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BOB MARRA PHOTO

JJ Tritto (5) tries to turn the right wing corner on as he is backchecked by a Blue Hills Regional Tech defender during the February 5 match-up at Porrazzo Rink. See Pages 8 and 9 for more photos.

Proposed Bennington Street restaurant still has yet to be presented at HVNA meeting

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

At the Harbor View Neighborhood Association's (HVNA) monthly meeting last week, a presentation about a proposed restaurant at 636-638 Bennington Street was tentatively scheduled to occur but did not happen once again.

According to HVNA Board Member Skip Marcella, the presentation has been on the

group's agenda for the past three months. However, the association has yet to receive the paperwork to proceed with a presentation.

"We have not received the project form for this particular project, and our by-laws state that you need to provide us with the project form in order for a project to move forward," said

See HVNA Page 5

'A true son of East Boston'

East Boston community mourns the loss of James "Jim" A. Kearney

By Cary Shuman

East Boston is mourning the loss of James "Jim" A. Kearney, whose lifetime of public service had a positive impact on people in education, business and sports in the Eastie neighborhood and beyond.

Mr. Kearney, who was a housemaster at East Boston

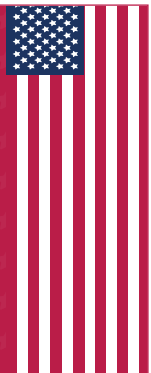
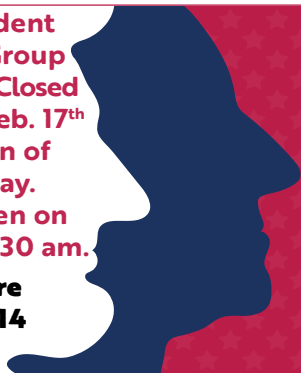


James "Jim" A. Kearney

See KEARNEY Page 3

The Independent Newspaper Group Office will be Closed on Monday, Feb. 17th in observation of President's Day. We will reopen on Tuesday at 9:30 am.

Deadlines are Friday, Feb. 14 at noon



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Forum

TRAFFIC SPEED CAMERAS ARE A BAD IDEA -- RED LIGHTS ARE BETTER

As our regular readers know, when it comes to the issue of motor vehicle safety, we take a back seat (pun intended) to no one.

However, we believe that the budget put forward by Gov. Maura Healey that would allow local and state authorities to place traffic speed cameras on our roadways is misguided.

In a nutshell, the legislation provides that tickets for \$25 may be issued to persons operating 11 miles or more over the speed limit and \$100 to those driving more than 25 over the limit. A first offense within any two-year period would result in a warning. In addition, the tickets would not go on a person's driving record for insurance purposes. They would essentially be the same as a parking ticket.

Our objections are as follows:

First, state law requires that, absent exigent circumstances, a police officer must issue a citation for a moving infraction at the time and place of the violation. This ensures that the officer is giving the citation to the person who is committing the violation. However, the traffic cameras only will be capturing a license plate, which means that the ticket will be sent to the registered owner without regard to whether the owner was actually the operator of the vehicle. If your child (or spouse, friend, or somebody else) is speeding in your car, you're stuck with the ticket and the hassle of trying to prove your innocence.

Second, local authorities (who are limited to installing one camera per 5000 of population in their communities) presumably will be installing these cameras on their most heavily-traveled roadways. However, this invariably means that non-residents, who may not be familiar with the speed limit on those roads, will be the ones who will be subject to getting a ticket. This will be doubly true because the speed limits on almost every local road in this state are poorly-marked and often change (up or down) without warning. In some communities, there is a discreet sign at the entrance to the town that the speed limit in that community is 25 m.p.h. "unless posted otherwise." Given the scattershot nature of speed limit postings across the state's 351 cities and towns, issuing speeding tickets based on a camera will be inherently unfair and arbitrary.

Third, the cameras will not deter those drivers who are the real problem: Habitual traffic offenders who speed excessively on a routine basis. In fact, the cameras will give them a green light (again, pun intended) to speed. If the tickets under the new system will have no real consequences for either their license or their insurance premiums, these habitual offenders will be able to drive as they like with impunity. For the juvenile-minded members of the Fast and Furious crowd, the ticket will not even be a slap on the wrist.

And that brings us to our fourth problem with the new law: Relying on traffic cameras to enforce the traffic laws on the main roads in our state will make our roadways less safe. Traffic stops by police officers do not merely deter unsafe drivers, but they also remove from our roads persons who have suspended licenses, court warrants, vehicles that are unregistered and uninsured, and drivers who are under the influence -- 40 percent of speeding drivers in fatal crashes had a blood alcohol content of 0.08 percent or above. A camera will address none of those issues -- leaving criminals and those under the influence to operate on our roads without fear of the possible consequences.

More broadly, if communities take the cheap way out, so to speak, by replacing officers with cameras, the entire community will be a lot less safe. We realize that every city and town in the state will soon be facing major budget issues and that many cities also are having a hard time filling the ranks of their police departments, but there is no substitute for having police officers patrolling our streets. In our view, if these cameras begin to replace police officers, our communities will be far less safe.

Finally, there is no doubt that most of these speed camera tickets will be issued to otherwise law-abiding and safe drivers, including many seniors, who might happen to exceed by a few miles the statutory threshold for a few seconds. We are being only semi-facetious in suggesting that drivers who obsessively are watching their speedometers and looking for changes in speed limit signs will add immeasurably to the plague of distracted driving. Driving 11 miles over the speed limit on most of our roadways is not unsafe, but the new law would punish normal everyday driving behavior.

But we have a better suggestion: If our state officials want to introduce traffic cameras, we think they should do so at red light intersections. More than 1100 persons nationwide, of whom half were pedestrians and bicyclists, were killed (and more than 100,000 were injured) in 2022 by motor vehicle operators who ran red lights. Statistics show that red light cameras reduce serious accidents of the horrific "T-bone" variety by 25 percent (although there is some evidence that rear-end accidents may increase).

Large, clear signage at every red light intersection proclaiming that cameras are in use would be a huge deterrent to anyone who might be tempted to run a red light (i.e., every driver on the road).

In addition, by requiring that communities must conform the light signalizations on their local roads to nationally-accepted standards, this will make intersections safer for everybody.

So we urge our legislators, if they are inclined to introduce traffic cameras in Massachusetts, to allow these devices to be placed at red light intersections in order to achieve the goal of improving roadway safety with the least amount of intrusion upon everyday, law-abiding citizens.

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Coletta Zapata introduces legislation providing tax exemptions

Special to the Times-Free Press

Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata proposed legislation allowing the City of Boston to opt-in to the “Good Landlord Tax Abatement.” The Good Landlord Tax Abatement allows municipalities to offer property tax exemptions for affordable rentals occupied by in-

dividuals earning below a locally determined income threshold. The tax credit, sponsored by State Senator Lydia Edwards and State Representative Andres Vargas, was included in the Massachusetts 2023 tax package.

“Boston is consistently ranked as one of the most expensive cities for renters. The housing crisis continues to displace our

neighbors, force families out of their communities, and leave countless residents on the brink of homelessness. Adopting the “Good Landlord Tax Abatement” will allow the City of Boston to deliver more housing to renters at affordable rates by incentivizing landlords to provide truly affordable housing opportunities,” said Councilor Gabriela Coletta

Zapata. “I look forward to the discussion with my Council colleagues to provide both immediate relief and long-term opportunities for Boston’s residents and property owners.”

To qualify for the exemption, the property must be rented at an affordable rate set by the City of Boston per United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, have a yearly lease, and be occupied year-round by households earning no more than 200% of the area median income.

Coletta Zapata’s ordinance comes as Boston’s housing crisis continues to worsen, with many residents being pushed out of their neighborhoods due to rising rent costs and rental availability, though expanded in recent years, remaining limited. As of January 2025, Boston’s average rent is \$3,393 per month, more than double the national average. Rising maintenance costs for small landlords frequently drive up rents, further limiting affordable housing options for residents.

“I am so excited to see Boston leading the way. I am particularly proud of Councilor Coletta’s



City Councilor
Gabriela Coletta Zapata

leadership. If passed we will be helping small property owners that are already doing the right thing. I hope more cities and towns will use this special power to keep rents low and while helping landlords,” said State Senator Lydia Edwards.

This docket was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means chaired by Councilor Brian Worrell (District 4). A hearing will be scheduled in the upcoming months and posted on the Councilor’s social media channels. This proposal was co-sponsored by Councilors Brian Worrell (District 4) and At-Large Councilor Henry Santana.

Kearney // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

High School and dean of students at Mario Umana Academy during his distinguished career in education, died Feb. 8, 2028, at the age of 70.

Former Boston city councilor Salvatore LaMattina respectfully described Mr. Kearney as “a true son of East Boston who bled Blue and Gold.”

“Jim Kearney was the best,” said LaMattina. “He really loved the neighborhood and was very active in the community. He was well respected by the youth and was a great role model for them. He was a leader in the Chamber of Commerce. He helped at Eastie Pride Day through the years. He was just an all-around great man. Jim’s passing is a sad loss for the neighborhood.”

City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata was a student at Mario Umana School when Mr. Kearney was dean of students.

“Jim was a dedicated educator, mentor, and civic leader whose impact on East Boston will never be forgotten,” said Coletta Zapata. “I first witnessed his commitment to uplifting our youth as a student at the Mario Umana School while he was dean of students. Beyond education, he worked tirelessly through various civic organizations to serve our community. His warmth, generosity, and selflessness left a lasting mark on countless lives. On behalf of our community, I extend my deepest condolences to his family and loved ones, and may we honor his legacy by continuing his mission of service.”

East Boston High School Principal Phillip Brangiforte said Mr. Kearney was highly respected by his colleagues. Brangiforte recalled that when he was coaching baseball at the school, he brought Mr. Kearney on board as an assistant coach of the team.

“Jim was always supportive of the students and wanted to help them succeed in life,” said Bran-

giforte. “The students loved him. He was always all about the kids. I would see Jim at many events in East Boston and he was so personable and nice to everyone.”

Rep. Adrian Madaro recognized Mr. Kearney’s outstanding commitment to the community and for being a person who earned the admiration and respect of all residents in East Boston.

“Jim lived a life of service and led with kindness in every role he had,” said Madaro. “He nurtured young people no matter their circumstances, and he dedicated his life to building a community where everyone could get the support and care they needed and deserved. His legacy will live on in the generous acts of our neighbors and the generations of people he helped educate. He will be sorely missed.”

Mr. Kearney was also known for his legendary career as a high school and college football official. His elections as president of both refereeing associations accentuate the high esteem in which he was held by his fellow referees.

In 2023, the Gridiron Club of Greater Boston recognized Mr. Kearney, a former East Boston High School football captain, for his 47 years of excellence and dedication with the John Baroni Award for Lifetime Contributions To Football.

Mr., Kearney worked hard for the benefit and advancement of East Boston student-athletes, serving as president of the East Boston Athletic Board and chairman of the Fred L. O’Brien School Committee.

Mr. Kearney also served the East Boston business community with distinction and grace. He was president of the East Boston Chamber of Commerce and volunteered his service as a member of the Columbus Day Parade Committee and the East Boston

Foundation. He enjoyed his connection to friends and members of the East Boston Yacht Club.

The East Boston Chamber of Commerce said in a statement, “It is with a heavy heart that the East Boston Chamber of Commerce conveys its sincerest condolences on the passing of James Kearney, former president of the Chamber, and a man who truly embodied the spirit of community service here in East Boston.

“His decades of work in our community were evident not only in the business landscape but also in education, sports, sports officiating, and many other areas. Jim’s contributions were vast, and his impact left an indelible mark on East Boston.

“We extend our deepest condolences to his family, as well as to the many colleagues and friends who join the Chamber in mourning his loss. Jim will be sorely missed by all. We are grateful for his tireless efforts, dedication, and the many accomplishments that have enriched our community.”

Sen. Lydia Edwards also paid tribute to Mr. Kearney’s contributions to East Boston.

“Jim’s passing is a massive loss to the community,” said Edwards. “His institutional and historical knowledge of Eastie cannot be replaced. I would often seek advice and consent from Jim. May he rest in eternal piece.”

Steve Haley, director of sales at Hilton Garden Inn, East Boston, said, “Jim was a great friend to the hotel and to the community. As a teacher and administrator in the Boston schools, he guided a lot of kids in the right direction. He was always there for the kids. Jim hosted many of his functions here since we opened in East Boston. He assisted East Boston residents in getting jobs at the hotel. He will be missed.”

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SENIOR NIGHT HELD FOR THE EBHS GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

PATRICK OCONNOR PHOTOS



Senior #1, Grace Gans-Linnane



Senior #25 Kimbely Ayala



Senior #3, Joana Miranda



Senior #4, Elisen Bonilla



Senior #23 Angelica Mejia

Senior night took place on Tuesday afternoon, February 4 at the home court prior to a game with Charlestown High School. Five seniors, Grace Gans-Linnane, Joana Miranda, Elisen Bonilla, Angelica Mejia and Kimberly Ayala

were cheered by their teammates amid works of praise from head coach Jason Harris and then posed for photos with their families. Unfortunately, the Jets then went on to lose to Charlestown 23-22. The win was the second of the season

for Charlestown. As we go to press this week, the Jets are 0-14 and have two games remaining on the road with Muniz in Jamaica Plain and Tech Boston in Dorchester.



Coaching staff with seniors #25, Kimberly Ayala; #4 Elisen Bonilla; #23 Angelica Mejia; #3 Joana Miranda; and #1 Grace Gans-Linnane.

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Beachmont Resilience Project officials meet with residents

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Beachmont Resilience Project (BRP), which consists of city officials, the North Suffolk Office of Resilience and Sustainability (NSORS), and the Woods Hole Group (WHG), held a meeting via TEAMS last Wednesday, February 5. The virtual meeting was a follow-up meeting to one that the BRP held in-person the previous week.

The meetings were aimed primarily for the benefit of Beachmont residents whose properties fringe Belle Isle Marsh to inform them of what the BRG is doing to address the problem of flooding and to hear their concerns and suggestions.

Beachmont long has been viewed as the proverbial canary in the coal mine for the impending impacts of sea level rise attributable to climate change. The meeting was moderated by Kristin Homeyer, who is the Resilience Manager for NSORS.

Also on hand were Justine Rooney, Conor Ofsthun, and Linnea Laux from WHG; Rebecca Haney, Katherine Glenn, and India Mackinson from Office of Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management (MCZM), which is providing the funding for the project; and Tom Swierawski, the head of Planning and Development for the city, and Elle Baker, who is the city's Open Space and Environmental Planner.

Ofsthun from the Woods Hole Group (WHG) explained that resilience work has been ongoing around Belle Isle Marsh for the past five years. He said the marsh, which is an Area of Critical of Environmental Concern (ACEC), is a habitat to birds, fisheries, animals, and pollinators. It is one of the largest remaining wetlands in Boston Harbor, but has been impacted by encroaching development within the coastal zone.

He noted that presently there are two ongoing resilience projects in the areas of Bennington St./Fredericks Park/Morton St. and Short Beach/Winthrop Parkway. The focus of the discussion last week was the MCZM's Beachmont/Pearl Ave. Project, which essentially is the connecting link between those other two projects.

Rooney of the WHG explained that the focus area of the project is the residential and



COURTESY PHOTO

The BRG is addressing the flooding problems of Belle Isle Marsh shown above.

municipal roadways on the outskirts of the Belle Isle Marsh (Pearl Ave., Summer St., Crystal Ave., and Winthrop Ave.). The project's goal is developing a plan for protecting at-risk Beachmont homes that are near the marsh and that are vulnerable to the threats of sea-level rise, more-intense storms, and so-called "sunny day" flooding. She said the aim of the project is to enhance resilience and mitigate the effects of flooding in that section of Beachmont.

Rooney noted that the WHG already has conducted a wetland resource delineation of the area and a topographic site survey, and soon will be developing a coastal flood risk assessment and a cost-benefit analysis with recommendations for both near-term and long-term solutions.

There will be another community meeting in May to present the findings of the BRP and to receive more community input, after which there will be a final report.

Laux from the WHG said that the community has been very helpful in providing feedback via photos and videos to show what is happening "on the ground" during flooding events. She also presented FEMA's 100-year flood map, as well as a map developed by the WHG detailing the vulnerability of the coastal areas to flooding from a storm based on a sea-rise level of 1.3 feet.

Another map showed the projected impact of so-called "sunny day" flooding events for the marsh for 2030, 2050, and 2070. A final map showed the homes in the area that are likely

to experience flooding by 2070 thanks to sea-level rise.

"There is not going to be one silver bullet that will mitigate flooding for everyone," Rooney cautioned. "Each property is unique."

Jim, a resident of Beachmont for many years, commented, "You are dead-on with the sea level rise. We see multiple storms a year where the water comes over the Winthrop Parkway and floods the marsh. What kinds of measures are you thinking about, such as dam structures or anything else, to control water levels in the marsh during high-impact times?"

Ofsthun said that the idea of damming the marsh, such as putting up a storm-surge barrier at the inlet at the Winthrop/East Boston line that could be deployed for a Nor'easter, has been raised by the Friends of Belle Isle Marsh, among others.

"However, the feasibility for that is difficult and expensive and would have significant impacts on the environment," said Ofsthun. "In addition, there are other sources of flooding, so plugging just one of those holes does not really solve the full problem."

Rooney also noted that the limited scope of the BRP is to address immediate needs and to do something that can protect homes in the short-term, which may be as simple as providing sandbags to residents.

A Pearl Ave. resident asked about the routine flooding in his section of the street that typically reaches 2-3 feet.

"That is the lowest-lying part of Pearl Ave., which definitely is 'ground zero' for flooding,"

said Laux, who noted that sunny-day flooding is common there.

Tom, another resident, suggested that private homeowners and the city should split the costs of deployable flood-barrier structures in their neighborhood.

Rooney noted that whatever is done, neighbors have to figure out how to work together in order to come up with a solution that will benefit the entire neighborhood.

Another resident said, "I do not get flooding from the marsh, but from the underground stream and when the water comes over the seawall, there is a pool of water in our street." Haux noted that rainwater that combines with sea water is contributing to this problem.

Residents noted that they typically move their autos to higher ground in order to save them from flooding and communicate with each other about the possibility of a flooding event that would require them to move their vehicles.

Some residents noted that flooding has caused damage to their electrical and other systems in their homes. They said that even multiple sump pumps often do not provide relief, but that the cost of raising their homes is prohibitively expensive.

A few residents said that they expect to be moving from the area within a few years because the flooding problem has made their neighborhood unlivable. Another resident said his recent tenants moved out after just two months because of the flooding issues.

"This is a great neighborhood, but living with flooding is hard, especially when you're not expecting it," one resident commented, while another commenter noted, "Flooding is the worst (to deal with) when it's nice out."

The meeting concluded with Homeyer thanking residents for their input. She added that the BRP will be looking forward to meeting again with residents in May.

HVNA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Marcella.

The proposed restaurant, El Parche, has been a prominent topic for the HVNA since the first abutters meeting was held in June.

The proponents initially wanted to open the restaurant with 40 seats and operating hours of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m., but residents resisted, citing the late hours and other issues.

Then, at another abutters meeting in September, the plans were amended to have a restaurant with 20 seats that would operate from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. Again, residents were not fond of the plans.

It should also be noted that at the time of the September abutters meeting, it was indicated that the proponents were seeking a beer, wine, and cordials license, a common victualer license, and live entertainment from the licensing board, and approval from the Zoning Board of Appeal to change the occupancy of the building and finish other renovations.

Marcella explained that there had been no recent communication with the proponents since he spoke with one of the project attorneys to get the presentation on the agenda for last week's

meeting.

"I have not heard anything from El Parche or from the attorney on the project to say why it is that they did not submit the paperwork, why they've not stated anything about coming to this meeting or not coming to this meeting," he said.

Moreover, Marcella made it clear that he was under the impression that the project would not be able to proceed until it was presented to the HVNA and that East Boston's Liaison, Roberto Gomez from the Office of Neighborhood Services, had informed the boards that the proposal had not been presented to the association.

"Whether we'll get a request from them to come to our March meeting or our April meeting — we'll keep people informed, but again, we will require them to submit the project form to us in order to be able to move forward with presenting here to Harbor View," said Marcella.

The next HVNA meeting is scheduled for March 3rd. For more information about the HVNA, visit its website at <https://harborvieweastboston.com/> or its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/harborviewna/>.

Johnson named Chair of the Board for Old North Illuminated

Special to the Times-Free Press

As a Black woman who grew up in the Episcopal church, it's important for Angela Johnson to see Black and Indigenous congregants' contributions included in Old North Church's story. As the new Chair of the Board of Directors for Old North Illuminated, which operates and preserves Old North Church Historic Site, the Dedham resident will help to uncover the hidden history of, preserve, and protect the national landmark.

Raised in the American South, the daughter of an Episcopal priest who died when she was 10 years old, Johnson first remembers visiting Old North Church Historic Site the summer after her freshman year of high school while joining her mother, a delegate for the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee, at a Union of Black Episcopalians conference in Boston. The church, the conference, and the Commonwealth left an impression on her as she would go on to pursue her post-secondary education at Wellesley College and build a decades-long career in nonprofit management and fundraising.

"As the new Board Chair of Old North Illuminated, I'm most excited about preserving and sharing the rich, multifaceted history of Old North



Angela Johnson.

Church," says Johnson. "While many people focus on the story of Paul Revere's ride, the church itself has been a cornerstone of our history for over 300 years. It's not just about the lanterns and the revolution – it's about remembering the full story, including the roles played by early church members and the diverse histories of all who were part of it, including free and enslaved Black congregants and others who contributed over the years. As someone who wasn't initially a history buff, I've come to deeply appreciate the significance of this place. Old North is a unique church with a rich past that speaks to everyone, and I'm committed to ensuring its stories are preserved and shared for generations to come."

Johnson brings more than 30 years of experience in communications, project management, teaching, and development to the Old North Illuminated Board of Directors. As Senior Director of Philanthropy at Year Up United, she focuses on building relationships with donors, mainly Massachusetts-based, to support the organization's national mission. She works closely with stakeholders to encourage volunteering, giving, and other forms of support. A passionate volunteer, Johnson has been active on the boards of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), The Lenny Zakim Fund, Sisters in Development in Massachusetts, and Minds Matter Boston. She also contributed to an Advisory Committee for Massachusetts State Treasurer Steve Grossman for four years and was a nine-year volunteer mentor for Big Sister of Greater Boston, where she was honored as a Community-Based Big Sister of the Year.

"I'm thrilled that the Board of Old North Illuminated has selected Angela to serve as our next Board Chair," says Nikki Stewart, Old North Illuminated Executive Director. "Her expertise in fostering partnerships and building support for both national and community-based non-profits will be invaluable as we begin this important an-

niversary year and look to our future. She is a powerhouse public speaker, a dynamic fundraiser, an adept event planner, and a warm and encouraging leader."

As a member of the Old North Illuminated Board of Directors, Johnson will help with general oversight of the strategic direction and financial health of the organization and serve on committees that provide guidance in areas such as education, marketing and development, preservation, finance, and investment, all of which enable the organization to execute on its mission and live its values. Board members serve for up to three terms of three years each and act as goodwill ambassadors who actively advocate on behalf of the nonprofit.

This year, Old North Illuminated celebrates the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, marking Paul Revere's legendary midnight ride and the iconic "two if by sea" lantern signal in Old North Church's steeple. For information about upcoming celebrations, visit: www.oldnorth.com/250th.

About Old North Illuminated / Old North Church Historic Site

Established in 1991 as the Old North Foundation, Old North Illuminated is a 501(c)

(3) nonprofit organization that is responsible for historic site operations and interpretative, educational, and preservation programs at the iconic Old North Church Historic Site. A secular organization that is independent of Christ Church in the City of Boston, Old North Illuminated welcomes approximately 500,000 visitors annually while overseeing the preservation of an enduring symbol of American independence. Old North Illuminated serves a wide audience by creating meaningful experiences through educational outreach, site-specific programming, and historical analysis. ONI works collaboratively with the City of Boston, the U.S. National Park Service, the Freedom Trail Foundation, and other partners to foster educational and interpretive programs for students and visitors while engaging the public in Old North Church's history and its role in inspiring liberty and freedom. In 2023, Old North Church Historic Site was designated as a Site of Conscience by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC), joining a global network of historic sites, museums, and memory initiatives that connect past struggles to today's movements for human rights.

Wu and BPHC release report on improving health equity

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) last week released a new report, Live Long and Well, outlining the City's commitment to close Boston's long-standing life expectancy gap by race and by neighborhood, primarily due to social, economic, environmental, and structural factors. Mayor Wu and BPHC are also calling on community partners to submit proposals for funding to improve health and life expectancy in Boston. In the report, the City and BPHC detail their commitments to addressing key drivers of premature mortality, including cardiometabolic disease, and ensure Bostonians can live well at every age. The report outlines a vision to reduce early death in Boston, par-

ticularly among Black individuals who have the lowest life expectancy citywide. With \$10 million in funding from Atrius Health Equity Foundation, the City aims to work with community-based organizations to build wealth and economic security in communities with the greatest health disparities.

Live Long and Well – first announced in July 2024 – emphasizes the importance of multi-sector partnerships and working with impacted communities to close life expectancy gaps and help residents live long, healthy lives. The first multi-sector partnership between the City of Boston, the Boston Public Health Commission, the Boston Community Health Collaborative, and Atrius Health Equity Foundation was announced this summer with a \$10 million investment

to improve health outcomes.

In January, Atrius Health Equity Foundation released its first Call for Proposal for a funding opportunity of up to \$5 million for community-led coalitions to work together to enhance economic mobility and inclusion as well as financial security in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan. Up to three selected proposals will be awarded up to \$2.5 million each. The RFP closes on March 12, and awardees are expected to be announced in June 2025. Atrius Health Equity Foundation plans to release a second round of funding in 2028.

"This initiative is about more than just longevity; it's about partnering with community-based organizations across Boston neighborhoods to ensure that all our residents have the resources, opportu-

nities, and support to thrive at every stage of life," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm grateful to the Atrius Health Equity Foundation, the Boston Community Health Collaborative, and all our community partners, hospitals, health centers, and local businesses, who are working together to help our residents live longer, healthier lives."

"Though our city is healthier than many in the US, we continue to note significant differences in life expectancy and early death by race and between neighborhoods. The disparities are stark and are evident throughout our city," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health for the City of Boston. "This is a longstanding issue that we have been working to address. We are committed to continuing to build new partnerships and

making new investments in the communities that need it most to ensure that everyone in Boston has the opportunity to live a long and healthy life."

"We're excited to be making large-scale investments that respond to the health priorities identified by Boston residents. We're thrilled to be partnering with the City of Boston, the Boston Public Health Commission, and the Boston Community Health Collaborative in undertaking this important work. We also thank the community members and leaders who contributed their expertise to develop this program. Investing in the health and longevity of everyone in Boston will create a stronger, healthier, and more vibrant city," said Dr. Ann Hwang, President of the

Wu announces annual tax prep services available for residents

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu, Boston Tax Help Coalition (BTHC), Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), and other community partners announced that eligible Boston residents are now able to take advantage of the City's free tax preparation service. An annual program, residents earning \$70,000 or less annually can file safely while maximizing their refunds and credits through the assistance from the City of Boston at one of over 30 neighborhood tax sites across Boston. The Tax Help Coalition assists residents with free tax preparation, financial education and economic stability opportunities. The tax filing assistance service is available remotely and in person, and interpretation is available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese, French, Vietnamese, Mandarin, and Cantonese. This announcement was made last week by the Chief of Worker Empowerment Cabinet Trinh Nguyen, Chief of Community Engagement Briana Millor, ABCD President and CEO, Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq., and Boston Tax Help Coalition Assistant Deputy Director Brian Robinson at a kick-off event at ABCD's Downtown headquarters.

"Boston residents can save hundreds of dollars per household through the Boston Tax Help Coalition's free tax preparation," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "These free, multilingual tax assistance services are available at over 30 neighborhood locations and serve as a critical resource that supports thousands of Boston residents every year in maximizing their refunds safely. I encourage every eligible Boston resident to participate and take advantage of this valuable resource."

Part of the Worker Empowerment Cabinet, the Boston Tax Help Coalition's free tax preparation service gives Boston's low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents a financial boost by eliminating predatory, for-profit, tax preparation fees and helping them to keep more of their earned income. Since its founding in 2001, BTHC has served nearly 227,000 households with free tax preparation and returned over \$400 million in tax credits and refunds directly to residents. BTHC clients have an average income of \$30,000 and this service can provide a substantial financial boost.

"The free tax preparation service is a critical wealth-building tool that returns millions in refunds and credits to Boston's workers and working families," said Chief of Worker Empow-

erment Trinh Nguyen. "This financial cushion can go a long way for Boston's households. We're incredibly grateful to our community partners and the hundreds of IRS-certified volunteers who make this important work possible."

"Every dollar is significant for each individual and family living in our city," said Briana Millor, Chief of the Community Engagement Cabinet. "We encourage residents earning \$70,000 or less to take advantage of the Boston Tax Help Coalition's free tax preparation and filing services to help alleviate their financial burden. We are grateful to our community partners for helping Boston residents access free tax preparation and financial services."

Additionally, the BTHC IRS-certified volunteer tax preparers assess filers' eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a credit for low- and middle-income workers. This year marks the 50th anniversary of EITC and its significant role in supporting working families by reducing poverty. In 2024, EITC averaged \$2,743 for residents. Despite this, according to the Internal Revenue Service, an estimated one in five EITC-eligible workers fail to claim this valuable credit each year.

In 2024, more than 330 BTHC volunteers prepared tax

returns for over 12,000 taxpayers, generating \$22.7 million in tax refunds, including \$7.3 million in EITC credits. The Boston Tax Help Coalition relies on and values the partnership of its member organizations to continue to promote the economic independence of working individuals and families.

"ABCD is proud to be a co-founder of the Boston Tax Help Coalition, and we are pleased to host the 2025 Boston Tax Help Coalition kick-off event with our partners," said ABCD President and CEO Sharon Scott-Chandler. "EITC is a tax deduction that returns money to hardworking families and communities. It is one of America's most effective anti-poverty initiatives. As critical members of the Boston Tax Help Coalition, our IRS-certified tax preparers ensure that residents receive every tax relief measure possible which allows them to build up a much-needed savings or reduce debt on current expenses."

The Boston Tax Help Coalition prioritizes providing reasonable accommodations to taxpayers with disabilities at all tax sites. Moreover, the BTHC will continue its partnership with DEAF, Inc. to provide dedicated service days to visually and hearing-impaired residents every Sunday, February 3 - April 13, 2025, at the Charles-

view Community Center, 123 Antwerp Street Ext., Brighton, MA 02135. More information can be found at boston.gov/disability-tax-help.

Going beyond tax preparation, the Boston Tax Help Coalition connects residents to free, comprehensive financial and asset-building services to improve their economic well-being. Four tax sites, DotHouse Health, Codman Square Health Center, Urban Edge, and the Center for Working Families, will offer clients a free Financial Check-Up (FCU), a credit advising session with a trained Financial Guide to assist them in understanding their current financial situation, including a review of their credit report and FICO score, personalized one-year plan to help improve their credit, and relevant service referrals. According to research conducted at BTHC tax sites by Dr. Scott Nelson, formerly of MIT, taxpayers who participated in the FCU improved their FICO scores by an average of 15.5 points in less than one year. The BTHC provided credit advising and financial education to 1,200 tax clients in 2024.

More information on the Boston Tax Help Coalition's free tax services, including the 2025 tax sites, can be found at boston.gov/tax-help.

Children's Winter Festival returns to Boston Common February 19

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department present the annual Children's Winter Festival on the Boston Common Parade Ground on Wednesday, February 19, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The free festival is open to all and offers music, dancing, giveaways, winter activities, treats, and crafts. Featured attractions include large inflatable installations such as the all-star challenge, fun house maze, and candy cane obstacle course. Children and their caregivers can also enjoy rides on the trackless train, the alpine slide, snow throw, and more.

"My family and I enjoyed visiting the annual Winter Festival last year, and I encourage Boston residents to take advantage of this fun way to keep kids engaged and connected

with their peers over February school break," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm grateful to the Parks Department and our local business partners for keeping this beloved winter tradition on the Common going."

LEGO® Discovery Center Boston will be in attendance with seasonal builds and activities with LEGO experts. Enjoy farm fresh milk from New England Dairy's Mobile Dairy Bar. Try your musical skills at Boston Music Group's instrument 'petting zoo.' Visit boston.gov/winterfest for more information about this family-friendly school vacation week event.

The event is hosted in partnership with title sponsor Highland Street Foundation and our contributing sponsors H.P. Hood LLC and Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers. The Boston Globe is the media sponsor.

Additional support is provided by LEGO® Discovery Center Boston, New England Dairy, Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience (LCN) at Boston Children's Hospital, and UMAss Boston Early Minds Lab.

The Boston Common Parade Ground is located at the corner of Beacon and Charles Streets. Call (617) 635-4505 or email parks@boston.gov for more information. To stay up to date with news, events, and

improvements in Boston parks, visit boston.gov/Parks, join our email list at bit.ly/Get-Parks-Emails, and follow our social channels @bostonparksdept on Twitter, Facebook, Bluesky, and Instagram.

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Sports

EB JETS FALL TO BLUE HILLS REGIONAL TECH 6-0

The upstart East Boston Jets continued their determined quest for a first win but fell on the short end of a 6-0 score against Blue Hills Regional Tech on Wednesday, February 5 at Porrazzo Rink. East Boston finishes up its season with home games against Lynn English February 12 and Keefe Tech February 15, both with 4 p.m. start times.



Mauricio Feloney (4) forechecks a Blue Hills forward.



Finn Kempanien makes one of dozens of saves he made on the day.

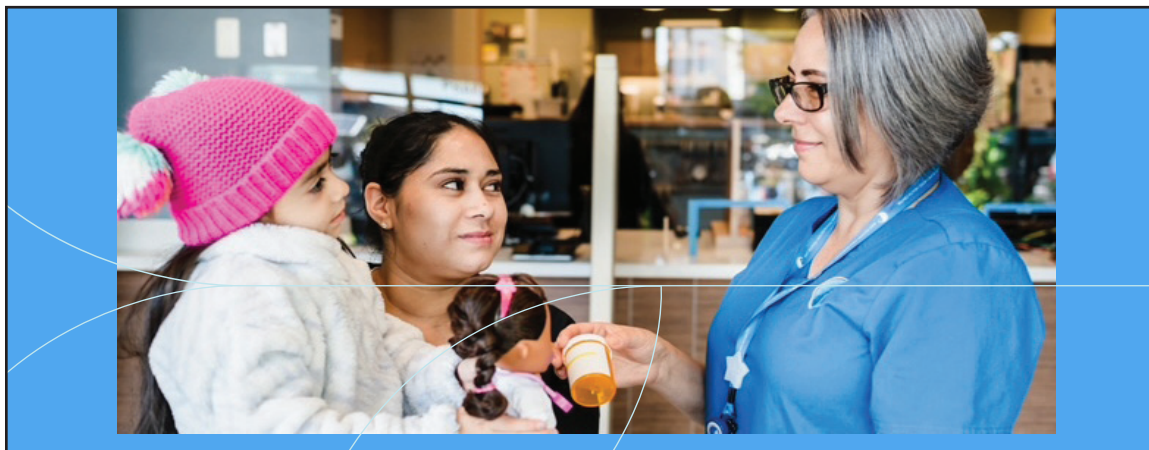


Mauricio Feloney (4) skates in pursuit of a Blue Hills forward and a loose puck.



Dante Screnci (17) threads a pass in front of a Blue Hills defender.

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Jack Kane (12) clears a loose puck through center ice.



Jason Heredia (18) tangles with a Blue Hills forward behind the net.

EBHS SWIM TEAM TAKES THIRD IN LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP



PHOTOS BY PATRICK O'CONNOR



Members of the East Boston High School swim team celebrate their third place finish in the Boston City League swimming championship on Thursday, January 30 at Madison Park. Retired coach Dave Arinella (left) cheered on the Jets in the various competitions.

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OBITUARIES

James "Jim" Kearney

Respected educator, sports and community leader
and a guiding light to all who knew him

James A. "Jim" Kearney, a cherished husband, brother, uncle and respected educator, passed away peacefully on February 8, 2025, at his home in Plymouth, MA, at the age of 70.

Born in Boston on May 4, 1954, Jim was the beloved son of the late James A. and Jean Kearney and a guiding light to all who knew him. Jim's life was marked by his dedication to his family, his passion for education, and his commitment to his community.

He is survived by his loving wife, Jane Simpson, and his devoted siblings: Dennis Kearney and his wife, Bernadette, Deborah Kearney, Michael Kearney and his partner, Lisa and Thomas Kearney and his wife, Robin. Jim was also a proud faux pas to Gus, Stuart and Finley and a cherished uncle to many nieces and nephews who will fondly remember his kindness and support.

Educated locally, Jim earned his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Massachusetts and went on to receive his Master's in Education from Cambridge College. His professional life was a testament to his belief in the power of education. Jim served as Housemaster at East Boston High School, Dean of Students at Mario Umana Academy, and Director of School Discipline at Charlestown High School. His leadership and genuine care for the students' well-being left an indelible mark on many young lives.

Beyond his professional achievements, Jim was an active and enthusiastic member of his community. He served as Past President of the East Bos-



ton Athletic Board and Chairman of the Fred L. O'Brien Scholarship Committee. His love for sports and commitment to fair play were evident in his roles as President of the Association of New England High School Football Officials and the Eastern Association of Intercollegiate Football Officials, Past Commissioner of Football Officials for Boston Public Schools and the Eastern Football League and Coordinator of College Football Officials.

Jim's dedication to his hometown was further demonstrated through his service as Past President of the East Boston Chamber of Commerce, his involvement in the Columbus Day Parade Committee, and his participation in the East Boston Yacht Club.

As a Board Member of the East Boston Foundation, Jim worked tirelessly to improve the lives of those around him. Those who knew Jim describe him as kind, friendly and selfless. He was a man who always put others before himself and sought to make a positive impact wherever he went. His warm smile and generous spirit will be deeply missed by his

family, friends, and all who had the pleasure of crossing paths with him.

Jim's legacy is one of love, service, and dedication. It is with heavy hearts that we say goodbye to a man who was not only a pillar in his community but also a beacon of light in the lives of all who knew him. His memory will live on in the countless lives he touched, both in the hallways of the schools where he worked and in the community he loved so dearly. As we bid farewell to James A. "Jim" Kearney, we celebrate a life well-lived, a journey filled with purpose, and a heart that knew no bounds in its capacity to care for others.

Jim's story is one of unwavering commitment to making the world a better place—one student, one colleague, one community member at a time.

Family and friends will honor Jim's life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga St., East Boston on Sunday, February 16th from 2 to 6 p.m. and again on Monday morning at 9:30 a.m. before leaving in funeral procession to Sacred Heart Church, Brooks Street, East Boston for an 11 a.m. Funeral Mass in celebration of Jim's life. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the East Boston Athletic Board, 20 Thurston St., East Boston.

Rest in peace, Jim. Your legacy of kindness, friendship, and selflessness will continue to inspire and guide us. You have left an indelible mark on this world, and for that, we are eternally grateful.

To leave an online condolence visit www.ruggieromh.com.

Stephen Powers

His first priority in life was devotion to family

Stephen W. Powers of Salem, NH, formerly of East Boston, passed away suddenly on February 6, 2025.

Steve's first priority in life was his devotion to family. He was also a retired member/shop steward of Teamster Union, Local 25. He was mentor to many of the young people in the area as a coach and Board member of the East Boston Youth Hockey Association. Captain of the Minutemen Dart League and Board Member/Director of the Children are Angels in Heaven Organization.

The beloved husband of 46 years to Patricia (Davis) Powers, he was the devoted father of Alicia Powers, Justin Powers and his wife, Paula, Caitlin Powers, McKenzie Powers and her wife, Renee, Breanna Powers and her fiancée, Alex Varrell; loving grandfather of Anthony, Keegan, Nico, Kendall, Lorenzo and Donovan; dear brother of Fran Powers and her husband, Dick Doolittle, Cathy Gabsi and her husband, Hamadi, Michael Powers and his wife, Donna and Rose Powers. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews. Steve was the son of the late Olive (Hanscome) Powers and her partner, Oliver Boucher and



Don Powers and his wife, Audrey.

Visiting hours will be held in the Magrath Funeral Home, 336 Chelsea St. [at Day Sq] East Boston on Thursday, February 13 from 4 to 8 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated in the Sacred Heart Church, 45 Brooks St, East Boston on Friday morning, February 14, at 11 o'clock. Interment will follow in Puritan Lawn Memorial Park, Peabody.

Donations in his memory to Childrenareangels.org would be appreciated. Please leave messages of condolence for his family on the Memories Page on MagrathFuneralHome.com.

OBITUARIES

All obituaries and death notices will be at a cost of \$195.00 per paper.

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OBITUARIES

Jacqueline “Jackie” A. Bossi

She will be remembered for being dedicated to her family and friends

Family and friends are respectfully invited to attend a Memorial Visitation on Monday, February 17 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Vertuccio Smith & Vazza Beechwood Home for Funerals, 262 Beach St., Revere for Jacqueline A. “Jackie” (Ciampa) Bossi who died on Thursday, February 6th at her home following a brief illness. She was 81 years old. A Funeral Service will follow in the funeral home beginning at 1 p.m. Interment will be private.



Jackie was a lifelong resident of Orient Heights in East Boston. She was born to her late parents, James G. Ciampa and Carmela M. (Grieci). Jackie was educated in Boston Schools and was a graduate of Girls Catholic in Roxbury, Class of 1961. She married her best friend, Joseph Bossi on October 25, 1964. The couple remained in the family home and began to raise their family. Jackie happily raised her children, Karen and Joe, Jr. She was a very active and present mother and attended all the events that her children participated in. Jackie made many lifelong friendships along the way with some of the parents that she met through school and sporting events. Jackie returned to the workforce once her children were grown. She worked as a bookkeeper for the Consoli Brokers at the New England Produce Terminal in Chelsea for over 20 years.

Jackie and her husband both enjoyed spending time with family and especially their granddaughters. Jackie and Joe had a very special love for one another, and they did everything together. Jackie was a “Mickey Mouse” superfan. She loved Mickey and enjoyed countless trips with her family to Disney World. She and Joe

enjoyed going out for dinner. Jackie was also known to begin her day with a cup of coffee and end by enjoying a nice glass of wine. She will be remembered for being dedicated to her family and her friends.

She was the beloved wife of 59 years of the late Joseph A. “Joe” Bossi, Sr., the loving mother of Karen A. Cornell and her husband, Eric F. of Danville, NH., and Joseph A. Bossi, Jr. and his companion, Lisa Thiesfield of Hartford, CT; the cherished nana of Madison P. Cornell of Winter Park, FL., Kaitlyn A. Cornell of Danville, NH., and the late Mackenzie M. Cornell; the dear sister of the late Geraldine M. Faiella and her husband, Ralph Jr. She is also lovingly survived by several nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, cousin, friends and extended family.

In Lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, PO Box 849168, Boston, MA 02284-9168.

To send online condolences, please visit www.vertuciosmithvazza.com. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the care and direction of the Vertuccio Smith & Vazza, Beechwood Home for Funerals, Revere.

Angelo Buonopane

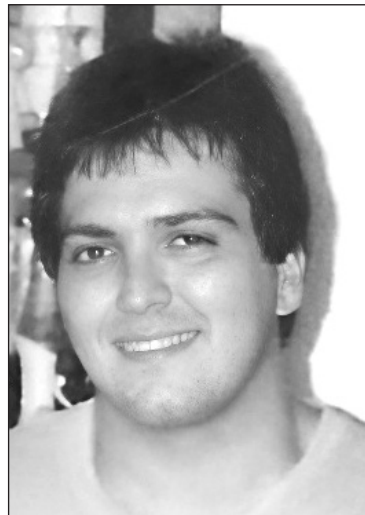
A man of many passions and interests who leaves so many good memories and stories that his legend will never die

Angelo Buonopane of Saugus, formerly of East Boston, passed away peacefully on his 67th birthday, February 1, 2025.

Born on February 1st 1958, Angelo was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, cousin, nephew, brother, brother in law, friend and son.

Angelo was a man of many passions and interests. A history buff who loved to read and watch films about World War Two, and the Civil War especially. A film buff who was always at the theater as a kid and with his kids growing up. A rock and roll music enthusiast who loved going to concerts and seeing all his favorites live, sometimes in a group and sometimes even by himself. An avid sports fan who never missed a game may it be a Tuesday night regular season match or his favorite, a big party surrounded by friends and family to enjoy one of the many championships from over the years. The big events for wrestling, football, baseball, basketball, boxing, and hockey were always enjoyed via big party. Angelo loved his cats, and he always did his duty well and without complaint.

Angelo graduated from East Boston High School, a straight A student in 1975, four years later he graduated from Boston State College with a degree in history, minor in psychology and started a brief tenure as a



public school teacher. Upon realizing that as much as he loved knowledge; his passion was for learning and not teaching, he started working with his father at the United States Post Office where he stayed for the remainder of his career.

On November 12th, 1983, Angelo married the love of his life, Marie Elena Andrews. They would go on to have four children, build a home together and remain happily in love and married for the rest of his life.

The 80's and 90's were a great time for Angelo, he was very active and he loved playing sports and lifting weights. Angelo loved traveling with his family as a young dad including trips to Hawaii, Chicago, cruising the Caribbean, and his favorite, Universal Studios and Disneyworld in Florida.

Angelo looked forward to his summers in Old Orchard Beach where, with his little brother, David he owned and operated “The Tide-rock House.”

He loved the beach and to “take a dip” and during the work week, his backyard pool substituted for the ocean breeze. He loved to host extravagant birthday parties for each of his kids, and big holiday parties where the whole family and their friends were welcome especially for Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. He was always aware of how fleeting and precious these moments truly were.

His home became a refuge for all walks of life, everyone was welcome and at any time of day or night, Ang's door or line was always open. To anyone who knew and loved him, he was a staple in their life. A source of friendship, comfort, humor, support, advice, encouragement, or if you wanted to just think freely and talk about life. He valued deeply all his relationships may they be family or friends.

Angelo always had a lesson to teach and contemplated every choice; in the end he always did what was right, one of the last men of true principle. He will be missed sorely by the survivors and he leaves so many good memories and stories that his legend will never die.

Lauren DeMato

Longtime Alamo Car Rental Station Manager

Lauren C. (D'Ambrosio) DeMato of East Boston passed away unexpectedly, February 4, 2025.

The beloved wife of Robert “Bob” DeMato, she was the loving mother of Michael DeMato and his fiancée, Nicolette D'Andrea of East Boston, Ashely DeMato-Cooney and her husband, Kevin Cooney of Windham, NH and Jade DeMato of East Boston; grandmother of Brielle Lauren Cooney; sister of Jolyne D'Ambrosio and Dino D'Ambrosio, aunt of Holly Cintolo and two grandnephews. She was the sister-in-law to John “Mickey” DeMato, Michelle DeMato Carr and her husband, Paul Carr, David DeMato and his wife, Michelle



Moulo DeMato and Paul DeMato and beloved aunt to Christian DeMato, Jenna Herbert, Heather Davis, James Carr, Scott DeMato, Stephen DeMato and Taryn DeMato.

Lauren was born and brought up in East Boston and has been

employed at Alamo Car Rental as the station manager for 37 years. In her free time, she enjoyed tending to her garden, baking and shopping.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend a Memorial Visitation in the Magrath Funeral Home, 336 Chelsea St [at Day Sq] EAST BOSTON on Monday, February 17 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon followed by a Funeral Mass in St. Joseph- St. Lazarus Church at 12:30 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Lauren's memory to a charity of your choice would be appreciated.

Please leave messages of condolence for Lauren's family on her Tribute Page at MagrathFuneralHome.com.

To place a memoriam in the Times-Free Press, please call 781-485-0588

OBITUARIES

William J. Chisholm

Member and Commander of American Legion Posts in Revere and East Boston; Massachusetts State Commander and past National American Legion Executive Committee Member

Family and friends are attended Visiting Hours on Monday February 10th in the Vertuccio Smith & Vazza, Beechwood Home for Funerals, 262 Beach St., Revere for William J. "Bill" Chisholm, who died on Tuesday, February 4th at the Kaplan Family Hospice House following a brief illness. He was 79 years old. His Funeral was conducted from the funeral home on Tuesday, February 11 followed by a Funeral Mass in Sacred Heart Church, 45 Brooks St, East Boston and Interment immediately followed with military honors in Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett.

Bill was born on July 16, 1945, in Boston to his late parents, Augustus and Winifred



(Little) Chisholm. He was one of two children, raised in Dorchester and educated in Boston. He was an alumnus of Don Bosco Technical High School, Class of 1963. He then

enlisted in the United States Navy during the Vietnam Era. He proudly and bravely served his country and was honorably discharged. He then married Sandra Messina on February 8, 1969. They began their family together and had a son and a daughter, residing in East Boston.

Bill held various jobs over the years. He retired from his position as a Mutuels Clerk at the Wonderland Racetrack in Revere which he held for over 10 years. Unfortunately, Bill lost his wife Sandra in 1996. He moved to Revere briefly and then returned to East Boston and continued to be the best father he could be. He also became very involved with the American Legion, first at East Boston Post 30 and he later

became the commander of Revere Post 61. He took a much larger role within the organization and served as both the past Massachusetts State Commander and a past National Executive Committee Member. He was also the past National Commander of the Italian American War Veterans. Bill happily volunteered his time with these non-profit organizations to fulfill his desire to help others, especially veterans. In his spare time, he would listen to music and read self-help books. He was also a man with a deep-rooted faith.

He was the devoted husband of the late Sandra M. (Messina) Chisholm of 27 years, the loving father of Michael Chisholm and his wife, Vickie Stringfellow of East Boston

and Kerri-Ann Sowdon and her husband, Christopher of Plymouth; the cherished grandfather of Timothy and Alex; treasured brother of Mary Clarke of Braintree and her late husband, Patrick; the dear friend of Kathy Welch of East Boston; caring uncle of Patrick, Mary Theresa and Noreen Clarke. He is also lovingly survived by many cousins and friends.

Remembrances may be made to the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans, 17 Court St. Boston, MA 02141.

To send online condolences, please visit www.vertuciosmithvazza.com. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the care and direction of the Vertuccio Smith & Vazza, Beechwood Home for Funerals, Revere.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MASSACHUSETTS PORT AUTHORITY COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF NEWLY DESIGNED WEBSITE

The Massachusetts Port Authority Community Advisory Committee (MCAC), a legislatively created oversight committee which serves as the voice of the thirty-five communities impacted by Massachusetts Port Authority operations, is pleased to announce that our new website is live. The site

can be found at www.massport-cac.org.

The website contains all the minutes from our committee and sub-committee (Aviation Operations, Environment & Health, Finance) meetings as well as resources for community members to learn about aviation and maritime impacts. Links can also be found to report noise complaints and understand runway usage at Logan Airport.

For more information on MCAC projects, please contact Executive Director Aaron Toffler at atoffler@massport-cac.org.

Health// CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Atrius Health Equity Foundation.

The Boston Public Health Commission recently convened a meeting with community stakeholders to announce the funding opportunity and gain support for the Live Long and Well agenda. Attendees unanimously expressed support for the city's efforts to invest in communities and close gaps in life expectancy.

"People in our communities are struggling financially, and local organizations are trying their best to meet urgent needs. We are looking forward to the distribution of these funds within communities where residents are suffering that are disproportionately impacted by lower life expectancy in the City," said Bishop William E. Dickerson II, Greater Love Tabernacle.

"Through my work in the Mattapan community, we have heard again and again that we need to address the many inequities that impact our health, like racial discrimination, low wages, limited access to housing, the need for quality edu-

cation, and much more," said Vivien Morris, Mattapan resident and member of the Boston Community Health Collaborative. "We must address all of these issues by working in partnership with community. Collectively, we can do this!"


"We are delighted to support the city's effort to address longstanding health disparities in our most vulnerable communities," said Pastor Dieufort Jean "Keke" Fleurissant MDiv, True Alliance Center and of Equity Now and Beyond. "Boston is a diverse city, and we are excited about the opportunity to partner to ensure that all communities have access to the resources that they need to live long and healthy lives."

According to BPHC analysis, there are glaring disparities in life expectancy across the city. In 2012, the Health Commission released data that showed a 33-year difference in life expectancy between neighborhoods in Roxbury and Back Bay, despite the neighborhoods being 2.3 miles apart. In 2023, BPHC prioritized updating this data and found the gap be-

tween neighborhoods in Roxbury and Back Bay is now 23 years, showing that while the data is still stark and concerning, progress has been made. BPHC's findings also show that there are communities across Boston, including Mattapan, Dorchester, East Boston, and Jamaica Plain, where life expectancy is significantly lower than average.

The Live Long and Well report details the significant and ongoing investments made by the City and local partners to address these disparities and improve health. It also highlights the City and Health Commission's strategies to improve a person's physical and mental well-being throughout their life.

The City and BPHC are continuing to look for more partners to join this work. Those who would like to learn more about the Live Long and Well population health equity agenda and the Foundation's Call For Proposals can visit boston.gov/live-long.



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Critical and significant drought conditions declared in several regions

Special to the Times-Free Press

Following nearly six months of below-normal precipitation, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rebecca Tepper declared the Central and Northeast regions have been raised to a Level – 3 Critical Drought. The Southeast, Cape and Islands regions have been elevated to a Level – 2 Significant Drought. The Connecticut River Valley and Western regions still have their previous statuses: Level 2 – Significant and Level – 1 Mild Drought.

As outlined in the Massachusetts Drought Management Plan, a Level 3 – Critical Drought, Level – 2 Significant Drought, and a Level – 1 Mild Drought require detailed monitoring of drought conditions. These levels also require ongoing coordination among state and federal agencies to implement water use restrictions. Additionally, engagement with municipalities, including local Boards of Health, is essential. This includes providing technical outreach and assistance to water suppliers and affected municipalities.

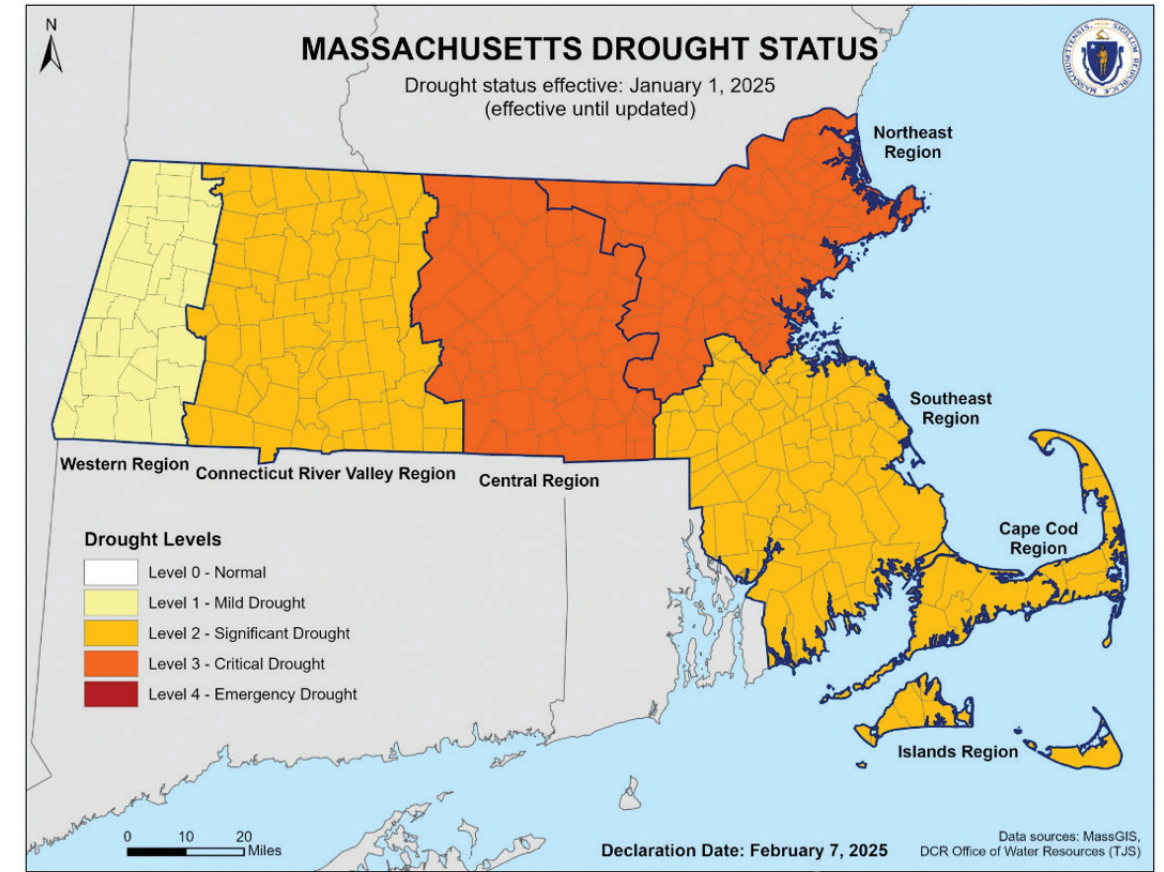
“Even with winter weather, several regions in our state are facing below-average precipitation,” said EEA Secretary Rebecca Tepper. “To avoid overtaxing our water systems,

we must prioritize indoor water conservation. It’s essential that everyone follows state guidance and local water restrictions to ensure our drinking water stays available for everyone.”

Over the past month, most of the state received between 1-2.5 inches of rain and snow, which is 1-13 inches below normal. Overall, most of the state has been in an 8-13 inch deficit since August. The Cape and Islands region is experiencing a 3.8-6 inch deficit in precipitation. Despite the recent rain and snowfall, streamflow and groundwater have worsened in nearly all regions, and recharge that typically occurs at this time of the year to reservoirs and groundwater lagging. Residents can report dry environmental conditions they are experiencing and submit photos to support state drought monitoring efforts here.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) will continue to provide technical assistance to communities on managing their water systems, including assistance on the use of emergency connections and water supplies.

It is important to note that the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) water supply system is not ex-



periencing drought conditions, as defined within its individual plan. However, private well users and other sources of water within the same river basins are impacted by drought conditions. All sources of water, regardless of their location or type of withdrawal, ultimately draw from the same river basin.

See DROUGHT Page 14

Region	Drought Level Declaration	Previous Month
Western	Level 1 – Mild Drought	Level 1 – Mild Drought
Connecticut River Valley	Level 2 – Significant Drought	Level 2 – Significant Drought
Central	Level 3 – Critical Drought	Level 2 – Significant Drought
Northeast	Level 3 – Critical Drought	Level 2 – Significant Drought
Southeast	Level 2 – Significant Drought	Level 1 – Mild Drought
Cape Cod	Level 2 – Significant Drought	Level 1 – Mild Drought
Islands	Level 2 – Significant Drought	Level 1 – Mild Drought

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ICE Boston arrests illegal Dominican drug dealer charged with assault, battery with dangerous weapon

Special to the Times-Free Press

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement apprehended an illegally present Dominican national convicted of heroin distribution crimes, who is currently charged with assault with a dangerous weapon and shoplifting crimes. ICE officers arrested Santor Aibar, 56, in East Boston on Jan. 22.

“Santos Aibar is exactly the kind of alien offender who needs to be removed from the streets of Massachusetts,” said ICE Boston Enforcement and Removal Operations acting

Field Office Director Patricia H. Hyde. “He has already been convicted of peddling poison to our neighborhoods, and he currently stands accused of assaulting a resident with a box cutter. ICE Boston will not tolerate such threats to the people of our New England communities. We stand committed to our mission of arresting and removing such egregious alien threats.”

Aibar illegally entered the United States on an unknown date, at an unknown location, and without being admitted, inspected, or paroled by a U.S.

immigration official.

The West Roxbury District Court in Massachusetts convicted Aibar Sept. 29, 2008, for distribution of of heroin and sentenced him to one year in prison.

ICE officers arrested Aibar at the Nashua Street Jail in Boston July 2, 2010, and served him with a notice to appear before a Department of Justice immigration judge.

The immigration judge ordered Aibar removed from the U.S. on Sept. 30, 2010, and ICE removed Aibar to the Dominican Republic Nov. 17,

2010.

Aibar illegally re-entered the U.S. on an unknown date, at an unknown location, and without being admitted, inspected, or paroled by a U.S. immigration official.

ICE encountered Aibar Feb. 28, 2023, following his arrest by local authorities, and issued an immigration detainer against Aibar with the Boston Police Department.

ICE determined that the state of Massachusetts released Aibar on Feb. 25, 2024, without honoring the immigration detainer.

The South Boston District Court arraigned Aibar Sept. 03, 2024, for the offenses of assault with dangerous weapon and shoplifting.

Aibar remains in custody following his apprehension by ICE.

Members of the public with information can report crimes or suspicious activity by dialing the ICE Tip Line at 866-DHS-2-ICE (866-347-2423) or completing the online tip form.

Learn more about ICE’s mission to increase public safety in our New England communities on X at @EROBoston.

Drought // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

It is important for all users to do their part to conserve water.

Below are recommendations for communities and individuals living and working within a Level 3 – Critical Drought, Level 2 – Significant Drought,

and Level 1 – Mild Drought region, including those utilizing a private well. Residents and businesses are also asked to check with their local water system in case more stringent watering restrictions are in place.

For Regions in Level 3 – Critical Drought

Residents and Businesses:

- Minimize overall water use;
- Follow state water conservation actions and any local water use restrictions;
- Monitor total household water use shown on your water bill for sudden increases, which often indicate leaks. Use the MA Home Water Use Calculator tool to evaluate house-

hold water use;

- Fix any toilet or faucet leaks immediately. Check for leaks in homes and businesses regularly by:

- Checking water meters for constant dial movement

- Using dye tabs to check for toilet leaks

- Conducting regular inspections of all pipes and fixtures, including those located in utility rooms, crawlspaces, and other hidden areas

- Use dishwashers rather than handwashing dishes. Run the dishwasher only on a full load;

- Aggressively reduce indoor water use by:

- Reducing shower length and consider using a shower timer

- Running washing machines only on a full load

- Not letting water run while brushing and shaving

- Replacing old fixtures and appliances with water-efficient ones. Make sure toilets, fau-

cets, and showerheads are WaterSense labeled

- Stop all non-essential water use; and,

- Be extra cautious with outdoor fires, grills, and flammable materials.

Immediate Steps for Communities/Municipalities:

- Provide timely information on the drought and on water conservation tips to local residents and businesses taking advantage of the state’s library of outreach materials;

- Enforce water use restrictions with increasingly stringent penalties;

- Strongly discourage or prohibit washing of hard surfaces (sidewalks, patios, driveways, siding); personal vehicle or boat washing; and,

- Establish or enhance water-use reduction targets for all water users, identify top water users and conduct targeted outreach to help curb their use.

Short- and Medium-Term Steps for Communities/Municipalities:

- Establish a year-round water conservation program that includes public education and communication, taking advantage of the state’s library of outreach materials;

- Implement or establish drought surcharge or seasonal water rates;

- Prepare to activate emergency inter-connections for water supply; and,

- Develop or refine your local drought management plan using guidance outlined in the state Drought Management Plan.

For Regions in Level 2 – Significant Drought

Residents and Businesses:

- Minimize overall water use and be particularly mindful of indoor water use;

- Follow local water use restrictions;

- Fix indoor leaks, such as from toilets, faucets, and showers, which result in more than 60 percent of indoor use;

- For larger buildings and businesses, conduct water audits to identify areas of leaks and potential water conservation opportunities.

Immediate Steps for Communities/Municipalities:

- Limit or prohibit washing of hard surfaces (sidewalks, patios, driveways, siding); personal vehicle or boat washing.

- Establish water-use reduction targets for all water users, identify top water users and conduct targeted outreach to help curb their use.

Short- and Medium-Term Steps for Communities/Municipalities:

- Establish a year-round water conservation program that includes public education and communication, taking advantage of the state’s library of outreach materials;

- Provide timely information to local residents and businesses;

- Implement or establish drought surcharge or seasonal water rates; and,

- Check emergency inter-connections for water supply; and,

- Develop or refine your local drought management plan using guidance outlined in the state Drought Management Plan.

Below are recommendations for communities and individuals living and working within a

Level 1 – Mild Drought region.

For Region in Level 1 – Mild Drought

Residents and Businesses:

- Minimize overall water use;

- Fix indoor leaks, such as from toilets, faucets, and showers, which result in more than 60 percent of indoor use; and,

- For larger buildings and businesses, conduct water audits to identify areas of leaks and potential water conservation opportunities.

Communities/Municipalities:

- Establish a year-round water conservation program that includes public education and communication, taking advantage of the state’s library of outreach materials;

- Provide timely drought and water conservation information to local residents and businesses;

- Check emergency inter-connections for water supply; and,

- Develop a local drought management plan (learn more here).

State agencies will continue to closely monitor and assess conditions across the state, coordinate any needed dissemination of information

to the public, and help federal, state, and local agencies prepare additional responses that may be needed in the future. The Drought Management Task Force will meet again on Thursday, March 6, at 10:00AM. For further information on water conservation and what residents can do, visit the EEA’s drought and water conservation pages.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to deb@reverejournal.com

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Love Sammy C



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Hannah & Kacey



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Parker Michael Casey



Happy Valentine's Day Milo ♡



Happy Valentine's Day!
♡ Wendy