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#### HAPPY 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY, ROSEMARIE GRASSO!





Rosemarie Grasso, a lifelong resident of East Boston, celebrated her 100th birthday on Thanksgiving Day at Mission on the Bay in Swampscott surrounded by her entire family of 3 generations - children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Her family would like to acknowledge and thank the Boston City Council and The House of Representatives for her proclamations of reaching 100 years of age. Shown above, left to right: Matthew Tarness, Melissa Tarness, Cherise Grasso, Anthony Grasso, John Sousa Sr, Rosemarie Grasso, Joseph Todesca, Charlotte Sousa, Kenneth Grasso Sr, Christina Grasso, and Ronald Grasso. Kneeling: Athena Grasso, Kenneth Grasso Jr.

## **GSNA** narrowly supports Cottage Street project

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

At its November meeting, the Gove Street Neighborhood Association (GSNA) opened voting on a project at 137 Cottage Street, and eligible voters supported the proposal by a slim 3-2 margin.

Further, another individual voted in support of the proposal but was not included in the results above due to uncertainty regarding their eligibility.

The project, which was also presented at the neighborhood group's October meeting, proposes renovating the existing three-family building.

As part of the proposal, plans include a vertical addition, an occupancy change to four units, and a roof deck.

Additionally, the project is planned for homeownership, and at October's meeting, Attorney Richard Lynds explained that they had already been approved to extend living space into the basement.

As for how the proposal aligns with zoning, it would

See GSNA Page 5

## Eastie's King of the Mat

Tony Prizio is bringing joy and judo to residents at Paris Street Gym

By Cary Shuman

In a matter of a few months, Anthony "Tony" DiPrizio has built a judo program that has grown in popularity so fast that there is currently a waiting list.

DiPrizio, president of the Muscles Unlimited Legacy Foundation, and his instructional staff are teaching judo to 75 residents each week at the Paris Street Gym. The holder of a Brown Belt, DiPrizio is also a professional sensei (teacher of martial arts) at Pedro's Judo Center in Wakefield where he is mentored by Jimmy Pedro, a two-time Olympic bronze medalist and one of the foremost judo coaches in the world. One of Pedro's students is Olympic

See TONY PRIZIO Page 16

#### SALESIAN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB HOLDS ANNUAL PASTA DINNER FUNDRAISER



Shown above, from left, Emi Welch, Yamina Lachmi, Boston Region 1 School Supt. Dr. Tommy Welch, Samuel Welch, Executive Director Michael Triant, and Rep. Adrian Madaro. See more photos on Pages 8 and 9.

nggiero Family Memrorial Home + East Boston Chamber's Orient Heights Tree Lighting!

The Friday December 14 — 5pm • Tree lit @ 6pm

## East Boston

Times-Free Press

PRESIDENT: Stephen Quigley PUBLISHER: Debra DiGregorioEDITOR: Cary Shuman PUBLISHER EMERITUS: John A. Torrone



# Forum

## REMEMBER THOSE IN NEED ON YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING LIST

Americans already have been spending a record amount of money thus far this holiday season, spurred on by the extended "Black Friday" (we are using quotes because Black Friday sales began in early November), Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday shopping days.

However, amidst our zeal to find the "perfect" gifts for our family members and friends, we hope that our readers make the effort, no matter how small, to remember those in need this holiday season.

Homelessness is at an all-time high in this country. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the number of unhoused Americans jumped significantly from 2023 to 2024 by about 18%.

It is estimated that homelessness in New York City has reached the highest level since the Great Depression of the 1930s. This past August, 103,391 people slept each night in NYC shelters. Even more depressingly, according to the Coalition for the Homeless, almost one-in-eight New York City school children experienced homelessness during the most recent school year.

The most vulnerable members of our society -- including people with disabilities, children, and older adults -- are experiencing homelessness at increasingly-higher rates. In addition, the proposed cuts to social safety net programs are expected to make the problem even worse.

The simple reality is that for far too many of our fellow Americans, the holidays bring little or no joy.

There are countless ways by which each of us can make the holidays brighter for those who are less fortunate, ranging from toy drives to food banks to Salvation Army Santas. With Christmas fast approaching, we urge everyone who has the means to do so to make that small effort to help those for whom the holidays are just another day.

#### TRUMP DELIVERS ON GLP-1 DRUGS

Back in January, we wrote an editorial entitled, "GLP-1 weight-loss drugs should be made affordable for all Americans."

We pointed out that the U.S. ranks among the most obese nations in the world -- an astounding 72 percent of Americans are deemed to be overweight. We also noted that the new GLP-1 drugs, which originally were designed to help persons with diabetes (by making sugary, salty, and high-fat foods less appealing), had the "side-effect" of bringing about significant weight-loss in the consumers of these drugs.

It also has been found that the GLP-1 drugs not only help to decrease users' appetite for food, but also to reduce their cravings for harmful substances such as alcohol, drugs, and even cigarettes, and to reduce the "food noise" for those with eating disorders.

Researchers also have established that the GLP-1 drugs improve the health of our cardiovascular system, liver, brain, and kidneys, and even help with sleep apnea.

In short, the GLP-1 drugs offer the potential of a life-changing medicine that could benefit tens of millions of Americans.

However, as we noted in our editorial in January, the GLP-1 drugs were prohibitively expensive -- about \$1300 per month -- for those not eligible for a prescription for their diabetes, which is the only condition covered by most health plans and Medicare for the drugs.

That all changed this past month with an agreement forged by President Donald Trump with the makers of these drugs, Eli Lilly (Mounjaro and Zepbound) and Novo Nordisk (Ozempic and Wegovy), by which they agreed to reduce their prices by more than 50%. For some consumers (who had been eligible for a previous 50% reduction off the \$1300 sticker price), this has worked out to a greatly-reduced monthly rate of about \$350 per month.

In short, President Trump's deal makes these drugs much more affordable for millions of our fellow citizens who now can begin to take advantage of this miracle medicine. Trump's efforts not only will benefit the health of individual Americans, but also promise to reduce our national healthcare costs in the years ahead.

## Massachusetts House passes Supplemental Budget to close FY25

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Massachusetts House of Representatives have passed a supplemental budget to address deficiencies, to make new necessary investments, and to close the books on Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25). The legislation appropriates \$2.25 billion in gross spending, at a net cost to the state of \$750 million, representing a reduction of almost \$200 million from the Governor's original proposal.

"This supplemental budget closes the books on FY25, and aims to fortify the Commonwealth's finances, bolster economic development, and ensure continued access to critical health care services," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "In the face of unrelenting attacks from the Trump Administration that will strip health insurance coverage from millions of Americans and deny access to lifesaving vaccinations, this supplemental budget will help vulnerable residents prepare for, and avoid, a lapse in coverage, and ensure continued access to vaccines for every child in Massachusetts. I want to thank Chairman Michlewitz for his hard work, and all my colleagues in the House for recognizing the importance of the investments that are included in this legislation."

"This supplemental budget will close the books on FY25 in a balanced and fiscally responsible manner. By making critical investments into much needed programs in healthcare, education, and housing to name a few, the Commonwealth will be in a strong fiscal position for FY 26 and beyond," said Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means (D-Boston). "I want to thank Speaker Mariano for his dedication to these issues, as well as all my House colleagues for supporting this initiative.'

"This supplemental bud-See BUDGET Page 3

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**Printer –** Concord Monitor

#### City launches enhanced language and communications access dashboard in Power BI

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Mayor's Office of Language and Communications Access (OLCA) is proud to announce the launch of a newly enhanced Language and Communications Access Dashboard, designed to provide a clear, transparent, and user-friendly view of the city's efforts to provide language

access accommodations. The dashboard, now live at boston.gov/lca, tracks the City's use of interpretation, translation, CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), and American Sign Language (ASL) services from fiscal years 2022 through 2025. It also incorporates spending supported by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

The dashboard is part of LCA's ongoing commitment to ensuring that all Boston residents regardless of the language they speak have meaningful access to City services and information.

Since Fiscal Year 2022, LCA has collected detailed data on how City departments use both on-demand interpretation and pre-scheduled language accommodations. The new dashboard brings this data together in one centralized platform built using Microsoft Power BI.

#### **Key features include:**

- On-Demand Interpretation
- Usage data from the City's telephonic and video interpretation providers
  - Separated by Over-the-

Phone Interpretation (OPI) and Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)

• Tracks total expenditure, hours of service provided, number of languages requested, and the top 10 requested languages

In total for FY25, City departments collectively supported constituents through more

See DASHBOARD Page 7

#### Budget // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

get closes the books on FY25, allocating important funds to programs that will help our residents," said Representative Adrian Madaro (D - East Boston). "In the face of devastating cuts and inaction from the federal government that will strip health insurance, take away access to care, and impact the quality of life for many across the Commonwealth, the funding in this bill ensures that our residents will be protected and covered, while providing resources for everything from housing, to school meals, to clean water and snow removal this winter. I'm proud of the steady, responsible approach Massachusetts continues to take to ensure our priori-

ties are funded".

The bill passed today appropriates \$10 million for Health Care for All to conduct a public awareness campaign, and to conduct health coverage enrollment assistance for communities at risk of losing health care coverage as a result of the new Medicaid reporting requirements that were put in place by President Trump and Congress through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. It invests \$10 million for the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, and includes \$5 million in grants to reproductive health care providers. It also invests \$15 million for a new Sports and Entertainment Fund grant program, for which

\$10 million will be set aside for the events related to the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The bill passed today also includes a policy section which authorizes the Department of Public Health Commissioner to determine routine childhood immunizations and vaccination schedules, rather than relying on the recommendations of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

In addition to the appropriations, the bill also invests in the state's future by depositing the remainder of the funds to an escrow account (\$337.7 million), to support pensions (\$18.8 million), and to the Other Postemployment Benefits Trust Fund (\$18.8 million).

Additionally, the House accepted an amendment from Chair John Lawn that updates and restructures existing assessments on Massachusetts hospitals used to fund the Health Safety Net and related hospital support trust funds. The changes modernize financial data used in the assessment, increase the amount hospitals contribute, and adjust how the resulting funds are distributed among hospitals.

The bill also addresses budget deficiencies, including:

• \$1.67 billion in gross spending (\$303 million net cost) for MassHealth • \$60.7 million for snow and ice removal

- \$35 million for Home-
- \$14 million for the Section 35 program
- \$12.5 million for no-cost calls
- \$12 million for Universal School Meals
- \$7.2 million for Department of Correction (DOC) Facilities operations • \$6.8 million for the Clean Water Trust
- \$3.5 million for State Police operations
- \$700,000 for the Suffolk County District Attorney

The bill passed in the House of Representatives by a vote 141-14, and now goes to the Senate for its consideration.



#### Virtual Public Meeting

6:00 PM 7:30 PM

#### **FORMER A-7 EAST BOSTON POLICE STATION**

**Register:** bosplans.org/

A7EastBostonPoliceStationMeeting2

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864 Meeting ID: 160 858 8955



Please join the City of Boston Planning Department for a virtual community meeting on December 8, 2025, at 6:00pm EST regarding the former A-7 East Boston Police Station. The purpose of the meeting is to gather community feedback on draft development objectives for rehabilitation of the building.

To participate, please register in advance at: <u>bosplans.org/A7EastBostonPoliceStationMeeting2</u>. Meeting ID: 160 858 8955. This meeting will be offered in English and Spanish. To learn more about the A-7 East Boston Police Station, please visit <u>bosplans.org/A7EastBostonPoliceStation</u>. For assistance for non-English speaking or hearing-impaired residents, inquire by 12/1/2025. Please direct all comments and inquiries to Scott Greenhalgh at Scott.Greenhalgh@boston.gov or 617-918-6240.

Scott Greenhalgh

Planning Department One City Hall Square, 9th Floor Boston, MA 02201

617.918.6240

scott.greenhalgh@boston.gov

Close of Public Comment Period: 12/22/2025

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#### SCENES FROM SAMUEL ADAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S OPENING OF MR. MIKE'S FOOD PANTRY







On Thursday, November 20, Samuel Adams Elementary School celebrated the opening of Mr. Mike's Food Pantry, a school-run food resource named for the long-time Cafeteria Manager Mike Tate. Students and families united with a mission, fundraising for the food pantry launch through the East Boston-based food security nonprofit Project Bread's annual Walk for Hunger. Parents and staff, led by Principal Johanna McKeigue Cruz and Project Bread staff member/ Adams parent Hannah Koehn, cleaned out and repurposed this school closet to be a useful resource for students in need. Mr. Mike's Food Pantry is now open to Adams Elementary students and their families.

Shown are Adams Elementary staff and parents celebrate opening of school food pantry with Project Bread staff.





# Boston Parks and Recreation opens registration for free youth flag football league

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department has announced that registration is now open for the 2026 Boston Youth Flag Football League (BYFFL), a free co-ed sports program.

The league provides an inclusive environment for young athletes and runs from January 3 to February 7, 2026.

#### League Details

Location: Carter Playground Bubble, 709 Columbus Avenue, South End.

Schedule: Saturdays, 8:00

a.m. - 12:00 p.m..

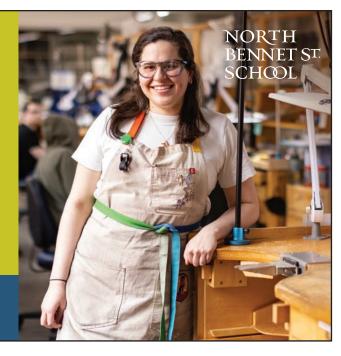
Divisions: Co-ed categories for 8U, 10U, and 12U, as well as a High School Girls division.

Season Length: The season is five weeks long, with playoffs scheduled for the final week

Coaches are encouraged to register their teams as space is limited by visiting boston. gov/parks-sports or joining the league online at https://www.zortssports.com/join/league/23168. For more information on the program, contact woodley.auguste@boston.gov or call (617) 961-3084.

# Discover craft artisans community classes NBSS

Open House Dec. 5-6 nbss.edu/openhouse



#### GSNA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

need variances for the rear-yard really kind of, in our opinion, setback and parking.

It should also be noted that the project was cited for lot coverage and permeable space; however, Lynds explained at October's meeting that since those conditions are existing, they do not require relief.

Feedback from October's meeting primarily focused on the design of the vertical addition. Several attendees expressed a desire for the design to fit in with the area's existing context, rather than standing out.

During the November meeting, Chris Drew of 686 Architects outlined the design thought process and the direction the proponent was leaning toward.

First, he walked through three designs that were considered but ultimately not chosen.

One of those options was doing a brick addition to match the existing building below.

"This existing building — as many buildings in East Boston have — it has this really nice cornice... So it gives a nice heavy presence at the roof level," Drew said.

"Continuing the brick up, you kind of lose that, and it

it kind of makes the top of the building very heavy," he added.

The other two options, which were not selected, were different Hardie planks.

"We didn't want this looking like an afterthought. We really put a lot of time and thought into how we think this should look." Drew said.

"As well as the biggest thing being - should this be approved — it would be approved with BPD (Boston Planning Department) design review... and Boston Planning Department really will have a lot to say about how this addition looks," he added.

Ultimately, the design plan is leaning toward Board and Batten painted black.

"It's a different material than what's there, but it looks, in our opinion, a little more intentional," Drew said. "A lot of times when we add additions like this to an existing three or four-story building, a lot of times this is the type of material the BPD likes to see.'

Though it should be noted that, as Lynds explained at the October meeting, BPD has the final word on design.

Following the presentation,

the floor was opened to those in attendance to ask questions and

One attendee suggested using brick but adding greenery, like ivy, to hide the newness of the brick.

In response, Drew said getting similar brick to what is currently there would be difficult, and that new brick would "stick out like a sore thumb."

Additionally, he reiterated his previous point that the fourth floor looked "very heavy," with brick.

GŠNA Board Member Neel Batra also commented that he felt using brick for the vertical addition would "look nice."

Other comments were made about the design, but ultimately, as Drew said, "When we start talking about materials, everybody looks at things and sees it a little differently.'

More topics, such as the basement living space and condo plans, were discussed before the end of the meeting.

For more information about the GSNA and to view a recording of November's meeting, visit https://www.govestreet. org/. The next GSNA meeting is scheduled for Jan. 26.



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#### Chairwoman Edwards advances bold Civil Rights and Public Safety agenda

Special to the Times-Free Press

Senator Lydia Edwards, Chairwoman of the Massachusetts Senate Judiciary Committee, delivered remarks last Wednesday to a gathering of Massachusetts judges, outlining the committee's current priorities, recent hearings, and her journey leading to her appointment as Judiciary Chair in March of 2025.

As the Senate Judiciary Committee Chair, Chairwoman Edwards has led the committee through a demanding and impactful session. Her final hear-



State Sen. Lydia Edwards speaking at the recent Massachusetts Judges Conference.

ing of the year on November 25 will focus on immigration, civil rights, and related policy matters, capping a season of intensive oversight. Most recently, she co-chaired a seven-hour hearing addressing abortion access, vaccine access, and youth offenses, underscoring the committee's broad and urgent portfolio.

As the Chairwoman, Senator Edwards hears legislation topics including:

- Data Privacy & Consumer Protection
- Medical Civil Rights & Practices
  - Employee Free Speech
  - Personal Security
- Protecting Sexual Abuse Victims
- Protection Against Abusive Litigation
- Eviction & Record Sealing
- Health Care Protections & Access to Care
- Juvenile and Youth Sentencing & Juvenile Record Expungement
  - Protection of Minors

Chairwoman Edwards has facilitated a Judiciary agenda around the protection of others, including minors, victims, consumers, tenants, homeowners, and more. Under her leadership, the committee has heard and advanced historic legislative priorities. Already, the legislature has passed the trailblazing Shield Act 2.0, which assures protections for patients and providers of reproductive and transgender services at a time when attacks are escalating on multiple fronts. Chairwoman also shepherded the recent bill to protect workers by creating increased penalties and criminal charges for attacking and assaulting transit workers.

Chairwoman Edwards has also released and moved several bills that are now pending in Ways and Means, including Raise the Age (a bill that would raise the age for juvenile offenses), Sexual Assault by People in Position of Authority ( a bill to close the loophole for adults who have sex with children above the age of consent but are within their authority) and an Act Relative to Drug Induced Homicide, a bill to hold drug dealers accountable for homicide (also sponsored by Rep. Jeff Turco in the house).

This leadership role marks a significant shift from her previ-

ous position as Housing Chair, expanding her statewide engagement in the legal and civil rights arenas.

"I loved being the Housing Chair. The hearings and conversations were very much like solving a complicated puzzle. With the Judiciary Committee the stakes feel a little bit higher. Parents come and testify with pictures of their dead children, stating that if certain laws had been in place, their kids would be alive. We also have constitutional scholars engaged in deep debate about so many fundamental rights. I especially enjoy the conversations I am having with the District Attorneys and the head of CPCS (our public defenders). I remind them we are not in court; this is not about "winning." Instead, we are trying to craft the best judicial system we can together. Honestly, I have had to talk with more police officers about their lived experience and the practical, real impact of the laws we pass, and I regularly hear from incarcerated individuals about their perspective on law reform.

Looking ahead, Senator Edwards will launch a series of public panels in the new year to deepen community understanding of the Judiciary Committee's work. These panels will explore how new and



State Sen. Lydia Edwards with the Massachusetts Judges Conference President and CEO, Hon. Daniel Dilorati.

pending laws influence communities across Massachusetts. In collaboration with District Attorney's offices, local police departments, and other justice-system partners, these events are designed to foster transparency, education, and civic engagement.

"The best thing we can do as a state legislature is be as transparent about the laws we are drafting, supporting, or opposing. We also need to make sure we hear from people about what is and isn't working.

For a full history of legislation considered by the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, visit malegislature.gov.

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

As a part of East Boston Cannabis Company's "Positive Impact Plan" EBCC has made the following educational classes available on ZOOM. https://princelobel.zoom.us/j/82613244092?pwd= nlEvx1Y9FEa2asTWu7ZNOEAIPPtLas.1

#### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15 7:00 PM

East Boston Cannabis Company is committed to providing educational programs and informational sessions geared towards individuals from the Target Areas and/or Massachusetts Residents who have, or have parents or spouses who have, past drug convictions that are interested in the cannabis industry, with specific focuses on marijuana retailers and entrepreneurship. Such educational events will specifically include, but not be limited to, information on <u>licensing workshops (i.e., guidance on filing</u> applications with the Commission), <u>preparation of standard operating</u> policies and procedures, Massachusetts <u>cannabis market overview and METRC best</u> practices.



#### Attorney AJ Moscone named to Boston Magazine's Top Lawyers for third year in a row

Special to the Times-Free Press

Attorney Albert J. Moscone, Jr., is born and raised in East Boston. He is the founder and managing attorney of Moscone Law, where he focuses on criminal and real estate litigation. Prior to founding Moscone Law, Attorney Moscone spent years being mentored by legendary Boston Attorney Ger-D'Ambrosio. Attorney Moscone has successfully argued before a judge or jury in multiple venues throughout the Commonwealth as well as in Federal Court.

Attorney Moscone has been recognized in The Best Lawyers, Ones to Watch in America. He has been named Top 40 Under 40 by the National Trial Lawyers in the Area of Criminal Defense. He is a member of the Boston Bar Association's PILP Class, 2023.

Criminal Defense: Attorney Moscone has successfully rep-



Attorney Albert J. Moscone

resented clients in all phases of criminal litigation including arraignment/pre-trial detention hearings, motions, jury trials and post-conviction matters. In many instances he has succeeded in persuading the government not to file charges against his clients.

Real Estate Litigation: Attorney Moscone has success-

fully litigated real estate title matters. He was appointed as a Title Examiner by the Massachusetts Land Court.

Municipal Representation: Attorney Moscone represents municipalities, ensuring protection of municipal delinquencies and the security of municipal liens.

#### News in Brief

#### USPS REMINDS CUSTOMERS TO KEEP PATHS CLEARED FOR CARRIER AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The Postal Service is reaching out to communities throughout the region to raise public awareness of the importance of keeping walkways, sidewalks, and approaches to mailboxes clear from snow and ice so letter carriers can provide safe and timely mail delivery.

Mounds of snow and patches of ice in front of mailboxes create havoc for carriers trying to safely deliver the mail. Postal officials emphasize that residents maintaining a clear path to the mailbox — including steps, porches, walkways and street approach — will help postal carriers provide timely delivery service. Customers receiving curbside delivery should also ensure clear access to their mailboxes for letter carriers from the street.

Postal employees make every reasonable effort to deliver the mail in many difficult weather conditions. At the same time, we must insure the safety of our carriers along their routes. Carriers are not allowed to attempt door delivery when there is a heavy buildup of snow and ice on sidewalks, steps or porches. They are not allowed to dismount for curbside boxes blocked by snow and ice buildup.

If mailboxes are blocked off and conditions are difficult, letter carriers must always consider safety and accessibility first. Letter carriers are instructed to not deliver to mailboxes and locations which are too hazardous or unsafe to access.

The U.S. Postal Service and postal letter carriers greatly appreciate your support.

The Postal Service received no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

See NEWS IN BRIEF Page 10

#### Dashboard // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

than 760 hours of live interpretation services — ensuring every interaction was linguistically accessible and supported by a qualified interpreter.

#### City-Scheduled Language Accommodations

Tracks departmental requests for:

- In-person and virtual interpretation
- Written translation (including revisions)
  - CART
  - ASL
- Captures total spending, number of requests, number of languages, and the most requested languages annually

To support accurate insights and usability, LCA has integrated multiple data sources, created standardized metrics, and implemented robust filtering tools within the dashboard model.

"This dashboard reflects our Cabinet's commitment to embedding equity into the way Boston delivers services," said Equity and Inclusion Cabinet Chief, Mariangely Solis Cervera. "By sharing this data openly, we're not only increasing transparency, but also creating the foundation for smarter decision-making about where resources are most needed. It's another step toward building a city government that meets residents where they are."

"This dashboard brings together years of data into one place, giving residents and City staff a clearer picture of how language and communication services are being used across Boston," said Jeniffer Vivar Wong, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Language and Communications Access. "It's a practical tool that helps us understand current needs, identify gaps, and guide our ongoing work to expand access."

"This is the City's first multilingual dashboard, and it represents a major step forward in how we approach language access," said Erika Garcia, Research & Data Manager for LCA. "With this tool, we can clearly see where translation and interpretation services are most needed, how resources are being used, and where we can continue to improve. It's about making sure every resident has access to the information and services they deserve."

"Data can tell a story about

the people and places around us," said Shin-pei Tsay, Chief Research and Data Officer, "we are proud to build tools that make information public and accessible. This window into how language access services are used across the City allows us to understand, improve, and deliver language access for every Bostonian. Our Data and Research Team, particularly Charles Sheils, Joseph Headley, and Jenna Flanagan, played

a key role in understanding what our communities need and ensuring the data dashboard directly supported OC-LA's service."

The Language and Communications Access Dashboard is available to the public and city staff at boston.gov/lca. An instructional video is also available in all 11 languages to guide users in navigating the dashboard and exploring the data.



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CARY SHUMAN PHOTOS



#### SALESIAN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB HOLDS ANNUAL PASTA DINNER FUNDRAISER



Executive Director Michael Triant (right), pictured with his parents, George Triant and Janet Triant, at the Salesian Boys & Girls Club's 19th annual Pasta Dinner.

Club held its 19th annual Pasta Dinner Fundraiser Friday, Nov. 21 at the club that is located on Byron Street.

Executive Director Michael

The Salesian Boys and Girls Triant welcomed the large gathering to the event. Triant thanked the many sponsors for their generosity and support which allows the Club to continue to provide valuable



Pictured at the Pasta Dinner are Melissa Triant of the transportation division, Lucia Ancillo, SEL room coordinator, and Janet Triant of the spiritual office.



Rep. Adrian Madaro greets guests at the dinner (front row) Michael Chisholm, Jose Guerra, Lisa Migliozzi and Mike Migliozzi, (back row) Susan Reason and Tim Reason.

programming that helps the Club members to grow to their fullest potential and to become responsible and caring citizens.

Director of Operations James Geraci and Director of Development Anita Belmonte made sure everyone was having a great time with their cordiality and hospitality.

Rep. Adrian Madaro and Yamina Lachmi of Sen. Lydia Edwards Office brought the greetings of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Boston Region 1 School Supt. Dr. Tommy Welch, an East Boston resident, enjoyed the event with his children.

The guests enjoyed crackers and cheese, a dinner salad, rolls and butter, and a pasta dinner

with meatballs and ziti, soda, followed by desserts that included cakes and cookies.

There were raffles for several outstanding gift baskets and prizes.

A very special thank you was extended to Janet Triant of Triant Real Estate for creating the beautiful gift baskets and her generous donations.



Helping out with the preparation and serving of the delicious pasta dinner are Dianne Belmonte, Laura Troville, Joan Papa, and Coreen



Salesian Boys & Girls Club leaders and members are pictured at the 19th annual Pasta Dinner.



Well-known East Boston-based journalist Frank Conte (back row), pictured with family and friends (front row), Irina Gallato, his mother, Maria Conte, and Ben Berlangieri; (back row), Joanne Tammaro, his daughter, Alessandra Conte, and Director of Operations James Geraci.

#### SALESIAN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB HOLDS ANNUAL PASTA DINNER FUNDRAISER



Charles "Skip" Marcella and Dottie Marcella, pictured with their granddaughter, Emilia Marcella, at the Pasta Dinner.



Heather Roberts and John Kingston, representing St. Jean's Credit Union, one of the event sponsors.



**Executive Director Michael** Triant, pictured with his daughter, Callie Triant, and his mother, Janet Triant.



EBLL President Nick Free, with his wife, Tiffany Free, and their children, Catcher Free, 10, (front), Holden Free 13, and Phoebe Free, 3.



Pictured at the Pasta Dinner are Director of Development Anita Belmonte, Yamina Lachmi of Sen. Lydia Edwards Office, and Julianna Troville of the Salesian Youth Development Staff.



Pictured at the raffle ticket table are Board Member Jim Langone, volunteer Janice Johnson, and Director of Operations James Geraci.



Rep. Adrian Madaro is pictured with Pasta Dinner supporters (front row) Steven Scarpa and Taimee Scarpa, Treyson Scarpa (left) and Owen Jalbert.

#### WINTHROP MARKETPLACE

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(single box only- excludes gluten	free)
Libby's Canned Vegetables	10/\$10.00
Celeste Pizza	10/\$10.00
Best Yet All Purpose Flour 5 lb bag	2/÷5.00
Best Yet Cranberry Sauce	2/ <del>\$3</del> .00
Classico Pasta Sauce	2/\$4.00
Ronzoni Pasta	
(ex: gluten free-super green-garden	veggie)
Hunts Canned Tomatoes 28 oz	2/ <del>\$</del> 4.00
Pillsbury Quick Bread	2/\$6.00
New England Coffee	<i>\$7</i> .99
Best Yet Whipped Topping	
Brigham's Ice Cream	
Philadelphia Soft Cream Cheese	
Bays English Muffins	2/ <del>\$</del> 7.00
Best Yet Sour Cream 16 oz	

Assorted Sliced Pound Cakes	÷5.99
Pecan Sticky Buns 6 pk	÷5.99
Stone Fire Flat Bread Pizza Crust 2 pk	

Fresh & Sweet Raspberries	÷2.9
Northeast Grown Fresh & Crisp	
McIntosh Apples 3 lb bag	÷2.9
Fresh Italian Plum Roma Tomatoes	\$1.69/I
All Purpose Yellow Onions 2 lb bag	
Fresh & Crisp Super Select Cucumbers	69

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Bottom Rump Roast	\$ <b>5.99/l</b> b
Grade A Split Chicken Breast	\$2. <b>59/l</b> b
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Perdue Chicken Nuggets	
Hatfield Bacon 16 oz	

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Smithfield Premium Smoked Virginia Ham.	<b>≑5.99/l</b> b
Sahlens Buffalo Chicken Breast	\$9.99/lb
Stella Slicing Provolone	∳6.99/lb
Corner Shop American Cheese	<b>≑3</b> .99/lb

#### Weekend Specials

Frid	ay, Dec. 5th through Sunday, Dec. 7t	h
ERY	"while supplies last"	

Half Parisian Bread	4/\$5.00	(
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#### News in Brief

#### WU ANNOUNCES YOUTH JOB APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Office of Youth Employment and Opportunity (YEO) have announced that youth job applications are now open for the 2025-2026 School Year.

The program currently has over 2,000 employment opportunities available for Boston youth and young adults ages 14-24.

#### **Program Highlights**

Application: Youth can apply online at futureBOS, the centralized hub for all City em-

ployment opportunities, including the flagship SuccessLink program.

Funding: The City provided \$23.3 million in its FY26 budget for youth jobs, leveraging an additional \$10.5 million in external funds.

Career Pathways: The program connects youth to employment in high-demand industries, including the new Boston Climate Youth Corps, which hired over 200 youth last summer for jobs focused on climate resilience and sustainability.

Partnerships: YEO partners with over 300 entities, including City agencies, non-profits, and educational institutions,

and continues to collaborate with Boston Public Schools (BPS) to fulfill the Youth Jobs Guarantee.

Financial Education: YEO partners with Bank On Boston and the Center for Working Families to provide financial education, workshops, and access to safe, no-fee bank accounts.

#### How to Apply

Job applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and youth are strongly encouraged to apply early by December 15, 2025.

Online Guide: A step-bystep application guide is available online at https://www. boston.gov/departments/youthemployment-and-opportunity/landing-summer-job-or-internship.

In-Person Help: Youth can visit the YEO office in person at 1483 Tremont Street in Roxbury, Monday - Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., or call 617-635-4202 for assistance.

#### ABCD ANNUAL TOY DRIVE SUPPORTS LOCAL FAMILIES

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) has launched its annual Toy Drive, urging the community to help bring joy to neighbors in need as the winter season approaches

For thousands of families, juggling the costs of heat, rent, and groceries during the winter makes providing "a little holiday cheer" difficult. Every year, the ABCD Toy Drive distributes upwards of 6,000 toys to more than 720 families with the support of generous donors.

#### How to become a donor

Individuals, families, social or faith groups, businesses, or benevolent societies are invited to step up and join the effort.

To become a Toy Drive Donor:

Complete the online form at bostonabcd.org/service/toy-drive/. An ABCD staff member will then contact you to schedule the donation drop-off and other logistics.

For questions or more information, contact ABCD at 617-348-6767 or holidays@bostonabcd.org.

#### How families can register for toys

Families in need of toys this holiday season must register by calling one of the participating ABCD locations.

Registration is required, and all eligible households must have an updated and complete client file that includes:

- proof of income.
- proof of address.

- photo ID.
- proof of family size (birth certificate of children).

Once the completed application is received, ABCD will contact the family with details on when the toys will be ready for pick-up.

Please call the East Boston Area Planning Action Council office at 617-567-8857 to sign up to receive or donate a toy this holiday season.

The East Boston APAC is located at 21 Meridian Street, in Eastie.

## BOSTON PARKS DEPARTMENT BRINGS FOREVER YOUNG PROGRAM INDOORS FOR WINTER

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF), is excited to announce the return of the Forever Young Program for older adults.

To keep seniors active, social, and warm all season, the free program is moving indoors to the Carter Playground Bubble.

#### **Program Details**

What: The program provides a welcoming indoor space for fun and fitness, featuring activities such as bocce, cornhole, walking, and weekly special events.

When: Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m..

Duration: Starting January 7th and running weekly until March 2, 2026.

Where: Carter Playground Bubble, 709 Columbus Ave, Boston, MA 02118.

Attendance: Sessions are drop-in, and pre-registration is not required.

The program aims to encourage physical activity, mental well-being, and community engagement for older adults throughout the winter.

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#### Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association honors individuals at the 2025 Law Enforcement & Corrections Awards Ceremony

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department joined the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association (MSA) in proud celebration of the outstanding achievements and unwavering commitment of law enforcement and corrections professionals at the 2025 Law Enforcement & Corrections Awards Ceremony on Thursday, November 13, 2025. The event, held at The Great Hall in the Massachusetts State House, honored recipients in 10 award categories for their exceptional dedication and ser-

The awards ceremony highlighted stories of heroism, commitment, and innovation within the law enforcement and corrections communities across the Commonwealth.

"It is a privilege to celebrate the remarkable contributions of law enforcement and corrections professionals who go above and beyond in service to others," said Hampshire County Sheriff Patrick Cahillane, President of the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association. "Their courage, innovation, and leadership make our correctional facilities and communities stronger and safer every day."

The Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association commended these exemplary individuals for their service, including the actions of Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Captain Mel Reed. Captain Reed and his colleagues' efforts continue to inspire positive change, improving outcomes for those individuals returning to our communities, and making the Commonwealth a more resilient state.

Captain Reed was recognized for his extraordinary courage, swift action, and unwavering commitment to public safety when he risked his own life to rescue an uncon-



More than 250 participants attended the 2025 Law Enforcement & Corrections Awards Ceremony on Thursday at the State House honoring exemplary individuals for their professionalism and service. Pictured here are (I-r) Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi, Captain Mel Reed of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, and Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Special Sheriff Mark Lawhorne.

scious driver from a burning vehicle, demonstrating exceptional leadership, composure, and the highest ideals of the law enforcement profession.

"Captain Mel Reed's courage represents the very best of the Suffolk County Sher-

iff's Department," said Mark Lawhorne, Special Sheriff for the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. "His swift, self-less actions in pulling an unconscious man from a burning vehicle saved a life and exemplifies the honor, bravery, and professionalism we strive for every day in our institutions and in our community. We are proud to see him recognized as the MSA 2025 Deputy of the Year."

In addition to Suffolk County's Captain Reed, other award recipients from across the Commonwealth were honored for their service and pro-

fessionalism: Officer John Ballerino (Norfolk County) and Officer Nicholas Woinar (Worcester County) were named Correctional Officers of the Year. Deputy Nicholas Fitzpatrick (Barnstable County) and Lieutenant Benjamin Goody (Franklin County) received the Deputy Sheriff of the Year award. The awards ceremony also recognized Employee of the Year recipients Elizabeth Stetzel (Hampshire County) and Alyssa Perley (Bristol County), along with Supervisor of the Year recipients Lieutenant Scott Bishop (Barnstable County) and Captain Sam Rapoza (Bristol County). Other awards went to Training Officers Sergeant Christopher Cochran (Barnstable County) and Sergeant Charles Ober (Essex County), Jail Administrators Barbara Clarkson (Barnstable County) and Superintendent Antone Moniz (Plymouth County), the Older Adult Reentry Unit and the Family Support Services Unit (both Middlesex Sheriff's Office) for Innovation and Program of the Year, and the LEO Support Foundation/S.M.A.C. (Plymouth County) as Strategic Partner of the Year. The Sheriff Michael J. Ashe Award was presented to Stephen Amos (Chief of the Jails Division, National Institute of Corrections).

## Healey-Driscoll Administration releases statewide high school graduation framework

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has released an initial statewide graduation framework designed to set nation-leading expectations and prepare all students for success after high school, regardless of their chosen career path. This framework, developed with the K-12 Statewide Graduation Council, represents the state's most robust education standards ever.

#### **Key Principles and Changes**

The new system moves away from reliance on a single high-stakes test. Key changes include:

- Phasing Out 10th Grade MCAS: The 10th Grade MCAS exam would be phased out as part of the new framework.
- No Single Barrier: No single test will represent a barrier to graduation for any student.
- Comprehensive Approach: Massachusetts will be the first state to implement such a comprehensive approach to setting high educational standards.

#### Seven Elements of the Framework

The framework is structured around seven elements that focus on building a strong academic foundation, demonstrating mastery, and developing real-world problem-solving skills.

#### **Strong Starts**

Students must complete a set of coursework that aligns with admissions requirements for higher education.

#### **Proven Skills**

To show mastery of course content, students will complete:

• A limited number of endof-course (EOC) assessments.

EOCs are a more targeted and relevant approach than the current high school MCAS.

Students do not have to pass an EOC to graduate.

• A capstone or portfolio.

Capstones are cumulative projects, typically including research, a written assignment, and a final presentation.

Portfolios are a collection of a student's best work demonstrating mastery in one or across content areas.

#### **Bright Futures**

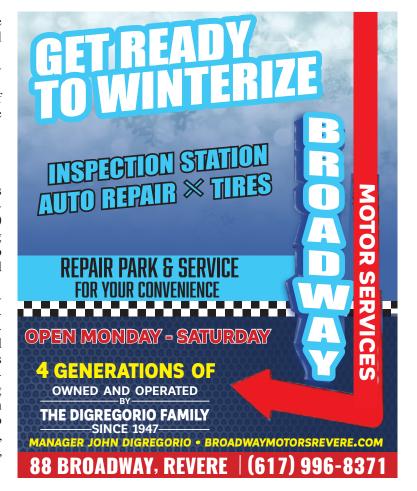
This element focuses on future planning and literacy:

- Students create their own plan for college or career.
- Students must complete the FAFSA or MASFA (financial aid application).
- Students learn financial literacy.
- Students can earn seals of distinction, such as the State Seal of Biliteracy.

#### Stakeholder Engagement and Next Steps

This initial framework is the first step, following significant feedback from over 400 people who attended listening sessions, 6,615 respondents to a statewide online survey, and 103 district administrators.

The administration will continue to seek input from communities to refine the recommendations and work toward a final report next year. This work builds on the administration's existing "Reimagining High School Initiative," which includes expanding access to programs like Early College, Innovation Career Pathways, and MyCAP.



#### BOSTON LYRIC OPERA PRESENTS THE OPERA GALA



PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN
Boston Lyric Opera Artistic
Director Nina Yoshida Nelsen
and Executive Director Bradley
Vernatter.



Thomas and Sonja Hout.



PHOTO BY NILE SCOTT STUDIOS

Priscilla Douglas, Retired Chair
of Board, Boston Public Library
with Dr. Melissa Gilliam, President, Boston University.



PHOTO BY MIKE MEIJA

Suki DeBraganca, Sarah Blume, and Jo Frances Meyer.



Alicia Cooney receives a Citation from Councilor Sharon Durkan on behalf of the Boston City Council with Boston Lyric Opera Artistic Director Nina Yoshida Nelsen and Executive Director Bradley Vernatter.

Shown at left, Boston Lyric Opera Executive Director Bradley Vernatter and Massachusetts State Senator Nick Collins.

Shown at right, Boston Lyric Opera Artistic Director Nina Yoshida Nelsen and Boston City Councilor Sharon Durkan thank attendees for their support.



The Opera Gala is the Boston Lyric Opera's signature event of the year. Held at the SoWa Power Station, guests

came to support the organization that enriches Boston with performances accessible to all.



PHOTO BY MIKE MEIJA

Alex Senchak, Alicia Cooney, and Keith Lockhart.



BLO Executive Director Bradley Vernatter, Susan Goldberg (WGBH journalist), and Jonathan Soroff.



Neal Ferreira presents Vocalist Mary Kray with the Steven Shrestinian Award For Excellence.

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#### BOSTON LYRIC OPERA PRESENTS THE OPERA GALA



Massachusetts State Senator Nick Collins, on behalf of the State Senate, presents a Citation to Boston Pops Conductor Keith Lockheart with Willa Bodman and Boston Lyric Opera Executive Director Bradley Vernatter.



Massachusetts State Senator Nick Collins, on behalf of the State Senate, presents a Citation to Lee Pelton with Boston Lyric Opera Executive Director Bradley Vernatter.



Boston Lyric Opera Gala Stage Director James Blaszko, Artistic Director Nina Yoshida Nelsen, and Executive Director Bradley Vernatter.



## Connect Where It Counts!

We are looking for volunteers age 50+ to serve as reading coaches to help students in Chelsea

#### Interested?

Attend an upcoming information session to learn more!

#### Mon, Dec 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

Chelsea Public Library 569 Broadway, Chelsea, MA

or visit our website literations.org/volunteer



Friday, December 12, 2025 5:00pm - 8:00pm

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Admission is one new, unwrapped children's toy.

Join us for a family event with kids music, entertainment, raffles, & cash bar. Cocktail attire encouraged, festive spirit required!



#### MBTA announces changes to service during winter 2026

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) today announced its service updates which go into effect on Sunday, December

Among these updates, 21 bus routes in total will increase frequency with 10 of those being upgraded to operate every 15 minutes or better. This is part of the larger Better Bus program aimed at improving the bus routes system wide.

Riders are strongly encouraged to check schedules in advance and to use the MBTA's Trip Planner as well as the MBTA Go app to view live information.

#### **Subway Updates**

Orange Line: Trip time and reliability will improve due to operational improvements to reduce congestion at Oak

Blue Line: Time between trips may shift by a few minutes midday between 12pm and 2pm to allow for maintenance and inspections. This will lead to improved reliability and predictability of passenger service.

#### **Bus Service Improvements**

Routes 32, 39, 57, 66, 71, 73, 77, SL1, SL3, SL5: These 10 routes will become Frequent Bus Routes with service every

15 minutes or better every day during most operating hours.

Route 64: To improve connectivity and consistency, weekend trips will no longer deviate to University Park in Cambridge, but will extend to Kendall/MIT seven days a week. University Park can still be reached by traveling to/from the bus at Central Square (inbound River Street, outbound Western Ave). Route frequency will also improve.

Routes 112 and 114: The bus stop located at the Chelsea Market Basket has moved from the east side of the store to the west side closer to the Carter St. side of the building due to building construction.

Route 7: Frequency will increase to alleviate crowding during AM and PM peak peri-

Routes 9, 21, 26, 45, 64, 69, 83, 116, 215, 225, 245: Frequency will increase.

For other minor runtime, reliability, and trip shift changes see mbta.com for schedules.

#### **Ferry Schedule Changes**

Hingham/Hull Ferry weekday service continues to operate year-round. There is no weekend service throughout the winter.

Charlestown Ferry weekday and weekend service continues to operate year-round.

East Boston Ferry weekend

and weekday will operate this season through November 30, 2025

Lynn Ferry, Winthrop Ferry, and Quincy Ferry weekday service continues to operate through November 26, 2025. There is no weekend service throughout the winter on these

The full lists of upcoming changes for winter 2026 will soon be available at mbta.com.

For more information, connect with the T on X @MBTA, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @ thembta, or TikTok @thembta.

wich can make a bon mi, and

we have based parties around

teaching friends to make fresh

rolls. The preparation for this

menu is mostly shopping and

One of our favorite food

See Fresh & LOCAL Page 15

#### Fresh and Local

## **Inspired By Street Food**

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

December is when entertaining friends and family adds to an already busy schedule. We suggest you choose to serve a meal inspired by street food. You could select a street food specialty that reflects your family's culture, features a family favorite, or honors a guest.

Food designed for last-minute preparation, served from a cart, food truck, or small stall, is usually limited in ingredients and makes great party food. As a bonus, most street food can be eaten out of hand, from disposable serving items, with fingers or wooden spoons and

You can have one or two people play chef and prepare each person's choice to order. Or, make it self-serve. Set up a table of optional ingredients



A fill-it-yourself taco party could be a perfect theme for feeding a crowd.

### Submit notices to legals@eastietimes.com

#### **LEGAL NOTICE**

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT SUFFOLK PROBATE AND **FAMILY COURT** 24 NEW CHARDON STREET BOSTON, MA 02114 (617)788-8300 DOCKÈT NÓ. SU25P2195EA Estate of: Danielle Marie Bovle Also known as: Danielle Boyle

Date of Death: 01/06/2025 To all interested persons: A Petition for S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Sharon M Boyle of Everett, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:

Sharon M Boyle of Everett, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration. IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/30/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action

may be taken without further

notice to you. UNSUPERVISED

ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PRORATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of and expenses of adminis-WITNESS, Hon. Janine D Rivers, First Justice of this Court. Date: November 24, 2025

Stephanie L Everett, Esq., Register of Probate 12/3

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truck menus and drew on our

favorite items from the past

to offer menu suggestions for

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sandwiches, and a big bowl of

bun thit nuong (a noodle salad).

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but not to cook.

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#### Fresh & Local // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

trucks, Mei Mei, has turned its menu into a dumpling business. You can buy their excellent products frozen and serve a selection of dumplings and sauces. Round out your menu with a takeout order from your favorite Asian restaurant.

Pennypackers is another well-loved food truck famous for its porchetta sandwiches. If you are a good home cook, you could make your porchetta in advance and surround it with a basket of bread, a tray of antipasto, and a big Italian salad.

Taco trucks are what sparked the street food scene in this country, and a taco party could be the perfect theme to feed a crowd. Even when we make tacos for two, we set up our dining bar as a taco assembly line. You could offer a hot plate of fillings, including vegetarian and vegan options. Add salsas, shredded lettuce, cheese, and creamy toppings. Let everyone decide whether they want hard, flour, or whole-grain tacos, and fill them as they wish.

If you have a crew of less adventuresome eaters, you could have a grilled cheese menu inspired by Roxy's Grilled Cheese truck. We geek out on grilled cheese by making them with an assortment of flavored breads from When Pigs Fly bakery. Or, you could duplicate Roxy's support of local businesses by choosing your ingredients from the vendors they proudly display on their website. Don't forget to have a simmering crockpot of tomato soup for dipping.

#### Do It Yourself or Have It Catered

One final note on this topic, many local restaurants and food trucks offer catering services. You could support a small business and have someone who's an expert in creating a popular street food menu handle the food for the party. The three who cater, mentioned here, are Mei Mei, Pennypackers, and Roxy's. If you have a favorite place for a favorite food, ask if they can cater your event. Small businesses can use the income and exposure, and you can use the free time!

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Email Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.



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INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER GROUP

#### Tony DiPrizio // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

gold medalist Kayla Harris, currently the UFC bantam-weight champion.

Taking great pride in the success of his East Boston-based judo program, DiPrizio said the endeavor was launched with the assistance of Rep. Adrian Madaro, who reached out to Nicole DaSilva, director of the community center, who agreed to be the host site.

Rep. Madaro is a strong supporter of the program and made a pre-Thanksgiving visit to the gym where he thanked DiPrizio for his excellent leadership, greeted parents, and obliged photo requests from judo participants.

"It was great to stop by the Muscles Unlimited Legacy Foundation to see its new judo class at Paris Community Center," said Madaro. "It's always nice to have another martial arts space in the community to not only teach youth self-defense, but also discipline, leadership,

and communication. Special thanks to Tony DiPrizio for founding this organization and for his mentorship with the program's participants."

DiPrizio said the enrollment breakdown for the two-days-aweek program is 45 children, 15 teenagers, and 10 adults.

"The program just took off and we're at 75 with a waiting list," said DiPrizio proudly.

DiPrizio, who is volunteering his time and effort to run the program, is assisted by an all-volunteer coaching staff that includes Frank Presta, Benjamin Noboa, Chris Alba, and Hailey Darling,

"Frankie and I started at Revere Karate Academy when we were six years old," recalled DiPrizio. "Mrs. [Doreen] Cogliandro, (a Grandmaster and world champion) was our first martial arts instructor. Frankie earned his Brown Belt under her tutelage."

DiPrizio attended Revere



Muscles Unlimited Legacy Foundation Judo program instructors, Sensei Benjamin Noboa and Sensei Hailey Darling, Foundation President and Sensei Tony DiPrizio, judo medalist Rafael Mazzoni, and Rep. Adrian Madaro.



The leaders and participants in the Muscles Unlimited Legacy Foundation's judo program, Senseis Tony Prizio, Hailey Darling, and Benjamin Noboa, medalist Rafael Mazzoni, and Sensei Frank Presta (far right) join Rep. Adrian Madaro for a photo during his special visit to the Paris Street Gym.

schools. He is the son of Diane DiPrizio, a lifelong Revere resident and a popular crossing guard at the Garfield School.

DiPrizio noted that the judo program is free of charge for all participants. The East Boston Foundation (which is funded by Massport) provided a grant of \$6,000 for the purchase of uniforms for the summer and fall sessions. WIN has donated uniforms for the winter and spring sessions. Revere Police Sgt. Joseph Singer of Revere Boxing donated the tatami mats. Let's Play Boston was a donor of \$2,500 to support operating costs.

One of DiPrizio's judo athletes, Rafael, a student at Excel Academy, is soaring through the ranks, having received a medal at a regional competition.

"I think you'll see Rafael Mazzoni contending for a spot on the 2028 U.S. Olympic team and training with Jimmy Pedro," predicted DiPrizio.

DiPrizio, who works full time for the Boston Department of Public Works, said his goal is to continue the judo program if there is funding available.

"The response we're getting from parents has been phenomenal," said DiPrizio. "Parents tell us how their children are gaining more confidence through our program, and their pursuit of belts is giving them a sense of accomplishment and an acknowledgment of their hard work."

And that's why Anthony "Tony" DiPrizio has respectfully earned the title of "King of the Mat" in East Boston. Here's hoping that Mr. DiPrizio finds a funding source so the many aspiring martial artists can continue to pursue their goals in judo.

#### The legacy of Muscles Unlimited

The original Muscles Unlimited Gym was opened in Revere in 1979. Tony Prizio's grandfather, Sonny Avola, and uncle, Bob Avola, were the leaders of the gym where several professional wrestlers and body builders would train. The gym closed in 2001.

"Pro wrestlers such as the Gulla brothers, the Iron Messiah, and Rocky Raymond all trained there," said Tony Di-Prizio. "When the wrestlers like Hulk Hogan and Macho Man Randy Savage competed in Boston, they would all go to Muscles Unlimited because it was right near the airport. That was a big spot for all the professional wrestlers. The gym also had tanning beds, which was a first back then."



