

**Her time to shine**

Rebecca Holtz of Walpole has been singing since she was 4. On June 7, she'll be the featured vocalist at the Keene Jazz Orchestra's spring concert. See Spotlight, Page C1.



**ALSO IN SPOTLIGHT:**  
MAYA ANGELOU,  
A VOICE FOR MANY.  
PAGE C1



**SPORTS: SWAMP  
BATS-TO-BE BEGIN  
PLAYOFFS. PAGE B1**

THE KEENE  
THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2014  
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# Anti-Vermont-Yankee crowd loud as ever

As shutdown looms, tempers flare at safety meeting

**A look at residents' issues**

By KYLE JARVIS  
Sentinel Staff

BRATTLEBORO — The Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant is shutting down, but that didn't stop critics Wednesday from blasting federal officials during an annual safety meeting.

Each year, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission publishes an assessment of whether the plant has operated safely over the past 12 months. As in previous years, this year's report determined that "overall, Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station operated in a manner that

preserved public health and safety and met all cornerstone objectives."

Entergy, which owns and operates Vermont Yankee, announced in August it would close the plant later this year, due to financial issues and

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■ They want dry cask storage, which they say is safer than the spent fuel pool storage used at Vermont Yankee.

■ They're concerned about the relationship between the nuclear

industry and the NRC, accusing federal officials of looking the other way or not addressing major safety concerns at Vermont Yankee.

■ They want to maintain and increase the

emergency evacuation zone during decommissioning of Vermont Yankee. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's rules say the zone can be eliminated during decommissioning.

## LILACS AND LOB WEDGES



MICHAEL MOORE / Sentinel Staff

Golfers make their way along the 17th fairway at Bretwood Golf Course in Keene Wednesday.

**Monadnock**

## Officials firm on insurance decision

By MEGHAN FOLEY  
Sentinel Staff

SWANZEY CENTER — Monadnock Regional School District officials are standing firm on their decision to cut funding for teachers' health insurance, despite arguments from the teachers union that the action violates their contract.

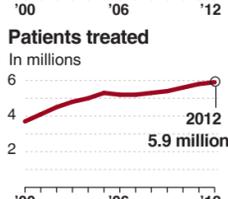
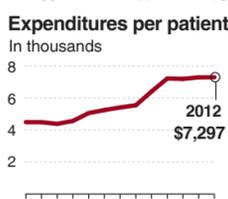
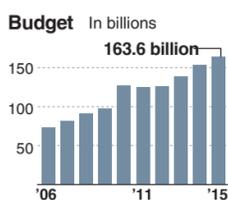
The contract, which is valid from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2016, was approved by school district voters in March 2012.

On Tuesday, the school board voted at an emergency meeting to fix the amount the district contributes to the health insurance pool for teachers at an amount lower than what's outlined in the teachers contract. In the same

See MONADNOCK on Page A7

**VA spending, patients treated**

How the budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the expenditures per patient have grown:



## Pressure mounting for VA chief's ouster

New report finds 'systemic problem'

By RICHARD SIMON and CINDY CARCAMO  
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — A scathing report finding a systemic problem at Veterans Affairs medical facilities nationwide, including manipulation of records to mask long waits for appointments, fueled new calls Wednesday for VA chief Eric K. Shinseki's resignation.

As the number of sites under investigation grew to 42, up from the 26 previously reported, the allegations over VA medical care have mushroomed into an election-year issue and become a major political headache for the Obama administration.

"We are finding that

inappropriate scheduling practices are a systemic problem nationwide," said the interim report, which identified 1,700 veterans at the Phoenix VA Health Care System waiting for an appointment but not on a waiting list and therefore "at risk of being forgotten or lost" in the scheduling process.

"We have substantiated that significant delays in access to care negatively impacted the quality of care at this medical facility," Richard J. Griffin, acting inspector general for the Department of Veterans Affairs, said in the report.

Shinseki called the findings "reprehensible to me,

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**INSIDE**

State Police's investigation of Brattleboro shooting to be reviewed. **Page A3**



Those "pings" from the missing Malaysian plane probably weren't from the plane after all. **Page A5**

## New substance abuse policy for Keene schools moves forward

By KAITLIN MULHNER  
Sentinel Staff

A new policy for working with Keene School District students who are involved in alcohol- or drug-related activities on school property passed through a school board committee meeting Wednesday largely unchanged.

The policy aims to reduce punitive measures for students who are struggling with alcohol or drug use, but the specific procedures for handling students who violate the policy still need

The proposal will go before the full school board next month. Officials hope to have it ready for the 2014-15 school year.

to be determined.

A task force of Keene Board of Education members, district staff and representatives from substance

abuse prevention groups started working on a new policy after a study in the fall indicated the use of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs was common at Keene High School.

The study's report said the district's policy for handling such issues was ineffective and hadn't been updated in 20 years.

The greatest shifts between the old policy and the new one is developing a culture where students aren't discouraged from seeking

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