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Doug Gay (l) and Nick Theis work on finishing the newly-poured concrete slab for the multi-purpose building at Blackwater Park. Carroll Concrete supplied the concrete at a discount for this community project headed by the Andover Recreation Committee.
Photo: Charlie Darling

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Wanted: Candidates For Selectman

By Dennis Fenton
Andover Board of Selectmen (retired)

Dennis Fenton, a long-time member of the Board of Selectmen, wrote these words in 2009 when he decided to retire from the Board. With his permission, we're re-running this to encourage people to consider becoming a candidate.

First, the fact that you are busy is not a legitimate excuse! Everyone can use that one, but it's the town's well-being that is at stake, so we all have to find time to do the things that are really important to us.

What background should you have? There's no one right answer to that question. George Upton, for example, took an appointment to fill a vacancy on the Board of Selectman before the moving van was completely unloaded when he came to Andover. He went on to win re-election. George only had on-the-job training, which is the hard way.

Other Board members have taken different paths, being on Town boards and committees to gain experience. All these folks had one thing in common as a part of the community – they wanted to give something back to Andover.

A Good Candidate

What makes a good candidate? The first item on any candidate's agenda should be what is good for the major-

ity. When a new problem arises, the solution is not the easy way out, but what serves our town the best.

As a Selectman, you are one of three overseers whose job it is to manage the town's resources and problems. When a vote is taken, be supportive even if you might like something a little different.

Another very important function is the appointment of various Town committees; try to have diversity in philosophy with as many parts of town represented as possible.

To make the job less of a burden, we have a Town Administrator and a Secretary/Bookkeeper who look after the day-to-day operations. Having those positions well filled should give any interested candidate reassurance that taking on this job is manageable.

Your main charge is to have needed services provided to the town at a reasonable cost. An important tool available to you in pursuit of that goal is the Budget Committee. Their job is to review all budgets in town and present the budget to be voted on at Town Meeting, School District Meeting, and the meetings of the various precincts.

The Budget Committee takes the prejudice out of an individual budget as they look at the big picture. It is important that we all, boards and citizens, listen very closely to the story they tell each year as they attempt to keep our tax rate at a manageable level.

Share Your Talents

To all you good folks out there: You are *not* too busy to make a commitment to share your many talents. Being a Selectman is not a thankless job. People appreciate your willingness to serve, and you will be surprised how many times you are told this.

I don't know who will sign up, but you are out there. This is for your town. It is all worthwhile. Good luck!

The filing dates for candidates to file with the Town Clerk are Wednesday, January 19, through Friday, January 28.



TOWN of ANDOVER

Filing Period for Andover Town & School District Officers

Jan 19 to Jan 28

File at Town Clerk's office
Mon & Wed, 9 - 2
Tue & Thur, 1:30 - 6:30

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