

Happy Holidays!

THE LYNN JOURNAL

Friday, December 5, 2025

LYNN HOUSING AUTHORITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT AND UNITED WAY DISTRIBUTE
THANKSGIVING MEAL BAGS



CARY SHUMAN PHOTO

Pictured at the LHAND/United Way of Massachusetts Bay food distribution event for Thanksgiving Nov. 22 at LHAND headquarters are some of the volunteers (front row, from left), Stephanie Letch of LHAND, Tom Richard, United Way Program Manager Yadira Carvajal, Sen. Brendan Crighton, LHAND Executive Director Charles J. Gaeta, and Councilor-at-Large Brian Field. Back row (left) are United Way Director of Policy Will Lehrer and Andrew Oswald.

The Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND) teamed up with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay to distribute gift cards for Thanksgiving turkeys along with meal bags to 1,300 Lynn families.

"This is an annual event that would not be possible without the efforts of the United Way of Massachusetts Bay," said LHAND Executive Director Charles J. Gaeta at the Nov. 22 event held at LHAND headquarters at 10 Church St. "With

the help of the volunteers here, along with our staff, particularly from our service department, this event has grown each and every year and the need is greater every year. I know the

See LHAND Page 3

M&T Bank donates \$20K and 1,000 pounds of food to Lynn Pantry

Special to the Journal

As an increasing number of families face food insecurity across the region this holiday season, nearly two dozen M&T Bank volunteers stocked the shelves with much-needed food donations at the Catholic Charities Lynn Food Pantry on Giving Tuesday, December 2.

Kelley Tuthill, President and CEO of Catholic Charities Boston, said the agency was thankful for M&T's generosity and volunteerism. Jeff Carpenter, M&T Bank's Interim Regional President in Massachusetts, also presented Catholic Charities Boston with a \$20,000 check to fight food insecurity from the M&T Charitable Foundation, the philanthropic

arm of M&T Bank.

"Hunger doesn't wait for your next paycheck," Tuthill said. "The clients who come to our pantry every day face constant uncertainty - whether they can pay for their prescription drugs, food or heat. We are incredibly grateful to M&T Bank for their support in helping us ensure that our most vulnerable community members don't go hungry."

During the month of November, M&T Bank collected non-perishable food items at its Greater Boston branch locations and its Boston office as part of Catholic Charities Boston's Hope for the Holidays campaign. On Giving Tuesday,

See M&T BANK Page 6

Lynn District Court hosts celebration of community and culture

Special to the Journal

Lynn District Court participated in the Massachusetts Trial Court's statewide Cultural Appreciation Week celebration of community, culture, and heritage on Thursday.

The Lynn celebration featured remarks by court, state, and local leaders as well as performances by the Massachusetts Correction Officers Federated Union Pipes and

Drums, ITM (In the Mak'n) Dance Team, a live painting of the Cultural Appreciation Day Logo by artist Michael Aghahowa, and a recitation of a poem, "Aren't We Just Kids?" by Sierra Velasquez, Lynn Youth Street Outreach Advocacy, Inc. (LYSOA) participant.

Lynn District Court First Justice Ina Howard-Hogan made remarks.

Among the court leaders who attended are Massachu-

setts Trial Court Chief Justice Heidi Brieger, Court Administrator Thomas Ambrosino, and Probation Commissioner Pamerson O. Ifill.

This event was part of the Massachusetts Trial Court's 9th Annual Cultural Appreciation Week during which more than 50 courts and Community Justice Support Center (CJSC) s hosted activities statewide.

See DISTRICT COURT Page 3



Essex Juvenile Probation Officer April Anderson and artist Michael Aghahowa.

EDITORIAL

REMEMBER THOSE IN NEED ON YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING LIST

Americans already have been spending a record amount of money thus far this holiday season, spurred on by the extended “Black Friday” (we are using quotes because Black Friday sales began in early November), Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday shopping days.

However, amidst our zeal to find the “perfect” gifts for our family members and friends, we hope that our readers make the effort, no matter how small, to remember those in need this holiday season.

Homelessness is at an all-time high in this country. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the number of unhoused Americans jumped significantly from 2023 to 2024 by about 18%.

It is estimated that homelessness in New York City has reached the highest level since the Great Depression of the 1930s. This past August, 103,391 people slept each night in NYC shelters. Even more depressingly, according to the Coalition for the Homeless, almost one-in-eight New York City school children experienced homelessness during the most recent school year.

The most vulnerable members of our society -- including people with disabilities, children, and older adults -- are experiencing homelessness at increasingly-higher rates. In addition, the proposed cuts to social safety net programs are expected to make the problem even worse.

The simple reality is that for far too many of our fellow Americans, the holidays bring little or no joy.

There are countless ways by which each of us can make the holidays brighter for those who are less fortunate, ranging from toy drives to food banks to Salvation Army Santas. With Christmas fast approaching, we urge everyone who has the means to do so to make that small effort to help those for whom the holidays are just another day.

TRUMP DELIVERS ON GLP-1 DRUGS

Back in January, we wrote an editorial entitled, “GLP-1 weight-loss drugs should be made affordable for all Americans.”

We pointed out that the U.S. ranks among the most obese nations in the world -- an astounding 72 percent of Americans are deemed to be overweight. We also noted that the new GLP-1 drugs, which originally were designed to help persons with diabetes (by making sugary, salty, and high-fat foods less appealing), had the “side-effect” of bringing about significant weight-loss in the consumers of these drugs.

It also has been found that the GLP-1 drugs not only help to decrease users’ appetite for food, but also to reduce their cravings for harmful substances such as alcohol, drugs, and even cigarettes, and to reduce the “food noise” for those with eating disorders.

Researchers also have established that the GLP-1 drugs improve the health of our cardiovascular system, liver, brain, and kidneys, and even help with sleep apnea.

In short, the GLP-1 drugs offer the potential of a life-changing medicine that could benefit tens of millions of Americans.

However, as we noted in our editorial in January, the GLP-1 drugs were prohibitively expensive -- about \$1300 per month -- for those not eligible for a prescription for their diabetes, which is the only condition covered by most health plans and Medicare for the drugs.

That all changed this past month with an agreement forged by President Donald Trump with the makers of these drugs, Eli Lilly (Mounjaro and Zepbound) and Novo Nordisk (Ozempic and Wegovy), by which they agreed to reduce their prices by more than 50%. For some consumers (who had been eligible for a previous 50% reduction off the \$1300 sticker price), this has worked out to a greatly-reduced monthly rate of about \$350 per month.

In short, President Trump’s deal makes these drugs much more affordable for millions of our fellow citizens who now can begin to take advantage of this miracle medicine. Trump’s efforts not only will benefit the health of individual Americans, but also promise to reduce our national healthcare costs in the years ahead.

NEWS IN BRIEF

USPS REMINDS CUSTOMERS TO KEEP PATHS CLEARED FOR CARRIER AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The Postal Service is reaching out to communities throughout the region to raise public awareness of the importance of keeping walkways, sidewalks, and approaches to mailboxes clear from snow and ice so letter carriers can provide safe and timely mail delivery.

Mounds of snow and patches of ice in front of mailboxes create havoc for carriers trying to safely deliver the mail. Postal officials emphasize that residents maintaining a clear path to the mailbox — including steps, porches, walkways and street approach — will help postal carriers provide timely delivery service. Customers receiving curbside delivery should also ensure clear access to their mailboxes for letter carriers from the street.

Postal employees make every reasonable effort to deliver the mail in many difficult weather conditions. At the same time, we must insure the safety of our carriers along their routes. Carriers are not allowed to attempt door delivery when there is a heavy buildup of snow and ice on sidewalks, steps or porches. They are not allowed to dismount for curbside boxes blocked by snow and ice buildup.

If mailboxes are blocked off and conditions are difficult, letter carriers must always consider safety and accessibility first. Letter carriers are instructed to not deliver to mailboxes and locations which are too hazardous or unsafe to access.

The U.S. Postal Service and postal letter carriers greatly appreciate your support.

The Postal Service received no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

THE LYNN JOURNAL

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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. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to Cary@lynnjournal.com

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As the busy holiday season approaches, know the signs of utility imposter scams

Special to the Journal

From phony calls threatening to shut off power to bogus emails and even imposters pretending to be employees, scammers posing as Eversource representatives are becoming increasingly more sophisticated. Every day, electric, water, and natural gas customers throughout the country are being targeted by impostor utility scams. While their deceitful tactics may vary, including having multiple callers on the line impersonating representatives from more than one company as part of the scam, the goal is always the same – to steal money and personal information from unsuspecting people. In recognition of Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) Day on November 19th, Eversource is joining utilities across the country in reminding customers to be vigilant and recognize the signs of suspicious behavior, especially with the busy holiday season approaching. The biggest red flag to be

aware of is being asked to pay with a gift card, prepaid debit card or Bitcoin – Eversource will never contact a customer with these types of requests.

“These scammers have perfected their tactics, and they can be incredibly convincing – applying enough pressure to rush the customer into paying before they have time to check if the person is legitimate,” said Founder of Utilities United Against Scams and Eversource Senior Vice President for Customer Operations and Digital Strategy Jared Lawrence. “We remind customers, if something doesn’t feel right or sound right, and you suspect someone is trying to scam you – don’t be afraid to hang up or shut the door on the person and then call us immediately at 800-592-2000 to verify the status of your account. If anyone asks you to buy gift cards and send them pictures or read them the numbers on the cards, you’re almost certainly being scammed.”

As customers shop for third-party suppliers to lower

their energy costs, another con to be aware of is people coming to the door and using deceptive marketing tactics to convince customers to switch energy suppliers. In Massachusetts, EnergySwitchMA.gov is the only official site managed by the Department of Public Utilities where customers can safely shop for energy.

With the holiday season right around the corner – a time when scam activity typically intensifies – customers are reminded of the following tips to stay safe:

- Eversource representatives will never ask for payment by gift card, prepaid debit cards, or Bitcoin.

- Never immediately pay, regardless of what the caller knows about the account or offers as an incentive. If the caller is requesting an immediate payment using a third-party service, at another location or via a prepaid debit card, hang up immediately and contact Eversource.

- Eversource representatives

never require customers to go to a department or grocery store to make a payment.

- Verify the caller is legitimate by asking for basic information. Eversource representatives will always be able to provide the name on the account, the account address and the exact past due balance.

- Eversource does not solicit door-to-door or on the phone on behalf of third-party energy suppliers.

- All Eversource employees carry photo identification; field workers wear clothing with the company logo and drive company vehicles.

- Customers should never provide personal, financial, or account information to any unsolicited person on the phone, at the door, or online, even if they seem legitimate.

- Customers who are scheduled for disconnection due to nonpayment receive several written notices, including an alert on their bill with information on how to maintain their service.

- Customers who doubt a call, in-person interaction, text, or email is legitimate should call Eversource directly at the number on their bill to confirm the authenticity of the contact.

- Customers should not search for Eversource’s phone number or website through a search engine. You can find contact information, including the website, on your Eversource bill.

- Do not accept offers from anyone to pay the customer’s bill or provide any other service for a fee. Even if the person claims to be an Eversource employee, it’s likely a scam.

- Do not click on links or call numbers that appear in unexpected emails or texts. Clicking on a link can make a computer infected with malware, including viruses that can steal information and compromise the computer.

Be sure to visit Utilities United Against Scams for more tips and helpful information to stop scams.

DISTRICT COURT (from pg. 1)

These celebrations included food tastings, cooking demonstrations, music and dance performances, art exhibits, and

more.

The Lynn Court was a “Signature event,” celebrations visited by court and local leaders

during the Massachusetts Trial Court’s 9th CAW celebration.



First Justice Ina Howard-Hogan poses with members of the Massachusetts Correction Officers Federated Union Pipes and Drums.



James Runner, ITM Dance Squad coach, Massachusetts Trial Court Chief Justice Heidi Brieger, Massachusetts Probation Commissioner Pamerson O. Ifill, and ITM dance members.

LHAND (from pg. 1)

community is very grateful for the United Way’s presence here and elsewhere.”

Will Lehrer, director of policy at United Way, praised LHAND for its partnership in the charitable endeavor.

“It’s great to have them as a partner – they’re such an es-

sential part of this community,” Lehrer said at the event. “We at United Way are happy to be of service to the community, to be able to provide 1,300 bags to Lynn families. Food insecurity is higher than it’s ever been, and so we’ve partnered to work in Lynn to distribute SNAP grants

on behalf of our Thanksgiving project. We’re grateful for the opportunity to support a community that is in need in this time, and we’re happy to be partners with LHAND.”

Sen. Brendan Crighton, who was part of the team of volunteers at the event, said, “I want

to thank Charlie Gaeta of the Lynn Housing Authority and the United Way for their efforts. This collaboration over the years has helped many families throughout Lynn, and I really appreciate all the volunteers coming out here. It’s a heartwarming event, but it also

just shows how big the issue of food insecurity is and how we need to do much more to make sure that families have the support, not only during the holidays but year-round.”

WARD 7 COUNCILOR-ELECT JORDAN AVERY VICTORY CELEBRATION HELD AT SCOPA ITALIAN KITCHEN

Several residents, business owners, and city officials attended a Victory Celebration for newly elected Ward 7 Councilor Jordan Avery Nov. 18 at Scopa Italian Kitchen.

Following is a statement from Jordan Avery:

“It was an incredible honor to celebrate our Ward 7 City Council victory surrounded by family, friends, supporters, and so many leaders from across our city and Commonwealth. Scopa Italian Kitchen — a local business I am proud to be a partner of right here in Ward 7 — was packed wall to wall with Ward 7 residents, business owners, volunteers, and supporters who helped make this campaign possible.

I want to extend a sincere thank you to Mayor Jared Nicholson, members of the entire Lynn City Council, School Committee members, and Essex County Sheriff Kevin Copping for attending. We were also joined by leaders from beyond Lynn, including former

Boston City Councilor Tito Jackson, Revere City Councilor Ira Novoselsky, and many other current and former elected officials from across Massachusetts. The outpouring of support from so many different corners of our state was humbling and deeply appreciated.

One of the most powerful moments of the night came when my cousin Tasha, who

traveled from Boston, performed a beautiful song that filled the room and brought everyone to their feet. It was a moment of joy, unity, and pride that I will never forget.

As I step into this role, I am honored to serve as the next Ward 7 City Councilor. I am passionate about building a stronger Ward 7 — focused on listening, problem-solving,

advocating for our neighborhoods, and getting real results for residents, families, and small businesses. My commitment is simple: to be present, accessible, and responsive, and to work every day towards a safer, cleaner, and more vibrant Ward 7 that reflects the best of who we are.

I look forward to our swearing-in ceremony on Monday,

January 5 at 6 p.m. at Lynn City Hall, and I encourage residents to join us that evening. This victory belongs to the community, and I am excited for the work ahead.

Thank you to everyone who showed up, supported, volunteered, and believed in this campaign. I am beyond grateful, and I am ready to get to work for the people of Ward 7.”



David Griffin, Seth Novoselsky, Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery, and Revere City Councilor Ira Novoselsky.



Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery greets Ron Gaudet (left) and Diane Gaudet (seated) and Bob Calder (right) and Donna Calder (second from right) at his Victory Celebration.



Essex County Sheriff Kevin Copping and Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery.



Lynn Classical basketball great Pancho Bingham was among the many supporters celebrating the victory of Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery at a party Nov. 18 at Scopa Italian Kitchen.



Members of the Lynn City Council attended the Victory Celebration for Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery. From left are Council President Jay Walsh, Councilor-at-Large Brian Field, Revere City Councilor Ira Novoselsky, Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery, Ward 5 Councilor Diana Chakoutis, Ward 2 Councilor Obed Matul, Ward 3 Councilor Coco Alinsug, Ward 6 Councilor Fred Hogan, Ward 1 Councilor Dr. Peter Meaney, and Ward 4 Councilor Natasha Megie-Maddrey.



Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery welcomes business owners Ray Failty, Jared Failty, Lou Markakis of Lynnway Associates, and Arthur Walhberg to his Victory Celebration at Scopa Italian Kitchen.



Jimmy Connors, Ward 7 Councilor-Elect Jordan Avery, and School Committeeman Lenny Pena.



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¹Annual Percentage Yield as of 11/06/25 and is subject to change prior to the end of the promotional term and upon renewal. Minimum \$500.00 to open; minimum \$0.01 to earn interest. Promotional term available through 12/31/25 and is for new money only. Fees may reduce earnings. After account opening, the current rate can be found within Metro iBanking and on the account statement. Federal Regulations require a substantial penalty on funds withdrawn prior to maturity for all Certificate of Deposit (CD) accounts. Fees and penalties may reduce earnings. All CDs that roll over upon maturity will earn the interest rate in effect at that time. At maturity New Money CDs roll into a Regular CD at a comparable term. Please see Metro's Truth-in-Savings Disclosure for Certificates of Deposit; ask a Metro Representative for further information about these accounts. This offer is only available to residents of Lynn and Peabody or members of Community Credit Union and is non-transferable. Must mention referral code ("Checking Offer", "CD Offer", or "Bundle Offer") at account opening.

²To earn \$500 incentive, you must open a new Metro Checking account by 12/31/25. One monthly recurring direct deposit required and sign up for e-Statements required within 60 days of account opening. The account must remain open and in good standing for 90 days. If new account is closed within first 90 days, there is a \$15 early closing fee. Account will be reviewed once during a 60-90 day period to qualify for incentive. Incentive will be credited to the checking account 60-90 days after opening. This is a limited time offer and Metro CU reserves the right to cancel the promotion without notice.

³To qualify for Metro Credit Union's bundle offer, you must open both a new Metro Checking account and a new 9-month Certificate of Deposit (CD) by 12/31/25. The checking account must be opened with enrollment in e-Statements and at least one monthly recurring direct deposit established within 60 days. The account must remain open and in good standing for at least 90 days; if closed within that period, a \$15 early closing fee applies. The account will be reviewed once during the 60-90 day window, and if eligible, the \$500 incentive will be credited to the checking account within that timeframe. The CD must be opened during the same promotional period with a minimum deposit of \$500 in new money not currently on deposit with Metro Credit Union. When both accounts are opened together, the CD earns a promotional 4.50% Annual Percentage Yield (APY); otherwise, the standard APY is 4.25%. Minimum \$0.01 is required to earn interest. APYs are accurate as of 11/06/25 and are subject to change prior to the end of the promotional term and upon renewal. At maturity, the CD will roll into a regular CD at a comparable term and the rate in effect at that time. Federal regulations require a substantial penalty for early withdrawals, which may reduce earnings. Fees may reduce earnings. This is a limited-time offer, non-transferable, and limited to one per member. Metro Credit Union reserves the right to modify or cancel the promotion at any time without notice. Offer available only to residents of Lynn and Peabody or members of Community Credit Union and must mention referral code ("Checking Offer", "CD Offer", or "Bundle Offer") at account opening.

Massachusetts House passes Supplemental Budget to close FY25

Special to the Journal

The Massachusetts House of Representatives have passed a supplemental budget to address deficiencies, to make new necessary investments, and to close the books on Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25). The legislation appropriates \$2.25 billion in gross spending, at a net cost to the state of \$750 million, representing a reduction of almost \$200 million from the Governor's original proposal.

"This supplemental budget closes the books on FY25, and aims to fortify the Commonwealth's finances, bolster economic development, and ensure continued access to critical health care services," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "In the face of unrelenting attacks from the Trump Administration that will strip health insurance coverage from millions of Americans and deny access to lifesaving vaccinations, this supplemental budget will help vulnerable residents prepare for, and avoid,

a lapse in coverage, and ensure continued access to vaccines for every child in Massachusetts. I want to thank Chairman Michlewitz for his hard work, and all my colleagues in the House for recognizing the importance of the investments that are included in this legislation."

"This supplemental budget will close the books on FY25 in a balanced and fiscally responsible manner. By making critical investments into much needed programs in healthcare, education, and housing to name a few, the Commonwealth will be in a strong fiscal position for FY 26 and beyond," said Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means (D-Boston). "I want to thank Speaker Mariano for his dedication to these issues, as well as all my House colleagues for supporting this initiative."

"This supplemental budget closes the books on FY25, allocating important funds to programs that will help our residents," said Representative Adrian Madaro (D - East Bos-

ton). "In the face of devastating cuts and inaction from the federal government that will strip health insurance, take away access to care, and impact the quality of life for many across the Commonwealth, the funding in this bill ensures that our residents will be protected and covered, while providing resources for everything from housing, to school meals, to clean water and snow removal this winter.

The bill passed appropriates \$10 million for Health Care for All to conduct a public awareness campaign, and to conduct health coverage enrollment assistance for communities at risk of losing health care coverage as a result of the new Medicaid reporting requirements that were put in place by President Trump and Congress through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. It invests \$10 million for the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, and includes \$5 million in grants to reproductive health care providers. It also invests \$15 million for a new Sports and Entertainment Fund grant program, for

which \$10 million will be set aside for the events related to the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The bill passed today also includes a policy section which authorizes the Department of Public Health Commissioner to determine routine childhood immunizations and vaccination schedules, rather than relying on the recommendations of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

In addition to the appropriations, the bill also invests in the state's future by depositing the remainder of the funds to an escrow account (\$337.7 million), to support pensions (\$18.8 million), and to the Other Postemployment Benefits Trust Fund (\$18.8 million).

Additionally, the House accepted an amendment from Chair John Lawn that updates and restructures existing assessments on Massachusetts hospitals used to fund the Health Safety Net and related hospital support trust funds. The changes modernize financial data used

in the assessment, increase the amount hospitals contribute, and adjust how the resulting funds are distributed among hospitals.

The bill also addresses budget deficiencies, including:

- \$1.67 billion in gross spending (\$303 million net cost) for MassHealth • \$60.7 million for snow and ice removal

- \$35 million for HomeBASE

- \$14 million for the Section 35 program

- \$12.5 million for no-cost calls

- \$12 million for Universal School Meals

- \$7.2 million for Department of Correction (DOC) Facilities operations • \$6.8 million for the Clean Water Trust Fund

- \$3.5 million for State Police operations

- \$700,000 for the Suffolk County District Attorney

The bill passed in the House of Representatives by a vote 141-14, and now goes to the Senate for its consideration.



M&T Bank volunteers sort donated food at the Catholic Charities Lynn Food Pantry on Giving Tuesday.



M&T Bank volunteers stock shelves at the Catholic Charities Lynn Food Pantry on Giving Tuesday.

M&T BANK (from pg. 1)

M&T Bank volunteers rolled up their sleeves, unloaded boxes of over 1,000 pounds of donated food from their vehicles and stocked the pantry's shelves with items such as pasta, flour, soups, canned protein, rice and baking mixes.

"M&T Bank is proud to support Catholic Charities Boston in its Hope for the Holidays food drive – an initiative that helps stock local food pantries and ensures families across Massachusetts have nourishing meals during this critical time. As more families face food in-

security, we believe no child or parent should have to worry about their next meal," Carpenter said. "Our commitment to community runs deep. Through collaborations like this, we strive to break down barriers and meet essential needs—bringing comfort, stability, and hope to the communities we serve."

"On behalf of the City of Lynn, I really just want to thank M&T Bank for this really meaningful contribution," said Mayor Jared Nicholson. "We're incredibly fortunate

to have such great partners in Catholic Charities."

Catholic Charities Boston is seeing a surge in visits to its food pantries as already strained families struggle to afford groceries amid challenges with food assistance and high living costs. Catholic Charities Boston operates four food pantries in Dorchester, Brockton, Lynn and Lowell, distributing approximately 2.4 million meals annually. For more information visit: <https://www.ccab.org>.



Shown left to right, Kelley Tuthill, President and CEO of Catholic Charities Boston; Mayor Jared Nicholson, and Jeff Carpenter, M&T Bank's Interim Regional President in Massachusetts, are surrounded by volunteers as they hold a \$20,000 check presented to Catholic Charities Boston from the M&T Charitable Foundation, the philanthropic arm of M&T Bank.

MBTA announces December service changes

Special to the Journal

The MBTA has announced service changes in December on the Orange and Green lines. Riders can find more information on service changes through in-station signage, in-station public announcements, and at mbta.com/PlannedWork. Transit Ambassadors and MBTA staff will be available on-site to offer information and assistance during these service changes. Riders are encouraged to subscribe to T-Alerts or to follow the MBTA on X @MBTA, @MBTA_CR, and @MBTA_CR_Alerts for up-to-date service information.

On the Orange Line

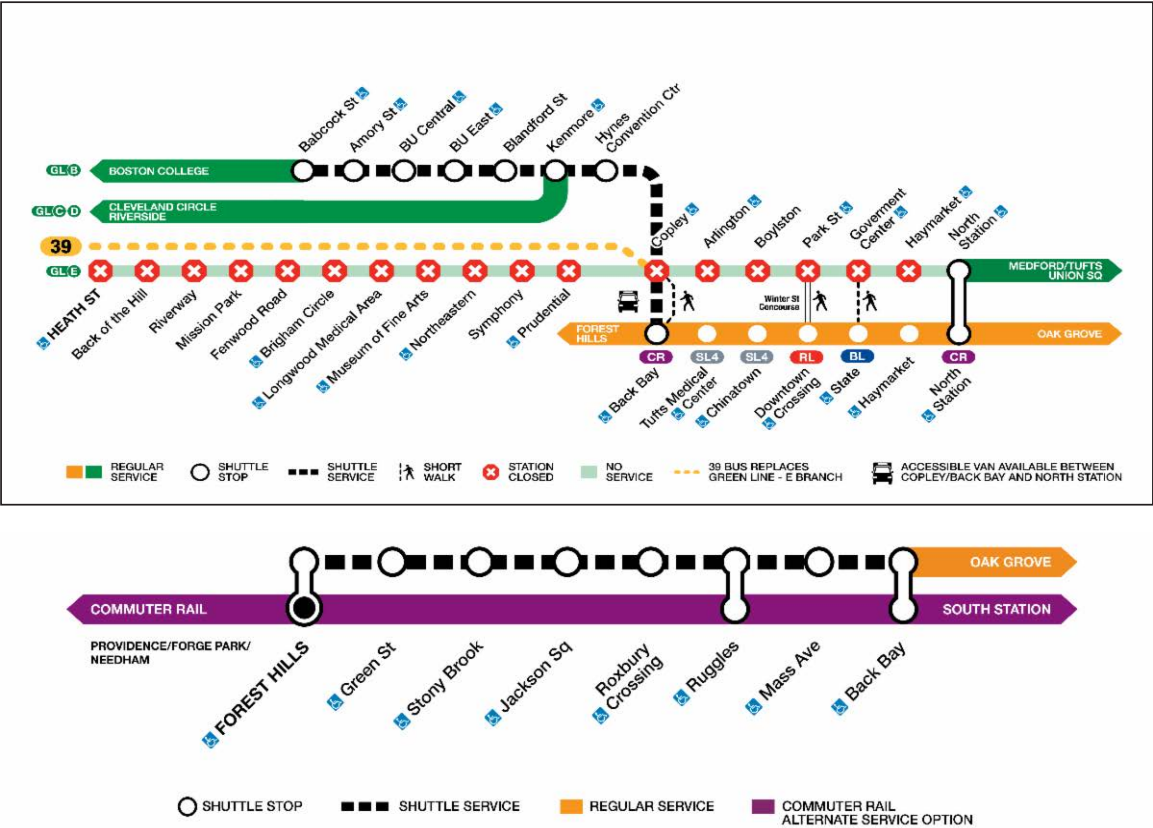
The MBTA will continue signal upgrade and modernization work on the Orange Line in December. By upgrading and modernizing its signals, the MBTA will significantly increase operational efficiency and improve scheduling reliability for riders. The MBTA will also maximize access to closed stations by performing cleaning, signage replacement, plumbing repairs and pump room work, and window replacement throughout the shutdown area as well as preparations for column work at Mass. Ave.

To accomplish this work, the following service suspensions will take place:

Orange Line service will be suspended between Back Bay and Forest Hills all day on Friday, December 5, and all day on Saturday, December 6. Regular Orange Line service will operate on Sunday, December 7.

Free and accessible shuttle buses will make stops between Back Bay and Forest Hills.

Riders are also encouraged to consider the Commuter Rail for fare-free service between Forest Hills, Ruggles, Back



Bay, and South Station. The trip between Forest Hills and Back Bay on the Commuter Rail is approximately 10 minutes.

Riders using shuttles bus service should budget ample extra travel time. For example, a rider travelling to Downtown Crossing from Forest Hills should budget at least an additional 30 minutes of travel in addition to their regular commute.

On the Green Line

The MBTA will perform work in December to replace the wooden overhead catenary wire “trough” in the Green Line tunnel, which is original to the tunnel’s construction in the late 1890s. The trough houses the Green Line’s overhead wires and will be replaced with a modern, more durable, metal trough. With unencumbered access to the underground Green Line track areas, a number of other projects will also perform work, including Green Line Train Protection System installation, signal modernizations,

tunnel inspections, station brightening work, and more.

The wooden overhead catenary trough – seen here at Park Street – dates back to the late 1890s and will be replaced with a modern, more durable, metal trough.

To accomplish this work, the following service suspension will take place:

Green Line service will be suspended between North Station and Babcock Street on the B Branch, Kenmore on the C and D Branches, and Heath Street on the E Branch for 15 consecutive days, December 8 – 22.

Riders using shuttles bus service should budget ample extra travel time. For example, a rider travelling to Park Street from Boston College should budget at least an additional 20 minutes of travel in addition to their regular commute.

B Branch: Free and accessible shuttle buses will operate between Babcock Street and Back Bay.

Riders can connect to the Or-

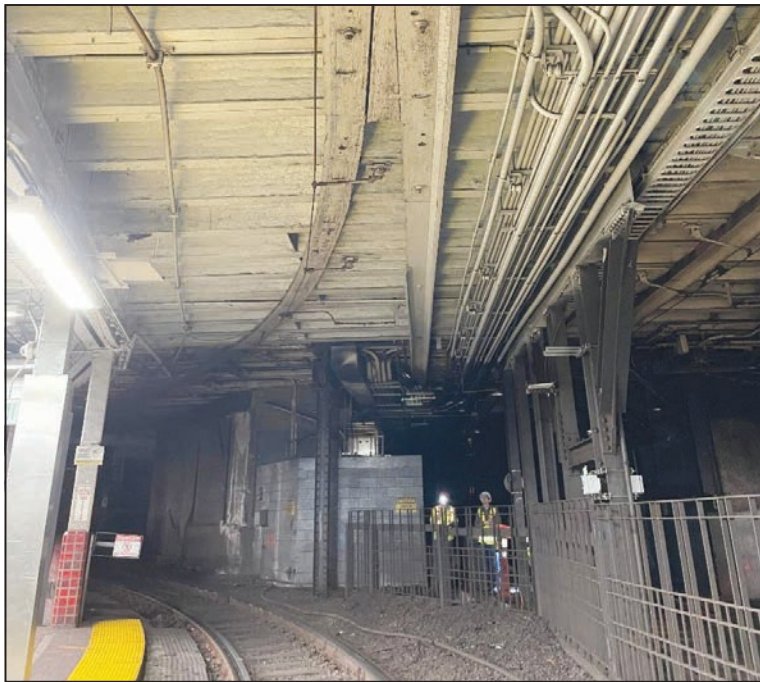
ange Line at Back Bay for continued service through downtown toward North Station.

There will be free fares at Kenmore with the fare gates open. Fares will also be free at all surface-level stops west of Kenmore.

Route 57 bus service will be fare-free during this service change.

C Branch: Free and accessible shuttle buses will operate between Kenmore and Back Bay.

Riders can connect to the Orange Line at Back Bay for continued service through downtown toward North Station.



The wooden overhead catenary trough – seen here at Park Street – dates back to the late 1890s and will be replaced with a modern, more durable, metal trough.

There will be free fares at Kenmore with the fare gates open. Fares will also be free at all surface-level stops west of Kenmore.

D Branch: Free and accessible shuttle buses will operate between Kenmore and Back Bay.

Riders can connect to the Orange Line at Back Bay for continued service through downtown toward North Station.

There will be free fares at Kenmore and Riverside with the fare gates open. Fares will also be free at all surface-level stops west of Kenmore.

E Branch: Route 39 will replace Green Line E Branch service between Heath Street and Back Bay. Extra buses will be added to the 39 to accommodate additional capacity. The route will be fare-free during this service change.

Accessible van service will be available for Green Line stops between Copley/Back Bay and North Station.

The Worcester Commuter Rail Line will be fare-free between South Station, Back Bay, and Lansdowne during this Green Line service change. Riders should note that regular fares should be purchased beyond Lansdowne and regular fares should be purchased if traveling on a Commuter Rail line other than the Worcester Line.

The MBTA previously announced service changes in November.

Upcoming service changes during winter 2026

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) today announced its service updates which go into effect on Sunday, December 14.

Among these updates, 21

bus routes in total will increase frequency with 10 of those being upgraded to operate every 15 minutes or better. This is part of the larger Better Bus program aimed at improving the bus routes system wide.

Riders are strongly encouraged to check schedules in advance and to use the MBTA’s Trip Planner as well as the MBTA Go app to view live information.

THE LYNN KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HOSTS THE ANNUAL THANKSGIVING ALL SCHOOLS LUNCHEON SPONSORED BY ST JEAN’S, BROTHERHOOD, METRO, AND RIVERWORKS CREDIT UNIONS



AD’s, coaches and captains from the Lynn high schools football and cheerleading teams were at the Lynn Knights of Columbus on Nov.25 afternoon for the annual luncheon.



Jason McCuish with the Blessing before lunch.



Mayor Jared Nicholson with his remarks and good luck to all the players, reminding them to play hard and be safe.



Interim Superintendent of Lynn Public Schools Molly Cohen with her remarks to players and coaches.



State Senator Brendan Crighton addresses the assembly at the Knights of Columbus Hall.

On Nov. 25, the 4 High Schools of Lynn, Classical, English, St. Mary’s and Lynn Tech, were represented at the Lynn Knights of Columbus for the Annual Thanksgiving Football Luncheon. The captains from the schools including the cheerleading squads all gather before they face off at the Turkey Day game.



Lynn school leaders and city officials are pictured at the annual Thanksgiving Football Luncheon held at the Knights of Columbus Hall.

LYNN HOUSING AUTHORITY
& NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Wishing you peace, joy & warmth this holiday season and in the year ahead

*Charles Gaeta, Executive Director | Board of Commissioners
Susan McGinnis-Lang, Steve Martin, Robert Muise,
Justin Anshewitz, & Kiara Palomares*

THE LYNN KoC HOSTS THE ANNUAL
THANKSGIVING ALL SCHOOLS
LUNCHEON SPONSORED BY ST
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AND RIVERWORKS CREDIT UNIONS



Lynn Mayor Jared Nicholson (center) with State Representative Sean Reid, John Kingston from St Jean’s, President/CEO of St Jeans David Surface, and President/CEO of Brotherhood Credit Union Adam Sherman.

MBTA (from pg. 7)

Subway Updates
Orange Line: Trip time and reliability will improve due to operational improvements to reduce congestion at Oak Grove
Blue Line: Time between trips may shift by a few minutes midday between 12pm and 2pm to allow for maintenance and inspections. This will lead to improved reliability and predictability of passenger service.

Bus Service Improvements
Routes 32, 39, 57, 66, 71, 73, 77, SL1, SL3, SL5: These 10 routes will become Frequent Bus Routes with service every 15 minutes or better every day during most operating hours.
Route 64: To improve connectivity and consistency, weekend trips will no longer deviate to University Park in Cambridge, but will extend

to Kendall/MIT seven days a week. University Park can still be reached by traveling to/from the bus at Central Square (inbound River Street, outbound Western Ave). Route frequency will also improve.
Routes 112 and 114: The bus stop located at the Chelsea Market Basket has moved from the east side of the store to the west side closer to the Carter St. side of the building due to building construction.
Route 7: Frequency will increase to alleviate crowding during AM and PM peak periods.
Routes 9, 21, 26, 45, 64, 69, 83, 116, 215, 225, 245: Frequency will increase.
For other minor runtime, reliability, and trip shift changes see mbta.com for schedules.

Ferry Schedule Changes
Hingham/Hull Ferry week-

day service continues to operate year-round. There is no weekend service throughout the winter.
Charlestown Ferry weekday and weekend service continues to operate year-round.
East Boston Ferry weekend and weekday will operate this season through November 30, 2025.
Lynn Ferry, Winthrop Ferry, and Quincy Ferry weekday service continues to operate through November 26, 2025.
There is no weekend service throughout the winter on these routes.
The full lists of upcoming changes for winter 2026 will soon be available at mbta.com.
For more information, connect with the T on X @MBTA, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or TikTok @thembta.

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NSMT presents the 36th anniversary production of ‘A Christmas Carol - A Musical Ghost Story’

Special to the Journal

The Holiday Season will light up once again when Bill Hanney's North Shore Music Theatre (NSMT) presents the area's most beloved production of A Christmas Carol for its 36th Anniversary production from Thursday, December 4 through Sunday, December 21, 2025. A Christmas Carol is sponsored by American Family Care, Urgent Care.

“There is no better way to end North Shore Music Theatre’s 70th Anniversary season than with our spirited annual production of A Christmas Carol,” said NSMT’s owner and producer Bill Hanney. “Presenting this production each year fills us all with the Holiday spirit and our Christmas Carol family would not be complete without welcoming David Coffee and Cheryl McMahon back as Ebenezer Scrooge and Mrs. Dilber for their 31st year. I am honored to continue to produce this masterpiece that is such an important part of so many families’ Holiday traditions, including my own.”

A Christmas Carol is the original adaptation of Charles

Dicken’ beloved classic was created by former NSMT Artistic Director Jon Kimbell and members of the NSMT staff, following Ebenezer Scrooge through a series of strange and magical ghostly encounters, where he ultimately discovers the true spirit of the Holiday season. Featuring traditional songs like “God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman,” “Here We Come A-Wassailing,” “The Boar’s Head Carol,” and “We Wish You A Merry Christmas,” and colorful costumes, A Christmas Carol has become a Holiday favorite throughout New England having been seen by more than one million people since 1989.

David Coffee and Cheryl McMahon will both return for their 31st year playing Ebenezer Scrooge and Mrs. Dilber respectively. A Christmas Carol also features Daniella Dalli as The Ghost of Christmas Past/Mrs. Cratchit, Davron S. Monroe as The Ghost of Christmas Present/Philanthropist 1, Nathan Halltiwanger as The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come/Young Scrooge, Mark Worth as Jacob Marley, Tommy Labanaris as the Narrator, Kevin Patrick

Martinas Bob Cratchit, Amy Bransky and Resa Mishina as the Pearlies, Henry Thrasher as Fred, Caroline Siegrist as Belle/Meg, Russell Garrett as Mr. Fezziwig/Philanthropist 2, Chris Graham as Dick Wilkins/Ensemble, Chris Isolanoas Old Joe/Ensemble, Nicole Weitzman as Mrs. Fezziwig/Ensemble, Meagan Lewis-Michelson as Ensemble, Emily Song Tyler as Ensemble, and Henry H. Miller as Ensemble.

The cast of AChristmas Carol will be rounded out by two casts of local youth performers including Fiona Kelly and Ainsley Moulton as Tiny Tim/Want, Jack Baumrind and Bentley Scott as Peter Cratchit, Adalyn Daly and Grace Olah as Martha Cratchit, Alexandra D’Onofrio and Ella Tugender as Belinda Cratchit, Piper Lane and Corinne Sweeney as Fan, Joseph Hobbib and Nicholas Shay as Boy Scrooge/Ignorance, Violet Black and Helen Brady as London Child #1 & Penelope Kaminsky and Regan Shanahan as London Child #2.

The creative team for A Christmas Carol includes Kevin P. Hill (Director & Choreographer), Milton Granger

(Music Direction), Howard C. Jones (Original Scenic Design), Jack Mehler (Lighting Design), Leon Rothenberg (Sound Design), Pamela Hersch (Projection Design), Gerard Kelly (Original Wig & Hair Design), Rebecca Glick (Costume Coordinator/Additional Costume Design), Brian M. Robillard (Production Stage Manager), Robert L. Rucinski (Assistant Music Director), Dakotah Wiley Horan (Assistant Stage Manager), and Maria Papadopoulos (Assistant Stage Manager). Flying effects are provided by ZFX, Inc.

A Christmas Carol is produced for North Shore Music Theatre by Bill Hanney (Owner/Producer), Kevin P. Hill (Producing Artistic Director), and Matthew Chappell (Associate Producer & Casting Director).

NSMT will be collecting toys in the lobby for Tiny Tim’s Toy Drive throughout the run of A Christmas Carol. NSMT will be accepting unopened, unwrapped toys for boys and girls ages 2 - 12. All toys will be donated to Toys for Tots.

Tickets for A Christmas Carol are priced starting at \$40 -

Kids 4 - 18 years of age save 50% at all performances December 5 - 21. Group discounts are available for purchases of 10 or more tickets. \$25 Student Rush tickets are available. For tickets and information call 978-232-7200, visit www.nsmnt.org, or visit the box office in person at 54 Dunham Rd., Beverly, MA.

A Christmas Carol performs from December 4 - December 21, 2024 (Evening shows December 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, and 21 at 7:30pm; Matinees December 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 20, and 21 at 2pm). Tickets can be purchased by calling the North Shore Music Theatre Box Office at (978) 232-7200, via the website at www.nsmnt.org or in person at 54 Dunham Road (Route 128, exit 46), Beverly, MA.

Since opening in 1955, NSMT has become one of the most attended theatres in New England, with approximately 250,000 patrons annually. With a national and regional reputation for artistic achievement, NSMT has received numerous industry awards including Elliot Norton Awards, IRNE Awards, the Rosetta Le Noire Award from Actors’ Equity, and the Moss Hart Award.

Healey-Driscoll Administration releases statewide high school graduation framework

Special to the Journal

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has released an initial statewide graduation framework designed to set nation-leading expectations and prepare all students for success after high school, regardless of their chosen career path. This framework, developed with

the K-12 Statewide Graduation Council, represents the state’s most robust education standards ever.

Key Principles and Changes

The new system moves away from reliance on a single high-stakes test. Key changes include:

- Phasing Out 10th Grade

MCAS: The 10th Grade MCAS exam would be phased out as part of the new framework.

- No Single Barrier: No single test will represent a barrier to graduation for any student.
- Comprehensive Approach: Massachusetts will be the first state to implement such a comprehensive approach to setting high educational standards.

Seven Elements of the Framework

The framework is structured around seven elements that focus on building a strong academic foundation, demonstrating mastery, and developing real-world problem-solving skills.

Strong Starts

Students must complete a set of coursework that aligns with admissions requirements for higher education.

Proven Skills

To show mastery of course content, students will complete:

- A limited number of end-of-course (EOC) assessments.

EOCs are a more targeted and relevant approach than the current high school MCAS.

Students do not have to pass an EOC to graduate.

- A capstone or portfolio.

Capstones are cumulative projects, typically including research, a written assignment, and a final presentation.

Portfolios are a collection of a student’s best work demonstrating mastery in one or across content areas.

Bright Futures

This element focuses on future planning and literacy:

- Students create their own plan for college or career.
- Students must complete the FAFSA or MASFA (financial aid application).

- Students learn financial literacy.
- Students can earn seals of distinction, such as the State Seal of Bilitracy.

Stakeholder Engagement and Next Steps

This initial framework is the first step, following significant feedback from over 400 people who attended listening sessions, 6,615 respondents to a statewide online survey, and 103 district administrators.

The administration will continue to seek input from communities to refine the recommendations and work toward a final report next year. This work builds on the administration’s existing “Reimagining High School Initiative,” which includes expanding access to programs like Early College, Innovation Career Pathways, and MyCAP.

OBITUARIES

All obituaries and death notices will be at a cost of \$195.00 per paper. Includes photo.No word Limit. Please send to obits@reverejournal.com or call 781-485-0588

MIDDLESEX SHERIFF'S OFFICE HOLDS HOLIDAY EVENT FOR FAMILIES OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

Smiles, laughter and holiday spirit filled the Middlesex Sheriff's Office (MSO) Training Academy on Saturday, November 22 as the office hosted an event for the families of incarcerated individuals.

The 2nd annual holiday event was hosted by the MSO's Family Support Services Unit (FSSU). It featured activities with staff from the Discovery Museum in Acton, balloon animals crafted by retired MSO Captain Drew Crawford and cookie decorating.

Additionally, each family was given a turkey donated by the Manolis Family Foundation, fresh eggs from the MSO's Project EARTH, and cookies baked by the MSO's culinary staff. The Wish Project from Chelmsford and the MSO's religious services staff also provided gifts that were distributed to children attending the event.

The event also featured a raffle of two bicycles donated by the family of an individual previously incarcerated at the Middlesex Jail & House of Correction. The family donated the bicycles as a thank you for the support they had

received while their loved one was incarcerated.

"I am incredibly grateful to our team, the Manolis family, The Wish Project and the Discovery Museum for making this event such an overwhelming success," said Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian. "Speaking to so many of the families who came, it was powerful to hear not just how much today meant to them, but how impactful their experiences with our Family Support Services Unit team are throughout the year."

"This was a great day," said FSSU Director Kerry Sullivan. "To see the happiness and know you're making a difference is powerful. Often times families are reaching out to us during difficult moments, so to be able to laugh with them and celebrate with them is something special."

Through the MSO's partnership with The Wish Project, the group is also working with the FSSU team to sponsor 40 families of individuals in the MSO's lower security programs (community work, work release and pre-release). Parents will be able to give these presents directly to their children during



Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian (fifth from left), members of the MSO, volunteers from the Discovery Museum, and representatives of the Manolis Family Foundation from Pridestar Trinity EMS stand behind a table filled with gifts at the Middlesex Sheriff's Office Training Academy in Chelmsford on Saturday, November 22, 2025.

upcoming visits.

To learn more about the Middlesex Sheriff's Office and the Family Support Services Unit, please visit www.middlesexsheriff.org.



The Manolis Family Foundation generously donated frozen turkeys to be distributed to the families of incarcerated individuals through the Middlesex Sheriff's Office Family Support Services Unit (FSSU).

MIDDLESEX SHERIFF'S OFFICE CELEBRATES THE GRADUATION OF 10 NEW CORRECTION OFFICERS

The Middlesex Sheriff's Office (MSO) proudly celebrated the graduation of the 53rd Basic Training Academy (BTA) at Winchester Town Hall on Friday, Nov. 21.

Ten new correction officers were sworn in during a ceremony that featured remarks from Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian and Winchester Police Chief Daniel O'Connell. 53rd BTA President Emily Magovern also

addressed those in attendance.

"Today represents commitment, growth, and pride," Magovern told classmates, family members and officials. "But most importantly, it represents responsibility - a responsibility not only to this uniform, but to the people we serve, our fellow officers, and our community."

The ceremony followed a rigorous academy process during which recruits underwent ex-

tensive training. The academy included both classroom and hands on work, as well as the mastering of policies, procedures, and skills needed to maintain safety and security.

The training focused on topics such as implicit bias, Mental Health First Aid, Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT), de-escalation and communication, first responder training and defensive tactics. In addition, all

10 recruits spent time working with veteran members of the MSO team during their on-the-job training at the Middlesex Jail & House of Correction.

"During this Thanksgiving season, we are proud to welcome these 10 new officers to our Middlesex Sheriff's Office family," said Sheriff Koutoujian. "Throughout their training, they displayed the character, commitment and dedication

to excellence that our team is known for. We look forward to the incredible contributions we know these officers will make throughout their careers."

The Nov. 21 graduation was the 19th held during Sheriff Koutoujian's tenure.

To learn more about the Middlesex Sheriff's Office and current career opportunities, please visit www.middlesexsheriff.org.



53rd Basic Training Academy President Emily Magovern addresses classmates, families and Middlesex Sheriff's Office officials during graduation on Friday, November 21



Members of the 53rd Basic Training Academy (standing) pose for a photo following their graduation. In the front row are Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian (center), alongside members of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office command and training staffs.

PHOTOS COURTESY BY JOSH LONDON

The Lynn Journal

2026 Publishing Calendar

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JANUARY

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FRESH & LOCAL

Inspired by street food

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

December is when entertaining friends and family adds to an already busy schedule. We suggest you choose to serve a meal inspired by street food. You could select a street food specialty that reflects your family's culture, features a family favorite, or honors a guest.

Food designed for last-minute preparation, served from a cart, food truck, or small stall, is usually limited in ingredients and makes great party food. As a bonus, most street food can be eaten out of hand, from disposable serving items, with fingers or wooden spoons and forks.

You can have one or two people play chef and prepare each person's choice to order. Or, make it self-serve. Set up a table of optional ingredients so your guests can be their own chefs.

Menu Suggestions

We consulted local food truck menus and drew on our favorite items from the past to offer menu suggestions for

your street food party. We also looked for items you could purchase if you have time to shop but not to cook.

If we were hosting a Vietnamese street food party, we would serve fresh rolls, *bon mi* sandwiches, and a big bowl of *bun thit nuong* (a noodle salad). Anyone who can build a sandwich can make a *bon mi*, and we have based parties around teaching friends to make fresh rolls. The preparation for this menu is mostly shopping and chopping.

One of our favorite food trucks, *Mei Mei*, has turned its menu into a dumpling business. You can buy their excellent products frozen and serve a selection of dumplings and sauces. Round out your menu with a takeout order from your favorite Asian restaurant.

Pennypackers is another well-loved food truck famous for its *porchetta* sandwiches. If you are a good home cook, you could make your *porchetta* in advance and surround it with a basket of bread, a tray of *antipasto*, and a big Italian salad.

Taco trucks are what sparked



A fill-it-yourself taco party could be a perfect theme for feeding a crowd.

the street food scene in this country, and a taco party could be the perfect theme to feed a crowd. Even when we make tacos for two, we set up our dining bar as a taco assembly line. You could offer a hot plate of fillings, including vegetarian and vegan options. Add salsas, shredded lettuce, cheese, and creamy toppings. Let everyone decide whether they want hard, flour, or whole-grain tacos, and fill them as they wish.

If you have a crew of less adventurous eaters, you could have a grilled cheese menu inspired by *Roxy's Grilled Cheese* truck. We geek out on grilled cheese by making them with an

assortment of flavored breads from *When Pigs Fly* bakery. Or, you could duplicate *Roxy's* support of local businesses by choosing your ingredients from the vendors they proudly display on their website. Don't forget to have a simmering crockpot of tomato soup for dipping.

Do It Yourself or Have It Catered

One final note on this topic, many local restaurants and food trucks offer catering services. You could support a small business and have someone who's an expert in creating a popular street food menu handle the food for the party. The three who cater, mentioned here, are *Mei Mei*, *Pennypackers*, and *Roxy's*. If you have a favorite place for a favorite food, ask if they can cater your event. Small businesses can use the income and exposure, and you can use the free time!

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

Middlesex Sheriff's Office honored with two awards at the 2025 Law Enforcement & Corrections Awards Ceremony

The Middlesex Sheriff's Office (MSO) took home two of the top awards at the 2025 Law Enforcement & Corrections Awards Ceremony on Thursday, November 13.

This year, the MSO was presented with both the Innovation of the Year Award for the new Older Adult Re-Entry (OAR) Unit and Program of the Year Award for the Family Support

Services Unit (FSSU).

The ceremony was hosted by the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association at the State House in Boston and recognized individual, team and organizational excellence. Accepting the awards on behalf of the MSO were Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian and staff assigned to the OAR Unit and the FSSU.

The OAR Unit was launched

in late 2024 with assistance from Boston University and UMass Boston and was created with programming and a structural layout specifically designed for incarcerated individuals ages 55 and older.

Like OAR, the FSSU, is a first-in-the-nation initiative. Launched in 2020, the FSSU is designed to enhance support for the loved ones of those incar-

cerated at the Middlesex Jail & House of Correction. The initiative, which has gained attention as a national model, has managed over 8,000 family interactions.

"The officers and civilian staff members who facilitate these vital programs are outstanding professionals who work tirelessly to make our communities better places to live and work," said Sheriff

Koutoujian. "Their commitment to implementing bold and innovative programs is changing lives for the better each and every day. That's why I am so proud to call them my colleagues and to share these awards with them."

To learn more about the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, please visit our website at www.middlesexsheriff.org.



Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian (right) and members of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office accepted the award for Innovation of the Year from Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association Vice President Nick Cocchi (left) at the Massachusetts State House.



Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian (right) and members of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office accepted the award for Program of the Year from Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association Vice President Nick Cocchi (left) at the Massachusetts State House.

NeighborHealth and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute partner to expand cancer care access for under-served communities

Special to the Times-Free Press

NeighborHealth announced today the launch of a new partnership with Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, bringing world-renowned cancer expertise directly to NeighborHealth patients to help close persistent gaps in cancer diagnosis and treatment. The partnership will help reduce wait times for cancer diagnostics, expand community awareness of and access to cancer care, and build greater trust between patients and providers.

The new relationship was made possible by Dana-Farber's Cancer Care Access Program, a clinical outreach initiative designed to reduce differences in cancer outcomes among local communities. On November 12, Dana-Farber held its first on-site cancer clinic in East Boston for patients of NeighborHealth, the state's largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). Staffed by a multidisciplinary team, and supported by cancer specialists, the bi-weekly clinics will provide a range of cancer-related clinical services in a community setting, including cancer screening and diagnostic workups, follow-up and survivorship care, reconnection to cancer treatment, referrals for second opinions, genetic cancer risk evaluation, and patient navigation and education.

"The goal is simple but profound," said Mimi Gardner, Vice President and Chief Equity Officer for NeighborHealth. "By partnering with Dana-Far-

ber, we can more easily connect our patients with expert cancer care while also reaching into communities to identify cancer earlier, remove access barriers, and address the underlying social conditions that create health disparities. We are thrilled to bring new life-saving options for care to our patients."

Cancer disparities remain well-documented in the United States, especially among Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic populations. According to the National Foundation for Cancer Research, cancer remains the leading cause of death among the Hispanic population in the United States. Lack of access to quality care often results in later treatment which is often more difficult and less successful. At NeighborHealth, more than 65% of patients identify as Hispanic/Latino and 85% of patients are at or below the federal poverty level. This partnership is expected to significantly expand access to timely cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment for these communities, helping to close long-standing gaps.

"At Dana-Farber, we've long recognized that bringing world-class care into the community is essential to achieving true equity in cancer outcomes," said Dr. Christopher Lathan, chief clinical access officer at Dana-Farber. "Through the Cancer Care Access Program, we've partnered with trusted community health centers to embed Dana-Farber clinicians

and navigators directly where patients already receive their primary care. This co-location model has proven that when you remove barriers - whether geographic, financial, or cultural - you can dramatically improve access to screening, speed up diagnosis, and ultimately save lives."

For patients with active cancer issues, the Cancer Care Access Program navigates care to Dana-Farber or another appropriate cancer treatment center that is convenient for the patient. For benign or non-urgent cases, the program connects patients to specialty care for follow-up.

"We're incredibly hopeful about the difference this partnership will make," said Ludmila Svoboda, nurse director of the Cancer Care Access Program at Dana-Farber. "By bringing Dana-Farber's expertise directly into NeighborHealth, we're meeting patients where they are and offering access to earlier detection and treatment, as well as the compassion and support that every person facing cancer deserves. Our aim is to bring high-quality care closer to home and to bring hope to every patient we serve."

NeighborHealth adult patients can be referred to the cancer clinic by their primary care provider for any cancer-related concern. Currently, clinics will be held twice a month at NeighborHealth's Adult Medicine department in the Taylor Building at 10 Gove Street in East



Cancer care access leaders gather in NeighborHealth's Adult Medicine department. (From left to right) Dr. Mothusi Chilume, medical director, NeighborHealth; Dr. Christopher Lathan, chief clinical access officer, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; Stecy Casseus, specialties administrative director, NeighborHealth; Laura Garber, PA-C, Dana Farber Cancer Institute; and Mimi Gardner, Vice President and Chief Equity Officer, NeighborHealth.

Boston. Additional clinics may be added based on demand.

NeighborHealth, formerly East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, is one of the nation's largest Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and the largest community-based primary care health system in Massachusetts, serving over 130,000 people and recognized by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as a National Quality Leader. For more than 50 years, NeighborHealth has offered access to comprehensive primary care, specialty care and emergency care for patients in the Commonwealth. In a first-of-its-kind merger in 2020, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center joined forces with the South End Community Health Center and

expanded services to patients who live and work in Boston's South End and Roxbury neighborhoods. NeighborHealth champions innovative care models to actively bridge health equity gaps in our low-income and immigrant communities with services unique from other healthcare providers in our state. For more information, visit www.neighborhealth.com.

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute is one of the world's leading centers of cancer research and treatment. Dana-Farber's mission is to reduce the burden of cancer through scientific inquiry, clinical care, education, community engagement and advocacy. Dana-Farber is a federally designated Comprehensive Cancer Center and a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School.

Massachusetts launches new campaign to support young adults in quitting vaping and nicotine

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), in partnership with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, has launched a new public health campaign to support young adults across Massachusetts to quit vaping and stop using other tobacco or nicotine products.

The campaign, called "This Ad Won't Make You Quit Vaping," aims to reach 18-24-year-olds who vape or use other nicotine products, including pouches, and connect them with free, trusted quitting support. According to the 2023 Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor

Surveillance System, 14 percent of young adults vape—and according to a national 2024 study from Truth Initiative, nearly half (48 percent) express a desire to quit. The campaign meets young people where they are, with honest and empathetic messaging that highlights the mental health benefits of quitting and introduces them to resources that are free and ready when they are, framing support as empowering.

The campaign is funded through the settlement the Attorney General's Office reached with Juul Labs, Inc. in 2023, holding the company account-

able for its role in fueling the youth vaping epidemic.

"This campaign is about righting the wrongs of Juul's predatory marketing," said Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell. "By investing settlement funds into prevention and cessation programs, we are giving young people the tools, resources, and support they need to break free from nicotine addiction and build healthier futures."

Research shows that many young adults turn to nicotine to try to manage anxiety or stress, but nicotine can make those feelings worse. A recent study

indicates vaping cessation is associated with improved quality of life and mental health among U.S. adults.*

The campaign's concepts were tested with English- and Spanish-speaking young adults who use nicotine products to ensure the benefits of quitting nicotine for your mental health were clear.

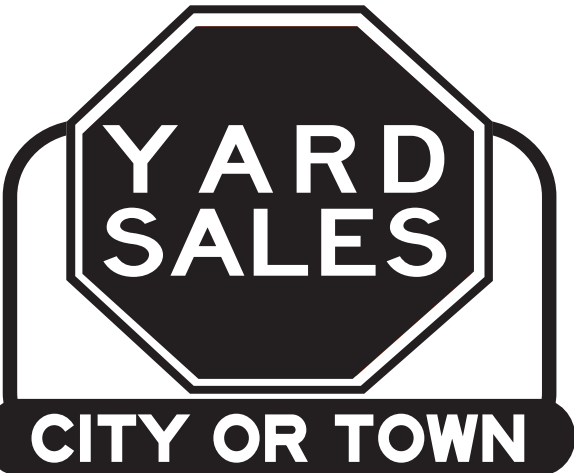
The call to action directs people to Text "Start" to 36072 or visit mass.gov/QuitVaping (For Spanish: Llama al 1-855-DEJE-LO-YA). Through the Massachusetts Quitline, young adults can connect with live, trained quit coaches by text or phone,

create a personalized quit plan, and access free quit medications such as patches or gum—all at no cost. The campaign will run in both English and Spanish across platforms where young people spend their time—including Meta, TikTok, YouTube, Google, connected TV (CTV), Twitch, streaming radio, and posters at colleges statewide.

By combining evidence-based support with a digital-first campaign, Massachusetts is working to ensure that more young adults try to quit vaping—and succeed.

WHERE TO FIND THE JOURNAL?

Community Credit Union.....	1 Andrew Square	7 Eleven.....	50 Western Ave.	Tedeschi's.....	540 Summer Street
Kwick Stop.....	532 Lynnfield Street	Metro Credit Union.....	475 Western Ave	Walgreens.....	841 Western Ave.
Dunkin Donuts.....	42 Market St	CVS.....	509 Eastern Ave.	Corner Shop.....	70 Market Sq
St. Mary's.....	35 Tremont St	Sunshine Convenience.....	6 Washington Ave	Richdale's.....	149 Walnut Street
Union Hospital.....	500 Lynnfield Street	Osborne Pharmacy.....	252 Eastern Ave.	Tony Lena's.....	617 Boston Street
Walnut St Café.....	157 Walnut St	+ Medical Supplies.....		Little River.....	618 Boston Street
Boys and Girls Club.....	25 N Common St	Christopher's Cafe.....	2 Lewis Street	Lynn Liquor Mart.....	825 Boston Street
7 Eleven.....	3 Lynnfield Street	Tedeschi's.....	210 Lewis Street	City Hall.....	3 City Hall Square
Lynn Library.....	5 N. Common Street	Johnny's Market.....	Lynn Shore Drive	Stop & Shop.....	35 Washington Street
Mobil Mart.....	512 Chestnut St	Port Hole Pub.....	98 Lynnway	GLSS.....	8 Silsbee St
Walgreens.....	290 Broadway	Ocean Shore Apt. Bldg.....	50 Lynnway	Walgreens.....	290 Broadway
Richdale's.....	229 Broadway	Eastern Bank.....	195 Market Street	Silsbee Towers.....	67 Silsbee St
Equitable Bank.....	400 Broadway	Brothers Deli.....	41 Market Street	Edison Bldg.....	85 Exchange St
Riverworks Credit.....	947 Western Ave	Capitol Diner.....	431 Union Street	D&M.....	13 Broad St
All Day Convenience.....	548 Summer St	Three Yolks.....	1103 Lynn Marsh Road	Pick Up Modern.....	68 Exchange St
CVS.....	200 S. Common St	PF O'Sullivan.....	151 Central St	Charlies.....	65 Exchange St
Lynn Sewer/Water.....	400 Parkland Ave.	Cal News.....	53 Central Ave.	Mobile.....	512 Chestnut Street
CVS.....	65 Boston Street	Police Station.....	300 Washington St.	Lynn Art.....	25 Exchange St
Rite Aid.....	52 Boston St	Richadale.....	585 Essex St	Eastern Bank.....	195 Market St
Richdale's.....	573 Chestnut Street	Lynn Apt. Bldg.....	295 Lynn Shore	Lynn Museum.....	590 Washington St
Western Ave Mky.....	108 Western Ave	Lynn Court House.....	580 Essex Street	The Lazy Dog.....	Wyoma Square
John's Roast Beef.....	111 Western Ave.	Lynn Housing Authority.....	10 Church Street	Rollys.....	Wyoma Square
Convenience Plus.....	225 Western Ave	Lynn YMCA.....	20 Neptune Blvd.		
Lynn Convenience.....	109 Western Ave	Shaws.....	Lynn Marketplace, 43 State Street		



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Coastal Climate Resiliency issues at the center of the Massachusetts Metropolitan Beaches Commission annual hearing

The Metropolitan Beaches Commission (MBC) and Save the Harbor/Save the Bay hosted their annual hearing at the Massachusetts State House on the condition of the 15 metropolitan beaches stewarded by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). DCR's new Commissioner, Nicole LaChapelle, testified on the agency's ongoing work to ensure the beaches are welcoming to all and strengthen the resiliency of DCR properties along the Boston coastline.

"Our coastline is vital to Massachusetts – it shapes our way of life, our economy, and who we are as a state," said LaChapelle. "Our first priority is to find out which beaches are at short-term risk from impacts of coastal storms and then work collaboratively towards a shared understanding of coastal resilience needs – rooted in equity, access, conservation, and suitability – that can be met efficiently and cost-effectively."

She also emphasized the importance of collaborating with multiple agencies, including the Army Corps of Engineers, the City of Boston, and the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM). "These partnerships are vital because tackling extreme weather requires everyone at the table. We need a 'One Massachusetts' approach to protect our communities and our coastline because extreme weather does not recognize geographic boundaries," LaChapelle noted.

"In the past two years, we've made significant strides in accomplishing the recommenda-



From left to right: Metropolitan Beaches Commissioners Nicole McClain, Margaret LaForest, Rep. Adrian Madaro, Department Conservation and Recreation Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay Executive Director Chris Mancini, Rep. David Biele, Rep. Joan Meschino, and Commissioner Susan Hamilton.

tions of the Breaking Barriers report and improving water quality at some of our priority beaches," remarked MBC Co-Chair, Senator Brendan Crighton. "That's been the result of these fantastic partnerships between the Commission, Save the Harbor, and DCR."

LaChapelle shared that over the past year, DCR has invested \$15 million in capital improvements to the Metro Beaches and is on track to invest an additional \$12 million in the current fiscal year. The past year's investments include improvements to bathhouses, the harborwalk, playgrounds, and utility services.

The Breaking Barriers report was published in 2023 by the MBC to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion on the Metropolitan Region's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

"When the Metropolitan Beaches Commission was founded, we focused on the foundational aspects of en-

suring our beaches were safe and accessible," said MBC Co-Chair Rep. Adrian Madaro. "Now, almost 20 years later, with the impacts of climate change affecting our coastline, the Metro Beaches Commission will continue to be crucial to ensuring healthy beach access for our communities."

"I look forward to collaborating with Commissioner LaChapelle on our ongoing efforts to enhance climate resiliency and accessibility on America's first public beach, so it may continue to serve as a premier destination for residents across the Commonwealth," said MBC Commissioner Rep. Jessica Giannino.

Save the Harbor then testified on climate preparedness in relation to the release of the ResilientCoasts report.

"Last year the Commissioner requested beach vulnerability assessments for our region's public beaches," noted Chris Mancini, Executive Director of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay. "CZM came through with

that information showing 16.6 miles—about 20 percent—of the MBC's publicly available beaches are vulnerable to short-term coastal erosion."

"We are also pleased to see the property buyback program featured in the ResilientCoasts Plan," Mancini added. "This demonstrates Massachusetts's forward-thinking regarding the rate of change on our shores."

MBC House Vice Chair Rep. Joan Meschino remarked, "This is a great moment for the Commission because [climate resiliency work] gives us a reason to invest in our city's beaches."

Staff from Save the Harbor highlighted the organization's collaboration with DCR to appropriate more funds from the Mass Ready Act towards climate adaptation and beach vulnerability assessments.

Between the Breaking Barriers report, the ResilientCoasts Plan, and the Mass Ready Act, Massachusetts is taking a multi-pronged approach to

prepare itself for a changing climate.

In the meantime, people continued to flock to the beaches for rest and recreation, as evidenced by the continued success of the Better Beaches Program. This program aims to give decision-making power over community spaces directly to community members. This year, Save the Harbor and DCR distributed \$315,000 to 75 grantees to run 182 free cultural festivals, fitness and wellness events, beach parties, and more along DCR's beaches.

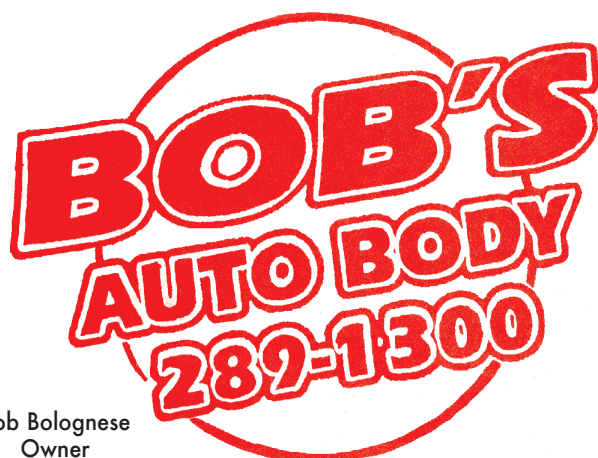
"Our public beaches belong to everyone, and together we can make sure that every visitor can see themselves reflected at each of our 15 metro beaches," stated LaChapelle.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is the region's leading voice for clean water and continued public investment in Boston Harbor, the region's public beaches, and the Boston Harbor Islands. Since 1986, our mission has been to restore and protect Boston Harbor, Massachusetts Bay, and the marine environment, and share them with the public for everyone to enjoy.

Save the Harbor is committed to making Boston Harbor, the Islands, our beaches, and our programs inclusive, equitable, diverse, and accessible to everyone and anyone. We provide free programs, events and create opportunities for people to experience Boston Harbor and our spectacular urban natural resources first-hand, with an emphasis on breaking down barriers of race, language, income and ability.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) oversees nearly half a million acres of land, making up one of the largest and most diverse state park systems in the country. Our work focuses on nurturing the vital connection between people and the environment by protecting, promoting, and enhancing our commonwealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the well-being of all. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr or contact us at mass.parks@mass.gov.

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