



## 2009 Town Meetings Approve Tax Bills Up 5%

By Ed Hiller  
Andover Budget Committee

In the February issue of the *Beacon* I estimated that, based on the recommended Andover budgets and assuming no change in the Merrimack County portion of our tax bills, Andover's 2009 tax bills would be about 3.8% higher than 2008. Now that our school district, town, and fire district meetings have been held and the voters have had their say, the best estimate for 2009 tax bills shows a 5% increase over 2008.

### Andover School District

The School District Meeting on March 2 voted to increase the Budget Committee's proposed budget of \$4.236 million by an additional \$60,000 to

fund repair of the gymnasium floor at AE/MS. This raised the total appropriations to \$4.296 million – an increase of \$265,245 (6.6%) over last year's net appropriation (omitting pass-through items) of \$4.031 million.

This increase in appropriations will result in an increase in the school tax rate from \$10.93 last year to an estimated \$11.95 in 2009, an increase of \$1.02 (9.3%). (This estimate of the 2009 tax rate assumes that all other tax-offsetting revenues, including the return of surplus, remain the same as in the previous year.)

### Andover Town Budget

The Andover Town Meeting voted  
See Taxes on page 7



Mark Cowdrey stokes the boiler at the Tucker Mountain Maple Co-op on Tucker Mountain Road in East Andover, where the maple season is full steam ahead. "The weather is projected to be ideal for sap flow, but you just never know how long the season will run," said Mark. The Co-op shelves are loaded with dark amber. Drop by to purchase your own liquid gold or to watch production. Staff photo: Heather Makechnie

## BREAKING NEWS

*Our Town*, a directory of local businesses and services created by the Andover Service Club, is enclosed in each issue of the April *Beacon* mailed to an Andover address. Details on page 30.

Andover's Fourth of July Celebration relies on the fundraising effort that kicks off this month. Neighborhood canvassers are needed. The article on page 15 has details on how to help.

The Old Time Fair put on by the Andover Historical Society will *not* be cancelled this year due to bridge construction. The Society needs your auction and flea market donations for the fair! See page 20.



Dale McLeod makes a point at School District Meeting on March 2. Staff photo: Bob Bussey

## Andover School District Meeting Results, Article By Article

By Charlie Darling  
Beacon staff

Over 200 Andover taxpayers settled into the AE/MS gym on Monday evening, March 2, to hold the annual Andover School District Meeting. Moderator Bill Bardsley, using the edge of a school lunch tray as an impromptu gavel, opened the meeting by introducing Margo Coolidge, Paul Currier, and Megan Wright, who led the audience in a sing-along of *This Land Is Your Land* and *America The Beautiful*. They concluded by singing Margo's own composition, *Andover Folk*. "I hope it sets a tone for tonight," she said.

Scouts Matthew Bent and Nick Keniston led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, and at 7:18 PM the meeting turned its attention to the warrant.

### Warrant Article 1

To accept the reports printed in the

School District report. With no discussion, the article passed unanimously.

### Warrant Article 2

To authorize the School Board to accept and expend unanticipated money received. Looking ahead toward the possibility of economic stimulus funds becoming available, the meeting passed the article all but unanimously.

### Warrant Article 3

To authorize the School Board to apply for, accept, and expend state and federal aid to education this year. The article passed all but unanimously.

### Warrant Article 4

To authorize the School Board to accept and expend private donations this year. The article passed unanimously.

### Warrant Article 5

\$4,236,578 for the School Budget. This amount does not include the  
See District on page 3

## Selectmen Seeking Andover's Oldest Citizen

100-Year-Old Boston Post Cane to be Awarded

By Heather Makechnie  
Beacon staff

August of this year will mark the 100th anniversary of the Boston Post cane, which goes to the oldest citizen of the town. Selectman Dennis Fenton would like to see the next recipient of Andover's cane honored at the Fourth of July celebration. "The problem is," said Dennis, "we haven't a clue who the oldest resident of Andover is."

The last person to hold the honor was Francis Huntoon, who died in the fall. Now the beautiful cane is sitting in Town Manager Dana Hadley's office. Or rather, two duplicate canes are sitting in the Town Office. The original is safely tucked away at the Andover His-



Andover's Boston Post Cane. Staff photo: Heather Makechnie

torical Society.

"A few years ago," said Dana, "Lincoln Charles was commissioned by the Board of Selectmen to make duplicates because for a while, Andover's cane had disappeared. When it was finally discovered and returned, we wanted to make certain that this irreplaceable piece of history was well secured. Now

See Cane on page 9

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