

Beacon Bits

The big day's just about here! I'm really looking forward to spending the Fourth of July in the *Beacon's* booth on the Village Green. I hope to meet many of our wonderful supporters whom I haven't met yet and enlist many new members and volunteers to the cause. Be sure to stop by our booth and say, "Hi!"

On the Fourth we'll be selling our first-ever *Beacon* t-shirts. Where else can you buy a t-shirt that mentions not only **Andover** but also **East Andover, West Andover, Potter Place, and Cilleyville?** Hurry over to our booth and get yours quick – they're so cool that they're bound to be hot sellers.

This month's *Beacon* is jammed with good, interesting, local news, and I'm very happy about that. But I'm very distressed about the growing quantity of good, local news that I have to leave out of each issue. What will it take to expand the *Beacon* so you can have all the news, you ask? That's easy:

- More members, and
- More volunteers

We're especially in need of people to help edit the 75 to 100 short articles we receive for publication every month. This *isn't* at all about being Miss Grundy, the stern English teacher. It's about reading an article and asking yourself, "Is everything in this article clear? Does it make sense?"

We've got dozens of people writing articles for the *Beacon* – now we need a dozen or so people getting those articles ready for our readers' enjoyment. It's not hard work, and there's no commitment required – do what you can, when you can. But do something, sometime, to help the *Beacon*. Because, remember...

Everyone Works For The *Beacon*!

Charlie

Next Month's *Beacon*...

...should be in mailboxes on Friday, July 29. Please get all ads, articles, etc. to us by **Friday, July 15** at the latest. And earlier is always better!

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and Lynch applauded their efforts.

"The people of New Hampshire deserved better," Lynch said. "Better targeting of aid, a more open debate and elimination once and for all of the statewide property tax."

Even many lawmakers who supported the plan yesterday were unhappy about it, choosing a ye-a vote for one of three reasons: Their hometowns get larger grants next year, they think it's better than the widely unpopular current system, or they feared what could have emerged from a last-minute conference committee.

[The plan] reduces the statewide property tax from \$3.33 per \$1,000 of assessed value to \$2.84. The tax would be collected and spent locally. Property-wealthy communities, or "donor towns," would no longer have to deposit a portion of their statewide property taxes into the state's education trust fund, for distribution to other communities.

The state would dole out about \$456

million in grants next year based on property values and student needs. A little less than half the money would be distributed based on a community's ability to raise taxes. The rest would be funneled into needy districts, such as those with many students requiring instruction in English as a Second Language or free- and reduced-priced lunches. But only communities with low family incomes would qualify for targeted aid.

Communities that would lose money would share about \$17 million to ensure no town gets less than 85 percent of its current grant.

The plan is kind to Alton, Newbury, New London and other donor towns because they'll no longer have to send checks to Concord. Property-poor communities, like Allenstown, Pittsfield and Franklin, also fare well, receiving increases in state aid next year. The losers are communities in the middle, with moderate property values and slightly higher than average incomes. Concord, for instance, loses \$1.3 million next year. Bow's grant drops by \$162,000. [Andover loses about \$13,000 or about 2% of what it received from the state in 2005.]

[While the bill was being debated.] a group of representatives from Nashua stood in a corner, murmuring. Their

Andover Loses 2%

Andover received \$694,301 from the state for education in 2005. The newly-passed legislation will reduce that to \$681,197 in both 2006 and 2007, a loss of \$13,104, or about 2%.

Here's how we fared compared to some of our neighbors:

- Danbury – UP \$199,473 (33%)
- Boscawen – UP \$473,278 (27%)
- Franklin – UP \$1,454,839 (26%)
- Salisbury – UP \$16,411 (3%)
- Warner – UP \$10,224 (1%)
- ANDOVER – DOWN \$13,104 (2%)
- Sutton – DOWN \$40,259 (1.1%)
- Hill – DOWN \$71,976 (15%)
- Webster – DOWN \$70,690 (15%)
- Wilmot – DOWN \$62,476 (15%)

rapidly growing city, which recently built a second high school, loses \$2.1 million next year under the new plan. The city, as well as other communities due for shrunken grants, is mulling legal action.

Lynch said Attorney General Kelly Ayotte is prepared to "vigorously" defend the plan against any challenges.

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tivities on the Andover Village Green, contributing a percentage of their profits toward continuing the event the following year.

On behalf of the Town of Andover and the Fourth of July Committee ... to those of you who have been here before, nice seeing you again! To you who make this your first visit ... welcome! We hope you will enjoy yourself on this Fourth of July as we observe our Independence Day together. May we all share many more!

Make An Andover Fashion Statement!



Proceeds benefit the *Beacon* – See us on the 4th on the Green!

BEACON MEMBERS WIN!

Each month the *Beacon* holds a random drawing among its members to give away valuable prizes provided by area businesses. **Become a member** for a year, support the *Beacon*, and join the fun! This month's winners are:

Artisan's Workshop	Handcraft'd Perfume Bottle	\$67	Jane Diven
Blackwater Junct. Rest.	Breakfast for Two	—	Bill Smith
Bowie's Market	Breakfast for Two	—	Ethney McMahon
Christie's Indoor Garden	Gift Certificate	\$25	Lea Ayers
Curves of New London	1 Month Membership	\$36	Donna McCabe
Forest Cone & Evergreen	Yankee Candle	\$21	Judy Manning
Handknits By Judy	Handknit Scarf	\$35	Linda Varnum
Jake's Market in Andover	Cash Card	\$10	Dave Bates
Mackenna's Restaurant	Gift Certificate	\$10	Otis Matherly
Mackenna's Restaurant	Gift Certificate	\$10	Ed & Mary Hiller
New Beginnings Salon	Biologage Products	\$26	Rene Ratte
New London Opticians	Gift Certificate	\$15	Dave & Anne Hewitt
Tight Lines Fishing Svcs	Gift Certificate	\$25	Chris & Kit Norris

Winners – contact the *Beacon* at 735-5331 to collect your prize.

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As a community newspaper, the *Beacon* relies on volunteers for most of its stories, photos, ads, production, and distribution. **When you have the time and the inclination, please help – NO COMMITMENT REQUIRED!**

The *Beacon* is mailed free to all Andover addresses. We ask for a minimum \$25 annual donation from out-of-town or seasonal subscribers who would like the paper mailed to them. **We welcome donations from the community** and depend on your financial support for a large part of our operating budget.

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Here's my member donation of \$_____ for (check one):
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Local

Your Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone or E-mail _____

Seasonal / Out of Town or Gift

Other Name _____
 Other Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone or E-mail _____

Seasonal: which months are you at the "other" address?

Andover Beacon • PO Box 149 • Andover NH 03216 • Thank you!