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Will new
LHS A.D. be
Martin or
dark horse?

A SUN STAFF REPORT

THE PICTURE of who will become the Lowell School Department's new athletic director should come into sharper focus tomorrow.

On Friday, a committee chaired by Deputy Superintendent of Schools **Ted Rurak** was scheduled to interview several of the 22 applicants who have applied for the \$82,000-a-year post that was vacated two months ago by the sudden resignation of **Charlie Ryan**.

The Column

Inside political news and views reported from around The Sun's circulation area.

First on tap for a hearing was **Brian Martin**, the former assistant city manager, city manager, city councilor, mayor, physical-education teacher and all-around jock. Martin recently resigned from his \$150,000 job running the Lowell Lock Monsters. Martin is clearly a favorite to get the job.

Also penciled in for interviews are **Jim DeProffio**, who helps establish the high-school curriculum, and **Bill Kulis**, son of **Joe Kulis**, an assistant football coach under the legendary **Ray Riddick**. Both Kulis and DeProffio are considered strong contenders. But the School Department is also said to have solid résumés from outside candidates, including several women.

Rurak's committee is expected to forward the names of three or four finalists to Lowell High School Headmaster **William Samaras** and Superintendent of Schools **Karla Brooks Baehr**.

SPEAKING OF Ryan, the Sun Surveillance Snoopcam Network (SSSN for short) has obtained the final payouts the Lowell School Department issued to him and ex-Sullivan School Principal **Paula Hutton**.

Both left under stress — the stress of whether criminal charges would be filed against either of them in the alleged mishandling of school funds and the alleged theft of kitchen equipment, respectively.

Ryan received a check for \$30,893.42 for unused sick leave and vacation pay. Hutton — amazingly — received a payment of \$41,011.20 for what is described as unused sick leave.

Ryan's payout is easy to understand. He was hired in May 1968 and spent 37 years in the school system. Hutton, however, was hired in August 1997 and barely had six years in the system. Also, by contract, an employee has to be in the system for 15 years to be eligible for the sick-leave buyback provision.

So why the big payout? Evidently, the School Department's legal case against Hutton, if it ever went to court, wasn't considered strong enough to win. If Hutton prevailed, she could potentially sue the school district for more than the case was worth to prosecute — and keep her job.

So the school district got Hutton to accept a legal settlement to leave quietly.

A win-win? Hardly, when taxpayers remember that this legal drama began over the alleged theft of \$2,000 in aluminum pots and pans.

Please see **THE COLUMN/12**

Upsets rule day in Littleton

Pagacik ousts Caruso for selectman; Mizzoni, Stea join School Committee

By MEAGHAN WIMS
Sun Staff

LITTLETON — Ivan Pagacik topped the ticket yesterday to earn his first term on the Board of Selectmen in an election that toppled two long-time incumbents.

Pagacik, a nine-year veteran of the town's Parks and Recreation Commission, bested four other candidates with 1,131 votes. Incumbent Reed Augliere won re-election to his second three-year term with 961 votes.

Current Chairman Ronald Caruso was defeated, placing fourth in the field of five, only above Pamela Campbell, who pulled out of the race last week but whose name remained on the ballot.

A stunned Pagacik, celebrating at the Outlook at Nashoba Valley Ski Resort in Westford, said by phone last night: "I don't know what to say. I'm just happy the town supported me. I'm looking to make a difference. All I know is, it's time to roll up my sleeves and get to work."

Please see **LITTLETON/11**



Daryl Baker and Susan McDowell get some shelter from the rain while campaigning in Littleton yesterday. Neither was elected. SUN/JULIA MALAKIE

Littleton election results

Selectmen	
(Two three-year terms)	
Reed Augliere*	961 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ronald J. Caruso*	532 <input type="checkbox"/>
Pamela D. Campbell†	195 <input type="checkbox"/>
Ivan Pagacik	1,131 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Robert L. Zimmerman	663 <input type="checkbox"/>

School Committee	
(Two three-year terms)	
Susan Anne MacDowell*	706 <input type="checkbox"/>
Nancy P. Mizzoni	829 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Daryl K. Baker	272 <input type="checkbox"/>
Mary C. Dugan	714 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shawna M. Stea	762 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jeanine M. Wood	207 <input type="checkbox"/>

Question 1
Shall the Town of Littleton be allowed to assess an additional \$190,000 million to fund the purchase of capital equipment for the Highway Department?
Yes 818 No 928

Question 2
Shall the Town of Littleton be allowed to assess an additional \$30,000 million to purchase a security alarm system for the Littleton High School?
Yes 801 No 950

*Incumbent. †Withdrew from race

TYNGSBORO'S GREAT DIVIDE

In Tuesday's town elections, officials will give voters three options to override Proposition 2½ and raise their own taxes to fund town services — or not. Five voters tell why they are or are not voting for an override.



Martina Witt favors the \$1.9 million override option — the highest option available. SUN/HOWARD MARTIN



There is no doubt where Sean Martin stands on the issue. He even has a sign in his yard. SUN/MIKE SPRINGER



Jim Miller is on the fence — literally. He might vote for the \$1.25 million option, but no higher. SUN/CHRISTINE PHELAN

Martina Witt:
Yes

Sean Martin:
No

Jim Miller:
Undecided

See Page 10 for five voters' opinions and a rundown of town officials' prognosis of the budget under the four options being presented to voters

'Remember what Andrew did and gave for us'

Chelmsford honors Marine killed serving his country

By REBECCA PIRO
Sun Staff

CHELMSFORD — The North Road bridge that spans Interstate 495 has been decorated with American flags and yellow ribbons for months.

Yesterday, a gathering in memory of Lance Cpl. Andrew Zabierek created a much more permanent sign of gratitude that will honor the late Marine for years to come.

Local, state and federal officials dedicated the bridge to Zabierek, who was killed in Iraq on May 21, 2004, at the age of 25. He was struck by a vehicle while on patrol in the Al Anbar province south of Baghdad.

The dedication was Chelmsford's way of saying thank you to



Judy Zabierek, mother of Lance Cpl. Andrew Zabierek, who died in Iraq last May, watches as a Marine places a wreath at the sign signifying the bridge in Chelmsford named after her son. SUN/MIKE SPRINGER

Please see **ZABIEREK/13**

Dracut OKs final payment to Lowell

Vote to give city \$450G brings to end water-theft scandal

By STEPHANIE COYNE
Sun Correspondent

DRACUT — The infamous scandal of the Dracut Water Supply District can now be laid to rest as voters approved the final payment to the city of Lowell for the water theft discovered in 1998.

Water-district voters unanimously agreed to transfer \$450,000, the balance of the \$1.3 million settlement between the district and the city of Lowell, at the annual district meeting yesterday.

"This is the last payment. It's over, it's done," said Gary McCarthy, executive director and superintendent of the water district.

The charges arose from an incident in 1998 when former Superintendent Nicholas Lambros was caught tampering with a meter that tracked the amount of water Lowell

Please see **DRACUT/10**

\$75 million budget gets thumbs-up

By JENNIFER AMY MYERS
Sun Staff

WESTFORD — Town Meeting voters were busy yesterday, approving a \$75 million budget for fiscal year 2006, a

\$1.3 million sewer project, establishing an affordable-housing trust fund and passing a right-to-farm bylaw in a marathon eight-hour session at the Abbot School.

The \$75,046,161 budget incorporates \$248,000 in projected state aid.

"We decided to take a leap of faith and assume that we will receive those funds," Town Manager Steve Ledoux

Please see **WESTFORD/11**

LOCAL NEWS

Chelmsford names bridge over I-495 for Marine killed in Iraq

ZABIEREK/From Page 9

Zabierek's family for the ultimate sacrifice it paid.

About 50 people braved yesterday's rain and cold, packed under a white tent set up just down the street from the bridge, away from the traffic.

The Chelmsford High School band played patriotic songs.

Stephen Zabierek stood in the front row, next to his wife, Judy, who clasped a bouquet of red and white carnations, as speaker after speaker stepped up to the podium to remember their son.

Zabierek, who graduated from Clemson University in South Carolina and planned to pursue a career in finances, enlisted with the Marines after the terrorist attack of 9/11 occurred.

"He was under no obligation to do anything other than continue his comfortable civilian life," Selectman Samuel Chase said. "(But because of) his sense of duty, honor and dedication to his country, he chose to do the hard time, when most of us choose to let others sacrifice for us."

State Rep. Geoff Hall called Zabierek a "silent spokesman" for all the soldiers who have died or are still serving in the war, away from their families.

Hall, a Westford Democrat who represents part of Chelmsford, helped pass legislation last winter to name the bridge for Zabierek.

State Sen. Susan Fargo presented the Zabiereks with a folded flag that once flew over the Statehouse, as well

as warm wishes from Gov. Mitt Romney.

"I'll remember this day whenever I'm on that bridge," she said.

"If we ever think the world is a rotten place, all we have to do is drive up this bridge and remember what Andrew did and gave for us," state Sen. Steven Panagiotakos said.

Other speakers included U.S. Rep. Marty Meehan and representatives of U.S. Sen. John Kerry and Middlesex County Sheriff James DiPaola.

Close to the end of the ceremony, Judy Zabierek and a Marine walked out from under the tent and carried a flowered wreath to place by the sign bearing Zabierek's name. The sign will soon be erected on the bridge.

"I'm proud," said Stephen Zabierek, who said after the

ceremony that he drives over the bridge every morning and night to and from work. "(Andrew) really believed he belonged over there. He was very calm and comfortable."

The ceremony even moved

those who didn't know Andrew or his family personally. Hudson resident T.J. Swisser, who was born and raised in Chelmsford, brought his 12-year-old daughter Holly to yesterday's event to show her war's

consequences first-hand. "I just wanted to try to instill some values that this isn't a war you see on TV," he said. "It comes home."

Rebecca Piro's e-mail address is rpairo@lowellsun.com.



George Sorbello, left, the grandfather of Andrew Zabierek, and Zabierek's mother, Judy, right, at the dedication yesterday in Chelmsford to a bridge in Andrew's memory.

SUN PHOTOS/MIKE SPRINGER

OBITUARIES

Peter E. Hanscom

...resident of Chelmsford, member of PGA; 67

CHELMSFORD — Peter E. Hanscom, 67, a resident of Chelmsford and formerly of Casco, Maine, died Thursday, May 5, at Lowell General Hospital after a lengthy illness. He was the husband of Elaine (Gagnon) Hanscom, to whom he was married for 30 years.

He was born in Casco, Maine, on June 23, 1937, son of the late Donald and Goldie (Edwards) Hanscom. He graduated from Casco High School in 1955 and Auburn Maine School of Commerce in 1959. He also attended the University of Maine in Orono.

In the early 1960s, Mr. Hanscom taught business education in Rangeley, Maine. He later became an assistant golf professional at the Augusta Country Club in Augusta, Maine. In 1965, Mr. Hanscom became a golf professional at Mt. Pleasant Country Club in Lowell. He also worked as a manager at Skip's Restaurant in Chelmsford for many years.

He was a member of the Professional Golf Association and former member of the Nabanasset Lake Country Club in Westford and Pine Valley Golf Club in Pelham.

Besides his wife, survivors include a son, Jason P. Hanscom of Chelmsford; two daughters and sons-in-law, Beth M. and Gregory Lemnah, and Stacey S. and David Whaley, all of Northfield, Vt.; a sister and brother-in-law, Marjorie and Russell Hay of Hawthorne, Fla.; four grandchildren, Greer and Robert Lemnah, and William and Sarah Whaley, all of Northfield, Vt.; two brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Robert and Bette Gagnon of Lancaster, and Leonard and Ann Gagnon of Lowell; a sister-in-law, Bonnie Hehir of Chelmsford; and many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

He was also the brother of Judith Hanscom, who died Feb. 4, 2003; and brother-in-law Timothy Hehir, who died in September 2002.

More obituaries/14, 15

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Chelmsford
Ground Round
185 Chelmsford St.
Tuesday, May 10, 2:30 p.m.

Bickford's
50 Drum Hill Road
Wednesday, May 25, 2:30 p.m.
Thursday, June 2, 10:00 a.m.

Bertucci's Brick Oven
Ristorante
14 Littleton Road
Tuesday, June 7, 2:30 p.m.

Best Fitness
279 Chelmsford St.
Wednesday, June 15, 1:30 p.m.

Lowell
J. J. Boomers
727 Pawtucket Blvd.
Thursday, May 12, 2:30 p.m.
Monday, June 20, 2:30 p.m.

Heritage Farm
163 Pawtucket Blvd.
Thursday, May 19, 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, June 15, 9:30 a.m.

McDonald's
66 Plain St.
Tuesday, May 24, 10:00 a.m.

Tewksbury
International House of
Pancakes
95 Main St.
Monday, May 9, 10:00 a.m.

To make arrangements for interpreter services or for accommodations for persons with special needs, call Fallon Senior Plan™ at 1-888-377-1980 (TDD/TTY: 1-877-608-7677), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. All sites are handicap accessible.

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