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BARRE GAZETTE

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SB hears about watershed coalition

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RUTLAND – The Select Board met last Monday to discuss a coalition being formed for towns in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed area from Raymond Bricault, the organizer of the coalition.

Bricault said there is a payment in lieu of taxes study group from West Boylston looking at the inequalities for communities in the watershed and the amount of PILOT funding they receive, and he said the benefits of a reformed PILOT formula likely would not affect towns' budgets in a material way.

Bricault said the reform would create winners and losers, with the winners being western Massachusetts and the losers being eastern Massachusetts, but he said central Massachusetts would likely not see much change in funding one way or the other.

"We need a bigger structure, we need a bigger fix," Bricault said.

Bricault said town administrators from the region are involved in the setup of the coalition, and legislation is being filed by Sen. Robyn Kennedy along with Rep. James O'Day.

Bricault said they would follow the blueprint of the similar Quabbin coalition for communities in that area, but he said one thing they have not done is get financial quantification, which is something the Wachusett coalition will focus on.

"We need to quantify the pain a little bit more," Bricault said.

He also said there will be a breakdown of Department of Conservation land and Massachusetts Water Resources Authority land to figure out how much of the land is PILOT eligible, and that is being done with help from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

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Voters veto QRSD agreement, OK budget

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
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HUBBARDSTON – A special town meeting was held last Tuesday at the Hubbardston Center School with 11 articles for voters to act on including an updated regional agreement with the Quabbin Regional School District and some amendments to the budget article from the annual town meeting.

Regional agreement

Article 8 was the regional agreement, which had already been approved by the other four towns in the district, but there needed to be a unanimous vote for it to go forward.

The Select Board in Hubbardston voted to leave it off the annual town meeting warrant because of concerns regarding emergency capital costs being valued at $5,000, a number the board said has not changed since the 1990s. The board preferred that cost to be at least $10,000, saying most projects do not cost less than $5,000 today.

Katie Young, chair of the Select Board said if the town meeting denies the agreement, it goes back to the drawing board, but the rest of the agreement is also subject to change.

According to the agreement's text, if a district owned school has a repair that costs in excess of $5,000 with a useful life of 12 months or more, it is deemed capital and assessed to the towns. For town owned schools, if a project costs between $5,000-$10,000, it has to be approved by the select board, and if it's over $10,000, it takes a town meeting vote.

Residents spoke on the article including Kristofer Munroe, who said there are problems with the agreement and the relationship with the district, citing adjusted graduation rates at 75% for the male cohort, 53% for the disabled and 76.3% for low income students.

Munroe said the town is paying roughly the same amount as the Acton-Boxborough district, and they have graduation rates over 90%. Munroe said the town should vote no because of a lack of performance, and to allow an open discussion.

Gael Moncoeur, who is a Hubbardston representative for the QRSD school committee, said comparing the rural district of Quabbin to Acton-Boxborough is not accurate, saying it is like comparing apples to oranges because of differences in Chapter 70 funding.

A motion was made to pass over the article, which

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Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette

Auguste Bellerose stars as Billy Flynn in Quabbin Performing Art's production of the musical "Chicago: Teen Edition". Performances are held in the auditorium of Quabbin Regional Middle High School, 800 South St., Barre on Saturday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 15 at 2 p.m., Friday, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 21 at 2 p.m.

Quabbin Performing Arts presents 'Chicago'

By Paula Ouimette
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BARRE – Quabbin Performing Arts is ready to "razzle dazzle" audiences with its production of "Chicago: Teen Edition", set to take the stage for opening night on Saturday, Nov. 14.

This year's cast and crew features a record number of seniors, who are warming up for their last performance as high school students before graduation in the spring.

Auguste Bellerose stars as Billy Flynn, the confident lawyer representing accused murderess, Roxie Hart.

This is Bellerose's fifth production at Quabbin Regional Middle High School, and audience members may remember seeing him as Beast in "Beauty and the Beast", Shrek in "Shrek the Musical" and Hades in the one-act play, "Persephone".

After graduation, Bellerose said he plans to enlist in the U.S. Air Force, and he will study aeronautical science to become a pilot.

Bellerose said the Quabbin Performing Arts has helped him find where he belongs and given him the confidence to tackle Billy Flynn's lengthy monologues and hit the right notes while singing.

"I guess it helped me find my little niche," Bellerose said. "I never saw myself doing theater, but I loved it since I started…it brought me a lot of joy."

Owen O'Donnell is a member of the backstage crew, working to ensure each performance runs

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Board discusses warrant signature process

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
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HARDWICK – The Select Board continued discussions on the accounts payable and payroll warrant signing process at its Monday meeting.

At a previous meeting this year, the board took a vote to require two signatures on the warrants to approve them, but according to members of the board, it has been difficult to get two people to sign it, and Town Administrator Justine Caggiano said the financial team is getting nervous about sending the payments in with only one signature since the board made it a policy to have two, so the discussion on the table was whether to revert back to only needing one signature.

Select Board Chair Jeff Schaaf was in favor of going back to one signature along with Select Board Clerk Zack Spencer. Vice-Chair William Tinker said the reason his signature isn't being put on the warrants is because he is not getting adequate time to review the payments and does not want to sign off on something that wasn't reviewed thoroughly.

Caggiano said the team

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Pathfinder Tech recognizes staff/students for Cold Springs campus opening

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER – At its recent General Advisory meeting, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School faculty was recognized by the commonwealth for the opening of its second campus this year.

On the evening of Oct. 15, Pathfinder Tech held its regular General Advisory meeting in the gymnasium. The event featured displays by students and staff from the school's various technical departments, and featured a dinner, speeches, and a special recognition for the recent opening of the Cold Springs campus.

"This is an opportunity for our teachers and our students to connect with people in industry, and people in higher education," said Counselor Brenda Turner.

Turner said the advisory is an opportunity for the school to hear from local businesses and past students about trends in the school's technical fields.

Superintendent Eric Duda began his comments by marveling at the number of people he recognized from his 20-year career with the school.

"I don't have to remind you why you're here and what's so important, but I do have to remind other people in this room, including our wonderful students that are here, all around this room," Duda said. "The businesses and the communities we serve are the drivers of literally everything. They're the drivers of the type of education we deliver. They're the drivers of construction projects and house building assessments that happen that pay for fire and police."

Duda recalled recent projects, including renovating the HVAC program, the new plumbing program paid for with grant funding, and renovations to the gymnasium to support the town's youth sports program. He also announced a historic anonymous donation of $800,000 that the district has received.

"We're going to be making a huge announcement

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Turley Photo by Marcelo Gusmão

The gymnasium at Pathfinder Regioanl Vocational Technical High School was filled with faculty, students, families, stakeholders, alumni and business owners to hear about the school's advancements.

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Strong finish for Quabbin field hockey

BARRE – Last week, the Quabbin Regional High School field hockey team finished up an impressive 2026 season. The Panthers were an overall 16-2, but even more impressive, they had a perfect 10-0 league record in the Midland Wachusett B to win the league championship. Offense was a big part of Quabbin's game, and Makenzie Casey and Abby Rogowski led the way with 25 and 21 goals, respectively. Freshman Olivia VanOudenhove also had a breakout year with 13 goals. Goalie Aubrey Thorpe allowed less than a goal per game while Quabbin averaged more than four goals scored per game. The Panthers, as of last Friday, were ranked No. 6 in Division 4, which means they will have home games for at least the first two rounds of the state tournament, which should be begin late this week.



Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes

Makenzie Casey fights through a swarm of opponents during recent action.



Juliana Nickson gets positioning for control of the ball.



Waverly Rivard pushes the ball forward through traffic.



Abby Rogowski battles for possession.



Kayla Curran chases down the loose ball.



Kayla Curran chases down the loose ball.

After suffering pair of forfeits, Panthers return to action

BARRE – Injuries devastated the roster of the Quabbin Regional High School football team in recent weeks. In light of that, Athletic Director Mark Miville announced that unfortunately, the team would forfeit its final two regular season games. The Panthers were charged with 14-0 losses against Tyngsborough and Groton-Dunstable. Miville said he hoped the two weeks would allow many of the injured players to be ready to play.

Quabbin was assigned a Week 9 matchup against Southbridge, and that game is currently scheduled for Friday evening, Nov. 6 at 6 p.m. Quabbin enters the game with a 1-7 record.



The women's team launches at the sound of the starting gun.

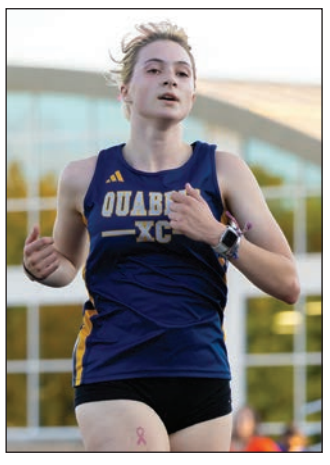
Quabbin Cross Country falls to Littleton

BARRE – On Wednesday, Oct. 14, Quabbin Regional High School girls cross country was defeated by visiting Littleton. Littleton put most of their runners in the top five as Quabbin fell 42-20. The league meet was held on Saturday, Oct. 24.



Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes

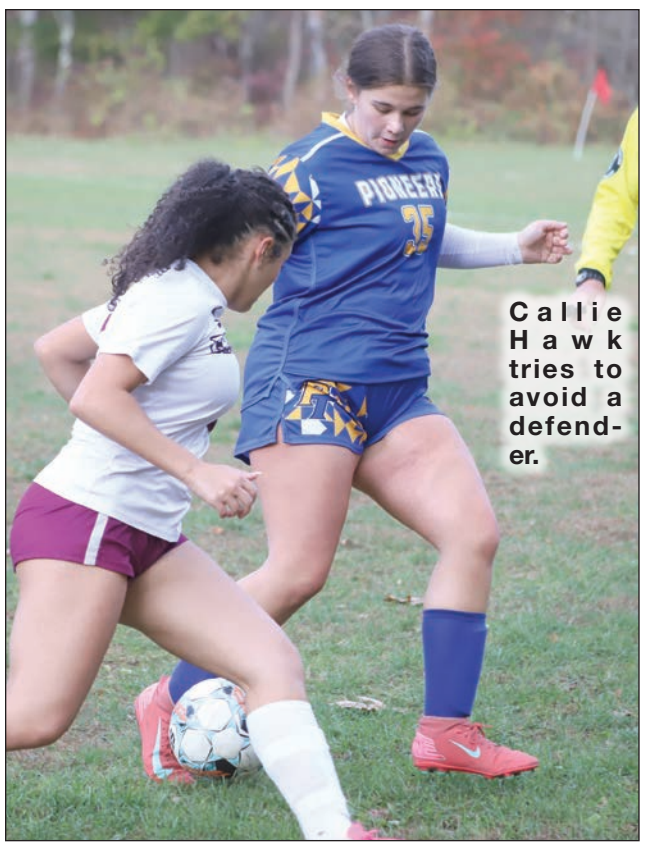
Jillian Rigney sets the school record again as she crosses the finish line.



Charlotte Darcey makes the final lap around the track to finish the race



Pip DuBois turns towards the loop around the pond on the course.



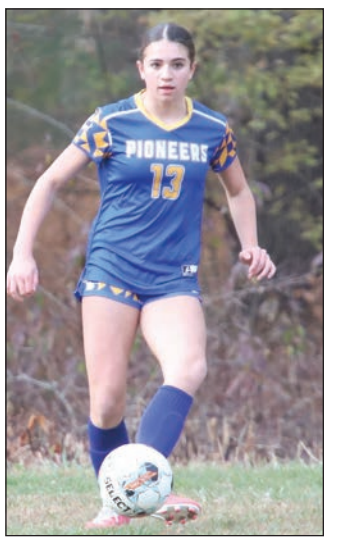
Callie Hawk tries to avoid a defender.



Josephine Boyko makes a quick pass.

Pioneers head into state tourney with nine wins

PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder Tech girls soccer wanted to end the season on a strong note. They did so with wins over Cape Cod Tech and Mt. Everett. The Cape Cod win was a 2-1 triumph followed by a 7-3 win over Mt. Everett. Pathfinder is 9-2-3 entering the state tournament this year. Pathfinder's shorter schedule this season was due in part to the fact the Pioneers lost a few opponents just prior to the regular season because of schools that did not field teams. Because of the lateness of the cancelled games, Pathfinder could not find more opponents to replace them with. The Pioneers were set to learn their tournament seeding earlier this week.



Megan Clark crosses the field to avoid the defense.



Whisper Wagher goes after a loose ball on defense.



Abigail Carmody goes for the goal.