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MONSON

Crowds flock to town for America's 250th Anniversary parade



By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – Last Saturday, July 4, the town held a massive parade to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the nation’s independence. Despite threats of rainstorms around the weekend, this Independence

Day was a bright and sunny one in town, which was perfect for the procession that made its way down Main Street. Residents from the community and its surrounding towns flocked to the town to sit and stand on the sidewalks and cheer and wave as the parade passed them.

“We are so thankful for all the support we get from the fabulous businesses in our town,” Summerfest said in a social media post. “This type of community involvement is what makes our small non-profit committee willing to put together the an-

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Residents of all ages waved to the crowd and flew the American flag on this patriotic holiday.

Photos by Marcelo Gusmão

Uncle Sam wants YOU to enjoy your Fourth of July celebrations.

PALMER

Town Council shares positive evaluation for town manager

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER – At the recent Town Council meeting, the council provided an evaluation for the work of the Town Manager. “Each year, we evaluate our Town Manager,” said Council President Barbara Barry, who explained the 1-5 scoring rubric. “We have 11

categories that we rate on. I will give the score of each counselor and then I’ll give the average of everything at the end.” Barry started with the category of Budgetary and Financial Administration, where Brothers scored an average of 3.83. In Personnel Administration, Brothers achieved an average score of 4.17. For Supervision and Leadership, Brothers scored

an average of 3.67, and in Staff Development he scored an average of 3.5. For Public Relations, Brothers was rated 4 by all the counselors, and in Employee and Labor Relations, Brothers achieved an average of 3.67. In Policy Execution, Brothers achieved an average of four, and for Interaction with the Town Council, he achieved an average of 4.5.

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MONSON

Select Board holds regular dept. meeting with police chief

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – The Select Board has started an initiative to meet regularly with department heads, starting with the Police Department. Select Board Chair Pat Oney said, “I would like to start a policy of asking a department head to come into each meeting on a rotating basis and give them an oppor-

tunity to speak to the board and for them to provide updates to our residents.” At the June 23 meeting, Chief of Police Nicholas Gasperini was the first department head to be called in to provide his updates. He asked if he had been selected based on seniority, and Town Manager Jennifer Wolowicz joked that he had been chosen based on “backwards seniority.” “(Oney) had drafted an

email and asked me to send it to the department heads,” Wolowicz said, and then read the email into the record. “I would like department heads to attend Select Board meetings on a rotating basis. This would serve several important purposes, including providing the public with a better understanding of the services each department provides, how those services are delivered, and how cur-

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MONSON

Quaboag Connector reports successful town usage

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – The Quaboag Connector is a transportation service that the town has participated in for some time now, to great success. “I am always thrilled to come to this meeting because Monson is such a wonderful supporter of the Quaboag Connector and has been for many years,” said Jen Healy, Rural Transit Program Manager at Quaboag Valley CDC. At the June 23 meeting, the Select Board met with Healy, who provided a use report for how the program she runs, the Quaboag Connector, has been used in town.

“For anyone who doesn’t know, it’s a community transportation service that operates in 10 towns, including Monson, here in the Quaboag Valley,” Healy explained. “We are a curb-to-curb service, and anybody can ride with us, it is \$2 each way at the most. We have lots of programs if that is a financial barrier.” Healy also added that all veterans ride for free, and there is a ramp or a lift for wheelchair access. To discuss the town’s use of the program, Healy provided data ranging from May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026, during which time there were

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MONSON

ZBA approves permit for motorcycle parts shop

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – At the June 25 meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals, a new business was approved to take over a building in town. Application of Nathan Plum, contract purchaser, for special permit pursuant to continue a pre-existing, non-conforming use for the operation of a light manufacturing motorcycle business at Bethany Road. The property is currently owned by Buck Ridge Real Estate, LLC. Plum was represented by John Drost of Fitzgerald Law Offices, who said Plum and his family are hoping to purchase the property with a plan to continue Plum’s current business, a motorcycle parts

manufacturing company. “(Plum) is a resident of Monson,” Drost said. “It’s a very low-impact site, he’s the only employee right now. All his deliveries are done by himself through the post office, he does not have constant trucks coming in and out of the location. The plan is to keep it that way.” Drost said Plum has operated his business for several years and has an interest in expanding, and right now is interested in bringing his business to the town. The property was described as a former cable company until the current owners, under a special permit, operated an electrical contracting business there. “This site, I believe,

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LUDLOW

Palmer to share veterans services with Ludlow

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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LUDLOW – The Town of Ludlow is set to enter into an agreement as of July 1 with the Town of Palmer to consolidate veterans services. According to the agenda for the Board of Selectmen meeting held earlier this week after press time, the Town of Ludlow, through the Board of Selectmen, was asked to approve a contract between Palmer and Ludlow to share a veterans services agent. Palmer and Ludlow are not the first two communities to have a shared veterans services agent, as

Agawam shares its veterans services with multiple communities, including Southwick. The Town of Ludlow will be the primary provider of the Veterans Services for both towns. According to the agreement proposal, services could include: Processing all Chapter 115 benefits for eligible veterans, VA claims and advocacy support, referrals to federal, state, and local resources for veterans, food pantry and

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SPORTS

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BASEBALL

Post 241 walks off against Aldenville

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE — Had Monson Post 241 shortstop Matt Santos come up with the game-winning hit against Aldenville (Chicopee) Post 337 at historic Legion Field, it probably wouldn't have meant as much to him as doing it a couple miles away at St. Joe's Ballpark in Thorndike.

The second meeting of the regular season between the two Senior Legion teams was still scoreless, entering the bottom of the seventh. With two outs and the bases loaded, Santos turned on a fastball and ripped it past the third baseman into left field, giving Monson a thrilling 1-0 walk-off victory last Wednesday night.

"The pitcher threw me a fastball. I knew I needed to get a base hit and win the game," Santos said. "It's just a great feeling. This is also the first time that I've ever won a game on this field."

Santos, who recently received his high school diploma, was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Palmer High School. He was the 2026 recipient of the Karl Oliveira Memorial Tri-County Baseball Scholarship Award.

Oliveira, who passed away in 2021, spent many summers playing baseball at St. Joe's Ballpark for the St. Joseph's Saints in the prestigious Tri-County Baseball League.

"Matt is a great kid and he's the perfect candidate to receive this year's scholarship award," said Monson manager Steve Tripp. "Karl and I were teammates on the varsity baseball team at Palmer High School. This field was his shrine. Karl probably played 1,000 games here and this is a very memorable night."

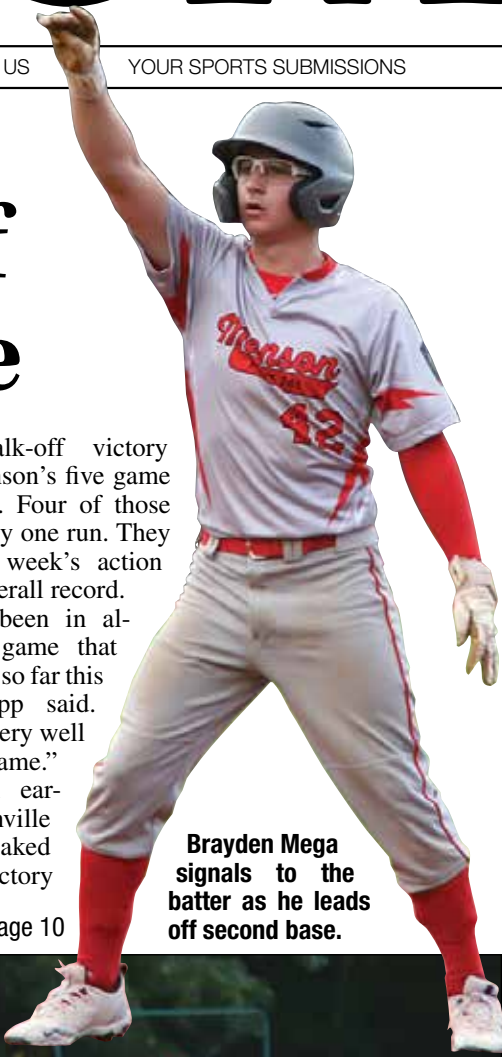
The Monson Legion baseball team normally plays their home games at Legion Field, but they were forced to move last Wednesday game to St. Joe's Park due to a scheduling conflict.

The walk-off victory snapped Monson's five game losing streak. Four of those losses were by one run. They entered this week's action with a 3-7 overall record.

"We've been in almost every game that we've played so far this season," Tripp said. "We played very well in tonight's game."

A week earlier, Aldenville (2-8-1) squeaked out a 1-0 victory

POST 241 | page 10



Brayden Mega signals to the batter as he leads off second base.



Josiel Ortiz pitches for Post 241.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

SOCCER

Pioneers, Black Rock battle to 1-1 draw

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Just when it appeared that the Western Mass. Pioneers were set to close out a 1-0 shutout victory against Black Rock FC, a late lapse gave the visitors from Nashua, New Hampshire an opportunity to score the tying goal.

Black Rock FC converted a corner kick goal during the seventh minute of stoppage time and last Friday night's USL League 2 match-up held at Lusitano Stadium ended in a 1-1 draw.

The result all but ended the Pioneers' postseason hopes, eliminating them from the USL League Two playoffs for the

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Riley Priddy dribbles up the field.



Santiago Blasco Gomez tries to keep the ball from going out.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Bankers in control following Fourth of July holiday



Brian Hungerford tries to keep a throw from getting to the outfield.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

HOLYOKE – PeoplesBank is in control of the Tri-County Baseball League once again, as the longtime playoff champions and multi-time regular season champions stand at an impressive 11-1-1 so far this season. The Bankers have 23 points for the league lead with their main rivals, St. Joseph's, tugging behind with 22 points. Teddy Bear Pools holds third place at 17 points, while Turners Falls, the Spartans, and BankESB round out the standings, all with less than 10 points. Last Monday, PeoplesBank played their only tie of the season as they battled to a 2-2 draw with the Spartans. The game was called due to darkness at South Hadley High School. Action resumed earlier this week with games scheduled on Wednesday, July 8.

MORE BANKERS PHOTOS | page 11



Jackson LaValley winds and fires for PeoplesBank.

Relics host tournament to honor John DaSilva



The four teams involved in the Silva Memorial Tournament.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

LUDLOW – On Saturday, June 20, the Western Mass Relics, a longtime softball league for senior citizens, held their John DaSilva Tournament.

DaSilva, recently passed away, and was a huge member of the league. Members of the league had a lot of positive things to say about DaSilva.

DaSilva joined the Relics after retiring from the U.S. Air Force having served 33 years, with 29 years of active duty. The day he signed up, they were in need of coaches, and he was talked into coaching. DaSilva was a coach every year he played in the league. He coached and played on the

Diamond Dawgs.

For the league, he served as the registrar, treasurer, and chairman of the Silver Division and also was responsible for field maintenance. When he wasn't at home he could be found at the field.

DaSilva was, by nature, a fixer and a problem solver

with many members. He settled many disputes. He ran the draft for picking teams in both divisions and created maintained many databases.

He, along with Pat Lombardo brought back the league's yearly picnic and the annual Christmas party. There were many donations made

for the picnic, which was a huge success with attendance and financially profitable to the Relics.

The tournament consisted of four teams looking to honor DaSilva's contributions to the league.

MORE RELICS PHOTOS | page 11



Joe Perla sends a pitch away.