



# East Boston

## TIMES - FREE PRESS

Wednesday, March 17, 2021



## Outdoor dining to return March 22

By John Lynds

Over a dozen East Boston restaurants are expected to take advantage of the City of Boston's 2021 outdoor dining program that is set to begin on March 22. This is an earlier start than the previously announced date of April 1.

"The countdown to patio and roof deck season in Boston was just officially moved up to March 22," said Cunard Tavern owner Phil Frattaroli. "Now It's just four more days until March 22 when we'll see all of you on the patio."

The Cunard was one of 13 Eastie restaurants to receive a special permit from the city that allows local restaurants to set up outdoor patios on roadways and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood. The program helped restaurants increase capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic while keeping customers and staff safe.

Last year, the Cunard joined Mi Rancho Restau-

See DINING Page 2

## JPNA votes in favor of three projects at March meeting

By John Lynds

The Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association (JPNA) board recently released the voting results from its March meeting held earlier this month.

JPNA members voted to support three development projects at the meeting.

The first project at 153 Everett St. members voted 29-2 in support of Taylor Kale and Dennis Topakov's plans to install a 200 square foot roof deck on their home.

The owners said they would use TREX decking and white aluminum rails. The headhouse on the roof is already existing and the deck and railing will not

See JPNA Page 5



Hilton Boston Logan Airport staff help the East Boston YMCA receive, pack and distribute grocery bags to community groups in East Boston.

Ten of the YMCA of Greater Boston's 33 pantry food sites are located in Eastie and in the past year the Eastie Y has served more than 350,000 grab and go Meals to youth 18 and under.



## East Boston YMCA partners with Hilton for its Pantry Bag Program

By John Lynds

Executive Director of the East Boston YMCA Joe Gaeta announced this week that the Y has begun partnering with Hilton Boston Logan Airport to expand the YMCA of Greater Boston's Pantry Bag Program.

Gaeta said each year for the past 15 years the YMCA of Greater Boston has grown its programming at local sites to fight food insecurity and reach more and more people.

"Since the start of the pandemic, our commitment has grown dramatically, and the impact of our work has grown as well," said Gaeta. "In 2019 the YMCA of Greater Boston

served more than 800,000 meals and snacks, in 2020 we served 3.1 million grab and go and prepared meals and 170,043 bags of pantry food delivered across 70 locations. We have developed close working relationships with key players with the Mayor's Office of Food Access, Boston Public Schools, the Greater Boston Food Bank, the Boston Housing Authority, and dozens of other community-based organizations."

Earlier this year the East Boston Y hatched a plan with the Hilton Boston Logan Airport to receive, pack and distribute grocery bags to community groups in East Boston.

The Eastie Y now pro-

vides on average 4,000 grocery bags weekly of pantry food to residents here and throughout Boston at 33 sites.

"The Hilton in East Boston was an ideal location for a temporary distribution center as prior to the pandemic, East Boston was one of the city's most

See YMCA Page 6

## ZBA approved new Bremen Street project

By John Lynds

Back in July, the Boston Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) sent the developers of a proposed large-scale mixed-use development project on Bremen Street back to the drawing board.

Citing a lack of greenspace coupled with the size and scope of the project, the ZBA unanimously rejected the proposed project at 282-302 Bremen St. that would have brought 145 additional units to Eastie.

While the project received BPDA approval, it lacked support from the community and the Mayor's Office.

However, last week the ZBA approved a scaled-down version of the original proposal.

Ahead of the ZBA hearing the developer reduced the number of units from 145 to 126, or a 13 percent decrease, and increased the percentage of affordable units from 15 to 20 percent.

Overall the approved project includes 13 live/work studios for artists and 5 three-bedroom apartments aimed at families making no more than 60 percent of the Boston area median income. In total, 20 percent of the units will be rented to people making no more than 60 percent of the Boston area median income.

The changes were supported at last week's ZBA hearing by City Councilor

Lydia Edwards.

The project received BPDA approval last February and was under Article 80 Large Project review and still needed zoning variances from the ZBA to move forward.

Bremen Acquisitions filed the project with the BPDA last year that kicked off an Article 80 review by the BPDA and the appointment of an IAG made up of community members for the proposal.

The developer wanted to take a non-conforming and outdated industrial use currently housing Gino's Auto Body on Bremen Street and turn the site into a development that includes a mix of residential housing and ground-floor retail space.

Other highlights of the project include related upgrades in public realm improvements, including pedestrian and vehicular access, landscaping and streetscape design. With a combined land area of approximately 34,160 square feet, the site consists of nine contiguous parcels of land with a series of non-descript automobile repair structures, one small wood-frame residential buildings, surface parking and multiple curb-cuts off Bremen Street.

The 110,000 square foot building included more than 3,000 square feet of retail space, over 2,155 square feet of artist workspace with gallery pro-

See ZBA Page 5



An artist rendering of the ZBA approved project on Bremen Street.

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For the latest news in East Boston that you need to know, check

**[eastietimes.com](http://eastietimes.com)**



# Yet another gun arrest in Eastie; Captain McCormack says he’s concerned

By John Lynds

Last Tuesday’s gun arrest gave East Boston the dubious honor of leading the city in gun confiscations so far this year, and this has District A-7 Captain Kelly McCormack concerned.

Last Tuesday, District A-7 officers along with officers assigned to the Boston Police Fugitive Unit along with members of the U.S. Marshals High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Fugitive Task Force and the Massachusetts State Police arrested a 21-year-old male from Revere for two outstanding warrants in the area of 226 Princeton Street in East Boston.

At the time of his arrest, the suspect was wanted on a warrant issued out of Essex Superior Court on charges of Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, Unlawful Possession of Ammunition and Possession of a Large Capacity Feeding Device as well as a second warrant sought out of Chelsea District Court on charges of Receiving Stolen Motor Vehicle and other miscellaneous traffic offenses.

As the officers were performing a protective sweep, they located the male target of their investigation along with a 21-year-old female from Lynn standing in a bedroom with what appeared to be a firearm and several plastic bags containing blue pills in plain sight. Both parties then were placed in custody without



The gun recovered during an arrest in Eastie last Tuesday. The firearm was able to shoot rifle rounds.

incident.

The address was immediately frozen pending a search warrant out of East Boston District Court.

After executing the warrant police recovered a loaded Ruger-57 handgun containing 16 rounds of 5.7x28 ammunition as well as several other loose rounds of ammunition and approximately 200 prescription pills.

Both suspects were arraigned in East Boston District Court. In addition to the prior arrest warrant charges, the male suspect was charged with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, Unlawful Possession of Ammunition and Possession with Intent to Distribute Class B Drugs.

Last week’s arrest and subsequent recovery of the handgun brought the total number of firearms recovered in the past few weeks in Eastie to seven. “We’ve seen an in-

crease in guns in East Boston,” said Captain McCormack. “We have now recovered more guns than other neighborhoods in the city. We are working with outside agencies to get a handle on this. It is concerning to me as we come into the warmer months. The prevalence of guns, especially in East Boston, is to me at an all time high. So I’m focusing on that with some outside resources and with the assistance of Chelsea PD. Chelsea is seeing the same type of influx of firearms and these gangs are in conflict with each other. So, I’m going to be very sensitive to those types of issues this summer.”

McCormack said the gun police took off the street last week had the capability of shooting rifle rounds.

“It’s a handgun that comes with the capability of shooting explosive rounds or armor piercing rounds,” said McCormack. “That’s a scary gun to anybody and I was glad to recover that firearm.”

## PAUL PINGARO SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

The Paul Pingaro Scholarship Committee would like to announce that applications for the following Scholarships are available at The Martin Pino Community Center.

- The Salvatore and Maria Pizzi Foundation Scholarship awards \$2,500 per year for four years.
- The Paul R Pingaro Scholarship is a one-time award of \$2,500.

Eligibility requirements for Applicants are as follows: Applicant must be a resident of East Boston, a graduating High School senior, must be accepted into an accredited college or university and turn in a completed application no later than April 23, 2021. For More information please call 617 635-5121 and ask for Joe Weddleton.

## GSCA MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA

March 22, 2021 Virtual Meeting Agenda

The Gove Street Citizens Association GSCA monthly meeting will be held ONLINE (and on phone) via ZOOM. The meeting will be held on Monday, March 22, at 6:30 p.m. Registration is required. If you have not received an invitation to register or have difficulty registering or attending, please go to <https://govestreet.org/zoom>, send an email to [secretary@govestreet.org](mailto:secretary@govestreet.org) or contact (781) 951-4111.

Though the agenda is subject to change, we plan

## NEWS IN BRIEF

to discuss the following items:

- Attendance Roll Call
- Welcome & Announcements
- Boston Police Updates
- Office of Neighborhood Services Updates – Lina Tramelli
- Neighborhood Updates – Nat Taylor
- Boston Groundwater Trust – Christian Simonelli, Executive Director. Christian will present information about the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) as it relates to East Boston. It’s important we all, as residents and stewards of our neighborhood, understand why this infrastructure is needed to protect our community.
- PLAN: East Boston - Jay Ruggiero Project Presentation: 297 Maverick - Richard Lynds, Esq.
- VOTE - Renovate, erect addition, and add roof deck.
- Legislative Update – City Councilor Lydia Edwards

## MASS NATIONAL GUARD TO PROVIDE CONTINUED ASSISTANCE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

In response to a request from federal authorities for continued support, approximately 400 members of the Massachusetts National Guard will depart this weekend for Washington, D.C., to provide ongoing public safety support to local, state, and federal agencies in the region.

As with earlier Massa-

chusetts Guard assistance in the nation’s capital, the deployment falls under Governor Charlie Baker’s Jan. 25 activation order, which made up to 700 Massachusetts National Guard personnel available at any given time to augment the security and logistics capabilities of various agencies in the region. With the Governor’s consent, this second phase of the federally funded mission is expected to last for 10 weeks. Previously around 600 Soldiers and Airmen were deployed to the support mission and returned home on Feb. 22.

The mission will not interfere with the Massachusetts National Guard’s ability to respond to and assist in emergencies within the Commonwealth. The Guard will ensure all appropriate health protection measures are implemented leading up to, and throughout, the mission. This includes pre-departure screenings, COVID-19 testing, and mandatory mask wear. Additionally, Soldiers and Airmen will have individual rooms while deployed to the D.C. area to further reduce risks during this pandemic.

The Massachusetts National Guard trains regularly with military, law enforcement, and civilian agencies to provide a broad spectrum of services in support of security, logistics, disaster relief, and other missions. The Guard has a proven track record of success supporting civilian authorities and their frequent side-by-side training with state and local first responders makes them well-suited for this mission.

## Dining // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

rant; La Cancun; Casa Colombia; Tutti Frutti; Maverick’s; Santarpio’s Pizza; Naples Restaurant; Bohemios Restaurant Bar; Rincon Limeno Restaurant; Barney’s Grill; Tawakal Halal Cafe; Paza On Porter; Mi Pueblito; Luna’s; and Renegade’s Pub for the city’s outdoor dining pilot program.

With the success of last year’s program, Mayor Martin Walsh said the city will continue many of the successful initiatives from

last year’s program, such as streamlined permitting. Applications for outdoor dining licenses on both public and private property are now open, and businesses can apply online at the city’s website.

“Outdoor dining was one of the bright spots last summer and fall, and we’ve seen the benefits it has had on our neighborhoods: supporting local businesses, a safe and enjoyable experience for restaurant patrons, and an


added resource for Boston’s small businesses during this challenging time,” said Mayor Walsh. “I’m thrilled we are able to start this program even earlier, and I look forward to businesses and residents taking advantage of it.”

The Mayor said the city has also focused on providing resources to businesses of color, and has made more than 200 personalized outreach calls to every business that applied for outdoor dining

last year. The Mayor’s Office of Economic Development has met with the Boston Black Hospitality Coalition to ensure added technical assistance is available for businesses to apply. Weekly “Help Sessions” were held from December through January to help businesses navigate the pilot process. The City of Boston is also planning to host additional office hours and workshops to help businesses with their applications as needed.



Mi Pueblito Orient Heights's outdoor dining patio during the 2020 season. The city’s outdoor dining program will return on March 22.



# Virtual Public Meeting

## Amend Article 32 Groundwater Zoning

**Monday, March 29**  
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM


**Zoom Link:** [bit.ly/3rsZaNZ](https://bit.ly/3rsZaNZ)  
**Toll Free:** (833) 568 - 8864  
**Meeting ID:** 161 812 6907

**Project Proponent:**  
Boston Planning and Development Agency

**Project Description:**  
This public meeting is to present proposed amendments to Article 32 Groundwater Conservation Overlay District of the zoning code and receive comments in order to extend protection to groundwater levels in areas of the city with older buildings on wooden piles built on filled land. This includes parts of East Boston, downtown waterfront, Roxbury/South End, South Boston and Audubon Circle.

mail to: **Bryan Glascock**  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
phone: 617.722.4300  
email: [bryan.glascock@boston.gov](mailto:bryan.glascock@boston.gov)

**Close of Comment Period:**  
4/9/2021

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

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# Chelsea student killed in horrible East Boston car crash

By John Lynds and Seth Daniel

An alleged game of street racing turned deadly last week on McClellan Highway, killing a Chelsea student and injuring another teen.

Jonathan Hernandez Flores died instantly last Wednesday night when the car he was driving hit another vehicle driven by an acquaintance, spun out of control and collided with a utility pole on the southbound side of McClellan near Addison Street.

“It seems the teen that died and his friend sped through the intersection at Boardman and McClellan and their cars touched,” said District A-7 Captain Kelly McCormack. “Once they touched both vehicles went out of control and in a split second one kid was killed and the other injured.”

The crash occurred with such intensity that it split the vehicle Flores was driving into two pieces.

Eric Danilchuk, who owns the autobody shop directly across the highway from where the accident occurred said in his opinion that the rate of travel had to be well over 100 mph. Danilchuk said given that newer cars have reinforced cabins and other safety measures it was his opinion that the car had to exceed the 100 mph mark in order to be split in two with ease.

This was the second deadly accident involving speed in just a few weeks and the third since 2019. All the deadly accidents involved young adults.

Last month East Boston High School graduates Isaiah Ortiz and Alexander Cabrera were killed when their vehicle collided with a pole on Chelsea Street. Back in 2019 a college student from Rhode Island, Amber Pelletier, was killed when the car she was a passenger in collided with several parked cars and then flipped over on Bennington Street.

On Thursday Chelsea High students were grieving with one another outdoors at the football stadium behind the school. Students were given space today (Friday) to grieve with counseling at Chelsea Stadium.

Chelsea School Supt. Almi Abeyta said students are feeling the loss, and that Flores was a long-time student in Chelsea Public Schools (CPS) – now attending the Chelsea Opportunity Academy (COA).

“This is a very sad loss that impacts all of us,” wrote Abeyta in the letter. “Jonathan attended his whole educational career in CPS – going to the John Silber Early Learning Center, Berkowitz Elementary School, Clark Avenue Middle School, and Chelsea High School before he transferred



Chelsea student Jonathan Hernandez Flores died instantly last Wednesday night when the car he was driving collided with a utility pole on the southbound side of McClellan near Addison Street.

to Chelsea Opportunity Academy. We, the Chelsea Public Schools, extend our deepest condolences and support to Jonathan’s family and friends...Our thoughts and prayers are with Jonathan’s family.”

The family of Jonathan Hernandez have started a GoFundMe page this week, and posted the following statement about Hernandez.

“Hello everyone, we say this with a heavy heart,” it read. “Our family was stricken with a terrible tragedy. Our Jonathan was involved in a serious car accident and unfortunately he is no longer with us. It goes without saying that these are very tough times. We ask that if anyone is willing to donate to his services, please do. Anything helps. He was loved by many and this is



PHOTO BY MIKE LAYHYE

The scene of the accident. The crash caused a widespread power outage in Eastie and snarled traffic for hours as police investigated the scene.

very tough for everyone.”

Chelsea Opportunity Academy Principal Ron Schmidt has reached out to the family for support from the district. The family has asked the public to respect their privacy while they grieve.

Chelsea students were given space at the football stadium today, with counseling and the like.

Social distancing protocols will be in place, and staff members are being provided space to grieve in online sessions.

The GoFundMe page can be found at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/fmn4-jonathan-hernandez>.

At an Orient Heights Neighborhood Association meeting Monday

night Captain McCormack vowed to look more closely at neighborhood streets and intersections where people are habitually speeding and explore traffic calming measures.

“Speed can be dangerous to us all so I’m going to look at these areas,” he said.

## EBCC to observe International Day

The East Boston Chamber of Commerce (EBCC) commemorates the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21.

The East Boston Chamber of Commerce will be placing a display of American flags to commemorate the upcoming International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21, 2021 at the Daniel H Solari Square outside the Chamber of Commerce office at 464 Bremen Street.

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was established and recognized by the United Nations (UN) in 1966 after the Sharpeville, South Africa tragedy in 1960 which captured worldwide attention. This event involved police opening fire and killing 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against the apartheid “pass laws” on March 21, 1960. The day aims to remind people of racial discrimination’s negative consequences. It also encourages people to remember their obligation and determination to combat racial discrimination. The UN called on the international community to increase its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination when it proclaimed the day as a UN Day of Observance. The UN continues its work to fight against all forms of racial intolerance.

Please note that the flags are for display purposes. If anyone wishes to obtain a flag, please feel free to contact the Chamber at [eastbostonchamber.com](http://eastbostonchamber.com) to purchase a flag. You can take a selfie of yourself or others with the flag display and post it on social media with the hashtag #eastbostonchamber to enter in a raffle for a free US flag like those found in the display. We will an-

nounce the winner on the East Boston Chamber of Commerce Facebook Page.

Spanish/ Español  
Cámara de Comercio de East Boston  
12 de marzo del 2021  
Veronica Robles  
617-308-2314

La Cámara de Comercio de East Boston conmemora el Día Internacional para la Eliminación de la Discriminación Racial en la fecha 21 de marzo del 2021.

La Cámara de Comercio de East Boston colocará una exhibición de banderas estadounidenses para conmemorar el próximo Día Internacional para la Eliminación de la Discriminación Racial el 21 de marzo del 2021 en la plaza Daniel H Solari, frente a la oficina de la Cámara de Comercio en 464 Bremen Street. en East Boston.

El Día Internacional para la Eliminación de la Discriminación Racial fue establecido y reconocido por las Naciones Unidas (ONU) en 1966 después de la tragedia de Sharpeville, Sudáfrica en 1960, que captó la atención mundial. Este evento involucró a la policía abriendo fuego y matando a 69 personas en una manifestación pacífica contra las “leyes de aprobación” de la segregación el 21 de marzo de 1960. El día tiene como objetivo recordarle a gente las consecuencias negativas de la discriminación racial. También alienta a las personas a recordar su obligación y determinación de combatir la discriminación racial. La ONU pidió a la comunidad internacional que redoble sus esfuerzos para eliminar todas las formas de discriminación racial cuando proclamó el día como Día de Observancia de la ONU. La ONU continúa su trabajo para luchar contra todas las formas de intolerancia racial.

Por favor tome en cuenta que las banderas son para fines de exhibición. Si alguien desea obtener una bandera, no dude en ponerse en contacto con la Cámara por medio de la página oficial [www.eastbostonchamber.com](http://www.eastbostonchamber.com) para comprar una bandera.

Para participar en un sorteo de una bandera de EE. UU. gratis, puede tomarse una selfie de usted mismo o en compañía de otras personas con la bandera y publicarla en las redes sociales con el hashtag #eastbostonchamber

Anunciaremos al ganador en la página de Facebook de la Cámara de Comercio de East Boston.

## Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
218 Brooks Street RT	Melchionda, Ralph J	218 Brooks St	\$675,000
Lynch, Patrick	Gale, Matthew	18 Chelsea St #2	\$490,000
Maldonado-Lemus, Noe D	Gambale, Cheryl E	167-169 Condor St	\$665,000
Leanues, Kristin	Tays Realty LLC	113-115 Falcon St #113-1	\$720,000
Weiss, Grant L	182-184 Lexington St T	182-184 Lexington St #1	\$585,000
New Ephesus LLC	Ynoa, Antonio	137 Leyden St	\$690,000
Top Notch Trans Svcs	Phyllis Vasques IRT	13 Monmouth St	\$725,000
Hearn, Kevin	Top Notch Tran Svcs	13 Monmouth St	\$760,000
RJJ Properties LLC	Wells Fargo Bank NA Tr	51 Montmorenci Ave	\$612,925
Agutierrez-Gomez, Cesar	40 Morris Street LLC	40 Morris St #3	\$537,000
Beachmont Investments LLC	Gore, Gina M	87 Putnam St	\$800,000
Daws, Brendan F	Guthery, Jeffrey	1044 Saratoga St #2	\$530,000
Lechowicz, Dariusz	CB Equities Saratoga St	946 Saratoga St #301	\$699,000
Buck, Lauren N	VanBreda, Michael P	140 Trenton St #3	\$90,000
Grunenfelder, Denise C	Smith&Townsend LLC	74-76 White St #202	\$615,000
Johns, Justin	Winthrop Maverick LLC	4-8 Winthrop St #302	\$480,000
Dzhavadov, Khakim M	Winthrop Maverick LLC	4-8 Winthrop St #303	\$685,000
Pham, John	Winthrop Maverick LLC	4-8 Winthrop St #402	\$905,000

37 MAVERICK SQUARE ■ EAST BOSTON ■ 617/561-4495

Virtual Public Meeting

Amend Accessory Parking Zoning

Wednesday, March 31  
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Zoom Link: [bit.ly/3kUXdqQ](https://bit.ly/3kUXdqQ)  
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864  
Meeting ID: 161 611 0558

Project Proponent:  
Boston Planning and Development Agency

Project Description:  
This is a public meeting to present proposed zoning changes that would make Accessory Parking a Conditional Use in neighborhood business subdistricts. Currently it is an Allowed Use in basements and first floors where there is an Allowed Use on the upper floors, such as residential. This condition creates a blank street wall with no active first floor use and runs counter to planning goals for neighborhood subdistricts. By making Accessory Parking Conditional, requiring a Conditional use permit, it provides and opportunity for community input and design review.

See 3/31/21 on the BPDA Calendar for more info.

mail to: **Bryan Glascock**  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
phone: 617.722.4300  
email: [bryan.glascock@boston.gov](mailto:bryan.glascock@boston.gov)

Close of Comment Period:  
4.9.2021

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary



# East Boston

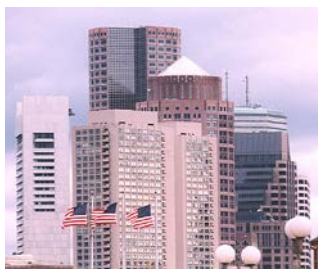
Times-Free Press

**PRESIDENT:** Stephen Quigley

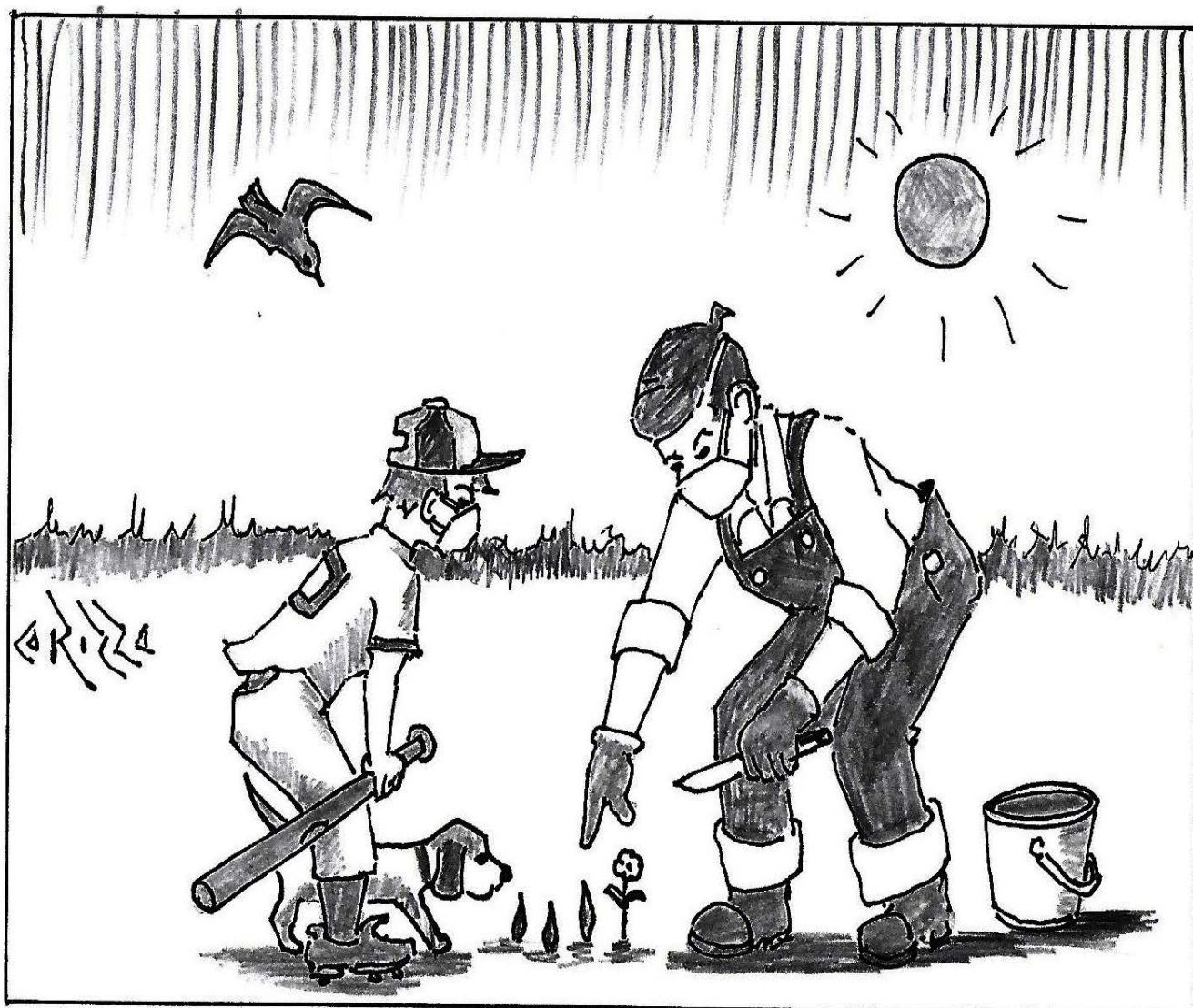
**PUBLISHER:** Debra DiGregorio

**EDITOR::** Cary Shuman

**PUBLISHER EMERITUS:** John A. Torrone



# Forum



IT'S VERY CLEAR THAT SPRING IS HERE, MARCH 20

## THE FILIBUSTER MUST END

The pros and cons of maintaining the filibuster in the U.S. Senate have reached the forefront of political discussion as never before -- and with good reason. Whether one believes that the filibuster protects the minority from the so-called tyranny of the majority or provides a means for the minority to obstruct the majority, the filibuster clearly is anti-democratic.

The filibuster is not part of our Constitution. It simply is a Senate rule upon which the Senate has carved out exceptions over the years, most notably for Presidential nominations and budget matters. The latter is referred to as reconciliation, which is how President Biden's \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief bill was enacted by a simple majority, as was the Republicans' \$2 trillion tax cut for the ultra-rich in 2017.

The rule allowing a filibuster may have made sense in the early 1800s when the U.S. was not divided between two parties. Political coalitions were much more fluid in the early days of our nation and compromise was common among senators.

However, after the Civil War, the battle lines were drawn between Democrats and the newly-formed Republican party (which only had come into existence in 1854), principally on the issue of race -- with the Democrats from the Solid South coalescing around the issue of segregation.

The so-called Dixiecrats -- embodied by Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina -- used the filibuster from the 1940s through the 1960s in an attempt to stymie Civil Rights legislation, especially the Voting Rights Act.

Though the racist efforts of Thurmond and others ultimately failed (only because the Senate obtained a 2/3 majority to end filibusters on those issues), the filibuster likely will be employed by Senate Republicans to obstruct voting reform measures that are necessary today.

The national Republican playbook to limit voting among non-white citizens once again is surging. Republican state legislators have filed more than 200 bills that would restrict voting in the coming elections in their states.

The very foundation of our democracy rests on the right of every citizen to vote. Legislation presently before Congress would ensure that voting rights are not abridged in any state. However, thanks to the arcane filibuster rule, the passage of a new Voting Rights Act faces little chance of success in the Senate.

The truth is this: The anti-democratic state efforts to limit voting rights most likely will be allowed to proceed because of the anti-democratic filibuster rule in the U.S. Senate -- and unless the Democratic majority in the Senate takes steps to abolish the filibuster rule, the United States will have a democracy in name only.

## MARVELOUS MARVIN WAS A GREAT FIGHTER AND A GREAT PERSON

The boxing world lost one of its all-time greats with the sudden passing of Marvelous Marvin Hagler this past week.

Hagler, a native of Newark who moved to Brockton as a teenager, reigned as the undisputed middleweight boxing champion of the world for seven years in the 1980s and is acknowledged as one of the greatest fighters of all time. His bout with Thomas Hearns, which lasted about eight minutes, is regarded as the greatest three rounds in boxing history.

We were fortunate to see one of Hagler's title fights when we covered his title defense for The Chelsea Record against Vito "The Mosquito" Antuofermo in the old Boston Garden in June, 1981 (we were stunned when we realized how long ago that fight was!).

We also had the pleasure of running into the champ after he had retired in an elevator in Boston at One Devonshire Place in the late 1980s. We only exchanged pleasantries, but Hagler's innate humility, graciousness, and sense of humor were apparent in our brief encounter.

Marvelous Marvin Hagler overcame his hard-scrabble background with an unparalleled sense of determination and hard work to become a world champion. His attainment of the pinnacle of his profession serves as a model for success in life in any endeavor.

Marvelous Marvin Hagler was a great fighter and a great person.

He will be missed.

Dr. Glenn Mollette

Have you ever thought changing jobs? Have you ever aspired to be a college basketball coach? Now is a great time to get your resume together.

John Calipari is the University of Kentucky men's basketball coach. His pay this year is over \$8 million. He has a lifetime contract worth 86 million dollars. In the eyes of the basketball world the UK basketball coaching job has been one of the most desired jobs in college sports. However, big pay doesn't come easy Calipari has led Kentucky to one NCAA Championship, four final fours and he has had 26 twenty-win game seasons throughout his career. Although this year his 9 wins and 16 losses hasn't gone over too well with many of Kentucky's fans

While Calipari is the highest paid college basketball coach there are others who do very well. Mike Krzyzewski of Duke will earn \$7 million this

season. Jay Wright of Villanova will earn \$6 million. Chris Beard of Texas Tech is scheduled to earn \$5,050.00. Rick Barnes of Tennessee will earn \$4,950.00. Roy Williams of North Carolina will earn up to \$4 million. Tom Izzo of Michigan State will earn \$3,984.00. And, the list goes on. Chris Mack, Louisville, \$4 million. Brad Underwood, Illinois, \$4 million. Larry Krystkowiak, Utah, \$3,961,519. Bob Huggins, West Virginia \$4,050,000. UCLA coach Mike Cronin \$3,600.00. Scott Drew of Baylor \$3,350,000. There are 50-60 college coaches making \$2 million a year but it does drop for many others. Kyle Smith of Washington State makes \$1.4 million. Steve Alford for Nevada is making \$500,000. Johnny Jones of Texas Southern will be paid \$250,000.

Rick Pitino who came back from coaching professional basketball in Greece will earn just over \$1 million dollars at Iona. This is a far cry from the

\$70 million-dollar contract he had with the Boston Celtics. His package had also reached over \$5 million per year before he left Louisville.

The list of coaches is too long to name them all with many more making between \$1 million to over \$2 million per year. There are many, many coaches making much smaller salaries.

The point is if you are looking for a career change you might consider college basketball coaching. Brad Stevens wanted to be a coach. He went to Butler in Indiana to be a volunteer in the Bulldog's program. He became the assistant coach and then a very successful head coach. Butler moved him from free to over \$1 million per year

by the time he left. Today he now makes over \$3.6 million per year as the head coach of the Boston Celtics. Not bad for starting out as a volunteer. So, find a job waiting tables to feed yourself. Volunteer for a good basketball program. Work very hard. Earn yourself an assistant's job and you might end up coaching a great basketball program and making several million a year.

*Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist -- American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.*

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We reserve the right to edit for length and content.

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403.

We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to

[deb@reverejournal.com](mailto:deb@reverejournal.com)



## LOCAL STUDENTS EARN ACADEMIC HONORS

### EMERSON COLLEGE ANNOUNCES DEAN’S LIST

The following students have been named to Emerson College’s Dean’s List for the Fall 2020 semester. The requirement to make Dean’s List is a grade point average of 3.7 or higher for that semester.

Ana Hein of East Boston. Major - Creative Writing BFA. Class of 2021.

Anthony Jacobson of East Boston. Major - Media Arts Production. Class of 2024.

Beatriz Andrade of East Boston. Major - Media Arts Production. Class of 2022.

Jane Nolan of East Boston. Major - Creative Writing BFA. Class of 2021.

Madeline Harrant of

East Boston. Major - Writing, Lit and Publishing. Class of 2021.

Maria Suevo of East Boston. Major - Media Arts Production. Class of 2022.

Rebecca Moore of East Boston. Major - Theatre Edu and Performance. Class of 2022.

Talia Smith of East Boston. Major - Journalism. Class of 2022.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city’s Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learn-

ing. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups.

Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals, with the first program launching this fall in Paris. The College has an active network of 51,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit emerson.edu.

## Boston introduces digital democracy ordinance

The ACLU of Massachusetts has announced its support for a Boston proposal to increase remote access for all public meetings, permanently establishing virtual participation options that have boosted resident engagement during the pandemic. Filed last week by Boston City Councilors Lydia Edwards and Liz Breadon, the ordinance would make local government more accessible to all Boston residents.

“Local democracy works best when all of us are able to engage,” said Carol Rose, executive director of the ACLU of Massachusetts. “Providing Bostonians with the option to remotely participate in city government meetings makes local government more accessible for residents with disabilities, and those who may not have access to re-

liable transportation, have caretaking responsibilities, or are unable to take a leave of absence from work, among other daily challenges. We commend Councilor Edwards and Councilor Breadon for their leadership and their commitment to expanding and deepening resident engagement with the democratic process.”

“The inaccessibility of most government meetings is a pre-pandemic inequity that we can’t go back to,” said Councilor Edwards. “One of the things I’m focusing on as we come out of the pandemic is ensuring government is as transparent and accessible as possible. Permanently allowing residents to participate virtually would make it easier for a wider range of voices to be heard and bring our city’s government one step closer to the standards res-

idents expect from us.”

“Over the last year, we have seen productive local neighborhood meetings held entirely online,” said Councilor Breadon. “Digital access to government and civic meetings makes our city more democratic. We cannot miss this opportunity to bring in the voices of caregivers and others who are not able to attend in-person meetings.”

In order to ensure equitable access to open meetings, the proposed Boston ordinance would require public meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities and non-English speakers.

The ACLU also backs a legislative proposal that would update Massachusetts’ Open Meeting Law to guarantee that remote access to public meetings outlives the pandemic.

## Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation supports educator-scholars of color at Salem State University

Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation recently granted \$100,000 for Salem State University’s School of Education to launch an Educator-Scholars of Color program. This grant continues the two North Shore institutions’ longstanding partnership to advance education, equity, and community across the region.

With the grant, Salem State will pilot this program over the next two years, inviting people of color majoring in early childhood and elementary education into supportive cohorts led by faculty members who will advise and help build community among these students throughout their college journeys. The program will also provide the selected students with monetary awards—both designed to help them succeed in obtaining bachelor’s degrees while breaking down racial and socioeconomic barriers to higher education.

The new Educator-Scholars of Color program will focus on increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the teacher pipeline, initially focusing on the Gateway Cities of Salem, Lynn, Chelsea, and Revere, where Salem State School of Education graduates often serve as teachers and where white educators far outnumber educators of color.

“The School of Education has made it a priority to diversify our own faculty and staff members and prepare them to train our students in a culturally responsive way,” said Joseph Cambone, dean of the School of Education. “With

Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation’s generosity, we’re continuing this work to give today’s Salem State education students of color equitable access to obtain their degrees so that they may teach and inspire children across the region.”

Nancy Stager, Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation’s president and CEO said, “This latest grant to Salem State University furthers both organizations’ increased commitment to addressing racial inequities, achieving social justice, and eliminating issues that perpetuate income and wealth gaps across our communities. It is an honor for Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation to help Salem State University launch the new Educator-Scholars of Color program and advance our shared commitment to breaking down racial and social inequities while creating greater opportunity for future educators and child care professionals.”

According to Salem State University’s School of Education Associate Dean Nicole Harris, the awards provided by the grant will also help students of color to access and complete Massachusetts’ many requirements for becoming a teacher.

“Individuals preparing to become educators face many out-of-pocket costs—including unpaid work as student-teachers and fees associated with the MTEL and other mandatory tests,” said Harris. “The new Educator-Scholars of Color program alleviates the financial burdens of these requirements and supports our students so

that they are well-prepared to excel not only on their tests, but also within the early childhood and elementary school classroom settings where they practice their teaching skills.”

Ultimately, Salem State University hopes to grow this pilot program into an initiative that supports and encourages all School of Education students of color whose teaching interests span the K-12 education spectrum. For now, the three faculty members leading the new Educator-Scholars of Color program will focus their energy on piloting the initiative among students studying early childhood and elementary education.

“Thanks to Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation, Salem State University can expand its legacy of championing learners and leaders from all backgrounds,” said Cheryl Crouse, executive director of the Salem State University Foundation. “This legacy began when Charlotte Forten became the school’s first African American graduate in 1856 and the first African American public school teacher in Salem in 1857. As we reflect on how we can all better support students, faculty, and staff of color, the Salem State community keeps Ms. Forten’s spirit alive with the new Educator-Scholars of Color program. We appreciate Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation’s unwavering support of our mission to make a quality, affordable education accessible to everyone.”

### THE EAST BOSTON BRANCH LIBRARY: 150 YEARS OF COMMUNITY

March 22, 2021 marks the 150th anniversary of the East Boston Branch, the first municipally funded branch library in the United States. Do you know where the first East Boston Branch was located? You may be surprised with the answer. Join us as we explore the history and importance of library service in East Boston while learning a bit about life in 19th and 20th century East Boston in this slide lecture presented on zoom by Branch Librarian, Margaret Kelly.

Registration is required. Zoom logon information will be sent out prior to the lecture.

Please email mkelly@bpl.org to register.

### ZOOM MAGIC SHOW WITH JEDLIE

On March 27, at 1 p.m. Jedlie is back but this time it’s virtual! Jedlie’s magic tricks never cease to amaze his audience while his zany antics have them howling with laughter.

## Pressley’s homelessness assistance act signed into law as part of American Rescue Plan

Staff Report
Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley issued the following statement on the enactment of her Emergency Homelessness Assistance Act, which was signed into law today by President Biden as part of the American Rescue Plan.
The legislation authorizes \$5 billion for the Emergency Solutions Grants program to enable state and local governments to finance housing and health-related services for the hundreds of thousands of people currently experiencing homelessness, including the acquisition of hotels and motels to serve as transitional

## LIBRARY News



Above, an old photo of the East Boston Branch Library, Below, Magician Jedlie entertains local children.



Join us as Jedlie presents his new magic show, “The Magic Between Us Is Respect and Kindness. This exciting program motivates kids to wake up every morning and choose to be respectful & kind to everyone they meet, ev-

ery day, everywhere. The show also reminds families to read together every day!

Registration is required. Zoom login information will be sent prior to the event. Email mkelly@bpl.org to register.

and permanent supportive housing.

“Housing is a critical determinant of public health, and that has never been more true than during this ongoing public health and economic crisis,” Rep. Pressley said. “That’s why I’m encouraged that my Emergency Homelessness Assistance Act, which I’ve been fighting for since the onset of this pandemic, was signed into law by President Biden. This critical provision will invest nearly \$5 billion to support the hundreds of thousands of vulnerable families and individuals nationwide who are currently experiencing homelessness. I am grateful to

Chairwoman Waters and Representatives Tlaib, Ocasio-Cortez and Ne-guse for their partnership in getting this across the finish line.”

Experts estimate that \$5 billion in additional resources is critical to help communities across the country provide safe and secure shelter for those experiencing homelessness. This provision is responsive to the needs of community and advocates and will provide cities and states the flexibility needed to make long term investments to combat the housing crisis including the conversion of hotels and motels into non-congregate shelters.

## ZBA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

gramming, up to 61 parking spaces and 145 bicycle storage spaces.

According to the BPDA The ground-floor retail space would be designed for an urban grocery store/market operator, daycare operator or local retailer.

Prior to the ZBA vote, Bremen Acquisition inked a community mitigation

package with members of the project’s IAG.

The package is comparable to other projects of its size with \$200,000 in direct money benefits Eastie. The developer agreed to doing 20 percent affordable onsite housing—seven percent more than what is required under the BPDA inclusionary poli-

cy.

The developer also agreed to install 19 trees, expand the sidewalks—up to 18 feet in some areas, install a safety bump out to make crossing Bremen Street easier for pedestrians as well as creating a more active Bremen Street in what has been an industrial area.

## JPNA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

be visible from the street.

Next the JPNA voted 27-3 in favor of the project at 14 Murray Ct. There, homeowners Daniel Griffith and Diana Delliacona want to construct a 390 square foot roof deck and steel spiral staircase.

The homeowners told JPNA members that they have scaled back the size of the roofdeck from the original presentation back in February. They said the roofdeck will not be able to be seen from Murray Court, but may be seen from the corner of Orleans and Murray Court.

They will also use TREX decking and white aluminum rails and access will be via a spiral staircase from the back deck.

Finally, JPNA members voted 20-9 in favor

to change the occupancy at 34 Cottage St. from a 3-family to a 4-family.

Homeowner Kieran O’Sullivan said she received a refusal letter with variances that were not considered at the JPNA’s previous Planning & Zoning meeting.


These variances were related to work that was done without a permit.

O’Sullivan explained

that approval of this project will legitimize the work that was done without a permit. These changes were made to improve egress and life safety.


The owner believed that the contractor had pulled permits for the work, but the contractor had not.

If approved there would be no new construction just a conversion in occupancy.



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Last Wednesday afternoon At-Large City Councilor, mayoral candidate and former East Boston High School teacher Anissa Essaibi George met with Eastie’s small business owners. As part of her “Get Boston Back to Business Tour”, Essaibi George visited Cunard Tavern, Mexicali Sushi Bar, La Cancun, and Taco Mex last week to discuss with local owners and staff about the resources and support needed to recover, rebuild and thrive post-pandemic.



# Mayoral candidate Anissa Essaibi George meets with Eastie’s small business owners

By John Lynds

Last Wednesday At-Large City Councilor, mayoral candidate and former East Boston High School teacher Anissa Essaibi George made a campaign stop in Eastie and met with businesses owners who have been struggling throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Restaurants have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic and were forced to recalibrate their entire business model in order to survive. Some, like the famed Jeveli’s Restaurant in Day Square, decided to pack it in for the winter and reopen when the

warmer weather returns to New England and the infection rates decline.

As part of her “Get Boston Back to Business Tour”, Essaibi George visited Cunard Tavern, Mexicali Sushi Bar, La Cancun, and Taco Mex last week to discuss with local owners and staff about the resources and support needed to recover, rebuild and thrive post-pandemic.

“We know that seeing and hearing from our small business owners and employees is critical to a successful recovery,” said Essaibi George. “In East Boston, and throughout the city on my Get Boston

Back to Business tour, I’ve had conversations directly with them to hear their experiences, concerns, and questions. Those conversations are really important and they’ll help inform how we rebuild our local economy post-pandemic, so it works better for everyone.”

Essaibi George said since launching the tour two weeks ago she’s heard directly from small businesses about the real challenges they’ve faced before and during this crisis.

“Of course we’re talking about recovery, but we’re taking it a step further and really getting at

the root issue of redesigning our economy to work for everyone,” said Essaibi George. “I look forward to continuing these important conversations with small businesses and employees in every single neighborhood of Boston.”

As a former Boston Main Streets Director for Fields Corner and a small business owner herself, Essaibi George previously visited small businesses in Dorchester, Roslindale, West Roxbury, Chinatown, South End, Jamaica Plain, Allston and Brighton.

In February, Essaibi George launched her campaign for mayor on the

steps of East Boston High School where she was a teacher and softball coach for 14 years before being elected to the city council in 2015.

Essaibi George said she has always considered East Boston her second home and is just as comfortable here as she is in her native Dorchester.

Before entering the political arena, Essaibi George taught Economics, Business Management and Health and Human Services to juniors and seniors at East Boston High and served as the school’s assistant softball coach for

## YMCA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

food insecure neighborhoods, with over 35 percent of residents living below the poverty line,” said Gaeta. “East Boston has long been a focal point of the Y’s hunger prevention programming.”

Gaeta said 10 of the YMCA of Greater Boston’s 33 pantry food sites are located in Eastie and in the past year the Y in Eastie has served more than 350,000 grab and go Meals to youth 18 and under.

“We are honored to be working with the YMCA of Greater Boston to support those in need throughout the East Boston community by distributing food donations,” said Hilton General Manager Bruce Roy. “Hilton Boston Logan Airport

has operated in East Boston for 50 years, and with over 500 Team Members and several calling East Boston home, supporting our local neighbors in this time of need is not only the right thing to do, but something that brings our team a deep sense of pride. At Hilton we are dedicated to supporting the communities in which we operate and where our Team Members live and work. As a business of people serving people, our primary focus is creating a culture that best serves our Team Members, business partners and community members and we remain committed to driving positive social impact.”

Gaeta said the partner organizations in Eastie that help distribute the



East Boston YMCA staff picks up supplies at the YMCA’s pantry bag program currently operating out of the DCR Melnea Cass Rec Center in Roxbury.

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www.ebnhc.org

Please visit eastietimes.com

State unemployment numbers fall slightly in January

Staff Report

The state’s January total unemployment rate is down 0.6 percentage points at 7.8 percent, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development announced March 12.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics’ preliminary job estimates indicate Massachusetts gained 35,500 jobs in January. This follows last month’s revised loss of 8,700 jobs. Over the month, the private sector added 26,300 jobs as gains occurred across all sectors, led by Education and Health Services and Professional, Scientific, and Business Services.

From January 2020 to January 2021, BLS estimates Massachusetts lost 334,200 jobs. Losses occurred in each of the private sectors with the exception of Mining and Logging, with the largest percentage losses in Leisure and Hospitality, with 32.8 percent of jobs lost; Other Services, with 18.7 percent of jobs lost; and Education and Health Services, with 8.7 percent of jobs lost.

The January unemployment rate was 1.5 percentage points higher than the national rate of 6.3 percent reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The labor force increased by 3,600 from 3,753,100 in December, as 23,300 more residents were employed and 19,700 fewer residents were unemployed over the month.

Over the year, the state’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was up by five percentage points.

The state’s labor force participation rate – the total number of residents 16 or older who worked or were unemployed and actively sought work in the last four weeks – remained unchanged at 66.5 percent. Compared to January 2020, the labor force participation rate is down one-tenth of a percentage point.

Annual year-end revisions show the unemployment rates were lower than the previously published estimates for May 2020 through September 2020. After the revisions, the highest unemployment rate during the COVID19 pandemic occurred in April 2020 at 16.4 percent which was 1.3 percentage points lower than the previously published highest rate of 17.7 percent in June 2020.

January 2021 Employment Overview

- Professional, Scientific and Business Services gained 4,600 (+0.8%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Professional, Scientific and Business Services lost 25,000 (-4.1%) jobs.
- Trade, Transportation and Utilities added 3,100 (0.6%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Trade, Transportation and Utilities lost 27,700 (-4.8%) jobs.
- Construction added 1,800 (+1.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Construction has lost 1,600 (-1.0%) jobs.
- Manufacturing lost 600 (-0.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Manufacturing lost -13,500 (-5.6%) jobs.
- Financial Activities gained 2,100 (+1.0%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Financial Activities lost 4,600 (-2.1%) jobs.
- Leisure and Hospitality gained 1,900 (+0.7%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Leisure and Hospitality lost 125,400 (-32.8%) jobs.
- Education and Health Services gained 10,000 (+1.4%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Education and Health Services lost 71,900 (-8.7%) jobs.
- Information gained 1,900 (+2.2%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Information lost 6,500 (-6.9%) jobs.
- Other Services gained 1,400 jobs OTM (+1.2%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Other Services are down -26,500 (-18.7%) jobs.
- Government gained 9,200 (2.2%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Government lost 31,600 (-6.9%) jobs.

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# Weekly COVID positive test rate increases in Eastie after weeks of steady decline

By John Lynds

Last week the cumulative COVID-19 positive test rate in Eastie stayed the same while the weekly positive test rate increased after experiencing steady decreases since the New Year.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), of the 36,247 Eastie residents tested for COVID since the pandemic began, 18.9 percent overall were found to be positive for the virus. This was the same percentage reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Last week, 1,892 Eastie residents were tested for the virus last week and 4.3 percent were positive--a 10.25 percent increase from the 3.9 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Citywide, 27,597 residents were tested and 3.6 percent were COVID positive--this was the same

positive test rate reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

At his daily press briefing Monday Mayor Martin Walsh said that Boston’s numbers have stayed below the thresholds for concern for several weeks. The number of people hospitalized continues to go down, people are getting vaccinated every day and help is on the way from the Federal government.

While Walsh said there are many reasons to be hopeful the city is still not out of the woods yet. “Everyone has to stay focused so that we don’t slip backward,” said Walsh. “That means: wearing a mask with a good fit, washing hands with soap and warm water, avoiding gatherings, and getting tested frequently.”

The Mayor said that people who have been vaccinated should look at the CDC’s guidance

on activities they can do safely, which is posted on CDC.gov.

As far as the St. Patrick’s Day holiday Walsh thanked the people of Boston for respecting public health guidance so far during the days leading up to the Irish Holiday and said that the City didn’t have many reports of big gatherings.

“City departments were out enforcing safety protocols at restaurants, and for the most part, everyone was in compliance,” said Walsh. “No emergency Licensing Board hearings were needed this morning (Monday). We need everyone to keep it up this coming week and weekend, too. As I said last week, having a party and potentially causing an outbreak, isn’t worth it. I thank everyone who continues to do their part.”

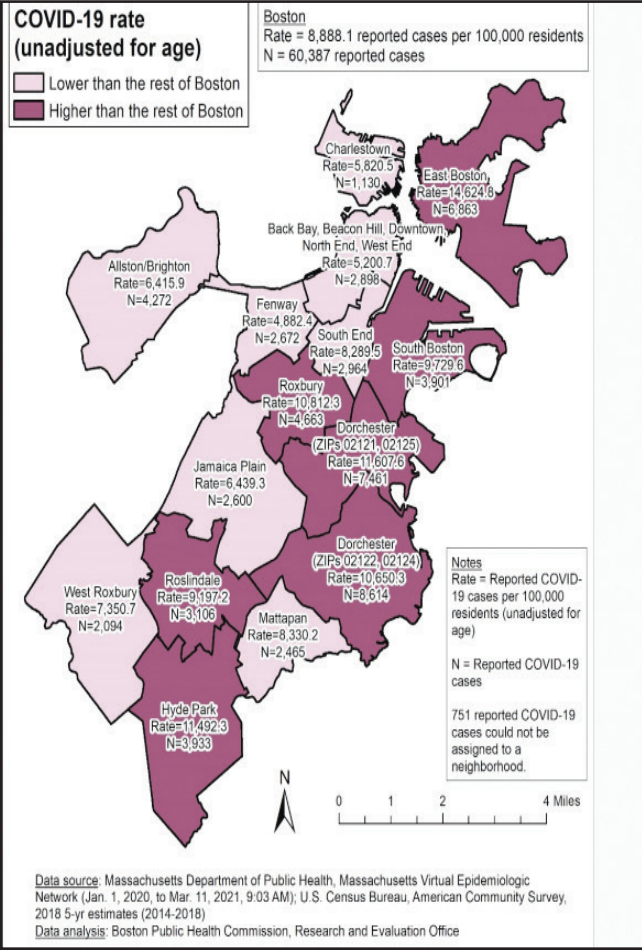
Eastie’s COVID infection rate increased by only 1 percent last week and

went from 1,446.9 cases per 10,000 residents to 1,462.4 cases per 10,000 residents. The citywide average is 888.8 cases per 10,000 residents.

An additional 73 Eastie residents contracted the virus and there are now 6,863 confirmed cases, up from the 6,790 reported two weeks ago.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 1.8 percent percent last week and went from 59,953 cases to 61,025 confirmed cases in a week. Twenty-seven additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,313 total deaths in the city from COVID.



On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 statistics by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

# Taxis dispatched to help local communities

Staff Report

MassDevelopment, in partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), has awarded \$2,543,883 in funding to 47 cities and towns, municipal agencies, regional transit authorities, nonprofits, and health and human service providers through the Taxi, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnerships Grant Program, an operational subsidy program aimed at expanding transportation service capacity through contracts with licensed taxi or livery businesses. Administered by MAPC, these grants will help communities supplement existing transportation options, create new programs to transport individuals to work, grocery stores, non-emergency medical appointments, and other destinations, and facilitate delivery of essential supplies such as food and medicine to residents in need. The Taxi, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnerships Grant Program is funded by MassDevelopment’s allocation from the Commonwealth’s Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Trust Fund.

“The Baker-Polito Administration commends MassDevelopment and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council for utilizing the state’s Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Trust Fund to help communities augment local transit with taxi and livery services to get residents where they need to go,” said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy. “These awards will provide a boost to an industry in need while filling gaps in the state’s transportation network.”

The Commonwealth’s Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Trust Fund was created by An Act Regulating Transportation Network Companies, which Governor Baker signed into law in August 2016 and is supported by a 20-cent assessment on every transportation network company ride in Massachusetts. One-quarter of the Fund is being designated to MassDevelopment to provide

financial assistance to small businesses operating in the taxicab, livery, or hackney industries

MassDevelopment is using one-third of its allotment from the Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Trust Fund to support the Taxi, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnerships Grant Program. In response to COVID-19, in April 2020 MAPC launched an early version of this program, the Urgent COVID-19 Taxicab, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnerships Grant Program, to facilitate urgent transportation and delivery needs for vulnerable populations during the pandemic; in November 2020, MassDevelopment and MAPC awarded \$1,003,978 through the program to 25 cities and towns, municipal agencies, regional transit authorities, and health and human services transportation providers.

MassDevelopment is using the remaining two-thirds of its allotment from the Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Trust Fund to support the Taxi and Livery Business Support Grant Program, which offers taxi and livery operators financial assistance to secure products or services that will aid in improving their competitiveness and enhancing safety capabilities in the rapidly evolving market of for-hire transportation. In December 2020, the agency awarded 85 grants totaling \$4,465,619 through the first round of the program to support 104 small businesses operating in the taxi and livery industries and two taxi and livery industry associations.

The following cities, towns, and organizations received funding from Taxi, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnerships Grant Program:

•Boston Public Health Commission – \$177,000

The organization is using this award to contract with 63 taxi companies to facilitate transportation for individuals experiencing homelessness and living in shelters, transportation for frontline emergency shelter staff, non-emergency medical

transportation for individuals who cannot travel via public transit, and deliveries of food and medicine for individuals unable or not advised to travel.

•Cambridge Health Alliance – \$150,000

The organization is using this award to contract with Green Cab Company, Inc. to facilitate transportation to medical appointments and food pantries for vulnerable, high-risk, and underserved patients in the organization’s primary service area.

•City of Chelsea – \$130,000

The city is using this award to contract with E-Z Transportation LLC, Teambuild Inc., Soughtafter Transportation, and HBSS Connect Corp to expand an existing emergency food distribution system to serve

vulnerable families afflicted with COVID-19.

•Mystic Valley Elder Service – \$50,000

The organization is using this award to contract with Malden Taxi and Suburban Taxi to facilitate transportation to medical appointments and grocery stores for seniors and adults living with disabilities who are isolated in their communities.

•City of Revere – \$46,800

The city is using this award to contract with Patriots Taxi Company to facilitate non-emergency medical transportation, transportation to stores, polling locations, and workforce development training programs, and food pantry deliveries for seniors, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and homebound residents.

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(ex gluten free-super green-garden veggie)	
Progresso Beans 19 oz .....	10/¢10.00
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Cain's Mayonnaise 30 oz .....	¢3.99
Pillsbury Flour 5 lb bag .....	2/¢4.00
Prego Pasta Sauce.....	2/¢4.00
Motts Apple Sauce 6pk .....	2/¢4.00
Arm & Hammer Laundry Detergent.....	2/¢6.00
Ore Ida Frozen Potatoes.....	2/¢5.00
Pepperidge Farm Layer Cakes .....	2/¢6.00
Kellogg's Eggo Waffles.....	2/¢4.00
(ex thick & fluffy)	
Cracker Barrel Cheese.....	2/¢6.00
(ex cracker cuts)	
Axelrod Sour Cream.....	2/¢3.00

## Bakery

Assorted Danish Strips .....	¢3.99
Assorted Mini Bundt Cakes.....	2/¢3.00
Brownie Bites .....	¢3.79

## Deli

Belgioioso Slicing Provolone Cheese.....	¢4.99/lb
Krakus Imported Polish Ham.....	¢6.99/lb
Kretshmar Rotisserie Chicken Breast .....	¢6.99/lb
Kretshmar Pepper Turkey Breast .....	¢6.99/lb

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Fresh Italian Plum Tomatoes .....	99¢/b
California Sweet Halo Clementine's 3 lb bag ...	¢4.99
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Bone In Split Chicken Breast .....	¢1.99/lb

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Tyson Bacon 16 oz .....	2/¢10.00
Plumrose BBQ Baby Back Ribs.....	¢5.99
Boca Burgers 10 oz .....	2/¢6.00
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## OBITUARIES

### Gloria Palleschi

Beloved mother, sister, aunt, grandmother and friend

It is with great sadness that the family of Gloria (Beatrice) Palleschi announces her passing on Wednesday, March 10 at her Revere home at the age of 92.

Gloria was a beloved mother, sister, aunt, grandmother and friend.

Gloria adored her family and was delighted to be surrounded by loved ones every Sunday with a pot of pasta and meatballs bubbling on the stove. She was the secret keeper of her family; no matter what time of day you showed up at her backdoor, she would greet you with a sauce stained apron and a warm smile. She was kind to everyone who crossed her path and became a surrogate mother, aunt and grandmother to so many. As we celebrate the legacy of this incredible woman, we will strive to be as kind, and welcoming as she was every day.

Born on July 4, 1928 to the late Carmine and Antonetta Vigliotta, she was the beloved wife of the late Charles Palleschi Sr., devoted mother of Charles Palleschi Jr. and his wife, Jeanne, cherished grand-



mother of Charles Palleschi III and his wife, Julie, Michael Palleschi and his wife, Michele and Alicia Palleschi and her wife, Coralie; adored great grandmother of Charles Palleschi IV, Emily, Chase and Brody; dear sister of the late Jeanetta Amorosa, Camille Marino, Mary Quarentello, Lena Procopio, Anthony, Alfonso and Edward Beatrice.

Funeral arrangements were by the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons-Bruno Funeral Home, 128 Revere St, Revere. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 309 Waverley Oaks Rd, Waltham, MA 02452 or at alz.org. To live stream Gloria's funeral please go to <https://my.gather.app/remember/gloria-palleschi> For guest book please visit [www.buonfiglio.com](http://www.buonfiglio.com).

### Anthony Toomey

He had a great sense of humor and the ability to make people laugh

Anthony J. Toomey, 19, of Revere, formerly of East Boston, died suddenly on March 12.

Anthony was a graduate of Revere High School, Class of 2020. He always wanted a career in law enforcement and began that journey working as a security guard for Boston Children's Hospital and recently became a member of the Laborers union Local 22. Anthony had great sense of humor and the ability to make people laugh.

The beloved son of Sherri L. Marano of Chelsea, and James M. Toomey and his fiancée, Natalie Wiedmann of Lynn, he was the dear brother of James M. Toomey Jr. of East Boston, cherished grandson of Michael D. Marano of East Boston, Judy (Serino) Marano of Saugus, Debbie Patrazza of Swampscott and the late James Toomey and is also survived by many



loving aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

A Memorial Mass celebrating Anthony's life will be held on Saturday, March 20 in Sacred Heart Parish, 303 Paris St., East Boston at 10 a.m. Relatives and friends are kindly invited. Mask and social distancing are mandatory upon entering Church. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Boston Children's Hospital Trust by visiting [childrenshospital.org](http://childrenshospital.org)

Paul Buonfiglio & Sons-Bruno Funeral Home.

### Rosemary DiCino

Former cook at St. Lazarus Parochial School and Dom Savio High School in East Boston

Rosemary T. DiCino of Beverly, formerly of East Boston and Saugus, passed away peacefully in her home surrounded by her loving family on March 11 at the age of 94.

The cherished and dearly beloved wife of the late Anthony DiCino, she was born in East Boston, the loving daughter of the late John and Julia (Picardi) Fucillo. Rose was employed as cook for over 25 years at the St. Lazarus Parochial School in East Boston as well as Dom Savio High School in East Boston. She was adored by the many hundreds of students and faculty. She was full of life and energy.

In 1945 she was the original captain of East Boston High School cheerleading squad. Rose could light up a room with her personality and humor. She was a loving and devoted mother to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was truly loved and treasured by many.

She is survived by her devoted, loving and cherished son, Freddy DiCino of Beverly; two daughters, Rosemarie DiCino of Beverly and Mary Ann Solombrino and her husband, Scott of Essex; her most adored five grandchildren: Jennifer Brazzo, Marianne Lasquade and her husband, Tim, Christopher Brazzo, Anthony Solombrino and his wife,



Jenna, Zachary Solombrino and his fiancée, Janina; four treasured great grandchildren: Anthony, Dominic, Luke and Jett and her many nephews and nieces. She was the loving sister of the late John Fucillo and his wife, Rose, the late Angelo Fucillo and his wife, Elizabeth, and the late Joseph Fucillo and his wife, Lois of Revere.

Funeral arrangements were by the Whittier-Porter Funeral Home, 6 High Street, Ipswich. A Funeral Mass of Christian Burial in Our Lady of Hope Church, Linebrook Road, Ipswich with Covid-19 restrictions was followed by interment in the Spring Street Cemetery, Essex. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in her name may be made to Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, 114 16th Street #2011, Mass General Hospital, Charlestown, MA 02129 <https://www.madrc.org/support-us/> To leave a condolence please visit [www.whittier-porter.com](http://www.whittier-porter.com).

### Kim Buttiri

Will be truly missed by all who knew her

Kim M. (Mottola) Buttiri of Groveland passed away unexpectedly on March 12 at the age of 52.

Kim had such a big heart and would do anything for her family and friends. She will truly be missed by all who knew her.

Born in Brighton on June 8, 1968 to the late Ronald Francis Mottola Sr. and Anna May (Jiamattei), she was the beloved wife of Joseph "Joe" Buttiri, devoted mother of Joseph and Joshua Buttiri, adored sister of Ronald Mottola Jr. and his wife, Doreen of Groveland and Gregg Mottola and his wife, Janha of Illinois and is also survived by many loving aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

A visitation will be held on Thursday, March 18 from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons-Bruno Funeral Home, 128 Revere St., Revere. Due



to capacity limits, we ask that you keep your visit brief to allow others to pay their respects to the family. Masks and social distancing are required when entering the funeral home. Relatives and friends are kindly invited. A Funeral service on Friday at the Buonfiglio Funeral Home at 10 a.m. will be followed by a Funeral Mass at St. Anthony's Church at 11 a.m. (names and temperatures will be taken upon entrance). Interment will be in Woodlawn Cemetery. For guest book please visit [www.buonfiglio.com](http://www.buonfiglio.com).

### Edward Sacco

Retired Mass. DCR supervisor, paramedic and ski patrol agent

Edward G. Sacco of Saugus passed away on March 9.

Edward was a retired Civil Engineer - Supervisor of Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation, a paramedic with Cataldo Ambulance Services and a longtime ski patrol EMT agent at Loon Mountain, NH.

He was the cherished son of the late Albert and Helen (D'Ambrosio) Sacco, the beloved husband of Joanne (Zampese) Sacco, the dear brother of Carol Ann Sacco of Orient Heights, East Boston and Ronald Sacco and his partner, Paula of Saugus and is also survived by many loving cousins and friends.

Family and friends honored Edward's life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, East Boston on Sunday,



March 14 before leaving in procession to St. Francis of Assisi Church, W. Medford for a Funeral Mass celebrating Edward's life. Services concluded with Edward being laid to rest at Holy Cross Cemetery in Malden. All services were held in accordance to the Commonwealth of MA COVID-19 reopening regulations.

For more information or to send an online condolence please visit [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com).

## OBITUARIES

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Thank you for being a Friend, Grandmother, Mother, & Guardian.

*Forever in our hearts Hunny.  
Love Brittany, Joey, & Christina*

*First Anniversary Remembrance*



**Joanne M. Othmer**

*March 19, 2020 - March 19, 2021*

*Sometimes in life there are losses. Losses that can never really be replaced. Losing you has been one of the hardest things I've ever had to live with. I wasn't ready to say goodbye. I wasn't ready to let you leave. I would give anything for just one more day, just one more second. But I've learned to trust in unconditional love. Because the one profound thing about death is that love never dies. Some bonds cannot be broken. Because even though you're not physically here, your heart is - it lives on within me. I carry your heart inside mine. Someday we will meet again - and we will no longer be separated by time or space. But until that day, I'll find comfort in knowing that you are still with me. I loved you then. I love you now. Always did. Always will. Forever in my mind. Forever in my heart. I will carry you.*

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Charlene (and your children & grandchildren)

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# State highlights expanded access to housing for vulnerable communities

Staff Report

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito joined Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Jennifer Maddox to highlight expanded access to housing for vulnerable communities across the Commonwealth.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2021, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has expanded the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)

and the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP) to make more rental vouchers available to more households in need. An additional 767 MRVP vouchers and 157 AHVP vouchers have been made available and targeted to specific, vulnerable populations.

“Our administration has long recognized the need for more affordable housing in Massachusetts, and the challenges created by the pandemic have made this need even more

clear,” said Gov. Charlie Baker. “Since entering office, we have been proud to invest more than \$1.4 billion in the development and preservation of affordable housing, and we look forward to this expansion of our state voucher program providing safe, affordable housing to more households across the Commonwealth.”

The Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program provides deep rental subsidies to low-income individuals and house-

holds. Currently, vouchers support nearly 8,900 households across the Commonwealth. More than 5,000 of these vouchers are mobile vouchers, meaning they can be used by families in search of housing available on the private market. The remaining vouchers, known as project-based vouchers, are used to support long-term affordability in specific housing developments. The expansion highlighted today will help households living in family, individual and domestic violence shelters move into permanent housing. Additionally, 100 vouchers will support the

development of new permanent supportive housing for individuals.

The expansion of AHVP vouchers, which are available to non-elderly individuals with disabilities, will help meet strong demand for this program. DHCD is also working with the agencies that manage AHVP vouchers to increase utilization rates by increasing the value of these vouchers, and providing greater flexibility for agencies to deploy this resource.

In October, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the Eviction Diversion Initiative, a multi-pronged strategy to

prevent evictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Since last spring, the administration has delivered more than \$50 million in emergency rental and mortgage assistance to roughly 13,000 unique households. This initiative combines substantial emergency financial assistance, along with new, free or low-cost legal aid for low-income tenants and low-income homeowners who live in a home with rental units, and new free mediation through the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration to help tenants and landlords solve lease problems together.

## AARP analysis shows Mass COVID-19 cases and deaths declining in nursing homes

The latest release of AARP’s Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard shows that both cases and deaths in nursing homes fell in the four weeks ending Feb. 14.

Although these rates are improving, new infections and deaths in nursing homes are higher than they were in the summer of 2020. Deaths of nursing home residents are slightly lower than what they were in the previous time period, dropping from a rate of 1.19 percent to .79 percent per 100 residents. New infections among residents and staff also declined to less than half of previous levels. Resident cases fell from 6.3 to 2.4 per 100 residents, and new staff cases declined from 6.2 to 2.4 per 100 residents.

The dashboard also reveals that staffing and shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) remain a problem. In Massachusetts, while the number of facilities reporting a shortage of PPE has declined, .011 percent did not have a one-week supply in the last month.

“One year into the coronavirus pandemic, we continue to see disgracefully high numbers of cases and deaths in Massachusetts nursing homes and long-term care facilities,” said Mike Festa, AARP Massachusetts State Director.

“Decreasing numbers and vaccine rollout give hope, but we should not lose sight of the chronic, ongoing problems in our long-term care system that were exposed by COVID.”

AARP Massachusetts will continue fighting for reforms that make nursing homes safe and provide options for seniors to stay in their homes.

AARP continues to urge elected officials to act immediately, focusing this year on:

- \* Enacting or making permanent the components of AARP’s plan:
- \* Prioritizing regular and ongoing testing and adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for residents and staff—as well as inspectors and any visitors.
- \* Improving transparency focused on daily, public reporting of cases and deaths in facilities; communication with families about discharges and transfers; and accountability for state and federal funding that goes to facilities.
- \* Ensuring access to in-person visitation following federal and state guidelines for safety, and require continued access to virtual visitation for all residents.
- \* Ensuring quality care for residents through adequate staffing, oversight, and access to in-person

formal advocates, called long-term care Ombudsmen.

- \* Rejecting immunity for long-term care facilities related to COVID-19.
- \* Establishing minimum nursing staffing standards
- \* Ensuring progress is made so that in-person visitation can safely occur and facilitating virtual visitation
- \* Creating a pathway for single occupancy rooms in nursing homes

The AARP Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard analyzes federally reported data in four-week periods going back to June 1, 2020. Using this data, the AARP Public Policy Institute, in collaboration with the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University in Ohio, created the dashboard to provide snapshots of the virus’ infiltration into nursing homes and impact on nursing home residents and staff, with the goal of identifying specific areas of concern at the national and state levels in a timely manner.

The full Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard is available at [www.aarp.org/nursinghomedashboard](http://www.aarp.org/nursinghomedashboard). For more information on how COVID is impacting nursing homes and AARP’s advocacy on this issue, visit [www.aarp.org/nursinghomes](http://www.aarp.org/nursinghomes).

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

KEY PROPERTY GOES OUT TO BID

CHELSEA - The long-vacant storefront on Broadway that used to house the Salvation Army store has gone out to bid this week and will soon have some movement on choosing a developer to build-out the City-owned, and key, downtown property.

City Planner Alex Train said the City has put out the RFP on the property at 440 Broadway and had a site walk with potential respondents Tuesday morning. Bids on the property are due April 29, and Train said he expects to get some very good proposals to choose from.

“We’re engaging in a pretty robust promotional and advertising campaign to elevate the regional knowledge of the opportunity,” he said. “We’re hoping to get a lot of good information out there and we’re optimistic it will yield a number of high-quality proposals.”

He said they have begun to form an Evaluation Committee on the matter, and predicted by the end of May they will have the developer selected. Then they will forward it to the City Council for review and approvals.

The development is seen by the City as a way to really get momentum going for development in downtown Chelsea. In a key location in busy Bellingham Square, the property has already gone through the approval process – thus saving lots of time and money for any developer that wins the bid.

What has been approved is a 16-unit, five-story new building with podium parking for eight spots. There is also to be 5,000 sq. ft. of retail on the ground floor. If a developer were to come in and want to propose a different project, they would have to go through

the approval process again.

“We did all the approvals before the RFP and got the development ready in hopes it would translate into more affordable housing and a higher-quality product,” Train said.

The City will be looking for an all-affordable, or a majority-affordable, project with ground floor retail and community uses. For the retail, he said they are looking for something creative, maybe even a continuation of the gallery that is there now, but certainly not a chain store.

“We don’t want something that could just be in any downtown in America,” Train said.

HOMEOWNER STABILIZATION PROGRAM TO START SECOND PHASE

CHELSEA - The Chelsea Homeowner Stabilization Program has nearly completed its first round of assistance, and will begin the larger Phase 2 program – which has money in it to help those whose property taxes have gone up significantly – will begin in the next two weeks.

Housing Specialist Desirae Valentin told the Affordable Housing Trust Fund on Tuesday that the first phase was successful, with 25 people selected for help and the loan documents now being wrapped up.

She said 41 had been put in the lottery, with others on the waiting list. However, only 25 were selected and qualified, and some money was left over because of that. That money will be rolled into Phase 2.

Of the 25, some 15 have signed agreements and the City is moving to get payment to them. The others are still finalizing paperwork and loan documents.

“We should be finish-

ing within the next two or three weeks on that and everyone will have signed loan agreements by the end of the month,” she said.

The program gives out up to \$5,000 for a single-family, \$8,000 for a two-family, and \$10,000 for a three-family. It is meant to pay three months of mortgage, utilities, taxes, insurance and tenant costs. The loan is forgiven after two years if one doesn’t sell the home and doesn’t move out. Those accepting would have to pay half back if they sell within the year, and all of it back if they sell immediately.

The larger Phase 2, she said, should open up in a couple of weeks for applications.

City Planner Alex Train said they are also working with Chelsea Restoration Corporation to make loan modifications to those homeowners who do not have a favorable mortgage, such as a high adjustable rate.

Additionally, he said there have not yet been a lot of foreclosures on homeowners in the city as of now, but many experts expect that in the near future.

“We haven’t seen a large number of foreclosures yet and that’s because lenders are being flexible,” he said. “Forecasters do predict there will be increases in foreclosures if the market doesn’t pick up for hospitality and service sectors.”

TEACHERS QUICKLY MOVE TO GET VACCINATED

EVERETT - A lot of noise has been heard over the past two months on the outside in the whole teacher vaccination debate in Everett, but on the inside many teachers had been struggling internally with the idea of serving their students or preserving their health.

It was a tough inter-



The Chelsea Salvation Army was pleased to accept a donation from Javier Bellini, vice president of Cambridge Savings Bank, on March 3 at the Chestnut Street facility. Accepting it is the Salvation Army’s Isael Gonzalez. “We are so grateful for the support of community partners like Cambridge Savings Bank that support the work we do for our community,” said Gonzalez. “Because of partners like them The Salvation Army of Chelsea/East Boston have served 5.9 million meals since March 2020, and The Salvation Army distributed 14.5 million meals across Massachusetts.”

section for the district’s many hundreds of teachers, but one that has been resolved this week as President Joe Biden and Gov. Charlie Baker cleared the way for teachers to get vaccinated last week, and many now have already received their first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

It couldn’t have come at a better time either, as Everett Public Schools educators have a tentative agreement to return to school buildings this month.

“I got my first dose at Gillette over the weekend and it was smooth as silk,” said Everett Teachers Association President Kim Auger. “I was very, very pleased at how it went...It really makes us look at going back in a far different way. We will keep our social distancing and protocols...I do feel like it is a relief. It’s in your arm and you’re like, ‘Oh my it’s been a year.’ It felt a little bit of relief, but we are still social distancing and wearing masks in our home.”

Teacher Jennifer Cuthbert said she felt the same way. As a 42-year-old fifth-grade teacher at the Webster School, she wasn’t likely to be vaccinated under the old system any time soon. So, going back without the protection of a vaccine was nerve-wracking, she said.

As a veteran, and with the teaching vaccination debate being settled last

week, she was able to get an appointment and will be vaccinated before school starts, she said.

“It’s huge for me,” she said. “It’s a huge sense of relief. Being in a class with 20-plus kids in a small room with mask off to eat lunch – that’s the plan I heard – it was nerve wracking. It’s a tough situation and I get it. A lot of parents have children at home and might have to go to work. However, my mom just had a brain tumor and had surgery so that was a main concern for me.”

Middle School teacher Keith Spencer echoed that sentiment, saying he was able to get his first vaccine about 30 minutes from his home. While he went through the wringer last Thursday, March 4, to get his appointment, he said finally getting it change everything.

“Personally, getting vaccinated before going back was at the top of my list,” he said. “I’m from a family that has issues with immunity. I don’t have immunity issues myself, but I was concerned with that. I understand transmission rates and stuff but I know we also haven’t crowded 30 to 35 kids in a room at the school. I wanted to get kids back here, but I was also hoping we would get the priority as essential people. I was quite disappointed when the governor didn’t make us a priority when school opening was a priority.

“For me, it was an essential thing,” he continued. “I wasn’t going to apply for medical paperwork. I would have gone back to the classroom without a vaccination, but it was tough. I’m glad I didn’t have to make that decision.”

That decision has been weighing on Spencer and other teachers in the district. Many in the administration have been pushing for vaccination, but in absence of that, they have also been pushing to get in-person learning available to students and families. That’s in large part because a majority of families are ready to send their children back to school. Everett tried to initiate a pilot program to vaccinate teachers in February, but that was squelched by Gov. Baker before it could happen – pitting teachers against some students and families on the return discussion.

“It just didn’t feel right,” said Spencer. “I felt like things that went on in our state over the last few weeks put us in that situation to where we had to choose between our students and our own personal safety. I was thinking about what happened if I got sick. I love my job and my students and what I do, but I was nervous about going back. I don’t think anyone should have to be put in a situ-

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Region // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

ation where they have to choose between their health and their job.”

Spencer said he is to receive his second dose of the vaccine in early April, just before he is scheduled to return. With that confidence, he said he is ready to be back – not that he wasn’t before – but that he can do his job without the nagging concern of being unprotected at work.

“If you’re a teacher and truly love what you do, you know the best way to teach your students is in-person learning,” he said. “I’m ready to go back.”

Teachers across the school system are to report back to the classroom on March 22 as part of a tentative agreement with the district.

FIRE DEPT. CALLS ARE DOWN IN 2020

EVERETT - The Everett Fire Department is left scratching their heads as to the large drop in calls for service throughout 2020, just as medical aid calls continued to increase and dominate their activities on the fire service.

According to Chief Tony Carli, there were 1,000 fewer calls in 2020 compared to 2019 – coming in at 5,560 total calls for service and 5,632 calls logged. That was the biggest story in the numbers that the chief has annually crunched since he began to notice the fire service transforming to more of a medical aid response and less of a fire response several years ago. However, with a pandemic raging and so many families stuck at home for a large part of 2020, the chief said he had thought calls would be up – not down.

“We’re down about 1,000 calls from the previous year and those numbers do tell a story,” he said. “One year ago today, I would have said we were going to have so many more calls – food on the stove calls, small fire calls. We had those calls, but we just expected to have had 1,000 more calls and not 1,000 less. We’re looking for answers. With everyone at home, that’s a lot less people not commuting into the city and the casino was closed a lot of the time. I go back and forth on it. Everett is a working-class city and a lot of residents continued to go to work. Overall, I think a lot of people were not travelling through the city and a lot of our businesses were closed.”

Everett Fire Union President Craig Hardy said once the pandemic hit, one of the issues with lower calls was the “fear factor.” He said the Fire Department was busy, but the public was scared to call for help many times.

“This year with the pandemic I believe our call volume was down because many people were scared to call and didn’t want us coming in the home,” he said. “The fear factor was there. It was an anxious time and we changed a lot of how we do things with Chief Carli in order to protect the public and the firefighters as well.”

The overall calls show

a vast amount of medical calls, and an alarming rate of false alarms/good intent calls – those calls resulting in a response that eventually was determined not to be necessary. Actual fire suppression calls were at 2 percent of the total calls for service, with 130 – a number that continues to go down, he said. The calls were as follows:

- Fire – 130 (2 percent)
- Ruptured Line – 0
- Medical Aid – 3,711 (66 percent)
- Hazardous Conditions – 215 (4 percent)
- Service Calls – 271 (5 percent)
- Good Intent Calls – 510 (9 percent)
- False Alarm – 760 (13 percent)
- Severe Weather/Natural Disaster – 2 (less than 1 percent)
- Special Incident Type – 33 (1 percent)

More than anything, the numbers are further proof for Chief Carli that an in-house ambulance/med service is critical to the survival of the Fire Department. Already, Mayor Carlo DeMaria and Chief Carli have began a pilot to bring on 20 new fire personnel that would start by getting EMT certification and riding an ambulance while preparing to enter the Fire Academy. In the end, they would be full firefighter personnel, but also be specialized to staff and respond with an ambulance service. It’s a transformation the chief said is coming and long overdue.

“This is about looking at the numbers and the City and realizing if we don’t get into the medical now, it’s going to be difficult to keep these numbers of firefighters on,” he said. “We need these firefighters and we can’t lose them. As a whole, the Fire Service is getting to the point where they embrace it more. In 2020, 66 percent of our calls are medical and we have to do something. We have a good partner in Cataldo. We need to take this chance to see if we can help them and provide a better product for the taxpayers. The numbers don’t lie and I think we can do this. Today it’s 66 percent of the calls, but in the near future it could easily be 90 percent.”

The chief said all 20 new EMT/Firefighter personnel will be brought on in April. They will get certified as EMT’s fire, and five already have that certification. In the meantime, they will be on the list for the Massachusetts Fire Academy training, and those certified as EMTs will begin riding the new ambulance service. He said they believe they will be able to send five to the Academy in July – with others going when spots open up.

“We have to change and transition with the times and figure out the services we provide to the city,” he said. “These (new firefighters) will be on the line eventually doing fire suppression and EMT work as we try to transition.”

Hardy said the Fire Union isn’t against the idea of an ambulance in-house, and actually recommended the plan several years ago. However,

he said there are a lot of things to work out before these new firefighters show up at a station for work.

“We go to every 9-1-1 medical call in the city and I’ve been on 23 years and it’s always been predominately medicals,” said Hardy. “The chief has said we’re not a progressive union but we believe we are progressive and we have recommended the ambulance for a long time...Now the City really wants to do it and we’re for it, but we need to negotiate it... We want to make sure it’s done right. We’re all for it but we want to go over all the hiccups because it’s a big change.”

One key point, he said, would be staffing. He said the new 20 firefighter/medical personnel only bring the contingent up to where it’s supposed to be now – at around 100. He said they still would need several more to staff the new ambulance and the fire suppression services too.

GLSS STAFF HELPING DURING PANDEMIC

LYNN - For many people who work at Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) helping others—especially those in need—is simply part of their DNA. But willingly doing so in the midst of a global pandemic says something special about GLSS staff. “I have been at GLSS for almost a year now, and during that time, I have witnessed so many acts of caring and compassion among our staff,” said Kathryn C. Burns, MHA, Chief Executive Officer. “As I have said before, it continually reaffirms for me my decision to join this incredible organization.”

During the past year, GLSS staff have delivered Meals on Wheels, organized toy drives, brought food to local shelters, distributed Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, gave out Grab & Go meals and bags of groceries, and so much more. So it came as no surprise to learn recently that many GLSS staff are assisting the City of Lynn with its vaccination efforts.

“Throughout the pandemic, consumer, clinical, and protective services staff have gone above and beyond to stay connected with

our consumers, and, at this critical time, everyone is doing their part to help people get vaccinated,” said Holly Jarrell-Marcinelli, Director of Consumer Services. “Both our nursing and supportive housing staff have jumped in to support vaccine clinic operations in the city of Lynn.

On several recent Fridays, Rosemary Durant, RN, GLSS’ Nurse Manager, has assisted in preparing vaccines for administration at the Lynn Tech Fieldhouse site on Neptune Boulevard. “There were many volunteers from both the community and the Lynn Community Health Center directing consumers and answering questions,” she stated. “The Lynn Fire Department was out in full force and was a big help.” The following week, Rosemary was joined by GLSS Home Care nurse Carolyn Coan-Andrews, RN.

Rosemary noted that the entire process from registration to vaccination seemed organized and ran smoothly. The City of Lynn anticipated administering 520 vaccines that day; however, due to the Governor’s decision to allow companions and caregivers under 75 to also be vaccinated, the total vaccines administered was probably closer to 600. The City plans to add evening hours with the goal of vaccinating 1,000 people per day.

Recently Paula Gonzalez, RN, and Nurse Supervisor Michelle Syed, RN, volunteered for what was the busiest clinic yet, with over 750 people being vaccinated. “It is really our honor and privilege to be able to do this,” Michelle said.

Staff who work at Supportive Housing Sites in Lynn also worked with the City’s Board of Health and Housing Authority to offer vaccination clinics. Maloney Properties, which manages St. Theresa House and St. Mary’s Plaza, partnered with CVS to vaccinate approximately 90 residents, administering both shots over the course of four clinics with assistance from Program Manager Maureen Teal and SCO GSSC Grecia Paradis. Working with the Lynn Board of Health and Simon Properties, Resident Services Coordinator

(RSC) Iliana Arzola organized a clinic at Silsbee Tower Apartments, where approximately 60 elders received the first vaccine. (The second dose is scheduled for March.) Eligible residents of neighboring Lynn Housing Authority properties were invited to attend, and RSC Acie Johnson and Home Care Case Manager Mariana Zorin provided support. “I am so grateful to Simon Properties for opening its doors to the residents of nearby McGee House and Olive Street,” Maureen stated. “Residents at those sites were delighted to be included.”

GLSS staff are helping in all sorts of interesting ways. Liz Bulkley, Moeun Him, and Joey Sawyer-Shaw are currently working on a series of educational videos about the safety and efficacy of the vaccines in conjunction with the Lynn Community Health Center. Throughout the pandemic, the Media Team has been creating videos to assist in educating staff, consumers, and the general public about COVID-19 and developing programming like Kelly’s Corner and GLSS TV to reduce stress and isolation.

“This year has really shined a spotlight on the dedication, commitment, and caring of our staff under the most difficult circumstances,” Kathy Burns said. “All these highly visible efforts really showcase to the wider community the character and compassion of our agency.”

TEACHERS STAGE PROTEST

REVERE - Last week outside the Rumney Marsh Academy members of the Revere Teachers Association (RTA) held a stand out and car parade calling for common sense school safety as teachers head back to school.

RTA members continue to argue that Revere Public School administrators refuse to allow teachers with underlying health conditions that make them more vulnerable to serious COVID-19 infection to continue working remotely.

“We are simply asking that our central administration protects our most vulnerable members and do the right thing,”

said RTA President Gina Garro. “The administration has refused to grant most of the accommodation requests of working from home for members who have a medically documented heightened health risk. Administration states that plans for cohorting kids in certain buildings is more important than protecting (RTA) members’ health. In certain buildings, student cohorting has been arranged to account for the need of remote teachers. This is a feasible accommodation and needs to be an option for all members.”

Garro said the district is currently denying most requests for staff to continue to work remotely with students who have also opted to remain in remote learning. She added that the RTA also asked that teachers be given the option to use sick time if forced to take a leave of absence and that option has also been denied.

“We would really like to be able to arrange an agreement with RPS so our members are granted the accommodations that their doctors request and can also continue to teach our students,” said Garro. “This is what is best for everyone.”

The decision to hold Monday’s protest emerged from negotiations about in-person learning ahead of school reopenings this month. Since agreeing to resume in-person learning Garro said the RTA members have been dismayed and shocked at what she called “draconian proposals” around health accommodations for high-risk staff.

However, on Tuesday the Revere Board of Health announced it plans to vaccinate 600 Revere teachers, early educators and school staff this Friday. (See lead story on page one).

The city’s board of health will work with the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center to begin administering the first doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The Moderna Vaccine is given in two doses but does not fully protect against COVID-19 until the second dose is administered 28 days after the first dose. So teachers would not get their second dose until April 9.

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# Piers Park Sailing Center, Harborkeepers take part in annual Shamrock Splash fundraiser

By John Lynds

With the annual Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Shamrock Splash going virtual this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic Piers Park Sailing Center and the Harborkeepers teamed up for the annual fundraiser.

Instead of celebrating for just one day on the beach in South Boston, this year's Shamrock Splash was a two-week virtual party--giving fundraising teams the opportunity to splash wherever they were.

On Sunday the Sailing Center and Harborkeepers, each with a team of eight 'Splashers', jumped into the icy water off Constitution Beach to raise money for summer programs in Eastie. The money raised will go towards funding Save the Harbor/Save the Bays' Better Beaches grant program.

The two teams were able to raise nearly \$5,000 for beach programs.

"Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is one of Piers Park Sailing Center's most valued partners. When it comes to making Boston's beaches welcoming and accessible to everyone they are a true champion," said Piers Park Sailing Center Executive Director Alex DeFronzo. "Through their advocacy and the great work that they do with the Metropolitan Beaches Commission and the DCR we have been able to work together to activate beaches and the harbor for East Boston youth and families. Our partnership with Save the Harbor created PPSC's Harbor Explorers program for 6- to 9-year-old youth 15 years ago and will continue in 2021. The Shamrock Splash helps raise funds for the Better Beaches Program and awareness about our metropolitan beaches."

DeFronzo said the Splash was a nice 10 second shock to the system.

"I dove in but ran the heck out fast haha," he said.

Harborkeepers Founder and Executive Director, Magdalena Ayed said the first time she ever went out on Boston Harbor was during an elementary school field trip for her



Splashers young and old get ready to enter the cold waters off Constitution Beach.

children hosted by Bruce Berman of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay.

"We went on a commercial fishing boat," said Ayed. "It was awesome and I have loved the harbor ever since. Piers Park Sailing Center has been participating in the Shamrock Splash for the last several years and while doing a smaller, socially-distanced splash was fun, we are looking forward to returning to the huge splash with hundreds of people at the Curley Community Center in Southie next year."

Secretary for Harborkeepers, Celeste Ribeiro-Hewitt, who made the splash with the rest of the team said the Harborkeepers were thrilled to participate in this year's Shamrock Splash to raise money for the Better Beaches Program.

"Given our mission to foster coastal stewardship, it was a perfect way for Team Harborkeepers to set an example of what local beach stewardship looks like, by plunging in the clean and accessible Constitution Beach harbor," she said. "Given the restrictions of the past year, jumping in the frigid Boston Harbor waters was like an invigorating reset button that reinforced the importance of continuing to work together on joint coastal stewardship work."

Ribeiro-Hewitt added that although she has participated in previous Splashes with Save the Harbor/Save the Bay this first time partnership team was a real tangible way for



The Piers Park Sailing and Harborkeepers teams raised nearly \$5,000 for the Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Better Beaches grant program.

board members to illustrate the benefits of "accessibility to, and care of, our harbor".

"As residents in a coastal community we may take for granted that our beaches are there or conversely, may be overwhelmed by the awesome job it is to maintain them and our environment," she said. "We hope this was a fun way for folks to see the benefit of the work we do and maybe stoked a little bit of interest in getting more involved. On a personal note, after a year of zooming with fellow board members, this was a great way to come together in person and really shake things up."

Since Save the Harbor/Save the Bay began the Splash during their 25th Anniversary celebration in 2011, thousands of splashers have raised more than \$1 million dollars to support free beach events and programs in East Boston, Lynn, Nahant, Revere, Winthrop, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull.

"Last year's Splash raised nearly \$50,000 to support free beach events and our Better Beaches program partnership with DCR," said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Executive Director Chris Mancini.



On Sunday the Sailing Center and Harborkeepers jumped into the icy water off Constitution Beach to raise money for summer programs in Eastie during Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's annual Shamrock Splash fundraiser.

ni. "It was also the last public event we hosted in 2020, before the pandemic forced us and our community partners to move most of our free programs online. We are optimistic that if people continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and sign up for their free vaccinations as they become available, the

region's residents from Nahant to Nantasket will be able to return to our beaches again this summer, and free beach events and youth programs will be more important than ever before. In the meantime, we have to celebrate clean water together – apart."

The annual event is

sponsored by Harpoon Brewery, JetBlue, Mix 104.1, The Blue Sky Collaborative, The Boston Foundation, The Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation, Beacon Capital Partners, P&G Gillette, National Grid, the Daily Catch, and Comcast.

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