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PALMER

Town Council rejects opt-out

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER – This week, the Town Council revisited discussions regarding its health insurance policy and provided updates on the sales of a property on Country Lane and Converse Middle School. Property acquisitions

During the June 8 meeting, the Council revisited the bid that was recently opened for Converse Middle School. “Unfortunately, we did not receive a bid,” said Town Manager Brad Brothers, who provided confidential details from the interested vendors to the Council in Executive Session.

“We had five parties take out the Request for Proposal, of which two really showed interest,” Brothers said, “but there are some factors that they would like us to review and talk about that prohibited them from submitting a bid right now.”

The council then received an update from Director of Administrative Services Ashley Place on the Country Lane property.

“When we went to research the property further,” Place said, “we discovered the property was potentially misappropriated as property of the town.”

Place described going through the handing of deeds with her team as far back as 1911, when the parcel was broken off a larger property, and sold to the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, which has since closed.

“Since that company no longer exists, we are researching the next steps,” Place said. Brothers said that no

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GRADUATION

Pathfinder packs gym for graduation

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER – This past weekend, Pathfinder Technical Vocational High School held its graduation ceremony to an audience of close to 1,500.

Last Saturday, the families and loved ones of this year’s graduates from Pathfinder Tech gathered in the gymnasium at Belcher-town High School. This marked the first time in 51 years that Pathfinder’s graduation was moved off-campus.

“We were forced to pick a specific date this year, because Skills USA Nationals were moved and conflicted with everyone’s graduations,” said Superintendent Eric Duda, who explained that there were students flying back from Atlanta, Georgia late the night before the graduation ceremony.

The school had planned to hold the graduation on the main campus, but when the weather started to look question-

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Photos by Marcelo Gusmão
Top left, Salutatorian Destiny Rodriguez celebrated her achievements with Kenndyl Roberts and Dylan Holbrook. Top right, the proud Aliengena family walked away with a Pathfinder Tech diploma, (Melissa, Max, and Michael. Right, to support Jason Benmahidi on his graduation day, he was joined by Shawn Souza and Stephanie Benmahidi.



MONSON

State declares Innovation Career Pathways at MHS

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – Last week, ahead of the regular School Committee meeting, the Superintendent held a press conference to inform the community about new designations from the state, and upcoming opportunities through the district’s early

college partnership.

To begin the June 3 meeting, Committee Member Peter Wiggins read the district’s Mission and Vision Statement.

“The mission of the Monson Public Schools is to maximize learning by adhering to high standards of academic achievement, preparing all students to become responsible, produc-

tive global citizens,” read Wiggins. “The vision of the Monson Public Schools is to be a high-performing, nurturing, and dynamic learning environment in which the community supports the stated mission, where staff and all students are passionate life-long learners.”

The Chair thanked Kathryn Peterson for joining the committee in the interim

position. Peterson said it was “great to be back.”

“We truly appreciate you joining us,” Morgan said. “We can fill the rest of (Flynn’s) term with an excellent board member. Thank you for your time and support.”

Before going into his report, Superintendent Paul

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MONSON

School Committee revisits homework policy

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – At this week’s School Committee meeting, a discussion was held on potential changes to the school curriculums for next year.

The curriculum subcommittee met on May 26. Superintendent Paul Foster made a presentation on the proposed curriculum adoption shifts for the 2026-27 school year, including talking about the ELA curriculum, the K-5 science curriculum, shifts in math, grant applications to support curriculum adoptions, and homework expectations.

Ahead of the presentation on the changes to the curriculum, Committee Chair Alison Morgan talked about the feedback regarding confusion around the language about what is and is not considered “homework.” One concern she highlighted was that students going into sixth grade are unprepared, and it was

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HOLLAND

Trail Committee holds educational hike in Sichel Community Forest

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HOLLAND – For National Trails Day, the community was invited to an educational hike through the town’s new trails.

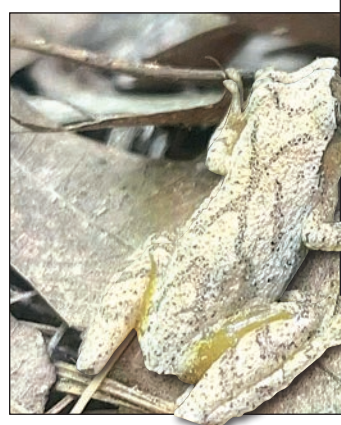
On Saturday, June 6, at 10 a.m., people from all over the area met at Stevens Brook Sichel Community Forest on Blodgett Road.

Stevens Brook Forest is a parcel surrounding Stevens Brook, the town’s pristine trout stream. Consisting of about 150 acres, it was recently acquired by the town and is available for recreational activities, with nearly four miles of well-marked trails with signs and maps to aid the user.

“We have created four miles of trails, the most popular are the Orange Trail and the Blue Trail,” said Felicia Witt from the Trail

Committee. “A few times a year since the trail system has been established, either Opacum or Norcross will put together a guided hike, so this was one of the hikes that Opacum wanted to do. A few weeks ago we did Plants of Steven’s Brook with Norcross, and they had one of their biologists come out and tell us a little about all of the plants. This hike

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Above, Dick Haller led 15 hikers along the Blue and Orange Trails through Stevens Brook Forest. Left, the hikers spotted all kinds of wildlife on their hike, ranging from birds, to frogs, to endangered turtles.

Submitted Photos



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BASEBALL

Palmer baseball knocked out of tournament

NORTHFIELD – Last Monday afternoon, Palmer High School baseball made the trip to Northfield to take on Pioneer Valley Regional High School in the Round of 32 in the Division 5 State Tournament. While the Pan-

thers grabbed leads of 2-0 and 3-2, Pioneer answered back each time, eventually tying the score 3-3 after just three innings. Pioneer then squeezed across a run in the bottom of the sixth inning for a 4-3 win over the Panthers.

The Panthers got a phenomenal effort in the game from Sebastian Mayberry. He pitched the first 5 1/3 innings and also had two hits and two runs scored for the Panthers. Palmer's season ends with an overall record of 12-8.

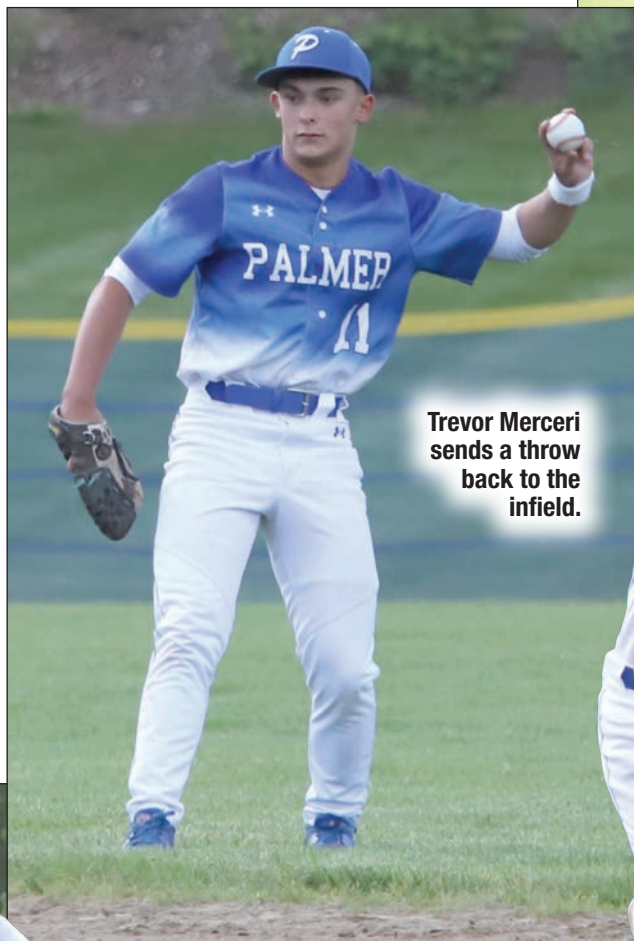


Sebastian Mayberry delivers a pitch for the Panthers.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Dylan Holbrook runs for first base after picking up a ground ball.



Trevor Merceri sends a throw back to the infield.



Theo Haley attempts to turn a double play.



Brendan Hess makes the throw to first.



Riley Prescho swings and makes contact.

SOCCER



Caleigh Foley sends a quick pass away.



Jenna Kalwa settles the ball.

Busy schedule continues for Mutiny

LUDLOW – The New England Mutiny continues double duty, playing in both the UWS and USL-W leagues. Last week, they were in action for two games, facing both the Maine Mystics in a UWS game, then followed that with a USL-W game against rival AC Connecticut. Neither final score was reported. The Mutiny were in action earlier this week against Hudson Valley and next face the Maine Footy on Saturday, June 13.



Laci Lewis turns play around.



Kendall Bodak, of Monson, tries to settle the ball.



Rachel Marchini winds up for a free kick.



Bella Meadows gets the stop.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Kayleigh Lukasik rears back for a touch.