



Members of the AE/MS Environmental Club (l-r: Shyanne Goodbread, Jacqui Morris, Chloe Methven, Cope Makechnie, Lauren Boisvert, Annika Johnson, Tiffany Poulin, Danika Kolezar, Scout Armstrong, Max Kolezar, Betsy Abrahamson, Jessica Lewis, Megan Kelley, Emily Bates, and Finn Weber) helped Mark Barselle and Molly Morgan plant the trees. Photo: Tom Morgan

## Students, Townspeople Beautify Town Hall With Trees

By Molly Morgan  
For the Beacon

"I hope that your branches will be a home for rabbits and birds."

"I hope that you will grow to be healthy and strong."

"I hope that you live a long time and don't get chopped down."

Each student, one by one, proudly read their blessing, carefully folded up the piece of paper on which it was written, and placed it in the hole where the

crabapple tree's roots awaited the next blessing and a bucketful of compost.

On May 26 students from Andover Elementary School Environmental Club and several community volunteers planted a crabapple tree near the back entrance of Town Hall. The following week, Jay Hubbard's third grade class planted three more trees, giving the south entrance of the Town Hall four new crabapple trees. The project was

See Trees on page 5

# Andover Budget On Track Despite Tough Economy

By Dana Hadley  
Andover Town Administrator

We all have been affected by the current economy, whether directly or indirectly. In crafting the Town's 2009 budget, selectmen and members of the Budget Committee were very much aware of the pressures surrounding residents.

From the Town's standpoint, we have been concerned about incoming revenues. It has been in the news constantly about shortfalls in state government and how revenues to individual communities will be eliminated. There has been a lot of discussion about revenues that the state will not be passing down to towns, such as the shared revenues and the proceeds realized from the state room and meals tax.

While there is still uncertainty about whether or not this will happen in the future, for this year we have been assured that the Town will receive those funds. This is approximately \$90,000, so if we did not receive those funds it would roughly equal an increase of 33¢ on the tax rate, or about \$66 added to the tax bill of a \$200,000 property.

The good news this year is that our revenues remain strong in most areas. Town Clerk revenues and Transfer Station revenues are coming in as projected. Other revenues, such as the Land Use Change Tax (the penalty for taking land out of Current Use) and the Yield Tax (on timber harvests), are much less than usual. But some other revenues have been stronger than expected, so revenues are strong so far this year. There have been no surprises so far in

the Town budget.

Unfortunately, tax collection has slowed some. The Tax Collector this year posted liens approximately \$45,000 higher for the 2008 tax year than the lien total for 2007. She has been working very hard to collect taxes for residents in danger of tax delinquency. We hope that tax delinquency will not be necessary – the Town is not in the real estate business. We have been working with property owners and accepting time payments in an effort to help residents resolve their overdue taxes.

While the economy has been a concern to everyone, it did have a silver lining in that our project vendors have sharpened their pencils to get our business. The Chase Hill Road paving project came in at \$30,000 less than originally planned. The Sam Hill Road project has not been done yet, but we may see some savings there due to cost reductions from vendors.

### On Roger Godwin's Passing

In closing, I don't think that I need to tell you that former selectman Roger Godwin's passing is a big loss to Andover. His legacy touched just about everything in Andover. His projects regarding our roads, the work of the Planning Board, the Town Web site, and the cable TV station are to name just a few.

Although I worked with Roger just a short time, his counsel was very valuable to me, especially when I first came to Andover. Roger and his dog, Spot, usually picked up our mail at the Post Office and delivered it to the Town Office every day. I have missed him stopping by.

### Fireworks from page 3

everyone tries to track where shells are going and listen for shells that do not fire or do not fire correctly.

#### After The Show

For our own safety we wait at least a half hour after the last shell is fired before beginning to pick up. We start this process by first checking the mortars that are preloaded to ensure that all shells fire properly and did not get missed. Occasionally this happens, and you will see that after the show is over we may fire one or two shells.

We then wait additional time to be sure that any shells that may not have gone off will not go off unexpectedly when we check the area downrange. We walk the grounds and search for any

shells that have not performed correctly. Any shells that are deemed to be duds are carefully put in water to soak for a half hour.

At this point we can begin to break down the racks and load any racks that do not belong to the Town on the truck to take back to Atlas. Also, any duds or other shells that did not fire are boxed up and returned as well.

At dawn I go up to the site and do a final check of the area to ensure that there are no duds or misfired shells that we may have missed the night before. If I were to find such a shell, I would package it up after soaking it in water for 20 minutes. Then I would bring it to Atlas in Jaffrey for proper disposal. Thankfully, in the past eight years I have been working for Atlas I have never had to make this trip.

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