

THE LYNN JOURNAL

Friday, February 6, 2026



The Lynn Classical High School girls basketball team, under the direction of head coach Tom Sawyer, has qualified for the MIAA Tournament. Front row, from left, are Jayiana Wesley, Aliyah Alvarado, Mia Duncan, Jada Tejada, Deleisha Perez Vasquez, Ayanna Lowe, and Aaliyah Santiago. Back row, from left, are Coach Shardaye Berry, Coach Chrysse Hill, Racherlin Vargas, Gianna Laft, Yari Ruiz, Divine Egbuta, Evelyn Diaz, Juliana Perez, Coach Rob Smith, and Coach Tom Sawyer.

Continuing Success Story

Classical coach Tom Sawyer has
has the Rams heading to the MIAA Tourney - again

By Cary Shuman

When Tom Sawyer took over as the head coach of the Lynn Classical girls basketball program, he had the proverbial “big shoes to fill.”

Gene Constantino had guided the Rams through a golden era, notably a perfect 20-0 regular season in 2003-04 and a North sectional final showdown with Andover at Tsongas Arena (now the Tsongas Center) in Lowell. That memorable team and season, in which Sawyer was in his first season as an assistant coach, featured such terrific players as Monique Lee, Takeya Faison, Paula McGinn, Mary Baldini, Ashley Dono-

van, Justina Alucudo, Irene Saranteas, Meaghan Reddy, and Manise Louinord. Prior to that campaign, the incomparable Helen Ridley had excelled for four seasons (1997-2001) on her way to becoming the captain at Division 1 Quinnipiac (Lee later joined Ridley for her freshman season in college).

But Sawyer has kept the program soaring (or should we say Sawyer-ing) to considerable heights since then, compiling an impressive record of 237-185 in 20 seasons as chief executive officer of Classical girls basketball.

With the loss of three key starters from last year's team - Keisha Perez, Savannah Tang

and Nevaeh Eth - there was a possibility that the Rams' streak of postseason appearances would be in jeopardy.

But those concerns were allayed quickly and decisively early in the 2025-26 season. Classical is 9-3 overall, 7-3 in the GBL following a 51-31 win over Lynn English Monday night - and a qualifier once again for the MIAA Tournament.

Sawyer, assisted by coaches Shardaye Berry, Chrysse Hill, and Powder Puff legend Rob Smith, has put together another unselfish contingent that puts the priority on wins, not indi-

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Avalos becomes first Latina president of NSWC

By Cary Shuman

Irma Avalos, chief executive officer of Lynn-based Precise Management and Residence, is the new president of North Shore Women Connect (NSWC) becoming the first Latina to lead the organization.

Avalos presided over her first meeting at Mangia Restaurant in Danvers, with more than 25 members of the non-profit women's organization in attendance. The mission of the NSWC is to foster opportunities for businesswomen to develop professionally and personally through networking, education, and social experiences. Avalos spoke with confidence and assuredness as she delivered what amounted to her inaugural address.

“It is truly an honor to stand before you today as the new president of this incredible women's business organization,” said Avalos.

“I want to begin by thanking our board, our members, and the

leaders who came before me. Your dedication, your vision, and your commitment have built the foundation that allows us to grow, evolve, and rise together.

“Tonight is meaningful for many reasons -- not only because we are beginning a new chapter, but because this moment represents progress. I am deeply humbled to share that I am the first minority woman to serve as president of this organization since its founding in 1984. This is not just my milestone; it is a milestone for every woman who has ever felt unseen, unheard, or underestimated. It is a reminder that representation matters, and that when one woman breaks through, she opens the door for many more.”

Proud of her company

Born in Guatemala, Irma migrated to the United States with her parents at a young age and began her journey of hard work

See NSWC Page 4



Irma Avalos delivers remarks at the first meeting in her new position as president of North Shore Women Connect.



Happy Valentine's Day

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

EDITORIAL

ACCLIMATING TO OUR LOCAL ICE AGE

The bitterly cold weather that we've been experiencing day-after-day this winter has been oppressive (not to mention costly because of our high heating bills).

The daily lows in the single digits, coupled with the strong winds that have brought the wind-chills well below zero, have tested even the hardiest New Englanders among us.

We are fortunate to live on an island near the coast, where the ice-bound harbor has created an Arctic-like seascape that is peaceful and calming, leaving us awestruck every morning when we wake up and look out at the frozen tundra that surrounds us.

The usual blue of the ocean has been replaced by a sea of white, and at sunset, the fiery pink and orange hues in the sky are reflected in the ice in soft pastels.

Our daily workout routine has been altered. The sandbar near our home that uncovers for about a quarter of a mile at low tide and that serves as our personal running track has been a sheet of ice when the tide recedes.

When our cold weather first set in a few weeks ago, the sea water on the surface of the sand bar instantly flash-froze as the tide receded. But for the past two weeks, the thick sheets of ice have been left stranded at low tide, rising and falling with the ebb and flow of each tidal cycle.

Still, we've been able to get outside on many occasions during the cold snap and enjoy what we figure have been the coldest runs of our life. Needless to say, we were dressed for the elements with five layers of clothing, a wool cap, a hoodie, and gloves. The wind chill officially was below zero, but we ran back-and-forth in the roadway around our island on the leeward side, protected from the wind by a hill, and being careful to slow down on any patches of black ice.

Most importantly, the sun was shining brightly on these runs. Even when the temperatures are in the single digits, the strength of the sun to provide warmth is apparent and very welcome.

These runs, as cold as they have been, were far better than pounding on the treadmill in our gym. They were invigorating both for our body and our soul.

Although the early part of this week was not particularly warm -- the temps reached the high 20s -- it felt like a heatwave compared to the past few weeks. We shed our coat, hat, and gloves, and wore shorts for our daily runs on the sunny side of our island.

As we ran back-and-forth on our roadway for our 30-minute workouts, enveloped by the piles of snow and the ice floes in the nearby harbor, it occurred to us that as trying as our winter has been, so much of what we dread about these months is in our minds.

It is possible -- with a little bit of sunshine and the right attitude -- to get acclimated to the harshness of winter, and even revel in it.

GO PATS!

It seems like it was just yesterday that Patriot Nation looked forward to our Patriots making it to the Super Bowl almost every year. From 2002-2019, the Pats went to nine Super Bowls in 18 years, winning six of them, a dynastic record of consistency spearheaded by Bill Belichick and Tom Brady that we feel confident in saying will never be equaled in the NFL.

But after a bit of a drought for the past half-decade, the Patriots once again are back in the big game and Patriot Nation is at the center of the sports world's universe, this time with head coach Mike Vrabel and quarterback Drake Maye leading the way.

The Super Bowl is such a gigantic event that it attracts the non-sports fans among us, even if the major draw for them is the halftime show, which this year will feature Puerto Rico's Bad Bunny, the number one recording artist in the world, or the Super Bowl ads, which themselves generate their own conversation.

For our part, we've been getting ourselves pumped-up for the big game by watching highlights of the Pats' previous Super Bowl wins, including the 2015 victory over Seattle in which Brady rallied the Pats from a 24-14 deficit with 8:30 left in the game and Malcolm Butler made his immortal game-saving interception on the Patriot one-yard line.

So whether these Pats will bring us the joy of the Patriots' victories of the Brady/Belichick era or the pain of the losses to Green Bay, the Giants, and the Eagles (or, heaven forbid, the 1986 loss to the Bears), Sunday evening promises to be a fun time for all of us.

NAV NEWS

NAVS' FUTURE PROSPECTS BASEBALL CLINIC RETURNS IN 2026!

The North Shore Navigators of the New England Collegiate Baseball League (NECBL) will be hosting two sessions of their popular youth baseball clinic at Fraser Field again during the summer of 2026.

For the fourth consecutive summer, the Navs' Future Prospects Clinic will feature two sessions of clinics for children ages 6-14, with each expanding to four days. Clinics in 2026 are scheduled for June 29-July 2 and July 13-16 (both Monday through Thursday).

The clinic will begin at 9:30 a.m. sharp each day and run through 1 p.m., featuring instruction from Navs players and coaches.

The cost of the clinic, per camper, is \$180 for one session or \$330 for both sessions. A sibling discount is available. All participants will receive a T-shirt at the conclusion of camp, which can be worn for free entry to all Navigators home games.

Lunch will be served to all participants throughout both sessions, with options changing each day. Campers may also bring their own lunch. Please inform Navs staff of any food allergies in advance of each session.

Contact General Manager Ed Power (eddie@nsnavs.com) with any questions or for more information.

The Navigators will return to historic Fraser Field and the NECBL for their 19th summer season in 2026, with first pitch set for Friday, June 5. Stay up to date on the latest Navs news by visiting nsnavs.com and following the team on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.

2026 NECBL SCHEDULE SET FOR NAVS

There may be feet of snow on the ground, but the North Shore Navigators took a step towards summer as their 44-game schedule for the 2026 New England Collegiate Baseball League (NECBL) season was officially revealed on Thursday.

The 19th season of summer collegiate baseball on the North Shore will include 22 home games at Fraser Field, with the season and home opener set for Friday, June 5 against the defending NECBL champion Keene Swamp Bats. It will mark North Shore's third straight season-opening game at Fraser and the five games against North Division rivals to begin 2026.

The Navs are slated to host games on eight weekend dates, including four on Friday nights, three on Saturdays and one on Sunday. Two of the team's Saturday dates take place in July, while there are back-to-back Fridays with home games at the beginning of the season.

Regular-season home game times for 2026 are unchanged from last summer, with first pitch sched-

uled for 6:05 p.m. on Monday through Friday nights, 5:05 p.m. on Saturdays, and 1:35 p.m. on Sundays. The lone exceptions are 11:05 a.m. starts for Texas Roadhouse "School Day" on Tuesday, June 9 and "Camp Day" on Tuesday, July 7, as well as a 3:05 p.m. scheduled double-header on Saturday, June 27.

The Navs are excited to feature promotions and theme nights in conjunction with local businesses throughout the 2026 season, with details to follow in the coming months.

The Navs Future Prospects Clinic returns in 2026 with a pair of four-day sessions for children ages 6-12. Sessions will run from June 29-July 2 and July 13-16, both Monday through Thursday. More information and registration is available [here](#).

Again in 2026, the Navs will compete against the Keene (N.H.) Swamp Bats, North Adams SteeleCats, Sanford Mainers, Upper Valley Nighthawks (White River Junction, Vt.) and Vermont Mountaineers (Montpelier, Vt.) in the North Division.

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POLICE NEWS

LYNN MAN SENTENCED FOR DRUG CONSPIRACY

A Lynn man has been sentenced in federal court in Boston in connection with an investigation into drug conspiracy.

Meliek Bennett, 29, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Brian E. Murphy to three years in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release. In August 2025, Meliek Bennett pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute controlled substances. He was arrested and charged in May 2025 along with his brother Maurice Bennett.

Maurice Bennett was identified as a member of the Bloods street gang in Lynn with prior convictions for carrying firearms and other violent crimes. During the investigation, numerous text messages between Maurice and his brother Meliek were intercepted, wherein they coordinated the distribution of drugs including cocaine, prescription medication, counterfeit pills and marijuana. The brothers discussed sharing drug customers, sharing drug supplies, paying Meliek Bennett's drug debts and making a trip to New Hampshire to sell controlled substances together.

In September 2024, during a recorded conversation, Meliek Bennett described intending to use a silenced pistol to shoot up the residence of a drug supplier and potentially murdering the drug supplier to whom he owed a drug debt – after the supplier had beaten up Meliek Bennett. Shortly thereafter, a search warrant was executed at Meliek Bennett's residence in Lynn, where fentanyl tablets, oxycodone, gabapentin and marijuana, as well as a .22 caliber pistol with a threaded barrel and ammunition were discovered.

On Nov. 3, 2025, Maurice Bennett was sentenced to two years in prison after pleading guilty in August 2025.



Firearm with Threaded Barrel Recovered during September 19, 2024 search of Meliek Bennett's residence

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley and Ted E. Docks, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Boston made the announcement. Valuable assistance was provided by the Lynn Police and Massachusetts Department of Corrections. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Philip A. Mallard and David Cutshall of the Organized Crime & Gang Unit prosecuted the case.

MEMBER OF THE LYNN CHAPTER OF THE TRINITARIOS PLEADS GUILTY TO RACKETEERING CONSPIRACY

A member of the Lynn Chapter of the Trinitarios has pleaded guilty to racketeering charges, including his participation in two murders and two other attempted murders.

Michael Milano, a/k/a "Trucho," 23, pleaded guilty on Dec. 15, 2025 to conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO conspiracy. U.S. Senior District Court

Judge Nathaniel M. Gorton scheduled sentencing for March 19, 2026. Milano was arrested and charged in February 2025, and was alleged to have participated in the murder of Jandriel Heredia and Abraham Diaz in September 2023.

The Trinitarios is a violent criminal enterprise comprised of thousands of members across the United States. The Trinitarios adhere to a Magna Carta, employ an internal hierarchy to organize and execute violence, and undertake extensive efforts to maintain the secrecy of the organization and its members.

In February 2025, federal racketeering charges were unsealed against 22 leaders and members of the Trinitarios. The charges were the result of a multijurisdictional investigation, dubbed Operation Paper Machetes, which began in the aftermath of four murders as well as a series of attempted murders and shootings that took place in Lynn in 2023, allegedly committed by the Trinitarios criminal enterprise and its members. In March 2025, a Lynn member of the Trinitarios was sentenced to ten years in prison. In June 2025,

two members of the Trinitarios were charged with kidnapping a drug supplier. In July 2025, the leader of the Lynn Chapter was sentenced to fourteen years in prison. Milano is the seventh Defendant to plead guilty.

During court proceedings, Milano admitted to his membership in the gang and participation in three shootings where the Trinitarios intended to kill rival gang members. The first incident took place in May 2023, where Milano and other members of the Trinitarios proceeded to rival gang territory in Lynn and discharged numerous rounds at rival gang members. Milano fired during this shooting.

The second incident took in August 2023, following the death of a Trinitario member, who was believed to have been killed by a rival gang member. For this incident, Milano and five other Trinitarios set out to ambush and kill rival gang members who were at a music studio in Lynn. Milano also fired during this incident.

Milano also admitted to his participation in the Sept. 2, 2023 murder of Jandriel Heredia and Abraham Diaz. Milano met with other Trinitario mem-

bers prior to the shooting and learning about the plan to kill a rival gang member who the Trinitarios believed was present at a party in Lynn. The rival gang member was not, in fact, present at the party. Milano admitted to driving by the party a number of times, and relaying information about what he observed as he drove by to the other Trinitarios knowing that it would be used by the other members to further their plan to murder rival gang members. Later that night, members of the Trinitarios drove by the party and discharged numerous rounds at the people gathered outside celebrating a recent graduation. Seven people were shot during this incident, and Abraham Diaz and Jandriel Heredia later died from the gunshot wounds they sustained. None of the victims at the party were members of a gang.

The charge of conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity (also known as "racketeering conspiracy" or "RICO conspiracy") provides for a sentence of up to life in prison, five years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Michael J. Krol, Special Agent in Charge, Homeland Security Investigations in New England; Ted Docks, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; Essex County District Attorney Paul F. Tucker; Massachusetts State Police Colonel Geoffrey D. Noble; and Lynn Police Chief Christopher P. Reddy made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorney Philip A. Mallard of the Organized Crime & Gang Unit is prosecuting the case.

NAV (from pg. 2)

Making up the South Division are two other Massachusetts teams in the Martha's Vineyard Sharks (Oak Bluffs) and Valley Blue Sox (Holyoke), as well as the Bristol

Blues, Danbury Westerners and Mystic Schooners in Connecticut, and Newport Gulls and Ocean State Waves (South Kingstown) in Rhode Island.

A charter member of the

New England League's inaugural season dating back to 1994, the Navs rejoined the NECBL in 2021 after a nine-year hiatus and proceeded to capture the Northern Division

regular-season championship. The franchise has qualified for the NECBL playoffs in five of its nine NECBL seasons and won its fourth Fay Vincent Sr. Cup in 2010.

Stay up to date on the latest Navs news by visiting nsnavs.com and following the team on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.

NSWC (from pg. 1)

and dedication at the age of 15. With over 25 years of experience in both the private and public sectors of property management, Irma has built PMRS on the foundation of professionalism, diligence, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

Before establishing PMRS, Irma held key roles in the property management field, including Certified Occupancy Specialist, Assistant Manager, Property Manager, Senior Property Manager, and most recently, Executive Director of the Swampscott Housing Authority. Her expertise and leadership skills were recognized when she was named Person of the Year 2021 by the Daily Item newspaper, representing the Town of Swampscott. She was also honored with a citation from Senator Brendan Crighton.

Fluent in Spanish and English, Avalos and her family migrated from Guatemala to Lynn when she was 10 years old. She attended Sisson Elementary, Eastern Junior High, and Lynn Classical High School where

she played basketball for two years.

A mother of "three amazing children who I love and have been my motor to continue and strive," Avalos said in her role as president, she will try to expand the NSWC's membership.

Avalos said prospect members can register online on the organization's website, North Shore Women Connect – Home. The annual membership is \$155 for individuals and \$300 for corporations.

Following is the complete text of Irma Avalos' speech in her first meeting as president:

"Good evening, everyone.

It is truly an honor to stand before you today as the new President of this incredible women's business organization. I want to begin by thanking our board, our members, and the leaders who came before me. Your dedication, your vision, and your commitment have built the foundation that allows us to grow, evolve, and rise together.

Tonight is meaningful for many reasons -- not only because

we are beginning a new chapter, but because this moment represents progress. I am deeply humbled to share that I am the first minority woman to serve as President of this organization since its founding in 1984. This is not just my milestone; it is a milestone for every woman who has ever felt unseen, unheard, or underestimated. It is a reminder that representation matters, and that when one woman breaks through, she opens the door for many more.

My vision is simple but powerful: To build a stronger, more connected, and more empowered community of women in business -- a community where every woman feels seen, supported, and equipped to succeed.

I believe in creating an organization that opens doors, amplifies voices, and provides real opportunities for growth, leadership, and collaboration. A place where we don't just network -- we build relationships. Where we don't just attend events -- we create impact. Where we don't just talk about empowerment --

we live it.

And to bring this vision to life, we need clear direction.

Over the next year, my focus will be on five key priorities:

1. Strengthening our internal structure. We will improve communication, clarify roles, and build sustainable systems that future leaders can inherit with confidence.

2. Elevating the member experience. Our members deserve high-value programming -- workshops, mentorship, leadership development, and events that truly help women grow professionally and personally.

3. Expanding partnerships. We will build stronger relationships with local businesses, civic leaders, and community organizations. Together, we can create opportunities that extend far beyond our meetings.

4. Promoting diversity and inclusion. Every woman -- regardless of background, industry, or stage of her journey -- deserves a seat at the table. Our organization will reflect the diversity of the women we serve.

5. Driving growth and sustainability. We will strengthen our membership, increase visibility, and build financial stability so our organization thrives long into the future.

This is not a vision I carry alone. It is one we will build together -- with collaboration, transparency, and purpose. I believe deeply in the power of women supporting women. When we uplift one another, we don't just grow individually -- we transform our communities, our businesses, and our future.

So tonight, I stand before you not just as your President, but as your partner in progress. I am committed to leading with integrity, compassion, and strength. And I am excited for everything we will accomplish together.

Thank you for trusting me. Thank you for showing up. And thank you for being part of a community where women rise, lead, and succeed -- stronger together.



Members of the North Shore Women Connect organization, pictured at the January meeting at Magia Restaurant in Danvers. Among those pictured in the front row are Andrea LaCroix, Rennee Jacavanco, Cindy Moore, NSWC President Irma Ávalos, Alma Sazo, Karol Feliz, Layla Williams and Karen Johnston. Back row from left: Catherine Kane, Carol LeBlanc, Susan Gannon, Amy LaMarche, Kelly Thompson, Alysa Southall, Nelly Kozlowski, Mo Levasseur, Leah M. Hill, Leslie Voss, and Rodica Moisidis.



Anny Ramos, Irma Avalos, and Glennys Reyes.



Cindy Moore, Rennee Jacavanco, Susan Gannon, NSWC President Irma Avalos, Alysa Southall, Nelly Kozlowski, and Mo Levasseur.



Amy LaMarche and Kelly Thompson, pictured at the North Shore Women Connect meeting at Magia Restaurant in Danvers.



Cindy Moore congratulates Irma Avalos on her ascension to the presidency of the North Shore Women Connect organization.



North Shore Women Connect President Irma Avalos and NSWC member Alma Sazo.

SUCCESS (from pg. 1)

vidual accomplishments.

The Rams' starting five of senior captains Jada Tejada and Deleisha Perez-Vazquez, senior Jayliana Wesley, junior Divine Egbuta and sophomore Mia Duncan (a member of the legendary Conlon family of Lynn swimming sensations) has improved steadily as the season has progressed, a trademark of the Sawyer Era. In the win over their crosstown rival, Diaz (21 points) and Egbuta (20 points, 12 rebounds) were the co-stars.

Meanwhile, seniors Yari Ruiz and Evelyn Diza and sophomore Aliyah Alvarado

are making strong contributions in reserve roles.

Sawyer was asked about the accomplishment of having a state tournament berth secured weeks in advance of MIAA March Madness and his team being in contention for a GBL title.

"My goal is to play better basketball as the year goes on," responded Sawyer. "And so far, that has been the case. The wins and losses will take care of themselves; I just want us to be the best version of us."

Has the team exceeded your preseason expectations, Coach?

"I thought we had a chance to get a number of wins if certain things fell right for us," said Sawyer. "What I'm very happy about is how this team is very coachable. They take our coaching and do their very best to implement it in the game or practice. It has been fun to watch this group grow individually and collectively as a team."

What Sawyer has done consistently in his program is maximize the enjoyment and development of the student/athlete experience for each player. While he is famously all-busi-

ness on game day and roaming the bench area intensely during games, he brings the fun to his grateful players off the court, such as the team's annual trip to a Division 1 college basketball. (This year, the team attended the Colgate-BU game in Boston).

Sawyer's program has produced its share of college players. Ava Brown and Akiyah Brown are currently playing at Suffolk University while Lauren Wilson and Keisha Perez are members of the Salem State University team.

With 237 wins and counting,

a perfect regular season (20-0 with 14 GBL wins and six non-league wins) in 2023, and a streak of postseason appearances, Sawyer is on course for a seat in the Massachusetts Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

The organizers best get a bigger hall for that induction ceremony, because there's little doubt that alumnae players, parents, and colleagues will be there in droves to show their appreciation and honor the undisputed and esteemed leader of the Green and Gold – Tom Sawyer.

ZONTA CLUB OF CHELSEA AND NORTH SHORE NEWS

The Zonta Club of Chelsea and North Shore hosted the annual Amelia Earhart Dinner on January 15th at the Hilton Garden Inn, Boston, in collaboration with the Zonta Club of Malden. The event honors the spirit of pilot Amelia Earhart, who had been a Zonta member, and recognizes young women recently awarded Amelia Earhart fellowships to pursue Ph.D. degrees in aerospace engineering and space sciences.

Zonta International awards thirty \$10,000 fellowships annually. Three of these awardees, all Ph.D. candidates at MIT, were honored at Zonta's dinner: Myrella Cabral of Brazil, studying Aerospace Engineering; Palak Patel of the US, studying Mechanical Engineering, and Fatima Zaidouni of Morocco, studying Physics. Each spoke about her area of study contributing to global aerospace projects.

Dr. Irene Porro, Director of



Keynote Speaker Dr. Irene Porro addresses guests at the Amelia Earhart Dinner.

the Christa Corrigan McAuliffe Center for Integrated Science Learning at Framingham State University was keynote speaker. Dr. Porro highlighted the importance of making science learning relatable and experiential across the ages, the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, and the importance of women's participation in global



Dr. Irene Porro front and center with MIT Fellows, Patak Patel, Fatima Zaidouni and Myrella Cabral Celebrate with members of the Zonta Club- Janette Giso, Diane Cambria, Sheila Arsenault, Barbara Lawlor, Janice Tatarka, Lee Farrington, Joan Lanzillo-Hahesy, Georgia Green, Christine DePrizio, Mary Jane O'Neill, and Janice Sikorski.

advances in science and space exploration.

Mary Knight, Secretary of Zonta District I presented each

fellow with, "wings," a pin symbolizing empowerment, academic excellence and the legacy of Amelia Earhart. Janice Tatarka,

President of the Zonta Club of Chelsea and North Shore presented recipients with flowers.



Mary Knight, Zonta District 1 Secretary presents wings and certificates to MIT Fellows - from left to right, Fatima Zaidouni, Palak Patel, Myrella Cabral and Mary Knight.



Janice Tatarka, President of the Zonta Club of Chelsea and North Shore presented flowers to the MIT Fellows, Fatima Zaidouni, Myrella Cabral and Palak Patel.

Revere Beach Partnership hosts annual Winter Wonderland on February 7

To celebrate the winter season at America's First Public Beach, the Revere Beach Partnership will host its annual Winter Wonderland event on Saturday, February 7, from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Waterfront Square on Revere Beach.

This family-friendly winter festival will take Revere Beach coast into a seasonal destination filled with festive activities for all ages. Attendees can

enjoy interactive experiences, live entertainment, food vendors, chili competition, and the highly anticipated Ice Sculpting Competition, where 5 talented ice sculptors will compete for cash prizes by creating incredible works of art from ice throughout the day.

For those looking to warm up, the Winter Market will feature over 20 vendors offering unique seasonal goods, crafts,

and food. The Chili Cook-Off, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, invites attendees to taste and vote on their favorite chili. Winter Wonderland will also feature activities for children, photo opportunities, and roaming winter-themed characters, making it the perfect opportunity to embrace the magic of winter by the ocean.

With thousands of visitors expected, Winter Wonderland

has become a beloved seasonal tradition and a must-attend event for residents and visitors alike.

This event is free and open to the public. We invite the community to bundle up, bring family and friends, and join us for a memorable winter celebration on Revere Beach.

Revere Beach Partnership is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 2001.

Its mission is to preserve and enhance America's first public beach for the enjoyment of all. The Partnership is led by a volunteer board dedicated to celebrating, maintaining, and promoting Revere Beach as a cherished community resource.

For additional information, contact: Kelsey Ficociello | kficociello@fmpproductions.com | 978-866-6460.

CITY PAWS**Tales of tails**

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

“Dogs laugh, but they laugh with their tails,” said Max Eastman in his book *Enjoyment of Laughter*. Anyone who has ever watched a dog at play would have to agree. Dogs use tails to express all manner of mood.

Social Signals

A tail can say many things, and to understand what the dog is communicating, you have to look at more than the wag. The position of the tail, the speed of the wag, and the signals coming from elsewhere on the dog are all important.

There are a few tail actions that humans can understand. A tail held high and still, or with stiff, small wags, is a sign of a dog on alert and perhaps even threatening. A tail tucked between the legs can be a sign of a fearful and/or submissive dog. Low, slow wags signal a dog questioning and unsure.

A dog feeling relaxed and secure holds its tail in its most natural position. Add a dose of happiness to that, and you see a gentle wag. The return of a favorite person could bring on a mighty circular wag.

There are exceptions to these rules. For some breeds, like Greyhounds, a tail tucked between the legs is the natural position. A shepherd will know that a herding dog, like a Border Collie, is concentrating on the job when the tail is tucked between the legs. In this instance, a wagging tail means the dog is goofing off.

On The Job

Tail shape and size have evolved to fit each breed of dog. A precise tail description is part of most breed standards in the show dog world. The fine print will describe the size, thickness, color, curl, feathering, and how the dog carries it in minute detail.

Frequently, a dog’s tail has evolved to fit its intended work. Beagles and other hunting dogs often have white tips on their tails and carry them high over their backs so hunters can spot them easily in tall grass.

Dogs that hunt underground, such as Dachshunds and Terriers, have been bred to have tails that a person can use to haul them out of burrows if they get stuck. Sled dogs, like the Siberian Husky, have long, curved, furry tails to keep them warm when they curl up in the snow.

Some dogs are also said to use their tails as a counterbalance when running. Water dogs can use their tails as rudders when swimming.

Other Tales a Tail Can Tell

A dog’s tail can also alert you to a medical problem. Anytime you see your dog’s tail carried in an unusual position, you should do a bit of checking. It can signal something simple (like an itchy hot spot on the skin) or a more serious condition.

In his book, “What’s Wrong with My Dog?” Boston resident Jake Tedaldi, D.V.M., writes about tucked tails. “It can be a sign that a dog is experiencing pain or discomfort of some sort.” Since it can also be a sign of fear, he suggests that you should first do what you can to make your dog comfortable and relaxed. If the tail is still tucked, look carefully for other signs of pain or injury in the spine, anal region, or abdomen. A visit to the vet may be in order.

On your next walk, check out the puppy tails around town. See how many types, shapes, and uses you can observe and brush up on your “tell-tail” language skills.

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



Beagles have white tips on their tails and carry them high over their backs so hunters can spot them easily in tall grass.

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Healey takes action to keep ICE out of schools, hospitals, courthouses, and places of worship

Special to the Journal

Governor Maura Healey took action to protect the people of Massachusetts from abuses by President Donald Trump and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. She filed legislation to keep ICE out of courthouses, schools, child care programs, hospitals and churches; make it unlawful for another state to deploy its National Guard in Massachusetts without the Governor's permission; and allow parents to pre-arrange guardianship for their children in case they are detained or deported. This is the most comprehensive effort in the country to protect against ICE activity in sensitive locations.

Governor Healey also signed an Executive Order prohibiting the state from entering into any new 287(g) agreements unless there is a public safety need, prohibiting ICE from making civil arrests in non-public areas of state facilities, and prohibiting the use of state property for immigration enforcement staging.

"In Massachusetts and across the country, we continue to see unlawful and unconstitutional actions by ICE that are meant to intimidate and instill fear in our communities, including against United States citizens who are exercising their constitutional rights," said Governor Healey. "This puts people at risk and in harm's way, and I find it necessary in the interest of public safety to take this action today."

For decades, the Department of Homeland Security maintained a "protected areas" policy requiring ICE to refrain from immigration enforcement actions in sensitive locations, including hospitals, houses of worship, courts, and school programs. This policy allowed all community members to access basic support and services without fear, and protected public safety by encouraging all people to seek necessary medical care and testify in court when necessary, whether as a victim, witness, or party. On January 20, 2025, the Trump Administration rescinded the protected areas policy, replacing it with a directive giving ICE agents unbridled power to take enforcement actions in medical facilities, houses of worship, courts, schools and child care programs. Governor Healey's legislation would restore the longstanding protections against arrests by ICE agents in these

essential spaces where families, children, and vulnerable people should feel safe.

Courthouses

ICE's presence at courthouses creates confusion and chaos and is deterring witnesses, victims and litigants from coming to court. It has resulted in the dismissal of charges and release of defendants. Governor Healey's legislation would ban warrantless civil arrests by ICE agents inside of courthouses to protect access to justice and ensure that anyone who walks through the courthouse doors to seek relief, protection, or to defend themselves should feel safe doing so.

Schools and Child Care Programs

School enrollment has declined dramatically, particularly in districts with high populations of immigrant students, across the state this school year, with record declines of over 5 percent in Chelsea and Everett. The Trump Administration's decision to revoke the protected areas policy has allowed ICE agents to target schools and child care programs. As a result, some families have been fearful of sending their children to school or participating in sports or school events, like graduation ceremonies. In addition, with national reporting of child care workers being followed into child care programs and detained by ICE, parents are increasingly reluctant to use necessary child care services so that they can go to work and continue to provide for their families.

Governor Healey's legislation would prohibit elementary, middle and high schools, as well as licensed child care programs and after school programs, from allowing an ICE or immigration agent to enter the premises without a judicial warrant. Schools, child care programs, and after school programs will also be required to adopt and implement their own policies on how to interact with or respond to requests from ICE agents, in line with guidance issued by the Healey-Driscoll Administration and Attorney General Andrea Campbell.

Hospitals and Medical Facilities

Health care providers have been reporting that more immigrant families are skipping medical appointments, delaying care or canceling their health insurance because they fear being detained by ICE. Hospitals also used to fall under the protected

areas policy until it was revoked by President Trump. Governor Healey's legislation would prohibit hospitals, community health centers, nursing homes, and substance use disorder programs from granting ICE access to nonpublic areas without a judicial warrant. These facilities will also be required to issue policies on how their staff and volunteers should interact with or respond to requests from ICE. In Massachusetts, no one should have to hesitate to seek essential or life-saving medical treatment because they fear detention, deportation or being separated from their families.

Churches and Houses of Worship

The Trump Administration's cancellation of the protected areas policy has deterred many immigrants from attending religious services, as reported by religious organizations across the country. Governor Healey's legislation would codify a statutory privilege against civil arrest for individuals within places of worship while attending services, protecting the First Amendment right of free exercise of religion.

National Guard

President Trump has been sending National Guard troops from other states into cities like Chicago and Los Angeles against the wishes of state and local officials. These deployments have drained resources, taken members of the Guard away from their day jobs, and have not made anyone safer. Governor Healey is the Commander of the Massachusetts National Guard, and her legislation would make it unlawful for a military force under the control of another state's Governor to enter Massachusetts without her permission.

Guardianship

Governor Healey's legislation would also allow parents to pre-arrange guardianship for their children in the event that they are detained or deported by ICE, ensuring that their child will be transitioned to a trusted caretaker. Parents will be able to designate an adult to be on standby to automatically assume temporary guardianship of their child, without losing their legal or parental rights.

Other Provisions

Governor Healey filed these provisions in "An Act Making Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2026 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropri-

ations and for Responding to Recent Federal Actions." The supplemental budget proposes \$411.3 million in time-sensitive appropriations for deficiencies.

In addition to the supplemental appropriations, the legislation proposes veterans benefits access reforms to ensure eligible veterans are able to obtain state benefits even if they are denied federal benefits, indemnification provisions to protect public employees acting within the scope of their duties in connection with federal investigations, and technical and privacy-related amendments affecting higher education access and student records. The legislation also includes an important time-sensitive proposal that allows for the Joint Hazard Incident Response Team to proactively work together and coordinate for large scale events, such as the World Cup or Tall Ships. Finally, the legislation includes several collective bargaining agreement ratifications.

Executive Order

Governor Healey's Executive Order prohibits any office or agency in the Executive Department from executing any new agreement under section 287(g) of the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, or any similar agreements, unless there is a specific and certified public safety risk or need.

The Executive Order also prohibits civil arrests by federal immigration officers in nonpublic areas of state facilities, except when authorized by a judicial warrant or judicial order. Staff will be made aware of this requirement and trained on interacting with federal immigration officers.

The Executive Order also prohibits state facilities, and other property owned or controlled by the Executive Department, from being used by federal immigration officers as a staging area, processing location, or operations base for civil immigration enforcement efforts.

Additionally, the Executive Order directs the Executive Office of Education and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to support public and private entities in developing policies and guidance on interacting with ICE.

Statements of Support

Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland):

"I am grateful to Governor Healey for her leadership and partnership on the pressing issue

of protecting our state and its residents during these dark and uncertain days. The Massachusetts Senate stands firmly with the Healey-Driscoll Administration in this effort, and we will do everything in our power to return these proposals—along with additional protections developed by the Senate we feel necessary to defend the safety, dignity, and rights of our residents—to the Governor for her signature soon," stated Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "Massachusetts is the birthplace of American democracy. Right now, that democracy feels fragile, but we will not let it die on our watch. Together with our partners in state government, the Senate will continue to meet this moment by protecting our residents, defending our values, and demonstrating the leadership our residents expect of us."

Attorney General Andrea Campbell:

"ICE's activity across the country is a reckless, dangerous and lawless abuse of power. When militarized federal agents kill people in the streets, detain innocent children, attack protesters with tear gas and pepper spray, and remove law-abiding residents from their loved ones, it does nothing to make our communities safer. Attorneys general are stepping up to hold the federal government accountable, and I am grateful to Governor Healey for today's announcement to further protect Massachusetts residents. I look forward to working with her and others, including legislative leadership and the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus, on related efforts."

Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan:

"It is critical that we all act to protect the rule of law. Courthouses are sacred spaces where everyone must be able to access justice and protection without fear or intimidation. Governor Healey's actions today are a welcome and necessary step forward, using the authority of the Commonwealth to place clear limits on where civil immigration enforcement actions can occur."

Dr. Almudena G. Abeyta, Superintendent, Chelsea Public Schools:

"Education has always been the great equalizer of our country. Our children deserve the

AFT Massachusetts stands with State House efforts to protect residents from ICE

Special to the Journal

The American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts joined Governor Maura Healey today as she unveiled an Executive Order to protect Massachusetts residents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers who continue to operate with unchecked authority fulfilling the immigration agenda of the White House.

"Masked ICE agents have been raiding communities across the Commonwealth for months, ignoring the Constitution and our basic human rights. Immigrant families are gripped by fear," said American Federation of Teachers President Jessica Tang. "Children cannot learn if they don't feel safe. These threats take an emotional, psychological, and physical toll on our children and their families."

For more than thirty years, schools, hospitals, and places of worship were considered "sensitive locations" – places protected from immigration enforcement. Under the Trump Administration, those places have been stripped of these protections, allowing ICE agents to target residents and families at their most

vulnerable.

Today's Executive Order bans ICE agents from entering schools, hospitals, places of worship, local courts, and other state-owned public property to conduct immigration enforcement. ICE would only be permitted in those locations with a judicial warrant.

"Educators are going above and beyond to try to reassure students and families that schools and their surroundings are the safe spaces they are supposed to be," continued Tang, who was present at today's announcement. "But that message rings hollow when parents are detained on the way to dropping their child off at school or when students who are here legally are detained and sent out of state. Children fear when they walk out the door, their family might not be there when they return."

The Governor's Executive Order takes a number of steps to protect students and families from a federal government that continues to operate above the law:

- Establishes a system for "standby guardianship" allowing parents to designate an alternative guardian that will spring

into effect for 30 days in the event they are detained or deported;

- Directs the state to work with public and private schools, child care providers, medical providers, and shelters to make sure that they know their rights and have policies in place for interacting with ICE and knowing how to ask for warrants; and

- Bans state agencies from entering voluntary agreements with federal immigration enforcement.

"What we saw on the ground in Minnesota was inhumane and un-American. No one should be afraid to drop their child off at school or go to the hospital or get essentials at the grocery store because they're worried about being targeted for the color of their skin," continued Tang. "We must use every tool at our disposal to safeguard our communities against a federal government that is making our streets more dangerous and dismantling our very democracy. The Governor's action today is a crucial step in that work. We remain committed to working with the Governor, Legislature, and critical allies to build upon today's steps and ensure we're doing everything we

can at the state and local level to protect our students and communities."

The AFT Massachusetts represents educators and public school employees working in many of the state's Gateway Cities. These districts, including Boston, Lynn, Lawrence, and Chelsea, are seeing significant enrollment drops due to the current immigration climate. Not only do these communities stand to lose generations of students, they face devastating shortfalls in funding due to enrollment declines.

To prevent these catastrophic shortfalls, the AFT Massachusetts is calling on the state to intervene, like it did during the COVID-19 pandemic, and support districts facing enrollment disruptions.

The Fiscal Year 2022 budget included one-time assistance grants for districts facing "pandemic-related disruptions in their enrollment." Nearly \$15 million was provided to 128 districts across the state to help stabilize school budgets during this unprecedented time.

"These communities, which serve disproportionate numbers of immigrant and high-needs

students, are already being hit hard by skyrocketing costs while being a frequent target of the White House's agenda to dismantle public education as we know it," continued Tang. "The enrollment crisis will bring these districts to the point of no return. We urge the state to take action to ensure all students of the Commonwealth have access to the quality public education and safe schools they deserve."

The AFT Massachusetts, a strong voice for collaborative education reform that is good for students and fair to educators, represents over 25,000 educators and staff working in public schools, universities, libraries, and health offices across the state.

AFT MA's budget priorities for Fiscal Year 2027 are outlined in their recent letter to Governor Healey. It includes a call for the state to use funding from the Fair Share Amendment to provide additional support to districts facing enrollment disruptions, similar to grant funding they provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ACTION (from pg. 8)

opportunity to learn, regardless of their citizenship. But that fundamental right is under threat. In these uncertain times, we must hold tight to the core value of education. Every child has the right to attend school and must be in school to learn. Let us not forget this fundamental right and may we protect it fiercely."

Amy O'Leary, Executive Director, Strategies for Children:

"We applaud Governor Maura Healey and her Administration for taking action today. Every child deserves safety, stability, and the opportunity to learn and grow. Schools and early learning programs must remain safe spaces where children can learn and play without fear. We know that

early childhood educators are on the front lines. We continue to be inspired by this dedicated and resilient workforce and their commitment to problem solving, building partnerships and providing high-quality learning experiences under incredible continuing circumstances. We are grateful to our leaders for showing empathy, compassion, and understanding what is at stake for people across Massa-

chusetts."

Dr. Mary M. Bourque, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents:

"Our students, families, and educators continue to live in terror and trauma because of the cruel and often unlawful acts of federal ICE agents. We are grateful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration for standing up to the Trump Administration, particularly to ensure that parents can send their children to school every day without fear."

Brooke Thomson, President and CEO, Associated Industries of Massachusetts:

"We have seen the negative impact of escalating tensions in Minnesota and Maine brought about by recent federal immigration enforcement activity. Businesses are not immune. Our members throughout Massachusetts cannot afford the economic uncertainty brought about by this type of activity, and we have heard from members experiencing workforce challenges as a direct result of enforcement. That is why Associated Industries of Massachusetts supports Governor

Maura Healey's efforts to set clear rules for what activity can take place and where it is permitted. AIM looks forward to reviewing the Governor's legislation and executive order and to working with elected leaders on this important issue."

Bishop Cristiano Borro Barbosa, Archdiocese of Boston:

"As an immigrant myself and as a bishop ministering here in the Commonwealth, I can affirm that many among the good people we serve are experiencing and living in constant fear and distress. Legal protection for safe spaces in schools, hospitals and houses of worship are needed as one means of providing locations and institutions to renew the spiritual and physical lives of all of us and our neighbors. All human beings with their God given dignity deserve to feel safe and protected."

Ashley Blackburn, Interim Executive Director of Health Care For All:

"Everyone should feel safe seeking medical care in Massachusetts – period. Thriving immigrant communities are vital for a thriving Commonwealth,

economically, socially and culturally. Health Care for All stands with Governor Healey and our partners throughout our Commonwealth in ensuring doctor's offices, hospitals and community health centers remain safe places for immigrants who are patients, caregivers or part of the health care workforce. It is critical that all providers are equipped to help their patients know and understand their fundamental rights in health care settings anywhere in the Commonwealth. Fear should never be a barrier to accessing the health care you need."

Dr. Olivia Liao, President, Massachusetts Medical Society:

"The physicians, residents, and medical students of the Massachusetts Medical Society firmly believe that health care is a basic human right. For that right to be fully realized, it is imperative that all health care settings remain safe, welcoming, and free from intimidation. It is unacceptable that immigrant patients in Massachusetts are avoiding care out of fear. Such barriers compromise individual and community health. We com-

mend the Healey Administration for taking action that strengthens protections for our patients and helps ensure access to essential medical care for all."

Gladys Vega, President & CEO, La Colaborativa and Co-Chair of the Governor's Latino Empowerment Council:

"The protections announced today by Governor Healey mean the world to me and my community – people I see every day asking for reassurance that they can live a normal life again. Like sending their children to school, going to work, and continuing to contribute to this state. These protections will help us navigate this new reality we all live in, and I know they will offer hope that, in Massachusetts, we have a leader who knows what's right, that our people deserve dignity, and that enough is enough."

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Recycle**

Aquarium welcomes new members to Board of Trustees and Ambassador Council

Special to the Journal

The New England Aquarium is beginning 2026 with six new members joining its Board of Trustees and Ambassador Council.

The Board of Trustees recently elected Danny Kalmar and Jane Willis to its ranks. Kalmar, who has served on the Aquarium's Ambassador Council since 2018, is a partner at McKinsey & Company with significant experience in AI and digital transformation, operational excellence, and leadership development. Jane Willis is a partner at Ropes & Gray where she focuses her practice on complex business litigation, class action litigation, and antitrust matters. They were each elected to a three-year term on the Aquarium's Board.

The Aquarium also welcomes four new members to its Ambassador Council: Alice Anne Barbo, Errin Davis, Matthew Marino, and Becca Schulman Havemeyer. These individuals serve as essential links to the community in advancing the Aquarium's mission.

"The New England Aquarium is constantly evolving and inspiring people to form a deeper connection to the ocean with a dynamic combination of exhibits, scientific research, education, and advocacy. We are pleased to expand our Board with an impressive group of Trustees and Ambassadors who bring with them expertise in business, education, green energy, and more," said Thomas R. Burton III, a Boston-based Mintz attorney and Chair of the Board of Trustees.

New Trustees

Danny Kalmar (Boston, MA)

Danny Kalmar is a Partner at McKinsey & Company and a senior leader in the firm's Financial Services practice. He is highly experienced in AI and digital transformation, operational excellence, and leader-



The new Trustees and Ambassadors joining the New England Aquarium. Clockwise from top left: Danny Kalmar, Jane Willis, Rebecca Schulman Havemeyer, Matt Marino, Errin Davis, and Alice Anne Barbo.

ship development. Kalmar has helped organizations around the world manage significant change and growth, influencing how companies stay competitive in an ever-changing business environment. Outside of his professional achievements, Kalmar has a deep passion for the ocean, having served as a submarine naval officer, being an avid sailor, and actively supporting bluetech initiatives. He holds a BA from the Technion Israel – Institute of Technology and an MBA from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School of Management.

Jane Willis (Boston, MA)

Jane Willis is a Partner at Ropes & Gray. She became a member of the firm's policy committee (the firm's governing body) in 2019 after serving for several years as co-chair of the global litigation and enforcement practice. Willis focuses her practice on complex business litigation, class action litigation, and antitrust matters, including, in large part, matters for health care and life scienc-

es clients. She has been named the Best Lawyers "Lawyer of the Year" for Antitrust in Boston for several years. She holds a BA in Applied Mathematics from Harvard University and a JD from Harvard Law School.

New Ambassadors

Alice Anne Barbo (Boston, MA)

Alice Anne Barbo is a life-long advocate for marine conservation and supporter of the New England Aquarium. She began her professional career as a secondary and adult education teacher in the fields of history, world cultures, political science, and study skills. Barbo served three parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston as the Director of Religious Education including managing the largest pre-k through grade 8 program in the diocese. She is happiest outdoors exploring natural wonders, parks, gardens and local history. Barbo earned a BA in History and Teacher Certification from the University of Massachusetts Lowell and a Master Teacher certification from Regis College.

Errin Davis (Boston, MA)

Errin Davis serves as the Chief Operations Officer at The Davis System, LLC, where she oversees major contracts and event management initiatives. Her career spans various roles supporting elected officials, including Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, and State Senator Liz Miranda. Davis's professional journey includes contributions to the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government; Boston Public Schools Office of Equity, Strategy & Opportunity Gaps; and Emerge Massachusetts. Davis is a graduate of Salem State University, holding a BS in Business Administration focused in Entrepreneurship.

Matt Marino (Scituate, MA)

Matt Marino is the co-founder and CEO of ETX Upstream, an investment platform for Energy Transition projects. Prior to ETX, he was co-founder

and CEO of Galehead Development, a renewable energy development platform that has delivered more than 2 GW of fully commercialized utility-scale solar and wind projects. Marino is an FII Level 1 Freediver and perpetually novice surfer. He resides in Scituate, MA, with his wife and two daughters, where they dive, beach, and surf whenever the weather allows. He holds a BA and MBA from Boston College and is currently matriculated at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography.

Becca Schulman Havemeyer (Chestnut Hill, MA)

Becca Schulman Havemeyer is co-founder and president of Beach Plum Properties, a design and development firm committed to building in an eco-friendly and climate-forward manner, limiting site waste, encouraging reuse and the incorporation of salvaged materials, and installing fossil fuel-free systems and appliances. Her early career was in nonprofit management and philanthropy, including time spent leading the Boston office of Room to Grow, managing programs at Jumpstart National, and leading corporate giving efforts at Manulife/John Hancock. Shulman Havemeyer serves as a marine mammal volunteer at the New England Aquarium. She earned a BA in Political Science and Women's Studies from Brown University.

New England Aquarium is a nonprofit research and conservation organization that has protected and cared for our ocean and marine animals for more than 55 years. We provide science-based solutions and help shape policies that create measurable change to address threats to the ocean faces. We inspire action through discovery and help create engaged, resilient communities.

Boston Food Access Council awarded Community Power Grant from Project Bread to advance food justice and systems change

Special to the Journal

Boston Food Access Council, of Boston, has been named a recipient of Project Bread's inaugural Community Power Grants program. The funding will help to drive grassroots advocacy and systems change to address the root causes of food insecurity, building capacity for smaller organizations where it would not be otherwise possible. Boston Food Access Council was selected from over 40 proposals for its proven impact, advocacy wins, and strong potential to build power across communities.

"Food insecurity is not just about food - it is about deep structural disparities," says Adriana Mendes-Sheldon, Director of Community Partnerships at Project Bread. "True transformation happens when power is redistributed and communities most impacted by food insecurity are part of shaping the solutions. By investing in grassroots leadership and advocacy, we build long-term capacity for organizing and a sustainable impact that goes beyond charity and toward systemic change."

The Boston Food Access Council is a community-led coalition working to ensure that Boston residents most affected by food insecurity have the

knowledge, resources, and power to shape food access solutions. Comprised of community members and organizational leaders, Boston Food Access Council brings together residents, advocates, and policymakers to break down silos and advance equitable food access through collaboration, advocacy, and awareness-building. With support from Project Bread's Community Power Fund, Boston Food Access Council will strengthen its capacity and deepen community leadership, while also funding a small cohort of paid community advocates. They have already hired a new fractional executive director, Sutton Kiplinger, to provide dedicated coordination and strategic guidance. In partnership with the Neighborhood Food Action Collaborative (NFAC), 3 community advocates have been hired who will do community engagement to help neighbors understand their own opportunities for action and become part of an engaged base of community members advocating for the changes they want to see in food access in their communities. These advocates—people with lived experience of food insecurity—will be trained to conduct SNAP and food access outreach, share accurate information, and elevate community stories at farmers'

markets, neighborhood events, and in conversations with decision-makers across Boston.

"We need to be able to connect policymakers directly to people who are experiencing food insecurity and supporting their communities every day," says Seana Weaver, former steering committee member and continued supporter of the Boston Food Access Council. "By investing in both leadership capacity and paid community advocates, we're strengthening the bridge between lived experience and power, while reducing misinformation and ensuring that community voices are driving food justice solutions in Boston."

Project Bread awarded a total of \$97,000 to five Massachusetts organizations through the Community Power Grants program. Grantees received individualized technical assistance from Project Bread's Research and Evaluation team to develop customized logic models that track each project's progress and impact. They will also participate in Project Bread's statewide Community of Practice. Mendes-Sheldon explains that "the program was intentionally designed to provide value beyond funding, offering key supports that build long-term organizational capacity,

sustainability, and impact." The grants strategically support the

Make Hunger History Coalition, Project Bread's bold statewide initiative mobilizing more than 500 partners around a shared roadmap to permanently end hunger in Massachusetts. This work seeks to intentionally shift the power dynamics in anti-hunger work by providing tools and support for grassroots organizations and individuals to voice their perspectives and become leaders in this statewide movement.

The coalition operates through five strategic pillars: ensuring all residents can access and buy food, integrating food security with health care, supporting residents to eat nutritious and local food, enhancing food support programs for priority populations, and addressing root causes that contribute to hunger. The other 2025-2026 grantees include Revere Arabic Community, Roslindale Food Collective + New Beginnings Reentry Services, MetroWest Food Collaborative, and Hampshire County Food Policy Council. They have all joined the coalition as active members, with their community leadership and organizing efforts directly feeding into working groups and collaborative efforts across the state.

To get involved with the Make Hunger History Coalition,

visit: www.makehungerhistoryma.org.

People experiencing food insecurity should call into Project Bread's toll-free FoodSource Hotline (1-800-645-8333), which provides confidential assistance to connect with food resources, including SNAP benefits, in 180 languages and for the hearing impaired. For more information, visit: www.projectbread.org/get-help.

Project Bread, the leading statewide food security organization in Massachusetts, connects people and communities in Massachusetts to reliable sources of food while advocating for policies that make food more accessible—so that no one goes hungry. For more information, visit: www.projectbread.org.

Boston Food Access Council (BFAC) is a community-led coalition working to empower Bostonians with the knowledge to access food resources and to bring together and amplify community voices and needs through collaboration, partnership, advocacy, and awareness building. Through community outreach, policy advocacy, and organizing strategies, BFAC ensures that those closest to the problem are the ones leading the solutions. For more information visit: <https://bostonfoodaccess-council.org/>

Residents now able to apply for home heating and energy assistance

Special to the Journal

The Massachusetts' home energy assistance program (HEAP) is a free resource to help eligible households pay a portion of winter heating bills.

Homeowners and renters, including households whose cost of heat is included in the rent, can apply in person at the agency in their area or through the online application.

Eligibility is based on household size and the gross annual income of every household member, 18 years of age or older.

Household income cannot exceed 60% of estimated State Median Income.

This program provides assistance through a fixed benefit amount for the cost of the prima-

ry source of heat with includes, but is not limited to: Oil, Electricity, Natural gas, Propane, Kerosene, Wood, and Coal.

If eligible, discounts are automatically given on:

- electric bills for investor-owned electric utilities
- gas bills for investor-owned gas utilities
- telephone bills

Payments for actual usage or fuel delivery are made directly to the heating vendor for primary energy needs from November 1st to April 30th.

Eligibility/Selection Criteria

- There are a variety of factors that impact the eligibility of a household.
- Eligibility is based on household size and the gross annual income of every household

member, 18 years of age or older.

- Household income cannot exceed 60% of estimated State Median Income

• Please contact the local fuel assistance agency for detailed information on criteria used for eligibility.

• Housing subsidies will also determine the specific benefit level.

Fees

The program is 100% free for those who qualify. Beware of scams by people charging an "application fee" to help submit an application.

How to apply

The online application opens on October 1 for the upcoming

heating season (November 1, 2024 – April 30, 2025). You can apply online, in person at the LIHEAP agency in your area, or by mail. Use the HEAP portal to find your agency or start the application. Households must apply each year.

• First time applicants must participate in an intake appointment, to get started please submit an online application or contact your local agency.

• Applications are mailed to households after the first year and can be renewed online, in person, or by mail.

• Applicants who are denied assistance have the right to appeal the decision through their local home energy assistance agency.

• You may also take a look at

the FY 2025 Cold Relief Brochure

Next steps

Necessary Documents

As part of the application process, please be prepared to share necessary information, including but not limited to:

- photo identification for the head of household or primary applicant (e.g. driver's license)
- a list of all household members
- information on your heating bills (e.g. heating company name and account number)
- information on your housing situation (e.g. an active lease or mortgage statement)
- proof of income for 30 days prior to application date (e.g. wages, pension).

National Grid offers safety reminders for clearing snow at your home or business

Special to the Journal

National Grid reminds its customers to exercise caution near the energy equipment outside of their homes as they clear snow left behind from Winter Storm Fern. Over a foot of snow has fallen across our Massachusetts service area with additional snow forecast throughout the afternoon. National Grid's top priority is safety, including the safety and well-being of our crews and customers, and we offer the following reminders to assist with removing snow from your property.

Keep Your Meters Clear of Snow and Ice

Many National Grid customers have electric and/or natural gas meters on the exterior of their homes and businesses. When clearing snow, customers and snow removal contractors should be aware of the location of this equipment to avoid coming into contact with meters or outside

gas risers. Additionally:

- Gently remove icicles from the meter with a gloved hand, if necessary. Never kick your meter or use a snow shovel to knock away ice.
- If energy equipment is located near your driveway or parking lot, and you have a vehicle-mounted snowplow or use a snow removal service, ensure that the equipment is well-marked so the vehicle operator knows to keep a safe distance. Striking a natural gas riser or electric wire with a plow could cause injury.
- The buildup of ice and snow around or over natural gas meters, regulators and pipes can pose a serious safety risk. Ice and snow falling from a roof can damage gas meters or service connections to customers' homes or businesses, resulting in potential gas leaks. Customers should take immediate action if a natural gas leak is suspected:
- Get out – All occupants

should leave the house immediately. Do not use the telephone, light switches or automatic garage door openers for any reason.

- Call us – After leaving the house and reaching a safe environment, call National Grid's 24-hour gas emergency number: 1-800-233-5325.

• Stay out – Don't return to your home until National Grid tells you it is safe to do so.

- If energy equipment is located near your driveway or parking lot, and you have a vehicle-mounted snowplow or use a snow removal service, ensure that the equipment is well-marked so the vehicle operator knows to keep a safe distance. Striking a natural gas riser or electric wire with a plow could cause injury.

Keep Your Vents Clear

The excessive amount of snowfall from this storm may have increased the snow depth in your yard and near your home or business. When clearing snow

from your driveways and walkways, never pile it near vents on the side of the building. A blocked vent – whether it's a furnace, hot water heater, dryer or sewer – can lead to the buildup of deadly carbon monoxide. Keep the vents clear and free of snow and ice, treating them as carefully as you would an energy meter.

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to those of the flu, and can include headaches, weakness, confusion, chest tightness, skin redness, dizziness, nausea, sleepiness, heart fluttering or loss of muscle control. If you suspect carbon monoxide is present in your home, immediately go outside and breathe deeply. Then call 911.

Trees, Snow and Your Electric Service

Snowfall places excessive weight on tree limbs and branches, creating potential hazards for energy infrastructure. Downed trees near power lines should

be reported to National Grid at 800-465-1212. Visit our website for more information about your electric service and trees. Customers are also reminded to exercise extreme caution near downed power lines:

- Always use extreme caution near downed power lines and wires, and always assume that they are carrying live electricity.

- Never touch a person or an object that is in contact with a downed line, as electricity can pass through to you.

- Take caution when approaching fallen trees, which could have power lines caught in them.

- Remember that water can conduct electricity. If you see a line down in a puddle or flooded area, avoid contact with the water to prevent risk of shock.

- Learn more about staying safe near downed power lines.

To learn more about electric and natural gas safety, visit our website – nationalgridus.com.

Winter storm safety tips

Winter storms in New England can range from freezing rain and ice, to a moderate snowfall over a few hours, to blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow that can last several days.

What Are Winter Storms?

Winter storms can include large snow accumulation, extremely cold temperatures, coastal flooding, beach erosion and heavy, wet snow or ice.

Why Prepare?

Extreme winter weather can shut down an entire region. It can lead to roof collapses, communications disruptions and power outages. Winter storms are associated with storm-related deaths caused by:

- Automobile accidents
- Heart attacks due to overexertion
- Freezing to death; and
- Carbon monoxide incidents

To minimize the dangers associated with winter storms, take the proper safety precautions to protect yourself and your family.

Winter Storm Watches and Warnings

The National Weather Service issues watches and warnings for winter storms and blizzards to alert the public of potential winter storms. It is important to understand the difference between these warnings so you know what to do to stay safe:

Winter Storm Watches

It is likely that winter storm warning, blizzard warning, or ice storm warning criteria will be met due to the conditions of an upcoming storm.

Winter Storm Warning

6" of snow or more in a 12-hour period (or 8" of snow or more in a 24-hour period) expected within next 12 to 36 hours.

- Blizzard Warning — Sustained wind gusts greater than or equal to 35 mph AND considerable falling and/or blowing snow, resulting in reduced visibility of less than 1/4 mile for at least three hours.

- Ice Storm Warning — 1/2 inch or more of freezing rain.

Before a Winter Storm

- Be informed by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies.

- Create and review your family emergency plan.

- If you receive dialysis, medical treatments or home health care services, work with your medical provider to determine how to maintain care and service if you are unable to leave your home for a period of time.

- Assemble an emergency kit. Add seasonal supplies to your emergency kit, such as extra winter clothing and blankets.

- Follow instructions from public safety officials.

- Prepare for possible power

outages.

- Fully charge your cellphone, laptop, and other electronic devices before a storm if power outages are expected.

- If your medical equipment uses electricity, talk to health care providers, utility company & your personal support network for options during a power outage. If you'll need assistance during an outage, talk to family, friends & your support network.

- Consider purchasing a generator to provide power during an outage. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and learn how to use it safely before an outage.

- Prepare your home for possible emergencies.

- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches around your home that could fall and cause injury or damage.

- Clear clogged rain gutters to allow water to flow away from your home. Melting snow and ice can build up if gutters are clogged with debris.

- Ensure your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working and have fresh batteries.

- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year.

- Make sure your home is properly insulated. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows to keep cold air out. Install storm windows or cover windows with

plastic from the inside to provide insulation.

- Ensure you have sufficient heating fuel and consider safe backup heating options such as fireplaces or woodstoves.

- Ensure your vehicle is ready for safe winter driving. Keep the gas tank at least half-full and have a Winter Emergency Car Kit in the trunk.

During a Winter Storm

- Minimize outdoor activities. Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, utilize MEMA's winter driving safety tips.

- Keep your pets safe with Winter Pet Safety Tips.

- Dress for the season to protect against the elements. Dress in several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing instead of a single heavy layer. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent. Wear a hat, mittens (not gloves) and sturdy waterproof boots to protect your extremities. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.

- During extreme cold weather, follow our extreme cold safety tips.

- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

After a Winter Storm

- Continue to monitor media for emergency information.

- Follow instructions from public safety officials.

- Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies, including downed power lines and gas leaks.

- Check with your local authorities or call 2-1-1 to find locations of warming centers or shelters near you or for other storm-related questions.

- In the event of power outages during cold weather, you may need to go to a warming center or emergency shelter to stay warm. Report power outages to your utility company.

- Stay away from downed utility wires. Always assume a downed power line is live.

- Stay off streets and roads until they are clear of snow.

- Use caution and take frequent breaks when shoveling snow to prevent overexertion. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter.

- Clear exhaust vents from direct vent gas furnace systems to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are working as it is a silent, odorless, killer.

- Clear snow from around vehicle exhaust pipes before starting the vehicle to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Massport releases Draft 2025 Strategic Plan; public input will help shape the Authority's vision for the next decade

Special to the Journal

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) today announced the release of its draft Strategic Plan and is seeking public comment to help shape Massport's path forward. The Plan builds on Massport's strengths and a decade of progress, assesses current conditions and trends, and identifies future challenges and opportunities. It balances operational excellence with inclusive forward-looking growth, reaffirming the Authority's commitment to safe, efficient, sustainable operations that engage and benefit the communities we serve. The Strategic Plan sets a vision for the next decade and outlines a flexible, action-oriented path to achieve it.

The public comment period opens today and runs through March 6th. The Plan and opportunity to provide feedback can be accessed here: <https://www.massport.com/strategic-plan>.

"Massport has not undertaken a strategic planning effort in a decade. As a central engine of economic activity, we need to plan for the future and respond to growing demand while setting the highest standards for safety, sustainability and community partnership," said Rich Davey, Massport CEO. "Guided by this vision, we will be transforming aging infrastructure, leveraging emerging technologies and delivering innovative customer-focused experiences and lasting benefits to our communities and the region. We welcome the public's feedback as we work to achieve these goals."

Key elements of the 2025 Plan:

The Strategic Plan presents a vision and a roadmap by key Massport assets and across the organization.

Aviation

Massport's aviation system must adapt to meet increasing demand and emerging technology as Massachusetts and New England are home to several travel-intensive industries and companies that rely on air travel to support their operations and drive economic impact, as well as a large traveling population that depends on safe, efficient and affordable air service.

Boston Logan

International Airport:

With one of the smallest and oldest airport footprints in the country, Logan must invest strategically to maintain safe, efficient, and reliable operations. Priorities include:

A major renovation or replacement of the Air Traffic Control Tower;

Enhancing Boston Logan's portfolio of high-occupancy vehicle and transit options including implementing innovative ideas like remote terminals;

Modernizing Logan's terminal core to enhance the passenger experience.

Worcester Regional

Airport:

To sustain growth, Worcester will focus on:

Maintaining and expanding commercial passenger service;

Assessing opportunities for potential to grow cargo or logistics operations;

Exploring new opportunities and partnerships with support of community stakeholders.

Hanscom Field

As New England's premier general aviation airport, Hanscom plays a critical role in supporting business aviation, medical flights, and regional innovation. Priorities include:

Powering the future of aviation innovation with research partnerships and support services;

Advancing Massport's sustainability and Net Zero efforts, including development and adoption of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF);

Continue to meet metro Boston's general aviation needs.

Maritime

For nearly 400 years, the Port of Boston has supported regional economic growth and jobs.

Conley Terminal aims to strengthen its position as a reliable, efficient container port with a goal of reaching 200,000 containers by 2035. Achieving best-in-class operational excellence to maximize competitive advantage will require:

Developing a roadmap for crane and wharf upgrades;

Further monetizing and in-

creasing stickiness of customer relationships.

Flynn Cruiseport Boston will focus on improving the passenger experience and enhancing ground access, targeting 600,000 annual passengers by 2035. Priorities include:

Developing core cruise business in collaboration with cruise lines

Improving customer experience and service

Enhancing ground transport access and curbside flow

Real Estate

Massport's real estate portfolio supports economic growth through waterfront development, maritime industrial uses, and commercial activity. By 2035, Massport aims to generate approximately \$100 million in recurring annual revenue. Strategic priorities include:

Attracting and enabling Blue Economy companies;

Funding sustained place-making activities;

Prioritizing land acquisitions and infrastructure investments.

Organization Wide

Four organization-wide capabilities are essential to delivering on the Plan: Talent, Community, Sustainability & Resilience, and Digital/Data &

AI. These are not supporting elements – they are foundational to achieving our mission and advancing Massport's role as a leader in climate innovation and the region's sustainability ecosystem.

Our Net Zero strategy continues to be a top priority as we move forward. This strategy addresses all emissions from Massport-controlled sources through sustainable infrastructure and operational improvements. Massport also recognizes the importance of reducing emissions beyond its direct control by extending our influence and building strong partnerships including the adoption of SAF at our airports.

Massport is also committed to advancing the East Boston community's vision for Piers Park 3. We look forward to working with the community on that.

Massport's 2025 Strategic Plan is Built on a Decade of Progress

Massport's 2014 Strategic Plan laid the foundation for major accomplishments across aviation, maritime, and real estate. Accomplishment achieved from the 2014 Strategic Plan include:

Transformed Conley Con-

tainer Terminal into a "big-ship-ready" facility capable of handling the largest vessels calling the East Coast;

Additional international gates at Boston Logan's International Terminal E;

Installed a CAT III landing system at Worcester Airport;

Completed Piers Park II in East Boston;

Delivered a dedicated freight corridor and buffer park in South Boston;

Applied the nationally recognized "Massport Model" to the Omni Boston at the Seaport Hotel procurement;

Opened a new Framingham parking garage that reached full utilization on day one;

Connected Boston Logan's terminals beyond security to enhance the passenger experience;

Expanded Boston Logan's parking capacity;

Maintained Hanscom Field's role as New England's premier general aviation airport and a critical reliever for Boston Logan.

These achievements demonstrate Massport's ability to deliver on complex projects, adapt to evolving needs, and advance economic growth while strengthening community engagement.

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Snow thrower safety tips: Keep best practices in mind

Clearing snow and ice from driveways, sidewalks and parking lots is no small job. You rely on your outdoor power equipment to do the heavy lifting, and it's important to keep safety in mind. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) reminds home and business owners to use snow throwers, often referred to as snow blowers, safely and offers tips to help.

"Weather today is unpredictable. You need to have your snow thrower serviced and ready to power up," says OPEI President and CEO Kris Kiser. "Review your owner's manual so you can use your equipment safely." Kiser says preparation is key and that home and business owners should consider the following:

Review the owner's manual. Check the owner's manual for safe handling procedures. If the manual cannot be found, look it up online, and store a copy on your computer so it's

available to reference in the future. Review how to operate controls. Be able to shut off equipment quickly.

Check equipment. The snow thrower should be powered off when being checked over. Adjust any cables and check the auger.

Charge batteries. Locate the batteries for your snow thrower and charge them fully before it snows.

Purchase fuel. Be sure to use the correct fuel recommended by the equipment's manufacturer. For most gasoline-powered snow throwers, that is E10 or less. Often fuel stations are closed after a storm so buy gasoline in advance of storms. Fuel that is more than 30 days old can phase separate and cause operating problems. For more information on fueling properly see www.opei.org/programs/ethanolwarning

Store and use fuel properly. Place gasoline in a proper fuel container and label it with

the date purchased and the ethanol content. Store fuel safely and out of the reach of children. Fill the fuel tank outside before starting the engine and while the engine is cold. Never add fuel to a running or hot engine.

Clear the area. Snow can sometimes hide objects. Door-mats, hoses, balls, toys, boards, wires, and other debris should be removed from areas you intend to clear. When run over by a snow thrower, these objects may harm the machine or people.

Dress for winter weather. Locate safety gear now, and place it in an accessible closet or location. Wear safety glasses, gloves and footwear that can handle cold and slippery surfaces when operating the snow thrower.

Key Safety Tip: Never put your hands inside the auger or chute. Use a clean out tool to unclog snow or debris from the snow thrower. Your hands should never go inside the au-

ger or chute.

Turn OFF the snow thrower if you need to clear a clog. If you need to remove debris or unclog snow, always turn off the snow thrower. Wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before clearing any clogs or debris.

Operate in visible conditions. Never operate the snow thrower without good visibility or light.

Aim with care. Never throw snow toward people or cars. Keep children or pets inside and away from your snow thrower when it is operating.

Use extreme caution on slopes and hills. Use caution when changing directions on slopes. Do not attempt to clear steep slopes.

Know where the cord is. If using an electric powered snow thrower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times. Avoid tripping.

OPEI is an international trade association representing

manufacturers and suppliers of power equipment, small engines, battery power systems, portable generators, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars. OPEI is the advocacy voice of the industry, and a recognized Standards Development Organization for the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and active internationally through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) in the development of safety and performance standards. OPEI owns Equip Exposition, the international landscape, outdoor living and equipment exposition, and administers the TurfMutt Foundation, which directs the environmental education program, TurfMutt. OPEI-Canada represents members on a host of issues, including recycling, emissions and other regulatory developments across the Canadian provinces.

FRESH AND LOCAL

Bread Pudding

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

We all have our favorite comfort foods. Bread pudding is one of ours. It's also a brilliant way to use up items in your refrigerator, pantry, or breadbox. It's an obvious choice when you have stale bread on hand and don't want to waste it. But we also make it when we have extra eggs or other leftovers.

Since Ed is a bread lover, that's one thing we always have onhand. Those who don't have a ready supply of bread could start a freezer bag of stale bread to make a pudding anytime you'd like. A mixture of breads will only add more flavor to the dish. You can also use fresh bread. Either leave the bread out to dry or pop ripped pieces into a warm oven to toast lightly.

Sweet Options

Most of us think of bread pudding as a dessert or a sweet dish. While you can make it from any leftover bread, we

love the batches made from specialty loaves, from cinnamon swirl to more exotic offerings. And, these sweet versions can use up any items that might be softening in your fruit bowl. Apples, pears, or bananas will add sweetness and nutrition to the mix.

We often add dried fruits like raisins, apricots, or figs to a simple bread pudding. The trick is to layer those in the middle of the pudding, or at least push them down into the mix. When they're on top, dried fruits tend to burn before the custard cooks.

Savory Versions

You can also take this cooking technique to the savory side and make a great breakfast or brunch dish, or a supper that can be waiting in the refrigerator when you get home.

Toss together any ingredients that you might put in a frittata. You could sauté onions, peppers, and sausage or ham, then let that mixture cool. Mix

your bread with grated cheddar cheese, toss it with the sautéed mixture, pour the custard mixture over it, and sprinkle the top with more cheese. Bake, and you have a wonderful savory bread pudding.

Specialty breads, from a place like When Pigs Fly Bakery, give you an easy way to go savory. Their Sicilian Green Olive & Hot Cherry Peppers bread just needs a bit of cheese and custard to make a quick meal.

Around the holidays, they make a Savory Cranberry bread that contains cranberries, onions, fresh sage, rosemary, thyme, and oregano. We call this "stuffing bread." A bread pudding made with that lovely loaf would be welcome on any buffet.

Stuffing recipes are a great inspiration for savory bread puddings. You can make your family's favorite cornbread or sausage stuffing, then add a custard to turn it into a creamy bread pudding. We often bake



This savory bread pudding was adapted from a traditional sausage stuffing recipe and was baked in a ramekin.

our savory bread puddings in ramekins for individual servings and to freeze for future meals.

Recipes

We don't follow a recipe as such for bread puddings. Rather, we use a ratio of 16 ounces of milk to 8 ounces of eggs (about 4 large) for the custard mix. You can break eggs into a measuring cup and add twice as much milk.

Season with salt, sugar, vanilla, or spices, depending on the other ingredients in the

dish. If the bread is sweet, add less sugar. If the ingredients are salty, for example, cured meat or fish, don't add much salt.

If you prefer to follow a recipe, there are dozens online. Both Epicurious and All Recipes have reliable versions. And, most general cookbooks, old or new, contain instructions for basic bread pudding.

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

RMV unveils redesigned disability placard to improve efficiency

Special to the Journal

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) announced today the introduction of a newly redesigned Disability Placard, created to improve security, curb fraud, and expedite delivery. Current placards will remain valid until their expiration date.

The updated placard features several key improvements:

- A modern design incorporating the widely accepted universal accessibility logo

- Durable material embedded with security features to deter fraud

- Bilingual instructions in both English and Spanish

"This redesign reflects our commitment to improving services for residents with disabilities while modernizing our operations," said Interim MassDOT Secretary and MBTA General Manager Phil Eng. "The new placard is not only easier to read but also reflects current design standards nationally. I want to thank Registrar Colleen Ogilvie and the entire RMV team for their leadership on behalf of the people we serve."

The RMV's Medical Affairs division issues approximately 140,000 disability placards annually to qualified residents on

a temporary or permanent basis. Previously, the placard production process was a multi-step, labor-intensive process. The new placards eliminate the need for individual lamination, cutting processing time by 25%.

"The updated design of the disability placard reflects the RMV's ongoing commitment to accessibility and safety," said Registrar Colleen Ogilvie. "I'm pleased that we can get the placards to customers sooner using a new and innovative process. As a reminder, disability placards are issued to an individual and are not transferable to family members or friends."

While the disability placards will feature a new design, the application process, certification requirements, and parking benefits have not changed, and the placard remains valid for the time it is medically necessary. Residents will continue to provide medical certification of health condition(s) with their application. Once approved, residents will be able to park in designated accessible parking spaces and meters without paying fees or penalties when displaying the placard until such time as it is no longer medically necessary.

For more information, please

visit mass.gov/RMV.

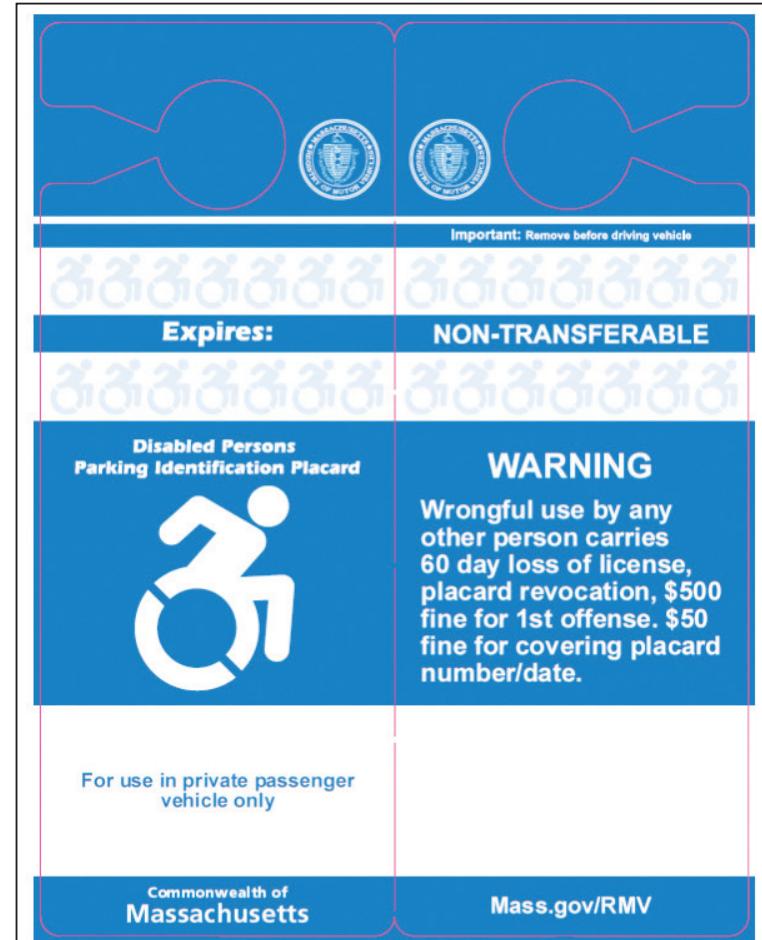
Statements of Support:

"Disability placards allow people with disabilities who need them to better access and independently navigate their communities. The words and images used in these highly visible placards matter. We applaud our colleagues at MassDOT for updating these placards to address concerns raised by the disability community and more efficiently provide the access to daily life that people with disabilities deserve."

— Allan Motenko, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD)

"The new disability placard is an important step forward in making Massachusetts a more accessible and inclusive state for everyone. By modernizing the placard system, we are improving accessibility and ensuring that people with disabilities have equitable access to the services, destinations and opportunities they rely on every day. I commend MassDOT for working alongside partners and stakeholders from this community on this milestone." — Dr. Lisa Iezzoni

"It's a huge honor to have this public domain icon now official in Massachusetts. As a parent of a child with disabilities, a professor for young



The new design – front and back.

designers and architects, and a citizen of our state, I look forward to making meaningfully accessible services for all of us." — Sara Hendren, Associate Professor, Art + Design and Architecture, Affiliate Faculty, Health, Humanities, and Society, Northeastern University.

Healey-Driscoll administration announces the opening of reservations for the 2026 camping season at DCR parks

Special to the Journal

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) announced that reservations for the 2026 state park camping season will open to the public on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 9 a.m. Camping season at DCR's 25 campgrounds will begin in April and continue through October.

"Camping at a DCR park is a cherished tradition for families and friends from all over — many of whom return to the same campground year after year, and in some cases for decades," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "Spending time together outdoors strengthens relationships, creates lasting memories, and helps foster the vital

connection between people and nature, along with a shared responsibility to care for these special places."

Campers should note the following prior to booking a reservation:

Reservations are available up to four months in advance of arrival.

Same-day reservations are available until 2 p.m. daily through ReserveAmerica

Campers should fill out all required fields of the reservation application at the time of booking to ensure a smooth arrival.

Visitors without a reservation are not allowed in campsites; however, day-use areas are available for gathering and outdoor activities.

All pets must have physical proof of valid rabies vaccina-

tion. Entry may be denied at check-in if paper verification cannot be provided.

Campground-Specific Updates

Fans of camping at Mount Greylock State Reservation and the Boston Harbor Islands are encouraged to monitor DCR's website and social media accounts for updates on the camping schedule.

Savoy Mountain State Forest's campground will close July 31, 2026, to accommodate the construction of a new bathhouse.

This season, Washburn Island will be available for camping on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The campground at Washburn Island is accessible by private boat only. Please note that there

is no on-site parking at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve or at the Town of Falmouth parking lot at White's Landing. Campers are responsible for finding suitable parking arrangements.

Since last season, DCR has made several improvements to its campsites including the new yurts at both Clarksburg State Park and Nickerson State Park.

A list of DCR campsites can be found at DCR's camping webpage. Campsites vary in offered accommodations, including showers, flush toilets, and R.V. water and power hookups.

Yurts can be reserved at Myles Standish State Forest, Nickerson State Park, October Mountain State Forest, Clarksburg State Park, Otter River State Forest, Shawme Crom-

well State Forest, Wells State Park and Willard Brook State Forest. Cabins can be rented at Mohawk Trail State Forest and Savoy Mountain State Forest. For more information on camping in cabins and yurts visit DCR's cabin and yurt camping webpage.

Additionally, approximately 20 of DCR's campgrounds have accessible campsites that all provide accessible parking, accessible restrooms, and a flat, firm and stable surface for camping. For more information on accessible campsites visit DCR's accessible camping webpage.

Last year, DCR accepted nearly 65,000 camping reservations at parks across the state. For more information

North Atlantic right whales return to southern New England waters

Special to the Journal

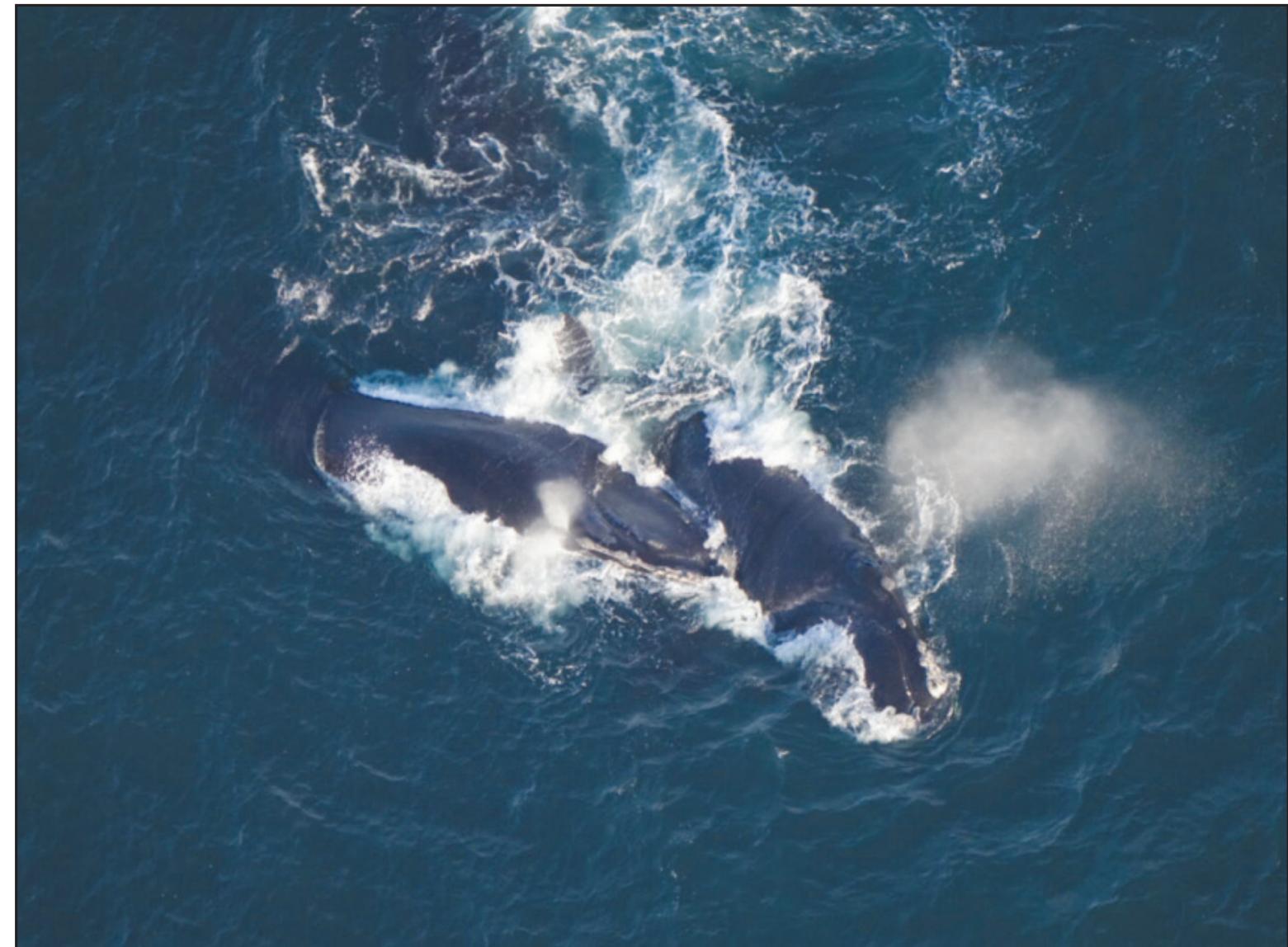
North Atlantic right whales have returned to the waters south of Massachusetts, prompting federal authorities to designate a voluntary slow zone.

Scientists from the New England Aquarium's Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life were flying an aerial survey on Jan. 5 when they sighted an aggregation of eight right whales 37 miles south of Nantucket. A second survey on Jan. 8 found over 20 right whales. Between both surveys, at least 23 unique whales have been identified so far. The group included two female right whales who have calved in recent years, "Braces" (Catalog #3320) and "Maple" (Catalog #1711), as well as "Atoll" (Catalog #4714), a young adult female who may be nearing calving age. These three females were all seen in surface active groups, a social behavior that involves several right whales closely interacting at the surface. These surface active groups can also provide mating opportunities, although not always. The majority of whales identified have been adult males including "Batman" (Catalog #1017) and "Dune" (Catalog #3351).

Assistant Scientist Kate Laemmle, who was one of the observers aboard the survey plane, noted the high number of these social groups in such a concentrated area.

"All around us, we saw groups of whales rolling, splashing, and bursting out of the water," Laemmle said. "Seeing these critically endangered right whales on our first surveys of the New Year is a great way to start the season and leaves us hopeful for more whales returning to the area."

The winter/spring season marks the peak time of year for right whale sightings in southern New England waters. In addition to the Aquarium sightings south of Nantucket,



NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM, TAKEN UNDER NMFS PERMIT #25739

Right whales "Maple" (Catalog #1711) and unnamed Catalog #3742 seen in a surface active group south of Nantucket, MA, on Jan. 8, 2026.

the Center for Coastal Studies has also sighted right whales in Cape Cod Bay over the last month. Cape Cod Bay is subject to a mandatory slow zone for boats and ships known as a Seasonal Management Area (SMA) until May 15.

The Jan. 5 whale sightings by the Aquarium triggered the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to implement a voluntary slow speed zone called a Dynamic Management Area (DMA) for mariners to reduce their speed to 10 knots to protect the whales. The DMA is in effect until Jan. 20, one of several active voluntary slow zones from Massachusetts to

Virginia due to right whale sightings. Vessel strikes are one of the leading causes of injuries and deaths for this species, which numbers about 380 individuals, making it critical that vessels slow down to the recommended speed.

"These recent sightings are an important reminder that right whales can be found throughout New England waters during the winter and spring. Reducing vessel speed in mandatory and voluntary right whale management areas is one of the most effective actions mariners can take to reduce the risk of vessel strikes and help protect this critically endangered species," said

Katherine McKenna, Associate Scientist in the Aquarium's Anderson Cabot Center who was aboard the Jan. 8 survey flight.

For the past 15 years, the New England Aquarium has conducted aerial surveys over the waters south of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, collecting data on all marine animals with a focus on protected species of whales and sea turtles. In recent years, the Aquarium has expanded survey coverage in New England including coastal Maine, the Gulf of Maine, and the Canyons along the shelf break. These flights help monitor changes in animal populations, identify various species, recognize trends using

standardized data, and monitor aggregations. Determining where right whales occur and how they are using habitats provides crucial information that can be used to better protect endangered species like North Atlantic right whales.

The New England Aquarium is a nonprofit research and conservation organization that has protected and cared for our ocean and marine animals for more than 55 years. We provide science-based solutions and help shape policies that create measurable change to address threats the ocean faces. We inspire action through discovery and help create engaged, resilient communities.

DCR (from pg. 15)

and questions about the 2026 camping season, visit the agency's website or email dcr.campinginfo@mass.gov.

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 common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the well-being of all. DCR infrastructure connects people to and through the beautiful landscapes and accessible

recreational facilities we care for – strengthening our communities and driving our economy. Our staff strive to build a healthier, more resilient Massachusetts where all residents and visitors can relax, reflect, and

feel a sense of belonging in our open spaces and public lands. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr or contact us at mass.parks@mass.gov.