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PALMER

School Committee approves updated Program of Studies

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER — At last week's School Committee meeting, the committee heard updates to the school's Program of Studies and shared communications from the public about the school's administration.

At the March 19 meeting, Superintendent Matthew Francis presented the Superintendent's Report. Sue North, Principal at the High School, provided an overview of changes to the Program of Studies so that the committee would be able to make an informed decision.

North began her presentation by thanking Assistant Principals Amy Herring and Enrique Sanchez for their work on the program. Changes to the program included specifying the school's English course offerings and renaming the Foreign Language classes to "World Language." North highlighted the inclusion of a Health and Physical Education course.

"Back on Nov. 20 at the School Committee meeting you had voted and approved for the Program of Studies to match exactly what the law says, and that is for 7th through 12th grade, each year, to have physical education," North said.

Another change in language was to the former Foundations of Reading course, now changed to Ac-

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MONSON

Tri-Board Meeting leaves unanswered questions on proposed cuts



Molly (Left) and her brother Brandon (right) show up with their mom October (middle) to protest budget changes at the school.

Residents, teachers and more voice concerns

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON—The Town of Monson Board of Selectmen's meeting, combined with the Finance and School Committees, saw a packed room of concerned citizens, educators, parents and local officials on March 24.

The session, held at 7 p.m., began with a round of applause honoring Monson High School's Olivia

Chrzan, who was recently named the West Mass Player of the Year in basketball. Chrzan, a senior, was recognized for her extraordinary achievements, including a remarkable career total of 2,287 points, the highest ever in Monson High's history, surpassing both male and female records.

"Monson is very proud of you," stated Brian Ashe (D-Longmeadow), a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, who presented Olivia with an official citation signed by both Ashe and State Rep. Angelo Puppolo, Jr. (D-Springfield).

Chrzan, who boasts a 100.4 GPA, is currently ranked second in her class and plans to attend Western New England University. Ashe, who has long been an advocate for local schools, spoke passionately about the impact sports had on his own life, noting that basketball played a pivotal role in his personal development.

The accolades, however, quickly gave way to serious discussions about the town's budget, specifically concerning potential cuts to education, staff and vital programs due to financial constraints.

TRI-BOARD | page 7

Schools looks at budget cuts

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON—The Monson Public Schools Committee on March 18 for its latest meeting, which touched on various

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MONSON

Planning Board balancing growth

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON—The Monson Planning Board convened for its monthly meeting on March 18 addressing a variety of topics, from estate lot approvals to zoning bylaw changes and new development proposals. The meeting covered crucial topics regarding local zoning laws, land development, and housing, with a focus on ensuring balanced growth in the community.

Estate lot approval on Paradise Lake Road

The meeting kicked off with a continuation of a public hearing for an estate lot on Paradise Lake Road. Clark Salazzo, representing the applicant, provided updates on changes to the proposed driveway and turnaround area. These revisions, which were approved by the fire chief, are designed to accommodate the largest emergency vehicles. Board members discussed concerns raised by the Conservation Commission regarding a monitoring well located on the property. Salazzo was unable to determine the well's purpose or history, and town records did not offer additional insights. However, it was confirmed that no construction would take place near the well. Following the discussion, the Planning Board reviewed the estate lot plan and previously approved conditions from 2022, which included construction guide-

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COMMUNITY



Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

Candace Gaumond doing her gallery message readings for the event attendees.

Fundraising event helps honor veterans

By Abigail McCoy
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PALMER—Tables at the Farm hosted a memorable evening on March 19 combining a fundraiser for veterans with a unique spiritual experience. The event was designed not only to

honor the veterans of Palmer but also to raise funds for future veteran-related activities. The evening began with a hearty dinner and culminated in a psychic medium session with Candace Ouillette Gaumond, a renowned international psychic and healer.

Tina Brohman, Palmer's Veteran Services Agent, was the driving force be-

CONSERVATION

Resident seeks dock in 'no disturb zone'

By Abigail McCoy
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PALMER — The Palmer Conversation Commission met last Tuesday night for its regular meeting, going through an order of conditions as well as a forest cutting plan request.

The first agenda item was the signing of documents, including an extension request for the Order of Conditions (OOC) for DEP #256-0359 at 190 Emery Street, Palmer. Alex Thomson, the property owner, was present to request an extension for the installation of a floating dock within the local 50-foot No Disturb Zone of Deep Marsh and the clearing of vegetation in the outer Buffer Zone to the pond. Thomson explained that the area had remained unchanged



Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette

Monson Police Department participated in the annual Polar Plunge event at Beaver Lake in Ware to benefit Special Olympics Massachusetts. This year's event raised over \$5,750 and had close to 50 people registered to take the plunge. Shown from left are Lieutenant Nicholas Gasperini, Officer Paul Mayo, Police Chief Stephen Kozloski, Gwen Gasperini, Olivia Iwaniec and Evie Iwaniec.

Annual event helped raise money for Special Olympics

By Paula Ouimette
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WARE — For the sev-

enth year, Ware Police Officer Jeannine Bonnayer has led the charge into the frigid water of Beaver Lake to help support a cause that is close to her heart.

The Polar Plunge raises money to support Special Olympics Massachusetts, which gives student-athletes

of all abilities a chance to participate in Olympic-style events. This year's Polar Plunge raised over \$5,750 — more than doubling Bonnayer's goal of \$2,500.

"This is the most people I've ever had," Bonnayer

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ROAD RACE



The participants are off in the 48th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Matt Provost, of Monson, came in 19th place at 35:09.



Tanner Wenzel, of Palmer, finishes at 39:48.



Sean O'Donnell, of Thorndike, finishes at 40:12.



Tim Romeo gets to the finish line at 46:21

Sun shines bright on 48th Road Race

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – For the first time in several years, it was gorgeous weather for the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race last Saturday afternoon the city streets.

More than 6,000 people participated in this year's event, with nearly 5,000 participants finishing the 10K, or 6.2-mile course.

This year, it was Samuel Whittaker of Salem, CT, who finished the race in 31:24. Alex Corbett, who placed second in last year's race, came in 23 seconds later at 31:47.

The top female finisher was Angelia Rafter at 34:13 and she placed 12th overall.

Rafter is from Glastonbury, CT.

Among local finishers, Matt Provost of Monson was 19th overall at 35:09. Ryan Davis of South Hadley was a close 20th at 35:10. Lindsay Smith of South Hadley finished 22nd at 35:12.

While the race course, commonly known as a "hilly" course throughout downtown Holyoke ending with a turn off Beech St. and up the hill on Hampden St. toward the finish line remained largely the same, there was one noticeable change in this year's event.

Presidential Timing took over the official timing duties after 4RUN3 went out of business last year. Those looking for more results from

the events can go to www.presidentialtiming.com to look at more specific results from the race. Like previous years, you can look up people by name and bib number to get more specific results.

The road race once again kicked off an excellent weekend celebrating the St. Patrick's Day holiday and also helped to prepare several participants in this year's event for future races in the coming months, including the Boston Marathon, which will take place on Monday, April 21.

With the weather being much warmer, there were less participants in costumes, though plenty of runners were wearing the green tutus that are often a part of each year's race.

The city also had excellent cooperation from the Holyoke Police Department, Holyoke Fire Department, the Massachusetts State Police, and Cataldo Ambulance, which provided public safety services for the event this year.

The race was kicked with a beautiful rendition of the Star Spangled Banner sung by Kate Caligaris and JFK Award winner and celebrity Bridget Moynahan shot the opening gun.

This year, there were four waves of runners followed by the fifth wave, which included walkers on the course.

Among the participants, there were nearly 400 participants in the race who were under 18-years-old.

SOFTBALL

Palmer softball swinging for spring



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Ava Swist makes contact during batting practice.



The Palmer softball team sets up the batting cage.



Coach Heather Korzec delivers instruction to her players.



Cora Lachance does a batting tee drill.



Kierra Koche swings and connects.

PALMER – Last week, Palmer High School softball began preseason workouts in advance of the upcoming

season. The team is scheduled to begin playing games next week.

BASKETBALL

League starts new award in honor of deceased coach

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

CHICOPEE— The Pioneer Valley Girls Suburban Basketball League was always very special to Eileen Monaghan.

Growing up in Chicopee, Monaghan played for a Suburban League basketball team. She then coached her daughter's Suburban League teams. In recent years, Monaghan was one of the referees in the league.

Monaghan most likely would've been back on the basketball court refereeing Suburban League games this winter, but she was tragically killed last April.

Suburban League Commissioner Joe Ciejka, who's from Ware, couldn't recall another person who played, coached and was a referee in

the Suburban League during the past 40 years.

"I believe Eileen is the first person to play, coach, and has been a referee in the Suburban league," Ciejka said. "Eileen brought an incredible spirit to the Suburban League and the kindness of hearts. Even though her heart has been silenced, we're not going to let her spirit ever die."

The inaugural Eileen Monaghan Sportsmanship Award was given to the Gateway 5/6th grade basketball team prior to the start of the 5/6th grade Division 2 championship game between Easthampton and Hampshire, which took place at Chicopee Comp on March 9.

"I think the sportsman-

Spring preseason underway



Arianna does a swinging drill.



Pathfinder softball works out last Friday at Soccer City in Wilbraham.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Pathfinder's Carly Juda plays coach during practice last Friday.

PALMER – The spring season is underway in high school sports with many teams set to open up the season later this week. More teams will get going early next week, weather permitting as well as if baseball and softball fields are ready for play.



Laylana Patran watches a pitch come in during batting practice.



Zaylee Brodeur works on hitting with the tee.