

The Journal Register

SERVING PALMER, MONSON, BRIMFIELD, HOLLAND & WALES

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com May 7, 2026 | Vol. CLXXV, No. 15 | \$1.00 www.journalregister.turley.com

PALMER

Supt. presents report on school calendar

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – The recent School Committee meeting featured a Superintendent’s Report that focused on the nuances of the School Calendar.

Superintendent Matthew Francis presented his report to the committee at its meeting on April 15. The presentation went over the processes and procedures involved in creating the School Calendar, and aimed to dispel any misunderstandings or misinformation about it.

Francis said that the dates are not picked arbitrarily, but have to follow certain regulations regarding students aged six and up.

“I wanted to go through it because, in years past, we have put forward the calendar, approved the calendar, but have not devoted enough information to go out to the general public on how it’s created,” Francis said.

Francis said that the pro-

REPORT | page 12

MONSON



Special Olympics Pep Rally big hit at MHS

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

student body attended the 45-minute rally to honor the Special Olympians.

“It was truly a memorable day for our Special Olympians, and our students were tremendously supportive,” said Physical Education Teacher Eric Degnan.

MONSON – On Friday, May 1, the regional Special Olympics were held in the school district, following a pre-emptive pep rally at the high school.

Last Thursday, April 30, the high school held its second annual Special Olympics Pep Rally for the school’s nine participants in the Special Olympics. The rally featured nearly 200 posters to decorate the walls of the gymnasium, and the entire

The school held a pep rally for the Special Olympians for the first time last year, holding it on the day leading up to the Special Olympics, which are hosted by the district.

“There are nine Special

RALLY | page 8



Submitted Photos
Top photo, Eric Degnan stood behind the podium, while the Monson Mustang cheered on. Above, the Monson Mustang gave Ryan C. a high hoof.

PALMER

ConCom approves healthcare center addition

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – This week, the newly restructured Conservation Commission held two public hearings.

The May 5 meeting began with Elizabeth O’Connor introducing herself as Acting Chair as of Donald Blais’s recent resignation.

The commission held two public hearings, first for a Request for Determination for the demolition of a mobile home, and then to continue the hearing on the proposed construction of an addition to the healthcare center.

O’Connor took time during the meeting to highlight that there are two vacancies on the commission

and read Conservation Agent Jessica Ladin’s vacancy announcement.

“Are you passionate about protecting Palmer’s wetlands and natural resources? This is your chance to make a real difference in our community.”

Interested parties can email a Letter of Interest to Town Manager Brad Brothers at BBrothers@TownOf-

Palmer.com, and any questions about the commission can be answered by Ladin, either by calling her at or sending an email to JLadin@TownOfPalmer.com.

Shearer Street
The second hearing was the continuation for the Notice of Intent for Palmer Healthcare Center at 250

CONCOM | page 7

PALMER



Submitted photo
Pathfinder Superintendent Eric Duda (left) shakes hands with Governor Maura Healey at the press conference in Marlborough.

Pathfinder receives record-breaking grant to expand opportunities

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

campus.
Superintendent Eric Duda described the award as a transformational moment for the district.

PALMER – Pathfinder Regional School District has been awarded a monumental \$3.5 million grant from the state.

Last week, Superintendent Eric Duda attended the official announcement event and press conference in Marlborough that was hosted by Governor Maura Healey to announce the funds being awarded to Pathfinder. The funding will support the expansion of 150 Career Technical Education seats, and the repurposing of the former Cold Spring School in Belchertown as an expanded

“This \$3.5 million award is truly game changing for Pathfinder Tech,” Duda said. “We are about to embark on the largest expansion in the history of our school district, and we are honored to receive the largest grant award ever awarded to Pathfinder Tech.”

The new campus in Belchertown is scheduled to open in September of this

GRANT | page 12

THREE RIVERS



Photos by Marcelo Gusmão
The Brotherhood of Three Rivers Fire Department filled the room at Villa Rose, (back row, from left) Chris Bergeron, Kevin Jusko, Dan Daigle, Matt Lemieux, Ben Duby, Jody Santos, Chris Geoffrion, Terry Hawk, Dan Moore, Mike Matthews, Ted Bock, Pat O’Connor, Erin Sullivan, Phil Dalessio, and (seated) Pete Shabot, John Sasur, Richard Pobieglo, and Francis Sullivan.

Three Rivers Firefighters reunite for annual dinner

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

THREE RIVERS – This past Saturday, the Brotherhood of the Three Rivers Fire Department held their annual reunion dinner, where former and retired firefighters were invited to eat, share stories,

and socialize with long-time friends.

The dinner was held May 2 at 6 p.m. at Villa Rose Restaurant, where a delicious meal of fish, chicken, and beef was served to the gathered fire-fighters. The old colleagues had lively conversations, as the former fire-fighters recounted old stories

about accidents and mishaps in the workplace, and of the many faces that have come through the department over the years.

“What this is, it’s a family reunion,” said coordinator Mike Matthews.

Matthews started the tradition five years ago. He sends over 50 letters to past

firefighters, and regularly gets about 35 attendees.

The dinner is about promoting brotherhood among the firefighters, and is limited to people who served at the Three Rivers station, and their families. The department previously held family

REUNITE | page 11



sports@turley.com

@turleysports

facebook.com/turleysports

SPORTS

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

sports.turley.com

BASEBALL

Warriors pick up shutout win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

FISKDALE – The Belchertown and Tantasqua varsity baseball teams have qualified for the Division 3 state tournament in each of the past four seasons.

As May began, both teams found themselves with records below .500, raising

uncertainty about their ability to secure a spot in this year's state tournament.

The Warriors celebrated a 6-0 non-league victory against the Orioles at Emrich Field, last Friday afternoon.

"We're a young and inexperienced team this season, so this is a very big win for us," said Tantasqua head coach Jon Leroux. "We began the

season slowly. Our starting pitchers needed to learn how to consistently throw strikes. We've played very well this week, and I think we're now heading in the right direction."

The Warriors, who also defeated the Orioles the past two years, had 4-8 overall record following the only meeting of this season.

Tantasqua's turnaround began at the beginning of last week. They were trailing Millbury, 7-2, before making a late comeback. They wound up losing that game by the final score of 7-6. Two days later, the Warriors outslugged Auburn, 16-13, in a road win.

"We made an outstanding

WARRIORS | page 10

LACROSSE



Brennan Peterson makes a throw on the run.

SOFTBALL

Mustangs get by Belchertown

MONSON – Last Tuesday afternoon, Monson High School softball defeated visiting Belchertown 8-5 in a good battle between the two schools. Monson did more of its scoring early in the game, getting out to a 7-2 lead. Belchertown made a

push in the fifth inning, scoring three runs, but Monson was able to prevent any further damage to get the win. Belchertown got a hit and two RBI from Kina Roy. Sophia Mitus scored a pair of runs and had a hit. Monson was led by starting pitcher

Chelsea Hull, who had a three-hit, four runs scored game. She also pitched a complete game. Monson is now 10-5 on the season while Belchertown fell to 9-4.

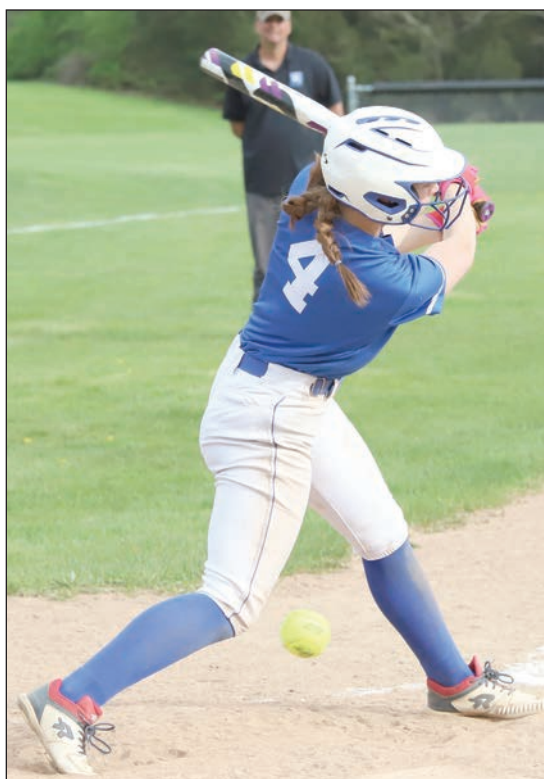


Monson's Chelsea Hull fires a pitch home.



Mia Cancel makes a throw to second.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Mai Uliana fouls off a pitch.



Madelynn Caron tries to make a catch.

Boys lacrosse keeps winning

MONSON – Last Saturday afternoon, Monson got another big win, defeating visiting McCann Tech 15-1 to improve to 8-3 on the season. Monson has also won five straight games with some tough challenges coming through in the next two weeks. Monson will make the state tournament, but will be fighting to also get into the small Western Mass. tournament that will be held prior to states. Monson will face Saint John Paul II on Saturday, May 9 at 1 p.m. on the road.



Kyle Beaudry reaches out to get the loose ball.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Parker Libs holds the ball back.



Dom Menard heads up the field.



Isaac Summers gets ready to turn and fire at the goal.



Landon Couture is pursued by the opposing defense.