

# The Journal Register

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**PALMER**

## Pathfinder recognizes 45 students in NHS ceremony

By Marcelo Gusmão  
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PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School held a ceremony to recognize its inductees into the National Technical Honor Society.

The ceremony began last Wednesday, May 6, with a

procession into the cafeteria, set to “Acoustic Breeze” by Benjamin Tissot. It was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Kyle Cienciwa, graduate of the Class of 2026, followed by opening comments from NTHS Advisor Brenda Turner and Superintendent Eric Duda.

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Autumn Nagle (right) and her mother, Kristy, immortalized her achievement by the garden in front of the school.

Photo by Marcelo Gusmão

**MONSON**

## Schools celebrate diversity with Special Olympics

By Marcelo Gusmão  
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MONSON – Friday, May 1 was the annual district Special Olympics, which saw special needs students from Hampden-Wilbraham, Palmer, Belchertown, and Ludlow all gather at the Monson school campus for a day of athletics and inclusion.

The district has been hosting the regional Special Olympics for several years. Director of Special Education Colette Bidus is in charge of coordinating with the Special Olympics Committee and the other school districts.

“It’s a great day of inclusion,” Bidus said. “It really highlights all these students and the power of inclusion and empathy for students. Whatever level they’re at, kids love to participate, and they all had a great time doing it.”

Bidus talked about the work that she and the committee did to put on the event this year.

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The Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts brought flags and torches to help kick off the Special Olympics. Submitted photo

**MONSON**

## Concerns shared with school committee at meeting

By Marcelo Gusmão  
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MONSON – At last week’s School Committee meeting, members of the public and students from the schools spoke up about concerns affecting the school district.

The meeting began with the committee and the superintendent recognizing the dis-

trict’s teachers for National Teacher Appreciation Week.

“There have been some events to celebrate our teachers this week,” said Superintendent Paul Foster, “but I think you can never say thank you often enough, and our teachers do a phenomenal job.”

Foster also gave a shout out to the Parent Teacher Student Association, who provided lunch to the teachers and

wrote welcoming messages in chalk on the sidewalk on Monday.

“On behalf of the School Committee, we appreciate all of our teachers and everything that they do every day for our students,” said Committee Chair Alison Morgan. “Thank you, PTSA, for supporting and making them feel a little special this week.”

**School Budget**

Bob Lamb approached

the committee to talk about the school budget.

“It’s always a tense time every year, everybody knows that. It’s no fun for anyone here in town,” Lamb said.

Lamb compared the average dollar amount spent per student across various different towns in the commonwealth. The median, he found, was \$27,767 per student.

“Monson has 810 students, according to the De-

partment of Education,” Lamb said, “and we average \$22,827 per student, below the median number.”

Lamb noted that this is a relatively recent development, and that only a few years ago, the district was above the state average in spending per student, but has since dipped below the median line. Lamb then spoke with apprehension

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**MONSON**

## Supt. updates on evaluation evidence for Entry Plan

By Marcelo Gusmão  
Staff Writer  
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MONSON – At the School Committee meeting on Wednesday, May 6, Superintendent Paul Foster presented evaluation evidence.

School Committee Chair Alison Morgan explained that the superintendent was asked to identify priority standards when he started in the district.

“For the evaluation tool that the state provides, there are tons of standards, so the School Committee voted on specific priority standards that we wanted the superintendent to focus on,” Morgan said. “These were chosen carefully by the committee based on what we felt were the biggest needs in our district, and which we wanted Superintendent Foster to come in and prioritize.”

Foster explained that there are four standards in the Superintendent Evaluation System in the commonwealth, which include instruction-

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**THREE RIVERS**

## St. Stan’s Polish Club provides venue for local indie bands

By Marcelo Gusmão  
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THREE RIVERS – Local bands filled the Polish Club with the sound of rock music, performed by five local bands.

On Saturday, May 2, five bands were invited to perform a concert at the St. Stanislaus Polish Club. Arranged by Zack Flebotte of Propolis, the event featured Newcastle Anchorman, 3-Phase, Seven Minutes in Heaven, and Ow! Ouch!! Oowie!!! joining them for an evening of rock music.

“It was a show we put together a couple months ago,” Flebotte said. “I built a rapport with the owner, asked

for a date, then hit up the bands on Instagram. We got in contact with Ow! Ouch!! Oowie!!!, and they helped us out with reaching out to other bands so we got a five band bill.”

Of the bands that performed on Saturday, two of them, Newcastle Anchorman and 3-Phase, were from the eastern part of the state, hailing from Boston and Lowell respectively. Flebotte said that he has played in various parts of Connecticut, including Mystic and South Whitney, with bands like Singe, Xur, and Venus Teal.

“We never played with any of those bands before, but we’re happy to invite anyone

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The band Ow, Ouch, Oowie was one of the first contacted by Flebotte for the concert.

Photo by Marcelo Gusmão



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## BASEBALL

### Palmer baseball edged by Ware

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE – A decade ago, Zach Handzel won his final game as a starting pitcher for the Palmer baseball team against archrival Ware. Since becoming the Panthers varsity coach, Handzel hasn't been able to celebrate a victory in the rivalry series.

In the only meeting of the regular season between the two neighboring high schools, the Indians squeaked out a 3-2 senior night victory over the Panthers at St. Joe's Park in Thorndike on May 4.

"We didn't get the job done in tonight's game. We left a lot of runners in scoring position," Handzel said. "This has always been a huge rivalry game and the players on both teams know each other very well. I'm really hoping that we can play them during the postseason tournament."

The last time that the Panthers (8-5) defeated the Indians on the baseball diamond was in 2019. They were able to sweep the season series that spring. Joe Lombardi was the Panthers winning pitcher in both games.

The Indians had a 9-5 overall record following last week's non-league home win.

"This is a very big win for us against our rivals," said Ware interim head coach Shawn Clark. "Palmer is a very good team, but my guys came to play tonight. It was an outstanding pitcher's duel. We've lost a couple of close games this season, so it feels nice to win one."

One of the seniors listed on the Indians roster is Brady Guimond, who was the winning pitcher in his final regular season start against Palmer.

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## SOFTBALL

### Monson softball shut out by Ludlow

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Heading into last Friday afternoon's home game against Bi-County league foe Monson, Ludlow sophomore third baseman Olivia Slatton was leading her team with four home runs.

With two outs in the bottom of the fourth inning, Slatton hit her first grand slam at the varsity level. It took the pressure off freshman righthander Madison Goncalves as the Lady Lions cruised to a 7-0 shutout victory over the Lady Mustangs.

"I've hit five home runs so far this season and I have a lot of confidence at the plate right now," said Slatton, who went 2-for-4 with four RBIs against the Lady Mustangs. "It was also nice to have a

large lead because we didn't want to make another comeback against them."

When the two teams met in the season opening game at the Quarry Hill Community School softball field in Monson, the Lady Mustangs built an early 7-1 lead before the Lady Lions battled back for a 15-9 victory.

Ludlow had a 12-1 overall record and 11-1 league record following the home contest. Their only setback came at Northampton High School, 11-2, at the beginning of last week.

The Lady Lions, who'll finish the regular season in first place in the Bi-County League standings, will be competing in both the Western Mass. and state tourna-

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## SOFTBALL

### Offense explodes in Palmer softball win

PALMER – Last Thursday afternoon, Palmer High School scored 10 runs in the first inning and rode that momentum to a 19-7 win over Holyoke. Harper Brouillette had three hits with three RBI, while Hannah Roy, Jaclyn Swiatlowski, and Amhia McElreavy all had two hits each. McElreavy drove in

three runs for the Panthers. Holyoke took advantage of several errors to put up their seven runs. Grace Bechard, Zomaris Robles, and Lily DeJesus had the hits for the Knights. Palmer is 4-9 this season while Holyoke is now 8-8, needing one more win to qualify for tournament this year.



Jaclyn Swiatlowski prepares to hit.

Turley photos by Maddox Baer



Amhia Mcelreavy steals second base.



Kierra Roche leads off towards third.



Cici Reed hits a ground ball into play.



Jillian Holbrook delivers a pitch.

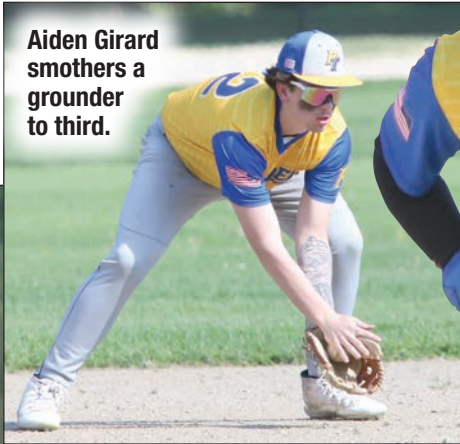
## BASEBALL

### Pioneers score first win of season

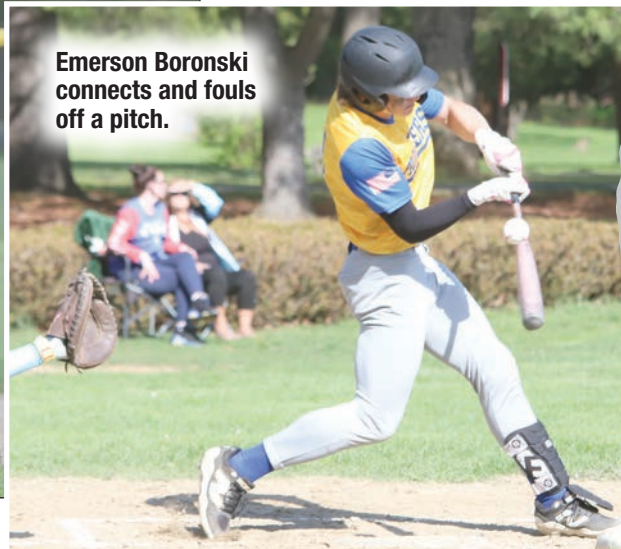
SPRINGFIELD – Last Monday afternoon at Forest Park, Pathfinder baseball defeated host Sci-Tech 14-1 for their

first win of the regular season. The Pioneers are 1-12 with just a few games remaining in the regular season.

Aiden Girard smothers a grounder to third.



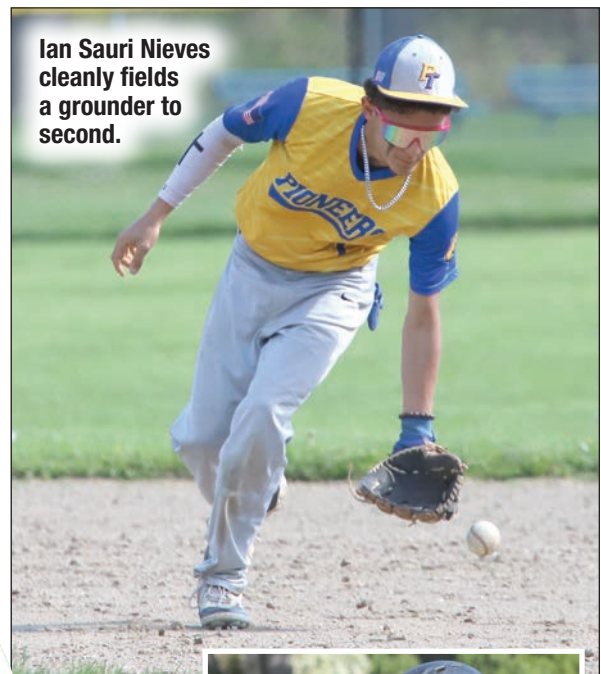
Emerson Boronski connects and fouls off a pitch.



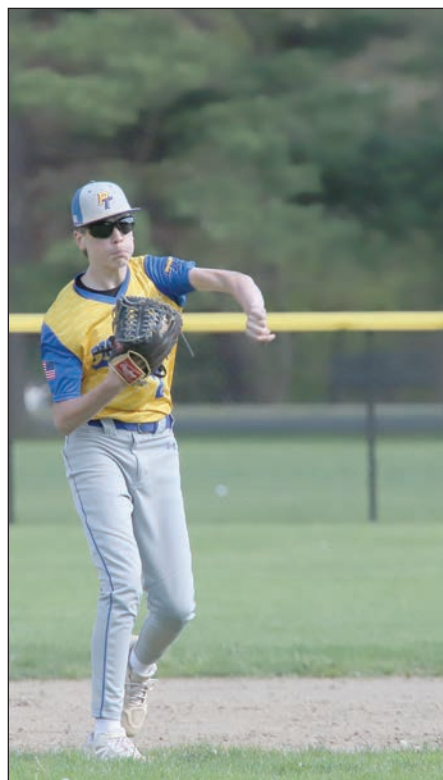
Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Dayne Shanley leads off second.

Ian Sauri Nieves cleanly fields a grounder to second.



Brody Wetnicka hustles for first base.



Zachary Smith makes a throw to first.