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CHELSEA RECORD

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1890

VOLUME 120, NO. 7

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020

35 CENTS

Serving the needs of residents

Salvation Army involved in massive food distribution effort

By Cary Shuman

The Salvation Army facility at 258 Chestnut Street is in full-scale operation each day, helping to distribute 500-600 food boxes that contain 35 meals in each box.

Capt. Isael Gonzales and his wife, Capt. Brenda Gonzalez, Commanding Corps Officers at the Chelsea facility, said the lines of residents have grown substantially as the COVID-19 pandemic has decimated the city.

“At 8:30 a.m., 90 minutes before we open, the line was already at the corner by the [Central] Fire Station and it remained that way for three hours,” said Capt. Isael Gonzalez.

He said the number of families the Salvation Army is seeing during the crisis has quadrupled on average.

The Salvation Army, which is part of the Chelsea Hunger Network, also serves 75 “grab-and-go” hot meals each day.

See NEEDS Page 7

Council likely to approve \$1.6 million in emergency funding

By Seth Daniel

City Manager Tom Ambrosino and Council President Roy Avellaneda both said the Council is likely to approve an emergency funding request of \$1.6 million to continue helping with food efforts and to pay for services at the regional quarantine hotel in Revere.

Ambrosino said the funding is critical and he expects the Council to agree.

“They will vote that at the next meeting,” he said.

“That will cover the food distribution and the hotel costs for May. We will get reimbursed for some costs by FEMA and assistance

See FUNDING Page 2

INDEPENDENT Newspaper Group

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MASKING THE SMELL OF FRESH FLOWERS



**Bellingham Square exploded last Friday with a huge display of fresh flowers on the pavilion. The New England Flower Exchange on Second Street and its partners Poppy Floral and Kinship Floral had excess flowers on hand and decided to shed a bright light on what is a dim situation in Chelsea. The flowers were in place Friday morning and caused a good deal of people to stop and...well... smell the flowers – at a proper social distance of course.**



Chelsea’s Hope

Student’s drawings capture an historic moment

By Seth Daniel

There’s something about the two color drawings by Chelsea’s Jaylee Ortiz that has captured this moment in the City’s history in a way that grabbed everyone’s attention.

Ortiz, 15, is a sophomore at Chelsea High School (CHS) and a member of the REACH program there when school is normally in session. Over the past eight weeks, she said she has seen so much in her hometown that has happened, that she needed to express herself. REACH Director Stephanie Rodriguez suggested Ortiz use the time to express herself through her drawings.

That produced, so far, two drawings that are showing up everywhere in Chelsea and to other parts of the state as well while the spotlight shines on the City as it becomes the epicenter of the COVID-19 battle in New England.

One of the drawings is a nurse in a mask and gloves flexing her muscles with the Mystic/Tobin Bridge and Chelsea High behind her. A second drawing depicts a National Guard soldier at City Hall giving eggs to a resident in a mask.

“I’ve had a thing for drawing since I was a kid in elementary school,” she said, noting that she also attended the Williams School and the Hooks Elementary. “They always had me put in the art show. I enjoy that I’m able to put what I see in my mind on paper and people understand what I’m saying. It’s something that keeps me calm. I’m the type of person that if you catch me in class, you’ll see a lot of doodles on my paper because it keeps me focused.”

Interestingly, Ortiz isn’t an artist in any of the CHS programs or doesn’t take any classes to perfect her art, but simply likes to convey what she sees to others.

These days, that includes seeing the city she calls home upended, with peo-



Chelsea High student Jaylee Ortiz uses drawing (above and below) to keep calm, and decided to draw some of the things she was seeing around her hometown. Now, her two color drawings have inspired hope in the City’s residents as they begin to circulate through the community.



See DRAWINGS Page 2

Update

City approaches 2,000 cases as new cases finally plateau

By Seth Daniel

The numbers of new positive cases of COVID-19 being reported to the City daily has seemingly plateaued recently, with about 70 new cases per day being reported.

City Manager Tom Ambrosino said it was a hopeful estimation, but indicated the numbers of infection is still very high, and the rate of infection in Chelsea is so much higher than any other place – making any such news about a plateau to come with curbed enthusiasm.

“I think there’s maybe been a plateau,” he said. “We’re not seeing any large spikes. We’re getting numbers around the 70s every day. That’s not good news, but at least we’re not seeing any increase. We will feel a lot better when we see these

numbers slowly declining.”

As of April 28, Chelsea had 1,915 positive cases confirmed, with 426 people having recovered and 98 having died from the virus. Last weekend, there appeared to be a major spike in the numbers. However, that was only because there was a backlog of tests that were finally registered from the Quest Diagnostics Lab. Many of these tests had been done some time ago, and only recently reported.

He said there is no one clamoring in Chelsea about re-opening the city as there is in other parts of the country. He said Chelsea would likely be the last community to open in the region.

“I think our infection rate is so much higher than anyone else, I can’t imagine anyone advocating to open things in Chelsea,” he said.

See CASES Page 2

#StayWell

Chelsea’s Chick Corea performs in a group of 60 international artists

Staff Report

As individuals and institutions the world over face unprecedented challenges, Grammy Award-winning music legends, including Chelsea native Chick Corea, teamed up to help spread a smile and stay well.

The result is the music video “Spread a Smile,” a modern-day “WE ARE THE WORLD,” that has already hit over 5 million views, generating an international following across more than 100 nations.

The Church of Scientology of Boston, where Corea is well-known as a member, is a voice among those millions making that message heard across New England where it is also working to ensure people

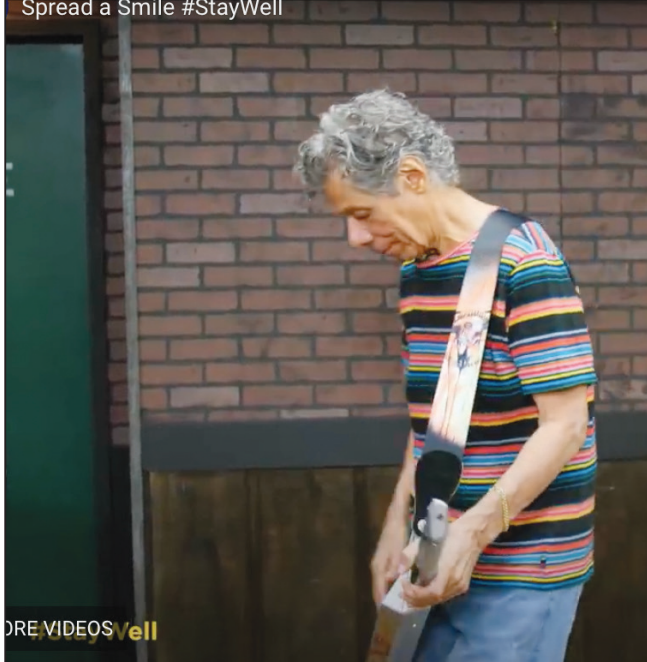
better understand how to keep themselves and work places sanitized and more safe from our current pandemic with free information that can be found with the “Spread a Smile” video at [Scientology.org/Stay-Well](http://Scientology.org/Stay-Well).

“This is what we need right now when so many people are isolated,” said Kevin Hall, Human Rights Director for the Scientology Church of Boston that is temporarily, in Quincy Center. “You really can’t help but smile when viewing this video so we are getting this out to as many people as we can. All you have to do is click, watch and spread a smile.”

The music video inspiration and now internet sensation features Gram-

See COREA Page 5

Spread a Smile #StayWell




DRE VIDEOS Vell

Chelsea native Chick Corea appeared in a video recently called ‘Spread a Smile’ with more than 60 other musicians.









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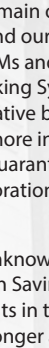
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
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# Chelsea

R E C O R D

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## ALLOWING THE STATES TO GO BANKRUPT IS A REALLY BAD IDEA

One of the most glaring shortcomings thus far of the stimulus and disaster packages that have been passed by Congress in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been the failure to provide assistance to the states.

Every state in the nation is seeing its revenues plummet to never-before-experienced depths. However, of the trillions of dollars thus far appropriated by Congress, there is barely a penny for state government operations -- and by extension, municipalities -- which are carrying the battle against the pandemic on the front lines.

The states thus are caught in an ever-tightening vise of plunging tax revenues on the one hand and skyrocketing costs on the other.

Despite the obvious squeeze on state budgets, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell last week commented, in response to a question about whether the Congress soon would be aiding the states, that he believed it would be preferable for states and municipalities to declare bankruptcy than for the federal government to provide needed funding to close their budget gaps.

It is hard to fathom why somebody of McConnell's stature would make such a statement, other than to give voice to the general Republican creed that disdains government operations at all levels. In particular, the GOP has immense dislike for what it considers to be overly-generous pension plans for state and municipal union employees.

However, the reason why states are in such desperate fiscal trouble these days has nothing to do with their pension or budget policies, but specifically is linked to the coronavirus, which has had a devastating financial impact on every facet of commerce, including state budgets.

Questions regarding the pension plans of the states as a contributor to their overall fiscal soundness certainly can be debated, but this is not the time to do so amidst this unprecedented crisis.

State and municipal governments across the country provide the first line of response for every American in protecting our health and welfare, so it makes no sense to allow states and municipalities to fail in this mission at this critical juncture amidst a pandemic that threatens to extend for many months.

In addition, without funding from the federal government, state and local governments will be forced to make layoffs of police, firefighters, teachers, and others in order to balance their budgets, a situation that will exacerbate even further the national unemployment rate.

Finally, the effect on the bond market from a plethora of state and municipal bankruptcies could have far-reaching and long-lasting negative effects for the country and the economy.

In short, there is nothing good that can come out of state and municipal bankruptcies at this time; but there is a lot that is bad.

Mitch McConnell's opinions are a grotesque perversion of responsible government. Hopefully, the rest of the Congress will not go along with his extreme and destructive ideas.

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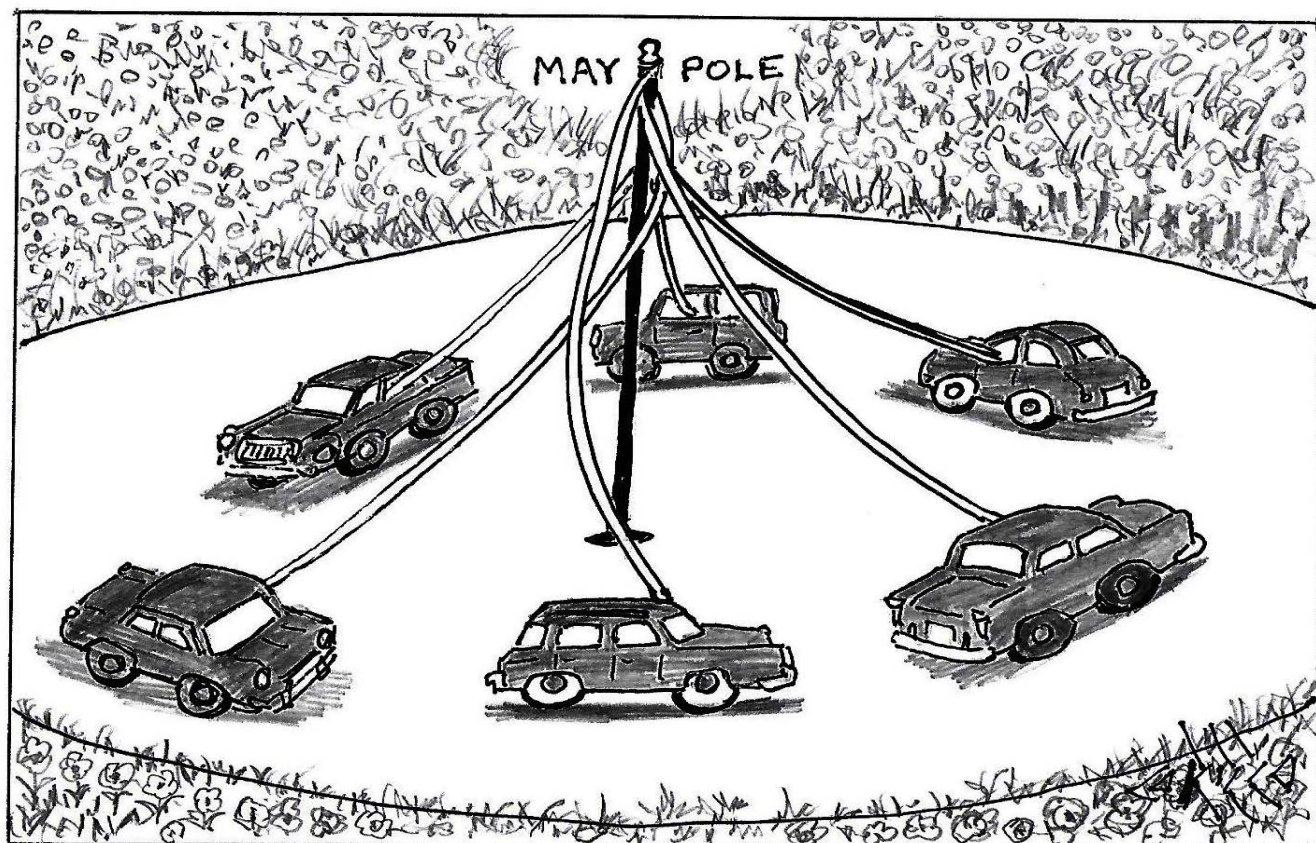
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# Forum



## GUEST OP-ED

### Fighting for the frontline

By Maura Healey

More than 300,000 health care workers and first responders in Massachusetts have stepped up to the frontlines in the battle against COVID-19. They suit up in scrubs or uniforms, leave the comfort of their homes, and put their lives at risk to keep us, our families, friends, and neighbors safe. We have an obligation to do everything we can to make sure they have access to the support they need during a time when they are sacrificing so much. That's why my office has launched FrontlineMA.org—a one-stop shop for frontline workers to get the information on resources they need during this crisis.

From Pittsfield to Provincetown, and from Newburyport to New Bedford, our frontline workers are putting in countless hours to combat this pandemic. Thankfully, many businesses, state agencies, and individuals have stepped up to

help provide housing, personal protective equipment (PPE), and meals to make lives easier for them. This website provides a centralized place to get information on those resources.

For health care workers who may be exposed and can't be with their families, we've compiled resources for alternative housing so they can have a place to stay and minimize the risks for their families in case they become infected.

For parents who are working essential jobs and are struggling to find a safe place for their kids, we've put everything in one place to ensure they can continue to access childcare.

And to protect our heroes and honor people like Officer Jose Fontanez, who lost his life to COVID-19 while keeping our communities safe, we're working with stakeholders to secure PPE. I encourage health care facilities and providers, police and fire departments, and state and county agencies to consult the resources

we've put together to get first responders and frontline workers the protective gear and information they need.

We've also compiled details on priority testing sites, tips for self-care, guidance on self-isolation and quarantine, and a list of free and discounted meals so that our health care workers, first responders, and their families can stay informed, safe, and healthy.

In addition to providing frontline workers with essential information, we want to make sure they know how much our communities appreciate and support them. That's why we created a Hero Wall where people can post pictures and send messages to thank our heroes and our frontline workers can share their own messages. I encourage everyone to post pictures of their sidewalk chalk or window art, or just a kind note, to say thank you to our nurses, doctors, healthcare workers and first responders. Throughout the

site, you'll see opportunities to chip in, by providing a meal or two, providing a safe place for workers to stay in between shifts, volunteering, or donating PPE.

Just like all of us, I'm thankful for our frontline workers who bravely show up and risk their lives every day to combat this pandemic and keep us safe.

We're grateful for our partners at HubSpot and IDEO who helped make this website possible, and for the invaluable input from healthcare providers and police and fire associations in making sure this website is the most effective for our frontline. We'll continue to update it as new information becomes available.

To our frontline workers, please use FrontlineMA.org as a resource during this battle. And to everyone else, stay home, stay safe, and thank a hero.

*Maura Healey is the Attorney General of Massachusetts.*

## GUEST OP-ED

### Science Matters

By Jack Clarke

Either science matters or it doesn't. Policy makers can't have it both ways and selectively apply it only when it advances a political agenda.

Science should inform and drive public policy not the other way around - this is especially true when it comes to the health of the American people.

In the case of the coronavirus pandemic and the climate change crisis, nowhere is the advancement of science more important. Lives depend on its accuracy, use and availability.

According to NASA scientists, 97 percent or more of published climate scientists agree that climate-warming trends over the past century are "likely due to human activities." Yet the President calls it a hoax and, along with many in Congress, refuses to believe the science. On the national level, denying what science teaches us about the short and long-term consequences of climate change will have dire consequences for this and future generations.

Scientists from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) tell

us that failure to take the climate emergency seriously now will result in lives lost as sea level rise accelerates, storms get stronger, droughts and fires increase, and the days get hotter. This fact is also acknowledged by scientists in many other federal agencies, including the Defense Department.

While America and the world grapples with the coronavirus, climate scientists and health experts forecast threats from additional infectious diseases spurred on by rising temperatures.

Mosquito-driven illnesses like dengue fever, West Nile, and Zika will become more common this century, they warn us, as the insects that transmit them expand their habitat range.

The World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately a-quarter-million additional deaths per year world-wide from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat stress. And, as we are seeing from the coronavirus, no one is immune from illnesses once thought of as exotic.

With the prospect of

those diseases appearing in the US, we need to start addressing the public health emergency of climate change and limit the spread of these afflictions - and we're not.

Dr. Kristie Ebi, a climate and public health scientist at the University of Washington and an IPCC contributor says she's "worried we're not prepared" - She's not the only one.

"The Lancet," a journal that "make(s) science widely available so that medicine can serve, and transform society," recently launched its "Countdown" project to provide an independent, global scientific monitoring system tracking the health dimensions of climate change. It views climate change as this century's "biggest public health threat."

As with the coronavirus, we are all vulnerable to the public health impacts of climate change. Some, however, are more vulnerable than others and minority communities, pregnant women, children and the elderly will suffer disproportionately.

Unfortunately, as with climate change, the White House disregarded the science of medical experts

from at home and around the world who predicted the current pandemic and it wasted January and February playing down the threat from the new virus.

Like the science of climate change, the President called the pandemic a political hoax, even though medical science informed the WHO's decision to declare the outbreak a global public health emergency at the end of January. The White House was informed of its potential consequences on January 5th.

Now, America's confirmed cases of Covid-19 are unnecessarily the highest in the world with nearly 800,000 infected and 42,500 dead - thousands of which could likely have been prevented if the science was taken seriously.

The World Economic Forum recently recognized the relationship between the climate change crisis and coronavirus and reported that a "global-to-local response and long-term thinking" is needed with responses guided by science and "the political will to make fundamental changes when faced with (these) risks."

"The Nation" magazine

See OP-ED Page 5



GUEST OP-ED

## COVID-19 has put a spotlight on disadvantages

By Mayowa Sanusi, MPH

In the past few weeks, data from multiple cities, states and counties across the nation have revealed how COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting communities of color. An analysis done by the Washington Post reveals that in places like Louisiana, Michigan, Chicago and Milwaukee county, Black people were over-represented among COVID-19 deaths compared to their population size. In Milwaukee County, Black people comprise about 70 percent of the dead but just 26 percent of the population. A similar trend is seen in Louisiana, where 70 percent of the people who have died were Black, although African Americans make up only 32 percent of the state’s population.

During a press conference last Tuesday, President Trump and Dr. Anthony Fauci acknowledged that COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting communities of color. Dr. Fauci stated that, “We have known literally forever that diseases like diabetes, hypertension, obesity and asthma are disproportionately afflicting the minority populations” but he gave no context as to why. People of color are not genetically predisposed to developing these diseases, so why are these communities disproportionately affected by chronic disease and COVID-19?

The primary reason for racial inequalities in health outcomes is differences in social conditions, and at the root of these disparities in social conditions is racism. The type of racism that set the scene for these social conditions is structural racism, also referred to as systemic or institutional racism. It is pervasive, sometimes obscure, and quiet literally deadly in situations such as the

COVID-19 pandemic. Institutional racism is defined as, “differential access to the goods, services, and opportunities of society by race...institutionalized racism is often evident as inaction in the face of need.”

COVID-19 has put a spotlight on the disadvantages that people of color face in this country, the shortcomings of the systems within the United States when it comes to protecting people of color and other marginalized populations, and the inaction by systems and government during this crisis. In the city of Chelsea, Massachusetts, which is predominantly Latino, essential workers make up approximately 80% of the population and the infection rates occurring in this community are comparable to some places in New York City. Chelsea residents are even more at risk because of the environmental injustice that has happened over the years causing the community to have high rates of asthma.

Unfortunately, the effects of systemic racism are far reaching, and no institution is spared even in the most “progressive” of states like Massachusetts. This is evident by the way that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has handled this epidemic when it comes to data collection.

On April 9th the Massachusetts Department of Public Health released race/ethnicity data for the state and nearly 70% of race/ethnicity for COVID-19 cases and deaths were either missing or unknown and no race/ethnicity data related to testing was released. On the same day, Secretary Marylou Sudders issued an order that labs and healthcare providers start collecting this data and that the Department of Public Health would issue guidance on how to do so. Still, over a week later

there is still nearly 60% of death and case data unknown or missing and there have been no guidelines issued to labs or healthcare providers on how to collect this data.

Some would wonder how not collecting this data is “racist” but this failure is but a small part of a larger system that de-values people of color’s needs. The fact that we know that communities of color are often times most impacted by crises, evident by H1N1, the HIV epidemic, and Hurricane Katrina, and still did not collect race/ethnicity data is a clear example that we are all not all in this together and that some lives mean more than others in the eyes of our systems.

Dr. Fauci stated the other week during a White House press conference that, “There is nothing we can do about it right now except to give them the best possible care to avoid complications” when referring to the impact that COVID-19 is having on communities of color, but this is not true.. We need our leaders to do better, we need our systems to do better, and we need our country to do better.

*Mayowa Sanusi, MPH is a public health researcher with a passion for social justice and addressing health inequities in communities of color. His expertise includes survey development, focus group facilitation, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and community organizing. Currently, Mayowa is employed at Health Resources in Action as Research Associate where he supports several public health assessment and evaluation projects. Mayowa earned his master’s degree in public health from the Boston University School of Public Health with a focus in Community Assessment, Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation.*

## Corea/Continued from Page 1

my Award-winning legends Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke, Mark Isham and David Campbell among an array of 60 international artists. Corea and Clarke were members of the popular jazz/fusion band “Return to Forever.” Keyboard specialist and composer Corea has won 20 Grammy Awards while his band mate Clarke has won 5 times as an extremely accomplished bass player.

This uniquely inspired collaboration comprises an ensemble filming from their homes around the world. Artists participated from New York, Los Angeles, Bogotá, Milan, Melbourne,

Cape Town and more than a dozen other cities across Europe and the United States.

“Spread a Smile” tells viewers that, even if you’re stuck at home, you can lift the world up by spreading positivity. It’s a message harmonized throughout the video by Smash Mouth’s Greg Camp, radio and television personality Keri Kasem, Australian icon Kate Ceberano, Chilean singer-songwriter Alberto Plaza, Argentine star Diego Verdaguer, Israeli guitarist extraordinaire David Broza, Cuban-born bass virtuoso Carlitos Del Puerto, Idols South Africa star

Tebogo Louw and Colombian actor-comedian Andrés López.

Written and produced by Scientology Media Productions, “Spread a Smile” is about the power of togetherness, even in a time when we’re all apart. The video further raises awareness about basic prevention and wellness resources available at the How to Stay Well Prevention Resource Center. The center provides materials, including PSAs, booklets and signage—also downloadable for free online at [Scientology.org/StayWell](http://Scientology.org/StayWell).

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## Charlestown company offers online ordering of produce and specialty foods for next-day pickup

Staff report

Consumers can now order a self-described “chef’s selection” of fresh fruit, vegetables and specialty food online for next-day pickup from a Charlestown-based company.

Located at 18 Bunker Hill Industrial Park, Costa Fruit & Produce is offering its selection of the highest quality produce, artisan cheese, meats and ingredients for online ordering at <https://costafarmersmarket.com/> Monday through Thursday from noon to 4 p.m.

Selections include the 8.5-pound Savor’s Market Meat Box for \$50, with one pound of Savor’s ground sirloin, two Choice 8-ounce New York strip steaks, a 3.5-pound whole Giannone chicken, one pound of bacon, one pound of boneless skinless chicken breast and one pond of boneless skinless chicken thighs; the Fresh Fruit Box for \$25, with one pineapple or melon, six pieces of stone fruit, six apples, six oranges, one container of berries and one bag of grapes, among other

**Costa Fruit & Produce's Fresh Nutra-Snack kits, which the Charlestown company distributed to local hospital workers in the Boston area.**

berries, two pieces of topical fruit and one bag of grapes; the Fresh Veggie Box for \$25, with lettuce or greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, two onions, one pound of carrots, two avocados, four squash or zucchini, two peppers and five pounds of potatoes; and the Fresh Produce Box for \$40, with one order of lettuce or baby greens, two onions, tomatoes, broccoli, two peppers, two cucumbers, one pineapple or melon, six pieces of stone fruit, six apples, six oranges, one container of berries and one bag of grapes, among other

options.

“We hope that by providing an alternative to shopping at a traditional market, we will make it easier for communities to maintain social distancing and still obtain delicious fresh foods,” Manny Costa, the company’s CEO and president said in a press release.

And Costa is also showing its appreciation for the healthcare profession by donating Fresh Nutra-Snack kits to local hospital workers in the Boston area. The kits are produced at Costa’s onsite, SQF certified processing facility and contain fresh fruit, juice and yogurt – all washed, sealed and ready to eat for workers on the go.

“Healthcare workers are putting themselves at risk every day fighting the COVID-19 virus. In appreciation of their heroic selfless effort we are happy to help where we can,” Costa said in a press release.

Costa is also providing their drivers with the snack kits as they service essential workers throughout New England.

clusions, at our own and our children’s peril.

When it comes to climate change and the public’s health, it’s time to act.

*Jack Clarke is the director of public policy and government relations at Mass Audubon.*

to ignore the science of climate change.

Whatever it is, we’re not prepared for it.

Believing or not believing the science can be a life or death situation, as we see now. We ignore and downplay its legitimacy and con-

## Op-Ed/Continued from Page 4

recently referred to the pandemic as a “dress rehearsal” for what we can expect with the impending impacts of climate change.

Climate author David Wallace-Wells calls it a “sobering preview” of what is to come if we continue



# Cares Act

City planning worker transitions to food supply coordinator

By Seth Daniel

About two months ago, Ben Cares was tucked away at his desk in the City’s Planning Department, mostly only going outside during a workday to take a site visit to a park that was to be renovated, or scouting out locations for the City’s upcoming BlueBike program.

That was then.

Now, just 45 days later, his day starts around 5:30 a.m. in the office answering e-mails, but his job quickly morphs into a day outside at the PORT Park doing his new normal of a job – coordinating the food supply for thousands of residents in the city who have lost reliable access to food and basic supplies.

“I got a text from our planner Alex Train who said he thought they might need me to help with food support staff,” said Cares. “In the nascent stages of the program, I was trying to figure out what the food distribution system was like in Chelsea. I always had an interest in food systems and studied a little about it in school. We started at the senior center with a small operation, then it moved to the PORT Park and then we expanded across the street from there. Now we’re doing around 750 boxes of food a day, which equates to providing 1,500 individuals with food every day and then another 100 boxes delivered to homes every day. It happened very quick over the course of three weeks. Now we’re getting into the flow and trying to ramp up to doing more boxes a day.”

Cares is part of a team at the PORT Park that receives a delivery of 45,000

pounds of food each day on pallets from the Greater Boston Food Bank. They quickly have to break it all down, put it into boxes and then get it ready for distribution at the various sites around the City. The estimate is they need to feed 18,000 people in the city who now do not have a way to feed themselves or their families – with another portion of those needing food being the large numbers of COVID-19 patients who are at home and need help.

They hope to be able to distribute 1,000 boxes a day to the pantries, he said, and another 500 for home deliveries.

He works with a very motivated team, including Ron Fishman of the Chelsea Hunger Network – a veteran of providing food to those in need long before anyone had heard of COVID-19. They utilize a large group of volunteers and other City workers to get the job done every day.

Cares is also another example of municipal workers at City Halls all over the region who have put their regular duties to the side and focused on helping to feed their cities. The same is happening in Everett, where Inspectional Services workers are delivering more than 400 hot meals per day to senior citizens and the infirm between inspection visits.

Cares said he goes to City Hall at 5:30 a.m. every morning to do some of his regular job, answering e-mails and following up on projects that still need attention.

By 7 a.m., he is at the PORT Park site to open up the operations and receive the deliveries of food that come in every morning.

After about four hours of breaking down pallets and sorting food into individual boxes, it’s time to deliver. With a group of volunteers and City workers known as Team Rubicon, they deliver the boxes to the sites and then make home deliveries.

At about 7:30 p.m., he returns to City Hall to answer any e-mails before going home and getting ready to start it all over again.

He said the situation with COVID-19 in Chelsea has illuminated the socio-economic disparities in the public health and food system – something that existed in Chelsea before the outbreak, but a condition he said is seen on the front lines all the more.

“It’s a lot of people who have the virus, but in Chelsea, there is such a high socio-economic costs because of the virus,” he said. “It’s like putting the local economy in a vise grip. The need is 10 times what it was.”

Working now mostly on the logistics end of things, Cares said he recalls on one of the first days of the food distribution effort going to the door of a woman who desperately needed food.

“She opened the door and saw me there with the food and started to break down and cry,” he said. “That was a poignant moment. Now that I’m on the logistics side, I have to draw from that moment. It’s not just beans and rice and potatoes and fruit. This is going to people who really need it. That’s why it has been a privilege for me to take on this role. Not only can I do something that helps so many, but it’s also a huge challenge and daunting.”

Cares has worked in the City’s Planning Department for almost two years.



Ben Cares, who normally works in the Planning Department, has now transitioned to take on the role of food distribution specialist – helping to coordinate the effort in feeding 18,000 of the neediest people in Chelsea who no longer can get food. He said it has been daunting, but has ramped up over just three weeks.



Point of Distribution team members have also ramped up quickly. Nancy Maldonado from ISD, Naomi Libran from Licensing, and Michael DeJesus, a community volunteer, have stepped up in the last two weeks to help run pop-up food pantries.

# We are Here and We Count!

## The 2020 U.S. Census is now more important than ever! Every household that does the census brings more money to Chelsea that will help the city recover after the coronavirus

It is safe to do from home.

Go online to [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov) or call:

844-330-2020 (English)	844-477-2020
844-458-2020 (Spanish)	(Haitian Kreyol)
844-416-2020 (Arabic)	844-474-2020 (Portuguese)

*The future of Chelsea depends on you!*

☒ 2020 CENSUS

Look for your census invitation in the mail

[www.ChelseaCensus2020.com](https://www.ChelseaCensus2020.com)

# We want to see you... at home!

An illustration of a doctor with a stethoscope on a smartphone screen. The doctor is smiling. The background shows a living room with a red sofa, a coffee table, a clock, and some plants.

Telemedicine allows health care professionals to evaluate, diagnose, and treat patients at a distance using telecommunications technology, such as a smart phone or computer. Telemedicine allows us to continue to provide high-quality care to our patients during the COVID-19 pandemic while minimizing exposures.

Telemedicine appointments are being scheduled in Pediatrics, Adult Medicine, Family Medicine, Women’s Health (OB/GYN), Behavioral Health, Neighborhood PACE, and other departments. We use certified medical interpreters during telemedicine appointments for languages other than English.

Do you need to schedule a telemedicine appointment with your primary care provider? Did you miss an appointment that needs to be rescheduled? If so, call 617-569-5800 to schedule a telemedicine appointment. This is especially important if you have a chronic or a behavioral health condition. You should be treated if needed, especially during this public health crisis. We’re here to keep you healthy!

[www.ebnhc.org](https://www.ebnhc.org) •

The logo for the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, featuring a blue circle with a white house icon and the text "Celebrating 50 Years".



# Needs/Continued from Page 1

“To see the need of some many people and hear their stories about the loss of jobs and having no income, I’ve never seen a greater need or more people express their appreciation for the services that we provide,” said Gonzalez, who as a college student in New York participated in Salvation Army special training and assisted the humanitarian effort following the 9/11 attacks.

Gonzalez said he is in daily correspondences with City Manager Thomas Ambrosino, conferring on the citywide food distribution efforts.

Chris Farrand, regional emergency disaster services for the Salvation Army for Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, has been instrumental in the execution of the food distribution effort in Chelsea, according to Gonzalez.

“I’ve always had a very good relationship with Chris,” said Gonzalez. “He’s become one of our closest friends the past couple of years. He’s been very helpful and it’s very good that we’re working together on this effort.”

Farrand, who oversees the state-level disaster operations, has been working with MEMA and the National Guard to provide additional support to the efforts in Chelsea.

“The National Guard is great at distribution (The food is from the Salvation Army, the City of Chelsea, and the Greater Boston

Food Bank),” said Farrand. “The Guard is a very organized, orderly partner and they bring that expertise, which is really necessary in times like these, just to make it go efficiently where there are so many moving pieces.”

As the Chelsea Corps has seen a tremendous increase in need for its services, Farrand has mobilized the Salvation Army’s state assets to support Chelsea.

“When Gov. Baker reached out to MEMA to say that Chelsea was in dire need of support, MEMA reached out to us and we collaborated with the National Guard on providing 1,300 food boxes (39,000 meals in four locations) in addition to what the Corps was already doing,” Farrand.

Farrand said finding the extraordinary amount of food needed to meet the demand has become “a daily task and challenge.”

“When we first started, we could use the Food Bank, but because every community is using the Food Bank, we’re reaching out to Sysco, US Foods, BJ’s and to almost any vendor that we can find to try and keep getting the different types of product that we need.”

Farrand visited Chelsea on successive days to assist the food distribution operations and “it was something to see.”

The Chestnut Street facility has operated an exist-

ing food pantry that is open Tuesdays and Thursdays. When the COVID-19 crisis began to pummel Chelsea, the numbers spiked substantially at the pantry.

The Salvation Army’s effort is separate from the City of Chelsea’s food distribution’s effort and the Chelsea Collaborative’s food pantry. But they do converse on how best to answer the needs of Chelsea residents.

“I’m pretty much in touch daily with Chelsea city officials,” said Farrand. “Every day the goal is how do we keep ramping up resources because the need is great. There are thousands of Chelsea residents in need of food.”

According to Farrand, since the COVID-19 response started, the Salvation Army in Massachusetts has provided one million meals to residents throughout the state.

Farrand said it is an effort that requires teamwork and execution.

“The need is too great for one local pantry,” he said. “The food insecurity, the loss of jobs, the COVID-19 positive challenges – I keep saying that it’s kind of the perfect storm of needs that are requiring us to really figure out how to keep expanding our services.”

(People wishing to donate to the Salvation Army’s food distribution effort can visit: [salvationarmyma.org/fill-the-food-pantry](http://salvationarmyma.org/fill-the-food-pantry))



The National Guard assists the Salvation Army at its Chestnut Street location.



The National Guard prepares to unload the food truck at the Salvation Army in Chelsea.

## Carter Street off-ramp closure reminder

The Carter Street off-ramp from Route 1 Southbound in Chelsea will close for three weekends for necessary repairs and safety improvements on the Carter Street off-ramp. The ramp closure originally scheduled for the weekend of April 24-27 has been shifted to the first weekend of May as shown below.

**WEEKEND CLOSURES:**

- Friday, May 1 at 10

p.m. – Monday, May 4 at 5 a.m.

- Friday, May 15 at 10 p.m. – Monday, May 18 at 5 a.m.
- Friday, June 19 at 10 p.m. – Monday, June 22 at 5 a.m.

**CARTER STREET OFF-RAMP DETOUR**

Drivers looking to exit Route 1 Southbound in Chelsea should use the Route 16 West exit towards

Everett and take Revere Beach Parkway to Everett Ave.

Drivers should take care to pay attention to all signage and move carefully through the work zone. Police details, lane markings, temporary barriers, traffic cones, signage, and other tools will be used to control traffic and create safe work zones.

## Mystic Valley Elder Services’ benefit event Spring for Independence raises over \$146K

Mystic Valley Elder Services’ (MVES) annual fundraiser Spring For Independence to help older adults and adults with disabilities was unfortunately cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event, in its fifteenth year, was to be held on April 4th at the Greater Boston Stage Company in Stoneham. Despite this year’s benefit performance of The Cast of Beatlemania being cancelled, more than \$146,000 was raised for MVES’ programs due to the generosity of its dedicated sponsors.

“Our sponsors have collectively helped us raise these funds to benefit our neighbors in need. In these challenging times, we are especially grateful that their support will provide critical

economic resources that will meet urgent program necessities,” said Jenny Vannasse, Director of Development at MVES.

The annual theater event has grown from a fundraiser into a true community event, with more than 300 patrons turning out for the performance. More than 100 businesses and individuals sponsored the event, including Lead Sponsors John and Wendy Pereira and StonehamBank, Principal Sponsor Agero, and Diamond Sponsor The Piccolo Family Charitable Foundation, Inc.

“StonehamBank and the Pereiras have been outstanding supporters of our agency for many years,” said Dan O’Leary, Chief Executive Officer

of MVES. “Each year, we hold this large fundraising event and I’m excited to say, despite these difficult times, we reached our fundraising goal. The proceeds will provide critical assistance for older adults in need.”

StonehamBank’s Chief Executive Officer Edward Doherty said, “With a history like MVES’ that is so deeply rooted in our community, we are committed to doing our part to encourage positivity to those around us by sponsoring the theater event. MVES has helped many in need through their programs and services and the Bank is proud to support such a wonderful organization in our community along with so many others.”



Pictured (L to R) Daniel O’Leary, Chief Executive Officer of MVES, accepts a Lead Sponsor check from StonehamBank’s Chief Executive Officer Edward Doherty for the Spring For Independence fundraising event.



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# SJC issues updated order regarding state court operations during the pandemic

The Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) on Monday issued an updated order, which will be effective May 4, 2020, regarding the operation of Massachusetts state courts and courthouses during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the new order, until at least June 1, 2020, all courts of the Commonwealth will continue to be open to conduct court business, but courthouses will

continue to be closed to the general public, except where entry is required to address emergency matters that cannot be addressed virtually (by telephone, videoconference, email, or comparable means, or through the electronic filing system).

Jury trials in both criminal and civil cases in state courts are postponed to a date no earlier than July 1, 2020. All bench trials, in

both criminal and civil cases are postponed to a date no earlier than June 1, unless they may be conducted virtually by agreement of the parties and of the court. The new order also extends various deadlines.

Monday's SJC order also directs Trial Court departments to identify categories of non-emergency matters that they will attempt to address virtually, where it is practicable to do so, and

to provide clear guidance to the public and members of the bar regarding what those categories will be by posting periodic notices to the judiciary's COVID-19 webpage. The SJC and Appeals Court will continue to conduct oral arguments virtually in non-emergency matters.

All court clerks', registers', and recorder's offices shall continue to conduct court business -- to ac-

cept the filing of pleadings and other documents in emergency and identified non-emergency matters, to schedule and facilitate hearings, to issue orders, to answer questions from attorneys, litigants, and the general public, and to conduct other necessary business of the respective court. All such business will be conducted virtually, except when the filing of pleadings and other documents in

emergency matters cannot be accomplished virtually.

All orders, standing orders, guidelines, and notices issued by any court department or appellate court in response to the pandemic, as well as all amendments, modifications, and supplements are posted upon issuance on the judiciary's COVID-19 webpage.

# Weekly initial unemployment claims down for the second week

Special to the Record

Massachusetts had 80,153 individuals file an initial claim for unemployment insurance from April 12 to April 18. This represented a decrease of 22% over the previous week as most of the workers who have been laid off as a result of work closures related to COVID-19 have already filed claims in the previous weeks.

In the previous work, from April 5 to April 11, Massachusetts had 102,828 individuals file an initial claim for unemployment insurance. This also represented a decrease, at that time 26% over the previous week.

Since March 15, a total of 651,457 initial claims were filed.

As in last week, Retail Trade with 12,669, Food and Accommodation at 9,564, and Health and Social Assistance with 9,249 continued to show the largest number of initial claims filed this week. Since March 15, Food and Accommodation, Retail Trade, and Health and Social Assistance accounted for over 41% of all initial claims

Industry	Week Ending 4/11	Week Ending 4/18	Change	% Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	393	281	-112	-28.5%
Mining	25	13	-12	-48.0%
Utilities	85	82	-3	-3.5%
Construction	7,881	4,754	-3,127	-39.7%
Manufacturing	5,896	5,065	-831	-14.1%
Wholesale Trade	4,618	3,709	-909	-19.7%
Retail Trade	15,534	12,669	-2,865	-18.4%
Transportation & Warehouse	3,362	3,292	-70	-2.1%
Information	1,480	1,336	-144	-9.7%
Finance & Insurance	735	536	-199	-27.1%
Real Estate	1,370	1,040	-330	-24.1%
Professional and Technical Services	5,567	4,359	-1,208	-21.7%
Management of Companies	715	486	-229	-32.0%
Administrative & Waste Services	5,863	4,956	-907	-15.5%
Education	2,283	1,653	-630	-27.6%
Health & Social Assistance	12,597	9,249	-3,348	-26.6%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,206	1,777	-429	-19.4%
Food & Accommodation	12,634	9,564	-3,070	-24.3%
Other Services	6,971	5,383	-1,588	-22.8%
Public Administration	1,425	1,244	-181	-12.7%
Information Not Available	11,188	8,705	-2,483	-22.2%

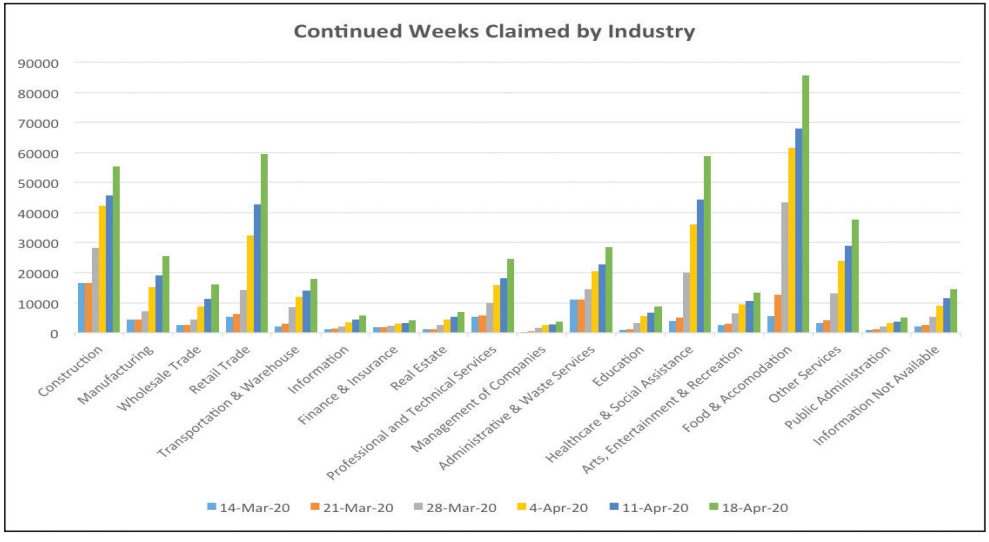
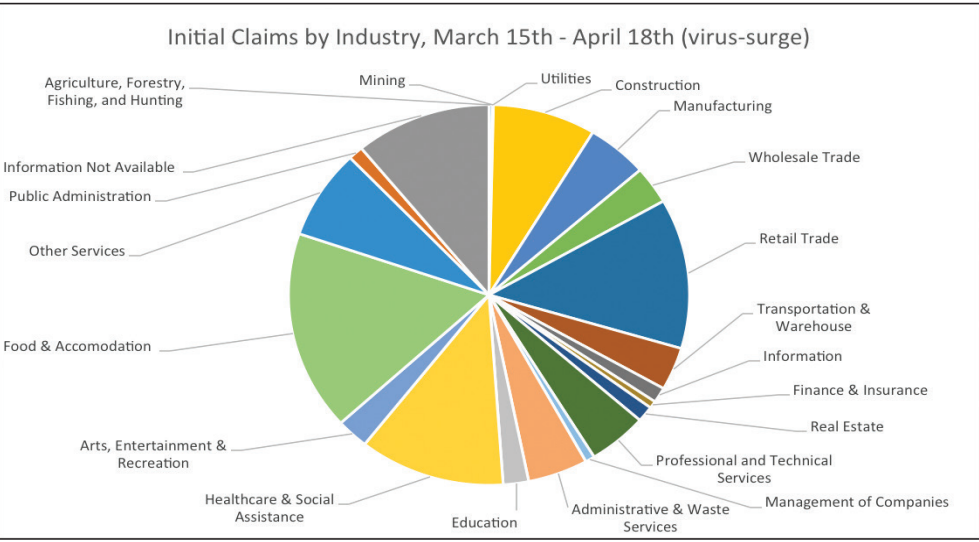
filed at 16.8%, 12.8% and 11.8%, respectively.

Currently, the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is paying unemployment benefits to nearly 400,000 people. Over the last month, the customer service staff at DUA has grown from

around 50 employees to nearly 1000. The remote customer service operation is now making over 20,000 individual contacts per day and DUA continues to host daily unemployment town halls, held in both English and Spanish, which have been attended by near-

ly 200,000 constituents. This week, Massachusetts launched Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) for groups like the self-employed, becoming one of the first states in the country to begin providing financial assistance to those not traditionally eligible for

unemployment compensation. In just the first few days of the program launch, DUA has already received over 200,000 PUA applications (going forward, total PUA related claims data for the previous week will be released on Thursday mornings at mass.gov/



Lets face it: Social distancing a measure put in place to stop the spread of the coronavirus has made celebrating major holidays with family and friends hard.

Mothers Day is coming up fast. And Since Moms can't go out, we thought now's the or anyone really... time to show them we deliver!

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019

32 CENTS

Residential tax bills to rise modestly

Sound barrier will provide residents immediate relief

Incoming Sept. Alon Abeyta holds final Community Conversation

Example Page

Sticky Note represented by Black box



# Research sample company looking for COVID-19 blood samples

By Seth Daniel

A biological specimen company is calling out to all those who have COVID-19 or have recovered from the virus to donate blood immediately to help wage a scientific war on beating the virus.

Biological Specialty Company (BSC) typically collects samples of several different diseases and sicknesses for the research community, including those in pharmacology, academia and the government. In normal times, one might go to one of their collection labs, such as in Medford, or at a health center. However, the company is responding to the immediate crisis, and huge request from researchers for COVID-19 samples, by changing its business model to collect blood samples from patients at their homes in a mobile collection unit.

“We need real diverse samples from diverse popu-

lations and in diverse stages of fighting the virus,” said Lori Ball, chief operating officer of BSC. “We really need to spread the word as fast as we can because this is a pandemic and we have a pocket of time where this is really valuable information...This is the time right now to collect this and get the information while it’s in process within the body.”

Ball said their company collects samples, and then distributes them to the research community. Right now demand is at a tremendous high for them to get researchers valid and diverse samples so they can learn about the virus and try to develop a way to fight it.

Any samples collected will be used to develop diagnostics, or to learn about what COVID-19 is. They could also be used to study anti-bodies in the blood, which are immune system responses to fighting the disease. Researchers want to learn why some fight off the disease and others have

trouble with it. Finally, they will use it to try to develop a vaccine so that no one ever gets COVID-19 again.

The only way to get to those important answers is to get samples of the virus from people who have it, thus the need to gather samples at their homes and to put out a public appeal for volunteers.

“Because of the nature of COVID, we realized that if there were those who wanted to donate, they might have a fever or might be in quarantine and might not be able to get out or don’t feel well enough to get out,” said Ball. “We changed our business model to include a mobile collection program so we could go to the home of COVID-19 patients. Our researchers were having trouble getting access to the research samples. That’s what we do, get them samples, and we felt we needed to be able to go to any zip code where people have been diagnosed.”

Because COVID-19 is a

global pandemic, and there are few answers now, donating to research has become very popular because it is a humanitarian gesture to try to beat the virus. However, being able to get those samples at the right time was difficult given how sick people were who had the virus.

“Some people who have been diagnosed with COVID definitely want to participate in research and many of them are first-time donors,” she said. “This is allowing them to connect with the research community right now. We are the conduit.”

Patients who are sick with COVID-19 and quarantined can now donate blood from the comfort of their home via a BSC mobile donation unit.

- When patients contact BSC, they will be asked some qualifying questions to confirm their eligibility to participate.
- BSC is seeking blood donors who are over the

age of 18 with COVID-19 positive test results confirmed by nasal swab or sera (blood test).

- Patients’ personal information will be kept confidential and only health-related data will accompany their blood sample.

- They will be asked to provide demographic information such as age, race, gender, medications taken, co-morbidities, and smoking status in addition to answering questions about their illness such as symptoms and date of onset.

- For their time, patients will be compensated \$10 for each tube of blood collected.

## Donating Blood In Quarantine

After a COVID-19 patient makes a blood donation appointment, a BSC phlebotomist, dressed in full personal protective equipment (PPE), will arrive at their home, explain the informed consent and collection process, and collect the blood sample. Then,

they will send the sample to BSC’s lab for processing and distribution.

## Donating Blood Post Recovery

People who have recovered from COVID-19 and have had no symptoms for at least 28 days, and have had no close contact exposure to a person with confirmed COVID-19 for 28 days, can elect to either donate via the mobile service or make an appointment to visit a BSC blood donor center.

BSC is a critical service supplying more than 30,000 pharma, biotech, diagnostic and government researchers with human blood products for scientific research.

Potential donors can obtain additional information and schedule an appointment by calling 1-833-GO-4-CURE, visiting [www.biospecialty.com](http://www.biospecialty.com) or sending an email to [donors@biospecialty.com](mailto:donors@biospecialty.com).

# MBTA fare transformation program advances with approval of amendment

Staff Report

On Monday, the MBTA’s Fiscal and Management Control Board approved a contract amendment regarding the Public Private Partnership agreement involving the T and the consortium Cubic | John Liang – rolling out the new fare collection system that has been anticipated since 2018.

This action marks a significant step toward implementing the revised transformative initiative approved by the Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) in December 2019, locking in an achievable and enforceable schedule while procuring new technology that will that will allow the system to adapt to future changes in ridership and to implement new kinds of fare options.

The amended contract totals \$935.4 million, including both the full cap-

ital cost of the system and a 10-year stream of operations and maintenance payments. Although this represents an increase of \$212.1 million in project costs compared to the contract approved in 2018, the new fare collection system remains cost-effective and is projected to collect over \$8 billion in fare revenue during its first ten years of operation.

This amendment, which strengthens the original 2018 AFC 2.0 contract, enables the MBTA to achieve all the original goals of the project under a new approach. Based on feedback from customers, advocates, and policy makers, the new approach will result in customer-focused upgrades to the existing and future systems. In addition, this board action reestablishes key milestones, includes new provisions that reduce the T’s construction risks, and allows the system to

account for future changes within the payment industry.

“Under this program reset, we’ll be able to deliver one system that can be used across all modes that meets the needs of our customers today, and has the ability to adapt to future needs,” said MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak. “Especially in light of recent changes to daily life caused by COVID-19, it’s more important than ever to move toward a dynamic system with contactless options that can withstand major changes to conditions that would otherwise undermine a legacy system of fare collection.”

The amended contract is only one part of a comprehensive Fare Transformation initiative that will ensure that customers begin to see improvements in fare collection over the next year, including the ability to obtain CharlieCards more

easily and the elimination of the cash/ticket surcharge in 2021, so that CharlieTicket and cash fares will be the same as CharlieCard fares.

Under the phased approach and in the short term, Fare Transformation will result in improvements that include:

- The ability to pay for a trip on all Zone 1A stations on the Fairmount Commuter Rail Line with a CharlieCard;
- Deploying fare vending machines that dispense CharlieCards;
- All-door boarding on MBTA buses and surface stops along the Green Line;
- Integrating ferries and the entire Commuter Rail network into the CharlieCard system.

This amendment also allots more time for both testing and installation of the new system and customer migration. Working with stakeholders, the program reset establishes a more ro-

bust, thoughtful network of retail sales outlets and fare vending machines centered on the needs of T customers. In conjunction with that process, the MBTA has committed to a significant increase in the total number of vending machines to ensure adequate access.

“Critical to this project’s success is outreach, and the level of engagement we’ve received indicates just how important the future of MBTA fare collection is to our customers,” said Ron Renaud, Chief Transformation Officer. “Thanks to the feedback, we are now on a course to provide improvements to our existing system, and ultimately, deliver a project that is even more focused on the needs of our customers.”

While the MBTA’s existing fare collection system collected approximately \$671.7 million in FY19, the aging system requires substantial maintenance

and upgrades and cannot support the kinds of fare options that customers have requested.

The new technology provided by the Public Private Partnership offers reliability of equipment, readily accessible payment technology, and flexibility in fares and programs to further enhance access and equity for the MBTA ridership of the future.

In 2018, the FMCB authorized the original contract to include \$356.8 million in payments for the capital cost of the new system and a ten-year stream of operations and maintenance payments totaling \$366.5 million for a total cost of \$723.3 million. The revised contract approved today includes \$723.3 million for the capital cost and a reduced ten-year stream of \$212.1 million in operations and maintenance payments, for a total of \$935.4 million.

# Pioneering consumer-worker organization demands massive COVID-19 testing production, universal testing

The National Consumers League (NCL), the nation’s oldest consumer and worker advocacy organization, is demanding that the federal government put its support behind massive COVID-19 test production and, as quickly as is feasible, put in place a testing protocol for every citizen so that America can get back to work.

“There are calls across the country to reopen businesses; we understand and share that frustration,” said NCL Executive Director Sally Greenberg. “However, as we are currently not allowing tests for people who are asymptomatic—and because 25 percent of people who carry the virus don’t show symptoms—doing so would be reckless. It’s a Catch-22. Until everyone is tested, we can’t send symptom-free people back into the world. So the government’s first order of business must include giving America’s labs and drug companies the goal and the means to produce rapid-response testing for every American within the next month.”

NCL has laid out the following recommendations:

- Meet the need for testing in clinics and doctors’ offices

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must oversee the process of improving techniques and reliable, accurate test production. Many labs are working on this, addressing the immediate need for care providers to have enough,

high-quality tests.

“The Senate has voted to include \$25 billion for the clinical labs that make the tests in the next COVID legislative package” said Greenberg. “That is welcome news because states cannot do this alone; they end up competing against each other for tests and other supplies.”

As Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (R-MD) said this week, “Every governor in America has been pushing and fighting and clawing to get more tests, not only from the federal government, but from every private lab in America and from across the world. It’s nowhere where it needs to be.” Virginia Governor Ralph Northam (D-VA) noted that the President’s claims that the country has enough tests for the virus are “delusional.”

Clearly, quality is paramount. The serious stumbles at such premier institutions as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cannot continue. “The federal government must continue to support and expand the production of quality tests, and at capacity to meet the current needs of care providers,” said Greenberg.

- Universal testing

As stated above, though, in order to get people back out to restart the economy, we cannot only test those who show serious symptoms and go to care providers to get tested. We must develop tests that can be

self-administered, and in adequate numbers so that each person can test for COVID before leaving the home on any given day.

“Millions of workers have to take drug tests every day to keep their jobs; those tests are rapid-response. Consumers can buy rapid response tests for strep throat and pregnancy,” said Greenberg. “Those are approved FDA products that are tested for accuracy and safety. We must get to a rapid response COVID-19 home test as soon as possible.”

In order to determine who has COVID-19 and should be quarantined, every American must be able to test for the virus on a regular basis. Those who test positive, with or without symptoms, go into quarantine for 14 days, as do the people in that individual’s household. Those who test negative are cleared to go out in the world to get the trains running again. This would call for hundreds of millions of tests to enable on-going testing, as it is the only path forward at this time.

And the technology is not “pie-in-the-sky.” The FDA has already approved one home-test kit, though it requires lab analysis. And BARDA/HHS has funded another company to develop “a rapid antigen and antibody diagnostic to identify current or past SARS-CoV-2 infections in 60 seconds.” We are on the road.

- Antibody testing

While it’s not clear how long antibodies create immunity, there is a belief that they at least do so for the short-term. So the next step would be to provide serology testing for people who test negative for COVID-19, using only tests approved by the FDA to ensure quality and accuracy. To date, the FDA has approved only four tests of the many available, but this is an important start.

Those who are determined to have a sufficient level of antibodies should be cleared to go back to work, while still wearing masks and gloves until science has confirmed decisively that antibodies create immunity. If the individuals don’t have antibodies, they would be advised to stay home, but could be cleared to go back to work so long as they test every day before heading out.

- Contact tracing

Everyone who tests positive reaches out to everyone they’ve had contact with and those people test for COVID-19. Anyone then testing positive goes into quarantine, and the process

repeats.

- Use technology to self-surveil

Finally, we need a system for uploading test results each day to our phones – like the bar codes we use to board an airplane – or to carry evidence that we have taken the test, have antibodies to COVID-19, and can work or otherwise go out. Enforcement would be a new challenge, given our commitment to civil liberties, but one that we can certainly work out.

- Longer term: Vaccinate

In a year or more, when a vaccine arrives, 95 percent of Americans will need to be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity and widespread protection.

“Our nation has the know-how and manufacturing infrastructure to produce the millions of tests needed to determine whether someone has the virus,” said Greenberg. “But due to lack of leadership at the top, our testing capacity is still, several months after the outbreak, extremely limited. To date only 3.3 million people have been tested, according to the COVID

Tracking Project. That’s about 1 percent of the population. That is simply not enough.”

NCL is demanding that the Federal government respond to the current national Coronavirus emergency as President Roosevelt responded to World War II and challenge Americans to “harness the efficient machinery of America’s manufacturers” to fight the pandemic.

“We need that call to action now, to challenge America’s labs and drug companies with the goal of producing testing for every American within the next month. Federal health care agencies including CDC, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and FDA should be their partners, and this should be a shared cost,” said Greenberg. “In the midst of the worst unemployment numbers ever seen in American history, and with millions of businesses having their existence threatened, we need federal leadership, expertise, and financial support to make this happen, and we need it now.”



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# Baker invites EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes to daily COVID-19 briefing

By John Lynds

As Governor Charlie Baker announced an initiative to expand COVID-19 testing at Community Health Centers throughout the state last Wednesday, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC) President and CEO Manny Lopes was front and center at the Governor’s daily COVID-19 briefing.

Last week EBNHC began offering COVID-19 testing seven days a week to any community residents who have flu-like symptoms or have been in contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive.

The announcement last week will expand this effort in partnership with Quest Diagnostics and the Mass League of Community Health Centers.

Baker said in rolling out increased testing, community health centers in areas

of high need, like Eastie, that have the ability to increase their testing capacities will be prioritized.

Since Friday, Quest has sent over 2,255 kits to EBNHC and other community health centers in Boston and Brockton. Quest Diagnostics has committed to ship an additional 5,000 COVID-19 test kits to EBNHC and 11 other community health centers in Boston, Brockton, Lowell, Quincy, Fall River, Provincetown, and Worcester.

“I’ve heard the Governor mention many times when we are in a crisis like this it is a team sport,” said Lopes at Last Wednesday’s briefing. “On behalf of the Mass Community Health Centers we are grateful for the support we have received from Governor Baker. For over 50 years community health centers in Massachusetts have been providing high quality, accessible care to

anyone that walks through our doors. We have been working hard to close the healthcare gap. Now, we are on the frontlines of COVID-19 testing, tracing and treatment.”

Lopes said community health centers provide an additional line of defense to keep patients out of larger hospitals and help avoid overburdening the healthcare system.

Lopes said currently, EBNHC, is servicing two of the most impacted neighborhoods in the Commonwealth—East Boston and Chelsea.

“Many patients are essential workers that work in supermarkets, restaurants, and healthcare facilities,” said Lopes. “Sadly, many of these residents can not afford the high cost of housing and live in crowded apartments with multiple families. So what has been an American Dream for

some has become an American Nightmare for others as this virus continues to spread in the community.”

Lopes said EBNHC’s response to COVID-19 has been extensive, wide reaching and hyper-local.

“We have been focused on education, testing and, as the Governor mentioned, part of this unique (state-wide) collaborative to conduct contact tracing,” said Lopes. “At EBNHC we are now open for testing 7 days a week. Like many health centers in Boston, with the support of Mayor (Martin) Walsh we have modified our operations to offer multiple settings for testing.”

Testing includes a walk-through location at 79 Paris Street from 8 a.m. to noon daily; a drive through location at Suffolk Downs, 525 William F. McClellan Highway from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. daily; and at EBNHC’s emergency de-



EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes during Governor Baker’s COVID-19 briefing last Wednesday.

partment (open 24 hours) at 10 Gove Street for those experiencing influenza-like illness.

“This partnership with Quest Diagnostics will help us increase our testing capabilities in the community to over 500 individuals per day,” said Lopes. “So far we have tested over 3,000 individuals and as we all

know testing will be critical in the well being of our residents. Testing leads to detections and allows us to keep sick individuals at home and reduce exposure in our community and reduce the spread of the virus. Having this reliable supply of test kits will allow us to test more individuals and the most at risk.”

# City of Chelsea emergency rental assistance program now available

Funded by the Community Preservation Committee and Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board, the Department of Planning and Development has established an emergency rental assistance program.

Prior to the pandemic, the crisis of housing affordability heavily impacted Chelsea residents. The City is committed to supporting residents during this period of economic hardship, which has worsened the crisis of housing affordability. As a step to reduce displacement and stabilize housing situations, the City has created this program to offer direct grant funding to residents. Qualifying applicants may be eligible for

a grant equivalent to up to three (3) months of rent, or \$5,000, whichever amount is less.

Funding is available for income eligible applicants who meet the program’s criteria.

- Funding is available for Chelsea residents only.
- To qualify, your household income must be at or below 50% of the HUD Area Median Income (AMI).
- Your application must certify compliance with requirements related to household income, assets, and public benefits.
- Applicants must verify monthly rental obligation with written documentation from the landlord or person

they are renting the apartment from.

Applicants will be chosen using a lottery system with preferences for families with children, disabled residents, veterans, seniors over 65, households who have been economically impacted by COVID-19 who are ineligible for other forms of federal assistance, and economically disadvantaged residents with household income at or below 30% of the HUD Area Median Income.

**How to apply**

Printed applications are available for pick-up by City Hall entrance (on Washington Ave.), at the Chelsea Collaborative, and at National Guard pop-

up pantry locations each weekday. Applications can also be submitted online at [www.chelseama.gov](http://www.chelseama.gov).

Programa de Asistencia en el pago de la renta durante la emergencia de la Ciudad de Chelsea

Fundado por el Fondo para la Preservación de la Comunidad y la Junta del Fondo Fiduciario de Acceso a la Vivienda, el Departamento de Planeamiento y Desarrollo ha establecido un Programa de Asistencia en el pago de la renta durante la emergencia.

La crisis de acceso a la vivienda impactaba fuertemente a los residentes de Chelsea incluso antes de la pandemia. La Ciudad se compromete a apoyar a los residentes durante este período de dificultades económicas que ha empeorado la crisis de acceso a la

vivienda.

Como una acción para reducir el desplazamiento y estabilizar las situaciones de vivienda, la Ciudad ha creado este programa para ofrecer subvenciones directas a los residentes. Los solicitantes podrán ser elegibles para una subvención equivalente de hasta tres (3) meses de renta, o \$ 5,000, la cantidad que sea menor.

La financiación está disponible para solicitantes que cumplan con los criterios del programa

- Disponible solo para residentes de Chelsea.
- Para calificar, los ingresos de su hogar deben ser iguales o inferiores al 50% de los ingresos medios del área según el Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano de los Estados Unidos (AMI por sus siglas en inglés).

- Su solicitud debe certificar el cumplimiento de los requisitos relacionados con los ingresos del hogar y los beneficios públicos.
- Los solicitantes deben verificar la obligación de alquiler mensual con documentación escrita del arrendador o la persona a quien le alquilan el apartamento.

Los solicitantes serán elegidos utilizando un sistema de lotería con preferencias para familias con niños, residentes discapacitados, hogares que han sido afectados económicamente por COVID-19 y residentes económicamente desfavorecidos con ingresos familiares iguales o inferiores al 30% de los ingresos medios del área según el Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano de los Estados Unidos (AMI por sus siglas en inglés).

# Plan for law school graduates announced

The Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court and the Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners (BBE) last week announced a plan for the Massachusetts Bar Examination to proceed amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and an expanded opportunity for graduates to appear in court under the student practice rule.

The plan for the bar examination outlines three elements:

- The bar exam will be conducted using the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) on September 30 and October 1, if that exam can be conducted safely, with social distancing in place for all examinees.
- If the UBE cannot be conducted safely in-person, an alternative exam will be administered remotely and will grant admission only to the bar of Massachusetts. In that event, the BBE will work to ensure that the exam will be similar in content to the subjects tested on the UBE, so that students who have been preparing for the UBE will not need

to make major adjustments in preparing for the Massachusetts only exam.

- Regardless of whether the September 30 and October 1 bar exam is the UBE or a Massachusetts only exam, the BBE will work to expedite the grading of the exam and its character and fitness investigations so that law school graduates will have results by mid-to-late December. Admission to the bar will be postponed by only eight weeks -- from the week of November 16-20, 2020, when the bar admission ceremonies were going to be held, to the week of January 11-15, 2021, when they will now be held. If an applicant has a pressing need to be admitted in late December, the applicant can arrange with the Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court for Suffolk County to be sworn-in, reducing the delay to only five or six weeks.

The Justices also issued an order removing a time restriction applying to students appearing in court under Supreme Judicial

Court Rule 3:03. For those students who are most likely to need to appear in court before they can be sworn in, who are generally those who have or will obtain employment with a district attorney, CPCS, a state legal office, or a legal services provider, and who have yet to obtain the SJC Rule 3:03 certification necessary to do so, the order will permit them to obtain such certification at any time before graduation.

On April 22, Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Ralph D. Gants sent a letter to law school deans outlining the plan. The Supreme Judicial Court also prepared information for law school graduates outlining the plan and the temporary expansion of SJC Rule 3:03.

The BBE is established by G.L. c. 221 §§35 & 36 to evaluate the qualifications of persons seeking admission to the bar of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

# Critical resources on COVID-19 available in Spanish for construction workers

Critical resources for construction workers who are confronting the coronavirus pandemic at work are now available in Spanish on a new website created by the state’s largest construction labor union group.

Construction is the sixth largest employment sector in the U.S. economy and many job sites remain active during the pandemic.

The Massachusetts Building Trades Council (MBTC) has made its COVID-19 Resource Center available in Spanish to ensure even more workers and their families have the information they need to mitigate chances of getting

infected or spreading the virus while at work.

The Council had previously called for a moratorium on all non-essential statewide construction, but feels it is critical for workers who do continue laboring on construction sites to have the knowledge needed to protect themselves to the greatest degree possible.

“There are many tradesmen and tradeswomen whose primary language is Spanish, and it’s crucial that the same information is available to them as it is to everyone else,” said MBTC President Frank Callahan. “We want to ensure that everyone who makes a living

on a construction site learns how to stay safe and how to protect themselves and their families during this time of uncertainty.”

The global pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color, including communities with a high percentage of residents whose primary language is Spanish, such as Chelsea.

The Spanish-language Coronavirus Resource Center created by the Massachusetts Building Trades Council can be found at: <https://massbuildingtrades.org/coronavirus-best-practices-for-building-trades-unions-esp/>.

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## OBITUARIES

### Joan Burke

Of Chelsea, formerly of Charlestown

Joan M. (Birmingham) Burke of Chelsea, formerly of Charlestown, died on April 18 at the Massachusetts General Hospital from Covid related pneumonia.

The loving and devoted mother of James M. Burke of Saugus, she was the cherished grandmother of Michael J. Burke of Peabody, loving daughter of the late Thomas F. and Mary W. (Conroy) Birmingham, dear sister of the late Winifred M. Quinn, Eleanor M. Doherty, Margaret A. Doherty, Mary Clare Payne, Thomas F. Birmingham and John J. Birmingham and is also survived by her very dear friend, Sandra Terry of Chelsea and by many loving nieces, nephews and extended family members and friends.

A Memorial Mass and family celebration of her life, followed by her interment in Holy Cross Cemetery, will be held and



announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, should friends desire, contributions in Joan's memory should be directed to the MGH Corona Virus Response Fund c/o 55 Fruit St., Boston MA 02114 or [www.MassGeneral.org](http://www.MassGeneral.org) Arrangements were given to the care and direction of the Welsh Funeral Home, Chelsea. We encourage family and friends who wish, to offer condolences at this time by means of the online guest book or to send a personal sympathy card visit;

[www.WelshFuneral-Home.com](http://www.WelshFuneral-Home.com).

### John "Jack" Hayes

Retired Beth Israel Hospital  
Account Manager



John A. "Jack" Hayes, 87, passed away on Friday, April 24 at Lifecare

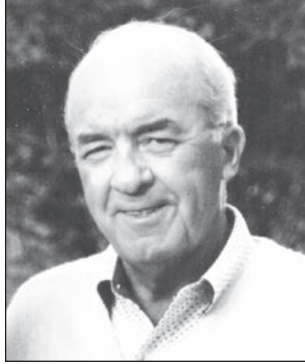
Center of Stoneham.

Born and raised in Chelsea, a beloved son of the late John J. and Helen A. (Hartigan) Hayes, he attended local schools and graduated from Chelsea High School.

He enlisted into the US Air Force, served during the Korean Conflict, was honorably discharged and returned to Chelsea. He continued his education at Suffolk University where he received his Bachelor's Degree in business administration.

He married Dorothy A. (Surette) and they settled in Melrose 40 years ago. He worked for many years as an account manager for the Beth Israel Hospital in Boston. He retired early and became the caregiver to both his wife and mother. He lost his wife to MS in 1994 and his mother passed 13 years later in 2007.

In his lifetime, Jack was an all-around Boston sports fan. He relished following his nephew's college football career attending each and every game played. In addition to his parents and his beloved wife of 43 years, he was also prede-



ceased by his sisters and brother the late Patricia Nolan, Elaine Marrotta, Robert Hayes and Eleanor Waitt. He is survived by his dear brother, James M. Haggerty of Chelsea and is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

A private family farewell was held, followed by graveside prayers and interment in Woodlawn Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, should friends desire, contributions in his memory may be made to National Multiple Sclerosis Society, 101A First Ave., Waltham, MA 02451. Arrangements were given to the care and direction of the Welsh Funeral Home, Chelsea. We encourage family and friends who wish, to offer condolences at this time by means of the online guest book or to send a personal sympathy card visit;

[www.WelshFuneral-Home.com](http://www.WelshFuneral-Home.com).

### Maureen Downey

Devoted to home and family

Maureen T. (Adam) Downey passed peacefully from life to eternal life on Friday, April 24 safely home into the arms of her loving savior. She was 83 years old.

Born in York, Maine, she was a loving daughter of the late Ralph and Mary (Smith) Adams. Maureen was raised in Chelsea, attended local schools, studied dance and graduated from St. Rose High School. She married John F. Downey and together they raised four sons and one daughter in Chelsea. Maureen was widowed in 2006 after sharing over 49 years of love and devotion with her beloved husband.

Maureen was very devoted to home and family. She enjoyed cooking, baking and spending time with her family. She encouraged her sons' scouting endeavors, volunteering her time as a Cub Scout Den Mother and supporting her sons as they later continued into the Boy Scouts. She worked outside of her home as a banking associate and was a familiar counter lady working for many years at Al Zack's Sub Shop where she was revered by many of Chelsea's teenagers.

Maureen never forgot a loved one's birthday or special event, sending a card, always including a personal handwritten note. In her retirement she enjoyed travel. She saved and saved to be able to make special anniversary trips to Hawaii with her husband John.

In her lifetime, Maureen sang in the St. Rose Choir, enjoyed gardening, planting flowers, herbs and vegetables around her Central Ave home in Chelsea.

In addition to her parents and beloved husband, Maureen was also predeceased by her siblings: the late Rosalie O'Callaghan, Edward Adams and Joseph Adams and a granddaughter, Brittany Downey. She is the forever loved mother



of Michael J. Downey and his wife, Shirley of Melrose, Robert E. "Bobby" Downey of Dunbarton, NH, Frederick C. Downey and his wife, Arlene of Saugus, Judith Ann "Judy" Downey of Avondale, AZ, and Kenneth P. Downey and his wife, Julie of Malden; cherished grandmother of Scott Downey, Tiffany Palumbo, Janelle Maynard, Shaun Downey, Jillian Downey, Jared Downey, Jianna Downey, Jaden Downey and adored great grandmother of Alyssa, Adriana and Evelyn. She was the dear sister of Marilyn Nolan of Tewksbury and is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews and extended family members.

A private family farewell will be held followed by graveside prayers and interment in Woodlawn Cemetery. A Mass and Celebration of her life will be held and announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, should friends desire, contributions in Maureen's memory may be made to the National Shrine of St. Jude, 205 W. Monroe St., Chicago, IL 60606.

Arrangements were given to the care and direction of the Welsh Funeral Home, Chelsea. For those who wish, we encourage family and friends to offer condolences by means of the online guest book or to send a personal sympathy card, visit;

[www.WelshFuneral-Home.com](http://www.WelshFuneral-Home.com).

## MBTA's RIDE now offering transit services to personal care attendants

The MBTA announced that the RIDE paratransit service will temporarily allow customers to book trips for their personal care attendants (PCAs) in an effort to best support their ADA-eligible customers during the COVID-19 situation.

"This change will allow the MBTA to maintain a vital link between RIDE customers and their PCAs," said MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak. "As we actively monitor the COVID-19 situation, we will continue to make necessary service changes that meet the travel needs of both those who are essential to combating this virus, and, where we can, the needs of those who are the most vulnerable among us."

A PCA is defined as an individual that provides assistance in performing Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). ADLs include, but are not limited to, mobility, bathing/grooming, dressing/undressing, passive range-of-motion exercises, taking medications, eating, and toileting. Allowing these bookings ensures that RIDE customers continue to receive the same level of daily support they need to live independent and safe lives.

This update is in addition to other temporary RIDE measures already in effect meant to protect the health and safety of T workers and customers, and preserve

services for those who must travel for essential purposes. Other temporary RIDE updates include the elimination of shared RIDE trips, temporarily extending RIDE eligibility and postponing eligibility appointments, adjustments to booking windows, updates to subscriptions, and a reduction in transfer trips. More information on these temporary updates can be found at [mbta.com/theride](http://mbta.com/theride).

In order to book travel for their PCA, RIDE customers should call the RIDE Access Center (TRAC) at 844-427-7433 and inform the agent that the trip is for their PCA. RIDE customers will need to provide the PCA's name, address, and service needs. PCA trips may only be to or from the RIDE customer's home address. RIDE customers can pay for the PCA trip out of the RIDE customer's account with PCAs also able to deposit funds into a RIDE customer's account by calling 888-844-0355. The cost of the PCA trip is equal to traditional RIDE fares. Customers will receive their night-prior call back from the RIDE and customers should let their PCAs know of their pick-up time. Arrival notifications will also go to the customer's phone number.

RIDE service for customer trips will remain the priority. As such, trips for PCAs will be fulfilled only as capacity allows.

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