



EPSOM

Crews fight brushfire ‘burning deep’

Dry conditions meant the brushfire was a concern above and below ground

By DAVID BROOKS
Monitor staff

A small brushfire in Epsom on Sunday drew crews from several area fire departments and showed that it isn’t merely what happens above ground that matters.

“We went back today and hit a couple hot spots,” said Capt. Joel French of the Epsom Fire Department on Monday. “It has been so dry... it is burning deep.”

Much of New Hampshire has seen below-average rainfall and high temperatures since early

June. These areas are now categorized as being in moderate drought, the second of five increasingly serious drought ratings by the National Weather Service.

Following a very wet spring, no part of New England was in any type of drought at all as late as May.

Now, dry weather not only means lots of flammable material — dry leaves, twigs and branches — lying on the forest floor ready to ignite. It also means that at least the top several inches of the soil itself is dry.

Soil can contain a surprising amount of organic material that can be ignited by hot flames above



GEOFF FORESTER / Monitor staff

A firefighters hoses down a brush in a wooded area behind 70 Goboro Road in Epsom on Sunday afternoon.

SEE EPSOM A5

BERLIN

Husband posed clear danger

Internal review finds courts had ‘sufficient evidence’ to deny bail before murder-suicide

By SRUTHI GOPALAKRISHNAN
Monitor staff

The state’s courts had sufficient evidence to deny bail for Michael Gleason Jr. before he killed his estranged wife, Marisol Fuentes-Huaracha, in Berlin last month, an internal judicial review determined.

Due to the serious danger he posed and the high likelihood of intimate partner violence, the magistrate who granted Gleason bail was presented with “sufficient evidence [that] existed to hold Gleason in preventive detention,” according to a summary of the case released Monday by the New Hampshire Judicial Branch.

Other irregularities occurred in the case. In April, Fuentes-Huaracha, said Gleason stole around \$9,000 along with her debit card, immigration documents, and other important papers. Yet his bail was set at \$5,000, less than the amount she said he stole from her.

She accused him of sexually assaulting her, preventing her from going to work, and stealing her phone. Given the 25-year age difference between Gleason and Fuentes-Huaracha and the pattern of behavior he displayed in trying to control

SEE MURDER A6

CONCORD: Fourth-generation operation on Clinton Street looking to ‘a new start’



GEOFF FORESTER photos / Monitor staff

Bridget Clapp sets up the farm stand off of Clinton Street on Wednesday, Aug. 20. Bridget bought covers for the vegetables to keep insects away from the products.

Farms hits century mark

By REBECA PEREIRA
Monitor staff

Developers regularly called and make their bids. Even customers, distressed by the for-sale sign on Clinton Street, stopped by to inquire about the farm in recent months.

Jason ‘Jay’ Clapp had the same reply each time: “We’re not interested in selling.”

He’d worked beyond the farm as a mail carrier, like his father, and in the body shop of a local auto dealer. He spent three years trucking, braving miles of congested traffic to haul 100,000 lbs. of steel into Boston. The sedentary, solitary road aggravated him.

Clapp Family Farm, however, has always had the opposite effect.

“I have no desire to be off the farm, this is my happy place, you



Jason ‘Jay’ Clapp loads a bale of hay from his flatbed truck to the family 1928 Ford Model A truck to feed his cows on the family farm on Clinton Street.

SEE FARM A5

NATIONAL FOREST

Judge allows logging to proceed

By DAVID BROOKS
Concord Monitor

A federal judge ruled that commercial logging in two North Country sites in the White Mountain National Forest can go forward, raising questions about a similar lawsuit against logging plans in the Sandwich Range.

U.S. District Court Judge Joseph LaPlante rejected many of the arguments against the U.S. Forest Service in a summary judgment handed down Aug. 20. The lawsuit was filed by Standing Trees, a Vermont-based group that advocates for forests on public lands, on behalf of New Hampshire individuals and businesses who would be affected by the logging op-

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