

BARRE GAZETTE

USPS 044560

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

October 1, 2026 | Vol. 192, No. 27 | \$1.00

www.barregazette.turley.com

Council on Aging requests upstairs office for outreach coordinator

By Ellenor Downer
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BARRE – Council on Aging Director Betty Jo O'Brien and several members of the Council on Aging asked Select Board for approval to create an upstairs office for their Outreach Coordinator at their Monday, Sept. 21 meeting.

The current office was on the lower level and the COA said the coordinator should

be upstairs to be more accessible to the clients, who use the senior center and those needing assistance from the outreach coordinator.

O'Brien said the library was an underutilized space and she and the COA members proposed walling off a section of that space and add a door to create an office for the new Outreach Coordinator.

O'Brien said there was money for the renovations in the building improvement

fund for building an office. She said the old office downstairs would be repurposed.

The Select Board approved the hiring of the new Outreach Coordinator, Gina Pedersen and supported the construction of an office for her on the main level of the building.

Surplus Water Department equipment

A Water Department operator said there was another town who was looking for

a piece of equipment his department was no longer able to use. He said the chlorine analyzer was too near the well to be used. Water could not be discharged within 500 feet of the well per state regulations and was not in use. He said the town needing the equipment has the ability to discharge the flush water into its sewer system. Barre did not have that capability.

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Pathfinder celebrates expansion with ribbon cutting

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

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

Massachusetts Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Pedro Martinez joined Pathfinder Tech Superintendent Eric Duda and local legislators at the ceremony. Additional guests included state Sen. Jake Oliveira and state Reps. Aaron Saunders and Todd Smola.

"Pathfinder Tech is turning opportunity into action," Smola told Turley



Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School leaders celebrated a major accomplishment with local officials.

Publications. "This expansion means more students can get the practical education they need to build careers, meet critical work-

force needs, and give back to their communities."

Martinez praised the collaboration among school leaders necessary to convert

the former elementary school into a vocational technical campus in only two months.

The result is an expansion of Career Technical

Education opportunities for students throughout the region.

"This is a tremendous day for Pathfinder Tech, for

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

The former Cold Spring School remained an active Belchertown elementary school through June 2026. The building was turned over to Pathfinder Tech on July 1, leaving district officials with a short window to repurpose the facility.

The project included extensive renovations and modernization upgrades

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SB votes to reduce early voting hours

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
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HARDWICK – The Select Board held a public hearing at their Monday meeting to hear a request from Town Clerk Ryan J. Witkos to reduce the number of early in-person voting hours for the Nov. 3 state election to 44 hours from 74 hours.

Early voting runs from



Oct. 17-30 and Witkos said the municipal building will be open for four hours on Oct. 17, 16 hours the week of Oct. 19-23 and Oct. 26-30 and for eight hours on Oct. 24, which is the last day to register to vote.

Witkos said in 2024, the town had 10% in-person turnout, and he also said that he recommends voters come out early because there are nine ballot questions.

Witkos said certain weekdays, the building will be open until 7 p.m. to allow for voters coming home from work to have an opportunity

to vote.

The Select Board approved this request, and signed the warrant for the election.

179 Main St.

The board reviewed a bid for 179 Main St., the former senior center and school. Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said the town went out to bid a second time because the first round did not produce any bids.

This round produced a single bid.

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Town receives risk management grant

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen heard about a risk management grant that the town received during a meeting last Tuesday.

Executive Assistant Mary Beth Kularski said this grant is done through the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association, and they offer a \$10,000 no-match grant every year. She said the town applied for, and received just over

\$8,000.

During the Sept. 22 meeting, Kularski said \$3,500 will be used for heating ventilation and air conditioning duct work at the police station to improve air quality since there has not been prior routine maintenance on it, and a condition of the grant was to set up a regular maintenance schedule for the system.

She said \$767 will be used for two-way radios for the Sewer Department. Kularski said \$1,098 will also be used for the Sewer Department for reflective

cones, warning signs, support kits, drums and barricades to establish a visible work zone.

The Water Department will get a multi-gas detector to monitor air conditions for \$2,690 according to Kularski.

Fire chief search

The board gave an update on the search for a new fire chief, saying there were nine applications received, and the Fire Chief

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Panthers field hockey continues to win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE – During her three-plus decades at the helm of the Quabbin Regional varsity field hockey program, Shelly Zalneraitis has coached countless talented players. None of Zalneraitis’ players had reached 100 career points (goals and assists) prior to this season.

Senior co-captain Makenzie Casey entered last Monday’s home contest against Narragansett Regional with 96 career points. She came agonizingly close to reaching the elite milestone in front of her home supporters.

Casey recorded her second hat trick of the 2026 regular season, which helped the

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Leicester too much for Panthers

BARRE – Last Friday night, Quabbin Regional High School football had a couple of early scores, but Leicester came roaring back with four touchdowns in the second quarter and powered to a 56-20 win over Quabbin. The Panthers got a touchdown from Zakk Mielnicki with a 67-yard run and Jordan Douglas had a 21-yard for a score.

Late in the game, Isaiah Porter scored on an 80-yard pass play. The Panthers are now 1-2 on the season.

Jordan Publicover tries to get around the corner.



Brady Dennis, left and Jordan Douglas wrap up the runner.



Leo Bates attempts to make a touchdown-saving tackle.



Zakk Mielnicki looks for a hole to run through.



Jordan Douglas breaks a big run.

QB Zakk Mielnicki pitches the ball to Jordan Douglas.



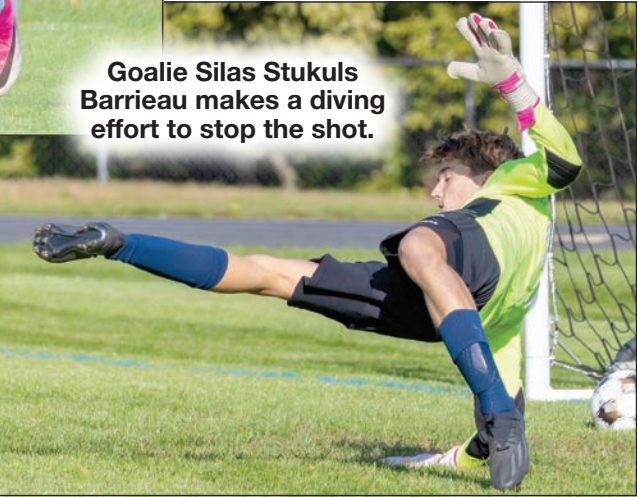
Joseph Cook steels himself as he makes the block.



Greyson Mullins battles for possession.



Matthew Labrousse boots the ball forward.



Goalie Silas Stukuls Barrieau makes a diving effort to stop the shot.

Brent Benoit fends off the opponent as he works the ball upfield.

Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes

Quabbin boys fall to Clinton

BARRE – Last Thursday afternoon, Quabbin Regional High School boys soccer was defeated for just the second time this season, losing to Clinton 4-0.

The Panthers are 3-2-1 on the season, having shown some good offense in their first three wins this year.

Coming up, the Panthers

will travel out to Tahanto Regional High School on Thursday, Oct. 1 at 4 p.m.

They are back home on Tuesday, Oct. 6 at 3:30 p.m. against West Boylston.

Pioneers take down Ware

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARE – Three of the previous four meetings between the Pathfinder Tech and Ware boys’ soccer teams ended in draws. Unlike their recent clashes, the first meeting of the 2026 campaign between the Bi-County East foes was far less suspenseful.

The Pathfinder Tech Pioneers held a 7-0 halftime lead and cruised to a 10-0 victory over the Ware Indians on a cool night at Veteran’s Field in Ware, last Tuesday.

“We’re hoping to challenge for the league title this year, so this is a very big-league win for us,” said Pathfinder Tech head coach David Wilson. “Winning the league title is our first goal. We also want to qualify for both the Western Mass. and state tournaments.”

Pathfinder Tech entered this week’s action with a 5-1-1 overall record and a 3-0-1 mark against league opponents. The last time they captured the league title was in 2022.

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Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Madison Boulrice punts the ball away.



Ellyana Lavalley sends a shot away.

Pioneers split a pair

PALMER – The Pathfinder Regional High School girls soccer team remains at .500 after scoring a win and a loss during the past week. Last Monday afternoon on the grass behind Pathfinder, the Pioneers edged Putnam 2-1. Lee would defeat Pathfinder last Tuesday 4-0 for a 2-2 overall record.

The Pioneers will travel to Gateway for a Friday evening game on Oct. 3 at 6 p.m. The Pioneers are back home to face Commerce at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 6.



Josephine Boyko chases down a loose ball.



Evelyn Wood looks to cut the ball off on defense.