodie Koczur, and Sean Bernier.

"The six seniors are going to be very difficult to replace next year. All of them helped us a lot this season," Rich said. "We're going to have to figure out who'll be able to fill their shoes next year. We'll need some of the younger players to step up."

Gaudreau and Guimond were starters for their respective teams in the Class C and D All-Star game.

"It was an honor to represent my school in this game," Guimond said. "It was also a lot of fun playing against one of my teammates. Jack is one of my best friends and it was a lot of fun playing on the same varsity basketball team with him the past few years."

Gaudreau, who'll be attending Springfield College, gave his thoughts about playing against Guimond.

"We played on different youth basketball teams until we were in the eighth grade," said Gaudreau, who isn't planning to play college basketball. "My teams lost to his team most of the time, but I was able to beat him in tonight's game. It just feels

awesome playing a game on this court."

The Indians, who lost to Greenfield in the semifinals of the Western Mass. Class C tournament, entered the Division 5 state tournament as the 24th seed with a 10-10 record. They beat the 41st seed Renaissance School, 61-29, in a preliminary home game before posting an 57-43 win at ninth seeded Boston English in the round of 32. Ware's season came to an end following a 66-49 road loss to eighth seeded Hoosac Valley in the Sweet 16. Hoosac went on to capture the Division 5 state title.

"We lost in the state tournament to Pioneer Valley Regional, who wound up winning the state championship title," Rich said. "We lost to Hoosac this year and they also won the Division 5 state title. I like the state tournament because it challenges you. It exposes the kids to a different type of environment that they're not used too."

Following the All-Star game, Gaudreau and Guimond took a picture with their varsity basketball coach. The duo will be wrapping up their outstanding high school athletic careers as members of the Indians varsity baseball team this spring.

### SAFETY from page 9

this year. There are nuances to the double bag rule that umpires will need to enforce.

Among them, while the standard practice is that runners running through first base such as in the situation of trying to beat out a ground ball will use the orange bag and fielders trying to record a force out will utilize will use the white bag, there are couple of exceptions.

One is the dropped third strike. If there is a dropped third strike and a catcher throwing on the outside of the baseline to first base, the first baseman is allowed to utilize the orange bag to field the throw and record the out. The runner, in this situation, can use either base.

After a runner has run through first base, typically after beating out a ground

ball, that runner must come back and touch the white bag. If the runner comes back and touches the orange bag, that runners is in play once they touch the orange bag and can be tagged out.

On situations like a clean base hit, a batter/runner who heads for first and rounds the bag, will utilize the white bag. But a runner running out a ground ball who touches the white bag instead of the orange bag could be called out on appeal because it can be treated like missing a base.

While the normal white base is the border of fair ter-

ritory, the orange bag is in foul territory. If a batted ball hits the orange bag, the ball will be called foul. A ball that hits the white bag or rolls over it is still fair.

The second bag at first base is orange in most cases, but can be another color.

For 2026, players playing on fields that have the double first base bag will use them with the rules that come with them. Adult leagues in the region have pledged to observe the rules of the double bag if they play on fields that have them. Most adult leagues go by MLB rules, which do not require a double bag at first base.



Double Bag

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# Turleysports

## Athlete of the Month

### Mike Siok

Ware High School

**S**iok was the top finisher from Ware in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race. Siok came across the finish line at 41:59.

*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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### RACE from page 9

showed individual participate from all over New England, New York, and New Jersey. There were even some international runners.

Last Saturday's even included a fun run for children and a walk as well that have been traditions in recent years. Prior to the race, there were musical performances and other entertainment downtown.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

**Louis Serafini, of Cambridge, won the 10K race at 29:45.**



**Rachel Schilkowsky, of Providence, RI, was the top female finisher at 34:15.**

### GAMES from page 9

Congress of State Games. She also works as a consultant for Dave McGillivary Sports Enterprises and Conventures Events, Communications & Marketing.

After more than 22 years as chair of the Bay State Games Board of Directors, Phil Gloude mans will step down this spring. Under his leadership, Bay State Games has grown into one of the largest multi-sport nonprofit organizations in New England. He joined the Board of Directors in 1987 and he will continue to serve on the board and its executive committee.

Gloude mans is the associate director of media relations at Boston College.

Prior to his BC position, he held senior media relations roles at Brown University and Boston University, as well as with three international public relations firms in Boston.

The Board of Directors has elected Dan Adams of Polsinelli PC Law Firm in Boston as its new board chair. Adams has served on the Bay State Games board for nearly 20 years and is head of sports and entertainment at Polsinelli PC. He holds a bachelor's degree from Boston College, a law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and an MBA from Harvard University.

In addition to his volunteer work with Bay State Games, Adams serves on

the Board of Directors of the East Greenbush Miracle League. His experience with state games spans decades, including as a three-time participant in the Empire State Summer Games of New York.

Registration for the 2026 Bay State Summer Games will begin in early March. The 2026 Summer Games will feature events from May 9 through July 25 across 30 different sports throughout eastern and central Massachusetts.

Players from Western and Central Massachusetts schools have consistently participated in the Bay State Games during the summer, especially in sports like soccer, field hockey, and volleyball.

# Ware Police Log

During the week of March 15-24, the Ware Police Department responded to 31 miscellaneous calls, 40 administrative calls, 13 traffic violations, 10 emergency 911 calls, five harassments/stalks/threats, three fires, five trespasses, one damage/vandalism, four thefts/larcenies, two frauds, seven safety hazards, two animal calls and 29 motor vehicle stops in the town of Ware.

### Sunday, March 15

4:28 a.m. Assault, Mattson Boulevard, Report Made  
 9:37 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Ross Avenue, Dispatch Handled  
 12:55 p.m. DUI/Impaired, Upper Church Street, Could Not Locate  
 2:19 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Palmer Road, Arrest Made  
 3:09 p.m. Trespass/Unwanted, Cherry Street, Services Rendered  
 8:43 p.m. Theft/Larceny, West Street, Assist Given  
 9:05 p.m. Traffic Violation/Hazard, Pleasant Street, Vehicle Towed  
 9:16 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Pulaski Street, Services Rendered

### Monday, March 16

2:47 p.m. Damage/Vandalism, West Street, Services Rendered  
 3:48 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Pulaski Street, Could Not Locate

### Tuesday, March 17

2 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Parking Ticket Issued  
 2:01 a.m. Electrical Hazard, Upper Church Street, Services Rendered  
 2:01 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Parking Ticket Issued  
 2:02 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Cottage Street, Parking Ticket Issued  
 3:43 a.m. Safety Hazard, Hardwick Pond Road, Services Rendered  
 3:57 a.m. Safety Hazard, Pleasant Street, Taken/

Referred to Other Agency  
 5:38 a.m. Safety Hazard, Lee Road, Services Rendered  
 6:56 a.m. Safety Hazard, Sherman Hill Road, Services Rendered  
 7:08 a.m. Safety Hazard, Malboeuf Road, Taken/Referred to Other Agency  
 8:29 a.m. Safety Hazard, Shady Path, Services Rendered  
 9:41 a.m. Brush Fire, Old Belchertown Road, Investigated  
 11:03 a.m. Traffic Violation/Hazard, Highland Village, Report Made  
 11:21 a.m. Safety Hazard, Beaver Road, Assist Given  
 4:59 p.m. Fraud/Deception, North Street, Services Rendered  
 5:44 p.m. Trespass/Unwanted, West Street, Advised

### Wednesday, March 18

1:51 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Citation/Warning Issued  
 2:11 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Citation/Warning Issued  
 2:22 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Smith Avenue, Citation/Warning Issued  
 2:29 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Aspen Street, Citation/Warning Issued  
 2:34 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Dale Street, Investigated  
 5:07 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Clifford Avenue, Parking Ticket Issued  
 5:26 a.m. Bylaw

*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.*

Violation, East Street, Parking Ticket Issued  
 5:31 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Pulaski Street, Parking Ticket Issued  
 11:15 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Gilbertville Road, Dispatch Handled  
 1:29 p.m. Weapons/Firearms, Eagle Street, Could Not Locate  
 6:50 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, West Street, Investigated

### Thursday, March 19

6:50 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Palmer Road, Citation/Warning Issued  
 7:30 p.m. Indecency/Lewdness, Hillside Village, Services Rendered  
 10:15 p.m. Trespass/Unwanted, West Street, Services Rendered

Please see **WARE POLICE**, page 13

# Hardwick Police Log

During the week of March 16-23, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department responded to 56 building/property checks, 16 directed/area patrols, 19 radar assignments, four traffic controls, 17 emergency 911 calls, three citizen assists, three assist other agencies, one complaint, 17 safety hazards, one missing person, one fire, one threat, one larceny/theft/shoplifting, two motor vehicle accidents, six animal calls and eight motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

### Monday, March 16

11:02 a.m. 911 Fire Alarm, Fiske Road, Services Rendered  
 1:17 p.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Officer Handled

### Tuesday, March 17

2:32 a.m. Utility Issues, Old Greenwich Plains Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 2:50 a.m. Safety Hazard, Turkey Street, Referred to Other Agency  
 3:08 a.m. Safety Hazard, Collins Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 3:40 a.m. Safety Hazard, Barre Road, Merge  
 4:09 a.m. Safety Hazard, Greenwich Road, Removed Hazard  
 4:17 a.m. Safety Hazard, Greenwich Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 4:37 a.m. Safety Hazard,

Barre Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 6:15 a.m. Complaint, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 6:56 a.m. Safety Hazard, West Street, Removed Hazard  
 7:42 a.m. Safety Hazard, Petersham Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 7:43 a.m. 911 Safety Hazard, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 8:04 a.m. Safety Hazard, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 9:41 a.m. Safety Hazard, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 10:13 a.m. Safety Hazard, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 11:33 a.m. Safety Hazard, Petersham Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 12:46 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Lower Road, Written Warning  
 2:41 p.m. Safety Hazard, Lower Road, Services Rendered  
 2:43 p.m. 911 Utility Issues, Church Street, Referred to Other Agency  
 2:44 p.m. Utility Issues, Main Street, Merge  
 3:15 p.m. 911 Safety Hazard, Bridge Street, Investigated  
 4:15 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Lower Road, Services Rendered  
 5:41 p.m. Utility Issues, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 5:42 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Turkey Street, Transported to Hospital  
 7:15 p.m. Safety Hazard, Ruggles Hill Road, Referred to Other Agency  
 7:39 p.m. Motor Vehicle Crash, Hardwick Road, Spoken To

### Wednesday, March 18

5:36 a.m. Assist Citizen, Turkey Street, Services Rendered  
 11:57 a.m. Fire/Illegal burn, Jackson Road, Investigated

12:21 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Turkey Street, Transported to Hospital  
 3:42 p.m. 911 Missing Person, Barre Road, Services Rendered

### Thursday, March 19

2:21 a.m. Medical Emergency, Prospect Street, Transported to Hospital  
 11:52 a.m. Medical Emergency, Barre Road, Transported to Hospital  
 7:52 p.m. Threat, Main Street, Referred to Other Agency

### Friday, March 20

5:29 a.m. Assist Citizen, Hardwick Road, Spoken To  
 2:53 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Crash, Church Street, Report Taken

### Saturday, March 21

12 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Old Petersham Road, Transported to Hospital  
 4:09 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Barre Road, Transported to Hospital  
 4:52 p.m. 911 Larceny/Theft/Shoplifting, Main Street, Officer Handled  
 9:38 p.m. Safety Hazard, Creamery Road, Officer Handled  
 11:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning

### Sunday, March 22

11:34 a.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Hardwick Road, Transported to Hospital  
 4:21 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Peace Restored  
 5:25 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Out of Town, Merge  
 6:24 p.m. 911 Medical Emergency, Lower Road, Transported to Hospital

### Monday, March 23

6:04 a.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, Hillside View, Services Rendered

## Open burning permits available online only

Season runs now through April 30

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](http://ware.firepermits.com). In order

to obtain a burning permit, please go to [ware.firepermits.com](http://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.

### C4R from page 1

Quaboag and Chicopee. "They all meet right here within a half mile of each other," Davies said.

The Chicopee River Watershed is the largest in the commonwealth and the largest in the Connecticut River basin. Despite its geographic area, this watershed is often overlooked.

"It's the largest watershed in Massachusetts," Davies said. "It's also one of the least recognized in the state."

Davies said the council needs a dedicated core group of volunteers to keep a focus on the watershed, and continue to grow its mission.

"We need long term commitments and people to really engage," he said.

### Water monitoring and restoration

Davies said the former watershed council, the Chicopee River Watershed Council, was inactive, and by 2014, he and others worked to revitalize it, and changed its name to Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council to encompass all of the local rivers.

In 2015, the council put a major focus on water quality sampling, with grant funding under the umbrella of the Connecticut River Conservancy. The council has also received financial support from various towns, in addition to Country Bank, the Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association and the Quaboag & Quacumquasit Lake Association.

"It largely relates to bacteria," Davies said of the water quality sampling. "The bacteria sampling is kind of that pulse...that annual physical.

That's what the sampling is; it's really that check-up."

Water quality sampling is conducted at sites across the watershed from late spring to late summer. The bacteria levels are then analyzed at Connecticut River Conservancy's lab, and posted on its website [ctriver.org](http://ctriver.org) or at [isitclean.us](http://isitclean.us).

Water quality is listed for "primary" or "secondary" use, with primary being safe for swimming and secondary for boating or fishing.

In 2023, the Department of Environmental Protection awarded a grant that allowed the council to take samples from more sites than ever before.

"There were six sites in 2015," Davies said. "Since 2023 we've done 25 sites."

Davies said the council was recently notified that the Connecticut River Conservancy received DEP grant funding again for this year's sampling season.

In addition to collecting water samples for testing, the council's volunteers also collect data on weather conditions and water temperatures.

"If there's rainfall before sampling, it can elevate bacteria levels," Davies said.

He said if there's an elevated bacteria level without rainfall prior to sampling, it could be an indicator that something along the river is causing the spike.

"We do look at how those values change," he said.

C4R has also facilitated invasive plant removal from waterways, such as water chestnuts.

Davies explained the importance of continuing to monitor rivers for the invasive plant, as its spiked seeds are



Turley Photo by Paula Quimette

Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council Coordinator Keith Davies spoke about the need for dedicated volunteers to continue the council's work to protect and promote the rivers in the watershed.

easily transported by waterfowl, and can lay dormant for 10 years.

"If it's not checked it will inundate the area again," he said.

### Blue Trails expansion

C4R also works to establish and maintain the Blue Trails, which have sections along all of the rivers in the watershed.

This year, C4R is continuing its focus on a new section, the Lower Quaboag, spanning from Route 67 to Laviolette Park.

a unique concrete T-beam bridge, a mysterious rock with the "1856" carved in it and much more.

The Lower Quaboag Blue Trail ends at Laviolette Park, which prior to 1960 was a backwater impoundment for the dam near the confluence. The Army Corps of Engineers built flood control measures and created the park following flooding in the 1930s and 1950s.

Davies shared a photo that showed people ice skating where the park is now.

"It's still a place of recreation, it's just not wet, it's land," he said.

Davies said trail crewmembers are also needed to act as stewards of the Blue Trails

Duties of a trail steward includes looking for downed trees, checking portage areas, picking up trash, talking to Blue Trail users, taking photos and reporting findings back to C4R.

### Macroinvertebrate monitoring

Davies said he would like to expand the river monitoring to include macroinvertebrate sampling – taking a closer look at the insects in the water.

"Certain bugs can only live in healthy water," he said.

Davies said sampling for macroinvertebrates is especially appealing to children, and could be a great way to get them involved in the protection (and enjoyment) of the watershed.

"It's a fun way to get people involved because it's hands-on," he said.

### Upcoming paddles

A special birding paddle with a Mass Audubon-

certified bird guide will be held on Saturday, May 16 on the Quaboag River. A dragonfly paddle is being planned for July at a location to be determined.

More information about future paddles can be found on C4R's website, [c4rivers.org](http://c4rivers.org).

How to get involved "If you know someone who really loves these rivers," Davies said. "Talk to them – have them get in touch with me."

Davies said it's important to get more people involved who can help with communication, organization, and other tasks.

"If we can't get some of this organized in the next years, I don't know if we're going to be here," Davies said of the council. "We've got to bring some movers and shakers."

### About C4R

Memberships and donations help C4R with resources for basic operations, including preparing events, creating and maintaining Blue Trails, collecting samples, writing reports and performing community outreach.

C4R has established a nonprofit relationship with the Connecticut River Conservancy, which holds and manages C4R funds for tax-exempt purposes for all donors who want this coverage.

To become a member, visit [c4rivers.org](http://c4rivers.org) and click on "Membership/Support – C4R."

For more information or to get involved, visit [c4rivers.org](http://c4rivers.org), email [chicopee-watershed@gmail.com](mailto:chicopee-watershed@gmail.com) or find Chicopee4Rivers on Facebook.

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**HELP WANTED**

The Town of North Brookfield is looking for a **part-time Program Assistant** for the Council on Aging. Please submit a resume with a letter of interest to the **Selectmen's Office, 215 Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535;** or by email to **selectmen@northbrookfield.net.**

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# public notices

## NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 89 Church Street, Ware, Massachusetts

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Isis Anadon, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, as nominee for Mortgage Network, Inc. its successors and assigns and now held by AmeriHome Mortgage Company, LLC, said mortgage dated May 18, 2021, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 14105, Page 323, as affected by an Assignment of Mortgage dated May 31, 2022, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 14568, Page 294, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction on April 9, 2026 at 11:00 AM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

A certain tract or parcel of land situate on the Easterly side of Church Street, in said Ware, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at an iron pin on the Easterly side of Church Street, said iron pin marking the Southwesterly corner of land of Wil-

liam O. Barrett;

thence Southwesterly along the Easterly side of Church Street 78.3 feet to an iron pin at the corner of land of Cora M. Gilmore; thence South 52° 11' East 220 feet along line of land of Cora M. Gilmore to an iron pin in line of land of Grenville Park;

thence North 43° 4' East 79 feet along line of Grenville Park at an iron pin at corner of land of William O. Barrett;

thence North 52° 22' West 220 feet along line of said Barrett to the place of beginning, more or less.

Subject to and together with the rights and easements in the common driveway which runs between locus and the premises now or formerly of John F. Slattery and Mary E. Slattery The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated May 17, 2021, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 14105, Page 319.

**TERMS OF SALE:** Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

**TEN THOUSAND (\$10,000.00) Dollars** of the purchase price must be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer's

or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within forty-five (45) days after the date of sale.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Marinosci Law Group, P.C.  
275 West Natick Road,  
Suite 500  
Warwick, RI 02886

Attorney for AmeriHome Mortgage Company, LLC  
Present Holder of the Mortgage

Telephone: (401) 234-9200  
MLG File No.: 23-03451  
03/12, 03/19, 03/26/2026

## TOWN OF HARDWICK BOARD OF HEALTH NOTICE OF REGULATION ADOPTION (MGL c.111 §31)

The Hardwick Board of Health has adopted a Regulation Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products, including a Nicotine-Free Generation provision prohibiting sale of tobacco products to anyone born on or after January 1, 2006. The regulation establishes updated requirements for tobacco retailer permitting, restricts where new retailers may operate, and includes a range of measures limiting the sale and availability of tobacco and nicotine products in Hardwick.

A full copy is available at the Board of Health office and on the Town's website.  
03/26/2026

## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT COMPLAINT TO FORECLOSE TAX LIEN

**[seal] No. 21 TL 000209**

**TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN** and to any former members, managers, creditors, and any other persons claiming any interest in Polonia R.E. Holdings, LLC, also known as Polonia RE Holdings, LLC, also known as Polonia Real Estate Holdings, LLC, a dissolved and later revived Massachusetts limited liability company, now or formerly located in Wilmington and also in Groton, both in Middlesex County, and said Commonwealth; Joseph Solans as he is Manager, Resident Agent, Real Property Manager, and Secretary of the Commonwealth Signatory of the said Polonia R.E. Holdings, LLC, also known as Polonia RE Holdings, LLC, also known as Polonia Real Estate Holdings, LLC, now or formerly located in Wilmington and also in Groton, both in Middlesex County, and said Commonwealth; Justine Hart, now or formerly of Maynard, Middlesex County, and said Commonwealth; Town of Ware (Office of the Treasurer/Tax Collector); or their heirs, devisees, legal representatives, successors, and assigns.

A Complaint has been filed by the Plaintiff Tallage Brooks, LLC. The Complaint asks the

Court to enter a judgment ending any ownership rights or interests in the land described below. The Complaint is about a parcel of land located in the Town of Ware, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, described in the Complaint as follows:

Property Address: 23 Aspen Street

Description of Parcel: A parcel of land with buildings thereon, containing about 0.085 acres described as Map 60, Block 0, Lot 101 in the Office of the Assessors, Ware identified in book and page 10150-51, Hampshire County Registry of Deeds.

**To respond to the Complaint, you or your attorney must take these steps by the Deadline to Answer, which is May Eleventh, two thousand and twenty-six.**

First, prepare a written Answer. You may write your own Answer or use the form or the online guided interview program on the Court website. Second, file your Answer with the Land Court Recorder's Office, or in the Assistant Recorder's Office at the Registry of Deeds where the land is located, or using the Court's online eFiling system. Third, serve a copy of your Answer to the Plaintiff by mail or e-mail.

**If you do not answer the Complaint by the above Deadline to Answer, this Court will find you in default.** You may lose the chance to answer or dispute the facts listed in the Complaint or pay the taxes owed. You

may lose all ownership rights or interest in the land described above. If a judgment of foreclosure is entered, you will lose ownership of your property. If the property is worth more than the amount owed to cover the tax debt and foreclosure costs, you may be entitled to receive any remaining funds (excess equity) from the Plaintiff.

It is ordered that this citation be published right away, once in Ware River News a newspaper published in Town of Ware.

Witness, **GORDON H. PIPER**, Esquire, Chief Justice of said Court, this Eighteenth day of March in the year two thousand and twenty-six.

Attest with Seal of said Court.  
Deborah J. Patterson  
Recorder

Plaintiff's Attorney:  
John D. Finnegan, Esq.,  
6 Beacon Street, Suite 600,  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel: (617)494-0800  
03/26/2026



## CANDIDATES from page 1

see made, including but not limited to fixing the water problem, finding ways to be more competitive with wages for employment on the town Department of Public Works, Police Department and Fire Department.

We spend money sending recruits for training and they stay long enough to get experience and then move on.

I would also like to find a way to bring new businesses to town. We have many open spaces that could accommodate business.

Another issue I have would be to find a way to reduce the amount of abandoned homes in town. I don't know if they are properties that taxes are still being paid on or just completely abandoned. Some of these houses are on main roads and just look terrible.

We have to take more pride in our town. We have to turn our town into someplace people want to live and raise their families.

Ware was always a small proud community. Which brings me to the old town motto of "The Town That Can't be Licked." I want to see that motto put back on our welcome to Ware signs.

Many residents didn't know this was being changed and were very unhappy about it. So I will work on that.

Another main concern of mine is the town water. I will make this a priority. It's been going on to long. I don't understand how they can charge the water rates they do for this water.

I personally wouldn't drink it or cook with it.

Let's look into sleeving the pipes. I would think it would be much more cost-effective and help us get to where we want to be with the water. The residents pay taxes to keep our town running let's give them what they deserve.

I will not be swayed to vote for anything I don't believe in.

Things take time to change, it won't happen overnight. But I will fight for the citizens of Ware.

I will be open, honest and transparent. My belief is if you always tell the truth, you won't have to remember a lie.

Let's work together to get things done. Thank you for your support.

## Steven Hawk

I was born at Mary Lane Hospital and have lived

my entire life in Ware and Gilbertville, where I am deeply committed to family values and community service.

After surviving a car accident that resulted in quadriplegia, I continued to give back by serving on multiple town committees, including the ADA Commission. I am also an active member of both the Senior Center and the East Quabbin Land Trust.

Growing up in a supportive rural community and participating in youth programs showed me the value of investing time, money, and energy to support children's development. Youth initiatives play a crucial role in building values and self-esteem. Providing support for new youth programs will take priority if I am elected to the Selectboard.

I am actively advocating, leading, and organizing efforts for the Gibbs Crossing section of the Mass Central Rail Trail in Ware and its planned expansions. Rail-to-trail projects encourage physical activity by offering safe and accessible environments for walking, cycling, and various forms of exercise.

These initiatives also support youth engagement in outdoor activities, promoting healthier lifestyles away from screen-based habits.

Improving ADA accessibility and creating links between communities, neighborhoods, and local shops encourages a sense of unity. Supporting seniors and individuals with disabilities is crucial to bringing people together.

Additionally, shared use trails offer alternative ways for non-drivers to reach important stores and services.

I am the ideal stakeholder to lead this.

Ware is currently experiencing financial difficulties, an aging water system in need of attention, limited healthcare access, vacant properties, and a downturn in business activity. My experience enables me to unite stakeholders and develop effective solutions, as well as to identify and leverage available resources to address these challenges.

Forming teams is natural for me. "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Helen Keller

I offer honesty, transparency, and community focus to the Selectboard, pledging to address residents' concerns and prioritize their views over personal agendas.

I seek to connect with

both residents and local businesses, so their perspectives are heard.

I enjoy serving others and engaging with the community.

## Nancy Talbot

To the voters of Ware – "Why lead when others choose to follow?"

"Service before self," "Make a difference," "Keep your fears to yourself – but share your courage" – these are but some of the very meaningful phrases which have helped to guide me during my life of public service.

My name is Nancy J. Talbot, and yes, I am a candidate for Selectboard once again.

I claim no victories – rather I believe I have been a part of success in some very challenging times.

To those of you who have known me over the course of my public career, I know you have seen honesty, courage, and fair decision-making. Often I've heard or been told I am the voice of reason.

Over the years I have volunteered and worked to keep our town pool open by raising funds, collaborating with others and finding creative ways to fund lifeguards and swim instructors.

When my children entered the elementary school there was no PTA so I helped create one. When there were no recreational programs for kids I became a member of a Recreation Commission and planned activities for kids in the summer and during school vacations.

I also was one of the first members of the Ware Sports Boosters and its Treasurer after we found that high school sports were not to be funded due to severe budget cuts in the town of Ware.

Raising funds to support all high school sports became second nature for many of us until funding was restored. We ran a concession stand, did raffles and events so our children did not suffer.

My first public office was School Committee in the 1990s, then in 2002 I sought to be elected Town Clerk.

Having been a member of the School Committee for 15 years, I hope you remember how hard we worked together to build a school system that would allow Ware students to succeed. Working with all of you we reconstructed a failing building in the Stanley M. Koziol Elementary

School; we refurbished the Ware Middle School and constructed a new Jr./Sr. High School.

Realizing I could make a difference in other ways, I chose to serve as a member of the Board of Selectmen and was first elected in 2005 and have, with your support, continued to serve, opting at this time to put my name forward once again.

In this past three year term I brought forth the idea to create an Infrastructure Asset Management Committee after the idea for privatizing Water & Sewer services failed. The committee has done an inordinate amount of work in the last three years; we have worked collaboratively and with guidance with consultants to put forward long needed items for improvement in the delivery of our water service.

The two water tanks (one on Church Street and one on Anderson Road) have and are undergoing total refurbishment. Hydrant replacement has and will be completed shortly.

The PFAS study and other studies are being completed.

Thanks to you the voters who have supported our work, we will continue to make improvements. Our infrastructure is an asset and must be cared for.

The Charter for the town of Ware was created and adopted in 2007, and yes that too needs some tweaking to insure that it is up to date. Changes over time to the business of running the town must be in writing (new committees, new positions added, etc. all these need to be stated in the document to reflect what has transpired over these last 19 years).

We are at a pivotal turning point in "our" town right now. Changes are happening; new businesses have chosen to be part of the change and we welcome them. The transformation of our community while sometimes unnoticeable has caught the attention of many.

As I stated once before "I take no credit for much of what has been done – rather I take pride in my ability to work in a collaborative way to insure for good government which is efficient and effective while accountable, mindful that as a team we are successful."

I ask simply that you consider me as one of the two members to be elected when you cast your vote Monday, April 13. Thank you.

## WARE POLICE

from page 11

### Friday, March 20

10:47 a.m. Theft/Larceny, Hillside Village, Services Rendered

12:24 p.m. Fraud/Deception, Palmer Road, Services Rendered

3:21 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Palmer Road, Dispatch Handled

5:57 p.m. Structure Fire, Belchertown Road, Extinguished

### Saturday, March 21

10:10 a.m. Odor, Hillside Village, Investigated

1:08 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Church Street, Investigated

1:13 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, West Main Street, Investigated

3:40 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Church Street, Services Rendered

11:10 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Laurel Drive, Services Rendered

### Sunday, March 22

3:39 a.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Gilbertville Road, Advised

3:46 a.m. Trespass/Unwanted, West Main Street, Investigated

4:44 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Pleasant Street, Services Rendered

9:29 a.m. Odor, Hillside Village, Could Not Locate

11:27 a.m. Harassment/

Stalk/Threat, North Street, Services Rendered

4:43 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Pleasant Street, Services Rendered

8:14 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Woodland Heights, Services Rendered

9:28 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Otis Avenue, Services Rendered

### Monday, March 23

2:59 a.m. Bylaw Violation, North Street, Parking Ticket Issued

3:20 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Sherwin Street, Parking Ticket Issued

3:23 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Aspen Street, Parking Ticket Issued

3:26 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Vigeant Street, Parking Ticket Issued

3:59 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Smith Avenue, Parking Ticket Issued

4:03 a.m. Bylaw Violation, Walnut Street, Parking Ticket Issued

7:18 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Street, Citation/Warning Issued

8:43 a.m. Trespass/Unwanted, Main Street, Services Rendered

11:28 a.m. Vehicle Fire, Greenwich Road, Assist Given

6:21 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Services Rendered

6:25 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Belchertown Road, Dispatch Handled



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**Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.**

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# 'Silents are Golden' returns to Stone Church April 11

HARDWICK – The 9th “Silents Are Golden” concert featuring Charlie Chaplin’s “The Gold Rush” (1925) with live improvised accompaniment by organist Peter Krasinski will be held on Saturday, April 11 at 7 p.m. on the Gilbertville Johnson & Son pipe organ at the Stone Church Cultural Center, 283 Main St., Gilbertville.

This performance is sponsored by the Friends of the Stone Church.

Organist, conductor and music educator Krasinski is broadly recognized for his imaginative and energetic

performances. Winner of First Prize in Improvisation from the American Guild of Organists National Competition, he is known worldwide for his unique accompaniment to classic silent films.

The “Gold Rush” takes viewers to the Klondike, Alaska where a comedy unfolds amid harsh conditions. Writer, producer, director and leading actor Charlie Chaplin plays his “Little Tramp.”

The film also stars Georgia Hale, Mack Swain, Tom Murray, Henry Bergman

and Malcolm Waite. It is the fifth-highest grossing silent film in cinema history.

Variety called “The Gold Rush” “the greatest and most elaborate comedy ever filmed.” The New York Times called it “the outstanding gem of all of Chaplin’s pictures, as it has more thought and originality than even such masterpieces of mirth as ‘The Kid’ and ‘Shoulder Arms’.”

Krasinski is House Organist of the Providence Performing Arts Center, Principal Organist at Mechanics Hall, Organist

of the Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Boston, Organist at First Church of Christ, Scientist in Providence, Rhode Island, and accompanist at Beth El Temple Center in Belmont.

He recently presented “THE CAMERAMAN” starring Buster Keaton to a sold out audience at the Musiikkitalo, Helsinki, Finland, and appeared in an Oscar-winning movie “The Holdovers”. For more information on the artist, please visit [www.Krasinski.org](http://www.Krasinski.org).

All concerts at the Stone Church are free to those

under 18.

Tickets are \$20 per person and holders of the Massachusetts Card to Culture may request up to two free tickets at the box office for any ticketed concert on the concert day, or may make a reservation by email to [events@FriendsOfTheStoneChurch.org](mailto:events@FriendsOfTheStoneChurch.org).

Partial support for the 2025-2026 concert season has been provided by the Mass Cultural Council. Support for spring concerts, including free community concerts, has been received.

## Grange to host supper March 30

WARE – A public supper to benefit the Ware Community Garden will be hosted by Ware Grange and Ware Senior Center on Monday, March 30 from 6-7 p.m. at the senior center, 1 Robbins Road.

Enjoy a dinner of Chicken Marsala, roasted potatoes, carrots, salad, roll, drinks, and cream puffs for dessert. The cost is \$15 per person.

Please RSVP in advance to [waregrange164@gmail.com](mailto:waregrange164@gmail.com) or call 413-284-1135. All are welcome to purchase tickets for a good meal in support of the creation of Ware’s new community garden.

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