

THE Hooksett Banner In Your Neighborhood

JANUARY 13, 2011

NEWS OF ALLENSTOWN, AUBURN, CANDIA, EPSOM, HOOKSETT & PEMBROKE

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This week in the

NEW HAMPSHIRE SUNDAY NEWS

◆ **Winning hands** – Regional lottery jackpots have been in the news recently. This Sunday, we'll report a related issue you'll surely find worth reading.

◆ **More than just gowns** – Any bride-to-be knows a lot more goes into the wedding process than choosing a dress. In our special section, we look at how Granite Staters are adding their personal touches.

Stars of the Week

NHTI dean's list

CONCORD –The following area students have been named to the dean's list at NHTI, Concord's Community College, in recognition of their academic achievement during the fall 2010 semester.

In order to qualify for dean's list, a student must be considered full time (registered for 12 credits or more), formally accepted into an academic program and have a semester grade-point average of 3.3 or higher.

ALLENSTOWN: Danielle Blanchette, Kathy Brasley, Meagan Celen, Steven Gerish, Brandon Hewitt, Melissa Jette, Kristin MacIsaac, Kacie Paradie, Kathleen Rogers and Michelle Touchette.

EPSOM: Kiel Cheesman, Mollie Griggs, Christie Hewes, James Kilian, Matti-Annett Lesieur, Lauren Nangle, Jackson Riel, Michael Schwenn, Emily Scott, Britney Streeter, Keven Weaver and Tyler Yeaton.

HOOKSETT: Marcia Cheney, Rahul Gurung, Michael Harrington, Jennifer Johnson, Dylan Lindstrom, Joseph Martin, Alexander Mason, Yevgeniya Morozova, Douglas Schack and Tami Webster.

PEMBROKE: Trevor Bissonnette, William Byrne, Zachary Cogswell, Matthew Cotnoir, Travis Gates, Hilary Goulart, Sarah Kruczynski, Paul Laflamme, Ernest Lopez, Kasandra McGarr, Alesha Niswander, Daniel Parent, Kayla Pouliot, Margaret Westover and Michael Yeaton.

Send us your stars!

Send your announcements to editor@hooksettbanner.com. Attach a photo of your star if possible.

What's Up

◆ **Homeschool morning** – Thursday, Jan. 20, 11:30 a.m., at the Hooksett Public Library. Homeschoolers can meet and exchange ideas. Register online or at the library.

Snake catchers



Dan O'Brien Photo

Third-grade students from Strong Foundations Charter School in Pembroke are campaigning to make the Eastern hognose snake New Hampshire's official state reptile after discovering that the endangered species lives right next to their school. Above, Jeremy Dixon, 9, Henry Harman, 8, and Isabella Frye, 8, use Playdoh and tinfoil to create a model tracking device that wildlife specialists could use to track the status of the eastern hognose snakes.

► Pembroke

State snake?

Third-graders want to name a state reptile

BY DAN O'BRIEN
danobrien155@gmail.com

A proposal to make the eastern hognose snake New Hampshire's first official reptile will slither its way onto a legislative bill and become law in the coming months – if a group of local third-graders has its way.

Lisa Baynes' class at the Strong Foundations Charter School has launched the effort after discovering a group of the endangered snakes lives across the road from their school.

"They have a genuine interest in it," Baynes said.



The Eastern hognose snake comes in a variety of colors and patterns. This photo is from the state Fish and Game Department, which notes that the harmless snake can flatten its nose to dig in the soil and will play dead if threatened.

"They're learning about something that's right next to them."

See SNAKE page A-8

School officials first heard about the snake's existence when they tried to build a new school across the street from its current location on Riverwood Drive. The project was halted after discovering the Eastern hognose snakes are listed as endangered by New Hampshire Fish and Game.

After hearing the news, Christina Dixon, who has three children attending the school, said she and her kids decided to research facts about the Eastern hognose snake.

► Allenstown

Sewer shock

Plant expansion will cost \$360,000 more than anticipated by town

BY DAN O'BRIEN
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The true taxpayer cost of the Allenstown Wastewater Treatment Facility's expansion project is 22.5 percent higher than the \$1.6 million figure given to the public in 2009, officials confirmed Monday, Jan. 10.

Now, with sewer customer fees already set to increase in Allenstown and Pembroke this year, the Allenstown Sewer Commission is asking if taxpayers can pay for a portion of that cost overrun.

Sewer officials went before selectmen Jan. 10 proposing a warrant article that, if

approved by voters, would use \$180,054 in taxpayer money to pay for the overrun.

The money was already saved in a capital reserve account, and the sewer commission needs voter approval to release those funds to pay for the cost overrun, so there will be no additional tax impact if approved.

The wording of the article actually asks voters to authorize raising \$360,108, but officials said they expect half of that money to be reimbursed by the federal stimulus package, saying Allenstown is one of the top communities in line

See SEWER SHOCK page A-8

► Hooksett

Crimes increase

Burglaries and domestic violence calls double over past five years

BY DAN O'BRIEN
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The economy and a police staffing shortage were big factors for why Hooksett reached a decade-high amount of burglaries in 2010, said Police Chief Stephen Agrafiotis.

There were 85 burglaries reported in Hooksett last year – the highest amount since 2000. The second-worst year was 2003 when 57 break-ins were reported.

"We don't know exactly why that is," Agrafiotis said.

"My best analysis would be the economy. It also would be that Hooksett is still a growing community."

There were 49 burglaries in 2009 and 36 in 2007, according to year-end statistics provided by Agrafiotis.

The chief also pointed to an officer staffing shortage as one reason why there were more break-ins last year. Agrafiotis partially blamed the media for covering the issue.

"I think some of the dis-

See CRIME page A-8

'Logomotion'

Robotics competition kicks off with big reveal

BY RACHEL CISTO
Contributing Writer

Several area high schools are preparing for the 2011 FIRST robotics season, which kicked off with the reveal of the new game.

FIRST robotics is an international competition for students interested in math, science and technology. On kickoff day, teams are allowed to measure the playing field, make notes and diagrams and take photos. From there, teams are given



a box of parts and six weeks to design, build, program and test a robot created to play the game.

This year's game is called "Logomotion." The object is to create the FIRST logo out of inflatable tubes shaped like the three elements of the logo.

In the first part of the game, called the autonomous period because the robots guide themselves on the field, each robot is holding a yellow "ubertube." The robots guide themselves across the field to place the ubertube on the pegboard.

During the second part of the game, when human players are controlling them, robots need to pick up logo pieces from human players on one side of the field, carry them across the field and then hang them on an assembly similar to a peg-



Courtesy Photo

Rachel Cisto, left, was thrilled to meet will.i.am, a member of the pop band Black Eyed Peas, at the reveal of the FIRST game on Saturday, Jan. 8. Cisto is a senior on Team Oz-Ram, a joint effort between John Stark and Hopkinton high schools. Pembroke Academy and the three city high schools will also compete, involving students from Hooksett, Auburn, Candia, Epsom, Allenstown and Pembroke.

board at the opposite end of the field. Each piece is worth a certain amount of points. Any piece on the bottom is worth one point, the middle row is worth two,

and the top row is worth three. If pieces form a FIRST logo across the row, that row's point value is doubled.

See FIRST page A-8

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