

# WARE RIVER NEWS

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## School Committee hears concerns about consulting firm

By Paula Ouimette  
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WARE – School Committee member Chris Desjardins asked Superintendent Dr. Michael Lovato how long the school district would be working with Clark Consulting to provide coaching and profes-

sional development to its staff.

At the Jan. 8 meeting, Lovato said the plan was for three years, and they are currently about a year and a half into it.

Lovato said in the surveys he's received from the teachers about Clark Consulting, there isn't the same negative feedback that has been voiced in recent School

Committee meetings.

"Through the meetings I have had with union leadership, Clark Consulting was not a major topic in any of those," Lovato said. "I haven't had specifics from the union leadership on what they're concerned with."

Lovato said in conversations he's had with individual teachers,

the feedback has been mixed, but he doesn't have any negative feedback in writing. He said he suspended the services from Clark Consulting after hearing complaints from the community and concerns about the cost of the services.

He said he was hoping to discuss these concerns with the union

leadership.

"I do think it's imperative that I get that information and that we actually have those conversations," he said.

School Committee Vice-Chair Aaron Sawabi said he needs more information before making any decision about whether or not the school district should continue to

work with Clark Consulting.

Lovato said he can send out another anonymous survey to the teachers and sit down with union leadership to hear concerns directly. He invited the union leadership to work with him to develop the survey.

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 3

## Nicholas Bousquet receives Michael H. Deslauriers Scholarship

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
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WARE – Members of AMVETS Post 2577 met in the hall of the American Legion to present a \$1,000 scholarship to a Ware college student.

The scholarship is given in memory of Michael H. Deslauriers who passed away at age 40. Although Michael was born with spinal bifida, he never let his physical challenges interfere with his true passion in life, music.

He shared his musical ability and trumpet skills with the community at large events and especially with veterans. He played "Taps" at numerous veteran's funerals and as a member of the Ware Community Band, performed for the town's Memorial Day and Veterans Day exercises.

The scholarship is presented every year to a Ware resident,

Please see **BOUSQUET**, page 3



Nicholas Bousquet, center, was the recipient of the Michael H. Deslauriers Scholarship.

Turley Photo by Ryan Drago

## SB accepts Town Admins contractual request

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
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HARDWICK – The Select Board met on Jan. 13 to discuss the contractual request of the Town Administrator.

Back in December, Town Administrator Justine Caggiano made a contractual request to have her pay increased \$5,000 to the amount of \$90,000. The Select Board tabled the discussion until this meeting on Jan. 13 and conducted an evaluation on her performance as Town Administrator.

Select Board members Kelly Kemp, Eric Vollheim and William Tinker shared their comments and evaluations with Caggiano regarding her performance as the Town Administrator and had very positive feedback to share.

Please see **HARDWICK**, page 6



## Martinez formally appointed as Fire Chief

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
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WARE – The Selectboard formally appointed interim Fire Chief James Martinez to serve in that role permanently, following the completion of the assessment center and test.

"Chief Martinez did wonders on the test," Town Manager Stuart Beckley said at the Jan. 7 meeting. "Really high scoring."

Martinez has been serving as the interim fire chief since January of 2023, following the retirement of Fire Chief Christopher Gagnon at the end of 2022.

Please see **WARE BOS**, page 8



James Martinez was formally appointed as the town's permanent Fire Chief at the Jan. 7 Selectboard meeting. He has been serving as interim Fire Chief since the beginning of 2023.

## Parks Commissioners meet with volunteers about playground

By Paula Ouimette  
Editor  
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WARE – The Parks and Recreation Commission met with volunteers from the community to discuss efforts to revitalize the Robert Beaugard Memorial Park, which is located behind the Reed Municipal Pool off Route 9.

Volunteer coordinator Adrienne Clark told the commission at the Jan. 6 meeting that she decided to do something after reading complaints on social media about recent vandalism at the park. She said she decided to form a community action group to "see if people are willing to take action rather than complain."

She talked about a recent meeting she held at the Ware Library

with those interested in volunteering, and the positive response she received. She said there were ideas shared about seeking grants and state earmarks and keeping in line with the playground's firefighter theme.

"There's an interest and want for the community to be involved," Clark said.

Clark said she will be attending

a site visit to the park with commission members, Parks Manager John Piechota and Town Manager Stuart Beckley.

Commission Chair William Imbier said the commission members are eager to work with the volunteers to make improvements at the park.

Please see **VOLUNTEERS**, page 6



Volunteers have been focusing on revitalizing the Robert Beaugard Memorial Park, also known as Ware Dreams Come True playground.



Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette

The Downtown Improvement Committee continues to look at ways to revitalize and bring commerce to Main Street.

## Committee works to revitalize downtown

By Abby McCoy  
Correspondent

WARE – At the Downtown Improvement Committee's meeting on Jan. 6, community leaders gathered at the Town Hall to discuss the progress of ongoing projects and address key issues facing the town's business district.

Led by Chair Dennis Craig, the meeting covered a broad range of topics, from future events to infrastructure improvements and strategies to attract more businesses to Main Street.

One of the highlights of the meeting was a reflection on the success of the 2024 fireworks display. The event, which took place in August, attracted approximately 1,500 attendees and raised \$18,000, thanks to the generous contributions of 40 major donors and several smaller supporters.

The committee acknowledged that while a majority of the funds raised went toward covering the event's fireworks display costs, the event was a resounding success. With plans already in motion for the 2025 fireworks

display, the committee is hopeful that this beloved event will return in the second weekend of August and draw even more community engagement.

The discussion then turned to Ware's ongoing beautification efforts. Currently, the town is displaying holiday banners, which will be taken down in mid-January and replaced by historical banners showcasing significant landmarks and sites around the town. These historical banners will remain in place until mid-April.

The committee also discussed plans to purchase new banner poles capable of hanging multiple banners at once, allowing more veteran banners to be displayed throughout the downtown area.

Additionally, the committee clarified that it is not guaranteed that a veteran's banner will be displayed every year. However, individuals who have previously purchased a veterans banner can opt to rerun it for a \$40 donation

Please see **REVITALIZE**, page 7

**Grand Opening!**  
~January 22~

**HANNA'S ON MAIN**  
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Open Wednesday - Saturday Lunch and Dinner  
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# SPORTS

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## Indians take early lead, down Palmer

Brodie Koczur drives to center court.

WARE – Last Monday night, Ware’s defense had a great first half, even limiting Palmer to a free throw in the second quarter, and used that momentum to cruise to a 56-43 win at home. In the win, Brady Guimond had 24 points to lead all scorers. Jack Gaudreau had 16 points. Ware is now 6-2 on the regular season. The Indians will take on Renaissance School on Jan. 17 at 7 p.m. The Indians defeated Renaissance earlier this season.



Jason Mumper brings the ball down.



Turley photos by Jack Cascio NEAPsmug mug.com

Owen McKeever sees an opening at midcourt.



Ben Torres goes for this jumper.

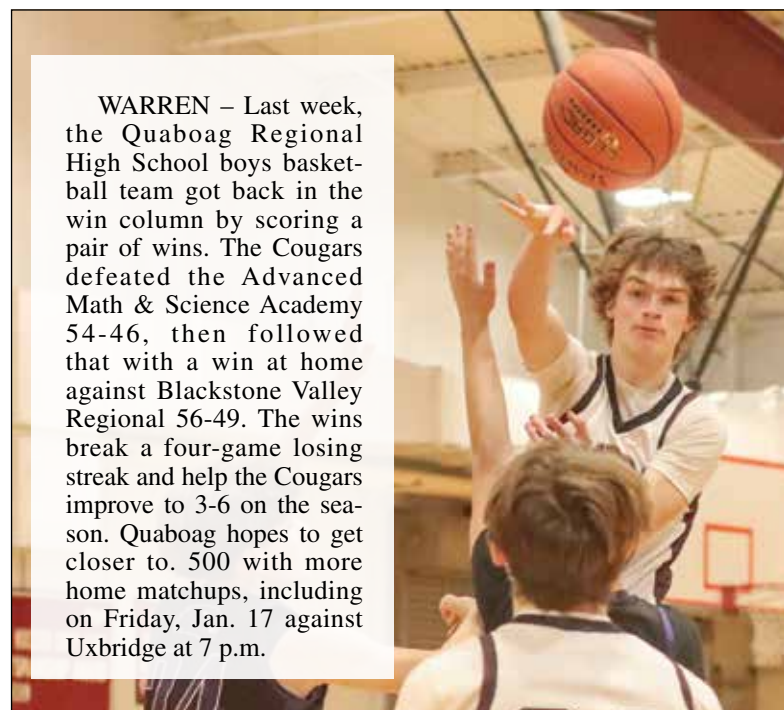


Justin Grout readies for a bank shot.



Jack Gaudreau gains height over this Panther, to hit the jumper.

## Cougars get back in win column



Isaac Cowher rises well above the fray to deliver this pass.

WARREN – Last week, the Quabog Regional High School boys basketball team got back in the win column by scoring a pair of wins. The Cougars defeated the Advanced Math & Science Academy 54-46, then followed that with a win at home against Blackstone Valley Regional 56-49. The wins break a four-game losing streak and help the Cougars improve to 3-6 on the season. Quabog hopes to get closer to .500 with more home matchups, including on Friday, Jan. 17 against Uxbridge at 7 p.m.



Turley photos by Jack Cascio NEAPsmug mug.com

Jacoby Labillois dribbles to center court.



Reilly Comptois completes this jumper.



Turley photo by Gregory A. Scibelli  
Jacoby Dilling looks for a path to the hoop.

## Panthers beat Gardner for second time

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

BARRE—The seniors listed on the 2024-25 Quabbin boys’ varsity basketball roster were freshmen the last time that the Panthers swept the season series against the Gardner Wildcats.

The first meeting of this winter between the two rivals took place at the Gardner Holiday Tournament on December 28. The Panthers built a large first half lead in the first round game and coasted to a 53-34 victory.

The Wildcats made the trip south to Barre last Friday night. Following a very close opening half, the Panthers pulled away in the second half en route to a 67-49 win in front of a large home crowd,

which included the school’s outstanding pep band.

“It’s always a hard fought battle whenever we face Gardner,” said Dennis Dextradeur, who’s approaching his 400th career win as the Panthers boys’ varsity basketball coach. “We’re very fortunate to be able to beat them twice this season. They’re an extremely well coached team and they have a couple of outstanding players. It was a festive atmosphere here tonight with the pep band and this was a very big win for us. It was a great night for Quabbin basketball.”

The last time that the Panthers (6-2) won both games against the Wildcats (5-4) was during the 2021-22 regular season. The two squads have split during the past

couple of years.

Four of the five Quabbin starters reached double digits in scoring in the home victory against the Wildcats.

The senior duo of Kyle Clark and Quinn Geary posted double-doubles.

Geary scored eight of his 13 points during the first half, and he pulled down 12 rebounds. Eleven of those rebounds came at the defensive end of the court.

Clark finished the game with 11 points and 11 rebounds.

Sophomore Jacoby Dilling led the way offensively for the home team with 19 points. He scored nine points in the first half and added ten more after half-

Please see **PANTHERS**, page 13



Liam McGrath drives towards center court.



Jacob Toomey is determined to drive through this defense.

## Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago  
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### Tuesday Night Commercial Elks League

PALMER – The Commercial Elks League is more than halfway through their second round of the 2024-2025 candlepin league season.

As of Jan. 7, The Daft Kings are reigning in first place with 16.5 wins and 7.5 losses. Last in Line is in second place with a record of 14-10. Team BK are in third place with 13.5 wins. Compression is in fourth place with a record of 11-13. The Mailmen are in fifth place at 10-14 and the Gutter Mouths are at 7-17.

This past Tuesday night at Diamond Junction Bowling Lanes, Last in Line bowled against The Mailmen. In game one, Last in

Please see **CANDLEPIN**, page 12

## Pioneers cruising toward state tournament slot

PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder girls basketball tacked on two more victories, scoring wins over St. Mary’s and Hampden Charter School of Science. The Pioneers defeated St. Mary’s at home 49-37 last Tuesday, then went

on the road to Chicopee and beat Hampden Charter soundly 50-24. With the wins, Pathfinder is now 6-1 on the season and look to continue the momentum on Jan. 16 when they play at Westfield Technical Academy at 6 p.m.



Addison Doktor goes for a shot.



Taylor Allen starts her way down the court.



Ciara Green keeps her dribble away from the opponent.



Greenly Lagimiere attempts a three-pointer.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Megan Clark goes for the free throw.