

Local entrepreneur finds support for new product

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George H.W. Bush lies in state in nation's capital

see page 28

Pub Mania team captain is ready

see page 14



The Laconia Daily Sun

TUESDAY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018

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Lakes Region Public Access station manager Grace McNamara calibrates a camera in preparation for broadcasting the Greater Lakes Region Children's Auction, which starts today and runs through Saturday. (Alan MacRae for The Laconia Daily Sun)

Gripes about mail service are delivered

By **THOMAS P. CALDWELL**
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — Postal managers reacting to complaints about poor mail delivery are reviewing staffing levels, delivery methods and the types of vehicles used, according to Steve Doherty, the United States Postal Service's strategic communications specialist for the Northeast Area.

"I've spoken with multiple postal managers ... who oversee the New Hampshire delivery area and showed them the letters you've published," Doherty wrote in an email to The Laconia Daily Sun. He said postal officials are looking "to insure that we have the best resources in place to provide first-class service to our Gunstock area customers."

The Sun has received several letters in recent weeks — many of them from Gilford — about missed deliveries, delayed mail and non-delivery. Other writers have defended the mail carriers, saying they are overworked and

see **MAIL** page 10

Consumers welcome cable choice

By **RIK GREEN**
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — Many consumers are elated by the prospect of a cable war pitting a newcomer, Comcast, against the incumbent, Atlantic Broadband.

More than two dozen people left comments on The Daily Sun's Facebook page support-

ing Comcast's request to enter the Laconia market. Others sent in emails.

"Competition for cable services is very much needed in our area," Werner Rebsamen said in an email. "At \$217 a month for services we hardly use, it is simply too much, especially for seniors on fixed incomes."

see **CABLE** page 6

Elm Street students have can-do approach in last week of drive

By **ADAM DRAPCHO**
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — It was a moonshot of a goal, Elm Street School fifth-grade teacher Andrea Morin admitted, when her students suggested trying to fill the floor of their gymnasium with donated food. But it would give her the chance to work out some grade-appropriate math problems,

and, even if they only got part-way there, they could provide some good for their neighbors.

She was right, it turned out. Their original plan was to run the project through Thanksgiving, to give the local St. Vincent de Paul food pantry a boost during a time of high demand. But their momentum kept building,

see **DRIVE** page 11



Adam VanPraet, Usiah Perez and Ryan Greene display some of the food items donated recently to Andrea Morin's Elm Street fifth grade class project, to collect enough food to fill their school's gym floor. (Adam Drapcho/The Laconia Daily Sun)

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so they decided to keep collecting, and counting, items that people within and outside of the school dropped off.

Morin said she is going to keep the project going through the end of this week, and will end it on Dec. 7. Even if no more food is brought in, the class project has been a fruitful one, generating more than 6,000 items, including cases of peanut butter and jelly that were recently delivered.

"I think we're halfway there, which is better than we expected," Morin said.

Her class project has been spearheaded by students Adam VanPraet, Usiah Perez and Ryan Greene. Together, the students figured out that it would take 1,380 boxes of food to fill the 1,674-square-foot floor. They then created a graph to record each time that a box of food is donated.

Greene said the math has been the easy part, the hard part has been carrying the food out to the parking lot to be delivered to the food pantry.

"I didn't expect to get this much," VanPraet said.

Perez said they started to realize in October that their project might have a chance at getting close to their goal. "We were getting stuff every day," he said.

"It makes me happy to see that people are going to donate so that poor people can eat more," said Perez.

The experience has changed the way the students think about the holidays. VanPraet said that last year he thought about the things that he wanted for himself. This year, he said, "I want to help people — make sure they have enough to be happy."

Those who wish to help the class in their last push toward their goal can drop a donation of nonperishable food — peanut butter and jelly, and chunky soups are especially in demand — at the school. Checks, made out to Elm Street School with "Cans for a Cause" in the memo line, may also be donated to the effort.

"It was a pretty amazing goal to go for in the first place," said Morin, so the students have been impressed by the progress made so far. "They've been quite excited."

Fire destroys vehicle seconds after occupants escape

BELMONT — A Laconia couple en route to Florida escaped their SUV unharmed just seconds before the vehicle burst into flames.

The Belmont Police Department reported the car he began having mechanical problems and not being able to maintain speed as the vehicle, which was towing a small cargo trailer, was traveling along Route 3 last Thursday, prompting the driver to pull into the Major Brands Plaza parking lot.

No sooner did Robert and Summer Jobin get themselves and their dog out the vehicle, when the Ford SUV became engulfed in flames.

The heavy black smoke and flames drew traffic along Route 3 to a crawl as firefighters doused the flames. The smoke and flames could be seen from the Laconia Bypass.

A 25-by-30-foot section of the vinyl siding of the north end of the plaza was warped by the heat of the flames.

One of the plaza business owners, seeing the flames so close to the building, pulled the plaza fire alarm system because of concern the fire might spread to the building.

Firefighters and equipment from the Laconia Fire Department were the first to arrive on the scene and managed to put out the flames before they could spread to the plaza.

The Jobins were on their way to their winter retreat in Florida when the incident occurred, Belmont Police Capt. Rich Mann said. They had another vehicle at their Laconia home and brought that back to hook up the U-Haul trailer, which was not damaged.

—Michael Mortensen

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