

THE LYNN JOURNAL

Thursday, April 1, 2021

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CLIMB TO THE TOP

Ben Bowden earns a spot on Colorado Rockies' Opening Day roster

By Cary Shuman

Lynn's Ben Bowden is a Major League Baseball player now. He's made it to The Show.

Bowden will begin the 2021 MLB season on the Colorado Rockies' roster. The Rockies play the reigning World Series champion Los Angeles Dodgers in their opening series.

Ben's parents, Larry Bowden and Stephanie Bowden, were hoping to be at Coors Field in Denver for their son's debut with the Rockies, according to Derek Dana, who is Ben's uncle.

"Obviously we couldn't be any prouder – it was just an awesome day Tuesday," said Dana, speaking on behalf of the family. "Ben gives you a call. He's so excited and you're just so happy for him. He's worked so hard. To finally get the chance and to do it on an Opening Day roster, making the team - we all were very excited

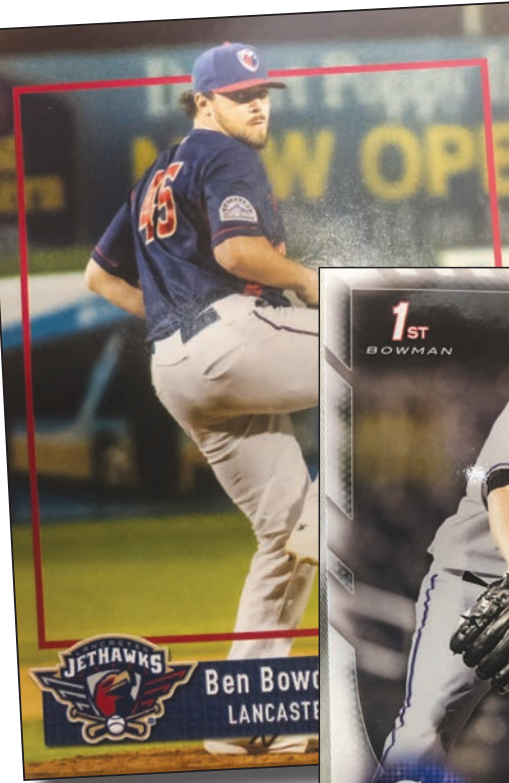
to hear that. It's just awesome."

Bowden, a 6-foot-4-inch lefthander, had an outstanding spring pitching for the Rockies during their Cactus League exhibition season in Arizona.

Bowden began his local baseball journey in the East Lynn Little League where his father served as league president. He was named the Mass. Gatorade Player of the Year in his senior season at Lynn English High School where he was coached by Joe Caponigro. He was an All-Star player in the Lynn Babe Ruth organization.

The news of Bowden's elevation to the Major League was welcomed with joy and pride by his Babe Ruth coaches, including current president Jeff Earp, past presidents Jim Beliveau and John Kasian, and coach Mike Mageary.

"What a great feeling it is for all of us," said Earp. "It's out-



standing. He's just such a great kid. His father is such a class act. The family is terrific. We'll be watching the Rockies' games on TV and we're planning a trip to see Ben pitch in person, proba-

bly at Citi Field (the Mets' home ballpark) in New York."

Lynn English Director of Athletics Dick Newton extended his congratulatory wishes to Bowden.

"The entire Lynn English High School athletic program congratulates Ben Bowden on making it to the Major Leagues," said Dick Newton, a former college baseball star at St. Leo's University. "We are all very excited about the news and wish him continued success in his career."

Dana, who played professional baseball in the San Francisco Giants organization, recalled his message to his nephew when he first entered the Vanderbilt Uni-

versity baseball program. "Ben used to tell me how good these kids were at Vanderbilt when he first got there and I just said, 'you're one of those guys – you just have to believe in yourself,'" said Dana. "When he got to professional baseball, same thing. I said, 'Ben, you're a second-round draft pick, you're one of those guys. Just believe in yourself and good things are going to happen.' He always did believe in himself. He kept believing in himself and he's there now."

Mena's journey ends on American Idol

By Cary Shuman

Amanda Mena, the incredibly talented vocalist from Lynn and St. Mary's High School, saw her journey end on the American Idol television show Sunday night.

Celebrity judge and music legend Lionel Richie delivered the news to Mena via a large-screen connection from his residence.

The decision caught Mena's thousands of followers by surprise. Mena was simply sensational during her audition in front of Richie and the other famous judges, Katy Perry and Luke Bryan.

Mena was hoping to gain a spot among the final 24 contestants.

Mena's accomplishment of advancing to Idol's Hollywood Week and her excellent performances in front of millions of



Amanda Mena is pictured during her appearance on the American Idol television show.

Mena's showcasing of her vocal talents on a big stage and her interaction with giants in the industry like Richie, Perry, and Bryan and Idol's amazing host Ryan Seacrest had to be a thrilling experience for the 18-year-old singer.

Mena will be returning to the recording studio to work on her next album.

Jamie Marsh, general manager of the Lynn Auditorium, told the Lynn Journal that he hopes to schedule Mena for a concert performance later this year.

Colin Jamieson of Boxford (who has family connections in Lynn including softball great Martha Jamieson, Berklee College of Music student Grace Kinstler, and Berklee graduate Brennan Hepler (whose stage name is "Beane") all advanced to Idol's round of 24.

Idol viewers on national television will no doubt elevate her rising career in the recording industry.

Many consider Idol the gold standard of music/reality shows.

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EDITORIAL

THE MARKEY-WARREN-AOC BUILD GREEN ACT IS NEEDED

The recent catastrophic winter-weather event in Texas has highlighted the degree to which our national infrastructure (among other things) has fallen victim to the penny-wise and pound-foolish thinking that has dominated our national politics for the past 40 years.

The winter hurricane, as some have labeled it, reportedly will prove to be the most-costly natural disaster in the history of the United States. Both the public utilities and the private companies in Texas did not invest in the types of infrastructure improvements to their plants and facilities that would have allowed them to withstand a weather event that really should not have been all that catastrophic.

Much was made of the wind farms that were knocked out of service, but wind turbines all across the globe exist in far harsher conditions than what occurred in Texas and they do not experience the catastrophic failure that was seen in Texas. Texas simply had not spent the money necessary for the winterization of those turbines.

The damage to the state's infrastructure left millions of Texans and residents of other states without power and clean water, causing billions in damage to individual homes (when their pipes froze), as well as the tragic loss of life that now numbers 111 persons.

In addition, the shutdown of oil refineries and petrochemical plants that were damaged by the storm has created shortages across the country that will drive prices needlessly higher for everybody.

And here's the thing: The winter storm would not have been a big deal in most of the rest of the U.S., where governments and business are prepared for such weather events.

But in Texas, keeping energy costs as low as possible was a priority for state regulators. The end result of not spending a few billion dollars upfront to weatherize the state's power grid resulted in tens of billions of dollars in post-catastrophe costs.

This sort of shortsighted thinking is not confined to Texas, however. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of our nation to public health emergencies because we have become entirely dependent on foreign manufacturers for all sorts of critical medical supplies, from drugs to masks to mechanical equipment -- all in the name of "efficiency" and "cost-cutting."

Similarly, we have under-invested to such an extent in our roads, bridges, airports, dams, water supplies, and power grids -- everything -- that we have plummeted to the level of a Third World country. We no longer are a world leader -- we're a world loser.

Our refusal to acknowledge and address the impending impacts of climate change have set us up for even more catastrophic weather-related events in the near-future. The proverbial "100-year" flood, wildfire, or storm has become commonplace.

The Build Green Act sponsored by our U.S. Senators, Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren, and House member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez seeks to remedy the twin problems of our crumbling infrastructure and the looming climate crisis.

The time to take action is running short. Hopefully, elements of the Build Green Act will be included in President Biden's forthcoming national infrastructure plan, which needs to get going as soon as possible.



HAPPY EASTER

GUEST OP-ED

Vaccination is the ticket to getting the U.S. back on track

By Carlos del Rio, M.D.

The end of the pandemic in the U.S. is in sight. The Covid-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have proven to be outstandingly effective at protecting recipients from coronavirus and they are also safe.

These vaccines -- and the potential of others on the way -- have the power to lift us out of the depths of this pandemic and put us on the path forward to rebuilding from Covid-19's devastating economic, social, and psychological impacts.

Put simply, getting America vaccinated is our ticket to halting the death toll and significantly slowing the spread of the virus. The vaccines are our ticket forward -- this is the message that needs to be shouted from the roof tops right now.

While public confidence in the vaccines, and access to them, continues to grow, many Americans -- especially Black and Hispanic adults and those living in rural areas -- remain hesitant about getting the shot.

In redoubling efforts to dispel fears about Covid-19 vaccines, the message that needs to be conveyed across the board is that

these breakthroughs will not only stamp out the virus, but also end much of the growing collateral damage due to the pandemic.

We know that these are very safe vaccines. Out of the first 1.9 million Pfizer vaccine recipients, only 21 people experienced severe reactions. That's 0.00001 percent.

We also know that the vaccines have demonstrated successful results. In a Moderna trial of 30,000 volunteers, half received the vaccine and the other half a placebo. In the placebo group, 185 came down with Covid-19, whereas in the vaccinated group,

only 11 did, and all those cases were mild. That translates into an efficacy rate of 94.1 percent.

Even more importantly, the data shows that the Moderna vaccine is 100 percent effective in preventing severe Covid-19 infections. The data from Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson is remarkably similar.

Skeptics say the vaccines were developed too quickly to be effective, that they'll cause worse side effects than the coronavirus itself, or that they won't prevent person-to-person spread.

(Op-Ed Pg. 3)

THE LYNN JOURNAL

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Op-Ed/ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The medical community knows that the first two of those statements are wrong, and the third, while very unlikely, has also been proven wrong in clinical trials where even when the virus was contracted the cases were notably mild.

Underselling the vaccine and fostering skepticism has very real consequences -- especially for the vulnerable communities who have already been most hard hit.

Even before Covid-19, our health care system was fraught with millions across America living with one or more chronic conditions. People with chronic illnesses are six times more likely to be hospitalized and 12 times more likely to die from Covid-19 than people with no chronic conditions.

We also know that this pandemic disproportionately im-

pacts persons of color. According to the CDC, Black and Hispanic people are about four times more likely to be hospitalized and almost three times more likely to die from Covid-19 than whites.

With awareness of these impacts must also come awareness of the path forward that the available vaccines provide us. This awareness is simple: Get vaccinated as soon as you are eligible.

Carlos del Rio, M.D., FIDSA is a Professor of Medicine at Emory University School of Medicine, Professor of Global Health and Epidemiology at the Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University and the Executive Associate Dean of Emory at Grady Health System. Dr. del Rio also serves on the Board of Directors for the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

Candidates pull nomination papers for Lynn city election in September

Several Lynn residents have pulled nomination papers for the Preliminary Election to be held on Sept. 14, 2021.

Three candidates, City Council President Darren Cyr, and School Committee members Jar-

ed Nicholson and Michael Satterwhite have taken out nomination papers for the office of mayor.

Mayor Thomas McGee has announced that he will not be a candidate for re-election.

Following is the list of candi-

dates who have pulled nomination papers to-date for the offices of mayor, councilor at-large, ward councilor, and school committee:

CANDIDATE	ADDRESS	Zip	OFFICE DESIRED	PARTY	INCUMBENT?
Cyr, Darren P.	50 Morton Hill Avenue	01902	Mayor	D	Ward 3
Nicholson, Jared C.	19 Merrill Avenue	01902	Mayor	D	School
Satterwhite, Michael A.	41 Bridle Path Road	01904	Mayor	D	School
Barton, G. Buzzy	11 Brook Street	01902	Councilor At Large	D	Yes
Encarnacion, Jose M.	80 Sagamore Street, # 404	01902	Councilor At Large	D	No
Field, Brian M.	9 Lois Lane	01905	Councilor At Large	D	Yes
Hyppolite, Marven Rhode	18 Empire Street	01902	Councilor At Large	U	No
LaPierre, Brian P.	2 Rand Street	01904	Councilor At Large	D	Yes
McClain, Nicole	99 Eutaw Avenue	01902	Councilor At Large	D	No
Net, Hong L.	20 Holyoke Street	01905	Councilor At Large	D	Yes
Lozzi, Wayne A.	335 Den Quarry Road	01904	Ward 1 Councilor	D	Yes
Starbard, Richard B.	221 Verona Street	01904	Ward 2 Councilor	R	Yes
Alinsug, C. Coco	18 Merrill Avenue	01902	Ward 3 Councilor	D	No
Colucci, Richard C.	265 Ocean Street	01902	Ward 4 Councilor	D	Yes
Megie-Maddrey, Natasha S.	36 Beacon Hill Avenue	01902	Ward 4 Councilor	D	No
Chakoutis, Dianna	39 Thistle Street	01905	Ward 5 Councilor	D	Yes
Hogan, Sr., Fred William	17 Lagrange Terrace	01902	Ward 6 Councilor	D	Yes
Walsh, Jr., John Jay	16 Raddin Street	01905	Ward 7 Councilor	D	Yes
Castellanos, Brian K.	693 Western Avenue	01905	School Committee	D	Yes
Coppola, Donna M.	300 Lynn Shore Drive, # 700	01902	School Committee	D	Yes
Dugan, Eric C.	243 Cedar Brook Road	01904	School Committee	U	No
Ford, Jr., John E.	89 Woodman Street	01905	School Committee	D	Yes
Gately, Lorraine	123 Edgemere Road	01904	School Committee	D	Yes
Lopez, Sandra M.	24 June Lane	01902	School Committee	U	No
Magnolia, Tiffany Jean	16 Bowler Street	01904	School Committee	D	No
Mora, Rocio R.	119 Henry Avenue, # 1	01902	School Committee	D	No
Pena, Lenny	59 Ingalls Street	01902	School Committee	D	No

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Free COVID-19 testing at 800-810 Lynnway

Residents can receive a free COVID-19 test at the building located at 800-810 Lynnway, the former home of Building 19 and the flea market.

No appointments are necessary. The testing site is open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Lynn legislators file bill to spur new school construction

State Senator Brendan P. Crighton, Representative Dan Cahill, and Representative Peter Capano have together filed legislation that will update the state's outdated and inequitable school construction formula. Since 2004, this formula - which determines state aid for school construction projects - has remained stagnant, disproportionately affecting the education of students in low-income communities across the state for almost two decades. HD.3667/SD. 2172, An Act Modernizing School Construction reforms the state's school construction formula so that all students and teachers have access to safe and healthy environments in high-quality school buildings.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed glaring inequities in the condition of school buildings across the state. Overcrowded buildings, obsolete HVAC systems, and other unsafe conditions hinder students and teachers from engaging safely and productively in their classrooms. Now more than ever, state funding is vital in order to renovate these decrepit buildings and construct new ones to help ensure all children have access to the same quality of education, regardless of income level.

"The Legislature took historic steps towards equitable access to

a high-quality education for all students with the Student Opportunity Act. It is now time to revise our school construction formula with a similar equity lens, and it has been great to work together with legislators and local officials to that end," said Senator Crighton. "Lynn has firsthand experience with the financial difficulties the current formula presents Gateway Cities with. I would like to thank Mayor McGee for his help working to make this formula more equitable for communities like Lynn. His insight and knowledge were pivotal in understanding where the MSBA is falling short in assisting low-income and diverse municipalities with building first-rate schools and educational settings that the children deserve."

"I want to thank Senator Crighton and Representatives Pete Capano & Dan Cahill for filing new legislation to update the MSBA school construction formula," said Mayor Thomas M. McGee. "The MSBA has been, and continues to be, a great partner with us in making essential school building repairs. This bill addresses the outdated reimbursement rate for new school construction and provides flexibility for aging school repairs without overly burdening the City of Lynn and other Gateway

Cities across the Commonwealth. Passage of this Bill would allow us to realize outcomes contained the City's five-year Capital Improvement Plan to provide improved learning environments for our students and faculty."

Under this legislation, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)'s dedicated revenue stream would increase from one to two pennies of the sales tax, doubling the revenue for construction projects. The legislation would remove the arbitrary cap of 80% reimbursement for MSBA-approved school construction projects, which has historically had an overwhelmingly disproportionate impact on low-income school districts. If not for this cap, these districts could have received an additional \$44 million between 2016 and 2020 to support school construction.

"Gateway cities continue to struggle to utilize MSBA's financing program, which Lynn residents pay into but will not reap the benefits of without a higher reimbursement rate for the full costs of school construction projects," said Representative Cahill. "This legislation provides a new formula for helping gateway cities move forward with these important school construction projects."

"We must get serious about

the construction and modernization of our public schools," said Representative Capano. "Relying on outdated data formulas and reimbursement requirements prevents communities with a higher proportion of low-income students from access to safe and modern buildings. This bill aims to even the playing field for gateway communities like Lynn and will give all students in the Commonwealth the opportunity to receive a 21st century education."

This bill also updates the school construction formula by requiring the MSBA to regularly revise its standards for reimbursement to accurately reflect modern construction costs. While the current average bid price for MSBA-approved projects is \$480 per square foot, the MSBA only reimburses projects at a rate of \$333 per square foot. The increasing gap between the true cost of building and state reimbursement has created significant barriers to cities and towns across the state.

This legislation would not only improve the school construction formula for all cities and towns but also use an equity lens so that low-income students have equitable access to high-quality school buildings. While the reimbursement formula does account for socioeconomic factors, the student poverty formula caps

the number of reimbursement points all school districts serving 33% or more than the state average of low-income students actually receive. This legislation would update this formula to help ensure that schools districts serving a greater proportion of low-income students will receive an appropriate increase in state funding for capital projects.

Further, it provides localities with additional flexibility in financing urgently needed school construction projects. This legislation allows school districts with a disproportionate share of school buildings in need of repair to use up to 1% Chapter 70 funds for school construction or renovation.

Finally, the state had historically provided additional reimbursement to projects clearly related to efforts to integrate schools, and this legislation would reinstate this policy in order to promote racially diverse schools across the state.

The Lynn legislative delegation will continue to work with advocates and stakeholders as this bill makes its way through the legislative process. For more information, please reach out to Senator Crighton's office at 617-722-1350 or Brendan.crighton@masenate.gov.

Frontline workers cheer final passage of emergency paid sick time

Labor advocates and frontline workers cheered the final passage last week of legislation that would allow all Massachusetts workers to access five days of emergency paid sick time for COVID-related sickness, quarantine, caregiving, and vaccination.

The Raise Up Massachusetts coalition of community groups, faith-based organizations, and labor unions, which has advocated for emergency paid sick time throughout the pandemic, praised the emergency paid sick time legislation for its worker-friendly provisions.

"This much-needed legislation will be an enormous help to the essential workers who have been carrying us all through the pandemic, and we thank Senate President Spilka, Speaker Mariano, Chairman Rodrigues, and Chairman Michlewitz for ensuring that all workers will be protected," said Cindy Rowe, Executive Director of the Jewish Alliance for Law and Social

Action. "We're especially happy to see that the bill includes job protection, so that workers can't be penalized or fired for using emergency paid sick time, that it covers all workers in Massachusetts, and that it covers the full range of needs workers have, including paid sick time for workers receiving a vaccine and paid sick time for workers who need to care for a family member with COVID-19 symptoms."

The coalition called on Governor Baker to sign the bill immediately.

"Over the past year, thousands of Massachusetts workers have lost pay, or even lost their jobs, because they needed to stay home from work due to COVID symptoms, or to recover after receiving a vaccine. Countless other workers have gone to work even when they might be sick because they can't afford not to get paid," said Steven Tolman, President of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO. "Workers need Emergency Paid Sick Time today, and we

urge Governor Baker to sign this critical legislation immediately."

•Background

The state's Earned Sick Time law, passed by the voters in 2014, provides 40 hours of paid sick time yearly, but for thousands of workers this isn't enough to meet the scale and impact of this public health crisis. The federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) provided 10 days of additional paid sick time for many workers, and it made a real difference: states that gained access to paid sick time under the FFCRA experienced about 400 fewer cases of COVID-19 per day, according to research from Cornell University and the Swiss Economic Institute. But the FFCRA had big coverage gaps that left millions of front-line workers without paid sick time, including workers at companies with more than 500 employees, and many employees of health care and residential facilities. The Center for American Progress estimates that at least 1.8 million

workers in Massachusetts were not covered by the FFCRA's paid sick time protections.

In December, the FFCRA's paid sick time protections expired, leaving all Massachusetts workers without access to emergency paid sick time benefits if they contract or are exposed to COVID-19. Massachusetts's new paid family and medical leave program, which took effect January 1, allows workers with serious medical problems as a result of COVID-19 to receive partial wage replacement if they take time off from work to recover. However, the new program has a one-week waiting period to receive wage replacement benefits, which means it will not help lower-income workers who cannot afford to miss an entire week of pay to isolate or quarantine. The new state law will fill this gap and ensure that workers do not feel pressure to go to work when they may be infectious.

The legislation requires all Massachusetts employers to pro-

vide 40 hours of emergency paid sick time to a full-time worker, and an equivalent amount for part-time workers. The sick time can be used for COVID-related sickness, quarantine, caregiving, and vaccination.

The costs to employers are covered in one of two ways:

- Businesses with fewer than 500 employees, as well as government entities, will be eligible to receive a tax credit from the federal government to cover the cost, as part of American Rescue Plan Act signed by President Biden this month.

- The state legislation provides state reimbursement to businesses with over 500 employees, and creates a \$75 million state fund for reimbursement.

Between the state and federal governments, all businesses will be eligible for either state reimbursement or the federal tax credit.

THE BULLDOGS OF LYNN ENGLISH HIGH BEAT EVERETT 55-46

Last week the Bulldogs of Lynn English traveled to Everett High School for an afternoon game. Coming back from a slow start the Bulldogs pulled ahead, and stayed there, taking a victory from the Crimson Tide of Everett 55-46.



Kanye Wavezwa drives to the basket for the Bulldogs.



Tough 'D' by the Bulldogs, double teaming effort by Louis Rivera (left) and Joshua St Jean (right).



Aaron Vizcaino pressures the opponent.



Head Coach Antonio Anderson talks things over in the first quarter with his team.



The "Big Man" Ademide Badmus at the foul line for the Bulldogs.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Lynn Journal encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to Cary@lynnjournal.com

**EMERGENCY
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ST MARY'S SPARTAN FOOTBALL VS ARCHBISHOP WILLIAMS

The St. Mary's High School football team, under the leadership of head coach Sean Driscoll, fell to Catholic Central League foe Archbishop Williams, 29-22, in an exciting game played Friday at Manning Field in Lynn.

Sophomore running back Derrick Coulanges rushed for 120 yards and two touchdowns in the game. Sophomore quarterback David Brown Jr. scored the Spartans' other touchdown on an 11-yard run.

St. Mary's hosts Cardinal Spellman Saturday at Manning Field.



Michael Anderson with a point after a kick puts the Spartans ahead early in the 4th, 22-21.



Chris Sazo closes in on a Bishops running back.



Quarterback David Brown breaks through the line for a big gain.



Running back Sal Afflitto heads for a St. Mary's first down.



Derek Coulanges drives into the endzone in the 4th quarter to tie up then score 21-21.



Coach Cortney Carey and the 2021 St. Mary's of Lynn Cheerleaders.

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The Lynn Journal's 2021 Easter Hunnies



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Happy Easter from Bella



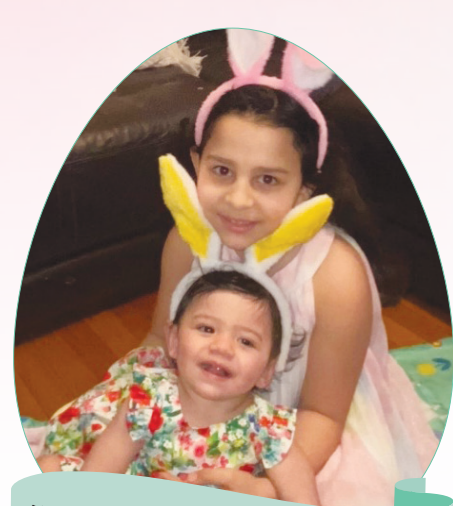
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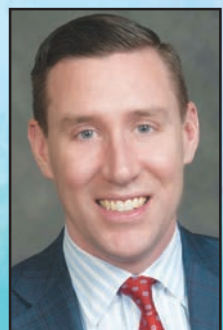
Happy Easter from Fluffy!



Happy Easter from Hannah



Happy Easter from Nawelle and Yasmina



May this Holy season find you in good health and good spirits
Happy Easter & Passover

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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Happy Easter from Juliana & Anthony!



Happy Easter from Loki

City of Lynn COVID-19 update; slight increase in positive cases

The Lynn Public Health Department has confirmed that as of March 30, the number of active, confirmed positive COVID-19 cases is 358 with 29 new cases today. 15,897 Lynn residents have recovered and 208 have died. The total number of confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in Lynn since March 21, 2020, including those who have died and recovered, is 16,463. Please visit the City of Lynn COVID-19 Data Dashboard which is updated daily.

A Statement from Mayor Thomas McGee on Recent Uptick in COVID Positive Cases

“While it is encouraging to see more Lynn residents getting vaccinated, the city has recently seen another uptick in reported COVID-19 cases and is again a red, high risk community. We

have come too far together to ignore the steps that have gotten us to this point. We must continue to follow the CDC guidelines of social distancing, wearing masks and staying away from large gatherings over the next couple months as more people receive the vaccine, which will help us move past this pandemic.”

Please visit http://www.ci.lynn.ma.us/covid19/resources.shtml#p7Gpc1_2 for the most up to date COVID-19 testing information, as well as more detailed information on the State and City of Lynn’s Reopening Guidelines. We will continue to provide regular updates on COVID-19 through the City website (www.lynnma.gov), social media, and the Smart 911 emergency notification system (sign up at www.smart911.com).



THE LYNN CLASSICAL RAMS RECOGNIZED SENIORS FOR THEIR DEDICATION

Last Friday afternoon the seniors of the Lynn Classical Varsity Boys Basketball Team were recognized prior to the start of the game against the Bulldogs of Lynn English.



Captain Jayden Thornton with his parents, Lisa and Dajuan and brother Cameron.



Captain Angel Garcia Figueroa with Head Coach Marvin Lee.



Antonio Flores Chinchilla with Head Coach Marvin Lee Avery and former coach Chris Tarantino.



Head Coach Marvin Lee Avery, Asst. Coach Rob Upton and the 2021 Lynn Classical Varsity Rams Basketball Team.

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

STUDENTS TO RETURN TO CLASS

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

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

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

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

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

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

"I'm excited we're offering parent choice in this decision," she said. "I want to emphasize that because some of our families aren't comfortable sending their child or childent back to school buildings...While I'm excited we are finally opening our schools, I am equally excited about offering remote learning to students who are being successful in that model. This is a great first step for Chelsea because we are the hardest hit community by COVID and so this is a big step for us."

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

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

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

The timeline for return is as follows:

- CPS students in Special Education Sub-Separate classes and the Chelsea Opportunity Academy students will return to full-time, in-person learning on Monday, April 5, 2021.
- Students in grades K-4 will return to in-person learning on Monday, April 12, 2021.
- Middle school students, grades 5- 8, will return to in-person learning on Wednesday, April 28, 2021.
- English language learners at levels 1 and 2 in grades 9-12 will return to in-person learning on Wednesday, April 28, 2021.
- Plans are in the works to increase in-person learning opportunities for high school students.

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

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

JANEY BECOMES ACTING MAYOR

EAST BOSTON - On Monday District 7 City Councilor Kim Janey became the first woman and the first Black mayor in the city's history after former Boston Mayor Martin Walsh was confirmed by the Senate to become U.S. Secretary of Labor.

Janey will be officially sworn in as the 55th Mayor of Boston on Wednesday, March 24.

Janey became acting mayor at 9:01 p.m. Monday night after Walsh submitted his resignation letter. Janey thanked Walsh in a statement for his service.

"Congratulations on your confirmation, Secretary Walsh," said Janey. "You are a proud son of Dorchester who will bring our city with you to the United States Department of Labor. The working people of America will benefit greatly from your passion. Now, we look ahead to a new day — a new chapter — in Boston's history."

As Walsh heads down to Washington D.C., he paused to congratulate his successor Monday.

"Congratulations on making history, Kim Janey," said Walsh. "I know you are going to continue serving our city and supporting an equitable recovery from COVID-19. I am always here for you, my friend."

Walsh said the two exchanged texts Monday with Walsh texting, "Think about this for a minute: A

little girl from Roxbury is about to become mayor of Boston." Walsh said her response was, "Think about this for a minute: A little boy from Dorchester is about to become the ... labor secretary of the United States of America. What an amazing city we live in."

Since Walsh was nominated as Secretary of Labor, Janey has been laser focused on transitioning into the role as Mayor of Boston. Under the city charter, Boston's City Council President assumes the role of Mayor until an election can be held.

Janey hopes to continue to lead Boston through the COVID-19 pandemic with a citywide agenda for recovery, reopening and renewal. Janey's pandemic recovery priorities include distributing vaccines effectively, returning children to school safely, and centering disadvantaged workers and businesses in the City's economic recovery. Janey is committed to ensuring the City of Boston re-opens safely and equitably, with relief and renewal in every neighborhood.

Janey is a fourth-generation Roxbury resident and her family includes a long line of educators, entrepreneurs, artists, and advocates. She said she was raised with values that have guided her to this day: the importance of education, the power of community organizing, and the fundamental principles of equity and justice.

Janey became a mother in high school and worked hard to

give her daughter everything she needed to succeed. She began her advocacy on behalf of children inspired by the interconnection of her own daughter's experiences with those of other children.

In her role at Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Janey championed systemic policy reforms to increase equity, excellence, access, and opportunity in Boston Public Schools. She placed a special focus on eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps for children of color, immigrant children, students who are learning English, children with special needs, and those living in poverty.

After attending the New School for Children, her parents enrolled Janey in Boston Public Schools. In middle school she had rocks and racial slurs thrown at her during the tumultuous busing era. Later, Janey attended Reading Public Schools through the METCO program, where she was one of two Black students in her graduating class. Janey went on to attend Smith College as an Ada Comstock Scholar, but withdrew to care for her grandfather.

Prior to becoming Mayor Janey made history in 2017 when she was elected to the Boston City Council as the first woman to represent District 7, which includes Roxbury and parts of the South End, Dorchester, and the Fenway. In 2020, she was elected by her peers as President of the Boston City Council.

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LYNN HOUSING AUTHORITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

"I am pleased to announce that the Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development has received additional funds from our partners at United Way. Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND) enjoys a long and fruitful relationship with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley (UW). Rooted in the UW's mission to "unite to create positive, lasting change for people in

need," LHAND and UW's collaboration brings about programming in areas both agencies are strongly committed to, including support for housing unstable families and their children, financial coaching, and more", stated the LHAND Executive Director Charles Gaeta.

This past year, from the very early days of the COVID pandemic, our United Way partners were actively raising funds via the Lynn Community Care Fund (LCCF) and rapidly releasing those funds to Lynn families in need through a variety of community agencies that banded together to address immediate

needs.

To date the UW, via LHAND alone, has distributed \$100,500 to Lynn families. These funds were instrumental in providing immediate relief, such as grocery store gift cards, to families in the early weeks of the pandemic in response to job losses and long unemployment queues. As other needs emerged, the UW was quick to respond with assistance for families struggling to maintain internet connectivity for their children's remote learning, pay utility bills, and more.

This week, we learned that an additional \$40,000 in funding secured by the UW will be made available to Lynn residents through LHAND programs. This funding represents a portion of a potential total of \$200,000 in funding to the Lynn community as a whole via LCCF provider agencies.

We are thrilled and honored to be part of this meaningful collaboration that supports those in most need – in real time!

CONGRATULATIONS, BRITTANY AND DAVID



Brittany Taylor Roberts of Lynn, and David Roy Croce of Beachmont, are excited to announce their engagement. David proposed to Brittany just before sunrise on March 14, 2020, across from Nubble Lighthouse in Cape Neddick. Ms. Roberts is the daughter of David Roberts and Arlene Manzo of Lynn. Mr. Croce is the son of Daniel and Elizabeth Croce of Beachmont. The bride-to-be graduated from the University of Massachusetts, Boston in 2015 with a degree in anthropology. She is currently the lead receptionist at a national moving company headquartered in Somerville. The groom-to-be trained to be a plumber at Northeast Metro Tech High School in Wakefield and graduated in 2005. He is a master plumber at a distinguished plumbing firm in Newton. The couple's hearts are set on a summer 2022 wedding.

ABCD AND THE GREATER BOSTON FOOD BANK ANNOUNCE A JOINT INITIATIVE

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD) and The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) jointly announced a groundbreaking \$2 million initiative, designed to provide thousands of families affected by COVID-19 with more fresh fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious perishable foods. As experts in the field have noted, the demand for emergency food in Eastern Massachusetts has increased by 66% due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With support from the federal CARES Act (Coronavirus AID, Relief, and Economic Security Act), ABCD will work with GBFB to fund 2.5 million pounds of fresh foods to communities in need through local food pantries, which are affiliated with GBFB. Approximately 260,000 individuals across Greater Boston will benefit over the next six months.

ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew and GBFB CEO Catherine D'Amato noted that this innovation builds on decades of partnership between the two organizations, each with deep, grassroots, community collaborations. In February, GBFB served over 172,000 households with over

2.4 million pounds of food throughout its food pantry network, which includes 8 ABCD sites. Over the past year, ABCD provided more than 100,000 households with a wide range of services designed to fight the current emergency, and to equip families with tools to thrive in the future.

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

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

ing pandemic."

The response from communities has been enthusiastic. "ABCD has been a critical partner in keeping folks in Malden, and across the region, housed, fed, and safe throughout the pandemic and long before," said Representative Steven Ultrino (D – Malden) "I'm incredibly excited about this new collaboration between ABCD and The Greater Boston Food Bank, and look forward to continuing our work with them to ensure that every member of our community can keep food on the table for themselves and their families."

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

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

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Three charged in connection with drug trafficking

Three individuals were charged this week in connection with a drug trafficking conspiracy involving cocaine, cocaine base, fentanyl and methamphetamine supplied by sources in Massachusetts and spanning into Maine.

Armani Minier-Tejada, a/k/a "Shotz" a/k/a "Gustavo," 22, of Salem; Miguel Minier, 55, of Lynn; and Shelby Kleffman, 31, of Trenton, Maine, were charged by criminal complaint with one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute controlled substances including cocaine, cocaine base, fentanyl and methamphetamine. Minier-Tejada and Kleffman were additionally charged with one count of conspiracy to possess, use and carry firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking conspiracy. Minier-Tejada and Kleffman were arrested this morning in Maine and will make an initial appearance in federal court in Maine today. At a later date, Minier-Tejada and Kleffman will appear in federal court in Boston before U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Donald L. Cabell. Minier remains wanted on the outstanding federal warrant.

As alleged in the charging documents, Minier-Tejada and Minier conspired to obtain large quantities of controlled substances, including cocaine, cocaine base, fentanyl and methamphetamine from Massachusetts suppliers

and distribute them to contacts in Maine, who then distributed the controlled substances on a retail level. Members of the conspiracy also allegedly possessed numerous firearms, including at least one fully-automatic firearm with a "selector switch" that converts a semi-automatic firearm into a machinegun, in order to protect the drug trafficking operation and target rival drug trafficking operators.

As described in the charging documents, Minier-Tejada and Minier brought large quantities of controlled substances, including distinctive purple fentanyl, to sell to dealers in Maine who would in-turn resell the controlled substances for higher profits in Maine. Kleffman was one such Maine-based dealer who received large quantities of controlled substances from Minier-Tejada and Minier. Minier-Tejada and Minier also allegedly obtained rental vehicles and rental homes in Maine that served as distribution hubs for the conspiracy.

The charge of conspiracy to possess a controlled substance with intent to distribute provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, at least three years and up to life of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. The charge of conspiring to possess, use and carry firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking conspiracy provides for a maximum

sentence of life in prison because a machinegun was involved in the offense, five years of supervised release and fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district judge based on the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; and Kelly D. Brady, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, Boston Field Division made the announcement today. Assistance was provided by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Maine; Maine Drug Enforcement Agency; Essex County Sheriff's Department; Lynn Police Department; Malden Police Department; Salem Police Department; Bangor (ME) Police Department; Hancock (ME) County Sheriff's Department; Portland (ME) Police Department; and Westbrook (ME) Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Philip A. Mallard and Sarah Hoefle of Mendell's Organized Crime and Gang Unit are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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Celebrate Literacy Day holds kickoff celebration

By Cary Shuman

Lynn's Celebrate Literacy Day Committee hosted a kickoff event that highlighted its outstanding accomplishments in promoting literacy in the city over the past ten years.

Sheila O'Neil, president of the Lynn Teachers Union, and Magalie Torres-Rowe, teacher in the Lynn school district, were the recipients of the Excellence in Literacy Leadership Awards at the event that was held virtually on March 18.

Saritin Rizzuto, vice president at event lead sponsor Metro Credit Union and committee chair and event founder, delivered the opening remarks. Diana Moreno has also commendably represented Metro on the committee since the inception of the event.

"Good evening to all and welcome," said Rizzuto. "It is great to see the familiar faces of the supporters that we've had for celebrating literacy year after year. The Celebrate Literacy Day Planning Committee comes together every single year to pull this event together. We are very grateful for members of our community that have joined us from the beginning until now."

Rizzuto said one of those valuable supporters since the inception of the event has been Lynn

Mayor Thomas McGee, who delivered the mayoral address to kick off the program.

The mayor and former state senator commended the organization, stating, "For everyone that's here to celebrate and recognize the ten years of this great committee and the work you do to really highlight literacy in our community and how important that is - I'm really happy to be here with all of you tonight."

McGee said he was honored to be a part of the event since his service in the Massachusetts State Senate. McGee also congratulated O'Neil and Torres-Rowe for receiving the prestigious awards.

Robert Cashman, president and CEO of Metro Credit Union that has a branch office in Lynn, appeared in a pre-recorded message in which he thanked teachers, first responders, community leaders for their amazing work during the pandemic.

"This is our tenth consecutive year to be involved with Celebrate Literacy Day and we are really pleased to be able to do that," said Cashman. "There is a common saying in the cred-

it union world, 'people helping people,' and this particular program is something that really says that."

Committee member Natasha Megie Maddrey introduced Torres-Rowe for her award.

"As a teacher, she founded the first Spanish National Junior Honor Society whose members support ELL students through the Big Brothers and Big Sisters school service program," said Megie Maddrey. "She also wrote a college guide for immigrant parents to help new Americans understand the academic process. Magalie takes great pride in supporting, educating, and empowering her students and their families as they strive to learn English, adapt to American culture and embrace the challenges of life in the United States."

Torres-Rowe humbly accepted the award. "I'm so glad that I'm here with you sharing this award with Sheila."

Torres-Rowe, executive director and founder of Latina Center MARIA, presented the Literacy Day's \$500 scholarship in her honor to the Latina Center MARIA Center.

"We're offering ESL classes, parenting classes, and professional workshops," said Torres-Rowe.

Lynn educator and union organizer Gina O'Toole was the award presenter for O'Neil.

"Sheila O'Neil is the current president of the Lynn Teachers Union Local 2037, AFT Massachusetts," said O'Toole. "She has been an educator in Lynn for over 28 years as an elementary teacher. As president of the Lynn Teachers Union supporting literacy, she has supported reading visits with LPS Supt. Patrick Tutwiler, who has been fantastic, also both Deputy Supt. Deb Ruggiero and Kim Powers, and Sheila has collaborated with Jason McCuish, LVTI Skills USA team, with their annual project that is incredibly inspiring."

O'Toole said O'Neil is ably following in the footsteps of Past President Brant Duncan "and Sheila has done a great job."

O'Neil said she was "truly honored" to accept the award and to celebrate literacy on behalf of all the educators of the Lynn Teachers Union.

"My grandmother was a teacher and I remember her saying, 'if you can read, you can dream, you can do anything,'" said O'Neil. "So reading has been and always will be one of my favorite activities. My daughters can attest to the fact



The Celebrate Literacy Day Planning Committee. Front row holding the event lead sponsor Metro Credit Union banner are Committee member Diane Moreno and Committee Chair Saritin Rizzuto, who are MCU officers. Back row, from left, are Committee members Esther Summerset, Danielle Sonia, Mikki Wilson, Natasha Megie-Maddrey, and Gina O'Toole. Not in photo: Committee member Wendy Joseph.

that I always have my nose in a book. As an educator, my love for reading has always been evident to my students during my small group discussions of literature and during the "Battle of the Books" after-school program competitions.

"As union president, I am lucky enough to visit schools across the district with Supt. Tutwiler and Deputy Supts. Ruggiero and Powers. I've also accompanied Mayor McGee on these visits," said O'Neil. "The excitement that we've witnessed from our students in receiving a brand new book is enlightening. The spark in our students' eyes is why we became educators. As president, I am so proud to have supported the Lynn Vocational Tech Skills USA with their award-winning literacy project for 2018-19 and I proudly announce my scholarship will be awarded to the LVTI Skills USA for their continued work in our community."

"I proudly represent the hardest-working and most dedicated educators I know. We all strive to bring literature to life for our students and encourage them to follow their dreams. Our teachers deserve to be respected and honored for their work that they do and the care that they give to the students in our district, especially this school year," said O'Neil. "This award is proudly accepted for the educators of Lynn public schools."

Jamie Zahlaway Belsito, trustee and alumna of Salem State University, delivered an inspiring keynote address while also congratulating the Literacy Day

Planning Committee for its outstanding efforts in promoting literacy in the city of Lynn and going "above and beyond" to create resources in the city.

In addition to Mayor McGee, other elected officials in attendance were Sen. Brendan Crigh-ton, State Reps. Dan Cahill and

Peter Capano, Councillors Brian LaPierre, Brian Field, and Rick Starbard, and School Committee members Lorraine Gately, Brian Castellanos, Jared Nicholson, and Michael Satterwhite.

Supt. of Schools Dr. Patrick Tutwiler was also in attendance at the celebration.

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