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Wednesday, March 31, 2021

Eastie parents to join State House rally Saturday

By John Lynds

At 3 p.m. on Saturday outside the State House, East Boston resident Abdi Mohamed Warsame Dirie will joining fellow Eastie parents and a coalition of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) parents to denounce what they argue is the Massachusetts Department of Education's exclusion of parent and family voices from full school opening policy-making.

The group of parents argue specifically that Commissioner Jeff Riley has overstepped his authority with, "a rashly-decided, poorly-planned mandate to fully open schools five days a week for in-person learning" without proper safety measures in place. They added that Riley has not seriously considered the health impact and disparities for students, teachers, or building staff or BIPOC and immigrant families hit hard by the pandemic.

Dirie said the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted Black and Brown communities in Eastie and other Boston neighborhoods and Riley's decision was made without the voices of these communities.

"Our governor and education commissioner decided to fully open schools five days a week for in-person learning on April 5 without proper safety measures in place," said Dirie, who has a 5th grader in school in Eastie. "The state hasn't made an investment to improve HVAC systems in all school facilities and free/clear cleaning at every school to prevent the exacerbation of certain medical conditions, including asthma and eczema, af-

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TIME TO MAKE THE ZEPPOLE



Sammys Carlos Deli and Catering had a line out the door this past Saturday, beginning at 8 a.m. for there delicious Zeppoles, served hot with several toppings to choose from. Shown above are owner Stephen Scire and his daughter, Jessica Presutti. Stephen said, "This will be an ongoing thing, our customers love them and we will continue to serve them on Saturday mornings while supplies last."

Councilor Lydia Edwards named one of Most Impactful Black Women in Boston

By John Lynds

Last week Get Kon-nected!, a local business networking organization, released its first ever list of Boston's Most Impactful Black Women, and District 1 City Councilor Lydia Edwards was on the list. Get Kon-nected! CEO Colette Phillips said the honors included two sub-groups, the 25 Most Impactful Black Women in Health Care and Sciences, as well as the 25 Most Impactful Black Women Pioneers.

Edwards joined a distinguished list of female Black leaders that included City Councilor Andrea Campbell, WBUR's Paris Alston, and Boston Public

Schools Superintendent Brenda Cassellius.

"Black women rule right now," said Phillips. "These women have forged trails as powerful and impactful as early Boston activists from abolitionist Elizabeth Riley to civil-rights leader and icon Melnea Cass." It's part of the mission at Get Kon-nected! to showcase the contributions of people of color in the state, and the list is a logical next step to promote those achievements. To see the full list, take a look at the video below.

Edwards, who was elected as District 1's first African American wom-

See EDWARDS Page 2

Recovery on the Harbor cuts ribbon, opens doors

By John Lynds

A new resource center for people in recovery from drugs opened its doors in Orient Heights Square earlier this month.

Run by North Suffolk Mental Health Association (NSMH) Recovery on the Harbor at 983 Bennington St. will offer those in recovery access to a wide array of resources and programs to help on their road to recovery.

On Friday NSMH staff was joined by Eastie's elected officials, members of the recovery community and Mass Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders to cut the ribbon on Recovery on the Harbor.

"It was a really good turnout," said NSMH's Katherine O'Leary. "Everyone that stopped by on Friday loved it. It's a nice big wide open space, it has really high ceilings, the acoustics are great, there's various different rooms and there's a garage door in the middle of the space

"Everyone that stopped by on Friday loved it. It's a nice big wide open space."

~ NSMH's
Katherine O'Leary

so we can shut it and have completely different spaces and can have meetings on both sides if necessary."

The only requirement for somebody to use this center is 24 hours of recovery and they have to be 18 years old or over. O'Leary said It will be a member driven program based on a peer to peer participatory process. So the members will decide to include things like parenting classes; AA and NA meetings; Smart Recovery meetings; Refuge Recovery meetings and multiple other pathways to recovery programs. There is some discussion to include vocational training or a parent support group.

It's really just meant to empower and enhance the community and strengthen the recovery community overall.

"Some of the sober homes in the area--East Boston Rehab the Recovery Home have already sent some people down to use the computers," said O'Leary. "Meridian Houses have utilized the space and now we're starting to get more interest from the sober houses. I reached out to all of the AA and NA meetings that were kind of displaced because of COVID and all of those meetings will start to be rejuvenated in that space. So all of the mutual aid groups that kind of went away will now have a new home. The former director of Meridian house is going to do the NA group that was at the Social Center on Friday nights and the women's meeting will come back and do a Codependency Anonymous meeting on Thurs

See RECOVERY Page 12



Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders, Audrey Clairmont, Director of Addiction Services NSMHA, Jackie Moore, CEO NSMHA, Katie O'Leary, Director of Recovery Support Services NSMHA, and Judi Lemoine COO NSMHA

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**See Easter Hunnies
on Page 6**

Stalled Loftel project up for auction

By John Lynds

The aging industrial building on the corner of Porter and Orleans Streets was supposed to be one of Paul Roiff’s signature boutique hotels, complete with extended stay rooms for business travelers and a restaurant.

However, Roiff, known for high end hotels and restaurants throughout Boston, later sold the Boston Planning and Development Agency-approved project to the Patel family for \$14.75 million.

The Patels, known for operating and managing several area hotels, planned to continue Roiff’s original vision, but for four years the project has stalled and become a dilapidated, boarded-up eyesore in the community.

Now, after years of promising the community that they’d get working to bring the neighborhood’s

first “Loftel” to fruition the plans seem to be coming to an abrupt end.

It was revealed that Paul E. Saperstein Co., Inc Auctioneers and Appraisers have been brought in to auction off the property.

The auction of the property will take place on April 14 at 1 p.m.

According to the auction posting the terms of sale require a “\$150,000 deposit by certified or bank cashier’s check” that will be increased to “10 percent” of the highest bid within five business days of sale”. The entire balance of the winning bid will be due within 30 days of the sale date.

The project’s original construction loan has been allegedly called back by the lender.

Since 2016 residents living in the Gove Street area have compared the dilapidated building on

the corner of Porter and Orleans Streets to something you would see in war torn regions rather than Eastie.

In 2019, the Patels told members of the Gove Street Citizens Association that progress had been made and were eager to begin construction.

The delays in construction were largely due to the telecommunication antennas on top of the building.

The Patels were forced to enter into lengthy negotiations with the telecommunication companies to move these antennas to another part of the roof. When dealing with the relocation of telecommunication antennas there is very complicated and legal choreography that has to occur before one can move forward. Because moving these antennas causes a disruption in ser-



The stalled Loftel project is up for auction.

vice there were a whole host of issues that came with that. These antennas are part of an old telecommunication easement and could not be evicted from the building because the companies own the space

that occupies the building’s roof.

Another delay for the project was in relation to the Patels’s Historic Renovation Tax Credit application. Applying and receiving tax credit funding

that ensures that the redevelopment of the building is done in a way that respects the property’s history and is incorporated into the hotel’s design can sometimes be a long process.

Edwards // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

an to serve the district, which includes East Boston, Charlestown and the North End, said that she was honored by being included on the impressive list.

“Obviously, I am humbled because I assumed I would need to be a little bit more older and have some more victories under my belt,” said Edwards. “I just felt very much congratulated that people feel like I’m doing a good job and that makes me feel wonderful.”

Being part of a really impressive group of women, Edwards said that she was honored just to be nominated.

“To be in that group was really the honor because many of these women included busted down doors and barriers,” said Edwards. “This list has a lot of incredible women who have done some incredible so I took the nomination as an incredible compliment and now being listed among them is amazing.”

Edwards said the honor has inspired her to keep going, keep fighting, keep thinking and keep challenging.

“I hope I’m making a difference but sometimes you don’t see that,” said Edwards. “When you’re in

the middle of some many different things sometimes you don’t know your true impact but I hope I’m making people’s lives better.”

Edwards’s work on ensuring equitable development at Suffolk Downs, increasing community affordability through proposed development projects and her initiatives to overhaul the ZBA and address housing issues and displacement has made her a champion of her working-class constituents.

“I think those are the little victories sometimes but I don’t forget that a lot of these decisions are permanent and impacting our community,” said Edwards. “I’m hopeful people understand how hard I work to get to those decisions. I’m just so honored to represent my community and I’m so grateful, especially to East Boston residents who put me on the map and I hope to continue to make my entire District proud.”

Edwards has spent her entire career as an advocate, activist, and as a voice on behalf of society’s most vulnerable. She served as the deputy director within the Mayor’s Office of Housing Stability



City Councilor Lydia Edwards.

where she was responsible for developing and delivering innovative solutions to fight displacement and brought together all stakeholders: landlords, management companies, housing authorities, and tenants.

Before becoming elected Edwards worked as a public interest attorney with Greater Boston Legal Services focusing on labor issues such as fighting for access to unemployment insurance, back wages, fair treatment for domestic workers, and combating human trafficking. She served as the statewide campaign coordinator for the Massachusetts Coalition for Domestic Workers, which advocated for the passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. In 2015, she was named Bostonian of the Year by the Boston Globe.

Councilors Edwards and Wu file expanded parental leave ordinance

Boston City Councilors Lydia Edwards and Michelle Wu have filed an ordinance that would codify the recent change to city policy expanding paid parental leave for city employees from six weeks to 12 weeks. The ordinance would also replace the word “stillbirth” in the policy with “loss of pregnancy” to encompass any situation in which someone has lost a pregnancy regardless of how that loss came to pass.

“These amendments codify a modernized paid parental leave policy into law and expand protections for City of Boston employees to take either partial or full paid parental leave,” said Councilor Edwards. “Policies can be good, but they can also be easily changed. This would ensure city workers have these protections in place for good. I’m excited to have this conversation and move our city forward.”

“Six years ago, as a new City Councilor and a new mom, I was proud to introduce Boston’s first ever paid parental leave ordinance,” said Councilor Wu. “Our leadership at the city level set the standard for employers throughout Boston and pushed momentum for protections at the state level. Today, I’m excited to join Councilor Edwards in proposing to go further—to codify the city’s expansion for twelve weeks of paid leave into law and expand the city’s leave policy for anyone facing a loss of pregnancy for whatever reason, including miscarriage or termination. Our city must be a place of compassion where every person has the time off they need for their emotional, economic and mental health.”

The proposal was praised by NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts executive director Rebecca Hart Holder.

“For many families

and pregnant people, pregnancy loss can bring unimaginable pain and grief. Supporting people coping with pregnancy loss by allowing them to take the time they need to grieve and heal is critically important. Reproductive freedom is the ability to decide if, when, and how to have a family and for those who experience pregnancy loss, it is the ability to mourn and care for themselves and their family. We applaud Councilor Edwards and Councilor Wu for embracing the full-spectrum of reproductive freedom and creating a policy that will ensure greater equity for women and pregnant people,” said Rebecca Hart Holder, Executive Director, NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts.

The ordinance will be formally introduced during Wednesday’s council meeting and assigned to a committee for a hearing to be held.

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Vogel, Sommer J	Kornblith, David N	36 Ashley St #3	\$475,000
Tringali, Christine C	119 Barnes Avenue LLC	119 Barnes Ave	\$599,975
Ryan, Matthew	Crespo Holdings LLC	159 Bennington St #3	\$465,000
Cassidy T Smith T	398 Bremen Street LLC	398 Bremen St	\$610,000
Wang, Xiaohui	East Boston Mgmt&Dev LLC	202 Lexington St	\$800,000
Wang, Xiaohui	Harve St Apartments LLC	204 Lexington St	\$920,000
Hayes, Colleen M	179 London Street RT	179 London St #3	\$555,000
EB MSQ Holdings LLC	Giacalone, Anthony	33-35 Maverick Sq	\$1,700,000
EB MSQ Holdings LLC	Giacalone, Anthony	37-39 Maverick Sq	\$1,300,000
VonStein, Scott	231 Maverick Street LLC	229 Maverick St #3	\$665,000
231 Maverick Street LLC	Progressive Club Inc	232-234 Maverick St	\$820,000
340 Meridian Street LLC	Larosa, Fancesco	340 Meridian St	\$900,000
Talebian, Pejman	Way, Marcus N	447 Meridian St #2	\$795,000
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USPS unveils 10-year plan for sustainability and service

Staff Report

The United States Postal Service (USPS) last week released its 10-year Plan, ‘Delivering for America,’ to return the organization to financial sustainability and achieve service excellence while maintaining universal six-day mail delivery and expanding seven-day package delivery.

“The need for the U.S. Postal Service to transform to meet the needs of our customers is long overdue,” said Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer Louis DeJoy. “Our Plan calls for growth and investments, as well as targeted cost reductions and other strategies that will enable us to operate in a precise and efficient manner to meet future challenges, as we put the Postal Service on a path for financial sustainability and service excellence.”

Ron Bloom, chairman of the United States Postal Service Board of Governors, said, “The Board challenged Postal management to devise a Plan that was firmly rooted in our public service mission to bind the nation together. The Plan will achieve service excellence, adapt the Postal Service to the evolving needs of the American people and address our obligation for financial sustainability. Through a wide-ranging process involving numerous talented and dedicated public servants throughout the organization and insightful input from many stakeholders, they have done just that. This Plan will revitalize this American treasure and we are excited to work with our

union leaders, stakeholders and newly nominated Governors, once they are confirmed, as we move it forward.”

The comprehensive Plan includes a combination of investments in technology, training, Post Offices and a new vehicle fleet; modernizing the Postal Service’s processing network; adopting best-in-class logistics practices across delivery and transportation operations; creating new revenue-generating offerings in the rapidly expanding e-commerce marketplace and pricing changes as authorized by the Postal Regulatory Commission.

Successful implementation of the Plan requires partnership from legislative and regulatory stakeholders as its composition includes:

- Self-help initiatives to provide billions in new revenue and cost reductions, while improving the predictability and reliability of service.

- Judicious implementation of new and existing pricing authorities.

- Legislative changes to retiree health benefit funding rules including requiring Medicare integration and eliminating the pre-funding requirement.

DeJoy continued, “The Postal Service’s problems are serious but, working together, they can be solved. Our 10-year Plan capitalizes on our natural strengths and addresses our serious weaknesses. It ensures that we can better meet the nation’s evolving delivery needs, and do so with the higher degree of efficiency, precision and reliability that our business and residential

customers expect and deserve. It can and must be done.”

The Plan was developed through a rigorous and holistic process that included reviewing reports by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and consulting with numerous stakeholder groups.

- Investing in People, Technology and Infrastructure

The Postal Service Plan will spur cash flow and savings to make \$40 billion in capital investments over the next 10 years, many of which have been long-delayed due to the organization’s financial challenges of the past decade. This includes a recent multi-billion dollar contract to modernize the Postal Service’s delivery vehicle fleet, which is over 28-years old on average and unsuitable for accommodating growing package volume. The first of the new vehicles are expected to appear on carrier routes beginning in 2023. With Congressional support, our delivery fleet can be electric by 2035, substantially reducing our carbon footprint.

“Investing in the Postal Service’s future means investing in our people,” said DeJoy. “For too many years, Postal employees have been asked to do more with less – forced to employ antiquated systems, utilize outmoded equipment, and drive outdated vehicles. This drives up costs and slows down service for customers. We cannot afford to keep this up. We believe firmly in putting the 644,000 women and men of the Postal

Service in the best possible position to succeed in their mission of service, while also enabling a more predictable progression from non-career employees into the career workforce. Our goal is to significantly reduce non-career annual turnover rates.”

Other planned investments include advanced package processing equipment; Post Office and facility upgrades; deployment of new mobile devices for carriers; new employee uniforms; best-in-class information technologies across the enterprise; and enhanced training and development to empower the workforce.

- Enhanced Customer Experience and New Revenue Generating Offerings to Meet Business and Consumers’ Expanding E-Commerce Needs

The Postal Service has one of the best last mile delivery networks in the world, which enables the delivery of goods and services to more than 160 million addresses across the country. The Plan identifies several strategies to leverage this unparalleled end-to-end delivery network to generate \$24 billion in new package net revenue growth and meet business and consumers’ rapidly evolving e-commerce needs.

This includes a new suite of services called USPS Connect, connecting businesses, large and small, to urban and rural communities across the nation. The Postal Service will expand its core package products, namely Priority Mail, Priority Mail Express, First-Class Package Service and Parcel Se-

lect to offer same day, next day and 2-3 day delivery options six to seven days a week.

Other offerings will include an enhanced Informed Delivery platform, enabling business and residential users to do more, such as provide carriers instructions on where to leave or pick-up packages, notify USPS to hold mail or schedule redelivery of packages before important items reach their mailboxes. Through these and other actions, the Plan also strengthens the mail channel for the nation’s commercial and personal needs.

- Adjust Select Delivery Standards to Dramatically Improve Service Reliability

To drive greater network efficiency, the Postal Service will submit filings with the Postal Regulatory Commission to modify the service standards for First-Class Mail Letters and Flats, as well as First-Class Package Service. These modifications will shift volume from unreliable air transportation to more reliable ground transportation, and enable network improvements that will allow us to meet or exceed 95 percent on-time delivery across mail and shipping product classes. First-Class Mail traveling within a local area will continue to be delivered in one or two days and 70 percent of First-Class Mail will continue to be delivered within three days or less.

The Postal Service also anticipates using its processing facilities differently to reflect the dramatic increase in package volume and declines in mail

volumes, and accommodate new revenue generating e-commerce offerings to better meet the needs of our customers. The plan anticipates an evaluation of facility operations, using the applicable regulatory processes.

- Legislative Initiatives and Administrative Elements to Better Compete and Achieve Financial Sustainability

The most significant item the Postal Service is asking the 117th Congress to pass is legislation to require that retiree health benefits be integrated with Medicare, and that the expense associated with these benefits be based on vested benefits, which would reduce the Postal Service’s cash flow expenses by approximately \$44 billion over 10 years. Legislation is also being supported to address burdensome retiree health benefit prefunding. We also propose that the Administration require the Office of Personnel Management to use a simple and fair method in how it apportions Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) liabilities for employees who transitioned to the Postal Service from the Post Office Department. These requested changes will benefit current retirees, current employees and the Postal Service.

In addition, in the coming weeks, the Postal Service will submit a number of filings with the Postal Regulatory Commission regarding pricing, products and services, and infrastructure.

Another gun arrest in Eastie

By John Lynds

Boston Police officers assigned to District A-7 in East Boston removed yet another firearm from local streets Sunday--bringing the total number of firearms recovered in Eastie in the past few weeks to eight.

According to police just before 4 a.m., Sunday morning officers responded to a call for a person with a gun in the area of Saratoga Street and Wordsworth Street.

While responding to the location, officers were flagged down by an adult female victim who stated that an unknown male tapped on the front passenger window of her vehicle with a gun and then fled on foot.

The officers were able to apprehend the suspect, later identified as, Reginald Abel, 48, of East Boston. After a brief struggle, officers managed to retrieve the loaded firearm from Abel and placed him under arrest.

The loaded firearm was determined to be a Smith & Wesson SW9C, with one round in the chamber and three rounds in the magazine.

Abel was charged with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, Unlawful Possession of Ammunition, Assault with a Dangerous Weapon and Resisting Arrest and was arraigned in East Boston District Court.

The uptick in firearm recoveries in the neighborhood has concerned District A-7 Captain Kelley McCormack as Eastie heads into the summer in just a couple of months. Earlier this month Bos-



The latest gun to be recovered by Boston Police in Eastie.

ton police, 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.

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. This arrest gave Eastie the dubious honor of leading the city in gun confiscations so far this year.

McCormack said the gun police took off the street during that incident and had the capability of shooting rifle rounds or armor piercing rounds and that it was a very “scary gun”.

Back in February police arrested five individuals, including a 13-year-old, and recovered five guns near the Maverick Landing Public Housing development.

There, police recovered a Springfield Armory 9mm, loaded with 12 rounds of ammunition in the magazine and one round in the chamber. The second firearm recovered was a Taurus PT709 Cal 9mm, which was loaded with five rounds of ammunition in the magazine and one round in the chamber, and had an obliterated serial number. Further investigation by police uncovered two additional firearms--Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm, which was loaded with 11 rounds of ammunition in the magazine and one round in the chamber as well as having an obliterated serial number. A fifth firearm was also recovered. The firearm, a SCCY CPX-Z 9mm, contained nine rounds of ammunition in the magazine and one round in the chamber.

In late February officers from District A-7’s station recovered a stolen AK-47 assault rifle from an apartment on Havre Street.

The 30-year-old man from Eastie, who was not immediately identified by police, was placed in custody after responding to a call for shots fired in the area of 186 Havre St.

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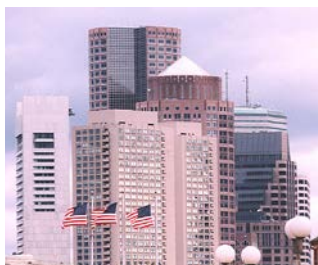
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HAPPY EASTER

GUEST OP-ED

Goodbye and thank you, Boston

By Former Mayor Martin J. Walsh

I left Boston City Hall for the final time as mayor. I packed up the last of the photos on my desk, say goodnight to the security guards as I've done a thousand times before, and head home to Dorchester.

It's been almost three months since I got the call from President Biden asking me to serve as secretary of labor, and the truth is I haven't had much time to reflect. My team and I have continued working around the clock on the response to COVID-19 and coordinating with the incoming administration to make sure city operations continue seamlessly. But now the Senate has confirmed my nomination, and a new team of leaders, both new and familiar faces, will take the reins at City Hall. All that's left to do now is to say goodbye and thank you.

I've been thinking about my mother, Mary, and my late father, John, who met in Boston after each immigrated from Ireland. They worked their entire adult lives to make a good life for my brother, Johnny, and me. They found friendship and solidarity among our neighbors in Dorchester, at St. Margaret's Church, in the immigrant community, and in the labor community. And it was community that helped me survive childhood cancer and get into recovery for alcoholism as a young adult.

Boston taught me at a young age that a supportive community is the greatest blessing, and serving that community is both a responsibility and a privilege. That's why I decided to run for mayor in 2013. After representing Dorchester for 16 years in the State House, and winning victories for marriage equality, LGBTQ rights, women's rights, disability rights, and immigrant rights, I knew that change was possible. I wanted to play a bigger role in making the American Dream a reality for more of my fellow Bostonians.

That's what we've done, together, as a city.

We created 140,000 new, good-paying jobs, fought for workers' rights,

and built more pathways into the middle class. We invested more in public education than at any time in Boston's history. We built record numbers of affordable homes. We fought the stigma around substance use disorder and got more people into treatment. We invested millions of dollars in arts and culture. We've risen as a national leader in environmental justice and women's pay equity.

Over the last four years, especially, Boston has shown what we stand for. As the Trump administration launched attacks on immigrants, Muslims, and women, Boston made it clear that we reject racism, xenophobia, sexism, and bigotry. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Boston has rallied to support people in need and put public health first. And responding to calls for racial justice, Boston took action through powerful community investments, police reform, and cultural change. For all of this, I am tremendously proud and grateful.

If the last four years have taught us anything, it's that we cannot be passive observers of history. We must never take for granted public health, human rights, and our very democracy. Unless we fight for these principles, we could lose them.

Now is the time to invest in community health and well-being. We must address the inequities that made some people more vulnerable to the health risks and the economic devastation of COVID-19. This is the only way to emerge from this crisis stronger than we were before.

We also need to increase civic engagement in all levels of government and decision-making. This past November, we saw record voter turnout, but those numbers should be higher. We need to end voter suppression and show people why their votes matter. And voting is only one piece of the puzzle.

Now is the time for everyone to consider how they can best serve their community and their na-

tion, all year round. That doesn't have to mean running for office necessarily; you can make just as much of an impact on your community by reaching out to your neighbor when they need it most, attending a community meeting to offer a fresh perspective, or becoming a positive influence on a young person's life. Our nation needs more people from more backgrounds to share their ideas and their creativity as we work to build back better.

This is a commitment I will carry with me as secretary of labor. As I fight for the rights, protections, and dignity that all working people deserve, I will seek input from people of all backgrounds. I will continually work to become a better and more collaborative leader. I will also bring Boston's values with me. I'll fight for immigrants, for people struggling with addiction, and for young Americans who dream of a better future.

I may be heading to Washington, D.C., but Boston will always be my home, and my heart. I'll be back often, but for now, I'll just share some advice.

To all of Boston's emerging leaders: In every decision you make, think about the impact it will have on the next generation, 10, 20, and 30 years from now. Always put the needs of the most vulnerable people first. Always ask yourself and other people in power, "Does this help everyone, or just the few?" And fight until the answer is everyone. Lifting up working people, and creating better opportunities for those who have the least, is the best way to create positive change. It will be hard; you'll have to make very difficult decisions, and own the outcome, good or bad. A true leader learns, grows, and becomes more connected to the community they represent as time goes on.

To the young people of Boston: I honestly believe there is no limit to what your generation can achieve. I have learned so much from conversations I've had with young students about racial justice,



Former Mayor of Boston
Martin J. Walsh.

climate action, LGBTQ rights, workers' rights, and more. You have helped me grow as a leader and as a member of the community. You are the most passionate generation I've ever seen, and you're challenging old notions of identity and societal roles. You have the power to change the world for the better. Focus on your education; trust your ability to make a difference; and be kind to yourself if you make mistakes or if life doesn't go according to plan. I'm proof that there are many paths to success. Don't let anyone tell you different.

Despite how difficult the past year has been, it also showed us how fast things can change, for better or for worse. Right now, we have an opportunity to enact swift, powerful, and positive change. The more people who are empowered to contribute, the more successful our recovery from COVID-19 will be. So this is my call to all Bostonians to consider how you will get involved in your community. Just as important, think about how you will encourage and empower others to get involved too. You can make a difference, so don't hesitate. Just take it one day at a time.

The challenges before us at a national level are enormous. But Boston has taught me that nothing is impossible if we work together and open the door for more people to get involved.

From the bottom of my heart, Boston, thank you.

Martin J. Walsh is the former Mayor of Boston and the new U.S. Secretary of Labor.

Your opinions, please

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Our fax number is **781-485-1403**.

Letters may also be e-mailed to editor@eastietimes.com. Letters must be signed. We reserve the right to edit for length and content.

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Weekly COVID positive test rate increases in Eastie

By John Lynds

With the Biden Administration and the CDC warning about a fourth wave of COVID 19 infections the weekly positive test rate in East Boston spiked 16 percent last Friday.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), last week, 1,755 Eastie residents were tested for the virus last week and 5 percent were positive--a 16 percent increase from the 4.3 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Of the 37,087 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.

Positive test rates were also on the rise citywide. According to the BPHC, 25,845 residents were tested and 4.2 percent were COVID positive--this was a 16.6 percent increase

from the 3.6 percent positive test rate reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Acting Mayor Kim Janey, the Boston Public Health Commission and the Office of Health and Human Services announced the Vaccine Equity Grant Initiative last week that will target communities hit hard by the pandemic like Eastie.

Janey said the program provides funding to non-profit organizations working to increase vaccine access and awareness for communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant applications will open Wednesday, March 31, 2021 and the deadline to apply is April 9, 2021. With a total of \$1.5 million in available funding, grant awards will range from \$100,000 to \$250,000 to be used by organizations over four months.

“Since the beginning of the pandemic, we’ve known that certain neighborhoods and communities have been dispro-

portionately impacted by COVID-19,” said Janey. “Creating this grant initiative will fund organizations closest to the individuals most affected, helping the City respond on a local, community-based level. I look forward to working with the grantees to further our efforts in vaccinating our more vulnerable communities.”

Applicants will develop strategies to target equitable vaccine access in specific ethnic communities, Boston neighborhoods, and other groups experiencing higher rates of COVID-19 positivity. Applications should also target outreach for communities facing barriers in obtaining the vaccine. These include Black/African American, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and immigrant communities; persons with disabilities; individuals over the age of 65; and the neighborhoods of East Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park, Roslindale and Chinatown, where positiv-

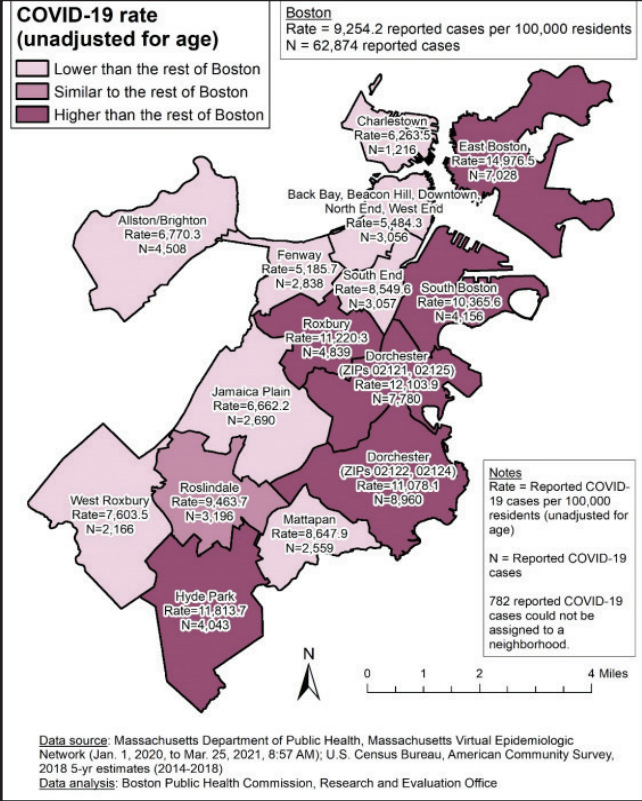
ity rates have consistently been higher and vaccination rates have been lower than the citywide average.

“In Boston, we are committed to continuing to prioritize local access and equitable planning when developing strategies to bring the COVID-19 vaccine to all of our residents,” said Chief of Health and Human Services Marty Martinez. “The grant program will build on our community partnerships and help ensure every Bostonian who is eligible has the necessary support needed to get vaccinated.”

Eastie’s COVID infection rate increased by only 1.4 percent last week and went from 1,477.4 cases per 10,000 residents to 1,498.6 cases per 10,000 residents.

An additional 95 Eastie residents contracted the virus and there are now 7,028 confirmed cases, up from the 6,933 reported two weeks ago.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report



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

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 2.5 percent last week and

went from 62,170 cases to 63,748 confirmed cases in a week. Fourteen additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,341 total deaths in the city from COVID.

APRIL 2021 HARBOR VIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING AGENDA

The next meeting of the Harbor View Neighborhood Association, (HVNA), will be on April 5, at 6 pm. Please note this meeting will be presented in English and Spanish for our Harbor View residents. The meeting will be on Zoom. Please check the website (harborvieweast-boston.com) for instructions to participate by video or telephone. HVNA will continue to stream the meeting via facebook live as well as Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/groups/harborview-na.

Agenda
Welcome/Introduction (5min)

Announcements (5min)
Love Your Block, McLean Park

Boston Police Station 7 Update Officer Dan Simons (10min)

177 Coleridge Street 2nd Presentation and VOTE. Gerry DiPierro, contractor for homeowner, Eric Nelson. Proposal to add a private roof deck (20x30) via a spiral staircase at the end of the building. Unit #2 will have exclusive access. (10min)

117 Coleridge Street 1st Presentation. David Choi, Architect for owner Jorge Betancur. Proposal to expand the rear porches and construct new side porches. Also to renovate the existing finished basement, legalize it and change occupancy from 3 to 4 Units. (20min)

119-121 Addison Street 1st Presentation and VOTE. Attorney Richard Lynds for owners. This building was constructed as of right and for Executive Suites. The proposal is to change the use to Residential which is forbidden in an Economic Development Area (EDA). (20min)

Legislative Update: Representative Adrian Madaro and Senator Joseph Boncore will brief us on the bills filed and actions taken on our behalf in the past and current year. Q&A to follow. (60min)

Next month look forward to Harbor Keepers Magdalena Ayed: Vision

Chelsea Creek and Jewish Cemetery Association update.

Our next meeting will be on May 3, 2021

Visit us at http://www.facebook.com/groups/harborviewna.

MENDEZ ON DEAN'S LIST AT LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

Norberto Mendez of East Boston was named to the Dean’s List at Lehigh University in the Fall 2020 semester.

Dean’s List status, which is awarded to students who earned a scholastic average of 3.6 or better while carrying at least 12 hours of regularly graded courses, has been granted to Norberto Mendez of Boston, MA in the Fall 2020 semester.

For more than 150 years, Lehigh University (lehigh.edu) has combined outstanding academic and learning opportunities with leadership in fostering innovative research. The institution is among the nation’s most selective, highly ranked private research universities. Lehigh’s five colleges - College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education, College of Health, and the P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science - provides opportunities to 7,000+ students to discover and grow in an academically rigorous environment along with a supportive, engaged campus community.

ABCD AND THE GREATER BOSTON FOOD BANK ANNOUNCE A JOINT INITIATIVE

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD) and The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) jointly announced a groundbreaking \$2 million initiative, designed to provide thousands of families affected by COVID-19 with more fresh fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious perishable foods. As experts in the field have noted, the demand for emergency

demic. With support from the federal CARES Act (Coronavirus AID, Relief, and Economic Security Act), ABCD will work with GBFB to fund 2.5 million pounds of fresh foods to communities in need through local food pantries, which are affiliated with GBFB. Approximately 260,000 individuals across Greater Boston will benefit over the next six months.

ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew and GBFB CEO Catherine D’Amato noted that this innovation builds on decades of partnership between the two organizations, each with deep, grassroots, community collaborations. In February, GBFB served over 172,000 households with over 2.4 million pounds of food throughout its food pantry network, which includes 8 ABCD sites. Over the past year, ABCD provided more than 100,000 households with a wide range of services designed to fight the current emergency, and to equip families with tools to thrive in the future.

“Our doors have been open. We’ve been providing food, diapers, rental assistance, fuel assistance and other emergency help from day one of the pandemic. By expanding this important partnership, the Fresh Foods project will keep hungry people healthier during an already difficult time,” said John J. Drew, ABCD President/CEO. “The need is urgent and our ability to help is immediate.”

“Partnerships are key in the work to end hunger in our communities, and ABCD has been one partner that is essential in GBFB’s COVID-19 response,” said Catherine D’Amato, president and CEO, The Greater Boston Food Bank. “Beyond partnering since 1989 as a pantry food distributor in the Greater Boston area, they have stepped up to provide critical funding to enable GBFB to distribute healthy and nutritious food for all partners in this region during this challenging pandemic.”

The response from communities has been enthusiastic. “ABCD has been a critical partner in keeping folks in Malden, and across the region, housed,

fed, and safe throughout the pandemic and long before,” said Representative Steven Ultrino (D – Malden) “I’m incredibly excited about this new collaboration between ABCD and The Greater Boston Food Bank, and look forward to continuing our work with them to ensure that every member of our community can keep food on the table for themselves and their families.”

ABCD and GBFB will also work together to identify barriers to better nutrition for low-income families. Both GBFB and ABCD are committed to seeking durable systems change which will enhance the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the resources struggling families rely on.

“Our families were letting us know that finding food and supplies was becoming more difficult in the grocery stores as COVID got worse,” said Jenny Sugilio, Acting Director at ABCD Parker Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Service Center. “We had to do something about it! No one should be allowed to go hungry.

GOLDBERG'S OFFICE AWARDS OVER \$1.8 MILLION IN VETERAN BONUSES

The State Treasurer’s Veterans’ Bonus Division is pleased to announce that in 2020 they processed nearly 4,000 bonuses and awarded \$1,850,451 in benefits to Veterans across Massachusetts. In addition, the division oversaw the creation of a new COVID-19 Bonus for Massachusetts National Guard members, activated in response to the state of emergency declared by the governor on March 10th, 2020. This initiative paid out \$838,000 to over 1,500 service members beginning in November.

“In 2019, our team successfully transitioned the Welcome Home bonus to an online platform, which allowed us to successfully manage the increased number of applications during the pandemic,” said State Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg. “Our servicemembers selflessly give so much to others that we wanted to

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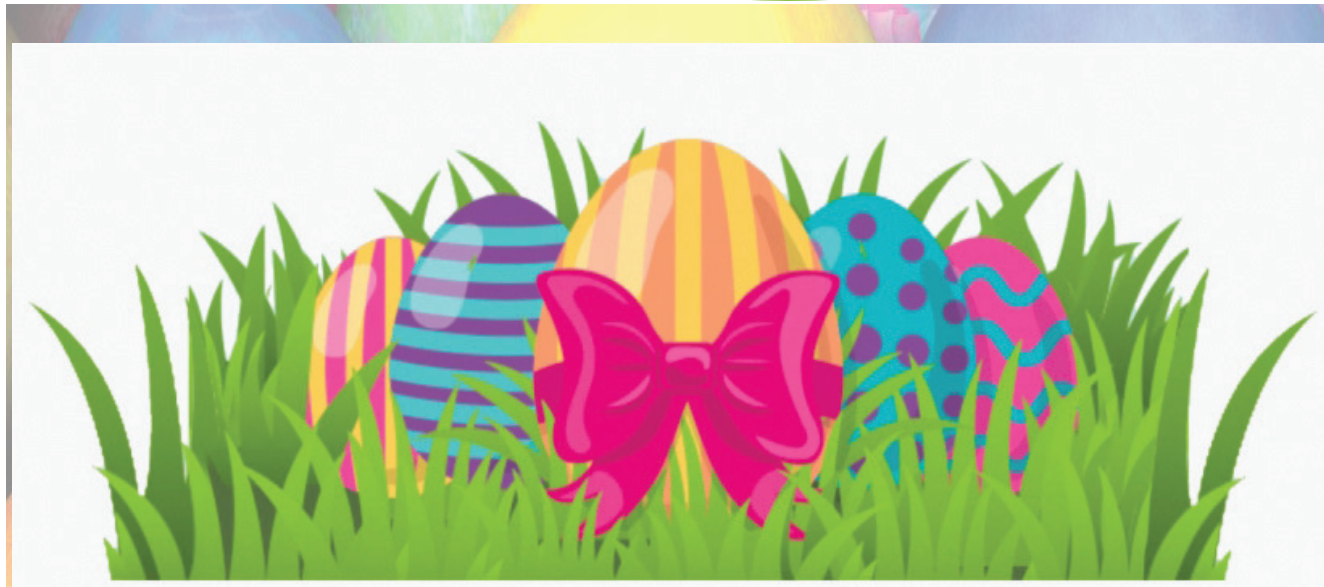


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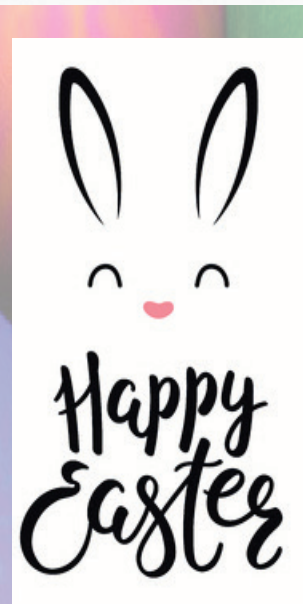
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Rally // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fecting students, faculty, and staff. In addition, our teachers, bus drivers, custodians, and families haven't been vaccinated and the governor made this decision without including the voices of BIPOC communities and working families who are disproportionately impacted by Covid-19. We don't know why he is rushing to open schools and putting our lives at risk when the covid injection is now spiking again. To us, equity means giving us a seat at the table, prioritizing, and investing in our community because East Boston is not Wellesley and the same model won't for us."

The coalition said parents and families in Boston overwhelmingly prefer to keep their children home and safe via the two learning model options currently available to families--hybrid or remote.

At the March 23, Boston School Committee meeting Boston Public School Superintendent Brenda Cassellius said 80 percent of BPS families do not intend to switch to a new model during a recent family choice survey conducted by BPS.

With less than a third of the school year remaining Riley has made moves to mandate children back into school buildings. Riley himself conceded that the April 5, 2021 return to full in-person learning was too hasty in Boston and granted BPS a waiver to his own mandate--allowing BPS K-8 schools to open fully on April 26, 2021.

This BIPOC Coalition is calling to have a seat at the table every time a policy decision is made that impacts their children. The inequities of the school full opening process have reached a

critical tipping point, posing a danger to many communities, families and many other stakeholders who have likewise been outright excluded or only peripherally consulted in with respect to full opening of schools, including our teachers, bus drivers, school custodians, nurses, and other direct service providers to students. The Boston Teachers Union, school bus drivers' union USW Local 8751, and other community organizations have endorsed this BIPOC Parent Coalition.

These parents collectively demand the following from DESE:

- Schools are granted the autonomy to continue offering hybrid learning models this school year
- All stakeholders who are eligible and choose to get vaccinated are made priority, including children ages 12 plus
- MCAS must be can-



A coalition of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) parents will hold a rally at the State House Saturday to denounce the Massachusetts Department of Education's exclusion of parent and family voices from full school opening policy-making.

celed for this school year

- Investment is made in high-efficiency HVAC systems in all school facilities and free/clear cleaning at every school to

prevent the exacerbation of certain medical conditions, including asthma and eczema, affecting students, faculty, and staff in those buildings

- Allow families to remain fully remote for the school year 2021-22 if they choose.

Climate legislation passes with Madaro's important environmental justice amendment

By John Lynds

The House recently passed landmark climate legislation that includes Rep. Adrian Madaro's amendment on environmental justice.

The nation-leading climate legislation, known as the Next Generation Climate Roadmap bill, which overhauls the state's climate laws, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, advances the clean energy

industry, and prioritizes and protects environmental justice communities.

Madaro's amendment will once and for all set criteria of what defines an environmental justice community based on race, income, and language-proficiency criteria. Madaro's amendment will give community members a much more meaningful role in the decision-making process about new projects that impact the

environment and quality of life for thousands living here.

One key point of Rep. Madaro's amendment is something called cumulative impact rule. The cumulative impact rule must take into consideration environmental impacts new projects may have when weighted cumulatively with past projects that bear environmental burdens on Eastie and other Environmental Justice

Communities.

Madaro pointed to Logan Airport growth and expansion and how many environmental impact statements from Massport are weighed apart from past projects that are already causing a burden environmentally.

"For the first time in Massachusetts history, Environmental Justice (EJ) is now law," said Madaro. "Low-income communities and commu-

nities of color have borne a disproportionate burden of pollutants and environmental hazards for far too long, while being excluded from the decision-making process affecting their neighborhoods. This law is the first step in a long overdue process to ensure environmental equity and finally recognize environmental justice and EJ communities in Massachusetts. After a veto from Governor Baker at the end

of last session, the House and Senate worked quickly to get it on the Governor's desk again in the new legislative session, and I am excited that it has now been signed into law. I want to thank my fellow sponsors, co-sponsors, and the many grassroots activists of the Environmental Justice Table who worked so hard to get this done."

The bill now returns to the Governor's desk.

First in the Nation COVID-19 pooled testing initiative finds low positivity rate in schools

Staff Report

The Baker-Polito Administration announced that data collected from its statewide, first-in-the-nation pooled testing initiative in schools across the Commonwealth found low positivity rates – far less than one percent – among students and staff. The statewide testing program, funded entirely by the Commonwealth and available to every Massachusetts public school at no cost, was also extended through the school year.

Launched in February and the first program of its kind nationwide, Massachusetts schools have tested nearly 159,000 individuals in 22,679 pools with a pool positivity rate of 0.76 percent to date; because the average pool included 7 people, individual prevalence among those tested is well below that number. More than 1,000 schools are enrolled in the COVID-19 pooled testing initiative, and more than 329,000 students, educators and staff are eligible to be tested on a weekly

basis. Of the collected pooled tests, Massachusetts is not aware of any in which there was more than one positive individual, suggesting that there is extremely little evidence of in-school transmission of COVID-19 in Massachusetts.

The test is performed at least once per week on an anterior nasal swab and results are delivered within 24 hours. If a pooled test result is negative, then all individuals within that pool are presumed negative and may continue

to remain in school. If a pooled test result is positive, then everyone in the pool is given an individual diagnostic test. Once positive individuals are identified, they must follow isolation guidance. Students, teachers, and staff that were close contacts of the positive individual must quarantine according to current requirements.

According to a study conducted by the Rockefeller Foundation released in December 2020, community outbreak had not been traced

to an elementary school, with contact tracing studies concluding that children are almost never the source in infection clusters.

"Massachusetts' robust and ambitious program offering COVID-19 surveillance testing to all schools, charters, and special education collaboratives led the nation," said Governor Charlie Baker. "The science is clear that it is safe for kids to be in the classrooms, and this initiative has proved to serve as an invaluable tool for schools throughout the Commonwealth as they return to in-person learning."

With initial state funding set to expire on April 18, the Baker-Polito Administration also announced today that it will cover the costs of the COVID-19 pooled surveillance testing through the end of the school year, an effort made possible by additional federal funds specifically for COVID-19 testing, anticipated to total

approximately \$207 million for Massachusetts.

Additionally, the Administration also announced today that it will now cover the costs of COVID-19 testing at sites dedicated to early education providers. In January, the Administration partnered with private and philanthropic funders, including supporters from the Massachusetts Early Education Funder Collaborative and BayCoast Bank, to launch a pilot COVID-19 testing program dedicated to providing on-demand PCR testing to child care providers and the families they serve to ensure easy access to testing when there is suspected COVID-19 exposure. The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) set up nine rotating drive-through testing sites throughout the Commonwealth, which are only open only to child care providers and individuals affiliated with programs.

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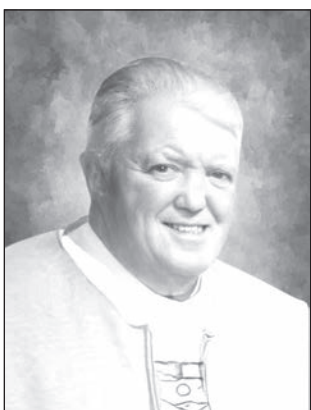
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OBITUARIES

James “Bro” Leary, Jr.

Lifelong East Boston resident

James G. “Bro” Leary Jr., 83, a lifelong East Boston resident, passed away on Friday, March 26 at home surrounded by his loving family. A U.S. Air Force veteran, he was the cherished son of the late Margaret (O’Brien) and James G. Leary Sr., the beloved husband of Brenda (Broussard) Leary; loving father of Jann Leary Goodwin, James G. “Jimbo” Leary III and Taimée Scarpa and her husband, Steven; adored grandfather of Teagen, Taiven and Treyson Scarpa and Jaelinn and Aidan Goodwin and caring brother of Ann Caristo, Maureen MacKay and the late Margaret Reynolds. He is also



survived by many loving nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, all services are private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in James’ name to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute by visiting www.dana-farber.org.

Please visit www.vaz-zafunerals.com to sign the guestbook.

Lisa Marie DeAngelico

Political activist, Orient Heights Precinct

Election Warden and FORCE peer counselor

Lisa Marie DeAngelico of East Boston passed away at home on March 24 surrounded by her family.

She was the loving daughter of Leonard and Paula (Crapo) DeAngelico and dear sister of Bobby DeAngelico, all of East Boston. She leaves behind beloved aunts, uncles and cousins as well.

Lisa lived her entire life in East Boston and leaves many friends. She loved local politics and enjoyed volunteering for East Boston candidates. She especially enjoyed serving as the Election Warden at the Orient Heights Precinct. She was an avid reader and made it her mission to learn everything she could about whatever happened to interest her. She valued education and held a BA from Simmons and MBA from Suffolk University.

Lisa learned all she could about the cancer she had and became an enthusiastic supporter of many outreach groups that offered help and support for



people with cancer. She became a Peer Counselor Volunteer at FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered. Donations can be made to FORCE (Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered) www.facingourrisk.org

Family and friends will honor Lisa’s life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street, East Boston for a memorial service on April 1 from 5 to 7 p.m. All services will be held in accordance with the Commonwealth of MA COVID-19 re-opening regulations. For more information, please visit www.ruggieromh.com.

Louis Torrone

Former owner of East Boston Times and thoroughbred Racehorse owner and trainer

Family and friends are invited to attend a Memorial Visitation on Saturday, April 3, from 12 noon to 3 p.m., in the Vertuccio & Smith, Home for Funerals, 773 Broadway (Rt. 107) Revere for Louis J. Torrone who died peacefully on Sunday, March 21 in his sleep at his Winthrop residence. He was 77 years old.

Interment will be held privately. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, all protocols are strictly enforced. All visitors must wear a face covering, maintain social distancing capacity limits in recognition of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the CDC and the City of Revere.

Louis was born and raised in Winthrop. He was a proud graduate of Winthrop High School, Class of 1961. He was a talented baseball player and catcher for the Winthrop Vikings. He was also a gifted musician as he loved playing the drums.

Louis worked alongside his father as Editor and Publisher at the East Boston Times, later succeeding his father in his retirement. Louis owned and operated the newspaper until he retired in 2004.

Louis was a well-known figure in East Boston and assisted in many fundraisers, organizations and high school sports. He was best known for all his fundraising efforts and support for the East Boston Columbus Day Parade for many years. Louis was a well-known and respected horse trainer along with



his brother, Richard and he owned and bred many prize-winning horses.

The beloved son of the late John Torrone and Blanche (Reppucci) Torrone, he was the dear brother of Barbara A. Pellegrino of Burlington, John A. Torrone and his wife, Virginia of Farmington Hills, MI and Richard G. “Dick” Torrone and his wife, Margaret D. “Marge” Torrone of Surfside Beach, SC and the cherished best friend of many years to Marie M. Matarese of Revere. He is also lovingly survived by several nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

In lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to The Central New England Equine Rescue, Inc. by visiting <https://central-newenglandequinerescue.com/>.

The staff of Vertuccio & Smith, Home for Funerals is most honored to have assisted the family in completing funeral arrangements. To send online condolences or for more information, please visit www.vertuccioand-smith.com.

Priscilla Stone

May 22, 1946 – March 25, 2021

Priscilla Stone of East Boston passed away peacefully on March 25 surrounded by her children: Eddie, Debbie, Rochelle and Felicia and her grandchildren: Anthony, Eddie, Feedle, Felicia and Luis and her two great children: Briella and Anthony Jr.

Her service will be held at Sacred Heart Church,



Brook Street, East Boston on April 17 at 11 a.m.

Mass. unemployment estimates for February are down

The state’s February total unemployment rate is down 0.7 percentage points at 7.1 percent, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development announced Friday.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics’ preliminary job estimates indicate Massachusetts gained 14,100 jobs in February. This follows last month’s revised gain of 37,900 jobs. Over the month, the private sector added 22,300 jobs as gains occurred across all sectors, led by Leisure and Hospitality and Professional, Scientific, and Business Services.

From February 2020 to February 2021, BLS estimates Massachusetts lost 325,100 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 30.1 percent of the jobs lost; Other Services, with 19.0 percent of the jobs lost; and Education and Health Services, with 8.9 percent of the jobs lost.

The February unemployment rate was 0.9 percentage points higher than the national rate of 6.2 percent reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The labor force dropped by 11,900 from 3,756,700 in January, as 15,700 more residents were employed and 27,600 fewer residents were unemployed over the month.

Over the year, the state’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was up by 4.3 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 – was down two-tenths of a percentage point at 66.3 percent. Compared to February 2020, the labor force participation rate is down one-tenth of a percentage point.

February 2021 Employment Overview

Leisure and Hospitality gained 10,300 (+4.0%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Leisure and Hospitality lost 115,500 (-30.1%) jobs.

Professional, Scientific and Business Services gained 9,400 (+1.6%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Professional, Scientific and Business Services lost 14,800 (-2.4%) jobs.

Trade, Transportation and Utilities gained 2,000 (+0.4%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Trade, Transportation and Utilities lost 24,800 (-4.3%) jobs.

Education and Health Services gained 1,300 (+0.2%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Education and Health Services lost 74,000 (-8.9%) jobs.

Manufacturing gained 1,200 (+0.5%) jobs over

the month. Over the year, Manufacturing lost -13,400 (-5.5%) jobs.

Financial Activities gained 800 (+0.4%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Financial Activities lost 3,500 (-1.6%) jobs.

Other Services had no over the month change in employment. Over the year, Other Services are down -26,900 (-19.0%) jobs.

Information lost 300 (-0.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Information lost 6,900 (-7.3%) jobs.

Construction lost 2,300 (-1.4%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Construction has lost 5,100 (-3.1%) jobs.

Government lost 8,200 (-1.9%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Government lost 40,200 (-8.7%) jobs.

Labor Force Overview

The February estimates show 3,477,700 Massachusetts residents were employed and 267,100 were unemployed, for a total labor force of 3,744,800. The unemployment rate dropped seven-tenths of a percentage point over the month. The February labor force decreased by 11,900 from 3,744,800 in January, as 15,700 more residents were employed and 27,600 fewer residents were unemployed over the month. The labor force participation rate, the share of working age population employed and unemployed, dropped two-tenths of a percentage point at 66.3 percent. The labor force was down 2,400 from the 3,747,200 February 2020 estimate, with 164,900 fewer residents employed and 162,500 more residents unemployed.

The unemployment rate is based on a monthly sample of households. The job estimates are derived from a monthly sample survey of employers. As a result, the two statistics may exhibit different monthly trends.

NOTES: The labor force is the sum of the numbers of employed residents and those unemployed, that is residents not working but actively seeking work in the last four weeks. Estimates may not add up to the total labor force due to rounding. For further information on seasonal adjustment methodology, please refer to the Bureau of Labor Statistics website <https://www.bls.gov>.

Local area unemployment statistics for February 2021 will be released on Tuesday, March 30, 2021. The preliminary March 2021 and revised February 2021 unemployment rate, labor force and job estimates for Massachusetts will be released on Friday, April 16, 2021. See the 2021 Media Advisory for complete list of release dates.

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

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

STUDENTS TO RETURN TO CLASS

CHELSEA - The School Committee voted unanimously on Thursday night, March 18, to approve a plan that will return general education students in the youngest grades back to the classroom five days a week on April 12.

The vote was unanimous amongst the Committee, though many were disappointed as they felt their hands were forced by state Education Secretary Jeff Riley's decision to require districts to re-open.

Nevertheless, after Chelsea Public Schools (CPS) celebrated one full year of remote learning on March 13, they also pivoted to adopt a plan that will have students who wish to return be in school five days a week every day.

"On Friday, March 5, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education met and voted to adopt a recommendation giving Commissioner Riley the authority to return Elementary students to full-time, in-person school on April 5, 2021 and April 28, 2021 for students in grades 5-8," said Supt. Almi Abeyta. "Therefore, we are skipping hybrid learning and going straight to in-person learning. This means that students who return to in-person learning will be in school five days a week every day. Thus, I am pleased to announce our timeline for in-person learning."

The plan also continues to offer a rigorous remote learning plan as well, known as the On-line Learning Academy (OLA). Any parent who does not want to have their students return to the classroom can choose to remain online for the rest of the school term.

School Committee Chair Kelly Garcia said she was glad Chelsea was offering options to parents before the year ended.

"I'm excited we're offering parent choice in this decision," she said. "I want to emphasize that because some of our families aren't comfortable

sending their child or child-back to school buildings...While I'm excited we are finally opening our schools, I am equally excited about offering remote learning to students who are being successful in that model. This is a great first step for Chelsea because we are the hardest hit community by COVID and so this is a big step for us."

School Committeeman Roberto Jimenez said the plan is the only option they have given the heavy hand of the state Education Commissioner.

"I support our current plan not because I think it's the best option, but because it's the only option DESE has left us with," he said. "I'm outraged at the anti-democratic power grab the state Board of Education just passed, taking away our School Committee's power to make decisions for our community in order to push Charlie Baker's political propaganda. We've seen the risks of full reopening from other communities, including the Governor's own town of Swampscott, which just had to shut down schools after a massive outbreak. DESE has made this whole process more difficult for us every step of the way, and I have no confidence in their ability to prioritize the well-being of our students. It's shameful that this is where we are. Our students and staff deserve better. Chelsea deserves better."

In the most recent surveys, about 57 percent of parents would like to send their children back to school in-person five days a week, while another 43 percent said they wanted to remain remote. That is an ideal number for a return, school officials said, as there isn't space under COVID protocols to house large numbers of students in the buildings at a three-foot distance. However, if between 50 and 70 percent wish to return, that can be accommodated much easier.

The timeline for return

is as follows:

- CPS students in Special Education Sub-Separate classes and the Chelsea Opportunity Academy students will return to full-time, in-person learning on Monday, April 5, 2021.
- Students in grades K-4 will return to in-person learning on Monday, April 12, 2021.
- Middle school students, grades 5- 8, will return to in-person learning on Wednesday, April 28, 2021.

- English language learners at levels 1 and 2 in grades 9-12 will return to in-person learning on Wednesday, April 28, 2021.
- Plans are in the works to increase in-person learning opportunities for high school students.

Garcia added that the Committee has made a decision that uniforms this year will be optional, and parents do not need to spend their last dollar to get uniforms for students.

"We have many families that lost their homes or their jobs during the pandemic," she said. "I've had families wanting to spend their last dollar on uniforms. We don't want that. Many of our families are still struggling."

SEEKING TO EXPAND VOTING RIGHTS

CHELSEA - A group of young adults and high school students are calling on members of the City Council to insert a provision into the revised City Charter that would allow for certain non-citizens to be able to vote in municipal elections.

Led by Manuel Teshe, the former Chelsea High graduate known a few years ago for fighting to get graduation outdoors at the Stadium, the group of young people said they had petitioned the Charter Review Commission to include the voting provision in its recommendations.

The Commission did not agree to do that, and after more than one year

of work on the Charter Review, submitted their recommendations Monday night to the City Council for review. Those recommendations will be reviewed at length by the Council in a Committee on Conference, and the Council can adopt the recommendations and it can also add to them.

The Charter is reviewed every 10 years, so making such a fundamental change would be now or never.

Teshe, Chelsea High students Richard Flores and Jazmin Jovel appeared during the Council's Public Speaking portion on Monday night to advocate for the insertion. They said they would ask that the Council seriously consider allowing those with Permanent Resident cards (Green Cards), those on visas and those with work permits the right to vote in Chelsea municipal elections.

"I'm here to ask you to take this seriously," said Teshe. "We are talking about a Civil Rights issue. We are talking about a voting rights issue...It goes like this, I don't care if you've spent 20, 30, 40 or 50 years in this community, if you were not born here, you cannot vote here...You can spend your entire life here and if you weren't born on this side of the border, you can't vote."

"Non-citizens will get the right to vote in this City and our neighboring cities soon," he continued. "The question is only a matter of time. Join me on the right side of history with this issue."

Teshe added that many rebut the argument by saying people should get their citizenship. He said he did just that, and it is a time-consuming and expensive process that not everyone can embark on.

Said Jovel, "Many of the essential workers that keep this city so orderly do not get a chance to say what happens in their own community."

Flores, who will be attending Harvard University next year, said it is time to stop this injustice, and asked the Council to insert this provision in its final Charter vote.

"Let's not wait for the state to fix this injustice; let's be the leaders," he said. "There are business owners in this city who live here as well and do not get to vote. Why? They don't have the accurate paperwork."

GAUTHIER TO SUE OVER AGE DISCRIMINATION

EVERETT - After a rocky ending with former Supt. Janice Gauthier in the Everett Public Schools (EPS) in 2019 and 2020,



Teacher Veronica Medina shows off a sticker proclaiming she had been vaccinated during one of the district's school staff and educator vaccination clinics over the past two weeks. Chelsea Public Schools staff and teachers are preparing to return to school next month on a five-day a week schedule.

the long-time former Everett educator has now filed a discrimination suit in Middlesex Superior Court claiming the City and the School Committee used her age against her in not considering her application to be the new superintendent in 2019.

After former Supt. Fred Foresteire abruptly resigned in 2019 following allegations of sexual misconduct – allegations that are still alive in a criminal case – Gauthier, now 70, took the reins as Interim Supt. and hoped to be considered for the full-time position during that year's Search Committee process. However, in her suit, she claimed that despite putting in an application and serving for decades in the Everett Public Schools – including during the tumultuous interim process – she was not considered at all.

Her 28-point suit, filed on March 10 and put on a fast track in Civil Court, alleged she was lumped in with the allegations against Foresteire and was discriminated against due to her age during that Search Committee process.

"As a result of these infractions, and as a result of the concerted conspiratorial relationship which existed in the newly constituted School Committee for the City of Everett and the Executive Offices of the City of Everett School Committee, the Plaintiff's Constitutional Rights have been violated, she has been the subject of Age Discrimination, has been deprived of Equal Protection under the United States Constitution and the Massachusetts Bill of Rights, and has sustained Damages, including

Costs, Loss of Employment, Gainful Employment, Professional Advancement and has been compelled to deal with the false and malicious innuendos created by her predecessor which have been linked to her in a malicious fashion in order to exclude her from selection in the selection process of the determination of the successor Superintendent of Schools for the City of Everett," read one of the points in her lawsuit.

The suit asked for judgements on four counts laid out in the suit, with interests and costs on the first three counts. It requests a potential jury trial in Civil Court for the Constitutional discrimination suit detailed in Count 5.

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia acknowledged the City has received the suit, but that they – as a practice – do not and cannot comment on personnel matters.

School Committee Chair Frank Parker, who was named in the suit along with several other members of the Committee, said it was best not to comment on pending litigation.

"I appreciate the call to comment on this, but I have a sworn duty and obligation to protect the City of Everett and the students of Everett Public Schools and in this case, the best comment is no comment," he said.

Gauthier's attorney, David Fulmer, did not return a call from the Independent in time to comment on the case or its merits.

Gauthier's suit also claims reverse racial discrimination as well, and also indicates that she was

See REGION Page 11

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Probate And Family Court
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF CONSERVATOR OR OTHER PROTECTIVE ORDER PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, § 5-304 & § 5-405
Docket No. SU21P0501PM
In the matter of: Najib Saib

Of: East Boston, MA
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Massachusetts General Hospital of Boston, MA and Miriam Saib of Quincy, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Najib Saib is in need of a Conservator or other protective order and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Conservator to serve Without Surety on the bond.
The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is disabled, that a protective order or appointment of a Conservator is necessary, and that the proposed conservator is appropriate. The petition is on file with

this court.
You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 04/19/2021. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.
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Region

// CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

told she could assume her old job as Curriculum Director. However, her suit relays that the position had been filled by someone with lesser academic and professional qualifications by the time a new superintendent was picked.

“The acts and practices engaged in by the City of Everett were confirmation of Age Discrimination and Reverse Discrimination, in that, by virtue of the fact that the Plaintiff is a Caucasian, she was not amongst those considered in the final process of evaluation and selection for the position of Superintendent of Schools, and as a result of the unpredictable and reversal of behavior of the conduct engaged in by the City of Everett and the City of Everett’s School Committee in its utter failure to consider her favorably for the position of Superintendent, following her having successfully discharged her duties in that position for a period of in excess of 15 months, prior to consideration and while eliminating her job by reposting and filling her prior position as Director of Curriculum Development with an individual of lessor academic and professional qualifications was and is a violation of the Plaintiff’s Civil Rights and a right to Equal Protection under the law....,” read the suit.

The suit is also loaded with language about the conduct of the former superintendent, Fred Forestiere, and indicates School Committee members and City officials successfully lumped her in with that alleged behavior.

“By reason of the unlawful, wrongful, and improper association of the Plaintiff with the prior Superintendent, and by virtue of the School Committee’s maligning of her character by association of the sexual predator who served as Superintendent before her, the Defendant Everett School Committee barred her from resuming her position as Director of Curriculum Development,” the suit read.

The suit indicated that since the time of not being

considered for the superintendent job, Gauthier “has been humiliated and has suffered great pain, and has endured great mental suffering, and has been otherwise Damaged.”

The Counts in the suit include (Count 1) Breach of Contract; (Count 2) Malicious Interference with Contractual Relations; (Count 3) Breach of the Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing; and (Count 4) Violations of Plaintiff’s Constitutional Rights Under the Massachusetts Bill of Rights and Under the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution and Violations Against U.S. Codes.

MATEWSKY SUFFERS HEART ATTACK

EVERETT - News traveled fast from Florida to Everett as Council President Wayne Matewsky reported had a major heart attack on March 18, and has been hospitalized at Holy Cross Hospital in Ft. Lauderdale ever since.

The news was talked about intently throughout the City all weekend, and was officially announced Monday night at the City Council meeting – where a somber group of colleagues wished Matewsky the best as he fought for his life.

“As most all of us know by now, Council President Matewsky did suffer a heart attack last week so we are keeping him in our prayers and asking for a quick recovery,” said Councilor Anthony DiPierro at the outset of Monday’s meeting.

Matewksy was appar-

ently visiting friends in Florida when he was hit with a massive heart attack that put him in the hospital immediately.

Reports from City officials over the weekend were grim, and Matewsky was fighting for his life. However, there was some good news by Tuesday when it appeared he might have made some progress in his condition.

The family has asked that everyone keep Council President Matewsky in their prayers for a recovery.

SATTERWHITE ENTERS MAYOR’S RACE

LYNN - Following is Michael Satterwhite’s announcement of his candidacy for Mayor of Lynn:

Attorney Michael A. Satterwhite has announced his run for Mayor of Lynn. Michael is a native of Lynn and has served on the School Committee for the past four years. From East Lynn to West Lynn, from Curwin Circle to the Highlands, from Lynnfield Street to Union Street, he has been there for it all the last three decades.

Michael grew up in the Lynn Public Schools system, going to seven different schools in our City. He has gone from renter to homeowner in our City. He has gone from employee to business owner in our City. From the Black Picnic’s roasted pig to St. Patrick’s Day corned beef and cabbage, he has celebrated all over our City. From working his first job at McDonald’s to becoming a Lawyer, he has grown in our City. From growing up watching the

Lynn Park Softball Women’s League to enjoying the Softball tournaments at the Dominican Festival.

Michael’s history has been here in Lynn. Struggling alongside you, educating alongside you. Michael has always been your ally, he has always been your neighbor, he has always been your friend, your classmate and fellow citizen. Now he wants to represent you. Be your voice, be our voice.

Embracing multiculturalism is a step in the right direction for every citizen. However, leading a City as diverse as Lynn, requires a leader who has lived in it and experienced it. His purpose here is to

connect with our Community, doing so honestly, frequently and transparently.

Michael said “I have the background, knowledge and experience with:

- Working to strengthen our safe, happy and healthy families with affordable housing, improving public safety and establishing community programs;
- Working to strengthen our day care and after school programs;
- Working to strengthen our business community;
- Working to strengthen our youth with opportunities and our public education system with equitable funding;

• Working to strengthen our seniors with access throughout our city and to affordable housing units;

• Working to strengthen the health and wellness of our community;

• Working to enhance our arts and cultural communities;

• Working to improve our homelessness and food insecurity problems;

• Working to improve our race relation problems through diversity and inclusion within our city government and school systems.

I will work for you. It sounds simple, but that truly is the first requirement of any elected position.”

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Recovery // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

day nights. There'll be a parent support group on Monday nights. So there's just all kinds of stuff like that and then we'll see what the community and what the members want."

Local business owner and leader in the recovery community Joe Ruggiero III will be hosting meetings in the space on Tuesday nights.

"Recovery on the Harbor is a fantastic resource for people in every phase of recovery from substance use disorder," said Ruggiero. "Its leadership team is committed to the community, to helping people recover and connecting people. I wholeheartedly welcome them into the Orient Heights business community."

There were some earlier misconceptions over exactly what sort of programs would be offered at Recovery on the Harbor when NSMHA announced it was moving into the space on Bennington Street. Some residents on social media spread rumors the space would be anything from an addiction treatment facility to a methadone clinic.

O'Leary said the space is not a hangout and not a place that someone can come to if they're getting high. If somebody comes in and needs treatment then NSMHA can assist them and help them find treatment but that's not what Recovery on the Harbor is designed for. It is really designed to strengthen and enhance the recovery community. Everybody that works there has some form of lived experience with alcohol or addiction.

"Congratulations to North Suffolk Mental Health Association on the opening of their newest venture, Recovery on the Harbor," said Rep. Adrian Madaro. "This program will be a critical resource for our community, providing access to a wide array of services for those in recovery."

Sen. Joe Boncore added it's critically important that services and support for those experiencing substance use disorders become more available,



Jack Kelly and Kim Hanton



Bob O'Leary, Katie O'Leary, and Donna O'Leary



Kim Hanton, Kathy Curley, and Katie O'Leary



Alisha Cohen, volunteer coordinator, Brian Goodman from Recovery Centers of America, and Katie O'Leary, Director of Recovery Support Services



Audrey Clairmont, Director of Addiction Services North Suffolk Mental Health, James Pelton, and Katie O'Leary, Director of Recovery Support Services

visible, and accessible in our communities.

"North Suffolk Mental Health Association's new Recovery on the Harbor will provide all pathways

to recovery for the East Boston community," he said.

City Councilor Lydia Edwards said she loved the concept.

"I love Recovery on the Harbor and it is exactly what we need," said Edwards. "We need a special space the community that is uniquely bonded with this particular issue. I think it's beautiful. I'm proud of them. I look forward to working with them and I look forward to helping in any way I can."

Recovery on the Harbor percolated up from several stakeholders that work with the addiction community and programs that help addicts to expand resources for the community.

Those looking to find out more information or want to become a member of Recovery on the Harbor contact Jenny Celata, Director of Recovery on the Harbor, at VCelata@northsuffolk.org.



Senator Joe Boncore, Jenny Celata



Jen Callahan, Director of Devine Recovery Center, John McGahan, President of Gavin Foundation, Audrey Clairmont, Director of Addiction Services North Suffolk Mental Health, Rep Danny Ryan, Rep Adrian Madaro, Katie O'Leary, Director of Recovery Support Services



Michelle Capone, Alisha Cohen, Irmari Santos, Valerie Brennan



L-R Alisha Cohen, volunteer coordinator, Valerie Brennan, outreach coordinator, Katie O'Leary, Director of Recovery Support Services, Rebekah Cole, Community Corrdinator and Jenny Celata, Director of Recovery on the Harbor.

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