

East Boston

TIMES - FREE PRESS

Wednesday, March 13, 2019



SHAMROCK SPLASH



The Piers Park Sailing Center's Piers Park Sub Zero Aqua Warriors team was the third top fundraiser behind Jetblue and Save the Harbor/Save the Bay during Sunday's Shamrock Splash.

Right, Piers Park Sailing Center Vice Chair Mary Cole took the plunge and helped raise \$4,950 for the PPSC team, the Piers Park Sub Zero Aqua Warriors, during Sunday's Shamrock Splash.



Mary Ellen Welch,  
dies at age 77

An East Boston legend

"Neighbors from around the city should know about the diversity of East Boston. This diversity makes East Boston a wonderful place. People should know that in East Boston, we are proud of our history, our location, and how the neighborhood has come together in trying times." -- Mary Ellen Welch

By John Lynds

Almost a decade ago, East Boston's Mary Ellen Welch was chairing the Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association meeting when Massport officials were presenting plans to build a huge rental car facility that she felt would negatively impact the community she loved.

Everyone in the room knew it was only a matter of time before she'd let them have it.

Welch patiently waited for the right moment, shifted in her chair and her soft voice raised a few octaves.

"Oh, come on!," she exclaimed stopping the Massport officials dead in their tracks.

She then became very animated, waving her finger and rattling off study after study showing the members the negative health impacts the project would have on the community. She'd then accused the Port Authority of once again doing the bare minimum and said that the size and scope of the project and its relation to the residential neighborhood should warrant further health studies.

"We have repeatedly asked for a study on the ultra-fine particulate matter and each time Massport has refused," Welch yelled.

For over a half century,

Welch was the steward of social, political and environmental activism in the neighborhood.

Welch, a longtime community activist and educator, sought to house the poor, improve the air quality in Eastie and helped bring a neighborhood with the least amount of open space to a community with award-winning, sprawling parks and greenways.

Sadly, on Thursday, March 7, Eastie lost a legend and an icon.

Welch died following surgery surrounded by her loving friends and family. She was 77 years old.

In August 2014, as one of the final sections of the Greenway Connector was completed, her longtime adversary, Massport, paid homage to the woman with the skills, commitment and vision to see Eastie connected from one end to the other via a park system that would rival any other in Boston.

As one of the founding members of the East Boston Greenway Council, Welch worked for decades to take a neglected stretch of the old Narrow Gauge Railroad and transform it into a system of lush landscaped parks so residents could enjoy a stroll from Jeffries Point to Orient

See WELCH Page 12



Mary Ellen Welch during the 2014 dedication of the Greenway. Welch, an East Boston icon and legend, died last Thursday at the age of 77.

See SPLASH Page 2

See EBNHC Page 3

Eastie residents, organizations take the plunge for local non-profits

By John Lynds

For East Boston nonprofit organizations like Piers Park Sailing Center, East Boston YMCA, the Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) and Harborkeepers, the annual Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Shamrock Splash fundraiser helps these organization bring fun activities to Eastie beaches and harbor during the summer months.

Several Eastie residents and

members of local non-profit organizations like Piers Park Sailing Center (PPSC) took part the ninth annual Harpoon Shamrock Splash to benefit Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Better Beaches Program on Sunday, March 10, at the BCYF Curley Community Center at M Street Beach in South Boston. Save the Harbor/Save the Bay raised over \$50,000 to support free beach

events and programs on the region's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

When participants woke up Sunday morning it was snowing sideways. Luckily it subsided a little before the splash, but there was still freezing rain and the beach was covered with snow, which made it a little uncomfortable for those taking the annual plunge. The water was a balmy 38 °F at Carson Beach on Sunday.

"We love doing the Sham-

rock Splash," said Piers Park Sailing Center's Executive Director Alex DeFronzo. "This year we had a team of 12 from PPSC. The bravest of the bunch was our board vice chair Mary Cole who dyed her hair green and led our charge into the ocean. She said she would dye her hair if she raised more than \$1,000 and she beat that handily bringing in a total of

EBNHC updates residents' Neighborhood Trauma Team

By John Lynds

When a traumatic or violent event occurs in East Boston, it affects not only the victim and their family but also the victim's extend family, friends, first-responders and neighbors who may have witnessed the incident and its aftermath.

For a little over a year, there has been a support team

on hand from the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center to help those trying to cope with trauma.

The team is part of the Health Center's new Neighborhood Trauma Team (NTT) a relatively new directive put together by Mayor Martin Walsh's Administration and the Boston Public Health Commission.

At a meeting last week the Health Center's Michael Mancusi and Erin Bourgault explained that the model was designed with feedback from a community engagement process that included 14 listening sessions hosted by BPHC. During this time, BPHC staff heard from more than 350 residents about what their individual and community needs

have been following a violent or traumatic event.

The Health Center was chosen as one of six NTT in the city to begin responding to traumatic events in the neighborhood and help family, friends and the broader community deal with events like shootings, stabbings and suicides.

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# 125 Sumner St. project underway

By John Lynds

The Clippership Apartments, a 20-unit, income-restricted complex owned by the Boston Housing Authority, could have had an overhaul 20 years ago when Maverick Gardens was being rehabbed under a federal Hope VI grant. However, residents opted not to be part of the Hope VI project even though the aging public housing development was in desperate need of a rehab.

In 2017 Winn Development Company, along with Lendlease Development, received Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) approval to raze the 20 units of Section 8 housing and replace them with 52 units of housing.

The project also received Zoning Board approval last year and earlier this month was granted its building permits and construction will commence this spring.

Winn and Lendlease were

designated by the BHA as the developer of the Clippership Apartments on August 3, after a competitive solicitation process.

“The Developer proposes to transform this aging housing complex, which has no financial resources of its own, into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-income, transit-oriented, residential development,” wrote Winn President Jamie Fay in the letter filed with the BPDA. “Leveraging the opportunity of the ongoing mixed-use development at Clippership Wharf, Lendlease is partnering with Winn to revitalize the aging housing complex and provide affordable units to meet and further the on-site Inclusionary Development Policy – both by replacing the dilapidated existing 20 rental units and by creating thirty new affordable and middle-income condominium units.”

The letter to the BPDA added that the current complex serves as a residence for 20 families, all of whom will be promised the right to move into the new units.

“The Developer has spent several months engaging existing residents and seeking input on the proposed project with the support and assistance of the BHA,” wrote Fay. “The original site design and program have been changed to be more responsive to the neighborhood and existing residents’ concerns, and we will continue to listen to neighborhood concerns throughout the review process. The Developer is committed to engaging the community and strongly believes that we can improve our proposal by listening to and responding to those who know the community best.”

Winn and Lendlease plan to demolish the four two-story townhouses and construct two new three-story, wood-framed buildings. One building will contain approximately 22 affordable rental apartment



The following are renderings of 125 Sumner Street: Winn, Lendlease file Letter of Intent to overhaul public housing complex.

residences, and the other will contain 30 mixed-income condominium residences. Apartments will include three- and four-bedrooms, and condominiums will include studio, one-, two- and three bedrooms. Fourteen of those condominiums will be designed affordable.

In the building that will contain the 20 low-income

rental units there will be a community room and ground-floor retail space. There will also be 19 surface parking spaces and 50 bicycle storage spaces located on site for residents

Winn and Lendlease are currently permitted to build a waterfront development project at Clippership Wharf directly behind the Clippership

Apartments. That \$225 million project will include 492 studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units, a small cafe and restaurant, a fitness center, a lounge and club facility, a canoe/kayak rental facility, a water taxi dock, and a possible mooring field for sailing.

## Salvadoran national sentenced for failure to register as a sex offender

By John Lynds

A Salvadoran national and convicted sexual offender living under an assumed name in East Boston was sentenced in federal court last week for failure to register as a sex offender as required under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA).

Melvin Velasquez, 34, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV to eight months in prison and five years of supervised release. In November 2018, Velasquez pleaded guilty to one count of failure to register as a sex offender. Velasquez

was charged by criminal complaint in August 2018 and has been in federal custody since his arrest.

According to court documents Velasquez was convicted in New York in 2007 of one count of rape in the third degree and sentenced to eight months in prison and eight years of probation. As a condition to his probation, Velasquez was required by SORNA to register as a sex offender in any jurisdiction where he resided or worked. Velasquez, who was also determined to be illegally present in the United States, was deported to El Salvador following the

completion of his sentence.

Sometime after, Velasquez returned to the United States, assumed a false identity, and was living and working in Eastie.

In May 2018, Velasquez, using his alias, was arrested and charged with various motor vehicle violations. Velasquez’s fingerprints were obtained and found to match the prints in his alien file stemming from his 2007 New York rape conviction. Law enforcement subsequently discovered that Velasquez had not registered, as required by law, with the Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board.

Please Recycle

### JPNA votes down Sumner Street proposal

By John Lynds

The Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association (JPNA) voted 12 to 11 against the proposed project at 272 Sumner St. to add an additional unit to a three-family.

East Boston resident Julius Sokol planned to perform a gut rehab on an existing three-family at 272 Sumner St. His plan called for adding a fourth floor with a 4-foot setback that would house an additional unit, bringing the total number of units to four. There was also two proposed off-street parking spaces.

The building is currently a typical three family with no additional parking in a 3F, 2000 Neighborhood.

### BPS // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

\$1,530 for the Better Beaches Program at Save the Harbor / Save the Bay.”

In total the PPSC team, the Piers Park Sub Zero Aqua Warriors, was the third top fundraiser overall and raised \$4,950 from over 60 generous donors.

“Save the Harbor is one of our most important program partners every summer,” said DeFronzo. “They send a team of 5-6 staff to Piers Park to provide marine science education to our Harbor Explorers and sailing students. This program also supports a bunch of other great organizations like the Friends of the Belle Isle Marsh, Harborkeepers, NOAH, and the East Boston YMCA.”

Last year the four Eastie nonprofits received \$18,180 each to host activities like free kayaking, sunset family fitness, family fun days, and the first annual East Boston marine science and maritime festival.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is the region’s leading voice for clean water and continued public investment in Boston Harbor, the region’s public beaches, and the Boston Harbor Islands, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s mission is to restore and protect Boston Harbor, Massachusetts Bay and the marine environment and share them with the public for everyone to enjoy.

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# City Council approves CPA funding

By John Lynds

Last month Mayor Martin Walsh and the City’s Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recommended that several projects in East Boston and across the city, totaling more than \$34 million, be included in the fall funding round for the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

The last hurdle in the process was a vote by the City Council to appropriate the funds and that moment came during last Wednesday’s Council meeting.

The Council voted unanimously last week to release the \$34 million in recommended funding to the projects in Eastie and citywide.

“It’s an exciting day in Boston,” said At-Large Councilor Michael Flaherty, who chairs the Council’s CPA Committee. “Whether it is the affordable housing opportunities or the beatification of our parks this round of funding will continue to benefit Boston residents for generations to come. This is why we supported the CPA and now voters and residents are finally seeing these projects come to fruition.”

In Eastie, \$950,000 was approved for the Grace Apartments development, which recently received Boston Planning and Development Agency approval. Developed by the East Boston Community Development Organization (EBCDC), Grace Apartments will be a new, 42-unit residential building serving low-income seniors located on 187 Sumner Street. The project will also renovate 17 income-restricted units on the site’s existing building.

According to plans submitted to the BPDA by the CDC the proposed project involves the construction of a



At-Large Councilor Michael Flaherty, who chairs the Council’s CPA Committee, during last week’s Council vote to approve CPA funding in Eastie.

new 39,067 square-foot, 42-unit, seven-story building and the renovation of an existing 26,800 square-foot building currently on the same site in Maverick Square.

The new building will include all low income elderly housing. The existing building, which includes 17 elderly/disabled subsidized units as well as approximately 3,000 square-feet of ground-floor commercial space, will be converted to workforce housing units, including two affordable units.

The property consists of a 16,266-square-foot parcel of land with 26,800-square feet of mixed use, residential and commercial building.

The Council approved \$735,200 to the proposed Aileron development to build seven housing units, including four affordable units. Overall the East Boston Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, its architect Eastie based Joy St Design, and the CDC have joined forces to create a 41-unit project that includes a mixed-use, mixed-income, ownership/rental housing and gallery spaces for Eastie artist community and community at large.

NOAH’s project, dubbed ‘Aileron’ will include eight

ownership units, half workforce and half market, in one building with 33-units occupying a larger building next door. Of the 33 units in the larger building 17 will be set aside for artist work/living space.

NOAH is also proposing two large common spaces, a Gallery and Workbar, that will be available for the other residents in the building.

Eastie will also \$600,000 for a new playground at the East Boston Early Education Center. The new playground for ELC includes integrated classrooms for students with disabilities in K0 and first grade.

The Nantucket Lightship, Boston’s only floating museum docked at the Boston Shipyard and Marina on Marginal Street will get \$575,000 to restore the historic ship’s rusted hull.

There is \$500,000 to create a new park to connect the renovated Boston Housing Authority Orient Heights development to the surrounding neighborhood.

Finally \$300,000 will go to building a fully accessible dock and dock house at LoPresti Park. This dock will create access to the waterfront for youth and an adaptive sailing program at LoPresti Park across from the Boston Housing Authority Jeffries Point development for those with handicaps. The program will be collaboration between the Piers Park Sailing Center and the Harborkeepers.

“We are very excited that our \$300,000 proposal to build a public floating dock at LoPresti Park has made the final round of CPA funding,” said Harborkeepers founder Magdalena Ayed. “This dock will create more equitable access to the Boston Harbor for all East Bostonians.”

## EBNHC // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“This is a multi-agency collaboration and we (EBNHC) have been working with agencies from across East Boston like North Suffolk Mental Health, District A-7, the East Boston Soup Kitchen to begin deal with traumatic events in the community in a more concerted way,” said Mancusi.

The NTT will respond to what are called ‘qualifying events.’ After a qualifying event happens the NTT will offer immediate individual and family support and ongoing access to trauma treatment. The team will conduct community outreach and engagement to make sure residents know how to access services, and will host community meetings to share safety information and provide safe spaces for groups to come together for healing.

“The qualifying events include any gun homicide, a shooting or stabbing were the victim or victims are under the age of 18 or an open third category like suicides or attempted suicides and other incidents,” said Mancusi.

Each qualifying incident has a ripple effect in the community that starts with the victim and spreads out to family members, extended family members, friends and the community or neighbors who have witnessed a violent or traumatic event.

“When a qualifying event happens we immediately put together a plan,” said Mancusi. “Then within 12 hours of the incident we are reaching out to either the victim, family members, extended family members or witnesses to the event that may have been traumatized and need help.”

Mancusi said the Health Center’s NTT will offer a whole host of support services and follow up services for those affected by one of these traumatic events in Eastie.

“There are concentric circles that surround a traumatic incident,” said Mancusi. “We are here to help each ripple that comes from an incident that may have a deep impact on an individual or group of individuals.”

Rep. Adrian Madaro encouraged more Eastie resident to get involved in the NTT efforts.

“I’m so impressed by the



EBNHC’s Trauma Team contact Erin Bourgault during the meeting last week.



Rep. Adrian Madaro encouraged more residents to get involved in the Neighborhood Trauma Team’s efforts in the community.



East Boston residents discuss how to improve the Neighborhood Trauma Team’s work in the neighborhood.

turnout when we have issues we roll up our sleeves and as a community we come together and work together to solve the issues,” said Madaro. “For the Neighborhood Trauma Team to be effective it needs an neighborhood to be involved. The more people who

are involved in this initiative the safer and the healthier our community will be

It is critical we stay engaged beyond tonight and I ask you all share this information with other people.”

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## Chamber Prosperity Awards set for the end of the month

By John Lynds

Living in an urban community is never easy. While East Boston does have it share of the issues, it also has a lifestyle that has made this a community of choice for generations of residents.

In Eastie, you are not just a face, but a name with lineage of whom your parents, brothers, sisters and grandparents are. Then, there are the recent waves of immigrants and young professionals that have added yet another important layer to the community’s tight knit feel.

However, keeping this sense of community alive is not an easy task.

The renaissance that Eastie has been experiencing for the last several years just did not happen, but happened because of local people.

On Thursday, March 16 at 6 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn on Boardman Street, the East Boston Chamber of Commerce will recognize individuals who in their own way have made a difference to the betterment for our community at their annual Prosperity Awards.

According to the Cham-

ber’s President-elect Jim Kearney, the Prosperity Awards were established to honor and recognize Eastie’s most influential and impactful businesses and community leaders that are among the distinguished individuals who have made significant contributions to the economic and cultural prosperity of our community.

This year’s recipients are: Small Business: Joe Eagen, Squeaky Clean Car Wash

Restaurant of the Year: Anthony DiCenso, Rino’s

Workplace Advocate: Steve Snyder, East Boston Neighborhood Health Clinic

Non-Profit Organization and Leader: Anne Margaret Gutierrez, East Boston YMCA

Public Service Award: Jim Kearney, BPS

Business Legacy Award: Steven Schire, Carlos Catering

Business Woman of the Year: Patty Guzman, Lolly’s Bakery

Economic Growth And Development: Tom O’Brien, HYM

Buddy Mangini Award: to be announced shortly

The host and master of ceremonies for the evening will be State Representative Adrian Madaro. “The Chamber is both honored and privileged to present the Awards to these outstanding individuals,” said Kearney. “Please join the Chamber in recognizing their accomplishments.”

For sponsorship and ticket information please contact Karina Hicks at the Chamber’s office.

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HANDS-FREE DRIVING  
MAKES SENSE

Recent statistics indicate that the single-biggest cause of motor vehicle accidents these days can be attributed generally to what is known as “distracted driving.”

According to some reports, more Americans now are killed on our roads because of distracted driving than from driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

That is why we fully support the legislation recently filed by Gov. Charles Baker that would require all use of a cell phone or other device to be strictly hands-free. It simply is not possible for anyone to keep their eyes on the road while texting, dialing, or reading from an electronic device -- and the epidemic of accidents on our roads is the best evidence of that.

We also support another aspect of Gov. Baker’s bill that calls for the non-use of a seat belt as a primary offense, thereby giving police the authority to stop a motorist and issue a civil citation solely for not wearing a seat belt. Under the present law, a person may be cited for a seat belt violation only if the operator has been pulled over for another offense (such as speeding). Massachusetts is fairly unique in this regard, but the governor’s bill will bring us into line with the majority of other states.

Another key aspect of the bill would require anyone convicted of a first offense for operating under the influence who applies for a hardship license to use an ignition interlock device for a minimum of six months, and be subject to penalties from the Registry of Motor Vehicles for attempting to drive after drinking or tampering with the device.

In our view, drinking and driving should not be allowed at all. But to the extent that we have a 0.08 threshold, imposing the requirement of an ignition interlock device for first offenders is hardly draconian -- anyone who drinks to that extent and gets behind the wheel of a car clearly has a problem.

Moreover, we are in favor of any additional measures that serve as an added deterrent to drinking and driving and thereby improve public safety.

Your opinions, please

The Times welcomes letters to the editor. Our mailing address is 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Our fax number is 781-485-1403.

Letters may also be e-mailed to [editor@eastietimes.com](mailto:editor@eastietimes.com). Letters must be signed. We reserve the right to edit for length and content.

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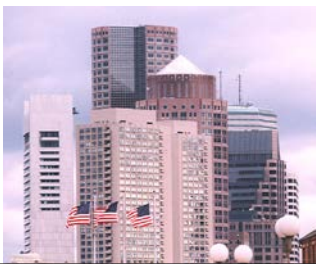
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GUEST OP-ED

Lenten Letter: Summit to protect children and minors was powerful

By Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley,  
OFM, Cap.

As we begin the holy season of Lent, this annual time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving affords us the opportunity to be renewed by God’s love and mercy as we recommit ourselves to lives of prayer and service to others.

This year, Lent has particular significance for the leadership of the Church at every level, local, national and universal. Recently Pope Francis called bishops from every country in the world to come together at the Vatican for the Summit to Protect Children and Minors. The summit included powerful testimony from survivors of clergy sexual abuse, religious sisters and laypersons who made clear that a meaningful and effective response from the Church is long overdue and of critical importance. I participated in the summit as the President of the Pontifical Commission for Protection of Minors and, with all present, was deeply impacted by those who addressed us.

Given the depth and seriousness of the crisis and the failures of the leadership of the Church, the expectations for the meeting were high and people are anxious to see concrete results. I left the meeting convinced that no bishop could possibly say that his diocese is not affected by these issues or that this is not a problem in his country and culture. Patience among our

people and in the wider community is exhausted and understandably the call is rising for effective action.

A dominant theme at the meeting was the need for an effective reporting mechanism when a Bishop or Cardinal has failed in his duty to protect children or has himself abused children or vulnerable adults. Although I believe an effective set of procedures will be developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I nonetheless wish to address this need immediately for the Archdiocese of Boston.

To that end I have decided to implement EthicsPoint, a confidential, anonymous and third-party system, exclusively for the reporting of misconduct by a Cardinal, Bishop or Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Boston. Since 2011 we have utilized EthicsPoint for concerns of potential ethics violations, financial improprieties, and other violations of the Archdiocesan Code of Conduct related to financial matters.

Like the existing system currently in use, this will be web based and have a toll-free hotline to make a report. Reports will be sent to members of my Independent Review Board who will be charged to immediately notify law enforcement for claims of abuse as well as the apostolic nuncio; the diplomatic representative to the U.S. of the Holy See. The system will be hosted on secured servers at the EthicsPoint facility and is not

connected to the Archdiocese of Boston website, intranet system or the existing EthicsPoint system currently in use. We anticipate the system being up and running soon and will provide more information at that time.

In January 2002 the clergy sexual abuse crisis was revealed by the media in powerful and compelling reports on the failures of the Church to protect children. Courageous survivors came forward and forced the Church to face the crisis and accept responsibility for the crimes committed against them. That same year the American Bishops implemented the Dallas Charter of Norms. Where it has been faithfully implemented, it has been effective. But we must aggressively build on the Charter to ensure that there are clear paths for reporting misdeeds of the hierarchy by utilizing the expertise of independent lay professionals.

During the meeting in Rome, the most powerful moments were when survivors of abuse spoke to us. This confirmed my own experience. The way forward for the Church is to hold as a priority the voices and experience of survivors, to keep them close to every step we take and make all possible efforts to provide the means for them to be heard. In Boston we will continue to provide pastoral care and counseling for survivors. We will continue to carry out programs of prevention and education in our schools and parishes. We will contin-

ue to do background checks annually for bishops, priests, all archdiocesan personnel, and all volunteers who work with children and young people. You may find the depth and breadth of those efforts in the Archdiocese of Boston on our dedicated website at [Commitment.BostonCatholic.org](http://Commitment.BostonCatholic.org).

For more than 26 years my ministry has involved responding to the abuse of minors by clergy. The crisis of sexual abuse by clergy is the greatest failure of the Church in my lifetime. It has eroded our moral authority, it endangers our pastoral, social and educational ministry, but worst of all, it devastates children and families.

We must face our past with transparency. Those who were sexually abused by clergy, their families and loved ones must always be the central focus of our response to the crisis. Their courage in coming forward has forced the Church to face the crimes committed against them. We are committed to accompanying them on their journey toward healing. Often it is survivors who teach us not to lose hope.

As we strive to live this season with renewed seriousness and commitment we pray and work for renewal in the life of the Church. We are firmly committed to zero tolerance, transparency and accountability, at all times holding survivors as the priority, always being vigilant to do all possible to prevent any harm to children.

NEWS BRIEFS

Housing legislation hearing

The Boston City Council will hold a hearing at City Hall on housing legislation, a real estate transfer fee, filed by Councilors Lydia Edwards and Kim Janey at 2 p.m. on March 19. The proposal would assess a fee of up to six percent on investor-owned properties sold for more than two million dollars, and would dedicate all pro-

ceeds - which could be several hundreds of millions of dollars under the current proposal - to affordable housing. Residents who sell their own home, i.e. owner occupants, would be exempt from the fee and the city would be able to create additional exemptions, such as for homebuyers. The councilors are also proposing a higher fee on properties that are flipped or sold and resold in a short duration.

Suffolk Downs Meeting

Councilor Lydia Edwards will hold upcoming meeting dates on issues related to Suffolk Downs. These sessions are intended to collect input on the current proposal, help comment on the development and help the city identify areas that are not clear in the current plan.

Housing & Affordability - Wednesday, March 13 (EBHS, Room 142) - 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Transportation - Tuesday March 26., EB Social Center, thirdFloor, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Economic Development + Good Jobs - Thursday, March 28 - 6:30 - 8 p.m., Umana Academy Auditorium.

Sessions on Homelessness/ Recovery Issues and Open Space and Climate Resiliency will be held in April.

For more information, contact Joel Wool, [joel.wool@boston.gov](mailto:joel.wool@boston.gov), 617-635-3200, Office of Lydia Edwards.



COMMUNITY NEWS

ORIENT HEIGHTS  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
COUNCIL MEETING  
AGENDA

The next meeting of the Orient Heights Neighborhood Council (OHNC) will be Monday, March 18, at 6:30 p.m. at the YMCA gym on 58 Ashley St.

Location: YMCA 58 Ashley Street

Meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

– Agenda is subject to change.

Introductions - Welcome and report from the board (President, VP, Secretary)

OHNC email list sign-up.

Public Safety - Station 7 Community Update Sgt. -- Jim Martin & Officer Dan Simon.

Presentation: Neenah Estrella-Luna presenting a project involving climate change and art.

Development Presentations - New and voting matters

VOTE: 18 Crestway Rd., Demolish existing single family and erect 3-story 9-unit building with 12 off-street parking spaces.

INFO: 1008 Saratoga St., Proposal to replace Tufts Tobacco with East Boston Local Roots, LLC a Recreational Marijuana Dispensary.

INFO: 154 Bayswater, Change 2-family status to 3-family by renovating basement space for additional apartment unit.

INFO: 192 Gladstone, Proposal to erect a 6-unit residential building with roof deck and 6 underground parking spaces.

Next meeting: Monday, April 15, 2019

EAST BOSTON  
SENIOR LUNCH  
PROGRAM

If you are 60+ years of age, the East Boston Social Centers at 68 Central Square in East Boston has a table and a meal waiting for you!

The Senior Lunch Program sponsored by ETHOS Congregate Meal Program provides

a hot, nutritious lunch, along with wonderful socialization, Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. A suggested donation of \$2 is asked.

We welcome seniors from our East Boston Community and surrounding areas.

EAST BOSTON  
BRANCH LIBRARY  
EVENTS

365 Bremen Street  
East Boston, MA 02128  
617-569-0271

ESOL Intermediate English Class

Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:30 to 1 p.m.

Starting on February 6th

This is an adult ESL Intermediate English class for people with some English experience. You will review grammar basics, learn how to offer and request advice, talk about future hopes and plans, and fix common mistakes in English pronunciation!

Registration is required. To register and for more information, please visit us, call 617.859.2446, or email [literacyservices@bpl.org](mailto:literacyservices@bpl.org).

Classes are free.

Caravan Puppets  
Friday, February 22nd at 3 p.m.

Caravan Puppets has delighted countless children and families throughout the USA, Canada and Japan. “The Four Season Bear” is a delightful tale of the year of a young bear with memorable songs, beautiful puppets, storytelling and audience participation. Funding for this program was made possible by the Highland Street Foundation.

LEARN ITALIAN FREE

The class will be held at Robert DeLeo Senior Center, 35 Harvard Street Winthrop for residents age 55 and above.

Whether you have Italian ancestry, or just want to learn one of the world’s most beautiful languages, join us at in-

formal and friendly Italian language and culture classes. Wednesday afternoons from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m.

For info call 617-846-8538.

EAST BOSTON SOCIAL  
CENTER'S SENIOR  
PROGRAM NOW  
OFFERING SPANISH  
LANGUAGE CLASSES

The Senior Program at the East Boston Social Centers is now offering Spanish Language Classes for adults over 60 years old. Classes are held every Wednesday at 10 a.m. in Room 209. All are welcome to attend. Class is taught by Mr. Montaro. No need to register, just come by on Wednesday at 10 a.m. for this fun class. The East Boston Social Centers is located at 68 Central Square.

EAST BOSTON  
TECH MEETUP

The purpose of the East Boston Tech Meetup is to build a community of people currently working in tech or those aspiring to move into a tech career who live or work in East Boston. These meetings will be held in the heart of Maverick Landing conveniently located steps from the Maverick T station, in the Maverick Landing Meeting House at 31 Liverpool Street.

GRACE CHURCH  
NEWS SERVICES

Grace Church Federated is an Episcopal/United Church of Christ church located at 760 Saratoga Street in East Boston. All are welcome. Please join us for Sunday morning worship at 9:30 a.m., followed by a coffee hour. We also have a food pantry on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until noon in the church basement. There are a number of ways you can help us to serve East Boston. Volunteer at or contribute to the food pantry. Sing with the Festival of Lessons and Carols choir. Bring

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Meetings

Harbor View Neighborhood Association  
First Monday of every month  
6:30 p.m. at the Edward Brooke Charter School, 145 Byron St.

Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association  
Second Monday of every month.  
6:30 p.m. at the Jeffries Point Yacht Club, 565 Sumner St.

Orient Heights Neighborhood Association  
Third Monday of every month.  
6:30 p.m. at Ashley Street YMCA, 54 Ashley St.

Friend of the East Boston Greenway  
Fourth Thursday of every month.  
6:30 p.m. at the Anna DeFronzo Center, 395 Maverick St.

Maverick Central Neighborhood Association  
Third Wednesday of every month  
7 p.m. at Paris Street Community Center, 112 Paris St.

Gove Street Citizens Association  
Fourth Monday of every month  
6:30 p.m. at the Noddle Island Community Room, Logan Rental Car Center

Eagle Hill Civic Association  
Last Wednesday of every month  
7 p.m. at East Boston High School Cafeteria, 86 White St.

a dish to the monthly Sunday evening community suppers. Participate in the Sunday worship service. Help with SundaySchool. Visit the Grace Church web site at [www.gracechurcheastie.org](http://www.gracechurcheastie.org) or call the church at 617-569-5358 for more information.

EAST BOSTON  
SOCIAL CENTER  
PIZZA AND COMEDY  
FUNDRAISER

East Boston Social Centers to Hold Annual Pizza and Comedy Fundraiser April 11.

The East Boston Social Center will hold its Annual Spring Fundraiser, a Pizza and Comedy night at Prince Restaurant in Saugus, on the evening of Thursday April 11, 2019 – doors open at 6:30 p.m. We look forward to seeing you and sharing a great night of laughs, pizza and friendship.

The East Boston Social Center is a 501(C) 3 non-profit multi-service agency that has served the children, families, and senior citizens of East Boston since its founding over 100 years ago, in 1918.

Net proceeds from this event will support the Social Centers’ programs, which serve over a thousand members of the East Boston and Greater Boston community each year. The Social Centers provide fully licensed and accredited Early Learning and After School programs for children ages two months through fourteen years, free after-school programming for at-risk teens, a Summer Program, as well as nutritional and social and recreational programming for seniors, and community space for advocacy, self-help and community groups.

Ticket price of \$35 per person includes unlimited cheese

pizza and soft drinks and a hilarious comedy show with some of the area’s best comedians. Other menu items and a cash bar are also available for purchase.

There is also a Raffle for an assortment of gift certificates, sports tickets, baskets and much more. Chances are \$20 for a book of 10 (Need not be present to win).

Thank you for your continued generosity to the East Boston Social Centers and support of the community of East Boston. We look forward to seeing you on April 11th!

To purchase tickets for the event or for raffle chances, please call Marisa at (617) 569-3221 ext. 107, email at [mdipietro@ebsoc.org](mailto:mdipietro@ebsoc.org) - or contact any of our Board members.

You may also purchase tickets online at: <https://www.ebsoc.org/new-events/>

LOCAL STUDENTS EARN ACADEMIC HONORS

Boston University  
announces Dean's List

Emily V. Truong, a resident of East Boston, has recently been named to the Dean’s List at Boston University for the Fall semester.

Each school and college at Boston University has their own criterion for the Dean’s List, but students generally must attain a 3.5 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale), or be

in the top 30 percent of their class, as well as a full course load as a full time student.

Founded in 1839, Boston University is an internationally recognized institution of higher education and research. Consisting of 16 schools and colleges, BU offers students more than 250 programs of study in science and engineering, social science and humanities, health science, the arts, and other professional

disciplines, along with a number of multi-disciplinary centers and institutes integral to the University’s research and teaching mission. With more than 33,000 students, BU is the fourth-largest private university in the country and a member of the American Association of Universities (AAU), a nonprofit association of 62 of North America’s leading research-intensive institutions.

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Saturday, March 23, 2019

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Tawakal Halal Cafe

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Paid for by the Committee to Elect Adrian Madaro

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Public Meeting

2-10 Maverick Square

Thursday, March 28

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

250 Sumner Street

East Boston Health Center Training Facility

East Boston, MA 02128

Project Proponent:

MG2 Group, LLC

Project Description:

MG2 Group, LLC propose to construct a six-story, mixed-use development totaling approximately 37,400 square feet. The proposed project will have twenty-five (25) rental units which includes three (3) IDP Units (affordable), and approximately 10,700 square feet of commercial retail space.

mail to:

John Campbell

Boston Planning & Development Agency

One City Hall Square, 9th Floor

Boston, MA 02201

phone:

617.918.4282

email:

john.campbell@boston.gov

Close of Comment Period:

4/5/2019

BostonPlans.org

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary



EAST BOSTON HIGH SCHOOL STAFF HONORS SENIORS

On Thursday, East Boston High School staff, administrators and students celebrated the last 100 days of school by honoring its seniors.

In 100 days the seniors will end their high school careers.

To celebrate the occasion the school held a pizza party with food donated by Carlo's Catering in East Boston.

The event was planned by the Senior Council Co- Presidents Ashley Figueroa and Sebastian Parra as well as Council members Alejandra Bonilla, Angelica Acosta, Eileen Zamarano, Melanie Agudelo, Nasja Taylor, Naylene Rivera, Jennifer Pimentel Colon and senior advisors Mr. Andrew Faiz and Ms. Tiana Tassinari.



EBHS seniors Mozell Johniken and Michael Pujols pose for a photo during last week's celebration.



Alexander Granado, Josue Monterozza, and Jeffrey Figueroa.



EBHS seniors were treated to a pizza party. Shown in the photo are Amaya Walter, Destiny Martinez, Nestor Beltre, and Richard Sanchez.



Chris Manta, Cruz, Jairo Machado, Miguel Elias, senior advisor Tiana Tassinari and Lesly Castillo.



EBHS seniors pose with a cake to mark the last 100 days of their high school careers. From left, Naylene Rivera, Able Fuentes, Bryan Cedano, Bryan Bonilla, and Nasja Taylor.



EBHS seniors play games during a celebration to mark the seniors last 100 days of school.



EBHS seniors pose for pictures during the event last week at the school.



EBHS seniors line up for pizza, drinks, cake to celebrate the class's last 100 days of school.



Food and drinks were donated to the seniors by Carlo's Catering. Aris Garcia helps serve classmates drinks.

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from 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.

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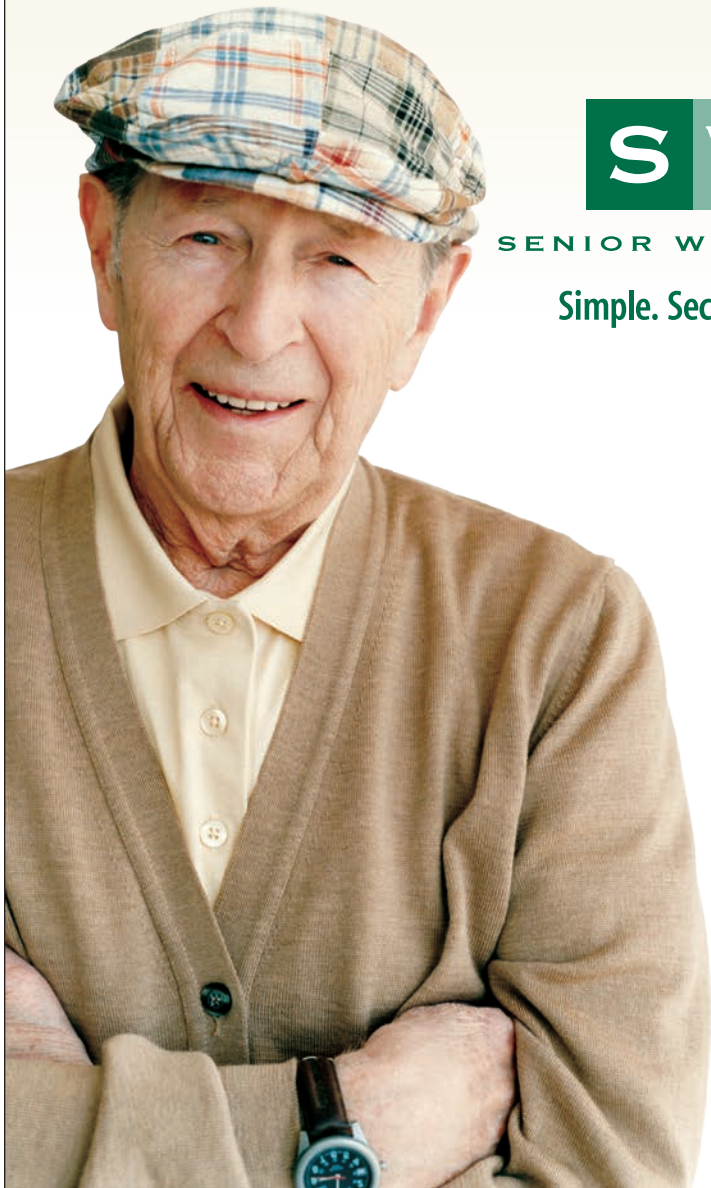
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THE THIRD ANNUAL WOUNDED VETERANS HOCKEY TOURNAMENT AT PORRAZZO RINK

It was a great day a Porrazzo Rink last Saturday morning. Local EMS and veteran hockey teams faced off to help raise funds for wounded veterans. Andy Biggio and his team brought is special honored guest Staff Sgt. JD Williams, U.S. Army sniper, a triple-amputee wounded in battle, to drop the puck for the championship game. Teams from Revere PD, Saugus Fire and Police, Winthrop Fire and

Police, National Guard, Transit Police, Malden Police all played a grueling four games of 25 minutes each to get to the championship round. It came down to two teams at 4-0, returning champs the Revere Police and the challengers, Winthrop Fire and Police. It was a tough match, and at the end of regulation time they were tied 2-2. The Revere Police took it in overtime to be back-to-back hockey champions. The real winners were everyone who attended the event, they got to see great hockey and meet real heroes on and off the ice and the American veterans who were wounded in battle defending our country. Included in the price of admission was the after party for the players and guests at the Mottola Post (Casa Lucia) with a fabulous dinner for all in attendance.



The 2019 repeat Champions, the Revere Police Dept., shown with Mayor Brian Arrigo, Joe DeFeo and veteran's agent Marc Silvestri.



The Winthrop Fire and Police combined hockey team.



Event organizer Andy Biggio is shown with the champions Revere Police and runners up Winthrop Fire and Police at Porrazzo rink last Saturday afternoon at the 3rd Annual Hockey Tournament for Wounded Veterans.



The 2018 champions and soon to be crowned 2019 Champions the Revere Police Dept.



The National Guard donned a different uniform for the day, led by team Captain/Sgt. Jamie Chambers.



U.S. Armt Staff Sgt. and sniper JD Williams drops the puck between Revere Police Lt. Steven Ford and Winthrop Police Officer Mike Connolly.

### WINTHROP MARKETPLACE

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Campbell's Soup (all varieties) .....	10/¢10.00
Best Yet Bread Crumbs 15 oz .....	10/¢10.00
Green Giant Boxed Steam Fresh Vegetables .....	10/¢10.00
Dunkin' Donuts K-Cups .....	¢5.99
Cheez-Its .....	2/¢5.00
Best Yet Peanut Butter .....	2/¢3.00
Starkist Canned Chunk Light Tuna .....	4/¢3.00
Arm & Hammer Laundry Detergent .....	¢4.99
Snow Clam or Corn Chowder .....	2/¢3.00
Best Yet Deluxe Macaroni & Cheese .....	4/¢5.00
Weight Watchers Smart Ones .....	2/¢3.00
Rays Bagels .....	2/¢5.00
Dragone Ricotta 2 lb .....	2/¢6.00
Simply Smart Milk 64 oz .....	2/¢6.00
Best Yet Crescent Rolls .....	3/¢5.00

#### Deli

Butterball Oven Roasted Turkey Breast .....	¢5.99/lb
Kretschmar Black Forest Ham .....	¢5.99/lb
Carando Prosciutto .....	¢8.99/lb
Best Yet Imported Cooked Ham .....	¢2.69/lb
Best Yet Provolone Cheese .....	¢2.99/lb

#### Bakery

Toasted Onion Rolls 4 pk .....	¢2.99
Lemon Crunch Pie .....	¢3.49
New York Style Crumb Cake .....	¢5.99

St. Patrick's Day Goodies-Cupcakes & Cakes!

#### Produce

Fresh California Broccoli Crowns .....	¢1.99/lb
Tropical Golden Sweet Pineapples .....	2/¢5.00
Loose Red Potatoes .....	79¢/lb
Fresh & Sweet Red LeRouge Peppers .....	¢1.99/lb
Sweet & Juicy Cantaloupe .....	2/¢3.00

#### Meat

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Assorted Bone-In Pork Loin Chops .....	¢1.49/lb
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Grade A Chicken Leg Quarters .....	79¢/lb
Top Round Roast Beef .....	¢3.59/lb
Whole Broiler Chickens .....	¢1.49/lb
Bob Evans Side Dishes .....	2/¢6.00
Bar-S Bacon 12 oz .....	2/¢7.00

*Weekend Specials*  
Friday, March 15 through Sunday, March 17

**BAKERY**

Variety Cheesecake .....	¢12.99
Rosemary Olive Oil Flat Bread .....	¢2.49
Raspberry or Cheese Danish .....	¢3.99

**DELI**

Hans Kisse Red Bliss Potato Salad .....	¢2.79/lb
Our Own In Store Antipasto .....	¢5.99/lb
Natural Casing Hot Dogs .....	¢4.99/lb

**PRODUCE**

Fresh Plump Blueberry Pints .....	2/¢4.00
Fresh Corn .....	39¢ each
Fresh Green Asparagus .....	¢1.89/lb

**MEAT**

Family Pack 85% Hamburger .....	¢3.99/lb
Family Pack Boneless Chicken Breast .....	¢1.59/lb
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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SAYS TO BRING BACK NON-CITIZEN VOTING MEASURE

CHELSEA - A small order on the Feb. 25 Council agenda likely didn't attract a lot of attention at the regular meeting, but Council President Damali Vidot said she had hoped it could have sparked a conversation.

That measure, which she introduced, revolved around looking at the possibility of allowing non-citizens who are here legally to vote in municipal elections.

Instead, she said, she was greeted with silence – and a 'no' vote.

"We have people invested in our community, who own homes, have kids in the schools and own businesses, but because they are citizens, they can't vote in our elections," she said. "Why not have a conversation about allowing them to vote? The fact my colleagues didn't want to at least have a conversation is a travesty."

The roll call consisted of a 5-6 defeated vote, with Vidot and Councillors Judith Garcia, Yamir Rodriguez, Enio Lopez and Giovanni Recupero agreeing to begin talking about it.

Those voting against were Councillor Roy Avellaneda, Calvin Brown, Joe Perlaton-da, Luis Tejada, Leo Robinson and Bob Bishop.

Vidot said she fully intends to bring the matter back in 90 days.

"I don't understand why we couldn't entertain this, to allow people to be part of the civic process," she said. "At the minimum, I thought we could have a conversation. If I had known there would be this reaction from my colleagues, I would have organized before. I have every intention of bringing it back again in 90 days. We can't be in the habit

of saying 'no' without talking about it."

Other cities in Massachusetts have voted to allow non-citizens to vote, including Cambridge and Brookline. Such a petition by the Council would require a home rule petition by the State Legislature. It would also require legislative action by the State House as well.

The measure in Chelsea would not allow non-citizens to vote in state or federal elections.

STEPHANIE SIMON WINS NATIONALS

CHELSEA - At a certain point, it would be wise to just leave the Chelsea High record books in girls' track blank until junior Stephanie Simon graduates.

The champion jumper, runner and hurdler tends to break most school records, and then break her own records time and time again. At a certain point, her coaches say, they will probably fill it all in after she graduates.

Simon, 16, comes from a strong athletic family – and her sister, Martine – is the only runner to have ever beat her in a meet. Now, she has focused in on jumping events and has put together a string of wins during the indoor season this winter.

Recently, she took first place in the Division 2 state long jump, and took second place in the New England Championship meet. Earlier this year, at the multi-state Dartmouth Relays, she took first in the long jump and high jump.

This weekend, she will travel to New York City for the second year in a row to compete in the National Championship indoor meet.

But back in Chelsea, if you see a young lady cutting it up on a skateboard, that might be Stephanie Simon.

"When I'm not training or practicing, I like to ride a penny board," she said. "I ride it everywhere, even to school. I think that's why I can jump. I think that's something every jumper has to have to be successful and that is being able to take a risk. You have to be willing to take a risk to throw yourself in a pit of sand or give it everything you have to flip up and over the high jump bar. It's the adrenaline I like."

Simon was born in Chelsea to Hubert and Mathilde Simon, who originally came from Haiti. Her older brother, Norbert, was also a track standout, as was her sister, Martine, who graduated last year. She said her younger brother, Emanuel, has potential in the 200 sprint.

She attended the Early Learning Center, the Berkowitz School, the Clark Avenue Middle School and has settled in at Chelsea High – where she keeps a 3.4 grade point average and is active in academics.

But her cool demeanor likely comes from having to contain herself on the track. Unlike with the sprints – where she also has great success within the conference meets – she said she has learned that a jumper (whether high jump, long jump or triple jump) needs to stay in control.

"Adrenaline is good for running, but for jumping you have to kind of put it in a bottle and use it to motivate you and counter it with technique," she said. "For jumping and sprints, unlike distance running, it's half mental and half physical."

It will be a very important quality when she arrives at the New York City Armory this weekend with her coach, Cesar Hernandez. Last year was her first indoor national meet, and she said it was overwhelming.

"Last year, stepping into that building was so over-

whelming," she said, noting that there hasn't been another Chelsea runner since Bobby Goss decades ago to go to nationals. "Every runner there was working hard and wanted to win. I didn't do so well, but it made me even more determined to do better at the national outdoor meet in North Carolina last spring and I did."

When she went to the Dartmouth Relays earlier this year, she said that same New York feeling came upon her, but she was able to shake it off, which is something she said she will do when she goes back to New York this week.

"I told myself it's the same events and the same sand," she said. "I was able to recover and move on."

Amazingly, Simon was never a runner until she got to high school, unlike many top runners who have been at it since grade school.

"My freshman year I didn't even run that first season," she said. "I liked soccer. I was able to make varsity my freshman year. In the winter, I played basketball. Then I did outdoor track and I was really good at it. In track, there was so much support and it was like a big family. My freshman year I was trying to figure everything out. Everyone kept telling me I had more potential in track. I listened to them and I'm glad I stayed."

Simon credited Coach Hernandez with helping her take bigger and bigger steps as a runner and, especially, as a jumper. As a raw athlete, she had talent, but she said Hernandez helped her to develop technique and pushed her not to just rely on athleticism.

"If he wasn't my coach, I would not be doing what I'm doing," she said. "He fits the kind of coach I need."

She also credited her teammates for being a great support system.

She also credited her family, who she said has been very

proud of her academically and in sports.

"In our family, everyone has their thing they are best at," she said. "I guarantee I win at track."

OFFICIALS LOOKING TO REVAMP STREETS AND PARKS

EVERETT - The City is seeking input from residents on a proposal to renovate and revamp two parks up the hill from Ferry Street – with one of them proposed to be a colossal dog park.

The City unveiled plans from Bohler Engineering on Monday at a public meeting cut thin by the snow storm, and the plans call for new concepts at the Central Avenue playground and the Hale School Site on Glendale Street. Both are just around the corner from one another, and City Planner Tony Sousa said they are being viewed as tandem projects.

Both parks are in a heavily and dense residential district on the west side of Broadway, and are funded within the current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Central Avenue appears to be the most exciting of the two proposals, with a plan to convert the playground into a \$1.1 million dog park.

"Central Avenue is a small parcel and our proposal is to convert it into a dog park with some public gathering space," he said. "It's designed to be an active dog park with water features and other elements. It goes beyond the traditional stone dust and grass. We're putting in a small water splash feature and misting stations with obstacles and equipment. It's no different than a traditional playground, but it is centered on dogs. It's not the first dog park, but it's the first one we're taking to this level with added amenities like a water feature and obstacle

courses for dogs. It's exciting."

Then, just around the corner on Glendale Street, the old Hale School site that is now a passive park would be converted to passive and active. The paths and benches would be retained, but new playgrounds would be added throughout the existing park.

"We do plan on putting playgrounds throughout the park space, and we're also potentially going to make space there for a community garden," he said.

That project is at a budget of \$1.5 million and all of the play areas would have a rubberized surface and would be ADA compliant.

Naturally, both parks would retain as many existing trees as possible, and new trees would be added along with new landscaping.

Sousa said they hope to bid out both projects as one tandem project in the spring.

"The game plan for these is to put it out to bid later this year an start construction late this fall with a completion in the spring of 2020," he said.

Ideally, he said, they would hope that one construction firm would big on both parks in order to reduce some of the mobilization costs – especially since they are only about a block from one another.

This would be the first two park projects in central Everett designed by Bohler. However, the company is not new to Everett. They are responsible for the design of the new Encore-funded playground at 7-acre Park – a playground that will be completed by June.

•Another park project on the way this summer is Rossetti Park by Waters Avenue and the Northern Strand Bike Trail. Already, the roller hockey rink has been taken down there, with plans for it

See NEWS Page 9

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THEATER REVIEWS

ONCE

By Sheila Barth

Before attending SpeakEasy Stage Company's production of eight Tony Award-winning musical, "Once," we were advised to arrive 15 minutes early, for a lively pre-show.

We weren't disappointed.

The actors and singers who collectively provide the musical accompaniment, opened the play, performing lively Czech, klezmer and Irish "kitchen" tunes, typical of a neighborhood Irish "kitchen" jamboree.

Theatergoers were enchanted with the group of 12 multi-talented, versatile actors-musicians, helmed by SpeakEasy general manager Paul Melone. The audience marveled especially at their musicianship, their harmonious vocals, solos, and blends, and their individual

ability to play a variety of instruments. Veteran Boston-national favorite Kathy St. George, originally from Stoneham, is a scene stealer, portraying Czech mother-grandmother Baruska. She sings, plays the melodica, piano, squeezebox, tambourine, and rhythmically pounds out percussion beats.

Did I say she also does nifty Irish and spirited Czechoslovakian folk dances with the ensemble? Kudos, ubiquitous choreographer Ilyse Robbins.

Moving chairs and a huge, black trunk that doubles as a table, platform, and more, the ensemble is perpetually singing, moving, strumming, fiddling, laughing, fighting, appearing to have a helluva time on stage.

Lending a comedic touch, when actors speak in Czech, Miranda McLean's white-lettered

supertitles flash overhead, in English.

The story line of girl-meets-boy, their blooming love, and girl-loses boy, all occurs in one week. The story seems secondary, though. "Once" is more of an exaltation of music and its beneficence to mankind.

Calling his portrayal as Guy, depressed, discouraged Dublin street acoustic guitarist, "a dream role," Nile Scott Hawver captures the thirtysomething's heartache over his girlfriend's leaving him and the love songs he wrote for her. Guy suffers from writer-singer's block, even after meeting and being motivated by Girl, (Boston Conservatory alum Mackenzie Lesser-Roy) sweet-faced, sincere, pretty Czech immigrant, who enthuses over his musical abilities, Guy remains unsure, downcast, but Girl is

determined to ignite a creative fire under him. She's emotionally moved, in thrall with Guy's love songs, and is determined to become his muse, tenaciously refusing to let him give up. Girl also helps Guy secure a bank loan to get to New York. Luckily, the banker is a frustrated, Irish singer-musician, who sings offkey, but plays the guitar well, so he's invited to join the band.

Besides falling in love with Guy, Girl also yearns for but can't afford a piano to accompany him.

Guy and his father have a great relationship (talented Irish actor Billy Meleady), and Hawver and Lesser-Roy, (she also portrayed Girl in the national touring production), have a warm chemistry that starts off haltingly and blooms into love that cannot be.

BOX OFFICE

SpeakEasy Stage Company added performances to the multi-Tony Award winning two-act, 2-1/2 hour musical, book by Enda Walsh, music and lyrics by Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova. Based on the 2007 film by John Carney. By popular demand, play is extended to April 7. Wednesday,Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 4,8 p.m.; Sunday, 3 p.m.; March 17, 19, at 7:30 p.m.; March 28, 2 p.m. Boston Center for the Arts, Roberts Studio Theatre, 527 Tremont St, South End, Boston. Tickets start at \$25; senior, student, under 25-year-old discounts. SpeakEasyStage.com, 617-933-8600.

Or can it? We don't know. The play ends with Guy hesitantly calling his girlfriend in New York City to say he's coming, and Girl's remaining in Dublin with Ivonka (Reagan Gardiner), her young daughter, because her husband, who left them and returned to Czechoslovakia, wants to return to them.

We're left cliff-hanging about Guy-Girl's relationship. But we're acutely aware of the plot's focus - follow your dream - and

how the power of music connects us all.

Girl may lose Guy, but he has a special, surprise gift for her he knows she'll treasure.

Rounding out this talented, cohesive ensemble are: Jacob Brandt, Billy Butler, alternative Ivonka, Clara Cochran; Chris Coffey, Robert X. Newman, Marta Rymer, Stephen Shore, Jeff Song and Ellie van Amerongen.

News // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

to be moved to the seven-acre Park area. Sousa said they have \$1.1 million set aside to re-furbish the tennis courts and landscaping there.

Beyond that, and maybe more exciting, is the City is looking to locate shipping container retail opportunities on the area of the park nearest the bike path. That is an initiative championed by Mayor Carlo DeMaria earlier this year, and Sousa said they have taken his idea and hope to implement it at Rossetti.

"The electricity is already there for the tennis courts, and we're looking to get all of that together," he said. "That's a very exciting aspect of this project."

•Other Park projects in the queue: Phase 2 of Meadows Park (behind St. Anthony's Church) will go out to bid later this month. Appleton Street Park renovations will also be bid out this spring, and upgrades to Wehrner Park will also be bid out.

Sousa said it is a credit to the City Council working with Mayor Carlo DeMaria to fund a very active CIP for this year, a plan that helps to create new and improved park spaces every year.

CHARGES AGAINST FORESTEIRE OUTLINED

EVERETT - What is detailed in the Everett Police criminal complaint against former Supt. Fred Foresteire - though just an allegation at this point - is shocking and sad to many in the community.

The redacted complaint - which does not contain names of victims or interviewees - became available to the media late last week, and the 15-page complaint relies on seven interviews with alleged victims, current administrators, City Hall employees, staff members and former employees of the district.

It paints a picture of a man who allegedly obsessed over certain women and allegedly took action - mostly at the School Administration Building - on those feelings.

It was a place, according to the complaint, that was like Las Vegas.

"(The victim) stated that on one occasion Foresteire allegedly told her that the Administration Building is 'Like Las Vegas, what happens here stays here,'" read the criminal complaint filed by Everett Police in Malden District Court.

The allegations in the voluminous report are graphic, but particularly for two of the victims - and some of the incidents are being corroborated by current and former school

employees who told police they were informed of the allegations long before the controversy erupted publicly last fall.

One of the victims was a long-time employee with the schools who, among other allegations, said her troubles began when she went into work at the Administration Building on a Sunday in 2012 or early 2013.

The problem started when her friend dropped her off and Foresteire allegedly asked her if that was her "lesbian lover."

Soon after, she alleged that Foresteire came towards her and unzipped her sweat jacket and allegedly began kissing her neck and chest area. She pushed him away and told him to stop, and then he allegedly suggested she go into an adjacent room and "bend over" so he could come up behind her.

As that unfolded a co-worker arrived and the day went on without incident.

However, when they were leaving, she went to tell him they were going home.

At that point, she began to leave the conference room and Foresteire allegedly pushed her up against a filing cabinet and forced her legs apart and allegedly rubbed his genitals on her. She was able to break free and flee the building.

On the following Monday, she said it was like nothing had happened.

The victim said that in her two years at the Administration Building, there were alleged routine harassments, and Foresteire would allegedly try to find opportunities when no one was around to touch her inappropriately. Early in 2013, however, she was finally told she would be re-assigned. However, the re-assignment she ended up with was not what was promised. She told police that was allegedly because Foresteire said she had told people about the alleged incidents.

Soon, she was working the switchboard at an elementary school. During the first year at that assignment, the victim said Foresteire would allegedly call the switchboard to speak with her. When he was assured it was the victim, he would allegedly ask her sexually explicit questions. During the final two years of her employment, this time at a different school, she said all of the alleged harassment stopped as if it had never happened.

According to the complaint, one of Foresteire's alleged common activities was to call select women on the switchboard and ask them sexually explicit and graphic questions.

Another victim, who worked at the Administration

Building in 2017 and 2018, detailed other incidents where Foresteire would allegedly call and ask explicit questions. The woman said she did not report it for fear of losing her job and not being able to provide for her children.

That victim told police she felt Foresteire was allegedly obsessed with her, leading her to enlist friends and other victims to help her so she would not be alone in the building.

"The victim told me that Foresteire was allegedly obsessed with her and that he would allegedly often touch her," read the report. "She told me that he has on countless occasions allegedly put his hand on her and allegedly grabbed her butt. She stated that he would allegedly parade her around the School Administration Building as if to show her off. When he saw her, he would allegedly make her stand up and turn around so that he could look at her and inspect what she was wearing."

That victim also detailed two alleged incidents, one in 2017 and one in 2018, when Foresteire allegedly ripped her shirt and bra off with force, and allegedly began to kiss her exposed chest - which she indicated terrified her. It wasn't long after that, she told police, that she began to complain and was finally terminated.

Another former principal in Everett corroborated many of the accounts, and also reported another alleged account of a teacher who Foresteire allegedly tried to pull her clothes off during a visit to the school. The principal had written notes on the incident from 2011 that she had kept, and turned them over to police. The teacher had not wanted to report the matter so as not to risk her job, but she did request that the principal allegedly notify her if Foresteire was coming to the building so she could make sure she wasn't alone.

That principal also alleged that was the subject of a lewd comment, allegedly, by Foresteire. She alleged that after attending a School Committee meeting, the next day Foresteire called to tell her he liked to look up her dress when she sat in the front row of the meetings.

"(The principal) told me that Foresteire allegedly would 'accidentally' rub against or touch her breasts," read the report. "She told me that if she reacted, Foresteire would allegedly apologize as if it was unintentional, but if she didn't react, he would say nothing."

To counter all of the allegations, a current high-ranking

female official in the School Administration - the former director of curriculum according to the report - told police she has never heard anyone tell her of any harassment or assault by Foresteire.

"She told me that no one ever told her about Mr. Foresteire acting inappropriately," the report read. "She told me that she was the director of curriculum and that it was not her position, that any reports would go to the Title 9 director. I then asked her specifically if she recalled speaking with either (Victim 1) or (Victim 2) about Mr. Foresteire and she told me no."

Several more incidents were detailed in the criminal complaint, which are just allegations. It has been pointed out by DA Marian Ryan consistently that Foresteire is innocent until proven guilty.

In the report, Attorney Mark Rotondo is mentioned as representing some of the victims. Contacted by the Independent, he said he would not comment on the specifics. "This cannot be tried in the news," he said. "Even Fred Foresteire is entitled to due process of law. It will be up to a jury of his peers to determine if he is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt."

Attorney Tara Swartz has been handling cases for three victims who have filed complaints with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). She is also mentioned in the complaint, and issued a statement last week.

"My firm represents three women who filed sexual harassment claims with the MCAD against the former Superintendent of the Everett Public Schools, Frederick Foresteire," she wrote. "My clients have always believed that they are not alone in what they endured during their employment with EPS. They remain resolute in the pursuit of their claims, as well as their hope that coming forward will assist in effectuating real change within the school system. We have no comment about the criminal charges announced today against Mr. Foresteire. We will let due process unfold and the evidence to be presented for a jury to decide."

The Everett Teachers Association said they were disturbed by the charges and said they would support their members who have been victimized.

"These are very disturbing charges," wrote President Kim Auger. "The Everett Teachers Association has taken important steps to support any members who may have been victimized and we will

continue to do so."

Foresteire's attorneys, Spruce Law, have not returned repeated phone calls to comment on the allegations.

Foresteire is due in Malden District Court on April 4 for an arraignment on seven charges.

WATERFRONT REPORT GIVEN TO COUNCIL

LYNN - Dave Andrews of Brown, Richardson and Rowe gave a brief overview of the Lynn Waterfront Open Space Master Plan to the City Council last week.

Since the plan was developed there have been several public meetings on it. The next will be the final public meeting, which will be held in late winter or early spring.

The Lynn Waterfront Open Space Master Plan to create public parks, plazas and continuous promenade along the waterfront. The project area runs from east of the Lynnway between the General Edwards Bridge and the Nahant Causeway. The project intends to increase public access to the water and "Improvements to the Lynnway and the Carroll Parkway are essential to making the waterfront welcoming and accessible," Andrews said of the 305 acres involved.

Between this area are approximately 1.75 miles of coastline.

Andrews said they have been working on this for about a year and a half. City, State and DCR officials have all had a look at the report.

"This provides good public access to the waterfront where it currently does not exist," Andrews said. "It gives the city the chance to guide and shape it."

To date, there have been three public meeting and two walks of the site.

He noted that development in the area will take the course over several years. The development will also address areas of coastal erosion, woodlands and wetlands near the General Edwards Bridge and the deteriorating of seawalls.

"This is unique because this is an open space master plan," Andrews said. "This provides a new vision based on all this work that can be done in the waterfront area, the design and implementation of strategies."

LETTERIE NAMED TOWN COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT

WINTHROP - Businessman and Precinct 2 Councilor James Letterie was appointed to serve on the Town Council

as vice president. The previous vice president was attorney and councilor Phil Boncore.

The council typically makes its own appointments this time of year, also assigning councilors to various committees.

Also nominated but not earning enough votes was Precinct 4 Councilor Heather Engman, has served two terms on the council. Prior to that she served for a term on the Board of Health.

"With the center business district she has led the way to add provisions for accountability," said Councilor Nick LoConte, noting her legal knowledge has been helpful during lawsuits the town has been involved in.

Letterie, has also served on the Finance Committee, the Miller Field Committee and school building committee.

"He's been involved in every major project in town in the last 12 years," Boncore said.

By a vote of 5-3 Letterie was selected as vice president.

In other council business: • The council voted to authorize bonding in the amount of \$586,000 from the MWRA for the Center Business District Infrastructure project. • The next Town Council meeting will be March 19

TAXI FARES SET TO INCREASE

WINTHROP - There was quiet opposition Tuesday night to the proposal to raise the Winthrop Taxi fares at the Town Council meeting. Even with the fare increase a ride in a Winthrop taxi will cost less than an Uber or Lyft ride.

Shawn Cluen, owner of Ride Right Transportation, doing business as Winthrop Taxi got approval from the Town Council Tuesday night to increase a regular fare anywhere in Winthrop to Winthrop to from \$4 one way to \$6 each way. For Winthrop seniors the one-way fare would be increased from \$3 to \$5. Another perk the taxi company would like to add is a "Senior Day" on Wednesdays when seniors pay \$4 to anywhere in Winthrop from anywhere in Winthrop.

Councilor Phil Boncore conferred that an Uber or Lyft ride from one end of the two to the other could be \$8-\$10.

Senior Center Director Kathryn Dixon said the senior center runs its own 10-passenger van and only charges \$3 round trip.



OBITUARIES

Mary Ellen Welch

Long time East Boston educator and community activist

Mary Ellen Welch, a life-long East Boston resident, teacher and community activist, passed away on March 7.

Mary was a graduate of Emmanuel College where she earned her teaching degree. She was totally committed to her community. First and foremost, she was extremely proud to be a school teacher for 47 1/2 years, mostly serving the East Boston community at the O'Donnell Elementary School.

Mary was predeceased by her brother, Charles Welch and survived by her sister Eleanor MacMullen and her husband, Gary, brother Jack Welch, sister in law, Joanne Welch, nieces Bridget Hennen and her husband, Mark, Amy Battisti and her husband, Steve, Carrie Palmer



and her husband, Michael, nephews, Timothy and Brendan MacMullen, grand niece and grand nephew, Madeline Battisti, and Sam Battisti.

Services will be private. People who wish to remember her may donate to either the East Boston Greenway or the Piers Park Sailing Center.

Ida Cennamo

Of East Boston

Ida Cennamo of East Boston passed away on March 10.

The loving daughter of Salvatore and Gaetana (La-Sala) Cennamo, she was the dear sister of the late Louise Iannaccone, Fanny Meola, Mary Cennamo, Lucy Pignatone and Anna Cennamo and is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews and two very special great great nieces. Family and friends

will honor Ida's life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street, East Boston on Monday, March 18 from 4 to 8 p.m. and again Tuesday morning, March 19 at 10 a.m. for a prayer service before leaving in procession to St. Michael's Cemetery, 500 Canterbury Street, Roslindale where Ida will be laid to rest. For more information, please visit [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com).

Viola Mercurio

Of East Boston

Viola A. Mercurio of East Boston passed away on Feb. 24 surrounded by her loving family at the age of 92.

The beloved wife of the late Thomas F. Mercurio, she was the devoted mother of Dolores Lombardi of Cambridge and John R. Mercurio and his wife, Gail of Wakefield; dear sister of Robert Caristo and his wife, Ann, Rita Petrozzelli and her husband, Pat and the late Rocco Caristo; cherished

grandmother of John T. Mercurio and his wife, Lauren and Melissa Lamarche and her husband, Chris and adored great-grandmother of Callie and Christopher Lamarche and Julia and Norah Mercurio. She is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held. For more information, please visit [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com).

Michael James Rauseo

Of Revere

Michael James Rauseo of Revere, formerly of Winthrop and East Boston, passed away unexpectedly on March 7. The loving son of the late Frank and Mary (Buonopane) Rauseo, he was the cherished brother of Anthony Rauseo of Winthrop and his twin sister, Deanna Rauseo of Saugus and is also survived by his many other relatives and friends.

Family and friends will honor Michael's life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family

Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street, (Orient Heights) East Boston, today, Wednesday at 8:30 a.m., before leaving in procession to St. Joseph-St.Lazarus Church, 59 Ashley Street, East Boston, for a 10 a.m. Funeral Mass in honor of Michael's life. Services will conclude with Michael being laid to rest in Winthrop Cemetery (Belle Isle Section.) For more information, please visit: [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com).

Sebastiano Pignato

Longtime owner of Busty's Barber Shop in East Boston

Sebastiano Pignato, born Oct. 19,1924 in Caltanissetta, Sicily, passed away peacefully at home with his loving family by his bedside on March 6.

Sebastiano was a barber by trade for many years and owned Busty's Barber Shop in East Boston.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Maria Grazia "Grace" (D'Anca) Pignato and his five children: Charles Pignato and Rosemarie and her husband, George Gordon, all of East Boston, Lillian and her husband, Robert LeBlanc of Waltham, Joseph Pignato and his wife, Lynne of Winthrop and Gina Pignato of Revere. He was the loving son of the late Rosa and Calogero, loving brother of Domenica and the late Giuseppe, Maria, and Teresa, all of Sicily. He is also survived by eight grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and many nieces and

nephews.

Family and friends will honor Mr. Pignato by gathering on Thursday, March 14 from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street, (Orient Heights) East Boston, and again on Friday morning at the Sacred Heart Church, Brooks Street, East Boston for a Funeral Mass in celebration of Mr. Pignato's life at 10 a.m. (Please go directly to the church.) Services will conclude with Mr. Pignato being laid to rest in Puritan Lawn Memorial Park, Lake Street, Peabody.

The funeral home is handicapped accessible. Children's lounge available. Courtesy valet parking and ample off street parking with attendants in our several off street parking lots. For more information, please visit [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com).

Dora Ieni

Of East Boston



Dora (Paradiso) Ieni of East Boston passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on Feb. 27 at the age of 88.

She was the beloved wife of the late Anthony Ieni, loving daughter of the late Enrico and Maria (Capone) Paradiso; devoted mother of Vincent Ieni of East Boston and Marie Russo and her husband, Michael of Saugus; dear sister of the late Samuel, Angelo, Ernest Paradiso and Flora Restain; cherished grandmother of Christine Capachietti and her husband, Michael and Lauren Cerbone and her husband, Emilio and adored great-grandmother of Arianna Cerbone. She is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

Funeral arrangements were by the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, East Boston. Services will conclude with Dora being laid to rest beside her beloved husband, Anthony at Holy Cross Cemetery, Malden. For more information, visit [ruggieromh.com](http://ruggieromh.com).

Virginia Forgione

Retiree of the former Cool-Ray Inc. of Chelsea



Family and friends are invited to attend Visiting Hours today, Thursday, March 14 in the Vertuccio and Smith, Home for Funerals, 773 Broadway (Route 107) Revere from 4 to 8 p.m. for Virginia M. (Russo) Forgione who passed after a brief illness on Sunday, March 10 at Care One at Essex Park Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing of Beverly.

Her funeral will be conducted from the funeral home on Friday, March 15, at 10 a.m., followed by a Funeral Mass in St. Anthony of Padua Church, 250 Revere St., Revere at 11 a.m. and immediately followed by interment at Calvary Cemetery, Winchester.

Mrs. Forgione was born in Winchester almost one hundred years ago on September 22, 1919. And she was a packer for the former "Cool Ray Inc." of Chelsea for over 30 years.

She spent most of her adult life in on Carroll St. in Chelsea before moving to the Victory Gardens of East Boston. Her joy was time with her family and a luncheon date or early supper date with family. Virginia also belonged to the Chelsea Senior Center, where she enjoyed many a social functions.

Her beloved late husband, George J. Forgione, Sr.,

passed on April 21, 1993; she was the cherished mother of George J. Forgione, Jr. and his wife, Janet of Boxford and Joan F. DeNapoli and her husband, Paul R. DeNapoli; the devoted grandmother to Kristina E. Forgione and her husband, Fahd Cynndy of Saudi Arabia and Korinne G. Bryant and her husband, Kyle Bryant of New Hampshire; the dear sister of the late Victor Russo and his late wife, Louise Russo and the late James Russo. She is also lovingly survived by four great grandchildren, Faris, Tariq, Ziyad and Brody. A fifth eagerly anticipated great grandchild is due in May. Several nieces and nephews also survive Virginia.

For more information, please visit [www.vertuccioandsmith.com](http://www.vertuccioandsmith.com).

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In Memory of  
**Anthony Palmer**  
March 15th 2018

*It's been a year, already,  
since the passing of Anthony.  
I can't believe that a year has passed.  
It seems such a short time ago.  
I miss him every day as  
my family does too.  
There is not a day that goes by  
that I don't think about him.  
I especially think of him  
when watching  
Anthony Jr playing hockey,  
football and baseball, like his dad.  
He's the image of his dad.  
There are no words or feelings  
for having such a loss.  
He was a gifted and special person.  
Winthrop's greatest athlete,  
I can be partial.  
Although you can't argue  
with his records.  
It's easy to go on with life,  
not so easy for his family.  
"May he never be forgotten  
and we keep him in our hearts  
till we meet him again in heaven"  
Love Uncle Jim*

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The Zoning Commission of the City of Boston hereby gives notice, in accordance with Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1956, as amended, that a public hearing will be held on March 27, 2019, at 9:00 AM, in Room 900, Boston City Hall, in connection with Map Amendment Application No. 716 and a petition for the approval of the Development Plan for Planned Development Area No. 120, 144 Addison Street, East Boston ("Development Plan"), filed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority d/b/a Boston Planning & Development Agency. Said map amendment would amend "Map 3A/3B, East Boston Neighborhood District," "Map 3C, East Boston Neighborhood District," and by adding the designation "D," indicating a Planned Development Area ("PDA") overlay district to approximately 143,139 square feet of land (approximately 3.3 acres) located at 144 Addison Street, East Boston. Said Development Plan would allow for approximately two hundred thirty (230) new housing units in the (2) connected four (4)- to five (5) story buildings with approximately one hundred sixty-four (164) structured vehicle parking spaces and approximately five (5) surface vehicle parking spaces. A copy of the petition, a map of the area involved and the Development Plan may be viewed at the office of the Zoning Commission, Room 952, Boston City Hall, between 9 AM and 5 PM any day except Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. For the Commission, Jeffrey M. Hampton Executive Secretary 3/13/19 EB

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Invites you to a Public Information Meeting for the Tobin Bridge/Chelsea Curves Rehabilitation Project Wednesday, March 13th, 2019 6:00 – 8:00 PM Chelsea City Hall City Council Chamber 500 Broadway, Chelsea, MA The purpose of this public meeting is to provide residents of Chelsea and adjoining communities with an opportunity to become fully acquainted with the construction phase of the Chelsea Viaduct Project, set to being construction in spring 2019. The meeting will focus on the construction phasing and project timeline. MassDOT will present and address specific comments from residents, community groups, and the City's government. The meeting will also provide an overview of 2019 construction on the adjoining Tobin Bridge rehabilitation and ways in which MassDOT is coordinating these two projects. The Chelsea Viaduct carries Route 1 north and southbound over Chelsea and the Tobin Bridge. The viaduct was constructed between 1956 and 1957 and, while safe to traverse, is structurally deficient with many of its components in severely deteriorated condition. The structure carries approximately 63,000 vehicles per day including MBTA routes 426 and 428. The construction work will repair the supports of the viaduct and replace the structure's roadway deck. To be added to the project email list, please visit [www.mass.gov/tobin-bridge-repair-project](http://www.mass.gov/tobin-bridge-repair-project) or [www.mass.gov/chelsearoute-1-viaduct-rehabilitation-project](http://www.mass.gov/chelsearoute-1-viaduct-rehabilitation-project). The Chelsea City Hall is ADA accessible. Spanish interpretation will be made available at this public meeting. To request access or language accommodations in languages other than Spanish, please contact MassDOT's director of Civil Rights at 857-368-8580, TTD/TTY 857-368-0603, Fax 857-368-0602 or by email at [MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). 3/13/19 EB

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# Welch // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Welch received a well deserved standing ovation from the community, Massport officials and Eastie's elected officials during the ceremonial ribbon cutting on the Greenway Connector that now stretches from Piers Park to Constitution Beach.

Welch, who has long fought Logan Airport expansion, spent the last three decades pressuring Massport for more mitigation for the community having to play host to Logan and all the negative impacts that came with it.

Welch said at the time the new Greenway Connector and the scenic vista at the Wood Island Bay Marsh revives memories of Wood Island Park, which was taken in the 1960s by Massport to expand Logan's runways. A battle she was a part of and sparked a life of ensuring expansion would not creep any further into the neighborhood. The idea of creating a buffer was born in response to then Gov. Ed King's vision to turn Jeffries Point into an industrial adjunct to the airport and create a "Berlin Wall" that would cut Eastie in half.

"Those memories were the inspiration for East Boston residents to work so long and so hard to create this linear park system," said Welch at the ceremony. "More than 20 years ago a group of activists proposed a buffer between the airport and community at a time when Massport was less friendly to its neighbors in East Boston. They plotted and planned to create a greenway park system."

Welch was also proud of the Eastie residents who fought hard to build a community against forces trying to destroy it. It was in the last house at the end of Lamson Court in the late Anna DeFranco's kitchen where residents like Welch gathered and planned for the historic and successful demonstration against the Port Authority on Maverick Street. The women became known as the 'Maverick Street Mothers' and successfully stopped the constant flow of construction trucks accessing Logan via Maverick Street for one of the airport's expansion projects. The group blocked Maverick Street with their young children in tow until a compromise was reached and the trucks would use another route to the airport.

"That event started a movement in which East Boston residents took a strong position against institutional expansion and for growth and sustainability of our East Boston community," said Welch of the momentous event.

However, her activism did not stop at greenspace in Eastie and even though her fingerprints are on parks like Piers Park, the Golden Stairs Terrace, the Bremen Street Park and the Greenway she also dedicated her life to social and environmental justice.

Welch was a second-grade school teacher at the Hugh O'Donnell School for 47 years prior to her retirement and was present at Martin Luther King's famous march on Washington in 1963.

It was her experience during that turbulent time that instilled a duty to social justice.

When she saw the wave of immigration coming into Eastie from Vietnam after the war in the 1970s she helped form the Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) to protect the housing rights of countless families being taken advantage of by absentee landlords. She served as NOAH's president for nearly two decades and was a tireless advocate for affordable housing for residents both old and new.

Welch also brought these important social causes to the attention of her second graders and sparked future generations of activists.

Each fall she'd write two important things on the blackboard for her new students--her name and Massport's Noise Complaint Hotline phone number.

In 1984 she received press for a project she did with her second-graders for Oxfam. During the height of the famine in Ethiopia she taught her students about the importance of helping others with so little. By teaching



Mary Ellen Welch speaks during the groundbreaking for the Logan Hyatt Hotel. The placement of the hotel ensured the future Runway 14/32 would be a unidirectional runway.

about the famine her students were inspired to give up buying their favorite candy each day and instead send the money to Oxfam to help feed the children in Ethiopia.

Welch was instrumental in the 1980s to push the Dukakis-era Massport Board to place the Hyatt Hotel at the end of the proposed Runway 14/32. There was an injunction on the runway at the time and activists like Welch worried if the injunction was ever lifted a multidirectional runway would have aircraft landing and taking off over Jeffries Point to the detriment of residents.

The solution Welch and others proposed was to build a tall hotel at the end of the proposed runway. When the injunction was lifted on 14/32 in the early 2000s it was a wind restricted, unidirectional runway. The hotel ensured all future landings and take-offs from 14/32 would occur over the water and not over the neighborhood.

A constant presence at neighborhood meetings and former chair of the Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association for many years, Welch was not afraid to speak her mind whether it was to a governor, a mayor, a local elected official, developers or the Massport brass. She was always armed with facts and studies to drive her point home and give those seeking approval pause--knowing full well they needed to first mitigate their impacts on Eastie before proceeding with any proposal.

A prolific writer of letters, Welch, armed with a pen and piece of paper at her table inside her third-floor apartment on Webster Street would string together beautiful prose urging senators, congressman, mayors and other local power brokers on what should be done to protect the health and well being of the neighborhood. And most listened.

In fact, her home became a destination for many seeking advice and guidance on issues and how to proceed with balancing their needs with the needs of the community. She was also a mentor to countless elected officials who sought her wisdom and become educated on the most pressing issues in the neighborhood.

In one of her greatest achievements, Welch pushed the FAA and Massport for the window soundproofing program in homes, schools and public buildings under flight paths in Eastie to help protect the hearing of thousands of children and adults in the neighborhood.

But one of things that set Welch apart, especially in this day and age of partisan divide, Welch had the uncanny ability to disagree with people on an issue but her passion never came from bitterness or hatred, but from her own personal conviction.

Known as one of the warmest people in Eastie, Welch could argue her point home in front of a crowd and go up one side and down the other of someone she disagreed with--but at the end of the day many of those same people she counted as dear friends.

This is a lesson we could all learn from because Welch never made any fight personal and could break bread with her toughest adversary at the end of the day.

Her fight was for Eastie, for what was right and just and what would best benefit the neighborhood she loved unselfishly.



Mary Ellen Welch, third from left, with other East Boston activists sometime in the 1980s.

In 2014 Mary Ellen Welch receives a standing ovation from residents and elected officials for her half century of work in the community.



## Mary

By Chris Marchi

It is with hearts heavy with sorrow, but also also swollen with pride and gratitude that we remember Mary. A constant in community environmentalism and airport activism for over 50 years, she was the founder, the leader, the mentor, and the friend that resident activists from all over East Boston have always needed throughout our very difficult journey with Massport.

At AIR, Inc., Mary practiced her unique brand of activism with kindness, diplomacy, logic, compassion, and many hundreds of trays of homemade brownies and cookies for over 35 years. For this, she won the adulation and respect of her neighbors, of our community's political representatives, of local, state and national institutions, and even of her counterparts at Massport.

Taking stock of Mary Ellen Welch's accomplishments beyond the personal impact she had on the lives of so many people is challenging due to the volume of her successes. It should be said also that Mary was the most humble person imaginable and that she would demand that others be credited. But without Mary Ellen, there would not have been a Maverick Street Mother's protest which was the true beginning of Environmental Justice and marked the opening salvo and first victory in Boston's residents' famed transportation justice struggles with the Federal Highway Program. Without Mary, community activists would never have organized the prolonged, concerted effort needed to sign the Bird Island Flats Agreement, which marked the first time an airport created a public open space as environmental mitigation for airport impacts. Without Mary's constant support, strategy and organizing, the First Community Agreement which gave the World the first airport soundproofing program, and gave East Boston the Edge Buffer Parks that became significant portions of the East Boston Greenway, and created the East Boston Foundation which has distributed over \$5 million in funding to local groups which work to offset the negative environmental and health impacts of Logan Airport would not have been possible. Mary was a driving force behind the Logan Airport Health Study, which finally provided for the first time concrete evidence of the negative health impacts of Logan Airport.

More recently, Mary Ellen guided AIR, Inc. Health Initiative, which brought leading scientists from across the World to Boston, to an Airport Health Forum in 2016 to present the latest research on what exposure to airport noise and air pollution can do to human health. The educational videos produced at this event are a resource which can be used by people in East Boston, and across the United States. Mary was instrumental in creating Destination: East Boston, a documentary film which teaches the history of airport activism in East Boston to inspire more people to join in transportation policy and airport advocacy efforts.

While her patience, voice, laughter, passion and guidance will be missed, her work for the dignity of this community continues. The next steps toward a better, safer, fairer community happen on the second Wednesday of the month at the DeFronzo Center at 395 Maverick St., at 6:30 p.m. AIR, Inc. meetings are a place where all are welcomed and supported. Join your neighbors, as we develop, discuss, and think through the innovative ARISE Project which is creating the World's first real-time networked air quality monitoring system to provide local residents with the information they need about current air pollution levels, and the exciting Breathe Easy Project, which will pilot the next wave of airport mitigation by installing air filtration devices in a local grade school.

## Her notes

By Steve Holt

Many of us in East Boston received them from time to time, whether we'd grown up here or were recent transplants. MaryEl-

## MARY ELLEN WELCH REMEMBERED

len didn't care about longevity or neighborhood "cred"; she merely wanted to support and encourage those who were trying to improve their little corners of the block, neighborhood, city, world. So she took out her pen, or (more rarely) signed into her email, and wrote.

Sometimes the notes were dense with policy and history. Other times, they were of the encouraging, keep-on-keeping-on variety: like this note and check she sent me when I was training / fundraising to run the Boston Marathon for United South End Settlements in 2017. I remember and kept several notes and emails of encouragement from MaryEllen during our two-year fight to keep our neighborhood casino-free. These notes always cast current struggles in light of those she and others faced decades ago. But they were always so positive and full of neighborly love.

She'd always mention how much she wanted to be there with us, on the front lines of a visibility or front row of an educational event--like she was for basically every activist fight in Eastie over the last half century. But in these final, slightly less mobile years, MaryEllen contributed where she could, how she could, usually with a handwritten note. Eastie has lost a lioness. She will be missed.

## Her legacy will be remembered

By Matt Cameron

Our neighbor Mary Ellen Welch was a lifetime champion of environmental, social, racial, economic, and immigrant justice--a true model of what a life of service in action looks like. Today we join many thousands of mourners throughout East Boston and beyond in grieving this loss and honoring a legacy which will be remembered for generations to come.

Mary Ellen was a fourth-generation East Bostonian who stood for racial equality, civil rights, and equal justice under the law for all at a time when these opinions were far more controversial than we can ever imagine today. She worked tirelessly for her entire life to hold Massport accountable for Logan's responsibilities to our community (her family, as she liked to say, lived in East Boston "before the invention of the airplane") at a time when they were at the height of their power. She served on the board of the Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association at a time when housing injustice was coming into focus as the single greatest threat to the integrity and diversity of East Boston. And she continued up to her final days to give her blessing and full support to progressive candidates (most especially our inimitable city councilor Lydia Edwards) and causes, even at a time when she was no longer able to comfortably leave her Webster Street home.

Stories are pouring out now from around East Boston from so many of us who received thoughtful letters, cards, emails, and calls of support from Mary Ellen over the years. In one particularly touching recent note to me, she shared her thoughts on the importance of Eastie's immigrant history and the diversity which has always made our community so unique while expressing her support for refugees and undocumented families. I was touched as always by the elegance and moral clarity of her words, and the genuine humanity which came through in everything she did.

The Golden Stairs Immigration Center is in a very real way a product of Mary Ellen's work. Her activism and community spirit directly inspired and drove the causes which got us involved in community organizing in East Boston, and she daily provided an outstanding example of how much good one committed individual can do.

In a characteristically modest final request, Mary Ellen asked that no memorial or funeral service be held for her. But of course a life like this one could never be forgotten by anyone she touched, even in the smallest ways, and her memory will live on in our community's parks, schools, neighborhood groups, and so many other places.

It is now on all of so many of us who were inspired by her life and activism to lift up her name and memory in the spirit of justice, humility, and unshakable commitment to community service which defined a life so honorably lived.

## Remembering Mary Ellen Welch

By Phil Giffey

It is with pronounced grief we have to convey these words, which are almost impossible to write, let alone say aloud: Mary Ellen Welch, NOAH's soul and backbone, former President of 18 years, and the North Star for justice, fairness, equity and compassion in East Boston for 50 plus years, has passed away (March 7) after a series of challenging health issues. We last heard her firm and directed voice at NOAH's Board meeting just over a week ago. We were so glad that she could participate by calling in again in January and February after a too-long absence. One would never know, nor would she ever inform or lament, that her body was so confined she could barely move. But none of those limitations came over in her still vibrant voice.

We express our deepest sympathies to her treasured sister and brother, Eleanor and Jack, to her cherished nephews, to the Marchi, Cave, Madaro and Lynds' families, who loved her more than one can imagine and whose hearts are broken, we know. And we know she loved you back with a loyalty, devotion and fidelity only a 'mother' could communicate.

For those of us who were fortunate enough to know Mary Ellen (or try to know her), or be involved in community causes of one kind or another alongside her, to have been touched by her immense strength, vision, passion for justice and equality, her courage, relentlessness and her twinning of wisdom and compassion, we will miss her beyond measure. She led the way, but she had our back. She was as stubborn as they come, but justice and equitable solutions can demand an intensity that is hard for most of us to hold. Most of us can't come close to her reach, but we do try, we do. We have to. She taught us to try. She encouraged us. She defended us. She pushed us. But she also allowed us to lead and I am personally grateful and deeply indebted to her far more than I can too poorly convey here.

East Boston has grown personalities scattered across the spectrum who have been touched and affected, nee 'handled' and 'stroked' by her. People know she did! She was a Master. Everyone called her. You had to, but you wanted to! She was our conscience. She knew it, you knew it. But consciences do not act. People take action. And she wanted action, solutions, equity for East Boston, Justice for people. And she wrote to everyone -- Governors, Mayors, officials, friends, foes, allies, ministers, mothers, fathers, kids, probably Popes and Presidents as well. No one too big, no soul too little. She pushed her points and encouraged her opinions/objectives tickling our egos almost embarrassingly so sometimes, but she did it not for personal gain or attachment, but to encourage a path or solution or a cause in which she believed.

As previously stated, Mary believed in more than causes, she fiercely and lovingly believed in people, which is why there is, and will continue to be, so much grieving over her departing. She would have none of this of course. No fussing over Mary would be tolerated or accepted by her at any time! We can hear her now saying, "Hey, stop this blabbing. Get back to work. Do something useful." "But Mary," we will say, "It's our turn now. Listen up! It's good for us. We have to do this or we'll bust!" She'd silently scowl, raise her regal chin, look us in the eye, let the silence drag painfully on and then say something like, "Ok, two minutes."

So....Ok everyone! Cry it out, maybe hug somebody... Your two minutes are up. Get back to work. Get back to the struggle. Get back to the living.

"Is that ok, Mary?"