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SERVING PALMER, MONSON, BRIMFIELD, HOLLAND & WALES

# The Journal Register

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**SAFETY**

## Palmer institutes parking ban

PALMER — With the snow-fall season well underway, the town of Palmer has enacted an on-street parking ban on any municipal road longer than one hour between 1 and 6 a.m. through March 31, 2017.

According to local regulations, the police are “hereby authorized to remove to some convenient place through the agency of a person or persons in the employ of the police department or by an independent contractor any vehicle parked or standing on any part of any way under the control of the town in such a manner as to obstruct or impede in any way the removal or plowing of snow or ice.”

Parking ban information is posted on the emergency banner of the town’s website, townofpalmer.com.

Through the years, so as to address certain hardships, the town, by virtue of its authority to make or amend parking regulations, has exempted portions of certain streets from the all-night parking prohibition during normal weather conditions.

**FATALITY**

## Driver dead following traffic accident

By Wyatt Aloisio  
Staff Writer

PALMER — Investigators said a medical incident was the cause of a traffic fatality that occurred over the weekend. The name of the victim had not been officially released at presstime.

On Saturday, Feb. 11 at 4:40 a.m. on Saturday, Palmer Police and paramedics arrived at the intersection of North Main and Shearer streets in Palmer, where a car had struck a utility pole in the vicinity of Flamingo Motor Sports.

Police determined the car had been traveling south when it went through the intersection, crashing into the pole.

The occupant of the vehicle, a 62-year-old man from Three Rivers, was transported by Palmer Ambulance to Baystate Wing Memorial Hospital where he was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Workers with National Grid and Comcast arrived to the scene a short while later to replace the pole that had been heavily damaged by the crash.

Palmer Police Chief John Janulewicz said that as of Monday investigators in the case have decided that the crash was not weather-related, but the mostly likely cause was a medical episode suffered by the driver just before he crashed.

Janulewicz went on to add that the investigators did not believe drugs or alcohol were factors and that police were in the process of notifying the man’s family members.

**WEATHER**

# WINTER arrives with force



A lone snow plow makes its way down Main Street in Monson during the peak of Winter Storm Niko on Thursday morning, Feb. 9.

Towns dig out from snowfall



Joe Marinesi and his daughter Adrianna, 8, shovel the snow off the sidewalk in downtown Palmer last week.



Kristopher Ventura, owner of the Palmer Dunkin Donuts, clears a path before the establishment on North Main Street on Friday, Feb. 10.

Turley Publications staff photo by Doug Farmer & Wyatt Aloisio

By Wyatt Aloisio and  
Douglas Farmer  
Staff Writers

MONSON — Winter went from bashful to brutal across the region as two storms that bracketed the weekend snarled travel and disrupted town and school events.

Residents Monson and Palmer batted down the hatches last Thursday, Feb. 9 for Winter Storm Niko, the biggest snowstorm yet this season, which throughout the day brought well over a foot of snow to several parts of the Pioneer Valley. Palmer reported 18 inches of snow, with Monson recording a

total of 14.5 inches and gusts of up to 55 miles-per-hour.

Area supermarkets, including IGA Adams Supermarket, were packed with “preppers” the night before who stocking up for the blizzard.

Store Manager Bob Tobio said there were increased sales in items

such as bottled water and pre-cooked deli meals, but this time they were surprised to see sales of one particular item skyrocket; ice cream.

“It’s definitely a strange one that you wouldn’t expect to sell,”

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**PATRIOTS**



Turley Publications photo by Bailey Medeiros  
Monson native Bailey Medeiros had the opportunity of a lifetime, watching the Patriots score a come-from-behind overtime victory over the Atlanta Falcons at Super Bowl 51.

## Monson native touches down at Super Bowl

Pats cheerleader watched from sideline

By Wyatt Aloisio  
Staff Writer

By half time at Super Bowl 51, with her team trailing 21-3, New England Patriots cheerleader Bailey Medeiros said that workers at NRG Stadium in Houston had already loaded the confetti cannons with colors of the Atlanta Falcons.

“It was very unreal and completely nerve racking,” said Medeiros. “But we just kept a positive attitude and continued watching and cheering them on.”

By the game’s end, following a historic comeback and the first-ever overtime period in any Super Bowl, the New England Patriots were crowned as this year’s National Football League Champions, winning by a score of 34-28.

For Pats fans, both in Houston that night and elsewhere, it

was a legendary victory that Medeiros got to see firsthand.

“It was crazy,” said Medeiros. “We just couldn’t believe it. There were girls who were making snow angels in the confetti (now in Patriots colors).”

Two days later, Medeiros would return to Massachusetts joining with her fellow cheerleaders, Patriots players, team coaching staff and thousands of their fans in the city of Boston for the team’s victory parade.

Seeing the excitement on the faces of those in the crowd and throughout the city, Medeiros said it re-affirmed what she already knew; that the Patriots had the greatest fan base of any sports team in the world.

“It’s just crazy to see all of the hard work from the players and the coaching staff and everybody in the organization pay off like this,” said Medeiros.

Medeiros, a native of Monson, said that the Super Bowl vic-

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**HEALTH**

## Baystate takes precautions for flu

Restrictions, warnings given for visits

By Douglas Farmer  
Staff Writer

PALMER — Local hospital officials are concerned enough with a spike in flu diagnoses in the region that they have established restrictions on visitation as well as urged staff and patients and their families to take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus.

In an official release dated Feb. 8, Baystate Health, which oversees Baystate Mary Lane Outpatient Center in Ware and Baystate Wing Hospital in Palmer as well as several regional medical centers, pointed to an increase in confirmed cases of influenza, which had risen to about 200 positive tests in the first week of February.

Robin Walker, an infection control specialist at Wing, said that there had been 10 confirmed cases in Palmer since the beginning of the month, with an undetermined number tracked at Mary Lane, as well.

“According to Baystate Reference Labs, the number of confirmed flu cases is the highest it has been since 2014,” read the release, distributed by Baystate Manager of Public Affairs Brendan Monahan. “Baystate did not implement flu restrictions the past two years, although our inpatient oncology unit [at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield] routinely operates with higher visiting restrictions due to the unique needs and concerns of oncology patients.”

Restrictions put in place at Baystate Health facilities include asking those who have been exposed to flu to stay home; no more than two visitors per patient; no visitors under 14; washing hands before and after visiting; and wearing protective masks.

Walker pointed out that it is still possible to get a flu shot now, although it is in the height of the season.

“We had our first cases of flu around Thanksgiving, an elderly couple,” she said. “It dipped in December and then there was an uptick after the holidays which isn’t that

FLU | page 13

## Shooting for history



Turley Publications staff photo by Dave Forbes  
PALMER — Pathfinder senior Andrew Roman (23) of Monson became the third member of the 1,000-point club with a 3-pointer from the corner midway through the third quarter. Story, page 11.



# SPORTS

CLASSIC

## Roman reaches milestone mark

Third player in Pathfinder history

By Tim Peterson  
Turley Publications  
Sports Correspondent

PALMER - Pathfinder senior point guard Andrew Roman entered last Friday night's Tri-County League boys basketball game versus St Mary's of Westfield 23 points away from joining the elite 1,000-point club.

The magic moment took place with 4:22 remaining in the third quarter. After receiving a pass from senior forward Aaron Gillman in the right corner, Roman, who's an outstanding three-sport athlete, buried a 3-pointer before being swarmed by his teammates.

"It's a very special night for me and I couldn't have done it without the support of all of my teammates, I can't thank them enough," said Roman following the Pioneers 72-31 home victory over the Saints. "My teammates really helped me out a lot tonight. It's just a great feeling and I'm probably always going to remember this night."

One of Roman's teammates on both the basketball and football teams is senior center Zach Monast, who's father, John, also scored 1,000 career points at Belchertown High School.

"Being a teammate with Andrew during the past four years has been a lot of fun," Monast said. "He's a pure athlete and he's a very good team leader. This was something that he really wanted to accomplish and we're all very happy for him."

After Roman made the history making 3-pointer, the contest was stopped for several minutes. He took pictures with family members, teammates, and friends. He also took a picture with Pathfinder Superintendent Dr. Gerald Paist and Assistant Superintendent/Principal Mary Jane Rickson. Roman was also congratulated by the Saints players and coaches.



Turley Publications staff photo by Dave Forbes  
Pathfinder senior Andrew Roman (23) celebrates with teammates after hitting the milestone shot in the third quarter.

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BASKETBALL



Turley Publications staff photos by Dave Forbes  
Palmer senior Sydney LeVasseur (second from right) is pictured with (from left to right) her sister Kendall, father and mother.

## Lady Mustangs topple Palmer on road

By Tim Peterson  
Turley Publications  
Sports Correspondent

PALMER - In the eight games that the Monson girls varsity basketball team has scored 40 or more

points, they've posted a 7-1 record. When they've scored fewer than 40 points, the Lady Mustangs are 0-8.

Monson, who had failed to reach the 40 point plateau in their previous five games, which were all losses, got back on the right track again with a 43-33 road win over archrival Palmer in a Central Division matchup on Monday night. It was also the Lady Panthers senior night.

"Monson and Palmer has always been a very big rivalry game and we came out ready to play tonight," said Monson head coach Tim Pascale. "We've been talking a lot about cutting harder, setting better screens, moving the ball, and getting better shots because we've struggling offensively in our past couple of games. I'm very proud of the way that my team played in this game."

It's also the fourth consecutive year that the Lady Mustangs (7-9, 2-5), who also won the first meeting, 46-32, have swept the season series against the Lady Panthers (1-15, 0-5).

Monson is also trying to qualify for the Western Mass. Tournament for



Monson's Shannon Jalbert (5) goes up for a shot along the baseline.

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BASKETBALL

## Lady Pioneers keep tourney hopes alive

By Dave Forbes  
Turley Publications  
Sports Staff Writer

PALMER - Heading into the final weeks of the regular season, all any team wants is a chance to be able to qualify for postseason play.

The Pathfinder girls basketball team are in that position. With three games left in the regular season, the Lady Pioneers (7-10) will need to win all three contests to get in. The girls were in a similar position near the end of the regular season last year and were able to qualify for the postseason tournament with an overtime victory at Gateway.

Pathfinder kept its hopes alive for a postseason bid in the past week as they picked up a pair of wins over three games.

The week did not start well as the Lady Pioneers dropped a 49-29 decision to Putnam.

Caleena Welsh finished with a team-high 15 points. Trista Daley narrowly missed double figures as she had nine, while Tiffany Papesh had four and Emily Latulippe added one.

Pathfinder then responded with a 43-31 win over Pioneer Valley Christian.

Things did not look good early on for Pathfinder as they trailed 13-1 at the end of the first quarter. However, a strong 15-point performance in the second quarter helped the Lady Pioneers erase a 12-point deficit and

go to the locker room tied at 16-16.

The two sides remained tied at 23-23 at the end of the third quarter before the Lady Pioneers used another strong offensive performance in the fourth quarter to pull out the much-needed victory.

Welsh led all scorers with 25 points. Alijahlias Dias helped out with eight, followed by six from Trista Daley and four from Elizabeth Hamilton.

Pathfinder then wrapped up the week with a 46-23 win over Smith Voke.

Pathfinder held a comfortable 25-16 lead at the half when a combination of strong defense and easy offense helped the Lady Pioneers to a 15-0 run in the quarter to stretch their lead out to 24 points at 40-16 at the end of the third.

Welsh, who leads the Lady Pioneers in scoring, finished with a game-high 16 points. Daley also finished in double figures with 10. Dias and Papesh helped out with eight, while Alexis Denault and Hamilton each had two.

Pathfinder was scheduled to play at McCann Tech earlier this week before heading to Franklin Tech on Thursday and hosting Sci-Tech in their final game of the season on Tuesday, Feb. 21.

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BASKETBALL

## Panthers hold off feisty Rams

By Tim Peterson  
Turley Publications  
Sports Correspondent

PALMER - Following a couple of very close games, the members of the Palmer boys varsity basketball roster certainly know what it feels like to have a big target on their backs.

The Panthers, who entered last Wednesday night's Bi-County League match-up with Southwick riding a 14-game winning streak, almost watched a 10-point fourth quarter lead slip away, but they escaped with a hard fought 62-56 home victory.

"Every team that we play against the rest of the season will be shooting for us," said Palmer head coach Ryan Minns. "We haven't lost since our first game of the season and we won our 15<sup>th</sup> game in a row tonight, but we just need to start playing a little bit better."

Last Wednesday's contest was the Palmer boys basketball teams annual Coaches vs. Coaches game. They raised more than \$200 for the American Cancer Society.

The Panthers, who posted a 78-60 win over the Rams at James E. Vincent Gymnasium at the end of December, entered this week's action with a 15-1 overall record and a perfect 10-0 league record. They have posted an impressive 31-4 mark since the beginning of the 2015-2016 season.

"We're still a very good basketball team," Minns added. "My job is to get the players to match the other team's energy level and effort level,



Palmer's Drake Bucknam (11) goes up for a shot in the paint.

which hasn't been the case the past couple of games."

Junior guard Matt Niemczura, who's quickly approaching the 1,000-point plateau, led the way in the second meeting of the season with Southwick by scoring a game-high 18 points. Senior guard Ryan McCarthy, who should also be able to score his 1,000th career point before the end of the season, scored 11 of his 15 points during the second half. Senior forward Drake Bucknam also reached double figures with 10 points and sophomore forward Dylan Tenczar, who came off the bench, scored all nine of his points before halftime.

While Palmer is trying to earn the top-seed in the Western Mass. Division 3 Tournament, Southwick



Turley Publications photos by David Henry sweetdogphotos.com  
Palmer's Matt Niemczura (4) shoots a long range jumper.

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