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EAST BOSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN BOSTON SCORES ANNUAL POETRY SLAM



Team Umana celebrates its victory at the Boston SCORES Annual Poetry Slam at the Strand Theater in Dorchester. See Pages 4 and 5 for more photos.

East Boston CHC gets grant to expand family nurse practitioner residency program

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Healey-Driscoll Administration recently announced \$2.1 million in grant awards to implement, sustain or expand Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) residency programs at eight Community Health Centers (CHCs) across the state, including NeighborHealth in East

Boston.

The FNP residency grant program aims to support community-based workforce recruitment and retention and increase availability of primary care professionals serving Massachusetts residents.

This investment is part of

See GRANT Page 3

Coletta Zapata reflects on fourth year in office with annual report

Special to the Times-Free Press

Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata has released her fourth Annual Report, reflecting on her work in 2025 and her second term on the Boston City Council. The report highlights major accomplishments across

District 1, including transformative investments, key policy initiatives, and community-driven efforts, while also outlining her priorities for the Council and the district in 2026.

"I'm proud of the progress we've made together, and I re-

See REPORT Page 3

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in observance of the
New Years Day holiday
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Forum

HAPPY NEW YEAR

It's hard to believe that another year has passed and that 2026 is here -- and that we now are entering the second quarter of the 21st century.

For those of us who ourselves are close to three-quarters of a century in age, as we look back at the quarter-century markers of our lifetime, we realize that when we were young, everything from the past seemed like it was long, long ago (and in a galaxy far, far away).

For example, when we'd be watching WWII movies such as *The Longest Day* or *The Battle of the Bulge* in the 1960s, that war seemed to be entirely of another era. But the historical events depicted in those movies had occurred less than 20 years previously.

That's about the same length of time, for example, that separates the start of the war in Iraq, which was in 2003, to today. Yet as we look back on that war, it seems like it was only yesterday that we were glued to our TV sets watching the U.S. forces advance to Baghdad.

Thoughts such as these make us realize that the one thing we've discovered about aging is that the older we get, the faster that time seems to go by.

We often quote a verse from Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Ring Out Wild Bells" when we write our annual New Year's editorial.

But after re-reading the poem in its entirety, we are printing the whole thing, because it sums up -- better than we ever could express -- our feelings about the departing 2025 and our hopes for the coming year 2026.

Although it was published in 1850, the poem's verses are timeless. Indeed, one could apply every stanza to something going on in the world today.

So we hope you take the time to read it and enjoy it, as we did the other day:

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.
Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more,
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.
Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out thy mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.
Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.
Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.
Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.*

We wish all of our readers a Happy and Healthy New Year.

LETTER to the Editor

CBS: A NEWSROOM OR A PR FIRM?

To the Editor,

I am disappointed by CBS News' spineless decision this past Sunday to pull its investigation into the "Inside CECOT" mega-prison in El Salvador. This was not a failure of journalism; it was a failure of nerve. And an irrefutable sign that "freedom of the press," as guaranteed by our First Amendment is clearly in danger.

The report, led by correspondent Sharyn Alfonsi, documented the "brutal and torturous" conditions facing migrants deported by the Trump administration to a facility described as a living hell. According to internal reports, the story was screened five times and fully cleared by both CBS legal and standards departments. Yet, at the eleventh hour, Editor-in-Chief Bari Weiss spiked it, claiming it needed "additional reporting"—specifically, an interview with the very administration responsible for the deportations despite the fact that Alfonsi had previously requested comment from the White House and relevant agencies.

When a news organization allows a government's refusal to comment to act as a veto over the truth, they have, as Alfonsi put it, handed the state a "kill switch" for

any story deemed inconvenient.

In Massachusetts, where we pride ourselves on a history of speaking truth to power, this kind of corporate cowardice is particularly galling. CBS didn't pull the story because it was inaccurate; they pulled it because it was uncomfortable. By choosing political safety over revealing the truth about the suffering in CECOT, CBS has traded its "gold standard" reputation for political appeasement and a week of quiet. In America, every person on our soil has fundamental rights to fair legal treatment, including court hearings and processes, ensuring they aren't deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, meaning even non-citizens facing deportation have rights to fair hearings.

We deserve better from our public airwaves.

Our neighbors to the north in Canada aired the roughly 15-minute segment, which was quickly spread online. For those who want to see the reporting CBS was too afraid to air, you can find the segment here: <https://archive.org/details/60mins-cecot>

Sincerely,

Kane DiMasso-Scott

The East Boston Times-Free Press reserves the right to edit letters for space, accuracy and clarity. We regret that we cannot publish unsigned letters. Please include your street and telephone number with your submission. The East Boston Times-Free Press publishes columns, viewpoints and letters to the editor as a forum for readers to express their opinions and to encourage debate. Please note that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The East Boston Times-Free Press. Text or attachments emailed to editor@eastietimes.com are preferred.

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Report // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

main committed to ensuring that every resident in District 1 feels heard, supported, and represented,” said Coletta Zapata. “Through collective efforts, we’ve achieved significant and meaningful change together through policy initiatives and community-based efforts. Thank you for the privilege of serving this community and for the trust you’ve placed in me. Together, I’m hopeful that we will continue to build on our progress in partnership.”

The report highlights the Councilor’s collaborative work with city departments to strengthen constituent services,

advance critical street and sidewalk improvements including ramp upgrades, pothole repairs, and street repaving. Simultaneously, she has championed key priorities such as affordable housing, climate resiliency, prioritized workforce development opportunities, and high-quality public education.

In 2025, the City Council had its fourth opportunity to influence the budget. Coletta Zapata hosted three town halls to gather input from constituents on priorities, such as the importance of youth programming, job opportunities, trash containerization, pest control, affordable housing,

BCYF programming and education. In her report, the Councilor emphasized the importance of community engagement throughout the budget review process, highlighting its critical role in shaping her advocacy and guiding her work.

Throughout the year, Coletta Zapata advanced a comprehensive policy agenda, focusing on both the practical functions and long-term goals for the city. Notable initiatives include:

Accelerating Boston’s waterfront resilience through coastal resilience strategies, investments and exploring a municipal Climate Bank to fund climate

solutions, create green jobs, and drive equitable economic development.

Reviewing oversight and accountability of Boston’s short-term rental ordinance.

Proposing increased fines for unauthorized parking during TD Garden events in the North End.

Launching a Region 1 Boston Public Schools community engagement initiative to shape the future of schools in Charlestown, East Boston, and the North End.

Advocating for the expansion of affordable housing across Boston.

Introducing a Home Rule Petition reforming the Zoning Board of Appeal.

Additionally, Coletta Zapata served as Chair of both the Government Operations Committee and the Environmental Justice, Resiliency & Parks Committee. Under her leadership, the City Council passed several critical ordinances, including codifying the Office of Food Justice and establishing the Office of LGBTQIA2S+ Advancement. The Council also advanced efforts to expand food access, support food pantries, and approved grants that unlock investments

to strengthen and expand Boston’s open and green spaces.

In the new year, Councilor Coletta Zapata is excited to continue advocating for District 1 and Bostonians city-wide with a robust policy agenda. Looking ahead to the next Council term, the Councilor remains committed to continuing this work with a focus on expanding affordable housing, strengthening high quality public education, advancing innovative climate action, investing in the essential ‘nuts and bolts’ issues, and building strong workforce development pathways to good-paying jobs in the climate sector as the economy shifts and AI reshapes the workforce.

Coletta Zapata encourages residents to contact her office for a meeting to discuss suggestions and ideas for solving the most persistent issues. To see her 2025 Annual Report in full, please visit bit.ly/GCZReport_2025 for English and bit.ly/GCZ_Reporte2025 for Spanish.

For additional information please contact the Office of Councilor Gabriela Coletta by phone at (617) 635-3200 or by email at gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov.

Grant // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Governor Maura Healey’s commitment to shifting more resources to primary care and supporting workforce development of primary care providers. The Healey-Driscoll Administration has identified primary care as a priority so that Massachusetts residents can get appointments when they need them.

The NeighborHealth CHC in East Boston will receive funding for two FNP residency slots.

“This investment in primary care at Community Health Centers comes at a critical time,” said Healey. “Community Health Centers are facing serious challenges because of actions of President Trump and Congressional Republicans, but Massachusetts remains committed to supporting their important work across the state and strengthening our primary care workforce.”

Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll said that the more the state can ensure that people have access to services through programs created by funding like this grant, communities will be better off.

“This funding is a major win for East Boston and for the families who depend on NeighborHealth as their primary source of care,” said State Senator Lydia Edwards. “Community Health Centers are the backbone of primary care in our neighborhoods, and investing in Family Nurse Practitioner residencies means more providers, better access to care, and a stronger, more stable workforce rooted in the community. I’m grateful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration, MassHealth and EOHHS for recognizing

the vital role NeighborHealth plays and for making a meaningful investment in the health and wellbeing of our residents.”

Health and Human Services Secretary Kiame Mahaniah said that having more primary care professionals at CHCs across the state means better access to care for residents, less strain on emergency rooms, and healthier lives for people in Massachusetts.

“Accessible primary care is the foundation of good health outcomes, services that Community Health Centers excel in providing to the communities that need it most,” said state Representative Adrian Madaro. “Here in East Boston, NeighborHealth is an essential primary care provider for our neighbors and surrounding communities. This funding for Family Nurse Practitioner residencies will bolster NeighborHealth’s ability to provide competent family-centered primary care to populations that will most benefit from it. Thank you to Governor Healey, Lieutenant Governor Driscoll and the Administration for making this funding possible.”

State Representative John Moran said Community Health Centers are essential to ensuring local access to affordable, equitable care. “Investing in primary care at centers like NeighborHealth in the 9th Suffolk District strengthens our health care system and helps address its ongoing challenges,” Moran said.

The FNP residency grant program is part of the Workforce Initiatives portfolio authorized and funded under the Medicaid

Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver.

“Increasing the availability of primary care professionals is an ongoing goal for MassHealth,” said

Undersecretary for MassHealth Mike Levine. “This funding allows Community Health Centers to train primary care providers who are committed and well-prepared to care for patients in community settings. It is crucial in supporting workforce development, while addressing the challenges of primary care recruitment and retention.”

The FNP residency grant program is part of the Workforce Initiatives portfolio authorized and funded under the Medicaid Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver.

“Developing Family Nurse Practitioner residency programs within community health centers is an investment in the future of equitable, community-based care,” said Michael A. Curry, Esq., President & Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers. “By building a strong and sustainable pipeline of Family Nurse Practitioners, we are expanding access to primary care, addressing workforce shortages, strengthening the foundation of care for underserved communities across the Commonwealth, and providing another training ground for diverse providers. This work reflects our enduring commitment to a simple truth: every person deserves access to compassionate, high-quality care.”

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EAST BOSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN BOSTON SCORES ANNUAL POETRY SLAM

East Boston elementary school students participated in the Boston SCORES Annual Poetry Slam at the Strand Theater in Dorchester. The theme of the event was: Sounds of the World Cup.

Boston SCORES is an after-school, organized soccer and enrichment program.



Students from the Curtis Guild School.



Students from the McKay School.



O'Donnell School students celebrate after winning the overall Sportsmanship Award at the Poetry Slam.



Students from the Umana Academy, winner of the Best Delivery Award.



Boston Region 1 Schools Supt. Dr. Tommy Welch pictured with Bradley School students, Emi Welch (daughter) and Miranda Ramos, who were selected as award recipients for the citywide poetry competition.



The Umana and PJ Kennedy School teams.

EAST BOSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN BOSTON SCORES ANNUAL POETRY SLAM



O'Donnell School students take a photo with their Sportsmanship Award.

Harbor View Neighborhood Association meeting agenda

The next meeting of the Harbor View Neighborhood Association (HVNA) will be on January 5, 2026, at 6pm. The meeting is In Person only but will be streamed via Facebook for archival purposes. Attendance on Facebook does not qualify for voting. The meeting will be held in the Salesian Boys and Girls Club cafeteria, across from the Brooke Charter School on Byron Street. You can access the meeting from the front door on Byron Street which is also handicap accessible and an elevator is available for your convenience if needed, which is the handicap entry, to avoid the stairs.

La proxima reunion de Harbor View Neighborhood Association esta en cinco de enero a las 6pm. La reunion esta en persona y via Facebook. La asistencia en Facebook no califica para vota. Llega a la cafeteria del Salesian Boys y Girls Club por la calle Byron al otro lado de Brooke Charter School. Puede entrar a la junta por la entrada principal en la calle Byron la cual puede ser utilizada por personas con discapacidades y tiene un elevador si es que es necesario para evitar las escaleras.

Agenda
Welcome/Introduction (5min)
Carlos Garcia (5min) East Boston liaison, Office of Neighborhood Services will report on any items of importance. His contact information is carlos.garcia@boston.gov or 617-308-5725.
Announcements (5min):

Better Beaches Save the Harbor Save the Bay Grant Program application ends on January 31, 2026. Virtual info session: January 14, 6pm-7:30pm via zoom and in person session January 20, 6pm-7:30pm at 15 Necco Street, Boston. Boston Scores wishes to thank all the
See HVNA Page 10

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Among those gathered for a holiday luncheon at 1928 Rowe's Wharf to thank those who serve our country were Navy and Coast Guard personnel stationed locally aboard the USS Constitution and USCG base Northeast, respectively. Seen are, from left, former Boston Police Commissioner William Gross; USCG Operations Specialist Chief Colin MacDonald; USCG Command Senior Chief Jimmie Carter; USN Commander Crystal L. Schaefer, commanding officer of the USS Constitution; Miles for Military Founder Maureen Byrne; 1928 Rowe's Wharf owner Kristin Jenkins; Marine Corps veterans Ronan Barrett and Danny O'Toole, USN Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Phillip Morris; and USCG Chief Warrant Officer Rob Resendes.

1928 RESTAURANT THANKS SERVICE MEMBERS WITH A CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Special to the Times-Free Press

The 1928 Rowe's Wharf restaurant on Dec. 22 served a complimentary Christmas luncheon to military veterans, active-duty service members, and their families as a show of appreciation to the brave men and women who have protected — and those who still defend — the nation. Among the active-duty personnel in attendance were the captain and sailors from the USS Constitution, which is berthed at the Charles-

town Navy Yard, and Coast Guardsmen stationed at USCG-Northeast District, headquartered in the North End.

Kristin Jenkins, the owner of 1928 Rowe's Wharf and its sister restaurant, 1928 Beacon Hill, offered the lunch in gratitude for the sacrifices made by those who serve. The non-profit organization Miles For Military, which provides flights home for junior enlisted personnel on leave who otherwise might not be able to afford them, joined the event. Guests

were able to make donations to Miles For Military.

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn presented a proclamation from the Council recognizing Miles For Military for its support of service men and women. Other speakers included Miles For Military founder Maureen Byrne, and former Boston Police Commissioner William Gross, who spoke about service and leadership. Mix 104.1FM morning host Karson Tager, an Army veteran, emceed the luncheon event.

Public health officials warn residents of a significant increase in flu cases

Special to the Times-Free Press

The City of Boston and Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) are informing residents that flu cases are surging earlier this year than last year, with a recent increase of 114% in reported cases. Flu related emergency department visits also increased 44% in that same period of time. The rate of infection is increasing most rapidly among children, with those under age five seeing an 83% increase and those ages 5–17 experiencing a 217% increase. This uptick in flu cases is occurring a month earlier than last season, when Boston did not hit these numbers until January. Further information on rates in Boston can be found on the Flu Dashboard and Wastewater Dashboard.

Residents, especially children and older individuals who are also at high risk, are encouraged to get their annual flu vaccine. Vaccines are highly effective at lowering the risk of severe illness and hospitalization from the flu and are essential for keeping yourself and your community safe this winter. BPHC recommends that everyone age 6 months or older receive an annual flu vaccine. BPHC has hosted 27 free vaccine clinics across 15 neighborhoods, vaccinating more than 2,500 individuals. Despite those and other efforts, as of December 6th, only 30% of Boston residents were vaccinated for the flu.

"Flu cases are on the rise in Boston, and we are urging residents to protect themselves and their loved ones from respiratory illnesses which can cause hospitalization and severe illness," said Bisola Ojikutu, MD, MPH, FIDSA, Commissioner of Public Health for the City of Boston. "Flu spreads easily during this time of the year when we gather together indoors. It is not too late to get vaccinated. Vaccination is the best tool we have to prevent serious illness. The Boston Public Health Commission will be hosting additional vaccination clinics throughout the city in

January."

Appointments to get a flu or COVID-19 shot can also be made at local pharmacies, your community health center, your primary care physician, or at a clinic sponsored by one of the Boston's hospitals. You can find more information about available vaccines in your area at www.vaccinefinder.org.

Community-based organizations also host free flu vaccine clinics around the city, and BPHC will be hosting additional free vaccination clinics for anyone 6 months and over in January 2026; updates can be found at boston.gov/vaccine-clinics, or by calling the Mayor's Health Line at 617-534-5050.

By practicing core prevention strategies, you can protect yourself and others from flu and other respiratory illnesses. Strategies include practicing good hand hygiene, increasing ventilation and staying home and away from others when sick. Wearing a mask provides added protection against flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses when in crowded spaces. You should consider wearing a mask if you or someone in your household are at increased risk of severe disease.

Individuals at high risk of complications from respiratory infections, including people under two or over 65 years of age, pregnant people, immunocompromised individuals and people with chronic illnesses, should seek medical care if they develop flu-like symptoms or are exposed to flu; early testing and antiviral treatment of flu and COVID can prevent severe illness and hospitalization.

Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is the country's oldest health department. We envision a thriving Boston where all residents live healthy and fulfilling lives. To accomplish this, BPHC works in partnership with communities to protect and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, especially those impacted by racism and systemic inequities. Learn more about our work at boston.gov/bphc.

CONGRATS TO MALDEN CATHOLIC WINTER STUDENT ATHLETES - MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER!



Congratulations to Malden Catholic winter student athletes for their outstanding participation in the Malden Mobile Polar Plunge. Over the course of one week, they raised an impressive \$1,025 in support of Special Olympics Massachusetts, demonstrating compassion, teamwork, and a strong commitment to service. Their efforts reflect the belief that athletics help build character, confidence, and leadership both on and off the field. Thank you to our student athletes for leading by example, to our coaches for their continued guidance, and to Principal Smith for supporting initiatives that inspire service and community spirit. We are proud of the positive impact you've made and grateful for the way you represent Malden Catholic.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

MAYOR-ELECT VAN CAMPEN ANNOUNCES KEY APPOINTMENTS

EVERETT - Mayor-elect Robert Van Campen today announced his intention to appoint senior leaders to his incoming administration, naming Monica Lamboy as Chief Development Officer, and Robert Knox, Jr. as Executive Director of City Services.

"These appointments reflect my commitment to building a strong, experienced team focused on smart growth, infrastructure excellence, and delivering results for our residents," said Mayor-elect Van Campen. "Monica Lamboy and Robert Knox each bring proven leadership, deep professional expertise, and a shared dedication to public service."

As Chief Development Officer, Monica Lamboy will oversee economic development initiatives, strategic planning, business attraction and retention, and community redevelopment efforts. Lamboy holds an exemplary track record of fostering public-private partnerships and advancing projects that strengthen local economies while preserving community character.

"Monica's vision and collaborative approach will be critical as we work to expand opportunity, support local businesses, and guide responsible development throughout our city," Van Campen said.

Robert Knox, who will be appointed as Executive Director of City Services, will lead the city's public works operations, including infrastructure maintenance, capital improvement projects, transportation, and essential services. Knox has over 30 years of experience in managing complex public works systems and ensuring efficient, safe, and reliable service delivery.

"Strong infrastructure is the foundation of a thriving city," Van Campen said. "Robert Knox's leadership and technical expertise will help ensure our streets, utilities, and public facilities meet the needs of today while preparing for the future."

"These leaders share my belief in transparent government, fiscal responsibility, and putting residents first," Mayor-elect Van Campen added. "I am confident they will serve our community with integrity and excellence."

NEXT PHASE OF SUFFOLK DOWNS BEGINS

REVERE - The HYM Investment Group ("HYM"), Cathexis Holdings, LP ("Cathexis"), the City of Revere, Related Fund Management, and Suffolk celebrated the official groundbreaking of Portico, the second multifamily building at Suffolk Downs. The 473-unit project marks continued momentum for the transformative 161-acre Suffolk Downs redevelopment, which is expected to deliver 10,000 homes across Revere and East Boston. Portico will join Amaya - the first residential building at Suffolk Downs - as part of the growing mixed-use development in Beachmont Square.

Upon completion, Portico will deliver a mix of studio, one-bedroom, one-bedroom + den, and two-bedroom floorplans, alongside more than 33,000 square feet of ground-level retail space. Portico will offer a collection of distinctive indoor and outdoor amenities, including a 15th-floor sky deck with sweeping ocean views, a lounge with a kitchen and terrace overlooking Beachmont Plaza, and an expansive courtyard with flexible lawn areas, fire pits, grills, and serene landscaped seating. Residents will also enjoy innovative creative studios with recording pods, a state-of-the-art fitness center, and a bright veranda featuring a coffee bar and private work pods.

Located just steps from the Beachmont MBTA Blue Line Station, Portico will be ideal for working professionals and residents looking for a connected, amenity-rich home base with ease of access to Downtown Boston and the coast. The new construction will bring dynamic and needed additional retail to Beachmont Square and along Salt Street, joining the recently opened Twisted Fate Brewery and The Point Barre and Yoga Studio at Amaya. Connected to a lively hub of civic spaces, open space, and retail, the 1.7 million square foot, mixed-use Beachmont Square serves as a gateway to the larger Suffolk Downs site. Suffolk Downs residents have access to a diverse array of fitness, shopping, food, and beverage options. This includes The Yard @ Beachmont Square, The Track at Suffolk Downs, The Dog Park, community events, and concerts

hosted at The Stage at Suffolk Downs.

Portico was, in part, made possible through a public-private partnership between HYM, Cathexis, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the city of Revere. Governor Maura Healey and Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Ed Augustus helped advance the development of Portico through the Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP), while Mayor Patrick Keefe and the Revere City Council were key in taking the local action needed to unlock Commonwealth tax incentives.

"The Suffolk Downs redevelopment is a transformative project for Revere and Greater Boston, and the Healey-Driscoll Administration was proud to award \$5 million to help make this project possible," said Ed Augustus, Secretary of Housing and Livable Communities. "Portico and the Suffolk Downs redevelopment will help us get to the 222,000 homes Massachusetts needs to keep up with housing demand, give buyers and renters more choices, and bring down costs."

"Today's groundbreaking at Portico reminds us of why both families and businesses invest in Revere. With our scenic coastal geography, convenient access to public transit, and competitive market value, there is clear incentive to plant roots and grow in Revere. Portico will deliver the needed housing, economic activity, and renewed energy to a neighborhood that is central to Revere's progress," said Patrick Keefe, Mayor of Revere.

"We couldn't be happier to celebrate the groundbreaking of Portico today," said Thomas N. O'Brien, Founding Partner and Managing Director of The HYM Investment Group. "Our focus at Suffolk Downs has always been to deliver thousands of new homes and create a truly mixed-use neighborhood and destination to meet the moment for Greater Boston. Breaking ground on Portico represents that vision in action. We are grateful to Governor Healey, Secretary Augustus, Related Fund Management, and all our project partners who have made this groundbreaking possible, and we're certain Portico will be a welcome addition to the Beachmont Square community."

"We are pleased to see Portico

SENIOR CENTER HOLDS HOLIDAY PARTY



PHOTOS BY MARIANNE SALZA

Shown above, Frank Alfano, Ann Mini, Maureen and Dale Willett, Ernie Brown, Councilor-at-Large Michelle Kelley, Cheryl Rivers, and Lucretia Deeran enjoying the holiday party hosted by the Revere Office of Elder Affairs on Dec. 17.

advancing as a key component of the Suffolk Downs redevelopment," said William Harrison, CEO of Cathexis. "HYM continues to demonstrate exceptional vision and execution, and their leadership has been instrumental in progressing a project that will bring much-needed housing and lasting community benefits to the region. Portico represents an important milestone in realizing the long-term potential of the site, and we remain committed to supporting the creation of a vibrant, mixed-use community that will serve the region for decades to come."

"Today's groundbreaking of Portico represents another step forward for Revere and for the future of Suffolk Downs," said Senator Lydia Edwards, State Senator for the Third Suffolk District. "This project reflects what is possible when the Commonwealth, the City of Revere, and private partners work together to deliver much-needed housing, create jobs, and build neighborhoods accessible to transportation. I want to thank the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the City of Revere and Mayor Keefe, HYM, Cathexis, and all of the public and private partners whose collaboration made this milestone possible. Portico will not only add hundreds of new homes, but also strengthen Beachmont Square as a community that supports local businesses and expands opportunities for residents across our region."

Related Fund Management, a vertically integrated real estate private equity and credit firm, provided \$226 million in senior construction financing for Portico through its Related Real Estate Debt Fund IV. The construction loan will support the

development of Portico and its robust amenities.

JLL Capital Market's Debt Advisory team representing HYM and Cathexis was led by Executive Managing Director Riaz Cassum, Managing Director Andrew Gray and Vice President Robyn King.

"Portico showcases the strength of investor appetite for building high-quality housing in the Boston area. The rental market demand has remained steady, as renters seek high-quality, yet affordable homes," said Riaz Cassum. "This project's strategic location near rapid transit and high-end amenities make it an attractive investment opportunity in today's market."

Suffolk is the general contractor for Portico, leading the ground-up construction of the multifamily building.

"We're proud to bring Portico to life and support the City of Revere as Beachmont Square continues to take shape, providing residents with a connected, amenity-rich home just steps from the Blue Line and all that Boston has to offer," said Pat Lucey, General Manager, Suffolk Northeast. "Suffolk has been deeply engaged in this community for years, and projects like Portico give us the chance to deliver high-quality housing and vibrant public spaces that truly serve local residents. It's exciting to see the neighborhood grow, and we're honored to help create a place that will benefit Revere for years to come."

With the official groundbreaking, construction on Portico has begun and delivery is anticipated by February 2028.

For more information on Suffolk Downs, please visit atsuffolkdowns.com.

FRIENDS OF THE MARY ELLEN WELCH GREENWAY HOST ‘CHRISTMAS ON THE GREENWAY’

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway hosted “Christmas on the Greenway” on Sunday, December 7th at Bremen Street Park. In addition to the beloved annual luminaria event, this year’s celebration featured a festive holiday performance by Sweet Harmony of Riverside Theater Works in

Hyde Park, presented in partnership with the Trustees One Waterfront.

The highlight of the day was a special visit from Santa Claus, who delighted children by handing out goody bags filled with treats, including a free ride on the Rose Kennedy Greenway carousel! All activities took place at Massport’s beautifully decorated Bremen

Street Park, creating a magical holiday atmosphere for the community.

The Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway collaborated with Massport to make the event extra special. Massport hosted a fun ornament-making activity for children, provided sugar cookies, and arranged for Santa to arrive in style on an official Massport

Fire Truck- much to the delight of families!

To end the evening, Santa boarded an exclusive MBTA Blue Line “Santa Express” train to Maverick Station, where families joined in singing Christmas carols along the way.

The Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway extend their heartfelt thanks to Mass-

port, MBTA, Trustees One Waterfront, State Representative Adrian Madaro, East Boston Holiday Light Committee, Gemini Digital, and the Rose Kennedy Greenway for their generous support.

For more information about the Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway, please visit www.maryellenwelchgreenway.org.

PHOTOS COURTESY JOHN GILLOOLY



Shown are scenes from the Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway-hosted “Christmas on the Greenway” event.



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FRIENDS OF THE MARY ELLEN WELCH GREENWAY HOST ‘CHRISTMAS ON THE GREENWAY’

PHOTOS COURTESY JOHN GILLOOLY



Shown are scenes from the Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway hosted “Christmas on the Greenway” event.



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Animal Rescue League of Boston offers tips and resources for families

Special to the Times-Free Press

At a time when many families are welcoming new pets into their homes, Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) shares expert resources and advice about settling furry family members into a new environment. Resources include ARL's Pet Behavior Helpline – a free service that can answer basic pet behavioral questions. Whether it's excessive barking, crate training, house soiling, or another issue, pet families with questions can call the Pet Behavior Helpline at (617) 226-5666 or via email behaviorhelpline@arlboston.org.

"It's very special to welcome a new family member to the household, especially during the holiday season. These first few weeks as a family are very important and ARL is here with the resources and guidance to make the experience positive and joyful for pets and their new families," says ARL Animal Behavior Manager, Laney Nee.

Tips for early days with dogs and cats

- Have a 'safe space' for your new pet set up and ready

for them – somewhere they can call their own that may contain their special toys, bedding, scratching trees for cats or a crate for dogs – this space helps them get comfortable

- Less is more when introducing your pet to their new life, so be aware of all the new things your pet is experiencing and recognize when they might be overwhelmed and need a break
- Go back to basics with house training for dogs and provide easy access to food, water and litterboxes for cats until they get used to their new spaces

Tips for daily routines

- Create a routine for you and your new pet right from the beginning
- Change can be overwhelming so creating a routine for your new dog is a key to success. The routine should have set times for potty breaks, meals, walks, playtime, and independent time in their own space with special toys and treats which get put away till the next time they are back in their safe space.
- A routine can help ensure

your new cat has the opportunity to follow their instincts which includes their need to hunt, catch, eat, groom, and sleep. There are many ways to accomplish this with many homemade items such as boxes, egg cartons, paper bags, toilet paper and paper towel rolls for treat puzzles.

Tips for relationship building

- Get active

Sniffari walks– let your dog stop and sniff!

Explore a new neighborhood – the usual neighborhood walks can get boring and routine – consider walking or driving to a different neighborhood to explore

Two toy fetch – alternate tossing two toys to your dog while walking

- Keep them engaged

Use a snuffle mat or wrap some treats up in a towel and let dogs use their nose to snuffle around and find all the food, or make a "licky mat" with canned food, peanut butter or cream cheese – smear it on a lick mat and they can spend time licking it until it's all gone

Enroll in dog training classes and teach your dog new skills,

ARL has a variety of offerings at our Dedham Campus, visit arl.boston/dog-training to learn more

Interactive play for cats can be done with wand teaser cat toys, chasing little play mice or balls with bells or make a small investment for automated toys that move if the cat walks past them or interacts with them

Helpful Videos

- "Name Game for Dogs" – incorporate this game into your routine to create a bond and help your new dog respond quickly when you say their name. Visit arl.boston/dog-name-game to watch a demonstration
- "Greeting Exercise" – practice this with family and friends so your dog can learn to greet people and other dogs politely. Visit arl.boston/dog-greeting-exercise to learn more

At ARL, we believe that positive reinforcement, reward-based training methods are the best course of action, especially when teaching dogs new things or desensitizing fearful dogs to new experiences.

More digital resources, in-

cluding new dog and new cat guides, are available at ARL's website.

Pets are family. This belief is at the heart of everything we do at the Animal Rescue League of Boston. ARL is the first female-founded animal welfare organization in Massachusetts and is proud to carry on a legacy of kindness and compassion, helping more than 20,000 animals annually since 1899. Recognized for innovative, award-winning programs that go beyond sheltering, ARL addresses the root causes of the issues facing animals and the people who love them. By partnering with communities, ARL helps animals heal and thrive, keeps pets and people together, and protects animals from harm. Because there is no government funding for this important work, animals must rely on people like you to get the care they need, when they need it most, 365 days a year. For more information, visit arl-boston.org and follow ARL on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

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HVNA// CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

neighbors for their patience and support during their first year of operation at Scores Field. Scores Field will be closed from December 19 until March 16. Stay tuned for a neighborhood meeting to be held in the new year. Congratulations to Stevie Scire of Sammy Carlo's Delicatessen & Catering who was picked to be the 'Elf of the Year' by the Madaro Foundation for his never-ending generosity to the community. He received the Albert "Junior" Lombardi Community Service Award. Congratulations also to Century 21 Mario Real Estate at 620 Bennington Street for winning 3rd Place in the "Deck the Windows" annual Window Decorating Contest sponsored by the East Boston Chamber of Commerce. First place went to Bono Restaurant and Catering at 271 Meridian Street and Second place went to Spinelli's pasta and Pastry Shop at 282 Bennington Street. Free Monthly Community Dinner at Sacred Heart Parish January 14, 2026, at 5pm-7pm. McLean Park, playground construction

to begin in spring 2026.

Station 7 Police Report (15min) Captain Bickerton, Sgt. Cintolo, Officers Mosley and Alvarez.

Eastie Farms (5min) Morgan Barlin and Christine Berlingeri would like to share information about the CSA program at Eastie Farms.

60-62 Byron Street (30min) 2nd Presentation and VOTE on this project by Attorney Richard Lynds on behalf of the 60 Byron Street Realty Trust. Plan is to raze the existing 2 family and erect a 6 Unit residential dwelling with 6 parking spaces. Anticipated variance is the lot width. An abutter meeting was held on December 12, 2025, by Eva Jones.

McLean Park Update (5min) Nelle Ward, Project Manager, City of Boston, Parks and Recreation reports that the construction contract has been awarded to JJ Phelan and Sons. The target date for closure of the park will be the late spring of 2026 and completion by the fall of 2026 if all goes well. Barbara Puopolo, chair of this

subcommittee, will present on the status of 2026 CPA funding for the Perimeter Site Wall Rehabilitation Project.

HVNA would like to thank all who helped make our Christmas/Holiday Party a smashing success with DJ Bingo as our entertainment. Special thanks to Stevie Scire, Carlo's, John Hios, Royal Roast Beef, East Boston Yacht Club and Larry Venezia. The Board members: Joe Steffano, Mike McCormack, and Kathleen O'Brien, as well as Vera Carducci, Joyce McCormack and Dottie Marcella for an exceptionally well organized and planned event. Also, the neighbors who joined us and helped us to fundraise through the raffles and prizes given out. A great time was had by all who attended.

The next meeting of the HVNA will be on February 2, 2026. Visit us at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/harborviewna> or check our website at harborvieweastboston.com or board@harborviewna.org

OBITUARIES

John Anthony DeMarco

Loyal, loving, and exceptionally strong man

John Anthony DeMarco passed away peacefully on the night of December 23, 2025. He was a loyal, loving, and exceptionally strong man whose character earned him the adoration of many. He is remembered for his selflessness, determination, and remarkable will to persevere—qualities that remained unwavering in the face of life’s greatest challenges. His generosity was boundless, his authenticity unrivaled. He did things in entirely his own way and was loved for it.

John was a constant presence in the lives of his friends and family. His desire to uplift those around him was instinctive, and he succeeded in achieving the very best for his loved ones. To John, hard work was a fact of life, and he embraced it wholeheartedly. His energy was electric, and he remained in constant motion. Regardless of adversity, he was not a man who could be kept down. Simply put, John was the first and last of his kind.

Born in East Boston on December 24 to parents Josephine (DiMarino) and Felix J. DeMarco, John was a Boston man to his core. He was a proud cement mason throughout his working life and a cherished member of Local 534, Cement



Masons and Plasterers Union, where he was known for his expertise, strong work ethic, and dedication to his trade.

John was also a gifted athlete. He played football in his youth, and, up until his passing, played handball regularly at L street Beach, and, in earlier years, at The Boston Athletic Club. When not on the court, he could often be found lifting weights at the gym or racing on the exercise bike. An avid reader, he enjoyed browsing bookstores of all sizes and reading peacefully in his living room in quieter moments.

Above all, John was devoted to his family. He will be missed deeply by his loving wife of 26

years, Maria DeMarco; their children, John Joseph DeMarco and Aria DeMarco; his daughters, Janna Mazza and Jene DeMarco; his mother, Josephine DeMarco; his sisters, Cecelia DeMarco, Rene Fagone, and Lisa Vozzella; and his grandchildren, Jonathan O’Hearn and Jene O’Hearn. He was predeceased by his father, Felix J. DeMarco, and his brother, Felix J. DeMarco Jr. He also leaves behind many loving nieces and nephews.

Though no attempt can be made to replicate him, John’s legacy of strength, wisdom, and loyalty will be honored eternally.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend visiting hours on Friday January 2nd, from 4:00–8:00 p.m. at Bell O’Dea Funeral Home, 376 Washington Street, Brookline. A funeral service will be held on Saturday, January 3rd, at 11:00 a.m. at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, 5 Linden Place, Brookline. Burial will follow at Holyhood Cemetery, 584 Heath Street, Chestnut Hill.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the funeral home in his honor, to support housing for veterans injured in the line of duty.

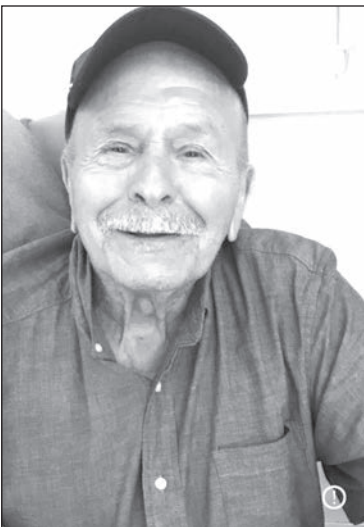
Frank C. Leone

Retired Master Plumber whose legacy is one of hard work, devotion to family and a life well lived in the community he loved

Frank C. Leone, a lifelong resident of Jeffries Point in East Boston, passed away surrounded by the love of his family. Frank was born and raised in East Boston and proudly lived his entire life on Everett Street, a neighborhood he cherished and where he was known as a great neighbor and a loyal friend.

He was the beloved husband of the late Rose Marie (Vitale) Leone and the devoted son of the late Ralph and Antonetta (Spano) Leone. A retired master plumber, Frank was a hard-working man who took great pride in providing for his family. Supporting those he loved was everything to him, and his life was defined by dedication, responsibility, and quiet strength.

Frank was a loving and devoted father to Ralph Leone and his wife, Marie, Frank Leone Jr. and his wife, Patricia, Annette Fiantago and her husband. Carl, Kenneth Leone, and Paul Leone and his longtime partner, Leyanne. He was a cherished grandfather to Tina Leone, Christopher Leone and his wife, Maria, Frankie Leone, Carl Fiantago and his wife, Danielle, Deanna Fiantago and her fiancé, Ryan Dorgan, Kenneth Leone, Anthony Leone, and Nicole Leone. He was also the proud great-grandfather of Luciano, Caruso, Luca, Taylor, and Noah. Frank was the dear brother of the late John Leone, Pat Leone, Carmella Pirone and Tina Cornetta and is also lov-



ingly survived by many nieces and nephews.

Visiting hours will be held on Sunday, January 4th from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street, East Boston. Family and friends are invited to gather again on Monday morning, January 5th at 8:30 a.m. at the funeral home before proceeding in procession to Sacred Heart Church, Brooks Street, East Boston, for a Funeral Mass at 10 a.m. Services will conclude with Frank being laid to rest alongside his beloved wife, Rose Marie, at Holy Cross Cemetery in Malden.

Frank’s legacy is one of hard work, devotion to family, and a life well lived in the community he loved. He will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege to know him.

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

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Park Street School celebrates 25 years of its founding

COURTESY PHOTOS

Special to the Times-Free Press

It began as a hope in 1998. It grew into a potential in 1999.

And then, Park Street School (PSS) became a realized dream, backed by research. Long waiting lists at preschools in downtown Boston provided convincing evidence that there was demand for a high-quality preschool. A group of mothers met and dreamed, and Park Street Kids was born – officially incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the fall of 1999. With 36 Toddlers and Preschoolers enrolled and four faculty and staff, Park Street Kids opened its doors at One Park Street in September 2000.

In the blink of an eye, again in recognition of the need expressed by families, a decision was made in the fall of 2002 to offer an elementary school to the community. It would be called “Park Street School.” Finding 67 Brimmer Street in the flat of the Beacon Hill neighborhood was indeed a gift. For nearly 100 years, the building at 67 Brimmer Street was a landmark at the corner of Brimmer and Chestnut Streets. Home to schools and colleges since the Brimmer School left Beacon Hill, the building remained a historic symbol of Boston’s rich educational history. In September of 2005, Grades 1-3 and Kindergarten moved into their newly renovated building. In its twenty-fifth year, the school serves more than 225 students through sixth grade.

This December, Park Street School concludes its celebration of 25 remarkable years. And what a year it has been!

As the school prepares to enter 2026, it looks back with immense gratitude for each family, student, friend, neighbor, and

supporter. It looks back with tremendous thankfulness for its neighborhood and the larger community of downtown Boston. It looks back with appreciation for 25 years of dedicated educators who have sought to know and love each child, and who have inspired and guided PSS students toward a lifelong love of learning and care for others.

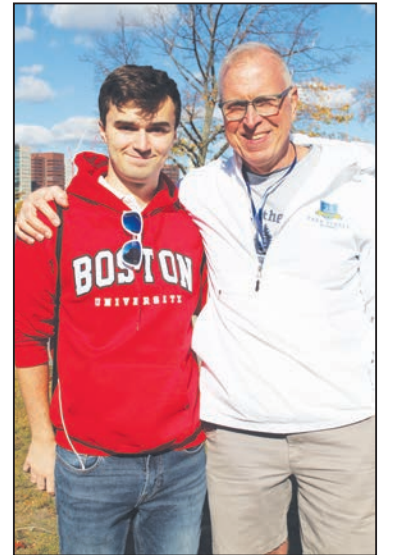
“This milestone is not just a celebration of our past,” shares Park Street School founding mom Laura Perkins, “but it is a testament to God’s faithful provision and the strong foundation we have built together. We marvel at both God’s faithfulness as well as the dedication of our families that have shaped our vibrant community.”

For over the past quarter-century, Park Street School has remained steadfast in its mission to serve and unite children from many backgrounds in the Boston area and to be a school that embodies the highest academic standards. Tracy Bradley, Park Street School’s founding Head of School, who remains at the school’s helm, remains grateful, as well, for the school’s commitment to its original mission and vision. “Our commitment to maintaining high academic standards and fostering the development of the whole child, while modeling empathy and care,” she says, “has allowed us to cultivate a diverse community where families and faculty come together to enjoy authentic friendship and support. I’m always encouraged when I see our students demonstrate a heart for others and express their understanding of God’s love for them. And when our graduates come back and share how they are thriving in their next schools and life ventures,” she pauses, “That’s a gift!”

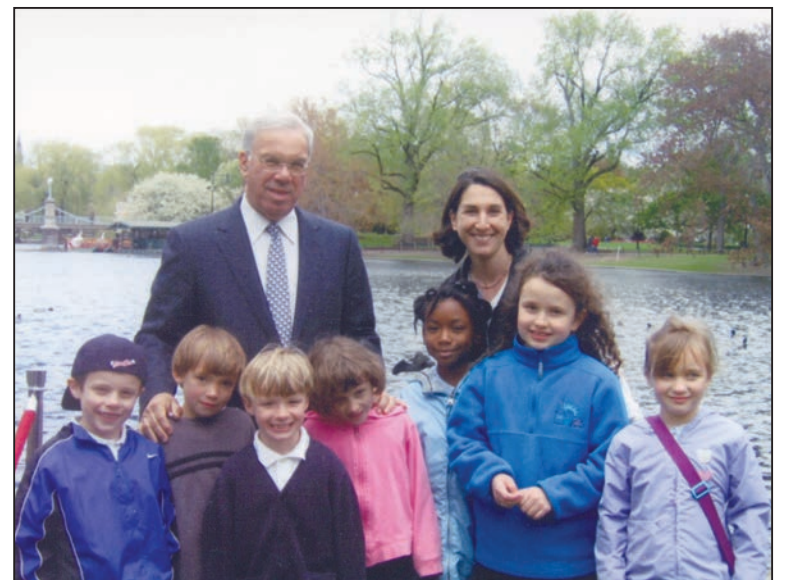
Kicking off the year, Park Street School’s community enjoyed several events and new ventures including: the inauguration of its first Founders Day over the weekend of October 25, 2024, with a Convocation Chapel, an all-school Celebration on the Esplanade, the Introduction of the new PSS Mascot – the PSS Knight, and a Founder’s Day Dinner with Founding families, the Board of Trustees, and Board of Visitors. The school kicked off its Capital Campaign and saw two building projects near completion (which are never convenient for neighbors, but which also spark deeper gratitude for them!). They also enjoyed a special Alumni Reception, Pancake Breakfast, and an extra-special 25th Anniversary Gala at the Boston Public Library in April.

As the school looks forward to the next milestone, it does so with excitement, purpose, and great enthusiasm. Armed with a new five-year strategic plan, and with a newly enhanced Science Lab, a much-needed flexible, multi-purpose space for students for performing arts, after-school programming, and special events, and new rooms designed for individualized instruction, multi-media and learning labs, private meetings, and larger conference room spaces, the school is poised to enter 2026 ready for growth.

“We’ve been incredibly blessed,” concludes Tracy Bradley, “We are so thankful for our location here in Beacon Hill, and the many downtown neighborhoods we have the privilege to serve. We look forward to seeing how Park Street School will serve families in the coming 25 years. What a privilege it has been!”

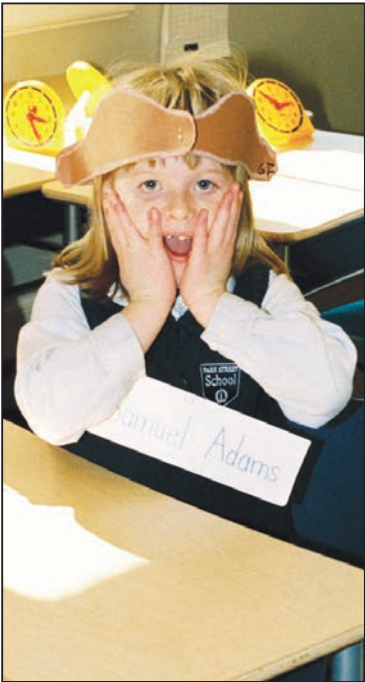


Shown are scenes from the past 25 years at Park Street School.



SCENES FROM PARK STREET SCHOOL THROUGH THE YEARS

COURTESY PHOTOS



Revolutionary Spaces set the stage for America’s 250th anniversary with reenactment of the debate that sparked the Boston Tea Party

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

As Massachusetts prepared to launch celebrations marking the 250th anniversary of American independence, Revolutionary Spaces invited the public and media to step back into the charged atmosphere of December 1773, when a single night of impassioned debate helped ignite a revolution.

On Tuesday, December 16, Revolutionary Spaces hosted a special reenactment of the historic Meeting of the Body of the People at Old South

Meeting House—the largest public gathering space in colonial Boston and the site where thousands once assembled to debate British taxation. That contentious gathering ultimately dissolved into the protest now known worldwide as the Boston Tea Party.

The reenactment unfolded exactly 252 years after the original meeting, placing audiences inside the raucous exchanges, rising tensions, and collective resolve that defined the evening.

“These walls bore witness to the debate, the anger, the hope, and the determination of the community,” said Nat Sheidley, president and CEO of Revolutionary Spaces. “Thousands gathered here to protest taxes, argue about liberty, and ultimately set the Boston Tea Party in motion. It was democracy in its rawest form.”

In addition to the reenactment, participants received an exclusive sneak peek of a new 360-degree immersive experience scheduled to launch on July 1, 2026—just in time for Independence Day and

the influx of visitors marking America’s 250th anniversary. The forthcoming experience will use cutting-edge technology, animation, and sound to transform Old South Meeting House, surrounding visitors with the sights, sounds, and emotions of a community on the brink of rebellion.

The event marked an early milestone in Revolutionary Spaces’ broader efforts to connect the public to the origins of American democracy ahead of the nation’s semiquincentennial, using immersive storytelling to make history immediate, visceral, and relevant.

Revolutionary Spaces stewards Boston’s Old South Meeting House and Old State House as historic landmarks, museums, and active civic spaces. Its mission is to bring people together to explore the American struggle to create and sustain a free society—using history as a powerful tool for civic engagement and public dialogue. Learn more at RevolutionarySpaces.org or follow @RevSpaces on social media.

Winter weather advisory: keep animals safe and warm this winter

Special to the Times-Free Press

With winter—and low temperatures—upon us, it’s important to think about how we’ll keep all our family members safe, warm, and healthy, including the four-legged ones.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), the nation’s leading legal advocacy organization for animals, has tips for how you can make sure your companion animals stay safe even in the worst weather winter has to offer. Dogs, cats, and other companion animals are not equipped to handle the cold much better than humans, so it’s important to pay close attention to signals they may be getting uncomfortable.

- First and foremost, bring your companion animals indoors, where it is warm. If it’s too cold for you to be outside, it’s too cold—and potentially deadly—for them, unless they are arctic breed dogs that can withstand colder weather such as a husky or malamute.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia—shivering, weak pulse, dilated pupils, stupor, and unconsciousness. If an animal exhibits these symptoms, get them to a veterinarian right away.
- “Salts” that melt snow can be a serious irritant for an animal’s paws—and some are toxic if eaten. Make sure to wipe or rinse their feet when back indoors.
- Don’t leave antifreeze in

open containers. Antifreeze is deadly—its sweet taste attracts almost any animal and will kill them.

- Bang on the hood of your car before starting it—small animals, including cats, may crawl under the hood to find warmth.

Companion animals give us unconditional love but they can’t tell us when they get too cold. A little care and caution will go a long way toward keeping all our family members healthy this winter.

If you see an animal in distress outdoors, call 911.

It is not uncommon for dogs and cats left outdoors in the brutal cold to suffer severe frostbite or even to freeze to death. Some areas, like North Dakota and Minnesota, have recorded temperatures as low as 40 degrees below zero.

State laws differ dramatically when it comes to defining the standards of care required for animals. Some states fail to expressly include a requirement to provide adequate “shelter” as an element of the crime of animal neglect.

However, others, like North Dakota (mentioned above) expressly mandate it. For example, in North Dakota, neglect of a dog or a cat includes failing to provide “[s]helter from the elements, as appropriate for the species, the breed, and the animal’s age and physical condition.”

But one thing is certain: it is illegal to knowingly cause a companion animal to freeze to death in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

ALDF is frequently contacted regarding animal cruelty charges filed against people who have left animals out in the cold.

Public scrutiny and law enforcement are our best tools to enforce animal cruelty laws, and that is why we make exposing such neglect—like leaving dogs outdoors to freeze to death—a priority and make sure violators of these laws are held accountable.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund was founded in 1979 to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals through the legal system. To accomplish this mission, the Animal Legal Defense Fund files high-impact lawsuits to protect animals from harm; provides free legal assistance and training to prosecutors and law enforcement to ensure that animal victims are removed from cruelty situations and animal abusers are held accountable; supports tough animal protection legislation and fights harmful legislation; and provides resources and opportunities to law students and professionals to advance the emerging field of animal law. For more information, please visit aldf.org.

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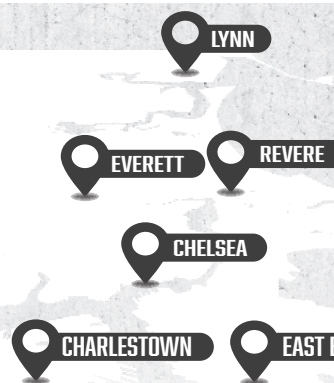
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Fifth Annual Rally 4 Nally Polar Plunge set for Jan. 3 at Carson Beach

Milestone event aims to surpass \$500,000 raised for ALS care and family support

Special to the Times-Free Press

To honor the life and legacy of Cathy Nally and support families impacted by ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), siblings Dan and Betsy Nally will host the 5th Annual Rally 4 Nally Polar Plunge on Saturday, January 3, 2026, at Carson Beach. Proceeds from the event will benefit Compassionate Care ALS (CCALS) and The Peter Frates Family Foundation, continuing Cathy's mission to ensure families facing ALS receive compassionate care, critical resources, and hope.

Cathy Nally, of Westwood and Boston, passed away in August 2022 after a courageous two-year battle with ALS. Since its inception, Rally 4 Nally has raised more than \$430,000 to support individuals and families living with the disease and to advance critical care and research initiatives. Organizers expect the 2026 event to push total fundraising past \$500,000, marking a significant milestone in the fight against the disease.

Event Details

Event: Rally 4 Nally Polar Plunge & Reception

Date: Saturday, January 3, 2026

Time: Registration opens at 10:00 a.m.; plunge at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Location: Carson Beach Boathouse, William J. Day Blvd., Boston, MA

Post-Plunge Reception: 12:00 p.m. at Loco Taqueria, 412 West Broadway, Boston, MA

To register or donate, visit <https://givebutter.com/rally4nally>.

"It's hard to believe that January 3, 2026 will mark our fifth Annual Rally 4 Nally," said Dan Nally. "This event



Supporters pictured at a previous Rally 4 Nally Polar Plunge.

has grown into something far bigger than we ever imagined. With the continued generosity of our community, we're hopeful that this year will bring us past \$500,000 raised for Compassionate Care ALS and The Peter Frates Family Foundation."

Nally added that the milestone carries special meaning given the realities of ALS. "Every year, approximately 5,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with ALS, and the average life expectancy is less than five years. With no cure and limited options to slow progression, families need immediate support. These two organizations are dedicated to providing grants, equipment, education, and peace of mind so families can focus on cherishing time together."

Compassionate Care ALS (CCALS) is a nonprofit organization that supports individuals living with ALS, along with their families, caregivers, and healthcare providers, through comprehensive services addressing both physical and emotional needs. The organization became a lifeline for the Nally family early in Cathy's diagnosis, providing hands-on guidance and support throughout her journey.

The Peter Frates Family Foundation is a grant-based organization that assists families with the overwhelming

cost of in-home care as ALS progresses. Founded in honor of Pete Frates—diagnosed

with ALS at age 27—the foundation continues his legacy of advocacy and action. A former

Boston College baseball captain, Frates helped launch the viral Ice Bucket Challenge in 2014, which raised more than \$225 million worldwide for ALS research and family support. Funding from that effort contributed to new treatment development, including Relyvrio, approved by the FDA in September 2022.

To mark the fifth anniversary, the Nally family has set an online fundraising goal of \$55,000, with additional proceeds raised through a silent auction, raffle prizes, and a post-plunge celebration. Community members are invited to take the plunge, donate online, or support the effort from afar in Cathy Nally's memory by visiting <https://givebutter.com/rally4nally>.

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