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OUR 131ST YEAR

Andover Townsman

Issue No. 21

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ENDURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Virus affecting every corner of the community

By SEAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

The coronavirus continues to upend lives in Andover, causing shutdowns that impact residents of all ages, shuttering places of work and play, and postponing the annual town election.

Gov. Charlie Baker issued an emergency order this week, shutting down certain businesses in Andover and across the state, and strongly encouraging people to stay home as much as possible to stop the spread of the virus.

Here are the latest

developments as Andover deals with the health crisis:

A second Andover resident has tested positive for the virus.

The annual town election, originally scheduled for March 24, was postponed and has not been rescheduled. On March 18, Essex County Superior Court approved Andover's request to delay the election due to the coronavirus. The Select Board will choose a new date at an upcoming meeting.

Absentee ballot applications can be found online and submitted by email to townclerk@andoverma.gov. Absentee ballots are also

More inside on the crisis

- The impact on local events, other happenings. Page 4
- Funerals banned from churches. Page 4
- Beware of scammers offering virus tests. Page 4
- Teachers have car parade outside student's homes. Page 5.

available at the Town Offices, 36 Bartlet St., inside the ground-floor entrance, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Completed applications can be deposited in a secure drop box

located next to the applications. Voters can also bring the applications home to complete and mail them to the town clerk's office at the same address.

The governor has ordered all businesses and organizations that do not provide "COVID-19 Essential Services" closed for two weeks. A copy of the order and a full list of services can be found at www.mass.gov. All pharmacies and supermarkets remain open.

Town offices at 36 Bartlet St. and the administrative offices at 5 Campanelli Drive remain closed to the public until further notice.

The offices are staffed and services are being provided to the public by phone and email, and by appointment if necessary. Residents can pay bills online anytime at www.andoverma.gov/billpay. Bill payments or correspondence involving other town business can be dropped off in the drop box in the half-circle driveway in front of the town offices.

The police and fire departments and essential public works and facilities services remain fully staffed and will continue without disruption.

See VIRUS, Page 3



Vanna Scheer, center, talks at the door of her home with Town Manager Andrew Flanagan and Meals on Wheels driver Gail Woodworth as they deliver food.

TIM JEAN/Staff photos

Voters await new dates for election, Town Meeting

By GEN DiNATALE
gdnatale@andovertownsman.com

The coronavirus threat is keeping voters from deciding who will lead Andover in the immediate future, and whether the town will pay millions for improvements to schools and the water system.

The town election, which was scheduled for this week, is postponed indefinitely, as is the annual Town Meeting.

The Select Board voted March 16 to seek state approval to postpone the election. Two days later, the board obtained a court order allowing indefinite postponement of both the election and Town Meeting.

The court order allows the Select Board to set new dates. Town Manager Andrew Flanagan said the board will consider setting a new date for the election in two weeks.

In the election, nine people are running for six positions. Three candidates — Amy Hafensteiner, Lauren Conoscenti and Shishan Wang — are vying for one open School Committee seat. Two candidates — incumbent Laura Gregory and challenger Stephen Prochniak — are running for one Select Board post.

In the election's uncontested races, Paul MacKay and Donald Schroeder are vying for two open Pynchard Free School trustee seats. Sheila Doherty is running for moderator. Margaret O'Connor is running for a seat on the Andover Housing Authority.

At this year's Town

The Select Board voted March 16 to seek state approval to postpone the election. Two days later, the board obtained a court order allowing indefinite postponement of both the election and Town Meeting

Meeting, voters will gather to consider 49 warrant articles.

The questions include a proposed redevelopment of the Mill District and whether to spend \$19.6 million for capital projects, including \$6 million for water main replacement projects, about \$4 million for school projects, \$1.5 million to replace the Shawsheen pump station, and \$1.1 million for a High Plain/Wood Hill athletic field complex.

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Delivering in a crisis

Meals on Wheels provides elders with food, connection to others

By SEAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

Last December, Dorothy Morrissey, 86, of Andover got a surprise with her meals on Wheels lunch delivery.

"It was a handmade Christmas card from a Bancroft Elementary School classroom," said Morrissey. "I was very touched by that."

She was so moved by the gesture that she wrote a letter of thanks to the school. A couple months later, a return note arrived from one of the students who created the card. The student wanted to know more about Morrissey and asked her to write back.

"Pen pals between generations," Morrissey said with a glowing grin. "It just warms

my heart."

Stories like that make the Meals on Wheels program, which operates out of the Andover Senior Center, an invaluable resource to home-bound elders.

"Meals on Wheels is not just a meal. It's a connection to the community," said Jane Burns, director of elder services.

That connection is more vital than ever in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As seniors quarantine, their access to food is diminished," said Burns. "The program allows them access to a hot, nutritious meal. This is a frightening and stressful time, and we are able to reduce their stress around food."



Preparing hot lunches for the Meals on Wheels program are Tina Solari, left, and Vern Loschi.

Recently, six state and local leaders accepted an invitation to deliver hot lunches to show their support for March for Meals month, an event held in

March of each year. The event honors the national nutrition program which was started in 1972.

See MEALS, Page 2

Putting the 'out' in workout

Yang's Fitness turns parking lot into gym

By SEAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

The philosopher Plato once said, "Necessity is the mother of invention." The owners of Yang's Fitness and Wellness Center in Andover couldn't agree more.

They recently came up with a way around coronavirus restrictions — keeping that all-important 6-foot distance in a limited group setting — for people who want to get their blood flowing in a gym environment.

They moved the gym



SEAN MURPHY/Staff photo

Tracy Callahan, personal trainer, leads an exercise class outside Yang's Fitness Center in Andover.

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SEAN MURPHY/Staff photo

People who support Andover's Meals on Wheels program – including staff members, volunteer drivers, and town and state officials who helped for a day – are, from left: Johanna Walsh, Meals on Wheels driver; Mike Lindstrom, deputy town manager; Jemma Lambert, director of Community Services for the town; Annie Gilbert, member of the town's Select Board; state Rep. Tram Nguyen; Laura Gregory, member of the Select Board; Town Manager Andrew Flanagan; Senior Center employee George Perakis; drivers Larry Lane, Ellen Clancy, Gail Woodworth and Deborah Properzio; and Shawna McCloskey, coordinator of transportation and Meals on Wheels.



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Reviewing the day's menu at the Senior Center are staff members Frank Melendez, director of nutrition and food services, and transportation coordinator Shawna McCloskey.



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Vern Loschi and other volunteers prepare hot lunches for the Meals on Wheels program in Andover.

MEALS

Continued from Page 1

"We all share concern for those who are isolated at home, not eating well, and not getting the nutrition they need," said Jenna Lambert, director of Community Services in Andover. "All of those things can lead to a cascade of other medical issues, so we're here ... to highlight the importance of the program."

Lifeline at a time of crisis

Once a candidate for the program is identified, a licensed social worker makes an in-home visit to determine their level of need.

"It could be someone who has had a knee or hip replacement who needs that recovery meal," said Burns. "It could be someone whose medical situation prohibits them from getting out for other reasons."

Because of the coronavirus, the Andover Department of Elder Services has decided to waive the screening process for receiving meals.

"The Meals on Wheels program represents something the town does that goes



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Explaining the many benefits of the Meals on Wheels program is Jane Burns, director of elder services at the Senior Center in Andover.

unnoticed, but has immeasurable impact on people's lives," said Town Manager Andrew Flanagan. "From a budgetary perspective the program has very little impact, but a huge reward on the taxpayer's investment."

The rewards come in many forms, from the camaraderie of the kitchen staff that prepares the food to the bond formed between the driver delivering the meal and the senior citizen receiving it.

"I've been delivering the same route for two years, so I've developed a rapport with the people I deliver to," said Gail Woodworth, a 20-year Andover resident. "I always get a thank-you and a big smile and that really makes my day."

Occasionally, Woodworth even gets a compliment.

"She's a honey," said a smiling Ruth Marble, 93, of her lunch provider.

Marble and her 92-year-old husband, Ray, believe they are healthier because of Meals on Wheels.

"I love the lunch she brings because it's complete,"

Marble said. "If I made a meal myself, I'd have one thing, but here I get the whole works."

'We're like a family here'

Andover is one of only four towns in the Merrimack Valley with senior centers that employ an on-site chef, which means production of higher-quality meals.

"Our dignitaries who stepped in today got the opportunity to see the kitchen (staff) pull the turkey out of the oven and package it up," Burns said of the town and state officials who helped deliver meals recently. "So those seniors are getting a hot, fresh turkey meal today."

Frank Melendez, director of nutrition and food services, has been running the kitchen for two decades with a staff of 25 volunteers.

"I have three volunteers who have been here almost 20 years with me, and a lot of others are 10-plus (years)," said Melendez. "They're just great people. We're like a family here."

The Andover Senior Center provides hot meals to 100 senior citizens every day. Besides providing meals on wheels, the center is known as a "congregate meal site" — each weekday anyone can



SEAN MURPHY/Staff photo

Dorothy Morrissey, 86, reads a letter she received from a Bancroft School student. The letter was delivered to her by a Meals on Wheels driver, demonstrating the social aspect of the program.

walk in and order a hot lunch.

COVID-19 changed all that, forcing the center to close its doors to the public. In response, the center is offering a home-delivered meal to those who formerly stopped by for lunch.

"Wednesday through Friday, each recipient will receive two meals in addition to a reserve so they will have enough food to carry them through the weekend," said Burns. "This way folks will have a few extra meals in the freezer in case of a shelter-in-place order."

A critical mission

Andover Department of Elder Services typically asks for a \$3 donation for each meal, officials said. However, it is not asking for any individual donation for the extra meal.

It all adds up to a lot of meals to deliver and a hefty responsibility on the drivers.



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Hot lunch and a chat are on the menu as Ruth Marble, 92, speaks with Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, who volunteered to deliver meals to elders.

"The bare bones of the program is to make sure a hot meal gets through the doorway, and that could happen in two minutes," said Shawna McCloskey, transportation and Meals on Wheels coordinator, who got her start with the program as a driver in 2001.

"But it's the care and attention and energy and interest and intuition of the drivers that make the mission work," said McCloskey, who is also a licensed social worker. The mission is threefold — meal delivery, socialization and a wellness check. Johanna Walsh, who has been delivering meals for seven years, knows the seniors on her route very well.

"I know if they don't say or do something that they might be sad or even sick," said Walsh. "We are often the only person that they see in a day, and they look forward to talking."

Paul Kang, 81, who is quick with a laugh, has been receiving meals through the program for seven years. Kang considers himself a talker.

"I love the meal, but I really love the conversations," he said with a warm smile. "I'm very lonely. I live alone, so I really love talking to the drivers."

The Meals on Wheels program is in desperate need of volunteer drivers, leaders of the program said. As an added incentive, Andover residents 60 and older can enter the Senior Citizens Rebate in Property Taxes program. Anyone who volunteers a minimum of 9 1/2 hours within a fiscal year will receive an abatement of \$1,100 on their property taxes.

"I look forward to the rebate, but I'd drive with or without it," said Larry Lane, a retiree from Andover who has been delivering meals for eight months. "I've always had a soft spot for elderly people. Having a conversation, making that connection — it's such an easy gift to give."

Call 978-623-8320 to become a Meals on Wheels volunteer, make a donation to the program, or identify an elder in need of a meal.

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WORKOUT

Continued from Page 1

out of the building and into the parking lot.

"We're doing four, 45-minute outdoor workouts today," Diana Kiesel, owner of the club, said on Wednesday of last week as Yang's embarked upon a series of outdoor classes scheduled to continue while the club is closed due to the coronavirus. "We do believe that regular exercise and eating right are good ways to keep your immune system strong."

Sunny skies, crisp temperatures and up-tempo tunes from a sound system's large speakers greeted more than a dozen exercise junkies chasing that endorphin high.

"This made me wake up and look forward to a workout," said Jenn Howard of Andover, one of the participants. "I'm not one to sit at home and watch a video, so I've been out running more."

The outdoor workouts are following the 25-person maximum per gathering rule, with a 6-foot distance between participants.

"We've been at it for 32 years," Kiesel said of the club's existence, "and this will be the first time we've ever come across anything like this. We want to do the right thing and adhere to what public officials are advising us to do."

Last week's two morning and two afternoon workouts were free to the public and, as more are scheduled, will remain so for members and non-members alike.

"Diana has been great, putting stuff online for us which is way more than you might expect considering

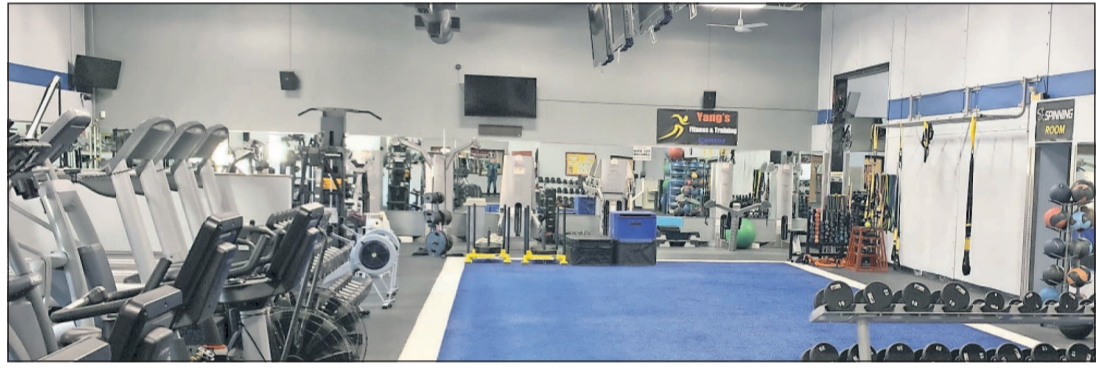


SEAN MURPHY/Staff photo

It's a one and a two – and many more – for workout enthusiasts as the club provides free classes to the public. See page 9 for more photos of the event.

all that's going on," workout participant Claire O'Brien of North Andover said, referring to club owner Kiesel's efforts help people continue their exercise routines.

Yang's continues posting updates and announcements on its Facebook page and workout videos on its YouTube channel for people unable to come to the club.



Equipment at Yang's Fitness Center goes unused because the coronavirus crisis has closed the gym.

VIRUS

Continued from Page 1

Public schools remain closed through at least April 3, per the governor's order. The school district is providing free meals to students.

The Cormier Youth Center is closed, but Andover Youth Services is open for virtual business. All town playgrounds are closed to the public until further notice.

The Senior Center has expanded its Meals on Wheels program to help feed elders at their homes.

Houses of worship are closed or services are curtailed, with the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston suspending Masses until further notice.

Memorial Hall Library is closed, but online resources, including downloadable books and movies are available at all hours, seven days a week. Contact the library Monday through Friday by email at rdesk@mhl.org or by text message at 978-315-6123.

The MBTA's commuter rail service is operating on a reduced schedule.

The governor's emergency order calling for non-essential businesses to close and people to stay home went into effect on Tuesday and is expected to last through April 7 at noon. The businesses affected are encouraged to continue operating remotely. The order also limits gatherings to 10 people during the state of emergency, a reduction from the 25-person limit established in an earlier order.

After governor's emergency order this week, the Andover Select Board declared a local emergency to try to become eligible for state and federal money.

"It could be important as we seek federal and state reimbursement," said Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, adding that Andover

joins hundreds of Massachusetts communities that also declared an emergency.

The Andover school district anticipates that schools could be ordered to remain closed beyond April 3 and is working to prepare for a prolonged closure, according to the public school website. On March 15, the state ordered the closure of public and private schools across Massachusetts.

As the number of people diagnosed with the virus increases, a second Andover resident has tested positive for the coronavirus. The state Department of Health notified the town about that resident, and Andover posted the information on its website March 21.

In a situation that's changing from hour to hour, fallout from the virus has put the squeeze on local businesses.

"Our restrictions are consistent with the governor's orders," Flanagan said. "At this point, we continue to evaluate the information available to us on a daily basis, but have not imposed

any restrictions specific to Andover."

Despite numerous setbacks, the town is scrambling to meet the needs of its residents.

The Stop & Shop and Market Basket supermarkets are allowing senior citizens to have the stores to themselves on certain days. To lessen their chances of contracting the virus, people 60 and older can go to Stop & Shop every day from 6 to 7:30 a.m., while Market Basket is open to senior citizens only from 5:30 to 7 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Whole Foods Market has implemented the six-foot safe distance rule for shoppers waiting in line. Store officials have placed duct tape on floors to guide customers to safe distances.

Free boxed meals for Andover public school students are being provided while schools remain closed. Students can pick up two day's worth of breakfast and lunch at the front entrance of Andover High School every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 to 11:30

a.m. Meals are also being dropped off by a refrigerated van at other locations across Andover on those same days between 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Each stop lasts for 12 minutes. Visit www.aps1.net for drop-off times and locations.

Andover Youth Services is using its Instagram page to connect with students, offering a number of virtual activities to help students cope with the coronavirus situation.

The Senior Center has waived its evaluation process for participation in the Meals on Wheels program, thereby providing a hot lunch to any senior citizen in Andover. More information is available by calling 978-623-8320.

Flanagan said communication between the town and its residents is key during the crisis. He said the town is making every effort to communicate daily

through email, website and all social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

"If residents do not have internet access, but have a cell phone, I encourage them to sign up for Andover News Alerts, which distributes critical information through text messaging," Flanagan said. "We are also able to call both landlines and cellphones in the event of an emergency."

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Students win \$10K for deriving fuel from algae

By GENEVIEVE DiNATALE
gdinatale@andovertownsm.com

A team of seven savvy students at Greater Lawrence Technical High School won a \$10,000 scholarship from the children's book publishing company, Scholastic.

The scholarship was awarded to the team for winning the Air & Climate portion of the company's annual Lexus Eco Challenge, a national scholarship competition that asks students across the country to tackle environmental issues in their communities.

According to Andy Morales, a 17-year-old junior at Greater Lawrence Technical High School, the students came up with the idea for their award-winning project by answering a question the school posed to them in their integrated classes at the end of their sophomore year.

The question was "how do you power the future?" The students answered that in their project by figuring out a way to power everyday machines without



Courtesy photo

The team stands outside the Statehouse holding certificates from the state Legislature recognizing their award winning work and contribution to the community. They are back row, from left, Isabel Chae, Emily Then, Benedict Nouel, Andy Morales, Marla Hilderbrand-Chae, Robert Suriei; and front row, from left, Alexis Gonzalez and Yasmerlin Ortega.

increasing carbon emissions. They did this by deriving biofuel from algae, rather than using fossil fuels.

Fossil fuels — such as the petroleum used to fuel cars

and airplanes — release carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, which some scientists say are a contributing factor to climate change and global warming.

In about nine months, the team designed a bioreactor that could break down the cell walls of algae with sound waves, then extracted five milliliters of biofuel from the algae which they

used to power landscaping machines.

"The work for me is super exciting because I worked in the field of science and science is where you do original research and you get an adrenaline rush," said Marla Hilderbrand-Chae, the life science and chemistry teacher who oversaw the project. She added that the students designed the bioreactor with the help of a \$200,000 grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

"This group that entered the competition really refined the extraction to where we got oil and then participated in a lot of things to get the word out in the community," she added.

The students have raised awareness of the importance of their work, making a video they shared at school, posting information about their project on the school's website and even presenting their work at the Statehouse.

And one of the winning teammates wants to use the recognition that came along with this scholarship to

inspire other Hispanic girls, like herself, to achieve their dreams.

"I feel accomplished because my family came here as immigrants and I feel like girls that are Hispanic or Latina can do exactly what we did," said Emily Then, a 17-year-old junior who wants to attend Tufts University. "I am going to college and I am going to save up the money to pay for college."

Meanwhile, another 17-year-old junior in the group, Isabel Chae said, "Honestly the best part about this is not the money or the recognition that comes with winning the award, but the fact that we are teenagers at a vocational high school and we were still able to do serious, original scientific research and develop the kind of protocol that we could later patent or publish."

The students will be competing in the final round of the scholarship competition for a chance to win \$30,000. Scholastic will announce the winners halfway through April.

All Those Years Ago

Susan McKelliget

Andover Center for History and Culture

The following items were taken from past editions of the *Townsmen*:

100 years ago – April 2, 1920

While a load of hay was being driven down Essex street Monday, the load capsized just at the railroad crossing, but fortunately no damage was done. Sid White of Reservation Road was in charge and, with assistance, replaced the load and proceeded on his way.

The Andover Fire Department was called out on Wednesday afternoon about three o'clock to extinguish a

brush fire behind Magnolia Avenue in Shawsheen Village. The fire started on the Lawrence side of the town line. No serious damage resulted.

A special moving picture entertainment event will happen at the Colonial Theatre on Thursday afternoon and evening, April 8. The feature picture will be "Anne of Green Gables" — a film based on the four famous "Anne" stories by L.M. Montgomery. This picture has been shown before crowded houses in Boston and other large cities, and is full of fun and highly entertaining.

75 years ago – March 29, 1945

With the whole nation hopefully awaiting the formal announcement by General Dwight D. Eisenhower that

German resistance has been broken and the war in Europe ended, leaders of all faiths in Andover completed plans for special religious observances to give thanks.

Chief C. Edward Buchan has taken steps to relieve the manpower shortage which has existed here for the past several months by appointing two provisional members to the Fire Department. The two are military veterans. They are Hector J. Keith, who served in world wars I and II, and John Deyermond, who saw active service and has received a medical discharge for wounds received in action. Buchan also appointed two regular call firefighters to the department April 1. They are Wilson Crawford of 122 North Main St., also a veteran of

the present war, and Paul D. Carey of 79 Summer St.

It is to be expected that Andover churches will be packed to capacity in prayer and thanksgiving to observe the great feast of the Christian church, Easter. All churches have prepared special programs for the annual services.

50 years ago – April 2, 1970

Andover's Civil Defense program was commended by state officials Monday at a meeting of 25 state and area Civil Defense leaders held at the Branding Iron in Tewksbury. The leaders were meeting in preparation for a fallout shelter program to be held here later this month. Civil Defense Director Burton Batcheller is planning to have a group of volunteers enter

the shelter on April 24 and remain there until April 26.

A photo shows "The Easter Bunny and his helpers on hand at Andover Recreation Park" last Saturday to distribute candy to youngsters during the annual Easter egg hunt conducted by the Recreation Department.

The official state highway map for 1970 has been issued by the state Department of Public Works. Among notable highway completions is Interstate 495, which passes through Andover.

25 years ago – April 6, 1995

Article 70 on the Town Meeting warrant is a proposal to create a Ballardvale Historic District, which would place some controls on architectural changes in the area to preserve its history. The

area affected would include Center, Marland and Church streets; Clinton Court; parts of Andover, River, Dale, Tewksbury, Chester and Oak streets; High Vale Lane; and Clark Road. "We are basically doing this for the good of the community," said Tim Barash, chairman of the Ballardvale Historic District Study Committee and a 15-year Andover resident.

Town officials may be headed for a second showdown with concerned residents over the radio towers and an equipment building on top of Holt Hill — once again the subject of a warrant article. Town and police officials want to allow a private cell phone company to use the hill in exchange for new facilities.

♻️ Please recycle this newspaper.

► Andover

School meals program continues

By ALLISON CORNEAU
Staff Writer

Gov. Charlie Baker has issued what he called a "stay-at-home advisory" to

take effect this week, but stopped short of enacting a full-blown order for residents to remain inside their homes for two weeks as the state works to stop the

spread of coronavirus. With schools closed until at least April 6, districts across the Merrimack Valley have vowed to keep children fed for breakfast and lunch until classes are back in session.

In Andover, students are able to pick up breakfast and lunch for two days at Andover High School from 11 to 11:30 a.m. at the front entrance on Friday, March 27.

Meals will also be dropped off by a refrigerated van that will stop for 12 minutes at select stops throughout town on that same day between 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Families with questions are asked to contact Food Service Director Gail Kouroubas or Taylor Pirog by phone at 978-247-5520.



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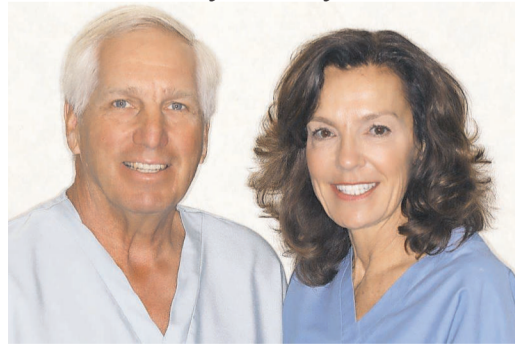
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Work on interstates 495 and 93 in and around Andover to continue Resurfacing projects force closure of lanes



FILE PHOTO

Interstate 495 in Andover is among the stretches of highway receiving new pavement.

By PAUL TENNANT
Staff Writer

The kind of highway work that went on this week, forcing lanes to close to traffic, will continue into the summer, state transportation officials said. Nighttime travel on the Merrimack Valley's two interstate highways became more challenging this week. The state Department of Transportation ordered lane closures for interstates 93 and 495 in Andover, North Andover, Lawrence and Methuen. During the construction, at least one lane of traffic was open at all times, MassDOT said.

The work on Interstate 495 in Andover, North Andover and Lawrence is expected to continue into the summer, according to MassDOT.

Workers will be installing pavement markings and making other repairs.

This operation is part of a \$26.1 million resurfacing project along Interstate 495.

Signs, police details and advanced message boards guided drivers through the work areas this week. Lanes on both sides of the highways were closed at 8 p.m. and reopened at 5 a.m. so crews could work safely.

The \$18.8 million resurfacing project on Interstate 93 in Andover and Methuen is expected to take longer. MassDOT said bridge deck repairs and other related work will last into late this year.

Both of these projects depend on the weather and are subject to change without notice.

MassDOT urges drivers to

avoid these areas and seek alternate routes to minimize delays. Those traveling through the area can expect delays and are advised to reduce speed and use caution.

For more information on traffic conditions, motorists can dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions; visit mass511.com, a website which provides real-time traffic and incident advisory information and allows users to subscribe to text and email alerts for traffic conditions; or follow MassDOT on Twitter @MassDOT to receive regular updates on road and traffic conditions.

Travelers can also download MassDOT's GoTime mobile app and view traffic conditions before setting out on the road.

Nuclear plant operating with limited staff members during crisis Regulators keep close eye on operation

By JACK SHEA
Staff Writer

Amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the company that owns the Seabrook nuclear power plant is continuing to operate the facility with only essential personnel, while the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is doing most of its work to monitor the plant remotely.

In a statement released late last week, Lindsay Robertson, spokesperson for NextEra Energy, said the company has implemented its "pandemic plan" and is following its procedures for ensuring continuity of service.

"This includes limiting access to our control centers to essential personnel only and putting various processes and procedures in place that are designed to limit the spread of the virus," Robertson said in the statement.

Robertson said the company has also been encouraging its

employees to follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization to protect themselves and others from the virus per NextEra's "standard preparedness protocol."

"We have a strong track record of preparing for many kinds of emergencies, and we are prepared to respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic," Robertson said.

According to Diane Screni, spokesperson for the NRC, the commission is continuing oversight of the Seabrook plant and other facilities licensed by the commission, although much of the work is being done over the phone.

Screni said the NRC's resident inspectors are on-site at a reduced frequency and able to do their jobs remotely.

"The resident inspectors have been to the plant this week and they are continuing to do oversight, but they're doing a lot of it by telework,"

Screni said last week. "If there's a safety issue, they're ready to go in, and they can remotely monitor plant systems, and they can gather information working from home."

Natalie Hildt Treat, executive director for C-10, a local organization that monitors the Seabrook plant, participated in a conference call last week with members of the NRC and other nuclear officials as well as NextEra representatives.

According to Treat, NextEra declined to answer questions on the specifics of its pandemic response during the call.

She said C-10 has called on NextEra to provide greater transparency and more details on how it prepared for this pandemic, what the company is doing to protect its employees and ensure continuity of operations, and what it will do to maintain minimum staffing levels if key employees fall ill.



BRYAN EATON/Staff photo.

The NextEra Energy Seabrook Station nuclear power plant overlooks Seabrook Harbor.

After the call, Treat offered the following statement via email: "We understand that Seabrook employees are taking the threat of COVID-19 extremely seriously, and that they are doing all they can to protect the health of their employees and ensure the safe

operation of the plant, which is an important part of our region's electricity mix.

"We also understand that the NRC is compelled to prioritize its resources, and that this extreme situation may necessitate some streamlined processes and relaxing of

protocols. While understandable, it's still a bit unsettling, considering we are talking about nuclear power," she said in the email.

To read the NRC's COVID-19 update, visit <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/faq/coronavirus.html>.

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TownsBeat



The stage is set in the parking lot outside Yang's Fitness Center for a morning workout.

SEAN MURPHY/Staff photos



Rows of abandoned stationary bikes at Yang's Fitness in Andover are a stark reminder that the club is closed for indoor activities due to the coronavirus.

Workout-side!

Dundee Park in Andover was the place to be for fitness enthusiasts, as Yang's Fitness Center recently turned a business closure forced by the coronavirus into an opportunity.

It allowed folks to scratch that exercise itch and get some fresh air at the same time.

The club brought its indoor gym outside, giving members and non-members alike an opportunity to relieve stress

and improve overall health. Participants joined in a series of exercises in the gym parking lot.

More workouts there are expected as the health crisis continues. The workouts will remain free with the public as the community copes with fallout from the coronavirus situation.

For more than three decades, Yang's Fitness Center has been a staple in the workout community.



The exercise routine included running in place.



People participating in the outdoor workout were kept at a healthy distance from each other by cones placed in the parking lot.



Exercise enthusiasts participate in the workout outside the club.



MIKE SPRINGER/Staff photos

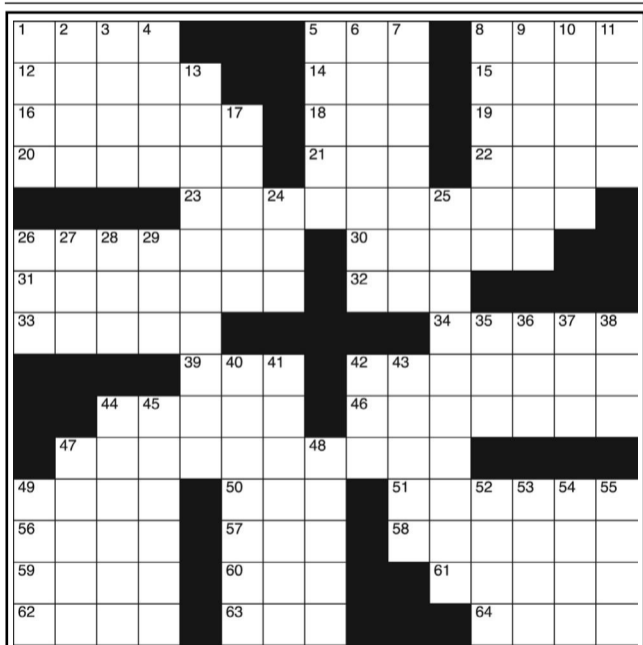
Assistant Town Manager Patrick Lawlor, right, talks with Kristine Arakelian, left, elder services outreach coordinator, and Chris Marshall, senior center office manager.



Susan Pimentel, administrative assistant in the town clerk's office, takes a call at Town Hall.



Kathryn Forina, executive assistant with the Town of Andover, looks out the door at Town Hall, which is temporarily closed to the public due to COVID-19. Forina is part of a skeleton crew of employees keeping local government running during the closure.



Business as usual

By SEAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

Coronavirus may have closed the doors of Town Hall and the administrative offices at 5 Campanelli Drive to the public, but the wheels of government continue to turn.

“Despite being closed to the public, all of our offices are open and operational,” said Town Manager Andrew Flanagan. “Staff are available to assist the public over the phone and email, and by appointment if necessary. We appreciate everyone’s patience and understanding during this time.”

The town has created a dedicated website related to Andover’s preparation for the arrival of coronavirus and its response to the crisis. That website is www.andoverma.gov/coronavirus. This is the best resource for everyone in Andover, officials said. “I want to thank our senior management team

for their leadership during this time and all of our employees for their commitment and dedication to serving the public,” Flanagan said.

Residents can pay bills online anytime at www.andoverma.gov/billpay. Bill payments or other town business can be dropped off in the drop box in the half-circle driveway in front of the town offices at 36 Bartlet St.

“We continue to recommend social-distancing, hand-washing and all the guidelines recommended by the Andover Health Division, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control,” Assistant Town Manager Patrick Lawlor said.

In addition, the town has extended the hours of its 311 information line from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Residents can dial 311 from landlines or cell phones while in Andover and receive the latest information about the crisis.

CLUES ACROSS

1. Bond villain Mikkelsen
5. A team’s best pitcher
8. French river
12. Mountain nymph (Greek)
14. City of Angels airport
15. Military force
16. Scrawny
18. Value
19. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
20. Highly seasoned sausage
21. Trouble
22. Prong
23. Showing varying colors
26. Cloaked
30. Renters sign one
31. Acquires
32. Type of language (abbr.)
33. Partner to pains

Solution in Classified Section

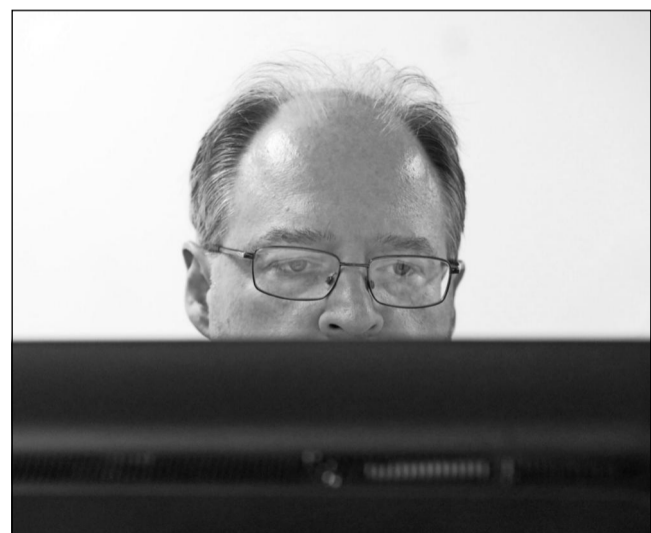
34. Third portion of the small intestine
39. Excessively theatrical actor
42. Infraction
44. Classical music for the stage
46. Stogged
47. One who terminates
49. Breakfast is an important one
50. Moved earth
51. Medical procedures
56. Genus of clams
57. Not well
58. Comparative figure of speech
59. Covered thinly with gold
60. Principle underlying the universe
61. A parent’s sisters
62. Professional engineering group
63. Coniferous tree
64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN

1. Female parents
2. Region
3. Transaction
4. Heroic tale
5. Of algae
6. Luminous intensity unit
7. Uncovers
8. French commune name
9. Poisonous gas
10. Pearl Jam’s bassist
11. Horse groom in India
13. Destroyed
17. A way to alter
24. Promotional materials
25. American state
26. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand
27. “Modern Family” network
28. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
29. Exercise system __-bo

35. Type of bulb
36. Opposite of beginning
37. Utilize
38. Type of student
40. Deficiency of moisture
41. Areas of the eye
42. Select
43. Sheets of floating ice
44. Priests who act as mediums
45. Roof of the mouth
47. Unnatural
48. Illuminated
49. There are three famous ones
52. Large, fast Australian birds
53. “Dracula” heroine Harker
54. Substitutes (abbr.)
55. Tax

3/26/20



Assistant Town Treasurer Pete Forcelllese works on a computer at Town Hall, which has been temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 crisis. Staff are available by email, over the phone and by appointment if necessary.



A woman reaches from her vehicle to drop an envelope into a payment deposit box in front of Town Hall. Residents can make payments while Town Hall is closed by using the box. They can also pick up and drop off absentee ballot applications for the upcoming election at another box in the front foyer of the building.

Townspeople



SEAN MURPHY/Staff photos

Live streaming an episode of the interactive show "Name That Tune" on the Andover Youth Services Instagram page are Cormier Youth Center employees, from left: Neil Callahan, contestant; Geoff Fulgione, host; Jackie Stackhouse, contestant; and Tony Lombardi, camera operator.

A virtual solution to a viral pandemic

BY SEAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

The staff at Andover Youth Services has turned to social media as a way to stay connected with students during the school-closure phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recently, students who dialed up the program's Instagram account were treated to virtual game shows.

"The first day, we sent out a contest and didn't get a big response," said Bill Fahey, director of the program. "It's the live stuff that

seems to work, so we did our first 'Jeopardy' show and 120 people tuned in."

An hour after that, it was "Name That Tune." The game included a host, two contestants and a camera phone operator who recorded the proceedings, while commenting on student feedback as it happened.

"The kids in this town are unbelievable," said Fahey. "We're fortunate enough to have that relationship with them."

Other themes on the interactive slate include cooking

shows, an athletic workout of the day and a contest called "Who Wants to be a T-shirtaire?" — a play on the popular TV show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?"

"If this place can't be here for the kids in a physical sense," Fahey said of the Youth Center, "why not take advantage and do it in the virtual sense. This way we keep the message out there that things are gonna be OK."

The plan is to continue the virtual fun until schools reopen, Fahey said.



Cormier Youth Center employee Geoff Fulgione plays the role of virtual game show host.



Camera operator, Tony Lombardi, left, records the proceedings as contestant, Neil Callahan, ponders an answer.



Virtual game show host Geoff Fulgione, center, and contestant Jackie Stackhouse, right, await an answer from contestant Neil Callahan.



The Cormier Youth Center is closed to the public due to COVID-19.



This empty recreation area at the Cormier Youth Center is typically packed with young people.



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\$35,995

2019 | FORD F150 SUPERCAB 4X4



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Red Cross in dire need of blood donations

Supplies lacking after drives canceled due to coronavirus

By MIKE LABELLA
Staff Writer

Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

The American Red Cross is in dire need of blood donations now that many blood drives have been canceled in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Potential donors are asked to check online at redcross-blood.org for locations where they can donate.

Red Cross officials said they have put in place new measures to ensure blood drives and donation centers are even safer for donors and staff.

"Right now, the American Red Cross has a severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations at these locations during this coronavirus outbreak," said Red Cross spokeswoman Kelly Isenor.

"Healthy individuals are needed to donate now to help patients who are counting on lifesaving blood, including surgical patients, accident victims, new moms with complicated childbirths, patients going through cancer treatment and more."

Isenor said that as of last week, close to 2,700 Red Cross blood drives had been canceled across the country which has resulted in some 86,000 fewer blood donations.

More than 80% of the blood the Red Cross collects comes from drives held at locations of this type, she said.

Healthy people are needed now to donate to help patients counting on lifesaving blood, she said.

Individuals can schedule an appointment to give blood by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, calling 1-800-RED-CROSS or enabling the Blood Donor

In Massachusetts, more than 100 blood drives have been canceled, Isenor said, resulting in 3,130 fewer blood donations. The Red Cross is adding appointment slots at donation centers and expanding capacity at many community blood drives across the country over the next few weeks to ensure ample opportunities for donors to give.

The Red Cross expects the number of cancellations to continue to increase, which is causing heightened concern for blood collection organizations and hospitals across the country.

"I am looking at the refrigerator that contains only one day's supply of blood for the hospital," said Dr. Robertson Davenport, director of transfusion medicine at Michigan Medicine in Ann Arbor.

"The hospital is full. There are patients who need blood and cannot wait."

There is no data or evidence that the new coronavirus can be transmitted by blood transfusion, and there have been no reported cases of transfusion transmission for any respiratory virus including this coronavirus worldwide, said Chris Hrouda, president of Red Cross Biomedical Services.

"We want to assure the public that blood donation is a safe process, and we have put additional precautions in place at our blood drives and donation centers to protect all who come out," Hrouda said, noting the Red Cross has implemented new measures to ensure blood drives and donation centers are even safer for donors and staff, including:

Checking the temperature of staff and donors before



An American Red Cross blood drive sign.

FILE PHOTO

entering a drive to make sure they are healthy; providing hand sanitizer for use before the drive, as well as throughout the donation process; spacing beds, where possible; increasing enhanced disinfecting of surfaces and equipment, wearing gloves and changing gloves with each donor; routinely wiping down areas touched by

donors; using sterile collection sets for every donation, and preparing the arm for donation with an aseptic scrub.

To donate blood, individuals must bring a blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification that are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most

states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also must meet certain height and weight requirements.

Donors can also save up to

15 minutes at a blood drive by completing a RapidPass, a pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire online, on the day of donation, from a mobile device or computer. To complete a RapidPass, follow the instructions at RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass or use the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

To Get Your Full Local Forecast, Go To <http://www.Andovertownsmen.com>

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Clouds and sunshine	Mostly cloudy	Partly sunny	Rain	Clouds and sun	Sunny intervals	Partly sunny
High: 48° Low: 35°	High: 55° Low: 31°	High: 55° Low: 37°	High: 44° Low: 39°	High: 45° Low: 32°	High: 49° Low: 35°	High: 54° Low: 37°

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather.com ©2020



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