



OFFICIALS: ROOF HEATER STARTED FIRE. PAGE 5



ENJOYING THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING. PAGE 12



TOMAS LOUREIRO STARRING FOR AHS FOOTBALL TEAM. PAGE 11

OUR 131<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

# Andover Townsman

Issue No. 22

April 1, 2021

\$1.00



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Sol Tash, 4, of Andover, leads a group of cyclists through the park looking for the next scavenger marker during Andover's First Annual Spring Bike Tune Up and Scavenger Hunt. The event was organized by Andover Police Department, Andover Community Planning Division and Andover Recreation to help get more people to use bicycles downtown.

## Steer, pedal and roll

### Town hosts spring bike tune-ups, scavenger hunt

BY MADELINE HUGHES  
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

It was a crisp day as Andover hosted its first spring bike tune-up. "We used to hold a bike rodeo, but because of COVID the structure of that event wouldn't have been able to

happen," said Anthony Collins, Andover's associate planner. Pedalin' Fools bike services returned to help tune up bikes, and kids followed a bike safety-themed scavenger hunt around the Town Office Complex. All of the events provide for social distancing, Collins said.

The same event will be held on April 11 to allow more people to get their bike tuned and participate in the scavenger hunt. The scavenger hunt uses QR codes for each clue, so participants won't have to touch anything, Collins said. See **BIKES**, Page 2

## Downtown bike parking gets easier

BY JUDY WAKEFIELD  
jwakefield@andovertownsman.com

Who hasn't been frustrated by the minimal parking on Main Street? Now, there is a new way to avoid that parking headache. The three keywords to get more customers downtown this summer — ride your bike. The town has been awarded an \$8,000 state

grant from the Department of Transportation to install seven new bike racks downtown. The first one was just installed at the intersection of Elm and Main streets - in front of Nazarian's Jewelers located at 2 Elm Square. The new rack looks like a two-wheel bike and is located on the brick sidewalk in front of the historic building. See **PARKING**, Page 2



CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

A new bike rack sits in front of Nazarian's Jewelers, 2 Elm Square in Andover.

## Committee selects 2 school chief finalists

BY MADELINE HUGHES  
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

Andover is one step closer to having a new superintendent.

The screening committee tasked with choosing candidates for the position has announced Magda Parvey and Stephen Zdravec as the finalists for the position Thursday night. The committee whittled down 10 applicants to five people to interview fully, then Parvey and Zdravec rose to the top, said Ann McNamee, the chair of the Superintendent Preliminary Screening Committee, in a statement.

The candidates will introduce themselves to the community and be interviewed in a televised forum, McNamee said. Then there will be a survey for Andover

residents to give feedback about both candidates before the School Committee makes the decision on who to hire.

One of them will replace interim Superintendent Claudia Bach, whose contract with the district ends in June. The new superintendent will start on July 1. Bach replaced Superintendent Sheldon Berman who resigned at the end of 2020 for personal reasons. Both superintendent finalists are from outside the state and have doctorate degrees in the field of education.

Parvey has been the chief academic officer for Middletown Public Schools in Middletown, Connecticut since December 2019. She previously was the interim superintendent for the City School District be a survey for Andover See **FINALISTS**, Page 2

## School Committee denies Fusion Academy approval

BY MADELINE HUGHES  
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

Andover's School Committee has voted against allowing Fusion Academy to operate as a private school in town.

Fusion Academy wanted to offer a different approach to school — a hybrid model that has 23 hours a semester of one-on-one learning

supplemented with independent work, also known as asynchronous learning, for each class. According to plans submitted to the district, all students would be at the school even when learning asynchronously, so there would be teachers available to provide assistance during the independent learning time. See **DENIED**, Page 2

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## Some write-in ballots but no surprises; 5% turnout

BY MADELINE HUGHES  
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

Fewer than 5% of Andover voters cast ballots during last Tuesday's election.

The low turnout was expected because everyone on the ballot was an incumbent seeking reelection and running unopposed.

There were 1,232 ballots cast, according to unofficial town results.

Christian C. Huntress and Ann W. Gilbert were reelected to the Select Board. There were 26 ballots with write-in candidates, according

to the results.

Tracey E. Spruce and Susan K. McCready were re-elected to the School Committee. Fifty-two ballots had write-in candidates.

Melissa M. Danisch and Eric Stubenhaus were reelected to be Trustees of the Punchard Free School seats.

Sheila M. Doherty was reelected as town moderator and Marilyn M. Fitzgerald for the Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical School District Commission.

Daniel T. Grams was reelected for the Housing Authority.



A resident fills out her ballot at Cormier Youth Center. Precincts 1 and 3, which have in past elections voted at the Senior Center, voted at the Youth Center on Whittier Court. This change in polling location is due to the renovation project at the Senior Center.



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# BIKES

Continued from Page 1

This past Saturday and on April 11 the town redesigned Punchard Avenue, adding in cones, signs and planters. It's part of the "shared street," program help drivers slow down, and to allow bikers and walkers a safe place to walk, Collins said.

The town is piloting this "shared street" program on one of its biggest cut-through streets because downtown residents particularly have asked for ways to have people slow down and stop cutting through on residential streets, Collins said.

"Biking and walking have to be done safely and we want to hear people's comments about how to make Andover safer for biking and walking," Collins said. "We want to know where they want to go when walking and biking so we can make it safer for their journey there."

The town has applied for a grant to expand the program through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and is awaiting that funding to potentially expand the program if residents like it, Collins said.

The town has also added bike racks downtown through a state grant, which will also help encourage people to bike downtown, Collins said.

"They will allow residents to be able to stop and hang out while having somewhere to store their bike," Collins said. "And this will hopefully reduce the short trips taken by car, instead encourage the walking and biking."

Registration is required for the upcoming event. For more information and to sign up visit [bit.ly/3cEmphy](http://bit.ly/3cEmphy).



Charlie Tash, 6, of Andover, pedals through the park during Andover's First Annual Spring Bike Tune Up and Scavenger Hunt.

TIM JEAN/Staff photo

# PARKING

Continued from Page 1

State Sen. Barry Finegold, D-Andover, is part owner of the Musgrove Building and welcomes the new bike racks.

"There were so many people who ate outdoors at restaurants in downtown Andover last year and this will bring even more customers downtown. I support this," said Finegold, a town native. "And, we want people to walk, ride a bike downtown because it's good for them."

Additional racks will be installed at Memorial Hall Library, Old Town Hall, Elm Square, Doherty Field, Main Street parking lot, Town Offices and Cormier Youth Center.

"These new bike racks will encourage biking and other forms of active transportation. The new bike racks will enable people to have convenient locations to park their bikes when they are downtown," said Ann Ormond, Director of Business, Arts and Culture for the town.



A new bike rack in front of Nazarian's Jewelers, 2 Elm Square in Andover.

CARL RUSSO/ staff photo

# FINALISTS

Continued from Page 1 of New Rochelle, New York, according to her resume.

Her work has concentrated in New York and Connecticut schools after beginning her career as a lead teacher in a Brooklyn

public school, according to her resume. She rose to be a principal then took various districtwide leadership positions.

Zadravec has been the superintendent for the Portsmouth School Department in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, since 2015 and is an adjunct professor for Southern New Hampshire

University, according to his resume.

His career has been concentrated in New Hampshire working as a math teacher at Newmarket Junior and Senior High School after being a long-term substitute teacher in multiple districts, according to his resume. Zadravec worked in multiple

positions, including as a math curriculum coordinator before going to work for the Portsmouth School Department in 2005 as the assistant superintendent.

More information about the candidates can be found at [bit.ly/3vWVUNr](http://bit.ly/3vWVUNr).

# AG's lawsuit seeks driving school refunds for 1,500

By JILL HARMACINSKI Staff Writer

was recently indicted by the Essex County grand jury on additional narcotics charges.

Residents, mostly teens, from the Merrimack Valley and Greater Newburyport areas, comprise the 1,500 students who paid more than \$1 million to a driving school that abruptly shut down after its owner was charged with trafficking methamphetamines, authorities said.

Attorney General Maura Healey filed a civil lawsuit late last week against North Andover Auto School, also doing business at MV Auto School, and its owner Michael Larocque, 56, of Lawrence. The lawsuit seeks refunds for the students and penalties after the schools, services, according to a statement from Healey.

In September, Larocque was charged with trafficking methamphetamines and

After his arrest, the state's Registry of Motor Vehicles revoked the school's license as well as Larocque's license to teach driver's education.

North Andover Auto School operated RMV-licensed driving schools in North Andover and Haverhill, at North Andover High School and also as Greater Lawrence Technical School in Andover, according to Healey.

"The schools provided instruction to primarily teenaged students throughout the North Shore, including those from: North Andover, Andover, Methuen, Haverhill, Lawrence, Merrimac, Amesbury, Salisbury, Newburyport, West Newbury, Georgetown, Groveland and Boxford," according to information released by Healey's office.

# DENIED

Continued from Page 1

District officials said that this wouldn't be sufficient, according to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which has recently required all elementary and middle school students to receive in-person instruction five days a week. They recommended the committee vote against allowing the school.

"Commissioner (Jeffrey) Riley has made clear asynchronous learning is not the same," said Assistant Superintendent Sandra Trach.

If a student takes eight classes a semester throughout the academic year they have 368 hours of instruction, whereas Andover High School students get 935 hours of in-person instruction a year.

State law requires school committees to approve private schools in their district only if "its instruction equals the public schools in the same town in thoroughness and efficiency and that private students are making the same progress as public school students."

The majority of the committee declined to grant the school approval for this discrepancy. Committee member Paul Murphy, who is a faculty member at Phillips Academy in Andover, was the only person to vote to allow Fusion Academy to operate as a private school.

This was the second attempt to allow the center

to operate as a private school in the town.

Fusion Academy has been operating a learning center in Andover since 2019. This year they offered programs to supplement asynchronous learning days for the hybrid model public schools currently operate due to health concerns because of the pandemic.

Whitney Repetto, an Andover mother of a Fusion Academy student, spoke in favor of the district allowing the school. She enrolled her son in the hybrid supplemental program where he went to the academy on the days he was supposed to be remote in the Andover hybrid model.

"It was an absolute lifesaver for us... We realized we might have the best academic year we've ever had," Repetto said. "The supplemental programming that they provided was phenomenal."

While the committee declined to approve the school, they did recognize the school helped students, especially over the past year.

"Under their current form they are doing good work for the families and students of Andover," said Shannon Scully, the committee chair, adding she hopes they keep their tutoring and supplemental academic programs.

Fusion Academy operates three other schools in Massachusetts, where school committees had to approve the plans. Fusion Academy in Newton opened in 2018, in Burlington in 2019 and in Hingham in 2020.

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A resident fills out his ballot at the Wood Hill Middle School during Andover's town election.

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# Andover man indicted for 2019 fentanyl OD death

By JILL HARMACINSKI  
Staff Writer

SALEM, Mass. — An Andover man was secretly indicted and charged with involuntary manslaughter for the December 2019 drug overdose death of another Andover man, authorities confirmed.

Joseph Comeau, 25, was arraigned March 24 in Salem Superior Court in connection with the fatal overdose of Max Durham, who was 20 at the time of his death, said Carrie Kimball, spokesperson for District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett.

Authorities say Comeau distributed fentanyl that resulted in Durham's fatal overdose.

Judge Jeffrey Karp set bail for Comeau at \$7,500 cash and ordered him to remain under house arrest at 6 Burton Farm Drive, Andover with a GPS monitoring device.

Karp further ordered Comeau to have no contact with Durham's family or any of the prosecution's witnesses and to remain drug and alcohol free, according to court records.

On March 18, the Essex County grand jury secretly indicted Comeau following a joint investigation by Andover Police, Essex

State Police Detective Unit and the Essex County District Attorney's Office that began in December 2019.

Comeau turned himself in to Andover Police on a warrant, Kimball said.

In court, Assistant District Attorney Kelleen Forlizzi told the court that on Dec. 6, 2019, the defendant arranged to sell drugs to Durham in Manchester, N.H. Durham drove to Manchester with a friend who is said to have witnessed the transaction. Comeau allegedly bragged about the strength of the drugs, which ultimately turned out to be straight fentanyl. Durham was found dead in his Andover home the next morning, authorities said.

Defense attorney Dan Murphy is representing Comeau.

Comeau is due back in court on May 12 for a pre-trial conference.

According to Durham's obituary, which ran in the Andover Townsman, he had many passions including hiking, skiing, skateboarding and bicycling. He enjoyed skiing with his brother and father in the White Mountains, out west and in France. He also liked baking Christmas cookies and during at York Beach, Maine.

"He nurtured and loved

his border collie Sky," according to the obituary.

Durham had planned to attend Champlain College in Burlington Vermont in the spring of 2020, according to his obituary.

He was survived by his parents, Mary and Andrew Durham and his brother Alexander; grandparents, Susan and Chris Durham; Aunts Debbie, Kelly, Patty Elena, Andrea and Peggy and Uncles Keith, Badri, Ski and Chris along with several cousins. He also leaves behind his spiritual grandmother and grandfather, Eileen Manning and Stanley Zajechowski, according to his obituary.

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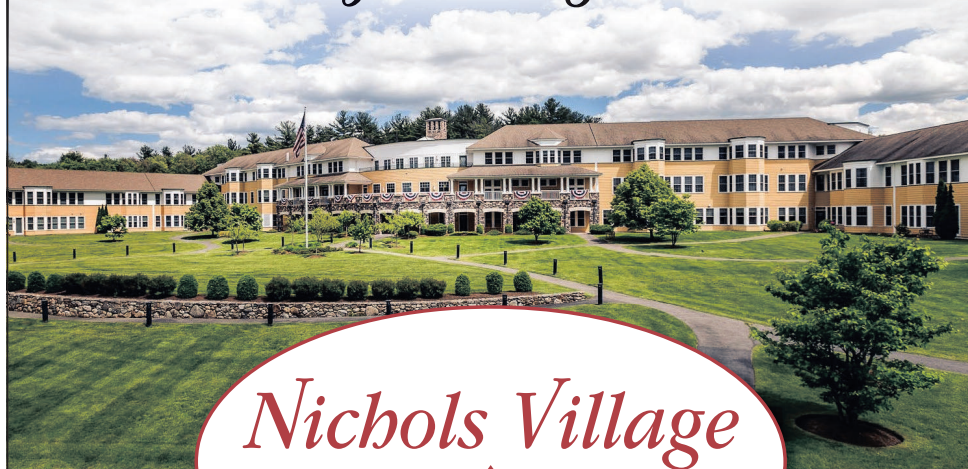
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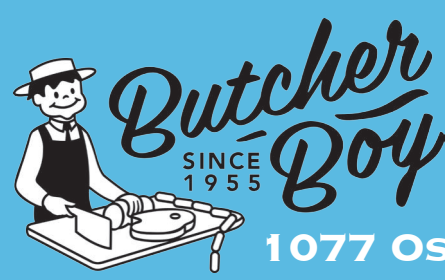
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# Opinion

## Slighted at the 'Big Dance'

Mid-March is the best time of year to be a college basketball fan, when you can bounce between the NCAA tournaments in the men's and women's games with all the effort it takes to switch channels. While the men and women play the same sport for the same colleges on the same brackets at roughly the same time of night, however,

*Really, all of it shows the NCAA considers the women's basketball tournament to be a backwater less deserving of its interest or support.*

workout facilities available to athletes in the women's tournament bubble — a stack of yoga mats next to a rack of a half-dozen sets of hand weights — and posted it next to a similar photo taken by someone in the men's tournament bubble. The latter, you might imagine, was outfitted as it should be with dozens of workout benches, squat racks and sets of free weights.

Don't think for a second that athletes in one tournament are more interested in training than their counterparts in the other. Nor should one assume this was a singular oversight. Menus for athletes in the two settings were vastly different, as well — steaks, lobster mac and cheese and the like for the men, versus some indiscernible protein and mushy vegetable medley for the women. Players in the men's tournament shared photos of a rich pile of giveaways and souvenirs offered to every athlete, while those in the women's tournament got something more likely passed off on a wizard kid living in the closet under the stairs.

Worse still was the revelation that the two tournaments have used far different approaches to COVID-19 testing for players inside their respective bubbles. Men are screened using the top-level polymerase chain reaction tests that detect the genetic material encoded in the coronavirus even among people without symptoms. Athletes in the women's tournament are screened with the cheaper, quick reporting and less precise antigen tests.

NCAA President Mark Emmert insists the safety programs at the tournaments are equally effective, according to the New York Times: "All of the health experts say the protocol that they're using right now in all our venues and all our championships is one that has no difference at all in our ability to mitigate risk."

Really, all of it shows the NCAA considers the women's tournament to be a backwater less deserving of its interest or support.

The dissembling response from the NCAA to the predictable fury all of this caused on social media only served to make things worse. Dan Gavitt, the NCAA's vice president of basketball, apologized for "dropping the ball," according to the Times.

At one point another NCAA official suggested the spare women's facilities had something to do with a lack of space — an excuse undone by a player from Oregon who posted a video of the cavernous, unused convention center surrounding it.

If we're being honest, the most important contrast between these two tournaments, as far as the NCAA is concerned, is the difference between the \$850 million it gets in television rights for men's tournament games, compared to \$42 million the Times reports it will receive for the women's tourney.

That the NCAA should be so callous as to let that affect the amenities for these student athletes is painfully dismissive of the women who've worked hard to earn an opportunity to play in the national spotlight. And it sends a poisonous message to fans of the game as well as the legion of young players whose dreams and ambitions are shaped by what they see playing out in front of them.

For college basketball players, there may be nothing better than earning a trip to the "Big Dance." It's just too bad the NCAA has to be the chaperone.

## The inspiration behind a name

ANDOVER  
STORIES

Tom Adams

Andover Center for History and Culture

Imagine making that long, grueling drive to visit family, perhaps a friend, or a long overdue pilgrimage to your hometown. Time crawls as the miles pass. You pass road sign after road sign, town after town. Telephone poles and light posts pass like a picket fence; power lines a blurred black ribbon. You see signs saying "Buffalo, Illinois, 38 miles"; "Memphis, Michigan, Exit 46A"; or "Dallas, Oregon, I-45 South, Merge Right."

You mumble softly, "no way, Buffalo's in New York, Memphis is definitely in Tennessee, and last I heard, it was Dallas, Texas."

Mind-boggling as it may seem, the fact is that many towns across this country and many more throughout the world boast identical names.

In America, for instance, there are 31 towns named Franklin; 88 named Washington; and 28 named Arlington.

Massachusetts has one of each.

Andover, Massachusetts alone has 17 "sisters," one each in California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Vermont and Virginia.

In our entire country, 927 towns and cities share the same name.

All this made me curious about the history of town and city names, and I started with the basics. Damascus, a major cultural center in the Middle East, is the world's oldest inhabited city dating back 11,000 years.

Alexandria, named after the ancient Greek city founded by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C., is the world's most popular city name. There are 39



Photos courtesy Andover Center for History and Culture

The Andover Town House in 1910. The fire house tower can be seen in the background.



The Andover Town House in 1900.

Alexandrias in the world, 12 of those are in America — located in Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and communities in Minnesota, New York, Tennessee and Ohio.

Worldwide there are 15 named New York and 29 Londons; 23 named Paris; 39 San Franciscos; and nine named San Antonio.

In the United States, Washington, named after the Revolutionary War general and our nation's first president, is the most common name, numbering 88 throughout the country.

Coming in second is Springfield with 38. The first named Springfield is in Massachusetts and was founded in 1636, 10 years before our town.

It was named after Springfield in

Essex, England. In 1777, George Washington founded the National Armory in Springfield.

Towns named Franklin — and there are 33 including Franklin, Massachusetts some 30 miles southeast of Hopkinton — round out the top three.

Franklin was so named in honor of American statesman Benjamin Franklin who played an important role in shaping the United States. Among his many achievements were helping to draft the Declaration of Independence, serving as Ambassador to France, and establishing the U.S. Postal Service.

What about Andover, our hometown?

The name "Andover" first appears in history in 950 A.D. with a Saxon king and his royal hunting lodge.

Our story "officially"



An "entering Andover" sign.

began in 1634 when the Massachusetts General Court set aside a portion of land for agriculture. The land included areas of today's Andover, North Andover, South Lawrence and Methuen.

Colonists were offered a three-year suspension of taxes and levies as inducements to settle in the area.

The first permanent settlement in the Andover area was established in 1642 by John Woodbridge and a group of settlers from Newbury and Ipswich. On May 16, 1646, the settlement was incorporated and named Andover in honor of the town of Andover, England, original home of some of the first residents.

Andover is just a few weeks away from its 375th anniversary.

Over the course of this anniversary year, Andover Stories will feature some fascinating stories about our sister city in England, past anniversary festivities, and a continuation of our look at life in Andover over these past 375 years. So, stay tuned!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Giving MCAS tests this year is an illogical waste of time

Editor, Townsman:

Massachusetts Education Commissioner Jeff Riley wants to go ahead with MCAS testing as usual this year.

He feels these traditionally biased tests (year after year, wealthy school

districts score well, economically challenged school districts score poorly) will show what our students did not "get" during this unprecedented year.

This will be an illogical waste of time. Students will spend two weeks on these tests, further diminishing their time spent actually learning, and frontline educators already know what has been sacrificed.

These tests will

exacerbate students' learning loss without providing any new information.

Riley must listen to students, parents and frontline educators, as their combined perspectives provide the most complete picture of what school districts need right now.

It is not common for frontline educators, superintendents and school committees all to agree on something, yet there is

overwhelming agreement among them that administering the MCAS this year would do more harm than good, and Riley should heed their advice.

He must let frontline educators have the time they need to help their students accomplish as much as they possibly can in what has been an impossible school year.

MARY ROBB  
Andover

## WEB QUESTION

Last week's town election in Andover saw just 5% of registered voters (or 1,232 people) mark a ballot in which all of the incumbents for local office ran unopposed for reelection. How come more people don't put in their names for Select Board, School Committee or another town position?

**TOO MUCH TIME:** Serving in local office requires an enormous investment of time, energy and attention — not to mention headache and frustration. If you really want to help our town, a ton of local groups are more than glad to have you volunteer.

**VITRIOL:** The politics of this town can get

downright ugly. Say the wrong thing about somebody, and yard signs start sprouting like mushrooms after the rain. Who needs the agony?

**SMART LEADERS:** Andover is fortunate to have smart, capable residents who are willing to serve in these positions. Why run for office when others are doing such a good job?

**PRIORITIES?:** There are many ways to spend one's time, from career to kids to travel. It's good that someone is willing to serve the town, but it's not for everybody.

Last week's question

How closely have you followed the state's travel guidelines?

As of Monday, the state relaxed its COVID-19 travel limits so that people may leave and return to Massachusetts within 24 hours without being tested for the virus or subjecting themselves to quarantine. Previously, not following the state's travel restrictions could have led to a \$500 fine.

The change is significant in towns such as Andover, close to the New Hampshire border. Now there is no restriction, per se, on crossing to shop in New Hampshire and coming back to Massachusetts — or doing

the reverse.

Have you been following the rules?

**TO THE LETTER:** I'll soon take my first trip across the border to the shops in Salem, N.H., in more than a year. I've almost forgotten where to park at Rockingham Mall. (9 votes)

**WHAT RESTRICTION?:** Even if I understood the point of these travel restrictions, it's silly to expect people to follow them when going to New Hampshire to shop or eat in a restaurant is such a part of the regular routine. Not having a restriction is nice, but I haven't exactly paid attention to it. (32 votes)

## READER ACCESS

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# Attorney general suing driving school, owner

School owner also sued; 1,500 students out more than \$1 million in refunds

By JILL HARMACINSKI  
jharmacinski@eagletribune.com

BOSTON - Attorney General Maura Healey has filed a lawsuit against a North Andover driving school that closed after its owner, Michael Larocque of Lawrence, was charged with trafficking methamphetamines leaving 1,500 students without more than \$1 million in refunds.

Healey's office is also seeking a preliminary injunction to preserve any assets for consumer restitution, according to a statement from Healey released at midnight Friday.

Through the preliminary injunction and lawsuit, Healey is "seeking full refunds of over \$1 million to affected consumers,"

according to the statement. Prospective students paid between \$550 to \$750 to take driver's education courses, authorities said.

The lawsuit was filed Thursday in Essex Superior Court against North Andover Auto School, also doing business as MV Auto School, and its owner, Larocque, 56, for violating the state's Consumer Protection Act.

The suit alleges the school and Larocque accepted prepayment for services from consumers, but after the school's licenses were revoked they did not deliver the services or provide any refunds.

"The closure of this business left hundreds of student drivers stranded with no way to complete their courses or obtain refunds for services

*"We've moved quickly to preserve the defendant's assets so they can be used for consumer restitution and are seeking more than \$1 million in full refunds for impacted consumers."*

Attorney General Maura Healey

they already paid for," Healey said.

"We've moved quickly to preserve the defendant's assets so they can be used for consumer restitution and are seeking more than \$1 million in full refunds for impacted consumers," she added.

Healey said her office started a civil investigation into "potential consumer protection violations" after receiving complaints and being contacted by the state's

Registry of Motor Vehicles. Larocque was originally charged Sept. 21 with two counts of trafficking methamphetamines over 200 grams after a lengthy investigation involving local, state and federal authorities.

He was recently indicted by the Essex County grand jury on the two counts of trafficking methamphetamines over 200 grams. He was additionally charged with one count of illegal possession of a class

D substance, one count of trafficking 36 to 100 grams of methamphetamine and one count of illegal possession of a class A substance, according to information provided by Healey's office.

Investigators seized the drugs after executing search warrants at Larocque's 69 Colonial Road home in Lawrence and the North Andover Auto School at 203 Turnpike St., unit 404, in North Andover, according to reports.

At the time of his arrest, detectives said they had made "controlled purchases" of methamphetamines from Larocque's Lawrence home and the school.

In the wake of Larocque's arrest, the RMV announced they had suspended the driving school's license and started the process of getting

refunds for students. Students enrolled in the driving school attend Andover, North Andover and Haverhill facilities.

Larocque, who is free on bail, faces arraignment early next month in Salem Superior Court, where the penalties he faces if convicted will be more severe.

Follow staff reporter Jill Harmacinski on Twitter @EagleTribJill.

Follow us on:

 @andovertownsmen

# Officials: Roof heater started fire at Sunset Rock Road

By MADELINE HUGHES  
mhughes@andovertownsmen.com

The fire that started in a home on Sunset Rock Road on March 22 was caused by an electrical issue, Andover Fire Chief Michael Mansfield and State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey said in a statement Wednesday.

The accidental fire began in the attic of the home at 14 Sunset Rock Road where an extension cord was being used for a roof heating system to prevent ice dams, they said.



Courtesy photo

Andover firefighters battle a blaze at a home on Sunset Rock Road on March 22.

"All heat-generating appliances such as space heaters, toasters, and roof heating systems need to be plugged directly into a wall outlet designed to support them," Mansfield said. "Extension cords are easily overloaded and don't have the protection of circuit breakers."

"Roof heating systems are safe when used properly, but should not be left on continuously," Mansfield said. "Turn them on only when needed,

then shut them off. Just like you wouldn't leave your space heater running all the time." Andover fire and police investigated the fire with State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

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# Climate pact hinges on 2 neighboring states

By Christian M. Wade  
Statehouse reporter

BOSTON -- Massachusetts is largely in the driver's seat on a regional plan to reduce carbon emissions from cars and trucks, but the initiative, which could lead to higher gas prices, now hinges on the approval of lawmakers in two neighboring states.

Gov. Charlie Baker, the governors of Connecticut and Rhode Island, and the mayor of Washington, D.C., signed a regional agreement in December that aims to substantially curb tailpipe emissions while drumming up revenue for projects to mitigate climate change and improve transportation infrastructure.

The Transportation and Climate Initiative won't be put to a vote in Massachusetts, but it still must be ratified by Connecticut and Rhode Island in order to go forward.

In Connecticut, lawmakers are debating whether to enter into the pact. A bill

filed by Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont is expected to clear a key committee but its fate in the General Assembly is less certain.

Rhode Island lawmakers have yet to file a proposal to ratify the deal, but supporters say they expect legislation to emerge soon.

Backers of the initiative in Connecticut and Rhode Island say they expect it to be ratified, but opponents argue that it's anything but a done deal.

"If lawmakers go ahead with this, they are going to be increasing gas prices for their constituents, which will be a hard sell," said Christian Herb, executive director of the Connecticut Energy Marketers Association, a trade group that opposes the pact. "The governor is clearly in favor of it, but the Legislature will ultimately have the final say."

Herb said a Republican minority in the Connecticut Legislature, and even some Democrats, strongly oppose approving a pact

*The pact aims to cut motor vehicle emissions by at least 26% within the next 11 years. It targets gasoline and diesel fuel consumption, which account for about 40% of regional emissions that scientists say contribute to climate change.*

that would lead to higher gas prices and "cede their taxing authority to some autonomous bureaucracy."

"If it had steam, I think they would've already voted on it by now," he said. "I expect it will come out of committee, but it's going to be a different story in the General Assembly."

The pact aims to cut motor vehicle emissions by at least 26% within the next 11 years. It targets gasoline and diesel fuel consumption, which account for about 40% of regional emissions that scientists say contribute to climate change.

The three states now

involved in the pact account for about 73% of vehicle emissions in New England.

Under the plan, suppliers who deliver fuel across state lines will be taxed on emissions above limits that have yet to be set.

Their costs will likely be passed to consumers.

Supporters say the plan caps increases at 5 cents per gallon in the first year, but opponents say it's unclear what will happen down the road. They say the deal ultimately will hurt consumers while doing little to reduce emissions.

"In order to reach the emissions cuts they're proposing, it's going to

have to be 30, 40, 50 cents a gallon," said Mike Stenhouse, founder and CEO of the Rhode Island Center for Freedom and Prosperity. "Make no mistake, this isn't about reducing carbon emissions. It's basically a cash grab by these states."

Stenhouse said his group has done polling that shows even Rhode Islanders who support cutting vehicle

emissions change their mind when told it will cost them at the pump. He said dozens of lawmakers have gone on record in opposition to the pact.

Former Gov. Gina Raimondo, a Democrat who signed the climate pact, has left to serve as President Joe Biden's commerce secretary. It's not yet clear where her successor, Democratic Gov. Dan McKee, stands on the issue.

But Hank Webster, director of the Rhode Island chapter of the Acadia Center, said he expects the pact to be ratified. He noted the Legislature is in the process of approving a massive

climate change bill, and he anticipates something will "emerge soon."

A majority of the 11 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states that were part of the original TCI pact haven't committed to the agreement. New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, a Republican, says his state won't join.

Of the current group, Massachusetts is the only state that won't be putting the issue to a vote.

The Baker administration says the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act gives the governor the authority to ratify the climate agreement without legislative approval.

A group of Republican lawmakers filed a bill last year that would have required a vote in the Legislature, but it failed to win support.

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

## Overbearing parents can ruin sports experience



**Dear Doctor:** Soccer season is about to begin, and both of our girls will be playing or their father will die. He loves the sport and he adores his daughters. His problem is the stress he puts on the coach and on them with his behavior. He screams directions from the sidelines, calls out the refs, and does an after game play by play with the girls. They enjoy the sport but are getting irritated with their father. Maybe he will pay attention if someone other than his wife tries to get him to lay off.

Wife

*Youth sports are great if they belong to the youth.*

they belong to the youth. The first rule is to allow the child a chance to own what he/she is doing. The second rule is to match the child with the sport. For example, a less coordinated child might do better in martial arts, staying away from a team venue.

Sports vary in intensity and physical requirements. Do your best to advise an appropriate one. If it doesn't work out, be flexible and do not push.

Finally, keep your mouth shut except to encourage. This does not mean obscene praise or criticism.

**Dear Wife:** You have brought up a problem in youth sports, the parents.

I remember sitting in a restaurant with a friend on a Saturday morning. We were having breakfast when four boys and their fathers came in and sat down for their morning snack.

They had come from hockey, and the four dads were reviewing their game. Criticisms were flying, and the kids were bowing their heads in embarrassment over their fathers' remarks.

My friend, a well known town jock, shook his head and said "see how they will someday speak to their sons."

Youth sports are great if



## Mass. unemployment claims surge

30,234 new applications for benefits were filed in the state

By Christian M. Wade  
Statehouse reporter

BOSTON — New unemployment claims in Massachusetts surged last week as the state's pandemic battered labor market continues to struggle.

At least 30,234 new applications for benefits were filed in the state for the week ending March 20 -- an increase of 10,713 from the previous week, the U.S. Department of Labor reported.

There were 3,358 new claims last week for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a federally backed program that covers workers ineligible for state unemployment benefits. That's an increase of 244 from the previous week.

Meanwhile, 126,374 continuing state claims -- which lag a week but are viewed as a barometer of the state's unemployment situation -- were filed in the week ending March 13,

declining by 14,780 over the previous week.

Another 287,934 individuals were collecting Pandemic Unemployment Assistance during the week that ended March 6 -- a 1,479 increase over the prior week.

State labor officials suggested that the increase claims could be from jobless workers who are reapplying for benefits from last year that expired.

The increase is nowhere near the nearly 148,000 unemployment claims filed during the same week last year, as rising COVID-19 infection rates forced the state to impose restrictions and shut down schools and many businesses.

Many unemployed workers were buoyed by a \$1.9 trillion relief bill, signed by President Joe Biden two

weeks ago, that extended pandemic relief programs until September, including a \$300 per week federal enhanced benefit.

Like most states, Massachusetts has been hit by a wave of unemployment claims amid the pandemic and government-mandated business closures.

The state has paid out nearly \$16 billion in state and federal jobless claims since last April, according to the state Department of Unemployment Assistance.

The crash of jobless claims has tapped out the state's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund that covers benefits. That's forced the Baker administration to borrow more than \$2.2 billion from the federal government to continue paying claims and prompted hikes in the rates that employers pay into the system.

Massachusetts' unemployment rate dropped to 7.8% in January, from its highest-in-the-nation mark of 16.1% in July.

Nationally, 684,000 new jobless claims were filed last week, a decrease of about 97,000 claims from the previous week, according to the Labor Department.

Continuing claims dropped by 264,000 to about 3.8 million nationally for the week that ended March 13, the Labor Department said.

More than 18.9 million workers nationally were still receiving state or federal jobless benefits in the week ending March 6, according to the report.

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

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# Sports

## TACKLE MACHINE

### Linebacker Loureiro has been a force on defense for Golden Warriors

By DAVID WILLIS  
Staff Writer

Andover's Tomas Loureiro crept up towards the line of scrimmage as the opposing QB called out signals.



Tomas Loureiro

The second the ball was snapped, the linebacker threw a blocker aside, lowered his shoulder and delivered a crushing hit to the running back, jarring the ball free and pouncing on the fumble.

Local ball carriers beware. When Loureiro is on the field, he's there to deal out punishment.

"Making a big tackle is a really incredible feeling, definitely a rush," said Loureiro. "My favorite part of playing football, and linebacker, is definitely the hitting aspect. I love being able to just be let loose and make plays wherever I can."

Loureiro's already made plenty of plays for Andover during its most unusual "Fall 2" season.

Through two games, the senior has registered a team-high 27 tackles, 14 solo, and has emerged as starting blocking back in the Golden Warriors' run-heavy read-option offense.

The 6-foot, 210-pound St. Lawrence University (N.Y.) recruit made 12 tackles in Andover's season-opener against Methuen, turned in seven tackles in a win over Lowell and returned an interception for a touchdown and made eight tackles in a victory over Haverhill.

It's been quite an emergence for Loureiro, who made 36 tackles in his first season as a starter in 2019.

"Tomas is just a tremendous young man," said Andover football coach EJ Perry. "He's mature, eloquent, intelligent and a hard-nosed football player. The bone crushing hits only compliment his ability to be in the right gap all the time. He controls the entire defense like a coach on the field."

#### FINDING HIS POSITION

A linebacker since he began playing football in the Andover Junior Football League (AJFL) as a fourth



CARL RUSSO/Staff photos

Andover senior captain Tomas Loureiro grabs a pass out of the air during practice earlier this season. Loureiro has been a force at linebacker for the Golden Warriors through three games.

grader, Loureiro struggled some after being moved to safety during his sophomore season and the start of his junior year.

"I've been playing linebacker for as long as I've been playing football," he said. "So I wasn't as comfortable at safety. It just didn't come as naturally to me, so I got moved back to linebacker during my junior year."

"I didn't have trouble at all with the transition back to linebacker from safety. Even when I was playing safety, I was always a more physical player. So moving back in the box at linebacker wasn't a very hard adjustment to make."

During the long COVID-19 break between his junior season — which he closed out by making 12 tackles

in a Thanksgiving Day win over — and his senior campaign, Loureiro made major strides as a linebacker.

"I think the biggest reason I've made so many tackles this year has been the improvement I've made in seeing my reads (of opposing offenses) clearly this year," he said.

"Knowing where to position myself pre-snap and then being able to know where the ball is going has allowed me to put myself in places where I can fly around and make tackles. When I'm making plays I know that I'm seeing the field well and am able to put myself in the best position I can be."

#### ADDING OFFENSE, CHOOSING COLLEGE

In addition to leading

the defense, Loureiro has added blocking back — or "H-back" — on offense, opening holes for speedy quarterback Scotty Brown and running back Lincoln Beal.

The new offensive responsibilities were initially a challenge.

"Becoming a blocking back on offense was something that I definitely struggled with at first," Loureiro, who caught two passes for 9 yards against Methuen, admitted. "I hadn't played offense in a long time, so it's taken some time to get used to."

"But I feel like I've come a long way and I'm really enjoying it. Of course, carrying the ball would be fun, but that's something that's up to the coaches and we'll just have to see what

happens."

Next, Loureiro — a member of the National Honor Society — will play football at St. Lawrence University.

"Without a recruiting season (due to COVID) he had to advocate for himself," said Perry. "He did individual workouts and led the team workouts, while sending out homemade tapes to colleges. Two Division 3 powers loved what they saw; Dennison College in Ohio and St. Lawrence University. St. Lawrence will be very happy to have him on their team."

First, Loureiro wants to finish his senior season strong.

"If we had lost this season to COVID, it would have been really devastating," he said. "For the rest of the season, I just hope we can

play our best and get a lot of wins along the way."

#### BROTHERLY LOVE

Loureiro has a friendly rivalry with a teammate at practice, his brother, promising sophomore running back/linebacker Joseph Loureiro.

The two often face off when Tomas and the starters scrimmage Joseph and the reserves.

"The funniest thing to watch in practice is the correspondence between Tomas and his brother Joe," said Perry. "Joe's fighting for varsity minutes, and currently is on both the offensive and defensive scout teams. This brings him into direct contact with his brother and you can hear the two bark at each other from across the field."

## Beal, football team roll to win over Haverhill

By JEFF HAMRICK  
Staff Writer

HAVERHILL — After watching the hosts open the game with a long drive and its first touchdown of the Fall 2 season, Andover rebounded to claim a convincing 23-7 victory over Haverhill on Friday.

After the Hillies took the lead, Andover responded running the ball nine times on an 11-play drive and tied the score on a Lincoln Beal touchdown run.

"Lincoln is a man," Andover coach E.J. Perry said. "Receiving and running today, he was unbelievable, and he's our linebacker, so playing like that he's pretty special."

Andover ran the ball eight times on its ensuing 12-play drive that was capped by Scotty Brown's 7-yard keeper for a 14-7 lead midway through the second quarter.

"They came out on us tough," Brown said. "But when we got the ball, we took it down their throats, and we knew we were in this game. We just had to score more, which we did."

Two-way starter Tomas Loureiro then provided the offense help by picking off



TIM JEAN/Staff file photo

Andover quarterback Scotty Brown, here throwing last season, helped lead the Golden Warriors to a win over Haverhill last week.

a pass and returning it 30 yards for a 20-7 lead 33 seconds before half.

"(Haverhill) came out and woke us up," Perry said. "When we woke up, I think we got in some rhythm. Obviously, Loureiro played out of his mind, catching that screen and taking the interception for six. And he made

a lot of tackles."

The only scoring in the second half was a 25-yard field goal by Andrew Wetterwald with 5:25 left in the fourth.

Beal accounted for 21 of Andover's 40 rushes and finished with a season-high 112 yards while Andrew Layman accumulated 40 yards on his six carries. Brown completed

10 of his 14 attempts for 90 yards, with Beal hauling in five passes for 43 yards. The Golden Warriors, however, had six of their 20 second-half rushing attempts end in negative yardage, including three sacks of at least 11 yards.

"Offensively, we were very good at times," said Perry,

whose squad improved to 2-1. "But we have things to clean up. We have to get rid of the sacks. But I think we're going to be alright."

#### INDOOR TRACK DEBUTS

Jodi Parrott wasted no time showing her All-Scholastic abilities after the long COVID-19 wait.

Parrott won the long jump (17-5), high jump (5-0) and 55 hurdles (8.4) to lead Andover to a 74-26 win over Haverhill on Saturday. Sarah Folan won the shot put (31-7), Molly Kiley took the mile (5:32), Michaela Buckley won the 300 (46.5) and Aimee Lu took the 600 (1:50.34), along with other winners for the Golden Warriors.

On the boys side, Connor Moses won the shot put

(41-11) and 55 hurdles (8.0) and Tristan Fabre took the long jump (19-5) and 55 dash (6.63) as Andover earned a 62-38 win over Haverhill on Saturday. DJ Walsh won the mile (4:48) and Matt Serrano took the two-mile (11:00) for the winners.

#### Andover 23, Haverhill 7

Andover (2-1): 7 13 0 3 — 23  
Haverhill (0-2): 7 0 0 0 — 7  
First Quarter  
Haverhill — Jabari Baptiste 3 run (Joey Spero kick) 4:44  
Andover — Lincoln Beal 2 run (Andrew Wetterwald kick) 0:20  
Second Quarter  
Andover — Scotty Brown 7 run (Wetterwald kick) 6:09  
Andover — Tomas Loureiro 30 interception return (pass failed) 0:334  
Fourth Quarter  
Andover — Wetterwald 25 field goal  
INDIVIDUAL LEADERS  
RUSHING: Andover (40-154) — Beal 21-112, Andrew Layman 6-40, Team 1-(-1), Brown 12-(-7)  
PASSING: Andover — Brown 10-14, 190  
RECEIVING: Andover — Beal 5-43, Aidan Ritter 4-35, Loureiro 1-12

### 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.



Griffin Lewis, 9, practices his golf swing at the Lower Shawsheen track and field park as he enjoys the warmer temperatures.



Twins Ada and Avery Schneider, both 3, and of Andover, slide down the big slide at the Lower Shawsheen park.

# Soak up the sun

PHOTOS BY TIM JEAN

With spring officially here, and temperatures finally creeping up after a long winter, the sunshine brought people out to Lower Shawsheen playground last week.



Abbey Carr pushes children she is watching over twins Ada, left, and Avery Schneider, both 3, of Andover, as they play on a swing at the playground.

# Andover police ask residents to take exam

By MADELINE HUGHES  
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The Andover Police Department is hoping to recruit more locals to potentially join the force, said police spokesperson Lt. Eddie Guy.

“We want to recruit the best people who are committed to the community and who have a variety of

experiences to help make our department better,” Guy said.

Guy is making this request for people to apply to take this year’s Municipal Police Officer exam, as the deadline to apply approaches. The department recruits people off that list, and locals are prioritized, he said.

Over the past few years they have seen fewer and

fewer Andover residents on that list of who took the exam, Guy said.

Now, with multiple officers’ retirements approaching in the next year to two years, he said this is a critical time for people who love the community to potentially make their mark and join the town’s police force.

“It’s a hard time in policing, but we know this is a

great opportunity for people to come into policing right now and actually make change,” Guy said. “It’s also incredibly rewarding to work with fellow residents and local businesses in town.”

They need people from all different backgrounds — finance, social work, information technology — because policing and

the crimes people commit have changed significantly over the past few years, he said.

Once people take the test in June, their scores will be released in the fall, Guy said. That’s when the department can start recruiting those people to join the force and start with the police academy, he said. Having the test completed allows someone

to be on the list of potential officers and be recruited for a few years, Guy said.

Guy is asking that people interested in pursuing a career as a police officer sign up for this summer’s State Trooper exam that will be held on June 12. Applications will be accepted until April 20. For more information visit [mass.gov/civilservice](http://mass.gov/civilservice).

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