



COMMUNITY
Amvets holiday party
 Page 16

2025

Happy New Year!

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SPORTS
Palmer takes win from Monson
 Page 9

The Journal Register

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JANUARY



JAN. 4
 Michael Critelli's guitar playing usually closes out the open mic nights.

JAN. 18
PVTA increasing service to Palmer and Ware

By Nick Boonstra
 Staff Writer

PALMER – Service along the Palmer and Ware Shuttles is seeing increased frequency, with the goal of a bus every half hour, Paul Burns, director of Transit Operations for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, told the Palmer Town Council on Monday, Jan. 8.

These increases are part of a larger push by the PVTA to increase service across the system after state budget cuts in 2017 led to reductions that have persisted up to the past year.

The PVTA is working to restore service that was cut under these reductions, expand weekend service across the region and increase frequency on all routes to once every 30 minutes, Burns told the Town Council. He added that Palmer and Ware are likely to be the first communities in the PVTA system to see their routes increased to this frequency.

Burns discussed with the Town Council the possibility of further improvements being made, such as a potential bus shelter being added in front of the Public Library.

Residents urged to contact state reps about crumbling concrete foundations

By Marcelo Gusmão
 Staff Writer
 mgusmao@turley.com

MONSON – An epidemic of damaged foundations in homes all over the area is resulting in lost revenue for the town, but sufficient support for a state bill could be a Hail Mary for local homeowners dealing with the issue.

During a recent Select Board meeting, Monson homeowner Michelle Loglisci asked residents to contact their state delegation to push a bill that would aid homeowners dealing with crumbling foundations.

"It's been over six years that we've been fighting for help for homeowners with crumbling foundations in the state of Massachusetts," Loglisci said. "Last Friday, I helped to organize and attend a tour of homes in Winchendon and Westminster. That means we've got crumbling foundations all the way from here on the Connecticut border, all the way to the New Hampshire border, and yet I'm still being (told) more people need to come forward."

Loglisci said that when the bill moved forward during a previous session, it was late enough that by the time the Senate's Ways and Means Committee received it, it was budget season and it had to set it aside. Loglisci said that once budget season starts again, nothing will be able to happen with the bill, and homeowners will be left waiting again.

"We have nowhere to turn," Loglisci said. "It's time that our legislators did something."

JAN. 25
Pathfinder's new puppy chases the blues away

By Marcelo Gusmão
 Staff Writer
 mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – Pathfinder Technical Vocational School is



Jennavieve Josephson stopped to pick up Scout on her way through the halls.

excited to introduce Scout, the English Golden Retriever who is promoting mental health among students and staff alike.

Scout was adopted by the school through support of the School Committee and a healthcare grant from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association. This grant paid for the purchase of the dog, as well as training, veterinary services and supplies like toys and a cage.

"What we're finding is it's a nice icebreaker for those students that have a hard time expressing their feelings and talking about what's going on," said then-Principal Brenda Turner. "If he's in the room, it breaks down a lot of barriers."

Turner said that in addition to improving students' mental health, Scout will also serve to address the absenteeism that has increased at many schools and workplaces since the pandemic.

Director of Student Services, Marina Latourelle, has been charged with taking care of Scout after the school is closed, a responsibility that the rest of the staff has lined up to share, should Latourelle be unavailable.

"The recommendation was that he comes to work right away," Latourelle said. "So he puts his little harness on and he comes to work, and he loves it."

Superintendent Eric Duda named the adoption of Scout as one of his proudest accomplishments of the year, along with introducing the Yonder pouches to help cut down on phone use.

"You can have the best school psychologists and three guidance counselors and two adjustment counselors, a powerful admin team and a wonderful teaching staff, and we can all work to do something to help this student," Duda said. "I saw this firsthand: you may or may not get there quickly, but with a puppy, you get there immediately."

Hardworking Girl Scout Treats Palmer Community During Snowstorm

By Harrison Giza
 Staff Writer

PALMER – The snow was everywhere this weekend, but it would take more than a nor'easter to stop Haiden Chabot from selling cookies to her community.

The eight-year-old Girl Scout, alongside the friendly faces of local residents Jillian Jamilowski and Patrick Sullivan, was out in the blistering cold on North Main Street, selling boxes of flavorful goodies near the front entrance of Capitol Cleaners and Launderers.

"We've have been here since 3 p.m. There was one other group before us," Sullivan said. "The Girl Scouts kind of work us in shifts. It has been a fairly steady rate here."

More and more cars pulled up to their table of highly sugared products. It was a sight to behold and a real treat for anyone who took the time out of their day to pick up a delicious batch of cookies.



The friendly faces of Jillian Jamilowski, Patrick Sullivan, and Girl Scout, Haiden Chabot were out selling cookies in the wintery weather recently.

"We braved the snow," said Jamilowski. "It was a decent turnout too. Palmer residents were amazing and supportive."

Though a young woman of few words, Chabot's smile and bundled scarf gave her the appearance of a Norman Rockwell illustration. She remarked that her favorite kind of cookies were the beloved Adventure-fuls, an indulgent brownie-inspired caramel flavored cookie with crème and a hint of sea salt.

The Girl Scouts sold cookies from Jan. 19-21 in both Palmer and Ware. The organization strives to serve their respective towns while making the world a better place to live in.

FEBRUARY



FEB. 1
 Palmer High School's revamped weight room will provide a great space for students to exercise.

FEB. 8

Tailgate Tavern raises money with annual Soup-Off

By Marcelo Gusmão
 Staff Writer
 mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – Tailgate Tavern was once again packed with entrants and attendees eager to participate in the annual Soup Cook-Off.

The contest, first held by the tavern in 2018, involves entrants bringing in a crock-pot of homemade soup, which attendees get to sample and vote on for a fee of \$5. The event was arranged to benefit Light Up Palmer, which just celebrated another successful holiday season of decorating the town.

At 1 p.m. on Saturday, both rooms of the tavern were packed with the chefs who had entered the contest and the variety of people who showed up to try their soup and enjoy the festivities. There were as many as 27 entrants into the contest this year. Staff at the tavern announced that they were able to raise \$2,730 for Light Up Palmer this year.

The entries ranged from beef stew to chicken noodle soup to lobster bisque and buffalo chicken soup to mulligatawny stew, which was served in small cups

with a selection of bread. The entrants all did their best to provide a tasty soup for the patrons who attended the afternoon bash.

One entrant, Josh Messina, shared that his beef stew took 48 hours to cook. Made with beef stock, corned beef, salt, pepper, marjoram and Italian seasoning, with onions, organic potatoes and shaved carrots, Messina's stew was among the favorites in the contest.

"I had fun, I love cooking," Messina said. "My daughter will be disappointed that none of that soup is coming home with us."

Winners of both the soup contest and the door raffle were announced by Michael Wadas, who announced in previous years and has served as the regular football announcer. One hundred percent of the proceeds from the soup sampling and the raffle baskets went directly to Light Up Palmer.

Local Grants awarded for town's Cultural Council

PALMER – Beth Zelazo, chair of the Palmer Cultural Council, has announced the award of thirteen grants in 2024 for cultural programs in Palmer.

The Council received 31 grant applications totaling \$48,062. However, the amount the Palmer Cultural Council received from Mass Cultural Council for this year was \$17,120 making this a difficult year of decision making.

Previous grant recipients include Palmer Council on Aging, Pathfinder Regional Vocation Technical High School, Palmer High and Old Mill Pond Schools, Palmer Public Library and Palmer Historical Cultural Center. A complete list of 2024 recipients and grant amounts can be found below.

The Palmer Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences, and humanities every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community.

Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of municipally appointed volunteers. The members of the Palmer Cultural Council are: Beth Zelazo, Sandra Noonan, Donald Blais, Janice Fountain, Jan McCoy, Judith Bechard, Kathy Scarglia and Chris Reim.

"It's the local volunteers who really make this system work," said Zelazo. "They make limited resources go as far as possible, and they make the tough decisions about which projects should be supported. Thanks to them, the arts, sciences, and humanities are part of people's everyday lives in every community across the state."

FEB. 15



Meeting members in attendance, (from left) Dave Golden, Jessica Sizer, Patience Hartley, John Latour, Amber Kumpulianian-Hastings, and Nick Zeo.



Monson students on their trip to Disney World, (from left) Diana Gagne, Rebecca Nareau, Isabella Allard, Kayla Murphy, and Emma Alban.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

E-mail items to journalregister@turley.com or mail to Calendar Editor, Journal Register, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, for receipt by Monday of week for publication.

The Journal Register encourages readers to contact event coordinators and organizers for updated event times. Have an event to promote? Email the information (in sentence form and as a Word doc or plain email text – no PDFs or flyers, please – to journalregister@turley.com.)

while you meet your neighbors and support Hitchcock and local businesses. The market starts on April 13, and runs from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

email khm@keephomesteadmuseum.org or visit keephomesteadmuseum.org.

INTERESTS

QUABOAG VALLEY QUILTERS GUILD: Members meet at 1 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month in the Amvets post at 2150 Main St., Three Rivers. The Guild is a no-pressure group with varying degrees of accomplishments, from novice to Big E “Best In Show” winners. Dues are \$55 a year. For more information, contact Barbara Beaulieu at 267-4044 or Merry Mombourquette at 283-7577. Follow them on Facebook for more.

LINE DANCING CLASS: 3-5 p.m. and/or 6:30-8:30 p.m., every Thursday at the Monson Polish Club, 7 Bliss St, Monson. Rose’s line dancing classes include absolute beginners and beginners, and participants get to dance to all types of music. \$10 per class. Please wear comfortable footwear, no sandals.

GAME NIGHT: 6-7:45 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month at Top Floor Learning (third floor of the Palmer Library at 1455 N. Main St.). Free and open to the public. Play available board and card games or bring your own. Must be 16 or older unless accompanied by an adult. No Registration Required – just show up! Questions? Call 283-2329, or 283-3691, or email palewis19@yahoo.com.

NOTCH VISITOR CENTER OPEN FOR WINTER SEASON: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday-Monday. The center is located on Rt 116, at the center of the Holyoke Range State Park. DCR Interpretive staff will be available for visitors. Coming in January, programs will also be offered to highlight the Range’s special nature in winter, see the park web site for details.

QI GONG: Qi Gong at Monson Free Library with Randy Emerson. Every Tuesday from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m.

PIONEER VALLEY QUILTERS Guild meets at the Elks Lodge #61 at 440 Tiffany St., Springfield. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. and all are welcome. The mission of the guild is two-fold: to share the joy of quilting with others and to work for the betterment of the community. Monies raised (as in the biannual quilt show) support various workshops and speakers for the meetings, as well as allow the guild to buy materials that are then used to create donated items. The guild has donated quilts, baby bibs, cardiac pillows, and Christmas stockings for veterans to a variety of community agencies, including but not limited to the Springfield Rescue Mission and the Gray House.

CRAFTERNOONS: Drop in 2-4 p.m. daily at the Holland Public Library, 23 Sturbridge Road to learn or practice different crafts. There are new crafts every Wednesday. For more information, call 413-245-3607.

KEEP HOMESTEAD MUSEUM: Located at 35 Ely Rd., Monson, nature trails are open daily until dusk for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Trail maps can be found in the parking lot. The Phillips Sculpture Garden is open year-round (handouts in box on one of the signposts). For more information call 413-267-4137.

UPCOMING

January and February Vendor Sales at Wing Memorial Auxilliary Gift Shop

- JANUARY 6**
K and H Jewelry Design
Handmade and unique
- JANUARY 10**
TheraFeet
Specialized footwear and more
- JANUARY 22**
Wefeful Weaving
One of a kind loom creations
- FEBRUARY 4**
K and H Jewelry Design
Very unique
- FEBRUARY 5**
Hobbit Hollow Herbs
Products made from nature
- FEBRUARY 6**
Wefeful Weaving
Rigid Heddle Loom
- FEBRUARY 10**
Geriations And Sew On
Hand sewn items
- FEBRUARY 12**
Crystal Clear Emotions
Amazing and special
- FEBRUARY 13**
Wicked Good Treats
One of our favorites
- FEBRUARY 14**
Share Beauty Products
made from nature
- FEBRUARY 17**
AFRIK
Interesting products from Africa too
- FEBRUARY 20**
Sweets and Treats
freeze dried candy/some fruits

ONGOING

FARMER’S MARKETS: The Brimfield Farmers Market at Hitchcock Academy is a fun place to find cool, unique products, plants and seasonal produce every Saturday



Owen Joseph Ferry

December 20, 2024

Parents: Joseph Ferry & Juli Mancini, Thorndike
Siblings: Lila Rose Ferry
Grandparents: David & Margaret Ferry, Palmer
Patricia & Justin Mancini, Palmer

Free Girl Scout event in Palmer

PALMER—Palmer and Ware area girls are invited to a free Girl Scout event Embrace Possibility on Wednesday, Jan. 29, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Girls and their guardians will sample Girl Scout badge projects, and take home their first Girl Scout patch. Girl Scout troops will be selling Girl Scout Cookies and answering any questions. Adults will discuss volunteering to form a new Girl Scout troop. Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts seeks volunteers to form a new leadership team (3-4 volunteers) so that the troop responsibilities are fun and can be shared. No previous Girl Scout experience is necessary. The event will take place at Second Congregational Church, 1080 Pleasant St., Palmer This event is for girls entering grades K and 1, who are not currently Girl Scouts. RSVP by Jan. 25 <https://go.gscwm.org/EmbracePalmer>. For information contact Angie at Arodriguez@gscwm.org or call 413-584-2602 x4028.

\$11 Million awarded to prevent youth violence

BOSTON— The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced funding awarded through the Charles E. Shannon Jr. Community Safety Initiative, including new funds to support violence prevention in public housing sites. The grant program is an important tool in helping communities build collaborative programs to improve safety and reduce gang activity.

“Preventing violence among young people is critical to ensuring the future wellbeing of our youth and the safety of our communities,” said Gov. Maura Healey. “This work requires collaboration among law en-

forcement, state and local officials, youth-serving nonprofits, and research partners to help ensure funds have the greatest positive impact. The partnerships built through the Shannon Community Safety Initiative are among the strongest tools we have to prevent youth and gang-related violence in Massachusetts.”

The FY25 Shannon Community Safety Initiative is a state-funded grant program that awards yearly funds to support regional, multi-disciplinary program sites that take collaborative and evidence-based approaches to reduce youth and gang violence. The funds are managed and administered by the Office of Grants and Research. A total of 15 program sites were awarded grants totaling approximately \$11,179,673.

Each program site will receive support from a Local Action Research Partner, which will assist with strategic planning, critical analysis and continuous feedback to support program operations and ensure that funded programs remain within scope, on schedule and within budget. Researchers interested in serving as a LARP were required to submit applications separate from the Shannon CSI program site applicants. The selected LARPs will share approximately \$785,543 in additional funding. This marks the first year the Shannon CSI has incorporated the new Housing Site Initiative, which allocates a portion of the program’s funds to support violence prevention in publicly funded housing. In accordance with the Legislative language authorizing the Shannon CSI, housing sites that have been subject to enforcement actions by the US Department of Justice were given preference for this funding.

DEADLINE

The Journal Register has changed its firm deadline for public submissions to Mondays. To get your submission in for that week’s edition space permitting, email Editor at journalregister@turley.com or call the office at 413-283-8393 by noon on Mondays. We appreciate the cooperation of our readers.



Palmer Senior Center

PALMER— The Palmer Senior Center, 1029 Central St., has many activities for seniors Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information or to reserve a meal please call 413-283-2670.

Special events January:

- Friday, Jan. 3- Showing 12:30 p.m. movie “A Little Bit of Heaven”
- Monday, Jan. 6- 10:30 a.m. Therapy dog
- Tuesday, Jan. 7- noon Lunch bunch China House in Palmer
- Wednesday, Jan. 8- 1 p.m. Wii Bowling
- Thursday, Jan. 9- 10 a.m. Tai Chi, 1 p.m. Sunshine village craft
- Friday, Jan. 10- 11:30 a.m. Dan Lynch writing group informational, 1-3 p.m. Brown Bag pick-up
- Monday, Jan. 13- 1 p.m. Bake and Take
- Tuesday, Jan. 14- 10:30 a.m. Trip to McKinstry Market Garden. They accept SNAP.
- Thursday, Jan. 16- 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Memory Café Ben and Ed show
- Monday, Jan 20- Center is closed
- Wednesday, Jan 22- 1 p.m. Wii Bowling
- Thursday, Jan. 23- 10 a.m. Tai Chi, 1 p.m. Sunshine Village Paint
- Friday, Jan. 24- 12:30 p.m. showing a movie “Instant Family”
- Monday, Jan. 27- 10:30 a.m. Marathon Bingo
- Wednesday, Jan. 29- Jeopardy style trivia
- Friday, Jan. 31- 1 p.m. Wii Wheel of Fortune

MENU

Breakfast is served every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:15 a.m. and is \$3. Lunch is served every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to noon and a suggested donation is \$2. Please call before 10 a.m. the day before to reserve a meal at 413-283-2670. Individuals must sign up for breakfast, otherwise a meal will not be ordered for them.

- Thursday, Jan. 2- Chef’s choice
- Friday, Jan. 3- Hotdog with bun, potato salad, baked beans and ketchup, Jello with topping
- Monday, Jan. 6- Breakfast sausage, scrambled eggs, potatoes o’brien, cranberry snack loaf and spiced apples.
- Tuesday, Jan. 7- Ham, egg and cheese croissant.
- Wednesday, Jan. 8- Ham and swiss, mayo, coleslaw, chicken veggie soup, club roll and mixed fruit.
- Thursday, Jan. 9- Cinnamon buns
- Friday, Jan. 10- Spaghetti and meatballs, tossed salad with ranch, garlic bread, mixed fruit.
- Monday, Jan. 13- Mac and Cheese, stewed tomatoes, WW bread, cranberry juice, Jello with topping.
- Tuesday, Jan. 14- Egg, sausage and cheese croissant
- Wednesday, Jan. 15- crab cake with tartar, steamed corn, coleslaw, whole wheat bread and chilled peaches
- Thursday, Jan. 16- Egg, bacon and cheese croissant.
- Friday, Jan. 17- Chicken Marsala, tossed salad with Italian, penne pasta, garlic bread, mixed fruit
- Monday, Jan. 20- Center is closed.
- Tuesday, Jan. 21- Chef’s choice.
- Wednesday, Jan. 22- Shepherd’s pie, steamed peas, mashed potato topping, 12 grain bread, spiced peaches.
- Thursday, Jan. 23- Waffles and Sausage
- Friday, Jan. 24- BBQ pulled pork, broccoli slaw, half baked sweet potato, WW burger bun, birthday cake.
- Monday, Jan. 27- Beef stew with carrots and peas, mashed potatoes, wheat roll, Jello with topping.
- Tuesday, Jan. 28- Egg, bacon and cheese croissant
- Wednesday, Jan. 29- Jamaican jerk chicken, collared greens, coconut rice, oatnut bread, mixed fruit.
- Thursday, Jan. 30- Egg, sausage and cheese on a roll
- Friday, Jan. 31- Beef Stroganoff, brussels sprouts, egg noodles, Italian bread and a cookie

Corrections

The Journal Register will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2 or 3. To request a correction, send information to Editor at journalregister@turley.com, or call 283-8393, extension 236. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Journal Register, Attn: Editor 24 Water St., Palmer, MA, 01069.



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FEB. 15



Reed and Sandra Coles auctioned art pieces to raise money for the repairs to Memorial Hall.

FEB. 22



"We're the reigning champions!" the sophomore boys from Monson High declared, before going on to win this year's Winter Carnival.

Old Mill Pond Elementary Students Celebrate 100 Days Event

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer

PALMER - Old Mill Pond Elementary celebrated a huge milestone of over 100 completed days for the 2023-24 semester.

Students were beyond happy during their 100 Days Event, with one outspoken supporter quite eager to share her thoughts regarding this significant academic achievement.

"The 100th day of school is a special time for us here at Old Mill Pond" said principal Holly-Beth Riopel. "Grade 1 has brought back the tradition of 100 day projects. The students work at home with their families to create the projects."

These aforementioned families gave it their all dolling up these kids. Some students dressed up as "older versions" of themselves, many with faded grey wigs and colorful suspenders, highlighting how they think they would look and feel at 100 years of age. One of the kids even went as far as to borrow a cane for the event.

Other Old Mill Pond Elementary students were tasked with putting together projects that involved the number 100, like building with 100 cubes or rolling dice until scoring 100 points. One OMP class required students to draw various gum balls in a candy machine and asked the young artists to fit the right amount of treats into each machine.

"We love having them displayed in our first grade hallway," said Riopel, "they make everything look terrific!"

FEB. 29

Town Council eyes Brad Brothers for Town Manager

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER - At its Feb. 26 meeting, Town Council voted to make an offer to a potential full-time Town Manager.

On Feb. 22, the council met with two finalists for the position of Town Manager, Carolyn Brennan and Brad Brothers. Through the council described both candidates as well qualified, a vote was passed to offer the position to Brothers, pending contract negotiations.

"For what we need right now, I think Brothers is the stronger candidate," said Council President Barbara Barry.

Brothers grew up in town, graduating from the Palmer Public Schools in 2008, before going to American International College for his undergraduate degree, where got into the field of management as a School Business Manager.

"I actually lucked out where Palmer opened up right when I was graduating college," Brothers said. "I

was able to continue on and start my professional career here in Palmer."

While working with school administration, Brothers was often encouraged to go over to the municipal side. Even while working in other parts of the state, Brothers said that he always had hopes of coming back to the town he grew up in.

Through conversations with current department heads, Brothers said that his vision aligned with theirs for what they envision for the town.

At the subsequent Town Council meeting, members expressed support for both candidates, but the consensus swayed them to Brothers for the role. Members praised him for his rich experience and passion for his hometown.

Council members mentioned that they saw Brothers' history, as a former resident of the town, as an asset to the position. The council voted five to one to make the offer to Brothers and awaits his acceptance of the position pending contract negotiations.



Turley photo by Harrison Giza

Landon Desautels, Jacoby Madera, Ms. Monette, Julianna Koss, Kay-Lynn Gadoua, Lily Menard and Lydy O'Keefe stand together wearing colors to show their school spirit during Kindness Week.

MARCH



State Representative Todd Smola and Senator Jake Oliveira presented Chamber President Matthew Lemieux with a recognition for the Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

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MARCH 7

No solution yet for Monson Developmental Center property

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

MONSON - The Monson Developmental Center property is an ongoing project that the town has been looking to develop through collaboration with the state.

"Nothing is going in at this point," said Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz. "The state owns that property, the Division of Capital Asset Management Maintenance is the agency that oversees it."

The site was formerly home to the Department of Human Services/Developmental Services, a state hospital for people that needed care back in the 1950s-60s. DCAMM assumed control of the Monson Developmental Center when it was closed by the Department of Developmental Services in 2012.

"DCAMM manages the MDC grounds, structures, and infrastructure," said DCAMM's Director of External Affairs, Stephanie Knapp. "It performs regular and as-needed maintenance at the MDC and oversees a 24/7, 365-days-per-year security presence on the MDC site."

Wolowicz said that going forward, DCAMM will continue to be in charge of oversight of the property. The department is working through their process to put the property out for procurement.

The state and town government will continue to collaborate on developing this property.

MARCH 21



Alice Peabody was awarded both Technical Excellence and Highest Score of the Event at Accelerate Dance Experience.

MARCH 28

Select Board stands by Town Administrator contract

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

MONSON - At a Select Board meeting earlier this year, the board discussed controversies surrounding the finalized contract for the Town Administrator.

Select Board Chair Pat Oney opened a renegotiation discussion for the employment contracts of the Fire Chief, the Police Chief, and the Town Administrator. The Fire and Police Chief's contracts were reopened as a formality in order to discuss the contract for Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz.

Oney said that after reviewing compensation, evaluating job duties, performance and experience, assessing opinions from residents, and considering the town's fiscal responsibility, including economic realities for residents, the Board found that the compensation allotted to the Administrator was appropriate.

"The town's contracted employees have very specialized skills and experience," Oney said. "It's particularly important that we acquire and retain the best people that we can. In order to do that, we need to pay

MARCH | page 4

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MARCH

MARCH | from page 3

them on a level that reflects those skills, experience, and abilities.

"If we aren't competitive with our contracts, I think it says that we don't value their work and their contributions to the town," Oney said. "It puts us in a position of losing them to another town."

Members of the public also spoke on the issue, with one resident opposing the board's decision. When Oney said that Wolowicz was being compensated for additional duties as Human Resources Director, the resident said that the contract should have expired, though Oney said that this was not the case.

"Regardless of the label, the bottom line would be the same," Oney said. "The board feels that Ms. Wolowicz is doing a good job, as reflected in her recent job performance review from July and we negotiated a contract that reflects that."



Who looked more festive at the First Church of Monson's Easter Celebration; 6-month-old Oriyan, or the Easter Bunny himself?

APRIL

APRIL 4

Master Plan Comm. meets to discuss presentation to Town Council

By Marcelo Gusmão Staff Writer mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – The Master Plan Implementation Committee met to go over the discussions that have been had with various town departments, in preparation for a presentation to be made to the Town Council in November.

Amber Kumpulianian, who now serves as chair of the committee, described her initial interest in the committee as "selfish," as she sought a position on the Open Spaces Committee in order to help maintain the Madura Conservation Area.

"I live across from Madura Conservation Area, and we use that trail on weekly basis, if not daily," Kumpulianian said. "I like those trails want to see them maintained well, so I applied for the committee."

In addition to Kumpulianian, the committee members include Town Councilor Jessica Sizer, Patience Hartley of the Historical Comm, Nick Zio of the Conservation Commission, and Dave Golden, who Kumpulianian described as the "man about town," and involved with many different things in town.

The Master Plan Committee was assembled as a way to ensure that stakeholders involved in the plan's major goals could see it through, after its creation in 2020-21. The committee has many meetings scheduled with other department heads in the lead up to the presentation in November.

"One of the things important to all members is that priorities don't get dropped," Kumpulianian said. "We can't do much, but we can definitely point the right people in right direction. It's been really fun, we've learned a lot about our town and why things are the way they are. It's a very positive committee."

APRIL 11



Superintendent Matthew Francis and Principal Sue North honored Shawn Troche, Jr., alongside his family, at the Academic Excellence Award dinner at Pathfinder's Perso Restaurant.

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APRIL 18



The organizers of the 50s Sock Hop, Recreational Director Andrew St. George (left), Veterans Services Agent Tina Brohman (right), and St. George's wife, Gloria (center).



Tina Brohman (right) described Betty Jo O'Brien and Dan Boynan as "her best friends."

Purple Heart Program Gets Ready To Celebrate Decorated Veterans

By Harrison Giza

PALMER - The Palmer Business Partnership, known by many as Light Up Palmer, are getting ready to roll out their Purple Heart Program.

Director of Veteran's Services for the town, Tina Brohman, loves being able to help Palmer's veterans community as well as aid The Palmer Business Partner-

ship any way she can.

"It is important for Palmer and its residents," Brohman said. "So many of them have said to me that 'it is important to remember' and that 'so many people forget' and that can break your heart."

"Light Up Palmer is group of residents who just love their town and love their Veterans," Brohman said. "I went out there last year when it was below seven degrees in the morning and it was really cold out. Everybody was still out there at the poles, making sure that the brackets are good because they have been there for so long or that the weather makes them unstable and break down."

Chris Smith and her committed group of volunteers have come together for years, under the Palmer Business Partnership Inc. The group is completely non-profit making them able to have the ability to accept charitable donations. Their now famous campaign goes by the name, Light Up Palmer, and is set with the intention of beautifying Main Street as well as Depot Village in general.

"The Purple Heart program has been sponsored by Light Up Palmer for the past 4 years. We started this initiative in August of 2021. We honor 5 Palmer residents who are Purple Heart recipients and our organization is nonprofit so our funding comes through the graciousness of our sponsors."



This April, the northern hemisphere witnessed a total solar eclipse.

APRIL 25



EARTH DAY

Students at Monson Public Schools had an Earth Day celebration on April 22. Here is a third grade class discussing the new book "The Energy Detectives" as a class outside where the story walk is.



SPRING FLING

Cool Kids Corner: This loyal crew of students kept it original in their Spring Fling wear, bringing alternative cool to their middles school party.

MAY

MAY 2



Bruce Rosenbaum (left) opened his workshop to Pathfinder students (from left) Evelyn Shilosky, Tyler Rondeau, Riley Olden, and Zander Offrey.



The former firefighters from Three Rivers Fire Department described their relationship as a brotherhood, and see this dinner as a family reunion.

MAY 9



Friends jumped on each other's backs to take a commemorative picture at the end of Palmer High's Spring Fling.

Advertisement for Top Floor Learning featuring tutoring services, a computer security class, and contact information.

Advertisement for 'Established Edition Quest for History' featuring local businesses and a deadline of February 5, 2025.



Monson Public Schools students waved to the camera as they participated in this spring's Special Olympics.

MAY 16

Special Olympics dedicated in honor of David Peritz

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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MONSON – The annual Special Olympics were recently held on the lawn of Granite Valley School, which unites students from Belchertown, Ludlow, Monson, Palmer, and Wilbraham for a celebration of inclusivity and diversity for the region's students.

Colette Bidus is the Director of Special Education for the Monson schools, a position she has held for two years. Bidus has been in Monson for her entire career, starting as a teacher before moving into the leadership position.

"The day is really all about students," Bidus said. "It's an opportunity for students with and without disabilities to compete alongside each other."

Bidus said that putting on the athletic festival involves a lot of community support, donations, and fundraising throughout the year. The committee collects nominations of athletes and unified partners and contacts the different districts, including reaching out to local government officials, the County Sheriff's Department, and the first responders and any town officials that like to attend the annual event.

"This year was really special, because we dedicated games in honor of David Peritz," Bidus said. "He was a really highly regarded special education teacher in Palmer schools, and the community tragically lost him last summer, so we wanted to honor his memory for all the students he represented."

Bidus said the school partners with Special Olympics in order to foster a more inclusive environment, which includes incorporating unified physical education classes, and a celebration of all the events that happen throughout the school year.

QHSUA welcomes new director, Emily Kirby

By Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com

REGION – Members of the Quabog Hills Substance Use Alliance welcomed the new Prevention Director, Emily Kirby, following the retirement of Gail Gramarossa.

At the May 13 meeting, Kirby introduced herself and shared information about her education and experience with substance use and harm reduction.

"We are in a complete void," Kirby said, in terms of harm reduction in the Quabog Hills area.

Kirby said there is no local access to syringes, with the closest being Amherst and Worcester. She said there is also a need for more sharps disposals.



Promenade

Juniors and seniors gathered on the school steps to take one big picture together before heading to the Harding Allen Estate for their prom.



CamStrong

The organizers posed with the guest of honor, (from left) Josette Before, Cameron Prosseri, and Dan Moore.

MAY 23



Pathfinder Awards

The award for Academic Excellence in Algebra II was awarded to juniors (from left) Ethan Shepard, Branden Hnitecki, Matthew Vanasse, and Harmonie Garcia. (Not pictured: Ethan Bernashe)



Eagle Scout

Paul Shipman presented Maddy Cutty's certificate to her as her mother, Monique, watched.

JUNE

JUNE 6

Graduations



Donovan Rayleonard signaled to the students when to stand and line up for their diplomas.



Vanessa Baer (right) graduated from Palmer High School this year, pictured with Jen McCarthy.



Superintendent Eric Duda introduced the other people onstage with him, Julie Quink, David Droz, Lorraine Alves, Barbara Ray, John Nason, and Robert Lavoie of the School Committee, and school administration Interim Principal Brenda Turner, Academic Director Dan Whalley, and Business Manager Greg Falcone.



Monson graduates march out to the field as the graduation classic Pomp and Circumstance plays.

JUNE 13



Relay 4 Life

Palmer High students worked the reception table, (from left) Sofia Braskie, Elijah Jez, and Ben Kilham.

JUNE 20



Melissa Webber (left), an Old Mill Pond teacher was nominated for the Most Valuable Teacher award for her work with Elliot in kindergarten.

Town Manager shares details on upcoming municipal budget

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – The Town Council held a Public Hearing where the Town Manager went over the next fiscal year's budget.

Town Manager Brad Brothers said the Town Accountant received spreadsheets from each of the department heads, then they went through various channels of review and a budget subcommittee, before going through every budget item that was proposed line by line. Brothers reported that the general fund budget amounts to \$41,978,324.

Brothers said that two of the main drivers for local receipts increases were investment income and income from cannabis excise tax, which is a new tax fund that the town has started to receive. Brothers said that one of his goals for the next fiscal year will be for the town departments to review fee structures and make sure the town is matching the local market rate.

The town's HMO and PPO health insurance plans were renewed for a 5% reduction. Brothers announced that the public schools will have a 3.5% budget increase, which will include the expansion of its Pre-K program, as well as developing collaborative teaching models and transporting contractual increases.

"In wastewater, inflation to general operating expenses in addition to growing capital project expenses had the recommended budget totaling \$4,449,490," Brothers said. "After reducing anticipated offsets of \$802,200, which is Monson septage and miscellaneous revenue, the balance left to cover is \$3,627,490."

Brothers said by assuming a 98% collection rate, based on the trend history of what's been collected previously, the town can expect to pay approximately \$3,701,520 for this project.

"What that equates to, with 5,141 EDUs being billed, it would set the FY25 rate to \$720 per EDU, which is up from \$614 in FY24," Brothers said.

JUNE 27



Katherine Santiago sat with Zoey, age three, Yamareliz, age 12, and Raphael, age 11.

School Committee closes out year with suggestions from students

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – To close out the school year, the School Committee held its regular meeting on June 12.

Superintendent Matthew Francis's report featured a list of the district's accomplishments for the past year. Though not an exhaustive list of the year's accomplishments, Francis noted improvements to the facilities, curriculum, instruction, professional development, and technology.

"I think it's fairly impressive to show what we've done as a district this year, so I wanted to provide that to you this evening," Francis said.

At the start of the meeting, Committee Chair Bonny Rathbone reading letters she had received from the public. The first letter was from a student asking that the district consider changing the start and stop times for high schoolers.

"She noted that in her research, 70% of teens do not get the required nine hours of sleep," Rathbone read. "Sleep-deprived teens are more likely to use or get addicted to caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol, and only 10% of elementary kids are affected by sleep deprivation."

The student cited a recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics that students start at 8:30 a.m. or later. Rathbone said that she thanked the student for the letter, and that though changing the schedule would be complicated by transportation and after-school programs, she would inform the committee of the concern.

With the second letter, Rathbone noted that she shared the student's concern that the current scheduling block only allows students half the school year for science, chemistry, and history and civics.

"If we had a full year to do both, then things wouldn't be so rushed and students would have more time to learn the curriculum, which would be easier on the teachers and the students," the letter read.

The student offered to provide a schedule from another school that might work for the town, but Rathbone said she had not yet received it. The last letter was from a student concerned that middle schoolers do not have adequate choices for their electives.

The student mentioned that this could affect drop-out rates for students who feel that they do not have the opportunity to explore their interests.

JULY

JULY 4

Morrell becomes next chair of Monson Select Board

MONSON – The Select Board reorganized last week following the town election, and the former Chair noted a few issues that have been developing in town.

At its meeting on June 25, the board was reorganized by unanimous vote, with John Morrell being named Chair, Peter Warren becoming Vice Chair, and Pat Oney taking over as Clerk.

"Thank you, Pat, for the work you've done in the last two years as Chair," said Morrell, "And congratulations on your re-election."

As then-current Chair, Oney opened the meeting by thanking the town for re-electing her to the board.

"I appreciate all the support," Oney said, adding, "please feel free to contact any of the three of us, either by email through the town's website, or leaving a message at the Select Board Office."

Oney then provided a numbered list of comments on issues that have been discussed at previous meetings.



Aqua Riders

Eddie gives a thumbs up as he's helped into the sit-ski in the water by water-ski volunteers.

Town Council votes on finalized budget, raises Senior Property Tax

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – The Town Council met to vote on a series of finalized budget items, including a Senior Tax Abatement exemption.

The Council held a vote to increase the Senior Property Tax from \$500 to \$1,000. Though the vote was initially only for a \$100 increase, Council Member Phillip Hebert asked why the town wouldn't raise it to the maximum allowable limit.

Town Manager Brad Brothers invited the town's Principal Assessor, Rachael Carney, to provide details on the program.

"The 41c program is for those aged 70 and older who qualify through income and through asset limitations, they have to apply annually to the program," Carney said. "We currently have 13 people enrolled in the program."

Carney explained that a single applicant can have a maximum income of \$20,000, and maximum assets amounting to \$31,000, not including their home and vehicle. For married couples, the maximum income is \$25,000 and assets can amount to no more than \$34,000.

"It's the one program that I think is the most beneficial to the most in need in the community," Carney said. "We have many other programs, but this is the one that I really feel like has impacted those that need it the most."

Brothers explained that it was recommended to increase by \$100 because the town doesn't know how many people who weren't aware of the program will now be applying for it.

"If this all of a sudden doubles or triples and we're at \$1,000 rather than just going to \$600 this year," Brothers said, "we don't have the funding."

Hebert suggested that the town appropriate funds from another source, such as Free Cash, in that event. This prompted Councillor Matthew Lemieux to ask about the Overlay Fund, which Council Chair Barbara Barry said "is not built up," and so the amount is comparable to the \$100 increase, plus abatements and exemptions issued over the course of the year.

Council Vice President Jessica Sizer noted that these seniors are also eligible for the tax work-off program. Brothers agreed with Hebert that the elders in town deserve as much as the town can afford, and recommended looking into adding onto the increase in future years.

At the end of the discussion, the Council voted unanimously to raise the limit to \$1,000.

JULY 11



Fire trucks of all shapes and sizes rolled past the Monson Free Library in this year's Independence Day Parade.



The Monson Varsity Girls' Soccer team carried a banner in the Fourth of July parade.

JULY 18



Fireworks for this year's SummerFest were provided by Pyrotecnico.

2024 Year in REVIEW

AUGUST

AUG. 15



Kim Hatch held up a mirror for Vivian, age two-and-a-half, to see her face-paint.

First of the Chamber of Comm. Summer Festivals at Hryniewicz Park

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

THREE RIVERS – This weekend, the Chamber of Commerce hosted the first of its Summer Artisan Markets.

The fair was held at Hryniewicz Park on Friday, July 12, and was attended by a number of food trucks, vendors, and crafters from all over the region for an afternoon of food, live music, family-friendly entertainment, and community engagement.

The Chamber has been hosting these markets for the last four years, starting in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to keep residents engaged in their community.

"It's a free event for the community, where they can come in and browse the eclectic mix of vendors," said Carol Seaver, Vice Chair of the Chamber.

Live music was performed from the gazebo by The Geezers, who performed covers of classic rock hits. Maggie the Clown was also present, to play and goof around with the kids.

Numerous vendors set up booths all over the park, protected from the sun with tents and tarps. Seaver shared that the event was planned to be held in rain or shine, and a water station was set up in case of extreme heat.



Dayton Ritchotte, Garrett LaFond, and Gabby Bruttaniti hung out at the Pulaski Park Car show.

Brimfield hosts annual antique market

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
epappas@turley.com

BRIMFIELD – The Brimfield Antique Markets have been one of the biggest antique markets and fairs in the United States since 1959.

People come from all over the states – and the rest of the world – and the market features twenty-one independent shows with thousands of dealers.

The shows go on around three times a year, in May, July, and will come again from Sept. 3-8.

Grab a water bottle, grab your cart, and your walking shoes, and prepare for a five-day event with anything from furniture to jewelry, to décor, textiles, pottery, art, delicious homemade teas, oils, candles, vintage clothing, prints, paintings, and so much more.

JULY 25



Pathfinder Summer Camp

Students were able to try their hand at kneading dough at Pathfinder's Culinary Department summer camp.



Brimfield Old Homes Day

A table at the Old Homes Day offered "Old Brimfield Coots Giving Advice."

Agriculture Commission to hold Farmer's Market at Memorial Hall

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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MONSON – The Agriculture Commission approached the Select Board to ask about holding a Farmer's Market at Memorial Hall in the fall.

Commission Chair Robert Skalbite, and members Ben Murphy and Ray Beaudoin opened their meeting at the July 23 Select Board meeting to announce a Farmer's Market event to be held on Sept. 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The commission had approached the board to request that the fee to use Memorial Hall be waived, as it had no budget to put on the event. Murphy said that this will be the first farmer's market put on by the commission.

"I was actually on the original AgCom, like 13 years ago," Murphy said. "What I'm thinking is to teach people what this is all about with farming. Like, if you have two chickens are you classified as a farmer? Not necessarily; so, how do we get together as a committee where we can answer questions for them?"

Skalbite said that the event is being planned primarily indoors at Memorial Hall, though there will be some options for vendors that need to be outdoors to set up on the property. The commission is still looking for vendors to participate in the market, and that it will be reviewing and finalizing the applicants in early August. He said there is an application available online.

AUG. 8



Rachel and Joe Talbot and Ian, age 3, pictured in front of Palmer's Engine 1 fire truck.

National Night Out

Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop provides timeline for East/West passenger rail

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – The Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop organization has provided updates on the development of a train station in town.

Things have been moving steadily in the mission to create an East/West passenger rail to connect the two ends of the state. Citizen Benjamin Hood was very optimistic about the ways that the state government has been supporting this effort.

"Governor (Maura) Healey, in spite of every setback along the way, managed to put money aside with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation," Hood said.

The Department of Transportation and Governor Healey set aside \$4.5 million to plan for a Palmer station. Still more money was set aside for Pittsfield, which Hood said was the boost the project needed to move forward.

Hood said that the Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop group, led by Andy Koziol, has been working with Town Manager Brad Brothers and Town Planner Heidi Mannarino to organize meetings with the DOT. Vanasse Hangen Brustlin formed a Master Plan for the project to undergo the initial siting and conceptual design.

According to Hood, DOT is hoping to start running trains along this new line by 2029, which will mean track work will begin around 2027. The current state of designs will seek to accommodate long freight trains and the round trip passenger trains that need to be able to pass each other easily while maneuvering around Boston-New Hampshire and Springfield-Hartford routes.

"We worked with Palmer Redevelopment Authority to identify the need to have the stop be downtown for the big economic boost it would give to Main Street businesses, but there are a number of options surrounding the diamond junction where the tracks meet," Hood said.



Snow Cones with the Principal

Kerry Lynch, Holly-Beth Riopel, and Penny Manteria served snow cones to prospective students.

Conservation Commission approves funding for full-time agent

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – This week, the Conservation Commission voted on funding additional hours for the Conservation Agent position.

The August 13 meeting opened with a discussion about approving spending from wetlands financial accounts to fund an increase in the hours for the position of the Conservation Agent.

At the previous meeting on August 7, Conservation Agent Justin Enright announced that he would be leaving the position to pursue a different career opportunity to be closer to family.

Town Manager Brad Brothers approached the board to explain the benefits to increasing the hours for the position.

"With Justin's departure, we're looking to ensure that we get a qualified candidate," said Brothers. "We feel like jumping the hours from 30 to 37 and a half would hopefully bring in that quality candidate, and may get someone on the fence who has a permanent full-time job at 37 or 40 hours to make the move over to Palmer."

The commission voted five to one to approve the spending from the Wetlands Salaries and Bylaws Salaries accounts for the remaining fiscal year for the agent's additional hours.

AUG. 22



RockFest

Project 267 performed at Pulaski Park for RockFest this summer.

Pathfinder Tech welcomes new principal

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – The nine towns serviced by Pathfinder Vocational Technical School welcomed Ryan Rege as the new principal.

As Interim Principal Brenda Turner steps down from the position she has filled for the last year, the school has welcomed Ryan Rege as the new principal. He started his professional career working in restaurants as a dishwasher, and rose to the positions of line cook and eventually sous chef until a chance meeting sent him on the path to education.

Now, after some time out of the district, Rege has returned to Pathfinder to become Principal of the school. He's been taking some time over the summer to get to know the faculty, the staff, and the superintendent.

"I'm thrilled to be back here, everyone's been incredibly welcoming," Rege said. "I love this school, and it's been a great transition for me."

Rege said that he looks forward to helping the students in Pathfinder's ten towns prepare for careers as professionals in any career of their choosing, including vocational and academic pursuits.

"As long as students graduate searching for truth, prepared for careers in the future, as well as any failures or opportunities for growth, I think we've done our job here as educators," Rege said. "I'm looking forward to helping students end up in a career they love. We want students heading out of here as critical thinkers that are able to find careers they're happy and successful in."

AUGUST



Aqua Riders

Alexa Weintraub, Sam Naples, and Sophia Joppas water-skied at the Hamilton Reservoir.

AUG. 29

First Day of School



Students file off the bus to Old Mill Pond School on the first day of school.



Assistant Principal Penny Manteria, Principal Holly-Beth Riopel, and Assistant Principal Kerry Lynch welcome students for the first day.



Students wave from the windows of the bus as they wait to get off the bus.



Supporting Lemonade Day, (from left) Tyron Edmonds, Linea Lamothe, Crystal Rondeau, Christina Hazzard, Andrew St. George, Julia Taylor, Marc Caci, Beth O'Keefe, David O'Keefe.

New administration emphasizes community partnerships and communication

MONSON – This semester, students at the high school will be introduced to the new administrative team of Principal Chris Fontaine and Dean of Students and Director of Counseling Maria Barnes.

New Palmer Town Manager

Brad Brothers was appointed Town Manager by the Town Council back in February.



"The number one rule I highlighted with all department heads in my first week, and continue to reinforce, is to challenge the saying 'we've always done it this way.'" said Town Manager Brad Brothers.

SEPTEMBER

SEPT. 5

Cultural Picnic



DJ Serge La Musica (right) provided music for the event, here pictured with Daniel Kinuthia, Sylvia Akofa, Claudia Medzro, and Rosella, age 10.



The Boy Scouts attended the picnic, (pictured) Brian Thompson, Alice Richard, Sean and Seamus Manley, Konnor Dearborn, Charlie Rider, Ethan and Elijah Rivera.



Granite Valley First Day

Hailey and Olivia stepped off the bus together to start their first day of school last Thursday.



Dr. Cheryl Clarke was excited to greet this student as she arrived at Granite Valley.

SEPT. 12

DoLifeLikeDoo Tournament



David's parents, Bob and Pat Peritz, stood by the banner for the memorial tournament.



David Peritz's family played on a team together, (from left) ex-wife Kathy, son Brandon, and daughter Morgan, and girlfriend Jen Hodgdon.



Nipmuck Powwow

Karen Dubard (center) took a picture at the Nipmuck Powwow with Brave Hawk and Harry Hawk Edmonds.

SEPT. 19



Senior Picnic

Chris Pascale, Marlene Johnson, Lisa Jacques, Andrew Vance, Lisa Contrino, Kathy Fitzgerald, and Mary DeSantis worked hard to put on the Senior Picnic this year.

Pathfinder Tech acquires Sykes Street building from Country Bank

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – In a deal several years in the making, Pathfinder Technical Vocational School has acquired the building on Sykes Street from Country Bank to host adult evening education.

The ribbon-cutting was presided over by Superintendent Eric Duda, with members of the School Committee, including its Chair Julie Quink, Vice Chair David Droz, and Secretary Lorraine Alves, as well as Mary McGovern, the President and CEO of Country Bank, Steve Sharek, the Executive Director for the Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators, James Przypek, CEO of the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce, as well as Senator Jake Oliveira, State Representatives Todd Smola and Aaron Saunders, and representatives from the office of Senator Durant, Senator Fattman, Representative Domb, and many guests.



A crowd of Pathfinder Tech administration and school committee members, Country Bank shareholders, and state legislators cut the ribbon on the school's new building.

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BASKETBALL

Palmer upends Monson in overtime



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

MONSON—Missy Rocker is beginning her second season as the boys varsity basketball coach at Palmer High School. Rocker's first game as a basketball coach was a five-point road victory against archrival Monson in the 2023-24 season opener.

A little more than a year later, Rocker, also the varsity softball coach at Ludlow High School, and

the Panthers basketball players made another trip across the Quabog River to Michael J. Kane Gymnasium at Monson High School. This time, the Panthers needed overtime to dispatch the Mustangs, 56-47, in an exciting Bi-County West match-up before a large crowd of our Big 19.

"Monson is one of our biggest rivals and we were able to beat them once again on their home court," said Rocker, who guided Palmer to a total of eleven wins a year ago. "This is a very big win for us, and

I really like the atmosphere in this gym."

The two crosstown rivals have now alternated victories in their last six meetings on the hardwood.

Monson celebrated a 47-37 road victory in the second meeting of last season.

The Panthers had a 2-1 overall record and league record following last Thursday's victory.

They held the Mustangs (1-1,1-1), who played their home opener, to just seven points during the final eight minutes of regulation and the five-minute overtime session.

"My players have been working very hard on their defense at practice," Rocker said. "I thought it showed in tonight's game."

Monson freshman Trey Dillahunt was held scoreless during the first quarter. It's some-



Matt Santos extends for a shot.

Dylan Doherty enters the paint.

thing that hasn't happened very often since he joined the varsity team as a seventh grader.

"It's very rare to see Trey not scoring any points for an entire quarter," said Monson head coach Zach Dreher. "We just didn't shoot the

ball very well in tonight's game, as we only made a total of three 3-pointers. We're still a very good basketball team and we still want to compete for the league title."

Dillahunt, who entered the second stanza with no points, wound up scoring a game-high 17 points during the final three quarters. He has scored more than 700 career points.

Junior Austin Meacham also reached double digits for the home team with ten points. Senior Tyler Labonte and junior Shane Szado both scored eight points, while junior Jake Beaupre chipped in with four points.

The Panthers, who don't have any seniors listed on their varsity roster, were led offensively by the trio of junior's Matthew Santos (16 points), Dylan Doherty (14 points), and Stephen Fredette (11 points).

Rounding out the scoring column for the visiting team were sophomore Taydem Haley (6 points), junior Jordan Jones, (5 points), and

BASKETBALL | page 10

ICE HOCKEY

Hurricanes hold off Minnechaug

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD—The first line of the Amherst hockey team is made up of freshman Nathan Desbien, junior Ethan Mooney, and junior Benjamin Remensnyder.

Desbien and Mooney, who were teammates on a couple of youth hockey teams, helped the Hurricanes get into the win column for the first time this season against Minnechaug Regional.

Desbien netted Amherst's first two goals before Mooney scored what turned out to be the game winning goal six minutes into the second period.

The Hurricanes, who held a one goal lead at the end of the second period, managed to keep the Falcons off the scoreboard for the final 15 minutes of the non-conference match before celebrating a 3-2 victory at the MassMutual Center in Springfield on Dec. 27.

"This is a very good win for us," said Mooney, who was named as an assistant captain prior to the start of the regular season. "We played a little more physically than they did, and we were able to come out on top. It was also very cool to have the opportunity to play a hockey game in this building for the first time."

The only high school hockey game scheduled to be played at the MassMutual Center this winter was organized by Joe Manning, who works for the Springfield Thunderbirds.

Manning graduated from Minnechaug Regional in 2020 and was a four-year member of the Falcons hockey team, which is coached by Kyle Bousquet. One of Manning's youth hockey coaches was Amherst hockey coach Michael Rousseau, who's also a longtime family friend.

"This is a full circle moment for me. I played hockey for both coach Bousquet and coach Rousseau when I was younger," Manning said. "This was the first time

that we've held a high school hockey game at the MassMutual Center in a while. I never had the opportunity to play a game here during my high school career. I did have a lot of help setting this game up. We just wanted to create a cool experience for these kids."

Manning gave a lot of credit to both head coaches, along with Amherst Athletic Director Victoria Dawson and Minnechaug AD Steve Burdett for helping him set up the memorable experience for the players.

The fans who attended the high school hockey game could also stay for the Springfield Thunderbirds game that night against the Hartford Wolfpack.

Rousseau is very glad that his team was invited to play in a hockey game at the MassMutual Center.

"The first reason why I accepted the invitation to play in today's game was the hard work that Joe Manning did putting it together. He's just an outstanding young man," Rousseau said. "The second reason is these kids will probably never get another opportunity to play a varsity hockey game here. It was an unbelievable experience for the players on both teams."

Following the match, the players from both teams took a picture together.

The last time Amherst played a game at the MassMutual Center was in the 2016 Division 3A state finals, which was a loss to Nashoba Regional.

Rousseau and his players walked out of the MassMutual Center feeling a lot better about things this time.

"We finally got the monkey off of our backs," Rousseau said. "We played with a lot of heart against a very good Berry Division team. We believed in our system and were able to win a hockey game."

While Amherst entered 2025

HOCKEY | page 10

BASKETBALL

Early offense paces Warriors to win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

FISKDALE—Before being named as the boys' varsity basketball coach at Tantasqua Regional eight years ago, Scott Dion held the same coaching position at David Prouty Regional High School in Spencer for 11 years. He replaced his father, Al, as the Prouty varsity basketball coach.

One of the players on Scott Dion's first basketball team at Prouty was Pat O'Connor Jr., who's currently the Panthers varsity coach.

The two Southern Worcester

County League rivals didn't face each other a year ago, but they renewed acquaintances at the Tantasqua Fieldhouse two days before Christmas.

The Warriors, who had lost the previous two meetings in the series, built a double-digit lead at the end of the first quarter before coasting to a 77-39 home victory.

"Having coached at David Prouty for 11 years and having also coached coach O'Connor, this was a game that I wasn't really looking forward to playing," said Dion, who also graduated

WARRIORS | page 10

RECOGNITION

Longtime referee Lavoie wins MIAA award

LUDLOW – Last month, long-time referee Joe Lavoie was recognized as the MIAA Football Official of the Year. According to information provided, Lavoie joined the Western Mass Football Officials Association (WMFOA) in 1974 (51 years) as a junior at AIC in Springfield, MA.



Lavoie was a 3-year starter for Milt Piepul's 8-1 ('75) AIC Yellowjackets. He was selected All-New England Honorable Mention by the AP and

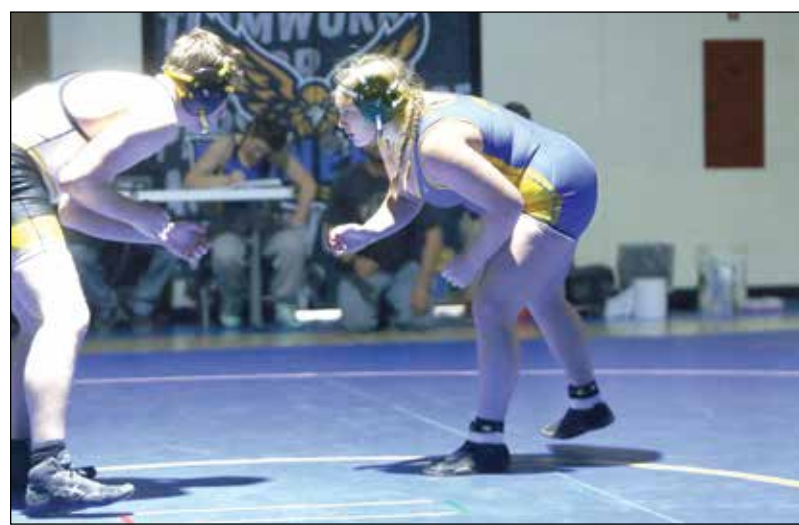
Boston Herald ('75), and selected to the ECAC team of the week versus Northeastern University.

After college, Lavoie taught and coached football in Ludlow for Steve Marino and subsequently in Agawam for Roger LeClerc, before joining private industry as a computer systems programmer/analyst. Retired from MassMutual with 30-plus years of

LAVOIE | page 10

BASKETBALL

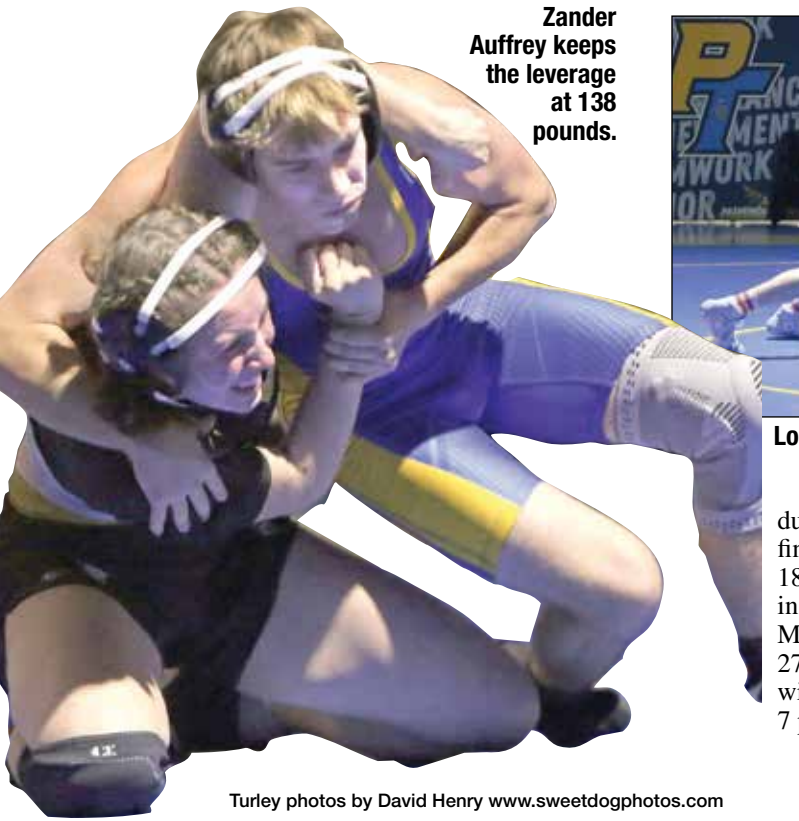
Pioneers wrestle past Smith Voke



Ava Swist gets ready to grapple.



Gavin Sawabi, of Ware, starts his match at 144 pounds.



Zander Auffrey keeps the leverage at 138 pounds.



Logan Hayes attempts a takedown.



Max Aliengena tries to avoid being tripped up.

PALMER – In their first dual meet of the season, Pathfinder defeated Smith Voke 48-18. The Pioneers participated in a tournament at Monument Mountain High School on Dec. 27. Coming up, the Pioneers will host Belchertown Jan. 8 at 7 p.m.

Jaiden Ambrose wrestles at the heavyweight position.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

SEPT. 26

Quaboag Hills Music Festival



Exit 8 played at the Quaboag River Music Festival in September.



Shaun Reilly and Daniela Toohey worked the bar at 13th World for the event.



MHS substance abuse talk

Stephen Hill had the support of the school's administration to put on the talk about substance use.

OCTOBER

OCT. 3



Mass Central Rail Trail supporters and cyclists participated in the inaugural RideN2B from Northampton to Boston held over three days.

OCT. 10



Chief William Bernat thanked the assembled crowd for its support and announced each speaker.

Palmer Fire Dept. unveils brand new ambulance

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – Last week, the Fire Department unveiled a new ambulance that will help provide emergency medical services to residents in the region.

On Friday, Oct. 4, town residents, state legislators, and first responders from all over the region gathered in front of the Fire Department to celebrate the launch of the new ambulance service.

Fire Chief William Bernat opened the ceremony by thanking State Representative Todd Smola and Senator Jake Oliveira, as well as Fire District Prudential Committee Chair James St. Amand.

“On Oct. 1, the fire district voted almost unanimously that the Fire Department will have its first ever municipal ambulance service,” Bernat said.

“It has been three long years in the making,” Bernat continued. “Our firefighters have responded to 317 medical calls in the past year alone, and assisted in the life-saving techniques until surrounding towns arrived with their ambulances.”

Bernat said that the ambulance service will not only save lives, but will also bring revenue for the district.

St. Amand spoke of the accomplishment this ambulance represents for the department, and thanked all the people who helped make it possible.

“It’s something that’s needed,” St. Amand said. “We just wanted to thank everyone for their efforts.”



Pathfinder Open House

At the Open House, kids battled against each other with remote-controlled robot from Pathfinder’s Robotics Battleshop.



National Night Out

Dillon Worth and Tyler Allen showed off a Wales police vehicle to Meghan Balderelli and Xander, age 6.

OCT. 17



Monson Cemetery Walk

Cemetery Commissioner Sarah McNamara Pedder portrayed Marcus Keep for the event.

Recreation director resigns, accomplishments praised

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – At the Oct. 15 Conservation Commission meeting, Recreational Director Andrew St. George announced that he will be resigning from his position.

“Over the last several years, we’ve worked on a lot of projects together,” St. George said. “Me and Jessica have been going over where we were in some of those projects.”

St. George said that he did not have updates on those projects since the departure of Conservation Agent Justin Enright, but said that the property at Barker Street have been cleaned up and more maintenance has been done.

St. George described it as “bittersweet” to leave the position.

“Since we’ve worked so closely together over the last couple of years, I wanted to have the opportunity to come in here in person and let you guys know,” St. George said.

St. George said he hopes this continues to grow and that people continue to use the trails, and mentioned the number of pictures that have run in the newspaper of him wearing costumes for ‘80s Day, Krampus Nacht, and Light Up Palmer. St. George also praised the Commission for its dedication to the town.

“I’ve been around a while in the municipal world, and I think I can truly say that you guys are one of the

actual boards and commissions that legitimately cares,” St. George said. “You’re doing what you do because you care about it. I really appreciate that you guys are all committed and work hard and keep trying to move things forward and accomplish goals. I think that speaks a lot to all of you for doing the job you’re doing.”

OCT. 24

Psychic Medium leads attendees in candlelit Secret Graveyard Stroll

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – This October saw the debut of the Secret Graveyard Stroll, a Halloween-themed sight-seeing tour based right here in town.

Residents from all over the region are invited to step aboard Bygone Excursions’s classic trolley to join renowned psychic medium entertainer, Gary McKinstry to embark on a chilling journey through one of the town’s “oldest and most haunted graveyards.” Led by candlelight, attendees will be treated to eerie stories, and are warned that they may “encounter spirits that still linger in the shadows.”

“The Secret Graveyard Stroll starts in Palmer at Steaming Tender,” said Scarlet Lamothe, owner of Bygone Excursions. “Ever since we got Thirteenth World, this huge attraction to Palmer, we wanted to build upon tradition of Palmer’s spookiness by bringing in more tourism to our area.”

There are exactly 22 tickets available per tour, because the trolley seats 24 people and two seats are reserved for psychic medium Gary McKinstry and his wife Virginia, who Lamothe said are the people running the show.

Lamothe said that she hopes that next year, they will be able to offer more weeks of the event.

OCT. 31

Converse Trunk-or-Treat



Principal Holly Riopel and her family dressed up as Beetlejuice characters for the Trunk-or-Treat.

Supt. announces retirement at School Committee meeting

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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MONSON – At last week’s School Committee meeting, prior to the public session, the superintendent announced that she will be retiring after this year.

At the Oct. 23 meeting, after receiving the student reports and voting to approve the minutes for several previous meetings, the committee was informed by Superintendent Dr. Cheryl Clarke that she will be retiring, effective in June of next year.

“It has been an honor to serve the students, staff, and families of the Monson Public Schools for 20 years,” Clarke said. “I am proud of the work that we have accomplished during the 12 years of my superintendency.”

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Victor, Andrew, Hunter, Sophia, Juliet, and Logan dressed as Godzilla, Mario, a princess, and Spider-Man to get candy from volunteers.

NOVEMBER

NOV. 7



Monson gets in the spirit

The Town Hall employees who decorated the downstairs, (from left) Denise Buck, Toni Uliana, Kim Uliana, and Penny Gustafson as Gramma Nutt.

Pep Rally and Parade celebrates 100-years of Palmer and Ware rivalry

PALMER – Last week, the towns of Palmer and Ware celebrated their 100-year rivalry with a football game at Legion Field.

Before the game began, the town held a pep rally and a parade that went from Converse Street, to Central Street, Park Street, and Thorndike Street, before coming back to Converse Middle School.

The parade included representatives from the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Girls' Soccer Team, and the town's Soccer Association, staff from the Palmer Public Schools, and other residents of the town.

After the parade, the residents arrived at Legion Field for the historic game, which ended 7-6 in Ware's favor.



The parade started at Legion Field and trekked around the block before coming back to play the game.

NOV. 14



Veterans Day Parade

The Boy Scouts held flags during the Veterans Day ceremony at Hryniewicz Park.



Veterans Day Breakfast

Tina and Mason Brohman, Charlann Griswold, Karen Pluff, Phil Yanni, and Caitlin and Rick Brohman, Jr., served breakfast to Rick Brohman, Sr.

NOV. 21



Holly Berry Bazaar

Reverend Steve Sousa, Bonny Rathbone, and Jo Condon were very helpful as they worked the bazaar.



BSA Troop #64 filled up a truck with donations for America Recycles Day.

Fire Department quickly quenches brush fire caused by rogue firework

PALMER – In November, the fire department responded to a fire that broke out at Legion Field as the result of a firework.

Chief William Bernat said that the department was notified at 6:09 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 15, of a fire breaking out near Legion Field.

When the first units arrived on the scene, there was a large tree on fire with a decent sized area of banking burning.

"Light winds were going up the hill, so there was potential to spread the fire rapidly with the dry conditions that we're having currently," Bernat said.

Bernat said that the first unit that arrived was able to make an attack on the fire by surrounding it and making a quick extinguishment. Units from Three Rivers and Bondsville were called to respond to the fire as well, and the scene was cleared around 7:27 p.m.

Bernat praised the work of his fellow firefighters, saying that "they responded quickly and did a fantastic job surrounding the fire."

Chief Bernat was among the firefighters that responded to the scene, and was accompanied by Captain Ryan Gauthier, Captain Sean Reynolds, Lieutenant Matt Caulfield, Lieutenant John Fitzgerald, Patrick Jessop, Jason Cousineau, Lucas Croft, and Jeffrey Zajac.

"Fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts and shouldn't be used," Bernat said. "With the extreme drought conditions that we have, and current red flag conditions, people should be very vigilant on not having any open flame. These specific conditions that we currently have can promote rapid fire growth, so it's very dangerous, and structures and residents can be threatened very quickly."

NOVEMBER | page 14

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DECEMBER | from page 14

out Child Life.”

Jaremczuk said that this will be the third year that she and her son collect toys for the hospital. As of January of this year, she registered their nonprofit as Forever In A Moment, Inc.

In their first year, Zeke and Samantha collected close to 500 toys to donate, and collected as many as 900 last year. Jaremczuk dropped the donations off at Baystate Children’s Hospital on Dec. 15.

DEC. 12



Members of Sons of AMVETS Post #74 in Three Rivers prepared to deliver over 250 toys collected from the AM-Vets family and community to benefit the local Toys for Tots campaign.



Brimfield Scouts

Steven, age 12, and Zack, age 15, spent their afternoon receiving votes for the Wreath Contest.



Pathfinder Open House

Johnathan Young and Jake Foss observed an engine in the Automotive Department.



Dennis Ladue (right) showed Lily Voisine, Avery Laplante, Gina O’Connell, and Harper Laplante what the Automotive Department does.

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DEC. 19

Select Board approves Fire Department’s use of Memorial Hall

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – The Select Board voted to allow the Fire Department to use Memorial Hall during upcoming construction.

The Fire Department approached the board to continue the discussion about using Memorial Hall while the station is being repaired and painted.

“This was added to the agenda to address too many interruptions during business meetings,” Warren said.

Town Manager Jennifer Wolowicz explained that at the previous meeting, the department had discussed the possibility of using trailers for temporary housing, but that proved to be infeasible. The current proposal would be to use the changing rooms in Memorial Hall rather than the basement.

“The minor things they’re going to be doing there is not changing the Hall,” said Building Commissioner Justin Larivee. “The dressing rooms are going to be able to put carpet in them, and the carpet will stay after the fact, which will be better for the plays anyway. The one outlet we’re going to run for the stove is going to go through an existing hole already from the basement up to the room, and then after that will be removed, so there will be no change at Memorial Hall after that.”

Larivee said that everything scheduled through 2025 to spring of 2026 would still be able to happen at Memorial Hall. Harris recommended using the stage at Granite Valley Middle School, “as long as the school’s okay with it.”

The board voted unanimously to allow the Fire Department use of Memorial Hall for the duration of the construction.

Wreaths Across America



Heather Wilson and Cemetery Foreman Mat Wawrzyk laid wreaths together this weekend.

DEC. 26

Feedback sought about station for East/West Rail Project

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
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PALMER – Last week, the Department of Transportation held a meeting at the library to solicit feedback from the public about the East/West Rail Project.

Members of the public were invited to a public information meeting in the Palmer Public Library’s Community Room on Monday, Dec. 16, where the project team provided an overview of the study’s background, the station site alternatives and evaluation, and design considerations for the potential future rail station. After the presentation, the attendees were asked to provide feedback on the site alternatives and design considerations.

Andy Koziol, the director of the project, has been with the Department of Transportation since June of last year. “We received quite a bit of feedback, there was a lot of public participation,” Koziol said.

Of the previous 11 sites, the project team has narrowed the focus to six that meet the ideal criteria for the new site. The meeting involved some controversy, much of which was centered on the elimination of Steaming Tender Restaurant as a potential site for the station.

Koziol explained that the designs require a high-level, 800-foot platform to allow for level boarding on all coaches. There will also need to be about 1,775 feet of an adjacent track.

Koziol said that this is complicated by the properties near Steaming Tender, citing the CSX yard across from the tracks.

“Part of that is the CSX yard right across from the tracks,” Koziol said, “then the horizontal width beneath the South Main Street bridge. Not only would the bridge have to be reconstructed, but this particular layout would require purchasing several properties, which would make that not feasible.”

This was countered by Blake Lamothe, the owner of Steaming Tender, who argued at the meeting that another proposal could fit in the space provided by the restaurant and would be a better use of the town’s assets.

“News stations are categorizing it a Category Four with Amtrak, which means they want to build these big long platforms,” Lamothe said. “We could have gone under Category Two or Three, which would allow us to use the existing structure for the station stop.”

“By managing assets, what you can do is put a couple million dollars into an existing station and develop a North/South line along with the East/West line and take the money to put into town to upgrade parking lots, infrastructure, sidewalks, and the stuff we need to get good, healthy growth downtown again,” Lamothe said.

Koziol agreed with Lamothe that a station far from the town center would not be ideal for economic growth, and mentioned it as a focus for the project.

“The general sentiment is that having the meeting station as close to downtown is desirable, we’ve heard that repeated several times through multiple mediums,” Koziol said.

This project is currently ongoing, with the first route currently in the works. Koziol said that the team is going to use the feedback it received to hone in on a site that is both feasible to DOT and supported by the community, at which point the project team will be able to work on a conceptual design for the station.

Virtual support groups for cancer

PALMER— During a cancer journey patients and their families often benefit from the support of others. Virtual support groups are being held now and through 2025, by Camille St.Onge, LICSW and oncology social worker.

For many years, people had to travel to a predetermined location to attend cancer support group meetings. As a result of restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic virtual support groups began meeting entirely online, with participants joining through video conferencing platforms like Zoom. Today, many people prefer this method because it offers flexibility, and convenience, and allows them to access support from where they are without needing to physically travel to a meeting location.

“Sharing concerns with a support group can be a beneficial way for people facing cancer to get the help they need to cope with the physical and emotional concerns that arise during and after a cancer diagnosis,” said St. Onge. “While

support and self-help groups can vary greatly, groups share one thing in common, they are a place where people can share personal stories, express emotions, and be heard in an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding, and encouragement.”

The support groups are designed to help patients, their families and caregivers cope with the challenges of a cancer diagnosis.

Virtual Support Group offered include:

- General Cancer Support Group: first Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Partners in Caregiving: second Wednesday of each month, 5 to 6:30 p.m.; Expressive Writing through Cancer, third Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Breast Cancer

Support Group, fourth Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

All meetings are currently held virtually and are made possible by funds raised by the Walk of Champions. For more information contact Camille St.Onge, LICSW, Oncology Social Worker by calling 413-239-7239 or by email at cstomagin@gmail.com.

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Time for New Year’s financial resolutions

Now that the calendar has flipped, it’s time for some New Year’s resolutions. You could decide you’re going to exercise more, lose weight, learn a new skill, reconnect with old friends — the possibilities are almost limitless. This year, why not add a few financial resolutions to your list?

Here are a few to consider:

- **Reduce your debts.** It may be easier said than done, but if you can cut down on your debt load, you’ll increase your cash flow and have more money available to invest for your future. So, look for ways to lower your expenses and spending. You might find it helpful to use one of the budgeting apps available online.

- **Boost your retirement savings.** Try to put in as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. If your salary goes up this year, you’ve got a good opportunity to increase your contributions to these retirement accounts. And once you turn 50, you can make pre-tax catch-up contributions for your 401(k) and traditional IRA. You might also want to review the investment mix within your 401(k) or similar plan to determine whether it’s still providing the growth potential you need, given your risk tolerance and time horizon.

- **Build an emergency fund.** It’s generally a good idea to maintain an emergency fund containing up to six months’ worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such a fund, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for short-term needs, such as an expensive auto or home repair.

- **Keep funding your non-retirement goals.** Your traditional IRA and 401(k) are good ways to save for retirement — but you likely have other goals, too, and you’ll need to save and invest for them. So, for example, if you want your children to go to college or receive some other type of post-secondary training, you might want to invest in a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan. And if you have short-term goals, such as saving for a wedding or taking an overseas vacation, you might want to put some money away in a liquid account. For a short-term goal, you don’t necessarily need to invest aggressively for growth — you just want the money to be there for you when you need it.

- **Review your estate plans.** If you haven’t already created your estate plans, you may want to do so in 2025. Of course, if you’re relatively young, you might not think you need to have estate plans in place just yet, but life is unpredictable, and the future is not ours to see. If you have already drawn up estate plans, you may want to review them, especially if you’ve recently experienced changes in your life and family situation, such as marriage, remarriage or the addition of a new child. Because estate planning can be complex, you’ll want to work with a qualified legal professional.

You may not be able to tackle all these resolutions in 2025. But by addressing as many of them as you can, you may find that, by the end of the year, you have made progress toward your goals and set yourself on a positive course for all the years to come.

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AMVETS enjoys State Commander's Christmas party



Turley Staff Photos

AMVETS State Commander Ed Wyzik presented his state officers.

PALMER – The AMVETS Post 74 in Three Rivers hosted the State Commander's Christmas party last week.

"The AMVETS work hard all year long to provide support for their members and all veterans. It's a nice break to have them come and enjoy themselves, bring their spouses and have a meal,"

said AMVETS State Commander Ed Wyzik. "Just sit around, laugh and be appreciated."

AMVETS Post 74 of Three Rivers hosted the event.

"We worked hard to put on a great event. To have the state commander and the event here was a great thing," Sons



Members of Quabbin Regional High School NJROTC also attended the Christmas party.



Guests are shown at the State Commander's Christmas party.



Guests enjoyed the AMVETS State Commander Christmas party.



State Ladies Auxiliary President Mandy Grotta-Dias and local officers wished everyone happy holidays.



Members of AMVETS Post 74 and Sons of AMVETS Post 74 enjoyed the party.



Sons of AMVETS State Commander Floyd Francis, AMVETS State Commander Ed Wyzik and State Ladies President Mandy Grotta-Dias are shown at the State Commander's Christmas party.




State Commander Ed Wyzik is presented with a jacket in appreciation for his service.

Commonwealth as well as Sons of AMVETS posts and Ladies Auxiliaries.

"These veterans represent the best of what the AMVETS offer. They are all family. And this is what a family does but come together," said Wyzik.

of AMVETS Post 74 Commander Tony Silva said.

The party was attended by representatives of AMVETS posts throughout the



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