



On February 15, two vehicles met head-on at Main Street and Potters Road. All three Andover emergency service departments had just arrived at the Andover fire station for motor vehicle extrication training, so teams responded within minutes. Members of the Andover Fire Department, East Andover Fire Department, and Andover Rescue Squad extricated the patient, who was transported to New London Hospital. Responders pictured (l-r) are Chuck Ellis, Jeff Sweeney, Jeff Clarke, and Scott Davis.

Photo: Jake Johnson

East Andover Fire Department

By Rene Lefebvre
Chief, East Andover Fire Department

The Town Meeting season will be extended by a public hearing for the citizens of the East Andover Precinct this year. State law requires that we have a public hearing prior to the regular precinct meeting to discuss the expenditure for the new fire truck. The amount of money requested and the fact that we will pay for this truck over more than one year trigger this requirement.

As your Chief, I think that this is a very good requirement. I feel strongly that we need a new truck and now is a good time financially to purchase. This is also a great opportunity for everyone to ask questions, see what we plan to purchase, and feel comfortable with the decision. The hearing will be at the East Andover Fire Station on Tuesday, March 16, at 7:30 PM. Hope to see you there.

Wood Ash Safety

The material we remove from our wood stoves is called "wood ash" and sometimes "coals." Neither description is fully accurate. "Wood ash" indicates the remains of a wood fire and basically a benign material. "Coals" would make you think "not hot". We all know that this is not true. (Well, not all true, or this paragraph would not be written.)

Wood coals are a charcoal-like material that hold a tremendous amount of heat and, given the proper conditions, will smolder for weeks. The second culprit, wood ash, aids the coal's ability to burn for a long time. The wood ash insulates the coals from too much oxygen. Together they make a nice warm nucleus that slowly consumes the charcoal and gives off heat energy.

Now, after removing them from a cold stove or ash bucket and spreading them on the flower garden next to the house or barn, all you need is a little

wind. The wood ash is blown away from the hot coals and very soon any flammable material is a target.

I would very much like to tell you that I learned this information from what I have read. The truth is that we have seen the results of hot coals and wind in our community many times. A fire will start and spread from locations that initially make no sense. That is our first clue, and after a few questions, the cause of the fire is soon found. The home owner is embarrassed and angry with himself. Other than a chat about the proper storage and disposal of ashes, no other conversation needs to take place.

My rules for storing ashes are simple and non-negotiable. First is that they must be stored in a metal container. Not wood, not cardboard, nor plastic – just metal.

Second is that the cover should fit tightly and must also be metal. Third, store the metal can with the tight fitting cover on a non-combustible material like brick, stone, or cement. The can may get hot, but most likely just be warm. The tight fitting cover will, over time, deny the wood coals even the modest amount of oxygen needed to keep them alive.

I tend to keep them for four weeks after the last donation to the can before disposal. Then I spread them on my garden, while carefully inspecting the material for any signs of life.

Do not put the ashes in our Transfer Station hopper! We have had several close calls with fires inside our compactor. The rubbish is of no value, but the Transfer Station is a town resource we all need.

If you are new to home heating with wood or have any other fire safety questions, please call my phone at 344-1201. We may not have the answer, but we will work to find someone who does.

Proctor Fire Department Is Active Once Again

By Ripley Harrington
Proctor Journalism Class

At Proctor we have classes, sports, and a fire department. Since November of 2008, firefighters Jake Johnson and Brad Hardie have rekindled fire department activities after two years of absence. The fire department was activated to raise the level of safety awareness and provide students with another activity outside sports and classes.

Firefighting and rescue work have been a long-standing part of Proctor and have served as a real emergency service in the town of Andover. For years, students 18 years of age responded to emergencies in Andover to assist the Andover volunteers. There are currently two students with training and permission to respond to local emergencies. Not surprisingly, they like the chance to get out of



Proctor's 1951 yearbook included this photo of the Proctor fire department. Pictured are Mahlon Hutchinson, Thomas Wright, John Ireland, James Wright, Kingsbury Davis, Peter Parker, Butch Walker, Mr. Robert Boyden, Thomas Van Dorn, Mr. Roland Burbank, and Marvin Ely.

classes when their pager rings.

The firefighters are eager to start the new year. The department has been considering purchases to equip the students with improved gear. A new set of

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Fourth Of July Committee

By Judy Perreault
Fourth of July Committee

The frost is definitely still on the "punkin," but we are looking ahead to summer and are already planning for the Fourth of July celebration. In case you missed the ad in this issue of the *Beacon*, we will be asking you to pick a theme for this year's parade during voting on March 9, Town Meeting Day. The choices this year are:

- Fiesta
- Great Outdoors
- Circus
- American Inventions
- Vacation Destinations

Fortunately, at our last committee meeting all the officers "re-upped," but with the comment "... but if anyone else would like the job..." We certainly would appreciate some new faces on the committee.

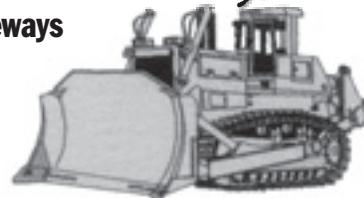
We have a need for some 55 gallon barrels to use on the Fourth as trash containers. Some of the ones we have are showing their age. They were originally obtained for us from a company that shipped dry product in them. They are made of a heavy cardboard.

If you should have access to these or something similar, please call Howard Wilson at 735-5427.

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