



FUTURE OF STEVENS ESTATE UNDER CONSIDERATION PAGE 7

STATE TO REFUND TAX FILERS FOR JOBLESS BENEFITS PAGE 12



FINALLY, ANDOVER FOOTBALL WITH FANS. PAGE 11

OUR 131ST YEAR

Andover Townsman

Issue No. 24

APRIL 15, 2021

\$1.00

Field of Honor dates set

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

The Exchange Club of Lawrence and the Andovers will offer its third Annual Field of Honor, displaying 500 American Flags on the North Andover Town Common.

The flags laid in honor and memorial will be on display from May 22 through June 13, recognizing both Memorial Day and Flag Day.

People are encouraged to dedicate a flag to someone who has served their country or community — Andover, Lawrence

or North Andover. Typically, most dedications are in honor or memory of veterans and people currently serving in the armed forces. However, this year, like last year, people have an opportunity to also recognize and dedicate flags to those on the frontlines of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, said Rick Blain, the event chairperson.

The coordinators extended the Field of Honor to three weeks at the request of many who participated in last year's event, he said. They estimate that some 1,000 people visited the Field of Honor last



Sarah Brush of North Andover, walks with her children Sean and Samantha, both 3, last year at the Field of Honor at North Andover's town common. This year's demonstration will last three weeks, from May 22 to June 13.

TIM JEAN/Staff photo

year, with all 500 flags being purchased and dedicated, Blain said.

Flags may be purchased and/or dedicated for a \$45.00 contribution on the website

exchangecluboflawrenceandover.org or xcfags.org.

People may also purchase a flag by sending a check, with the dedication to the Exchange

Club 30 Massachusetts Ave. North Andover, MA 01845 or by telephoning either Rick Blain at 508-523-3086 or Bob Wescott at 978-375-6217.

Renovated and ready

New Robb Center complete, will start opening by appointment

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

It's brighter and bigger.

And the staff of the new Robb Center, which was renamed from the Andover Senior Center during the renovation, is eager to welcome back seniors to their new digs.

The senior center was closed in November 2019 to begin renovations, and programs were displaced. Programs continued mostly virtually since the pandemic took hold in the U.S. in early 2020.

The center has slowly brought back more classes, including two outdoor fitness classes, said Jane Burns, director of elder services in Andover.

Staff are moving in this week. Meals on Wheels will take over the new kitchen starting Thursday, and the Senior Connections program resumes in its newly dedicated room Friday, Burns said.

Over the next few months the senior center will open up to more groups, and people will be able to make appointments to visit, Burns said.

"Until the state really opens up we will be by appointment only, but we will be opening up to more groups as we are able to do so," Burns said.



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Jane Burns, Director of Elder Services talks about the arts and crafts room after a major renovation project of the Robb Senior Center in Andover. The center was renamed the Robb Center after Don and Vicky Robb, who were dedicated citizens to the Andover community.

The space is brighter with fresh white walls and the many windows letting light in. The windows have been replaced with replicas to allow for the light but not the drafts and leaks that previously occurred, Burns said.

The new center is about 40% larger than the original with an expanded fitness area and workout room, said Paul MacKay, chairman of the Council on Aging.

The larger fitness space will allow for more classes, Burns said. Elder Services is partnering with Merrimack College to bring in a graduate student who is a certified personal trainer teaching one-on-one lessons and classes, Burns said.

The new building features a dedicated art room and café space, unlike the chairs lining the hallway previously, MacKay said. There's also a new health

office in the Robb Center to allow for more private medical visits, when town health officials and other doctors conduct clinics.

Andover's Veteran Services office is also moving into the senior center to allow more collaboration and programing geared towards veterans, Burns said. One fitness class in the planning stages will be particularly for veterans, she

See CENTER, Page 2

Committee approves new superintendent

Magda Parvey to start job July 1

BY MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsman.com

Andover's School Committee has chosen Magda Parvey to lead the district as superintendent come July 1.

Parvey will replace interim Superintendent Claudia Bach, whose contract with the district ends in June. Bach temporarily replaced Superintendent Sheldon Berman, who resigned at the end of 2020 for personal reasons.

The committee overwhelmingly chose Parvey in a 5-0 vote Monday night.

"Through a rigorous interview process, Dr. Parvey shared her vision of collaborative leadership and her deep commitment to student-centric decisions," the committee wrote in a statement. "She is intent on promoting a culture of continuous learning, positive and professional



COURTESY PHOTO

Magda Parvey was chosen to be the next superintendent for Andover schools.

engagement, and open communication."

Parvey, who has a doctorate degree in education, has been the chief academic

See PARVEY, Page 2

COVID-19 mutations drive up virus cases

BY CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — The number of communities with elevated COVID-19 infection levels jumped again last week, as health officials say mutations of the virus continue to spread in Massachusetts.

At least 77 cities and towns are now listed as high-risk for COVID-19 transmission, according to the state Department of Public Health. That's up from 55 the previous week and 20 three weeks ago.

The designation is based on the number of active cases and the positivity rate on COVID-19 tests, scaled based on population.

Several North of

Boston communities that were already listed as high-risk "red" communities — including Lawrence, Methuen, and Peabody — saw rates remain flat or increase.

Meanwhile, the state is also reporting more cases of COVID-19 mutations.

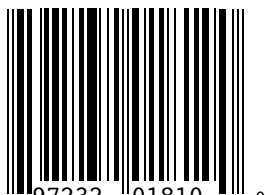
As of Monday, the health department reported that laboratory tests had detected at least 1,405 cases of three different COVID-19 variants to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's up from 1,068 less than two weeks ago.

A majority of the cases were B.1.1.7, a variant first detected in the United Kingdom that has become the

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Driving school owner charged with drug trafficking free on \$50K bail

BY JILL HARMACINSKI
Staff Writer

SALEM, Mass. — The owner of a Merrimack Valley driving school who faces drug trafficking charges is free on \$50,000 bail following his arraignment in Salem Superior Court.

The arraignment Wednesday of Michael

Larocque, 56, of Lawrence on methamphetamine trafficking and narcotics distribution charges was the latest of his legal woes.

In addition to his criminal case, Larocque, who owns North Andover Driving School and MV Auto School in Haverhill, also faces a civil suit filed by Attorney General Maura Healey. That suit alleges he

failed to return \$1 million in refunds to 1,500 students.

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

A preliminary injunction in the civil suit was

See BAIL, Page 2



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TIM JEAN/Staff photos

The Wellness Center will offer a place for fitness classes.

CENTER

Continued from Page 1

The Robb Center will also serve as the town's emergency shelter, because it's equipped with three showers and a large walk-in freezer that will allow the town to store food for weeks, Burns said. Previously the senior center was used as a shelter following the gas disaster,

however, town officials realized they needed space for people to bathe, so they ensured it was in this project, Burns said.

Overall Burns is looking forward to giving Andover seniors a place to be and socialize post-pandemic.

"We would really love to just welcome everyone and open our doors, but we have to be safe in how to reopen," Burns said. "But we will get there."



The Robb Senior Center in Andover includes a the new kitchen after a major renovation. The center makes lunch and diners for its meals on wheels program and can serve as an emergency shelter.

BAIL

Continued from Page 1

recently issued, resulting in Larocque's assets being frozen.

Larocque's schools had students from across the Merrimack Valley and

Greater Newburyport.

"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," a statement released by the attorney general's office read.

Following his indictment by an Essex County grand jury, Larocque was arraigned on two counts of trafficking methamphetamine over 200 grams. He was also 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.

He was released on

\$50,000 bail, which he has posted. He was also ordered to remain drug-free and to surrender his passport. His next court date is scheduled for June 4.

If he is convicted, the penalties he faces in superior court are more severe than at the district court level.

In September, investigators said they seized 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, investigators said.

At the time of his arrest,

detectives said they had made "controlled purchases" of methamphetamine from Larocque's home and the school.

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

Healey's lawsuit, filed in March, seeks refunds and penalties for 1,500 students from the Merrimack Valley and Greater Newburyport after Larocque was arrested and failed to deliver services to customers, according to investigators.

Late last week, Healey's office sought a preliminary injunction in Salem Superior Court to freeze Larocque's assets for consumer restitution. A judge issued the injunction while writing "there is a reasonable likelihood" that Healey will recover money spent by the driving school students "including interest and costs."

Students paid Larocque's schools between \$550 and \$750 for driver's education courses, Healey said.

Follow staff reporter Jill Harmacinski on Twitter @EagleTribJill.

Andover Townsman

Established 1887

ISSN 1524-1432
USPS 025-440

Published Thursdays by North of Boston Media Group
33 Chestnut St.
Andover, MA
978-475-7000

Ad fax 978-475-5731 • News fax 978-470-2819

E-mail: townsman@andovertownsm.com
Web: andovertownsm.com

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CASES

Continued from Page 1

dominant strain in the U.S. Cases tied to other variants, B.1.351 and P.1, which were first detected in South Africa and Brazil, are also on the rise, according to health officials.

Nationwide, at least 19,554 cases of the B.1.1.7 variant have been reported, according to the CDC. There are 324 cases of B.1.351 in 36 states and 434 P.1 cases in 28 states.

As of Thursday, Massachusetts had the highest

number of cases of the Brazilian strain nationwide, or 113, the federal agency reported.

Essex County has reported the third-highest number of COVID-19 variant cases, or 219, according to state data.

Meanwhile, the state's public schools reported nearly 1,000 COVID-19 cases involving students and staff last week — a slight decline over the previous week — as most schools prepare for a return to full-time, in-person instruction.

That figure included 821 students and 157 staff who reported positive

COVID-19 tests.

State education officials point out the cases represent only a fraction of more than 660,000 students and staff currently in hybrid or in-class instruction.

Health officials in Massachusetts reported 1,376 new cases of COVID-19 and 19 new deaths on Monday.

The rising infection rate comes as more people get vaccinated against the virus.

More than 4.5 million doses have been administered as of Monday, with more than 1.7 million people fully vaccinated. The state has about 6.9 million residents.

Gov. Charlie Baker acknowledged the uptick in cases and hospitalizations and stressed the need for people to continue wearing masks, practice social distancing and get vaccinated.

"We would encourage everybody who will be eligible to sign up and schedule a vaccine when they are eligible," he said at a briefing on Monday. "The vaccine saves lives."

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



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PARVEY

Continued from Page 1

officer for Middletown Public Schools in Middletown, Connecticut, since December 2019. She previously was the interim superintendent for the City School District of New Rochelle, New York, according to her resume.



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ACE plans new fundraiser

Race for ACE will help honor teachers

By MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsmen.com

Andover Coalition for Education is hosting an event in May meant to get people moving and honor teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week.

May 1 to 8 will be a Race for ACE, "a movement challenge to raise money for our schools."

Participants and families are asked to do an activity for 30 minutes a day. Run, walk, hike, bike, dance, skip or jump - anything that promotes 30 minutes of movement. Participants are asked to post a photo or video on social media and tag it #raceforace2021.

"ACE is excited to host this fun family fundraiser this spring. Our schools need community support more than ever," said ACE President Lenore Price. "With the pandemic restrictions around events, ACE wanted to provide a safe opportunity for families and community members to get outside and do something active, while

also raising support for our schools. ACE typically hosts a major fundraiser in the spring that generates significant funds that in turn are invested back into the schools. If everyone in our community gives a little, we will have a lot to give back to our schools."

Each day during the event week a winner will be picked from those who tag ACE online to win prizes and swag from ACE and local businesses.

The first week of May is also Teacher Appreciation Week. ACE encourages dedicating race activity in honor of a favorite educator or staff member in the schools. ACE will then send an e-card to the teacher(s) to inform them of this tribute gift.

"This is a fantastic way for the entire Andover community to come together, get outside, be active and support our schools. I hope everyone in town completes their own Race for ACE during the first week of May," said Coach Fazio, Hooptown director

and A Boys Basketball Coach. The event costs \$25 for an individual, \$40 for a family and \$100 for a team, which can be a sports team or organization. Everyone who participates will receive Race for ACE gifts. To register visit give.mybooster.com/raceforace.

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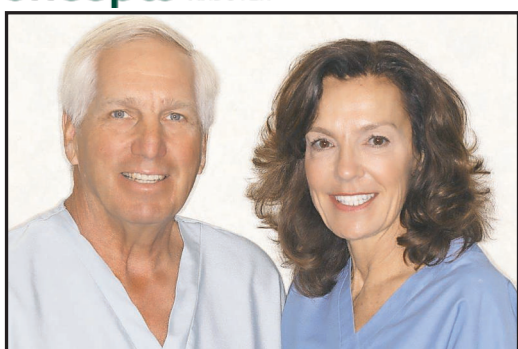
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ALL THOSE YEARS AGO

ANDOVER TOWNSMAN OBITUARIES

Obituaries in the Andover Townsman are paid notices.

To place an obituary, please visit andovertownsm.com/submitobit. Call 1-800-681-6248 if you have any questions.

Judith C. Van Der Zee, 89

September 18, 1931 - April 6, 2021

NAPLES, ME — Judith C. Van Der Zee (Napier), 89, of Naples, Maine, passed peacefully on April 6, 2021, surrounded by her loving family.

Judith was born in Andover, Mass. and was a graduate of Pynchard High School, class of the 49ers. Following graduation, she worked as a bank teller and loved to count money, and collected rare bills and coins she found along the way.

She was a member of Free Christian Church and sang in the choir. She met her husband Robert and a few months later they were wed in August of 1962 at Free Christian Church in Andover. They built a beautiful house on Napier Road and raised two sons and a daughter. The family vacations were always camping at Four Seasons Camping Area, first in a pop-up trailer and then a travel trailer. In 1981 they followed their dream of running a business and purchased Four Seasons. They loved the camping business and made many lasting friendships and memories along the way.

Judith and Robert wintered in Englewood, Florida for twenty-seven years and enjoyed golfing, bowling, and singing in the chorus. Her hobbies included knitting, watching game shows, doing word jumbles, and going out on Thursdays with the campground ladies.

Judith is predeceased by her beloved husband of 57 years, Robert. Three children: Jonathan Van Der Zee and Ellen Brock of Englewood FL, Andrew Van Der Zee and Bridget Meara of Portland, Maine,



and Ken and Beth Brown of Naples. Grandchildren Christopher Van Der Zee, Amy Walker, Matthew and Meara Van Der Zee, Ryan Baillargeon, Emma, Elijah and Samuel Brown. Four great grandchildren Hudson, Jovie and Sawyer Walker and Ryder Van Der Zee.

The family would like to thank Androscoggin Home Care and Hospice, Home Care for ME personal support services, Elijah Brown and Nina Huff, and First Light Home Care for all their support and wonderful care.

ARRANGEMENTS: Family and friends are invited to a time of visitation from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, April 9, 2021 at the Hall Funeral Home, 165 Quaker Ridge Road in Casco. Graveside committal services will be held, 12 p.m. Saturday, April 11, 2021 at the Spring Grove Cemetery, 5 Spring Grove Rd, Andover, MA 01810. Online condolences and tributes may be shared on Judith's Tribute Wall at www.hallfuneralhome.net.

Susan McKelliget

Andover Center for History and Culture

100 Years Ago—April 15, 1921

The most disastrous fire of the week occurred yesterday morning at the home of Arthur Lovejoy on Lovejoy road when the roof and attic story were destroyed. Other fires were for a brush fire at the corner of Chandler and Beacon streets and at the dump at Tyler factory number 2. On Tuesday there were four fires: a grass fire on land belonging to the trustees of Phillips academy on Bartlet street, a grass fire on the Wakefield land on Cuba street, another burning two acres of land on Argilla belonging to William M. Wood, and the last for a barn on South Union street.

A week ago, in Lawrence District Court a man and women were defaulted for

the neglect of minor children and a warrant issued for their arrest. Being residents of this town, on South Union street, the warrant was given to Chief Smith to serve. The father made his escape and the mother wishing to avoid appearance in court, placed her two small children in a baby carriage and trundled them all the way to Lowell. Her presence in that city was discovered by the police and she with her children, carriage and all, were returned to Andover by motor after which they were lodged at the Andover police station. They have since been transferred to the Andover town farm.

75 years Ago — April 18, 1946

Andover took a cue from other cities and towns during this time of shortages and last Friday morning had it's own queue, a clothesline that extended from the door of Elander and Swanton (near where

Royal Jewelers is located today) as far as the corner of Chestnut and Main Streets. Donald Surette managed to get a shot (cover photo of Townsman) of the line before the sell-out, but unfortunately did not get a shot at a shirt. The line started to form at 7:30 a.m. and the shirt-selling began at 8:30 and ended at 10:30. There just weren't any more shirts.

Donald Dunn was elected head of the recreation committee and Benjamin Dimlich, supervisor of the playground at a recreation committee meeting this week.

It's a little confusing, but there are two organizations and there are two dances. The World War II veterans of the American Legion are sponsoring a dance at the Crystal Ballroom May 2. The AMVETS, which is a veteran organization entirely made up of World War II veterans are holding

a dance at Crystal on May 16.

50 Years Ago — April 22, 1971 A photo caption reads "Former comedian Dick Gregory, turned social critic, spoke to Phillips Academy students this past week, and his humor jabbed at the inconsistencies of racism in America."

(Partial editorial) Town meeting recently dictated that a study be made regarding future sessions. A representative form of town meeting was proposed. It was relegated to study by a committee. Since that time there has been proposed a change in the form of Andover's town government to a city type. Town meeting as we know it, appears to be unwieldy. The actual results coming from such sessions are not a complete sampling of the town. A small percentage of voters shows up at the annual and special sessions.

Learning to tie shoes can be fun



Dear doctor, Maybe other parents are having this problem, and it sounds strange to

ask. We have a 4-year-old who cannot tie his shoes. He goes to his older sister or to one of us to have them tied. We wonder if he has

some kind of problem with seeing and doing things. He seems perfectly fine otherwise and is a great kid.

Dear worried, Smart kid. He has others doing things for him, but refusing to help him is not an option.

The answer is to teach him how to tie his shoes, or anything else which requires the fine motor skill. By the way, this is not a uncommon problem

at his age and eventually would be a skill he would likely master.

Here is something I learned from another child. Let me share it with you.

Take the cord from a bath robe. They usually are fluffy and easily handled. Wrap the cord around a door knob. Make this a fun experience.

Introduce it as something new he might learn. Please do not make him think he is failing with "big boy"

comments. Then in easy steps have him do what you do with the cord by making a bow knot.

Usually a child will master this with a few tries. The texture and ease of manipulation help. Over time show him the same pattern on his shoes.

If all else fails, wait for kindergarten and first grade when socialization helps. If he resists, there are shoes with no laces.

David Whitman Hepworth

March 25, 1929 - April 10, 2021 Hep

THORTON, NH — David Whitman Hepworth died at home on April 10, 2021, at the age of 92 from COVID-19 complications. David was predeceased by his wife Keren whom he shared marriage with for 60 years.



his friends at their homes and also at the Plymouth Senior Center.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Pem-Baker Community Health, 101 Boulder Point Drive, Plymouth, NH 03264.

A celebration of life will be planned at Owls Nest once COVID-19 concerns subside.

David is survived by his daughter Susan and her husband David Bunker, three grandsons, Jeffrey, Christopher and Neil Bunker; great-grandsons, Noah and Atlas Bunker; and great-granddaughter Clara Jane Bunker.

David and Keren lived the last 22 years at Owls Nest Golf course resort where they thoroughly enjoyed all the wonderful outdoor activities and socializing at the club. In his latter years, David enjoyed spending his time at the driving range, with just a small bucket of balls and hitting the course when his daughter and son-in-law joined him. Until COVID-19, David also spent his days playing bridge with

Police: 500 grams of fentanyl found during stop

BY JILL HARMACINSKI jharmacinski@andovertownsm.com

LAWRENCE — Two Maine residents who came to Lawrence to buy the opioid fentanyl had about \$25,000 worth of the drug in their car when state troopers arrested them, according to a police report.

Shelby London, 30, of Gardiner, Maine, told state police that she and Donald Dennis, 37, of Waterville, Maine, drove south to Lawrence "to purchase narcotics and then return to

Maine," according to a state police report.

The report said Trooper Derrek Deranian pulled over a car driven by Dennis on Marston Street in Lawrence around 5:30 p.m. Friday. Dennis, at the wheel of a white Chevrolet Impala, was speeding and drifting in and out of his lane of traffic, police said.

There was an active warrant for Dennis' arrest, police said. After the trooper removed Dennis from the car, he saw a plastic bag in plain view, police said.

The bag contained approximately 500 grams of fentanyl, which has a street value of about \$25,000, police said.

The police report said Deranian and Trooper Ryan Durkin, who arrived to help, spoke with London, the passenger in the car.

"It was discovered through conversation with the occupants that the pair were in Lawrence to purchase narcotics and then return to Maine," the report said.

After placing London

under arrest, the troopers found several thousand dollars in cash in the back seat of the car, police said.

Dennis and London were booked at the Andover state police barracks. Dennis was charged with trafficking fentanyl, conspiracy to violate drug laws, speeding and a marked lanes violation, police said. London was charged with trafficking fentanyl and conspiracy to violate drug laws, police said.

Follow staff reporter Jill Harmacinski on Twitter @EagleTribJill.

POLICE LOG

Table with columns for days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) and police incidents like Unemployment fraud, Arrest, Scam, Trespassing, and vandalism.

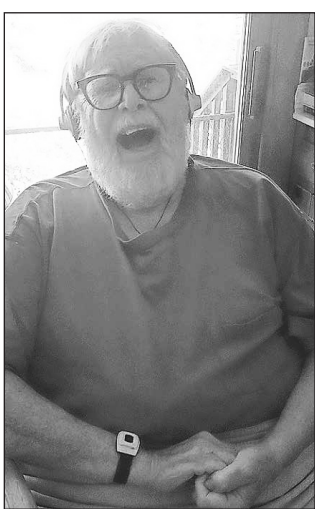
REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

Table with columns for town names (Andover, Buxford, Dracut, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Methuen, Lawrence, North Andover, North Reading, Salisbury) and listing details like address, price, and agent.

John Wilson, 91

October 11, 1929 - March 23, 2021

NEWBURYPORT, MA — John Wilson has recently passed away at his home. A man of profound loyalty and understanding, he filled the lives of those he knew with a love that will never be replaced. An ardent family man, he was the embodiment of support for his loving wife Margaret Wilson, his children, Kathleen and Barry, daughter-in-law Selana, and his granddaughters (Brandi, Bryna, and Britanny). He may be gone, but the memory of all that he has done for his loved one's lives on. And always will.



father. -Barry

I love you dad, and I am proud to have had you as my

Raymond H. Potvin, 79

January 13, 1942 - April 8, 1942

ANDOVER, MA — Raymond H. Potvin, 79, passed away Thursday, April 8, 2021 at his home in Andover, surrounded by his family.

Ray was a master carpenter who built, restored, renovated and remodeled numerous homes and businesses throughout the Greater Lawrence/Lowell area. He leaves behind his wife, Anne and children Judi Desruisseau and Steve Potvin.

ARRANGEMENTS: Per his request, celebrations of his life will

be private. In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation to Lowell General Hospital, whose Cancer Center doctors, nurses and staff helped support Ray and his family throughout the past year. For online condolences please visit www.contefuneralhomes.com.



Future of Stevens Estate under consideration

By MADELINE HUGHES
mhughes@andovertownsmen.com

NORTH ANDOVER — The future of Stevens Estate — a picturesque wedding venue with more than 150 acres and public trails — is being debated by the Select Board.

The board manages the town-owned property, but North Andover wants to end that responsibility. The board has accepted proposals from private organizations to manage the property.

The board has interviewed one candidate extensively — Fireside Catering. Jed and Zack Webber own the catering company and five sister restaurants, collectively known as the Webber Restaurant Group.

In its proposal for Stevens Estate, Fireside Catering has promised to renovate the property and provide at least \$150,000 to the town annually.

For more than a decade, North Andover has discussed turning the estate over to an event-management company. That nearly happened in 2019, but town voters rejected a proposal to lease the estate to Elegant Banquets, a Connecticut company that proposed using the property for wedding receptions and other high-end social gatherings.

Fireside Catering is a Massachusetts-based company that works with seven similar land venues in the state, including Crane Estate in Ipswich. There, Fireside Catering works with a local nonprofit that maintains the property.

In addition to Fireside Catering, the Webbers own Gibbet Hill Farm in Groton, where they operate a restaurant and event venue.

“Our family stepped in and bought the land from the developer and I lead the conservation effort where we partnered with the state, the town, and a number of private organizations to put over 450 of the acres into permanent conservation,” Zack Webber said about Gibbet Hill Farm.

Webber said Fireside Catering is looking into potential partnerships to help with land management for Stevens



The town-owned function facility at the Stevens Estate in North Andover.

FILE PHOTO

Estate.

Former North Andover Select Board member Tracey Watson said she supports the Fireside Catering plan.

“While the Stevens Estate is often referred to as a ‘town gem,’ and albeit I tend to agree on some level, it is also a drain on town resources both directly and indirectly,” Watson said. “It has been for many years. For me, the time for action on this property is long overdue. It is time for the professionals to take over this site and hopefully make it the gem we all want to see it be.”

The town is also considering a nonprofit that would focus on preservation of Stevens Estate for educational and cultural purposes. A Massachusetts-based land conservation group known as Trustees for Reservations has submitted a letter proposing a conservation plan for the property, including “year-round public programming, particularly related to the North Andover Public Schools and youth engagement.”

“The Trustees’ youth, education and public programs cultivate a sense of wonder and a knowledge and appreciation of Massachusetts cultural and natural history,” Robert Warren, managing director of conservation for Trustees for Reservations, wrote in the letter. “We currently operate seven summer camps and 50 school vacation week programs across the state, and intended to feature similar outdoor activities,

school field trips, community celebrations and other experiences to engage North Andover residents with the special resources at the Stevens Estate.”

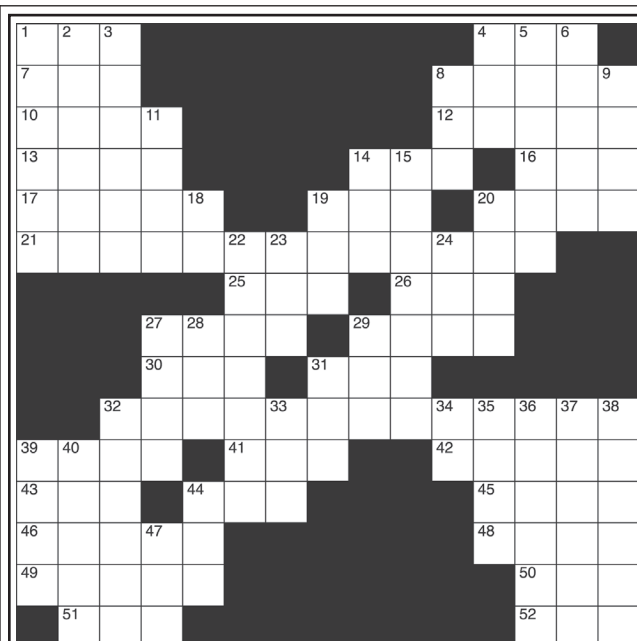
“Our submittal was based on the general information provided to all interested parties,” the letter continued. “During the negotiation process we would

have undertaken a more detailed assessment of the needs of the property and created a detailed enterprise plan including identification of a private events partner.”

The Select Board will review the proposals for Stevens Estate. Any partnership for the estate must be approved by town voters.



Please recycle this newspaper.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Ocean surface indicator (abbr.)
4. American time
7. Satisfaction
8. Diving duck
10. Very small amount
12. Metrical units
13. An ignorant or foolish person
14. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
16. It may sting you
17. Turn outward
19. Perform on stage
20. “CSI” actor George
21. Localities
25. Make a choice
26. Indicates position
27. One of Thor’s names
29. Indian musical rhythmic pattern

Solution in Classified Section

30. “The Raven” author
31. Take in solid food
32. Legendary QB
39. Sorrels
41. Organization of nations
42. Texas pharmaceutical company
43. Mathematical term
44. Expression of disappointment
45. Abba __, Israeli politician
46. Hide away
48. Salad restaurant
49. Daughters of Boreas (mythology)
50. Men’s fashion accessory
51. Political action committee
52. Unhappy

CLUES DOWN

1. Make unhappy
2. Heard the confession of
3. Capital of Taiwan
4. Fiddler crab
5. Brazilian dances
6. Fit with device to assist breathing
8. Brother or sister
9. Pastries
11. “Lone Survivor” director Peter
14. Boat type (abbr.)
15. Apertures (biology)
18. Suffix
19. Creative endeavor
20. Icelandic poem
22. Spanish dances
23. Town in Central Italy
24. Cars need it
27. Mimics
28. Rocky peak
29. Cigarette (slang)
31. One point south of due east
32. Soap actress Braun
33. Large domesticated wild ox
34. Island nation
35. Appear
36. Addictive practices
37. Loss of control of one’s body
38. Type of poster
39. Greek mountain
40. Funny person
44. One and only
47. Pouch

4/15/21

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ANDOVER NEWS IN BRIEF

Saving the birds

Recent headlines about global insect declines and three billion fewer birds in

North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current landscape designs have been at sustaining the plants and animals

that sustain us. In a Zoom webinar at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 27 Professor Doug Tallamy will discuss simple steps that people can take to reverse

declining biodiversity and will explain why we, ourselves, are nature's best hope. Register at mhl.org/events.

Copies of Tallamy's book "Nature's Best Hope" can be ordered through the Andover Bookstore.

Library offers tree seedling giveaway for Arbor Day

Celebrate Arbor Day by planting a white oak — Quercus alba — tree seedling given out by the Friends of the Memorial Hall Library in celebration of Arbor Day.

White oaks provide more food for wildlife and habitat for moths and butterflies than any other woody plant in the eastern United States. They can grow to a height of over 100 feet and up to 4 feet in

diameter, which enables them to sequester large amounts of carbon. Their deep roots and broad canopies play an important role in producing clean and steady streams of water that sustain aquatic wildlife habitat. Their long lives mean they benefit generations of people and wildlife.

Sign up at mhl.org/arbor-day-white-oak-tree-seedling-giveaway for a tree at and pick up your seedling at the library on one of the designated pickup days in early May.

Medication disposal

Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on April 24 Andover is hosting a Medication Disposal Day at West Elementary School. Residents should gather expired, unused, or unneeded medication and drop them off. The disposal is completely

anonymous and free of charge.

Help for job-seekers

The 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. via Zoom.

The group will meet from January through June. If you are unemployed and looking for a job, underemployed, seeking a new career direction, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "enclave career," this networking group program is perfect for you.

Participating on a regular basis will give job-seekers tools and strategies needed for a successful job search. Pre-registration is required. Visit 50plusjobseekers.org to sign up.

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Francesca, Methuen Ma
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Sports

A return to football normalcy

Watching Andover play football, for first time in more than a year, was emotional experience

Bill Burt



I was in a press box. A full press box. Several hundred fans, in front of me, were in the seats, many

there to root on Andover High.

Parents of senior players, managers, cheerleaders, etc. were lined up -- about 80 people in all -- as if they were getting a COVID-19 vaccination.

Football ... make that ... real football, was back. At least for me.

While it wasn't Thanksgiving Day, when Central Catholic and Andover gave this area some football doozies over three decades, there was a lot to be thankful for when the rival Golden Warriors and Raiders met at Lawrence Veterans Memorial Stadium in Lawrence on Friday night.

There is a lot to complain about, with me at the front of the line, when it comes to dealing with this pandemic. But that is an argument for another day.

It's the first time in over a year that I've attended a sporting event that felt normal.

The blue skies at the start were epic. The backdrop of the vast, North Andover tree line, to the north, was picturesque.

The best part, though, was inside the white lines.

It didn't look like a disjointed event in which the Andover and Central Catholic student-athletes put in about 25% of the work they normally would for a season.

This was good, tough football, which is to be expected when Central and Andover meet.

We got to see a few, future bright lights. Andover sophomore QB Scotty Brown has shown flashes of greatness this "Fall II." Brown has completed 46 of 82 passes for 581 yards and three touchdowns and has rushed 79 times for 226 yards and six touchdowns.

Sharing the backfield with Brown is running back Lincoln Beal. He has carried 90 times for 464 yards and four touchdowns rushing and caught 23 passes for 302 yards and another TD. All of those



CARL RUSSO/Staff photos

Andover's Lincoln Beal fights through a Central Catholic tackler on Friday. It was a special moment, returning to that gridiron rivalry.

There is a lot to complain about, with me at the front of the line, when it comes to dealing with this pandemic. But that is an argument for another day. It's the first time in over a year that I've attended a sporting event that felt normal.

are team-highs.

Leading the defense is Tomas Loureiro (39 tackles) and Connor Sheehan (30 tackles).

On Friday, we also got to see Central's junior quarterback Ayden Pereira do what he does best, which is change the course of a game when it seems to matter most.

In the end, we got to see "the gold standard" as Andover High football coach E.J. Perry said about Central, hitting its stride in key spots.

The hitting was November style. Same with execution. Brown and Pereria are not normal.

They are part of the new brand of QB, feet and arms included.

It wasn't the prettiest football game, but when is it really pretty? These games against good teams are usually decided by mistakes. The team that makes the fewest, which was Central on Friday night, usually wins.

The best part, though, for me was after the game.

The teams, per the rules, are supposed to meet with their coaches for a post-game meeting soon after the clock expires.

That didn't happen. About 20 to 30 players on each team started

mingling, shaking hands. It represented the entire game, really. No cheap shots or personal foul penalties.

It was as if they were saying, "Great to see you Andover" and "Great to see you Central."

We can enjoy sports rivalries -- or "hate" if you want to call it that -- all we want and, I have to admit, sometimes it's fun to follow.

But the respect shown afterward was a great, meaningful sign that they, really all of us, are in this together.

I assume there were rules broken -- see COVID-19 manual -- but sometimes you have to get out of the way.

Thanks to Central and Andover for a great night. The only thing missing was the postgame turkey.

You can email Bill Burt at bburt@andovertownsmen.com.



Andover's Anthony Previte tackles Central Catholic's Mark Ciccirelli on Friday.

Gritty Andover forced Central football to 'earn it'

By BILL BURT
Staff Writer

LAWRENCE — The score, 17-0, looked like Central Catholic football's other four dominant victories. But the score lied.

Central 17
Andover 0

Andover High forced archrival Central Catholic to earn its victory on Friday. As in really earn it.

It took a few late Andover drops, a near sack and quarterback Ayden Pereira's signature -- a 21-yard run and a 13-yard bullet pass for a touchdown to finally seal Central's fifth win in the Fall 2 season.

One issue for Central was a pair of sophomores, quarterback Scott Brown and running back Lincoln Beal. They are and they were electric. Beal finished with 116 yards rushing, all hard-earned, on 24 carries, and Brown, only 5-foot-8, made plays with his feet (55 yards) and his arm (95 yards).

The problem was when Andover was close to scoring, it couldn't. When Central was close to scoring, only three times, it did.

"They were better than I thought they were going to be," said Pereira, who completed 17 of 24 passes for 201 yards and two TDs with two interceptions. "They confused us a lot on defense."

Pereira opened the scoring, completing five consecutive passes before hitting a wide open sophomore Matthias Latham for a 21-yard score.

Andover sandwiched three red zone drives around a Nick Mazzie 31-yard

field, getting to the Central 6, 17 and 14. Two penalties hurt and as did two missed field goals.

"When you play a team that good, you can't give them any help," said Andover coach E.J. Perry. "They're good. They do everything well. We can't have drops and commit penalties in the red zone against a team like that. But I am proud of our team. We're young and we're learning a lot here."

Central's defense came up big. Central's behemoth 6-foot-1, 270-pound defensive tackle Uyi Osayimwen not only had 12 tackles, but six were for losses on the lightning quick Brown.

Tommy Casey also had 11 tackles and some big hits on Beal and Brown. Central coach Chuck Adamopoulos said, "We needed a game like this. They are tough. Beal is for real. So is Brown. They fought us the entire way. We had to make a few plays and we did."

"After that (season-opening) loss to Methuen, Andover has played really well. This game was close. They made us earn it. I'm happy because we played a good game against a good opponent."

Central Catholic 17, Andover 0

Andover (3-2): 0 0 0 0 - 0
Central Catholic (5-0): 0 7 3 7 - 17
Second Quarter
Matthias Latham 21 pass from Ayden Pereira (Nick Mazzie kick), 9:10
Third Quarter
Mazzie 31 field goal, 3:34
Fourth Quarter
Justice McGrail 13 pass from Pereira (Mazzie kick), 4:35
INDIVIDUAL LEADERS
RUSHING: ANDOVER -- Lincoln Beal 24-116; Scott Brown 18-55; Andrew Layman 1-4
PASSING: ANDOVER -- Brown 11-22-2, 95 yards
RECEIVING: ANDOVER -- Beal 5-35; Tomas Loureiro 1-11; Chris Cappachietti 1-5; Aidan Ritter 1-8; Andrew Wetterwald 1-16; Bret Mondejar 1-12



CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Andover's Lincoln Beal jumps for a pass against Central Catholic on Friday.

SEND US YOUR TOWN SPORTS NEWS

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

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

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

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

SWIMMING TEAM KEEPS ROLLING

Jaclyn Ambrose won both the 200 IM and 500 freestyle and was on two winning relays as the Andover swimming team stayed undefeated (8-0) with a 130-58 win over North Andover last Tuesday. Amanda Morin won the diving and Kaitlin Chun took the 100 butterfly for the winners.

Businesses buoyed by tax relief package

By CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse reporter

BOSTON — Businesses facing double-digit increases in unemployment insurance and taxes on federal disaster loans are now breathing a sigh of relief.

A \$350 million pandemic relief package, signed by Gov. Charlie Baker last Thursday, rolls back increases in unemployment insurance rates for businesses, waives state taxes on federal Paycheck Protection Program grants, and establishes an emergency paid leave program for workers to take time off for COVID-19 related issues.

A key provision of the bill lowers scheduled increases in unemployment taxes for the next two years.

A multibillion-dollar deficit in the state's unemployment fund, created by a crush of pandemic-fueled jobless claims over the past year, was expected to drive up rates paid by employers an average of 60% beginning next year. The plan signed by Baker

also authorizes the state to borrow up to \$7 billion from the federal government to keep jobless benefits flowing.

Businesses will pay a new excise tax on employee wages — which legislative leaders say will average \$57 to \$66 a year per employee — to repay interest on the federal loans. That tax would sunset next year.

Additionally, employers who accepted PPP loans that were later forgiven by the federal government would not have to pay state income taxes on the money. Only 1 in 5 of those loans were forgiven in tax year 2020.

In a letter to lawmakers, Baker said the measure "takes a thoughtful and comprehensive approach in delivering critical relief to facilitate economic recovery for the people of Massachusetts."

Business leaders praised the tax relief and lowered unemployment insurance rates.

Chris Carozzi, Massachusetts state director for the National Federation of

Independent Businesses, said many businesses are "breathing a sigh of relief" that they won't be saddled with a big tax bill as they begin to recover.

"These are two crucial policies that will directly assist struggling small businesses who were ravaged by the pandemic and now hope to lead the state's economic recovery," he said.

The measure signed by Baker also included relief for workers who were unemployed last year or this year, allowing them to exempt up to \$10,200 in the jobless benefits they collected from state taxes if their household income is below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Another provision creates a \$75 million COVID-19 emergency sick leave program, which will give full-time workers 40 hours of paid time off if they get infected and need to quarantine or care for a family member affected by the virus.

"The mandate aptly addresses needs

-- immunization, isolation and quarantine -- that were not contemplated when the state's Paid Family and Medical Leave program was designed," Baker wrote to lawmakers.

However, Baker sent that portion of the bill back to lawmakers with requested technical changes, including a proposed cap on benefits. He also proposed extending a \$40-per-employee tax credit to businesses that don't qualify under a federal paid leave program.

Lawmakers can either accept Baker's amendments to the bill or override them.

The Legislature's Ways and Means Committee is considering Baker's preliminary \$46 billion budget, which includes additional relief for businesses and workers.

Massachusetts also expects to receive nearly \$8 billion in federal funding for testing and vaccines, schools, businesses and local governments, under a \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief package signed by President Joe Biden last month.

Lawmakers want gender-neutral state Constitution

By CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse reporter

BOSTON — The state Constitution has been amended 121 times since it was ratified more than 240 years ago, most recently in 2006, when voters approved the state's health-care law.

But some on Beacon Hill say the historical parchment, penned by Massachusetts' own founding father, John Adams, is in need of a different kind of revision.

A group of lawmakers want to update the Constitution to make it gender-neutral, changing the pronoun "he" to "the person" throughout the document.

"We are making such great strides to become inclusive in the commonwealth," Rep. Mindy Domb, D-Amherst, primary sponsor of the bill, told members of the Legislature's Judiciary Committee on Tuesday. "We should make sure the constitution reflects that."

There are at least 83 references to "he" in the document, which begins with the words: "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights."

Domb pointed out the word "person" is already used 64 times in the document.

"By striking the word 'he' and replacing it with 'the person,' we are making the Constitution more consistent as well as gender inclusive," she told the panel.

Several states, including Vermont and Maine, have changed their constitutions to use gender-neutral language, while others are considering doing so, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

New York voters approved such changes in 2001. Rhode Island also made the switch.

Roughly half of all U.S. states have moved toward gender-neutral language, in drafts of laws and proposed revisions of their state constitutions.

The Massachusetts proposal was one of 10 Constitutional amendments heard by the panel on Tuesday, the first step toward getting on the ballot. The Legislature is expected to convene a joint session next month to consider the amendments.

Domb has filed another proposal to allow state and local elected officials to decline to recite the phrase "so help me, God" when taking the oath of office.

That amendment, which was advanced by the Judiciary Committee in the previous two-year session, calls for substituting a secular version, known as the Quaker oath, which states, "This I do under the pains and penalties of perjury."

"It doesn't take God out of the Constitution," Domb said. "This only allows for an option for a person, regardless of their religion, to take the oath."

Another proposal, filed by House Minority Leader Brad Jones, R-North Reading, would prohibit the state from using the eminent domain law to take private property.

State law allows citizens to petition their representatives and senators to file proposed amendments to the Constitution.

A proposed amendment filed by Vincent Dixon, a Winchester Republican who ran unsuccessfully for the Governor's Council in 2014, would establish a term renewal process requiring state judges to be reconfirmed every 10 years.

Currently, judges are appointed for life after being nominated by the governor, vetted by a state commission and confirmed by the Governor's Council.

Supporters of the dozen or so constitutional amendments acknowledge they face a long slog.

To be successful, amendments must be approved by two consecutive Legislatures — a process that could take three years or more.

State to refund tax filers for jobless benefits

By CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse reporter

BOSTON — The state plans to refund tens of thousands of residents who've already paid income taxes

but are due a deduction for the jobless benefits they collected last year.

During a legislative hearing on Thursday, Finance Secretary Mike Heffernan said the Department of

Revenue will be making adjustments for more than 130,000 tax filers who didn't get a reduction in their state income taxes for the first \$10,200 in unemployment benefits.

Heffernan said about 400,000 in Massachusetts residents have already filed their state tax returns. The deduction for unemployment benefits, which was part of a package of legislation signed by Gov. Charlie Baker last week, took effect after many of those individuals filed their returns.

He said refunds totaling \$55 million will likely go out beginning next month for those who had not taken the deduction.

"That should happen by mid-May," Heffernan told the House Committee on Federal Stimulus and Census Oversight.

Workers who were unemployed last year will also

get a break on their federal taxes. A stimulus bill signed by President Joe Biden last month exempted the first \$10,200 of jobless benefits from federal income taxes.

All told, the state's tax coffers are expected to take a hit for \$128 million due to the exemption on jobless benefits.

Heffernan told lawmakers the state can't use the billions of dollars in stimulus money it's expecting from the federal government to offset the impact to its tax coffers.

"That will come out of our current tax dollars. But we had good returns, year to date" he said. "And we think that is a very worthy tax expenditure."

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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