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THE NORTH END REGIONAL REVIEW

EMAIL: DEB@REVEREJOURNAL.COM
EDITOR@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

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NEMPAC'S 10th annual Soirée celebrates 'Cabaret in the City'

Special to the Regional Review

The North End Music & Performing Arts Center (NEMPAC) hosted its 10th annual Soirée on Thursday, September 24 on the historic Paul Revere Mall with a night of music, conviviality, and community.

Celebrating a decade of this signature fundraiser, this year's Soirée brought the community together for "Cabaret in the City," an evening inspired by cabaret, the Great American Songbook, and musical theatre. The 10th Annual Soirée also launched NEMPAC's 25th Anniversary Season, paving the way for another year of arts education, performance, and community building.

The event raised $105,100 with more than 250 attendees present. Proceeds directly support NEMPAC's Community Music School and Performing Arts Center, helping make exceptional music education and performing arts programs accessible and affordable to students and artists of all ages and abilities.

Honoring Community Champions

The evening also recognized two distinguished contributors to Boston's arts, education, and civic communities:

• Traci Walker Griffith, Executive Director of the Eliot K-8

(NEMPAC *Pg. 4*)

COURTESY PHOTO

Cabaret performers - Far Left Calvin Limuel (pianist), left Becca Allen (vocalist), right Abigail Whitney Smith (vocalist), and far right Samuel Batista (saxophonist)

Old North Church holds Blessing of the Animals

By Phil Orlandella

Many local pet owners gathered at the Paul Revere Mall (Prado) to participate in the annual Old North Church's Blessing of the Animals under a warm sunny day.

Many two-and-four-legged animals took part in the North End tradition that blends colonial history with a history with a moment of community warmth.

The blessing took place a few steps from the Paul Revere statue where the Rev. Dr. Matthew Cadwell blessed a variety of pets.

The service opened with prayers for pets who have passed away, followed by a pet procession in the Mall and then the blessing.

Rev. Cadwell also spoke on the traditional roots

(BLESSING *Pg. 8*)

COURTESY PHOTOS

The Reverend Dr. Matthew P. Cadwell, Vicar of Old North Church, lead the service and talked of the significance of the blessing tradition and Old North's role in the North End community.

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EDITORIAL

TWO MORE REASONS TO GET A FLU SHOT

'Tis the season for respiratory illnesses -- the flu, COVID, and RSV -- for which vaccinations offer the best line of defense for the vast majority of individuals.

In addition to the protections that vaccines provide for these diseases, studies have shown that there are two other significant benefits from receiving a flu shot.

A recent study has indicated that for older Americans, there is a strong correlation between flu vaccinations and a lower risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and dementia. The study revealed that the high-dose flu shot, which is specifically recommended for those over 65, can reduce the risk of developing those debilitating diseases by up to 40%.

This finding comes on top of studies that have demonstrated the benefits of an annual flu shot for our hearts and cardiovascular system.

We urge our readers to look past the political noise and misinformation surrounding vaccines. The flu, COVID, and RSV account for tens of thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations annually in the United States.

Vaccinations not only protect us directly from respiratory illnesses, but they also have additional benefits for our aging bodies. A day or two of muscle soreness is a small price to pay for the life-saving protections that these vaccines will provide.

AFGHANISTAN, IRAN -- AND THE U.S.?

The announcement last week by U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth that the military will livestream the execution by firing squad of Nidal Malik Hasan, the former U.S. Army psychiatrist who killed 13 and wounded 32 in a shooting at Ft. Hood in Texas in 2009, is unfathomable.

The last public execution in this country occurred in the 1930s when 20,000 people witnessed the hanging of a Black man in Kentucky amidst a festive atmosphere. The sickening spectacle of that execution reverberated across the country and forever ended public executions in the U.S.

State-sponsored public executions today belong to the realm of only two nations, Afghanistan and Iran, where the barbaric treatment of those accused of a crime remains the same as it was in the Dark Ages.

Even worse, the livestreaming of executions became the calling card of terrorist organizations such as ISIS, who did it solely to promote fear and terror. Has America now become the new ISIS?

But what is most disturbing about livestreaming a public execution is that America's children will be able to view a brutal event that will leave a lasting trauma in the psyche of many of them for the rest of their lives.

The ultimate irony of Hegseth's perverse thinking is that instead of deterring terrorist acts, it will only serve to inspire the terrorists, for whom martyrdom via a live streamed execution would represent the pinnacle of their cause.

Even among our own citizenry, broadcasting an execution by firing squad via live stream risks further entrenching the culture of violence that already pervades our society.

Our feeling about this sordid situation aligns with the view expressed by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who stated the issue very succinctly: "The public execution even of one who has done grave harm will only further undermine the moral fabric of our nation and be a blight on the conscience of its people."

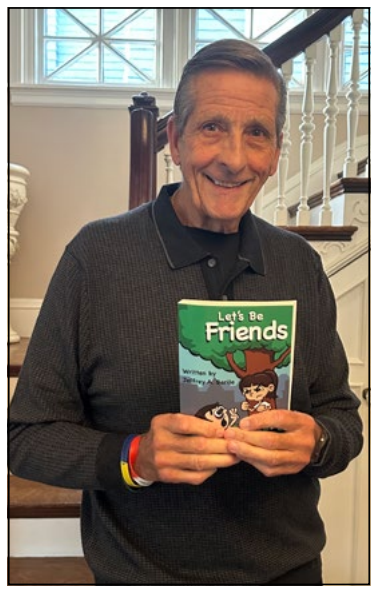
The Independent Newspaper Group reserves the right to edit letters for space and clarity. We regret that we cannot publish unsigned letters. Please include your street and telephone number with your submission. The Independent Newspaper Group publishes columns, viewpoints and letters to the editor as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

North End Historical Society member pens book on life in the area in early 1900

Special to the Regional Review

"The story of Anthony Santoro, Jr. and Gina Marie Volpe began on a sunny Thursday afternoon in the fall of 1918. On this beautiful day in Boston's North End, after a long, busy day at school, Anthony eagerly walked down a bustling Hanover Street, clutching a shiny nickel in his pocket."

And so begins "Let's Be Friends" a book written by former Lynn elementary school principal, Jeffrey Barile. Jeff's paternal grandparents emigrated from Italy in the early1900s, his grandfather from Naples and his nana from Salerno. They were married in Boston, but Jeff's grandfather did not play a significant role in raising his four sons or his grandson. However, his 5'1"nana set the tone for her family's pride in their Italian heritage.



Jeff Barile holds a copy of his new book, "Let's Be Friends."

Jeff is a member the North End Historical Society and a supporter of the recently opened North

(Book *Pg.* 7)

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PUBLISHER: Debra DiGregorio
deb@reverejournal.com

PRESIDENT: Stephen Quigley
editor@beaconhilltimes.com

REPORTERS AND CONTRIBUTORS:
Stephen Quigley | Phil Orlandella | Cary Shuman

PHONE 781-485-0588 - FAX 781-485-1403
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News Briefs

CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN AT THE WEST END COMMUNITY CENTER

The West End Community Center invites families and neighbors to celebrate Halloween with two upcoming events filled with costumes, entertainment, and community fun!

West End Halloween Dance – Friday, October 23, from 6:30–8:30 PM

The Halloween fun starts early with the West End Halloween Dance! Neighbors of all ages are invited to hit the dance floor for an evening of music, dancing, and community connection. Costumes are encouraged but completely optional—so come dressed for Halloween or simply come as you are and dance the night away!

Kids Halloween Celebration – Saturday, October 31, at 10:30 AM

Bring the kids in costume for a morning of Halloween fun at the West End Community Center! The celebration will feature Bwana Iguana and his fascinating reptiles, followed by magic and amazement with Daniel Jaye. Kids can also enjoy a Halloween craft and spend a fun morning with friends and neighbors. It's a great way to celebrate Halloween together!

Both events will take place at the West End Community Center, 75 Blossom Court, Boston. The Center welcomes neighbors from the West End and surrounding communities to join in its programs and activities.

For more information, contact the West End Community Center by email: info@westendcommunitycenter.com

Boston Election Department issues reminders ahead of State Election, issues call for poll workers

The Boston Election Department is reminding voters that the State Election will take place on Tuesday, November 3, 2026. This election will elect the Commonwealth's Governor, a United States Senator, members of the United States House of Representatives, members of the Massachusetts General Court, and other local offices. This election will also feature nine ballot questions. Voters are encouraged to consider their choices before heading to the polls on Election Day.

Poll Worker Recruitment

The Election Department is recruiting poll workers for the upcoming State Election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Poll workers are paid a stipend ranging from $160-200 in addition to payment for required training. Being a poll worker is a meaningful way to give back, participate in democracy, and help neighbors vote in elections. Residents can request to be assigned a location close to their home. Bilingual applicants are strongly encouraged.

Residents can apply or get more information at boston.gov/pollworkers, by emailing the Election Department at pollworkers@boston.gov, or by calling 617-635-0905.

Voter Registration

The voter registration deadline for the State Election on November 3 is Saturday, October 24, 2026.

Voters may register:

- In person: At the Boston Election Department, 1 City Hall Square, Room 241, Boston, MA 02201, by Saturday, October 24, 5:00 p.m.
- Online: At voteinma.com by Saturday, October 24, 11:59 p.m.
- By mail: Registration forms must be postmarked by October 24

In-Person Early Voting

In-person early voting will run for two weeks from Saturday, October 17 through Friday, October 30. Registered Boston voters can vote at any early voting location.

Boston City Hall will serve as the primary early voting site, with voting on:

- Mondays, October 19 and 26; Wednesdays, October 21 and 28; and Fridays, October 23 and 30, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Tuesdays, October 20 and 27; and Thursdays, October 22 and 29 from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Voters are encouraged to enter Boston City Hall using the North side entrance on Congress Street (across from the Haymarket T-Station).

Additional early voting locations are available in neighborhoods throughout the city on the following dates:

- Saturday, October 17 and Sunday, October 18 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 20, and Thursday, October 22 from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 24 and Sunday, October 25 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 27, and Thursday,October 29 from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

All early voting sites are equipped with electronic poll books for voter check-in. Early voting locations will be well-staffed with poll workers and interpreters. All sites are fully accessible to voters with disabilities.

Vote By Mail Application

The vote by mail application deadline is Tuesday, October 27

(Elections *Pg. 15*)

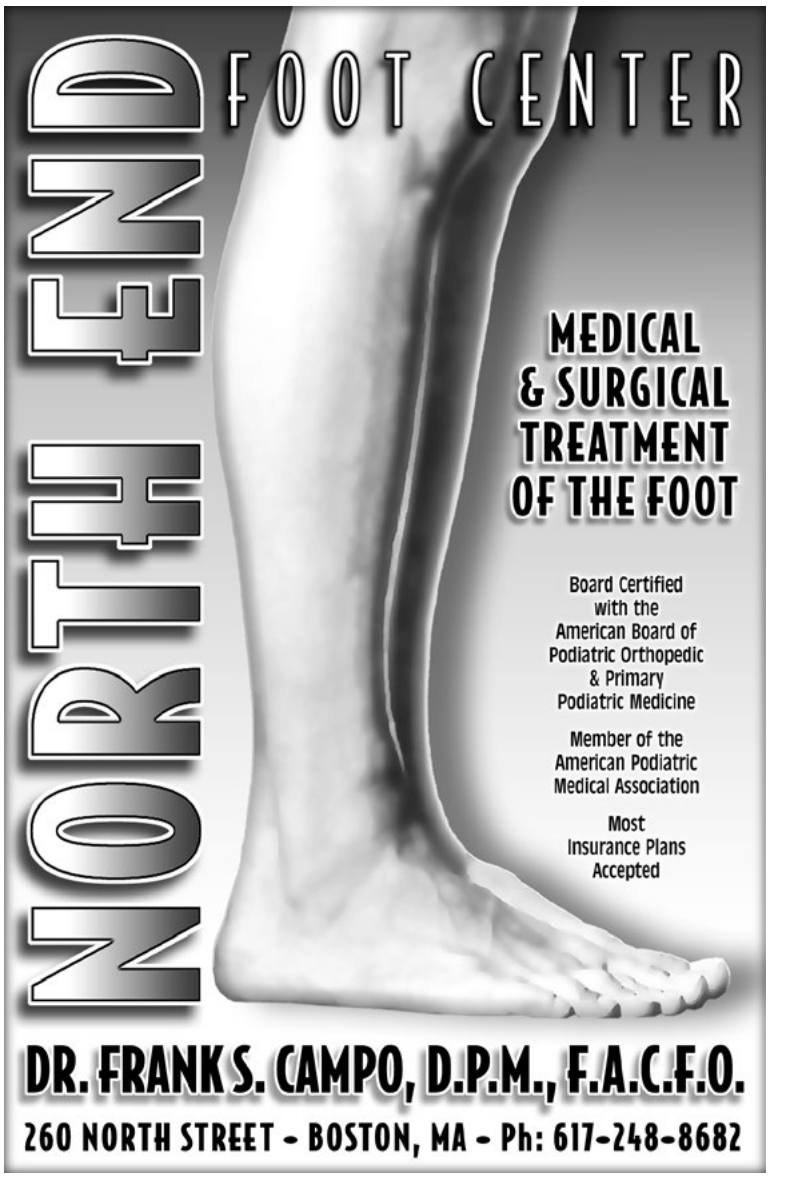
N.E.A.A. 2026 Fall Soccer

The 2026 North End Athletic Association Fall soccer program is the biggest it has ever been. "With over 230 players on 18 teams in 3 age groups it has grown beyond my wildest imagination." stated NEAA Sports Coordinator John Romano. We started playing in the outfield grass of the Little League Field on Saturday mornings, with coaches playing with the 9-12 group just to be able to field 2 teams. We now have 44 coaches, 6 Coordinators and several other volunteers that help keep the program going. Many of the coaches and some parents have even begun playing themselves after practices and on the weekends when we can squeeze them in on the crowded Puopolo Turf Field.

Soccer is one of 4 sports offered this Fall along with Girls Field Hockey, Flag Football and baseball clinics.

"We are especially grateful to all the volunteers who make the program such a huge success. We also couldn't make it so affordable with all kinds of great equipment without all of our sponsors.

Keep your eye out for the first eve North End Mayor's Cup Travel teams and their colorful uniforms. We practice Tuesdays and Thursday and play games on Saturday's and now coming are the aforementioned Mayor's Cup practices on Sundays and Mondays. Stop by and see some great programming on the North End pitch!



NEMPAC *(from Page 1)*

Innovation School, who retired this summer after more than 34 years of leadership advancing equity, arts education, and student success in Boston. NEMPAC has partnered with the Eliot to provide high-quality arts programming for students and families for several years.

• Robin Sidell, Chef and Owner of North Street Grille and a longtime North End community leader. Her longstanding support of local organizations, including NEMPAC, has included hosting neighborhood fundraisers, sponsoring concerts, and supporting the Jazz in the Park Summer Concert Series.

A Night of Music, Celebration, and Community

This year's "Cabaret in the City" theme brought the spirit of Boston's cabaret and musical theatre traditions to the Prado, with Becca Allen, Samuel Batista, Abigail Whitney Smith, Calvin Limuel, and members of NEMPAC's Summer Musical Theatre Troupe providing entertainment throughout the evening.

Reflecting on the warm and festive evening, NEMPAC Executive Director Sherri Snow shared: "Seeing our community come together to support the arts is incredibly inspiring. Nights like this don't just fuel our mission—they remind us what the creative spirit of NEMPAC and our community is all about. And it's especially meaningful when our supporters show up again and again."

Guests enjoyed a buffet dinner, curated libations, a raffle, and a live auction featuring exclusive items and experiences, along with a Fund-a-Need moment supporting NEMPAC's year-round programs. The evening's festivities were made possible by the generous support of NEMPAC's sponsors, event partners, and donors. The raffle featured dozens of donated bottles of prosecco from 90+ Cellars, each adorned with a hand-painted Broadway Playbill design by a local Boston artist. The celebration continued with an after-party at Mia Roof Deck, generously hosted by DePasquale Ventures.

One of the evening's most heartwarming highlights was a special performance by NEMPAC's Summer Musical Theatre Troupe students, who delighted the audience with "You Will Be Found" from Dear Evan Hansen and "When I Grow Up" from Matilda the Musical. After dedicating three weeks of their summer to rehearsing a full-length musical, the students proudly took the stage to share their hard work, creativity, and talent with an enthusiastic audience. Their performance was a wonderful celebration of the joy, confidence, and community that the arts inspire in NEMPAC's young students.

Supporting Arts Access Across Greater Boston

Funds raised at the Soirée support NEMPAC's year-round programs, reaching more than 2,900 artists of all ages and abilities through music lessons, musical theatre, school partnerships, youth development, and expanded programming at the Charlestown Working Theater. Support also helps sustain NEMPAC's professional performing arts season, including the Jazz in the Park Series, Opera on the Prado, and the Artist Series.

Led by more than 40 faculty members across a wide range of disciplines, these programs expand access to the transformative power of the arts. A special thank you to the 2026 NEMPAC Soirée sponsors and event partners:

Legend Sponsors: DePasquale Ventures and Seven Hills Farmstead

Encore Sponsors: Anonymous, enLabel Corporation, Pallas Capital Advisors

Spotlight Sponsors: Beacon Bank, The Chambers Family Foundation, Eastern Bank, Tony & Creelea Pangaro, Bud & Margaret Ris, and Andrea Waldstein & Davida Carvin

Event Partners: 90+ Cellars, Access Tent, Big Night Live, Boston Bottle, Catch Light Design, Falcetti Pianos, Imprint Studios, JNG Events & Design, and Simplistic Charm.

Joseph Vozzella, Audrey Tortolani, Neil Denenberg, Robyn Reed, Laurie Cadigan, and Meghan Denenberg.

Barb Peterlin, John Romano Jr., Robin Sidell, Catherine Martin, and Doug Peterlin.

NEMPAC student Summer Musical Theatre Troupe performers.

NEMPAC'S 10TH ANNUAL SOIRÉE CELEBRATES 'CABARET IN THE CITY'

Honoree Traci Walker Griffith (retired Executive Director of the Eliot K-8 Innovation School).

Honoree Robin Sidell (owner and chef at North Street Grille) and presenter John Romano, Jr. (Vice Chair of NEMPAC's Board).

NEMPAC parent Sarah Hughes and her child Laylah who performed as part of the Summer Musical Theatre Troupe.

Bidder at the event.

Left Ciara D'Amico, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services, middle Sherri Snow, Executive Director of NEMPAC, and right Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata (and her new baby).

Emcee, Tony V.

NEMPAC Staff and Interns: Sherri Snow, Katie Raney, Bailey Kolapudi, Harriet Hung, Shannon Fitzgerald, Jhon Alvarado, Morgan Flynn, Trudy Miles, Rose-Marie Gomez, Stephen Allen, Pamela Feo, and Will Neely.

News, Notes and Whatever

BY PHIL ORLANDELLA

HARBOR TOWER CLIMATE PROJECT MET THE NOR'EASTER CHALLENGE

No sooner than the residents of Harbor Towers held a celebration of the 20 million completions of its climate resilience project, they experienced the brunt of a Nor'easter that made its way up the coast, creating high winds and heavy rain.

The project designed to protect the waterfront structure from rising sea levels and future coast storms, met the test, protecting the building as it was projected to do.

Harbor Towers residents, without any help from any government agencies, took the bulls by the horns and made this project a reality that has proven to be effective.

Harbor Towers has been designated as a critical flood pathway location.

ROMANO COORDINATES AMAZING CAR SHOW

John Romano Jr. for many years has been coordinating successful community programs, activities and events in the North End, especially for the North End Athletic Association (NEAA).

He has now turned his attention and fostered his skills with the Wilmington Sons and Daughters of Italy/Dominators Car Club, annual car show.

Romano joins WSDOI President to coordinate an amazing collection of Hot Rods, classic cars, muscle cars, custom and trucks, at 126 Micclesen Drive, Town Hall Parking lot in Wilmington from 9am to 2pm.

Trophies will be awarded IN many categories of vehicles that pay $20 to enter a show car. Admission to the event is free.

"We expect over 200 cars in the show," both coordinators said. "Come and see the amazing collection of individual vehicles," they added.

There will be a BBQ with hotdogs, Italian sausage and more.

COLUMBUS PARK/ LONG WHARF DISCUSS CLIMATE ISSUES

Many local residents turned out for a meeting with city officials to discuss the future of Christopher Columbus Park located on Atlantic Avenue.

Signs were placed throughout the park asking for help and ideas from residents.

The city is looking forward to making Columbus Park and Long Wharf resilient against rising tides and storm surges, residential input is needed.

The city held the meeting to seek vision for the future of the park and the Waterfront in general.

SMALL TALK AT LIBRARY

Author and communications expert Kim Kerrigan presented Small Talk That Pays Big Dividends at the North End Library.

She helped participants reduce phone dependency and strengthen face to face communication.

It covered active listening, productive speaking feedback, tone of voice and many other subjects.

NEMPAC SOIRE SPONSORS

The North End Music and Performing Arts Center (NEMPAC) Soire fundraiser held in Paul Revere Mall (Prado) was a huge success because of generous sponsors and ticket sales.

Legend Sponsor: DePasquale Ventures and Seven Hill Farmstand.

Emere Sponsors: Anonymous, Eplahel Corporation and Pallas Capital Advisors.

Spotlight Sponsors: Andrea Waldstein and David Carvin, Beacon Bank, Bud and Margaret Ris, The Chambers Family Foundation, Eastern Bank, Tony and Creelea Pangaro.

AUTHOR TALKS AT THE LIBRARY

Author Talk: David Krub Little Mister Victory on October 21 from 6pm to 7pm at the North End Library, 25 Parmenter Street.

BLUE TRELLIS LIGHTS TO BE TURNED ON

One of the most exciting holiday events is the lighting of the beautiful blue trellis lights at Columbus Park on the Greenway.

The lights will once again be turned on to illuminate winter nights and celebrate the holidays.

There will be special guests, festive music, snacks and some warm drinks.

This special tradition is a nice event, don't miss it.

GIVING THANKS COMING TOGETHER

Friends of Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway will hold a giving thanks, community coming together at the park on Sunday, November 15 at 2pm.

Meet and greet old and new friends. Bring a hat, scarf or gloves for the ABCD Winter Drive.

NEWRA ELECTS OFFICERS

At its October monthly meeting the North End/Waterfront Residents' Association (NEWRA) elected officers for two-year terms.

Elected were: President Cheryl Delgreco, Vice President Jenn Crampton, Secretary Cara Munnis, Treasurer Mary Ann D'Amato and Sergeant at Arms Anne Louise Puopolo.

BECOME A COLUMBUS PARK CORPORATE SPONSOR

There are many corporate and other types of sponsors for Christopher Columbus Park supporting the maintenance and activities year-round.

Their commitment and contributions make it possible for the Friends of Christopher Columbus Park beautifully maintained.

Tree and bench sponsorships are also available. Interested email info@foccp.org.

BAD BUNNY BINGO PLAYED AT NE LIBRARY

Bad Bunny Bingo had a great time playing a game of musical bingo featuring the songs of the character at the North End library.

One lucky winner received the prize of Debi Tirar Ma's Fotos on vinyl instead of calling out numbers, snippets of Bad Bunny songs were played and players marked down the correct song on their bingo card.

NEAA SOCCER PROGRAM BIGGER THAN EVER

With over 230 players on 18 teams, in three age groups the NEAA 2026 Soccer program has grown beyond expectation and is now the biggest program the longtime community volunteer group has ever put together.

There are now 44 coaches, 6 coordinators and several other volunteers making the program work.

NEAA Sports Coordinator John Romano Jr oversees this program.

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What a 32-hour workweek means to Boston residents

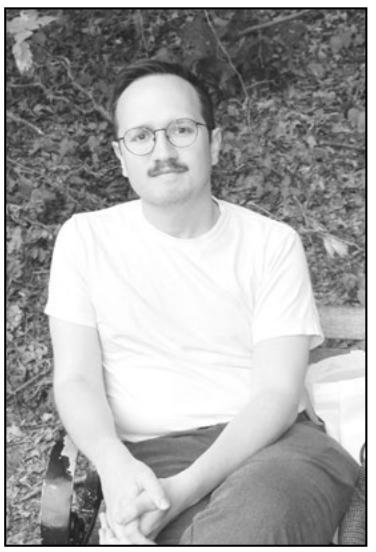
By Anna Gohman, Miles Dakss and Keona Hayes

Boston residents seem enthusiastic about the idea of a national 32-hour workweek reintroduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Rep. Mark Takano of California, but expressed concern about how it would be implemented.

Residents from Fenway, downtown and Jamaica Plain interviewed cited more opportunities for income, a better work-life balance and less stress as reasons for supporting the proposed bill. But they expressed skepticism about the economic impact it would have on supporting their families, workers and their communities.

"I think it would be great for us to push back against this culture of being productive absolutely all the time, which I think ironically makes us less productive in the long run," said Aaron Mueller, 30, a resident in downtown Boston.

Sanders and Takano recently reintroduced the "Thirty Two Hour Workweek Act," something they had proposed going back as far as 2021. According to their proposal, which suggests gradually changing the typical 40-hour work week to 32 hours over four years, people would work reduced hours while still earning the same pay and benefits of a 40-hour work week. The proposal would also lower when employees could become eligible for overtime pay and double their wages after 12-hour shifts.



ANNA GOHMAN PHOTOS

Aaron Mueller, 30, sits by Jamaica Pond on Saturday, Sept. 19. Mueller, an Assistant Professor of Computer Science at Boston University, said a 32-hour workweek could impact social norms of the community.

In introducing their proposal, the two Democratic lawmakers cited success stories of a 32-hour work week from elsewhere in the world. A pilot study conducted in the United Kingdom in 2022 found that over 70 percent of the 3,000 workers included in the study reported being more satisfied with their time and less burnout, while the businesses that participated in the study saw an average increase in revenue of 35 percent.

Meghan Napier, 37, reads by Jamaica Pond on Saturday, Sept. 19. Napier, a senior co-op counselor at Northeastern University's Khoury College of Computer Sciences, said a 32-hour workweek could improve the quality of life for herself and her students by decreasing stress and anxiety.

When Sanders last introduced the bill, in 2024, Louisiana Senator Bill Cassidy — who lost his Senate seat in the primary earlier this year — slammed the idea, saying it would "will destroy employers, forcing them to either ship jobs overseas or dramatically increase prices to try and stay afloat."

Residents interviewed for this article cited more opportunities for income, a better work life balance and less stress as reasons for supporting the proposed bill,

Kervins Boutin, 25, sits by Jamaica Pond on Saturday, Sept. 19. Boutin discussed how a 32-hour workweek would have affected his previous work as a facilities maintenance professional.

saying they hope its implementation will streamline productivity in the workplace and quality of life.

While some residents said a 32-hour workweek would help modernize outdated labor standards, others expressed concerns about changing traditional social norms.

"Throughout most of humankind, people worked far more than 40 hours a week. What are you going to do [for] that extra 8 hours?" said Beacon Hill resident Paul Cohon.

Meghan Napier, 37, a Jamaica Plain resident, disagreed, calling the standard 40-hour work week "arbitrary" and "outdated."

"During the workweek, you have to commute, come back, do all this stuff, so you don't have time to do all the day-to-day things," she said. "I think I would almost just need a day to do just like errands that I can't get done during the week."

Similarly, Kervins Boutin, 25, a Boston-area resident on a visit to Jamaica Pond, said the additional time could create more opportunity to pursue productive interests that could also benefit their communities.

"People with freed-up time usually like to put it towards something productive," he said. "People are able to take on healthier sort of entrepreneurial roles and schedules."

Despite differing opinions about how a 32-hour workweek would affect workers and the economy, Boston residents largely agreed that more time outside of work could improve their quality of life.

For some, that extra day could mean more time with family, pursuing interests or catching up on responsibilities.

"It just gives you more time to catch up on life," said Fenway resident Mary Clang.

This story is part of a partnership between The North End Regional Review and the Boston University Department of Journalism's Newsroom program.

BOOK *(from Page 1)*

End Historical Museum. He is also a member of the Lynn Italian American Citizens Club, and he plays in the club's Wednesday night bocce league. In 2024, Jeff was recognized by the Lynn City Council for his contributions to the city's Italian community. It is these family and community experiences along with the reading of two famous North End authors; Stephen Puleo's book Dark Tide and Patricia Annino's book Italians of the North End that helped him shape his fictional story. Although, there is a nonfictional component to the story that won't surprise those who have read Dark Tide.

Briefly, the two protagonists are sixth-grade Italian immigrants living in Boston's North End in the early 1900s, and from that setting, their story addresses issues of immigration, poverty, bullying, friendship, and tragedy. Jeff maintains that those issues are as relevant today as they were in the 1900s. And, while the main characters are young, he thinks readers of all ages will enjoy Anthony and Gina's heartwarming story.

In honor of Italian Heritage Month, and with its connection to the North End, Jeffrey Barile is proud to announce that his latest book, Let's Be Friends is now available on Amazon in paperback and e-book format. https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0HFF75C2Y/

Also, proceeds from the sale of "Let's Be Friends" will be donated to the LIACC scholarship fund.

BLESSING *(from Page 1)*

in Saint Francis of Assisi's reverence for nature and the church's role in the community.

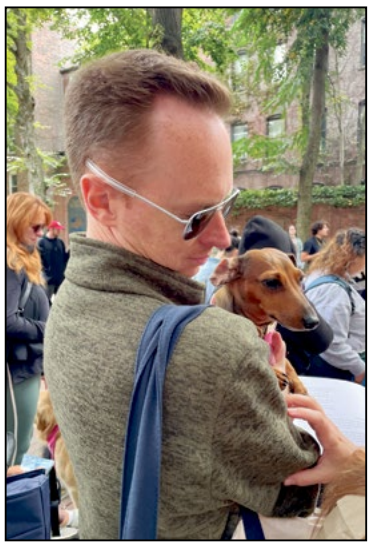
The Blessing of the Animals is a North End popular tradition that draws diverse faiths and backgrounds to honor the animals who have provided comfort and companionship to their owners and families.

Shown are scenes from the annual Old North Church's Blessing of the Animals.

COURTESY PHOTOS

OLD NORTH CHURCH HOLDS BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

COURTESY PHOTOS



ALL WELCOME - CHILDREN AND ADULTS

HALLOWEEN PARTY

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24. 2026 - 1:00 PM TO 3.00 PM
HANOVER AND BATTERY STREET

1.00 PM PARADE THROUGH THE STREETS
TICKETS FOR PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN TO EVERY CHILD

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IN CASE OF RAIN. PARTY WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 25

Harbor Towers cuts ribbon on $20M flood-barrier project

By Nicole Tobia

Mayor Michelle Wu joined residents of Harbor Towers Condominiums on Wednesday by cutting the ribbon on the downtown waterfront property's $20 million flood-resistance project that includes deployable barriers.

The ribbon-cutting was part of Deployables Day, a citywide gathering that highlights publicly and privately owned deployable flood barriers.

In recent years, the high-rise condominiums have experienced their share of damage because of flooding and severe storms. In 2018, floodwaters came within inches of the property, which prompted the condominium to act.

As concerns about rising tides have continued to grow, Harbor Towers decided to take the next step and install deployable flood barriers to protect the building's infrastructure.

"We have four of our largest and most impacted and important public spaces that have deployables in place and ready to go when the need is," Wu said. "And since we started the program, 11 private properties as well, with this one being one of the most significant."

As sea levels continue to rise and the threats of climate change become more apparent, Boston will continue its efforts to fight back and work to preserve the city, Wu said.

"The specifics are really real, and the benefit that Boston has is we already know what we need to do," Wu said. "We were way ahead of many other cities in really doing the hard work of putting those maps against our real-life conditions."

Norman Meisner, chairman of the Harbor Towers Board of Trustees, said residents of the 54-year-old towers received a "wake-up call" in the winter of 2018, when not one but two "one in a hundred-year storms" struck.

Meisner described the towers as likely the second-lowest elevation on Boston's waterfront, with Long Wharf being the lowest.

The trustees sought solutions to the threat of flooding and found that protecting the perimeter of the structures was the most feasible option. They brought on Weston & Sampson as their architect and engineer and Build Enclosure Science as their project manager. Commodore

Mayor Michelle Wu.

Norman Meisner.

The decision was made to protect the towers with a combination of permanent and deloyable protections.

The $20 million for the project came entirely from the condo owners, Meisner said. It is expected to protect the towers for the next 50 years.

Meisner said the project was completed "on time and within budget."

This story is part of a partnership between The North End Regional Review and the Suffolk University Department of Journalism program.

Harbor Towers Condominiums.

Wu announces return of Hub on Wheels

Special to the Regional Review

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the return of Hub on Wheels, a family-friendly bike ride starting on a car-free Storrow Drive and highlighting many parts of the City that aims to build community and celebrate Boston neighborhoods. All routes will conclude at a festival on City Hall Plaza, bringing riders together for a day of community, celebration, and fun. The return of Hub on Wheels is made possible in part due to the multi-year title sponsorship of Wayfair.

For more information and to sign up for updates, residents can visit this webpage. The Mayor made this announcement at the City's Ride & Chill event, a free, family-friendly day of biking and activities throughout Franklin Park sponsored by Wayfair and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. This announcement builds on Mayor Wu's work to make Boston a home for everyone.

"We are thrilled to announce a reimagined Hub on Wheels that will bring people together for a day of biking and community, with a car-free Storrow Drive, a ride through 13 neighborhoods, and a festival for all ages on City Hall Plaza," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm thankful to Wayfair for partnering with us to create more opportunities for our community members to get active, celebrate the unique beauty of our neighborhoods, build community, and create lifelong memories. We are excited to welcome back this cherished tradition, updated with the support of incredible community partners to reflect the diversity of everyone biking in Boston today."

"Hub on Wheels presents an amazing opportunity to see Boston from a new vantage point," said Chris Osgood, Interim Chief of Streets. "Traveling throughout the city, the routes offer a day of exploration, celebration, and adventure for the whole family. I want to thank Wayfair for their support of this event and the bike advocacy community for their partnership in helping us expand access to biking."

The return of Hub on Wheels is part of the City's broader efforts to create family-friendly streets, and provide free programming that builds community, expands access to biking, and connects residents and families with city services and resources. Hub on Wheels started in 2005 with hundreds of participants, after community advocates including Steve Gag, Steven Miller, Ed Demore, and Jeff Rosenblum built support for a citywide bike ride.. The annual event later became a critical program supporting Boston Bikes, a department launched in 2007 by Mayor Menino. After its launch, Hub on Wheels occurred every year through 2019 when it

(Hub *Pg. 12*)

Councilor Flynn pushes food-waste collection expansion

By Miles Dakss

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn is proposing an expanded Curbside Food Waste Collection Program intended to reduce food waste in the city and limit rodent issues in residential neighborhoods.

"It's an opportunity for us to address pest control issues, but also improving the environment, [and] providing cleaner and safer neighborhoods," Flynn said in an interview with The Beacon Hill Times.

Currently, Boston residents waste 130,000 tons of food each year, according to the city's 2024 Food Recovery Assessment, which explores opportunities to strengthen the food recovery ecosystem in Boston.

Virginie Forget, a Boston representative for Food Rescue US, said a large portion of wasted food comes from residents, not large food-related organizations.

One of the food waste containers.

"Food waste is the No. 1 material in our landfills," Forget said. "Food rotting in the landfills is responsible for a large amount of gas released in the atmosphere, whether it be CO2 or methane."

Forget said limiting food waste reduces greenhouse gas emissions, conserves usable food products and helps improve food security.

The city's free Curbside Food Waste Collection, which has been in operation since 2022, allows residents to place their scraps in green bins throughout the neighborhoods. Garbage to Garden Inc. picks up the bins.

Flynn said that the city's effort is not enough and that more needs to be done to address food waste in Boston, which he said increases the city's rodent population, damages the environment and causes quality of life headaches for residents.

"I certainly would like to see every family or every apartment or development and unit have composting," Flynn said. "Ultimately, that is my goal, to expand it citywide, where everybody is participating."

Flynn held a hearing in September that tackled food-waste issues, such as the lack of composting capacity in Boston, increasing pest control, and devising a better pickup system for the green bins.

Forget said that many people are unsure of how to properly dispose of their unwanted food, so they toss them into the trash bins, which rats and other rodents feast on.

"I live in the city, and it only takes a look in the street to see … the trash. It's not … put in the right bin to protect it from rat infestation," Forget said.

She added: "If food waste is not handled properly, then you're basically feeding [the rat] population that we're all trying to get rid of."

Flynn said rats in the neighborhoods are "a major problem."

"Separating food from traditional trash is a way for us to provide healthier neighborhoods and address the pest control crisis we have in the city," Flynn added.

Nick Scribani, 29, of Beacon Hill, said that while he has not heard of the city food-waste program or seen the "green boxes" on the streets, he said he has noticed a pest problem in Beacon Hill.

"Walking down the street, especially at night … you'll see a good amount of big rats just roaming the streets," said Scribani.

This story is part of a partnership between The North End Regional Review and the Boston University Department of Journalism's Newsroom program.

Gov. Healey calls on transmission utilities to immediately refund $1.5 billion owed to customers

Special to the Regional Review

Governor Maura Healey today called on Eversource, National Grid, and Unitil to immediately return Massachusetts customers' share of the estimated $1.5 billion in excessive profits owed to electric customers across New England. In a letter sent recently, Governor Healey urged the utilities to stop delaying refunds and provide a clear timeline for getting money back to customers, rather than waiting until the federal deadline next May.

The refunds follow a March 2026 decision by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which lowered the profits New England transmission utilities are allowed to earn on their investments after more than a decade of advocacy by the Attorney General's Office under then-Attorney General Healey and Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell. FERC ordered the utilities to refund customers for excessive profits paid by customers for more than a decade.

"Massachusetts families have been paying too much for too long, and they shouldn't have to wait another winter to get their money back," said Governor Maura Healey. "As Attorney General, I fought these excessive rates, and now federal regulators have ordered the utilities to pay customers back. I'm calling on these companies to stop the delays and return every cent owed to our residents. We're going to keep standing up for customers and fighting to lower their energy bills."

"As the state's ratepayer advocate, my office works to protect Massachusetts residents from excessive utility costs, including utility profits. This office has fought for years to secure this ruling, and now it's time for customers to get their money back. I support Governor Healey's call for utilities to return this money without further delay," said Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell.

"Customers have waited too long for this refund, they shouldn't have to wait a day longer," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "People are struggling. The transmission utilities need to get serious about the financial realities of their customers and give them their money back."

In the letter, Governor Healey called on the utilities to work with ISO New England and other transmission owners to begin issuing refunds immediately. She also requested that Eversource, National Grid, and Unitil provide the following information by October 27, 2026:

- A clear accounting of the refunds owed to Massachusetts customers;
- A schedule for when those refunds will be returned; and
- An explanation of how customers will receive their funds.

FERC initially ordered transmission owners to complete refunds within 30 days of its March 19, 2026 decision. After the utilities and ISO New England requested more time, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit denied the companies' attempt to delay the refund. FERC ordered the refunds to be complete by no later than May 20, 2027, but customers should not have to wait any longer for money that must be returned to them.

This action builds on Governor Healey's ongoing work to lower energy costs for Massachusetts residents. Last week, Governor Healey declared a State of Energy Emergency and announced nearly $150 million in winter energy bill relief, including new heating assistance for middle-class families, increased benefits for low-income households and the removal of charges from electric bills. Governor Healey has also delivered hundreds of millions of dollars in direct energy bill relief, including cutting residential electric bills by 25 percent and gas bills by 10 percent for two months last winter; brought new sources of lower-cost energy online, including hydropower expected to lower bills by about $50 million each year; activated Vineyard Wind contracts projected to save customers $1.4 billion; opposed utility rate increases and unnecessary charges; and filed energy affordability legislation projected to save residents and businesses more than $13 billion. The administration will continue pursuing every available tool to lower energy costs and put money back in people's pockets.

Fresh and Local

Takeout orders that work

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Many of the foods we love at our favorite restaurants when we dine there, we'd never order for takeout. In some cases, we have two menus in mind: items we always order in person and items we order to go. For example, at our favorite pub, we enjoy fish and chips in person but pick up their shepherd's pie or chicken pie for takeout. Their great chef delivers a perfectly fried, non-greasy, crispy order of any fried food every time. We also know from experience that certain menu items, like the pies, reheat well.

Best for Takeout

As we reviewed a list of the most popular takeout foods, some were obvious, and others made us question if the person ordering was oblivious to food quality. We understand why pizza tops the list. We've all learned how to reheat pizza in a toaster oven or air fryer, and some of us even eat it cold for breakfast.

We love picking up a pizza to take home, and we often order more than we plan to eat when dining at our favorite places. What's more, we love several pizza styles and try to give various places all a bit of our business.

Asian cuisines also offer many options for stewed, stir-fried, or braised dishes that reheat well. We opt for Mexican plates vs. tacos but understand that others will include those plus burritos and quesadillas.

We love Indian food and have a wonderful restaurant nearby where we can pick up many favorite meals. Salonki, the Boston chain, has some tasty takeout options.

Finally, we add many soups, salads, and sandwiches to our takeout list. We always order dressing on the side for salads and tend to choose the ones that are meals rather than sides.

Not For Takeout

The first category on this list is fried foods. While there are exceptions (we're talking about you, Korean Fried chicken wings), most fried foods suffer from the restaurant kitchen to your plate at home unless you live within a quick walk and pick it up yourself.

We don't understand the popularity of burgers and fries for takeout unless you are going to pick it up and eat it on your way home. If it's a fast-food burger and fries, it might be okay by you. If it's a quality burger, we feel it's best eaten within sight of the chef.

Delicate food, like many seafood dishes, is better enjoyed straight from the kitchen. While some pasta dishes, especially casseroles like lasagna, work, others will go from al dente to soggy.

Chinese food might be the first cuisine you think of for takeout. It's a good bet, but you have many other choices.

Guidelines

As you review a menu, think about what that food will look like after 45 minutes. Now think about the items you've ordered in the past and enjoyed not only as today's meal but also as leftovers. To save time in our week, we often order enough items to last a couple of days.

Be specific with your order. If you like spice, order the three-hot-pepper option. If you don't, or the restaurant is new to you, order mild and ask for some hot sauce or peppers on the side. If you don't like some of the sides or additions, ask for them to be left out.

Finally, when a restaurant tells us our food will be ready in 25 minutes, we show up early. You improve the quality of your order if you wait for the food instead of the food waiting for you.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Email Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

Hub *(from Page 10)*

was paused by the City. Boston Bikes' work continues today, expanding access to biking, managing the City's public bike share system and helping thousands of residents build skills and confidence on a bike.

"I'm excited Hub on Wheels is returning to Boston in 2027. The City's work to create family-friendly streets and expand access to biking makes this event especially meaningful. I'm proud Wayfair's support of Hub on Wheels can help bring that vision to life for Boston residents," said Steve Conine, Co-Founder and Co-Chairman, Wayfair.

"We're thrilled to support the return of Hub on Wheels to Boston and the opportunity to bring people together to safely bike through the city's diverse neighborhoods," said Alexi Conine, President of the Conine Family Foundation. "Through our HubLuv initiative, we heard from people and organizations across the Greater Boston biking community about what they want to see in the event's future. We're excited to see the City embrace that input and reimagine Hub on Wheels for 2027"

There will be three routes that participants are able to choose from with all starting and ending on City Hall Plaza. Each route will highlight various neighborhoods across the City. More information will be posted on this webpage at a later date. People interested in receiving updates can sign up at this link.

"The return of Hub on Wheels is a fantastic step forward for Boston," said Elijah Evans, Chief Executive Officer of Bikes Not Bombs. "By creating safe, car-free spaces, this event invites residents to see our city from a new perspective and celebrates the vibrant biking culture we have built together. We are beyond excited to be part of this tradition and look forward to getting Boston riding in 2027."

"The event builds community by providing an opportunity for everyday residents of Boston to experience the diversity of neighborhoods by bike," said Maha Aslam, Transit and Streets Project Manager for Livable Streets.

"Hub on Wheels gave Boston something rare: a day when streets were truly people-centered. Kids on training wheels, grandparents, neighbors, and families all got to experience the joy of riding together. Hub on Wheels was a day to uplift bike joy," said Tiffany Cogell, Interim Executive Director of the Boston Cyclists Union. "That's an experience that should live in every neighborhood, in the ride to school, the trip to the corner store, the evening loop around the block. But joy alone can't make cycling a real choice. People will only ride if they feel safe, and that takes a connected network of protected bike lanes that links our neighborhoods. Hub on Wheels shows Boston what that future feels like. Bringing it back is a chance to center the people most at risk on our streets and to build the infrastructure that lets every Bostonian choose to ride, every day of the year."

During Ride & Chill, residents and families participated in free, safe, and family-friendly opportunities to learn, practice and ride bikes in and around Franklin Park. In addition, the City hosted a festival at the Shattuck Picnic Area with free programming, including but not limited to dance and fitness classes, a bike repair clinic, a local DJ, live music, and local food vendors. Festival sponsor Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts made Bluebike credits available to ensure broader access to biking, and engaged young people at the event in designing Bluebike wraps for future designs.

"DCR is committed to providing free, family friendly programming at our parks and properties across the state to help foster a love of the outdoors," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "Hub on Wheels is a great opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and connect with friends and neighbors that make up the Boston community."

To learn more about City's bike programming and additional events, visit boston.gov/bikes.

BHCC celebrates third year of Liberty Mutual Insurance grant for DISH Food Pantry

Special to the Regi0onal Review

Bunker Hill Community College's (BHCC) is marking the third year of a $150,000 grant from Liberty Mutual Foundation supporting its DISH Food Pantry, which provides food and other essential resources to students and their families.

Since opening in 2019, DISH has grown significantly in both the number of people it serves and the resources it provides. In 2025, the pantry distributed more than 131,000 pounds of food — an increase of more than 300 percent over five years — and served more than 1,000 households. Today, students can access resources through grocery pickup and automated food lockers, as well as programs such as a monthly diaper lottery.

Liberty Mutual has been a supporter of DISH since BHCC opened the pantry. The current three-year grant has helped DISH fill gaps in resources that may not be available through other sources, including culturally relevant and gluten-free foods, hygiene products, diapers and infant care items.

"We are grateful to Liberty Mutual for its stalwart support of the DISH and our students," said BHCC President Pam Eddinger. "It has always been important to me that we address our students' basic needs, because you can't learn if you are hungry. We also know that our students are parents and caregivers, and it's important that we feed their families, too. We are proud to have helped lead this movement to address campus hunger in America, and we could not do it without committed partners like Liberty Mutual."

BHCC's work on basic needs support has helped foster a national movement to recognize food insecurity as a significant barrier to student success. For two decades, the College has been an advocate for addressing student hunger not only through direct services, but also through broader policy and institutional change. The College's approach emphasizes dignity, flexibility and access to foods and necessities that reflect the lives of the students and families it serves.

"The DISH team is so grateful for the long-term support of Liberty Mutual," said Chelsea Alexander, DISH Food Pantry Coordinator. "This three-year grant provided significant funding that we could rely on year-over-year, supplementing our purchasing budget in a substantial way. Liberty Mutual's support has given us the flexibility to fill the gaps and make DISH responsive to the real lives of our students."

The continued support of partners such as Liberty Mutual has helped BHCC build on this foundation and strengthen the College's capacity to ensure students have the resources they need to succeed.

With more than 50 years of academic excellence, Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) is one of Massachusetts' most impactful institutions of higher education, serving over 20,000 students annually. With campuses in Charlestown and Chelsea, BHCC offers a broad range of educational opportunities throughout Greater Boston. BHCC fosters a welcoming and supportive learning environment for students by offering associate degrees and certificates, early college and dual enrollment, community education, corporate training, and industry-specific programs.

Media contact: Eoin Cannon, Senior Advisor to the President for Public Affairs and Strategic Communications, Bunker Hill Community College, Boston, MA 02129

617-291-4492 (cell) and 617-228-3402 (office); Email: eoin.cannon@bhcc.edu

At the DISH Food Pantry ribbon-cutting in 2019, Liberty Mutual Foundation Senior Program Manager Kalina Philalom (third from right) celebrated with members of the Bunker Hill community.

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Governor Healey announces new winter energy bill relief for Massachusetts families

Special to the Regional Review

Governor Maura Healey announced new actions to help Massachusetts families lower their heating and electric bills this winter.

Governor Healey has declared a State of Energy Emergency and, through an Executive Order, is expanding eligibility for home heating assistance and removing charges from electric bills. This includes creating a new home heating assistance benefit for approximately 50,000 middle class households who rely on heating oil that previously did not qualify for existing assistance programs, as well as increasing heating assistance for approximately 156,000 low-income households as part of the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The Governor will also eliminate the SMART program charge on residential electric bills for three months and cut the Alternative Portfolio Standard by 50 percent this winter. Overall, this plan will lower energy bills for approximately 85 percent of ratepayers. More information can be found at mass.gov/heatinghelp.

Additionally, by declaring a State of Energy Emergency, Governor Healey is activating legal protections in Massachusetts against price gouging of petroleum products. Governor Healey is directing all responsible state agencies to monitor, investigate and enforce rules against price gouging or excessive or misleading prices for petroleum products.

Governor Healey also sent a letter to Congressional leaders urging them to provide an additional $3 billion in emergency funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), bringing the program to $7 billion.

"Families are seeing the impact of the war in Iran every time they fill up their gas tank, place an order for heating oil or open their electric bill. I'm declaring a State of Energy Emergency because in Massachusetts, we are going to use every tool we have to get people relief," said Governor Maura Healey. "We're delivering nearly $150 million in savings, including helping middle class families who didn't previously qualify for assistance and taking charges off of electric bills for households and businesses across Massachusetts. I'm also grateful for the strong partnership of Congressman Joe Kennedy and Citizens Energy to create the Winter Warmth Fund to deliver additional relief to families facing sky heating bills."

"Energy costs are putting real pressure on family budgets, and this plan gets relief directly to those who need it," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "We're helping middle class families heat their homes, increasing support for our lowest-income residents and taking charges off electric bills this winter. This is about meeting the moment and lowering costs for people across Massachusetts."

"For too many of our neighbors, an unexpected heating emergency can quickly become a crisis — forcing families to make impossible choices between keeping the heat on and putting food on the table or paying other essential bills," said former Congressman Joe Kennedy III, President of Citizens Energy.

"Every family deserves a warm and safe home, especially when winter arrives in Massachusetts. The Emergency Winter Warmth Fund is about making sure no one has to face that choice alone. By bringing together Citizens Energy, the Commonwealth, and partners across Massachusetts, we can help families through the moments when they need a helping hand most and make sure no one is left out in the cold."

The cost of heating oil is currently 70 percent higher this winter compared to this week last year and prices are likely to remain volatile. In Massachusetts, the average price of home heating oil reached $6.08 per gallon as of September 28, up 73 percent from $3.52 last year. Approximately one in five Massachusetts households relies on heating oil, particularly in older homes and rural communities.

"No one should be afraid to turn on the heat when costs are high. This is a matter of public health," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "We are standing up new programs to help middle class families stay warm and safe this winter. We are also taking actions to provide savings on electric bills and expand support for low-income customers. This is also why we need to continue our all-of-the-above approach to energy to bring down costs and put an end to this costly volatility our residents can't afford."

"Rising heating costs are putting added pressure on families already struggling to keep up with everyday expenses," said Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Juana Matias. "Today's announcement of increased HEAP benefits and expanded access means more Massachusetts households can get the help they need to stay warm this winter. The Healey-Driscoll Administration is delivering relief when families need it most."

"Keeping Everett affordable and making sure our residents can get help when they need it is a priority for my administration," said Everett Mayor Robert J. Van Campen. "No senior should have to choose between heating their home, putting food on the table or filling an essential prescription. Strong relationships with our partners at the state level are critical to addressing challenges like rising energy costs, and I'm grateful to Governor Healey and her administration for recognizing the pressure families are facing and taking action to provide real relief. When the City and the Commonwealth work together, we can make sure these resources reach the residents who need them most."

Governor Healey's energy affordability plan includes:

New Middle Class Home Heating Oil Assistance Benefit

For the first time, Massachusetts is creating a new home heating oil assistance benefit for households earning between 60 percent and 100 percent of State Median Income, extending assistance to middle class families that have traditionally fallen outside eligibility for existing heating assistance programs. For a family of four, this means households earning more than $103,049 and up to $171,749 may qualify for the new one-time emergency benefit.

Approximately 50,000 Massachusetts heating oil households are expected to qualify and receive up to $680 per household. Assistance will be available beginning in December until the end of the heating season on April 30, 2027, or until funding lasts.

The new benefit will be administered by the same local organizations that currently provide home energy assistance across Massachusetts. More information is available at www.mass.gov/heatinghelp.

Increased HEAP Benefits

The Administration will provide an additional $15 million to increase winter heating assistance for approximately 156,000 low-income households across Massachusetts.

HEAP is a free, federally-funded statewide resource that assists eligible renters and homeowners by paying a portion of their winter heating bills directly to their heating companies. During the 2025-2026 heating season, the HEAP program provided financial assistance to more than 156,000 Massachusetts households, representing over 300,000 people.

Current support ranges from approximately $525 to $1,200 per household. Under Governor Healey's plan, households that heat with oil will receive a 20 percent increase in assistance, while households that heat with utilities will receive a 15 percent increase.

Homeowners and renters can apply for HEAP online at www.mass.gov/heatinghelp or through local administering agencies across the state. The assistance period runs from November 1, 2026, through April 30, 2027. Households whose heat is included in their rent can also qualify, and households do not need to be on public assistance or have unpaid heating bills to receive assistance.

Eliminate the SMART Charge on Residential Electric Bills for Three Months

The Administration will transfer $80 million in state funding to eliminate the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program charge from residential and commercial electric bills for three months this winter, while the program continues to deliver benefits to all Massachusetts ratepayers.

The SMART program supports incentives for qualifying solar projects across Massachusetts and is funded through a charge on electric customers. For January-March 2027, the state will cover those costs so they are not passed on to residential customers.

Phase Out the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard

The Administration will also take emergency regulatory action to reduce the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard by 50 percent this winter, providing an estimated $20 million in additional ratepayer relief.

The Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard was established in 2009 to support certain large heating and cooling systems, through costs included in electricity supply rates. The Administration will begin reducing required obligation for the program this winter to lower those costs for ratepayers.

Emergency Winter Warmth Fund

Governor Healey also announced in partnership with Citizens Energy Corporation the creation of a new Emergency

(Relief *Pg. 16*)

ELECTIONS *(from Page 3)*

at 5:00 p.m. Voters may apply for a vote by mail ballot through the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website, by visiting the Election Department in room 241 at City Hall, or by mailing an application. Voters should not place applications in ballot drop boxes as this will delay processing.

Voters can track vote-by-mail or absentee ballot at trackmyballotma.com. Completed Vote by Mail Ballots must be received by the Election Department no later than November 3rd, or by 5 p.m. November 6 if postmarked by November 3. As that day approaches, it is best to deliver them to one of the City of Boston Ballot Boxes that can be found across the City and emptied daily. A map of those locations can be found on this website.

Accessible Voting

The Accessible Electronic Voting System allows voters who are unable to independently read, write, hold, or physically manipulate or mark ballots to submit their ballot via a secure electronic delivery system. Voters who qualify for an Accessible Electronic Ballot may apply online. The deadline to apply for an accessible ballot is Tuesday, October 27, at 5:00 p.m. To get access to the electronic ballot, voters will need to provide their email address.

Poll Pads Electronic Check-in

Poll Pads will be used to check-in voters at each Early Voting location. The voting process for voters remains the same: voters will check in with a poll worker, receive a paper ballot and envelope, mark their vote, seal it in the envelope, and return it to be counted on Election Day or processed in advance at an authorized facility.

Central Tabulation

On Monday, October 26, the City of Boston will begin processing mail-in and in-person early voting ballots cast in the State Election for all 275 precincts. Ballots will be removed from their envelopes and fed into a tabulator at Boston City Hall, One City Hall Square, Room 801, Boston, MA 02201.

Only ballots received prior to Friday, October 30, 2026, will be removed and deposited in Room 801.

Advance Processing Schedule

Ballot removal and processing will occur daily from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., beginning on Monday, October 26 through Tuesday, November 3, 2026, with processing beginning at 7:00 a.m. on November 3 (if necessary) and continuing until all ballots have been processed.

- All ballots advance processed by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 30, 2026, will be centrally tabulated.
- All other ballots received by 2:00 p.m. on Election Day (Tuesday, November 3, 2026) will be delivered to their respective precincts for processing.
- All other ballots not delivered to the polls that arrive on Election Day on November 3, 2026, will be tallied on Saturday, November 7, 2026 (schedule to follow), provided they meet one of the following deadlines:
- Received by 8:00 p.m. on November 3, 2026; or
- Postmarked by November 3, 2026, and received before 5:00 p.m. on November 6, 2026

Media Guidelines

Where To Stand: Members of the press must remain behind the guardrail. While many polling places are not equipped with a physical guardrail, the area within the "guardrail" encompasses the check-in table, the voting booths, and the ballot box. Only poll workers and voters should be within this area.

Interacting With Voters and Poll Workers: Members of the press, like all other observers in the polling place, may not interact with voters while they are in the polling place. Further, observers who have questions about where they should stand and what they are allowed to do while observing should ask to speak to the warden. The warden may provide members of the press with information regarding their rights as observers.

Photography: Photography of the voting process in the polling place is permitted, though marked ballots may not be photographed. Photographers are allowed inside the polling place to photograph the area from outside the guardrail. The warden may instruct the photographer not to take photos of any marked ballots.

Video and Audio Recording: As with photography of the polling place, video recording of the polling place is allowed. Audio recording of the polling place is not permitted under state law. Anyone recording in the polling place must have the ability to record without capturing audio and should be instructed to do so by the warden. Those who are using electronic equipment may not use the electricity in the polling place to power their equipment.

Exit Polling: Exit polling and interviews of voters are permitted outside, within 150 feet of a polling place, as long as it does not interfere with a person or voter on their way to an election. Only voters leaving the polling place may be stopped. Voter access to the polling place should not be impeded in any way.

Send legals to legals@eastietimes.com or call the office at 781-485-0588

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS The Trial Court Probate & Family Court Suffolk Division Docket No. SU24P1934 In the Matter of Frances A. Otey To all interested persons: A petition has been filed by: Tina A. Otey 11 Strathcona Road, Apt #2 Dorchester, MA 02121 requesting: that this Honorable Court give the order to the State Board of Retirement to share the copies of Unauthorized payments to Gina Otey on September 6, 2024 and any other in September 2024, including calculations of pensions. I also ask that St. Elizabeth's Hospital now BMC be ordered to give incident reports as well as the missing medical records. You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before 10:00 a.m. on October 22, 2026 This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an Affidavit of Objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you. WITNESS, Janine D. Rivers, First Justice of this Court. Date: 9/17/26 Register of Probate

10/15/26
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LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617)788-8300 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Docket No. SU26P1931EA Estate of: Joseph G Lind Date of Death: 07/17/2026 To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Elizabeth Devlin of Needham MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: Elizabeth Devlin of Needham MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration. IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/19/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you. UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. WITNESS, Hon. Janine D Rivers, First Justice of this Court. Date: October 08, 2026 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate

10/15/26
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LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617)788-8300 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Docket No. SU26P1952EA Estate of: Thomas Francis Fitzpatrick, Jr. Date of Death: 05/13/2026 To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Meloday J Cabral-Pini of Malden MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that Melody J Cabral-Pini of Malden MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration. IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/06/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you. UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. WITNESS, Hon. Janine D Rivers, First Justice of this Court. Date: October 02, 2026 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate

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West End couple's pet sitting-and-walking service continues to grow

By Dan Murphy

Grace and Nick's growing pet sitting-and-walking service got its start through a chance opportunity in May of 2024, when the West End couple stepped in to help a friend working as a dog sitter via the Rover pet-care app who wasn't available to help out a regular client one weekend.

Grace Begin, age 22, grew up in Gray, Maine, surrounded by dogs, while Nick Seaver, a 22-year-old West End native, always loved animals but was unable to have a pet of his own growing up because they weren't allowed in his apartment building.

Nick, who attended boarding school in Fryeburg, Maine, previously worked at a dog daycare in Dedham. He has now been working for nearly a year at Harbor Hounds in East Boston.

In October of 2024, Grace and Nick booked their first client, and they continue to regularly walk that client's dog to this day.

From that first job, their client list has continued to grow steadily through word of mouth and referrals. Grace and Nick currently have around 20 clients in the Greater Boston area for overnight sittings and walks, and they're always open to meeting new clients and their pets.

For all new clients, Grace and Nick offer a free meet-and-greet. They will travel to the owner's home, or meet at a local park, if preferable, spending about 30 minutes to an hour getting to know both the owners and their pets.

"It gives the owners a chance to ask questions and feel comfortable with us, while also allowing us to learn about the dog's routine, personality, and any specific needs," Grace wrote. "One of the most important parts of our work is building strong relationships with both the pets and their owners. We enjoy getting to know each dog's personality and routine, and we want owners to feel confident that their pets are safe, happy, and well cared for while they're away."

Grace and Nick currently offer dog walking, overnight pet sitting, and drop-in visits. The rate for walks are $25 for a 30-minute walk, or $40 for a one-hour walk.

The day rate for a pet, including walks, feeding, and playtime, is $60, while drop-ins are $30 for a one-hour visit. Prices can always be discussed with Grace and Nick during the free meet-and-greet, depending on the needs of the pet and their owner.

Grace and Nick are fully covered through pet-sitting insurance. Nick also received a canine coach certification from his previous job at dog daycare in Dedham. References from current clients for both dog walking and overnight sittings can be provided upon request.

COURTESY IMAGE

Grace and Nick, a West End couple who run a pet sitting-and-walking service, are seen with some of their canine companions.

Call Grace and Nick at 207-357-6178 for more information.

RELIEF *(from Page 14)*

Winter Warmth Fund to provide additional help to families struggling with heating costs this winter.

Citizens Energy Corporation will launch the fund with an initial $100,000 contribution. Funding will support both existing heating assistance for low-income households and the new middle class home heating oil assistance program created by Governor Healey. Contributions to the fund will be distributed through the existing network of local administering agencies, building on the state's $49 million investment in heating assistance and helping more families receive support this winter. More information can be found at citizensenergy.com/warmth.

"We are grateful for the Governor's leadership and for the heating help public/ private partnership that she has organized with Joe Kennedy and Citizens Energy to help thousands of vulnerable families stay warm, healthy, and safe this winter in the face of unprecedented energy cost burden challenges," said Joe Diamond, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association for Community Action. "Households we help with fuel assistance, and now those with incomes just over the eligibility limit for federal fuel assistance, can breathe a little easier as winter approaches. Community Action Agencies look forward to helping households in need, regardless of heating fuel type, including home heating oil, for example, which is over six dollars a gallon - between 50% and 70% higher than last year at this time and likely to rise further. This initiative strengthens the comprehensive and integrated approach to heating help on which we partner with the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities led by Secretary Juana Matias, and includes the provision of weatherization services to those who qualify for fuel assistance."

Today's announcement is the latest step in Governor Healey's ongoing work to lower energy and transportation costs for Massachusetts residents. Governor Healey has delivered hundreds of millions of dollars in direct energy bill relief, including cutting residential electric bills by 25 percent and gas bills by 10 percent for two months last winter; brought new sources of lower-cost energy online, including hydropower that is expected to lower bills by about $50 million each year; activated Vineyard Wind contracts projected to save customers $1.4 billion; opposed utility rate increases and unnecessary charges; and filed energy affordability legislation projected to save residents and businesses more than $13 billion.