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35 CENTS

Officials tour local vaccination sites

AG Healey visits Chelsea site

Photos by Seth Daniel

Attorney General Maura Healey picked the Chelsea vaccination site as the first stop on a tour of local vaccination sites around the Commonwealth this week in an effort to promote health equity and vaccination access.

Some media reports also questioned if she was also testing the waters for a potential run at governor next year, with current Gov. Charlie Baker now under the spotlight for a frustrating rollout of the state's vaccination program.

That said, AG Healey was all business when she visited the site on Monday morning, Feb. 22. She visited the front desk, the appointment check-in desk, the vaccination room and the area where vaccine is

drawn into syringes and prepped.

"I've been saying for a long time now that as we move forward with vaccination, it's so important that we get vaccination to communities that have been disproportionately harmed and are disproportionately at risk. We know in this state it is communities like Chelsea and others like majority Black and Latino populations that have really, really become sick and died as a result of COVID-19," she said. "It's really critical we keep health equity in the forefront...Today it's not food being delivered here, but vaccine – though food is still an important part of what's being done here. I want to hold up these two leaders. We've got to get shots out

See HEALEY Page 6



AG Maura Healey toured the Chelsea vaccination site on Monday morning. She is shown in the vaccine room – formerly the conference room at La Colaborativa – with EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes and La Colaborativa Director Gladys Vega.



U.S. Senator Liz Warren visits the vaccination area at La Colaborativa on Broadway in Chelsea on Feb. 18 as part of an announcement that the federal government will be sending vaccine directly to the site, eliminating the need to go through the state. Senator Warren is shown here speaking with Nurse Practitioner Mollie FitzGerald. Looking on are EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes, La Colaborativa Director Gladys Vega and Kelly Hennessey, EBNHC director of testing and vaccination sites.

Senator Warren, vaccine site partners announce direct federal shipments

By Seth Daniel

The Chelsea vaccination site hosted Senator Liz Warren on Feb. 18 to announce with partners La Colaborativa and East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC) that they would be the first site in the country to get vaccine directly from the federal government.

As a demonstration project focused on communities hardest hit by COVID-19, the federal government has promoted a program that will allow

collaborative vaccination sites like the one in Chelsea to tap into the federal vaccine pipeline and no longer have to get vaccine from the state. That will allow the site's state-provide supply of vaccine to be allocated to other places in the state.

"Chelsea was one of the hardest hit communities in the state, probably in the nation," said Warren after touring the site, which is based in a re-purposed La Colaborativa office on Broadway. "Racial inequality, economic in-

equality that were already present in Chelsea were made far worse by the COVID climate. Chelsea also showed what is possible and what it means to stand up for each other, work together, have access to health care and they have food, jobs and develop partnerships in the time of vaccination. So, Chelsea is a very hopeful story as well. Chelsea is about to enter a new phase as this vaccination center becomes a

See WARREN Page 7

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Al Mazin hits number 73, but who is counting anyway

By Cary Shuman

Friends feted Chelsea native Albert "Al" Mazin at a 73rd birthday celebration at Rossetti

Restaurant in Lynn.

Among those in attendance at the guest of honor's table were Scott Hagemester and Steven Waxman.

Al enjoyed a main course of Frutti Di Mare Fra Diavolo that consisted of New England sea scallops, Gulf shrimp, Cape Cod Littlenecks, Prince Edward Island mussels, and calamari, served over fresh linguini.

"The meal was delicious," said Al, who received a personal birthday wish from owner Bob Rossetti during the party.

Born on Feb. 10, 1948, Al grew up on Belling-

ham Street and attended the Shurtleff School. He graduated from Chelsea High in 1966.

Al and his wife, Diane (Botta) Mazin have been married for 45 years. They have four children, Randy, Kristi, Robyn, and Ryan.

Al has been a member of the Merritt Club for 45 years. He is also a supporter of other local clubs and organizations and a charismatic guest at Chelsea Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club social events.

He played softball for

the Moose Club team in the Chelsea Modified Fast Pitch Softball League at Highland Park. Reportedly, the 5-foot-10-inch, right-handed hitter had close to a .300 batting average in the league.

"But not that close," joked Al.

Al said he loves the City of Chelsea. "I've always loved the city, the people – it's changed a lot but it's still a No. 1 city," said Al.

Asked how he feels at the age of 73, Al replied, "I feel 21."



Al Mazin (standing, right), pictured with friends Scott Hagemester (seated) and Steven Waxman (standing, left) and Rossetti Restaurant owner Bob Rossetti, at his 73rd birthday celebration.

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CBC Black History Month celebration a success

By Cary Shuman

The Chelsea Black Community was set to honor its “Chelsea Trailblazers” Wednesday night, bringing to a close the organization’s schedule of events in celebration of Black History Month.

CBC President Joan Cromwell said the community celebration would recognize “Chelsea Trailblazers through the COVID-19 pandemic and social injustice.”

Cromwell and other CBC leaders are being lauded for the varied schedule of events that were well attended via Zoom.

“The month was amazing,” said Cromwell. “It was informative, full of education and awareness. We had close to 100 people at some of the events.”

Last week Superior Court Justice Angel Kelley led a panel that discussed initiatives in addressing racial disparities as well as ideas for community partnership and employment opportunity. Chelsea’s well-known spiritual leader, Rev. Dr. Sandra Whitley, facilitated the event on Zoom.

“I think the discussion was helpful in terms of knowing where we’re going as our community while developing a relationship with the Chelsea court system,” said Cromwell.

The CBC leader said she appreciated the planning efforts of Bunker Hill Community Dean Sharon Caulfield, School Committee member Henry Wilson, and board mem-

ber Dakeya Christmas.

“Sharon was incredible in her organizing role,” said Cromwell. “Her implementation of the Black History Month photo exhibit at the Salvation Army was dynamic. Her photos were displayed beautifully.”

Councilor-at-Large Leo Robinson, dean of Chelsea city government, said the CBC and its multi-faceted observance of Black History Month effectively raised awareness about important issues affecting the city.

“I know this year was challenging because of COVID-19, but they stepped up commendably again to educate and inform Chelsea residents about the organization’s key goals and objectives,” said Robinson. “I would like to see the organization (CBC) expand its involvement in the community by having its members consider positions on our city boards and groups such as the City Council.”

Among the highlights of Wednesday’s “Chelsea Trailblazers” were slated to be: a poem recitation by Desayna Christmas; a musical tribute of recognition to the Chelsea Trailblazers by accomplished singer Annie Cheevers, daughter of former Chelsea resident Maria Schneiderman Cheevers; and a tribute of gratitude to the Chelsea School Department and Supt. of Schools Dr. Almi Abeyta by President Cromwell’s son, Kyle Umemba, and daughter, Jayde Umemba.



Chelsea District Court Chief Probation Officer Carmen Gomez



The Honorable Justice Matthew Machera



CBC President Joan Cromwell



The Rev. Dr. Sandra Whitley, facilitator of the discussion.



Councilor-at-Large Damali Vidot



The Honorable Superior Court Justice Angel Kelley

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Construction look-ahead through March 6

This is a brief overview of construction operations and traffic impacts for the Tobin Bridge/Chelsea Curves Rehabilitation Project. MassDOT will provide additional notices as needed for high-impact work, temporary ramp and street closures, and changes to traffic configurations beyond those described below.

ROUTE 1 TRAFFIC IMPACTS
ROUTE 1 NORTHBOUND: Approaching the Tobin Bridge from Boston, the work zone begins in the right lane.

2 of 3 travel lanes will be open during daytime hours (5 a.m.–10 p.m.)
ROUTE 1 SOUTHBOUND: Approaching the Chelsea Curves from the North Shore, the work zone is in the median. All 3 travel lanes are open during the daytime hours (5 a.m.–10 p.m.)

LOCAL STREET CLOSURES
There are no local street closures scheduled for this look-ahead period.

WORK HOURS
Most work will occur during daytime working

hours (7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.) on weekdays. Some work will take place on a 2nd shift (2 p.m. – 1 a.m.) and overnight hours (9 p.m. – 5 a.m.) and on Saturdays (7 a.m. – 7 p.m.).

DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULED WORK
ROUTE 1 NORTHBOUND: Installation of new bridge deck will continue through the Chelsea Curves.
ROUTE 1 SOUTHBOUND: Completion of new bridge deck and placement of bridge barrier will continue through the Chelsea Curves.

For more information

about the Tobin Bridge/Chelsea Curves Rehabilitation Project, please visit the project website: mass.gov/tobin-bridgechelsea-curves-rehabilitation-project.

COMPLETED WORK
All remaining work is within the Chelsea Viaduct portion of the job. Work has begun on the reconstruction of parking lots underneath the Chelsea Viaduct.
North Washington Street Bridge Replacement Project
The foundations for the new North Wash-

ington Street Bridge are currently under construction.
All traffic is now on the temporary bridge with work underway to construct the new permanent bridge.
There will be police details in both Keany and City Square during peak traffic hours.
For more information about the North Washington Street Bridge Replacement Project, please visit: mass.gov/north-washington-street-bridge-replacement
TRAVEL TIPS
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.
The contractors are coordinating with local event organizers and police to provide awareness and manage traffic during events. For your awareness, there will be no events at the TD Garden during this look ahead schedule.

Gov. Baker signs \$16 billion Transportation Bond Bill legislation

Staff report

Gov. Charlie Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, and Acting MassDOT Secretary of Transportation Jamey Tesler joined legislators, municipal leaders, and other stakeholders in a virtual ceremonial signing of the \$16 billion Transportation Bond Bill legislation. This legislation was signed into law on January 15, and authorizes funding across all modes of transportation to support and facilitate the ongoing continual efforts of MassDOT and the MBTA to invest in and modernize the Commonwealth’s transportation system.
“The Transportation Bond Bill builds upon our Administration’s ongoing

commitment to create a 21st-century mobility infrastructure that will prepare the Commonwealth to capitalize on emerging changes in transportation technology and behavior,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “MassDOT and the MBTA have continued to implement widespread improvements throughout the transportation system and this new bond authorization will further support capital investment planning to rebuild, modernize, and expand the capacity of the Commonwealth’s transportation infrastructure.”
The legislation includes nearly \$5.1 billion to continue modernizing the MBTA, \$100 million to improve the pavement condition on state num-

bered municipal roads, \$50 million to ensure municipalities have resources needed to continue efforts to build ‘Complete Streets’ infrastructure to encourage the public to travel more on foot and by bicycle. The bill also includes \$70 million for the Municipal Small Bridge Program and expands the use of designated bus lanes and transit signal priority through two new grant programs. Additionally, the bill authorizes the MBTA to use well-established procurement methods such as Job Order contracting for smaller projects.
The bill also responds to the needs of municipal partners by reauthorizing or creating five funding partnerships to supple-

ment and complement the Chapter 90 program, and reauthorizes the popular Municipal Small Bridge Program and Complete Streets Program. In addition to local bottleneck reduction program already mentioned, a third municipal funding initiative would improve the condition of roadways by authorizing \$100 million for a municipal pavement partnership program to help cities and towns care for state-numbered routes that are locally owned.
Highlights of the Transportation Bond Bill are as follows:
• \$4.4 billion for use as funding for Highway federal aid projects
• \$3 billion for Transit System Modernization Investments (MBTA)

• \$1.25 billion in Non-Federal Aid for use as funding in Highway projects that are not eligible for federal funding
• \$1.25 billion for the new Next Generation Bridge program
• \$70 million for the popular Municipal Small Bridge Program
• \$50 million for the popular Complete Streets program
• \$20 million for ‘public realm’ COVID-related Shared Streets and Spaces program
• \$100 million for a new Municipal Pavement program for pavement projects on locally owned but state numbered roads
• \$100 million in four new programs to provide financial assistance for municipalities seeking to

improve infrastructure, such as bus lanes or bus signal prioritization projects, and connectivity
• \$350 million for the Cape Cod Bridges approaches project
• \$825 million for South Coast Rail
• \$595 million for Green Line Extension
• \$89 million for Aeronautics Division
• \$760 million to support the Regional Transit Authorities and Rail & Transit’s Mobility Assistance Program and Rail improvements
Construction Zone Speed Limits that allows posting of speed limits in construction zones and doubling of speeding fines for violations.

Chelsea

R E C O R D

PRESIDENT: Stephen Quigley

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Cary Shuman

Forum

AN UNFATHOMABLE NUMBER

When COVID-19 first came into our national consciousness more than a year ago, it was just a blip on the news. The prospect that a viral bug originating halfway around the world would alter every aspect of our lives seemed inconceivable.

And even if the virus did come here, America was not some third-world country. We had confidence that the world's best medical care system and scientific minds would work together to prevent something as seemingly trivial as a mere virus from overwhelming our nation.

But one year -- and 500,000 American lives -- later, that which was unimaginable has become a nightmarish reality.

To be sure, the unprecedented incompetence and outright malevolence of the previous administration contributed substantially to amplify and worsen the problems brought on by the pandemic.

But even in a best-case scenario, the virus would have upended every aspect of our lives. Although the politicization of the virus contributed to our nation's suffering, the pandemic still would have caused death and economic turmoil to an unprecedented extent.

The official count of 500,000 COVID deaths was surpassed this week. Let's hope that as we move forward and as the daily numbers of deaths and hospitalizations continue to decline, we have learned that despite our high-tech lifestyle, we are no match for Mother Nature.

The pandemic has exposed many problems in our country, including the inadequacy of our health care system, especially for minority groups, and the danger of politicizing scientific information.

Hopefully, we have recognized our multitude of mistakes and we will make the necessary investments in our health care and pandemic detection systems to ensure that we will be ready for the next pandemic.

As the philosopher succinctly put it, those who do not learn from the past are condemned to repeat it.

SPRING IS IN THE AIR

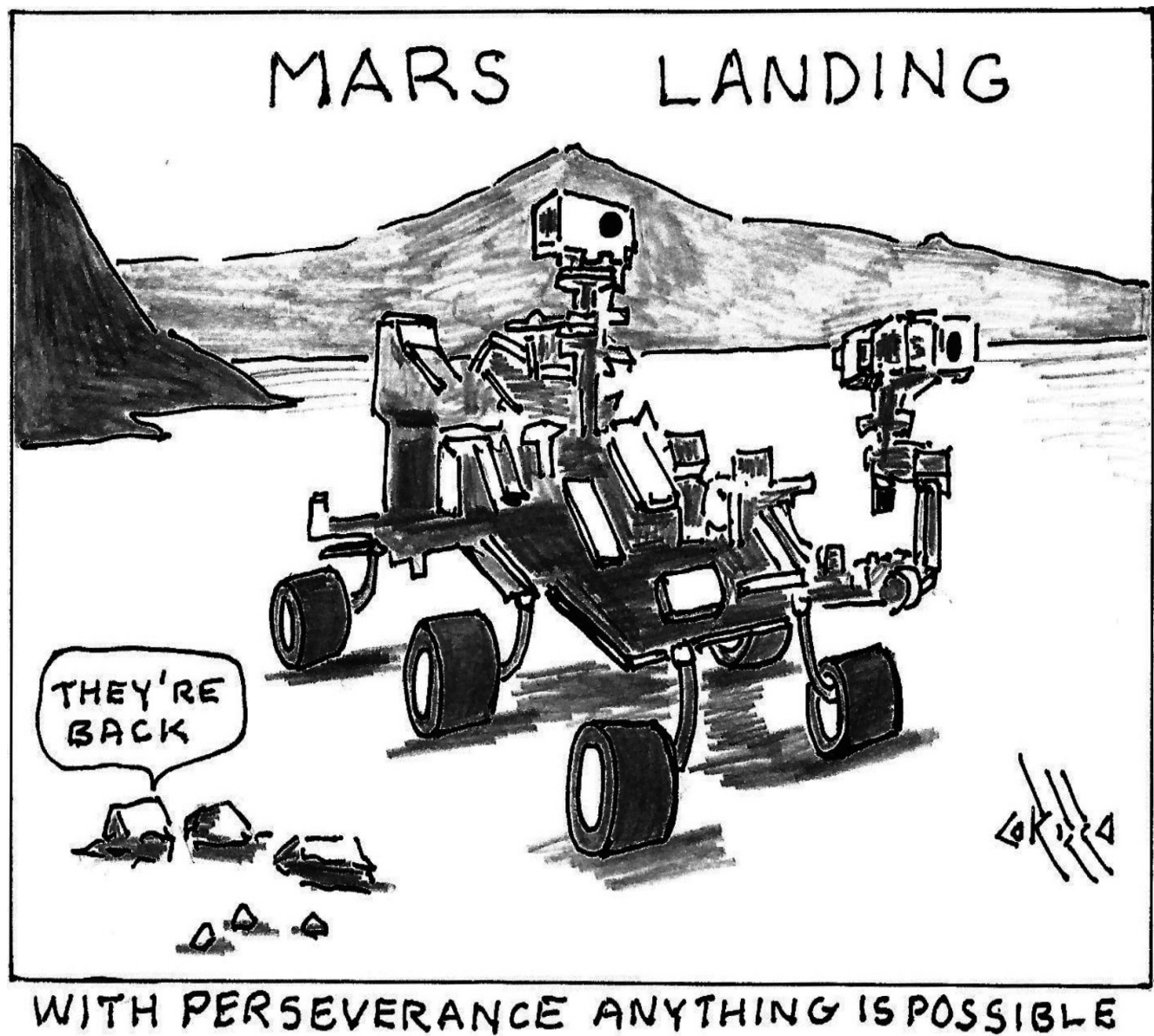
This winter has not been a particularly difficult one for us in the Northeast, although February has been colder and stormier than January.

But with temperatures reaching the 50s by the middle of this week, there is the feeling that spring is just around the corner.

We realize that "spring" is a relative term for those of us living on the Massachusetts coast, but undeniably the onset of warmer weather will provide more opportunities to get outside and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine after months of being cooped-up amidst our pandemic quarantines.

Spring traditionally symbolizes rebirth and rejuvenation. That thought is especially meaningful in the spring of 2021.

Hopefully, the coming of spring and the availability of mass vaccinations will enable all of us to emerge from our cocoons and allow us to return safely to our pre-pandemic lives.



GUEST OP-ED

Making your funeral arrangements

Dr. Glenn Mollette

A good friend died recently. At the age of 80 all his life insurance had expired and his savings was spent. His family, financially, were living from week to week. His failing health along with Covid-19 put him in an Intensive Care Unit for days apart from his family where he died. His hospitalization brought more bills and financial hardship for those left behind. Needless to say, there wasn't any money to pay for a casket, embalming, plot of ground and a grave marker.

His young adult son put together their dire scenario and sent it out to everyone his family knew. Within a week 103 friends had given \$20,300 to momentarily rescue this family from their perilous situation. It was enough money to buy a casket, embalming, a plot of ground and a small grave memorial marker.

Do you have 103 friends who would give \$20 to \$2000 each to pay for your burial expenses? I know I do not. Such an outpouring was a testimony to his life and the lives of so many he had touched. This story is a

sad reminder that we must take prudent steps toward covering our burial/funeral costs.

I don't want my wife or children to have to figure it out after I'm dead. Often, we don't get a choice. We die way before we have time to make our final arrangements. This happens a lot. This is why we need to do it now or as soon as we can.

Another dear friend recently died very young. Her family was strapped for cash and went the route of cremation. Cremation is costing between \$2500 to \$7500 depending on where you live. Not cheap. My Navy son said, "Dad, just cremate me and scatter my remains over the north Atlantic." I pray he lives to be a hundred and his grandchildren have to do that.

Some of you know my wife died back in 2002. Her funeral cost me about \$10,000 and her grave plot was \$600. I was cash strapped at the age of 47. I had nothing but medical bills and a house payment. I wasn't prepared for a funeral, mentally or financially. The only thing that saved me was a year before she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a

good friend sold us small life insurance policies. He also talked us into paying extra for a disability wavier on the policy. The disability wavier was the only way I was able to maintain that life insurance policy which we used 13 years after he sold it to us. It was the only way I could have paid for that funeral, unless I could have borrowed more money on my house. This was doubtful because I already had a second mortgage on the house from trying to pay other medical bills. I would have been hurting and probably would have had to go the cheapest route available for her funeral. It was simply the grace of God and a wise insurance agent who saved us in that respect.

My mother and father in law both died recently and their funeral expenses alone were over \$14,000 each. Fortunately, they had saved enough money to cover these costs. You can spend less and you can spend more of course. The question is do you want your family to have to figure it out? Sit down with a trusted funeral director and begin making preparations now.

Decide which route you

want to go. Decide how much you want to spend. You can plan everything. Pick out everything. Most likely pay for everything. Just make sure you are dealing with a very trusted funeral director. Write out everything you want done including music, speakers and anything specific you want them to say. It's up to you of course. Make several copies of your wishes and what you have done. It's amazing how people lose stuff.

When we are dead, we won't care. We won't know, but we care now. I know most of us care about those we leave behind. This is one way we can help them to know how and what we want done and relieve their burden by making the arrangements ourselves.

Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist – American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.

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stephen.quigley@reverejournal.com

Advertising and Marketing

Legal Advertising
Ellen Bertino

Director of Marketing
Debra DiGregorio
deb@reverejournal.com

Editorial
Reporters,
Regular Contributors
Seth Daniel
(seth@reverejournal.com)
Cary Shuman
(Cary@lynnjournal.com)

Assistant Marketing
Directors
Maureen DiBella

Copy Editing, Layout
Scott Yates

Senior Sales Associates
Peter Sacco
Kathleen Bright

Business Accounts
Executive
Judy Russi
Printer
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OBITUARIES

Victor P. Monkiewicz

May 14, 1955 – February 9, 2021

Victor P. Monkiewicz, 65, passed away unexpectedly on February 9 at the Beverly Hospital.

He was a beloved son of the late Walter Z. and Leonarda M. (Gerry) Monkiewicz.

Born in Lynn, he was raised in Lynnfield and attended community college studying business management. As a young man, he worked in the family business and officially joined KAYEM Foods in Chelsea on July 1st 1973 to January 30th 2013, giving 40 years of service to the family business.

He worked in every department at KAYEM over the years and ended up in the kitchen where he felt the most at home chopping, blending and stuffing all of the items KAYEM makes every day. Victor ran all of the ovens and steam water tanks in the smoke house. He worked in muscle meat, learning how to trim beef, pump hams, roast beef, etc. and worked in the packing room as well.

Victor was part of an exchange program where he went to Germany to learn how to make and stuff many different products and bring his knowledge back to KAYEM. He also learned from some of the best long-term “Old Tyme” employees of KAYEM on how to make kiska, head cheese, jellied corn beef and was one of many who helped make the casing and stuff the “World’s Largest Kielbasa” when KAYEM made an attempt to get into the Guinness Book of World Records.

He loved working with other people and was a favorite of his Uncle Tony. He spent many summers on Uncle Tony’s boat. Victor loved to snowmobile, which he did first as a family with all his uncles and later with all his brothers and sister. He would travel to St. Petersburg, Florida to enjoy the sun and fun with family and enjoy life.

His sense of humor was shared with his nephews and nieces and they never grew tired of his jokes and funny texts. He enjoyed making everyone laugh,



“a good old belly laugh”! He was always smiling and helping others in any way he could. He had the biggest heart of anyone. He will be remembered for his generosity in helping others.

Everyone who met Victor always had a story to retell about their interaction with him, he left an impression, with a loving touch, always with a smile and chuckle, as he was a gentle giant and made you feel comfortable like a good friend.

Victor lived a simple life and took care of those around him till the end. He is now reunited with his Mom, Dad, his sister Krystyna and brothers: Casimir “Charli” and Thomas and other family members.

He will be dearly missed by his siblings; Stephan Monkiewicz and his wife, Cheryl of No. Berwick Maine, Tricia Williams of Rowley and Janek Monkiewicz of Reading. He was the cherished uncle of Nicole Bruss, Seth, Khara, Hannah and Solomon Monkiewicz, Nathan and Jacob Williams, Adam, Kasia and Brody Monkiewicz. He is also survived by his aunts, many cousins, extended family and friends.

A springtime celebration of Victor’s life and inurnment in Holy Cross Cemetery will be announced at a later date.

DONATIONS: Should friends desire contributions in his name can be made to Neurofibromatosis Northeast, 9 Bedford St., #3, Burlington MA 01803 or click here; DONATE

At this time, we encourage family and friends who wish, to share a memory or offer condolences to visit: www.WelshFH.com.

Helen Tryder

Of Peabody, formerly of Chelsea

Helen Y. (DeGurski) Tryder of Peabody, formerly of Chelsea, died on February 17.

The devoted wife of the late John J. Tryder, Sr., she was the beloved mother of John J. Tryder, Jr. and his wife, Rosalind of Peabody, Allen C. Tryder of Raymond, NH and the late David R. Tryder. She was the eldest of 13 children of the late John and Yvonne (Babineau) DeGurski; cherished grandmother of Cristen Tryder and her husband, Sean Carbone of Middleton, Brendan Tryder and his wife, Marla of Hooksett, NH, Kimberly Tryder and her companion, Andy of Windham, NH and Jonathan Tryder and his companion, Bella of Raymond, NH. She is also lovingly survived by her great grandson, Abel Tryder as well as many



nieces.

Due to the current health pandemic and with concern for family and friends, funeral services and interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place., Memphis, TN, 38105 or to the Boston Children’s Hospital Trust, 401 Park Drive, Suite 602, Boston, MA 02215 or at giving.childrenshospital.org.

John Richard Baggs

Retired auto mechanic

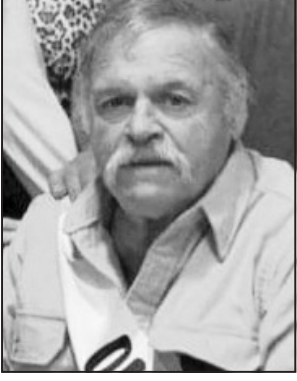
John Richard Baggs, 70, of Malden passed away Thursday morning, February 18 at Tufts Medical Center in Boston.

Born in Everett, the son of the late John M. and Mildred B. (Carnell) Baggs, he attended Chelsea Public Schools and graduated from Chelsea High School, Class of 1970.

An auto mechanic by trade, John worked at Pallin’s Buick, Smyly Buick and Melrose Dodge throughout his working career before retiring when at 62. John enjoyed his retirement by spending time with his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He was a former auxiliary member of the American Legion in Malden where he enjoyed spending time with many close friends. John will be forever missed by all those who loved him dearly.

The devoted father of Dawn Baggs of Chelsea, Shaun Thompkins and his wife, Amanda of Haverhill, Caress Baggs of Malden and Krystal Bonet of New Hampshire, he was the dear brother of Robert A. “Bobby” Baggs and his wife, Inta of Saugus; cherished uncle of Robert “Bobby” Baggs and John Baggs. He is also lovingly survived by eight grandchildren: Danté, Shampell, Ava, Lila, Juliana, Daymien, Cameron, and Isabella; three great grandchildren, Ja’Nellise, Aubrielle, Alayani and numerous close friends.



John’s Funeral Services were conducted at the Carafa Family Funeral Home in Chelsea on Tuesday, February 23. Services concluded with interment at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett. We encourage family and friends to visit www.carafafuneralhome.com to offer condolences by means of the online guest book or to send a personalized sympathy card.

Baker announces plan to eliminate remote learning for elementary schools

By Lauren Bennett

Governor Charlie Baker on Tuesday announced that the state has a goal of getting elementary school students back into the classroom full-time by April.

“I think we all know that when COVID hit last year, just about this time, teachers, staff, and students experienced an incredible disruption to their daily routines in school,” Baker said, “and ever since, have been adapting and adjusting to the challenges that came with the pandemic.”

Baker said that districts across the state have made adjustments to help their students adapt to the challenges put forth by the pandemic, “but I think we all agree there’s no substitute for in-person learning, especially for kids in elementary school,” he said.

“Our administration has been clear for months that the best place for kids is in the classroom,” Baker said.

He said that Jeff Riley, the Commissioner of the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, began a process on Tuesday with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education“ to get more kids back into the classroom full time by phasing out remote-only learning in April” and allow students, beginning with elementary school students, to attend classes in person Monday through Friday.

Baker said that the process would begin with students in elementary school, and that the state “hope[s] to be moving ahead soon,” he said. “We know the pandemic’s been difficult on everyone, but it’s been really tough on kids and their parents as they struggle to be out of the classroom and detached from their teachers and their peers.”

Approximately 80 percent of the state’s school districts are currently providing some sort of in-person learning, whether it be a hybrid model or fully in person, Baker said.

“Districts with in-person learning, regardless of how high COVID transmission is in their community, have seen few, if any, examples of in-school transmission,” Baker said. He said that with “proper mitigation strategies” and com-

pliance with protocols, “schools across the Commonwealth have been able to safely welcome kids back to the classroom for many months now.”

However, about 20 percent of the state’s school districts are still fully remote, which translates to about 400,000 kids, Baker said, “most of whom haven’t been in a classroom since March [of last year].”

Baker said that students’ “social, mental, and emotional well-being has been significantly impacted” by being out of the classroom.

“The science is pretty clear on this one: there are now dozens of reports from all over the world that it’s safe to be in school, and doctors and public health experts, including Dr. Fauci, all agree that getting kids back in school needs to be a top priority,” Baker said.

He said that the state has “committed funding, resources, and supports to schools and districts to return to classrooms.”

Commissioner Riley said he would “take a phased-in approach to returning students to the classroom, working closely with state health officials and medical experts.”

He said he would work first to return elementary school students to in-person learning, “with the plan likely extending to middle school grades later in the school year and possibly high schools as well.”

Parents who do not wish to send their children for in person learning will not be required to do so, and they can remain learning remotely through the end of the school year, Riley said, adding that “there will be a waiver process for districts who may need to take a more incremental approach,” Riley said, adding that fully remote schools could first transition to a hybrid model.

Baker said that “with COVID cases and hospitalizations continuing to decline and vaccines well underway, it’s time to set our sites on eliminating remote learning by April and starting with elementary schools.” He said the state will continue to ramp up vaccine distribution as much as possible and open more mass vaccination sites statewide.

MVES to present Hearts in the Right Places Auction

Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) presents Hearts in the Right Places, an online auction that will take place on www.biddingforgood.com for one special week only from Monday, March 15 through Sunday, March 21. Funds raised will benefit the mental health and social engagement needs of older adults and adults living with disabilities. Sponsorships are available for \$2,500 and your company logo and link to your website will be featured on the Hearts in the Right Places home page on biddingforgood.com.

Auction items include gift cards to many local restaurants that need our support now more than ever, the art work

of locally and historically renowned artist, Polly Thayer Starr, a unique and romantic Newburyport Lighthouse experience, jewelry, specialty baskets of New England gourmet food and much, much more. Mark your calendars and be sure to visit the online auction in March!

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Healey / Continued from page 1

through community-based organizations. Organizations like La Colaborativa know their residents, they speak their languages and understand how to actually get people to come, be comfortable and get vaccinations.”



In the top photo City Councillor Leo Robinson chatted with AG Healey before the tour of the Chelsea site. In the photo to the left EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes welcomed questions from the press on Monday about the site.



EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes explains to AG Healey how they are working to get the community to trust in the vaccine.

State announces \$4.7M for vaccine equity in hardest-hit communities like Chelsea

Staff Report

The Baker-Polito Administration announced Wednesday a new \$4.7 million initiative to promote COVID-19 vaccine equity in the 20 communities most disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, with one of those communities being Chelsea.

•Vaccination Appointments: On Feb. 25, around 50,000 new appointments will be added at mass vaccination locations across the Commonwealth. This includes the mass vaccination locations at Fenway Park, Gillette Stadium, Springfield, Danvers, Dartmouth and Natick. Retail pharmacies like CVS and Walgreens will also administer over 20,000 doses next week as well.

Residents can go to www.mass.gov/COVIDvaccine tomorrow morning to find and schedule their appointments. Appointment availability is very limited due to the constrained supply of vaccine doses that the Commonwealth is receiving from the federal government.

•\$4.7 Million for Vaccine Equity: The Administration today announced a \$4.7 million effort to support its vaccine equity initiative announced last week, which focuses on reducing barriers to vaccination in the 20 hardest-hit communities in the Commonwealth. The Administration will work with Archipelago Strategies Group (ASG) and Health Care for All (HCFA) to best leverage these funds.

The initiative will support and coordinate with local leaders and community- and faith-based organizations to strengthen existing efforts in these cities and towns. These efforts will specifically focus on communities of color, homebound seniors, disabled individuals and other hard-to-reach populations. ASG and HCFA will provide hyperlocal, population-specific communication resources as well as hiring local residents and working with local organizations with cultural and linguistic competencies to reach disparately impacted populations in each priority municipality. ASG specializes in grassroots mobilization, partnering with local leaders, community organizations, and

media partners to develop community-based solutions. As a subcontractor, HCFA will provide high-touch support for priority communities, including direct service support, community organizing, education, and outreach.

This work will complement the Commonwealth’s \$2.5 million public awareness campaign, “Trust the Facts, Get the Vax,” adapting the campaign’s messaging for specific communities. The initiative will focus on the 20 municipalities with the greatest COVID-19 case burden, taking into account social determinants of health and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on people of color. These communities are Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Framingham, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Methuen, New Bedford, Randolph, Revere, Springfield and Worcester. This work will be coordinated with targeted opportunities for increased vaccine access through existing and new locations, including pop up sites and mobile clinics.



AG Maura Healey returned to La Colaborativa on Monday morning and was greeted by Director Gladys Vega.



Leah Pires, Site Supervisor in Chelsea, with Kelly Hennesey, director of testing and vaccination sites.



AG Healey told reporters that the state’s system has become more equitable, but she still has concerns about the distribution of the vaccine and the frustrating system set up for appointments.

The Cat Fanciers’ Association present TrapKing’s ‘From Feral to Fancy’ TNR fundraising cat photo contest

Special to the Journal

What do you get when you team up rapper-turned-trapper Sterling “TrapKing” Davis with the world’s largest cat organization, two top pet healthcare brands, and 10 well-known internet purrsonalities? A CFA Virtual Cat Competition destined to turn 11 lucky kitties into mini-celebrities!

Cat owners can enter their cats in the competition. Spectators can enter and vote on their favorite cats now through February 26 and the judges will announce the winners on Facebook February 27 and 28.

Davis is an African American cat rescuer dedicated to Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), widely considered the only humane way to stop cat overpopulation. It’s endorsed by the Humane Society of the United States, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the American Humane Association, and many other progressive animal

welfare organizations.

TrapKing’s From Feral to Fancy TNR Fundraising Cat Photo Contest offers cats everywhere the chance to compete for 100 prizes with their photos. “I love how CFA realizes that rescue, shelter and feral cats are just as beautiful as the fancy pedigree ones,” said Davis recently. Top winners in each of the competitive categories will enjoy photo appearances in New York City’s Times Square! Proceeds from the event will go to Davis’ nonprofit, TrapKing Humane Cat Solutions, which will use the money to teach cat rescuers the basics of TNR.

CFA is partnering with Davis because of his exemplary work in bringing diversity to the animal world. “It’s no secret the cat scene is dominated by white women, and Sterling brings a message of acceptance and compassion. He’s trying to bridge the racial divide between the cat world and the black community,” says Desiree Bobby, CFA’s Marketing Direc-

tor. Davis is known for his motto, “You don’t lose cool points for compassion.” The show is also sponsored by the brands ZYMOX® and Oratene®, veterinarian recommended solutions that have been helping pets have healthy ears, skin and mouths for over twenty years.

The event is part of CFA’s Companion Cat World Program, reflecting the organization’s mission to enhance all cats’ lives. Kitty contestants can choose from 11 categories, including the Main Event, Me & My Cat Lady/Cat Daddy, Beautiful Eyes, Gotcha! Day, Cats in Costume, Outdoor/Adventure, and Cats Looking for Fur-ever Homes. The judging lineup includes well-known cat influencers NathanTheCatLady, SunglassCat, Adventure Cats, “Catification” designer Kate Benjamin, Two Crazy Cat Ladies and Pet Behavior Expert Arden Moore, plus many more. You can learn more and enter at <https://vcc.cfa.org/trapking2021/>.

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Warren / Continued from page 1

site that deal directly with the federal government in getting vaccinations. That means the people in this community will have even better access than before.”

EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes said the partnership with the state has been wonderful, but dealing directly with the federal government would guarantee their current supply. The Chelsea site, and three others in the EBNHC umbrella, have the capacity to administer 6,000 doses per week, but at the moment are administering below that until the demand scales up.

“This helps us guarantee the supply,” said Lopes. “We’ve had a great partnership with the state and that will continue but now we have direct access to the federal pipeline. We’re one of the few community health centers in the country that has been granted direct access to the federal government supply. That means the supply we’re using today from the state could now go to other areas within the state and we’ll have a direct line from the federal government.”

Warren said the new program is rewarding something Massachusetts has done for a long time, and that is to reach into communities to solve big problems at the ground level.

“Part of this is what Massachusetts has been doing for a long time and community health centers are one of the principal examples of that,” she said. “Chelsea has demonstrated through this partnership how to make community health centers the primary delivery for testing, for care and for vaccinations. The federal government wants to use them as demonstration projects and that’s part of what’s happening in Chelsea. It’s a reminder that hardest-hit communities can receive first-rate care for all of their people.”

Vega said getting more resources is important right now because essential workers in Chelsea will be able to go to work with confidence, and industries like hospitality that have been decimated and laid off many Chelsea

workers could return.

“I want everyone in Chelsea to get vaccinated,” said Vega. “I want to make sure our workforce goes back to work and our economy continues to expand, but without vaccinations and additional resources, and making sure we continue to get more, it’s ideal for a community like Chelsea – especially when we were the epicenter of the pandemic. We’re delighted but we feel we need to rush a little bit with this process so everyone in our communities... are all vaccinated.”

Lopes said the Chelsea vaccination site was the first to be announced in the federal program, but there are six more community health centers in Massachusetts that have also qualified for the program.

One key issue is immigration concerns, and assuring undocumented residents in Chelsea that the site is safe and won’t be used as a place to deport those coming in.

“As we speak to people in the community about making an appointment, we tell them we would not have promoted this amazing center and this amazing partnership if we didn’t trust our partners,” said Vega. “We wouldn’t do it if we didn’t know that immigration had nothing to do with this process.”

Warren did also talk at length about the Essential Workers Bill of Rights she has been supporting, a piece of legislation that would go beyond “saying thank you” to essential workers such as those that live in Chelsea, and provide financial support to reward them for the job they’ve done.

That, she said, now appears to be potentially getting looped into the newest COVID relief bill being battled about in Washington, D.C.

She said that package is also about putting resources into vaccine production and distribution to hard-hit communities.

“We all need to do better on vaccine,” she said. “Part of it is we just need more vaccine available. That’s what this COVID relief package is all about. It puts more money into vaccine production and

tries to speed it up. We also have to rely on states to get the distribution right. The federal government is experimenting and trying to work with the hardest hit communities like Chelsea by providing the vaccinations directly to places that are demonstrating how to do this in the community. But a part of what will be in the COVID relief package will be the bill I’ve done (with colleagues) to make sure resources are going to the hardest hit communities so places that are trusted partners like this vaccination site are places partnering up to provide the vaccinations and care in the community. This will be the best way to deal with the health inequities that COVID has exposed.”

Warren said she would like to see better distribution in Massachusetts, and the press conference was the day that the state appointment system crashed as those 65 and older began to try to book appointments all at once.

She said now is the time to be moving the vaccine to everyone – that it isn’t and “either-or moment.”

Meanwhile, she said the state needs to move to a much better, centralized online site for making appointments and getting information.

“I would like to see him have a single pre-registration system that works for everyone in the state,” she said. “Look, this is a hard time for everyone and everyone is doing their best, but adding to peoples’ anxiety because they’re up early in the morning looking at a website. They don’t know if their town is the place to look or the center down in Boston...For some people it’s about whether or not they even have transportation to these big centers. One thing that would make it easier for everyone in Massachusetts is to have a centralized system that everyone can tap into and find out what they qualify for and where the available appointments are.”

The event was the first public event in the state that Senator Warren has attended since COVID-19 broke out last year.



Senator Warren is greeted by EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes and Jeff Sanchez of EBNHC.



EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes and La Colaborativa Director Gladys Vega explain to Senator Warren the process for getting vaccinated at the site.



Senator Liz Warren explains the Chelsea vaccination site is part of a demonstration project by the federal government to get vaccine directly in the hands of community collaborations in the hardest-hit COVID-19 municipalities.



Dr. Jackie Fantes, Chief Medical Officer for EBNHC.

Energy Facilities Siting Bd. approves controversial substation proposal along the Chelsea Creek site

By John Lynds

Despite widespread community opposition as well as opposition from over a dozen Massachusetts elected officials the state’s Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) unanimously approved Eversource’s highly controversial plan to build a new substation along the Chelsea Creek in East Boston on Monday afternoon.

In a marathon meeting that lasted several hours and the adoption of several amendments to Eversource’s plan that included a safety plan, flood zone management and community mitigation the board eschewed Eastie’s and Chelsea’s already overburdened industrial infrastructure and rubber stamped the plan.

Despite state Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides saying at Monday’s hearing that the substation would be placed in a “heavily, heavily in-

dustrialized area within an environmental justice community that has historically suffered disproportionate environmental harms and a heavy burden of infrastructure” she still voted in favor of Eversource’s plans as an EFSB board member.

During the hearing Theoharides dismissed historic calls for leaders to begin exploring a move to more renewable energy and begin taking climate change seriously as a ‘false politically motivated narrative’.

“This context has weighed heavily on my mind as I’ve spent the last two weeks thinking about this decision, since our last meeting,” said Theoharides. “The notion that a substation is part of a fossil fuel past is a false politically motivated narrative. Substations are a piece of infrastructure that will be critical in our ever growing electrification of building and transportation sectors.”

Although she conceded

that substations may deliver increasing amounts of clean and renewable energy produced by wind and solar in the future.

But as of now Theoharides said, “the communities of East Boston and Chelsea have a right to reliable electricity”.

John Walkey, an Eastie resident and member of the Chelsea’s GreenRoots who has been fighting the substation plan, said EFSB’s decision, while disappointing, is hardly surprising. “We know that our national regulatory system for our energy sector is dominated by the regulated industry, so why should Massachusetts be any different?,” said Walkey. “It does really expose the hypocrisy of those who talk up climate resiliency and social equity while at the same time continue accepting money from corporations like Eversource and effectively doing their bidding. This is not what democracy looks like; it is what systemic environ-

mental racism looks like. And this is not the end of this fight by a long shot.”

Walkey said activists plan to appeal this decision to the State Supreme Judicial Court and will be challenging their application for a Department of Environmental Protection Waterways Division Chapter 91 license.

“This isn’t a fight you walk away from because this is where we live, where our children play, and where we already grapple with so many other environmental burdens that affect our health,” said Walkey. “If they can convince us that this substation is needed, which they have yet to do, they will still have to convince us that Massport, by far the largest single user of electricity in East Boston, is not the most appropriate and sensible location for it.”

The substation was approved to be sited at the City Yards back in 2017.

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

TDM HEADS TO CITY COUNCIL

EVERETT - After more than a year of discussion about Transportation Demand Management (TDM) within the City’s development process, and several months of presentations to the Planning Board, the Board approved a recommendation to adopt a TDM plan – sending the matter now to the City Council for potential passage.

The TDM was proposed and discussed in early 2020, and even before, as development in Everett began to ratchet up and both the City and the development community looked for predictability in regards to parking, traffic and transportation.

Mayor Carlo DeMaria has endorsed the plan that his Administration has proposed via Transportation Director Jay Monty – something that is central to his philosophy of pushing public transit so there could be more density in the buildout along Everett’s main corridors.

“The whole premise here is we want the Site Plan Review process to take a holistic look at the transportation impacts,” said Monty. “Zoning in most communities use parking and traffic as a proxy for transportation impacts. The two are kind of conflicting. The more parking, then the more traffic. It becomes a vicious spiral where there’s more parking, more traffic and then more impacts. That’s what the mayor has been saying the last several years now.”

The TDM plan works where it gives developers and the City more choice. Monty compares it to a menu in a restaurant. The developer still has some choice as to what they will choose to mitigate the transportation impacts of their project, but the City sets the menu and what is offered. In that way, there are no surprises and the plan set forth by the developer must be approved at Site Plan Review by the Planning Board.

The items in the plan would be different for every development, depending on the impacts, the size of the development and the location of the development, he said.

“Every project is different,” he said. “The 600 on Broadway for example has lots of amenities, good transit and bike and

bus lanes that can be used to mitigate. The needs of that will be different from 1090 Parkway, or the Stop & Shop site, where the transit isn’t that great... This allows the developer to say what’s best for them and their project. Then we work with them for the best plan.”

The TDM proposal takes parking and transportation out of the hands of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), and puts it within the Site Plan Review process. That allows zoning to focus on zoning, he said, and the Planning Board to work on transportation and predictable impacts and mitigation.

“We really designed this so the Zoning Board had skin in the game,” he said. “It gives them more discretion and more power to shape a project... This allows the Planning Board to look at it in a much greater level and produces a project that has mitigated all concerns.”

The matter will have to go through the City Council process, but the Planning Board has recommended passage. If it does pass, Monty said he will be very interested in seeing how the first few applicants use the process and shape it.

An accompanying piece about codifying residential parking stickers – which have been not allowed for many new developments – is still being reviewed in the Planning Board.

CHANGES AT OLD WOOD WASTE SITE APPROVED

EVERETT - The Planning Board on Feb. 8 approved a minor modification to the newer plan for the old Wood Waste site, a 600-plus unit residential community build on the construction waste yard, and paved the way for the project to start very soon.

Greystar Development’s Tammy Copson was at the Board on Feb. 8 for a minor modification to make sure the former conditions on the approvals jived with what the plan is now on paper. The changes clear the path for a potential construction on the site of 650-units of housing in two, six-story buildings with 9,000 sq. ft. of retail space.

Copson told the Board that the 57 conditions on the permit that was given more than two years ago

needed some updating so that everything was understood and clear.

“We wanted to clarify some edits of the conditions,” she said. “

“(The project) will most definitely start if we can get everything cleaned up,” she said.

Greystar, the largest residential apartment developer in the world, got involved with the project last summer after taking it over from the former Wood Waste ownership, under Billy Thibeault.

Planning Board member Leo Pizzano pointed out that once the project gets under construction, it’s going to be a very confusing situation. That’s because there are going to be multiple projects under construction at the same time.

Greystar will like start first, but the 18-month construction period will likely overlap with Grossman Properties’ massive project at the Stop & Shop and Block properties’ residential project on Second Street.

“That will be three massive projects and a fourth on Vale Street that are going to be going all at once and the residents at The Pioneer are going to be wanting to get out of there,” he said. “I keep saying that.”

The matter was approved 5-0.

•BLOCK PROPERTIES

Block Properties made their second official appearance at the Planning Board on Feb. 8 after a trip there in January for a full presentation. The residential project at Second and Vine Streets was informally introduced to the Board, though, last October.

In January, the development team had appeared before the Board and had a thorough presentation. However, a technology snafu didn’t allow all Board members to get questions submitted.

The team was back for those questions on Feb. 8.

The plan is to demolish two industrial buildings on Vine and Second Streets in the Commercial Triangle near the City Line with Chelsea. They hope to build a six-story building with 320 units of apartment housing with 4,000 sq. ft. of retail space and a parking garage. The project meets most all zoning codes, and only needs to complete the Site Plan Review process.

WINTHROP HOUSING AUTHORITY BEGINS VACCINATIONS



Residents and staff of the Winthrop Housing Authority are shown above ready to receive the first COVID-19 vaccine shot. Shown to the right, Health Dept. workers fill out the forms.

The City has been working on transportation issues and stormwater issues with the development team, and that continues. The developer has ceded a portion of the property fronting Second Street to be used for the Silver Line extension when and if it comes to be. Meanwhile, Block Properties will likely be one of the first groups to work through the new Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan approved by the Board last month.

An Activity Use Limitation (AUL) for pollution on the site is likely to be filed in the coming months, allowing the developer to provide 5 percent Affordable Housing rather than the usually-required 15 percent.

REP. MADARO APPOINTED BOARD CHAIR

East Boston - House Speaker Ronald Mariano appointed Rep. Adrian Madaro as Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

This is Rep. Madaro’s first chairmanship since being elected to the House in 2015. Madaro previously vice-chaired the Joint Committee on Transportation.

The Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery considers all matters concerning behavioral health, mental illness and substance use disorder, including prevention and early intervention, treatment and

recovery services as well as homelessness.

The committee oversees the state’s Department of Mental Health and the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services.

“I’m very excited for the opportunity to work on issues that change people’s lives, that save lives, that really makes an impact on our communities in East Boston and the Commonwealth,” said Madaro. “If you think about it there’s no family that I know or can think of that hasn’t been touched on either mental health issues and or substance use issues so this is an incredible opportunity to really do some good.”

Madaro was instrumental in the past to secure state funding for the development and administration of a program to prevent and treat addiction to opioid and related substances through the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center. The program closed services gap and ensured treatment counselors were able to cover the critical hours of night and weekend shifts with the hopes that this coverage could be the difference needed in preventing overdoses and encouraging treatment for addicts. He also secured state funding to focus efforts on mental health through the Health Center and how it pertains to substance abuse disorders.

“Most recently we worked on that issue for Telehealth to make sure those types of services are covered under Telehealth during the ongoing

COVID-19 pandemic,” said Madaro. “As a former board member of the Health Center and later as a state representative we’ve worked very hard trying to bolster those types of services for our community. That’s another reason why I’m really excited to have been named chair of the committee because it allows us to amplify and enhance the work that began right here in our own backyard statewide.”

With the recent opening of a recovery support center in Eastie, Madaro said there needs to be more focus on long-term support services.

“That is something I’ve heard a lot of folks in the recovery community talk about,” said Madaro. “The one thing about substance abuse and recovery is that it’s almost never ending. This is an issue that touches young people, whether it’s mental health or substance use, old people, veterans, there’s public safety implications, there’s public health implications and then it goes into the judiciary system when you think about drug court or mental health court. So the breadth of policy that we can work on is really incredible and it just presents such an amazing opportunity to make a positive impact in our community and, more broadly, throughout the state.”

Out of the gate Madaro said he plans to meet with key stakeholders in the mental health and recovery communities.

See REGION Page 9

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Region / Continued from page 8

“We’re starting to line those meetings up now,” he said. “Not only with statewide players but also the players and stakeholders right in our own backyard. That would certainly include places like the East Boston Community Soup Kitchen volunteers, which are frontline service providers for people dealing with these challenges. It would also include North Suffolk Mental Health, the Health Center and anyone else who does that type of social service where people are dealing with those types of challenges. I really want to roll up my sleeves and help—whether it’s the issues that my Senate Co-Chair is facing down the Cape or whether it’s the issues we’re dealing with here in East Boston. I really wanted the opportunity to dive into substantive policy that impacts people’s lives and that’s exactly what I’m going to get to do on this committee. I’m just thrilled and grateful to Speaker Mariano for the appointment and excited to work with my colleagues on the committee to do some impactful work here in the state.”

DOLORES LAMATTINA, LONGTIME CITY EMPLOYEE, DEAD AT 85

East Boston - Dolores LaMattina, a longtime former city employee of the Paris Street Gym and Pool known for her warmth and dry sense of humor, has died.

Mrs. LaMattina who, as a single mother, raised four successful boys including former City Councilor Sal LaMattina, died on Wednesday, February 10 surrounded by her family. She was 85 years old.

Mrs. LaMattina was born and raised in East Boston and attended East Boston. Mrs. LaMattina spent her entire life living at Drake Place just off Chelsea Street around the block from the Paris Street Gym and Pool. There Mrs. LaMattina raised her four boys—Sal, Robert, David, and John.

Sal would become City Councilor while David and Robert opened up a successful karate studio in New Hampshire. John would go on to have a successful career in Boston’s restaurant industry and worked at high end restaurants like Morton’s and Strega.

“She made sure we kept in line,” said Sal LaMattina. “At an early age she got us involved in the Social Centers, the Salesians Boys & Girls Club and Paris Street. We grew up poor. I’m so amazed that she raised four boys in a little house with four on Drake Place. She gave us all a really happy childhood. We never knew we were poor because she was always so generous. I find comfort that my brothers and I had a beautiful mother who loved us so much. She taught us love and respect not only to our family but with others.”

Mrs. LaMattina worked at Macy’s for many years before making a career change in 1990.

From 1990 to her retirement in 2013 at the age of 77 Mrs. LaMattina worked the front desk at the Paris Street Gym and later at the Paris Street Pool’s front desk.

When her son, Sal, was elected to the City Council Mrs. LaMattina became

the de facto Mayor of East Boston and the Paris Street Pool her City Hall.

“Everyone would come to her,” said Sal LaMattina. “They go down to the pool and see my mom if they needed help, if they needed housing, if they needed a job, if they needed some other assistance and she’d call me with a list of names of people I needed to help.”

Sal LaMattina said his mother was always very generous and always wanted to help people.

Her granddaughter, Liana LaMattina, a former Chief of Staff for Rep. Adrian Madaro and current Assistant District Attorney prosecutor said her grandmother always had the biggest heart she’s ever known.

“Every Sunday she would cook Sunday Dinner, make a gravy and it was pretty much an open house,” said Liana LaMattina. “Anyone could come in and get some food... friends, neighbors...that’s just the type of person she was. She was always so caring and compassionate. I remember at the (Paris Street) Gym there was this stray dog that was always outside and every day when she went to work she would bring him left-over food, kitchen scraps, bones, hotdogs..anything she had. She was a beautiful person.”

LITERACY DAY GALA PLANNED FOR MARCH 18

LYNN - No one could have predicted the heights that the Lynn Celebrate Literacy Day Gala would reach in the past 10 years, not even Saritin Rizzuto, one of the founders of the event.

A vice president at Metro Credit Union, Rizzuto said that to have more than 300 guests attend the gala each year is an extraordinary show of support from the Lynn community for the committee’s efforts to promote literacy and education.

The gala event is usually held on the roof deck of the All Care Visiting Nurse Association building during the summer. The view of Lynn and Nahant is spectacular from the well-known building located across the street from North Shore Community College.

The committee intends to celebrate its decade of accomplishments at a kickoff event held virtually on March 18 at 6 p.m. The actual gala itself will be held in September.

Mayor Thomas McGee, who has been a strong supporter of the event since his days as Lynn’s state senator, will deliver the opening remarks. The keynote speaker will be Jamie Zahlway Belsito, former congressional candidate.

The 2020 recipients of the Excellence in Literacy Leadership Awards, Lynn school teacher Magalie Torres-Rowe, executive director and founder of Latina Center MARIA, and Sheila O’Neil, president of the Lynn Teachers Union, will reveal at the kickoff event which local non-profit organizations will be receiving the \$500 scholarships that the committee donates in their honor.

“Each year we recognize individuals and organizations that have gone above and beyond to educate the public about literacy in the Lynn community,” said Rizzuto.

Rizzuto said she is

proud of the volunteers who serve on the Celebrate Literacy Day committee including her Metro Credit Union colleague Diana Moreno, whose family has also been a leader in the advancement of the sport of soccer in Lynn.

“They have been dedicated individuals that have really taken time out of their busy schedule to commit to celebrating Literacy Day,” credited Rizzuto. “This committee so instrumental in making the event a success.”

9th GRADERS STRUGGLING IN COVID-19 WORLD

REVERE - Ninth grade is a pivotal year for students as they begin their high school career. It’s a big adjustment being in a new school setting, learning the ropes of high school and making connections and forging relationships that may last a lifetime.

However, COVID-19 has put a huge damper on this exciting and important transition year for students in Revere Public Schools and schools across the state.

“We’re seeing that in schools across the country we are having real problems with retaining the focus from ninth graders,” said Revere High School Principal Dr. John Perella. “I talked to principals in Greater Boston on a weekly basis and every single one of them identifies a ninth grade class as the most challenging and concerning and it is a definitive concern for us as well.”

Dr. Perella said not only are ninth graders coming into a new school that they have never experienced in school their eighth grade school year was also severely cut short by COVID.

“They weren’t able to really end that chapter of their educational life,” said Perella. “Typically we have very robust programs over the summer that allow incoming ninth graders to come in and get acclimated to the school. So we’re really operating under a lot of challenging situations here. Our understanding is that the ninth grade is having some troubles. We will be doing some data diving at the end of the semester to get a better analysis of failures and passes. It has been a challenge getting students to connect and to stay connected with us.”

However, Dr. Perella said RHS’s Assistant Principals have been interacting daily with students and families and sending home correspondences and setting up meetings.”

“The ninth grade teachers are doing this as well,” said Perella. “In preparation for this year we sort of established cohorts for ninth and 10th grades. So we have the systems in place to communicate and to make those connections, but there’s no denying that this is a concern for us and throughout the country.”

RIVERFRONT MASTER PLAN APPROVED BY PLANNING BD.

REVERE - Mayor Brian Arrigo has been focusing his efforts on redeveloping the city’s riverfront area in coordination with a community-based process that gained momentum in 2020.

Ward 5 Councilor John

Powers, in whose district the property sits, has been a partner in the Mayor’s vision and the advancement of that transformational project - known as the RiverFront Master Plan - that will redevelop several of the private properties in that district as well as the improvement of public properties such as Gibson Park.

The RiverFront Master Plan also addresses climate resiliency strategies that will improve the flooding situation that has been a persistent problem in the Riverside neighborhood, not only from sea level rises but periodic rainfall events.

At its Feb. 9 meeting, the Planning Board unanimously adopted the RiverFront Master Plan that envisions the potential of the approximately 20 acres in the northern part of Revere on the Pines River bordering Lynn that is centered around Gibson Park.

The Planning Board’s unanimous vote signified a special triumph for Arrigo, Powers, and the many residents of the Riverside and Point of Pines neighborhoods.

“The Riverfront District has been historically underutilized, and the Master Plan will offer a new, dynamic public space for all of our residents to enjoy,” said Mayor Arrigo. “The redevelopment of the land will keep in line with our environmental goals and transform our precious riverfront into a local highlight of recreation, health, and stewardship.”

Meanwhile, State Rep. Jessica Giannino, who will play a key role at the state level as the total re-

construction plan for the nearby General Edwards Bridge moves into the spotlight, also sees the approval of the RiverFront Master Plan as a victory for the city and its residents.

“I commend the City of Revere for bringing together residents and community stakeholders of the Riverside and Point of Pines neighborhoods to begin a master planning process for the RiverFront waterfront, which faces the Pines River,” said Giannino (D-Revere). “If the recommendations of the group are implemented and come to fruition, this will provide a revitalization of the neighborhood, including an opportunity for community boating, which will be an asset to our community.”

Bob O’Brien, chief of planning and development for the City of Revere, said the city also anticipates the redevelopment of the current G and J Towing and Salvage Yard and the former Mirage site into a waterfront restaurant.

O’Brien indicated that the G and J Towing property is under agreement for prospective redevelopment with Redgate Residential Development “that has a long history in Revere.”

One of Redgate’s recent projects was 500 Ocean Avenue which is adjacent to the Markey Bridge.

“We’ve had a long and successful history with Redgate in Revere and one of the great advantages of the prospect redevelopment is that’s it a company that understands Revere and that the city knows well,” said O’Brien.

The Boatworks Property could make way for a community rowing center (North Shore Maritime Center) and the future establishment of a Revere High rowing team (see related story).

O’Brien said the goals of RiverFront Master Plan would not have been attainable without the superior leadership of Mayor Arrigo, Councilors John Powers and Patrick Keefe and Rep. Jessica Giannino, who also serves as a councilor-at-large.

“For Councilor Powers notably, there are two aspects of the RiverFront Master Plan which are really a reflection of his leadership—one is the proposed reuse of the Riverside Boatworks property,” said O’Brien. “John has been in the forefront of opposing the kind of development that the neighbors didn’t want, and as result of that, we’re now getting what the community does want. The other element is the new fire station at Point of Pines, which was also a longstanding cause of John Powers. In many ways, the Boatworks, the fire station, and the redevelopment of the tow yard are near and dear to John’s heart and a reflection of his leadership.”

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PADULSKY SISTERS WERE BIG FANS OF CHICK COREA



Lynda Padulsky Diamond (left) was a big fan of Chelsea native and world-renowned jazz pianist Chick Corea and attended all of his concerts in Boston. Lynda invited her sister, Karen Padulsky Poverman (right), to join her in appreciating Mr. Corea's incredible talents in person and Karen became a huge fan as well. The sisters are shown backstage with Mr. Corea after his October, 2019 concert at Symphony Hall. Karen and Lynda are the daughters of Morton and Sandra Padulsky of Chelsea. Mr. Corea died on Feb. 9 after a gallant battle against cancer.

Encore Boston Harbor achieves health security verification from Sharecare and Forbes Travel Guide

Staff report

Encore Boston Harbor is proud to announce that it is among the first hotels in the world to become *Sharecare Health Security VERIFIED™ with Forbes Travel Guide*. This comprehensive facility verification helps ensure guests can book with confidence at a resort that has consistent and robust health safety procedures in place.

“We enlisted a team of top-rated medical and health professionals from Georgetown and John Hopkins Universities to help us develop our health and safety programs; now considered the gold standard in our industry,” said Brian Gullbrants, president of Encore Boston Harbor.

“Being *Sharecare Health Security VERIFIED™ with Forbes Travel Guide* is a testament to our continued effort to offer our guests the latest health safety advancements in addition to our five-star resort experience.”

The Sharecare Health Security verification comes with an easily identifiable “seal of approval” – the *Sharecare VERIFIED™ with Forbes Travel Guide* badge – based on

a hotel’s compliance with expert-validated best practices that minimize the risk and impact of COVID-19 and potential future public health events.

Developed by Forbes Travel Guide, the global authority on hospitality excellence, and digital health industry leader Sharecare, the comprehensive verification covers more than 360 standards across health and hygiene protocols, cleaning products and procedures, ventilation, physical distancing, the guest experience, and health safety communication with guests and employees. Hotels are required to verify their health protocols on an ongoing basis to ensure continued compliance with the most up-to-date global health standards.

“The pandemic has made it clear that hotels and resorts must, first and foremost, assure guests of their safety,” said Filip Boyen, CEO of Forbes Travel Guide. “By becoming *VERIFIED®*, Encore Boston Harbor has demonstrated its commitment to creating a culture of accountability and following global best practices to heighten health security, certified by a third party.”

Encore gross gaming revenues grow for third straight month

By Seth Daniel

Gross Gaming Revenues (GGR) at Encore Boston Harbor grew for the third straight month in January at \$33.31 million and showed increasing revenues at both slots and table games.

In fact, despite closures and COVID-19 restrictions, the slot numbers weren’t that far off from pre-pandemic days – a startling fact that has been

the case on several monthly reports throughout the past year.

The slot revenues in January came in at \$19.6 million, which was up from \$16.09 million in December and \$15.4 million in November. In pre-pandemic days, such as in December 2019, slot revenues were \$22.6 million – just \$3 million more in that month than in January of 2021. Even

last September 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, slot numbers were at \$23.4 million which was above the average monthly revenues for Encore before COVID-19 hit.

Table games have been closed for the most part since COVID hit, with no poker offerings at all since last March. That has caused the revenues to be far off the normal course at \$13.68 million in Jan-

uary. That was consistent with revenues in December as well, and a little higher than November’s \$11.8 million.

Before COVID, table games were grossing close to \$30 million a month at Encore.

The January 2021 state gaming taxes stood at \$8.3 million and the total coin-in dollars were \$235.19 million – the highest since October.

State of City / Continued from page 3

the rent backlogs that exist and will only grow as time passes by.

He also highlighted the package of zoning changes that was sent to the Council after a mostly-positive recommendation from the Planning Board. One of the key changes there include building more density. Meanwhile, a Home Rule Petition approved in the State Legislature not long ago allows for Tax Title properties in the City to be transferred to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for development of affordable housing – a first in any community.

I expect very shortly that Board will come to the Council seeking a transfer for their first project,” he said.

A second concern is rebuilding the small business community. He said the City is going to have to invest significant money to get small businesses away from the crisis stage and back to sustainability. He said he has tasked the City’s Community Devel-



Councilor Leo Robinson during the State of the City.

opment office with getting out into the community and beginning that work.

Rebuild Small Biz Community

“I have instructed the DHCD to spend the next month working closely with the business community and the Council to develop ideas how we might most effectively jump start that sector with government support,” he said. “I expect that could include assistance for outdoor dining, a second round of the storefront improvement program and perhaps sponsoring some

events to draw business to the commercial sector once it is safe for larger gatherings. The details are still in development, but the City is committed to using government resources to fuel this business recovery.”

Meanwhile, while small business is getting on firm financial ground, Ambrosino said the City needs to begin thinking about building back its reserves. The pandemic caused the City to reach deep into its Rainy Day Fund, with the Fund having been at around \$25 million before the pandemic, and now at \$15 million. He said they spent \$12 million to support residents, and \$5 million of that came from the City’s savings. Another \$5 million was used to prop up the budget this year due to declining revenues.

“We do have some work to build back up our financial strength,” he said. “I will say things are not as bleak as those circumstances first indicated. In fact the economic

prospects for FY22 are looking better...Re-building \$10 million of our reserves will be difficult but we will begin that in FY22.”

Finally, the last point of attention he said needed to be the school system. He said Chelsea Public Schools will not be able to function without help from the City.

Wrapping it up, Ambrosino said he remains hopeful for 2021 and that working together, City leaders will find their way out of the pandemic.

“I have every faith and confidence that working together with you we’ll find the right path forward in 2021,” he said. “Our City was tested and shaken in 2020. I’ll quote one of my favorite Bible verses, ‘We were hard pressed on every side, but we were not crushed.’ Instead we emerged intact and the State of Chelsea tonight remains steady, strong and determined.”

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LOCAL STUDENTS EARN ACADEMIC HONORS

TORREZ NAMED TO WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY'S DEAN'S LIST

Felix Trinidad Torrez, of Chelsea, MA, is among close to 750 students named to the Western New England University Fall 2020 Dean's List. To qualify, students must earn a GPA of 3.30 or higher.

"We are so proud of our Dean's List students who demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence in their studies despite the unique challenges of our fall semester," commented Dr. Robert E. Johnson, President. "Of the roughly 3,000 colleges and universities tracked by the College Crisis Initiative, Western New England University was among just 27% nationwide that resumed primarily 'in-person' teaching last fall. Our Dean's List students stayed focused and engaged; they should be very proud of their achievements. Well done, Golden Bears!"

Trinidad Torrez is working toward a BS in Criminal Justice.

Having just celebrated its Centennial, Western New England University is a private, independent, coeducational institution. Located on an attractive 215-acre suburban campus in Springfield, Massachusetts, Western New England serves 3,690 students, including 2,486 full-time undergraduate students. Undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs are offered through Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and the School of Law.

HONOR ROLL ANNOUNCED AT AC

The following Chelsea residents were named to the second quarter Honor Roll at Arlington Catholic High School after receiving grades of B- or better in all classes:

Natalie Coreas
Kelly Nguyen
Chloe Renik

ENDICOTT ANNOUNCES DEAN'S LIST

Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Fall 2020 Dean's List students. In order to qualify for the Dean's List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below "C," have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

Gerson Yanes Benitez of Chelsea, majoring in Business met these requirements:

About Endicott College Endicott College offers doctorate, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree programs at its campus on the scenic coast of Beverly, Mass., with additional sites in Boston, online, and at U.S. and international locations. Endicott remains true to its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts education with internship opportunities across disciplines. For more, visit endicott.edu.

BONNER NAMED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD DEAN'S LIST

The University of Hart-

ford is pleased to announce Yasmine Bonner of Chelsea has been named to its Dean's List for Fall 2020.

Spread across seven dynamic schools and colleges, the University of Hartford has been guiding the purpose and passion of students for over six decades. On our 350-acre campus alongside Connecticut's capital city, approximately 4,600 undergraduate and 2,000 graduate students representing 49 states and 47 countries come together for a common purpose: to collaborate across different disciplines, diversify perspectives, and broaden worldviews. We're a four-year private university focused on advancing the public good through meaningful connections within our communities. Our unique approach to comprehensive education gives us the critical perspectives that lead to impactful change, regionally and beyond. With degree programs spanning the arts, humanities, business, engineering and technology, education, and health professions, we focus on doing the work that matters. For more information, visit hartford.edu.

MALDEN CATHOLIC STUDENTS ACHIEVE HONOR ROLL

Malden Catholic High School students have completed the coursework for the first quarter for the 2020-21 school year. Malden Catholic divides honors into three sections: Headmaster's List, First Honors and Second Honors.

Headmaster's List is achieved by having over a 90 in all classes, First

Honors is achieved by having over an 85 in all classes and Second Honors is achieved by having over an 80 in all classes.

The following Chelsea resident achieved:

Headmaster's List: Chi Linh Nguyen

Since 1932, Malden Catholic High School has shaped emerging leaders in our community, claiming a Nobel Laureate, a Senator, two ambassadors and countless community and business heads among its alumni. Annually, graduates attend some of the nation's most renowned universities including Harvard, Georgetown, Brown, Cornell, Tufts, Georgia Tech, Boston College and Amherst College. Foundational to student success is Malden Catholic's codivisional model which offers the best of both worlds, single-gender academics during the day and integrated social and extracurricular opportunities after school. Malden Catholic is known in the community for its rigorous academics, SFX Scholars Program and award-winning STEM program (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) with electives such as Robotics and Engineering Design. Malden Catholic curriculum is designed to improve individual growth mindset, leadership principles, success outcomes along with integrating the Xaverian values of trust, humility, compassion, simplicity and zeal. <https://www.maldencatholic.org/>

ON DEAN'S LIST AT UMASS LOWELL

Among those recognized for achieving academic distinction for

the fall 2020 semester at UMass Lowell are:

- * Yhan Cruz of Chelsea, majoring in political science
- * Kevin Calix Bustillo of Chelsea, majoring in chemical engineering
- * Gabriella McLellan of Chelsea, majoring in computer science
- * Coral Gonzalez Diana of Chelsea, majoring in nursing
- * Jorman Mota of Chelsea, majoring in civil engineering
- * Danelia Ramirez Aguilar of Chelsea, majoring in criminal justice
- * Mac Shillingford of Chelsea, majoring in civil engineering
- * Leslie Carreto Romero of Chelsea, majoring in business administration
- * Angeline Nguyen of Chelsea, majoring in biology
- * Lael Santiago of Chelsea, majoring in biology
- * Zongxuan Li of Chelsea, majoring in computer science

UMass Lowell is a national research university offering its more than 18,000 students bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in business, education, engineering, fine arts, health, humanities, sciences and social sciences. UMass Lowell delivers high-quality educational programs and personal attention from leading faculty and staff, all of which prepare graduates to be leaders in their communities and around the globe. www.uml.edu

LEONARD-CALCANO MAKES DEAN'S LIST

Andreas Leonard-Calcano of Chelsea was named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the 2020 Fall Semester.

Leonard-Calcano is in the software engineering program.

Undergraduate students are eligible for Dean's List if their GPA is greater than or equal to 3.40 for nine credits of traditionally graded coursework; they do not have any grades of "Incomplete," NE, D, or F; and they have registered for, and completed, at least 12 credit hours.

Rochester Institute of Technology is home to leading creators, entrepreneurs, innovators and researchers. Founded in 1829, RIT enrolls about 18,600 students in more than 200 career-oriented and professional programs, making it among the largest private universities in the U.S.

The university is internationally recognized and ranked for academic leadership in business, computing, engineering, imaging science, liberal arts, sustainability, and fine and applied arts. RIT also offers unparalleled support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The cooperative education program is one of the oldest and largest in the nation. Global partnerships include campuses in China, Croatia, Dubai and Kosovo.

SAINT JOSEPH PREP HONOR ROLL

Kaylie Gonzalez of Chelsea and a member of the sophomore class at Saint Joseph Prep in Boston was named to the honor roll for the second quarter as a Phoenix Scholar. To qualify for this distinction, Kaylie needed to have all A's and B's.

East Boston Savings Bank Foundation awards Care Dimensions a \$5,000 grant

Care Dimensions, the largest hospice and palliative care provider to adults and children in Massachusetts, is proud to announce receiving a \$5,000 grant from East Boston Savings Bank Charitable Foundation ("Foundation") to support the nonprofit's telemedicine program. This program provides a free smartphone equipped

with a HIPAA-secure, telemedicine application and internet connection for hospice and palliative care patients who don't have access to the internet or a device to support real-time video nursing support and consultation.

"When the pandemic began and we implemented video visits to supplement limited in-person

visits, we realized that many of our patients had no access to the internet or a device to be able to participate in this type of support," said President and CEO Patricia Ahern, RN, MBA, FACHE. "The pandemic challenged us to be creative about ensuring continuity of care and healthcare equity for all patients. We are very

grateful the Foundation has invested in our mission."


A partner to Care Dimensions since 2010, the Foundation helps community organizations within their service area with an emphasis on assisting health and human services agencies and the support of low-income persons.

"For more than two de-

cades through our Charitable Foundation, EBSB has been assisting charitable organizations like Care Dimensions by providing funding for programs that help improve the lives of those that are in need," says Richard Gavegnano, Chairman, President and CEO of East Boston Savings Bank. "We feel very strongly about being a




resource for these organizations especially during challenging times like the present."

"Our program offers additional support and peace of mind for some of Care Dimensions' most vulnerable patients and caregivers who lack adequate digital access," said Vice President of Philanthropy, Donna Deveau, M.Ed.



Film Series

You are never too small to make a difference.
-Greta Thunberg



The Walnut Street Synagogue, in partnership with Women in Film & Video New England and the Boston Latino International Film Festival, is proud to present "Tikkun Olam/Sanar el Mundo" a film series & roundtable virtual event.

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Sunday, February 21
The Longing: The Forgotten Jews of South America
directed by Gabriela Bohm
3:30pm Film/5:00pm Discussion-Virtual

Sunday, February 28
Decade of Fire
directed by Vivian Vázquez Irizarry and Gretchen Hildebran
3:30pm Film/5:00pm Discussion-Virtual

Sunday, March 14
Havana Curveball
directed by Marcia Jarmel and Ken Schneider
4:00pm Film/5:00pm Discussion-Virtual

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Chelsea Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

