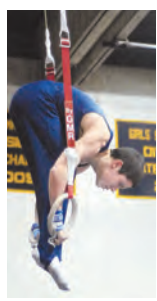




GROWING FOOD WITHOUT DIRT AT WOOD HILL MIDDLE
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RADIO SHACK TO REMAIN IN PLAZA
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NO RINGERS ON THIS TIGHT-KNIT TEAM
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TOWN TAKES ACTION ON HOME'S TRASH PILES
PAGE 5

OUR 124TH YEAR

Andover Townsman

Issue No. 25

FEBRUARY 16, 2012

75 CENTS



DUSTIN LUCA/Staff Photos

Angela McNeeley, 6, has had hip dysplasia since she was born, though it wasn't detected by doctors until just over a year ago. After spending months in a body cast and wheelchair following her first surgery, Angela now dances after school. Pictured here, she performs an Irish step dance at the O'Shea-Chaplin Academy of Irish Dance.

From body cast to dance floor

Dancer, 6, overcoming surgery for overlooked hip dysplasia

By DUSTIN LUCA
STAFF WRITER

To anyone in the audience, 6-year-old Angela McNeeley is just another girl who loves to dance. Kicking her right leg around her body to the tune of Irish step music, her ponytail bounces side to side as a smile stretches ear to ear.

Nobody would know that, six months ago, she was in a body cast, almost completely immobile for months. With her after-school dancing put on hiatus by a late diagnosis of a condition called hip dysplasia, she would ultimately face learning to walk all over again as she moved from the cast to a wheelchair to a walker.

"It was fun, she says. 'I remember the first time I walked,' said Angela, smiling. 'I took two steps, and I fell on my beanbag.'"

Birth defect unrecognized

Hip dysplasia is a congenital birth defect, in which the hip doesn't form the way it should in newborn babies.



Angela McNeeley, 6 and pictured here with her parents, Vivian and Michael, now dances again as part of her therapy.

The hip socket becomes malformed, taking a shape not suited for holding onto the head the femur, which is shaped to fit into the socket.

Doctors check newborn babies for hip dysplasia by pulling their legs back towards their body. If

the legs pop out and become dislocated, that's usually the red flag that gets a doctor's attention, according to Angela's mother, Vivian McNeeley.

See **DANCER**, Page 3

Contract mediation up in smoke

State negotiator to craft sample new teachers deal

By DUSTIN LUCA
STAFF WRITER

Union VP says teachers voice silenced. Page 5.

Mediation has failed to help the teachers union and School Committee settle a new contract, so a state-approved negotiator will now review the two sides' positions and make recommendations for a new teachers contract.

The process is called fact finding. Once the report is issued by the negotiator, the two sides will then bargain over the suggested contract.

Nobody is sure what will happen next, but there are many possibilities, ranging from a contract settlement taking place before the report is finished to

possible court action. "For everybody involved — teachers, students, parents, the community — we need for this disruption to be over," said Annie Gilbert, School Committee chairwoman. "Both sides are acting in good faith to resolve the issues that remain, rather than go down the full road, and I'm hopeful that we can do that."

Kerry Costello, Andover Education Association president, said it has been 37 years — going back to contract talks in 1975

See **MEDIATION**, Page 4

Adams' Marlborough support has Dems calling for state investigation

By DUSTIN LUCA
STAFF WRITER

brother, Ammon Adams, over the span of two years.

The Massachusetts Democratic Party is calling for a state investigation into a campaign finance technique it believes was used by the family of Andover state Rep. Paul Adams to support his campaign.

Campaign finance records show the Marlborough Republican City Committee (MRCC) received \$30,000 in contributions from Adams' parents and

solely out of Marlborough, then used \$27,806.31 on five specific dates from Sept. 14, 2010 to Oct. 22, 2010 to mail anonymous campaign materials supporting Adams' bid for Beacon Hill, which he ended up winning with 54 percent of the vote. Other money was spent on a get-up-the-vote effort involving volunteers to bring the total

See **RECORDS**, Page 5

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Curl up by the fire — at Memorial Hall Library

MHL undergoing extensive upgrade, all with state cash so far

By DUSTIN LUCA
STAFF WRITER

Memorial Hall Library is undergoing an extensive cosmetic upgrade, and so far it hasn't cost Andover taxpayers a dime.

The building's first floor — the entrance for which faces Elm Square — has been completely redesigned with a gas fireplace, a new way to display books, and more. Further changes are expected as the library does its first renovation work in nearly

a quarter of a century, according to library Director Beth Mazin.

"After 25 years of heavy use — 1,300 to 1,500 people coming in a day to the library — we had to renovate the building," said Mazin. "We need it at this point. We're moving through the building."

Recent work to renovate the first floor area of the library started around three years ago as the library started to move

See **LIBRARY**, Page 3



DUSTIN LUCA/Staff Photo

Beth Mazin, director of Memorial Hall Library, stands in a newly renovated first-floor area of the library. Work has included repainting walls, adding shelving, reorganizing, adding a gas fireplace and providing a better view of neighboring Essex Street and Elm Square, visible in the windows behind Mazin. To her right, a new section awaits library patrons who put materials on hold from their computer or smart phone.

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In Brief

LWV addresses 'Political Advertising and the Voter'

The League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover will sponsor a discussion on the regulation of political advertising...

QUOTE, UNQUOTE ...



The Marlborough Republican City Committee has "found a way that they think exploits loopholes and campaign finance laws to hide how money gets into an election."

Kevin Franck, communications director for the state's Democratic party, who wants the state to investigate. The family of Andover state Rep. Paul Adams donated \$30,000 over two years to the committee...

We've been able, finally, to document what we're seeing, the trash and animals getting there. That's allowed us to take the next step of action.

Andover Health Director Thomas Carbone, on the town issuing cleanup orders for an Osgood Street property with trash bags piled several feet high in the yard. Story, page 5.



PAST & PRESENT



THEN: This Andover Townsman file photo shows the former Andover Lanes building on Park Street being taken down on October 21, 1997.



NOW: The parking lot at 34 Park St. was long home to a bowling alley building, the shell of which sat vacant for a few years before it was razed.

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COPY DEADLINES
Advertising copy must be in the Townsman office by Monday at 5 p.m.
Camera-ready advertising copy is due by Tuesday at noon.
No cancellations honored after these deadlines.

Town manager's budget up 2.3 percent

Town boards are working on next year's budget, which the town manager has given the theme "Building on Opportunities." The town has multiple opportunities created by health insurance reform and plan design, information technology, regional efforts, retirements and more, according to Town Manager Buzz Stapeczynski.

Overall, the \$147.2 million budget reflects a 2.3-percent increase over last year's. Stapeczynski's budget calls for a 3.3 percent increase for the schools portion, from \$63.3 million to \$65.4 million. Preliminary numbers from the School Department presented in Stapeczynski's

recommended budget reflect a net increase of nearly 61 staff. This includes roughly 20 positions previously paid through grants that will no longer be available next year. What the final staff totals supported in the schools' budget will be is not yet known. Superintendent Marinel McGrath said her budget will be presented at the beginning of March. Anything available before that time is "very preliminary."

Several other new positions are expected to be needed to cover obligations from the town's Excel program that covers 18- to 22-year-old students who are currently taught out-of-district in North Andover. It is expected that costs for the program will be shared between the two communities, requiring the town to take on more staff, according to McGrath. — Dustin Luca

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nearly 30 percent of census forms remain

The annual town census for 2012 was mailed to residents

the last week of December 2011. The town clerk's office reports a 71 percent return on the census.

If you have not already returned your census, the town clerk's office urges you to do so. An accurate count of all residents is important for the town for several reasons-for example, the current population count is the basis for allocation of state and federal funds.

Andover Democrats to elect delegates to state convention

If you have any questions call the Town Clerk's Office at 978-623-8255. Democrats in Andover will be holding a caucus at Memorial Hall Library on Saturday, Feb. 25 at 10 a.m. sharp to elect 17 delegates and three alternates to the 2012 Massachusetts Democratic Convention, where Democrats from across Massachusetts will select candidates to compete for the Democratic nomination for U. S. Senate.

Forum tonight on proposed Ballardvale Fire Station

The School Committee and selectmen will host a joint forum on the proposed Ballardvale Fire Station tonight, Thursday, Feb. 16 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the World War I Memorial Auditorium at Doherty Middle School.

Health clinics

The Andover health department will offer a mini clinic on Monday, Feb. 27 from 1 to 2 p.m. at Frye Circle. It will offer senior center clinics on Wednesdays, Feb. 22 and 29 from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment is necessary. For more information, call 978-623-8295.

Advertisement for Tallman Eye Associates featuring the slogan "Excellence in eye care... close to home." and a grid of 20 doctor portraits.

Advertisement for Orthodontics for Children and Adults, listing Kathleen Chan and Ivy Chen.

Advertisement for North Reading Antiques and Collectibles LLC, listing various items and contact information.

Large advertisement for North Reading Antiques and Collectibles LLC for a "Ladies Night" event on Thursday, February 23rd, featuring jewelry, antiques, and gold/silver purchases.

Town seeks cleanup at Osgood blight property

BY DUSTIN LUCA
STAFF WRITER

The town's health department is taking action against a blight property on Osgood Street, where hundreds of trash bags are piled several feet high.

On Friday, town Health Director Tom Carbone issued cleanup orders that give the owner of 116 Osgood St., Susan Odle, up to seven days from receipt of the orders to clean up the property.

The home was pictured on the front page of the Townsman two weeks ago, Feb. 2. Carbone said the town couldn't take any action on the property at that time, because it didn't seem the property was a health issue.

That is no longer the case, according to Carbone.



DUSTIN LUCA/Staff Photo

Stacks of trash bags sit on Susan Odle's property, the contents of which originated from her condemned condominium on Michael Way.

"We've been able, finally, to document what we're seeing, the trash and animals getting there," said Carbone. "That's allowed us to take the next step of action."

Odle failing to comply with the orders within seven days "could result in court action" from the town, said Carbone, who declined to specify what that could mean.

The orders were sent by both certified mail and regular mail to three addresses registered to Odle. The doubling of the mailings was done "so if somebody chooses not to sign for the certified mail, they still get it via the regular mail," said Carbone.

As of Monday, the town had not received a response or any returned mail.

■ POLICE LOG

COMPILED BY DUSTIN LUCA
dluca@andovertownsman.com

The following arrests were taken from Andover police logs for Tuesday, Feb. 7 through Monday, Feb. 13:

ARRESTS

Tuesday, Feb. 7 — At 8:51 p.m., Jaelyn Gottlieb, 34, of 25801 Shawnee St., Sorrento, Fla. was arrested on River Road and charged on a warrant for offering sexual conduct for a fee.

Thursday, Feb. 9 — At 6:34 a.m., Chrissy Camara, 24, of 687 Lakeview Ave., Lowell, was arrested on River Road and charged with speeding and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

At 11:26 a.m., Fedlaire Aristide, 25, of 51 Osgood St., Methuen, was arrested in the area of Routes 495 and 28 and charged with a stop sign violation, operating a motor vehicle with a revoked license, providing a false name and address to police associated with a motor vehicle violation, possess of

a class B drug with intent to distribute, and having a controlled substance in, on or near a school or playground.

At 1:19 p.m., Jose Colon, 38, of 40 Kenneth St., Lawrence, was arrested on River Road and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, subsequent offense.

Saturday, Feb. 11 — At 1:02 p.m., Nikole Bistany, 37, of 3 Woodland St., Lawrence, was arrested on North Main Street and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a revoked license.

Sunday, Feb. 12 — At 2 a.m., Nikole Fagan, 28, of 50 Cambridge Road, Woburn, was arrested on Main Street and charged with a marked lanes violation, a red light violation and operating under the influence of liquor.

At 10:27 p.m., Robert Connerney, 18, of 17 Abbott Bridge Road, Andover, was arrested on North Main Street and charged with malicious destruction of property over \$250.

Monday, Feb. 13 — At 11:31 p.m., Savier Carrasquillo, 28, of 6 Merrill St., Methuen, was arrested on Memorial Circle and charged with assault and battery on a household member, assault with a dangerous weapon, destruction of property over \$250, larceny over \$250, intimidating a witness and threatening to commit a crime.

INCIDENT

Sunday, Feb. 12 — At 8:22 a.m., police pursued a gray Mercedes C 300 believed to have been traveling at speeds of roughly 75 miles per hour down Andover Street. While in pursuit, an officer giving chase saw the vehicle rack up multiple red light violations. Eventually, the vehicle started driving northbound on Route 495 at speeds of over 100 miles per hour in light traffic. Police then terminated the pursuit and notified Lawrence and State Police, and put a be-on-the-lookout call to all stations in the northwest region.

RECORDS: Democrats calling for investigation on campaign funding

■ Continued from Page 1

spending on Adams by MRCC to around \$30,000, according to Paul Ferro, MRCC chairman.

Paul Adams did not return phone calls.

Kevin Franck, communications director for the state's Democratic party, says the Marlborough-based group has "found a way that they think exploits loopholes and campaign finance laws to hide how money gets into an election. That's something that violates state ethics laws and should be seriously looked at."

In his letter to the OCPF, Massachusetts Democratic Party Chairman John Walsh says the Marlborough Republican City Committee has helped campaign operations for six Republican state representatives, including Adams and fellow Andover Rep. Jim Lyons.

Ferro said everything the MRCC is doing is both legal and going to continue.

"We're doing exactly what local Republican committees are supposed to do, which is help elect Republicans," said Ferro. "It's absurd to say we can't help anyone outside of our city. I've campaigned across the state for a variety of candidates."

This is the second time, Democrats have called for an investigation into Adams' campaign.

Under state campaign finance law, individuals can donate up to \$500 per year to a candidate's campaign. Previously, the same family

members each gave Adams himself \$13,000 in gifts, which an Office of Campaign and Political Finance review determined Adams later loaned to his campaign. Adams, his parents and brother agreed to pay fines totaling \$4,000, and \$45,000 in loans Adams made to his campaign will not be repaid.

Initial reports did not list donations, source

In 2010 and in the first week of 2011, Adams' mother, father and brother each donated \$5,000 per year to the Marlborough Republican City Committee, finance reports show.

Adams' original finance reports outlining his campaign's expenditures, receipts and in-kind donations did not identify how money from the city committee was used to benefit his campaign.

A pre-election report initially filed on Oct. 25, 2010 reflected only an in-kind donation from the Republican State Committee for \$2,823 in post card mailings on Oct. 15, 2010. The report was amended on April 18, 2011 to add three sets of in-kind donations of "mailings" from BFS Daniels, a print communications company. The reason for the amendment was to "Delete duplicates" as explained on the report's cover sheet. This came around half a year after the donations were initially made by the city committee.

Four months later, on Aug. 8, the report was amended again, correcting the three

in-kind donations listed as coming from BFS Daniels to reflect their source as "Marlborough REPC." The reason for the amendment was to "Correct inkind designee," the cover letter says.

A year-end report initially filed on Jan. 20, 2011 didn't report any in-kind donations. It was amended on April 19, 2011 to reflect two in-kind donations from BFS Daniels. The report was amended again on Aug. 8, 2011 to properly identify the source of both donations as the Marlborough GOP committee.

'Loophole' is legal, officials say

OCPF spokesman Jason Tait said he couldn't comment specifically on the situation surrounding Adams' in-kind donations and his family's contributions to the MRCC. However, he said that as long as individuals donate no more than \$5,000 a year to a party committee, no campaign finance laws are being broken.

A party committee can only donate up to \$1,000 per

year to a candidate, Tait said. However, party committees are free to donate as much as they want in the form of in-kind donations — including printed materials, DVD mailings and website hosting, he explained.

"I wish that we had 500 active local Republican committees who are each raising five to ten K on their own, supporting their local state Rep. candidate on their own, but frankly that's not the case," said Ferro. "I'm

very happy that my committee has been successful to elect Republicans across the state."

The state's Democratic party said the failure to identify the source of the in-kind donations is an issue.

"What it looks like [MRCC] and [another Republican PAC] were doing was moving money through a local political committee, and then all over the state in ways specifically designed to hide the source of that money from

voters," said Franck.

Walsh wrote to the OCPF that its documents demonstrate the Marlborough city committee "spent very little money in support of local Marlborough candidates in recent years."

"We have not found another Republican town committee that is engaged in this kind of multi-step campaign finance scheme," said Franck. "We're looking through OCPF filings as we speak."

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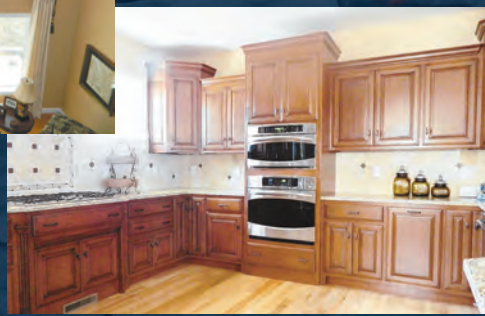
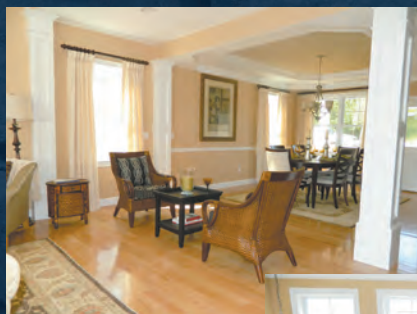
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TOWN TALK

Your Dental HEALTH

by Nicholas T. Papapetros, DMD, FAGD



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Son of a senator

Last Wednesday, Amy and Barry Finegold became the proud parents of their third child, Maxwell Meyer Finegold.

Maxwell, who joins two sisters, weighed in at 8 pounds, 12 ounces.

"I had two great children," said Barry Finegold, Andover's state senator and a 1989 Andover High graduate. "Now I have three, and I'm so happy now."

Amy Finegold is owner of dresscode, a downtown clothing store.

Still waiting on his third child is Bob Douglas, Andover's Conservation director, whose wife is expected to deliver their new baby on Feb. 28, just a

day shy of the leap day that arrives every four years.

— Dustin Luca

28 want to lead Andover High

Twenty-eight people have expressed interest in being principal at Andover High School, Superintendent Marinel McGrath said. The applications are being reviewed by a team of teachers, parents, community members and administrators. It's expected that the names of finalists from the search could be available in about a week. McGrath said she expects an appointment to be made by the third week of March.

— Dustin Luca



Max Murray and his grandmother Sharon Caico were among the Shawsheen School community who created valentines for people living at Wingate at Andover, a nursing home.

Creating together

Students at Shawsheen School made Valentine's Day cards for the residents at Wingate at Andover last Friday, Feb. 10. Students invited their grandparents to join in their creativity. The valentine-making

event was sponsored through the School PTO's community services committee.

Shawsheen School is a magnet or choice school for children in preschool through grade 2.

Interesting view on long-running town yard task force

Town Yard Task Force Chairman Rick Feldman spoke to selectmen and Finance Committee members about plans to build a new Town Yard on Campanelli Drive.

For those watching at home, who weren't familiar with the task force, Feldman offered a simile to describe his board's role in Andover.

"I am Rick Feldman, representing the Town Yard Task Force, which has been around for a lot of years," said Feldman. "We're like an annuity."

An annuity is a contract between a person and an insurance company that generally pays out over a long term.

— Dustin Luca

Like musicals? Take a 'Trip'

Two Andover students, junior Jillian Thero and freshman Gabriella DiVincenzo, are among the Lawrence Academy actors rehearsing for *The Trip*, an original music theater performance at the Groton school.

Working together to create both the script and the music, the cast explores the question, "Who are our ancestors, and how did their journeys and choices determine who we are today?" Performances are Feb. 16, 17 and 18 at 7:30 p.m. in the school's Richardson-Mees Performing Arts Center in Groton.

A new beginning

People may "feel the force" at Memorial Hall Library as it enters hyperdrive for its Star Wars Symposium to be held on Sunday, Feb. 26 at 2 p.m. People ages 6 and older are invited to come dressed as a favorite character for the costume contest, learn about the history of Star Wars, join in a trivia contest and more. Families are welcome, and people are asked to register at mhl.org/eventcalendar.

The event is sponsored by the Friends of Memorial Hall Library.

For more information on the Star Wars Symposium and other Children's Room programs, visit mhl.org/kids/programs.htm, or call The Children's Room at 978-623-8401 Ext. 39. Programs are held at Memorial Hall Library, 2 North Main St.

Robot battle

Andover High School will be the site of a battle of the robots on March 10.

The Andover Robotics Club at AHS will host the Massachusetts State First Technical Challenge Tournament on March 10. Opening ceremonies are at 10 a.m., with closing ceremonies around 5 p.m.. There will be 24 teams competing from across the state.

"This is similar to a state tournament in any athletic endeavor – but on the STEM side," said ARC team advisor and math teacher Minda Reidy.

The Andover team qualified for the state battle royale by outperforming others at the North Andover Regional FTC qualifying tournament.

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Deadline: March 9 & May 4

Andover Townsman

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Townspeople



MARY SCHWALM/Staff photos

A member of the Trustees of the Reservation leads a hike during Winter Fun Day at the Ward Reservation off Prospect Road. Had there been snow, skiing, snowshoeing and sledding would have been offered.



Six-year-old Clark Warrener enjoys a cup of hot chocolate topped with marshmallows at the Winter Fun Day on Sunday.

FUN, YES. WINTER? NOT SO MUCH



Mia Jensen, 6, shares a bench with her dad Henrik as she enjoys a hotdog before talking a hike at the Ward Reservation during Sunday's annual event.

The ice man has gone

Bill Dalton



When I was young, there was an icebox in my grandmother's kitchen. It wasn't a nice, expensive-

looking, brass handled, mahogany-colored, wooden icebox as big as a refrigerator that you might see in an antique store; no, it was a short, squat, practical-looking, waist-high thing that looked more like a large safe than a piece of furniture.

It sat in the kitchen corner opposite the pantry, the same place I imagined it had sat for many years, and a grown person had to bend down to open the door, and he better get what he needed fast and close the door, especially in the hot months, so that the ice wouldn't melt before the next delivery. There was no freezer in the kitchen icebox, of course, because ice just kept things like milk and leftovers cold and didn't freeze anything.

The ice man came every few days, carrying a block of ice hanging from ice tongs in his hand, and he put the block in the icebox's ice compartment, which took up a quarter of the icebox's space. When the ice melted, it dripped into a pan that had to be emptied before it overflowed. Expensive iceboxes had spigots to release the water, and, if

you trusted the ice source, the melt might be used for cold drinking water, but no one in my grandmother's house trusted the source.

The iceman's delivery was predictable, because he had to get into the house to complete the delivery, although in those days, there was usually someone at home in every house. Yet, the iceman, if need be, was more casual with my grandmother's delivery, because my Uncle Bill, whom the iceman knew, lived in the house along with my grandmother and Aunt Francis, and Uncle Bill had a pair of ice tongs in the cellar in case he had to carry ice left on the porch.

One summer's heat wave, they bought an extra block of ice and had their only fan, a large thing that looked like a World War I airplane engine, blowing over the ice to cool the living room. This was extravagant for them, and although both my aunt and uncle worked, extravagance was frowned on in those days because they'd recently lived through the Great Depression, which lasted from 1929 to World War II, and then the war caused much scarcity because of the needs of our fighting men and women. Citizens had a small supply of stamps and coupons to buy important things like gas and sugar, and were asked to collect scrap metal and turn it in so it could be made into whatever our troops needed. We kids

See DALTON, Page 10

Andover doctor reflects on Vietnam trip, surgeries

By JUDY WAKEFIELD
STAFF WRITER

Back from a Vietnamese hospital where he performed five to six surgeries a day, this Andover urologist finds himself reminding patients not to take health insurance for granted.

Dr. Liam Hurley treated villagers with cancer, kidney stones and other urological conditions in Hue, Vietnam. He took part in a seven-day mission trip last October with the non-profit group, IVUmed. The organization makes quality urological care available to people worldwide and has helped thousands.

The average life expectancy in Vietnam is late 50s to early 60s. With many of that country's people living in countryside villages, trips to Hue (pronounced weigh) for health care are pretty much non-existent. As a



Courtesy photo

Liam Hurley of Andover with his colleagues in Vietnam after a day of caring for patients in Hue, Vietnam's Urology Hospital's operating room. From left, Hao Nguyen, MD, Vietnam; Hao Nguyen, MD, a USA urology resident; Steven Previte, MD, Northeast Urology; Hurley; and Kelly Swords, MD, a USA urology resident.

but they did. We had many patients," said Hurley, of Holy Family Hospital and Northeast Urologic Surgery, PC, which has offices in North Andover, Haverhill, Salem, N.H. and Derry, N.H. "It was a reminder not to take health insurance for granted. For many of these patients, there were problems that should have been diagnosed earlier."

It was Hurley's first mission trip and he teamed with colleague Dr. Steven Previte of Reading and two urology residents.

Patients were prepped for surgeries by Vietnamese medical staff, who Hurley said were very knowledgeable.

"They were very good at diagnosing and making decisions," Hurley said. "I even learned a trick or two about

result, many people don't see doctors for decades. When they finally seek treatment, their disease can be so far advanced that there is little hope for a cure. "I don't know how they got there (to the hospital),

See DOCTOR, Page 10

ALL THOSE YEARS AGO

COMPILED BY
SUSAN MCKELLIGET

100 Years Ago Feb. 16, 1912

James Anderson of High street, who is employed in the Lawrence Dye Works, fell from his building in the mill on Thursday morning and was caught in the shafting of the machinery, and sustained severe injuries. He was removed to his home at once and is now resting comfortably.

Miss Dorothy Cole

entertained a party of her friends at a valentine dinner at her home on Locke street on Saturday evening. Valentine favors and decorations appropriated to the day added to the occasion. The guests were as follows: Agnes Grant, Evelyn and Ada Brewster, May Bartlett, Winnifred LeBoutillier, Ruth Allen, Muriel Johnson, Gwendolyn Brooks, Mary Peirce, Dorothy Newton and Irene Odlin.

The past week has been a satisfactory one from the plumbers' point of view at least. Frozen and bursting

water pipes have been frequent happenings during these cold days, and in one or two cases, slight fires resulting from thawing out pipes, have been reported.

75 Years Ago Feb. 12, 1937

The Andover Savings Bank has sold the Dutch Colonial house at 291 North Main street to Percy Earnshaw of Lawrence. The sale was made through the Fred E. Cheever Real Estate Agency.

George Collins of Avon

street returned to his duties at Andover Press on Wednesday after a week's illness.

Miss Elizabeth Carney is recovering from an attack of the grippe.

Henry Burbine was appointed a public weigher at the meeting of the selectmen Monday night.

Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth H. Lewis of Carisbrooke street have left for a short vacation in Florida. Their small son is rapidly recovering from severe burns on the hands.

See YEARS, Page 10

DALTON: When dependent on ice man, speed was a factor

Continued from Page 9

didn't have toys until well after the war, but we made fake guns out of sticks, and there were always marbles, although some were very old. We never missed what we never had.

My grandmother's icebox was the last one I remember seeing in use. She liked it and said she didn't have to worry when electricity was lost, as in the Great Hurricane of '38. Years earlier, around 1910 to 1920, she had owned the Metropolitan, a bakery on Main Street, that sold ice cream and ice cream cakes as part of its inventory, so she trusted ice and iceboxes to be dependable, no matter the weather and no matter whether the electricity was on or off.

Ice is resilient if treated well, and iceboxes were insulated and the small blocks of ice, depending on the outside temperature, were good for days, as long

as you didn't open the door too much or too long. I'm amused by kids today who stand in front of an open refrigerator with no idea of what they want. I think they're bored and grazing for some food to relieve their boredom.

My kids had a friend who spent half his day looking for something to eat in our refrigerator, often in a bent-over position seeking some hidden treasure in its depths. Even though I was glad he felt enough at home in our house to do that, I mentioned one day that seeing him bent over our refrigerator was such a common sight that I was beginning to think his butt was part of our refrigerator door. I'm happy to say it didn't deter his future refrigerator use.

Bill Dalton writes a weekly column for the Andover Townsman. His email address in billdalton@andovertownie.com.

BIRTHS

FINEGOLD - Born at Lawrence General Hospital on Feb. 8, 2012, a son, Maxwell Meyer, to Barry and Amy (Gottesman) Finegold of Andover. Grandparents are Michael and Sondra Finegold of Andover, and Mark and Janet Gottesman of Newton. Maxwell is welcomed home by his big sisters, Ava and Ella.

GENDRON - Born at Lawrence General Hospital, a daughter, Jocelyn Tobey, to Matthew Gendron and Amanda Piercy of Andover. Grandparents are Stephen and Jean Piercy of Andover, and Richard Gendron and Patricia Tufano of North Andover. Jocelyn is welcomed home by her siblings, Alexis Piercy, Kaila Gendron, Michael Gendron, and Sean Gendron.

ENGAGEMENT



Deanna Vasilakis and Michael Pescatore

George and Anna Vasilakis of Andover are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Deanna Cynthia Vasilakis, to Michael Brian Pescatore, son of John and Elaine Pescatore, also of Andover.

Deanna is a graduate of Andover High School, class of 2003. She earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a master's degree in teaching from Pace University. She is employed by Uncommon

Schools as an associate director of recruitment.

Michael is also a graduate of Andover High School, class of 2003. He received his bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and his MBA from Bentley University. He is a purchasing manager for Procter & Gamble.

The couple was engaged while on vacation in San Francisco, and a September 2012 wedding is planned.

ALL THOSE YEARS AGO

Continued from Page 9

50 Years Ago Feb. 15, 1962

The Finance Committee, using its sharp blue pencil thoroughly, has lopped some \$72,000 from departmental budgets. Chairman Walter C. Wilson Jr., told the selectmen Tuesday night that a few items are still under consideration, and had no final tally to announce.

A report on the \$8,000 tractor purchased last spring for use at the dump will be presented to the selectmen next Monday night. The tractor has been laid up for repairs, which Town Manager Thomas E. Duff estimated in the area of \$600, during the selectmen's meeting Feb. 5.

A full-dress meeting of the future of the town dump will be held at 7:30 next Monday night. Featured will be the selectmen, the Finance Committee, and the special Study Committee that recommends a sanitary land fill operation

at the present dump site.

25 Years Ago Feb. 19, 1987

Kenneth Seifert, superintendent of schools, Tuesday evening presented the School Committee with an operating budget of \$18,516,720 for the 1986-1988 school year. Explaining that we haven't made any trade-offs yet, Seifert said there is \$87,970 in the budget that is not yet committed to meeting the costs of current programs, but there are more than \$570,725 worth of additional programs, salaries, and expenses that are not being met.

The arguments spanned three separate public hearings, but the message behind them—delivered to the Planning Board Tuesday night by approximately 25 residents—was both consistent and clear: limit the living density in Andover by curbing multi-unit development at every possible level.

DOCTOR: On return, praises Vietnam's medical staff

Continued from Page 9

kidney-stone removal."

Hurley and his team worked at Vietnam's largest urology hospital. The 300-bed facility serves adults and children from throughout the Hue region. The hospital's medical team was on hand for the surgeries.

Medical equipment there is much older than what Hurley is used to. But, the Vietnamese staff is doing the

best they can with what they have, he said.

"The conditions in which the physicians treat patients—the low quality equipment and poor working environment—make it immensely challenging to provide timely treatment," he said. "What we were able to do using minimally invasive procedures is remarkable as these were very complex procedures."

Hurley, an Andover

resident since 1993, continues to email Vietnamese staffers and said he would like to visit again. He said the people of Hue are very proud and don't often ask for help—he will always remember that.

"Towards the end of the trip, a resident was clearly struggling on a case and invited us to help," Hurley said. "There's this threshold where you earn trust and the right to be invited in to help.

This was a pivotal moment. Now, months after returning, we continue to communicate with him by email."

If he does return to Hue, he'd especially like to check in with that resident. But with four children at home, he said he's not sure what his wife, Brigid, would say about another trip too soon. Their children are Connor, 11, Declan, 9, Maeve, 7 and Nora, 5.

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Donald P. MacGillivray L.I.C.S.W.

For more than three decades, Donald P. MacGillivray has been providing counseling for couples, both together and individually. A licensed independent clinical social worker, Mr. MacGillivray also works with siblings, parents and their adult children and couples seeking premarital counseling, in addition to his work as a marital counselor.

When one person in a marriage wants to have counseling against the wishes of the other, coming to therapy can become an issue. Mr. MacGillivray says that the person who wants to come to counseling can feel powerless. However, he says that one person doing

therapy is likely to change the dynamics of the marriage.

"Marriage is a living, breathing thing. The quality of the relationship is what each brings to it. Those pieces that haven't been resolved in each of us get played out in relationships. When we do work on inner issues, that will shift some of the behaviors in the relationship. People can make changes in what they experience and can learn to behave and respond differently to things that happen in a way that works better for them. A lot of behavior is habitual - done without awareness. The questions for awareness are 'what and how.' What are you doing that's not



working for you and how are you doing that? What follows? What is the consequence (everything has a consequence - nothing's for nothing)? And what does work and how do you do that? My job is to get you to think about yourself in ways you haven't thought before. Increased self awareness helps people make changes in problem-solving strategies," he has said.

"When I'm asked, 'Why should I be the one who has to change?' I respond, 'For your sake - so that you have choices and feel more in charge of yourself, less dependent, and with less a sense of powerlessness.'"

Donald MacGillivray's office is located at 10 High St., Andover, and his telephone number is 978-470-1555. He sees clients on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

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Legendary Ladies performer Sue Matthews with the orchestra for the show.

Channelling 'Legendary Ladies of Song'

Residents can take a step back in time to enjoy the music of some famous female vocalists of the 20th century. The Rogers Center for the Arts at Merrimack College presents "Legendary Ladies of Song," the music of Doris Day, Peggy Lee and Rosemary Clooney, on Friday, Feb. 24.

Singer Sue Matthews joins a quintet of swinging

musicians for a sparkling tribute to three of the most famous "girl singers" from the big band era who went on to well known solo careers.

Matthews has performed repeatedly at the Arts Week Festival in County Galway, Ireland and in Budapest, Hungary as well as in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and Buenos Aires, Argentina. She has also appeared at

Town Hall in New York as part of the city's annual cabaret convention, according to a Rogers Center release.

Advance tickets are \$30, \$25 advance college employees, students, seniors. All tickets at the door will cost \$35.

For more information or reservations, visit merrimack.edu/rogers or call the box office at 978-837-5355.



Sue Matthews

Call to artists, craftspeople to join MV Artisans

The Merrimack Valley Artisans are seeking "local artists and fine craftspeople, who are devoted to their art and who, as members, will be committed to their organization and its mission."

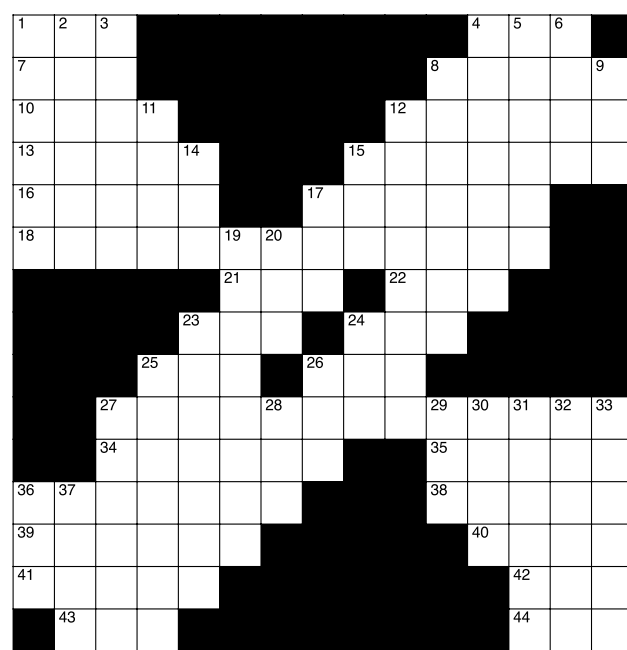
The Merrimack Valley Artisans is a group comprised of approximately two dozen local artists and craftspeople who meet monthly, in Dunstable, to discuss topical issues and common concerns in

artistic endeavors. The group organizes a two-day annual show in Chelmsford during the third week of October. It supports local high school students pursuing an art education at the college level

by granting scholarships and cash awards. Members also hold presentations to educate the public about the arts.

For more information, visit merrimackvalleyartisans.org.

Crossword puzzle



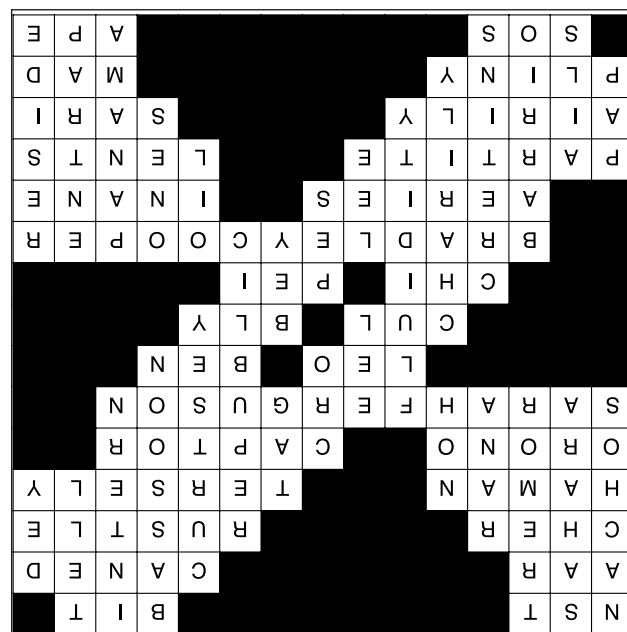
CLUES ACROSS

- Nuclear Stress Test
- A small amount
- Comedian Jack P ____
- Beat with a rod ____
- Bono's ex wife
- Steal cattle
- Tribe in Myanmar
- In a crisp way
- 04473 ME
- One that takes a captive
- The Dutchess of York
- Zodiacal lion
- Actor Affleck
- ____ de sac
- Pioneer journalist Nellie
- 22nd Greek letter
- I.M. ____ architect
- "Hangover" star
- Lofty bird habitats
- Devoid of intelligence
- Divided into parts
- Seasons of 40 weekdays
- Breezily
- Indian dress
- ____ the elder
- Furious
- Distress signal
- Nonhuman primate

CLUES DOWN

- Tortillas, cheese & salsa
- A vast desert in N Africa
- Earth quiver
- Double-reed instrument
- Doctor in training
- Make known
- Female bow
- "Partridge" star Susan
- Leopard frog genus
- Representative government
- Japanese classical theater
- Price label
- ____Magnon: 1st humans
- Property of flowing easily
- Snake-like fish
- With great caution
- Ottoman Empire governor
- Changelings
- Foot (Latin)
- Quarter of a Spanish-speaking country
- Side sheltered from the wind
- Lubricate
- Digits
- Famous canal
- Ensnare
- Live in
- Oversimplified ideas
- Afflicts

Solution



EVENTS CALENDAR

Continued from Page 11

Andover YMCA is located at 165 Haverhill St., Andover; 978-685-3541.

LIVE MUSIC, Aoife Clancy & Robbie O'Connell, The IVY CHORD Coffee House, Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading, 239 Woburn St., Reading, doors open at 7:15 p.m., \$17 seniors, students, \$20 general admission, open seating with home-made scones and hot beverages for sale before the concert, concert start at 8 p.m.; ivychoir@uureading.org, 781-944-0494.

LIVE GOSPEL MUSIC, sixth Annual Black History Month Celebration, First Church Congregational Church, Boxford, 7 p.m., with Confirmation Gospel Singers, free but contributions to First Church's food pantry in the form of canned foods will be welcomed at the door; FirstChurchBoxford.org.

PROM EXPO, Lowell Memorial Auditorium, noon to 6 p.m., 50 East Merrimack St., Lowell, 978-454-2299, lowellauditorium.com.

SUNDAY, FEB. 26

STAR WARS SYMPOSIUM, 2 p.m., Memorial Hall Library. Come dressed as a favorite character for the costume contest, learn about the history of Star Wars, join in a trivia contest and more. For ages 6 and up, families welcome; register at www.mhl.org/eventcalendar. 978-623-8401 ext. 39.

LIVE MUSIC, Duo Andacht will perform works by Ludwig van Beethoven, Sergei Prokofieff, Max Bruch and Manuel de Falla, 4 p.m., Unitarian Church, 26 Pleasant St., Newburyport, suggested donations

are \$15, \$10 for seniors, children and students free; frsuo.org. 978-465-0602 ext. 401.

MONDAY, FEB. 27

FREE MOVIE FOR ADULTS, "The Tempest," 7 p.m., Memorial Hall Library. Attend the movie, and enter to win the DVD after watching it; mhl.org, 978-623-8401, ext. 31 or 32.

TUESDAY, FEB. 28

FISH ON! Local Trout Fishing-Still Waters and Streams, 7 p.m. Capt. Al Montello speaks on the benefits of fly fishing at local trout fisheries and shares the best approach for fishing trout waters under any conditions; Memorial Hall Library; mhl.org.

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Education

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One cure for abusing sick days

Ken Seifert



Some people are afflicted with an unusual illness. They are stricken with a virus that hits them

on Mondays, Fridays and the day before and after a long vacation. They are incapable of coming to work. Yet upon their return to work, they have experienced a miraculous recovery.

It takes more than a supervisor to remedy such a malady on the job. From time to time, the Andover Public Schools are vulnerable to such a man-made physical ailment. Here is how the formal and informal organization addressed the problem, about 25 years ago.

Throughout my tenure as superintendent, the Andover Education Association leadership and I met monthly to discuss: curriculum, innovations, staff development and problems of mutual concern. Either side could present items for the printed agenda. Minutes were posted in the teachers' rooms and principals' offices.

One day I had been reviewing the Monday/Friday problem and decided to raise the issue with the union. When I presented the phantom illness, it was a discourse on the educational and financial impact it had on our schools. They listened patiently and when my "sermon" was over they responded.

They were just as concerned as I was. Such a practice made everybody look bad. Joe Murphy, district representative for the Mass. Teachers Association and a regular attendee of our meetings, smiled and said to me, "Instead of preaching to the choir about such an epidemic, give us the names and the appropriate data." I asked for a minute or two and compiled my list. There

were no more than a dozen names on the completed list. (Before checking I thought there would be at least 30; administrators have a tendency to exaggerate numbers.) President Tom Myers said to give the association a chance to provide professional counseling to those in need of collegial support and guidance. All of this was done in strict confidence.

A few months later I reviewed the progress of the secret virus. I discovered we had almost eradicated the disease. For those two who continued abusing the policy, I advised the association I was going to request, from each, a doctor's report on the medical reason for such absences. The leadership felt that was reasonable and offered no resistance. The group effort worked. It would be some time before the age old organizational disease raised its ugly head. No matter where one goes in this world, they'll find some members of the rich or poor, educated or uneducated, young or old and male or female have this motivation problem: I don't want to go to work before and after a vacation!

There was not one grievance filed against me on this issue. The confidence of the association leadership was kept. The School Committee and Finance Committee were pleased we saved a few dollars. The disease was put into remission. Admittedly the strategy was a bit unusual. Sometimes, helping one another on mutual concerns requires unorthodox approaches. Today, I suppose we both could be sued for harassment in the workplace.

The more significant point to this true story is that when one sits down and communicates openly and honestly regarding topics of mutual interest and responsibility, and in a climate of trust and respect, it is amazing what can be accomplished as a team.

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



Wood Hill Middle School seventh-grader Sam Bird tends to lettuce in the school's greenhouse.

Courtesy photos

Cutting edge science team at Wood Hill Middle-schoolers growing plants using aquaponics

BY JUDY WAKEFIELD
STAFF WRITER

They are a green team of seven. No, they are not Celtics basketball fans or a recycling group.

They are a team of seventh-grade scientists at Wood Hill Middle School on the cutting edge of food science.

Green Team members Timmy Kalantzakos, Morgan Marini, Rohan Sinha, Devin Dean, Robbie Lemons, Jill Webber and Sam Bird have been diligently monitoring the growth of plants using aquaponics for several months. Scientists – and many other people – using this method can grow crops and fish together in a recirculating water system.

"Aquaponics is the growth of plants without any soil. Instead, you grow the plants in water with the help of fertilizer and/or fish waste," said Sam in an email. "The world is gaining many more people and scientists are looking for a way to feed the extra population. Aquaponics is one of the top solutions to this problem."

The school's parent advisory council launched the students' research by contributing \$5,000.

Sam said in an email that the PAC grant money allowed his team's aquaponics project to get started last year when the team built a greenhouse and purchased some PVC pipes. A heating system followed. Today there are basil and lettuce plants growing on Styrofoam in the successful greenhouse.

This green team, all students in Charles "Chip" Gregory's science class, is learning first hand how our growing world may be able to feed its people.

"The kids have done a great job with this and have learned so much," Gregory said.

Sam explained the key to growing basil and lettuce happens as a result of a special system.

"It starts with a fish tank where the water is pumped



Green Team members are Rohan Sinha, Morgan Marini, Sam Bird, Devin Dean, Timmy Kalantzakos and Robbie Lemons.



Jill Webber poses in front of the growing plants.



Wood Hill Middle students are learning how to use fish waste and water to grow plants without soil.

increase growth," he said.

This team has learned that excreting fish can provide nutrient-rich water for the plants. The fish feces contain an ammonia with those nutrients.

"That's why people clean fish tanks, to stop a toxic buildup that will kill the fish," Sam said.

That ammonia and bacteria build up can be converted to nitrites that help plants grow. This fish waste works as a natural fertilizer for the

plants, Sam said. "In the tubs, the plants have an abundance of water and nutrients because they are floating in water filled with organic fertilizer. We monitor PH, chlorine, ammonia and nitrates on a regular basis using test kits to ensure the system works," he said.

ON CAMPUS

MSL Trial Advocacy Team wins NE division competition, advances to finals

The Massachusetts School of Law's Trial Advocacy Team has won the 2012 Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition for the Northeast Region of the National Black Law Students Association, which was held Jan. 25 through 29 at Pace University Law School in New York.

The Northeast region is comprised of the 33 law schools in New England, New York and northern New Jersey.

MSL defeated St. John's University Law School to capture the championship while another MSL team was beating Syracuse University to capture third place.

MSL now sends two teams to the National Finals in Washington, D.C. to compete against the top 15 teams in the country. As a result, MSL now advances to the National Finals for the third

year in a row and has sent seven teams to the National Finals in the last five years.

Team members are Kellie Tiller, Anthony McDuffie, Patrick Brown, Katisha Brown, Darryl Caffee, Allenston Sheridan Jr., Tradia Vereen, Felicea Robinson, James Hester, Shane Goulet, Jennifer Guerrero, Cathrine Okoh, Judy Cox, Pearl Louis, Christopher DeCarlo and Emanuel Andrade.

Associate Dean Michael L. Coyne, Professor Daniel Harayda, Professor Darius Greene, and Essex County Assistant District Attorney Kimberly Gillespie coach MSL's Trial Advocacy team.

Holy Cross honors

Jessica DeVito a second year student at the College of Holy Cross, has been named to the dean's list for the first semester of the 2011-12 academic year.

She is the daughter of Anthony and Annette DeVito of Andover.

She majors in French and is a part of the Pre-Health Professions Program.

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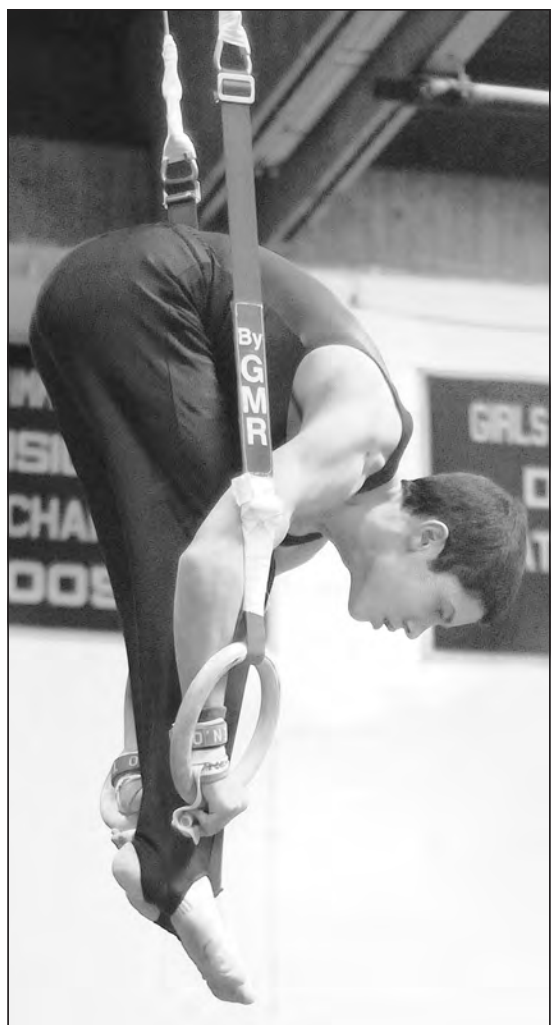
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Sports



Cody Flaherty competes on the rings.



Senior captain Abhishek Sinha competes on the rings as Coach Steve Sirois stands by to assist.

Mullins sets record, Warrior take MVC crown

GIRLS TRACK

All-Scholastic Maggie Mullins broke the school record in the 2-mile, running an outstanding 10:51.04 at the Merrimack Valley Conference indoor meet on Friday, leading Andover to victory with 89 points, well ahead of rival Central Catholic (74).

This just days after Mullins committed to run track at Boston College.

"(Mullin's) time was awesome," Andover coach Peter Comeau said. "I'm happy for her and the season she's having right now because last year was a tough year for her."

That time also shattered the meet record, which Mullins set one year ago (11:09.58).

Also starring for the Golden Warriors was Courtney Comeau, the daughter of Peter Comeau, who won the 55 hurdles in 8.94.

"I couldn't be a prouder father and a coach," said Comeau. "She bettered her time. She's getting faster and faster."

Also scoring victories for Andover were Terra Organisciak in the dash (7.47), Hannah Chapman in the long jump (16-1) and the 4x200 relay of Organisciak, Micaela Soucey, Sydney Gillis and Alex Puccia. The 4x400 relay chipped in with a second.

(9.3), parallel bars (8.2), high bar (8.3), pommel horse (7.4), floor (9.2), rings (8.8) and all-around (51.3). Teammate Cody Flaherty added second in every event and the all-around (44.7)

GIRLS SKIING

Finish dominant regular season perfect

Andover continued to dominate the field, taking four of the top five places on the way to rolling over Masconomet (90-45) last Monday. Jess Kearns led the way in second, while Julia Ganley was third, Kerry Christopher fourth and Nicole Ericson finished in fifth place. Another Golden Warrior, Sara Faigel, was 10th.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Dunn threes help team top red-hot Lowell

Chris Dunn hit four 3-pointers on the way to a game-high 20 points as Andover beat Lowell 48-38 last Tuesday, just four days after the Red Raiders shocked top-ranked Central Catholic.

James Costello grabbed 14 rebounds and Connor Merinder added 12 boards for the Golden Warriors, while freshman Merinder also chipped in with seven blocks.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Boudreau does it all

Nicole Boudreau scored 32 points and grabbed 12 rebounds and eight steals as Andover rolled over Notre Dame 75-38 on Saturday. Ally Fazio added 12 points and eight assists.

Ally Fazio hit four 3's for 16 points and Nicole Boudreau sunk six 3-pointers on her way to 30 points as Andover downed Lowell 80-64 last Wednesday. Angelice Gonzalez chipped in with 12 points for the winners.

BOYS SKIING

Suglia leads way

Tom Suglia took fourth overall (21.68) as Andover blasted Austin Prep 131.5-3.5 last Tuesday. Next in for the Golden Warriors was Adam Risman (eighth), followed by Jake Tarricone (15th).

BOYS TRACK

Relay takes first

The 4x800 relay of Patrick O'Sullivan, Will Klein, Mike Maldari and Ryan Cooney won in 8:07.73 as the Golden Warriors placed seventh at the MVC Meet on Friday with 31 points. Cam Farnham added a third in the dash (6.69) and Cooney was third in the 1,000 (2:35.57).

BOYS HOCKEY

Andover blanked

Andover fell to Austin Prep 4-0 on Saturday.

GIRLS HOCKEY

Warriors fall

Andover lost to Acton-Boxboro 7-0 on Saturday.

SPORTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Two Stonehill student-athletes make conference honor roll

Two Andover High graduates were among the 228 Stonehill student-athletes named to the Northeast-10 Conference Fall 2011 Commissioner's Honor Roll, according to the school.

The Andover students are football player and senior JonLars Carlsson, and volleyball player and sophomore Kirsten Arvidson.

This honor roll recognizes student-athletes who earned a grade point average of 3.00 or better during the

See SPORTS, Page 15

AHS ring leaders

Boys gymnasts pick up sport, each other

By JUDY WAKEFIELD
STAFF WRITER

They never had previous experience with a pommel horse or high bar. Asked to do chin-ups in front of classmates in the Andover High School cafeteria, most were thinking "like that will ever happen!" And for many current members of the AHS boys gymnastics team playing basketball, baseball, football or hockey, was out of the question.

"Those kids play those sports for years before they get to high school. And we didn't," said co-captain Aghishah Sinha, 17, and an AHS senior. "No way could we do those sports."

Yet, these guys wanted to get in shape, be on a team and do something during the winter high school sports season.

Now they have. And what started as a sort of "Bad News Bears" gymnastics team with no experience and no skills, has blossomed into the "Good News Gymnasts."

This weekend, the team will compete in the top state gymnastic competition, at Braintree High School.

AHS gymnast superstar Brian Manning is expected to get his usual high scores. He has put his team on the gymnastics map this season.

But, as any good coach will say, there's no "I" in team. Behind Andover's superstar gymnast is a story about one of the golden rules of team sports: never quit and support each other. Seven of Manning's teammates met with the Townsman to talk about competing on the squad. They are thrilled with Manning's success, as he aspires to compete in Div. 1 gymnastics in college. But, fellow team members will never be that good and that's fine with them.

They still practice on the bars, on the rings, on the floor mats and on the pommel horse until blisters bleed through the tape on their hands.

Every day after school, this team lugs equipment into the gym and practices for at least two hours. When squeezed out because other sports, like basketball, need their space, they practice in hallways.

"We've got to move out of the gym sometimes but that's OK. We move as a team," Sinha said.

Practice location may turn temporary



CARL RUSSO/Staff photos

Andover High School cheers for their team at a meet against Lowell and Methuen.

but this team's spirit is permanent.

Why, they even support competitors, clapping loudly for boys on other school gymnast teams.

"Why not? A good performance is just that, no matter who you are," Sinha said.

As these gymnasts gear up for this weekend's state tournament, they reflected on getting together and becoming a team.

"I was sitting with some friends at school when I was asked to join the gymnastics team," recalled senior Jonah Adler, 18. "I had no skills, no experience."

"They told me not to worry about that, they would teach me. Now, I'm so glad I joined," Adler said.

His six teammates nodded in agreement. These super polite guys hang out, text each other a lot, eat together often and cheer for each other, regardless of scores.

"These guys asked me to check it (the team) out, they didn't ask anything else of me," said Cody Flaherty, 18, and an AHS senior.

Flaherty was a gymnast star at a local private club, but by the time he arrived in Andover after his family had moved, he said he felt a bit burned out.

"I wasn't sure if I wanted a team, but I checked out the AHS club," Flaherty

said. "I felt freedom with them...it was a great bunch of guys."

Josh Martin, 16 and an AHS junior, was looking for a winter sports team to join. He's a competitive BMX rider, so staying in shape was his motivation.

"I was looking for something to do, to keep me in shape," Martin said. "I'm so glad now. It's been a challenge but way better than I ever thought." Wearing his designer black glasses, junior Isaac Diaz, 17, seems quiet and shy. When a friend recommended he join the team, he didn't know how he could.

"I never did any of this," he said.

Now, he's a floor and pommel horse competitor, who has seen his body become stronger than ever.

So has sophomore Brian McDonough, 15.

"I have learned new moves on the pommel horse and just gotten so much stronger," said the sophomore. "And, we all get so much support from each other."

As for those chin-up numbers, they are now "classified" information, according to co-captain Pat McDonough, 17, and an AHS senior.

"We raised over \$1,000 for tsunami relief in Japan," he said, as students pledged money per chin-up at the event held in the AHS cafeteria.

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Courtesy photo

Jess Kearns flies down the slopes for the Andover High ski team this season. Kearns delivered a career year, finishing the regular season ranked No. 1 in the league.

Star on the slopes

Kearns leads ski team to perfect record

By DAVID WILLIS
STAFF WRITER

From the moment Jess Kearns dons her helmet and steps onto the slopes, every distraction goes away.

"You can't overthink things," said Kearns. "When it gets into you head, you think too much and you don't do well. You can't worry about the competitors or the danger of skiing. Just do what comes naturally."

That mind set has certainly worked for the Andover High senior this season.

With a tremendous final race, Kearns finished as the No. 1 skier in the North Shore League for the entire regular season, leading Andover to a perfect 10-0 record and the league's regular season title.

"Jess has worked so hard and has raced so well this season," said Golden Warriors coach Tom Busta. "She has always been a fantastic skier, but this year she has been more aggressive and is skiing so well."

As soon as she could walk, Kearns was on the slopes.

She started skiing when she was 2-years-old, and by 7-years-old she was racing, helped by her father Tim who grew up skiing in New York.

"Over the years I have skied a lot in Vermont," said Kearns. "I love skiing up there. I didn't as a junior, and I missed it a lot. I feel like it's making a difference this season."

For her first two years with Andover, Kearns skied alongside her older sister Katelyn, a Golden Warrior captain in 2010 who now attends UMass.

"We're really close so it was so great to go to practice with her every day," said Jess. "I am a little more competitive than her, but I always looked up to her."

Kearns impressed as a sophomore, taking fifth at the Interscholastic meet, and last season finished third at Interscholastics.

"She was always a talented athlete and skier," said Busta. "We thought she would be in the Top 5 in the league this season, but to win the league has exceeded my expectations. We are so

thrilled for her."

It didn't take long for Kearns to set the tone for the season, as she raced to victory in the season's first meet, the second first-place finish of her career. She then earned four second-place finishes and one third, setting up a showdown on the final race of the season.

"I knew it would be either me, (teammate) Kerry (Christopher) or Megan Jones (of Manchester Essex)," she said. "I knew I needed a great finish to win the league."

The co-captain delivered just that, taking second overall to place first in the league (166 points), just edging close friend Christopher (155 points), who ended up second in the standings.

"This was especially great because I am a senior and this is my last year," she said. "It's very special. And me and Kerry have a friendly rivalry. We are good friends and help each other out."

With the regular season over, Kearns now has her eyes set on the post-season, with the possibility

of matching the boys' 2011 state title.

"We really feel like we have a good chance this year," she said. "We have six girls that can really ski and could place at states. If we could do that, it would be awesome. I can't even describe how happy I would be."

Kearns has yet to make a decision on next year, but has been accepted to colleges such as UNH, Ithica and St. Michael's. She will continue to ski, and is deciding if she wants to compete.

But, despite her accomplishments, it isn't her skiing talent that is first in Busta's mind when he thinks of Kearns.

"She has the best sense of humor," said the coach. "She does a mean English accent. She seems so quiet, but she has a great dry sense of humor, and she will help anyone that needs it."

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to andovertownsmen.com.

SPORTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Continued from Page 14

fall semester. Bentley University ranked first among all NE-10 schools with 320 student-athletes earning a 3.00 GPA or higher while Stonehill finished second and Saint Michael's ranked third (210).

Spring rowing registration

Essex Rowing Club Inc. is continuing registration for the upcoming spring season for its youth and adult programs. No experience is necessary, and introductory sessions are available for those interested in trying the sport of rowing.

For more information and registration details, visit essexrowing.org or call 978-208-4617.

Andover transfer to play for MC lax

The Merrimack College women's lacrosse team has been picked to finish fourth in the Northeast-10 Coaches Preseason Poll released on Thursday, Feb. 9. Junior transfer Sam Kiesel

of Andover is expected to see some action in the cage for the Warriors.

YMCA early spring program registration underway

Registration for the Merrimack Valley YMCA's early spring program has begun. Member registration also is underway.

Early Spring session classes, including those at the Andover/North Andover Y on Haverhill Street, run from Feb. 27 through April 28. The Y's current program guide includes adult sessions are available for those interested in trying the sport of rowing. For more information and registration details, visit essexrowing.org or call 978-208-4617.

Program Guides are available online at atmymca.org or at the YMCA building. For further information call the Andover/North Andover YMCA at 978-685-3541; the Lawrence YMCA at 978-686-6191 or the Methuen YMCA at 978-683-5266.

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