

East Andover Fire Department

By Rene Lefebvre
Chief, East Andover Fire Department

There are two things fire fighters find very important to do. One is fighting fire, and the other is breathing. Now I know you're thinking that even a fire fighter is capable of breathing without much thought. But we must do our work in places where the air is not safe to breathe.

When I was a rookie (that statement makes the young folks groan) we did not think about safety the way we do today, and it was not uncommon to send firefighters to the hospital for smoke inhalation. Thankfully self-contained air packs were invented

and introduced to the fire service.

I remember (there he goes again) the older fire fighters saying they were "never going to use that contraption." Being a rookie had its advantages, as we were too new to realize that tradition always wins over innovation in the fire service, so we liked the new toy.

Today an air pack is issued to every fire fighter and has become as common on the fire ground as hose. My first pack weighed about 30 pounds. The new packs weigh less than 15 pounds and carry twice the amount of compressed air.

Re-filling the air pack with clean air has become more complicated due to the high pressures we now use. To make re-filling the air packs safe, they are now filled in a vault-like device that we purchased and installed in our fire station.

The vault is designed to contain the pieces of the air tank, should it explode during refilling. This is a very real hazard that was recognized early by the NFPA, the governing body that makes the rules fire fighters follow to work safely, and they mandated the filling vault.

Typical of most fire fighters who look at danger as a manageable task, our fire fighters reached the conclusion that if we blow up a tank, we may not be injured, but we would need clean shorts. Being the kind of pre-planners that we are, we have a clean pair taped to the side of the vault. You just never know.

POLICE BLOTTER

The Andover Police Department responded to 184 calls for service from February 15 to March 15. The following is a partial breakdown:

- Accidents on Proctor property, Main Street, and Flaghole Road
- Attempted suicide, Franklin Hwy
- Assisted other departments 10 times
- Issued three pistol permits
- Thefts on Main Street and on Proctor property
- Neighborhood dispute on Princess Drive
- Assault complaint on Main Street
- 92 motor vehicle warnings

- 11 motor vehicle citations
- OHRV complaints on Channel Road and Plains Road

Arrests

- Jeffrey Connor, 17, Andover, assault
- Richard Stebbins, 30, Andover, DUI and motor vehicle violation
- David Ellis, 41, Franklin, warrant from Merrimack County sheriff
- Raymond Kelso, 19, Danbury, operating after suspension, prohibitions
- Matthew Creswell, 26, Springfield, theft by deception
- Koallie Rowe, 19, Salisbury, operating after suspension, prohibitions

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CONSERVATION CORNER

By Tina Cotton
Andover Conservation Commission

On Town Meeting day many residents looked at the displays of the Planning Board, the Master Plan Update Committee, and the Conservation Commission. Maps had a particular draw. Maps are a marvelous way to view the town and the relation of its parts to the whole. What do they show on my land? Why so many different maps?

The maps were created by different organizations showing different features. Most of the information came from the GRANIT database for Geographic Information Systems (GIS), maintained for the state by Complex Systems at the University of New Hampshire. The information was derived from input by state, federal, and municipal agencies and private organizations.

Each map layer, or subject, is downloadable and viewable by using Arc-Explorer, a free download. Virtually anything that can be located on the ground using a coordinate system can be mapped in GIS. Some information is scanned, such as aerial photography, and other information is added using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit. Coordinates in the GPS unit are downloaded into a computer and placed on a map using a software program.

Your Town boards are securing GIS maps produced by various groups to help draft a revised master plan. The Lakes Region Planning Commission is using several data layers to produce a build-out analysis of Andover. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is preparing a natural resource map of Andover and another map showing areas they deem worthy of preserving in their present undeveloped state. Colby Sawyer students prepared a map for all towns within the Ausbon Sargent Land Protection Trust region (including Andover) that presented prioritized areas worth con-

serving. The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department produced a map of Andover's wildlife habitat.

Each of the groups above had different priorities. Each chose map layers, or subjects, according to their priorities. These priorities were then weighted (given a numerical degree of importance). By combining these weighted priorities and mapping them, you get a map that shows what areas have the highest importance and are therefore most important to preserve. This is called a co-occurrence map.

What were some of the priorities for these groups? These included such things as river corridors, south-facing slopes, agricultural lands, forested areas, lakes, wetlands, population density, roads, unfragmented or large undeveloped areas, wildlife corridors, areas of anticipated population growth, major utility lines, roads and railroad beds, lot lines, steep slopes, flood plains, rare and unique habitats, cultural and historic resources, and current land use.

The job of the Town boards is to use these co-occurrence maps to establish Andover's priorities, weight them, and come up with our own unique co-occurrence map on which to establish modified zones for residential use, commercial and industrial use, conservation and recreational use, and so forth. All meetings are public and public hearings will be held on proposed changes. Your input is essential in formulating a master plan that we can live with for the next ten years and beyond.

The New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning has summarized our process nicely. We need to provide economic opportunity, choice, and livability to keep our town more or less as it is while allowing for growth. Some guiding principles (smart growth principles in RSA 9-B) for this include maintaining traditional compact settlement patterns, a mix of uses including housing, employment, shopping, municipal and social services; a working landscape for farming, forestry, and recreation; balancing environmental quality and locally controlled growth.

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Dee is the author of *Changing People Changing Dogs*

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