



OUR 122ND YEAR

Andover Townsman

Issue No. 19

JANUARY 7, 2010

75 CENTS



Alexandra Maze-Hsu, 19, of Andover, is shown with an enormous duckbill leg bone that is almost as big as she is.

Dinosaur-digging trio

Family volunteers at North Dakota digs each year

By JUDY WAKEFIELD
STAFF WRITER

It's time for all those lists outlining the top stories of 2009, and for Discover magazine a top 100 science story involves the discovery of a mummified dinosaur duck-bill in North Dakota.

Discover gave the so-called "dino mummy" story a cover tease, and the attention it has received held special meaning for Andover resident Stephanie Maze-Hsu who has volunteered on digs with her teenage children at the site where the mummy was found.

"(The dino-mummy) was probably one of the most complete and exciting finds in paleontology in a LONG time," Stephanie Maze-Hsu of Andover wrote in an e-mail to the Townsman.

A self-described dinosaur buff, she said she has been fascinated with dinosaurs since she was a kid, and has successfully passed that interest along to both of her children - Robert, 16, who attends Andover High School, and Alexandra, 19, who attends MIT.

This educational consultant by day said her dinosaur fascination is "just a summer hobby of amateur, volunteer paleontology." But it's serious enough to get



The Maze-Hsu family excavating at a dinosaur-fossil site in North Dakota.

her and the kids to travel across the country to be involved.

This dinosaur-digging trio from Andover went to North Dakota in the summer of 2008 to Marmarth Research Foundation and the site where that mummified dinosaur duck-bill was found. The Marmarth Research Foundation in Marmarth, N.D. allows people to volunteer on dinosaur digs and work in fossil laboratories. Stephanie Maze-

Hsu has made discoveries of her own.

"One day my daughter was helping excavate a triceratops hip bone in a very inaccessible place, and the staff member supervising this dig sent me and two other volunteers off to 'prospect' (traipsing off without a compass)," Stephanie Maze-Hsu said. "We had learned to distinguish bone chips from rock and less than a five-minute walk



Stephanie Maze-Hsu with an original jaw piece that she found at Perilous Point, a site she was allowed to name for finding the remains.

from the site we were working on, we found bone chips.

"We found a jawbone sitting on the surface of the rock. We marked the place very well and ran back to the staff guy, and he agreed it was a spectacular find," she said.

"Because I was on the team who found it, I got to name the site, which I called 'Perilous

Please see **DINOSAUR**, Page 4

Zimmerman mom speaks out about party

New details in teen's suicide

By BETHANY BRAY
STAFF WRITER

Eleven months after the suicide of Elizabeth Mun following a party in Andover, Laurie Zimmerman says she is speaking out because her children continue to be negatively affected by misconceptions surrounding the 16-year-old Wellesley girl's death.

Mun, a Concord Academy classmate of Zachary Zimmerman's, was found unresponsive in Hussey Brook Pond in the early morning of Feb. 15, 2009 after leaving a party at the Zimmerman's William Street home. The medical examiner later ruled Mun's death a suicide, and "that her consumption of alcohol was not a contributory factor to her death," said Essex Assistant District Attorney Jessica Connors at an August court hearing.

Relying on documents she said she obtained as part of the court case against her son Zachary, Zimmerman revealed details including that Mun had been told by her parents that they were splitting up, had written three apparent suicide notes before coming to the house party, and that Mun

had no alcohol in her system. The Townsman did not view all the documents in detail and could not take copies of them.

"My heart breaks for this young lady," Zimmerman said. "We were so sorry for her. That's why we kept silent until now."

"It has been a terrible year for us, one that my kids did not deserve. We chose to stay quiet so that this young woman could be buried with dignity, and no one came forward and told the truth about what she did. It all fell on Zachary," according to Zimmerman. "She was an acquaintance, not a close friend. She was not invited. She was a troubled girl who showed up here with a mission, and that was to say goodbye to her boyfriend, who happened to be here that night."

Following Mun's suicide, Zachary wasn't allowed to attend graduation with his classmates and was denied entry to several colleges after Concord Academy had him write letters informing the colleges of his arrest. Zachary and his younger sister, an Andover High student, have been snubbed and called names

Please see **ZIMMERMAN**, Page 2

ZIMMERMAN: WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT

Referencing government documents obtained as part of her son Zachary's court case - including three apparent suicide notes, a medical examiner's report and a transcript of an interview with Elizabeth Mun's parents - here is what Laurie Zimmerman says happened on Feb. 14 and 15 at her home. The Townsman did not view all the documents in detail and could not take copies of them, during a more than one-hour interview at the Zimmerman's home.

Earlier that night, Elizabeth Mun had gone out to dinner with her parents at the Framingham Country Club, said Zimmerman.

Later, Elizabeth had a friend pick her up and drive her to Boston, unbeknownst to her parents.

Elizabeth Mun called her boyfriend Josh, who was at Zimmerman's party, from Boston, asking if she could see him, she said. Zachary initially said no. Teens at the party urged Zachary to allow Elizabeth to come and be with her boyfriend on Valentine's Day, so he eventually said yes, said Zimmerman.

Mun took a taxi from Boston to Andover, showing up in shorts and Ugg boots, and Mun and her boyfriend spent the remainder of the evening in the house, separate from the rest of the

teens at the party, said Zimmerman.

Around 5 a.m., Mun told her boyfriend she had to leave. After Mun left, Josh woke Zachary, saying she had left and "something doesn't feel right," said Zimmerman.

As she wandered away from the Zimmerman home, Mun used her cell phone to call her parents in Wellesley, she said.

Zimmerman showed a transcript, dated Feb. 24, of an interview at the District Attorney's office with Elizabeth's parents, Edward C. Mun and Dr. Sue Lee Mun. In the interview, Sue Mun said Elizabeth seemed on the phone as if she was asking for help; she sounded depressed and under the influence. She told them she was in Andover. Sue Mun said that had never noticed before any signs that her daughter wanted to hurt herself.

Mun had written three suicide notes: one to her parents and one to her brother and cousin - both left in plain sight at her home in Wellesley, and one to her boyfriend Josh, which she slipped into his pocket at the Andover party, said Zimmerman.

"That's why she came here, to say goodbye (to Josh)," said Zimmerman. "She didn't come up here for a party, she came up here for a mission."

Little feedback offered during open forum on town manager

By BETHANY BRAY
STAFF WRITER

The selectmen set aside time during their Jan. 4 meeting to get public feedback on Town Manager Buzz Stapeczynski, but only one resident came to offer comment on the Monday after New Year's Day.

Selectmen will decide this winter whether to reappoint Stapeczynski, Andover's town manager since 2000, or look for someone new. The board plans to make a decision by Feb. 4.

So far, selectmen have received about a dozen emails, "all very

positive and complimentary (of Stapeczynski), except for a couple," said Selectmen Chairman Alex Vispoli Monday night.

Cyr Circle resident Mary Carbone, the only resident to offer comment at Monday night's meeting, said she'd like Stapeczynski to stay another five years. Carbone's one disappointment, she said, was Stapeczynski and the selectmen's decision to shut off more than 600 street lights as a cost savings measure.

"I think he's doing a very good job, based on the circumstances. Andover is a very hard town to manage," said Carbone, who is a

regular at selectmen meetings.

"I will be here for another five years, Buzz, and I would hate to have to train someone else," she said, smiling.

Stapeczynski's contract expires June 4, 2010, and selectmen are required to let Stapeczynski know if he's reappointed by March 4. At a public meeting Nov. 2,

Stapeczynski told selectmen he'd like to stay another five years in Andover.

To offer feedback, visit www.andoverma.gov/selectmen and

scroll down to find board member's e-mail addresses. Letters can also be sent through U.S. Mail to Town Clerk Randy Hanson, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St.

INDEX

Arts & Entertainment	11	Seniors News	10
Business	5, 13	Sports	6
Classified/Real Estate	14	Townspiece	9
Crossword	11		
Editorial	7		
Education	12		
Letters	7		
Obituaries	5		
Police Log	4		



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Which of the following New Year's Resolutions is the most fun?

1. Lose weight
2. Quit smoking
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In Brief

PAST & PRESENT



THEN: Main Street in the winter of 1957 with snow piled high, just above the parking meters.



NOW: Downtown Andover's Main Street, looking north without the parking meters that once lined the street.

QUOTE, UNQUOTE ...



WE WANTED OUR ATHLETES TO HAVE THE opportunity to meet with elementary kids and talk about what it means to be a teammate, and have good sportsmanship. (They're) delivering the message of how you should try your hardest, all the time, no matter what you're doing – whether it's in the classroom, at music lessons or on the athletic field. There's no one better to deliver that message than high school athletes.

— *Andover High School physical education teacher Carol Martini on "The Warrior Way," a program that uses high school athletes to teach fifth-graders about good sportsmanship. Story in Education, Page 12.*

THAT'S WHEN THE cancan line started.

— *Karen Payne-Taylor on what happened at the senior center's New Year's Eve party when entertainer Russ McQueen played "New York, New York." Story and photos of event in Townspeople, Page 9.*



NEWS CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JAN. 7

Town Yard Task Force, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., third-floor conference room, 7:30 a.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., third-floor conference room, 7 p.m.

Ballardvale Fire Station Building Committee, Public Safety Building, North Main Street, fire chief's third-floor conference room, 7 p.m.

School Committee budget advisory council, School Administration Building, School Committee room, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, JAN. 8

West Elementary School Council, West Elementary conference room, Beacon Street, 8:15 a.m.

SATURDAY, JAN. 9

Zoning Board of Appeals, Memorial Hall Library, the hall, 9 a.m.

MONDAY, JAN. 11

School Committee workshop, School Administration Building, School Committee room, 6 p.m.

Board of Health, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., first-floor conference room, 6 p.m.

Board of Selectmen, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., third-floor conference room, 7 p.m.

Housing Partnership Committee, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., second-floor conference room, 7 p.m.

Cultural Council, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., second-floor conference room, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, JAN. 12

Tri-board subcommittee, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., second-floor conference room, 8 a.m.

Preservation Commission, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., second-floor conference room, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Board, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., third-floor conference room, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 13

School Building Committee, School Administration Building, School Committee room, 6 p.m. (8 a.m. meeting was cancelled)

Finance Committee, Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., second-floor conference room, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, JAN. 14

Council on Aging, School Administration Building, third-floor conference room, Whittier Court, 8 a.m.

TRIAD, Andover Senior Center, Whittier Court, behind Town Offices at 36 Bartlet St., 9:30 a.m.

Advice on college financial aid Jan. 11

Parents and students are invited to attend the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority's free comprehensive presentation on college financing in town this month.

The seminar will be hosted by Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical High School on Monday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. The school is on River Road in Andover.

An experienced MEFA

representative will discuss the financial aid process, according to a release from the agency. The seminar will teach parents how to apply for financial aid, compare financial aid award letters and seek available financing options.

Families will receive a seminar booklet that serves as a year-round resource. Time will be allowed for questions and answers.

Business breakfast for BNI Jan. 13

BNI Mill City is sponsoring a visitors' breakfast on Wednesday, Jan. 13, from 7 to 8:30 a.m. The breakfast is open to the public and will be held at the Greater Lawrence Technical School, 57 River Road, Andover. The cost of the breakfast is \$10.

BNI is an organization that allows local professionals to pass referrals to other members.

Anyone who is interested in generating a steady source of referral business is encouraged to attend this event.

There will also be a guest speaker discussing the new Massachusetts privacy law which must be complied with prior to March 1, 2010. For reservations, call Sheila Stone at 978-807-2299.

Beat the winter blues with Wednesday hikes

Studies show that diminishing light at this time of year can cause changes including decreased levels of serotonin affecting mood and melatonin affecting sleep. Doctors suggest that one solution for this is to get outside during daylight hours, and exercise. Exercise alone can increase serotonin, giving a sense of well being. Combine these two at beautiful Harold Parker State Forest every Wednesday at 10 to 11:30 a.m.

meet at the headquarters at 305 Middleton Road.

Wear appropriate footwear hiking footwear is best no sneakers. Feel free to bring snowshoes/skis on days with snow. Trail is of moderate difficulty. Bring water and sunscreen on sunny days.

Throughout the winter, we will cover all the trails in the park. Co-sponsored by The Friends of Harold Parker and DCR. For more information call 617-694-9190 Or visit www.mass.gov/dcr.

January health clinics

The Andover Health Department will offer mini clinics on Monday, Jan. 11, from 2 to 3 p.m. at Andover Commons, and on

Monday, Jan. 25, from 1 to 2 p.m. at Frye Circle. Senior-center clinics will be held 2 to 3 p.m. each Wednesday, Jan. 13, 20 and 27. No appointment is necessary.

College dedicated to helping soldiers' kids

Merrimack College has committed to help make college possible for children of Massachusetts soldiers who were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The college has become the first higher education institution to match funds provided by the Massachusetts Soldiers Legacy Fund, a non-profit organization which seeks to honor Massachusetts fallen servicemen and women by helping their children defray the costs of their college education.

MSLF provides \$10,000 per year total of \$40,000 over four years towards educational expenses for eligible students. With this partnership, Merrimack College

will match the donation for eligible students who apply and are accepted to the college.

"When Merrimack College opened its doors in September 1947, over 60 percent of students were World War II veterans utilizing the G.I. Bill. We are proud to continue our commitment to the families of U.S. soldiers by partnering with the Massachusetts Soldiers Legacy Fund," said Dr. Ronald Champagne, president of Merrimack College.

To date, over 80 soldiers, whose home of record at the Department of Defense was Massachusetts, have died in Iraq and Afghanistan. Of those, 30 were parents, and their over

60 collective children are eligible for educational assistance through MSLF.

"Merrimack has a long history of assisting service members, and this recent commitment to the Fund only highlights that support," said Peter Trovato, founder of the Massachusetts Soldiers Legacy Fund. "We are thankful to Merrimack for continuously placing importance on educational opportunity, and the children of those lost in war will directly benefit from that generosity."

Other Ways Merrimack Supports Soldiers

Yellow Ribbon Program: Qualified military veterans

can receive reduced tuition at Merrimack College due to the College's participation in the Yellow Ribbon Program – an educational access program for military veterans through the U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs;

Merrimack also awards academic credit for military based training per American Council on Education recommendations.

For more information on Merrimack College's contribution, contact Heather Notaro at 978-837-5195 or email heather.notaro@merrimack.edu. For more information on the Massachusetts Soldiers Legacy Fund, contact Peter Trovato at ptravato@summitpartners.com.

Grant will expand program

Family Service Inc. of Lawrence, has received a grant from the Massachusetts Service Alliance to expand its "Big Friends, Little Friends" program, which matches at-risk youth in Greater Lawrence with adult mentors. The goal of the Big Friends, Little Friends program is to improve performance in school and increase the young person's self-confidence and self-esteem.

"Family Service recognizes that mentoring is the most effective way to improve the lives of at risk youth," says Kay Berthold Frishman, Family Service's executive director. "We are so pleased that the Massachusetts Service Alliance recognizes the power of mentoring and that they have chosen to invest in Greater Lawrence."

Family Service Inc. has operated the Big Friends Little Friends program since 2008, before which time the program operated independently as Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Lawrence. To become a mentor call Program Coordinator Leah Feroce at 978-327-6640, or email lferoce@familyserviceinc.com.

Volunteers needed

Residents can make difference in the life of an elder in their community. In the spirit of the national effort toward community service for all, Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley is seeking volunteers to be

companions, shoppers or medical advocates who accompany and assist elders to medical appointments throughout the Merrimack Valley region. Volunteers receive training, flexible schedules, ongoing support and mileage reimbursement.

Training will be at Elder Services offices, 360 Merrimack St., Building 5, Lawrence.

For more information about dates and times of the trainings, call Eileen Giordano at 978-946-1463 or Gerry Proulx at 978-946-1445.

Dinner at West Parish

West Parish Church, 129 Reservation Road, is hosting a ham and bean supper on Saturday, Jan. 9, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. The cost is adults \$8 and

children \$4. The congregation invites people to "join us for a delicious meal that will include ham and beans, hot dogs, baked macaroni and cheese, side dishes and dessert."

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Alexandra Maze-Hsu, 19, with a triceratops skull.

DINOSAUR: Family digs archeological trips to North Dakota

Continued from Page 1

Point' because it was a challenge to get to and very slippery," she reported.

That jawbone was eventually diagnosed as a "partially articulated triceratops," Maze-Hsu said.

She was so excited with the

diagnosis that she just had to go back. So, the dinosaur diggers from Andover returned to North Dakota last summer to work on the site once more.

"I found adult teeth at the site, meaning it might be a site with a juvenile and adult together, further indicating that dinosaurs

cared for their young," Maze-Hsu said.

It's very exciting for this paleontologic family as they have found a collection of teeth, knuckle bones, ribs and more from dinosaurs.

They also enjoy digging alongside dinosaur fans from around

the world who also visit North Dakota each summer.

As for the summer of 2010, the digging trio from Andover plans will return to Marmarth in hopes of uncovering more.

Visit <http://www.mrfdigs.com/excavations/perilouspoint/> for more information.

Bach to offer her thoughts on education trends

BY JUDY WAKEFIELD
STAFF WRITER

EDUCATIONAL TREND TALK

When Claudia Bach started as Andover's school superintendent in 1998, a letter was waiting for her. A similar letter arrived every September in the years that followed.

The letters were from Rabbi Robert Goldstein at Temple Emanuel, and they wished her good luck and offered an ear for listening if she needed it.

The two became friends and, as Bach gets ready to leave Andover in June, those meaningful letters are coming to mind.

"He's so supportive of kids... He always sent a letter at the beginning of each school year to remind me that he was there for counsel," Bach said. "I have such respect for him."

The positive feeling is mutual as Rabbi Goldstein invited Bach to speak at Temple Emanuel this Sunday morning, Jan. 10. It's an unusual appearance for Bach as school audiences are more typical for her.

"She's got a great deal to offer. She's bright, such a deep thinker," Goldstein said of Bach. "Education is sacred around here and we've asked her to reflect on education."

The discussion will center on education trends and how

School Superintendent Dr. Claudia Bach Sunday, Jan. 10 11 a.m. Temple Emanuel Haggetts Pond Road, Andover Free, public welcome

kids today are growing up in a world that is very different from the world in which their parents grew up, Bach said. She is still putting her thoughts together but there is one educational angle that will not be covered - the school budget angle.

Budget woes have dominated school superintendent agendas lately but Goldstein said there's a whole other side to a school superintendent. That's what he wants residents to hear about.

Bach is not a member of the temple, and said she was happy to get the invitation from Goldstein. Perhaps Bach's strongest supporter on the School Committee is Debra Silverstein, who is a member. Goldstein said conversations with Silverstein led him to decide to invite Bach to speak on education.

The Andover public is welcome to attend this free event.

Start thinking about choosing a summer camp now

Merrimack Valley and North Shore summer activity programs and camps are invited to participate in the 2nd Annual TMC Camp and Enrichment Fair.

Scheduled for Sunday, March 7, the fair will be held at Merrimack College in Andover.

at the Wyndham Andover. This event is free and open to the public, and will run from 7 to 9 p.m.

Hosted by The Mother Connection, this fun and informative event is geared to parents of children ages 2 to 7, and helps lets families meet with local

camp and enrichment programs in one convenient place. Last year more than 50 programs were represented, and attendees found the fair to be an excellent way to evaluate the best summer options for their children. Program directors appreciate

the opportunity to speak one on one with prospective families. A directory will be available for purchase as well. For more information, or to reserve a table, contact enrichmentfair@themotherconnection.org

Verizon helps families learn sign language

The Verizon Foundation recently donated \$10,000 to support a unique program called "Shared Reading Saturdays", a partnership between Northern Essex Community College and Gallaudet University, designed to encourage literacy in deaf and hard of hearing children.

The goal of the program is to teach parents how to read storybooks to their deaf and hard of hearing children using American Sign Language. Research shows that children whose parents read to them regularly do better academically in school.

One Saturday morning each month, families gather at Northern Essex Community College's Lawrence Campus to participate in workshops where they learn

how to read children's storybooks in American Sign Language to their deaf children. A number of volunteers, many of whom are students or graduates of NECC's Deaf Studies Program, run organized activities for the children and their siblings. The workshops are followed by lunch where families have the opportunity to meet and socialize with other families who have deaf children.

What's unique about the program is that in addition to being taught in English and American Sign Language, the program is available in Spanish for Spanish speaking families with deaf children.

Those interested in participating can contact kvseye@necc.mass.edu or 978-556-3701.

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Obituaries

Francesca C. Shammass, 79

NORTH ANDOVER — Francesca C. Shammass, 79, of North Andover, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2009 at the Merrimack Valley Hospice House.

Francesca was born in Cairo, Egypt, the daughter of the late Peter and Marguerite (Guista) Fassoni. She was formerly a resident of West Roxbury where she raised her family. She has been a resident of North Andover for

17 years.

Francesca leaves her loving husband of 52 years, Saba Shammass of North Andover; her three children, Al Shammass and his wife Jennifer of Walpole, Robert Shammass and his wife Karen of Apex, N.C., and Margie Oldaker and her husband David of Andover; a sister, Sylvana Accetti of Rome; and five grandchildren, Alea Shammass, Peter Shammass, Jason Shammass, Paige Oldaker

and Emily Oldaker.

ARRANGEMENTS: At the request of the family, services were private. Arrangements were under the direction of the Charles F. Dewhurst Funeral Home, Methuen. Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the American Cancer Society, 30 Speen St., Framingham, MA 01701. To send an online condolence, please visit www.dewhurstfuneral.com.

John C. Harris, Jr., 87

ANDOVER — John C. Harris, Jr., 87, of Andover, passed away on Monday, Jan. 4, 2010 at Wingate of Andover.

John was born in Malden to the late John C. Sr. and Ruth (Cole) Harris. John was a mechanical designer for G.E. and Textron for many years until his retirement in 1987.

John served his country with the U.S. Navy during World War II as a Naval Aviator, a position he was both proud and passionate about. He was a Mason at Mt. Carmel in Lynn and during his spare time he enjoyed bowling.

John is survived by his loving

wife, Lois F. (Bemis) Harris of Andover; his children, John C. Harris, III and his wife Pamela of Lynnfield, Paul E. Harris and his fiancée Kimber Epps of Fitzwilliam, N.H., Carol A. Callan and her husband Arthur of Stoneham, Susan L. Ahearn and her husband Michael of Sandown, N.H., and Laurie J. Waitkevitch and her husband Timothy of North Andover; his 11 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren; and his sisters, Lois A. Cooper of Groveland, and Selma R. Gould of Derry, N.H. John was predeceased by his brother, Clifford G. Harris.

ARRANGEMENTS: Relatives and friends are cordially invited to attend his funeral service on Thursday, Jan. 7, at 11 a.m. in the Free Christian Church, Andover. Interment will follow in the Spring Grove Cemetery, Andover. Calling hours were to be held on Wednesday from 4 to 8 p.m. in The Conte Funeral Home, 28 Florence St., Andover. For those who wish, John may be remembered through donations to the Friends of Andover Senior Center, 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA 01810. For funeral home directions or to sign the family guest book, please visit www.confetfuneralhomes.com.

Bertram S. Morgan, 87



BAREFOOT BAY, Fla. — Mr. Bertram S. Morgan, 87, died Thursday, Dec. 31, 2009 at his residence in Barefoot Bay.

Born in Providence, R.I., Mr. Morgan was the son of the late Charles H. Morgan and Winnifred (Symonds) Morgan. He grew up and attended schools in Andover. He attended the

University of Alabama and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Bert and his wife, Jo, lived in Nashua, N.H. for many years, raising their two daughters there before moving to Alabama, then retiring to Florida in 1988.

In Nashua, Bert worked as an engineer for Improved Machinery and Sanders Associates and was a member of Nashua Country Club where he first acquired his lifelong love of golf.

Bert was predeceased by his

beloved wife, Jo, in November of 2009. He is survived by his daughters, Janis Kennedy of Grand Bay, Ala., and Nancy Tighe of Burlington, Conn.; grandchildren, Morgan and Ryan Kennedy of Alabama, Greg Brownsword of East Hartford, Conn. and Karen Pyndus of Fair Haven, N.J.

ARRANGEMENTS: A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010 at Strunk Funeral Home Sebastian, Fla. A guest book may be signed at Strunkfuneralhome.com.

Laurence W. Riley, 71

ANDOVER — Laurence W. Riley of Andover, died Thursday, Dec. 31, 2009 at Lawrence General Hospital. He was 71-years-old.

Born in Boston on Jan. 5, 1938, he was the son of the late Francis J. and Mary L. (O'neil) Riley. Laurence was a retired employee of New England Deaconess Assoc. He was a member of St. Augustine Church and

Andover Knights of Columbus 1078. He was a graduate of Central Catholic High School, Class of 1955 and served in the U.S. Air Force.

He is survived by his sister with whom he resided, Helene E. Roberts and her husband William B. of Andover; two nieces, M. Katherine Roberts DVM of Unadilla, N.Y. and Meghan E. Roberts of Cape Neddick,

Maine.

ARRANGEMENTS: Calling hours were held on Monday, Jan. 4, from 3 to 6 p.m. at Burke-Magliozi Funeral Home, 390 North Main St., Andover. Funeral Mass was Tuesday at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph Church, 20 High Vale Lane, Andover. Burial was in St. Augustine Cemetery, Andover. Contributions may be made in Laurence's name to Monastery of St. Clare, 445 River Road, Andover, MA 01810.

Stephanie Plachna Sorota

ANDOVER — Stephanie Plachna Sorota, mother, artist, widow of the late Stephen S. Sorota. Born in Lowell, Feb. 11, 1914, she passed away on Friday, Dec. 25, 2009 in Carrollton, Texas.

Stephanie graduated from Lowell High School, Class of 1931, and from Catherine Carver Secretarial School, New York City. Stephanie's talent as an artist was recognized early. While still in high school she won art competitions that led to the publication of her work on school magazine covers. Due to the economic conditions of the 30s she put aside her dream of attending art school and instead worked in New York City at the Chemical Bank & Trust Co. In 1936 she returned to Massachusetts.

Married in 1937 to the late Stephen S. Sorota, football and track coach and educator, Phillips

Academy, Andover, and former Director of the Andover Summer Session (1956-59), Stephanie filled multiple roles as wife, mother and faculty hostess. In the latter role she earned the respect and affection of generations of parents and students and will be especially remembered for her annual football and track team dinners. While raising her four children she also worked at the Oliver Wendell Holmes Library and, later, at the Pike School in Andover, leaving little time to pursue her art. At the age of 62 she was finally able to devote herself to serious study. Invitations to exhibit her work soon followed.

In 1978, Stephanie won her first Blue Ribbon, awarded for a watercolor painting of North Bridge, Concord. Her particular subject matter was largely inspired by the New England

landscape, especially that of Cape Code and its seasons. She exhibited in the Cape Cod Art Association All New England Show, the Bridge Street Gallery in South Yarmouth and the Falmouth Artists Guild. Among her varied achievements are four "First in Watercolor" awards from the Yarmouth Arts Council and Yarmouth Arts Guild. Her artistic talents also found expression as a member of the Osterville Garden Club. Among her many prizes for flower arrangement was the coveted blue ribbon from the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts.

Stephanie is survived by her daughter Diane; and three sons, Stephen Jr., Philip, and Peter; and 10 grandchildren and two great-grandsons. She touched the hearts of all she met and we are all blessed to have known her.

Business

Andover resident lauded for 30 years at PCCD

Sandy Levine of Andover, a certified early intervention specialist with a master's of social work, was recognized for 30 years of employment at the Professional Center for Child Development at its annual meeting in December.

Levine is the director of the center's Early Intervention Program, which serves over 1,000 children aged birth to three years annually.

Levine attended Boston University for her undergraduate studies, and received her master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan School of Social Work. She lives with her husband, Steve, and has three adult children and two grandchildren.

Her office is at 130 Parker St. in Lawrence, where she manages the program and directs the program's staff of 50 employees. An initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Center's Early Intervention program is one of 58 in the state and is one of the larger providers of essential services for infants and children.



COURTESY PHOTO

Veryl Anderson, executive director of the Professional Center for Child Development, presents an engraved desk set to Sandy Levine in recognition of 30 years of employment and services to the community.

"My involvement at the Center with a dedicated early intervention team who has provided vital

services to families and their young children," said Levine in a release. "Through the years, I have seen the children grow up and heard about how important those early years were for the families. It has been most gratifying."

The Professional Center for Child Development provides educational, therapeutic and social services for children of all abilities, from birth through age 7. All of the programs provide training and support for parents and families. Children with multiple disabilities and complex health care needs, children who need early intervention, and typically developing children all benefit from the center's programs. The PCCD's Andover and Lawrence sites serve 1,400 area children each year. The Andover location is on Osgood Street.

Andover company's court chosen for Capitala World Tennis Championship

The Capitala World Tennis Championship was played on the Plexicushion Prestige tennis surface, a surface is made by the Andover-based California Products Corp. at 150 Dascomb Road, Andover, according to a release. The Capitala World Tennis Championship was a three-day tournament that kicked off the 2010 tennis season.

"This single elimination series of matches [was] played at the Abu Dhabi International Tennis Complex at Zayed Sports City, seating up to 5,000 spectators. Competing for \$250,000 is not the only incentive in the winner-takes-all championship, as several awaited rival re-matches [were expected to] occur," said a release from California Products Corp. "Opening Dec. 31, this match will set

the pace for the tournament's six competing players as well as the highly anticipated 2010 tournaments leading into Jan. 19 Australian Open."

"Plexipave worked closely with IMG and Bin Sabt Traders LLC, the local authorized applicator of Plexicushion, to insure the surface is similar in all play characteristics to the Australian Open series that follows the tournament," said Art Tucker, vice president of Plexipave.

Plexipave is the world's largest manufacturer of acrylic sports surfacing systems and surface preparation products. Plexipave Systems are used at ATP and WTA Tournaments such as Del Ray Beach, Memphis, Indian Wells and Los Angeles.

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Opinion

Lessons from a tragedy

If Elizabeth Mun had not committed suicide in Andover, it's likely no one would have known about the party at the Zimmerman home on Feb. 14, 2009. It wouldn't have even been a mention in the police log. It would have been another inappropriate, underage alcohol party that went unnoticed on a quiet Andover side street. But Elizabeth Mun did commit suicide in Andover, and the party became front-page news well beyond town.

Since then, Zachary Zimmerman, who hosted the party, and his younger sister Zoe, a high school student, have been shunned by some and called hurtful names by others, according to their mother. Some friends' parents won't allow their kids into the Zimmerman's home.

There's a bit of denial here. Many kids in Andover drink, and even more attend parties where there is drinking. Of course Zachary Zimmerman was wrong to host an underage party with alcohol. However, parents must realize he was not the first teenager and has not been the last to do so while his parent was away for an evening. The majority of these parties go unnoticed by parents, neighbors and police, yet you can still regularly read about police breaking up such gatherings in the police log. One parent group has hosted a program called "Not my kid, not in Andover" to combat the belief of many parents that it is only other people's children, in other towns, who attend such parties.

At the entrance to the Zimmerman home is a large painting by Zachary Zimmerman. It shows three balls and chains - the kind one imagines that prisoners might wear - and they are chained to thick wooden posts in the ground. The balls appear to be looking out on a desert landscape with sand dunes in the distance. Laurie Zimmerman says her son told her the balls represent her, Zachary and his sister Zoe.

Zachary Zimmerman needs to admit his mistake in court for hosting a party and accept the judge's punishment. He and his family will always be affected in some way by the suicide of Elizabeth Mun. But fellow residents don't need to make the aftermath more difficult. And they need to open their eyes to how common underage drinking parties are in this town and in others.

If any good can come out of the horrible incident during the morning of Feb. 15, 2009, perhaps it's a conversation about what responsible adults can do to show there are better solutions than alcohol, drugs and suicide.

WEB QUESTION

What should Andover's resolution be?

Due to a technical error, last week's Web question was not posted.

This week's question: what should the town of Andover's resolution be for 2010?

As a new decade dawns, it's time for making changes and resolutions. What, in your opinion, should the town of Andover's new year's resolution be?

■ Make a concrete plan to replace Bancroft Elementary School, and act on it.

■ Turn back on all the streetlights.

■ Find better and new ways to save money.

■ Rehire Town Manager Buzz Stapczynski.

■ Combine town and school departments, such as technology.

■ Bring a balanced budget to spring Town Meeting

■ Create more taxpayer friendly agreements with employee unions.

■ Eliminate take home cars for any employee.

■ More snow days for the public schools.

■ None of the above

■ All of the above

To cast your vote, go to www.andovertownsmen.com and scroll all the way to the bottom of the page. For different or lengthier answers, e-mail Editor Neil Fater at nfater@andovertownsmen.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Don't take long winter's nap. Vote for change

Editor, Townsman:

'Twas the week after Christmas
And all through the land,
The people were assessing
The problems at hand.
Tax cheat in the Treasury,
Marxists in the Halls,
Mobsters in the Cabinet
Threatening all!
Crooks in the Senate,
Socialists in the House,
Spendthrift in the Oval Office
Alarming even the mouse!
Terrorists in our courts,
Aliens crossing our border,
Thugs in the streets
Creating disorder!
Bailouts, stimulus,
Government takeovers,
Unemployment, failed businesses,
Mandated makeovers.
Had enough? Do something about it! On Jan. 19 vote for change!

JOAN PATRAKIS
35 Chandler Road

JOY RIDE



CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Caleb Cafua, 3, of Andover took advantage of the fresh snow from Saturday's storm to go sledding at the Carl Thomson baseball field and playground in North Andover. His father Greg Cafua said he prefers the smaller North Andover hill for sledding for his son instead of the larger Andover High School hill.

ROAD TO EXCELLENCE

School Committee's role essential to Andover

Ken Seifert



To all the past and present School Committee members, I thank you for your contribution and your willingness to serve. It is not

an easy job and getting more difficult.

It is an essential role to play in every community, and the most important link between the community and the schools. To those who might run for the office, I say, do not choose sides. In spite of what some may say, both have the same interest. Here are a few suggestions, from a former superintendent:

Your primary responsibilities are to recommend policies to each other that make schools better and to solve short term problems. At times and equally important is to hire the best and most appropriate CEO and educational leader of some of the finest schools in the state of Massachusetts. They may not show it, but most citizens are very

WHAT IS A PUBLIC POLICY?

There are many answers to this question. A simple definition would be a public policy is a written statement that lets the public know what a board of directors, such as selectmen or School Committee, has agreed on to make things better or to solve a short term problem. It usually implies some long term purpose in a broad area such as planning, budgeting, assessment, staff development, curriculum, research and development or innovation.

It can also be a fairly cohesive set of responses to a problem that has unexpectedly arisen. Both types of policies provide the community and organization with some guidance on what the board of directors has in mind. A good policy also contains procedures on what the policy makers will do. A policy without a plan is not worth the paper it is printed on.

A process that good organizations follow is to have a policy with a plan, a program, and projects connected with the overall intent. Each step along the way gets more specific, shorter term and more specifically outlines the responsibilities of everyone from policy maker to public employees. It shows clearly what the elected officials and the paid employees say they will do and provides an excellent guide on what was planned was achieved. Sometimes the ones with the most responsibility have the least guidance. Sometimes there isn't even a policy.

interested in the schools.

Always do the right thing. Sometimes political pressure causes common sense to get lost in the argument.

Don't be afraid to dream of good schools and to share those dreams.

Be fiscally prudent and understand the balance of all public services. Good ideas and sound planning should not cost big bucks.

Do not micro-manage. They

do not pay you enough money to do so. Let the superintendent and community know what you expect and evaluate the expectations accordingly.

Always have a vision and a plan so people know where you are headed.

Accept and listen closely to criticism. Most people want to make things better. They are not picking on you. Disregard personal attacks. The community recognizes snipers. (I wish

I had learned this earlier in my career.)

If there is no policy in a given area the superintendent must, out of necessity, make such a decision. He or she should not have to do it twice.

There will be times when you get confused. Trust your instincts and ask the question, what would a reasonable person do in such a circumstance? Most people in Andover are reasonable. I cannot tell you the hundreds of times I asked myself the same question and did follow that rule. At least I tried. Probably the most personal questions to ask yourself are: If I am elected, what benchmarks do I want to leave as my contribution? Will I make the schools better? What is a public policy? What is the relationship between policy and practice? (See box.)

Being a School Committee member can be a source of satisfaction and achievement. It all happens in an environment of good policies, doing the right thing, making things better and solving short term problems. I wish all who want to serve the very best.

Ken Seifert is a former superintendent of schools and a 40-year resident of Andover.

Call to action for former AHS student from Afghanistan

Dyan Espindle



Massoud Kohistani and Dyan Espindle

Massoud Kohistani of Afghanistan arrived in the United States five years ago at the age of 15. He was chosen among many to qualify for the Cultural Bridge Program, founded by the late Sen. Ted Kennedy. This program was designed to bring students from Afghanistan, for the first time in history, to our country for one year, to learn the principles of democracy.

My family's involvement was unplanned and truly unexpected. While Massoud was training in Kyrgyzstan to assimilate into the American culture, the family who had committed to host him withdrew, leaving him without support and housing. My daughter Kara, who worked for American Council in D.C., told me of Massoud's plight. Shamefully, I admit, I did not know where Afghanistan was or anything about its culture and the timing could not have been worse.

What I did know then and what I do know now is that it's one thing not to volunteer for service, but when God put's a request for service in one's direct path. Let's just say I did not want to go on record as saying no!

Massoud arrived, frightened and frail, in need of extensive medical and dental care. He spoke little English and his disadvantaged past presented him guarded and insecure in his new surroundings. With love and patience and the constant companionship of my son, David, and the support of my husband and five children, and friends, Massoud began to thrive.

Massoud was enrolled as a student at Andover High. He possessed a burning desire to learn, achieve and succeed. He mastered the English language, received honors grades, and participated in school

sports and in many social and community-service events. Massoud touched the hearts and souls of his teachers, his host family and the community. Many articles were written about his challenges and successes.

Sadly, as agreed when the year ended, Massoud returned to Afghanistan to complete high school and meet new challenges returning to a country in turmoil. Because of his achievements in the U.S., he was chosen the next year to prepare the new students preparing to enter America. Massoud completed his studies and remained a top student in Afghanistan.

We have kept in constant communication with Massoud these past five years and it has been challenging. Calls accepted are often sporadic and interrupted. E-mail has been difficult because of limited access to computers and destructive bombings by the Taliban directed to limit communication. During this time, Massoud has had only one goal: to return to the United States to further his education. I have diligently pursued every avenue these past five years to help Massoud achieve his dream. There have been many obstacles and disappointments during this venture, but we have never given up hope.

One month ago we received word that

Bunker Hill Community College in Boston was willing to enroll Massoud. A plethora of documents and appeals collected over the past years were accumulated and submitted and in December Massoud was granted his visa to return to the United States.

As you know, a young man Massoud's age is in great danger in Afghanistan. Again, my family knew we needed to respond. Our family situation is greatly changed since Massoud was with us five years ago. My husband is a casualty of the recession and has been unemployed for more than two years. Our youngest son David is a junior in college and although I am working full time as a hospice nurse, our finances are stretched to the limit, but how could we say no?

Because Massoud is not a citizen he is not eligible for any college financial aid.

And so the purpose of this letter: my family will enthusiastically provide housing, food, clothing, and daily living expenses for Massoud but will need assistance to pay his tuition. Massoud will be obtaining a student work permit and will obtain a job through the work study program.

So with humility and a determined resolve I have set up a college fund for Massoud. There is no contribution too small as this is going to be an uphill battle. All contributions are tax deductible (ID # 61-1608193).

Checks can be sent to:
Massoud Kohistani College Fund
PO Box 785
Vineyard Haven MA.02568

The writer is a former Dascomb Road, Andover, resident who hosted Massoud while he attended Andover High with her son David.

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Dog days of winter



Sarah Lerner, 14, submitted this photo of her dog, Brady, which she took during a recent snowstorm. Have a photo you'd like to submit for consideration in the Townsman? Send it to editor Neil Fater at nfater@andovertownsm.com.

L'Italien office hours

State Rep. Barbara L'Italien will hold constituent office hours at the Andover Senior Center

on Friday, Jan. 29, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Either L'Italien or her legislative aide will be available to meet with any interested residents. Residents can also speak

directly with L'Italien's office anytime by calling 617-722-2380. L'Italien represents the 18th Essex District which includes Andover precincts 1, 7 and 8.

Town to sell small pieces of land

By BETHANY BRAY
STAFF WRITER

- 138 Andover St.
- 71 Elm St.
- 0 Woburn St.

Seven small parcels of town-owned land will be sold through an auction this month, after selectmen voted to allow the sale Monday night, Jan. 4.

The seven properties are all less than one acre and were acquired by the town by foreclosure of tax titles.

- They are:
- 98 Andover St.
 - 20 Iron Gate Drive
 - 2 Pepperidge Circle
 - 1 Shaw Drive

Abutters to three small, landlocked, unbuildable parcels on Andover, Elm and Woburn streets have expressed interest in purchasing the lots, said Assistant Town Manager Steve Bucuzzo.

The Andover Street, Pepperidge Circle, Shaw Drive and Iron Gate Drive properties could accommodate a single family home, said Town Manager Buzz Stapeczynski, but

would require a zoning variance for affordable housing or historical preservation.

The total appraised value of all seven lots is \$250,000.

Not only would the town gain income in the sale of these lots, Stapeczynski told selectmen Jan. 4, but it would put the properties back on the tax rolls. Selectmen voted 4-0 to approve the auction with Selectman Ted Teichert was absent.

A specific date has not been set yet, but the auction will take place sometime in January, said Stapeczynski.

H1N1 clinic for those 10 and older

The Andover Health Division has announced that an H1N1 immunization clinic has been scheduled. This clinic will be for persons age 10 years and older, and will be held at the West Middle School on Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010, from 4 to 7 p.m. Both Nasal Mist and traditional shots will be offered at this time.

Additional regional clinics are being planned so that residents who wish to receive the vaccine but cannot attend this clinic may still have opportunities to do so, according to the town health division. Children under the age

of 10 must receive two doses of vaccine spaced 28 days apart to ensure protection.

While the incidence of the H1N1 illness is down, public health officials believe there is a strong possibility of a third wave of infection. The town reports that "vaccination now will decrease your chances of becoming ill from this virus. By being immunized, residents protect not only themselves but also those around them; the less likely the chance that an outbreak will occur and threaten

vital services."

Persons attending the H1N1 clinic are asked to bring a photocopy of their insurance card for the Andover Health Division records. Several insurance companies in Massachusetts are now reimbursing communities for the costs associated with the administration of the vaccine, and the town will seek that money.

Paperwork for these clinics may be downloaded in advance from the town Web site at <http://andoverma.gov/health/>.

Cleaner: More coats needed for kids

With an unforgiving winter now in full force, a final plea has gone out to make sure no family need face the winter blast without warm coats to wear. And while schools and corporate partners have been busy collecting coats for Anton's Cleaners' Coats for Kids drive, more coats are still needed to meet the demand. All types of coats infants, kids, adults can be dropped off at any of the 44 Anton's Cleaners stores and all Jordan's Furniture outlets through Jan. 9.

Since it began in 1995, Coats for Kids has distributed over 550,000 coats, representing \$6.5 million in donated cleaning costs. Last year alone, nearly 65,000 coats were collected, including many through the corporate partners

and school program.

"What better way to celebrate the New Year than with the feeling that you have helped your friends and neighbors in a time of great economic struggle," says Charles A. Anton, President of Anton's Cleaners. "On behalf of these many families, we offer our sincere thanks for your generosity and best wishes for a happy and safe New Year."

Anton's reminds everyone that more coats are needed to reach its goal of collecting 60,000 coats that will be cleaned by Anton's at no charge. Following cleaning, Coats for Kids' distribution partners such as Massachusetts Community Action Programs, Salvation Army, Cradles to Crayons, BUMC: Outreach Van Project, and Catholic Charities,

among others, will ensure that coats get to those who cannot afford one during the cold weather months.

FOX25, Jordan's Furniture and KISS-108 & JAM'N-94.5 are providing promotional support for Coats for Kids. Supporting Partners for Coats for Kids include Graham Communications and Package Supply Corporation.

For more information, visit antons.com/cfk or call the Coats for Kids hotline at 800-659-0069. You can also follow Coats for Kids on Facebook and Twitter. Anton's Cleaners, a family-owned business with 44 stores in eastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire, was recently honored with the Massachusetts Family Business Award.



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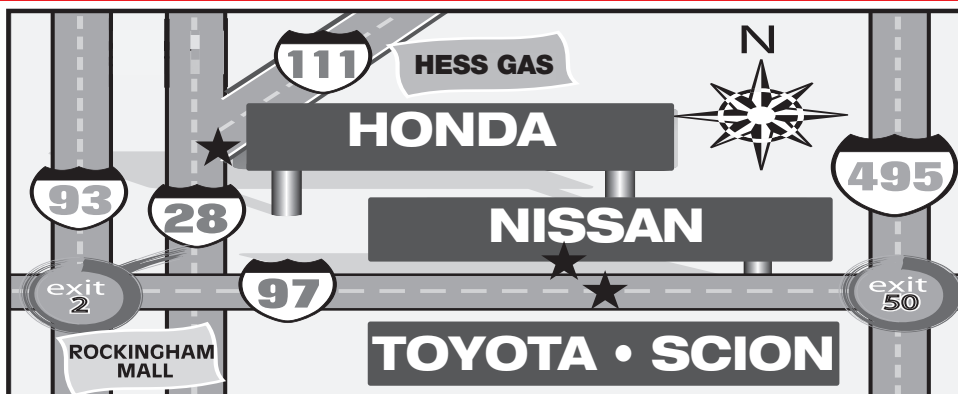
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Townspeople



Russ McQueen entertains during the annual New Year's Eve afternoon party at the Andover Senior Center Thursday. More than 60 seniors braved the snow storm to gather for the event. ROGER DARRIGRAND/Staff Photo



Ladies eye the various desserts during the annual New Year's Eve afternoon party at the Andover Senior Center Dec. 31.



Joe Scuderi lets Bernice Haggerty pet his coon skin hat as he entertains during the annual New Year's Eve afternoon party at the Andover Senior Center.



More than 60 seniors braved a snow storm to ring in an early new year with food and entertainment last week.

Seniors welcome new year with dinner, dancing

A snowstorm didn't stop local seniors from attending the annual afternoon New Year's Eve party last week.

Karen Payne-Taylor of the Andover Senior Center said 60 seniors turned out for this year's celebration. The party was held at the downtown center from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 31.

Payne-Taylor said the dancing really got going when entertainer Russ McQueen played "New York, New York."

"That's when the cancan line started," she laughed.

The party closed with a sparkling cider toast to the new year.

— Judy Wakefield

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ALL THOSE YEARS AGO

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100 Years Ago Jan. 7, 1910

There won't be much opportunity for the ice dealer to complain of the impossibility to secure a crop for the year 1910. The cold weather has effectively answered the cry for normal prices and normal supply for next summer.

George R. Dana, distributor of Steven-Duryea automobiles for Lawrence, Andover, Methuen, Lowell and surrounding territory tells us he is meeting with most flattering success in sale of these machines for spring delivery.

Buchan and Francis of 10 Park St. wish to thank the public of Andover for their most generous patronage during the recent holiday buying season. Sales of Christmas presents were, by great number, in excess of previous years.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Barnard gave a reception on Wednesday evening to business associates of Mr. Barnard and their wives at their beautiful home on High Street.

75 Years Ago Jan. 4, 1935

Sixty men were employed to throw back the plowed snow this week by the Board of Public Works as a result of the first serious snowstorm of this winter. Three teams of horses were used to plow the snow off the country roads.

Seven or eight dresses valued at about \$100, plus two postal cards cost a young man just five cents Saturday night at the Harborn shop. It was not a bargain sale at the shop; the young man merely paid cash for the two cards and then ambled out with the dresses while the store proprietors were not looking.

An overheated furnace caused a fire which destroyed the house and furniture of Fred Doyle, local contractor on Chandler Road early Monday morning.

It is expected that the new steam pump at the Haggetts Pond pumping station will be in operation shortly. The pump is practically set up, and the steam fitting is now being done.

50 Years Ago Jan. 7, 1960

A plan that might stabilize the tax rate – by directly assessing a share of the cost of expanded or new town facilities against new homeowners – has been seriously suggested to the Selectmen and Planning Board. In obvious sincerity, Harold R. Rafton, 5 Alden Road, proposed the plan, which would be adopted only after a study by committee voted at Town Meeting.

Robert B. McIntyre, 13 Binney St., has announced his candidacy for the School Committee at the annual March town election.

Final approval has been given by the School Committee to a \$1,294,743 budget for 1960, an increase of \$147,536 over the 1959 appropriation. By far the largest single increase comes in the teachers' salary item which stands at \$879,007 for the new year. Much of the increase comes as a result of the state's action in requiring a statewide \$4,000 minimum salary for all teachers.

Silence is a rare commodity

Bill Dalton



I like it when it snows heavy and my world grows more silent with each flake.

Days ago, a few snowflakes flurried down, and I went for a walk. The flakes soon grew thick and plentiful, falling straight down, as there was no wind. Within minutes the road and conifers were covered.

The footprints I made walking away from the house were gone when I walked back a bit later. Outside my home, I stopped and listened, and I could hear nothing but the quiet tick the flakes made as they hit my coat and hat.

Where I live in rural New Hampshire

it is quiet, and once in a while only, when the wind is from an odd direction, do we hear a distant highway.

Silence is a scarce commodity. Most scarce commodities are valuable, but no monetary value is assigned to silence.

There are few places in Andover where you can find silence. Holt Hill in the Ward Reservation sometimes is silent except for the wind. The highways built in the late 1950s and early 1960's robbed Andover of silence. A map will show you that highways cross the town in a way that ensures they can be heard most everywhere.

When I was young, I didn't think of silence as a rare commodity. I first felt the pleasure of silence at Nantucket airport on a cold February night about 1980. I was in my late 30s. My plane was the only active one at the airport when I landed. After leaving the plane, I noticed something, and I stopped. There was no sound, distant or close, not even

the wind. There was silence, and for the first time in my life I understood how rare and pleasant it was.

There are some sounds as pleasant as silence: the blowing wind, the ocean surf, a running stream, singing birds. You can buy machines that imitate these sounds, and people relax or sleep listening to them. You can also buy white noise to muffle sounds that distract or disturb.

White noise is used in many work-places, especially where cubicles are common. It is expensive to buy high quality white noise, the kind that covers other sounds in such a way that it imitates silence. But it's not silence, it's a gentle sound like an unceasing breeze of constant tone.

We gave a gift of white noise to a person who needs to sleep at odd hours. It's a good gift if it works. We are willing to pay for white noise and pleasant sounds but silence has not been given a value.

During the winter, there is noise in rural parts of New England where there used to be silence. The noise is from snowmobiles. We don't have trails near us, but if we did the noise would lower the value of my property to me. Those who involuntarily listen to snowmobiles are losing a rare commodity in order for the snowmobilers to have fun.

If silence were a valuable commodity rather than just a scarce one, snowmobilers would be required to compensate those whose silence has been stolen.

Compensation will never happen, but the loss of the rare commodity of silence explains why some people who must listen to snowmobiles despise the machines and those who operate them.

Bill Dalton writes a weekly column for the Andover Townsman. He enjoys hearing from readers, and his e-mail address is billdalton@andovertownie.com.

Education

Ken Seifert's column is on the Opinion page this week

BOOK REVIEW

'Cane River' flows perfectly

By MARI MIYACHI
WHAT'S UP CONTRIBUTOR

I like to keep a running list of books I plan to read, generally for the purpose of remembering titles that interest me. For the most part, I stick to this list and make the best effort to work through it. However, there is always a point when a novel compels me to break from the list. These spontaneous choices are usually piqued by media hype and the books soon forgotten.

But ever so often, one turns out to be a memorable favorite.

I began reading "Cane River" by Lalita Tademy on one such whim, and it has become one of my favorite books in recent memory.

"Cane River" is the story of four generations of women living along the river of the same name in Louisiana around the time of the Civil War: Elisabeth, the great-grandmother and matriarch; Suzette, her third daughter; Philomene, her granddaughter, who is the last to be born into slavery; and finally her great-granddaughter, Emily. Every generation witnesses what Elisabeth calls a "bleaching of the line," as these women, whether by force or by choice, bear children to local white plantation owners. Most of all, through the midst of slavery, war and the Reconstruction, each one of these women struggles to seek a better life for their children and their families.

Tademy utilizes the idea of

a family tree, especially the matriarchal hereditary line, to enforce the themes of love and unbreakable familial bonds, and to create a cohesive plot over a time period that spans nearly a century. Beyond the engaging plotline, I found the characters of "Cane River" to be well developed and unforgettable through the expression of their strengths, weakness, hopes and disappointments on the journey to freedom. The book is peppered with excerpts and pictures from the notebook of one of Tademy's aunts – the story is based on her own family history – which brings a sense of life to the time period at hand.

I give "Cane River" a 10 out of 10. Tademy has a gift for taking the historical facts of an era and a family, and filling in the details with beautiful prose, making for a uniquely real and touching portrait of a family growing in difficult times, and the strong women who led the family. "Cane River" is a truly remarkable book, one that weaves the overwhelming racial tensions of the time seamlessly with the personal evolution of Elisabeth, Suzette, Philomene, and Emily, characters I grew to know and love. I strongly recommend this book to any mature reader, from teenager to adult, as a 21st century classic in the making.

Mari Miyachi is an Andover resident and high school student at Phillips Academy who writes book reviews for young adults.



Andover High School student/athlete Jess Salley high-fives a member of her team during a volleyball game at Sanborn Elementary School as part of "The Warrior Way" mentor program.

ANGIE BEAULIEU/Staff photos

THE WARRIOR WAY

High-schoolers visit younger kids to teach sportsmanship

By BETHANY BRAY
STAFF WRITER

In the eyes of elementary students, what could be cooler than a teenager, especially the star of their favorite high school sports team?

A new program in the public schools uses that connection for good – sending Andover High School athletes to elementary physical education classes to mentor Andover fifth-graders and encourage good sportsmanship.

"They don't realize it, but they are huge role models for younger students in town. Every move they make on the field, there are kids watching," said Andover High physical education teacher Carol Martini. "We wanted our athletes to have the opportunity to meet with elementary kids and talk about what it means to be a teammate, and have good sportsmanship. (They're) delivering the message of how you should try your hardest, all the time, no matter what you're doing – whether it's in the classroom, at music lessons or on the athletic field. There's no one better to deliver that message than high school athletes."

"The Warrior Way" program, which takes its name from the high school sports team nickname the Golden Warriors, began this month, as groups of high school athletes visited fifth-grade physical education classes at all of Andover's elementary schools.

The program was the brainchild of Martini and AHS senior Christian Lightner, who plays varsity football and baseball.

The 50 high-schoolers in the program were nominated



Andover High School student-athlete Connor O'Neill plays a volleyball game with fifth-graders at Sanborn Elementary School as part of "The Warrior Way" mentor program.

by their coaches for not only athletic prowess but also top academics and strength of character, said Martini.

Martini said she knew the 50 teens were committed when they came to a 7 a.m. meeting Lightner organized, getting out of bed an extra 45 minutes before school.

While visiting fifth-graders last month, the high school students participated with the younger students in their physical education classes and finished the visits with question-and-answer sessions.

"They modeled what we hope is great physical education behavior, complimenting the other kids, (saying) 'nice shot',

shaking hands, being very positive and helping kids that were struggling, to make them feel a part of things," said Martini.

"There's a little reverse psychology here, too, with the AHS student-athletes realizing what an impact they have on the elementary kids," she said.

The program has received positive feedback, said Martini, and the fifth-graders warmed to their high school visitors quickly. They peppered the high schoolers with questions, asking what it was like to try out for a team and train during practices.

One youngster asked the cross-country team captain if he had really run across the whole country, said Martini with a

chuckle.

Through the next year, Martini said she hopes to expand the Warrior Way program into more elementary school grade levels, as well as Andover's middle schools. Eventually, the Warrior Way could include recess and lunch times as well as physical education classes, she said.

"We have a philosophy that kids have to enjoy what they're doing (to be physically active). We put a great deal of emphasis on the pleasure, fun and joy of participation," said Martini. "We want everyone to graduate from here with a love of participation, and I feel we do a really good job with that."

■ PUBLIC SCHOOL LUNCH MENUS: JAN. 11-15

Elementary schools

Monday: Hamburger, veggie burger or cheeseburger, veggie chili and tortilla chips, baked sweet potato fries and fresh fruit.

Tuesday: Rotini with meat or marinara sauce, bread stick, ham-and-cheese pinwheel, carrots, green beans and fresh fruit.

Wednesday: Beef stew and biscuit, chicken caesar salad, bread stick, grilled cheese, roasted squash and anjou pear.

Thursday: Chicken tenders and dips, salad with hummus, feta and pita, roast beef on a bulky roll, vegetable medley and fresh melon.

Friday: Pan pizza, tossed salad and icy juicy and topping.

Middle schools

Monday: Grilled hotdog, chicken caesar salad, bread stick, pancakes and sausage, baked beans, roasted carrot sticks and cinnamon applesauce.

Tuesday: Pan pizza, fish sticks, french fries, dinner roll, chicken parmesan on a roll and french fries, green peas, cole slaw and fresh fruit.

Wednesday: Chicken or steak and cheese calzone, turkey salad pocket with lettuce and tomato, pretzels, honey barbecue chicken over salad greens, bread stick, pasta salad, chicken rice soup and fresh fruit.

Thursday: Grilled tenders with dips, dinner roll, grilled ham and cheese panini, salad with hummus, feta and pita, buttered noodles, green beans and fresh fruit.

Friday: Hawaiian or pepperoni pan pizza, bacon burger with lettuce and tomato, pretzels, manager's choice,

tossed salad and fresh fruit.

Andover High School

Monday: Nachos with spanish rice, refried beans topped with cheese and chilled pineapple, steak and cheese wrap, greek style chicken panini and meatball sub.

Tuesday: Turkey potpie, mashed potatoes, steamed carrots, dinner roll, grilled hotdog, turkey or ham and cheese panini, pulled BBQ pork on a roll and chilled fruit.

Wednesday: Spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread, seasoned green beans, vegetable wrap, hot italian sub, manager's choice and fruit cup.

Thursday: Chicken stir fry over rice with oriental veggies, cheeseburger with lettuce and tomato, hot roast turkey sandwich and gravy, crispy chicken on a roll with lettuce and tomato and chilled fruit.

Friday: Baked fish with lemon, oven potato wedges, cole slaw, pizza burger, veggie quesadilla, manager's choice and fresh fruit.

Also available a la carte daily at the elementary and middle schools: bottled water and 100-percent juice, low-fat ice cream and yogurt, bagel with light cream cheese, yogurt, fresh fruit of the season and milk.

At Andover High School there is a wrap/deli bar with sandwiches made to order with favorite toppings, plus a daily sandwich offering, daily specials, and panini specials.

For prices or other information about lunches, call Gail Koutroubas, food services director, at 978-623-8622.

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TOWN TALK

Snow much fun

For friends, Caroline Washburn, right, 10, and Kavvanah O'Connor, 10, both of Andover, the snow is nothing but fun as they soar down an embankment behind Shawsheen Primary School Sunday, trying out new discs.

JAN SEEGER/Staff photo



Andover Zip Code Day official

Selectman Mary Lyman sent and e-mail saying this Friday, 01/8/10, will be celebrated as Andover Zip Code Day. Citizens are encouraged to wear blue and gold to school and work, and there is talk of a special blog through the library, messages on cable TV and Andover Web sites that highlight "Andover Zip Code Day." The idea was proposed in last week's Town Talk.

Talk tech

Town leaders are working on a strategic technology plan, and your input is wanted as they identify ways the town and school departments can use technology to enhance services and better

serve the residents of Andover.

Residents are invited to give feedback through an online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/6BN6XN5

— Bethany Bray

Unity and eggs

The Andover Baptist Church will offer its annual unity brunch on Martin Luther King Day, Monday, Jan. 18.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Annual Unity Brunch will be from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Andover Baptist Church, 7 Central St., Andover. The keynote speaker is Pastor Lyndon Myers. The event is free, but donations are encouraged. For more info, call Nikki

Manning at 617-785-6477.

Battle of the bands of Biblical proportion

On Friday, Jan. 22, 2010 at 7 p.m., this year's annual pulpit exchange between South Church and Temple Emanuel will take place at Temple Emanuel, 7 Haggitts Pond Road. The Rev. John Zehring, the new pastor at South Church will deliver the sermon, and Rabbi Robert Goldstein will conduct the service. The temple's musical group "Shabbat Unplugged" will provide musical accompaniment, along with South Church's special musicians, the Jazz Disciples. All are invited.

DEADLINE TO ENTER JAN. 20

Weight Loss Contest

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