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HOLLAND

Guests enjoy community health fair

By Kevin Flanders
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HOLLAND – Area residents took advantage of several resources and services offered during the seventh annual Health Fair and Vaccine Clinic.

Held on Sept. 15 at Holland Community Center, this year’s event featured more than 30 local vendors. Offerings included blood pressure tests, outreach and awareness materials, and appearances from local officials and organizations.

“We’ve gotten a wonder-

ful turnout today. Everything is right here for people to get the answers they need,” said Sanna Hart, the event coordinator at Holland Community Center.

Sponsored by the Holland Council on Aging (COA) and Holland Outreach, the event also featured a vaccine clinic. Guests had the opportunity to receive several vaccinations, including the flu shot, flu 65+, shingles, hepatitis B, Covid-19, and pneumonia vaccines.

Attendees were also able to meet District Director

FAIR | page 6



Turley photo by Kevin Flanders
Anna Randal and Emily Loscialpo provide information on Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc.

SCHOOL



Submitted photos
Above, the display is almost complete. Right, students wave to the drone flying above the field.

Granite Valley makes its mark

By Kevin Flanders
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MONSON – The Granite Valley School community came together last week for a colorful display of teamwork – made possible by each and every unique individual within the group.

On its own, a single dot

might seem insubstantial, even insignificant. But during a school-wide program held on Sept. 15, GVS students discovered that every community is strengthened by the personalities, skills, and backgrounds of its individual members.

Beneath cloudless skies at GVS, the lesson gradually took shape in the form of a slowly widening series of

concentric rings on the soccer field, each one representing a different grade level.

From above, drones operated by Monson High School video production students captured the demonstration of unity achieved through a celebration of individuality.

The project also included educators and staff members who complete the daily GVS

learning community.

“I felt this was an opportunity for us at Granite Valley to come together as a community,” said GVS Principal Serenity Greenwood. “It was important to me that all staff be included – custodians, cafeteria staff, counselors, instructional aides, office staff,

GRANITE | page 7

MONSON

A mother’s unbreakable hope

Memoir spotlights mental healthcare crisis

By Kevin Flanders
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MONSON – With the publication of her memoir, “Saving Lawrence: A Mother’s Journey of Love and Survival,” Brenda Gagne is calling attention to the struggles of everyday families amid the national mental health crisis.

Gagne’s memoir was published in May after she worked on it intermittently for a decade. Having lived in Monson for 62 years before moving to Florida last year, Gagne was a foster parent for

20 years and adopted seven children with special needs. “My husband and I also cared for aging relatives when they became sick, so I was always pushing my book to the back burner,” Gagne said.

But despite the long road to publication, Gagne remained determined to share a

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HOPE | page 16



Brenda Gagne



MONSON

Cruise for Critters raises funds for animal shelter

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – Car lovers and dog lovers alike gathered for a car show fundraiser to benefit a local animal shelter.

On Sept. 19, Westview Farms Creamery hosted the 14th annual Cruise for Critters, a cruise night to benefit Second Chance Animal Services. The event was offered free for spectators, and encouraged residents to bring their dogs on leashes to enjoy the event.

“Today, we got 154 cars,” said Al Widlan. “We have 58 vendors, which is, I think, our record in vendors.”

This year’s event also included the addition of food trucks.

Widlan organized the cruise night in loving memory of Zane, his rescue pup of 12 years. The event featured many attractions, including homemade ice cream, a vendor fair, food trucks, pumpkin picking, live raffles, a hayride and an adoption event.

Visitors were also treated to a demonstration by local

CRITTERS | page 11

SCHOOL

Pathfinder celebrates expansion with ribbon cutting

By Kevin Flanders
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BELCHERTOWN – The Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School District celebrated a major milestone last week, with a ribbon cutting ceremony at the district’s new extension campus.

On Sept. 18, local officials joined school leaders at the ribbon cutting for Pathfinder Tech at Cold Spring, the district’s new extension campus located at 57 South Main Street in Belchertown.

Massachusetts Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Pedro Martinez joined Pathfinder Tech Superintendent Eric

Duda and local legislators at the ceremony. Additional guests included State Senator Jake Oliveira and State Representatives Aaron Saunders and Todd Smola.

“Pathfinder Tech is turning opportunity into action,” Smola told The Journal Register. “This expansion means more students can get the practical education they need

to build careers, meet critical workforce needs, and give back to their communities.”

Commissioner Martinez praised the collaboration among school leaders necessary to convert the former elementary school into a vocational technical campus in only two months.

The result is an expansion of Career Technical Ed-

ucation (CTE) opportunities for students throughout the region.

“This is a tremendous day for Pathfinder Tech, for our nine member communities, and, most importantly, for the students who want access to high-quality Career Technical Education,” Superintendent Duda said. “What was accomplished here demonstrates what is possible when people come together around a common goal. We took an elementary school that was still serving students in June and, in just eight weeks, transformed it into a fully operational vocational technical campus that welcomed Pathfinder Tech students on September 1.”

The former Cold Spring School remained an active Belchertown elementary school through June 2026. The building was turned over



Pathfinder Tech leaders celebrate a major accomplishment with local officials.

Submitted photo

RIBBON | page 13



Turley photos by
Gregory A. Scibelli

Jaclyn Swiatlowski
makes her way
up the field.

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SOCCER

Lady Panthers reach draw with Chicopee

PALMER – In a back-and-forth affair, Palmer High School girls soccer ended in a 4-4 draw with Chicopee High last Monday afternoon. The Panthers would then have a 2-0 loss against Easthampton and are now 2-1-1 on the season. Palmer looks to get back on the winning track on Friday, Sept. 25 at Holyoke High School at 4 p.m.



Harper Brouillette tries to keep the ball away from an oncoming defender.



Addy Petraszewicz sends a pass away.



Aria Nompleggi goes after the 50/50 ball.



Jillian Holbrook turns to shoot.



Clara Smola chases down the ball.

SOCCER

Busy start to season for Pathfinder

HOLYOKE – It has been a busy first two weeks of the regular season for Pathfinder boys soccer. The Pioneers have already played five games, winning three of them. Last Tuesday, the Pioneers visited Holyoke High School and battled to a 1-1 tie. Following that, Pathfinder defeated PVCIC and Commerce both by 4-0 scores. Coming up, the Pioneers will host Southwick on Monday, Sept. 28 at 7 p.m. at Legion Field.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Ian Sauri-Neves tries to get by a Holyoke defender.



Ian LaPete tries to stop an attacker.



Weston Letendre and Abees Castillo-Clotter go after the ball.



Mason Ostrout lifts a long kick to the end of the field.



Christian Ribeiro looks to get around an opponent.

SOCCER

Mustangs offense scores big in win over Ware

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARE – The Monson boys' varsity soccer team's first night match of the 2026 campaign ended in a scoreless draw at Mahar Regional on Sept. 15. When they played another night game four days later at Veterans Field in Ware, there wasn't very much drama.

The Mustangs, who scored four goals in each half, got into the win column for the first time this season following an 8-0 shutout victory over the Ware Indians in a non-league match played last Saturday night.

"We've been competitive in almost all of our games this season," said Monson head coach Jared Pignone. "We were able to put it all together in tonight's game, which is a very good feeling. I'm hoping this game is the turning point of our season."

The Mustangs (1-3-1) also celebrated a 7-0 shutout

SOCCER

Pioneers get split of first two games

SPRINGFIELD – After a postponement delayed the start of the season for Pathfinder Tech girls soccer, the Pioneers got things going with two games last week. To open the regular season, Pathfinder defeated Commerce on the road in Springfield 4-2.

The next day, the Pioneers made a long trip north and suffered a 6-1 loss at Athol and are 1-1 to start the year. Coming up on Tuesday, Sept. 29, the Pioneers will host Duggan Academy at 4 p.m.



Callie Hawk overcomes an opponent and steals the ball.



Evelyn Wood makes her way up the field.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Amber Roman clashes with an opponent.



Abigail Carmody brings in a pass.



Josephine Boyko heads off the ball on defense.



Makaela Tourville starts to dribble after taking possession.