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OUR 128TH YEAR

Andover Townsman

Issue No. 4

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Murders remain a mystery



Essex County District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett asks for the publics help in the murder case of John E. Magee and his wife Geraldine Magee at a press conference held at the Andover Police Station. The Andover couple were murdered in their home on Dec. 14, 2011.

After 4 years, the shooting deaths of John and Geraldine Magee unsolved

By GABRIELLA CRUZ geruz@eagletribune.com

the holidays with them and their warm, generous, loving nature."

After almost four years, the murders of John and Geraldine Magee remain unsolved for investigators, but fresh and haunting for members of the Magee family.

"Four years of missed holidays, birthdays, cookouts and vacations with family and friends," said a statement issued by the Magee family. "We miss spending

The double-homicide of the local couple, who were married for 39 years, shook the otherwise quiet community of Andover. Andover Police Chief Patrick Keefe said during a press conference yesterday at the Police Department that only one

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John E. Magee, 69, and Geraldine M. Magee, 67, were found shot to death on the first floor of their home at 7 Orchard Crossing in Andover on Dec. 14, 2011.

HANDOUT PHOTO

More questions raised on schools chief

Parents, residents challenge board's superintendent choice

By GABRIELLA CRUZ geruz@andovertownsman.com

Several residents are raising questions about the School Committee's decision to extend interim Superintendent Sheldon Berman's contract into a long-term deal, saying concerns about his past should be more fully vetted.

During a school committee meeting last week, and in letters to the editor published in the Townsman this week, a number of people are asking for a more open and transparent process of reviewing and hiring Berman for the job, which carries a salary of well over \$200,000 a year.

Krystal Solimine, whose son attends Andover High School, questioned Berman's past as superintendent of districts in Kentucky and Oregon at a hearing last week, during which she was limited to a 3-minute statement.

She said that she had already brought the issues about Berman's past to the



Sheldon Berman

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Selectmen shift tax burden toward business

By TERRY DATE tdate@eagletribune.com

"That is actually very similar to the increases last year," Board Chairman Mary O'Donoghue said.

ANDOVER — Selectmen set the 2016 tax rate on Monday, apportioning less of the burden to homeowners than they had expected and resulting in a higher than expected rate for commercial/industrial taxpayers.

The apportionment will result in a 3.4 percent increase over the current rate for homeowners, bringing the bill to \$8,945 for an average single-family home, said Andover Assessor David Billard.

The average commercial bill will be \$53,761 or a 3.6 percent increase over the current average bill, and the average industrial bill will be \$110,338, or a 4.5 percent increase over the current bill.

Last year the average residential tax bill was \$8,648; the average commercial bill was \$51,878; and the average industrial bill was \$105,569.

The 2016 residential tax rate is \$14.82 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation; and the commercial/industrial rate is \$25.99 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Board members voted 5-0 to adopt a 153.5 percent shift, meaning the commercial and industrial rate is 53.5 percent higher than the residential rate.

At 153.5 percent, "it creates the most uniform increases

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Building a BRIGHT future

Andover/North Andover YMCA's \$23M renovation almost complete



AMANDA SABGA/ Staff photo

The new main lobby of the Andover/North Andover YMCA which is in the final few stages of its \$23 million renovation project.

By GARRIN MARCHETTI gmarchetti@eagletribune.com

ANDOVER — After nearly two years, Andover/North Andover YMCA Executive Director Alex Turek can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Over the course of the last 20 months, Turek has helped oversee the \$23 million renovation and expansion of the YMCA center, a project which will improve the amenities of the existing building and add nearly 50,000 square feet of space.

The YMCA, 165 Haverhill St., first opened

in 1974. While the building has undergone several small renovations over the decades, the recent project marks the first major makeover for the building in its 41 years.

"We've been working on this (project) for about 18 months, but we've really been talking about it for 10 years," Turek said Thursday. "It's been a long process, but we're almost at the end, and I think our members are going to be thrilled with the results."

Turek and James Kapelson, vice president of

See YMCA, Page 3

More railroad tracks, more reason to steer clear

Double-tracking to commence at tricky intersection in 2016

By TERRY DATE tdate@andovertownsman.com

The railroad crossings and six entrance points at Essex and Railroad streets is already a maze-like configuration where motorists, trains and pedestrians venture with caution.

With a second set of railroad tracks due to be installed by early 2016, the crossing will grow wider, the danger more pronounced, and the need for caution redoubled.

Enter the railroad crossing blitz program on Tuesday from noon to 2 p.m., a roadside safety forum.

Andover police

spearheaded the effort, assisted by safety representatives from four rail organizations. The main message to motorists was to not stop on the tracks.

Twice in a span of 30 minutes the crossing arms lowered, bells clanged and the wigwag lights flashed red as two AMTRAK passenger rails zoomed past.

Standing by Depot Pizza in his neon lime vest was Andover police officer Eric Milligan, stopping motorists, handing them a plastic bag filled with trinkets emblazoned with rail safety messages. He

See TRACKS, Page 2



AMANDA SABGA/ Staff photo

The MBTA train crosses the dangerous intersection at Pearson, Railroad and Essex streets. The intersection is going to get even more dangerous as construction starts next month on another set of train tracks to improve commuter rail service.

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“Understandably, the community was and continues to be concerned about the circumstances surrounding this shocking event.”

Andover Police Chief Patrick Keefe

MAGEE

Continued from Page 1

other murder has occurred in Andover in the last 25 years.

“Understandably, the community was and continues to be concerned about the circumstances surrounding this shocking event,” Keefe said at the podium he shared with District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett. “At the time of the murders, the circumstances were such that we believed there was no further threat to the public’s safety and we believe that this is still the case.”

Keefe and Blodgett said during the morning press conference that although the investigation into the murders has remained active, only limited information would be shared with the public in order to protect investigation efforts.

“As we mark the fourth anniversary of these murders, our purpose this morning is two-fold,” Blodgett said. “First, to assure the citizens of Andover and of Essex County this investigation remains active and of the highest priority. Second, to provide limited information of the investigation in hopes of sparking memory or conscience of someone who has information that could be helpful in solving this heinous crime.”

Blodgett offered a brief summary of the timeline leading up to when the couple was murdered in their home on Orchard Crossing in Andover.

On Dec. 13, 2011, Blodgett said John “Jack” Magee, 69,



Andover Police Chief Patrick Keefe and Essex County District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett held a press conference at the Andover Police Station Monday to talk about the Dec. 14, 2011 murder of John E. “Jack” Magee, 69, and Geraldine M. “Jeri” Magee, 67, who were both found shot dead on the first floor of their 14-room home at 7 Orchard Crossing in Andover.

AMY SWEENEY/Staff photo



John E. Magee, 69, and Geraldine M. Magee, 67, were found dead in their Andover home on Dec. 14, 2011.

District Attorney’s office and Andover Police have followed leads to four different states and 20 cities and towns in the Greater Boston area.

Blodgett also said that along with the Essex District Attorney’s office, its detective unit and Andover Police, Massachusetts State Police Crime Scene Services, Ballistics, Violent Fugitive Apprehension Unit and Special Services have all been utilized.

Blodgett said the FBI, ATF and Homeland Security have been involved in the case as well as local police departments including Worcester, Boston, Hampton, N.H., and those in Jupiter, Fla.

“Someone out there knows something. We are asking you to search your memory and your conscience, pick up the phone and call us,” Blodgett said. “We will not let this case go cold.”

Anyone with any information is encouraged to call (978) 470-3864.

went to a construction site in Reading where his company was building several houses. While he was there, he spoke with his son John Magee III about picking up building materials in Boston and bringing them to the building site the next day. Jack Magee reportedly left the construction site around 3 p.m.

Holly Senykoff, the couple’s daughter, told police that she spoke to her mother Geraldine, 67, around 4:25 p.m., that afternoon regarding plans for

the next day. Senykoff said her mother had agreed to watch her grandchildren while Senykoff went shopping for Christmas presents. Senykoff also said she believed she could hear her father talking in the background and assumed that he was home with Geraldine.

John Magee III was at the Magee Construction office, in the basement of his parent’s Andover home, researching some information about the supplies he had to pick up in Boston. According to Blodgett, he left his parents’ home around 4:30 p.m.

“At approximately 9:19 the next morning, Andover Police received a 911 call

from Holly reporting that she found her parents dead in their home,” Blodgett said. “The investigation began immediately.”

Blodgett said more than 50 interviews of family, friends and neighbors have been conducted in both Andover and Jupiter, Fla., where the Magees had a second home. Magee Construction employees and sub-contractors, real estate agents and other business associates of John Magee, and friends and acquaintances of Geraldine have also been interviewed.

All personal bank statements and credit card records of the Magees have been “extensively

examined,” along with the financial records of Magee Construction, Blodgett said. The computers belonging to both John and Geraldine as well as those belonging to Magee Construction were seized and forensically examined.

On numerous occasions, the Andover and Florida homes owned by the Magees have been searched, Blodgett said. The motor vehicles of Magee family members and those associated with Magee Construction have also been searched.

Countless hours of surveillance video from numerous locations have been reviewed and the

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TRACKS

Continued from Page 1

reminded them to not stop on the railroad tracks.

He handed one bag to Andover resident Ben MacDonald, 27.

MacDonald has lived in town his whole life and has had several close calls, near accidents, while traveling the Essex and Railroad Street crossing.

“It can get a little crazy, especially after a train goes by,” he said.

Andover police Sgt. Chuck Edgerly said there was a time, around 1980, when the Essex crossing had two sets of tracks.

Now with the return of two tracks, to accommodate both passenger and freight trains, the police department wants to get out in front of the change and remind people to be careful.

“Whether two or one (sets of tracks), drivers should be aware of the traffic ahead of them at the crossing so that they don’t force themselves into stopping on the tracks.

That is the situation



AMANDA SABGA/ Staff photo

Andover Police Officer Eric Milligan hands out packets on train crossing safety to drivers. The Andover Police Department collaborated with Transit Police and the Federal Railroad Administration to raise awareness about railroad crossing safety.

where motorists most often find themselves hemmed in on the tracks, when traffic backs up and a vehicle gets stuck on the tracks with a

vehicle directly in front and behind.

Police see this a lot, Edgerly said.

To avoid this

predicament, motorists should allow room to safely get out of the way and not get stuck on the tracks.

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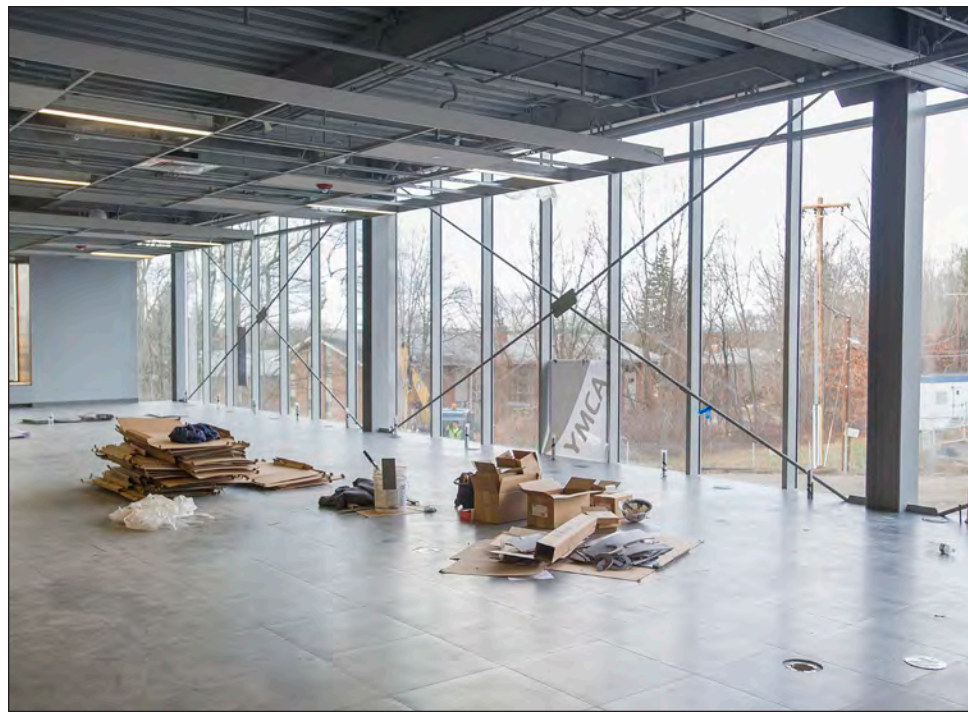
Continued from Page 1

membership development and marketing for the YMCA, said the 104,138 square foot building will be completed by the beginning of January.

During a tour of the building Thursday, the two showcased the YMCA's new features, including an expanded wellness center, a learning center for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education and a rehabilitation center operated by trainers and practitioners from Lawrence General Hospital.

An early preview of the renovations came in June, when the YMCA held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new child care center for preschool and school-age students. Before the project, students were dispersed in various locations throughout the building for their programs, but the 7,700 square-foot center puts all the students in one, dedicated space, making it easier for parents to pick their children up at the end of the day.

The child care center operates on the first floor of the building, which will also house an Active Learning Center where third and fourth-grade students can participate in a curriculum created by Merrimack College professors. According to Turek, the Merrimack curriculum requires students to participate in various movement-based exercises designed to help improve



AMANDA SABGA/ Staff photo

The main cardio area of the newly renovated Andover/North Andover YMCA is nearly finished. The only thing left to do is unpack the equipment. The new cardio area is part of the organization's \$23 million renewal project.

their STEM test scores.

Next to the learning center will be a brand-new kitchen, where the YMCA will teach cooking classes to both adults and children. The kitchen will partially replace the current main entrance lobby, as the main entrance moves to the new building, a wrap-around, two-story glass wing which will house the YMCA's new wellness center.

The wellness center will stretch two floors, according to Turek, with roughly \$750,000 worth of new treadmills, workout bikes and weight-lifting equipment for members to use. There will also be new locker rooms, including a

family locker room, a necessary service the YMCA did not offer before.

"We're really excited to have a family locker room," Turek said. "If fathers comes with their daughters, or mothers come with their sons, it allows them to change together instead of separately in their own locker rooms. There was a real need for it before, and we wanted to make sure it would be part of the new building."

Other new additions include four new fitness studios, which will be used for Zumba and spin classes, as well as a multi-purpose family swimming pool and lap pool. Before,

the YMCA only had one fitness studio and two pools which were mostly used for competitive swimming.

A notable addition to the YMCA will be a Lawrence General Hospital rehabilitation center on the lower level of the building. The center, staffed by trained medical professionals, will give YMCA members the opportunity to see their doctors or receive treatment for injuries right on site.

"The partnership

between (the YMCA) and Lawrence General is a great example of community collaboration," Kapelson said. "I always say, 'You work better as a group than as an individual,' and this is a great example of that."

Donations have helped fund the project; to date, the organization has received nearly \$8 million from local residents and businesses through fundraising efforts and personal donations.

Harvey Construction of Bedford, N.H., has been constructing the building, while Sasaki Associates of Watertown designed the structure. While the building process has been lengthy, Turek and Kapelson said the patience and support of the YMCA members has been "truly great," and the end result will be worth the wait.

"All of these improvements and additions are going to increase the amount of impact we have on this facility," Turek said. "We're really proud of the work we've been able to do while remaining open for our members. This new facility will continue serve the people here for years to come."

Follow Garrin Marchetti on Twitter @GarrinMarchetti

TAX

Continued from Page 1

across the classes," Billard said.

Keeping increases even among the classes of taxpayers has been selectmen's practice in the past, O'Donoghue said.

Ordinarily, the maximum shift available to municipalities is 150 percent.

But the town assessor told selectmen the option to shift a greater share of the tax burden was available to the town for the first time under a provision in state tax law.

Under the provision, if the residential levy share for 2016, at a 1.50 shift, is greater than what it was in the prior year, the board has the option to apply a greater shift to a maximum of 1.75.

Last year, when setting the 2015 tax rate, the Board chose a 146.5 shift. So the residential levy share for 2016, at 1.50, is greater than it was the prior year.

Board member Dan Kowalski pointed out that even with the 153.5 percent shift in 2016, the trend, when considered for the past 10 years, has been for residential taxes to increase slightly over commercial taxes.

Residential property makes up 81 percent of the taxable property in town. Commercial property accounts for 7.6 percent, industrial 8 percent, personal property 3.3 percent and open space 1 percent.



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Andover's solar deal in the hands of the Legislature

By BILL KIRK

bkirk@andovertownsmen.com

Andover is still waiting for the state Legislature to approve a bill on solar energy that would enable the town to save more than \$300,000 a year.

Based on recent inaction by the state House of Representatives and Senate, however, it looks like the town will be waiting until at least January - and maybe longer - to find out if the legislation passes so the town can start saving money.

"It's not dead yet," said Janet Nicosia, the manager of energy and utilities for the town. "If they take action in January and keep

the financial structure intact, we'll still be a go. But it's hard to tell what the final bill will look like."

Pressure from power industry lobbyists in Massachusetts has stalled further action on a bill that would lift the cap on so-called "net-metering credits." The credits dictate how much low-cost power National Grid and other utilities must buy from solar providers and sell to their customers. Earlier in 2015, the cap for municipal contracts was reached.

Once it was reached, all municipal solar projects that hadn't already been connected to the power grid - like Andover's - were put on hold.

The state Senate approved

a bill that would expand the credits by 100 megawatts - enough so that Andover's project would be approved. The House has balked at the proposed increase, and inserted other language that could change the way solar power is bought and sold in Massachusetts.

Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr, a member of a solar bill conference committee, said late last week that conferees do not have any meetings scheduled and are not exchanging proposals.

"We haven't met since" Nov. 18, Tarr said. "We've had some informal conversations among the members of the conference committee. I think it's

important for people to realize the urgency of this matter to try to resolve it. That being said there are some significant differences and it's going to take a lot of work to close the gap. But I think it's imperative that we do close the gap."

The delay is bad news for Andover, which made a deal with a New York-based power company called Syncharpha that would let the town save \$6 million over 20 years from a solar array in Western Massachusetts. But Syncharpha isn't going to build the solar array until the Legislature lifts the caps.

If the Legislature fails to approve a bill, it will be a bitter pill to swallow since the

town has already taken three swings at solar.

Nicosia said the first deal with another solar developer collapsed because the company working on the deal "went kaput."

Syncharpha came along with another deal, but Selectmen rejected it, partly because of concerns about the first deal and partly due to politics.

The second deal was rejected by the Board of Selectmen last April, on the eve of the town election. Selectman Brian Major approved of the deal, but he ran into opposition from Selectman Dan Kowalski, who was gun-shy about signing a 20-year agreement.

When selectmen nixed that second deal, Syncharpha sold the project to another buyer - Worcester State University. That project is under construction and will be on-line soon, Nicosia said.

When the third deal came along, also from Syncharpha, selectmen were eager to jump into the solar market, but by the then the net metering credits had run out.

"Government always move slower than anyone wants," she said. "They wanted to be careful. You can't blame anyone for that. But the election had a lot to do with it."

Material from the Statehouse News Service was used in this report.

BERMAN

Continued from Page 1

committee's attention via emails that included links to articles written in both Eugene, Oregon, and Louisville, Kentucky.

"I definitely want to be put on record saying this," Solimine said. "Three minutes is not enough to even touch the surface of the things I would like to have addressed. It's all information that I think the public should be aware of. I hope that this will be met with a thorough investigation."

Process also questioned Several articles published online and in various newspapers have questioned Berman's role in a number of for-profit and non-profit organizations he has either started or been involved with. A number of them have gone on to enter into contracts with the school districts he has overseen.

Berman recently acknowledged this in a letter to the School Committee during which he admitted affiliations with 31 different organizations as a way to make his connections transparent to the public and the School Committee. The committee voted last week to write a letter back to Berman

acknowledging and accepting the letter, as a way to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest.

Others at last week's meeting were more frustrated with the committee's process used to extend Berman's superintendency. Several parents said when Berman was hired in June, the committee promised his position was temporary and that once his interim term was over, a search for a long-term candidate would begin.

"You spoke to the fact that we were going to get an interim superintendent, and that that was your mission," local parent Regina Kelly said. "We entered into this knowing that we were taking a retired individual and we were going to have him here for a year. There are so many employed people, not retired, that are looking to move up. I think it's a disservice to our community that we're not looking for people that are going to be here for the long haul."

Jeanne Teichert, another Andover parent, said when the committee unanimously voted on Oct. 22 to extend Berman's superintendency, the agenda listed the item as "information only."

"There is a difference between 'Action Requested' and 'Information Only' on an agenda," Teichert said. "On Oct. 22, the agenda did

not say that the committee would be taking a vote. I think you took some people by surprise."

The committee has had multiple planning meetings in executive session over the last two months to prepare for negotiations with Berman regarding his contract. Although Berman has been with the district for only five months, the committee voted in October to extend Berman's interim superintendency to a long-term position.

Support from town, union While neither the committee nor Berman responded to comments by parents last week, Candace Hall, the district's director of human resources, spoke in defense of Berman and explained that Solimine's concerns had already been addressed during Berman's vetting procedures.

"It has been almost an unbelievable transition since Dr. Berman has been here," Hall said. "We went through the pros and cons of each candidate. I have worked with six superintendents and Dr. Berman's work so far has been just wonderful."

Hall said the articles Solimine referenced were "questionably" written.

President of the Andover Education Association Kerry Costello also supported Berman, saying any person in a

leadership position has made decisions that people don't always like.

"There is no pure candidate out there for any type of leadership position," Costello said. "The AEA researched both candidates and found positives and negatives about both. I've worked with six superintendents, and like all of us, they each have strengths and weaknesses. I think this, though, has been a positive transition."

Gilbert said the committee's decision to change course from the original plan of hiring a different, full-time superintendent was a result of Berman's impact on the district in the short time he has been here.

"Last spring, we did absolutely say that this was an interim position that we were searching for and that we would reconvene in the fall and conduct a full search," Gilbert said. "After working with Dr. Berman, we met on Oct. 15 to consider our options up to that point. We saw an opportunity to add to the district's leadership and continue the momentum Dr. Berman had started."

Gilbert also said the concerns brought forward at the meeting last Thursday were the first the committee had heard regarding Dr. Berman and that the feedback the committee had received has

been positive.

She added, "his affiliations are in the best interest of the district, as far as I'm concerned. Most districts are thrilled to have a superintendent who has the kinds of affiliations Dr. Berman has."

Goals and objectives Berman also submitted a draft of his preliminary goals for the remainder of the school year. Eight goals were listed and included ideas such as ensuring that all students are appropriately challenged, promising collaboratively work to enhance the district's morale and effectively communicate developments with the community, among others.

Jeanne Teichert addressed

the committee again regarding Berman's proposed goals, which she compared to those of superintendents in surrounding districts.

"Other district's superintendent's goals are online for everybody to see," Teichert said. "These goals are not measurable and I think it's doing a disservice if the committee can't follow through with evaluating the superintendent."

Berman and the committee acknowledged Teichert's concerns and the committee agreed to vote on Berman's goals at their next month's meeting, giving the superintendent time edit or revise his submissions.

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AMANDA SABGA/ Staff photo

Artist Bren Bataclan talks to Bancroft Elementary students in front of the mural they helped him create.

'Smile movement' comes to Bancroft School

By GABRIELLA CRUZ
gcruz@andovertownsm.com

Through art, Bren Bataclan has been trying to bring smiles to faces for more than 10 years, and most recently, has brought "The Smile Movement" to students at Bancroft Elementary.

During a school-wide assembly on Monday, Nov. 16, Bataclan spoke to Bancroft students about his goal to make people happy through his artwork. Bataclan also taught students and staff how to create his signature cartoon characters, which he has been painting since 2003.

"Students came to the assembly with pens and paper and got to draw with Bren," Bancroft Elementary Assistant Principal Lauren King said. "He told them to turn to their neighbors and just smile. It was a really powerful lesson."

Bataclan spent time working with Bancroft Kindergartners to create drawings that would later be combined with other students to create a mural. The mural was unveiled on Friday, Nov. 20, and included the work of students from all grades with the goal of spreading happiness and displaying inspiration for the entire school.

In the summer of 2003, Bataclan began leaving his paintings in public spaces throughout Boston with positive messages attached like, "Everything will be alright," and, "This painting is yours to keep as long as you promise to smile at random people more often." Bataclan hoped to create a ripple effect of smiles through his free street art.

Kim Heelan, a kindergarten teacher at Bancroft, bought a piece of Bataclan's art and became interested

that Bataclan was continually working to expand his movement and thought Bancroft would benefit from his instruction.

"Kim knew that Bren was trying to spread his message of smiling through giving back to the community through art," King said. "She thought that tied into the culture here at Bancroft and we all agreed."

Since his installation of what he called the "smile project," Bataclan has given away paintings in all 50 states and to 70 countries around the world leading the small project to grow into an international movement.

"When students walk down the hallways where the murals are, they get to say, 'I learned to draw from Bren,'" King said. "They learned that they can say, 'I can make others smile too.'"

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Quiz show team makes it to 'Sweet 16' bracket

Education Notebook

Gabriella Cruz



After competing with 131 schools from across the state, Andover High School's quiz team earned one of 16 spots to compete in a televised academic tournament for *High School Quiz Show's* seventh season.

In Andover's first year participating in the competition, the high school's team of six scored high enough to move on to the next phase of the competition, which will be filmed in January in front of a studio audience.

On Sunday, Nov. 15, Andover's team met with 130 other high schools at WGBH studios in Brighton for oral quizzes during the qualifying event called "Super Sunday."

The questions for the qualifying event as well as the live tournament align with state high school curriculum standards and include questions about literature, history, science, math, general knowledge and current events.

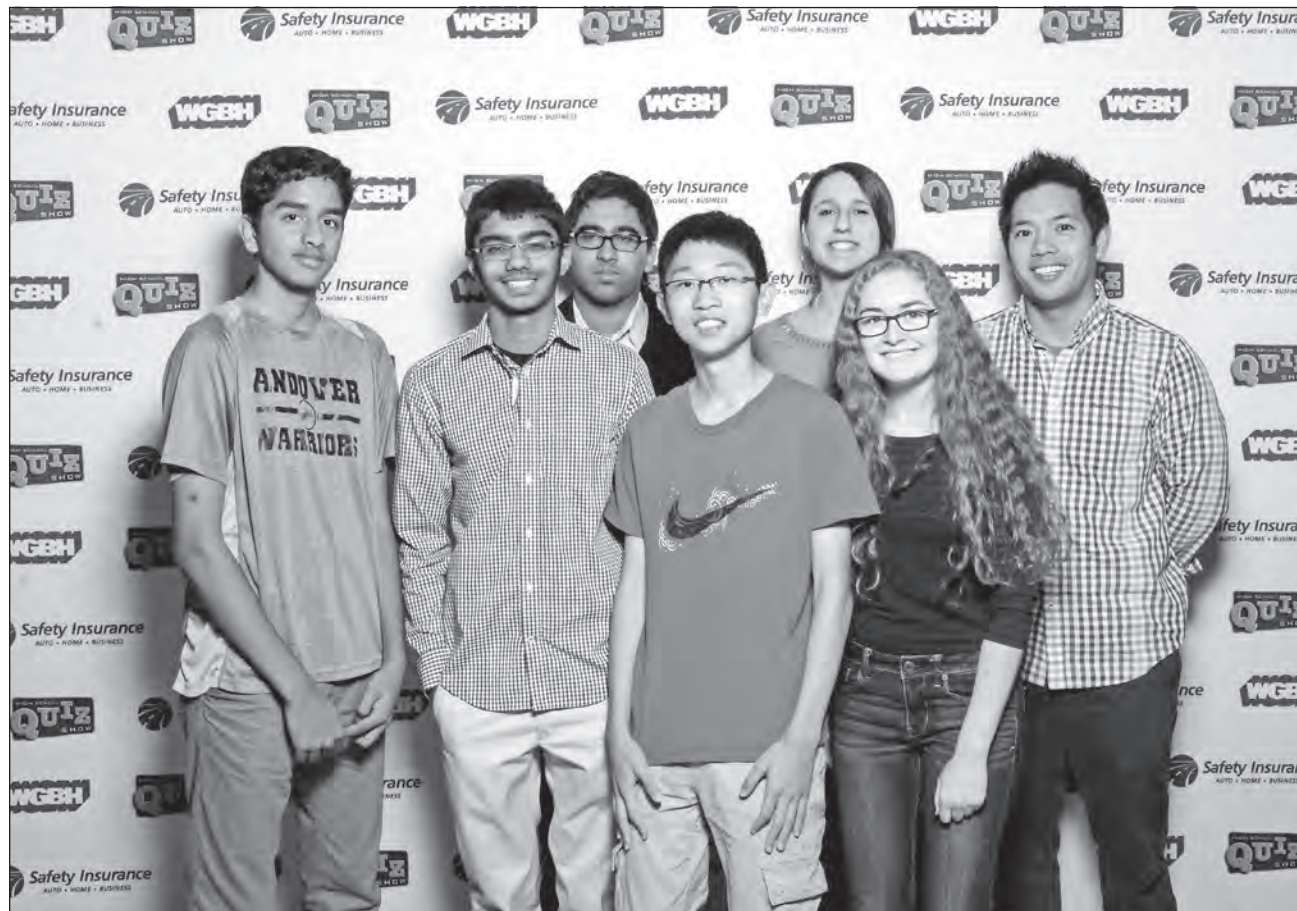
The winner of the single-elimination, bracketed tournament will be crowned the state champion and will go on to compete against New Hampshire Public Television's *Granite State Challenge* winner in the fourth annual interstate quiz show face-off, the Governor's Cup Challenge.

The tournament, hosted by WGBH Boston, is endorsed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts PTA.

The seventh season will premiere Saturday, Feb. 6 at 6 p.m., on WGBH 2, and the Governor's Cup Challenge will be produced and hosted by NHPTV.

Andover School of Montessori Grants

This fall, the Andover School of Montessori received \$11,500 in grant money that the school plans to use to



Andover High School students who made the quiz show team are, left to right: Ajay Ananthakrishnan, Ayan Chowdhury, Reetahan Mukhopadhyay, Frank Cai, Lily Tavares and Alex Martin. Standing at the end on the right is math teacher Alan Hibino.

COURTESY PHOTO

provide more opportunities for its staff and students.

With a \$1,500 grant from the Roger M. and Michelle S. Marino Foundation, the school plans to purchase "Engineering is Elementary" kits for elementary students to enhance STEM curriculum. The kits were developed by Boston's Museum of Science.

"The Engineering is Elementary curriculum meshes seamlessly with our Montessori philosophy," said Michelle Finno, the school's Director of Enrollment Management and Marketing.

The school will also host Joy Arcolano as an artist-in-residence using a \$5,000 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Society. The "Students and Teachers Working with Artists, Scientists and Scholars" grant will allow Arcolano to work with upper-elementary students to focus on "self-expression of scientific knowledge through the



Students in the Shawsheen Preschool Program don costumes as they prepare to enjoy a Thanksgiving-inspired feast. Sitting at the table are, left to right, Joshua Stepper, Tyler Irvin and Sophia Chavez.

COURTESY PHOTO

arts," Finno said. The work students do will culminate in a spring performance.

For the sixth consecutive year, Andover Public Schools' Essential School Health Services project awarded the School of Montessori's nursing office

a \$5,000 grant. This grant money will be used for nursing professional development, substitute nurses and other school health expenses.

"Grants enrich the learning experiences that we can provide for our children," Finno said. "Grant research and writing is a timely endeavor, and I am grateful to all those who helped Andover School of Montessori secure these funds."

Shawsheen Pre-K Feast

Dressed as either turkeys, pilgrims or Native Americans, Shawsheen preschoolers joined together for a Thanksgiving feast full of snacks, song and Thanksgiving-inspired costumes.

Each of the pre-k program's three classes was assigned a costume theme and spent time before their feast creating pilgrim hats and bonnets, Native American headdresses or turkey feathers out of construction paper, yarn and glitter. The classes then sat down to enjoy a friendship fruit salad and popcorn.

Carol Green, one of the preschool teachers, said that each class brought in one kind of fruit for the feast.

The three classes then worked together to combine their selections into one big friendship fruit salad. Green said the students also sang some Thanksgiving songs.

"The students worked together to make the food they shared for the feast," Green said. "Everyone joined together to sing their favorite Thanksgiving songs. And you wouldn't believe how many Thanksgiving songs there are!"

To submit ideas for Education Notebook, or any education-related story, email Gabriella Cruz at gcruz@andovertownsmen.com or call 978-691-8732.

ON CAMPUS

Benji Edelson, an honor roll student, graduated from the Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor, Conn., in May. Edelson was co-captain of the wrestling team and co-president of the Jewish Student Union. He played percussion in the Jazz Improvisation Ensemble and his work in drawing and printmaking was featured in student art exhibits. Edelson was a member of the boys varsity soccer team, and served as a dorm prefect and resident assistant. He culminated his senior year with a project titled, "Senior EP Project."

Jennifer Henry, Kristian Moody, Leslie Perez, Shane Totten, and Emily Wivell, all earned a place on the spring 2015 dean's list at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

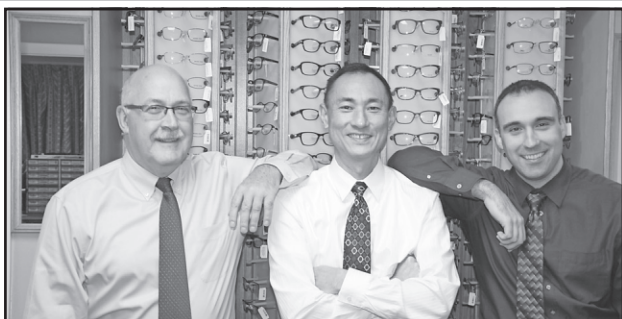
Lucas Henry Christopherson, Sarah Haley Kanell, and Theodore Petersen Sorota, were named to the dean's list for the spring 2015 semester at Washington University in St. Louis.

Nine local residents were named to the dean's list for the spring 2015 semester at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, N.H. They include: **Kaitlyn M. Beaumont, Brigid R. Donovan, Rachel C. Doolan, John P. Gaffney, Madeline M. Hunt, Alex C. Latsey, Timothy J. Leeman, Holly A. Mulkern, and Thomas J. Suggia.**

The following local residents graduated from Saint Anselm College in Manchester, N.H.: **Rachel C. Doolan**, Bachelor of Arts in Spanish; **John Patrick Gaffney**, Bachelor of Arts in politics; **Andrew D. Lebowitz**, Bachelor of Arts in business; **Holly A. Mulkern**, Bachelor of Science in nursing; and **Kendall C. Wipff**, Bachelor of Arts in communication.

The following UMass Dartmouth students were named to the 2015 spring dean's list: **Romy Abouhamad, Connor Gaffney, Christopher Laquidara, April Mo, Matthew Najarian, and David Ortiz.**

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Kirk takes job as Editor of the Andover Townsman

By GARRIN MARCHETTI
gmarchetti@northofboston.com

Bill Kirk, a veteran and award-winning reporter with The Andover Townsman and The Eagle-Tribune, was named the permanent editor of the Townsman on Dec. 1 after serving as interim editor for the last several months.

In a statement released last Friday, Karen Andreas, regional publisher of North of

Boston Media Group, which publishes the Townsman, said Kirk was the right person for the important editing position. "Bill and I have worked together for many years, and I am thrilled to have him take the top job at the Townsman," Andreas said. "He's smart, he's dedicated, and he's a seasoned local journalist who understands what is important to a community."

For the last two years, Kirk had served as the assistant editor of the Townsman, the sister publication of the Tribune. He has also worked for the paper as a reporter, writing compelling news and feature stories

on a variety of topics. Speaking from the Townsman's office at 33 Chesnut St., Kirk said he was excited for his new role and looked forward to continuing the newspaper's role as a "major part of the Andover community." "There's been a lot of change in Andover over the years, but the Townsman has always been here," Kirk said. "We are in our 128th year (of publication). People come to us to see what's going on, and I see us continuing to do what we've always done: serve as the eyes and ears of the taxpayers of Andover."

Kirk has been honored

numerous times for his work as a reporter, including last February, when he won two awards at the New England Newspaper and Press Association awards banquet in Boston.

He won a second-place award for government reporting and a third-place for general news. He also received a merit award from the Environmental Protection Agency Region 1 (New England) back in May for his ongoing coverage of Solarize Andover, a community group dedicated to securing solar electricity for Andover residents and businesses. He has won back-to-back Reporter of the Year

awards from Community Newspapers Holdings Inc., which owns the Townsman, the Tribune, and about 200 other newspapers across the country.

After graduating from American University with a degree in journalism, Kirk began his career as a reporter at the Gloucester Daily Times and later worked at the former Peabody and Beverly Times. He went on to serve as city editor of the Salem News and Statehouse bureau chief for the North of Boston Media Group.

He joined The Eagle-Tribune as night copy desk editor, and

later worked as a business editor and a reporter for the Tribune and the Townsman.

Kirk said he would like to expand the Townsman's presence on social media, which he said has become a great source of news-gathering, as well as reaching out to community groups to inform them of the Townsman's current and ongoing work.

"We want to let people know our resources are strong and that we are devoted to this community and covering it," Kirk said. "(Andover) is a really interesting community, and there are a lot of great stories here."

BUSINESS BRIEF CASE

Lazarus House accepting applications for 2016 Boston Marathon

Lazarus House Inc. is accepting applications to join their 2016 team in running the

Boston Marathon. The funds raised will go to the continued support of providing services to people living in poverty in the Merrimack Valley.

"Last year I ran for homelessness



Julie Zavri

and it was the greatest experience of my life," said Andover native Julie Zavri in a press release. "I had the biggest smile on my face from start to finish despite the less than perfect weather. Each step I took, I felt privileged that I was running the most amazing race in the world to raise money

to help people in our community overcome obstacles I have never dealt with, and hopefully never will. I was amazed at the generosity of my supporters; I couldn't believe my 26.2 miles could raise nearly \$12k."

LH team runners will receive training, access to special events, and fundraising ideas from Charity Teams. For more information and to fill out an application, go to lazarushouse.org/lazarushouse-boston-marathon.

LeTip networking meetings

LeTip Merrimack Valley Executives, a free business networking group, meets on Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 a.m. at Atria Marland Place, 15 Steven St., Andover. Bring business cards to hand out. For more information, call Paul Lambert at 978-609-6420 or email PDLLAW@comcast.net.

Monthly professional networking

The Networking Group meets one Tuesday each month from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at Temple Emanuel, 7 Haggetts Pond Road, Andover. Past speakers have included professional recruiters, career counselors, human resource professionals, marketing leaders, business owners and more. New sponsorships are always welcome to help defray costs. For more information, contact Brotherhood President Mitchell Schneir at 978-470-1356. Visit www.templemanuel.net for a complete schedule.

Wright-Pierce project wins regional award

Wright-Pierce, a water, wastewater and infrastructure firm serving clients throughout the Northeast and Southern seaboard with an office

in Andover was the design engineer for the Mattabasset Water Pollution Control Facility project in Cromwell, Conn., which recently won an Engineering News Record Best Regional Project of 2015.

The \$100 million upgrade project earned the award from ENR, a trade publication and AEC (architecture, engineering and construction) industry observer, for contributing to the clean-up of Long Island Sound by reducing the facility's nitrogen levels to below state and federal compliance mandates, while increasing treatment capacity with Energy Efficient design components that qualified for more than \$1 million in incentive rebates from Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P), now Eversource.

The ENR New England 2015 Best Projects competition honored the top projects in Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. An independent jury named 16 projects in 10 categories as award winners. The Mattabasset project won in the Water/Environment category. All winning projects will be featured in the November issue of ENR New England and honored during the ENR annual awards event.

To submit an item for the Business Briefcase, email townsman@andovertownsmen.com.

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TownsBeat

AN ANNUAL TRADITION

Garden Club's wreath-making workshop like a Santa parade — very popular

It's not a "Nut-cracker" show or a holiday town tree-lighting or a Santa parade, but the Andover Garden Club's annual holiday wreath and boxwood-tree workshop at South Church, is just as popular as those other holiday events in town.

About half of the club's membership of 90 were at the workshop on Dec. 1 and, unfortunately, there was no room for non-members as the workshop is a favorite holiday season must-go for so many club members.

"Because the size limitations of the hall and the necessity of ordering material in advance it meant that, unfortunately, we couldn't open the event to the general public," said Frances Wheeler, who handles publicity for AGC.

Wheeler said membership stands at 90, and 40 to 50 people attended the workshop and made colorful holiday decorations. Many attendees brought greens from their home and used those greens to decorate wreaths and boxwood trees.

"Yes, it's popular," she said of the workshop. "Some years we have a lecture with a noted floral designer around the holidays, but this workshop always comes back. It's important."

The Andover Garden Club was founded in 1927 and a primary goal is to aid in the beautification of Andover. A member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc., and National Garden Clubs, Inc., the club provides both financial and hands-on support to a variety of municipal, educational, and environmental organizations throughout the region.

The Andover Garden Club welcomes new members, and information about joining is available from AGC membership chairs Anne Collins (978-681-8052, collinsak14@verizon.net) and Donna Rudolph (978-475-7165, dlabsuper49@aol.com).



Maria Shapiro works on her boxwood tree at the Andover Garden Club's annual workshop at South Church on Dec. 1.

AMANDA SABGA/ Staff photos



This boxwood tree is decorated with cardinals, frosted pine cones, berries, candy canes and an angel.



Some members of the Garden Club worked on wreaths during the annual workshop.



Joyce Domingue works on her wreath while other Garden Club members tackle projects in the background.



This close-up reveals some of the different materials that went into wreath-making at the annual event.



Organizers Sandra Clevesy and Barabara Kurth at the Andover Garden Club annual wreath and boxwood tree workshop at South Church.

ANDOVER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DECEMBER
FRIDAY, DEC. 11

MESSIAH CONCERT, 7:30 p.m., Cochran Chapel, Phillips Academy campus, 180 Main St., Andover. The Phillips Academy Music Department will sponsor its 28th annual holiday concert featuring excerpts from Handel's oratorio, Messiah; this concert will benefit the Neighbors in Need food pantry and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; the program, under the direction of Christopher Walter, will feature the Phillips Academy Community Chorus and the Academy Chamber Players; soloists will be Shannon Canavin, soprano, Krista River, mezzo-soprano, Eric Christopher Perry, tenor, and David Tinervia, bass-baritone; \$5 for general admission, senior citizens and students may be admitted with a donation of nonperishable or canned food; 978-749-4260, email music@andover.edu.

ADVENT EVENING CONCERT, 7:30 p.m., Faith Lutheran Church, 360 South Main St., Andover. Celtic musicians, singer Michael O'Leary and harper Carol McIntyre, will present an evening of Celtic spirituality and music to mark the Advent season and the coming of the Light; a freewill offering will be taken to benefit the musicians; 978-475-4059, email info@faith-andover.org.

FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY,
DEC. 11 TO 13

"A NIGHT OF HOPE: A CHRISTMAS CABARET," 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, 2 and 6 p.m. on Sunday, ACT Theater Company, 1632 Osgood St., Suite 102, North Andover. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$18 for students and seniors; ACT is sponsoring a food drive to benefit Emmaus House in Haverhill; audience members are encouraged to bring nonperishable food items to the show; www.act-theatercompany.com.

SUNDAY, DEC. 13

12TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY POPS CONCERT, 1 p.m., Danvers High School auditorium, 60 Cabot Road. Presented by International Cars, Ltd. and Honda North; the program will feature the Hillyer Festival Orchestra, soprano Erin Smith, and sing-a-longs; this year's concert will benefit the Colleen E. Ritzer Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Danvers High School Falcon Band, and the In Control Family Foundation; \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors (60 and over), \$10 for high school and middle school students, free for children 12 and under; www.ticketstage.com/CRMSF.

ANNUAL HANUKKAH CELEBRATION, 2 p.m. at Osgood Landing, 1580 Osgood St., North Andover. Performing puppets, latkes, and Hanukkah treats will highlight this year's Merrimack Valley Jewish Federation's annual First Light celebration; ventriloquist Jonathan Geffner, along with his madcap puppets, will perform "Maccabee Mishegoss!"; \$15 for adults, \$9 for seniors (over

See CALENDAR, Page 12

Andover synchro-skater makes top team

By JUDY WAKEFIELD

Leah Gens, a senior at Andover High School, has been accepted to the elite Synchronized Skating Team, the Haydenettes. The Haydenettes are 23-time National Champions and four-time World Bronze medalists and compete at the senior level.



Leah Gens

The team is again named as one of the Team USA to represent the country at international competitions. They are assigned to compete at the inaugural Synchro event at the Grand Prix Final in Barcelona, Spain in December. There are only five teams from the world invited to compete at this event.

The Haydenettes will compete at Leon Lurje Trophy in Goteberg, Sweden in January, Shanghai Trophy in Shanghai, China and the

World Championship in Budapest, Hungary (qualification pending). In addition, the team will be participating in local competitions and shows prior to the National Championship in Karamazoo, Mich., where the world teams will be selected.

Last September, they appeared at a Jimmy Fund benefit. On Dec 1, the team skated at the Bryant Park in New York City for a tree lighting ceremony. They may also exhibit at the 2016 World Figure Skate Championship in Boston in March 2016.

Leah has been skating on various teams of Hayden Synchronized Skating based in Lexington. This is her seventh season. For the past two seasons, she was a member of Lexettes, Hayden's Junior team and competed internationally. On the way to rise from Juvenile Team Mini Mates to Senior Team Haydenettes, she also has accomplished triple Gold medals in Moves-in-the-field, Free-

style and Pattern Dance.

"It has been a long road and lots of hard work - literally blood, sweat, tears and bruises took place. I am grateful for the opportunities and support from coaches, fellow skaters, Andover schools and teachers," her mother Caem Gens said in a press release.

Haydenettes attract accomplished skaters from around the nation. There are only two skaters who are native of Massachusetts out of 20 this season. Five other skaters on this year's team are from other states and are attending Merrimack College.

They are: Sharon Neff of Birmingham, Mich., 2nd year on Haydenettes; River Kynoch of Easton, Conn., 5th year; Hannah Stodola, Appleton, Wis., 1st year; Andy Gottfried, Olmsted Falls, Ohio, 1st year; Ashley Tomich, West Caldwell, N.J., 3rd year. This is Leah's first year on the Haydenettes.



The Haydenettes are pictured at their summer boot camp at Waterville Valley, N.H., in August. AHS senior Leah Gens is in the front row, far left.

Townspeople

Wood Hill Middle puts on Shrek Jr. play

BY GABRIELLA CRUZ
geruz@andovertownsmen.com

Wood Hill Middle School students will be putting on their rendition of Shrek the Musical, Jr. with performances Friday, Dec. 18 and Saturday, Dec. 19. Seventh grade social studies teacher Katie Rey has been working with students over the past few weeks with the help of four student directors.

Jenny McNaughton, 14, Kelley Carzo, 14, Brooke Fleming, 14, and Caroline Fraser, 13, are all eighth graders at Wood Hill and have been leading the student actors during rehearsals. All four girls said the best part of their responsibility has been the role they've played offstage.

"Getting to help the kids who are younger than us is my favorite part," Carzo said. "A lot of them haven't been in a play before. Seeing them in the hallways or outside of school is really cool because they kind of look up to us."

This will be Fleming's third year participating in the school's annual play and she said she still remembers her first audition when she was in sixth grade.

"I was so nervous for my first audition and I was going over lines for days," Fleming said. "Mrs. Rey made me feel comfortable and forget that I was nervous right when auditions started. She is so funny and whatever we're doing, she makes it fun. She's a character -- the good kind!"



Katie Rey, a seventh grade social studies teacher at Wood Hill Middle School, looks on during the cast's rehearsal of Shrek the Musical, Jr.

GABRIELLA CRUZ/ Staff photo

directors said that being in the spotlight onstage comes in second to being their for younger students and helping them succeed.

"Every year I've been doing plays, I always look up to the student directors," Fleming said. "It's bigger than just a play because the

younger kids look up to us and that's a seriously cool feeling."

Opening night for Shrek the Musical, Jr. will be on

Friday, Dec. 18 at 7 p.m., in the Wood Hill Middle School auditorium. Two more shows will go on on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are

\$10 in advance or \$12 at the door and can be purchased in the school's cafeteria after school starting Monday, Dec. 14.

St. Augustine's Youth Ministry helps out

On the Saturday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 28, more than 140 teens and adults from St. Augustine Parish's Youth Ministry served at 13 different work sites throughout the Merrimack Valley and in Boston.

Collectively, they performed 375 hours of service on what is called "UNITAS Serving Saturday," according to Katie LeBlanc, Youth Ministry Coordinator. UNITAS is Latin for unity and represents the theme of the regular service opportunities at the church.

This day "of giving back" was organized by LeBlanc as part of the Youth Ministry's ongoing mission. Adult volunteers traveled with small groups of teens to each site to perform a variety of tasks including cooking, serving meals in shelters, sorting whatever needed to be sorted from clothing to bottles of soda, cleaning both indoor and outdoor areas, decorating for Christmas at shelters, assembling cots and much more. Some teens also helped put together a large mailing of newsletters sent to prisoners while others spent time assembling



This group, which served at the food bank at Emmaus House in Haverhill, included, left to right: Jose Bernal, Emily Abbott, Maureen Abbott, Tony Bielecki, Isabel Bernal, Delaney Fisher, Elvena Bielecki, Sophia White and Kelsey Roy.

rosary bracelets to give to various organizations.

The day began at 8 a.m. with Mass celebrated by Fr. Tony Burrascano OSA. He talked about his own

experience of mission.

Work sites included the Community Giving Tree, Lazarus House, Lowell Transitional Living Center, Habitat for Humanity's

Re-Store, L'Arche Irenicon, CorUnum, Lawrence Catholic Academy, Emmaus House, Boston Rescue Mission, the Pine Street Inn and Ironstone Farm.

BOOMERVENTURE

BoomerVenture has a variety of programs designed to meet the needs of the broadest possible range of Andover's 50-plus residents. Here are some of the fall offerings in store for the campus at The Center at Punchard, 30 Whittier Court, Andover: **Exercise and Wellness** with **Chip Carter**: Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Connect mindfulness with one's "everyday life" in a very real and practical way; \$5.

Reflexology with Uli Kapp: Thursdays, 6 p.m. By advance appointment only; \$1 per minute, in 15-minute intervals.

Energize with Exercise: Mondays through Feb. 8, 3:30 p.m. Fun aerobics and weight training workout, ending with a meditative cool down, with instructor, Denise Boucher; \$60.50

Zumba Toning: Thursday through Feb. 11, 3:30 p.m. Combine weight training and cardio-fitness while dancing; Nancy Ryan is the instructor; \$49.50.

Serenity Yoga: Thursdays

through Feb. 11, 7:15 p.m. Take part in an active practice of flowing postures with 15 minutes of meditation; Sheila Wescott is the instructor; \$54.

Belly Dancing: Thursdays through Feb. 11, 6 p.m. Learn basic moves from fast and fiery to slow and smooth; improve flexibility and increase self-confidence while working all muscles; dance off calories; suitable for women of all body types and fitness levels; \$54.

Films Screening Room: Award-winning, independent films are shown every Thursday starting at 6:30 p.m.

All events are held at The Center at Punchard and are open to the community. Space is limited and registration is required.

The Center is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call 978-623-8321 for information or visit www.andoverseniorcenter.org for complete listings. Registration can now be completed online as well.

Local congregation displays "Black Lives Matter" flag

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Andover, located at 6 Locke St., displayed a "Black Lives Matter" flag by its door on Sunday, Nov. 29, in a brief ceremony during the worship service.

"Last year, we had several worship services related to issues that have been raised by the Black Lives Matter movement," said the pastor, Rev. M. Lara Hoke. "This year, our worship services have focused on anti-racism about once a month, including recent themes of immigration and white privilege. We asked congregants what they thought of displaying a Black Lives Matter flag, and the only reservation I heard was: 'Are we doing enough anti-racism work to be worthy of hanging the flag?' So, we are hanging the flag in solidarity with those in the movement, and as a pledge that we will continue to do more anti-racist work."

She said some people



A 'Black Lives Matter' flag was hung at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Locke Street to show its support of anti-racism causes.

might associate the Black Lives Matter movement with being anti-law enforcement.

"I don't feel that way at all," Hoke said. "I did criminal investigations for three years when I was in the Navy as a special agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative

Service, and I appreciate how incredibly hard and dangerous that job can be. Black Lives Matter, among other things, is about trying to make police more aware of racism in their work. We all have to be aware of racism in our work, but with police

work it's a matter of life and death, literally."

Richard Hudak, president of the congregation, said, "to many, the slogan 'Black Lives Matter' also represents awareness of the many ways institutional racism constrains the life chances of people of color. The congregation's desire is to continue to raise that awareness."

Nancy Mulvey, a member of the congregation for 45 years, believes that Black Lives Matter reflects the principles of the congregation and the Unitarian Universalist denomination, and their commitment to social justice. Mulvey notes that the congregation has hung a rainbow for years in solidarity with the LGBTQ community.

"Our rainbow flag and now this flag are visible reminders of our commitment to social justice and equitable treatment for all," Mulvey said in a press release.

Looking for volunteers!

Townsmen to highlight hard-working, non-paid people of Andover

The Andover Townsman is looking for a few good men. And women. And even kids, for that matter. Next month the newspaper is launching a new feature, "Volunteer of the Week."

The idea is to celebrate the many people who volunteer in town in any capacity to make Andover a better place to live.

It can be a member of a board or commission who takes up their own, personal time attending meetings that help govern the town.

Or it could be a senior citizen who helps out by reading at a local school. It could be a student volunteering at a soup kitchen.

Or a parent pitching in at their child's school, Cub Scout troop, church

or sports team. It could be a coach, a referee or, in something unique to Andover - an AVIS property caretaker.

If you'd like to nominate someone, send an email to Bill Kirk, editor of the Andover Townsman, at bkirk@andovertownsmen.com. Or call 978-623-8733.

If you already have the information about the person, send that along with a photo. If not, let us know and we can conduct the interview and take a photo.

We basically need to know the following: Name, age, volunteer position, why they volunteer, how long they have volunteered, what they like about it and what they get out of it. So, let us know! We want to celebrate volunteers!

■ **WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE CENTER AT PUNCHARD**

The Center at Punchard (The Center), 30 Whittier Court, Andover, has lots of activities and programs on tap.

Here are some of the highlights:

The Fix-It Shop: Monday, Dec. 21, 1 to 3 p.m. The handy team will do their best to fix small appliances, chairs, or lamps. The cost is \$4 plus parts for seniors (ID required); \$10 plus parts for non-seniors/nonresidents.

Healthy Living Tidbits with Art McDermott: Friday, Dec. 11, 9:30 a.m. The topic will be "The Psychology of Aging." Dive into the aging mindset and learn tips to use the power of one's thought process and attitudes to keep young, live longer and promote positive changes. A healthy breakfast will be offered.

Annual Holiday Concert: Monday, Dec. 14, 8:30 a.m. Following a breakfast of Eggs Benedict and more to set the festive atmosphere, the Sunrise Singers will perform "Sounds of the Season." Look for a special guest appearance from Senior Connections Adult Day Program with the Rhythm-Aire's Tambourine Band; \$4 by advance ticket only.

Friday Speaker Series: Friday,

Dec. 18, 8:30 a.m. Join Professor Richard Padova, Global Studies Department at NECC, for "When the Candidates Come Calling: New Hampshire's First-In-The-Nation Presidential Primary." Padova will take a look at the well-known and not-so-well-known presidential candidates who have traipsed through New Hampshire over the years. Next February will mark the 100th year of New Hampshire's primary; \$4.

Knit, Purl, Repeat! You Too Can Knit! Wednesdays through Feb. 10, 1 p.m. This class is designed for anyone who has never picked up a pair of knitting needles. Learn how to cast on, work knit and purl stitches, cast off and pattern reading at a basic level. Be ready to knit longer in no time for the holidays. Bring yarn or select a skein from The Center. Experienced knitters are always welcome; free.

Water Workout at Edgewood: Tuesdays through Feb. 9, 9 a.m. Get an aerobic workout in a low-stress, low-impact environment. Transportation from The Center is suggested (\$2 donation) as parking is very limited. The bus leaves at 8:30 a.m. sharp and must be reserved by noon Monday by calling Carol; \$48.

Fireside chat



CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

From left, Billy Wang and Nick Toldalagi, both 15, and Katie Hartzell, 16, sit around the fire pit located in the courtyard at Andover Village Square. Every Friday a jazz band plays outside.

■ **TOWN BRIEFS**

Merrimack Valley YMCA launches annual campaign

The Merrimack Valley YMCA will kick off its 2016 annual campaign IMPACT16 on Thursday, Dec. 10, from 8 to 10 a.m. at the Andover Wyndham, 123 Old River Road, Andover.

The keynote speaker, Sal Lupoli, will speak of the significant impact individuals, businesses, government and nonprofit organizations can have when everyone works together to strengthen the community. All are welcome to enjoy a complimentary breakfast.

For more information or to register, visit mymca.org/impact16 or call Kate Rozzi at 978-725-6681, ext. 130.

Ballroom dancing event celebrates holidays

The annual Crystal Ballroom at the Town House Holiday Ball, hosted by the Andover Senior Community Friends, is Sunday, Dec. 13 from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Town House at 20 Main St.

Complimentary soda refreshments will be served. No food or drink from the outside is allowed.

D.B.'s Orchestra will provide the music. Advance tickets are \$15 per person and \$25 per couple. At the door, the ticket price is \$15 per person.

Tickets may be purchased at The Center at Punchard — the senior center — or the Andover Bookstore.

Atria Marland Place, Ashland Farm and Brightview are sponsoring the Ball.

TCNE's annual citrus fundraiser planned

The Treble Chorus of New England (TCNE) is committed to providing the best music education possible. Tuition covers a small portion of what it costs to train a chorister. The rest of the money comes from ticket sales, donations and fundraisers. The Citrus Sale is one of TCNE's biggest fundraisers of the year.

The grapefruits and oranges are from the Indian River Valley area of Florida. Oranges are \$30 for small boxes, \$47 for large boxes and grapefruits are \$28 for small boxes, \$44 for large boxes. Orders will be

taken through Friday, Dec. 11 and the fruit will be delivered on Dec. 19. Pay with either cash or check. Make checks payable to TCNE. The TCNE staff will arrange a time and date for orders to be picked up.

To place a citrus order, contact Anna Choi, TCNE administrator, at tcnemanager@treblechorusne.org.

American Training accepting donations for annual coat drive

Help keep the community warm by donating coats and jackets to American Training's annual Coat Drive. Last year more than 100 coats were collected and thus, more than 100 community members were kept warm through the

harsh winter. This year's goal is to collect even more coats and jackets. All donations will be distributed to those in need through this program and Anton's Coat Drive.

Donations can be made now through Feb. 1, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at any of the three American Training locations: 6 Campanelli Drive, Andover; 150 Industrial Ave., Lowell; and 107 Audubon Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit americantraininginc.com/coatdrive2015.

Andover Chess Club

The club has a new meeting place. It now meets at St. Augustine's Center for Education and Ministry at 35 Essex St. in Andover. The club formerly met at Faith

Lutheran Church on South Main Street in Andover.

The Andover Chess Club meets on Friday nights from 7 to 9 p.m.

If you have questions, go to andoverchessclub@gmail.com or call club advisor Mike Henroid of Andover at 781-790-6461.

Andover Public School Preschool Screenings

The Special Education staff conducts screenings for 3- and 4-year-olds on the third Friday of every month. If there are concerns about your child's development, call Mary Kay at 978-623-8850 to schedule an appointment.

■ ■ ■
To submit an item for the Town Briefs, email townsman@andovertownsmen.com.

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Sports

Bolduc takes over as Andover wrestling coach

By DAVE DYER
Staff writer

ANDOVER — Mike Bolduc has never been one to shy away from a challenge, and he is thrilled for his newest endeavor.

Bolduc recently began his first season as the head wrestling coach at Andover High, which has struggled to compete in the mighty Merrimack Valley Conference.

He succeeds Brian Caldwell, who resigned for work/personal reasons after the Warriors went 5-20 last year and 1-23 the year before.

“Just getting back on the mat excites me,” said Bolduc, who is also the head boys soccer coach at Central Catholic. “I think we can be competitive, but it’ll take two or three years. The MVC is so tough.”

The energetic Bolduc, 50, certainly has the background to succeed. He coached as an assistant at Methuen for 10 years, was highly successful at Salem (N.H.) for five years and then helped grow the program in four years at Malden Catholic.

At Salem, he developed one of the strongest teams in New England. In 2002, the Blue Devils finished second in New England and, at the start of the 2002-03 season, he led Salem to a memorable 34-33 victory over New England superpower Timberlane, snapping a 49-meet winning



Mike Bolduc, seen here during his tenure as a Malden Catholic coach, embraces his new challenge as head wrestling coach at Andover High School.

COURTESY PHOTO

streak. That Salem team eventually placed first in New England but Bolduc wasn’t at the helm at the end. After leading the team to a 10-0 record, he left the team for the Army Reserves, training units headed to war. He handed

the team off to his assistant, Mike Shaw.

For his deference to his military obligations, Bolduc was named the Eagle-Tribune 2003 Sportsman of the Year.

After returning from active service, Bolduc took over at

Malden Catholic and helped develop All-State champions Kyle and Devin Visconti while building the numbers up from 19 to 32 and — at the time — setting a school record for wins at 14.

Bolduc left Malden Catholic in 2011 because of other

obligations but he retired from the military last year.

“After retiring from the military, I wasn’t sure about coaching,” said Bolduc, who currently works for the Department of Defense in Boston. “But I’ve enjoyed coaching and I’m ready for

this.”

Among the changes Bolduc has already set in place is moving the practice and meet location from the distant Wood Hill Middle School to the new Andover Youth Services facility in the center of town.

“I’d prefer to be in the high school, but this is better than where they were,” said Bolduc. “It will have an advantage as we try to build the youth program.”

Andover is expected to return 15 wrestlers from last year and Bolduc is hoping to add 8-15 more. That would be a start.

“It’s going to take some time,” said Bolduc. “Like a lot of sports, a lot of success is because of the culture you build. If I can get that going, and have the kids work a little more before and after the season, we can do it.”

“The problem at first will be coaching different levels. We’ll have a few (wrestlers) with good experience, some with a little experience and others will have no experience. We’ll have to coach all three and tend to them all.”

“Andover is pretty successful in just about every sport. It’s got a lot of great athletes. If we can get a few and build on that, we can also be successful. That’s our goal.”

Interestingly enough, Andover opens up against his former team, Malden Catholic.

Changing sides Andover hockey great Oteri, 23, hired as Methuen coach

By DAVID WILLIS
dwillis@eagletribune.com

Sarah Oteri made her legend in an Andover High jersey, becoming one of the most dangerous scorers in state girls hockey history, then beginning her coaching career at her home school.

Now, for the first time, the Golden Warrior legend (AHS class of 2010) will be wearing another color when she sees Andover High take the ice this winter.

Oteri, a former All-Scholastic, has been hired as head coach for the Methuen-Tewksbury girls varsity hockey team. The 23-year-old Methuen High English teacher kicked off the pre-season this week.

“(Methuen athletic director) Jim (Weymouth) came to me and told me that his girls hockey coach was leaving, and wanted to offer me the position,” said Oteri. “I did a lot of research, and I was more than thrilled to have the opportunity.”

The “Red Rangers” finished 15-4-1 last winter, its third as a varsity program. Led by senior

sensation Amanda Conway, who scored a state record (boys and girls) 86 goals last winter, they advanced to the Division 2 quarterfinals.

“We are thrilled to have Sarah as our new coach,” said Weymouth. “She has a wealth of experience in the game, was a terrific player and is going to be a great role model for the girls. It is also a plus she teaches in the school. We are very lucky to have Sarah.”

While she has just one year of coaching experience, Oteri’s name is well known around the Massachusetts girls hockey world.

A four-year star for Andover High (class of 2010), Oteri scored 92 career goals, including 35 in her All-Scholastic senior season. Also an All-Scholastic as a junior, she led Andover High in scoring all four seasons and was a star as a field hockey player.

Then-Andover girls hockey coach Phil Rowley said at the time: “Her hockey IQ is through the roof.”

Following her senior season, Oteri moved on to UMass-Amherst, where she played for the club women’s hockey team. She led the team in scoring all four seasons, and as a senior was named American College Hockey Association second-team All-American.

Her greatest honor came in 2013, when she represented her country in 2013, when she



Sarah Oteri became a superstar as a dynamic scorer for Andover High. After a year as an assistant for the Golden Warriors, Oteri has been hired as head hockey coach at Methuen.

TIM JEAN/Staff file photo

earned her a spot on Team USA for the 26th Winter World University Games (or Universiade) in Trentino, Italy.

The team, which also included players from NCAA Division 1 programs such as the University of Minnesota and Ohio State, won the bronze medal.

“I cannot even put into words what an honor that was,” said Oteri. “It is like the college Olympics. To wear the Team USA jersey and travel with the team was amazing. It was such a wonderful experience.”

After graduating from UMass in 2014, Oteri began a one-year

Master’s degree program in education at Merrimack College. She was also hired as JV coach for Andover.

“Coaching is something I always knew I wanted to pursue,” she said. “I had a great experience working with the Andover coaches. I learned a lot. I was very happy to be heading back to Andover this winter.”

But a new opportunity was on the way when Methuen/Tewksbury head coach Arianna Rigano stepped down after two seasons in November to take the head job at Lexington. With just weeks before the

preseason, Weymouth immediately thought of first-year teacher Oteri.

“I had met Sarah at the beginning of the year and I remembered she was a hockey star and had coached at Andover,” said Weymouth. “I asked her to come to my office to talk, and it has worked out great. The girls are in awe of her background and she is a great leader.”

Oteri is thrilled to have the opportunity to lead the squad, including a matchup with Andover High in January.

“Methuen is a young program (fourth season) with lots of energy,” she said. “The kids

are very excited to play and learn. I feel very comfortable with my coaching ability and hockey knowledge, and I don’t think my age will be an issue. I know I have to keep learning, and I am excited to do it with this group.”

“It will be strange facing Andover. I know a lot of the kids and parents. But I am a Red Ranger now, and I am excited about it.”

David Willis is a sports-writer/videographer for The Andover Townsman. Reach him on twitter at @DWillisET

PeeWee 3 won the trophy at the recent Vermont tournament



The Andover PeeWee 3 hockey team competed in the Green Mountain Avalanche Tournament at Jay Peak, Vt., last month and played three games to get to the championship game, where they won the tournament. The team defeated Springfield 1 in the championship game. Pictured are, front row: Stevie Williams, Jacob Accardi, Max Todisco, Drew Wachtel, Will Moriarty, Tyler Ferro, Danny Saunders and Tyler Neal. Second row: Brendan Carroll, Matt Haney, Kody Dicredico, Nate Quail, Jack Walsh, Terry Morrissey and Shea Frost. Not pictured is Arnab Bhakta. Head coach is Steve Neal. Assistant coaches are Ken Dicredico, Derek Wachtel and Matt Quail.

SEND US YOUR TOWN SPORTS NEWS

The Townsman wants to spotlight the triumphs, and tragedies, of Andover’s local sports teams and athletes.

We’re asking coaches, players, parents and fans to send us photos as well as highlights from all the week’s sporting games and events. Items can range from a shout-out for a top player or team, a spectacular play or sports milestone or even some candid shots from a game or practice.

We also want to hear ideas for stories on athletes or a big game that The Townsman should feature in its pages.

Send your photos, highlights and story ideas to townsman@andover-townsman.com or call 978-475-7000, ext. 8733. We look forward to hearing from you.



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Library decorations are a must-see

By JUDY WAKEFIELD
jwakefield@andovertownsmen.com

Now that the town's public library has an outdoor patio, holiday decorating has been stepped up outside the building and like a good book, it's hard to take your eyes off the elegance of all those white lights that are shining there during this holiday season.

Memorial Hall Library at 2 North Main St., at the corner of Essex Street, is a noticeable downtown corner this year. While the magnolia tree located in the front of the building is usually lit up, there are a lot more lights around the building this year than usual.

"We always decorate but this year is different. We have the patio now and we went out to bid and asked for proposals to decorate," said Susan Katzenstein, assistant library director. "I'm a gardener and it looks just lovely."

Boxes and wreaths on the patio have been decorated with greens and red ribbon while several trees have white lights.

Samantha's Garden, located on Tewksbury Street in Andover, submitted the winning, \$1,200 bid and Katzenstein said the library staff is thrilled with the work.

The decorating just happened last week so there have been no comments from library patrons - yet - she said.

Samantha's Garden is no stranger to decorating downtown as the company decorates around traffic lights.

"It's much more exciting this year ... it is very sophisticated," she said.



A crew from Samantha's Gardens decorates the trees outside the Andover Memorial Hall Library for the holidays earlier this month.

RYAN HUTTON/
Staff photos



In what looks like a scene from "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation," a worker from Samantha's Gardens tries to pull a broken bulb out of a string of holiday lights.



A member of the crew from Samantha's Gardens carefully threads a string of lights through the branches of a tree outside the library.



Strings of lights in plastic bins had to be untangled before they could be hung up outside the library.



As any homeowner knows, you can never have enough spare light bulbs when decorating. Here, a box of bulbs is at the ready while a crew from Samantha's Gardens strings lights up outside the library recently.

WHAT'S HAPPENING: MEMORIAL HALL LIBRARY

Memorial Hall Library has a lot of programs and activities in store.

Here are some of the featured programs on the calendar:

Shawsheen River Greenway: Explore the Possibilities

Attend a community workshop on Thursday, Dec. 10, at 7 p.m. to share

ideas for opportunities to create a more accessible Shawsheen River. Heather McMann of Groundwork Lawrence will describe their experience creating the Spicket River Greenway, a 3.5 mile long "emerald bracelet" of green spaces and walking paths connecting parks and open space

through multiple neighborhoods and helping the community achieve the dual goals of riverfront restoration and neighborhood revitalization. This program is a collaboration of Memorial Hall Library, LWV of Andover/North Andover, Andover Historical Society, Andover Tomorrow, and the

Shawsheen River Greenway Task Force.

Other events at Memorial Hall Library include:

Discover Your Past Genealogy Club, Thursday, Dec. 10, 10 a.m. Everyone is welcome. Most meetings will have a predetermined topic to discuss. Participants will learn from each other. Register

at www.mhl.org/eventcalendar or call 978-623-8401, ext. 31.

Career Networking Group, Thursday, Dec. 10, 10 to 11:30 a.m. in Friends Alcove 1. "Tips and Tricks You Need to Know" will be the topic. Join this free group to expand one's network of business contacts, share ideas, and learn about effective job search strategies. Facilitated by certified career coach, Arleen Bradley.

Writers' Group, Thursday, Dec. 10, 7 p.m. in the Activity Room. For writers of adult fiction, nonfiction, and memoirs. This group provides constructive advice and feedback on each other's works in progress.

Sai Maa Enlightened Living Group, Mondays, Dec. 21 and 28, 7 p.m. in the Activity

Room. The goal of participating in the group is to provide access to a life transformation that includes a continuing expansion of awareness and knowledge, and participating in a conversation that builds profound connection and community with others. For more information, visit www.sai-maa.com or email SaiMaaMeditationAndover@gmail.com. Register at www.mhl.org/eventcalendar.

Conversational English, Monday, Dec. 14, 10 a.m. to noon. For non-native speakers of English who have studied formal English and would like to practice their speaking and listening skills. New members are welcome. Contact Carolyn Fantini at 978-475-4602.

Creative Café, Monday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m. Bring craft supplies for a fun, monthly craft night. Meet other crafters, and work on one's own projects. Open to adults who knit, crochet, scrapbook, and create other portable crafts.

MHL's Monday Movie, Dec. 14, 7 p.m. Attend the free, monthly movie and enter to win the DVD. For details, and this month's selection, visit www.mhl.org/monday-movies.

Career Networking Group, Thursdays, 10 to 11:30 a.m. in Friends Alcove 1. Join this free group to expand one's network of business contacts, share ideas, and learn about effective job search strategies. Facilitated by certified career coach, Arleen Bradley. For more information, visit www.arleenbradley.com.

All events take place at the library, 2 North Main St., Andover, and are sponsored in conjunction with the Friends of Memorial Hall Library. Registration is requested. For more information or to sign up, visit www.mhl.org/eventcalendar, or call 978-623-8401, ext. 31 or 32.

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Entries accepted until 1/30/16 at midnight. Winner announced on 2/1.

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2016 Jeep Compass Latitude 4x4



STK# J151068
MSRP \$26,790
495 Discount..... \$1,491
Rebate \$2,250
Fin w/Chrysler Capital ... \$500

Yours For \$22,549

Or Lease for \$109 per month for 39 mos.
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2016 Chrysler 200 S



STK# C16024
MSRP \$27,905
495 Discount..... \$1,706
Rebate \$2,000
Fin w/Chrysler Capital ... \$500

Yours For \$23,699

Or Lease for \$189 per month for 42 mos.
*MUST FINANCE WITH CHRYSLER CAPITAL

2016 Jeep Cherokee Latitude 4x4



STK# J16123
MSRP \$29,830
495 Discount..... \$1,731
Rebate \$2,500

Yours For \$25,699

Or Lease for \$159 per month for 39 mos.
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2015 Chrysler Town & Country Touring



STK# C15150
MSRP \$33,770
495 Discount..... \$2,171
Rebate \$3,000
Fin w/Chrysler Capital ... \$500

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Or Lease for \$219 per month for 39 mos.
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2015 Jeep Grand Cherokee 4x4



STK# J151167
MSRP \$34,990
495 Discount..... \$2,491
Rebate \$2,000

Yours For \$30,499

Or Lease for \$199 per month for 42 mos.

2015 Dodge Journey SXT



STK# D15210
MSRP \$27,590
495 Discount..... \$1,991
Rebate \$3,250

Yours For \$22,349

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STK# R16025
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495 Discount..... \$3,691
Rebate \$500
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THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy; mild	Partly sunny; mild	Low clouds and mild	Mild with rain	Rain	Rain
High: 55° Low: 44°	High: 55° Low: 40°	High: 54° Low: 39°	High: 57° Low: 46°	High: 60° Low: 36°	High: 46° Low: 32°	High: 47° Low: 31°

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Bariatric Surgery helped Damarys get back into high heels. To hear her story and take a Weight Loss Surgery online self-assessment, visit lawrencegeneral.org/weightloss

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS

The following real estate transfers were recorded recently in town:

19 Abbot St.: David W. Palmer and Judith A. Piscione to Douglas E. and Linda Mesler, \$1,010,000
16 Balmoral St., Unit 104: Timothy and Rory Dugan to Brandon G. Cummings, \$221,500
4 Charles Circle: Wayne T. and

Valerie H. Samuels to Imran and Laura E. Ali, \$869,000
28 Cuba St.: Joseph F. Guererra FT and Joyce M. Anderson to Brittany R. Mahoney, \$249,000
18 Dale St., Unit 4B: Samuel G. Wainwright and Andrea W. Kim to Dhruv Y. Manek and Dhara Satija, \$395,000
3 Dartmouth Road: Anthony J. and Kate R. Bargnesi to

Charles V. and Meghan D. Leitao, \$470,000
3 Fossen Way: Ira J. and Miriam Rosenberg to Jack Guo and Weili Zhao, \$666,000
195 Haggetts Pond Road: Theodore D. and Mary E. Witman to Joathan J. and Lacey E. Jensen, \$542,000
18 Ivy Lane: Sharon and Sagi Shechter to Deborah and Brian Murphy, \$457,500

22 Linda Road: Leona Cressey to Keith Morrison and Gabriella L. Dowling, \$460,000
3 MacKenzie Court: Belmont SB to Claire W. and Ricky C. Lam, \$1,600,000
500 Minuteman Road, Unit 500: MHF Andover 3 LLC to Lixi Hospitality Andover, \$12,000,000
28 Riverina Road: Rhonda Hebeisen to Andrew J. Lynch

and Lauren A. Ryan, \$476,000
294 South Main St.: Richard Sylvester Jr. Est. and Frank Loconte to Charles P. Fotopoulos, \$1,500,000
2 Shadow Lane: Timothy N. and Judith A. Cronin to Anne M. and Michael Paris, \$966,700
1 Stone Post Road: Robert K. and Debbie W. Tang to Donato Aceto and Catherine Iasiello, \$800,000

77 Summer St.: Eugene J. and Bridget E. Doran to Belford Construction Inc., \$412,000
7 Tiffany Lane: Valerio and Kimberly M. Iannalfo to Stephen and Colleen McLaughlin, \$680,000
27 Woodhaven Drive: Philip E. and Karen A. Gibson to Partha S. Sinha and Stephanie L. Moon, \$576,500

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<p>ANDOVER</p> <p>Move in condition near downtown with great lot. \$369,900</p>	<p>ANDOVER</p> <p>SALE PENDING</p> <p>Downsize opportunity! Water views! 2BR, 2.5BA, Sun room/office \$424,900</p>	<p>ANDOVER</p> <p>1st floor, 5RM condo with open concept, garage parking \$329,900</p>

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