



Andover Fire Department, May 2017

Fire Permits are now required

Rene Lefebvre, AFD Chief

Four years ago the members of the East Andover and Andover fire departments met, discussed, and planned our



Members of Andover Fire Department practice ice rescue techniques using "cold water suits."

future. The study team commissioned by the Andover Select Board concluded that the fire department would be better as one department. Now it was up to us to carry out that plan and see if we could make working together a reality.

The first year we trained and con-

ducted our meetings together but still operated under two commands. At the end of the first year we combined our operations and worked as one department; for all practical purposes we were one team. The plan worked, training intensified, and our fire operations greatly improved.

However, there was one final hurdle to overcome. We needed to combine our two precincts into one district. This task did not belong to your fire department; it was for you, the voters to decide. And with your support, and vote in the affirmative, we are now one district and one fire department.

For many of us this last step is actually the beginning. The last four years were sometimes difficult, but not once did we think that our chosen path of one department was the wrong one. When we senior members are no longer able to answer bells, we will pass on to our team a strong and motivated department.

I greatly wished that the vote to combine the precincts was unanimous, but that was not the case. To those we disappointed, I will pledge to do my best to maintain a strong well equipped fire department at the least possible cost

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Adalyn Boucher, Chance Thibault, and Timothy Welcome cleaned brush away from the amphitheater area as part of AE/MS Earth Day.

Caption: Jane Slayton, Photo: Gretchen Hildebrand

Game room, Bristol Community Center. More photos of other community spaces on page 3.

All Captions and Photos: L. Chase

Community Spaces: A Look Inside

Community centers nearby and beyond

They're housed in old churches (Bristol, Danbury), old school buildings (Bradford, Franklin), an old fire station (Plymouth), a purposely built structure (Wilmot), a former town hall (Winhall, Vermont), and more.

They provide space for after school youth activities, internet access, preschool classes, senior centers, game rooms, art studios, study halls, food banks, film showings, community get togethers, and more.

They're run by both paid staff and volunteers, with funds coming from individual contributions and fees, foundation grants, and governmental agen-

cies. Most serve a single town, but one (Bristol) serves nine. They range in age from a single year (Winhall, Vermont) to more than 70 (Bristol).

Since Andover's Old Town Hall acquired new ownership late last year, the buyers, using the name Andover Community Space, have been visiting other nearby, and one not-so-nearby, community spaces to find out what's going on and how they're managed.

Here are a few photos, taken during guided tours when the facilities were not in use. If you'd like to help make similar opportunities available to the Andover community, send an e-mail to: AndoverCommunitySpace@gmail.com.



Second grade students work as a team to clean up the school grounds after a harsh winter.

Left to right: Parker Sweeney, Greg Howard, Linden Morgan, Camden Allenby, Caden Bendixsen, Tony Mori, Colin Murphy, Isaac Norris, and Timothy Welcome.
Caption: Jane Slayton, Photo: Gretchen Hildebrand

Town Developing Contingency Plan for Bridge Closure

Andover Select Board

Let me emphasize right up front- we are NOT facing an imminent bridge failure. This article is in response to a request from a citizen at the 2016 Town Meeting, that the Select Board devise a contingency plan in the event of the need to close Lawrence Street Bridge.

A quick update on Lawrence St. Bridge: The bridge is being inspected every three months for increasing signs of decay and/or damage, by an independent engineering firm. At present, we are allowing heavy loads to cross the bridge, but we will reduce load limits if

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