



December 6 was wreath-decorating day at AE/MS. Carmen Bates, Jane Slayton, Ethney McMahon, Anne Hewitt, and Vienna Marcus were on hand to add bright red touches to fresh wreaths destined for homes and public buildings all around Andover. The sale of holiday wreaths is an important fundraiser for the AE/MS PTO in support of field trips throughout the school year. Photo: Charlie Darling

Beacon Struggling to Reach 300 Supporters for 2014

Canvassing up, but total down 18%

Charlie Darling, *Beacon* staff

We're wrapping up the *Beacon's* 2014 fundraising year, and I wish the news were better...

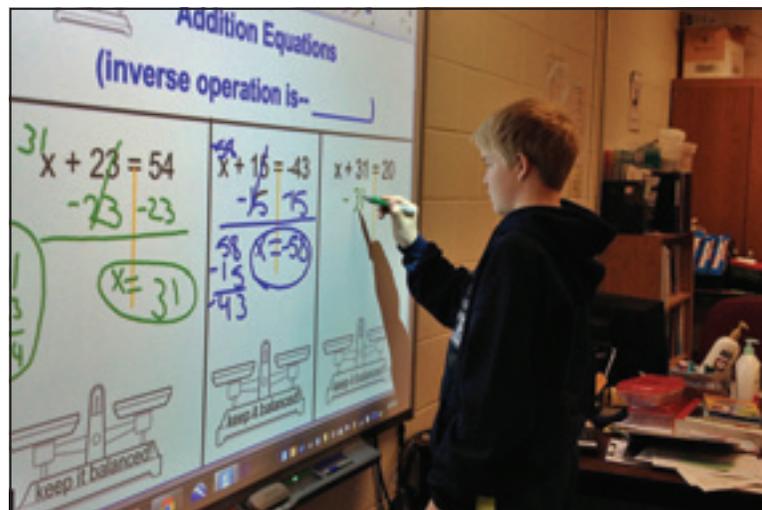
First, the good news. This fall, a dozen volunteer canvassers reached out to 158 *Beacon* readers who hadn't donated yet in 2014. Of those readers canvassed, 68 stepped up and made their donation for the year (up 26% from last year) – thank you! (Almost all of the other 90 readers canvassed just never replied.)

Sadly, the best efforts of our canvassers and this year's nearly 300 donors were not enough to match last year's total, let alone move us closer to a stable and sustainable future for the *Beacon*. The total number of donors so far in 2014 is down 12% from our 336 donors at this point in 2013; the total amount raised so far in 2014 is down 18% from the total at this



Scan this gizmo on your smartphone to donate now!

point in 2013.



AE/MS has received a \$10,000 donation from Proctor Academy, which it will use for education technology like the Smart Board Ryan Methven is using to solve an algebra problem. For more, see articles on page 39 and 40.



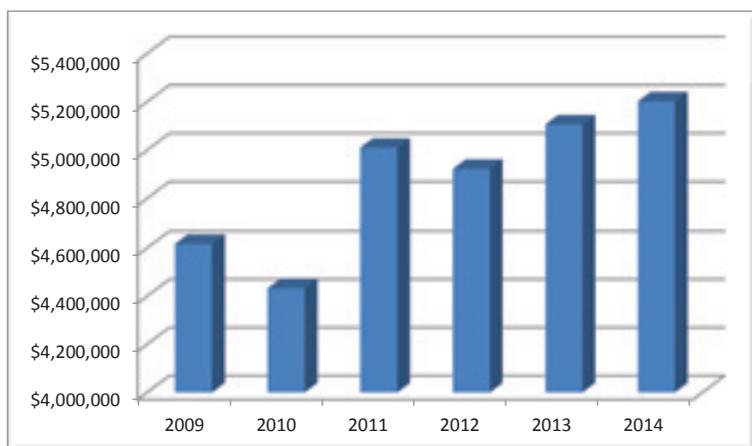
point in 2013.

Finally, more good news – there's still time to at least match last year's numbers! If you haven't supported the *Beacon* yet in 2014, please do so in the next few days, before 2014 runs out. Turning this weak performance around at the last minute would send a powerful message about what the *Beacon* means to the community, and what the community's willing to do to keep it publishing.

If you haven't donated to the *Beacon* yet this year, please don't wait! Use the coupon on page 4, or click the Donate button on any page of AndoverBeacon.com. If you have questions, visit AndoverBeacon.com/Donor-FAQ or contact me at Charlie@AndoverBeacon.com or 735-6099.

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To Be Raised by Taxes - Past Six Years					
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
\$4,616,373	\$4,431,790	\$5,009,718	\$4,921,453	\$5,105,830	\$5,200,882



Amount to be Raised by Taxes Rises 1.9% in 2014

Re-val shifts tax burden among taxpayers

Ed Hiller, Budget Committee

A revaluation of Andover was completed this year, which resulted in a decrease in the total assessed valuation of the town by approximately 6.2%. Each property is assessed separately, so the change in valuation will vary from property to property. But on average, the property valuations are down by 6.2%.

[For a deeper look at how the revaluation does and doesn't impact your tax bill, see *Total Town Valuation Impacts Tax Rate, Not Total Tax Bills* on page 6.]

The tax rate is computed by dividing the total amount of taxes to be raised by the total town valuation. To raise the same amount of taxes when the valuation has gone down by 6.2%, the computed tax rate goes up by that same percentage, namely 6.2%.

But since the total amount of taxes to be raised is up 1.9%, the total tax rate had to go up an additional 1.9% to approximately 8%. As a result of complexities in calculating school tax rates, the tax rate for 2014 is actually up about 8.6%. However, the total amount of taxes that appears on each tax bill will, on average, be up only 1.9%.

Andover School District Taxes

The annual School District Meeting for 2014 voted a total appropriation of \$4,754,553, up from the previous year by \$138,587 (or 3.0%). Included were:

- \$50,000 for a comprehensive building maintenance study

Two Tax Bills in 2015

Based on vigorous discussion at the 2014 Town Meeting, the Selectmen have designated 2015 as the year in which Andover changes to semi-annual tax billing. So before you put away your 2014 tax bill, make a note of one-half of the total amount. Then mark your June 2015 calendar with that amount, because you'll be receiving a 2015 tax bill in June for one-half the total of your 2014 tax bill.

Your second 2015 tax bill will arrive in late November or early December 2015, and it will reflect your total 2015 tax, minus the payment you made in June.

- \$25,000 to the Special Education Trust Fund
- \$25,000 to the High School Tuition Trust Fund
- \$30,622 for salary increases

See Taxes on page 5

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