

# East Boston

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### ZUMIX CELEBRATING 35 YEARS



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ZUMIX co-founder and executive director Madeleine Steczynski kicked off the April 10 festivities by jumping out of a cake, handmade by ZUMIX students.

Right, a ZUMIX student blows confetti off his cymbal during one of the songs. See page 5 for more photos.



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PHOTOS COURTESY AGNIESZKA RYTYCH-FOSTER

## Coletta Zapata hosts budget town halls ahead of FY27 budget review

Special to the Times-Free Press

In preparation for the City Council's FY27 budget review process, Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata (District 1) hosted a series of budget town halls to shape her advocacy. Each meeting focused on key issues impacting each neighborhood, creating an important space to hear directly from constituents about their feedback on investments in essential city services. Throughout the budget town hall meetings, Councilor Co-

letta Zapata committed to advocating for core city services improving the quality of life of residents such as improved trash collection, pest control and mitigation, efficient street and sidewalk repairs, increased maintenance for parks and open spaces, senior programming, and expanding affordable housing.

"The budget reflects our values by demonstrating our priorities through key investments,

See BUDGET REVIEW Page 11

## HVNA opposes Moore Street project

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

Those in attendance at last week's Harbor View Neighborhood Association (HVNA) meeting voted in opposition to a project at 3 Moore Street that proposes to bring multiple units to the area.

The proposal, as explained by Attorney Richard Lynds, involves demolishing the existing structure on the lot to construct a new three-story building with six units.

The building would include a mix of two-bedroom, two-bedroom plus, and three-bedroom units. Additionally, it is slated to include two roof decks, but would have no parking.

As for how the proposal, which is situated in the East

Boston Residential (EBR)-3 subdistrict, aligns with zoning, it would need two variances: Lot width and parking.

Lynds explained that while up to six units are allowed in EBR-3, this is contingent on the lot's width.

"Up to six units is allowed in the EBR-3 district, provided you have 55 feet plus one inch of width — we're at 50 feet," he said.

In terms of parking, Lynds said, "We believe that based upon the fact that this lot is large enough to accommodate a total of six units with no parking already, we believe that's a technical variance and we're happy to appeal before

See HVNA Page 11

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# Forum

## PROUD OF OUR LOCAL "LINK" TO THE ARTEMIS II SPACE MISSION

After watching the dramatic re-entry into our atmosphere of the Artemis II's Orion capsule Integrity, its subsequent splashdown, and the retrieval of the four astronauts in the Pacific Ocean last Friday evening, we were proud to learn that one of the four Navy dive medical personnel who swam to the Orion capsule and greeted the astronauts has a local connection to the Boston area.

Chief Hospital Corpsman Vlad Link grew up in Chelsea and is a 2006 graduate of Chelsea High School. "I have been exposed to the Navy since I was a young teenager, and I'm proud to represent both my family and hometown," said Link to , who noted that his role with the Artemis II mission has been the highlight of his 18 years of experience in dive medicine. "Contributing our efforts to NASA and the Artemis II mission is something we take great pride in as part of that legacy."

Link and his fellow dive medical team members, who trained for years for their mission, performed the initial medical assessments of the Artemis II crew. They were prepared to provide triage care as necessary and assisted the astronauts in egress onto the inflatable raft set up outside by Navy divers. They then prepared the crew to be airlifted by helicopter back to the amphibious transport dock ship USS John P. Murtha.

According to the Navy Outreach department, Link is part of a specialized group, often working in expeditionary warfare communities, who are certified divers and who undergo specialized training to become experts in decompression illnesses and other undersea medical situations. Their mission is to care for and ensure dive-qualified service members are safe to conduct diving operations.

We know we join with all of our readers in offering a "Salute" to Chief Hospital Corpsman Link for a job well-done. He made all of us in the Greater Boston area feel a sense of pride in his accomplishment and we thank him for his service.

## AG CAMPBELL MOVES FORWARD VS. THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

When Frances Haugen, a former data scientist with Facebook, disclosed thousands of internal documents to the Wall St. Journal in 2021 that revealed that Facebook's own research showed the negative impacts of its Instagram algorithms on teen mental health, Americans on all sides of the political spectrum were shocked to learn that Facebook was prioritizing engagement -- and profits -- over the safety of our children.

Since then, the attorneys general in more than 30 states have filed lawsuits against Facebook, including in Massachusetts, where our Attorney General, Andrea Campbell, brought a suit based on c. 93A, the consumer protection law.

Facebook challenged the legality of Campbell's lawsuit, citing the protection afforded social media platforms by a federal law, known as Section 230, which provides that companies such as Facebook cannot be held liable for the posts of third parties on their web sites, even if those posts are defamatory. (The only recourse for the person who is defamed is to sue the person who made the post.)

However, Campbell's lawsuit is based not on what the users of social media have posted, but rather on the very design of the platforms themselves which, her lawsuit asserts, violates our state's consumer protection laws.

Friday's decision by the Mass. Supreme Judicial Court allowing Campbell's lawsuit to proceed (Meta was appealing the denial by a lower court of its motion to dismiss based on Section 230) marks yet another legal setback for these social media platforms.

A few weeks ago, a New Mexico jury found Meta (the parent of Facebook/Instagram) liable for failing to protect children from sexual exploitation and predators on its platforms, ordering Meta to pay \$375 million in civil penalties. (Social media giants Tik-Tok and Snapchat previously had settled their lawsuits with the New Mexico AG.)

With Attorney General Campbell's lawsuit, among the many others, now set to proceed, it would appear that a reckoning for the social media companies finally is at hand -- and that the safety of our children will prevail over profits.



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# Edwards secures key investments for Third Suffolk District in FY26 supplemental budget, prioritizes education and community safety

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Massachusetts Senate passed the Fair Share Supplemental budget for Fiscal Year 2026. Senator Lydia Edwards secured several local and regional investments included in the supplemental budget, advancing a fiscally responsible plan that strengthens public education and community infrastructure across the Third Suffolk District and beyond.

The Senator's budget wins focus on education, youth sports, cultural development and community safety, and including the following:

### East Boston Initiatives

Senator Edwards has secured several budget priorities for East Boston, including \$50,000 for East Boston High School athletics to upgrade equipment across multiple sports pro-

grams, \$75,000 for Zumix to support the Latin Music Festival and workforce training in audio-visual production, \$100,000 for the Bradley Elementary School soccer field, and \$50,000 combined for Excel Academy Charter School and Brooke Charter School to improve essential school resources and facilities.

### Revere Initiatives

Also included among the Senator's wins are allocated funds for public schools in Revere, including \$188,000 for early education expansion at the McKinley School to ensure new classrooms are equipped with modern furniture and technology, as well as two allocations for Revere High School: \$30,000 for the construction of two dugouts at Veterans Memorial Field and

\$30,000 to upgrade and replace varsity cheer equipment, purchase mats and soccer nets for the new McMackin Field, and provide additional uniform replacements for the athletic department.

### Winthrop Initiatives

In Winthrop, budget wins will support student safety, wellness, and infrastructure improvements for Winthrop Public Schools, including \$150,000 for upgraded school security systems; \$50,000 for Community Against Substance Abuse (CASA) to expand student support services; \$10,000 for roof repairs, stair tread replacements, and the replacement of expired sprinkler gauges; and \$17,000 to remove and replace outdated basketball hoop structures and improve gymnasium flooring.

"I believe this budget reflects our shared commitment to supporting our students, our schools, and the long-term success of our communities," said Senator Lydia Edwards, State Senator for the Third Suffolk District. "By securing targeted investments for East Boston, Revere, Winthrop, and statewide initiatives, we are making meaningful contributions to student opportunity and community building."

Beyond the district, Senator Edwards also secured regional investments, including \$200,000 for NeighborHealth Corporation to expand pharmacy education and workforce training programs for high school students.

"From expanding early education and upgrading school facilities to supporting arts, athletics, and workforce de-

velopment, these resources will have a tangible impact on young people and families across the Third Suffolk District," Senator Edwards added. "I am grateful to Senate President Karen Spilka, Chair of Senate Ways and Means Michael Rodrigues, and my Senate colleagues for their leadership and collaboration in advancing a budget that prioritizes community-building and delivers real results for residents across the Commonwealth."

These investments are part of the Senate's broader commitment to directing public funds toward high-impact, community-based initiatives - ensuring that students, families, and schools across the Commonwealth benefit from equitable access to resources, modern facilities, and educational opportunities.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### SALESIAN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION

Salesian Boys & Girls Club to hold its 17th Annual Summer Camp Scholarship Auction/Fundraiser ~ "A Celebration of Education." on Thursday, June 5, 6 p.m. at Spinelli's Banquet Hall, 282 Bennington Street, East Boston.

Each year, this special event helps provide children with the opportunity to experience a safe, enriching, and unforgettable summer at camp. With your support, we can continue to open doors for kids who might not otherwise have access to these life-changing experiences.

Join them for an enjoyable evening featuring good friends, delicious food, great live & silent auctions, and awards.

The Auctioneer will be Joseph Ruggiero.

There are several sponsorship opportunities available.

Proceeds from the evening will directly fund summer camp scholarships and programs.

For information regarding sponsorship opportunities or the event, Please Contact Mi-

chael Triant - michaeltriant@salesianclub.com - 617-913-1531 or Anita Belmonte - abelmonte@salesianclub.com - 617-784-1744

### GEOHERMAL NETWORKS FORUM APRIL 22

Residents are invited to Geothermal Networks Forum, Wednesday April 22 at Boston Library's Rabb auditorium 5pm to 7:30 pm. Event hosted by Neighborhood Association of Back Bay (NABB) and other environmental organizations, is free and open to public with speakers and interactive fun tables to explore. Register link below. Please spread info to everyone you know. Jackie Royce NABB Green Committee 617-266-3608

### MAYOR'S CUP LACROSSE TOURNAMENT TO DEBUT MAY 15-16 IN WEST ROXBURY

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department today announced the first annual Mayor's Cup Lacrosse tournament will take

place on May 15 and 16, offering young athletes across the city a new way to compete and connect this spring.

This tournament brings local youth teams together for a day of friendly competition and community engagement. All tournament games will take place at the West Roxbury Education Complex fields located at 1205 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury.

"We are more than excited for the debut of our Mayor's Cup Lacrosse Tournament this May," said Interim Parks and Recreation Commissioner Cathy Baker-Eclipse. "We are proud to create opportunities for young people across the city to have access to team activities where they can not only build relationships, but remain healthy and active while having fun."

Divisions are available for boys and girls grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8. Please note that pre-registration for teams is required with a limit of eight teams per regional division.

Visit [boston.gov/parks-sports](http://boston.gov/parks-sports) to register your team. For more information, contact Woodley Auguste at [woodley.auguste@boston.gov](mailto:woodley.auguste@boston.gov).

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# NeighborHealth recognized as a 2026 USA TODAY Top Workplace

Special to the Times-Free Press

NeighborHealth, the largest federally qualified community health system in Massachusetts, has been named a recipient of the 2026 USA TODAY Top Workplaces award, a national honor recognizing the organization's strong, employee-driven culture and commitment to excellence.

For NeighborHealth, this recognition reflects the organization's deep commitment to building a workplace culture rooted in community, connection, and shared purpose. As a community-based health system with 1700 team members, NeighborHealth believes that delivering high-quality, patient-centered care starts with

supporting and empowering the people who provide it.

"This recognition is especially meaningful because it comes directly from our team," said Jamie Hazard, President and CEO of NeighborHealth. "Our team members are at the heart of everything we do, and their dedication is what allows us to deliver the high-quality, compassionate care that our patients depend on every day. Building a supportive and inclusive workplace is core to our mission and what makes our impact possible, helping us expand access, improve outcomes, and better serve our community."

This people-first approach is central to NeighborHealth's mission of creating a compas-

sionate, culturally aligned care environment where patients, families, and providers are deeply connected. NeighborHealth's innovative care model addresses social drivers of health, helping bridge health equity gaps in low-income and immigrant communities with comprehensive primary care services, as well as emergency medicine, behavioral health, dental, vision, radiology, pharmacy and a broad array of specialty care services.

NeighborHealth's designation was based on authentic employee feedback captured through a confidential survey conducted by Energage, the HR research and technology company behind the Top Workplaces program since 2006.



NeighborHealth employees are proud to be recognized as a USA TODAY Top Workplace.

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The results are calculated based on employee responses to statements about Workplace Experience Themes that are proven indicators of high performance.

"Earning a USA TODAY Top Workplaces award is a testament to an organization's credibility and commitment to a people-first culture," said Eric Rubino, CEO of Energage. "This award, driven by real employee feedback, is more than just a recognition – it's proof that your employees believe in the organization and its leadership. Job seekers and customers look for this trusted badge of credibility and excellence. It signals a company that values its people, and that kind of culture resonates in today's competitive market."

The Top Workplaces award honors organizations with 150 or more employees that have created exceptional, people-first cultures. This year, more than 42,000 organizations were invited to participate.

NeighborHealth, formerly East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, is one of the nation's largest Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and the largest community-based primary care health system in Massachusetts, serving 120,000 people and recognized by the Health Resources and Services Administration

(HRSA) as a National Quality Leader. For more than 50 years, NeighborHealth has offered access to comprehensive primary care, specialty care and emergency care for patients in the Commonwealth. In a first-of-its-kind merger in 2020, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center joined forces with the South End Community Health Center and expanded services to patients who live and work in Boston's South End and Roxbury neighborhoods. For more information, visit [www.neighborhealth.com](http://www.neighborhealth.com).

Energage is a purpose-driven company that helps organizations turn employee feedback into useful business intelligence and credible employer recognition through Top Workplaces. Built on 18 years of culture research and the results from 27 million employees surveyed across more than 70,000 organizations, Energage delivers the most accurate competitive benchmark available. With access to a unique combination of patented analytic tools and expert guidance, Energage customers lead the competition with an engaged workforce and an opportunity to gain recognition for their people-first approach to culture. For more information or to nominate your organization, visit [energage.com](http://energage.com) or [topworkplaces.com](http://topworkplaces.com).

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### ZUMIX'S 35TH BIRTHDAY PARTY - THE BIRTHDAY BOP

PHOTOS COURTESY AGNIESZKA RYTYCH-FOSTER

ZUMIX, a local nonprofit providing creative opportunities for young people through music and technology, celebrated its 35th anniversary with a Birthday Bop celebration on Friday, April 10. The event included a look back at ZUMIX's beginnings in 1991, an open mic featured performances from current ZUMIX students and alumni, and a community celebration of ZUMIX's long-term impact on young people.

people we serve. It continues to be a magical space where confidence and creativity grow—and transformation happens every day.”

ZUMIX will continue to celebrate throughout the year, weaving the anniversary theme into its signature events, such as the Walk for Music on July 12 and its annual Gala, The Muze, set for October 29. To stay up to date, follow ZUMIX on social media at @zumixinc or visit their website at www.zumix.org.

“As we celebrate 35 years of ZUMIX, we're reminded that this is more than a place—it's a living, growing community,” said Madeleine Steczynski, co-founder and executive director of ZUMIX. “From our earliest days to today, ZUMIX has evolved with purpose and possibility, just like the young



State Representative Adrian Madaro gave citations to ZUMIX, Madeleine and the ZUMIX Teen Council, recognizing their hard work and service to the East Boston community. (L-R: Corey Depina, ZUMIX Director of Programs; ZUMIX Teen Council members Charley Belaney, Chrisette Coke, Sebastian Lopez Britto, Nora Janjar and Hilda Sarmiento; Madeleine Steczynski. Back row: Representative Adrian Madaro.)



ZUMIX student Julian Macias Grondin celebrates at the Birthday Bop.



ZUMIX student Demitrius Dumond performed at the evening's open mic.



ZUMIX staff members Steve Chandy and Jireh Calo celebrate after performing at the evening's open mic.



Current and former ZUMIX staff members gathered to celebrate. (L-R: Ed Meradith, Steve Chandy and Brandon Allen.)

# Wu, Chairman Aaron Michlewitz, and Rep. John Moran announce \$4M in new funding included in Ways & Means proposed budget

Special to the Regional Review

Mayor Michelle Wu joined House Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz and State Rep. John Moran to announce \$4 million in new funding that will be included in the House Ways & Means proposed budget in support of ongoing initiatives to end outdoor substance use in neighborhoods of Boston and connect individuals with treatment and recovery programs. Mayor Wu also highlighted progress made across various city departments and agencies, including the Coordinated Response Team (CRT), which leads cross-departmental efforts to address safety, health, and quality of life for residents with a goal to end outdoor substance use in neighborhoods of Boston and the criminal activity that supports it, and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), which leads a public health approach to supporting residents with substance use disorder. Today's announcement builds on the City's significant progress and highlights continued coordination between the City, state partners and community leaders to advance comprehensive, long-term solutions and ensure public health in the Mass & Cass area and citywide.

"Boston has made meaningful progress toward the goal of ending outdoor drug use in our neighborhoods through a sustained and coordinated effort grounded in public health, safety, and accountability," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "We're seeing fewer crowds, few-



Mayor Michelle Wu

er calls for service, and more people connected to treatment, thanks to the ongoing collaborations with neighborhood working groups, service providers, and our City and State agencies. I'm grateful to Chairman Aaron Michlewitz and Rep. John Moran for their leadership in including significant funding in the House budget that would support even more of this critical work."

To drive forward crucial efforts to address quality of life in the Mass and Cass for residents and families, Chairman Aaron Michlewitz announced that the House Ways & Means Committee will include \$4 million in their proposed budget supporting various initiatives better connecting individuals with treatment options and recovery programs. Funding is aimed at bolstering supportive recovery housing options for individuals and additional clinical support services.

"By providing these additional financial resources, we will be able to better connect individuals with acceptable

treatment options and effective recovery programs. With this partnership between the Commonwealth and the City, we will be able to not only improve the lives of the residents of Boston but also help people on the road to recovery," said Rep. Aaron Michlewitz, Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means (D-Boston). "I want to thank Mayor Wu and her administration for their tireless commitment to this issue, as well as Re. John Moran, and the other members of the working group for finding a reasonable and effective solution to this issue."

"Sincere thanks to Chairman Aaron Michlewitz for his steadfast support of the South End/Roxbury/Newmarket Working Group on Addiction and Recovery and his commitment to advancing meaningful solutions for Mass and Cass. Together with city and state partners, we remain focused on balanced, humane, and effective solutions that strengthen public health, improve safety, and restore confidence in our neighborhoods," said State Rep. John Moran (9th Suffolk District).

Last year, the City brought together the Coordinated Response Team (CRT), the Boston Police Department and their Neighborhood Engagement Safety Team (NEST), the Boston Public Health Commission, partner organizations and elected officials to advance coordinated efforts for the Mass and Cass area and improve conditions in various neighborhoods. This led to a series of recommendations being brought forward by the South End/Roxbury/Newmarket Working Group on Addiction and Recovery. These recommendations have informed the City's ongoing strategy to end outdoor substance use in the area and across Boston neighborhoods.

"I want to thank Chairman Aaron Michlewitz for his unwavering commitment, Rep. John Moran for his steadfast advocacy at the state level, and to Mayor Michelle Wu for recognizing the urgency and complexity of these challenges — working to improve quality of life for residents and business

owners, while ensuring that those who are struggling receive the care, dignity, and support they deserve on their path to recovery," said District 3 City Councilor John Fitzgerald.

"What we see at Mass and Cass and nearby neighborhoods is a mix of enormously complex societal challenges," said Suffolk County District Attorney Kevin Hayden. "It isn't just one issue; it's many all at once across public health, public safety, homelessness and quality of life. I thank everyone here for helping put forward solutions and look forward to continuing our efforts in partnership."

"I want to thank Mayor Wu, Chairman Michlewitz, and my committed recovery working group co-chairs for their thoughtful recommendations and steadfast support of the Mayor's Coordinated Response Team (CRT) co-response diversion program in partnership with the Boston Police Department Neighborhood Engagement Safety Team (NEST)," said Kellie Young, Director of Coordinated Response Team. "Together, we are working to end outdoor substance use and improve quality of life for our residents, business owners, and individuals living with substance use disorder. Through our partnership with the Gavin Foundation, we are ensuring that individuals are rapidly connected to structured pathways to recovery that promote stability and long term support. We are already seeing clear, measurable improvements across our city streets, with consistent reductions in outdoor substance use and meaningful progress in restoring public spaces. We remain focused on building on that progress every day. This work reflects what's possible when coordination, accountability, and compassion come together—and strengthens our commitment to advancing both public safety and public health across Boston."

"As Boston Public Health Commission prioritizes health and provides a wide continuum of prevention, care, and treatment services, more work is needed, and we're thankful to the Mayor, our city and state partners, and our provider part-

ners who do this challenging work with us on a daily basis," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health for the City of Boston. "Our city is a national leader in our response to the substance use crisis, and I'm proud of our legacy of crafting innovative, collaborative, evidence-based, and compassionate policy to ensure people living with substance use disorder have access to the full continuum of treatment services."

Boston Public Health Commission works to promote the health and wellness of residents across Boston, including people with substance use disorder. Their data show a 38% decrease in overdose deaths in Boston, the lowest number of overdose deaths in nine years. BPHC's Recovery Services Bureau focuses on preventing overdose, expanding treatment access, and supporting recovery through harm reduction services, outreach programs, and community partnerships. In 2025, BPHC had more than 45,000 client interactions through outreach services and programs, and they placed about 2,500 people on treatment pathways. BPHC's Matapan Recovery campus provides residential treatment beds with 24-hour care and alone had 850 enrollments in 2025.

In an effort to improve quality of life and address unlawful behavior, the Boston Police Department continues to implement various strategies. In the area around Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard, quality of life calls for service have decreased by 20% and total violent crime has decreased by 33% year to date 2026 compared to 2025. Total violent crime in the Mass and Cass area decreased 7%, property crime decreased 6%, and arrests increased by 54% for 2025 compared to 2024.

To enhance real-time responsiveness and shift to more proactive, preventative engagement, the CRT worked closely with NEST to use a new, field-based diversion model which is effectively engaging more residents in high impact areas. This new effort has led to the CRT

## OBITUARIES

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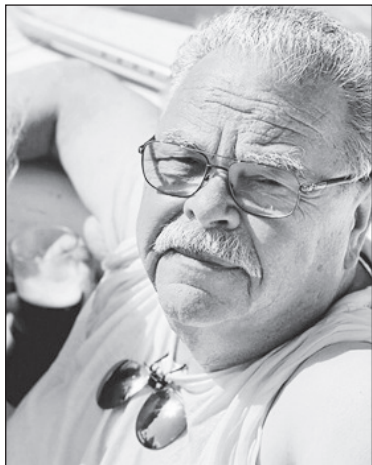
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# OBITUARIES

## John Boudreau

A Man of Remarkable Character

John R. Boudreau, 81, died Friday, March 6, 2026 at the Lahey Medical Center in Burlington. Known and beloved by all as “Papa John,” he was a man of remarkable character — a skilled craftsman, a devoted grandfather, and a loyal friend to everyone fortunate enough to know him.



An avid gun collector, his passion for firearms was born from his profession as a machinist. He had a deep appreciation for the fine craftsmanship required to create these pieces. He also had a great love of fishing and boating, pursuits that brought him peace and joy throughout his life.

He cherished his home in Gilford, NH on the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee — a place he called “Heaven on Earth.” It was there, surrounded by the beauty of the water and the warmth of his family, that he was most himself.

The greatest joy in his life was caring for his triplet granddaughters, Jailyne, Brooklynne, and Madison. He was by his daughter, Laurie’s side throughout the entire pregnancy and moved in shortly after their birth to help care for and raise them. He never missed a single day of their lives.

He loved attending all of their school sporting events and was incredibly proud of their upcoming graduation from Endicott College — Brooklynne and Madison pursuing degrees in Nursing, and Jailyne in Biotechnical Engineering.

His daughter, Laurie was one of the most important people in his life. He stood by her side with unwavering love and dedication through every chapter — most profoundly during her pregnancy with the triplets, when he chose to move in and help raise Jailyne, Brooklynne, and Madison. His commitment to supporting Laurie and her family was a testament to the depth of his love, and the two shared an unbreakable bond built on mutual devotion and respect.

He loved doing construction projects and plumbing

alongside his son-in-law, Jason McFadden, whom he always regarded as the son he never had. Though they drove each other crazy — one a meticulous planner, the other a doer who got the job done — they complemented each other perfectly. And as those who knew him can attest, his father always won in the end.

He also cherished the time spent with his dear friends at North Shore Firearms, where he was affectionately known as “Big John.” It was a place that combined two of his great loves — camaraderie and the craft of fine firearms.

His best buddies and most loyal companions were his beloved family dogs: Tito, Titan, and Frodo — faithful friends who were always by his side.

He is survived by his loving daughter and son-in-law, Laurie Anne and Jason McFadden of Danvers, three granddaughters (triplets), Jailyne, Brooklynne and Madison, all of Danvers and a sister, Marie Hannah of Manchester by the Sea. He was also the brother of the late Adeline Corcoran.

Visiting hours will be held at the Conway Cahill-Brodeur Funeral Home, 82 Lynn St., Peabody on Sunday, April 19, 2026 from 3 to 6 p.m. followed by a service in the funeral home at 6 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited to attend. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in his memory to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105. For directions and online guestbook, please visit [www.ccbfuneral.com.94](http://www.ccbfuneral.com.94)

## Joan A. Iannone

Her legacy is one of unconditional love, generosity, and a home that was always open to others

Family and friends are warmly invited to gather in remembrance of Joan A. (Sardina) Iannone, who passed away peacefully in her sleep on Friday, April 10th, at her home in Revere. She was 89 years old.

Visiting Hours will be held on Friday, April 17th, from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Vertuccio

Smith & Vazza, Beechwood Home for Funerals, 262 Beach St., Revere. A Funeral Mass celebrating Joan’s life will follow at 11:30 a.m. at St. Michael the Archangel Parish – St. John the Evangelist Church, 320 Winthrop St., Winthrop. She will then be laid to rest at Winthrop Cemetery.

Joan was born in Boston on November 24, 1936 to her late parents, Stephen J. “Bing” Sardina and Angelina “Angie” (Intraversato) Sardina. Her childhood was spent in East Boston where she created long time friendships, family, and involvement in the East Boston community. A proud graduate of East Boston High School, Class of 1954, she soon after married the love of her life, Pasquale “Patsy” Iannone, on February 5, 1956. Together, they built a life rich in family and tradition.

Joan dedicated many years and retired as a paraprofessional with BPS. During her time with BPS, she made many friendships from the different schools she worked in. Her favorite memories were in Milton, New Hampshire, at the family “Cottage.” It was a place where doors were always open, laughter was constant, and Sunday dinners at 2 p.m. became a beloved tradition. If you were nearby, you were welcome—no questions asked. Her later

years were spent at Jack Satter House with a beautiful view of Revere Beach.

Joan had a gift for bringing people together. She was an incredible cook and an even more beloved baker, filling homes and hearts with her creations. Known affectionately as “Ma” to many, her love extended far beyond her immediate family. She found joy in life’s simple pleasures—playing Scrabble (where she was unbeatable), bowling with friends, crocheting, and even trying her hand at authentic Chinese cooking. In her later years, she also enjoyed time spent at Foxwoods and Encore, always embracing life love and happiness.

Joan’s greatest pride was her family. She was the beloved wife of the late Pasquale “Patsy” Iannone and a loving and devoted mother to Stephen Iannone and his wife, Sandy, Lisa Iannone, Michael Iannone and his wife, Marcy, and the late David A. Iannone. She was a cherished grandmother to Derek Taft, Deanna Taft, Michael Dennis Iannone, and the late Dennis Taft, and a proud great-grandmother to Jason David Taft. She also leaves behind many loving nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear friends whose lives she touched deeply.



ly.

Joan’s legacy is one of unconditional love, generosity, and a home that was always open to others. She will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who were lucky enough to know her.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Joan’s memory to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

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



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# NeighborHealth convenes local leaders to address health gaps among new moms

Special to the Times-Free Press

NeighborHealth, Massachusetts' largest community-based primary care health system, convened healthcare providers, public health leaders, policy-makers, and community organizations on Friday, March 20 at La Colaborativa in Chelsea for "From Preconception to Infancy: Embodying Maternal Health Equity," a conference focused on advancing equi-

table, compassionate care for birthing families and improving outcomes for mothers and infants across the Commonwealth.

Bringing together experts on topics such as maternal mental health, midwifery, doula care, breastfeeding and birth centers – the conference aimed to catalyze systemic change and actively dismantle barriers negatively impacting maternal and infant health.

According to Massachusetts Department of Public Health data, Black women in Massachusetts are about 1.9 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes (during pregnancy or within one year postpartum) compared to White women – illustrating persistent racial inequities in maternal mortality. Nationwide, more than 84% of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable. ii

"Every family deserves the opportunity to experience a healthy pregnancy, a safe birth, and a strong start for their child," said Jamie Hazard, NeighborHealth President and CEO. "NeighborHealth believes that advancing maternal health equity requires collaboration across healthcare providers, public health leaders, and community partners. By coming together to share knowledge, data, and personal experiences, we can build systems of care that truly support families from preconception through infancy."



Mimi Gardner, Vice President of Community Impact & Partnerships, NeighborHealth, addresses conference attendees at La Colaborativa's Survival and Economic Development Center in Chelsea.

See HEALTH GAPS Page 9



Shown (left to right) NeighborHealth leadership team members Jamie Hazard, CEO and President; Eugenia Coronado, Vice President Specialty Services and Patient Experience; Dr. Julio Mazul, Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer meet during a conference break.



Presenter Hafsatou Fifi Diop, MD, MPH, Assistant Commissioner for Health Equity, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (left) and Keynote Speaker Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha, PhD, MPH, CHES, Tufts University School of Medicine (right) greet one another.



With baby in tow, Rachel Blessington (right) of Worcester Community Midwifery joins fellow advocates at the conference, including Kari Radoff (center) of Boston Medical Center.

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# Health Gaps // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

The event featured a keynote address on Black maternal health and systemic inequities from Ndi-diamaka Amutah-Onukagha, PhD, MPH, CHES, Julia A. Okoro, Professor of Black Maternal Health at Tufts University School of Medicine, followed by discussions with experts and providers on maternal health policy, perinatal care innovation, and the role of community-based doulas, home visiting programs, and multidisciplinary care teams.

“We know the challenges facing underserved communities – but we also know what’s needed to move forward,” said Dr. Amutah-Onukagha. “By raising awareness of public health risks, supporting policies and research that strengthen community well-being, and taking proactive steps to address disparities in maternal and child health, we can drive meaningful change and create a path toward more equitable, high-quality care for every family.”

The program included presentations and working sessions from leaders at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Boston Public Health Commission, the

Massachusetts Health Policy Commission, MassHealth and numerous community organizations working to improve maternal and infant health outcomes.

“This conference reflected the power of partnership and community voice in shaping a more equitable maternal health system,” said Mimi Gardner, Vice President of Community Impact and Partnerships at NeighborHealth. “Our goal was to move beyond discussion and toward actionable solutions that strengthen care delivery, expand access to culturally responsive services, and address longstanding disparities in maternal health. When we work alongside community organizations and families, we can create meaningful change that improves outcomes for parents and babies across our region.”

NeighborHealth, formerly East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, is one of the nation’s largest Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and the largest community-based primary care health system in Massachusetts, serving over 120,000 people and recognized by the Health Resources and Services Admin-



Shown (left to right) Shauna Palmer, Flourish Collective; Mari-Elena Leckel, Owner, Boston Birth Associates; Melissa Bowley, CEO, Flourish Care; Candice Wilcox, Community Engagement Manager, Flourish Care; Awara Adeagbo, Non-profit consultant, gather after a session.

istration (HRSA) as a National Quality Leader. For more than 50 years, NeighborHealth has provided comprehensive primary care, specialty care, and emergency services to communities across the Commonwealth. Through innovative care models and strong community partnerships, NeighborHealth works to advance health equity and expand access to high-quality care for low-income and immigrant communities.



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# Over 17,450 Boston Stadium Train Tickets sold during first day of sales

## First-day World Cup ticket sales have broken all previous “special event train service” ticket sales records

Special to the Times-Free Press

The MBTA announced that more than 17,450 Boston Stadium Train mTickets have been sold so far across the first five World Cup matches during the first day of sales being open.

“The 2026 World Cup is no ordinary event, and we are privileged to have the opportunity to welcome all to experience Massachusetts. The tremendous demand during the first day of Boston Stadium Train ticket sales demonstrates that we needed to think outside the box to safely deliver unprecedented train service, carrying fans both near and far to the World Cup matches,” said Interim Secretary of Transportation and MBTA General Manager and CEO Phillip Eng. “Under the leadership of the Healey-Driscoll Administra-

tion and our Legislative partners, we have been rebuilding the rest of our MBTA transit network, including subways, bus, ferry, paratransit, and our workforce. With that, all modes will be providing higher levels of service to enable visitors to see and experience even more during their time here – three years ago, we could not have delivered this level of service, and I’m proud of the MBTA team that has worked tirelessly to ensure we could offer this many transit seats. To all that want to purchase a Boston Stadium Train mTicket, we encourage you to use the mTicket app today! We’re excited to welcome futbol fans from around the globe to Massachusetts this summer.”

Compared to driving, parking, and event-day traffic delays, the MBTA Commuter

Rail provides one of the easiest, most predictable, most affordable ways to get to and from Boston Stadium. Good for travel between South Station and Foxboro, Boston Stadium Train tickets are also good for unlimited travel across the entire Commuter Rail network on match days – throughout any Zone or Interzone where MBTA Commuter Rail trains travel. This expanded access to the Commuter Rail network allows soccer fans more flexibility and options in choosing where to stay to attend World Cup matches.

First-day World Cup ticket sales have broken all previous “special event train service” ticket sales records:

- Nearly 11,000 roundtrip train tickets for Boston Stadium Train service to the World Cup matches were purchased

in the first hour of being available (more than 5,000 in the first 10 minutes).

- This is the highest rate of MBTA special event tickets ever sold in one hour.

- For context, this is very close to the rate of ticket sales for the second release of tickets to the 2023 Taylor Swift concert, which sold out in about two minutes with just over 1,800 tickets sold.

- The first round of Taylor Swift special event ticket sales was about 3,600 tickets, which sold out between midnight and 8 AM.

- More than 6,200 tickets have already been sold for the Haiti vs. Scotland World Cup match at Boston Stadium on June 13, which beats the record of the most special event train tickets sold to any individual event at Gillette Stadium, including the Army-Navy Game and all Taylor Swift concerts combined (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday shows).

The MBTA plans to run an unprecedented amount of service for the World Cup, mobilizing up to 20,000 riders to and from each of the seven matches on 14 trains per match. This far exceeds the 3,000 riders for the Friendly Match and about 2,000 riders for a typical Patriots game. To meet this demand, the T took on a \$35 million project to upgrade Foxboro Station in advance of the World Cup, will deploy many additional Customer Service and Operations Staff, enhance security operations, operate later bus and subway service on match days, and provide other enhancements that best support Boston Stadium Train passengers.

Customers are reminded that a same-day match ticket is needed to purchase a Boston Stadium Train ticket. Passengers must register the email address used to purchase their match ticket on mTicket to complete their train ticket purchase.

Those who attempted to purchase yesterday and were unable to are encouraged to return to mTicket to make another attempt. With the demand currently being seen, passengers are again encouraged to not delay their train ticket purchases as capacity is limited to 20,000 customers per match.

Customer service is available at 617-222-3200 and at MBTA.com/customer-support for customers who still need assistance. In addition, customers should refer to MBTA.com/WorldCup and MBTA.com/BostonStadiumTrains for detailed train and purchasing information.

As a reminder, any prohibited items that do not comply with the stadium’s Bag Policy will not be permitted on the trains. No personal items may be left on the train during the match. Clear bags are strongly encouraged.

For more information, visit MBTA.com/WorldCup or connect with the T on X @MBTA and @MBTA\_CR, Facebook / TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or TikTok @thembta.

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) opened America’s first subway tunnel in 1897, pioneering public transportation in the United States. Today, the MBTA is one of the largest public transit systems in the country, operating an extensive network of subway, bus, Commuter Rail, ferry, and paratransit services across 176 cities and towns. The MBTA is undergoing a transformative period, focusing on cultivating a culture of safety and excellence, modernizing infrastructure, and improving reliability and accessibility. Current priorities include accelerating critical infrastructure repairs, expanding accessibility, and reducing emissions. The MBTA is committed to providing dependable, frequent, and accessible service that riders can rely on while supporting the region’s economic vitality. Through initiatives like the unprecedented Track Improvement Program, the Better Bus Program, and the Rail Modernization Plan, the MBTA aims to connect communities and improve riders’ daily experiences and trips. For questions or assistance, riders are encouraged to contact the MBTA Customer Center at 617-222-3200. Members of the press are encouraged to contact mediarelations@mbta.com. For the latest updates on MBTA services, projects, and initiatives, visit MBTA.com or follow @MBTA on social media.

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## Budget Review // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and it serves as the Council's leverage to advance and deliver for our district," said Councilor Coletta Zapata. "Over the coming weeks, we will engage in a collaborative process with residents to ensure we are funding critical city services and advancing initiatives that address our most pressing challenges while navigating financial constraints. I encourage all residents to share their input by reaching out to my office and joining the Council during upcoming budget hearings."

On April 8, 2026, Mayor Michelle Wu shared the first draft of the \$4.9 billion FY27 Operating Budget which is now in the hands of Boston City Council. The FY27 budget reflects a disciplined approach to protecting core city services while positioning Boston for long-term fiscal stability with the lowest increase in spending since 2009. The City of Boston, along with other municipalities across the Commonwealth and country, are facing a challenging fiscal environment with

rising costs, slowing revenue growth, and economic uncertainty. Despite these challenges, the City of Boston continues to have a AAA bond rating and strong city reserves. As fiscal conditions tighten and costs rise, the FY27 budget reduces or eliminates funding for several discretionary programs and grants that were previously supported through federal relief funding and City investments.

To address key drivers of last year's deficit, the FY27 proposed budget includes cost-containment measures targeting rising health care costs, public safety overtime, and snow removal. At the same time, the budget continues to prioritize housing affordability and stability, summer youth employment, and high-quality constituent services that improve quality of life and maintain our streets. It also invests in public health and safety, critical resources for families and seniors through Boston Public Libraries and BCYF centers, and high-quality education for

all students.

The Boston City Council will hold budget hearings reviewing the proposed budget alongside city officials and hear feedback directly from residents. Most hearings will be live-streamed on [www.boston.gov/city-council-tv](http://www.boston.gov/city-council-tv) and all hearing recordings will be available on the Boston City Council's youtube page.

This marks the fifth year the Boston City Council has the authority to reject, reduce, amend, or approve line items in the city's operating budget. The Council is expected to vote on the finalized budget by the end of June, with approved measures taking effect on July 1, 2026. Additionally, this budget cycle will feature the city's third participatory budgeting process, allowing residents to contribute ideas and recommendations. To learn more about how to get involved, visit [boston.gov/departments/participatory-budgeting](http://boston.gov/departments/participatory-budgeting).

## Funding // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

and NEST proactively engaging more than 890 people since September through their coordinated outreach efforts. This engagement has led to more than 600 people accessing inpatient substance use treatment. On March 30, City teams launched our Warm Weather Initiative, bringing additional BPD resources for NEST with support from state partners and the MBTA Transit Police. In the two weeks since launching efforts across agencies, the Coordinated Response Team has engaged more than 160 individuals and helped 90 people onto recovery pathways.

With warmer weather approaching, the City of Boston will continue to advance and expand our efforts to end outdoor substance abuse, connect individuals to treatment and recovery programs, and build on our progress. Next week, the City will send the annual 2026 Warm Weather Plan and Coordinated Response Team Report to the Boston City Council.

This announcement also builds on the City's new partnership with the Gavin Foundation, supported by a grant from the Cummings Foundation, has expanded access to recovery and treatment services in the area. Although significant challenges remain, over the past four years, the City has succeeded in building clear pathways to recovery and stable housing, coordinating public safety and public health responses, and ending permanent encampments in Boston. To address persistent outdoor substantial use and quality of life challenges, the Boston Police Department has committed to increased presence and enforcement in impacted areas, focused on diverting individuals in treatment and recovery programs.

For additional information on the City's ongoing efforts, please visit the Coordinated Response Team's webpage and this dashboard.

## HVNA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Zoning Board and make that case."

Moreover, during the presentation, Lynds outlined a by-right plan that would fully comply with zoning and include the construction of two separate three-unit buildings, but would not require parking.

"This comes up a lot — 'Why wouldn't we just do the two three-families?' There are a number of reasons. One is cost, but second is impacts — if we do two separate buildings, you have to bring two water services, two utilities, two source services, and two fire alarms," Lynds said.

"You only have to bring one in for a single building, and you can organize the building in a way that you have a single entrance, so that's the reason why we're proposing a single building."

After Lynds outlined site plans, renderings, and more, the floor was opened for questions from those in attendance.

HVNA Board Member Skip Marcella asked about the abutters' meeting for the project, noting that an attendee of the

HVNA meeting at which the project was first presented had some concerns.

Lynds noted that his client has been working with the individual's concerns about construction and its potential impact on their property.

There was also a discussion regarding the by-right proposal, with attendees wondering whether a setback was required between the two buildings. However, Lynds said that was

not the case if the buildings were attached.

Another attendee wondered where the trash would be located. Lynds indicated there was space in the basement.

Ultimately, the project was opposed in an 11-3 vote.

To view a recording of the most recent HVNA meeting, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/harborviewna/>. The next HVNA meeting is scheduled for May 4.

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# Wu, Boston Emergency Medical Services celebrate new EMTs and recent promotions

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu, Boston Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) celebrated the graduation of 26 new EMTs and the recent promotion of eight EMS members in a ceremony held at Boston's historic Faneuil Hall. The graduates, all state-certified EMTs, successfully completed the Boston EMS Recruit Academy, an intensive training program that prepares recruits to deliver high-quality emergency care across the city. With this new class joining the ranks, Boston EMS continues to strengthen its 9-1-1 ambulance and dispatch services in response to growing demand.

"Congratulations to the newest class of EMT graduates," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Today marks the beginning of your commitment to a profession rooted in service, compassion, and skill. As a critical link between our first responders and healthcare providers, EMS plays an essential role in delivering care across our city. Boston is deeply grateful for your dedication to keeping every neighborhood in Boston safe and healthy."

"Today, we welcome a new class of EMTs who have already shown impressive dedication and heart," said Boston EMS Chief James Hooley. "Your training has prepared you for exactly what lies ahead—real emergencies, fast-changing situations, and the responsibility of caring for people when



A recent ceremony honoring 26 graduating recruits and 8 promotions to enhance emergency medical services in the City of Boston.

they need it most. And we need you now more than ever. You are stepping into this role at an extraordinary moment. With FIFA World Cup events, Sail Boston, the Marathon, and 250th commemorations ahead, we are preparing for one of the busiest springs and summers our city has seen in years. Your commitment ensures we can meet these challenges head-on. We're honored to have you join our ranks."

The Boston EMS Recruit Academy is a full-time, paid program that combines classroom instruction with field training to prepare EMTs for a broad range of life-threatening emergencies—including mass casualty incidents, active shooter situations, hazardous materials exposure, and human trafficking response. During

their training, the graduates collectively responded to more than 3,000 9-1-1 calls, treating patients experiencing everything from cardiac arrest and childbirth to serious trauma and behavioral health crises.

"Congratulations to all who are graduating today and to all who are advancing in their EMS careers," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health for the City of Boston. "Boston EMS is critical to health and wellness in our city, and your decision to serve ensures that lifesaving care reaches residents and visitors in every neighborhood. As first responders, you deliver skilled care at the moments when people need it most, and you do so with compassion and purpose. Your work is essential to building a healthier, more equitable Boston, and I am deeply grateful for your service."

During the ceremony, the department also celebrated the recent promotion of six Emergency Medical Technicians to the rank of Paramedic, following their successful completion of an intensive paramedic program, departmental promotional exams, and a demanding

three-month field internship.

Promoted to Paramedics

- Kevin Pywell
- Kwang Koo
- Matthew Derby
- David Ramos
- Sebastian Morales
- Sam Cedrone

The department also honored two members promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, who together bring nearly 25 years of combined experience to the supervisory ranks.

Promoted to Lieutenants

- Brian Bailey
- Randy Brinson, Jr.

"These promotions mark a significant milestone in your careers," said Boston EMS Chief James Hooley. "Each of you has demonstrated exceptional skill, dedication, and readiness to lead. The confidence your peers and this department place in you is well earned. As you step into these roles, you will set the tone and standard for those around you—and your impact will be felt far beyond the walls of EMS, throughout every neighborhood we serve."

Boston EMS is one of the busiest municipal EMS providers in New England, responding to more than 141,000

emergency medical incidents per year.

Boston EMS is the primary provider of emergency medical services for the City of Boston and is a nationally recognized leader in the field of pre-hospital emergency medicine. The department leverages the latest advances in both medicine and technology to bring high-quality, compassionate care to the people of Boston. As a bureau of BPHC, Boston EMS also plays a key role in the City's emergency preparedness efforts and provides community programming designed to educate the public about important health and safety topics.

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](http://boston.gov/bphc).



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# CELEBRITY CHEF VICTORIA FABBO IS FEATURED AT DAME DELICIOUS AT OAKLEY COUNTRY CLUB

More than 300 guests attended Les Dames d'Escoffier Boston's Dame Delicious – An Evening of Culinary Adventures – which was a celebration of women in food and hospitality, March 27 at the Oakley Country Club in Watertown.

Boston-based businesses, including the Boston School of French Cooking and The Daily Catch restaurant, had tables at the event. Celebrity chef Victoria Fabbo, of Everett, who is a registered dietitian, held a food demonstration of her amazing cooking skills at the event. Fabbo is the host of the "Fabulous Foods With Victoria Fabbo" on the YouTube channel.

Mary Ann Esposito, host of PBS Ciao Italia and author of "Ciao Italia – Plant Harvest Cook!" and Cecile Ganne, author of "Scent of a Truffle," autographed copies of their books at the event.

The event proved to be an unforgettable celebration of food, wine, and inspiration.

CARY SHUMAN PHOTOS



Celebrity chef Victoria Fabbo (center), pictured with her parents, Victor Fabbo and Karen Fabbo, at Dame Delicious – An Evening of Culinary Adventures – at Oakley Country Club in Watertown.



Jamie Walsh, general manager of The Mighty Squirrel Brewing Company in Boston's Fenway neighborhood.



Evelyn Schichner and Lily Milman of the Boston School of French Cooking, located in the South End, are pictured at the event.



Karen Coleman, board member of the Mass. Restaurant Association, and Cecile Ganne, author of "Scent of a Truffle."



Representing The Daily Catch restaurant on Hanover Street in the North End are owner Maria Freddura and chef Jesse McNally.



Representing The Epicurean Club of Boston, executive chefs James Boyd, Denise Graffeo, Steve Lawrence, and Rico DiFronzo.

# Massachusetts to launch EBT chip cards to prevent SNAP theft, protect tax dollars

Special to the Times-Free Press

Massachusetts is moving forward with the adoption of chip and tap-enabled Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, which will enhance security measures to better prevent theft across the system, including for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Massachusetts would become the third state in the country to implement this important tool to prevent theft and ensure taxpayer dollars are protected.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has started notifying Massachusetts retailers to prepare for this upcoming change by updating their Point-of-Sale (POS) system to accept the new chip and/or tap EBT cards. The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) will begin piloting chip

and tap-enabled EBT cards later this year.

SNAP is a federal program that is entirely funded with federal dollars. SNAP fraud is extremely rare – less than one percent of the SNAP caseload has been found to have committed fraud.

Chip and tap-enabled EBT cards were not authorized by federal government for use until 2024, and guidance for states to implement these more secure EBT cards was not released until August 2025. In 2025, Governor Healey introduced and the Legislature passed funding to implement the transition to these more secure cards. Only two other states have launched chip and tap-enabled EBT card pilot programs to date.

EBT cards are where benefits are stored and accessed by almost one million people in

Massachusetts who receive assistance from DTA. There are an estimated 5,500 SNAP retailers in Massachusetts who complete EBT transactions. DTA issues approximately \$2.6 billion in SNAP benefits annually to households meeting a variety of eligibility criteria.

Benefit theft occurs when eligible clients have their benefits stolen through criminal activity. The most common method of benefit theft is installing card skimmers on Point of Sale (POS) devices to steal the card information from the card's magnetic stripe. Criminals then use the card information to make fraudulent purchases, leaving zero balances for clients to meet their basic needs as intended.

Massachusetts chip and tap-enabled EBT cards will contain a Europay Mastercard Visa (EMV) microchip and other technology that is much more secure than a traditional magnetic stripe EBT card. For every transaction, the microchip generates a unique code that must be verified by the EBT system before the transaction will be authorized. Chip and tap-enabled EBT cards complete transactions by either being inserted into a POS terminal, or tapped on the POS terminal, rather than swiped using the magnetic stripe.

“DTA’s job is to provide support to eligible households in need, and blocking criminal actors who would intervene and steal those benefits is an absolute top priority. After years of advocacy and hard work to get here, Massachusetts is excited to introduce a measure that will further reduce opportunities for benefits

to be stolen, helping families put food on the table and stopping theft before it occurs,” said DTA Commissioner Michael Cole. “Thanks to the Governor and Legislature’s investment, EBT cards will be better aligned with the safeguards that have long existed for commercial credit and debit cards. We’re hopeful that retailers can quickly adopt the technology needed to utilize this card technology, and we stand ready to make sure this process goes as smoothly as possible.”

“The migration to chip-enabled EBT cards adds an important layer of security to the Commonwealth’s food benefits system,” said Jon B. Hurst, President & CEO, Retailers Association of Massachusetts. “Retailers have been upgrading their Point-of-Sale (POS) systems to prepare for this change, and we appreciate the partnership with the Healey-Driscoll Administration to ensure a seamless transition.”

DTA has previously taken significant action to prevent benefit theft and safeguard client benefits, including:

- Implementing card lock/unlock technology using DTA Connect mobile application and the Cardholder Customer Service Line.
- Providing an EBT card safety flyer with every EBT card issued that contains information on how to lock/unlock your card, as well as frequently change the PIN.
- Educating clients on card safety and encouraging regular changing of their EBT card PIN to enhance security, and forcing re-pinning when there was known high-risk for stolen PINs.
- Producing educational materials

on protecting your EBT card and identifying scams (informational videos, flyers, and more) in multiple languages, available on [mass.gov/ProtectYourEBT](https://mass.gov/ProtectYourEBT)

• Engaging retailers and retail associations through outreach and education on benefit theft schemes and patterns, and partnering with law enforcement on information sharing.

Fraud prevention is a critical responsibility for all DTA staff. DTA uses eligibility interviews and verification to ensure accurate initial determinations. DTA constantly leverages advanced data analytics and tools – regularly adding new methods – data matching, transaction monitoring, and a variety of fraud detection practices to detect and resolve potential program integrity risks. When issues are identified DTA conducts non-criminal fraud investigations, disqualifies individuals for program violations, refers cases for prosecution, calculates overpayments and establishes claims for repayment.

DTA operates a fraud hotline via phone and email inbox where anybody can submit a referral for investigation. Suspected fraudulent activity is investigated through dedicated program integrity and law enforcement partnerships. DTA also actively partners with State Auditor’s Office Bureau of Special Investigation (BSI) and the Office of the Inspector General on program integrity initiatives.


Anyone is able to report fraud to DTA online using this form, by email [DTA.ReportFraud@Mass-Mail.State.MA.US](mailto:DTA.ReportFraud@Mass-Mail.State.MA.US), or by phone using DTA’s Fraud Hotline at 800-372-8399.


## East Boston Times-Free Press Drop-Off Locations

Orient Height Food Market	1016 Bennington St.	Mobil Gas Station	Meridian St.
Angelos	1012 Bennington St.	Shaw's	240 Border St.
Butcher	1008 Bennington St.	Kappy's Liquors	216 Border St.
Tobacco	1006 Bennington St.	CVS	210 Border St.
Sunny	1000 Bennington St.	McDonalds	Central Square
Renegades	1004 Bennington St.	East Boston Social Center	68 Central St.
Metro PCS	982 Saratoga St.	Wallgreens	1 Central Sq 100 St.
Catering Deli	978 Saratoga St.	Americano Express Bar	Meridian St.
Kiosco Restaurant Bar	974 Saratoga St.	Shell Gas Station	52 Meridian St.
Rite Aid	971 Bennington St.	Police Station	49 Meridian St.
Luna's Italian	945 Saratoga St.	Post Office	50 Meridian St.
Neptune Laundromat	Saratoga St.	East Boston Saving Bank	10 Meridian St.
Subway	948 Saratoga St.	East Boston APAC	17 Meridian St.
Burger King	948 Saratoga St.	Bella's Market	67 Maverick St.
Saratoga Market	16 Trident St.	Bank of America	Maverick St.
Royal Famous Roast Beef	752 Bennington St.	Smoke Shop	Maverick St.
Lanzillis Gas Station	931 Bennington St.	PLS Check	19 Maverick St.
Lisslot Hair Salon	730 Bennington St.	Meridian Market	121 Meridian St.
Century 21 Realty	620 Bennington St.	Clipper Wine and Spirit	Maverick St.
7-Eleven	120 Byron St.	Station Grocery	Maverick St.
Salesian Boys and Girls Club	150 Byron and Bennington St.	Dunkin' Donut	Maverick St.
Carlos Catering	567 Bennington and Moore St.	Tedeschi	Maverick St.
The Corner Mini Market	517 Bennington and Harmony St.	Heritage Apts	209 Sumner St.
The UPS	2 Neptune Rd.	Cross Roads Shelter	56 Havre St.
Neptune Liquors	1 Neptune Rd.	Maverick Landing	31 Liverpool St.
Neptune Convenience	3 Neptune Rd.	San Miguel Argangel	317 Sumner St.
Neptune Laundromat	489 Saratoga St.	Adela's Bakery	319 Sumner St.
Mellos Coffee	476 Saratoga St.	Mehak Halal	Sumner St.
DA. Copas Pizza	474 Saratoga St.	Wine and Barley	326 Sumner St.
Laundromat	470 Saratoga St.	Al Bar	330 Sumner St.
Mobil Gas Station	396 Chelsea St.	Italian Express Pizza	336 Sumner St.
Spinellis	282 Bennington St.	Family Brothers Market	339 Sumner St.
Daycare Liquors	286 Bennington St.	Alvaro Laundromat	341 Sumner St.
Jevell's Restaurant	Chelsea and Day Square	Sumner Market	345 Sumner St.
Tiny Bubbles	200 Bennington St.	Maverick st Market	211 Maverick St.
Lolly's Bakery	158 Bennington St.	Wash and Dry	209 Maverick St.
Sava's Market	150 Bennington and Brooks St.	Laundromat	72 Chelsea St.
Kelly's Pub	84 Bennington St.	Santarpios	111 Chelsea St.
East Boston Corner Market	233 Marion St.	Old Factory Condo	156 Porter St.
Peach's and Cream	73 Bennington St.	Spotless	24 Porter St.
East Boston Saving Bank	1 Bennington St.	East Boston YMCA	215 Bremen St.
Citizens Bank	Meridian St.	Boston Library	365 Bremen St.
Dunkin' Donut	Meridian St.	Woody's Liquors	1035 Bennington St.
Castello Liquors	Meridian St.	Don Orion Nursing Home	111 Orient Ave.
The Soap Box Laundromat	299 Meridian St.	Glastone Market	3 Glastone St.
Angela's Coffee	131 Lexington St.	Continental Dry Cleaners	15 Breed St.
Food Market	353 Meridian St.	Martin Community Ctr	86 Boardman St.
Meridian Market	357 Meridian St.	Starbucks	430 McClellan Highway

## Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
Reynozo, G De La Cruz	91-93 Orleans Street LLC	181 Maverick St	\$831,000
Hochstetter, Griffin Ian	Herndon, Courtney	301 Saratoga St #2	\$617,000
Hernandez, Lisandro	Malacaso, Paul	305-R Lexington St	\$445,000
Sherpa, Palmu	Hess, Gerald M	622-624 Saratoga St	\$940,000
Seybal, Maximilian	Wm Property Mgmt LLC	655 Saratoga St	\$699,900
Kim, Taehyeung	50 Lebanon Street Rt	98 Prescott St	\$520,000
Arrington, Jordan	Bennington St 98-100 LLC	98-100 Bennington St	\$700,000





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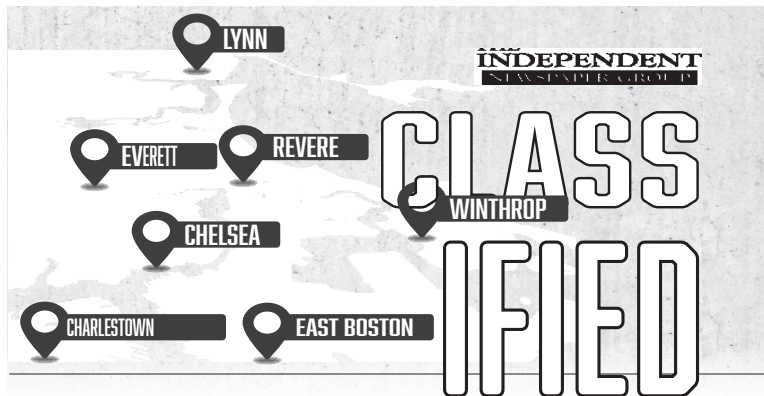
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Suffolk Probate and Family Court  
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(617)788-8300  
DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION  
Docket No.

SU26D0406DR  
Diana P Sanchez-De Diaz vs. William Diaz  
To the Defendant:  
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown.  
The Complaint is on file at the Court.  
An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any

action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party.  
SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.  
You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon: Diana P Sanchez-De Diaz 814 Saratoga St Boston, MA 02128 your answer, if any, on or before 06/10/2026.  
If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action.

You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.  
WITNESS, Hon. Janine D Rivers, First Judge of this Court.  
Date: March 25, 2026  
Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.  
Register of Probate

4/15  
EB

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# East Boston's Professional Service Directory

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## CITY PAWS

# Assisting rescue groups

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Whether you are a dog person or a cat person, a parrot or a Guinea pig lover, there is an animal shelter or rescue group that could use your assistance. If you've always wished you could help place the thousands of animals who need new homes, rest assured, there is a place for you that suits the time and skills you offer.

We worked with Westie and Cairn rescue groups for many years and found the time we devoted to helping to be rewarding in many ways.

giving, consider donating to a rescue group that has come to your attention. When we lost our second Westie, Maggie Mae, friends asked where they could send memorial gifts.

We suggested the MSPCA and the Animal Rescue League of Boston locally, but we also included WestieMed.com on our list for our rescue friends across the country. This non-profit covers the medical expenses of Westies in the care of rescue groups. Maggie would have been proud to have helped all three groups.

### Home Visits

Home visits fit into our current lifestyle. With each re-

### Supporting Rescue

As you plan your charitable



The couple who adopted Swiffer 15 years ago have been two of our best friends ever since.

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quest, we can choose to take on the task or not. Home visit volunteers are the eyes and ears of the people who process the applications and make the decisions about placing animals in what they call "forever" homes.

We also answer questions about the breed and warn of possible dangers around the house that someone who has not lived with a tenacious terrier might miss.

Fifteen years ago, we conducted a home visit for a couple in Jamaica Plain. Once the adoption was complete, they

contacted us to take a walk with them and their new Westie Swiffer. One walk led to another, and this couple remains two of our most cherished friends to this day. When we say that time spent helping rescues can reward you in many ways, new friends are a perfect example.

### Transporting

Many rescue groups move dogs long distances with volunteer drivers. We've driven some of these runs and helped coordinate a Westie transport group for many years. A route

is planned from the foster home that has the dog to where the pup can be handed over to the adoptive family.

There are also opportunities to transport by air if you're traveling between cities and would be willing to take a small dog in the cabin with you. We've been the local connection for volunteers flying into Logan.

### Fostering

If you've ever wondered whether there is room in your life for another dog or cat, you might try fostering an animal. This is simply providing shelter, training, comfort, and affection to a dog or cat in your home for a few weeks. Your assessment of the animal is used to match them with a permanent home that will suit their personality, activity level, and behavior.

### Leaders & Worker Bees

Naturally, every rescue group needs leadership and worker bees. People make phone calls to shelters, pick up surrendered dogs, take them to veterinary visits, nurse them after surgery, or care for them as they recover from neglect, injury, or illness.

As you can see, from writing a check to devoting your life, there is a place for you if you'd like to do a bit to help homeless animals. Pick a group, pick a task, and give it a try. Each success along the way will fill your heart with joy.

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