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# The Laconia Daily Sun

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## Secretary of State: Vote numbers tend to grow in recounts

BY RICK GREEN  
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — On general election night, longtime Lakes Region journalist Gail Ober, a Democrat, appeared to defeat her Republican opponent Richard Beaudoin by a dozen votes.

Beaudoin, who runs an electronics repair shop, initially didn't want a recount, saying, "I'm not that small-minded." But he eventually opted for a recount at the urging of Republican Party Vice Chair Alan Glassman.

In New Hampshire, it's inexpensive to seek a recount. It only cost Beaudoin \$10.

He ended up winning by a single vote.

The race makes for a case study

on how the way voters fill out ballots can lead to changes in election outcome after a recount.

Before the recount, Ober had 2,583 votes and Beaudoin had 2,571.

After the recount, Beaudoin had gained 17 votes and Ober had three additional votes. This gave Beaudoin a total of 2,588 votes and Ober 2,586. The Ballot Law Commission invalidated one vote, so Beaudoin walked away with a one-vote victory.

So how did 20 extra votes materialize in the recount that weren't there on election night?

Secretary of State William Gardner provided an explanation Monday.

The New Hampshire House of

see **RECOUNTS** page 7



Jim Carmody, a teacher at Laconia Middle School, has pledged to ride his bike to school for 100 days this school year. As of the holiday break, he has clocked 40 days of commuting via bicycle. (Adam Drapcho/The Laconia Daily Sun)

## Critics of town sue Gilmanton

BY MICHAEL MORTENSEN  
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

GILMANTON — A local couple is suing the town for \$3 million, alleging selectmen and other town officials slandered them and defamed their character.

The suit, brought by Brett and Brenda Currier, was filed in U.S. District Court on Dec. 20.

Mr. Currier is a former selectman who was defeated by Marshall Bishop, now the chairman of the Board of Selectmen. The suit names the town of Gilmanton, as well as Bishop, both individually and as the owner of Gilmanton

see **SUIT** page 5

## Cool school commute

Laconia teacher pledges to ride bicycle to work for 100 days

BY ADAM DRAPCHO  
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

LACONIA — After his principal pledged to attend a hundred 5 a.m. Crossfit workouts in honor of the school's initiative to promote physical activity, Jim Carmody felt moved to find his own way to inspire students at Laconia Middle School.

He decided that, for 100 days of this school year, he would leave his truck at home in Belmont and commute to work on his bicycle.

"This is new. We have this theme called 'Get Moving,' I thought it would be great if teachers took on challenges," said Carmody, who teaches special education for the school's seventh grade.

He originally thought about cycling for 50 days out of the 180-day school year, but that didn't seem hard enough.

"I thought, if I did 100, I could ride on

He wears a jacket made for bicycle commuting, waterproof pants and cycling shoes, gloves and long underwear.

days that were cold, or days that were wet, on days that had snow. That seemed like more of a challenge," Carmody said.

Sounds like a good idea in September. In December, could he keep it up? As of the holiday break, Carmody had logged 40 days, including two in December. He plans to keep the wheels rolling throughout the winter, at least on the fair days, so he will be able to say that he biked to work during every month of the school year.

Bicycling isn't anything new to Carmody.

see **COOL** page 5

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# New year brings new state laws

By HOLLY RAMER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CONCORD — A new law raising the marriage age in New Hampshire was a victory for one incoming state representative before she even considered running for office.

Starting Tuesday, the state's minimum marriage age became 16, up from 13 for girls and 14 for boys. The bill was championed by Cassie Levesque, who was a senior in high school in 2017 when she began her push to raise the marriage age as part of a Girl Scouts project.

Her first attempt failed, but her second effort succeeded in 2018. The experience inspired her to run for the state Legislature, and she won a seat in the House in November. Now 19, she said she plans to revisit the marriage age issue to get it bumped up to 18.

"Whether I was a representative or not, I knew I was going to raise it to 18," she said. "I just have to keep fighting and making sure we give kids an opportunity to be kids, and let them grow up and experience things before they make that decision."

Levesque, a Democrat from Barrington, is the second-youngest state lawmaker this session; she's 12 days older than Rep. Dennis Ruprecht, D-Landaff. She'd initially brushed off the suggestion that she run for the House, in part because she didn't want it to interfere with her online college courses and role as Girl Scout leader, and because she doesn't drive. But other lawmakers quickly offered to give her rides to and from Concord, and she felt encouraged by the support.

"All the cons started turning into pros," she said.

Another marriage-related bill also took effect Jan. 1. It states that judges shall not sign off on marriages involving a person under the age of consent unless there is clear and convincing evidence the marriage is in the child's best interest. Other new laws taking effect with the new year include:

- Key changes to New Hampshire's expanded Medicaid program: The program previously used Medicaid funds to purchase private health plans for low-income residents, but in reauthorizing the program for another five years, lawmakers decided to change its structure to a more cost-effective managed care model. The plan also imposes new work requirements on enrollees and use 5 percent of liquor revenues to cover the state's cost as federal funding decreases.

- A ban on therapy that attempts to change the sexual orientation or gender identity of minors: Opponents argued there was no evidence such therapy happens in the state, and that state licensing boards already have the authority to regulate and discipline any practitioner who uses coercive tactics. Supporters of the new law said the therapy is inappropriate, ineffective and harmful. A similar measure failed in 2016.

- A \$100,000 death benefit for surviving family members of teachers and other school employees killed in the line of duty: While there have been no mass shootings in New Hampshire schools, supporters argued that such incidents elsewhere have turned teachers into first responders, and they deserve the same death benefits given to police officers and firefighters. The \$100,000 would be on top of whatever other retirement benefits the employee had earned.

- A ban on wildlife trafficking: The law prohibits the trade of products derived from protected species, such as elephant ivory and rhino horns. Such trafficking is already outlawed between states; individual states control trade within their borders.

- Reductions to the Business Profits Tax and Business Enterprise Tax: The profits tax will drop by 2.5 percent, while the enterprise tax will drop 11 percent. Republican Gov. Chris Sununu says the cuts will help continue moving the state's economy in the right direction, and he will push for further reductions in future years.

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## POLICE LOGS

LACONIA — Laconia police handled 51 calls for service during the 24-hour period ending at noon Friday, Dec. 28.

Three people were arrested. Henry J. Lamontagne, 57, of 125 Mechanic St., Apt. 1, in Laconia, was arrested on a charge of possession of a controlled drug.

Robert J. Walker, 50, of 19 Dillon Way, Apt. 10, in Laconia, was arrested on a charge of domestic violence simple assault.

David Quinn, 56, no fixed address, was arrested on a bench warrant.

Officers conducted eight motor vehicle stops, and investigated two traffic accidents — both on Belmont Road (Route 106).

Reports of one incident of fraud and another of assault were investigated.

A report of harassment at a North Main Street apartment was investigated.

Officers dealt with six disturbances.

BELMONT — Belmont police handled 65 calls for service from Dec. 21 through Dec. 27.

Five people were arrested. Donald G. Sanborn III, 46, no fixed address, was arrested for driving after his license had been revoked or suspended.

Jonathan S. Olisky, 40, no fixed address, was arrested on a bench warrant issued by Laconia District Court.

Jennifer Downs, 29, of 142 Church St., Apt. 2, in Laconia, was arrested on a warrant issued by Merrimack Superior Court.

Lindsay M. Thayer, 30, of 142 Church St., Apt. 2, in Laconia, was arrested for driving without a license.

Sean H. Newman, 26, of 5 Pine Grove Road, in Belmont, was arrested for resisting arrest.

Police investigated accidents on Birchwood Lane, Laconia Road (Route 106), Union Road and Depot Street, and a burglary at T&L Concrete.