



SPORTS
Red Raiders
fall short 62-60
 Page 6

View from a
Country Kitchen
Secrets of Santa
 Page 5

WEATHER
Sunday
 Sunny
 High 28° Low 18°
 Page 2

Athol Daily News

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Mass. adds 5,000 jobs in November

BOSTON — The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development reported today that preliminary November estimates show an increase of 5,000 jobs in Massachusetts, for a total of 3,245,400 jobs. The total unemployment rate was 7.0 percent, down 0.3 of a percentage point from the

Jobs Page 8

Tully CCC complaint is tabled

By PAT DOUBLEDAY
 ADN Staff Reporter

ORANGE — A complaint against the Tully City Council Club will be tabled by the selectboard until January. Nicholas Ambrogio of Tully Road submitted a list of complaints he and the neighbors have when an event is held at the club.

He stated that the biggest problem is that the patrons use his driveway and grassy front lawn to turn around.

He stated, in part, "I'm talking about at least two car lengths in my driveway, like they live there." He stated that they park in front of the

Tully CC Page 8

New Salem Store recognized



The New Salem General Store owners Rick and Lori Oliver were recently recognized by the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation for their efforts, and those of their customers, in helping raise over \$5,600 during the 2011 New England Ride for Kids. The event sponsors 40 motorcycle rides around the country each year. The funds raised in 2011 topped \$4.5 million to be used in brain tumor research and family support. The Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation asked the local Red Knights Motorcycle Club to present the Olivers with their plaque. Left to right — Rick and Lori with Red Knights president Bob LaFord.

Feedback from public sought on cobra lights

ATHOL — On Tuesday, Dec. 20, at 6 p.m., the town will conduct a lighting test in the area of Checkers and S&S Appliance on Main Street.

Four ornamental lights in that area have had LED bulbs installed and are now white instead of yellow, said Town Manager David Ames.

The LED lights were installed a week ago. The other lights are 100-watt light; however, the LEDs are 55-watt. The 55-watt lights put out enough light to compare to a 175-watt bulb.

On Tuesday, the town will be bagging or shutting off the cobra head light that is between the two LEDs on the north side of the street as a part of the test. "We want to see if we can eliminate some of the cobra heads if we go

with the brighter LEDs," said Ames. "Replacing each ornamental light will save 45 watts per light and require less maintenance; however, if we can also eliminate a cobra head, we can save an additional 250 to 400 watts. I am looking for feedback from the public. What do they think of the white lights? Had anyone noticed the change? How do they think the downtown will look if all ornamental lights are replaced?"

Lights Page 8

Athol Daily News Santa Fund over the \$9,000 mark

ATHOL — Ho! Ho! Ho! The Jolly old Elf is busy making final preparations for his midnight ride, and the 64th Athol Daily News Santa Fund continues to climb

toward its goal of \$13,500 to bring Christmas joy to the area's boys and girls.

Today's contributions total \$1,780, which brings to the running total to \$9,148.38.

Donations were received from the following: from "the many friends" of the Athol Daily News Santa Fund \$1,150; from the Ellinwood Golf Tournament \$150; in memory of Sir Hunter Blue of

Santa Page 8

Large-scale ground-mounted photovoltaic bylaw hearing draws little interest in Erving

By JARED ROBINSON
 ADN Staff Reporter

ERVING — There was zero attendance from residents at a public hearing held Thursday night at the town hall to discuss the planning board's proposed large-scale

ground-mounted photovoltaic installation bylaw.

Planning board chairman Bill Morris explained that executives at the Erving Paper Mills have expressed interest in placing a large-scale ground-mounted solar array

on 100 acres of land owned by Erving Industries north of the paper mill, above Route 2, with the hope of offsetting the cost of electricity to power the plant. Morris would not comment on the exact wattage of the proposed array, just that it is larger than the 250kW minimum to be considered "large-scale" under the bylaw.

Morris explained that the solar bylaw is the antithesis of the adult entertainment bylaw discussed at a special town meeting Monday night; in that the adult entertainment bylaw requires full compli-

ance, but the solar bylaw only asks for substantial compliance as some aspects can be waived by the special permit granting authority. He also said that the planning board approved the installation of large-scale photovoltaic arrays because Erving's natural layout makes it easy to conceal them. Inside of Route 495, where residential districts are much more compact a large-scale solar array has a greater effect on the aesthetics of the area, Morris said. In Erving though, where the ter-

Erving Page 8

Fact finding excavation



LIBRARY SURVEYING — Athol Public Library Director Deb Blanchard, right, looks on as surveyor Kevin Hinds, left, of Precision Land Surveying Inc., of Southborough, and Richard Thuma, project manager for the APL renovations/expansion project, make notes regarding the cement culvert running beneath the town hall, library, back parking lot and the downtown area. The three were on site Friday. The culvert allows for one branch of the Millers River to run underground to where it meets Mill Brook at Lord Pond Plaza in the area of Niagara Cutter. Pete Lyman excavated the hole to reveal the top of the culvert.

Photo by Brian Gelinias

Massachusetts is among 9 states to win 'Race to the Top' grant

By KIMBERLY HEFLING
 AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nine states will share \$500 million in grant money won in a high-profile competition intended to jump-start improvements in early childhood programs, the Obama administration announced Friday.

California, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina,

Ohio, Rhode Island and Washington state will see funding for innovative efforts in often-overlooked pre-K schooling.

"Nothing is more important than getting our babies off to a good start," Education Secretary Arne Duncan said Friday at the White House.

The money to aid the nation's youngest learners is part of the administration's cornerstone education initiative — the "Race to the Top" grant competition. It has states competing for federal dollars to create programs intended to make

schools more effective in exchange for education initiatives it favors. Last year, it handed out \$4 billion in similar grants focused on K-12 education.

"Education must be our national mission," President Barack Obama said in a written statement. "Today, we're acting to strengthen early childhood education to better prepare our youngest children for success in school and in life."

The goal of this competition is to get more children from birth to age 5 ready for kindergarten. Thirty-five

Race Page 8

Orange planning to sell tax liens

ORANGE — The board of selectmen will be scheduling a hearing regarding the proposal by a firm to purchase tax liens from the town and sell them at auction.

At a board meeting in mid-November, Bill Cowin of Tallage, LLC of Boston, gave a presentation of the program, which is supported by Town Treasurer Joy Grover.

At Wednesday's board meeting, Interim Town Administrator Christine Forgey expressed concern that home owners who are really struggling at this time not be included in this program, and that the board support Grover in this effort. For example, absentee landlords and those who aren't making payment of taxes a priority should be targeted rather than struggling home owners.

Chairman Robert Andrews noted that overall,

Liens Page 8

The House passes \$1 trillion budget bill, avoids shutdown

By ANDREW TAYLOR
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House has passed a \$1 trillion-plus catchall budget bill paying for day-to-day budgets of 10 Cabinet departments and averting a government shutdown.

The 296-121 vote to approve the measure represented a rare moment of bi-

partisanship in a polarized Capitol. Lawmakers are also seeking compromise on separate legislation to renew jobless benefits and a cut in payroll taxes.

The vote sends the measure to the Senate, which was expected to pass it on Saturday.

The bill puts in place budget curbs mandated under an August pact between President Barack Obama and

Congress. It trims spending for most domestic agencies and awards the Pentagon the smallest budget hike in recent memory. It pays for overseas military operations and a slew of programs ranging from border security to flood control to combating AIDS and famine in Africa.

Many provisions sought by House Republicans were dropped from the bill before

Bill Page 8

For the kids



TOYS FOR TOTS DONATION — Mark Ellis, right, of Pequoig Detachment 1168 of the Marine Corps League, recently accepted a donation of \$532 from Ray Harper, of Harper's Farm in Leominster, to be used for the Marines' Toys for Tots program. The donation was presented in front of the Peace Statue at Memorial Park in Orange. The money was raised through the sale of pumpkins, prior to Halloween, by Marine Corps League members. The pumpkins were donated by Harper to help the League kick off its annual Toys for Tots drive.

Photo by Brian Gelinias

