

Big night for 'Boots'

Long-time ref, rules interpreter honored for service to basketball in Merrimack Valley

By Bill Burt

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NORTH ANDOVER – When it comes to basketball in the Merrimack Valley, and issues related to the game and its rules, there is one person every local basketball coach, athletic director and referee has called: Bill “Boots” Boutilier.

“Whenever anybody has a question about a rule, like, ‘Can my kid wear a soft cast and play?’ you call Boots,” said longtime Andover High boys basketball coach Dave Fazio. “He always has the answer. You might not always like it. But he always has the answer.”

But Boutilier’s gift to the basketball community stretches well beyond those many late-night phone calls.

He was a high school and college official for 33 years, a teacher at North Andover High for 36 years and member of Board 130 for 53 years.

Today, while retired from most of his old duties, he is completing his 39th year as a rules interpreter for the area.

For his contributions, the

MIAA honored Boutilier with its prestigious Sherman A. Kinney Award for what he has given to the sport he so dearly loves.

He received the award Feb. 28 at the state tournament game at North Andover High’s Crozier Field House.

“This means a lot to me, knowing Sherm as I did,” said Boutilier, who also spent 12 years on the Massachusetts Basketball Committee with Kinney.

“I was starting out as an official in the early 1970s. He was at Hamilton-Wenham at the time. He and Bob Licare, who was the coach at North Andover High, had great battles,” he said.

“The one thing that struck me about Sherm was that he was very fair to officials,” Boutilier said. “If he thought you missed a call he’d let you know, but he wouldn’t let it linger like other coaches do. ... A great guy, a great coach and a better person.”

While basketball and rules are a passion for him, Boutilier’s true passion is family, he said.



BILL BURT PHOTO

Longtime area basketball official Bill “Boots” Boutilier received the MIAA’s top basketball honor, the Sherman A. Kinney Award, for his career in basketball, helping this region’s coaches and referees with the many rules as an interpreter. He was a high school and college official for 33 years.

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CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Pete Smith, right, associate director for the MIAA, presents North Andover's Bill Boutilier the MIAA's prestigious Sherman Kinney Award.

» Boots

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When his son Kevin was in elementary school he tagged along at some of his dad's games.

"I remember going to the Boston Shootout, which was really exciting," Kevin said. "He used to referee Celtics training camp scrimmages at Brandeis. I was in fourth or fifth grade and I'd bring my friend Mike Allen. The Celtics had Eric Montross and Dee Brown. And Larry Bird would be watching in the bleachers. It was really cool to see that."

When Kevin got to high school and later Plymouth State, his dad's

officiating career lessened.

"He never missed a game," Kevin said of his dad's track record when Kevin played. "That meant a lot to me."

To this day, Boutilier and his wife rarely miss a sporting event involving their four grandchildren.

Fazio, long-noted for his "antics" on the sidelines during games, recalled several "run-ins" with Boutilier.

"I was a young whipper snapper and in terms of refs, he was the big man on campus," he recalled. "He gave me many, many warnings during games when I was misbehaving a bit. He would say, 'Not another word!' But he never (called me for a technical foul)."

Fazio recalled a humorous moment with Boutilier during a game at UMass Lowell in which he was watching in the stands.

"I yelled out, 'Great call!,'" Fazio said. "He must've heard my voice because he turns around and looks at me, and says, 'Holy (bleep)! If you're saying 'great call' it's time for me to retire.' We still laugh about that to this day."

This award, though, covers his entire career helping the game, officials and coaches, get it right.

"Coaches call asking about a rule, 'Did officials get it right?'" said Boutilier. "Once I explain it, most are understanding. They want to get it right. Officials want to get it right, too."

Boutilier noted his long career

as an official and working with officials was not a one-man show in his household. His wife, Patricia, has not only been along for the ride, but covered for him on many nights.

"She's as much a part of this award as anybody," said Boutilier. "There were a lot of weeks when I'd be doing games five and six nights a week when the kids (Kevin and Ellen) were young. It fell on her. You have to have a partner that understands what it takes. You need that support. She was the one driving to and from grammar schools and their games. Even now, I still get the phone calls at night. She understands."

Boutilier says this lifetime achievement award is something

he will cherish, but the relationships he has had in this sport trump everything.

"I've loved every minute of it," he said. "I enjoyed the high school games as much as the college games. I've met so many great players and coaches over the years. Some of my best friends are officials, too. The part I miss about officiating is the camaraderie, telling stories, some of them probably lies."

He has a message for up-and-coming officials.

"I tell the young guys today that people think you do it for money. But you do it because you like being in the action, doing the best job you can. It's not easy, but I wouldn't change a thing."

Merrimack College, NECC ink partnership pact

Staff Report

HAVERHILL — A new joint admissions agreement between Northern Essex Community College and Merrimack College will provide NECC students with more seamless pathways to continue their education after graduating with their associate degrees, according to officials at both schools.

Under the agreement, students who opt-in are conditionally accepted to Merrimack College when they are accepted to NECC. Once a student graduates from NECC, they can begin the transfer process. Merrimack College will provide a designated transfer admissions counselor for graduates of NECC, who will receive priority for Merrimack merit scholarships.



From left, Northern Essex Community College President Lane Glenn and Merrimack College President Christopher Hopey signing the joint admissions agreement.

MELISSA BOUSE/
Courtesy photo

“Now more than ever, we must ensure that any student who dreams of earning an associate degree and bachelor’s degree can do so,” said Merrimack College President Christopher Hopey. “And this agreement will make that dream more accessible

to more students. We know first-hand the transformative impact higher education can have on its students and the communities they go on to serve.”

During the event, Hopey also announced that NECC students who transfer to

Merrimack College after they earn their associate’s degree will receive up to a \$10,000 scholarship, or a \$5,000 scholarship if they enroll in the bachelor in humanities program.

Merrimack College and NECC have enjoyed a long-standing partnership focused on accessibility and opportunities for learners in the Merrimack Valley and beyond. Over the past five years alone, about 400 NECC students have transferred to Merrimack College, according to officials.

The institutions have worked to grow early college programs and are exploring the establishment of an innovation corridor in the Merrimack Valley.

“Merrimack remembers its roots,” said NECC President Lane Glenn. “Merrimack remembers the importance of service to our communities and ensuring accessibility to and affordability of a high-quality education. This joint admissions agreement is another significant step forward because it makes the process much simpler.”

NECC has joint admission agreements with four additional institutions: Salem State University, UMAss-Lowell, Regis College and Emmanuel College.



COURTESY PHOTO/
Haverhill Citizens Hall of Fame Committee
Frances Cole Lee

Famed poet honored in Haverhill’s Hall of Fame

By Jonah Frangiosa

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HAVERHILL — From studying in the public library to earning a spot on its wall with the city’s greats, one poet will be honored for her life achievements this weekend.

The Haverhill Citizens Hall of Fame Committee will honor poet and civil rights advocate Frances Cole Lee with an induction ceremony at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22, in the Haverhill Public Library’s Johnson Auditorium, 99 Main St.

Born in Haverhill in 1883, Cole Lee was a prolific poet who wrote and published more than 300 poems in newspapers, magazines, and anthologies, capturing nationwide recognition for her work.

Some of her work was selected to display at the 1939 New York World’s Fair and she was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the National Poetry Center in 1941.

She developed a skill for poetry from reading books on the subject in the Haverhill Public Library. Cole Lee published her first poem, “God is Everywhere” in the Christian Endeavor World magazine followed by two books of poems, “Faith of Our Fathers” and “Opal Dust.”

Both poetry collections are available at the Haverhill Public Library today.

Cole Lee was also a vocal advocate for racial equality as she wrote letters to newspapers, condemning segregation during World War II. She remained part of the civil rights movement throughout the 1960s, using her penmanship to carry the message. She was also a member of the NAACP and Calvary Baptist Church.

She continued writing well into her 80s before passing away in 1970.

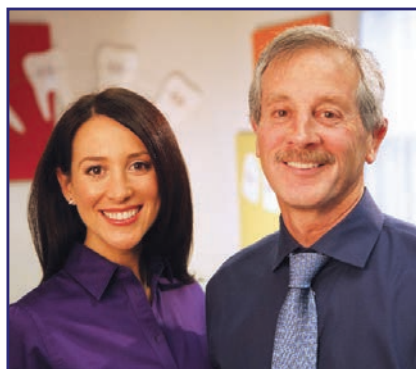
Her husband, Joseph H. Lee Jr., was a standout three-sport athlete at Haverhill High School and was inducted into the Haverhill Sports Hall of Fame in 1981.

This weekend, his wife will join him among many other legends of the city’s history.

Established in 1985, The Haverhill Citizens Hall of Fame is an organization that recognizes residents who achieved fame and brought distinction to the city.

Cole Lee will become the 46th honoree in the hall of fame, all of which are displayed on the first floor of the Haverhill Public Library.

The event, held in conjunction with Black History Month, is free and open to the public.



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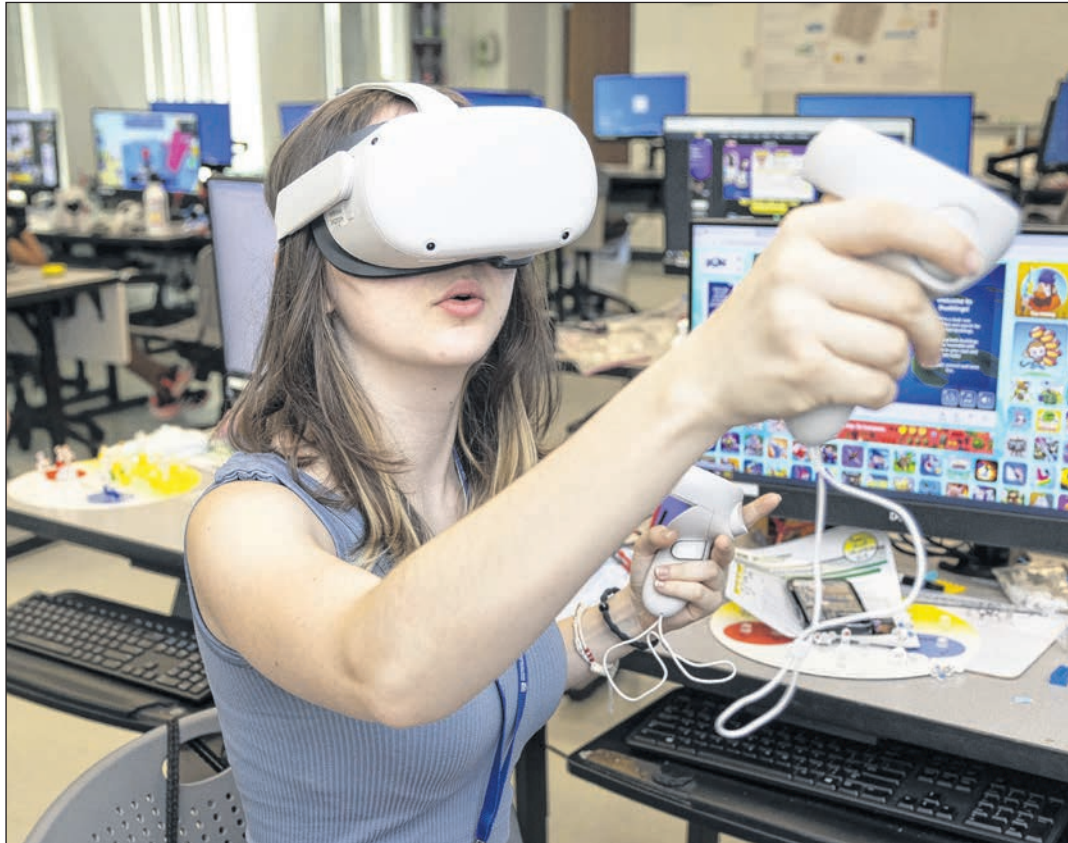
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UNH offering free STEM programs for teens

A student at work in last year's UNH Tech Camp for junior high and high school students.

COURTESY
PHOTO



Staff Report

DURHAM — UNH Tech Camp will be offering a number of free week-long STEM programs for middle- and high-school students in July, focused on regenerative medicine and biofabrication.

These subjects will all be explored through an experiential, project-based learning format that emphasizes creative thinking, problem solving and having fun. Day and residential options are available and all STEM experience levels are welcome to apply. Programs run between July 7 to 25 on the Durham campus. Applications are now being accepted.

A special program for students who are traditionally underrepresented in STEM-related fields is also being offered at no cost this summer.

Open to grades five to 12, the Dinah Whipple STEAM Academy is an immersive educational program that explores science, technology,

engineering, the arts and mathematics as well as topics related to the Black experience. The program runs from July 21 to 25.

These free programs are being offered as part of UNH Tech Camp, a longstanding summer youth program for grades five to 12 held on the UNH Durham campus.

Founded in 2007, Tech Camp offers a wide array of summer STEM programs ranging from video game design and forensic science to rocketry and space exploration. Need-based scholarships are available for all programs that aren't being offered at no cost.

An important component of the Tech Camp mission is to foster a diverse and inclusive community, providing STEM education to students from all ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

For more information, visit <https://shorturl.at/1BmGR>.



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CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Logan McLennan of North Andover had open-heart surgery at 3 years old. He is now studying at Northwestern Medical School in Chicago on a track to become a pediatric cardiologist.

Heart to heart

North Andover man who overcame affliction on path to become cardiologist

By Terry Date

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NORTH ANDOVER – At 3 years old Logan McLennan was focused and observant and had a single question for his parents before he was taken to the operating room at Boston Children's Hospital for six hours of open-heart surgery. "Are things going to be OK?"

They told him everything was going to be OK.

Now 23, he is in his second year of medical school at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago.

McLennan is destined to become a pediatric cardiologist.

His story inspires. It reflects how life experiences,

difficult ones, shape the future and can do so in powerful and positive ways.

For his undergraduate studies, McLennan earned a double degree in biology and child development at Tufts University in Boston in 2023.

He now has the rest of this year and then years three and four of medical school to complete.

After that comes a residency, which, depending on the program, can be anywhere from three to seven years.

Wherever McLennan ends up, he will be focused, observant and active; fortified by the power of empathy and an ability to use time well to produce results. Not just for himself but for others.

Each day he is up early, 6:30-ish, and goes to bed tired from a full day at 10 or 11 p.m.



Logan McLennan of North Andover is in his second year of medical school.

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CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Logan McLennan, right, stands next to his parents, Matt and Anne, and brother, Mason, who is a senior at North Andover high.

» Heart

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He has been that way since he was a child.

His parents, Anne McLennan, a sixth-grade teacher in Methuen, and Matthew McLennan, who works in the family real estate company, say by grade six, Logan was getting himself up in the morning, making his breakfast, packing a lunch and bounding to the bus stop.

His parents didn't promote that self-reliance. It wasn't something they talked about; it just happened.

His brother, Mason, a senior at North Andover High School who is bound for Sacred Heart University, also has self-directed his day-to-day doings.

Logan has always balanced numerous endeavors.

In childhood at Kittredge Elementary School and North Andover Middle School, he juggled karate, sports, school, friends, family, music, puzzles, video games and other interests.

When classmates were encouraged to learn to play an instrument and then put on a concert for parents, Logan dedicated the song he learned to his mom and played it on guitar: "Stairway to Heaven."

In high school at Phillips Academy, he undertook more of the same activities,

except his interest steered to rowing, away from karate, in which he had attained a third-degree black belt.

He also worked as a summer camp counselor at the nearby Brooks School.

He channeled more of his energy to the welfare of others in high school and college, tutoring students, organizing efforts to keep young people safe in social settings, and performing improvisational comedy in a troupe for elementary students.

The people in Logan's life who have most influenced him have all valued learning. Whether they were teachers, coaches or teammates — and at every level.

Teachers could rely on him, too.

His parents say by the time he was about 8, the karate school he belonged to in North Reading could rely on him to teach classes.

At Kittredge Elementary one day when the teacher was out, he left a packet with instructions for the substitute teacher that included a note: If there are any questions, ask Logan, he will be able to help.

Logan still tutors students, a group of 100 Massachusetts high schoolers over Zoom, preparing them for the Medical College Admission Test.

His parents were and are his most important mentors.

From his dad, a businessperson with an outgoing



COURTESY PHOTO

Logan McLennan, then 3 years old, of North Andover at Boston Children's Hospital for open-heart surgery. Today, at 23, he is in his second year of medical school, on a track to become a pediatric cardiologist.

personality, Logan has learned how to think in the moment.

From his mom, a low-key and observant person, he has learned to assess situations before taking action; to think through the consequences.

When they play chess, his mom takes her time, thinks well ahead.

"She beats me every time," Logan says.

He's grateful for his good upbringing.

Logan has a spotty recollection of his early introduction to doctors and hospitals for his heart problems. He was afflicted with an atrial septal defect — a hole between the upper chambers — and a mitral valve prolapse — flaps that do not always fit and close properly between each heartbeat.

His parents remember it all, including the months leading up to the surgery Oct. 15, 2004.

Earlier, in July, at Logan's regular annual doctor's visit, an astute nurse heard a subtle irregularity while listening to his heartbeat.

It could have been missed, had a less experienced or proficient nurse been wearing the stethoscope, but she recognized it from earlier cardiology work.

Logan recovered from the surgery well. He was up and walking the next day and returned home with his parents two days later.

Cardio checkups continued until he was 18.

A life-changing meeting

A turning point in Logan's career interests came when he was a junior at Phillips Academy.

He was selected for the school's Lorant Fellowship, awarded to a student with the greatest fire in the belly to succeed.

Classmates nominated the candidates.

Three finalists proposed study-abroad projects, and the fellowship paid for the winner to fulfill theirs.

Logan's proposal was to observe how doctors empathize with patients over four weeks in England at Evelina London Children's Hospital.

He got to do more than that at Evelina, a busy hub in England's national health care system.

He drew blood, gave echocardiograms and accompanied doctors as they consulted with parents and patients.

One day while Logan was with a doctor on his scheduled appointments in the hospital, the doctor told a couple with a girl around 11 that their daughter needed heart surgery.

The girl's heart problems were the same as Logan had 13 years earlier.

Both the mother and father were talking fast, shaking a little bit.

The girl did not say much. She appeared to be stunned.

Logan asked the doctor, who by now had to move on to his next appointment, if he could stay and talk to the parents.

Logan did and, in the course of the conversation, told them about his experience and the surgery's success.

Coincidentally, the family had the same last name as Logan.

The experience of being with these other McLennans was a pivotal moment. One in which Logan discovered his calling.

He is now in the midst of fulfilling that calling.

He feels confident in the skills he is building, developing the bedside manner that gives patients and families reassurance in troubled times.

They are skills that Logan knows by heart.



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