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SERVING PALMER, MONSON, BRIMFIELD, HOLLAND & WALES

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SCHOOL

Palmer schools ban Confederate flag

Debate continues after incident

By Wyatt Aloisio
 Staff Writer

PALMER — The administration of the Palmer Public Schools has issued a ban on all articles of clothing or other items worn or displayed by students depicting the Confederate flag following an incident at Palmer High School last week.

The move resulted in emotional conversations among parents and others on social media, with comments including both support for the district's decision and opposition to the ban. Those against the ban also called the directive a move against the students' rights to free speech.

In a post made to the Palmer Public Schools Facebook page on Wednesday, Oct. 4, Palmer Public Schools Superintendent Patricia Gardner and Palmer High School Principal Sue North referenced an incident that had occurred earlier that morning involving a student wearing a bandana with the Confederate flag on it. Therefore, they wrote, all clothing, memorabilia, and other articles depicting the flag in question would no longer be tolerated in any of the schools and that swift action would be taken should any student choose to violate the policy.

Gardner and North said in the post that the incident was currently under investigation. Arrest logs from the Palmer Police Department from last week detail the arrest of a 14-year-old student at the school, who was charged with disturbing a school, disorderly conduct and assault and battery.

The two administrators said in their post that the Palmer Public Schools strive to practice tolerance and create an environment in which

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RACING

on the up



Tim Johnson, of Valatie, New York, jumps his vintage 1979 Yamaha over the crest of the hill during Sunday's championships.

Championships benefit Riders, Lions

By Douglas Farmer
 Staff Writer

MONSON — A group of racers of all ages gathered in Monson on Sunday in the spirit of competition and camaraderie, and it was all uphill from there — just the way they liked it.

The event was the New England Hill-climb Championships on Oct. 8 and racers from throughout the Northeast jockeyed for final points on the challenging hill on the property of the Quabog Riders Motorcycle Club off King Avenue in Monson. Despite the overcast skies, entire families came to enjoy the event and boys, girls and adults revved the engines in bikes of varying sizes and tried to build momentum up the hill.

For example, the Linde family of Charlton were very active. Justin Linde is the secretary of the New England Hill Climb Association and gave instructions to the riders before



Abigail Linde, of Charlton, rides over one of the breakers on the hill in Monson.



Nicolas Boulrice, of Three Rivers, finishes first in both the 65 cc and 80 cc Jr. categories.

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TASK FORCE

Stepping into the spotlight

Walk highlights domestic violence

By Douglas Farmer
 Staff Writer

BRIMFIELD — Sometimes people are in an abusive relationship and they don't even know it, said Margo Chevers, the coordinator of the Tri-Town Domestic Violence Task Force. But once they do realize it, it can be difficult to get out of because of the shame, or other factors that brought it to that point.

For that reason, in written material and in person, Chevers does her best to frame what constitutes an abusive relationship, with signals such as dominance of one partner over the other; constant humiliation;



Staff photo by Douglas Farmer
 Pastor Dawn Adams (right) prays for victims of domestic violence as Tri-Town Domestic Violence Task Force Coordinator Margo Chevers bows her head.

isolation from other friends and loved ones; threats of harm; intimidation; denial and blame on the part of the abuser. Due to this pattern, as uncomfortable as it may be, those concerned may need to offer help before the victim is willing to admit anything is wrong.

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PUBLIC WORKS



Turley Publications staff photo by Douglas Farmer
 The intersection of French Drive and Faragon Avenue was heavily patched in recent days.

Private roads get patched

Residents express satisfaction

By Douglas Farmer
 Staff Writer

PALMER — After several months of debating with Palmer officials about what or wasn't the town's obligation for road repairs, residents of private roads around Lake Thompson seem largely satisfied with recently completed patching.

Residents of French Drive,

James Street and Faragon Avenue came before the Palmer Town Council earlier this year to complain about the deteriorating condition of their roads. They also met with State Rep. Todd Smola (R-Warren) and state Sen. Anne Gobi (D-Spencer) to discuss their plight.

Town officials pointed out that the roads were private and thus would require a "betterment" from the residents along the roads to bring them up to town standards; those that lived there said that the town had historically patched their streets and had stopped doing so only a few years ago.

Nevertheless, Palmer Department of Public Works

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

Their flame still burns

Victims, survivors of violence honored

By Douglas Farmer
 Staff Writer

PALMER — The compelling words of survivors of domestic violence and those committed to fighting it in Palmer last week showed that their emotions burned as brightly as the candles lit in memory of those who didn't survive.

The event was the annual Take Back the Night hosted by the Palmer Domestic Violence Task Force on Wednesday, Oct. 4 at the Palmer Public Library. The event included the poignant words of Task Force Coordinator Tammy Koske, whose sister was likely murdered by an abuser; Palmer Police Chief John Janulewicz; Hampden County Sheriff Nicholas Cocchi; Monica Dominique, victim service coordinator with the sheriff's department; and Assistant District Attorney Clarissa

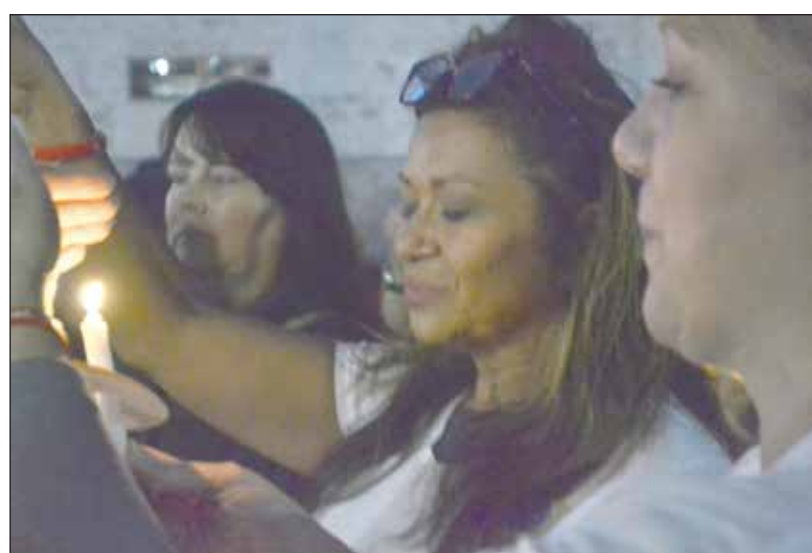
Wright. There were also representatives of the Warriors of Renee Thibault Herbert Foundation, founded by family members of Herbert, murdered by her husband in West Springfield on April 5, 2016.

Palmer Town Councilors Barbara Barry, Robert Lavoie, Mary Salzmann and Lorinda Baker were in attendance, along with Town Manager Charles Blanchard.

A highlight of the event was a candlelight vigil held by the entrance to the library, with a prayer read by Brenda Vezina of the WORTH Foundation.

"May this light be taken from our hands and float up directly to your hearts, may you know that we will always be your light on earth taking steps for you as you would and protecting and valuing you and your memory," she read. "May we all know our worth and our value simply by being on this earth and with each breath may we strive to be safe and at peace. Amen."

Koske explained that October



Turley Publications staff photo by Douglas Farmer
 Brenda Vezina of the WORTH Foundation leads a prayer during the candlelight vigil of Take Back the Night in Palmer last week.

is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and then related the investigation of her sister's disappearance. "My sister disappeared from Holyoke at the age of 22 many years ago, with her son who was 11-months-old and her daughter who was 3," she

said. "We always believed her husband was responsible. For 18 years we wondered. The F.B.I. ultimately tracked him down in Florida, but we found out later that he had been

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HISTORY

Lord Monson comes to town

MONSON — Nicholas, Lord Monson, the fourth most senior baron in the United Kingdom Peerage, is currently on vacation in the U.S. He recently accepted an invitation to be a guest of the Monson Historical Society.

So on Friday, Oct. 13 he will speak about his family before, during and after the time the town of Monson was created and named at Memorial Hall at 7 p.m.

Nicholas is the 12th lord of his line and the 16th baronet. He is a

published author, writes for national newspapers and speaks on the BBC. He campaigns for a change in the law on titles so females have the right to inherit them equally to men. He also campaigns for a rethinking of drug laws, which has promoted the prime

minister to correspond with him directly.

His talk will begin the medieval past and progress to the present. Afterwards, Lord Monson will take questions.



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SPORTS

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COLLEGE

Murphy sisters face each other for first time

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

DURHAM, N.H. - Until recently, Bee and Brooke Murphy, who were outstanding soccer players at Monson High School, hadn't seen each other in person in two months.

At the beginning of August, Brooke made the almost three-hour trip from her hometown to Durham, N.H. She's a senior on the University of New Hampshire women's soccer team.

A couple of days later, Bee made the two-hour ride west to New York to start her freshman season for the University of Albany women's soccer team.

"We Facetime with each other all of the time, but I haven't seen Bee since I left home at the beginning of August," Brooke said. "It was certainly a very special day for both of us."

The two women's soccer teams are America East Conference members and they only play once during the regular season.

Following a scoreless opening half, Brooke Murphy scored a second half goal helping the Wildcats post a 3-0 shutout victory over the Great Danes on a picture perfect fall afternoon at Bremner Field. It was also UNH's Senior Day and half the town of Monson was sitting in the bleachers.

"It's always very special to score a goal on Senior Day," Brooke said. "I just had enough time to poke the ball past the goalie. It also feels nice to defeat Albany because they beat us twice last year."

Brooke was one of seven Wildcats seniors honored during a pre-game ceremony.

She walked onto the field before the match with Bee, her parents (Tom and Tracy), her younger sister (Tennessee), and several other relatives.

"When I found out that this was

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GIRLS SOCCER

Fabian tallies twice to topple Palmer

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER - Since losing to archrival Palmer, 1-0, at Legion Field in 2014, the Monson girls varsity soccer team has posted an amazing 41-0-6 regular season record.

The Lady Mustangs have also outscored the Lady Panthers, 11-0, in the last three meetings at Legion Field, which includes a 2-0 shutout victory, last Friday night.

It was the only meeting of the season between the rivals.

Monson who used to be a member of the Grieve Division and are now members of the Central Division, began this week's action with a 5-0 league record.

Both of the Lady Mustangs goals were scored by senior midfielder Lily Fabian, who joined the varsity soccer team as a freshman, along with her classmates Lauren Medeiros and Hannah Hicks.

"This was my final time playing a high school soccer match on this field and it has been a lot of fun playing night games here," Fabian said. "We really wanted to win tonight's game."

Following the shutout victory, the Lady Mustangs had an 8-0-3 overall record. They've also



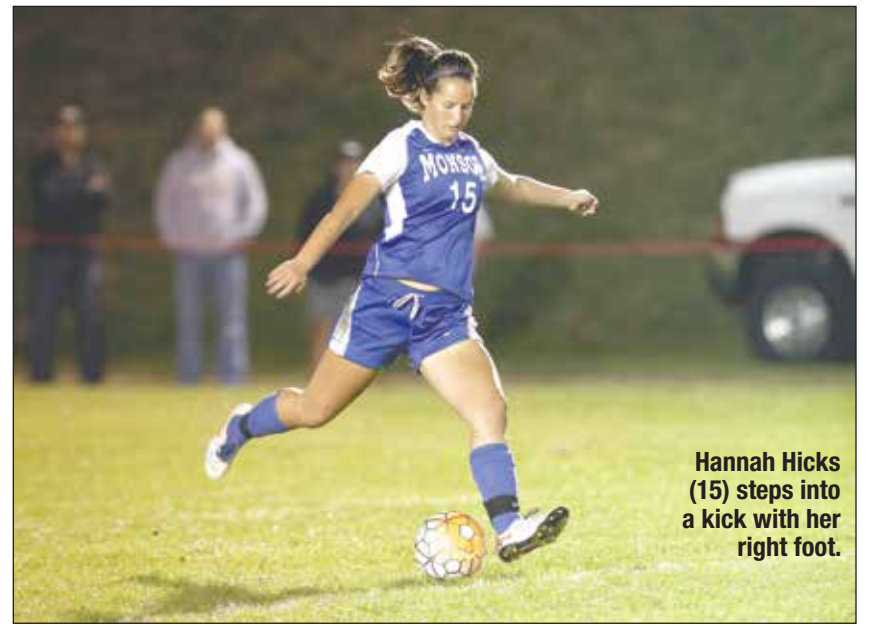
Monson senior Lily Fabian (11) scored both goals in the win over Palmer.

Staff photos by Dave Forbes

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Palmer's Kerrianna Pavlu (3) tries to step around the defender.



Hannah Hicks (15) steps into a kick with her right foot.



Madelyn Theriault (4) makes a run in the middle of the field.

FOOTBALL

Mastalerz dashes past Pioneers

By Dave Forbes
dforbes@turley.com

PALMER - The Palmer football team made the short road trip over to St. Joe's Park on Friday night and snapped a two-game losing streak with a 37-0 victory over Pathfinder.

Palmer jumped on the board in the first quarter on running back Kyle Mastalerz with a 55-yard touchdown run to make it 8-0.

The Panthers then got the ball back quickly as Eddie Jusko returned an interception to the Pathfinder 13-yard line. From there, Mastalerz picked up his second touchdown of the night — this one from 13 yards to extend the Panthers lead to 16-0.

Palmer stretched the lead out to 24-0 with 4:00 left in the second quarter when quarterback Jeff Pardo hooked up with Dan Ladue for a 59-yard touchdown reception.

Palmer's final two touchdowns came in the second half with Mastalerz getting his third of the game on a 12-yard run and Joe Lombardi dashed into the end zone from 9 yards out to close out the scoring in the fourth.

Mastalerz finished with 184 yards on 11 carries for the Panthers.

Jusko finished the game with two interceptions for Palmer.

Jacob Lackie had 41 yards rushing to lead Pathfinder. Joe Rowan added 38 yards and Jesse Griswold had 21 yards on the ground.



Palmer running back Kyle Mastalerz (37) finished with 184 yards rushing and three touchdowns.



Pathfinder's A.J. Oliveira (81) tries to split two Palmer players.



Pathfinder's Joe Roman (21) cuts between two Palmer defenders.

GIRLS SOCCER

Lady Pioneers closing in on tourney spot

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER - Other than back-to-back road losses during the last week of September, everything else had gone very smoothly for the Pathfinder girls' soccer team so far this fall.

The Lady Pioneers entered last Friday's Tri-County League home match with the Sci-Tech Cybercats needing only two points in order to qualify for the Western Massachusetts Division 4 Tournament for the first time since 2015. Being able to clinch a postseason berth would've also been a very nice way for the Lady Pioneers players to kickoff the long holiday weekend, but they wound up earning just one point following a 0-0 draw.

"I'm very disappointed with this outcome because we do have a very good team this year and we should've been able to score at least one goal in today's game," said Pathfinder head coach Kevin Lynch. "I don't think that another girls soccer team has ever had the chance to qualify for the postseason tournament before Columbus Day in the history of the school."

Palmer began this week's action with an 8-2-1 overall record and they were also sitting near the top of the Tri-County League standings with a 7-1-1 mark.

The Lady Pioneers, who have nev-

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