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— TOO MUCH SO
TO SPOOK
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TO LEAD AHS
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OUR 130TH YEAR

Andover Townsman

Issue No. 52

OCTOBER 29, 2020

\$1.00

1.7M-plus Mass. residents already voted

BY CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — More than 1.7 million Massachusetts residents have already voted in the Nov. 3 election, and the majority have done so by mail.

Next Tuesday, Massachusetts voters will pick a

president and U.S. senator while deciding two statewide ballot questions and a host of congressional and state races. The contentious race between incumbent Republican President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden is expected to drive a record turnout.

Gloucester voters also will

consider a question for a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion to fund a new school to serve the combined student bodies of East Gloucester and Veterans Memorial elementary schools.

Secretary of State Bill Galvin estimates overall turnout will exceed 3.3 million, including about 1 million

people who are expected to vote on Election Day.

More than 36% of the state's 4.6 million voters have already cast ballots through the mail or during the early voting period that got underway on Oct. 17, according to Galvin's office. At least 63% of the votes received have been mail ballots.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Newburyport City Clerk Richard Jones, who oversees the city's elections. "We've been emptying our drop box just about every hour for the past week."

Locally, some North of Boston communities are reporting that upwards of 50% of voters have cast ballots by

mail or in person.

Suburban voters seem to be taking advantage of pre-election voting more than those living in cities, according to a breakdown from Galvin's office. Locally, Marblehead, Rockport, Manchester, Wenham and Andover have reported some

See **VOTED**, Page 2

Eyes on the 'pie'

New Feaster Five medals unveiled

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

Everyone who runs the Feaster Five will still get a pie this year. However, it will be a gold medal shaped like a pie, emblazoned with a running turkey, and not the traditional edible variety.

And those who step up to the new and even more vigorous Feaster Challenge — a combined 5K and 5-mile run — will get an additional silver medal that looks like a plate, which fits behind the pie medal.

"The whole world is shut down, but the world of virtual running is still on," said race manager Tom Licciardello of North Andover.

The annual Feaster Five Thanksgiving road race is virtual this year because the crowd cannot safely gather.

Already, 1,000 people from 32 states and five countries have signed up for the event, which also includes a Kids' K, to be held during the week of Nov. 23 to 29, Licciardello said.

See **MEDALS**, Page 2



Courtesy photo

Feaster Five Race Manager Tom Licciardello holds the medals that will be given out this year. Everyone who runs gets the gold medal shaped as a pie and everyone who runs the challenge — a 5K and 5-mile — gets the silver plate-shaped medal too.

Nguyen, Dufour vie for 18th District

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com



Republican **Jeff Dufour**
Democrat **Tram Nguyen**

After a political upset and flipping the district Democrat in 2018, state Rep. Tram Nguyen, D-Andover, is looking to continue her work at the Statehouse.

The former legal aid lawyer is being challenged by Republican Jeff Dufour of Tewksbury, who works as a contractor in information systems.

Both candidates say their unique skill set is appropriate for the next term to represent

the people of the 18th Essex District which includes parts of Andover, Boxford, North Andover and Tewksbury.

In the middle of
See **DISTRICT**, Page 2



Fergal Gildea, Lupoli Company's new food and beverage director, sits inside 34 Park.

Goodbye Salvatore's, hello 34 Park

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

Bacon is fermenting in vodka awaiting its role in Andover's newest brunch.

The libation will be used for bloody Mary's and other cocktails at 34 Park, the renamed, rebranded and

renovated Salvatore's.

This weekend, 34 Park — located at 34 Park St. — will be introduced.

The venue is the first of four owned by Sal Lupoli that will be run by Fergal Gildea, Lupoli's new food and beverage director.

See **34 PARK**, Page 2

Committee outlines superintendent search

Plan for Berman departure underway

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

The School Committee opted to hire a search firm to find a new permanent superintendent in a unanimous decision, but will keep the search for an interim superintendent in-house.

The committee is in need of an interim superintendent to start Jan. 1 and someone to fill the position permanently starting July 1.

Superintendent Sheldon Berman announced his resignation Oct. 15.

The committee also voted to post the six-month interim superintendent opening to begin the search without the help of a firm, utilizing people within the district to make that decision.

The committee highlighted community engagement as one of the most important aspects of the search and approved a request for a proposal to solicit firms. The proposal states the committee will choose a firm by Nov. 24.

"A big reason for me wanting to do this is to have some expertise to guide us through the right way to approach community involvement in a very robust way with a lot of outreach," said committee Chairwoman Shannon Scully.

The committee is working with Theresa Peznola, who works for the town's Purchasing Department, to find a search firm. The process for a permanent decision.
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DISTRICT

Continued from Page 1

the COVID-19 pandemic, the state faces a health and economic crisis that could cause an estimated budget shortfall of more than \$5 billion. The next state representative will help the state and communities he or she represents get through these crises.

Dufour wants to use his number-crunching skills to help balance the budget. He describes himself as “fiscally conservative, so I’m more of a numbers and money guy by trade.”

“I didn’t like the way I felt my tax dollars were being handled and managed,” Dufour said. “I think that’s a big responsibility of our representatives. Government doesn’t make its own money. It’s taxpayer money. Their job is just to manage it and provide the greatest benefit as efficiently and effectively as possible and I didn’t feel like they were doing that.”

Nguyen won in 2018 shortly after the Merrimack Valley gas explosions. She has since used her expertise in helping people navigate laws — including during the gas explosion recovery and current pandemic — to help them get services.

Given the looming budget shortfall, Dufour doesn’t want to raise taxes, whereas Nguyen wants to raise corporate taxes and find avenues to get federal funding to the commonwealth.

“I am very hesitant to raise any taxes at this time,” Dufour said. “I’m opposed to that because we have a problem right now, were too many people are out of work. So, that tax burden is either going to be put on the people who still have a job, or it’s gonna be actually added to people who are out of work and certainly can’t afford any more taxes.”

On Monday Gov. Charlie Baker signed Nguyen’s first bill where she was a lead sponsor into law that increases the minimum unemployment benefits to \$100 a week.

“With the recent Lost Wages Assistance Program through the federal government, there was an arbitrary restriction that those who make under \$100 in unemployment benefits wouldn’t get access to the actual \$300 for six weeks,” Nguyen said. Which is just unfair

because if you’re gonna give money out to folks, why wouldn’t everyone who’s on unemployment be eligible for this?”

“Those who make less than \$100 per week on unemployment are those who need the extra money the most,” she said. “So what our bill does is that it would allow the governor to increase the unemployment minimum to \$100 so that everyone who gets unemployment would qualify for this money that’s coming from FEMA.”

Nguyen’s bill allowed an estimated 17,000 people to collect an additional \$300 a week on unemployment retroactively between the end of July and September, giving those people up to \$1,800. On social issues, Dufour said that he’s been called “too liberal by conservatives” and “too conservative by moderates.”

With the recent confirmation of Justice Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court, cementing a conservative majority, and the possibility of previously decided cases being overturned, potentially reverting power to states, Dufour said that “if you look at the far right and what they’re claiming Roe v. Wade allows that’s too far.”

“I don’t think she got this far because she’s a bad judge. I think she’s worked her way up,” he said. “She is a good judge. I don’t think she’s gonna be as political as people are fearing, and I believe I’ve seen statements on her where she’s gonna keep stuff pretty much precedent is precedent.”

Nguyen instead wants to codify laws to continue to protect health and civil rights, she said. She wants to also continue to legislate with those priorities in mind.

“All of the work that we’ve been doing has been intertwined, and it’s hard to kind of breakthrough, and say ‘oh, this is the racial justice bill.’ Right?” Nguyen said. “I’ve been very intentional to bring a racial justice, social justice, gender justice lens to the different bills that we’ve been working on.”

“That is a perspective I have been able to bring to the House,” Nguyen said. “My colleagues value me as someone who worked in the field as a legal services attorney and saw how particular bills and policies directly impacted the most vulnerable communities.”

34 PARK

Continued from Page 1

“Sal wanted to do something different for the community, especially when people start to come out again,” said Christie Cartwright, director of marketing and communications for Lupoli Companies.

While people were dining outside this summer due to COVID-19 restrictions, the inside of the restaurant received a facelift, she explained.

Gone are the days of dark bricks, red chairs and Chestnut tables. Now, bright white bricks and light fixtures create a new atmosphere.

“We’ve had lots of activities taken away, but we still have the experience of going out to a restaurant,” Gildea said. “I want to make sure people can have unique food and beverage experiences.”

Gildea is all about the experiences, he said. He wants people to experiment with new flavors.

Diners at 34 Park can expect a similar Italian menu to Salvatore’s, with different kinds of pasta and pizzas in generous portions, Cartwright said. A side of pasta will be one pound, she said.

There’s also the addition of Southern fried chicken and waffles.

The drink menu has some of the biggest changes. Gildea chose numerous local microbreweries to include on the beer list, along with unique wines. The servers, he said, will have extensive training in recommending pairings.

“I’m going to teach you new things every time you come in,” Gildea said.

Many foods and drinks are locally sourced, he said. “Everything is made from scratch,” he added.



Courtesy photos

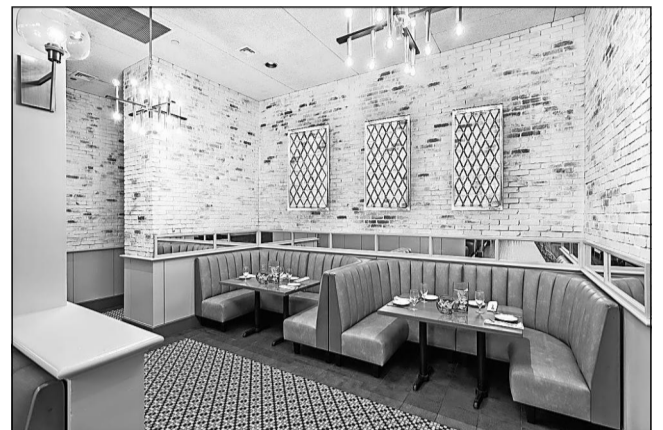
34 Park’s new interior.

“Like the calamari — we are breaded it as soon as it goes into the fryer.”

Gildea comes to Lupoli Companies after being the director of food and beverage at the Revere Hotel in Boston. He will oversee Andover’s 34 Park and the other Lupoli restaurants.

Lupoli Companies has three other venues in the works: Bosa, an Italian restaurant set to be on the first floor of the Heights project in Haverhill, and Bar Bosa, which will be the accompanying rooftop bar. There will also be a new restaurant at Lupoli’s Thorndike Exchange apartment building in Lowell, called Gentleman James, after Lupoli’s brother, Cartwright said.

Lupoli also has a project in the planning stages in Salem, New Hampshire, that features a restaurant. The two-story building would be a charitable casino and restaurant with a rooftop bar, according to plans filed with the town. That would likely be a fifth restaurant run by Gildea, Cartwright said.



The interior of 34 Park, the renovated Salvatore’s.



The big meatball.

VOTED

Continued from Page 1

of the highest turnouts, each near or above 50%, according to Galvin’s office.

By comparison, Lynn reported about 27% of voters had cast ballots as of Monday. Lawrence had seen the lowest turnout in the region, or about 18%.

Nearly 60 million Americans have voted in the Nov. 3 election so far, surpassing all early ballots cast in the 2016 polls, according to published reports. In New Hampshire, a

battleground state in the presidential election that has also seen a dramatic rise in voting by mail, more than 136,000 ballots had been submitted to local election clerks as of last Tuesday, according to Secretary of State William Gardner’s office. The state updates turnout weekly.

Massachusetts is one of a number of states that have substantially increased mail-in voting options to avoid overcrowding at the polls amid concerns about the coronavirus. Before the outbreak, the state only allowed voters to mail “absentee” ballots if they could not vote in

person on Election Day, but voters needed an excuse, such as a disability.

State lawmakers who pushed through rules expanding voting by mail during the pandemic say it has given voters more options and boosted overall participation.

“I think we’re going to see the largest vote in Massachusetts’ history,” said Sen. Barry Finegold, D-Andover, a Senate co-chairman of the Legislature’s Committee on Election Laws who helped write the new law. “We’ve given voters so many options to cast a ballot that there’s

really no excuse not to vote in this election.”

While election clerks can accept postmarked ballots up to three days after Nov. 3, Finegold said he still expects the major races to be called on election night.

“There could be a few legislative races that are too close to call,” said Finegold, who is running unopposed, “but I think we’ll know who the winners and losers are.”

Christian M. Wade covers the Massachusetts Statehouse for North of Boston Media Group’s newspapers and websites. Email him at cwade@cnhi.com.

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SEARCH

Continued from Page 1

superintendent will likely be completed by the spring of next year, Peznola said.

The district put an official announcement out Monday to look for the agency to conduct the search.

The committee was joined by Jessica Porter, the new director of Human Resources — who is set to start her job for the district next week — along with multiple district employees that are part of

the leadership team.

Porter helped advise the committee, saying she had good experiences using search firms for filling key roles in the past. However, she said the district likely didn’t need to utilize a firm for the interim position.

“With any job search, it is going to take time to find the right person,” Porter said. “I do think for a 6-month position of an interim superintendent, I do think we’ll use more time trying to do something with a broader search, going with a consultant. ... I think

this is something we can handle within the district.”

Porter suggested getting a team together within the district to vet interim candidates and then have the School Committee decide between a few.

“The interim superintendent will not be considered as a candidate for the permanent superintendent role,” Scully said reading from the position description. She said that line hopefully conveys there is no “back door” for getting the permanent role. Berman first became

superintendent for an interim term, and the School Committee decided to hire him for the permanent position.

“Frankly I don’t think the community looked favorably upon that at the time and there’s still perhaps some consternation that the search wasn’t as thorough as possible,” Scully said.

Committee member Susan McCreedy, who is the only remaining member who was serving at the time Berman was hired, agreed, saying this is a different situation.

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MEDALS

Continued from Page 1

Licciardello has plans to run this year with his wife, daughter and grandson locally, while his other daughter joins from Connecticut.

“It’s wonderful to have scattered family doing it on Thanksgiving,” he said.

Licciardello has run the Boston Marathon and is participating in the New York City Marathon virtually this year, as well.

“Like so many things this year, we are adapting and

making the best of it,” he said.

Stephanie Guyotte, a member of the marketing committee, is planning to run the 13K challenge over multiple days because she is recovering from an injury, she said.

If she had to run it all in one day she likely couldn’t do that distance, she added. She is also planning to set up a fun course for her children to run the Kid’s K, she added.

The popular Couch to 5K training also went virtual this year. Participants meet up on Zoom every Sunday

morning to talk and stretch together, Guyotte said. They then each get to run at their own pace in their own space, she said.

“We miss that community aspect (of gathering on Sunday mornings), but it’s something people can check into and have that accountability,” Guyotte said.

The 12-week conditioning program is also running virtually. Every adult who registers can access the program online and get three videos each week.

“Obviously it looks different this year but we want people to keep that Thanksgiving tradition alive,” Guyotte said.

And the tradition expands across the world no matter how families and friends are separated.

A former Swedish exchange student who ran the race when he was living in the area is signed up, Licciardello said.

One family from Alaska, with the last name Feaster but with no known previous connection to the race, signed up as well, he added.

“The race means so much to so many families, we decided ‘let’s make it the best virtual event we can,’” Guyotte said.

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Nguyen posts erroneously about rally incident

By MIKE LABELLA
Staff Writer

What police say was a misinterpreted accident at a rally in support of Democratic candidates triggered a storm of controversy on social media Friday and Saturday after state Rep. Tram Nguyen posted that a driver had intentionally driven into a group of people holding campaign signs.

"The notion that an individual driving by a group of volunteers with signs would deliberately steer their car into the crowd is unfathomable," Nguyen, D-Andover, wrote in a Facebook post.

Missie Bankes, chairman of the Republican Town Committee, responded to Nguyen's post saying she'd been told by police that the driver was actually an elderly woman who had gotten so excited to see the group that she momentarily veered her car and later told police she had no idea she'd frightened anyone.

On Saturday, Nguyen — who represents Boxford, North Andover, Andover and Tewksbury — said she removed her Friday evening post because she started to receive conflicting information about the incident and wanted to get more details. She said her initial post was intended to show support for her volunteers, some of whom held campaign signs in support of her candidacy.

Boxford police Chief James Riter said Friday's rally took place outside of the town's historic Lincoln Hall, in a side parking lot facing Route 133. At 5:38 p.m. someone called police to report an incident and an officer was dispatched to investigate, according to the chief.

Pamela Newport of Boxford told The Eagle-Tribune that she took part in the rally and said that although she did not witness the actual event, she was close enough to hear a vehicle make two smacking sounds that she said came from the vehicle striking two campaign lawn signs.

She said the incident sent a wave of panic through the



FILE PHOTO

18th Essex District State Rep. Tram Nguyen, D-Andover, celebrates her win in 2018.

crowd. "Everyone was really upset and all thought it was done out of anger," Newport said. "We told the representative what we experienced and that we were all afraid and that's all she had to go on. Then on Saturday she walked it back."

Riter said the incident involved an 80-year-old woman who may have veered slightly as she was excited to see people standing with signs in support of Democratic candidates. "She's of the same political persuasion (as the sign-holders) and said she got excited and may have edged her way over a bit," Riter said.

In his report, Boxford police Officer Albert Manzi said he spoke to one of the people holding signs, who told him the vehicle in question came close to the base of the stick of his sign and may have hit it.

Manzi said the man had been standing close to the

road at the time of the incident, but that the sign did not appear to have been damaged and that the man said he was not hit by the vehicle.

Manzi said he subsequently spoke to the driver at her home and that the woman apologized for driving too close to the crowd, saying she was excited to see the signs and became distracted and did not realize how close she'd come to one of the participants.

Riter said that no charges were filed in connection to the incident.

Jim Lyons, chairman of the state Republican Party who lost his seat to Nguyen in 2018, posted on Facebook on Saturday morning accusing Nguyen of spreading false

information about what had happened Friday night.

"Nguyen, who claims to 'make our communities more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming, so that all people are treated fairly, with dignity and respect,' owes an apology for her intolerant and divisive words," he wrote in his post.

Lyons added that Nguyen's post had called on leaders of the local GOP to condemn the incident.

Nguyen responded on Saturday around noon with a Facebook post in which she said she removed her Friday post as she wanted to get more details.

"I will continue to talk to those who were on the

"The notion that an individual driving by a group of volunteers with signs would deliberately steer their car into the crowd is unfathomable."

State Rep. Tram Nguyen, D-Andover, in post about incident deemed to be accidental

ground and let the police reach a conclusion about what took place," she said.

Asked if she'd seen a copy of the police report, Nguyen said she had not but that she had requested one.

"My understanding was the people present (at the rally) have not filed their reports yet," she said. "I have full faith in police to take this seriously and to complete the investigation."

Riter said that as far as he is concerned, the investigation has concluded and that no other reports about the incident had been filed as of Saturday afternoon. He also said he is not aware of any video of the incident.

"I listened to the recording of the call to dispatch and although someone in the crowd did say someone swerved at them, clearly there was no way this was an intentional act," Riter said.

Asked if she still expects the local GOP to condemn Friday's incident, Nguyen said she expects them to condemn any act of hate related to today's political climate.

"I was calling for condemnation for such division," she said. "Jim Lyons is calling for the same and we should stand in solidarity of such behaviors."

Hit the streets for trick-or-treat on Saturday

The town is allowing trick or treating from 5 to 7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 31.

The town issued a statement Tuesday explaining that typical door-to-door trick-or-treating is considered a high-risk activity, however, it is allowing people to make their own decisions on what activities to participate in.

The town suggests people have individually wrapped goodie bags in their yards or driveways for people to grab as a lower-risk alternative to handing out candy from the door.

The town asks that those participating in trick-or-treat leave their outside lights on as a signal that they are welcoming people.

The town is continuing to monitor the situation.

— Madeline Hughes, staff reporter



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Opinion

Re-elect Rep. Tram Nguyen

It's easy to paint a state representative with the broad red and blue strokes used to define his or her party. But a legislator's work often has as much to do with duties back in the district — the letters, phone calls and advocacy on behalf of individuals in need — as it does political debates at the State House.

Rep. Tram Nguyen got that lesson in a crucible as she took up the causes of people in Andover and North Andover in the aftermath of the September 2018 gas disaster. Her tireless work over the past two years is more than enough reason to reelect her to Beacon Hill from the 18th Essex District.

Nguyen was a newcomer to public office when she won a surprise victory over longtime Andover Rep. Jim Lyons. In retrospect, in light of her experience as a legal services attorney, she turned out to be the right woman in the right job at the right time. Her experience served her well as she took on the plight of people in conflict with insurance adjusters and a natural gas utility whose bungling led to a series of fires, explosions and property damage throughout the region barely two months before her election.

Nguyen served as a representative in the macro, pressing the region's interests alongside other elected leaders who demanded answers and accountability from Columbia Gas. She also engaged in the micro as a conduit and advocate for frustrated residents and businesses with no place else to turn. She has returned to a similar mode of leadership in the past eight months as an outlet to state services for people squeezed by restrictions meant to limit the spread of COVID-19.

We don't support all of Nguyen's policy choices, and some of her actions reveal someone still getting used to the public spotlight. Last weekend, for example, Nguyen was quick to condemn on social media the actions of a driver who appeared to have veered a car toward a group of her supporters at a visibility in Boxford. Police determined the senior citizen at the wheel had gotten excited by the sign holders -- whom she supported, by the way -- and had no intent to harm. Luckily no one was injured, and Nguyen removed her post. We expect more discernment and prudence from our state legislators.

That incident is by far outweighed, however, by the record Nguyen has built over the past two years as a grassroots legislator willing to get in the trenches when her constituents need her most. Her connection to the people of the 18th Essex, forged in the aftermath of the Merrimack Valley gas fires and now during a pandemic, should earn her reelection.

Skip the Witch City this Halloween

"This is just not the year, and I really want to send the message that if you're coming to Salem, come in November."

The plea from Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll couldn't be more clear: Stay home.

It's a tough message to hear for tens of thousands of revelers from across the region -- and the world -- who flock to the Witch City every October. And it's especially difficult for the hundreds of Salem businesses that rely on the Halloween boost to turn a profit for the year. Many of those businesses are hanging on for dear life after months of pandemic-related restrictions.

The continued specter of COVID-19, however, means this will be a Halloween like no other in Salem. Rather than encouraging visitors, the city hopes to keep them away.

At a press conference last week, Driscoll and Gov. Charlie Baker outlined steps to keep crowds to a minimum leading up to Halloween, and for the day itself. They include closing city parking lots and garages, reducing commuter rail service to the city and ordering businesses to close at 8 p.m. on Oct. 30 and 31.

It's the strongest approach possible, short of throwing a roadblock across Route 114 and blowing up the Beverly-Salem bridge.

As painful as the decision may be, it was the correct call. Salem has seen huge weekend crowds this fall, even in the midst of the pandemic. While loathe to speak publicly and risk losing repeat customers, businesses report that many tourists are unwilling to obey capacity limits and refuse to wear masks.

The city's edict isn't about convenience, it's about keeping residents safe and preventing the type of "super-spreader" event that can cost lives and lengthen the arc of the pandemic.

So, visit Salem -- but do so in November. The great restaurants, breweries, museums and shops will still be there, and you'll be able to move around without putting yourself and others at risk.

Hallowe'en was never like this: It was much, much worse!



Andover Center for History and Culture

Editor's Note: This Halloween story was published in the Oct. 17, 1946 edition of The Andover Townsman.

It follows in part.

When young people, disguised and masked and slightly fearsome in their Hallowe'en costumes, come to your door singing and hoping for a reward of some kind ... they are following in the traditional footsteps of those who ages ago went from parish to parish, in the "old country," begging and puling (singing) for Soul Cakes, or any other good thing with which to make merry!

And has anyone told you that eating apples hung from a string was once much more difficult, since in the earlier form of the game, the apples were tied to the ends of hanging beams, on opposite ends of which were lighted candles. By this flickering, unsteady flame the apple target was more elusive than ever for the contestants with hands tied behind their backs. Even our apple bobbing

stunt is a descendant of a more perilous sport. In the olden days lack of good balancing caused many a splash as the player tried to light a candle from another, tied to the far end of a pole, suspended over a tub of water.

And the carrying of lighted pumpkins is a modern counterpart of the past practice of tying broom and flax to a pole, and carrying the thing aflame on

See HALLOWEEN, Page 8

Vote 'no' on ranked choice to ensure voters have an equal say

Editor, Townsman:

"Democracy is supposed to be majority rules," says Evan Falchuk, chairman of the Yes on 2 Committee.

In Maine's second congressional district in 2018, Bruce Poliquin won 46.3% of the vote over Jared Golden's 45.6%. In our current system in Massachusetts, Poliquin would have won, no question, since he won the most votes. However, he didn't.

Once Maine's ranked choice voting system came into play, the second and sometimes third choices of people who voted for other candidates were lumped in with Golden and Poliquin's numbers, and Golden, who did not win the popular vote, won the election.

Is it truly "majority rules" if the people's second choice is elected?

Besides that, ranked choice voting overthrows one of the bases of our democracy -- one person, one vote.

Those who vote for losing candidates have more voting power than those who don't and can effectively cast their vote twice.

In the instance of Maine's second congressional district, ballots cast for the two other candidates were counted again, and cast in favor of either Poliquin or Golden until one or the other had a "majority."

Is this what we want in Massachusetts?

Apparently, it's not what Gov. Gavin Newsom wants in California. Last year, Newsom vetoed a bill that would have allowed California cities to switch to ranked choice voting.

I'm nine months too young to fill out a ballot this year, yet this decision will affect every vote I cast in the state of Massachusetts.

I urge your readers to vote no on 2, and let every person in this state have an equal say on Election Day.

CLAIRE CAHILL
Andover

Nguyen has been a leader on climate change issues

Editor, Townsman:

It is with great enthusiasm that I will be voting for state Rep. Tram Nguyen for a second term in office. Her unbridled energy, commitment to progressive values and dedication to her district are off the charts.

In Nguyen we have a champion in the State House on a host of issues I care about. And, I believe that her perspective as a woman, a daughter of immigrants, and her experience as a legal services attorney for the marginalized gives her a unique and important voice in the State House.

I am impressed by the breadth of important issues that Nguyen has taken on in her first term in office. She has been hard at work on the opioid crisis, on issues related to affordable housing, women's health, labor issues and racial justice including building trust between community residents and law enforcement through legislative action. Both the Merrimack Valley gas explosions and COVID-19 are testament to her leadership in a crisis.

For me, however, it's Nguyen's unwavering commitment to climate change that inspires me and gives me hope.

I have had the honor of working with Nguyen as a member of Andover WECAN: Working to Educate for Climate Action Now.

Early in her first term, I sat down with Nguyen to lay out our vision for a greener Andover. We talked about local projects in addition to state climate initiatives. She listened attentively and then produced her two climate bills in addition to the slate of climate-related bills that she would be sponsoring in the State House. I was heartened because this is the kind of leadership and action we need.

In addition, Nguyen and her team put together an environmental town hall this past summer which laid out

her climate agenda and the legislation which she would be supporting. Her hallmark ability to listen to residents' opinions and questions was on full display.

We are fortunate to have a state representative of Nguyen's caliber. I hope you will join me in voting for her.
MARY PRITCHARD
Andover

Nguyen a successful advocate for her district

Editor, Townsman:

We are writing to share our enthusiastic support for our state representative, Tram Nguyen. We have been impressed with her hard work, her energy and her compassion, and we believe that a second term is well earned.

Over the past two years, Nguyen has made an incredible effort to connect with her community, to support her community and to show up for her community. She has delivered on her promises to be available and responsive.

While the pandemic has curtailed her monthly drop-in office hours for the time being, she continues to respond to hundreds of constituent phone calls and emails.

She has successfully advocated for her district; she has secured funding for the Robb Senior Center; increased state funding for public schools, and held Columbia Gas accountable after the 2018 disaster.

And when COVID-19 turned our lives upside down, Nguyen provided timely and critical updates on statewide efforts to slow the spread of the virus, helped secure personal protective equipment for first responders, and assisted residents with unemployment, housing or other needs brought on by the crisis.

For two years, Nguyen has been there for Andover. Let's be there for her on Election Day by casting our votes to send her back to the State House.

THOMAS ESPOSITO
AND LAUREN CONOSCENTI
Andover

Nguyen an important resource for family facing critical decisions

Editor, Townsman:

I am honored to write in support of Rep. Tram Nguyen, who is running for re-election to the 18th Essex District seat.

In her first term, Nguyen has demonstrated herself to be a proven leader and someone we can depend on to listen, follow through and work effectively on behalf of her constituents.

Nguyen works tirelessly to provide round-the-clock access to information as we navigate these challenging times. Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, she has posted daily summaries to social media outlining critical data and resource links to help families stay informed. She has also sent weekly email newsletters highlighting valuable resources available to help people address issues related to food insecurity, housing instability, medical care, child care -- the list of needs goes on.

For my family, specifically, Nguyen has been invaluable in addressing and advocating for the needs of the elderly in assisted living residences. She has helped to answer many time-sensitive questions over the past eight months and has provided me with the relevant information from the Office of Elder Affairs that I needed to make critical decisions on behalf of my family.

Her quick response time and thorough research have been instrumental in helping me and my family through this pandemic, and for that I will be forever grateful.

Nguyen has the energy and passion we desperately need right now, and she understands the diverse needs of the communities she represents. She will continue to effectively advocate for our constituency and community and will be a strong voice for all of us.

I hope your readers will join me in voting for Tram Nguyen for reelection for the 18th Essex District seat on Tuesday, Nov. 3.

CYNDI WEBBER
Andover

WEB QUESTION

Are you confident in the state's plan to distribute a COVID-19 vaccine?

The Baker administration recently sent plans to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for how the state will distribute its allotment of vaccine, once it's available.

Health care workers will be among the first recipients, followed by people ages 65 and older and those with health conditions that put them at greater risk of developing severe complications from COVID-19.

How confident are you in how the vaccine will be distributed?

FEELING FINE: Gov. Charlie Baker and his administration handled closures due to the pandemic and the gradual reopening as well as anyone could expect. There's no reason to believe the state's management of a vaccine and its distribution won't be handled with the same professionalism.

NOT CONFIDENT: This public health crisis has been a fiasco from the beginning. Who's to say how much vaccine the state will get, who'll get the first shots, and whether those will even be effective? I have more faith in the Patriots making the playoffs than in the vaccine being distributed smoothly.

Last week's question

Should the state downgrade North Andover as a "red community" on its COVID-19 transmission map?

Town officials across the border have been smarting from the designation, which was driven by an outbreak of COVID-19 cases at Merrimack College's Monican Centre. The dormitory is physically located in Andover. However, the state assigned those cases to North Andover, in line with the college's mailing address.

The red designation limits the ability of some businesses to reopen in North

Andover. It can also inhibit things like high school sports. Should the state give North Andover a respite?

LEAVE IT RED: It's too bad North Andover gets all of the Merrimack College COVID-19 cases, but then again, students who may have been exposed to the virus leave campus to shop and eat in local restaurants. The map is meant to show people where the coronavirus is spreading. Don't tweak it. **(37 votes)**

CHANGE COLORS: North Andover shouldn't be penalized for an outbreak on campus, which the town has next-to-no control over. The state shouldn't hold the town accountable, either. **(17 votes)**

ANDOVER'S PROBLEM: If those COVID-19 cases were detected in a college dormitory that is physically in Andover, then they should be assigned to Andover, even if it makes this town "red" on the state's map. Fair is fair. **(14 votes)**

READER ACCESS

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Resident: Noose was political, not racist

Officials, politicians release statement condemning display

By MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsmen.com

A resident who hung a noose on the lawn of his Whittier Street home says it was not racially motivated, but instead was a political statement about how Democrats treat the president.

Peter Young, an avid supporter of President Donald Trump, says the noose was part of a Halloween setup, placed next to a skeleton wearing a Trump mask.

"It's by the Trump skeleton because he is being lynched by the Democratic mob," Young said.

Shortly after Young put up his display Wednesday, photos began to circulate on social media, drawing attention from residents, town officials and politicians, activists and police.

When police responded to the Whittier Street home, Young's father, who owns the property, asked that the noose be taken down, according to police spokesperson Lt. Eddie Guy.

In an interview with The Eagle-Tribune, Peter Young acknowledged the racist history of the noose but reiterated that was not his intention.

Still, it didn't take long for official statements to make their way to the public.

"Whatever his motivation is, the interpretation is concerning to us," state Rep. Tram Nguyen, D-Andover, said in an interview Thursday. "The residents shouldn't have to guess what his motivation is."

Nguyen, state Rep. Frank Moran, D-Lawrence, and state Sen. Barry Finegold, D-Andover, called it "an unwelcome act of hate in our community," in a joint statement Thursday morning.

"Thanks to swift action from our local police, a disturbing and all too familiar image of racism was taken down quickly," they wrote. "... America's long and troubled history of slavery and racism still haunts us today. We, as elected leaders, believe it is important to stand together rejecting hate in Andover and elsewhere. This act is not reflective of our caring and diverse communities, but rather an unwelcome message from one individual."

Not long after, the town of Andover sent out its own statement, condemning the "symbol of hate."

"Symbols and acts of hate have no place in Andover and in every case, they will be actively and thoroughly investigated by the Andover Police Department," the release states.

However, Guy said the police investigation determined there was no racism involved.

"The Andover Police Department takes any type of racial bias seriously when someone makes a complaint that could be racially motivated," Guy said. "In this particular situation, it appears (to be) someone voicing their

"It's by the Trump skeleton because he is being lynched by the Democratic mob."

Peter Young of Andover, an avid supporter of President Donald Trump

political opinion. We don't believe there was anything racially motivated about this incident."

He visited the home with police Chief Patrick Keefe and Sgt. Mark Higginbottom.

Higginbottom spoke with Peter Young about how people who called the department perceived the situation.

Young "respected what we had to say," Guy said.

This incident comes amid national racial reckonings that have prompted the town to actively take stock in its own practices.

At a Sept. 28 Select Board meeting Town Manager Andrew Flanagan and board members adopted a goal that focuses expressly on advancing the community's work around diversity, equity and inclusion. The town will conduct a survey to see how bias is portrayed in the community in the coming weeks.

The Merrimack Valley Black and Brown Voices and Allies wrote in their own statement Wednesday afternoon, "Residents of Andover may think Andover is an inclusive diverse town, but images and attitudes like that resident's sign leave BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) residents fearful, distressed, on high alert and feeling very unsafe in their own homes and town."

The statement continues, "Every BIPOC resident who lives in Andover should feel safe, welcomed and valued. As a community, we must continue to work hard toward the betterment of the place we live in."



COURTESY PHOTO

The Merrimack Valley YMCA celebrated Marilyn Fitzgerald for her 50 years of service to the organization. From right: Donna Aldrich, board member and parade organizer, Frank Kenneally, president and CEO of the Merrimack Valley YMCA, Marilyn Fitzgerald and Claudia Soo Hoo, the chief operating officer.

Parade delivers thanks to YMCA volunteer

By MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@eagletribune.com

More than 50 cars paraded through Andover on Saturday to celebrate Marilyn Fitzgerald's 50 years of service to the Merrimack Valley YMCA.

Fitzgerald was supposed to be celebrated earlier this year at a fundraiser that was canceled due to the pandemic. However, staff and board members at the YMCA wanted to ensure they could recognize her this year, so Donna Aldrich, a board member, organized Saturday's event.

"Marilyn is an advocate and champion for the Y in the community," President and CEO Frank Kenneally said. "She recruits others to serve and she is a mentor and inspiration to many of our volunteers and staff."

Dozens of cars containing board members, Fitzgerald's friends and family, as well as other residents paraded through her Andover neighborhood. They were escorted by police, Kenneally said.

"When the parade reached her home we presented Marilyn with a commemorative vase and

a basket with 50 cards from staff and volunteers and our child care children saying a few words of congratulations and expressing gratitude for her service," he said.

Fitzgerald served as a program volunteer in aquatics at the Andover/North Andover branch and the camps. She has also served on the board of directors and other committees throughout her years.

Most recently Fitzgerald led the strategic planning task force to keep the organization's momentum up for the next few years.

Fitzgerald also always showed others, like Kenneally, support, he said. "She has been so supportive of my career and development," Kenneally said, having known Fitzgerald for over 30 years. "She has inspired me and taught me what it means to be a Y professional and steward of this organization."

Report identifies 'digital divide' in Essex County

By PAUL LEIGHTON
Staff Writer

One out of every five households in Essex County does not have a computer or access to an internet connection, a "digital divide" that has been unmasked by the coronavirus pandemic, according to a new report.

The study, commissioned by the Essex County Community Foundation, found that the lack of online access is most prevalent among low-income and Latino families. The problem has been intensified by the pandemic, as critical services such as education and health care are relying more on the digital world to reach people.

"Now, just may be our best opportunity to address the digital divide in Essex County," said Stratton Lloyd of the Essex County Community Foundation during a Zoom call announcing the report. "This existed before but it's exposed now."

The foundation manages more than \$90 million in charitable assets. In recent years, it has taken on the role of addressing issues such as income inequality, improving the arts, and providing disaster relief in the wake of the 2018 gas explosion in the Merrimack Valley and now during the coronavirus pandemic.

Beth Francis, the president and CEO, said the foundation's efforts to help out during the pandemic illuminated the problem of the lack of online access. The report, conducted by the Center for State Policy Analysis at Tufts University's Tisch College of Civic Life, revealed just how large the divide is.

The report examined U.S. Census Bureau data in all 34 communities in Essex County. The Census Bureau began asking questions about digital access on its American Community Survey in 2013 to measure the

development of broadband access and decrease barriers to it, according to the bureau.

The report, called Striving for Digital Equity, found that nearly 80% of Essex County households own desktop or laptop computers and have access to wired broadband. But that means that nearly 60,000 households, with about 160,000 people, do not.

Nine of the 10 neighborhoods with the lowest rates of broadband access and computer ownership are in Lawrence and Lynn, although the problem cuts across every community for families earning less than \$35,000 per year, the report said.

Latino residents are twice as likely to lack broadband access compared to their white, non-Latino neighbors, according to the report.

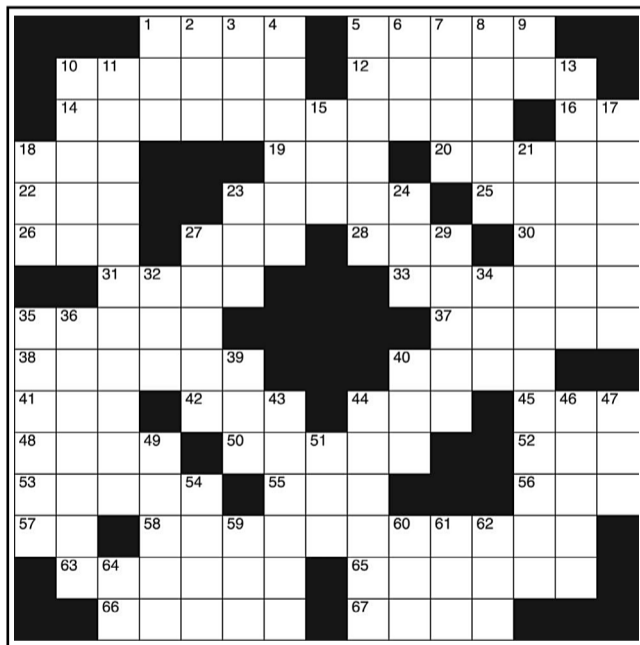
The report said communities in Essex County have worked hard to provide students with computers, but noted there were problems with broadband faltering with everyone in the family online at the same time, and also privacy concerns in tight living arrangements.

"If you have a great computer and solid, reliable broadband access but don't have a room where you can close the door, it's hard to make the best of the digital world," Evan Horowitz, the director of the Center for State Policy Analysis, said in the Zoom presentation.

Horowitz said language is another dimension of the digital divide because many of the resources are available only in English.

Older residents could also benefit from better access, especially with the shift to telemedicine during the pandemic, the report said.

The report mentioned a variety of possible approaches to closing the gap, some of which are being used elsewhere.



CLUES ACROSS

- Upright post on a boat
- Sentimental person
- Native American tribe
- Wear away
- Where you're going
- Doctor
- Popular Chinese dialect
- One point east of due south
- Northern sea duck
- Note
- Wives (law)
- Trigonometric function
- A way to communicate (abbr.)
- Swiss river
- No (Scottish)
- Commercials
- Large instrument
- Chantilly, ___ de Menthe
- Small, saclike cavities

CLUES DOWN

- More (Spanish)
- A subdivision of a play
- Japanese title
- More jittery
- Fabric
- Luke's mentor ___-Wan
- Cleaving tool
- Ancient city of Egypt
- 36 inches
- Farewell
- Second to last
- Improved by critical editing
- Defensive weapon (abbr.)
- Fancy attire
- ___ Farrow, actress
- Completely opposed
- Supervises flying
- Pouch
- True firs
- Mistake

Solution in Classified Section

- High and thin in tone
- Treat extremely well
- Famed track star Usain
- Secure web connection (abbr.)
- Rob of energy
- Paving material
- Cool!
- Tip of Aleutian Islands
- Indicates silence
- Water in the solid state
- Security interests
- Popular hoopster Jeremy
- Shed tears
- Low frequency
- Harmful bacterium
- Common language: lingua ___
- Standards of perfection
- They consist of two parts
- A detailed description of design
- Computing platform (abbr.)
- Snakelike fish
- Greatly horrify
- Despicable person
- Tell on
- Ballplayer's tool
- Central Brazilian town
- Court game
- Land
- "The Partridge Family" actress Susan
- Retract a statement
- Data executive
- Capital of Yemen
- Portable computer screen material
- Electronic data processing
- "Matt Houston" actor Horsley
- Resinous substance
- Rural delivery

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HALLOWEEN

Continued from Page 6

one's shoulder around the village, attended by a crowd of singing and shouting merrymakers.

Long ago young women went out into the dark fields on this night and, with blindfolded eyes, pulled cabbages to determine from their roots the figures of their future husbands. ... They went out and pulled the first kale they met with. ... This was prophetic of the grand object of all their spells.

Even the waxing and soaping on windows has an ancient origin. An old Hallowe'en custom of the fishermen of Orkney (in Scotland) was a seining or signing of their boats with a cross of tar to bring them success with their fishing.

But if your barn door disappears or your gate is unhinged and lies in some near-by field, you should be grateful, for you could have had dire misfortune attend your next trip to the barn or visit to your garden. It works this way, and we quote -

"This charm must be performed unperceived and alone. You go to the barn and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible;



(COURTESY ANDOVER CENTER FOR HISTORY AND CULTURE)

A Halloween postcard

for there is a danger that the BEING, about to appear, may shut the door and do you some mischief. Then take this instrument used in winnowing corn ... and go through all the motions of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times; and the third time an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance of retinue marking the employment or station in life."

That's the way to call up a ghost you see, and it's just as well to have the BEING safely out through the other side and off about his weird business before you get yourself done some mischief.

If you don't care about any of these, yet wish to stir up that uneasy eerie feeling of long-legged beasties and things that go bump in the night, you might ask for a book at the Memorial Hall Library. Whatever you choose, it's pretty certain that at the end of an evening's perusal, you'll agree with Thomas Hood, who wrote:

"O'er all there hung a shadow and a fear,

A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,

And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,

THE PLACE IS HAUNTED!"

Andover Stories is a weekly feature coordinated by the Andover Center for History and Culture.

BRIEFS

Rotary Meetings

Rotary of Andover is hosting Rotary District Governor Betsy Manzelli. The meeting begins Friday, Oct. 30, at 7:45 a.m.

Future guests include Andover's Director of Veterans Services Mark R. Comeiro, USN (Ret.) on Nov. 6 for a Veterans Day observance.

Meetings begin at 7:45 a.m. The talk goes until 8:15. Networking follows until 8:30 a.m.

Following COVID-19 social distancing protocols and regulations, attendance is limited to 25 people who must register. Meetings are also virtual on Zoom.

Guests and new members are welcome. Contact person is Amy Salant at 781-964-6397 or RotaryAndover.com.

Spotlight Playhouse auditions

Spotlight Playhouse is accepting video auditions through Nov. 4 for "Home for the Holidays," the annual musical cabaret. This year's event will be livestreamed Dec. 18 and 19 from the group's rehearsal space in the Everett Mills in Lawrence.

Audition information is available at spotlightplayhouse.org. The website also includes a full

description of the COVID-19 protocols the organization will have in place for rehearsals and the livestream performance.

Additional information is available from Spotlight Playhouse at info@spotlight-playhouse.org or by calling 617-470-2175.

Affordable housing discussion

At 7 p.m. on Nov. 9, Andover Community Trust Board members, Dara Obbard will be moderating a conversation about affordable housing with an Andover Community Trust homeowner Sidney Davila, the trust's Executive Director Denise Johnson, Andover's Senior Planner Lisa Schwartz and the Rev. Dana Allen Walsh of South Church.

They will be discussing why affordable housing is critical in town, where affordable housing exists in Andover, what Andover is doing today and what more can be done.

The program, to be aired on Zoom, is a collaboration of Courageous Conversations and Memorial Hall Library. Complete details can be found at mhl.org/adult-program/2020/affordable-housing-andover-update-whats-next.



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* Please limit messages to no more than 20 words

Four restaurants and a pandemic

One businessman's story of working through the crisis

By **BILL BURT**
 Staff Writer



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Restaurant owner Jimmy Dietz stands outside of Joe Fish Seafood Restaurant and Bar in North Andover. Dietz and his son own four restaurants in the area: The Loft Restaurant and Pub in North Andover, a second Joe Fish Seafood Restaurant and Bar in North Reading, and Dos Lobos American Taqueria & Tequila Bar, in North Reading

The unpredictable restaurant business is something Jimmy Dietz has been drawn to for most of his life.

What started as intrigue — a 10-year-old boy hanging around the diner where his grandmother worked in Clearwater, Florida — led to opening a New York deli soon after graduating college, before moving to Boston.

Eventually, after managing Legal Sea Foods, meeting his wife and starting a family, Dietz began opening his own places.

Today his personal restaurant empire is two Joe Fish, one Loft Restaurant and Pub and a Dos Lobos American Taqueria & Tequila Bar strong.

“I love everything about this business — everything,” Dietz will tell you, as he did in a 2013 interview with this reporter.

“Did I say that?” Dietz asked recently, sitting in his office in the basement of The Loft in North Andover.

“Wow,” he added. “As crazy as this sounds, even going through this mess, yes, I agree with everything I said.”

Dietz was on a roll before the virus hit. He had taken complete financial control of both Joe Fish and The Loft in North Andover, opened another Joe Fish on Route 28 in North Reading, and then Los Lobos, a Mexican restaurant also on Route 28 near the Andover town line.

Then March 2020 came and he was reminded of something a bartender friend once told him.

“He said, ‘Nothing lasts forever. No matter how good it is. It doesn’t last forever,’” Dietz recalled.

As expected, last January and February the business slowed down; that happens every year. But it’s supposed to pass.

“All of sudden in March we were shut down,” he said. “And it’s like, ‘Are you

kidding me? It’s my business. I can’t be shut down.”

Suddenly those words from the past were prophetic. “My bartender friend was so right.”

Retool or go home

Sunday March 15, 2020, is burned in the minds of people all over the Bay State.

Gov. Charlie Baker shut down most non-essential businesses and public entities, put a ban on gatherings larger than 25 people, and suspended school for at least three weeks, through April 7. Restaurants, Baker said, would be allowed to offer takeout only, and with restrictions, starting March 17.

“One of the biggest beefs we all have started right then,” said Dietz, whose son, Jim Jr., is part owner and director of operations of the four restaurants. “All of the sudden, we have two days to figure out how to operate a takeout-only business.”

Sure, he said, his restaurants did offer takeout, but not as a primary mode of operation.

“A lot of people don’t understand that,” said Dietz, who lives in North Andover. “You have to retool your business for takeout only. We had never done that before.”

Dietz called for advice from a friend who owns a Chinese food restaurant that does half its business in takeout under normal circumstances.

“We had to retrain the staffs,” Dietz said. “Then we started running into things we didn’t foresee at all.”

There was the curbside pickup and the need for guests to call from the parking lot. But, he said, too many orders at once meant calls being sent to the answering machine.

“They were getting frustrated. We were getting frustrated,” Dietz said. “We had to learn how to do takeout at that level.”

A couple weeks in, things did improve, he said. But business was a fraction of its former self, with North Andover’s Joe Fish faring the best — at 70% below normal.

Spring held promise. That was the hope. But another blow was dealt when New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu allowed restaurants there to open for outdoor dining May 18.

COVID-19 had hit Massachusetts much harder than the neighboring Granite State and Baker wasn’t ready to move forward.

“Look at it from our perspective,” said Dietz. “We are only a few miles from New

Hampshire border, and all of our regulars are heading across the state line. That’s hard to take.”

On June 6, Baker was ready to allow for outdoor dining, too — and said restaurants could open up for it two days later, June 8.

Again, Dietz said he scrambled.

He needed tents and Jersey barriers for four restaurants, among other supplies, and to make preparations such as securing health, fire and police permits from North Andover and North Reading.

It was not cheap. “Each tent was \$2,000 per month,” Dietz said. “And the each Jersey barrier costs \$85.”

For all four restaurants, “that’s \$12,000 a month in the hole before we open,” he said.

Bumps and barriers

Also from the camp of the unexpected: Dietz had a hard time getting his staff back to work.

“They were making more money to stay home,” he said, pointing out that in addition to regular unemployment benefits they were receiving another \$600 weekly from the federal stimulus package.

Due to fewer workers on hand for Dietz’s restaurants, he couldn’t open all of the tables that were available.

“How stupid is that?” said Dietz. “You’re paying people to not work. I just don’t get it. I never will.”

He sold gift cards to customers from which half of all proceeds went to employees who did stay.

“We ended up selling \$30,000 in gift cards so we divided \$15,000 among 37 staffers,” Dietz said. “Those people really dug in and helped us out. We couldn’t have done it without them.”

The community also stepped up when they heard what he was doing.

“It sent me a message that people really want to help out the little guy, the small businesses,” he said.

For outside dining the

ambiance wasn’t ideal, with all of his restaurants located only feet away from extremely busy roads. The two in North Andover are on Route 125 and the two in North Reading on Route 28. But at least it was a start to getting business back, Dietz said.

By mid-September, one of his four restaurants was turning a small profit.

Knowing that Massachusetts restaurants were bound to begin to open at some capacity, Dietz began thinking about what he’d need to do to keep customers safe and operate within state guidelines.

Talking to Terence Sweeney, a friend he went to high school with in the Bronx who is now a contractor in Atlanta, Dietz described what he wanted to do.

“I wanted to put up barriers between the booths, basically separating every booth as its own entity,” Dietz said. “(But) I was scared of the costs, particularly labor, to do it at all of my restaurants. This was 60 booths.”

Still, he knew he had to be proactive, be ready for the opening and to pay for it.

“You can’t do it on your own,” Dietz recalls Sweeney telling him.

“Next thing you know he’s flying up here to help me,” he said. “I couldn’t believe it.”

In mid-August they worked nine hours a day for 12 days, framing, cutting, hammering.

“We ended up scoring these window panes, which cut my costs tremendously,” Dietz said. “So now all of the restaurants have a non-porous barrier between each booth, 6 feet high, and covers all of the COVID standards. I believe we saved \$6,000 in labor costs by doing it ourselves. We are in survival-mode. You do what you have to do. And, of course, Thank God for my friend Terence.”

He had other vital help, too, he said — the government. He applied for and received funding for all four restaurants as part of the Paycheck Protection Program. That

money can be used for payroll, rent, utilities and related expenses.

Bouncing back with insight

Seven months into the pandemic, Dietz said his restaurants are surviving.

North Andover’s Joe Fish is operating at about 70% compared to a year ago, he said, and The Loft is at about 55%.

The two North Reading restaurants — the other Joe Fish and Dos Lobos — are running at about 50% year over year, Dietz estimates.

“I’ve talked to some of my friends in the business and we’re doing pretty good compared to others,” he said.

And there have been positive developments amid the viral whirlwind. Take efficiency, for instance.

His menus were reduced, which helped streamline some processes. Jay Duffley, his longtime executive chef, took over a lot of the food prep duties. And Dietz himself is more hands on.

“We used to cut our own fish. We still buy it from the same person, but we have them cut it for us. We used to make a lot of dressings from scratch. Now we’re buying them already complete. It means we don’t have to have inventory sitting on the shelf,” Dietz said. “Money can’t be sitting on the shelf in this environment.”

He said in a strong economy, there’s no real pressure to scrutinize everything about a business model — the menus, the labor, the facilities.

“But when they take your livelihood away from you, and you’ve got to go into survival mode and make this work with limited income and limited staff. It’s another challenge,” he said.

“We had to go in survival mode,” he added. “And because of it, I believe we will come out stronger on the other side.”

Bill Burt is executive sports editor of The Eagle-Tribune. You can email him at bburt@eagletribune.com.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING
A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of J. & M. Armitage, 100 Woodview Way, #1401, Andover, MA for a special permit under Art. VIII, §3.3.5 &/or a variance from Art. VIII, §4.1.2 to raze & rebuild a house on a non-conforming lot.
Premises affected are located at 5 Howell Dr, Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 21 as Lot 62. The petition may be viewed by request to zoning@andoverma.gov, 978-623-8627 or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22/, 10/29/20

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of Alan Simao, 41 Katie Way, Tewksbury, MA for a special permit under Art. VIII, §3.3.5 &/or a variance from Art. VIII, §4.1.3.2.b to construct a portico that will not meet the minimum front setback.
Premises affected are located at 131 Andover St., Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 115 as Lot 11. The petition may be viewed by request to zoning@andoverma.gov, 978-623-8627 or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of A. Schwartz & L. Smith, 63 Maple Ave, Andover, MA for a special permit under Art. VIII, §3.3.5 &/or variances from Art. VIII, §4.1.2 & 4.2.2 to construct additions/alterations & a shed that will not meet the minimum side setbacks.
Premises affected are located at 63 Maple Ave., Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 176 as Lot 38. The petition may be viewed by request to zoning@andoverma.gov, 978-623-8627 or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of Andrea Saunders-Correa & Hercilio Correa, 12 Magnolia St., N. Reading, MA as a Party Aggrieved for review of a Stop Work Order &/or for a special permit under Art. VIII, §3.3.5 &/or for a variance from Art. VIII, §4.1.2 to construct a single family dwelling on a non-conforming lot that will not meet the minimum side setbacks.
Premises affected are located at 209 Greenwood Rd., Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 129 as Lot 5.
The petition may be viewed by request to zoning@andoverma.gov, 978-623-8627 or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of David W. Barron of San Jose, CA, a Will has been admitted to informal probate. David W. Barron of San Jose, CA, has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code with supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
AT - 10/29/20

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Essex Division
Docket No. ES20P1677EA

Estate of: Jeanette T. Barron Also Known As: Jeanette Barron Date of Death: May 28, 2020
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To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner David W. Barron of San Jose, CA, a Will has been admitted to informal probate. David W. Barron of San Jose, CA, has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code with supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
AT - 10/29/20

NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of E. Yen & L. Tong, 10 Bancroft Rd, Andover, MA as a Party Aggrieved for review of the Inspector of Building's determination &/or for a variance from Art. VIII, §3.2 to construct an accessory structure on a lot without a principal structure.
Premises affected are located at 8 Bancroft Rd, Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 58 as Lot 24A. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of AT&T Mobility Corp, c/o SAI, 12 Industrial Way, Salem, NH for special permits under Art. VIII, §86.1.1, 6.1.11 &/or 9.4 to add / alter roof-mounted antennas, radio / headers, ballast mount, & equipment.
Premises affected are located at 23 Main St, Andover, MA in a GB District & are shown on Assessor Map 55 as Lot 98. The petition may be viewed by request to zoning@andoverma.gov, 978-623-8627 or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of Alan Simao, 41 Katie Way, Tewksbury, MA for a special permit under Art. VIII, §3.3.5 &/or a variance from Art. VIII, §4.1.3.2.b to construct a portico that will not meet the minimum front setback.
Premises affected are located at 131 Andover St., Andover, MA in an SRA District, and are shown on Assessor Map 115 as Lot 11. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING
A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of C. & D. Arzeno, 18 William St, Andover, MA for a modification of Decisions Z-20-10, 25 & 83 to allow issuance of a C.O. prior to meeting conditions 1-14
Premises affected are located at 18 William St, Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 52 as Lot 98. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/2020

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M., on the petition of Alan Simao, 41 Katie Way, Tewksbury, MA, for a special permit under Art. VIII, §3.3.5 &/or a variance from Art. VIII, §4.1.3.2.b to construct a portico that will not meet the minimum front setback.
Premises affected are located at 131 Andover St., Andover, MA in an SRA District, and are shown on Assessor Map 115 as Lot 11. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/2020

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

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Premises affected are located at 21 Lincoln St., Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 71 as Lot 69. The petition may be viewed by request to 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/2020

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of E. Yen & L. Tong, 10 Bancroft Rd, Andover, MA as a Party Aggrieved for review of the Inspector of Building's determination &/or for a variance from Art. VIII, §3.2 to construct an accessory structure on a lot without a principal structure.
Premises affected are located at 8 Bancroft Rd, Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 58 as Lot 24A. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

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Premises affected are located at 8 Bancroft Rd, Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 58 as Lot 24A. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

NOTICE OF HEARING

A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of AT&T Mobility Corp, c/o SAI, 12 Industrial Way, Salem, NH for special permits under Art. VIII, §86.1.1, 6.1.11 &/or 9.4 to add / alter roof-mounted antennas, radio / headers, ballast mount, & equipment.
Premises affected are located at 23 Main St, Andover, MA in a GB District & are shown on Assessor Map 55 as Lot 98. The petition may be viewed by request to zoning@andoverma.gov, 978-623-8627 or at 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/20

NOTICE OF HEARING

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ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANDOVER ZONING BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING
A public hearing will be held at virtually at www.andovertv.org on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. on the petition of C. & D. Arzeno, 18 William St, Andover, MA for a modification of Decisions Z-20-10, 25 & 83 to allow issuance of a C.O. prior to meeting conditions 1-14
Premises affected are located at 18 William St, Andover, MA in an SRA District & are shown on Assessor Map 52 as Lot 98. The petition may be viewed by request at 978-623-8627, zoning@andoverma.gov or 36 Bartlet St., Andover, MA.
ELIZABETH OLTMAN, CHAIR BOARD OF APPEALS
AT - 10/22, 10/29/2020

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Sports

ADJUSTING ON THE FLY

With her position eliminated, Miller finds other way to lead Andover field hockey

By DAVE DYER
ddyer@eagletribune.com

Andover senior field hockey quad-captain Alana Miller faced a major shift heading into her final high school field hockey season.

For years, her role was as a defensive “flyer” — the player called upon to “fly” out from the goal line on a free corner pass and try to stop the opposing team from getting a good shot on goal. Often the flyer is right in the line of what could be a hard shot.

But with COVID-19 forcing changes in the way most all sports are played, the flyer position was eliminated from Massachusetts field hockey for the 2020 season along with penalty corners.

While Miller could have been disappointed by the change, she has instead persevered.

“Alana is not flashy in her play,” said Hall of Fame field hockey coach Maureen Noone. “This year, she is playing as a back position on the last line of defense before the goalkeeper. She is mature for her age and brings toughness and game experiences on and off the field.”

Miller is now providing key play on defense for an Andover team that entered the week 3-0, having allowed just one goal in the coronavirus-delayed 2020 season. The Golden Warriors likely would have contended for a state title, had the tournament not been eliminated due to COVID.

A Catholic University field hockey recruit, Miller never backed down from her role as a flyer.

“It can be a little dangerous and my mom always says she cringes when she sees me do it,” said Miller. “I love it. I try to be the first person to reach the ball and be a disruption.”

Miller’s mom must have cringed even more in last year’s Division 1 state semifinals because her daughter was flying out in an attempt to stop Somerset Berkeley standout Lucas Crook, who has a rocket for a shot and was one of two boys on the state championship team.

“She (Miller) showed a lot of people how resilient she is when she was flying out at a boy hitter who was over 6-feet tall, taking direct shots,” said Andover



Senior captain Alana Miller was a star “flyer.” But with that position eliminated, she has found other way to lead the Andover field hockey team.

STAFF FILE PHOTO

coach Maureen Noone. “She never hesitated.”

And while her position is different this fall, it is no less challenging.

“On the field her play responsibilities include breaking up

breakaways, and attempting to generate some offense,” said Noone. “Without defensive corners, Alana has rotated from left to right side of the field on the back line. She is a total team player.”

Miller said much of her fearlessness comes from being an avid scuba diver, who got certified in the fifth grade. She said she has been in far scarier situations.

“I’ve seen lots of sharks,” said



COURTESY PHOTO

Andover’s Alana Miller learned her fearlessness from her years as an avid scuba diver.

TALENTED CAPTAINS

Andover field hockey coach Maureen Noone benefits from having four extremely skilled and dedicated captains in Alana Miller, Paige Gillette, Hanna Medwar and Heather Graham.

Medwar is one of the state’s most dangerous goal-scorers, who tallied 17 goals last year. Graham is also skilled at scoring goals, and Gillette is an outstanding goalie.

Miller, who has done a lot of her diving in the Florida Keys. “Some of them are (smaller) sand sharks but I’ve also seen some large sharks. It’s kind of humbling.”

Miller admits that losing in the state finals last fall to a team with two talented boys was frustrating. But, she says, “I felt we were prepared and we came out and played hard, the best we could. I’m proud of the way we played.”

Miller is also proud to be a captain this year, “especially because of where I started freshman year.”

Unlike many of her teammates, she had virtually no playing experience before high school, so she started out on the freshman team and worked her way up to becoming a two-year starter on defense.

“I’m just very excited about it (being a captain),” she said. “I feel really good that my teammates believe in me.”

According to Noone, Miller — who is also a superb student with a weighted 4.2 GPA — is a natural as a captain.

“As a leader, Alana has been a vocal leader, always supporting her teammates in any way she can,” said Noone. “She has been great in organizing and connecting with our younger players. She is the player that is always working — even when practices are over — trying to better her hitting skills.”

DAVID WILLIS CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT

LOCAL ROUNDUP

Ingram, Andover take MVC Golf Day title

GOLF

Stephen Ingram shot a 73 while Cade Cedorchuk, Evan Giggey and Nick Ventura each added a 78 as Andover won the team title at the MVC Golf Day last Thursday.

The Golden Warriors won with a team score of 18-over, well ahead of No. 2 Lowell (32-over).

“I was so happy for our three seniors, the year they were hoping to have,” said Andover coach Dave Fazio. “This was a state tourney for us. Cade, Steven and Evan have been with me forever. Our success over the last couple of years is the number of really good players we have. Everybody broke 80. That’s not an easy thing to do having four guys do it. I’m so proud.”

Added Cedorchuk: “We’re very thankful that we were able to play this fall, being seniors and loving our team. t caps off a great start to our senior year. We weren’t sure we were going to be able to play back in the summer. But it was great.”

Nick Ventura shot an even-par 36 for medalist honors, as Andover beat Central Catholic 233-251 last Wednesday. Stephen Ingram (38) and Evan Giggey (39) were next best for the Golden Warriors (9-1).



BILL BURT PHOTO

The Andover High golf team won the MVC Golf Day team event last Thursday at Mount Pleasant Golf Club in Lowell. The team consists of Evan Giggey, Stephen Ingram, Nick Ventura and Cade Cedorchuk. On the far right is Andover coach Dave Fazio.

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Kiley leads the way
Molly Kiley took first place overall in 18:51 and Leila Boudries grabbed second in 19:16 as Andover defeated Central Catholic 18-41 on Saturday. Abby Redington (fourth, 20:19), Anika Kapadia (fifth, 22:02) and Mary Lonergan (sixth, 22:14) added stellar finishes for Andover.

Leila Boudries (17:50) placed third overall, but Andover lost to Billerica 20-35 last Wednesday. Abby Redington (fifth, 19:00) and Mary Lonergan (eighth, 20:05) were next in for the Warriors.

FIELD HOCKEY

Hat trick for Farnham
Lilly Farnham scored a whopping three goals, as Andover rolled past rival North Andover 5-0 last Wednesday.

GIRLS SOCCER

Adams nets two

Lauren Adams scored two goals to lead Andover to a 3-3 tie with Central Catholic on Saturday. Maya Schwinn-Clanton scored the other Golden Warrior goal and Ashley Napolitano and Kaitlyn Crowley combined for five saves in goal.

Andover lost to North Andover 3-1 last Wednesday.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Serano stars

Matt Serano placed second overall in 16:52, as Andover fell just short to Billerica 26-29 last Wednesday. Charlie Beams was right behind him in fourth (17:15), DJ Walsh took fifth (17:21) and Zack Nepomnashy finished eighth (17:44).

Matt Serrano continued to shine, placing third in 16:44, as Andover lost to Central Catholic 22-33 on Saturday. Cameron Kim (fifth, 16:55) and DJ Walsh (sixth, 16:59) also led the Golden Warriors.

BOYS SOCCER

Warriors blanked

Andover continued to struggle to score goals, but played Central Catholic to a 0-0 tie on Saturday.

Andover fell to rival North Andover 1-0 last Wednesday.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Andover falls short

Andover dropped a grueling 25-20, 25-22, 25-24 loss to North Andover last Wednesday.

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 townsmen@andovertownsmen.com or call 978-475-7000, ext. 8733. We look forward to hearing from you.

A TREAT FOR HALLOWEEN

TIM JEAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Andover Recreation Department hosted its annual "Too Cute to Spook" Halloween event at Recreation Park on Wednesday, Oct. 21.

Children, primarily preschoolers, came in their 2020 costumes of choice and participated in activities including an obstacle course, games and other activities.



Daniel Haggerty, 3, dressed as Buzz Lightyear, and Jesse Stott, 2, dressed as a fisherman, make their way through an obstacle course.



Aiden Card, 4, of Andover, dressed as a gecko.



Maxwell Flaherty, 18 months old, dressed as The Hulk, and his brother Lincoln Flaherty, 4, dressed as Spiderman, take part in a coloring contest.



Duncan Vemis, 3, dressed as Toucan Sam, helps his little brother Walter, 2, dressed as Superman, as they play a game.



Joey Bonfiglio, 2, of Andover, dressed as Captain America, makes his way through an obstacle course.



Lucy Getto, 2, dressed as a Purple Dragon, leads her nanny Lindsay Crudale.



Ray Retelle, 3, dressed as The Grinch, and Lincoln Flaherty, 4, dressed as Spiderman, mosey through the obstacle course.

GOP request for 'watchdogs' spurs criticism

BY CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — The state Republican Party is seeking to enlist "watchdogs" to check for fraud at the polls, which Democrats say signals plans to intimidate voters.

In a recent email to members, MassGOP Chairman Jim Lyons said the party is "looking for a few good watchdogs" in the Nov. 3 election.

"Integrity at the ballot box begins and ends with attentive citizens," Lyons wrote. "Poll watchers are necessary to minimize any risk of fraud."

Lyons' call follows a similar one from President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly suggested that his supporters, as well as law enforcement, should monitor the voting process. Trump's campaign argues that a Republican victory in November could be imperiled by voter fraud.



FILE PHOTO/State House News Service
Jim Lyons, the head of the Massachusetts Republican Party, is drawing fire for calling for Republicans to serve as "watchdogs" at the polls this Nov. 3.

Democrats accuse Trump and Republicans of recruiting supporters to act as intimidators at the polls.

"Donald Trump has made no secret of his efforts to intimidate voters and keep them from voting, and now we are seeing the same thing right

here at home, courtesy of the Massachusetts Republican Party," Gus Bickford, chairman of the Massachusetts Democratic Party, said in a statement.

Bickford called on Gov. Charlie Baker, de facto leader of the state GOP, to denounce

plans to "bully and intimidate voters."

Baker, a moderate Republican who told reporters recently he won't be supporting Trump in the election, hasn't said anything about the issue of GOP voter intimidation. Recently he has distanced himself from the party leadership, which has adopted a more conservative platform under Lyons' leadership.

Attorney General Maura Healey, a Democrat, said the state GOP is pivoting off Trump's messaging to "engage in an effort meant to have the effect of intimidating voters and suppressing the vote."

"We're not going to tolerate any intimidation," she said. "We are going to make sure that people's right to vote is protected, free from obstruction and interference."

Like a majority of states, Massachusetts allows political parties to assign poll watchers as election monitors, but they

are prohibited from confronting voters or acting in a manner that would be considered intimidating.

Local clerks may ask for a police presence at the polls, though officers are prohibited by law from interfering in the voting process.

During the first presidential debate, Trump urged supporters to "go into the polls and watch very carefully," claiming the election could be marred by fraud.

Earlier this year, the Republican National Committee announced plans to recruit up to 50,000 volunteers to monitor polls in 15 states and challenge ballots and voters deemed suspicious.

The RNC has said its poll watchers will be trained and abide by state laws.

The U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division also deploys observers to the polls in Massachusetts and other states to watch for voter

disenfranchisement.

Meanwhile, other groups are planning to send observers to look for instances of voter intimidation. The American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts has teamed up with Common Cause and other voting advocacy groups to deploy hundreds of trained "non-partisan" poll workers on Election Day.

"The goal is to ensure every eligible voter can cast a ballot without any interference," said Carol Rose, executive director of the ACLU of Massachusetts. "We don't have a history of violence or intimidation at the polls in Massachusetts, and we don't want there to be any, but we'll have people out ensuring if that happens we put a stop to it."

Christian M. Wade covers the Massachusetts Statehouse for North of Boston Media Group's newspapers and websites. Email him at cwade@cni.com.

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