



Firefighters seek regular cancer tests

Effort under way to boost screening; bill would put \$5M toward effort in NH

By CATHERINE McLAUGHLIN
Monitor staff

One hundred New Hampshire firefighters will be screened for cancer this week at the Professional Fire Fighters of New Hampshire's convention, kicking off an effort to develop long-term, regular testing

statewide.

Cancer is now the leading cause of line-of-duty deaths — representing more than 70% of them in 2023 — for firefighters in North America, according to the International Association of Firefighters. Efforts to combat that in New Hampshire are two-pronged between prevention and early detection, union President Brian Ryll said. A bipartisan bill moving smoothly through the legislature this year would fund a one-year program aiming to screen all of

the Granite State's nearly 4,000 active-duty firefighters for cancer. Ryll said the findings of that pilot will inform his organization's push to establish a regular testing program. This week's kickoff is just the first step.

"We're trying to drive home the importance of early detection," Ryll said. "This has the potential to save lives."

Because of the profession's risk factors, any firefighter's cancer diagnosis is presumed to be work-re-

lated unless it can be clearly ruled out, Ryll said. As cancer rates have ballooned, his organization has worked to educate fighters about ways to limit their exposure to the smoke and chemicals that put them at risk. But for those who do get sick, catching it early is key.

With testing legislation moving through the State House, the union put together the screening event at its convention Tuesday and Wednes-

SEE CANCER A3

CONCORD

Parking an issue for mall project

Steeplegate housing developer seeking relief from city for minimum number of spaces

By CATHERINE McLAUGHLIN
Monitor staff

The developer looking to turn the mostly vacant Steeplegate Mall into a bustling mix of residences and retail is seeking relief from the city's minimum parking requirements to reduce the amount of pavement at the massive redevelopment project.

The ambitious plans include putting hundreds of apartments, shops, a Costco, walkways and green space on the site — while keeping room for an existing bank, Applebees and remaining mall tenants. To put the puzzle pieces together, Onyx Partners Ltd., which bought the largely vacant mall last year, has asked for both a variance on parking minimums and for the Zoning Board of Adjustment to help simplify later planning board review.

The plan will be before the board on Wednesday, reopening the project to public input.

In total, the Steeplegate plans include more than 2,500 parking spaces across several lots, including hundreds of spaces underneath two of the new apartment complexes. Several of the lots within the project meet parking requirements, but the biggest ones come up short of both the commercial requirements and the two spaces-per-bedroom residential minimum.

Onyx has argued previously that the parking needs of daytime com-

SEE ZONING A3

ALLENSTOWN: Students and staff welcome the opening of new K-8 school



GEOFF FORESTER photos / Monitor staff

Allenstown Community School Principal Shannon Kruger gives a high five to second grader Mason Pieberl as students and faculty gather for a drone photo outside the school on the first day of classes at the new facility.

BUILDING FUTURES



ABOVE: Allenstown Community School third grader Riley Curry (center) is among those raising a hand to answer a math question in teacher Kim Foss' class on the first day of school at the new facility.

LEFT: Allenstown Community School students and faculty gather for a drone photo outside the school on the first day of classes at the new facility. Faculty wore black T-shirts commemorating the first day of school, and the students wore white T-shirts given by a school employee.

CONCORD SCHOOLS

District close to hiring new principal at Broken Ground

By CATHERINE McLAUGHLIN
Monitor staff

The Concord School Board will vote on the nomination of Kyle Repucci, currently the superintendent of schools in Rochester, to be the next principal at Broken Ground elementary at its meeting Monday night.

Repucci has been superintendent in the Lilac City for the last five years and was the assistant superintendent for three years before that, according to the district's nominating document. He also spent a total of 10 years as a middle school and then a high school principal in Epping.

Repucci would replace Susan Lauze, who is retiring after more than 20 years at the helm, at Broken Ground. During budget workshops, a proposal by Superintendent Kathleen Murphy to combine the principal positions at Broken Ground and

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