

WARE RIVER NEWS

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Voters approve 34 articles at STM

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARREN – All but two articles on the 36-article special town meeting warrant passed last week, as just over 50 voters allocated over \$500,000 in free cash to pay for various needs, in addition to putting aside over \$400,000 in stabilization funds.

Failed articles

The first article to fail at the Nov. 16 special town meeting with a vote of 17-34 was article 13, which was placed on the warrant by the Board of Selectmen, seeking three electronic speed signs and additional speed limit signs in the amount of \$9,300.

Board of Selectmen Chair David Dufresne said the signs would be used to reduce speeding in areas of concern, including on South Street and by the Senior Center. He said the signs on South Street would be placed on both sides of the road.

“South Street has been a concern for us,” Dufresne said. This concern heightened after a child riding his bicycle was struck by a vehicle.

Dufresne said the speed signs record data, including what times of day people are speeding the most.

“It’s a safety thing...people do slow down for them,” Dufresne said.

The Finance Committee did not support the article, because its members believed the signs should be funded through the Police Department’s budget, and they didn’t see a need for additional signs when the town already has five.

The second article to fail was article 14, which asked voters to transfer \$30,000 from free cash to pay for a management assessment study for the Quaboag Regional School District, after voters had

Please see **WARREN STM**, page 12



Festive wreaths decorate the Town Hall.

Eric Swett secures lightbulbs on a giant wreath at Veterans Park.

WARE Holiday Flair

Santa Claus is set to arrive on Nov. 24

WARE – The Ware Holiday Flair Committee will welcome Santa into town on a firetruck to light up the big tree in Veterans Park, the day after Thanksgiving, Friday, Nov. 24.

The festivities will begin with a performance by dancers from Dance Unlimited in front of the Town Hall at 5:45 p.m., followed by the arrival of Santa around 6 p.m. After the tree lighting, children and families can visit with Santa in the Town Hall.

On Saturday Dec. 9 from 5-7 p.m., (or until the last car goes through), visit Grenville Park for the Ware Holiday Flair Festive Drive-Thru event. Vehicles will enter through the Upper Church Street exit, travel around the first baseball diamond, and exit through the entrance.

Please see **FLAIR**, page 8



Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette
Members of Ware High School’s football team were on hand to setup for the Ware Holiday Flair.

Walmart addition approved

Construction set for next summer

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Dan Allen, a civil engineer from Bohler Engineering, appeared before the Planning Board on behalf of Walmart, 352 Palmer Road, seeking a major site plan permit to allow for an 8,041 square foot addition at its location.

At the Nov. 16 meeting, Allen said Walmart is seeking to add traffic striping and parking lot improvements, including stop signs and stop bars, to improve the traffic circulation.

The entire front parking lot will be re-striped, Allen said, but there

Please see **WALMART**, page 11

Boys State represents democracy and America

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – American Legion Boys State is considered one of the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students in the U.S.

This educational experience is a participatory program in which students become part of the operation of local, county and state government.

Boys State was founded in 1935 to counter the socialism-inspired

Please see **BOYS STATE**, page 10

Hospital Review Committee hears updates on MLH

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Hospital Review Committee Chair Howard Trietsch said Baystate Health presented a timeline for the decommissioning of Baystate Mary Lane Hospital at the end of October, and to date, most of it has happened.

Updates on decommissioning

At the Nov. 15 meeting, Trietsch said the radiology department had left, and earlier that day the mammography and bone density department had also relocated from the Ware site to Baystate Wing in Palmer. The remaining departments will leave by Dec. 11.

Michael Knapik, vice-president of Government and Community

Relations at Baystate Health, said the decommissioning continues to be on schedule, and that Baystate has a signed a nonbinding letter of intent with Westmass Area Development Corporation.

Knapik also told the committee that Baystate Health will be selling its external laboratories to Labcorp.

“Internal labs will still be in [Baystate] Wing,” Knapik said.

Trietsch said it would be more convenient for residents of Ware and Gilbertville to continue to have access to a laboratory in town.

Architect study/forum follow-up

Janet Slemenda and Amy Dunlap of HKT Architects Inc. have been working with the town to find possible uses for the site,

Please see **MLH UPDATE**, page 13

Quaboag wins Springfield Stock Market Competition

By Haileigh Swistak
Student Intern

WARREN – On Thursday, Nov. 9, Quaboag Business Teacher Jean DiRico took 62 students from her three Personal Finance classes on a field trip to participate in the Junior Achievement of Springfield’s annual Stock Market Competition.

This marked the 18th annual Stock Market Competition hosted by the Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts which took place at the Cedars Banquet Facility in Springfield.

The event began with each team having a fictitious one million dollars to invest into an artificial market which simulated the

New York Stock Exchange. There was a total of 60 rounds which were labeled as days that lasted exactly one minute each.

Out of the 12 schools and 72 teams that participated in the event, a total of 300 middle and high school students were in attendance.

One of Quaboag’s teams, “Buy Low, Sell High” from Quaboag won first place. The students in this team were Kassidy Pelland, Emily Cieslak, Richard Tracy, Daniel Hobart, and Izaiah Flores.

The team ended the game with the highest net worth of \$1,369,533.62 and an ROI of 36.95% and won a pizza party for all students in DiRico’s Personal Finance classes.



Submitted Photo
Quaboag Regional High School’s “Buy Low, Sell High” won first place at the Junior Achievement of Springfield’s annual Stock Market Competition. The students in this team were Kassidy Pelland, Emily Cieslak, Richard Tracy, Daniel Hobart and Izaiah Flores.

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COMMUNITY

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Ware rebounds in week 10

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Ware River News OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

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

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



VOLUNTEERS GET HARDWICK READY FOR CHRISTMAS

Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette

This past Saturday, Highway Superintendent Marty Grysowka and his crew hung the wreath on the Town House in preparation for the Hardwick Classic Christmas on the Common to be held on Sunday, Nov. 26 from 3-7 p.m.



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Classic Christmas on the Common is Nov. 26

HARDWICK – Classic Christmas on the Common will be held Sunday, Nov. 26 from 3-7 p.m. on the town common.

There will be holiday fun with a visit from Santa, games and activities,

10+ vendors, annual tree lighting, touch a truck, hay rides, gingerbread house competition, holiday parade, dinner and bonfire at Mimi's.

Purchase your Hardwick winter hat and 2024 calendar featuring photos taken by residents.

A cookie walk will be held in the Town House with proceeds to benefit Hardwick's Christmas for Kids.



Stork Report.....

Avaree Marie Goudreau

Born Sept. 28, 2023
Parents: Kellyann Kaiser and Ian Goudreau
Siblings: Landon and Bailee
Maternal grandmother: Donna Dansereau
Paternal grandparents: Keith and Kim Goudreau
Maternal great-grandparents: Terese Grogan
Paternal great-grandfather: Paul Young

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 1991 showed members of the St. Mary's School basketball team. Front row from left are Joe Despres, Geroge Babb, John Despres, Chris Pajak, Kristin Finocchio, Mathew Grabowski; second row, Danny Juda, Brian Dulak, Rob Slattery, Mike Finocchio, Ben Wisnieski and Coach Wayne Higney.

Tree & Wreath Festival returns Dec. 9 and 10

WARE – All are welcome to join the Proprietors of the Ware Center Meeting House for this year's Ware Tree & Wreath Festival on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 10 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Ware Town Hall, 126 Main St.

They will be raffling off donated wreaths and trees as well as other decorative items to support the Ware Center Meeting House and Museum. The event also has a bake sale, 50/50 raffle and a table with Ware books, T-shirts, and memorabilia.

There will be free children's activities including decorating a cookie, making a craft, and Kids Karaoke.

Be sure to come to check out (and take a chance) on the Ware Historical Society's Noah's Ark Tree.

It's decorated with pairs of ornaments to represent the animals on the Ark, which were the only toys children could play with on Sundays. The ornaments include giant cookies, over two inches round.

It's not too late to donate. Businesses and citizens interested in contributing decorated trees and wreaths should call Lynn Lak, co-chair of the Festival committee at 413-967-7223 or email her at llak310@comcast.net.

In-person drop off is Friday, Dec. 8 between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. at the Great Hall in the Town Hall. The event is free and open to the public.

Visit warecentermeetinghouse.org for more information or to make a donation online.

Warren's annual tree lighting scheduled for Dec. 1

WARREN – Warren's annual tree lighting will be hosted by Parks and Recreation on the Common, Friday, Dec. 1 from 4-7 p.m., with a bad weather date of Dec. 2.

There will be musical entertainment, free horse drawn wagon rides, vendors, crafts, s'mores by fireside, open houses, activities, food at area merchants, and the tree lighting at 6 p.m. Santa's mailbox will be there as well as Santa himself.

Lizak Bus Services will provide a free shuttle service from the Shepard Municipal Building to the Common.

Help the Warren Police Department stuff a cruiser for the Jingle Fund. Unwrapped gifts, gift cards and money donations are welcome. Wreaths will be sold at the Warren Fire Department.

Ware High School craft fair is Dec. 2

WARE – The Ware High School craft fair will be held Saturday, Dec. 2 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the gymnasium.

The fair benefits the freshman through senior classes at

Ware High School.

There will be a 50/50 raffle and a lottery tree and a raffle table. A concession stand will be run by the Student Council. Crafters will have an assort-

ment of wood crafts, jewelry, holiday items, pottery, chocolate, paintings, ornaments, candles, maple products, signs, jams and jellies, crochet items and much more.

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ACCURACY WATCH

The Ware River News will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 3. To request a correction, send information to ekennedy@turley.com, or call 967-3505. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Ware River News, Attn: Editor, 80 Main St., Ware, MA 01082.

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of North Central Massachusetts

Photograph by Norm Eggert: <https://normeggert.photoshelter.com>

It's amazing what hidden treasures are just outside our back doors

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Country Roads

Christmas Tour

Month Long

Nov. 10th -

Dec. 10th, 2023

Check individual store for hours

www.countryroadschristmas.com



Submitted Photo

Jodie Gerulaitis, vice president Community Relations and Blair Roubidoux, assistant vice president West Street Banking Center at Country Bank, present a check to John L. Zienowicz, executive director at Ware Senior Center.

Country Bank supports senior centers with donations

WARE – Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, recently announced donations to 21 local senior centers throughout the region.

Supporting communities has been part of Country Bank's mission since 1850, the bank is committed to the people, businesses and non-profits it serves.

A total of \$42,000 in donations were made to local senior centers. These donations are made without restriction for those necessary items that may not be met within annual budgets.

"We are so fortunate to have a community partner like Country Bank. Countless members of their staff have volunteered at our events and special projects that have ranged from holiday parties at the senior center to personally delivering boxes of food items to seniors in need. This donation helps to sustain our meal program, which over the past five years, has provided in excess of 38,000 home cooked meals for the seniors. Their commitment to service, volunteerism and com-

munity is what makes Country Bank the gold standard when it comes to being true 'Difference Makers,'" said John L. Zienowicz, Ware Senior Center executive director in a press release.

"We know what a difference this makes for the senior centers, and we are honored to be able to support the great work that they do to help our seniors," said Jodie Gerulaitis, vice president of Community Relations at Country Bank.

In addition to its annual monetary support, Country Bank also sends teams of its "Difference Makers" to volunteer at local senior centers on a monthly basis.

About Country Bank
Country Bank is a full-service \$1.7B with 17.0% Tier 1 Capital mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton and Worcester. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network. Country Bank can be reached by calling 800-322-8233 or visiting countrybank.com.

Orders accepted for Polish food sale starting Nov. 26

WARE – St. Mary's Church will begin to take orders for its Polish food sale starting on Sunday, Nov. 26 through Saturday, Dec. 2, or until sold out.

Call between noon-7 p.m. for Sylvia at 413-436-9268 or Diane at 413-967-5207 with questions and/or to order. Pickup will be on Saturday, Dec. 16 (snow date is Dec. 17) in St. Mary's Church hall on South Street.

Curbside pickup will only be available to anyone with a handicapped card.

You will be designated a pickup time when placing your order. Payment will be collected at time

of pick up and should be exact amount, either check made out to St. Mary's Church, or cash and placed in an envelope with your name, order number and payment amount.

Food items available include pierogi: cabbage, \$13/dozen or \$6.50/ 1/2 dozen. sweet cheese, \$15/dozen or \$7.50/ 1/2 dozen and savory cheese, \$15/dozen and \$7.50/ 1/2 dozen; golombki, \$13 for three; kapusta, \$9/quart; kielbasa from Bernat's in Chicopee, whole \$10 and half, \$5; and rye bread from Countryside Bakery, whole \$5.50 and half, \$2.75.

Thank you for your support.

Przypek named Human Resources Director

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Town Manager Stuart Beckley presented his candidate for Human Resources Director to the Selectboard at a recent meeting.

The town's charter names the Town Manager as the appointing authority for this position, with the Selectboard's review.

Beckley chose to appoint Amy Przypek, a lifelong resident and an employee of the town for almost nine years, currently working in the Payroll and Benefits Department.

"We had three strong candidates," Beckley said at the Nov. 14 meeting, adding that Przypek is "extremely capable and skilled."

"She works very hard for the town, she also had several years of experience in the private sector before coming to the town of Ware," he said. "I think she's a very strong candidate."

Selectboard Chair Caitlin McCarthy said this is a hard decision for her, as she agrees that Przypek has great qualities, but discussion with the town's labor counsel highlighted some areas of concern.

"After going through job description and minimum requirements...she did not meet those minimum requirements," McCarthy said.

Selectboard member Keith Kruckas said that while promoting from within can be a good thing, in the six years he's served on the board, he's seen a history of problems with it.

Kruckas said he was reluctant to even create the HR Director position in the first place.

"When I started here, there was no HR position...it's always been part of the Town Manager's job," Kruckas said. "Given there were so many problems, I was reluctant and finally gave in and we created the position."

Kruckas said since then, there have been a couple of different people filling that role.

"To me, the revolving door of people that have come through this building that I've seen, only in the last six years, is completely disturbing," he said, getting worse since the pandemic. "We are in desperate need of getting help and keeping them, and we have to have somebody that has proven track record."

Kruckas said as a taxpayer, he's "sick and tired" of watching his

and other's money pay for training of employees, when they could just hire a qualified person.

"I just think as a taxpayer, the taxpayers deserve to have somebody that has a proven track record and has the qualifications that were requested in the ad," Kruckas said. "It's nothing personal."

Kruckas also noted that the Municipal Finance department would be left short-staffed with Przypek appointed to HR Director, and that the Selectboard is trying to complete an audit of that department. He also questioned if the shift in position would create a conflict.

"Having a person that was involved in that department that is now going to be under investigation or an audit, now be in charge of the HR, I don't think it is a very appropriate thing for the town to put ourselves in that position," he said.

McCarthy said she felt that Przypek lacked the ability to conduct investigations as HR Director, as required by the role, due to lack of experience and qualifications. McCarthy added that Przypek does a great job in the current position she holds, and she would support her in seeking education and training in HR.

Beckley said Przypek did really well in the interview and has a strong background that reflects the experience needed.

Selectboard member Jack Cascio said he was impressed with Przypek during the interview process, and that she already knows how the town operates.

"I liked Amy, and I was impressed with her, and I would feel comfortable with her in that position," Cascio said.

Reduced quorum discussion

Talbot said with special town meeting being the week after Thanksgiving, she is concerned that the 100 voter quorum won't be met, causing the meeting to be delayed.

"If we can't have the meeting, that pushes it off to another week," Talbot said. "The setting of the tax rate is critical, because there's a timely issue with getting the bills out in December."

Talbot suggested the Selectboard act on whether or not to reduce the quorum to 75 (just for this special town meeting), on Nov. 21. This vote would not affect future town meeting quorums.

Water/wastewater assets update

The Selectboard voted to reject the request for proposal from Aquarion Water Company.

McCarthy said in talking with others, she feels forming a subcommittee would be beneficial to the town. McCarthy said the subcommittee should have members that are knowledgeable of the field.

Cascio said he proposed forming an electable committee of Water Commissioners, which would require a charter revision.

Talbot said forming that committee would be a major change to the charter and could take years to form. She said forming a subcommittee would not require a charter revision.

Town Manager's report

Beckley said the Board of Health approved the ReSource Waste Services of Ware site assignment amendment following a hearing and review of conditions.

The town received insurance approval to repair the water damage that occurred in the Planning and Development Office and work should begin at the end of the month.

Beckley congratulated Firefighters Matthew Spellman and Joseph Tuminelli for their graduation from the Massachusetts Fire Academy.

"To have them complete the Academy is a great accomplishment," he said.

Beckley said an interview with a candidate for the Police Department was held, and the candidate will appear before the Board at the next meeting.

A grant to improve ADA accessibility in the Town Hall and High School for voting purposes was approved and is moving forward. Beckley said the town also received an earmark from the state to improve Veterans Park.

Handicapped parking space

A resident requested a handicapped parking space in front of 5 Pine St. Kruckas shared concerns that by allowing this, it will "open up a floodgate" of others wanting to do the same on public ways.

He said its opening up a "dangerous precedence" for the town.

"It's a public street and there's other homes on the street, there's a business there, I just think it wouldn't set the right precedence," Kruckas said.

McCarthy agreed and Beckley said it would be challenging to

enforce.

The Selectboard voted to take no action on the request.

The Selectboard also received a request from Workshop13 to create business parking in front of 13 Church St., which they took no action on.

Winter parking rules

Beckley said the Police Chief wanted to make it clear that vehicles parked in municipal parking lots need to be removed by 7 a.m. for snow removal.

The Selectboard approved the modified parking lot rules.

Rail Trail concerns

Selectboard member Jack Cascio said Steven Hawk approached him with safety concerns regarding the Mass Central Rail Trail, as well as the need to add plexiglass to the kiosk at the Gibbs Crossing trail entrance.

Beckley said Hawk and the Friends of the Mass Central Rail Trail have also requested to place signs on both the town property, and Walmart's, to make road crossings safer. He said the town will need permission from Walmart in order to place signs on their property.

Appointments

Ware High School senior Nicholas Bousquet was appointed to the Tax Increment Financing Committee and the Planning and Community Development Committee.

Beckley said Bousquet is the first member of the Planning and Community Development Committee. Bousquet also serves on the Open Space Committee.

The Selectboard thanked Bousquet for his enthusiasm and willingness to serve.

Wanda Mysona was appointed to be the seventh member of the 250th Celebration Committee.

Resignation

The Selectboard accepted resignation from Jon Hogan from the Ware Housing Authority. The vacancy will be posted and an appointment to fill the seat will be made at a December meeting.

New restaurant

The Selectboard approved a common victualler license for Ware House of Pizza, 197 West St. The restaurant plans to open at the beginning of December.

Donations/volunteers sought for Wreaths Across America

WARE – Ware will be participating in the Wreaths Across America program, honoring veterans in municipal cemeteries.

On National Wreaths Across America Day, held across the country on Saturday, Dec. 16 volunteers and community members will gather at Veterans Park on Main Street at 10 a.m. before distributing wreaths in four cemeter-

ies across the town.

In order to secure enough wreaths for the four cemeteries, Ware's Wreaths Across America Chair Frank Bateman has paired up with two sponsorship groups, the Ware Middle School PTO and Scouts BSA Troop 281. Sponsoring a wreath is \$17, of which \$5 goes to the sponsoring group.

Wreaths can be sponsored by visiting the link for either sponsoring group: Scouts BSA Troop 281, <https://wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/175907> and WMS PTO, <https://wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/176743>.

People can also sign up to volunteer for National Wreaths Across America Day by visiting these links.

If people want to donate or volunteer but don't have online capabilities, they can call Bateman at 413-949-6517 and leave a message.

The cutoff to sponsor a wreath for this year's National Wreaths Across America Day is Nov. 28. Any donations received after that date will go toward securing next year's wreaths.

NOTICE
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POSITION OPENING: Winter Plow Drivers-Laborer
Town of New Braintree (pop. 998) is seeking winter Plow Drivers both non-CDL and CDL to plow and treat roadways with our trucks. Salary dependent upon experience.
Further position details and job applications are available at the Board of Selectmen's Office, 20 Memorial Drive, New Braintree, MA 01531.
You can also contact the New Braintree Highway Superintendent by calling 508-847-2628.

Selectboard and FinCom review STM articles

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – The Selectboard reviewed 15 warrant articles for the special town meeting to be held on Monday, Nov. 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the Ware High School auditorium, 237 West St.

Unpaid bills

Article 1 will ask voters to transfer money from available funds to pay for unpaid bills from prior fiscal years in the amount of \$18,305.17.

Town Manager Stuart Beckley said there are six bills that need to be paid, including one from the Fire Department in the amount of \$500 to the town of Belchertown; the Department of Public Works for \$244 to Lagrant Electric; two Water Department bills for the analytical lab in the amount of \$245 and \$740; a sewer bill for sludge services for \$16,457 and a Lagrant Electric bill for \$117.50.

The Water Department bills will be paid by the Water Reserve fund and the sewer bills from the Sewer Retained Earnings.

Selectboard member Keith Kruckas asked why certain bills weren't being paid on time, especially when funds were available.

Beckley said some of the bills were received late by the town, but he agreed it is "unacceptable" for the regular bills to be unpaid.

Finance Committee Chair Ken Willette said some of the unpaid bills are understandable, but recurring bills where the funds have already been appropriated are of concern to his committee.

"That's not a sound financial policy and whatever can be done to address it, needs to be done," Willette said of the unpaid bills.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley voted in favor of supporting the article.

Line item adjustments

Article 2 will ask voters to approve the following line item adjustments or amendments: \$8,000 for elections, \$40,000 for insurance, \$15,000 for Fire

Department, \$5,000 for building, \$10,000 for software, and \$11,200 for Assessor's salary.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley supported this article.

OPEB liability

Article 3 seeks to appropriate, borrow and/or transfer \$322,481 from available funds for the other post-employment benefits liability trust fund.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley supported this article.

Stabilization fund

Article 4 asks voters to appropriate and/or transfer \$107,493 to the stabilization fund.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley supported this article.

Capital stabilization fund

Article 5 asks voters to appropriate and/or transfer \$107,493 to the capital stabilization fund.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley supported this article.

Overlay district

Article 6 will ask voters to create a rural residential business zone overlay district and to amend sections of the Zoning Bylaws.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley supported this article.

Police Department age requirement

Article 7 asks voters to authorize the Selectboard to petition the General Court for the enactment of special legislation, increasing the maximum age requirement allowed by the town to hire a police officer.

Beckley said over the years, there have been many requests for waivers from the town regarding the civil service maximum age in order to be appointed as a police officer.

The town attorney said to avoid this, the town should significantly increase the maximum age to 45. The maximum age limit is currently set at 32.

Private to public way

Article 8 is presented by petition, to see if the town will accept King George Drive as a public way.

If passed by voters, the private way will be deeded to the town, with all title, closing and recording costs paid for by the property owners.

The Selectboard, Planning Board and Beckley supported this article.

Financial software

Willette said article 9 will be passed over at the special town meeting, and will instead appear on the annual town meeting warrant. Article 9 asks voters to authorize the purchase of financial software using available funds.

He said the Finance Committee heard a proposal from a finance software vendor that is used in other municipalities, and they decided they would like to proceed with the project. This software will allow the town to streamline its budget book, as well as create dashboards, reports, pie charts, graphs, queries, track history and forecasting.

"One of the goals of the Finance Committee is to not use special town meetings as opportunities to circumvent the budget process of annual town meetings," Willette said.

He said in terms of financial policy and practice, the Finance Committee decided to withdraw the article until the spring.

Grenville Park

Article 10 seeks \$140,000 to plan, design, improve, renovate and equip Grenville Park to improve accessibility. This includes playground equipment, parking, walkways and a pavilion.

Beckley said the town has received a grant for \$97,000.

"The state requires that the whole project be funded, which is the \$140,000," he said, but the grant will cover for the majority of it.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee, Parks and Recreation Committee and Beckley supported this article.

Personnel classification

Article 11 seeks \$12,000 to create a personnel classification and pay plan for nonunionized staff in town.

Willette said if available, the \$12,000 could be paid for using American Rescue Plan Act funds, and the article could be removed from the warrant.

The Selectboard voted 2-1 in favor of using ARPA funds, with Selectboard member Nancy Talbot abstaining. Article 11 will be dismissed at the special town meeting.

HVAC chiller

Article 12 asks voters to approve spending \$250,000 for an HVAC chiller at the High School. This cost includes the purchase, installation and design for the project.

Kruckas questioned what the school district's ARPA funding was spent on, adding that this item should have been a priority.

The Selectboard and Finance Committee stressed the importance of capital planning to ensure large projects like this are properly planned and budgeted for.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee and Beckley supported this article.

DPW mower

Article 13 will ask voters to purchase a new mower for the Department of Public Works in the amount of \$23,000. Beckley said the mower is needed for the town's cemeteries, but it can also be used for other town mowing needs.

Barn removal

Article 14 asks voters to spend \$14,000 to demolish and remove the barn at Aspen Grove Cemetery.

The Selectboard, Finance Committee, Cemetery Commission and Beckley supported the article.

Facilities repairs

Article 15 will also be dismissed at special town meeting, but it was seeking to funds repairs to town facilities, including design and engineering costs. Beckley said more research needs to be done on this article, which may appear on the annual town meeting warrant.

CDA discusses grant funding, projects and growth

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Community Development Authority met to go over updates and projects that can be done under the Community Development Block Grant.

The funds will be used for engineering design work to Cottage Street, housing rehabilitation, implementation of a Façade Improvement Program, and to support public social services.

At the Nov. 13 meeting, Community Development Authority discussed new business in regard to updates on the Façade Improvement Program and the CDBG Program.

The Façade Improvement Program assists commercial property owners in the renovation of the exterior of their buildings in order to improve visual quality of the downtown and to enhance the area as a place to visit, shop, and work.

One of the project ideas discussed and identified during the meeting was supporting residents with low and moderate income. Another was repowering any water and sewer in town.

The Community Development Authority is aware that certain projects in town are expensive and the maximum amount of funding for the Community Development Block Grant is \$1,000,000. Of the grant, 25% is used for public service and support.

Preparing for a public hearing, the Community Development Authority is working to provide a presentation and figure out what special projects need to be done in Ware prior to their next meeting in December.

For the community, the Community Development

Authority was going over the use of the community development fund. The main topic in their community development fund was vacant storefronts in town.

There are several spaces in town that could be eligible for funds. However, the rule is that the space must be vacant for at least a year before any vacant storefront program funding.

One of the new additions to community development is a veterinarian service taking up vacant space in Ware. In addition to vacant spaces, there are some spaces on Main Street currently being filled up.

One way of spreading awareness of these vacant spaces is marketing through the town and growing more business. Ways to assist and develop further growth in town can come from promotion of the town, putting up banners, and other continued promotions.

Also in Ware, the authority was talking about a lot of downtown business growth. In the last several months, a pizza parlor, restaurant, and delivery service have been new additions to the town.

"A lot happening in the town of Ware," said Paralee Smith, director of Planning and Community Development.

During their ancillary discussion, the Community Development Authority discussed a map of grants, listings for the façade grant, and a master list of what has happened so far in town. With a lot of growth and progress going on in the town, the Community Development Authority hopes this growth is known to the public and continues as a trend.

The next meeting will be at the Town Hall on Monday, Dec. 11.

Medicare 101 educational event offered Dec. 4

BARRE – The Barre Senior Center will be hosting an educational presentation on Monday, Dec. 4, at 12:30 p.m. at the senior center located at 557 South Barre Road Barre for current beneficiaries and for those who will soon be eligible for Medicare.

The information is specific to Massachusetts. The session will run from 1 to 1.5 hours, including time for questions.

The presentation will be conducted by Ed Spater, a licensed Insurance agent, who will explain the basics of Medicare including:

Why it's important to evaluate your current Medicare coverage each year

The pros and cons of each of your Medicare coverage options

What to consider when deciding which Medicare cover-

age option is right for you
Ways to save money and get better Medicare coverage in 2024

For accommodations of persons with special needs at meetings call 774-271-5199 or 711 for TTY callers.

Christmas for Kids begins, donations requested

WARE – The Ware Police Department and the Ware Fire Department have started their 20th annual Ware Christmas For Kids program for the 2023 holiday season.

They are requesting financial assistance to help them fulfill the needs of the children of Ware, and

all assistance is greatly appreciated. The program is for infants through children aged 12.

The program recognizes all holiday observances.

Monetary donations may be dropped off at the Ware Police Department at 22 North St., or

may be sent to Ware Christmas For Kids, c/o Ware Police Department, 22 North St., Ware, MA 01082.

Darlene Gildert is the program coordinator, and she can be reached at 413-967-3571, extension 327.

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The ties that bind

Author journeys through 175-year history of family sash

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

BARRE – Paula Grandpre Wood has been studying genealogy since she was a teenager, following the connecting thread that weaves her family together, generation after generation; the Ceinture Fléchée.

Also known as the Arrow Sash, this 175-year old sash has been passed through her father's family for six generations. It was wrapped around the men over their fur coats in Canada.

"This all began in 2012 when I had this obsession," Grandpre Wood said of determining the sash's origins. This obsession led her to travel with friends to Quebec, Canada, her family's start in North America, and to write her first book.

"The Long Walk Home with the Ceinture Fléchée: The Arrow Sash," chronicles the journey of the sash, Grandpre Wood's family, and her own spiritual journey.

"The story starts with my ancestors, which I was blessed to have all the way back to the 1500s," she said.

Taking the sash with her, Grandpre Wood traveled to where her seven times great-grandfather was indentured to the governor as a servant for a three-year contract.

After finishing the term of his contract, Grandpre Wood's ancestor was given land, and put down permanent roots. That land is now the Canadian shrine to Our Lady of the Cape.

Grandpre Wood said her ancestors had arrived in New France (Canada) after having to flee La Rochelle, France. Her ancestors also converted to Catholicism when they arrived in the new world.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I think I'd be looking for my ancestors in Quebec cemeteries," she said.

Grandpre Wood wondered what it must have been like for her ancestors, as they left everything they knew and loved to travel to an unknown place.

"What would you do to save your family? We're seeing that today, what happened in Ukraine,



The author's great-grandparents Domina and Albina are shown with their 11 children.

Israel, Gaza...where do you go with your families? Where do you take your families for a better life, even if you have to give up everything you love?" she asked.

The sash now belongs to her brother, but Grandpre Wood considers her self the "Keeper of the Sash," carrying it with her while she continues to find both ancestors and descendants.

Grandpre Wood said her great-grandparents had to uproot and move once again after they lost their farm, bringing all 11 children to Central Falls, Rhode Island where their cousins lived.

The family lived in a tenement house, just as Grandpre Wood did growing up in Central Falls.

The journey of the sash runs parallel to Grandpre Wood's spiritual journey, leading her to reclaim her faith.

"After being away from the Catholic church for 35 years, I had a call to return to the church," she said. "Never did I think I'd be including myself in the book...my story and my return to the Catholic church and my ancestors' story. What I found out in the end, as I kept bringing the sash to different places, they kept praying for me. It's about spirituality; mine and theirs."

When she's not exploring her family's history, Grandpre Wood enjoys spending time with her husband of 41 years, Mike, and their three dogs. She is also actively involved in the church, as a member of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish.

Prior to her retirement two weeks ago, Grandpre Wood worked as a physical therapist for 37 years at Quality Physical Therapy in Sturbridge and its satellite office at the Listening Wellness Center in Barre.

"For 22 of those years I lived

Author and Barre resident Paula Grandpre Wood stands with her book display during the Autumn Fair.

in Barre," she said. "I think of the thousands of people that I've met over the years. I love the work that I was able to do for all those years and the people I got to meet, it's incredible."

One of the people Grandpre Wood met during her time as a physical therapist, is Laura Dusha Nelson, the outgoing executive director of the Listening Wellness Center.

"I read the book, because I know Paula, she's been my physical therapist," Dusha Nelson said. "I honestly couldn't put it down. I wanted to hear what the next thing was...people who love history are going to love it, and people who know Paula are going to love her journey."

When asked if she had plans to continue writing, Grandpre Wood said "it's not over yet."

"The sash always takes me to new places and challenges me to go a bit further," she said.

About 'The Arrow Sash'
"The Long Walk Home with the Ceinture Fléchée: The Arrow Sash" is available through Amazon and Barnes and Noble.



Paula Grandpre Wood wears the sash at a cemetery.



The sash is wrapped around a family headstone in Saint-Liboire, Quebec, Canada.



Paula Grandpre Wood is shown hiking with one of her dogs.

Grandpre Wood will also be at Saint Francis of Assisi Parish Christmas Open House at St. Joseph's Church, South Street,

(adjacent to the Listening Wellness Center) on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information about the

book or author, visit paulagrandprewoodsash.com.

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WARE Holiday Flair



Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette

Mark Lagioniere puts lights on a Christmas tree.

FLAIR from page 1

Cars must enter Upper Church Street coming from the direction of Route 32. No cars will be allowed to enter the park coming from the direction of downtown.

The Quaboag Connector will provide free rides for those without vehicles, staging in front of the old Church Street school, across from the park entrance.

Donations will be accepted at the drive-thru, but are not necessary for this free, community event.

Volunteers are needed to help set up the morning of the event, starting at 9 a.m. If anyone would like to volunteer, they can contact Kathy Deschamps 413-519-9815.

If anyone would like to donate to help support the event, checks made to "Ware Holiday Flair" can be mailed to the Town Hall, c/o Stuart Beckley, 126 Main St., Ware, MA 01082.



Nicole Croteau prepares wreaths to be hung on the Town Hall.

Volunteers brought "season's greetings" to Main Street.



Ornaments bearing the names of loved ones decorate the Christmas tree at Veterans Park.



A volunteer works to connect the large Christmas Tree at Veterans Park.



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Quabbin History Calendar available for holiday shopping

WARE – Local author J. R. Greene will be at the Young Men's Library, 27 Main St., on Monday, Nov. 27 at 6 p.m. to sign and sell his annual Quabbin History Calendar.

He will give a short talk about some of this year's subjects before the signing.

If you can't make it to the library that day, there are some calendars and a few of his books

on sale at the Checkout Desk now through Christmas. For more information, please call 413-967-5491.

Greene is also selling his calendars at Junction Variety in Thorndike, Quaboag Books in West Brookfield and Mimi's Coffeehouse in Hardwick. He will host a program at the Palmer Public Library on Tuesday, Dec. 12.

Meeting discusses Patrill Hollow Dam removal

HARDWICK – Members of the public are invited to learn about MassWildlife's plans to remove the Patrill Hollow Dam, located within Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area, on Wednesday, Nov. 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the Myron E. Richardson Municipal Building, 307 Main St.

MassWildlife, Patrill Hollow Dam has outlived its original purpose and is in poor condition. Removing this aging dam will improve water quality and aquatic habitat, restore natural river flow, and reduce the potential risk of flooding.

For more information about the project, visit mass.gov/patrillhollowdam.

Patrill Hollow Dam Removal Public Informational Meeting

MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) is inviting the public to an informational meeting on **November 29, 2023** from **6:30 to 8:00 p.m.** at the Myron E. Richardson Municipal Building 307 Main Street, Gilbertville, MA.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the proposed Patrill Hollow Dam Removal project in the Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area. The Project Team will be available to answer questions and to seek input on the project. Please contact Todd Olanyk todd.olanyk@mass.gov with questions or requests for accommodations.



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Gavin Sawabi and Ben Torres descend on an Oriole receiver with this double team pass defensive maneuver.



Turley photos by Jack Cascio NEAPsmugmug.com

Kyle Safford scans the turf as he looks toward the uprights.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com Hunter Griswold runs through traffic.

Smith Voke gets revenge on Pioneers

NORTHAMPTON – On Nov. 10, the Pioneers football team traveled to Northampton for a non-playoff game against Tri-County opponent Smith Vocational. Pathfinder had a 19-7 win over Smith Voke in Week 8. This time, the Pioneers were not so lucky, falling 32-26. With the defeat, Pathfinder is 4-6 heading into this Thanksgiving's game against Belchertown.

LEFT: Hunter Griswold drops back for a pass attempt.



Nicholas Pfister runs down the field.



Dustyn Cook kicks off.

Following playoff loss, Ware rebounds in Week 10

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARE —The non-playoff football game between the Belchertown Orioles and the Ware Indians featured two teams looking to get back into the win column following losses in the state tournament six days earlier.

The Indians, who lost at home to Randolph, 3-0, in a Division 8 tournament game on November 3, scored seven touchdowns enroute to a 48-14 victory on a foggy night at Veteran's Field on Nov. 9.

"I'm very proud of my players, especially the seniors, who were able to win the final game of the season on this field," said Ware head coach Mike Fazio. "We put a lot of effort into making the state playoffs every year and you're always worried about how the players are going to respond following a playoff loss. We responded very well in tonight's game."

The seniors listed on the Ware football roster are Jacob Witt, Kyle Gordon, Ayden Young, Noah Fales, Dominic Guardino, Kyle Safford, and Talan Molina.

"The seniors have done a lot of hard work in building our culture during the past couple of years," Fazio added. "They were my first group of players who put a lot of time in the weight



Ben Torres is in control as he makes a reception.

room, and it has paid off. We're now hoping to win our final game against Quaboag."

The home victory improved Ware's overall season record to 9-1. If they're able to defeat Quaboag on the night before Thanksgiving, the Indians will reach ten wins for the first time since 2017. They finished with a 10-1 mark that season.

The Indians have also won the last

three meetings on the gridiron against the Orioles. They squeaked out a 28-20 win in another non-playoff home game a year ago.

While Safford and Molina each scored a rushing touchdown in this year's meeting against the Orioles, sophomore Jadrien Berthiaume led the way offensively with four rushing

Please see **WARE**, page 10



Anthony Quartarone tries to get away from the sideline.



The Panthers were not able to make the tournament this season.

PANTHERS FINISH FALL SEASON

BARRE – It was a tough season for Quabbin boys soccer as the Panthers went 3-12-2 overall. The Panthers would not make the state tournament or the Central Mass. Tournament and finished their season on Oct. 28 with a 1-1 tie against Quaboag Regional.



Quabbin's final game was held at Quaboag High School.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Jenkins Miller clears the ball with pressure coming.



Colin Harmon advances up the field with the ball.

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Cougars fall to Northbridge

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARREN—Prior to last Friday night's non-playoff game, Northbridge High School and Quaboag Regional had never faced each other on the gridiron.

Ken LaChapelle, who's wrapping up his 46th season as the Northbridge varsity football coach, entered the contest with 392 career victories. He moved a step closer to reaching the 400-win milestone after guiding the Rams to a 34-13 road win over the Cougars.

"It was nice to come here for the first time and get a win," said LaChapelle, who's the all-time winningest high school football coach in Massachusetts. "We've had an up and down year, so this is a very important win for us. I'm just hoping that we can find our way back home now."

While Quaboag head coach Dave Shepherd doesn't know LaChapelle very well, he did enjoy coaching against him for the first time.

"He's a great football coach," Shepherd said. "It was a lot of fun coaching against him for the first time. We just didn't play our best game of the season tonight."

Shepherd is also a veteran football coach. He spent the first four years of his high school football coaching career at Amherst Regional. He then coached football at Ware High School for nine years and this is his 15th season at Quaboag.



Tyler Withers leaps high to grab this pass.



Bryce Douglas eats up yardage on this run.

"Overall, this is my 28th year coaching high school football," he said. "I certainly won't be coaching as long as coach LaChapelle."

The Rams headed back to the Blackstone Valley with a 5-5 overall record, the Cougars, who had won their previous two games, fell to 6-4.

After winning the coin toss and electing to receive the opening kickoff, the Cougars offense started the first series of the game at their own 37.

On the first down play, senior running back Tyler Withers dropped the direct snap from center. After picking up the ball, Withers sprinted down the right sideline before being tackled from behind at the ten yard line by Northbridge senior Zach Tevepaugh.

Two plays later, sophomore

Please see **COUGARS**, page 11

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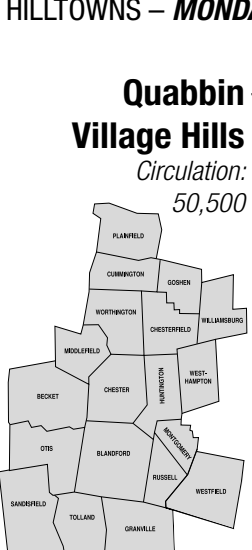
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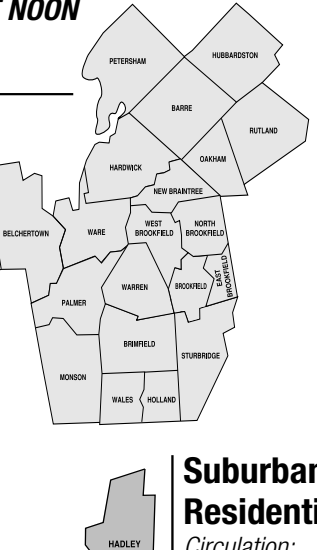
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CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00
23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

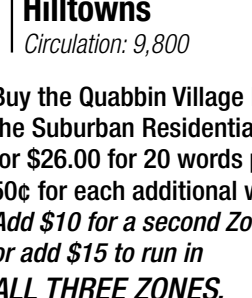
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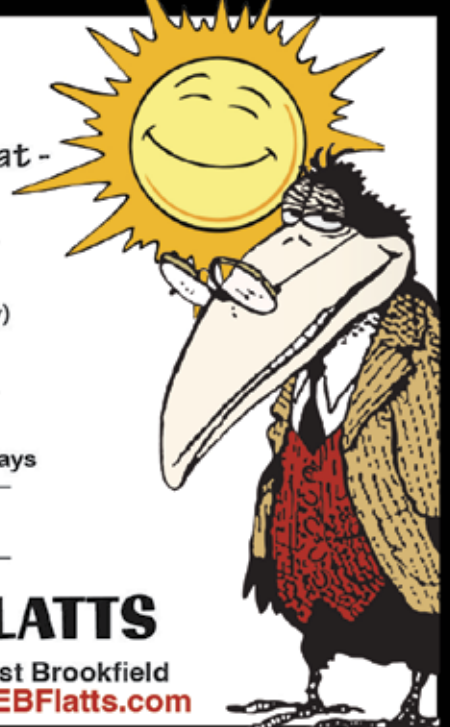
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