



East Boston

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Wednesday, May 15, 2024

THE JETS IN SOFTBALL ACTION AGAINST REVERE



The East Boston girls lost to Revere in non-league softball action at Revere on Friday, May 10. Shown, Jenna DaSilva makes contact. See Page 5 for more photos.

PHOTOS BY BOB MARRA



Starting pitcher Mikayla Forbes pitched a strong four inning.



Right fielder Jessica Vanegas fields a fly ball.

Generosity needed

Grace Church Food Pantry needs your help

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

The Grace Church Food Pantry, which has been serving East Boston for decades, is running out of funding and is turning to the community in hopes of support.

Jane Crapo of the Grace Church Food Pantry underscored the pantry's dire financial challenges. Specifically, the pantry only has enough funds to support the current demand

for two more months.

According to Crapo, the food pantry, founded by Marilyn Ford about 30 years ago, has seen its demand grow since its inception as an emergency food pantry that served around 10 families a week.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Crapo says the food pantry, on the high-end, served around 25-30 families a week. However,

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Boston, Revere hold Resilient Bennington Street, Fredericks Park project meeting

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

Earlier this month, officials from Boston and Revere hosted a public meeting at which attendees received updates about the Resilient Bennington Street and Fredericks Park project.

The abovementioned project stems from a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant

awarded to the City of Boston, which is partnering with the City of Revere.

According to the project's webpage on the City of Boston's website, the grant was awarded to "advance the design of coastal resilience strategies extending along Bennington Street in East Boston and

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Investigation leads to multiple arrests in Eastie

Special to the Times-Free Press

Police made a number of drug and weapons arrests in East Boston last week.

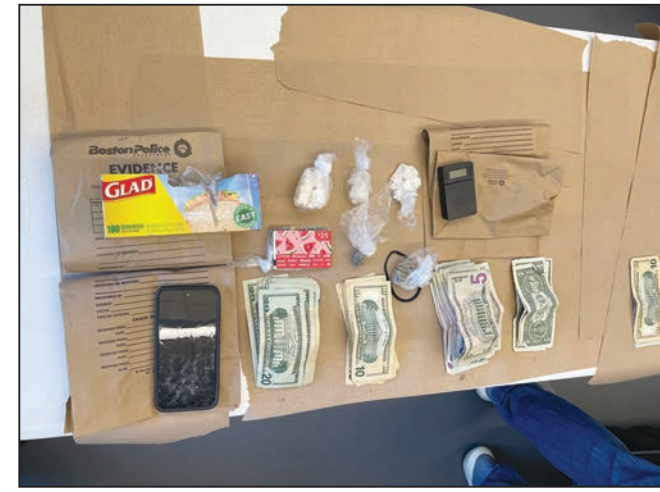
Ten people were arrested last week as part of a six-month-long investigation into a Maverick Landing housing development building in East Boston that has been an incessant source of drug activity and 911 calls, according to Suffolk County District Attorney Kevin

Hayden.

In addition to the ten arrests, police during the May 7 search warrant operation—dubbed Operation Clean House—seized over 100 grams of cocaine, over 60 grams of Fentanyl, and \$2,610 in cash.

"Just as a small number of individuals can drive an outsized share of crime a single problem property can have an outsized

See ARREST Page 3



The cash and drugs seized from 44 Border St arrests in East Boston.

City of Boston kicks off free summer fitness series

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) are pleased to announce the 2024 Bos-

ton Parks Summer Fitness Series sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. The series offers free weekly classes both virtually and in 17 City of Boston parks through August 31, 2024.

The 2024 Boston Parks Summer Fitness Series is being launched with a kick-off event on The Boston Common on Thursday, May 16, at 5:30 p.m., featuring free ZUMBA® from Z-Spot and Yoga

plus fun giveaways.

The series offers a wide range of classes, including Yoga, Gentle Yoga, Chair Yoga, HIIT, ZUMBA®, Family ZUMBA®, Kick

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Forum

20 YEARS OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN MASSACHUSETTS

It was 20 years ago this week (on May 17, 2004, to be exact), that the first marriage licenses were issued by cities and towns across Massachusetts for same-sex couples.

The marriage licenses were precipitated by the decision by the state's Supreme Judicial Court in November in the Goodridge case, which declared that same sex couples were entitled to the same legal protections and rights as heterosexual couples.

It's hard to imagine, with 20/20 hindsight, that marriage equality ever was an issue. There is not -- and never has been -- a justification for not allowing two adults to marry the person of their choosing in order to enjoy the legal status and privileges that marriage conveys.

But back in 2004, in the immediate aftermath of the Goodridge decision, there were many members of our state legislature, both Democrats and Republicans, who were talking of holding a Constitutional Convention in order to amend the state constitution to allow same-sex couples to have only so-called civil unions, not full marriage.

Massachusetts was an outlier in 2004 and fortunately the effort to call for a Constitutional Convention failed. Soon thereafter, other states allowed same-sex marriages and then in 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a 5-4 decision in the Obergefell v Hodges cases that all states must issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

However, public opinion was way ahead of the courts. Modern Family, the hit TV comedy show that started in 2007, included a gay couple among its characters. Today, polls consistently show that more than 70 percent of Americans across all party lines support same-sex marriage.

To be sure, there still is much to be done to assure equal protection of all rights for our fellow Americans of the LGTBQIA+ community. But it is worth noting the events of 20 years ago to acknowledge the momentous changes that have taken place in the course of one generation.

PLASTIC, PLASTIC EVERYWHERE

In the classic 1967 movie, the Graduate, Dustin Hoffman's character, Benjamin Braddock, a recent college graduate, is taken aside by a family friend at his graduation party, who says to him, "Ben, I just have one word of advice for you. Are you listening? 'Plastics'. There's a great future in plastics. Think about it. Will you think about it?"

"Yes sir," Benjamin replies meekly.

In 1967, plastics were nowhere near as ubiquitous as they are in 2024. But the advice given to Benjamin was prescient -- today, plastics, which are petroleum-based, are used for just about everything in our daily lives.

The problem is, plastics also are in everything, including our bodies. According to scientists, microplastics are flowing through every one of our organs and tissues, and the same is true for just about every animal on earth.

In addition, very little of the plastic that we generate is recyclable. We may think of ourselves as being virtuous when we dutifully recycle all of our plastic items every week, but a recent survey revealed that only about six percent of plastic items are recycled and that much of what is labeled as "recyclable" really is not recyclable at all. Those hard-plastic containers that hold our laundry detergent, for example, can be recycled only at a very few facilities across the country, which means that almost all of them end up in landfills, where they eventually disintegrate and make their way into the food chain and our water -- and into our bodies.

Almost 60 years after the Graduate, we are drowning -- literally -- in a sea of plastics, and with the demand for plastics ever-increasing, the problem is only going to get worse. It is estimated that by 2050, the demand for plastics will triple and the amount of plastic in the world's oceans actually will outweigh the fish.

Yes, as foretold in 1967, the future was indeed, "Plastics."

But that future -- today's present -- turned out to be a grim one.

Athenaeum opens new "Folio" bistro as final chapter of renovation and expansion

The Boston Athenaeum has announced the opening of its new street-level bistro, Folio, launched in partnership with The Catered Affair. Folio will serve as the newest social hub in Boston, inviting all curious food lovers to enjoy made-to-order shareable plates, lively conversation, and impeccable service. The opening date is Tuesday, June 25, 2024.

The opening of Folio marks the final installment in the Boston Athenaeum's renovation and expansion intended to make the space more welcoming and inviting to the city of Boston. The restaurant is open to the public and offers visitors the enjoyment of the distinctive and unique setting of the Boston Athenaeum's library, museum, and cultural center. The welcoming ambiance will be paired with European-inspired cuisine

by Chef de Cuisine Peter Laspia, dozens of new and old-world wines, and craft cocktails -- including a Boston Athenaeum branded signature cocktail, "Athena's Ambrosia."

"Folio represents an important moment for the Boston Athenaeum as we continue to open our doors to the city of Boston and invite everyone to connect with our community," says Leah Rosovsky, Stanford Calderwood Director. "We hope our new restaurant will tempt members and visitors to join us at the Boston Athenaeum. Folio creates another way for everyone to experience our library and museum."

Located at the Boston Athenaeum with a street-level entrance at 14A Beacon St., Folio offers clever libations paired with sophisticated bites welcoming residents, visitors, tourists, and Athe-

naeum members to dine with friends, coworkers, and family. Steps from the Boston Common, Freedom Trail, Massachusetts Statehouse, and downtown Boston; Folio adds a passion for culinary brilliance and exquisite service to complement the Athenaeum's appetite for literature, history, art, and social connection.

The bistro will be open:

- Tuesday – Thursday; from 10 am – 8 pm
- Friday – Saturday; from 10 am – 5 pm

"Modeled after the ambiance and service of European bistros, Folio provides distinct hospitality in unexpected ways," said Ken Barrett-Sweet, Vice President of Catering at The Catered Affair. "Guests enjoy craft cocktails, a unique wine list, and made-to-order shareable plates. Folio will quickly become a favorite

gathering spot for the curious."

Folio is the latest collaboration between the Boston Athenaeum and The Catered Affair, a state-of-the-art culinary event caterer serving the New England region for 44 years. Previously, the organizations announced a partnership positioning TCA as the exclusive on-site cuisine provider for events held at the Athenaeum.

With the launch of Folio at the Boston Athenaeum, The Catered Affair brings the relentless passion for culinary brilliance and exquisite service to a restaurant atmosphere that complements the Athenaeum's dedication to year-round opportunities for social connections through book clubs, author talks, concerts, exhibitions, and more.

Fundraiser brings 'Dial M for Murder' to the stage

Classic mystery gets a modern twist

Thrills and chills, all for a great cause! Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) will host a performance of "Dial M for Murder" Thursday, May 16, at Greater Boston Stage Company, 395 Main St., Stoneham. The show is MVES' annual Spring for Independence fundraiser, benefitting older adults and people with disabilities in our community.

In "Dial M for Murder," Tony believes his wife Margot is having an affair, and he wants revenge. He plans out the perfect murder. Or is it? The audience follows twists and turns as the suspense builds -- will Tony succeed in his attempt and will he be caught? "Dial M for Murder" may be best known as the 1954 Hitchcock film, but it started out as a successful stage play. Clever and fast-paced, the current show puts a modern spin on the original.



MVES invites theatergoers to a pre-show reception at 6 p.m. with complimentary cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. The show starts at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are available for \$80 each at www.mves.org/dial-m-for-murder. For more about the show, please contact MVES' Development Department

at 781-388-4802 or development@mves.org

Founded in 1975, MVES provides resources and care to older adults and people with disabilities. Services include Meals on Wheels, transportation, in-home assistance, health insurance counseling, caregiver supports, and more. The nonprofit serves Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Winthrop, and seven other communities north of Boston. For more information, call 781-324-7705 or visit www.mves.org.

Fitness // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

It By Eliza®, Afrobeats Dance, Walking Group, Strength Training and Conditioning, and Salsa Dance. The program is tailored to the interests of residents and participants, including age-friendly classes for families, older adults, and those new to fitness classes. For more information and a link to the full schedule, visit boston.gov/fitness.

"Cultivating vibrant communities through accessible, engaging programming is at the heart of our mission at the Boston Parks and Recreation Department," noted Commissioner Ryan Woods. "By activating public parks with initiatives like the Summer Fitness Series, we're not only providing opportunities for physical activity but also fostering social connections and enhancing the

overall well-being of Boston residents."

"The Summer Fitness Series provides a free opportunity for residents to be active in our City's parks while bringing our communities together to connect socially," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. "Being active is one of the best ways to prevent many chronic diseases as well as improve mental health. The series is available in most neighborhoods and online and is a continuation of the work being done to improve the health and well-being of all residents."

Series partners echoed the focus on community engagement and holistic health. "The Boston Park Fitness series showcases

the vibrant neighborhoods and cultures of Boston, and what better way to experience that than through community fitness?" said Jeff Bellows, vice president of corporate citizenship and public affairs at Blue Cross. "The program has something for everyone, including in-person and virtual classes for people of all abilities. We're proud to partner with the City of Boston to support

the physical and mental health of our community."

To stay up to date with news, events, and improvements in Boston parks—including weather-related cancellations for outdoor fitness classes—call (617) 635-4505, visit Boston.gov/Parks, join our email list at bit.ly/Get-Parks-Emails, and follow our social channels @bostonparksdept on X, Facebook, and Instagram.

Your opinions, please

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Wu announces Aidan McDonough as the new SPARK Boston Director

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu announced Aidan McDonough as the new SPARK Boston Director. SPARK Boston empowers 20 to 35-year-olds to play a greater role in planning for the City's future. Its office is within the Community Engagement Cabinet, focused on eliminating silos between Boston residents and City Hall. McDonough will be filling a vacancy to lead the SPARK Boston Council.

"SPARK Boston is a unique way for young leaders in our city to have their voices heard in Boston's future," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Aidan's



Aidan McDonough, the new SPARK Boston Director.

experience in community organizing makes him a great fit for this passionate, innovative group and I look forward to working with him and the rest of

SPARK Boston on issues most important to millennials and Gen Z."

Aidan McDonough graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with his bachelor's degree in communications. He moved to Boston in 2010 to pursue his career in public service. When he moved to Boston, he knew right away that he wanted to make Boston his home. After being active in the Brighton community and for local and state campaigns, it became clear to him that he had a passion for civic involvement and helping others to find and build their own community in Boston. McDonough served on the SPARK

Boston Council in 2018-2019. He was formerly the Executive Director of Brighton Main Streets.

"Aidan's passion for empowering young adults and enthusiasm to deepen his work in public service makes him a great addition to the Community Engagement Cabinet," said Community Engagement Cabinet Chief Brianna Millor. "The SPARK Boston Council is an integral part of Boston's local government. I am excited to witness Aidan working closely with the SPARK Boston Council empowering them to continue to be changemakers in our city."

SPARK Boston is

housed in the Mayor's Community Engagement Cabinet, and is responsible for advising Mayor Wu on issues affecting millennial and Gen Z populations and working with City departments and community stakeholders to create innovative solutions. The council meets monthly with City Hall leaders and creates free programming for their peers including voter resources, events highlighting the City's ongoing initiatives, and professional and social networking opportunities across Boston's many neighborhoods.

"As an alumnus of SPARK Boston, I am looking forward to get-

ting back into the program and giving council members the opportunity to expand their knowledge of Boston," said SPARK Boston Director Aidan McDonough. "I plan on taking the lessons learned from my time on the council and continue providing opportunities for council members to be engaged in what is happening in local government. I hope to help council members have access to cabinet chiefs and program directors so that their ideas of how Boston can continue to grow can be heard by decision makers within City Hall."

Conservation Law Foundation to file suit

By Adam Swift

Two oil terminals in Chelsea and Revere run by Global Partners, Ltd., are allegedly polluting the waters of Chelsea Creek with dangerous petroleum byproducts. The Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) has notified Global Partners, Ltd., that they intend to sue the company for Clean Water Act violations at two oil terminals they run in Chelsea and Revere.

According to CLF, the two terminals are allegedly polluting the waters of Chelsea Creek with dangerous petroleum byproducts.

"Chelsea Creek is a landmark for residents of Chelsea, Revere, and East Boston, but it has been poisoned by industrial pollution from the fossil fuel industry for too long," said Heather Govern, vice president of CLF's Clean Air and Water program. "Global has a responsibility to comply with the law and must take action to reduce these dangerous levels of pollution now."

CLF claims that it has

found that Global allegedly is violating its 2022 Clean Water Act permit by releasing dangerous levels of pollutants, including cancer-causing petroleum byproducts, into Chelsea Creek. The creek has historically been popular among residents for catching big striped bass and other fish.

However, because petroleum byproducts build up in fish and shellfish, the fish in Chelsea Creek are unsafe to eat. Studies have found this "bioconcentration" can be as much as 100,000 times more contamination than the surrounding river, according to a press release from the CLF.

However, Global Partners officials stated that since January of 2023, the company has been working closely with EPA to address the concerns identified by CLF.

"In fact, the company voluntarily disclosed these issues to EPA when the agency set new permit limits for certain metals and other compounds allowed under the permits in

December of 2022," said Jaclyn Harrison, Global Partners senior communications director. "In January 2023, EPA and Global began working together to develop a monitoring, compliance, and treatment plan to comply with the strict new permit requirements."

Harrison said Global will continue to work closely with EPA to ensure that it meets its obligations to the environment and the communities.

CLF officials stated that the lawsuit continues its advocacy to protect Chelsea Creek and the nearby Mystic River from pollution discharged from oil terminals and oil operations.

In 2022, CLF collaborated with community partners to persuade the EPA to set stricter limits on how much Global can pollute, CLF officials stated, adding that late last year, ExxonMobil, under pressure from a CLF lawsuit, ceased operations of its Everett oil terminal and agreed to sell its aging facility.

Arrest // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

impact on the entire community's quality of life," said Hayden. "This is one of those properties, primarily due to just a few out-of-control apartments. I thank Boston police for making a clear statement to East Boston residents that they're aware of this problem and are committed to addressing it."

The residential building at 44 Border Street has accounted for 52 documented drug-related police interactions between January 2023 through April 2024, according to the district attorney's office.

On Tuesday, members of Boston police Area A-7 Drug Control Unit with the assistance of D-4 and E-5 Drug Control Units executed multiple search warrants listing four individuals and three apartments, all in the 44 Border Street building.

Hayden said monitoring of the property will continue and trespassers and other violators will face arrest, arraignment and appropriate prosecution.

"This situation gets right to the heart of peacefulness in our neighborhoods and safety on our streets," Hayden said. "The actions of the few will be responsibly addressed when they impact the wellbeing of the many."

The following individuals were arrested as a result of the investigation:

- Samuel Junta, 43, charged with trafficking Class B substance over 70 grams
- Kerry Bell, 47, charged with trafficking Class B substance over 70 grams
- Youssef Benelmir, 50, outstanding warrants
- Reinaldo Diaz, 45, charged with possession Class A with intent to distribute and being a fugitive from justice

• Edwin Pagan, 47, charged with possession Class A with intent to distribute

• Christina Dionizio, 30, outstanding warrant

• Victoria Herrera, 30, charged with trespassing

• Amin Roundil, 30, charged with trespassing

• Youssef Benarba, 30, outstanding warrants

• Edwin Ceballo-Hernandez, 36, charged with trafficking Class A substance and Class B substance

Some of those arrested were arraigned last week and received a variety of bail amounts and release conditions, according to the district attorney's office. The others will be arraigned at later dates. Reinaldo Diaz, who is facing a fugitive from justice charge for a pending case in Rhode Island, was ordered held without bail.

In addition to the Operation Clean House arrests on May 7, officers assigned to District A-7 in East Boston arrested four people after they responded to the area of 19 Beachview Road for a report of suspicious activity a little after 2 p.m.

Demetrey Pate, 20, of Brighton, Wendy Seide, 21, of Hyde Park, Levar Freeman-Allen, 19, of East Boston, and Philip Blain, 20, of Boston, were arrested on firearm charges.

Officers responded to the area of 19 Beachview Road for a report of four males dressed in dark clothing, looking into

home windows, according to the Boston Police Department. Officers were advised that the four individuals left the area in a motor vehicle.

As officers were canvassing the area for possible suspects, a second radio call came in for three males in the yard of 75 Orient Avenue. Officers immediately observed the suspected motor vehicle parked in the area and were able to determine that the vehicle was occupied four times, and requested the occupants to exit the vehicle, according to the BPD.

With the assistance of responding officers, all four individuals exited the vehicle and were pat frisked. After further investigation, officers recovered two firearms from inside the vehicle, according to police officials. The firearms were later determined to be a Glock 26 with fifteen rounds in the magazine, and a Glock 27 with one round in the chamber and thirteen rounds in the magazine. Officers also recovered a backpack that contained eight plastic bags of marijuana and two digital scales.

All four suspects were placed under arrest and charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, unlawful possession of ammunition, disturbing the peace, and trespassing. Blain was additionally charged with possession with intent to distribute of class D. All four suspects are expected to be arraigned in East Boston District Court.

NEWS BRIEFS

State Representative Adrian Madaro

Community discussion (30 min)

How do we build a sense of community?

We want to hear the community's ideas! We plan to discuss events we can host and other suggestions.

Potential name change of GSCA to be inclusive of all neighbors

We would like the Gove Street Citizens Association community to consider changing its name. More than 40% of GSCA

residents were born outside the United States. While we acknowledge that "Citizens" is rightly a source of pride for many, for others it may signal that they are not welcome at our meetings.

GSCA Community Meeting - May 2024

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/yyw-asqu-rys>

Our next meeting after the May meeting will be on Monday, June 24, at 6:30 p.m.

GSCA MEETING AGENDA

Gove Street Citizens Association (GSCA) agenda for Monday, May 20, at 6:30 p.m.

Please register for this virtual meeting on our website: <https://www.govestreet.org/meetings>

Agenda (approx. 60 min)

Community Updates (30 min)

Updates from BPD (Sgt. Cintolo)

Updates from City Hall (Mela Villa Gomez)

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Camp 21- Women's Tackle Football officially kicks off

Special to The East Boston Times

Camp 21 – Women's Tackle Football in Boston, has launched its first football training camp for women and girls of all ages.

Rumunda “Moe” Holder, founder and CEO of Camp 21, joined University of New England assistant football coach Sue Lizotte and professional women's tackle football players Chris Ellis-Hibbett, Heidi Epstein, and Amanda Alpert as instructors at the inaugural camp session held May 4 at Healy Field in Roslindale.

“Women have been playing organized tackle football in the U.S. for more than four decades, yet football continues to be a male-dominated arena,” said Rumunda Holder, Founder and CEO of Camp 21 – Women's Tackle Football. “Through this first-of-its-kind continuous football training camp for women, we're aiming to promote the evolution of Women's Tackle Football, encourage more women to embrace the sport and ultimately challenge the perceptions of a sport tra-



Women's Tackle Football Camp 21 Director Rumunda Holder is hoping to start a girls tackle football program in the Boston public schools.

ditionally dominated by males.”

Also assisting at the camp was former Division 1 college football player Kalonji Hall, a resident



University of New England assistant football coach Sue Lizotte and professional women's tackle football players Chris Ellis-Hibbett, Rumunda Holder, Heidi Epstein, and Amanda Alpert are pictured at the first session of Camp 21 – Women's Tackle Football.

of East Boston who has coached the Showstoppers team in the Boston Women's Flag Football League.

“I think this camp will provide an excellent opportunity for girls to learn the fundamentals of tackle football and move on to competitive play,” said Hall, who is helping Holder coordinate the camp.

Holder said she would like to start a citywide girls tackle football program for students in the Boston public schools.



Women's Tackle Football Camp 21 Director Rumunda Holder tosses the football to Amy Martinez at the first session of the camp.

Generosity // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Frederick's Park in Revere.”

The project webpage continues to describe the project, stating that it will “develop schematic designs for an identified priority action area at Bennington Street, Fredericks Park, and Belle Isle Marsh, located at the intersection of East Boston and Revere where flooding occurs today and will increase in the future.”

Moreover, the webpage indicates that the project will employ “nature-based and hybrid solutions” to accomplish goals such as reducing flood risk, improving public safety, and enhancing the marsh's habitat value.

Catherine McCandless, Boston's Climate Resilience Project Manager, and Elle Baker Revere's Open Space and Environmental Planner, both underscored the importance of this project by displaying past events from 2022 and this past January, which have left areas from and around Bennington Street to Fredericks Park under water.

“This just highlights that flooding is happening now during storms, and we anticipate that this will increase in severity and frequency as sea levels rise due to climate change. So it's really imperative for us to take action now,” said McCandless.

Currently, an analysis is being conducted to determine which strategies should be used to accomplish the project's goals—some of which were mentioned above.

Specifically, two alternatives are being analyzed to reduce flood risk. Alternative one is to “elevate Bennington Street with a gradual slope into the marsh” in Boston and, in Revere, to “construct a berm/living levee around Fredericks Park to Montfern Avenue with a gradual slope into the marsh.”

Alternative two is to “construct a berm/living levee along Bennington Street in the City's right-of-way with a gradual slope into the marsh” in Boston and in Revere to “elevate Fredericks Park with a gradual slope into

the marsh and construct a berm/living levee from Fredericks Park to Montfern Avenue.”

According to McCandless, the alternatives were proposed through work in different plans such as Climate Ready Boston, a study of Belle Isle Marsh, and Revere's Open Space plan.

She also noted, “All of these different alternatives will include that redesign of Fredericks Park, and in some cases, it may be a combination of these different alternatives depending on the location throughout the study area.”

As the meeting progressed, Mark Costa of VHB, the project's lead consultant, outlined the findings from a project site investigation.

First, Costa walked through the elevation data along Bennington Street and at Fredericks Park. The data revealed that Bennington Street and Fredericks Park have low points at 7.5 feet.

This low point is critical because Costa identified

that the predicted 2070 100-year flood elevation is 13.8 feet.

“The 7.5-foot low elevation within Bennington Street, as well as the 7.5 within Fredericks Park, is approximately six feet lower than what we're expecting a future flood event to reach,” said Costa.

Costa displayed a hydraulic model with the abovementioned elevation data, rainfall, storm surge conditions, and existing flood infrastructure. The model simulated a future 100-year event with a 1.5-foot rise in sea level.

The model showed flooding that begins in low-elevation areas and spreads throughout the areas near the park and Bennington Street.

However, Costa also showed a model with the same event, except the resiliency strategies were added, and water stays in the marsh system, moves down Sales Creek, and discharges into the Belle Isle inlet.

Costa also indicated that a geotechnical evaluation, which he said “is a study of the underlying soils,” is being conducted. He also mentioned that soil borings were completed in March, and fill, clay, and sand were found.

He also mentioned that they have spoken with Beachmont Veterans Memorial School officials, who identified settlement around the site.

“The elevation of the school has remained the same... but the ground surface elevation has actually sunk over the years,” said Costa.

Finally, through an on-site field investigation, wetland resource areas were delineated, including wetland areas east and west of Bennington Street, salt marshes east of Bennington Street and coming into Fredericks Park, and more.

To wrap up the presenta-

tion, Costa provided overviews of the aforementioned alternatives with a map and cross sections. To view these images, visit https://drive.google.com/file/d/18whk4WouV45bso4BZ_dFdfol-DhuX-1Gx/view?usp=sharing.

Following the presentation, the floor was opened for questions and comments from those who attended the meeting.

Joanne McKenna, Revere's Ward 1 Councilor, raised a concern she had heard from residents abutting Montfern Avenue and other roadways that a berm might push water into their streets.

Costa indicated they are in a preliminary design phase and said, “We don't have detailed grading yet or drainage structures identified. However, I can say that we will absolutely take into account abutting properties, both coastal events as well as rainfall events, and provide a really comprehensive design here.”

Baker then addressed concerns raised in the chat by the VFW in the area regarding impacts on parking.

“We have a very narrow strip to get around the corner where the VFW is to not impact any of the parking. We're trying to look at what other alternatives that we can do there,” said Baker.

“I thank you for your patience and for all your questions, and I can understand that you're frustrated, and it might feel like we've made decisions without you, but I assure you we have not done so,” she added.

“Nothing here is actually set in stone.”

McCandless also clarified, “All of the design and permitting work is coming after this point. So there's still a long way to go before we have a final design.”

Another attendee asked if there was a preference

for any of the alternatives. Costa indicated that they are considering many things, such as impacts on wetland resource areas, sightlines, cost, and more.

“Right now, we don't know which ones the preferred. We know both of these solutions, both of these alternatives, alternative one [and] alternative two, could work for flood protection, but there's so many other things to consider than that,” said Costa.

As the meeting progressed and ultimately ended, several other topics were discussed, such as extending potential shared used paths to East Boston's Greenway, the adaptability of these alternatives, and other possible solutions.

Regarding the next steps, there are upcoming engagement opportunities for folks interested in learning more about the project.

Specifically, there are plans for a virtual office hour tomorrow, May 16th, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. There are also plans for a coffee hour on May 23rd at Toretta's Bakery and Ice Cream in Revere from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

It should also be noted that McCandless mentioned during the meeting that the goal is to select a preferred alternative in June.

“Community and stakeholder engagement has been spanning all of the work that we've done before this point, and it will continue to span all of the work that is to come,” said McCandless.

For more information about the project and to view the recording and presentation from this meeting, visit <https://www.boston.gov/departments/environment/resilient-bennington-street-and-fredericks-park#past-engagement->

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THE JETS IN SOFTBALL ACTION AGAINST REVERE



Catcher Yariana Camilo blocks an errant pitch.

The East Boston girls lost to Revere in non-league softball action at Revere on Friday, May 10.

PHOTOS BY BOB MARRA



Grace Gans (41) and shortstop Jenna DaSilva (20) try for a force play at second base but the ball got away.



Shortstop Jenna DaSilva, (left), centerfielder Devani Taylor, and second baseman Grace Gans converge on a pop fly that eluded them and fell for a hit.



Third base player Arielle Tritto tries to make the play at third.



Left fielder Jordynn Copeland waits for a fly ball to drop into her glove.

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Malden Catholic announces major campus expansion to support growing student population and enhance academic and athletic programs

Special to the Times-Free Press

Malden Catholic (MC) announced major expansion plans for its academic and athletic programs. By partnering with Timberline Construction and Scalora Consulting Group, MC broke ground on May 9, for a state-of-the-art academic and athletic facility located across the street from Malden Catholic at 50 Crystal Street. This expansion will introduce a 7th and 8th grade program, tentatively scheduled to open for students in September 2025, pending any unforeseen delays or adjustments. MC will accept 100 students in its 7th grade and 100 students in its 8th grade. This development aims to build upon the remarkable 40% growth in enrollment observed over the past five years and the success of MC's codivisional model. Next year's high school enrollment is anticipated to surpass 900 students.

President John Thornburg made the announcement during Malden Catholic's 18th Annual Gala Celebration on April 6th, unveiling the launch of the capital campaign, Our Essential Future – A Campaign for Malden Catholic.

"We are excited to announce the first major campus expansion since Malden Catholic relocated to Crystal Street more than 55 years ago—a milestone moment that will enhance the MC experience for our students, faculty/staff, and

the community," stated Thornburg.

"In addition to expanding and modernizing our campus, we are advancing our mission by extending the Xaverian Brothers' educational experience to 7th and 8th grade students. This expansion will lay a strong foundation, facilitating the transition into MC's college-preparatory high school programs. When I accepted this position at Malden Catholic five years ago, I was excited about our growth potential due to our unique codivisional model and the Board's decision to invest in a 1.6-acre property across the street. This announcement marks the next major phase in realizing our vision to grow our remarkable school. As we embark on this next chapter in the MC story, we are grateful to our many supporters, including our dear friend, mentor, and generous benefactor, the late Joe O'Donnell '62, who served as Co-Chair of the campaign before his passing in January 2024."

The 70,000 square foot building will include cutting-edge classrooms and lab spaces, a spacious dining hall and modern office facilities to support administrative needs and student services. The athletic facility will include a 30,000 square-foot indoor turf field, a 6,000 square-foot basketball court, wellness center and weight room. The Biomedical Engineering lab will facilitate the addition



Artist rendering of the state-of-the-art academic and athletic facility.

of more biomedical classes within MC's Project Lead the Way Program. Dedicated classrooms for Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy will also be added to expand the growth of MC's Business Program.

The capital campaign – Our Essential Future – A Campaign for Malden Catholic - has a goal of \$40 million, which will serve to fund construction at 50 Crystal Street and increase scholarship support for students. The campaign is off to a strong start with impressive support from the MC community.

The Our Essential Future Campaign recognizes the combined 180 years of outstanding educational services and faith formation provided to students from Malden and surrounding communities by the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Xaverian Brothers. It aims to ensure that future generations will have the opportunity for an exceptional Catholic high school experience at Malden Catholic.

Jim and Bev Donovan, long-time benefactors to the school, have provided a \$5 million lead gift to the Campaign. Jim, who served for over 20 years as a Trustee at MC, including the last 10 years as Board Chair, will now serve as Co-Chair of the Campaign. He has been instrumental in every major strategic initiative during

his tenure and played a crucial role in formulating plans for the campus expansion.

In a statement, Jim Donovan expressed his hopes: "As non-graduates, Bev and I hope our lead gift inspires the many thousands of men and women privileged to hold an MC or Girls Catholic diploma. This gift honors my father's service to the school as a custodian in the 50s and 60s, where he mentored many students and was a beloved friend and confidant of many Xaverian Brothers. It also honors my sister Elaine's service as a School Sister of Notre Dame. We strongly believe that the young men and women of Malden, Medford, Everett, Revere, and the surrounding communities served by MC deserve the best educational platform and athletic facilities, and that the campus expansion at 50 Crystal Street will be truly transformative for them. It is our hope that the entire MC community will join us in making this a reality."

For more information about 7th and 8th grade enrollment at 50 Crystal Street and additional details about Our Essential Future – A Campaign for Malden Catholic, please visit the campaign website at www.maldencatholic.org/give/campaign-launch.

Malden Catholic would like to thank the following

individuals for their invaluable contributions to the success of Our Essential Future – A Campaign for Malden Catholic:

Malden Catholic Advancement Team: Sean Hurley '97, CFO/VP of Advancement, Robert McCarthy P'07, Senior Director of Advancement and Strategic Partnerships, Gregory Maynard, Director of Major Gifts, Strategic Initiatives and Planned Giving, Sarah Hamilton, Esq., P'22, Director of Annual Gifts and Operations

Honorary Campaign Chairs: Dr. Eugene F. Fama '56 and Sallyann (Dimeco) GC'56 and Ted Legasey '63 and Tricia (McNamara) GC'63

Campaign Co-Chairs: Joseph J. O'Donnell '62 and James R. Donovan Hon'11

Board Chair: Mason S. Tenaglia '74

Malden Catholic President: John K. Thornburg

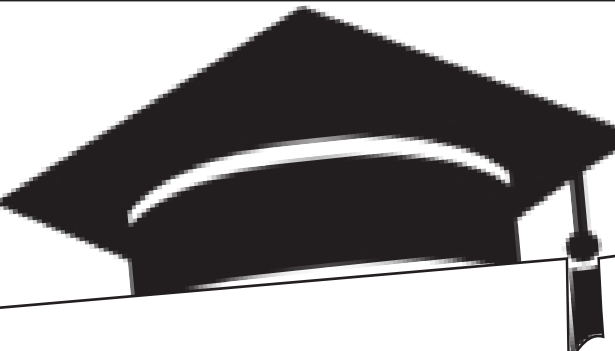
Campaign Steering Committee: Patricia McWade GC'65, Rosemary (Boland) Phalen GC'69, Richard L. Sumberg '64, Brian J. Walsh '84 P'16, '18, '20

Campaign Leadership Committee: Mark T. Cannon '73, Richard F. Connolly, Jr. '57, Alicia Cooney P'21, Paul T. Fitzgerald, Esq. '81, Joseph J. Keough '88, Daniel J. Lawler '84, Daniel Passacantilli '90, Mark J. Sullivan '83

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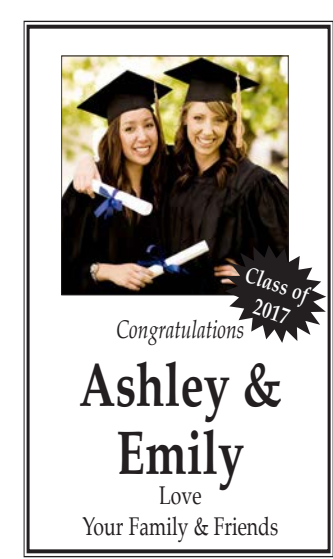
Committee: Stephen J. Byrne '95, P'24, '26, Benjamin Marino P'22, '24, Colleen McGlynn Moody P'24, Craig Spadafora '91, P'26, '27, Peter Van Dorpe P'27

Since 1932, Malden Catholic High School has shaped emerging leaders in our community, claiming a Nobel Laureate, a Senator, two ambassadors and countless community and business heads among its alumni. Annually, graduates attend some of the nation's most renowned universities including Harvard, Princeton, Dartmouth, University of Chicago, Georgetown, Cornell, Brown, Tufts, Carnegie Mellon, Duke, Notre Dame, Northeastern, Boston College and College of the Holy Cross. Foundational to student success is Malden Catholic's codivisional model which offers the best of both worlds, single-gender academics during the day and integrated social and extracurricular opportunities after school. Malden Catholic is known in the community for its rigorous academics, SFX Scholars Program and award-winning STEM program. Malden Catholic curricula is designed to improve individual growth mindset, leadership principles and success outcomes along with integrating the Xaverian values of trust, humility, compassion, simplicity and zeal. <https://www.maldencatholic.org>.



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Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Office of Nightlife Economy today announced the launch of the City's Wake Up the Night Grant, which will award individuals and organizations up to \$10,000 to host nighttime activations. The application is now open and the deadline to apply is May 28.

The Wake Up the Night Grant Pilot Program will use up to \$250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to revitalize Boston's nightlife economy and foster safe, inclusive social spaces. All activations will take place in July through December 2024 and be free and open to the public.

"Boston is a city of neighborhoods, and we are working to revitalize our nighttime economy

and create opportunities for residents to enjoy safe, joyful spaces throughout the warmer months and into the fall," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "This year we're trying to make it easier than ever to foster fun programming that showcases the beauty of our communities and support residents and businesses in their efforts to make this summer a safe, enjoyable one for all in Boston."

All funded events will align with one the following categories:

- Accessible Programming: Social events specifically curated for persons with diverse abilities (physical, cognitive, or emotional)
- Cultural Expression: Activations showcasing the many cultural interests and expressions

of Bostonians.

- Intergenerational: Activations promoting multi-generational social interaction.

- Spirit-Free Programming: Activations mindfully omitting the consumption and presence of alcohol.

- Weekday Activations: Events promoting social interaction Monday through Thursday, specifically in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

- Youth Programming: Activations aimed to serve persons 20 years old and younger.

"There is a pressing demand for more innovative, inclusive, and accessible nighttime activities," said Corean Reynolds, Director of Nightlife Economy for the City of Boston. "Through the Wake

Up the Night Grant Pilot Program, we are excited to directly invest in people and organizations that are reimagining Boston's nightlife."

The Grant is open to individuals, nonprofit organizations, or businesses working in partnership with community partners. Applicants must be Boston residents or demonstrate that their project is led by partners who are Boston residents.

The Wake Up the Night Grant is an Office of Nightlife Economy initiative. The Office, launched in March 2023, works to create a more robust and equitable nightlife economy to enhance the overall quality of life for residents of Boston. For more information about the Office of Nightlife Economy, visit boston.gov/nightlife.

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XR takes action on World Asthma Day

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

Extinction Rebellion Boston (XR), a local group that works to bring about climate and ecological justice, took to the McArdle Bridge on World Asthma Day to draw attention to asthma rates and pollution-related illnesses in East Boston, which the group says is caused by Logan Airport.

Last Tuesday morning, May 7, several activists walked onto McArdle Bridge to attach a banner that read “Toxic Air Zone.” The goal was for the banner to drop when the bridge opened to allow a ship to make its way to Logan Airport.

Unfortunately for the activists, a security guard stopped their banner drop and took it down just as the bridge was about to lift.

Although XR’s demonstration did not go exactly as planned, Jamie McGonagill, XR’s Media and Messaging Director, still seemed to classify it as a success, underscoring the coverage it got from local news outlets.

“I think what makes a demonstration successful is if it creates conversation about the issue that the demonstration was meant to illustrate,” said McGonagill.

As mentioned, the purpose of the abovementioned demonstration was to draw attention to asthma rates and other pollution-related illnesses in East Boston.

“East Boston has an incredibly high asthma rate,”

said McGonagill, as she cited findings from studies such as the Logan Airport Health Study conducted by the state’s Bureau of Climate and Environmental Health and the Department of Public Health.

Specifically, the study’s executive summary revealed that “children in the high exposure area were estimated to have three to four times the likelihood of this respiratory outcome [probable asthma] compared with children in the low exposure area.”

“Our takeaway is that Massport is directly responsible for these illnesses, is directly responsible for the asthma that is rampant in the East Boston community, and we knew we wanted to do something to draw attention to that,” said McGonagill.

However, it should be noted that in email correspondence with Jennifer Mehigan, Massport’s Director of Media Relations, she indicated that in the Logan Airport Health Study conducted in 2014, “the Department of Public Health did not conclude there was a linkage between activity at Logan and these conditions, but it did acknowledge that Logan is a very small contributor to urban air emissions, since concentrations of emissions fall to less than 1% beyond the airport perimeter.”

Moreover, Mehigan noted that since 2014, Massport has provided annual funding to the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center as a result of the study.

“This partnership helps to expand the efforts of their Pediatric Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Prevention and Treatment Program in East Boston and Winthrop,” she wrote.

That said, activists like McGonagill have a set of demands to quell the abovementioned issues.

First, she mentioned the implementation of an “airport-sponsored community classroom and residential air filtration program.”

“Essentially, they should be installing and maintaining air filters in classrooms, daycares, community buildings, and also some private homes right around Logan Airport,” said McGonagill.

Activists are also asking for a stop to Logan Airport’s expansion, no displacement of planes from Hanscom Airfield to Logan Airport, banning private jets in the state, and more.

“All of these initiatives would help our kids from getting sick,” said McGonagill.

McGonagill says movement has been “very limited” regarding the potential implementation of these requests.

However, it should be noted that McGonagill indicated that Massport responded to a job description for the organization’s CEO position crafted by the Logan Community Clean Air Coalition and AIR, Inc. and printed in the East Boston Times.

Ultimately, McGonagill indicated that there would be more events in the future to raise awareness for these issues.

“I know that Extinction Rebellion Boston is really committed to improving the lives of residents in East Boston,” she said.

“It really is a back and forth between community

events to support the residents of the area in understanding more about the risks that they’re facing, understanding more about where their voices can be heard while simultaneously taking more direct action, more civil-disobedience action to pressure the people in power.”

To learn more about future events from XR, visit <https://xrboston.org/>.

It should also be noted that Mehigan wrote in email correspondence that Massport “acknowledges that airport operations impact the surrounding communities” and that “for the past several decades has worked to reduce that impact as much as possible through a variety of initiatives.”

Mehigan detailed a recent initiative for Massport to achieve net zero by 2031. She wrote that the 2031 goal is “two decades before the industry standard of

2050.”

“Massport is committed to being a good neighbor. We have built and maintain more than 30 acres of parks and open space, mostly in East Boston. We require all new construction on Massport property to meet LEED certification,” wrote Mehigan.

“New construction and renovation projects incorporate energy conservation efforts and the installation of renewable energy sources are currently replacing air field diesel-powered equipment with eGSEs (electric ground service equipment); have eliminated millions of vehicle trips each year at Logan with better management of TNCs (Uber and Lyft); and are increasing Logan Express services and encouraging passengers to take public transit, among other initiatives,” she added.

Meeting // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

when the pandemic hit, demand drastically increased.

“When the pandemic happened, our numbers just skyrocketed. We had probably over 150 families a week waiting in line for food; it was really quite scary,” said Crapo.

While demand has decreased since the height of the pandemic, Crapo emphasized that the food pantry is still serving around 150-180 households a month.

“Yeah, it did go down, but the need is still there; the need is definitely there,” she said.

Although Crapo indicated that the food pantry managed the demand during the height of the pandemic due to the community’s generosity, she says the amount of monetary donations has decreased post-pandemic.

“There have been several times over this last year that

our account has dipped to the point where it got a little scary, like how are we going to do our shopping for next month,” said Crapo.

Though the Grace Church Food Pantry, which is open the first two Saturdays of every month, receives some help from the Greater Boston Food Bank through the YMCA—200 bags of food a month—it also does its own shopping, which costs around \$2,000-\$2,500 a month.

The shopping the food pantry does out of its own account supplements the products received from the Greater Boston Food Bank since participants can only come once a month.

“Where they can only come once a month, we want to make it so they walk out of there with at least several meals in the bags that we give them,” said Crapo.

The food pantry received a \$10,000 state grant last year, and Crapo hopes it will receive another this year. However, that grant money only goes so far—about five months.

Crapo made it clear that without funding, trouble could be on the horizon for families who usually come to the food pantry.

“If the funds get to a point where we can’t do that supplemental shopping, not as many families will be able to be served, and not as much food will be able to be given,” said Crapo.

“We might still get support from the YMCA, but it’s going to be like one bag of food, which I guess is a blessing if you need food... it’s really truly not enough,” she added.

For those who want to make a monetary donation, the pantry is accepting checks and money orders.

Checks or money orders should be made out to Grace Church Food Pantry and can be mailed to 760 Saratoga Street, Boston, MA 02128.

Moreover, an online donation option is in the works. Residents should keep an eye out for the Grace Church’s website (<https://gracechurcheastie.wordpress.com/>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/gracechurcheastie/>) for more information on the online donation option when it becomes available.

Additionally, the Grace Church Food Pantry is accepting food donations, but they must be non-perishable items. For those looking to donate food, first call 617-543-3360.

“If the funding runs out, less families will be helped, and less food will be given out,” said Crapo.

Richard Lettieri

A man of uncompromised, high integrity with a passion for justice and kindness for the poor and the underserved

Richard J Lettieri, 76, of Osprey FL, formerly of Swampscott MA, passed away on 5/4/24 after a long, courageous battle with heart disease.



Richard was born on 5/29/47 to Roy and Genevieve Lettieri in Chelsea MA. After graduating Chelsea High School, Richard attended and graduated from Villanova University in 1969, where he was a three-year starting letterman on the varsity baseball team. As a student-athlete at Villanova, Richard was recognized by the Outstanding Americans Foundation as an Outstanding College Athlete of America for his academic and athletic achievements. Upon graduation, Richard taught algebra and geometry at St. Dominic Savio High School in East Boston for two years. Richard then enrolled in law school at Boston College, where he graduated in 1974 with a Doctor of Jurisprudence.

Richard was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar Association in 1975. Richard had a 40 year, esteemed legal career including a nine-year stint with the Massachusetts Port Authority where he was Chief Legal Counsel from 1981-1986. Richard’s career path then took him to the prestigious Boston law firm Ropes & Gray where he spent 25 years, excelling as a Partner from 1990-2012. While at Ropes & Gray, Richard’s practice focused on Corporate Law, Public Development and Airport Law.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Richard was a man of uncom-

promised, high integrity with a passion for justice and kindness for the poor and the underserved. He took great pride in serving as a Board Member of the New England Center and Home for Veterans, as well as supporting numerous charities that help the needy and disadvantaged.

Richard was predeceased by his parents; his younger brother, Ronald; his aunt Lucy Ryan; and his loving partner of 35 years the distinguished artist, Jennifer L. Pierce. Richard is survived by his younger brother, Roy of San Francisco; two nieces; numerous cousins in the Boston area; and his cousin, Ann Marie Lane of Chicago.

A private ceremony is planned at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett. The Lettieri Family requests any consideration for donations be made to the American Heart Association or New England Center and Home for Veterans in memory of Richard Joseph Lettieri.

William Morani, Sr.

Amtrak Retiree



William E. “Billy” Morani, Sr. died in East Boston on May 11, 2024.

Billy served in the Army National Guard during the Vietnam Era. Upon discharge he began working for the B & M Railroad, which then became Amtrak from which he retired.

The beloved husband of Shirley A. (Paz) Morani, he was the father of Shirley Butts Morani and her husband, Michael Butts, William E. Morani Jr., Diane Morani and Thomas A. L. Morani, all of East Boston; brother of Marian Loud of East Boston and Thomas Morani of Mansfield; grandfather of Paul Anthony Morani of East Boston and Justine Castellon of Tennessee and great-grandfather of Nicholas. Billy is also survived by many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Visiting hours in the Magrath Funeral Home, 336 Chelsea St [at Day



Sq] East Boston are today, Wednesday, May 15 from 4 to 7 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited. Funeral Mass in St. Anthony of Padua Church, Revere, Thursday morning, May 16, at 11 o’clock. Interment will follow in Puritan Lawn Memorial Park, Peabody.

At the family’s request, in lieu of flowers, donations to the Alzheimer’s Assn. in Billy’s memory, would be appreciated.

Please leave messages of condolence for the family on his Tribute Page at MagrathFuneralHome.com.

Donald “Donnie” Wythe

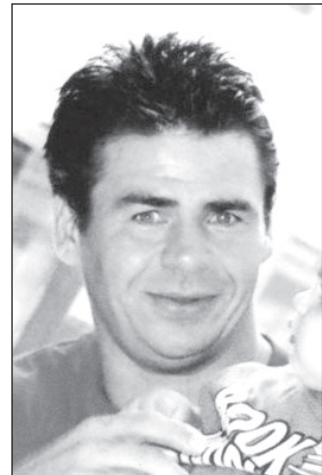
Of Boston

Donald “Donnie” J. Wythe, 58, of Boston, passed away on Saturday, April 27, 2024.

Born in Boston to the late Helen (Hurley) D’Agostino and James Al-lerton, Donnie is survived by his brother, Walter Wythe and his wife, Maria of Medfield, his sister, Barbara Perez and her husband, Alex of Florida and his nieces and nephew: Briana, Alexis, Matthew and Valentina.

He was predeceased by his parents, Helen and Joseph D’Agostino, his brother, Joseph “Tony” Wythe and his nephew, Alex J. Perez, II.

The family will receive visitors on Friday, May 17 from 4 to 8 p.m. in the J. S. Waterman Langone Chapel, 580 Commercial Street, Boston, MA 02109. Complimentary valet parking attendants at front door.



On Saturday, May 18, to visit in the morning and/or join process to church, please be at the funeral home by 9:30 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m. in Sacred Heart Church, 45 Brooks Street, East Boston. Services will conclude with interment in Holy Cross Cemetery, Malden. For online condolences and/or directions, please visit: www.watermanboston.com.

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Planned closure of Sumner Tunnel this summer reduced to one month

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is announcing the schedule for the upcoming full closure of the Sumner Tunnel as its multi-restoration project continues. What was originally scheduled as a two-month 24/7 closure similar to last year has now been significantly reduced. The tunnel will be closed for work on Friday, July 5 and is expected to be reopened no later than Monday, August 5. There will be additional weekend closures both before and after this month-long closure. The closure is the next phase of a project that began in April of 2022 and includes work on the tunnel ceiling, roadway, walls, lighting, and additional improvements

which will increase safety and climate resiliency. The project is a \$160 million investment in the Commonwealth's infrastructure.

Last summer's work focused primarily on replacing and rehabilitating the ceiling of the tunnel as well as work on the walls, light fixtures, conduit, and wiring. The upcoming work will primarily be on the road deck and associated elements.

"This is a vitally important infrastructure project that will ensure the Sumner Tunnel remains safe and structurally sound for generations," said Transportation Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbitts-Nutt. "We want to thank the people of Massachusetts and especially East Boston residents for their patience as we get closer to completing this

very important work."

Drivers are encouraged to use public transit and will have many discounted or free public transportation options during the full closure of the Sumner Tunnel Restoration Project. This year's full closure will mirror, in many ways, the successful offerings of 2023, providing travelers with a range of services:

Free MBTA Blue Line rides: Riders can enjoy convenient travel.

Free and reduced cost MBTA water ferry options: Riders can take advantage of alternative water transportation at no or minimal cost.

Reduced MBTA Commuter Rail fares on the Newburyport-Rockport line: Save on your commute during the closure.

Fare-free service for customers boarding key

Chelsea bus routes, including the Silver Line 3.

Discounted parking at select MBTA and Commuter Rail lots and garages: Park at reduced rate while the closure is in effect.

On the RIDE, trips that begin and end within ¾ of a mile of the MBTA modes that are free will also be free from July 5 to August 5.

Discounted tolls for Resident Discount Program participants: Benefit from lower tolls if you're enrolled in the program.

Additional options for travelers to and from Logan Airport: Stay informed about alternative transportation choices for airport travel.

"As MassDOT and the Highway Division tackles critical infrastructure projects like the Sumner Tunnel Restoration Project,

the importance of a multi-modal transportation system is front and center," said General Manager Phillip Eng. "I'm proud of the MBTA workforce for what we were able to do last year during the tunnel closure and we are ready to support our partners at MassDOT again. With enhanced ferry service and the Blue Line now operating at full speed, along with our other modes, we are pleased to welcome all that choose to use mass transportation. Thank you to our riders for continuing to utilize the MBTA as we encourage motorists to leave the driving to us again this year during the tunnel closure and even after it reopens."

The full schedule of remaining weekend closures can be found on our project website.

Weekend closures will

take place from 11:00 p.m. on Friday until 5:00 a.m. on the following Monday. Weekend closures will not take place during holiday weekends.

"It is a credit to the work and engineering of our MassDOT colleagues and the contractor that we're able to significantly cut the extended closure in half for this summer."

said State Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver. "Our ultimate goal remains for the Sumner Tunnel to remain safe and in service for years to come."

Additional information can be found on mass.gov/summer-tunnel.

For MBTA service information, please visit: www.mbta.com.

Healey-Driscoll Administration extends State Financial Aid Priority deadline to July 1

Special to the Times-Free Press

In alignment with the Biden-Harris Administration's call to support students in completing their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced that the Department of Higher Education (DHE) has moved the priority deadline for its largest state financial aid program, MASSGrant, from May 1 to July 1, 2024. This later deadline gives Massachusetts students more time to complete their FAFSA for the 2024-2025 academic year.

MASSGrant is a need-based financial aid program that helps to cover educational expenses at state public and private colleges and universities. During FAFSA Week of Action, the administration is encouraging students to complete their FAFSA as soon as possible.

"Massachusetts is home to the greatest higher education institutions in the world, but we need to make sure that students are able to access that education. That's why our administration has taken action to significantly expand financial aid," said Governor Maura Healey. "We are extending the MASSGrant deadline to ensure that students who qualify for this financial aid have enough time and support to apply and do not leave money on the table."

"Many students' post-high school plans rest on whether or not they receive the financial aid needed to make going to college a reality," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "This year's updated deadline supports

students who have reported challenges completing this year's new FAFSA, and the move is part of larger efforts to remove financial barriers to the life-changing opportunities that higher education offers."

The extended priority deadline for MASSGrant comes in response to challenges that students are facing as they work to complete the significantly updated FAFSA. Students who qualify for MASSGrant and apply by the July 1, 2024 priority deadline are guaranteed to receive financial assistance from this program. Students who cannot complete the FAFSA due to their immigration status can complete the MASFA to apply for state need-based financial aid.

"We're happy to allow more time for FAFSA completion this year to support our students, families, and those in our K-12 schools and educational community who work tirelessly to help with FAFSA completion," said Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler. "The Healey-Driscoll Administration, in partnership with the Legislature, is committed to helping students access higher education. We are hopeful that students will apply for financial aid and take advantage of the many expanded opportunities to attend college more affordably."

"Our message to students and families continues to remain the same: fill out the FAFSA as soon as possible," said Commissioner of Higher Education Noe Ortega. "This year's extended deadline responds to feedback from students, campuses and other partners about this

year's unique challenges with FAFSA completion. We want students to know there are significant financial aid dollars available for those who qualify, and that persevering through completing the FAFSA is worth it."

"This updated MASSGrant priority deadline is welcome news," said Elementary and Secondary Education Acting Commissioner Russell D. Johnston. "I hope students, especially first generation college students, will see the extended deadline and the Administration's significant expansion of financial aid and realize that public higher education is within reach."

Along with Massachusetts' longstanding MASSGrant program, the Healey-Driscoll Administration has brought historic increases in student financial aid. In August 2023, the administration launched MassReconnect, which makes community college tuition and fees free for students ages 25 and older without prior degrees, regardless of income. Then in November 2023, the administration launched MASSGrant Plus Expansion that provides free tuition and fees to Pell Grant-eligible students at all Massachusetts public colleges and universities (not including room and board) along with a \$1,200 allowance for books and supplies. The expansion of MASSGrant Plus also cuts tuition and fees in half for middle-income families earning an adjusted gross income between \$73,000 and \$100,000 annually.

"Extending the MASSGrant deadline puts higher education within reach for more students and families in our Commonwealth at a

moment when we should be doing everything in our power to make college accessible to every resident. I'm proud to live in a Commonwealth where education is a priority, and I applaud the Healey-Driscoll Administration for extending this deadline and giving families more time to complete their FAFSA," said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland).

"As a former public school teacher, I understand firsthand the importance of ensuring equitable access to education," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "I applaud the Healey-Driscoll Administration for extending the state's application deadline as it will be impactful for students most in need of financial support to make college a reality."

"I applaud the Healey-Driscoll Administration's action to ensure as many students as possible have the opportunity to complete a FAFSA and to keep the doors to higher education wide open to students regardless of their financial situation," said Senator Jo Comerford (D-Amherst), Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education.

"The college application process has always been a challenging time for students and their families, this year made more difficult by the new FAFSA form rollout," said House Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education Dave Rogers (D-Cambridge). "I commend the Healey-Driscoll Administration for extending the MASSGrant priority deadline and, more generally, for partnering with the House to expand access to higher education significantly."

"We should be doing everything in our power to make applying to college and financial aid as accessible and simple as possible, said State Senator Jason Lewis, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Education. "I am proud that the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the State Legislature have been allocating significant funding and resources to make public higher education more accessible in Massachusetts. Extending the priority deadline for MASSGrant will allow more students to receive this financial support from the state to be able to attend college."

"I join with my col-

leagues in the House of Representatives as we welcome all tools available to aid students and their families to meet the challenges of financial concerns and, more importantly, the great opportunities of higher education," said State Representative Denise Garlick, House Chair of the Joint Committee on Education.

How to complete the FAFSA for students and their families

- High school students are encouraged to inquire with their school counselor about applying for financial aid and applying to college. Additional resources are available for students looking for assistance completing the FAFSA, including the below contacts:

- MassEdCO serves students who are low-income and first-generation to college. Students can find local assistance with college access by entering their zip code on the MassEdCO website: [Massachusetts Education & Career Opportunities, Inc. \(MassEdCo\)](http://MassachusettsEducation.org).

- Watch the "FAFSA How to" videos.

- FAFSA Day Massachusetts: fafsaday@gmail.com

- The Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA): (800) 449-MEFA (6332), collegeplanning@mefa.org

- The Department of Higher Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA): (617) 391-6070, osfa@osfa.mass.edu

Students are encouraged to attend an upcoming free, virtual FAFSA Day MA event, where they can receive personalized help from a financial aid professional. DHE recommends these three steps to students and families:

1. Create an FSA ID. At least a week before attending a FAFSA completion event, create your Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID if you don't have one. This ID allows you to log in and complete a FAFSA. It takes a few days for your account to be activated, so please start this process a week in advance of trying to complete your FAFSA. For instructions on creating the FSA ID, visit studentaid.gov. If applicable, have your Social Security number ready.

2. Sign up for a FAFSA completion event. Sign up for a virtual, free FAFSA Day MA event on April 30 or May 13 by following this link. You can look

for similar events on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) website. Another option is to ask your school counselor if there are any upcoming FAFSA completion events in your community.

3. Gather your documents. Visit this link for a list of documents you should have with you when you complete the FAFSA. You do NOT need to submit these items to the federal government, but you may need the information on them.



"Extending the deadline of the MASSGrant financial aid program by the DHE is another example of how the Healey-Driscoll Administration is putting the Commonwealth's students first," said John D. Keenan, President of Salem State University and Chair of the State University Council of Presidents. "With FAFSA delays, this has been a challenging year for all students but particularly for those that attend state universities as so many of them are first generation to college. The MASSGrant extension will provide families with a clearer picture of how they can obtain their bachelor's degree, a dream within reach for many."

"I applaud the Healey-Driscoll Administration for allowing Massachusetts college-bound students and families more time to complete the FAFSA and to qualify for the MASSGrant program," said UMass President Marty Meehan. "Our goal is to ensure that qualified students can leverage every bit of financial aid that is available to them, and this extension will help realize that. In a similar spirit, UMass campuses have also extended their deposit deadlines for entering students."

"Given the challenging rollout of FAFSA, any and all support and additional time we can provide to students and families in the Commonwealth is crucial," said Rob McCarron, president and CEO of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts. "Attending and graduating from a college or university can bring life-changing opportunities, and state financial aid programs, such as MassGrant, provides much-needed support, making financial aid critical for all deserving students."

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Massachusetts House passes bill authorizing Chapter 90 funding

Special to the Times-Free Press

The Massachusetts House of Representatives passed a bill that includes \$200 million for the state's Chapter 90 program, which provides municipalities with a funding source for transportation-related improvements, including road and bridge repairs, as well as \$175 million for specific programs. The bill also appropriates \$25 million for the rural roads program established in last year's Chapter 90 legislation, which provides funding to rural communities in addition to the standard Chapter 90 distribution.

"Providing funding for critical infrastructure projects through investments in the Commonwealth's public transportation, roads, and bridges is one of the most important responsibilities that we have as members of the Legislature," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "I'm proud of the support for regional infrastructure that this legislation provides, and of the funding that it allocates for the purchasing of electric vehicles by transit authorities. I want to thank Chairman Straus and my colleagues in the House, for prioritizing this vital

legislation." "Through this bill, the House provides cities and towns funding to maintain bridges and roads while advancing transportation accessibility and electric vehicle acquisition," said Representative Adrian Madaro (D-East Boston). "I look forward to seeing the City of Boston use these dollars to address our transportation network."

This legislation authorizes \$150 million in programs that will support various transportation-related projects. This includes \$25 million for each of the following:

- Municipal Pavement Program, which focuses on the improvement of municipally owned state numbered routes
- Municipal Small Bridge Program, which provides financial support to cities and towns for small bridge replacement, preservation, and rehabilitation projects
- Complete Streets Funding Program, which provides technical assistance and construction funding to municipalities for streets that provide safe and accessible options for all travel modes such as walking, biking, transit, and vehicles

- Municipal Bus Enhancement Program, which provides grant funding to towns to build out infrastructure related to mass transit by bus, such as bus shelters, curb reconfiguration, bus lanes, and signal prioritization
- Mass Transit Access Grant Program, which provides grants to municipalities for design and construction for improvements to access commuter rail stations or other mass transit stations, such as parking lots, drop-off and

pick-up zones, bike storage infrastructure, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure

- Municipal/RTA EV Grant Program, which provides grants to Regional Transit Authorities and municipalities for the purchase of electric vehicles and related charging equipment

Having passed the House of Representatives 155-0, the bill now goes to the Senate for their consideration.

Wu to attend climate summit at the Vatican to showcase Boston's leadership on climate action to global audience

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu today shared the events she will participate in while attending a climate summit at the Vatican, hosted by Pope Francis, "From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience." Mayor Wu will give remarks for a discussion called "Governance, Energy," as part of Vatican Summit Session VII - Best Practice in Governance and co-chair a discussion called Session XI - Financing Resiliency. As a participant at the summit, Mayor Wu will showcase Boston as a champion on climate action, while learning from other global leaders about best practices. A key part of Boston's Green New Deal is ensuring that the City's work supports the climate, livability and opportunity of Boston's neighborhoods for residents, taking action to address environmental protection while also enhancing public health, housing affordability, better public transit options, and access to green jobs.

the world to participate in Session XII - Voices of the Youth.

"As the climate crisis takes on growing urgency across the globe, communities must come together to take collective action for a safer, brighter future," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Boston is proof of what's possible for cities tackling the climate crisis while creating green jobs and healthier communities. I'm honored to represent Boston at this important convening led by Pope Francis, and look forward to shining a spotlight on our community's work and also bringing home solutions from innovative cities around the world."

Mayor Wu is champion of climate action for Boston. The City's leadership has delivered results through growing its PowerCorps green jobs program and Boston's Community Choice Electricity program, transitioning to electric school buses and vehicles, decarbonizing existing buildings and adopting green building standards for new construction, launching networked geothermal energy in public housing, enhancing Boston's green spaces and building green infrastructure to protect against flooding, bolstering electric vehicle infrastructure, and aggressively fighting for federal funding. Mayor Wu has set an ambitious agenda.

Mayor Wu's commitment to climate action advances sustainability, resilience, and environmental justice. Last month, Mayor Wu shared her FY25

Budget which included groundbreaking investments in climate action and adaptation. These investments range from new personnel investments, such as a park administrator and six new maintenance staff to maintain Franklin Park, to transformative Capital investments, such as a new \$75 million City fund that leverages State and Federal climate resilience grants. Under Mayor Wu's leadership, the City will enhance climate resilience across Boston to prepare for cli-

mate change while supporting the lives of Boston residents.

The international conference is organized by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences under the leadership of UMass Boston Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Ram Ramanathan, Distinguished Research Professor at UC San Diego and climate solutions scholar at Cornell University. Pope Francis will preside over the summit.

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STATE REP. ADRIAN MADARO HOSTS CAMPAIGN RECEPTION

State Rep. Adrian Madaro hosted a campaign fundraiser at Carrie Nation on Beacon Street, Boston.

A large crowd of colleagues in state government, supporters, and friends packed the function room for the reception. Among the attendees was Rep. Madaro's wife, attorney Ariel Madaro, whom he met while both were undergraduate students at prestigious Tufts University where they received their degrees.

Also a graduate of Suffolk University Law School, Adrian Madaro represents the entire East Boston neighborhood in

the Mass. House of Representatives. He is the chair-

person of the Joint Com-

mittee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery.



House Ways and Means Committee Chair Aaron Michlewitz and Rep. Adrian Madaro are pictured at the campaign reception.



Rep. Adrian Madaro and his wife, Ariel Glantz Madaro.



Rep. Adrian Madaro welcomes Kate Alicante (left) and Dana Mauch to his campaign reception at Carrie Nation.



Frank Magaletta, Rep. Adrian Madaro, and Hung Goon.



Former state senator Joseph Boncore (left) was among the guests attending the campaign reception for Rep. Adrian Madaro.

FRESH AND LOCAL

Breeding reality check

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

A recent social media post anthropomorphized several dogs, explaining what they were bred to do and how hard it is to live in a world without that work. It ends with a plea that people do a breed reality check before they buy or adopt a dog.

Responsible Selection

Read about the breed's history or the predominant breeds for a canine with a generous gene pool. We still turn to our ancient copy of "The Roger Caras Dog Book" when someone asks about a breed.

In addition to an expert narrative about each breed, Caras rates each from one to ten for three key factors: the amount of coat care and exercise required and the suitability for apartment life. Consider those aspects of living with the dog you think you want.

When you see one of

your favored breeds in the wild, start a conversation with the guardian and ask about the best and worst aspects of living with their dog. What they find a problem, like the need for lots of exercise, may be perfect for you. Or, something they think is worth the time and money, such as regular professional grooming or the cost of feeding a large canine, may not fit your budget. Dog professionals like dog walkers and groomers can be good sources of information, and a veterinarian can tell you about the health problems associated with the breed.

A rescue group is another excellent source of the information you need to make a sound decision. We would ask those guardians why the dogs they re-home were surrendered. In the case of the West Highland White Terrier rescues we've fostered and placed, there have been problems with children (who can

bring out the dog's prey instinct,) allergy issues, and not understanding that these are not necessarily lap dogs but were bred to be very independent and hunt vermin.

From the Dog's Point of View

In the post, the beagle explained that his work was to howl and bark to lead hunters to their prey, but today, when he does that, he is wrong and doesn't understand why. Caras warns, "A beagle loves a good howling session and may tend to do a solo when left alone."

The Jack Russel Terrier explained that he is not a quiet living room dog. He was meant to hunt vermin (some larger than he is) and is tired of being scolded for the high energy his work requires. This breed suffered from media exposure when Moose, an incredibly well-trained canine actor, played Eddie on the sitcom Frasier.



While Westies may look cute and cuddly, they are actually very independent, intelligent, and strong-willed. For many, a Bichon Frise is a better choice.

Wikipedia points out that Moose's original owners surrendered him because he was too hard to handle. "He could not be house trained; he chewed everything; he dug and barked a lot; and he was constantly escaping and climbing trees."

The Labrador Retriever reminds us she was not meant to sit around the house and get fat. She

wants to run, dive into the water, and bring back a duck or a floating toy. Karas rates the Lab as a ten out of ten with the need for exercise and finds it suitable for apartment life only if given a lot of exercise and occasional retrieving work.

The post ended with a dog's plea to think carefully before choosing a dog: "I'm a dog from the

21st century, yes, but deep inside me, the one who fought, the one who hunted, the one who pulled sleds, the one who guided and protected a herd still lives within."

Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.

NFPA announces guidelines about safe electrical vehicle charging at home

As electric vehicles (EV) enter our roadways, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has introduced a series of free resources,

guidelines, and information to help raise awareness about EV fires and safe EV charging practices at home.

According to the Inter-

national Energy Agency, global sales of electric vehicles exceeded 10 million in 2022 and are expected to grow in the coming years. At the same time, consumer concerns about the fire safety risk of EVs are increasing. Lithium-ion batteries, the most widely used and reliable source of energy for electric vehicles, are central to questions about safety.

"It is widely known that electric vehicles provide environmental and cost-effective benefits," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of Outreach and Advocacy at NFPA. "However, as fires involving EVs are reported in the news, concerns about the risks they pose persist. Through advocacy efforts

that highlight our new online resources and information, NFPA is working to better educate the public about the risks associated with EVs and other devices that use lithium-ion batteries, along with ways to use them safely."

The new online resources from NFPA feature more detailed information about lithium-ion batteries, EV maintenance, and what tips consumers can follow to stay safe when charging their electric vehicle at home. Resources for safety educators and consumers, including a safety tip sheet and social media cards, are all free and downloadable. A free training course is also available to the public that helps address some of

the common concerns and myths about owning an electrical vehicle, including safety features, charge types, and battery life.

NFPA recommends these tips when charging electric vehicles at home to help prevent fires:

- Before charging an electric vehicle at home, have a qualified electrician check your electrical system to see if it can handle charging.

- Install charging equipment in safe locations. Keep away from busy areas and things that could catch fire.

- Use devices that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory.

- Read and follow all manufacturer directions.
- Check chargers and

cords for damage before using. Never use if damaged.

- Do not use more than one plug or extension cords with the charger.

- Keep charging items out of reach of children and animals when not in use.

- Cover charging station outlet to keep water out.

Learn more about electric vehicle fire safety, find training information, and download the free safety tip sheet at nfpa.org/evsafetyinfo.

Information on the safe use of smaller devices that use lithium-ion batteries such as computers, smart phones, e-bikes and e-scooters, can be found at nfpa.org/lithiumionsafety and nfpa.org/ebikes.

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