

# WARE RIVER NEWS

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## ArtWorks held opening reception

By Ryan Drago  
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WARE – Just as winter nears its end, ArtWorks Gallery held an opening reception for a Winter Art Exhibit.

A total of 27 art pieces were entered into the gallery, and the idea was put together by an exhibition team of volunteers. Director for the Winter Art Exhibition is Joyce Eichacker, said the volunteers select art themes for the whole year and decided on an open-ended theme for this show.

Winter is a season that can cover a lot of ground and inspire ideas and emotion.

Serving as the juror for the Winter Art Exhibit is artist Susan Tilton Pecora.

She is a signature member of The New England Watercolor Society, and had her watercolor painting called "Late Afternoon, Pine Street" display in the ArtWorks Gallery show.

There were different mediums featured during the Winter Art Exhibit including watercolor, oil, pencil, acrylic, photography and many other interesting mixes of art.



The Winter Art Exhibit will be on display at ArtWorks Gallery, 69 Main Street, Ware through April 4.

Turley Photo by Ryan Drago  
Terrence Kiernan of West Warren alongside his acrylic work "Birchwood" featured in the Winter Art Exhibit located at ArtWorks Gallery in Ware.

Over 20 artists entered their work into the Winter Exhibit and some were in attendance during the opening reception.

Sue Fontaine had two of her pieces featured in the Winter Art Exhibit. She has always worked with a variety of mediums and she has a fine

arts studio based in Erving. The first is called "If Blue Was the Beginning and the Please see **EXHIBIT**, page 8

## SB, FinCom held budget meeting

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis  
Correspondent

HARDWICK – The Select Board met with the Finance Committee last Wednesday to begin discussions on the fiscal year 2027 budget.

Finance Committee member Mark Korzec gave an outline of the structure of the town's budget, and said there are 150 line items, each one representing various town departments and their needs. He said that the structure was confusing, and he sorted the line items into broader categories, reading them off from highest to lowest budgets.

The categories in order are schools, administration, police, highway, insurance, general government, debt, and fire.

Korzec said schools account for about half of the town's overall budget, and the water pollution treatment plant, which is not included in the line items, accounts for about

\$900,000. Korzec said that amount is equal to or slightly more than the police department.

Korzec also outlined the top sources of revenue for the town, which include property taxes, receipts, excise taxes, New Braintree Police Department reimbursements, and payment in lieu of taxes. He said property taxes amount to about 75% of all revenue.

Korzec said investments are generating little revenue. Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said the interest rates on their investments are starting to increase.

### Police Department budget

Police Chief Kevin Landine said he is requesting \$675,000 for FY 27, compared to the actual budget of \$650,500 for FY 26. Landine said the current budget is about 63% used at this point in the fiscal year, which he said is standard.

The first expense for the

Please see **MEETING**, page 13

## Parks reviewed guidelines for use of Memorial Field

By Ryan Drago  
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WARE – The Parks Commissioners met at the Ware Fire Station for their meeting on March 9.

The biggest item being focused on was the guide-

lines for the use of Memorial Field. Copies of the listed guidelines were provided for the public to review and the Parks Commissioners, alongside Parks Manager, John Piechota, went over each guideline.

Memorial Field is the home of the high school's

varsity baseball team during the spring and summer months, which are fast approaching. The field also hosts youth football and soccer league practice and play during the fall months.

The first guideline reads "Organizations and teams are responsible for field clean up

after all games and practices." Seeing no discussion or questions from the public, the Commissioners agreed that this guideline is appropriate.

The Commissioners agreed that they want the field to look best for the kids who use it for practice and

games.

There were many youth sports representatives from the town in attendance, who coach youth baseball, softball, and football.

The next guideline is the Parks Manager has the final decision regarding operation of all town fields for

play. The next is night games being scheduled once the nighttime low temperature is consistent at 45 degrees. Both the public and the Commissioners appeared satisfied with these two guidelines.

Please see **PARKS**, page 6

## Supt. gave update on tuition agreement

By Paula Ouimette  
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WARREN – Superintendent Stephen Duff said the North Brookfield School Committee voted to stay as a single town district for the 2026-2027 academic year.

He said they have been in conversation with North Brookfield for about four years, first to look at the possibility of a regional agreement amendment and second to discuss the possibility of a tuition agreement between the districts.

At the Feb. 26 School Committee meeting, Duff said he will keep commu-

nication channels open with North Brookfield, in the event anything changes.

He said there were differences in the projected cost to provide special education services to North Brookfield students, and he said that was because North Brookfield had the students assigned one-to-one staffing to calculate future costs.

"When we service kids in special education, if they're in a small group, every student in that small group does not have a one-to-one teacher, it would be one teacher with five students," Duff said.

Please see **UPDATE**, page 13



Turley Photo by Ryan Drago  
Announcers Paul Grant, left, and Greg Guillard of Candlepin Bowling Network broadcasted during the 10-string candlepin bowling tournament at Roll-A-Way Lanes in Ware to help benefit Candlepins for Cancer. Grant is holding up a T-shirt which highlights his catchphrase whenever someone bowls a strike.

## Candlepins for Cancer bowling tournament held at Roll-A-Way

By Ryan Drago  
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WARE – It was a day featuring strikes and spares as Roll-A-Way Lanes hosted a 10-string bowling tournament this past weekend.

This tournament was held to help benefit the New England based 501©(3) charity, Candlepins for Cancer. The tournament consisted of two shifts with over 30 bowlers entering the tournament and a portion of the \$120 entry fee per bowl-

er goes towards the charity.

Livestreaming the tournament were Candlepin Bowling Network announcers, Paul Grant and Greg Guillard. Grant shared that

Please see **CANDLEPINS**, page 6

## Select Board reviewed FY 27 sewer budget

By Ryan Drago  
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HARDWICK – The Select Board met on March 9 and had the fiscal year 2027 sewer budget on their agenda.

Water Pollution Control Facilities Superintendent Scott Potter answered questions from the board members and explained which items in the budget are fixed costs and which ones are considered discretionary.

According to Potter, he says the plant expenses could be considered discretionary.

The superintendent said there has been a lot of in-house work being done and without having to budget for outside contract work.

Please see **SEWER BUDGET**, page 6

## Questions needed for 'Meet the Candidates' forum

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.



# SPORTS

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## Ware girls basketball defeated in second round

WARE – Last Monday night, Ware High School stayed in the region, going from home in the opening round of the Division 5 state tournament, to a road matchup in the Berkshires at Drury High School.

Drury slowed Ware's offense to a crawl, unfortunately, the defeated the 14-win Indians 61-21 to end Ware's season.

Ware had a very good run during the regular season and defeated Neighborhood House Charter to start the tournament.

Ware was led by Reese McKeever with just five points in the defeat. Ware went 13-5 this season before losing the Class C Western Mass. Tournament last month. Ware would enter the state tournament and edged Neighborhood House 48-47.

## Indians season ends in Round of 16

Turley photos by David Henry  
www.sweetdogphotos.com



Brady Guimond starts his way down the court.



WARE – It was the quarterfinals appearance they had last season, but Ware boys basketball made it into the Round of 16 this year in Division 5. Ware would defeat Renaissance in the preliminary round at home, followed by a visit to Boston to defeat Boston English in the Round of 32 on Feb. 26 57-43. Finally, Ware's season came to an end closer by as the Round of 16 brought the Indians to Hoosac Valley in Cheshire. The Indians fell 66-48. In the final action of the season for Ware, which finished 12-11 overall, Brodie Koczur had 15 points while Brady Guimond had 13 points and Alex Orszulak had 11 points.



Alex Orszulak attempts the three-pointer.

LEFT: Jack Gaudreau snags the opening tip.

## Local seniors headed to All-Star Games

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the team rosters for the 2026 Western Massachusetts Senior High School All-Star Games. On Friday, Mar. 20, the Hall of Fame will host the 2026 All-Star event on the Jerry Colangelo Court of Dreams at the Hall of Fame. Sixty of the region's top seniors were selected from different divisions to participate in the final high school contests of their prep career.

"We are honored to welcome Western Massachusetts' top high school basketball players to the 15th annual All-Star celebration at the Basketball Hall of Fame," said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. "This event is a special opportunity to recognize the hard work and achievements of these outstanding seniors, and we invite the community to join us as they take the court one final time in their high school careers."

A committee of local coaches and media members, representing each division on both the boys' and girls' sides, selected the teams. Using the designated classes for the PVIAC Tournament, the players will be divided into six teams: two girls' teams, two boys' teams of Class A and B players, and two boys' teams of Class C and D players. Only graduating seniors are eligible for the All-Star Games. Rosters are on the next page.

Please see **ALL-STARS**, page 10



Dalton Marquis fights through a pair of opponents to get a shot.



Brodie Koczur keeps the ball away from his opponent as he seeks to get a shot off.



Kaleb Kanozek floats a shot to the hoop.

## Road Race set to kick off big weekend

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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HOLYOKE – Last March, for the first time in several years, it was gorgeous weather for the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race.

More than 6,000 people participated in this year's event, with nearly 5,000 participants finishing the 10K, or 6.2-mile course.

It was Samuel Whittaker of Salem, CT, who finished the race in 31:24. Alex Corbett, who placed second in last year's race, came in 23 seconds later at 31:47.

The top female finisher was Angelia Rafter at 34:13 and she placed 12th overall. Rafter is from Glastonbury, CT.

Among local finishers, Matt Provost of Monson was 19th overall at 35:09. Ryan Davis of South Hadley was a

close 20th at 35:10. Lindsay Smith of South Hadley finished 22nd at 35:12.

While the race course, commonly known as a "hilly" course throughout downtown Holyoke ending with a turn off Beech St. and up the hill on Hampden St. toward the finish line remained largely the same, there was one noticeable change in this year's event.

Presidential Timing took over the official timing duties after 4RUN3 went out of business last year. Those looking for more results from the events can go to www.presidentialtiming.com to look at more specific results from the race. Like previous timers, you can look up people by name and bib number to get more specific results.

This year, the road race is set to take place on Saturday, Mar. 21 with the main race



The participants are off in the 48th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race last March.



Please see **ROAD RACE**, page 10

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli  
The first wave of harriers starts the course on Maple St.