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CHELSEA RECORD

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35 CENTS



City Manager Thomas Ambrosino speaks at a rally opposing a vote to fund a new Northeast Metropolitan Vocational Technical High School in front of City Hall last Thursday.



School Committee President Kelly Garcia speaks out on the high cost of the construction during the rally.

School Committee approves new teacher contracts

By Adam Swift

The Chelsea Teachers Union and the School Committee have agreed on new three-year contracts for teachers, paraprofessionals, and clerical staff.

The contracts, which are retroactive to July and run through the end of June, 2024, see larger than average salary increases. School and union officials said they hope the new contracts help to retain qualified teachers in the district and with the recruitment of a diverse workforce.

"I think the memorandums of agreement represent some really great gains on behalf of our paraprofessionals, our clerks, and our educators unit," said Chelsea Teachers Union President Kathryn Anderson.

Anderson said the contracts were ratified nearly unanimously by union

members.

"I look forward to continuing our work together and I really think this will go a long way toward helping retain the wonderful staff we do have in Chelsea and helping to recruit a more diverse workforce to help get our kids the education they deserve," said Anderson.

Teachers will see a 5.25 percent salary increase in the first year of the contract, followed by a 4.25 percent increase in the second year and 4.5 percent in the third year.

"We made a very large increase to ensure that we are competitive in the surrounding area and ensuring that we are retaining staff," said district human resources director Christine Lee, who noted that the typical annual salary increases are closer to 2 to 2.5 percent.

"This is a huge increase

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City officials rally to oppose Voke building costs

By Adam Swift

Chelsea's proposed share of the cost of a new Northeast Metropolitan Vocational Technical High School building would put an unfair financial burden on the city, according to city officials and community leaders who rallied in front of City Hall last Thursday.

Voters in the 12 vocational district communities, including Chelsea, will be able to weigh in on the funding of the proposed \$317 million project in Wakefield on Tuesday, Jan. 25. Polls will be open in Chelsea in the

City Council Chambers at City Hall from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

At last Thursday's rally, a number of city officials urged voters to vote no.

"We are grateful for the opportunity that this brings to our students in offering vocational education, however the construction of this new school comes at a hefty price for our community," said District 5 City Councillor Judith Garcia. "It will cost the city (\$58) million. We are talking about annually a cost of \$1.9 million, which is a very high price for us; it's a price that our community cannot afford

to pay."

School Committee President Kelly Garcia urged residents in surrounding communities, which include Revere, Saugus, Winthrop, Wakefield, Reading, and Woburn, as well as voters in Chelsea to vote no.

"Our schools, our community can simply not afford this construction and we hope we can count on your vote on voting no on Jan. 25," said Kelly Garcia.

The inequity of the formula determining Chelsea's share of the project cost was a theme touched upon by many of the day's

speakers. Judith Garcia said if Chelsea has to pay nearly \$2 million per year over the next 30 years, it will basically eliminate the ability for Chelsea to pay for any new school or city projects over that time.

"Our objections have nothing to do with the merits of the school, it is simply the cost and the antiquated formula," said District 2 City Councillor Melinda Vega Maldonado. "The cost is simply unaffordable, inequitable, and insensitive, especially

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Rental, utility assistance available for residents

By Adam Swift

Assistance is available for renters and homeowners facing economic hardships during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We want to make sure the residents of Chelsea know about all of the housing resources that are available to (them) as well as utility assistance resources," said city Housing and Community Preservation Coordinator Oriana Reilly. "We know

it is winter and fuel prices have gone up, and (residents) have many rights as tenants, (they) have rights to live in a safe, warm home throughout the winter."

Reilly said the city and the Department of Housing and Community Development want residents to know about the resources available for utility and rental assistance.

"Right now, there is a moratorium on utility shutoffs," said Reilly. "It

is not allowed for Ever-source or National Grid to turn off your heat until March 15. However, they can turn off your electricity and heat after March 15, and you will still have debt if you haven't paid your bills."

Residents should start planning ahead to figure out how they will be able to handle that debt.

"You can apply for help paying your utility bills through rental assistance programs that already ex-

ist," said Reilly.

Those rental assistance programs are available through TND Connect at (617) 712-3487, La Colaborativa at (617) 889-6080, Metro Housing Boston at (617) 425-6700, and CAPIC at (617) 884-6130.

"We really recommend that you call these organizations to find out what you might be eligible for and what your options are

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Community pays tribute to Soldiers Home Chaplain, The Rev. Patrick Healy

By Cray Shuman

They came together as one congregation and one community for a Mass of Christian Burial Monday to say farewell to the Rev. Patrick Francis Healy, the long-time chaplain of the Chelsea Soldiers' Home.

The Rev. Michael O'Hara led the funeral Mass at St. Michael's Chapel for the Rev. Healy, who passed away on January 12, 2022, at the age of 100. Family and friends and state and local officials

attended the observance which truly was a celebration of the universally beloved clergyman's incredible life story that began in Charlestown and spanned the entire globe through his highly decorated service (various campaign medals and three Bronze Stars) in the United States Army as a chaplain.

Eugene O'Flaherty, a former state representative and chief counsel to former Boston Mayor Martin Walsh, rose to the occasion with a beautiful, touching eulogy for the Rev. Patrick Healy. O'Flaherty has been a calming influence during what has been an emotional time for the congregation as it mourns the loss of its spiritual leader.

"Today I am filled with grief at his loss but also, like all of you, I know we will see him again and that



The Rev. Patrick Healy.

fills me with happiness. Father taught us that," said O'Flaherty at the outset of his message.

O'Flaherty told the congregation of the Rev. Healy's humble beginnings at Saint Mary's grade school in Charlestown, "where Father's affinity for the faith was nurtured." He illuminated on the Rev. Healy's excellence as a young athlete, "earning a tryout with the Boston Red Sox in 1939."

O'Flaherty also highlighted Father Healy's writings of "Finger of God" books, quoting him in an interview before his 100th birthday, "If you let the finger of God guide you in life, you're going to be very happy."

O'Flaherty credited Father Healy's service to his country and how his noble contribution to his fellow American veterans continued during the last two years of the pandemic that struck the Soldiers' Home community hard.

"His last mission in life was here at the Home, during the pandemic," said O'Flaherty. "He cared for the troops just like he learned to do in Vietnam and other places around the world. Amidst that danger of war, Father Healy had said, 'I was in

See HEALY Page 2

Positive Covid-19 cases ticking up in Chelsea schools

By Adam Swift

The new calendar year has seen a major uptick in positive Covid-19 cases in the Chelsea schools thanks to the Omicron variant.

Since the December holiday break, there have been 161 positive cases among students, and 167 among staff, according to Assistant Superintendent of Schools Adam Deleidi. Those numbers account for 35.6 percent of the 451 positive student cases since the schools started tracking the number of September, 2020, and 53 percent of the 314 positive staff cases in that same time.

About 30 percent of the Chelsea schools workforce has tested positive for Covid-19 since the start of the pandemic, the assistant superintendent said.

The good news, Deleidi said, is that the vaccine rates in Chelsea and in the schools are among the highest in the state, and the cases are much milder than previous variants of Covid-19.

At last week's School Committee meeting, Deleidi updated the committee on the numbers,

as well as the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Department of Public Health guidelines for positive cases and close contacts.

"I want to acknowledge the hard work and effort just to be able to be learning in person, and doing it at a high level," said Deleidi. "First and foremost, our students, who are most impacted by this, and I'm really proud of all the work the students have done to be able to deal with this. Obviously, this is not an optimal situation, but every day, they are masking up, and they are getting vaccinated, and they are doing everything we are asking them to do."

Deleidi also praised the teachers, nurses, administration, and other staff who have been working hard to keep the district going.

The biggest change in the DESE guidelines is the cutting down of isolation and quarantine times for those who test positive or are close contacts for those who test positive. Those times have been cut in half from 10 to five days, provided those af-

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Baker administration announces additional measures to protect acute care hospital capacity

In response to continuing staffing shortages across the healthcare industry, the Baker-Polito Administration announced several measures intended to ensure acute hospitals can serve those in need of acute care. The Commonwealth’s healthcare system has been facing a critical staffing shortage which has contributed to the loss of approximately 700 medical/surgical and ICU hospital beds since the beginning of 2021. Hospitals are also seeing many more patients than usual, the majority due to non-COVID-19-related reasons.

To assist hospitals amid the staff shortage, the Department of Public Health (DPH) issued orders to:

- Curtail unnecessary Emergency Department visits for non-emergency services
- Allow qualified physician assistants to practice independently
- Provide greater staffing flexibility for dialysis units
- Allow foreign-trained physicians to qualify for licensure more easily

“Our healthcare system continues to experience significant workforce and capacity constraints due to longer than average hospital stays, separate and apart from the challenges brought on by COVID,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders. “Working closely with our hospital leaders, these additional actions by DPH will allow for flexibility to preserve our hospital capacity in the coming weeks.”

DPH has previously updated public health orders

and issued advisories to hospitals and other healthcare facilities to alleviate staffing shortages and enhance the capacity of the health care system. These new actions include:

Advisory Curtailing Unnecessary Emergency Department Visits

Emergency Departments across the Commonwealth, like all other healthcare systems, are experiencing significant staff shortages and long wait times for care. In order to ensure critical resources are available for those who are having a medical emergency, individuals should not seek ED care for routine healthcare needs, COVID-19 testing or COVID-19 vaccination. For non-urgent, routine healthcare needs, individuals should contact their primary care providers.

Physician Assistants

Physician Assistants (PA) may practice independently without physician supervision, provided they are employed within a provider setting where PAs work together with physicians to provide patient care and the PA is qualified and practicing within their scope of practice, experience, and training.

Moonlighting for resident flexibility

Resident physicians can engage in “internal moonlighting,” which will allow flexibility to provide patient care outside of their specialized training program so that they may be redeployed to parts of the health care system with the highest staffing demands.

Credentialing: interfa-

cility staff transfer flexibilities

Requires DPH-licensed facilities to expedite credentialing and to facilitate staff transfers across and between hospitals and provider systems to best meet patient care and capacity needs.

Out-of-hospital dialysis center staffing flexibilities

Enables out-of-hospital dialysis providers, including hospitals with outpatient dialysis centers, to relax staffing requirement levels while maintaining safe patient care by following DPH guidance that otherwise ensures that sufficient direct care staff, who are trained in dialysis care, will be available to meet the needs of patients undergoing dialysis.

Foreign-trained physician order

Enables an expedited licensure of foreign-trained physicians by allowing those with at least 2 years of post-graduate training, but who do not have a Massachusetts limited license, to qualify for licensure.

These actions align with or expand upon emergency public health orders issued since March 2020 to preserve the healthcare system while still providing quality care.

Residents can help these efforts by getting a vaccine and booster, which remains the best way to protect against serious illness or hospitalization from COVID-19.

These actions are in addition to the deployment of additional Massachusetts National Guard staff posted at acute care hospitals.

PEOPLE OF CHELSEA

X Bonnie Woods - 2021

The following is one in a series of sneak peeks at the upcoming People of Chelsea additions by Chelsea Photographer Darlene DeVita. The new work will ultimately appear on the fence of the Chelsea Public Library (CPL) Spring of 2022 a collaboration between the People of Chelsea project and the CPL.)

By Darlene DeVita

X Bonnie is a Chelsea artist and is also known for her landscaping work. We photographed in her garden, once a dumping ground now a paradise!

Let’s start with how you got your name, X Bonnie Woods.

“I started using the “X” professionally in 1978 as an artist. At the time I was working on folded paper with ink. They were maps, treasure maps, realistic maps of specific places, certain cities. This was Pre-Chelsea. For instance, if I were making a map of this porch where we’re sitting now, there would be a little rectangle there where you are, and there would be a little square where I’m sitting, I would be an “X” on where I’m sitting right here on this chair, and then I’d sign my name next to it to show that’s where I was on the map. Up to that time, I would sign my paintings with my last name, Woods, but in this show, because of where I placed my name, rather than at the bottom of the piece, they started calling me X Woods. I started getting fan mail to X Woods, and I just thought it was cool because I was getting letters to X Woods. From then forward, I kept using it, and I like it. The X can mean so many different things to different people. We can look



mysterious, X marks the spot, X chromosome, female. I just liked it and kept it.

I moved to Chelsea in 1999 via Ohio to Boston to Chelsea. In the beginning, we used to have artist’s walks. At the time, we had a little map of where the artists lived and where their studios were. We also had garden walks. This seems long ago now because there are many more artists in Chelsea now. I remember having open houses here.

One of my favorite galleries was the Spencer Lofts Gallery. I have had several shows there. It’s a beautiful space, and it was perfect for my work because I was working on big pieces. They looked fantastic in that space. Unfortunately, the board members of the association decided not support the gallery anymore. That was a big loss. I’ve been in different exhibition spaces in Boston, but that was one the best spaces in the Boston area. To see that end was a terrible thing for the arts in Chelsea.

There was the Chelsea Art walk too! The foundry was one of my favorite parts of it. To have it right here in Chelsea! As I understand it, that was the only bronze foundry

in New England. They sculpted the “Make Way For Ducklings” [by artist Nancy Schön] there! They had tours with wine and cheese during the art walk, and at the end of the tour we had an opportunity to make an iron 6x6 coaster.

I spend a lot of time in Germany and still have a number of projects going on there, my daughter and two grandchildren live there, but I have consulted with Mimi Graney, and Chelsea Prospers on their history walks. One of my ongoing projects is a new city map for Chelsea. I’m getting ready to gear up on that project again. I think now that Chelsea is opening up a bit after the pandemic, it might be time to go around again and talk to people about the project.

It seems the pandemic brought Chelsea to its knees in a lot of ways, but you can see the Chelsea spirit. It’s the how the thing of making something out of nothing, the Phoenix rising up out of the ashes. Chelsea’s very resilient, we’re usually hit very hard by whatever tragedy comes by, and somehow we pick ourselves up again and again, and we get ourselves on the “map” again!”

Contract/ Continued from page 1

from what we have ever done before, and we’re happy to be able to provide these increases to our educators,” said Lee.

In addition to the salary increase, the new contract includes an increase in tuition reimbursement, two work-from-home days for counselors to write college recommendations, and two hours of classroom setup time at the beginning of the year. It also includes up to five days off for the familial loss of a pregnancy.

The paraprofessional contract has a salary in-

crease in the first year of between 5.5 and 6.25 percent. The clerical contract also includes salary increases and an adjustment of the salary schedules so they are more in line with the teacher and paraprofessional teacher schedules.

“I think we have three contracts here that represent the heart of what we are trying to do to move the Chelsea schools forward,” said Superintendent of Schools Almi Abeyta.

School Committee member Roberto Jimenez

Rivera praised the agreements as strong contracts for the teachers and the district.

“I am very happy with the way this turned out,” he said. “This is really going to allow us to retain staff that have been here for many years, and it’s going to make it more attractive for potential new hires to come to Chelsea. We’re in a time when we already had an existing educator shortage even before the pandemic and it’s only getting worse, so this is only going to set us up for success in the future.”

Schools/ Continued from page 1

ected no longer present any symptoms.

In addition, those who are fully vaccinated, or who take part in the school system’s test and stay program and test negative can remain in school if they are a close contact.

The assistant superintendent also addressed

some questions about the current DESE stance on remote learning.

“DESE will not approve remote learning to count towards our time in learning requirements,” Deleidi said. “We are required to be in school for 180 days with 900 hours of learning for elemen-

tary students and 990 for secondary. If we went to remote learning, it would not count towards that time, and we would need to make it up just like a snow day. So we are doing our best to remain in-person.”

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Chelsea

RECORD

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MAYOR MICHELLE WU: GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

The job of mayor of a large American city never has been easy, but these days the challenges facing our public officials who lead our major metropolitan areas are greater than ever.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a confluence of difficult circumstances, ranging from an epidemic of drug overdose deaths, a housing shortage that is exacerbating homelessness, exponentially-increasing firearm murder rates, school closures, public transportation issues, and unprecedented small business failures.

In addition, the political rancor that exists at the national level has spilled over to the local level in an unprecedented manner. The axiom that all politics is local, as the great Tip O'Neill famously said, no longer is true -- the political demagoguery that has poisoned our politics in Washington now has spread to every corner of the country.

Michelle Wu, the new mayor of Boston, is now at the center of a firestorm regarding her order to require Boston's city employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine. According to the Boston Globe, there is a small minority of those who oppose her order who are protesting loudly outside her house, disturbing her neighborhood, and some who are hurling racially-charged comments and threats toward Mayor Wu and her family.

So we wish to take this opportunity to express our support for the mayor and for her order requiring vaccinations for city employees. Unfortunately, she is taking on the burden of dealing with the small but vocal mob alone -- and we are grateful that she is showing the courage to do what is right for the city and its residents.

SOMETHING ELSE TO WORRY ABOUT

We were driving on the Expressway the other day and we heard on the radio that the Florida orange crop will be at its lowest output since the 1940s. "What? The 1940s?!" we thought to ourselves.

The point of the news report was that orange juice prices will be higher this coming winter because of the low crop output. But what the report didn't explain was why the crop will be so low.

We assumed that there must have been a frost or some other weather-related event, or perhaps there was a supply chain or labor shortage issue, as the cause for the shortfall.

But when we looked into it, we discovered that the Florida orange crop has been declining steadily for the past 20 years or so.

And the reason for the decline is something far more insidious than the weather or COVID. According to Inside Climate News, a respected environmental news web-site, the culprit is an invasive insect: "The Asian citrus psyllid fills its stomach by feeding on the leaves and stems of citrus trees. The tiny brown insects infect the trees with bacteria that cause citrus greening, a disease that makes the fruits inedible. Natives to Asia, the citrus psyllids were first found in the United States in Florida in 1998."

Invasive species have been causing all kinds of damage in our country and around the world for many years. The zebra mussel (which came from Russia) and th Asian carp have wreaked costly damage in the past few decades. However, their impact is largely unseen by the American public.

But the Asian citrus psyllid's damage strikes home for all of us. Oranges and other citrus fruits are a staple food item in every American household.

So now, amidst our winter of discontent, there is one more thing to add to the list -- the Asian citrus psyllid.

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Forum

Markey and Warren announce \$307.5 million in home energy funding

Senators Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) announced that Massachusetts will receive a record \$307.5 million for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for the 2022 fiscal year. The Biden administration reported that in addition to an annual appropriation of \$120.5 million for Massachusetts, the state received an additional \$187.1 million in funds from the American Rescue Plan -- more than

double the state's typical annual funding for the energy assistance program. LIHEAP is the main federal program that helps low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing critical assistance during the cold winter and hot summer months.

"This historic amount of funding to help households cover home energy costs in Massachusetts means no family or senior has to go cold this winter," said Senators Markey and

Warren. "Thousands of additional Massachusetts residents will qualify for vital fuel assistance, and we will once again ensure that our most vulnerable residents are taken care of -- especially in the midst of this pandemic. But as climate change makes seasons more extreme and supply chain disruptions continue to exacerbate energy burdens for families, LIHEAP funding must be allocated to not only give families the annual subsidies they need, but also to

provide support for weatherization, which will help them reduce their energy burdens over time. We thank the Biden administration for its efforts to distribute this funding and look forward to continuing to expand this home energy assistance program."

As a part of the American Rescue Plan, Senators Markey and Warren advocated for \$20 billion in funding for Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) and \$4.5 billion in additional funding to LIHEAP.

Baker administration launches Commission on Clean Heat

The Baker-Polito Administration announced that the members of Massachusetts' first-in-the-nation Commission on Clean Heat were sworn in, helping to advance the Commonwealth's ambitious goals to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in the buildings sector. The Commission, which was created via Executive Order 596, held its first meeting on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, and over the next year will advise the Administration as it works to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050. The Commission membership, representing a wide range of backgrounds and expertise including affordable housing, energy efficient building design and construction, health care and real estate, will identify policies and strategies and recommend a framework to achieve emissions reductions that is well-balanced, affordable, and equitable.

"This Commission brings together a diverse, experienced and thoughtful group of experts and stakeholders to help our Administration develop the policies and strategies we will need to meet the challenges associated with decarbonizing the buildings sector in Massachusetts," said Governor Charlie Baker. "The membership of the Commission on Clean Heat represents a variety of important perspectives that will be critical in the development of balanced, forward-thinking approaches to decarbonization that prioritize innovation, affordability, and equity as we make this transition."

"We thank the new members of the Commission on Clean Heat for their willingness to take on this important work on behalf of the Commonwealth," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "As the Commission on Clean Heat begins this vital work, our Administration will also ensure

ample opportunities for members of the public to fully participate and contribute in the process as we work to reduce emissions from heating fuels in a way that is both effective and affordable."

Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Kathleen Theoharides has appointed EEA Undersecretary of Energy and Climate Solutions Judy Chang to serve as her designee and chair of the Commission, and its membership reflects a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds from outside stakeholders, including representatives from the fields of affordable housing, energy efficient building design and construction, healthcare, heating system design and technology, real estate, and heating fuel distribution.

"The Commission on Clean Heat will bring together stakeholders to take on our most pressing emissions reduction challenges in the building sector through a collaborative, inclusive approach," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides. "Gathering these voices and perspectives from technical experts, the affordable housing community, business leaders, environmental organizations, and major industries in the Commonwealth, will enable our continued, nation-leading pursuit of the equitable, creative strategies we need to meet our ambitious climate targets."

"This groundbreaking Commission begins its work with a membership that represents the diversity of voices required to identify recommendations to achieve the Commonwealth's emission reduction, housing, and economic development goals," said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy. "We are grateful to the Commission members for investing the time nec-

essary to do this important work and I look forward to the group's recommendations."

The Commission on Clean Heat will meet regularly to work on developing policy recommendations, which are due to Governor Baker by Wednesday, November 30, 2022. The policies developed by the Commission will seek to sustainably reduce the use of heating fuels and minimize emissions from the building sector while ensuring costs and opportunities arising from such reductions are distributed equitably. The Commission on Clean Heat will also hold public stakeholder meetings throughout the year, with the first to be scheduled in March, 2022. Dates and times for the public stakeholder meetings, as well as additional opportunities for public input, will be announced on the Commission on Clean Heat webpage.

"Climate leadership over the next decade will require a fundamental transition in how we heat and cool our homes and buildings," said Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Patrick Woodcock. "While we move forward with accelerating the aggressive deployment of energy efficiency and heat pumps this first-in-the-nation commission on clean heat will identify the next generation of cost-effective and equitable policies that yield deep building sector decarbonization across the Commonwealth."

In March 2021, Governor Baker signed nation-leading climate legislation that commits the Commonwealth to reducing emissions below 1990 levels by 50% by 2030, 75% by 2040, and to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050. The Commission on Clean Heat's recommendations will aid the state in its efforts to meet these emissions targets. For more information on the Commission members, please visit the Commission on Clean Heat's webpage.

The Executive Order signed by Governor Baker in September, 2021 also establishes an Interagency Building Decarbonization Task Force to support the work of the Commission. The Task Force will consist of subject-matter experts from across the Executive Branch, including the Department of Energy Resources and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development.

In October 2021, the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council unanimously voted to approve the 2022-2024 statewide Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan. The plan represents a transformational shift of the Mass Save programs to better align with the Commonwealth's ambitious climate requirements and focus on increasing participation in environmental justice communities across the state. In July, EEA Secretary Theoharides set ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals for the 2022-2024 Mass Save Plan. In aggregate, the investments made through the electric and gas plans in 2022-2024 will need to deliver 845,000 tons of emissions reduction towards our 2030 GHG limit. It is anticipated that Mass Save will achieve the GHG emission reduction goals by increasing the number of buildings retrofitted and weatherized each year, making significant investment in electrification of existing buildings to transition customers away from fossil fuels, reducing support for fossil-fuel heating incentives, phasing out LED light-bulb incentives, increasing equitable program investments in environmental justice communities and low-moderate income households, and increasing workforce development investments to expand diversity in the workforce. It's estimated that this plan will provide an \$13 billion in benefits to the Commonwealth. This plan was submitted to the DPU on November 1, 2021 and can be approved by the Department as early as January 31, 2022.

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Voke / Continued from page 1

after the hardships of the pandemic.”

City Council President Roy Avellaneda said he understands the need for a new vocational high school.

“What we object to is the cost of the project, because it seems a little bit exorbitant based on our own cost when we built our own middle school and other projects in the city so we don’t think the cost has been scrutinized enough,” said Avellaneda. “Second, it’s about the portion that Chelsea must contribute that we feel is unfair and heavier for the community than the other participating 12 communities. It’s another example of Chelsea once again not receiving equitable treatment as compared to everyone.”

The funding formula for the construction costs is based solely on the number of students each community sends to the vocational school. Only Revere sends more students in the district.

City Manager Thomas Ambrosino said he believes the current vocational high school is antiquated and that a replacement needs to be replaced.

“It’s the cost of this specific replacement and its oppressive financial burden on the city of Chelsea that drives our strong opposition,” said Ambrosi-



City Councillor-At-Large Leo Robinson.

no. “To demand that the city of Chelsea pay \$2 million a year, for each of the next 30 years without any consideration at all for our unique demographics and our ability to pay where wealthier communities, far wealthier communities than Chelsea will be paying far less for the same exact facility for their students and their residents. That to me is unfair, it’s unjust, it’s unconscionable.”

Superintendent of Schools Almi Abeyta said it is rare for her as a superintendent to oppose the building of a new school, and said there is no doubt that the vocational district

needs a new building, but like the others who spoke, Abeyta said she objected to the costs it will impose on the residents of Chelsea.”

“The cost is a huge burden to our community that is 70 percent economically disadvantaged and the hardest hit in this pandemic,” said Abeyta.

Northeast Metropolitan Vocational Technical District Superintendent Dave DiBarri has stated that Northeast Metro Tech’s goal is to help every student reach their full potential, and to find employment in high-paying, high-demand jobs upon graduation.



La Colaborativa Executive Director Gladys Vega.

“Northeast’s building is more than 50 years old and has already served beyond its intended lifespan,” said DiBarri. “As a result, Northeast students

do not have access to the best career technical education possible.”

He said a team including Northeast officials, School Committee mem-

bers from all 12 communities Northeast serves, and construction experts has spent more than four years developing a plan for a new school building.

News in Brief

MVES OFFERS FREE TRANSPORTATION TO PICK UP COVID-19 RAPID TEST KITS

Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) is offering free transportation services to Chelsea residents 60 years and older to pick up free COVID-19 Rapid Test Kits. MVES understands that older adults are more susceptible to the pandemic and feels

it is important to help all older residents in Revere served get tested. Please call ahead to Chelsea City Hall at 617-466-4209 for availability of kits.

To make it simple, there are only three eligibility guidelines to get approved for your ride: be 60 years of age or older, don’t have other means to pick up free COVID-19 Rapid Test Kits in your town, and be a resident of Chelsea. That’s it! Make sure to call us in plenty of time

so you can plan the most convenient travel time for yourself. MVES wants to remind individuals that it is also offering free transportation services to older adults to local COVID-19 booster, vaccine, and testing sites as well as flu clinics.

To register for your rides, call MVES at (781) 324-7705 and ask to speak to an Information and Referral Representative about the COVID-19 Free Transportation Program.

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CHELSEA HIGH SCHOOL ROUNDUP

CHS BOYS TRACK TEAM TOPS MALDEN

The Chelsea High boys indoor track and field team earned a 46-39 victory over Greater Boston League foe Malden this past week.

Leading the way for coach Cesar Hernandez's Red Devils with first-place performances in their events were:

Jeffrey Ponce in the shot-put; Emmanuel Simon in the 55 dash; Ali Warsame in the 300 dash; Nate Nadow in the 600 dash; and Alex Estrada in the mile.

A host of Red Devils added three points to the Chelsea cause with second-place finishes: Nasir Adams in the hurdles; Markland Richards in the 55 dash; Austin Freeman in the 600 dash; Sebastian Rendon in the 1000; and Johnny Maldonado Lazo in the two-mile run. In addition, the duo of Simon and Richards joined in a three-way tie for second in the high jump with a Malden boy.

The final point for Chelsea was earned by Jeffrey Lainez with a third-place performance in the shot-put.

CHS GIRLS TRACK FALLS JUST SHORT, 43-42, VS. MALDEN

The Chelsea High girls indoor track and field team dropped its first meet of the season by the narrowest of margins, falling by a score of 43-42 to Greater Boston League rival Malden.

First-place finishers for coach Cesar Hernandez's Lady Red Devils were: Gizelle Rodriguez and Jasmine Maradiaga, who tied for first in the high jump; Rodriguez in the 1000; Maradiaga in the 600 dash; Dhalia Christmas in the shot-put; Holly Hattleberg in the two-mile; and the quartet of Gizelle Rodriguez, Giselle Olivar, Darily Sanchez, and Maradiaga in the 4 x 400 relay.



Giselle Olivar in the first let of the relay.



Johnny Maldonado Lazo turned on the jets in the final lap to claim victory in the 2-mile run.



Jeffrey Lainez in the shotput.



Carlos Jimenez Mora shows the strain of a leg in the relay race.



Ari Warsame shows good form in the 300 yard run.



Emmanuel Simon in the high jump.



Sebastian Rendon with an early lead in the 1000-yard run.



Alejandro Zepeda raced to a second runs a leg in the relay.



The start of the One Mile Run, with Chelsea's Alejandro Zepeda (30) and Elexander Estrada (5) vying for a good spot.

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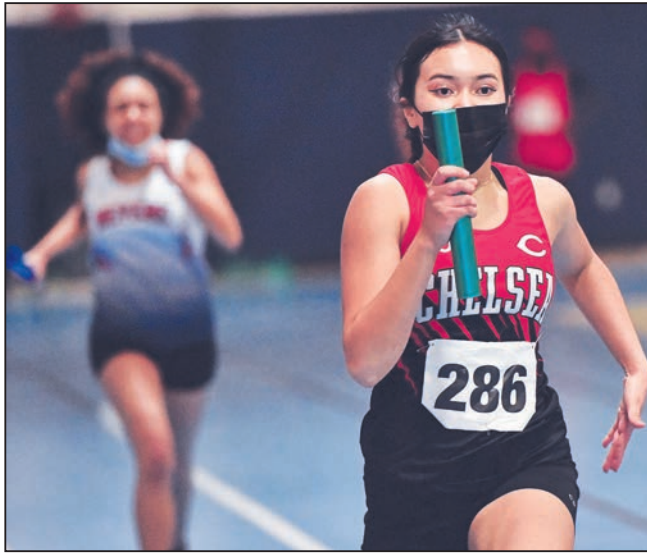
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Gizelle Rodriguez overcame a 30-yard deficit to anchor a Chelsea victory in the relay race.

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OBITUARIES

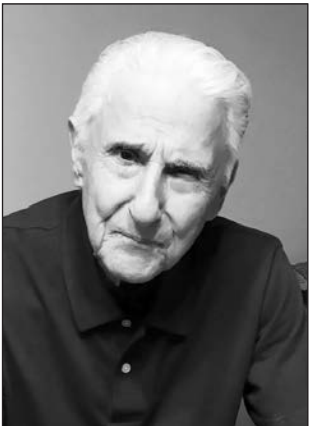
George Paul Mastrangelo
Retired Chelsea Firefighter, Bronze Star
Recipient Who Fought in Battle of the Bulge

George Paul Mastrangelo, a life-long resident of Chelsea, passed away Friday, January 14 at the age of 95. Born February 23, 1926, he was the son of the late Joseph and Mary (Nichols) Mastrangelo, brother to the late Joseph Mastrangelo Jr., Lucy Lohman, and Mary D. "Chickie" Love.

George attended Chelsea Public Schools and later worked as a Chelsea firefighter for 26 years until his retirement in 1984.

A veteran of World War II, he served in the infantry as a bazooka man and anti-tank gunner through three campaigns, including The Battle of the Bulge, and was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Bronze Star.

George was the devoted husband of the late Mary (Limoli) Mastrangelo; beloved father to Donna Filipiak and her husband, Stanley of Saugus and Georgette "Gigi" Colombo of Peabody and her late husband, Anthony; cherished grandfather of Justin Filipiak, Brian Filipiak and his wife, Michelle, Alana Colombo and Anthony John Colom-



bo. He is also lovingly survived by his great-grandchildren, Olivia and Dylan George Filipiak as well as many nieces and nephews. He loved spending time with his family and will be forever missed at Sunday dinner.

Family and friends are kindly invited to attend a Funeral Service in the Smith Funeral Home, 125 Washington Avenue, Chelsea today, Thursday, January 20 at 10 a.m. Services will conclude with interment at Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett. Those attending are required by the City of Chelsea to wear face coverings and are asked to socially distance during services.

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Joyce Anne Dabene
She will be forever remembered

It comes with such deep sadness to announce that Joyce Anne (Lenkiewicz) Dabne, 66, of South Weymouth gained her angel wings on January 5, hand in hand with her two loving children. Her passing was unexpected but we will cherish in our hearts the fond memories that we all have shared with my mother, Joyce. The impact that she made on our lives throughout her time on this earth will forever live on in each one of us.

Joyce was born to the late Florence (Covino) and Edward J. Lenkiewicz on September 9, 1955 in Chelsea and she was a devoted and loving mother to Nicole Ashley Dabene and Paul Dabene, Jr., both of Boston and wife to Paul Dabene of Weymouth for 35 years. She is also survived by her sister, Paula Lenkiewicz, of Chelsea and her brother, Edward Lenkiewicz, of Everett.

Joyce graduated from Chelsea High School in 1973 and began working at the Federal Reserve Bank. Following that, Joyce worked for the Department of Social Services in Boston where she met her husband, Paul, who was installing phones in the office. After getting married, the two lived in the North End of Boston for a few years before relocating to Weymouth to raise their two children. Once her first child arrived, Joyce went on to perform her one true calling of being a devout and dedicated stay at home mom. There was truly no one more suited for this job and no one more passionate. She lived for her kids; all the dreams that she held in her heart for them will forever live on in their spirits.

Joyce was the most selfless person; she always put everyone else's needs and wants ahead of her own. Everything she did was for everyone else and her hands worked without fail, day and night. Whether she was sewing a pillowcase, making a bow for a gift, or serving up breakfast, lunch, dinner or dessert for her kids, she truly never stopped. The meals and treats she made were always gourmet, yet effortless, for her. We have yet to figure out



how she could whip up something amazing out of barely nothing. And while her Italian cuisine can't be outshined, Tuesdays will never be the same without her tacos. Above all that, she lived for her kid's happiness and success. She dedicated herself to giving her kids the best life she possibly could, and it was perfect. Our mom was and always will be our biggest cheerleader; she never once missed any event or adventure that we wanted to take, and always had flowers and a smile on her face as she watched us grow into the people that we are today. There isn't one soccer game, let alone practice, that she didn't attend. Mom put forth her best self in everything she did and she wouldn't stop until she knew that what she was giving was truly perfect.

Joyce will forever be remembered for her heart; not only did it put forth so much love, it was so perfect that up until the last second of her life, her heartbeat was unflawed. You truly only had to meet our mom for two minutes to know how much love she had to give and how kind and caring of a woman she was. The memories, life lessons, and the ways in which she touched each and every one of us will allow for my mom to live on in our hearts and spirits. To have known our mom is to have loved our mom.

Always and Forever.
The family received visitors on Wednesday, January 19 in the J.S. Waterman-Langone Chapel, 580 Commercial St., Boston and a Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Leonard Church, 320 Hanover St., Boston. For online condolences, please visit: www.watermanboston.com.

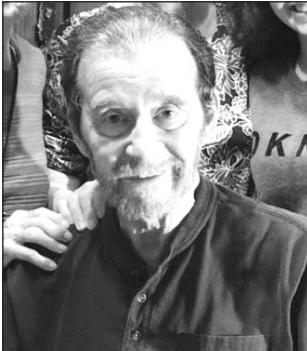
Joseph Curcio
Of New Hampshire

Joseph Curcio, 77, of Pembroke, New Hampshire passed away comfortably while surrounded by his children on January 10.

Joe was the first of five children born to the late Anthony Curcio and the only child to the late Julia Frateroli.

Joe was a loving father to Lyn MacAskill (Curcio) of Newburyport, David Curcio of New Hampshire, Danielle Curcio and her husband, Andrew Hernandez of Las Vegas, Andrew Curcio of Las Vegas, and JJ and Christian of Pembroke, New Hampshire.

Papa Joe cherished his three granddaughters: Brianna, Kylee and Amelia. Joe is also survived by his Auntie Honey Iebba of Chelsea and Cousin



Armand Iebba of Wakefield as well as many other cousins, nieces and nephews.

No services are scheduled at this time. A Mass will be planned in his honor. Donations can be made in his name to the COPD-foundation.org. The Pettit-Roan Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements. To share a memory or to offer a condolence, please visit www.pettitroan.com.

Patricia Burke

She will be remembered for her warmth, kindness, sense of humor, generosity and beautiful smile.

Patricia A. (Driscoll) Burke, 86, devoted wife for 48 years of the late Frederick W. Burke, beloved mother of Kathleen Burke of Seabrook, NH, Margaret (Peg) Marcus and her husband, Allan of Saugus and John Burke of Chelsea, passed away peacefully on January 9. She was the daughter of the late John J. Driscoll and Margaret (Kelleher) Driscoll; the sister of the late John Driscoll and his surviving wife, Evelyn and Mary Driscoll Hintlian and her late husband, Harry; the loving grandmother to David Marcus, Alanna Marcus and Kathryn Burke and cherished great-grandmother to Sophia and Lianna. She lovingly leaves behind many nieces, nephews and close family friends.

A graduate of St. Rose High School in Chelsea, Pat had many interests including music, dancing, reading, art, ballet and animals. Her greatest joy was that of being a wife, a mother and spending time with family.

Pat also enjoyed travels to Ireland with her husband, Freddie, a memorable trip to Paris with her sister, Mary and cruises



and week-end getaways with her children.

Pat will always be remembered for her warmth, kindness, sense of humor, generosity and beautiful smile. She will be missed.

Expressions of sympathy may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN, 38105 or at www.stjude.org which was a cause close to Pat's heart.

Pat will be laid to rest beside her beloved, Freddie at Puritan Lawn Memorial Park. Services will be private.

To send a message of condolence to Pat's family, please visit www.smithfuneralhomes.com.

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Baker-Polito administration files \$5 billion general government bond bill

The Baker-Polito Administration filed legislation seeking \$4.991 billion in capital funds to support core improvements that will enable the Commonwealth to continue delivering critical state services to the people of Massachusetts.

The proposal, titled An Act Financing the General Governmental Infrastructure of the Commonwealth, includes \$4.15 billion to maintain, repair, and modernize assets that serve those most in need across the Commonwealth, help educate the future workforce, deliver on key environmental objectives, and keep the Commonwealth’s communities and workers safe. It also includes \$841 million to continue existing, successful grant programs that support Massachusetts communities, to improve cybersecurity and other technology infrastructure, and to acquire critical public safety equipment.

“This bill supports essential capital investments that will deliver long-lasting benefits to Massachusetts residents for years to come, with a focus on safety, resiliency and opportunity,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “We look forward to working with our colleagues in the Legislature to make these important investments, which will pave the way for the continued efficient delivery of government services and economic growth.”

“The proposed investments in this bill continue our Administration’s work

to improve a wide range of critical infrastructure and foster growth and development across Massachusetts,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “These funds will ensure the continuity of proven programs and enable impactful future economic, health and safety initiatives that will benefit the Commonwealth’s communities, businesses and residents.”

The bill filed today makes authorization available through Fiscal Year 2028 that would support \$2.4 billion in existing maintenance and resiliency projects through the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM). DCAMM maintains nearly 1,700 major buildings covering 60.8 million gross square feet of property across the Commonwealth, including higher education buildings, health and human services facilities, public safety facilities, and trial courts. It also leads decarbonization and resiliency efforts in accordance with Executive Order 594. Leading by Example: Decarbonizing and Minimizing Environmental Impacts of State Government, which was issued by Governor Baker in April of 2021 and directs efforts to reduce gas emissions in Massachusetts facilities. The bond bill proposes \$400 million in energy efficiency initiatives at facilities statewide.

An additional \$1.8 million in DCAMM authorization is proposed to meet new facilities’ needs and

mitigate future risks. This includes an increased focus on incorporating lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic related to the physical space and layout of facilities.

The bill also proposes \$185 million in authorization for the Executive Office of Technology Services and Services (EOTSS) to support a variety of cybersecurity, IT infrastructure, and application modernizations initiatives. This includes projects that would modernize the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Online system and build out an integrated eligibility and enrollment system to streamline the benefits application process across multiple state agencies. \$50 million is proposed to improve virtual and physical security infrastructure at the Trial Courts facilities, including intrusion detection and video monitoring. Further public safety investments include \$60 million for equipment for fire services, corrections, and communications towers, and \$100 million for the replacement of approximately 300 Massachusetts State Police vehicles per year, half of which will be hybrid vehicles.

“This \$5 billion bond bill reflects the Baker-Polito Administration’s dual commitment to supporting the Commonwealth’s assets and making sustainable, fiscally responsible capital investments,” said Secretary of Administration and Finance Michael J. Heffernan. “The projects proposed are key to maintaining core govern-

ment operations and will keep the state moving forward, and we are looking forward to working with the Legislature to pass this bill into law.”

The bill seeks to support Massachusetts’ communities by authorizing \$496 million for established and successful grant and community programs that have a track record of providing valuable resources for workforce development, economic development, housing, and more to communities across the state. This includes the Workforce Skills Capital Grants Program, the Community Compact IT Grants Program, the Cultural Facilities Fund, the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, the Housing Stabilization Fund and the Housing Choice Capital Grants Program.

In June 2021, the Baker-Polito Administration finalized its Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-2026, and the authorizations in this bond bill would support investments and initiatives in the upcoming annual update to the Capital Investment Plan, which will include capital spending for Fiscal Years 2023-2027.

Highlights of the bond bill include:

- \$185 million for various cybersecurity and IT infrastructure initiatives, including:
 - \$100 million for cybersecurity investments and to support existing large business applications modernization projects
 - \$50 million for virtual and physical security

infrastructure at the Trial Courts facilities, such as intrusion detection, duress, physical screening, access control, video monitoring, and communications

- \$35 million to upgrade Lottery gaming systems, decommission end-of-life equipment, and address cybersecurity vulnerabilities
- \$160 million for public safety investments, including:
 - \$100 million for the replacement of approximately 300+ vehicles per year, half of which will be hybrid
 - 60 million for public safety equipment for fire services, corrections, state police & parole vehicles, and communications towers
- \$100 million to continue support for the Workforce Skills capital grants program, which provides grants to high schools, community colleges, training programs, and non-profit organizations to purchase equipment that will help expand access to career technical education programs
- \$100 million for municipal grants to support a broad range of local infrastructure improvements and projects
- \$64 million to support the Massachusetts State Revolving Fund (SRF) – specifically, for the Commonwealth’s matching funds required to secure federal dollars for the Fund, which helps cities and towns in improve water supply infrastructure and drinking water safety
- \$60 million for the

Housing Stabilization Fund, which provides funding for municipalities, non-profit, for-profit developers and local housing authorities in support of affordable rental housing production and rehabilitation

- \$51 million for the continuation of the Food Security program, which improves food security for the people of the Commonwealth through grants aimed at enhancing access to and production of local food for the next two years at current funding level
- \$50 million for the Cultural Facilities Fund to continue providing grants for planning, acquisition, rehabilitation and construction of cultural facilities administered through Massachusetts Cultural Council and MassDevelopment
- \$30 million for the Community Compact IT competitive grant program aimed at driving innovation at the local level and available to any municipality that is part of Community Compact Cabinet Initiative
- \$25 million for Housing Choice grants to municipalities that receive a Housing Choice designation through high housing production and/or demonstration of best practices
- \$16 million for MassVentures START grants, which help businesses commercialize ideas that have been backed with federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) funding.

Baker-Polito administration awards additional \$13.5 million for COVID-19 vaccine equity efforts

The Baker-Polito Administration last week announced \$13.5 million to support community organizations working in the cities and towns hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the Massachusetts Vaccine Equity Initiative to increase awareness, acceptance and access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Three Chelsea organizations are slated to receive grants. These latest grants are part of the Administration’s investment of more than \$46.5 million to address vaccine hesitancy.

Vaccine Equity Initiative by helping address the immediate and long-term health equity needs in priority communities – needs that have been exacerbated by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.”

The \$13.5 million includes:

- \$10.65 million to launch the Massachusetts Community Health Workers for Resilient Communities (MA CRC) program. Ten organizations in nine priority communities have been awarded three-year grants to support community

health workers in clinical care settings and support local boards of health in increasing COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

- \$2.2 million has been awarded through June 2022 to extend current outreach and education funding to 45 community- and faith-based organizations, including Tribal and Indigenous People-serving organizations. These organizations will continue hosting and promoting vaccine clinics in the 20 Massachusetts communities most impacted by COVID-19. Funded orga-

nizations will also engage families and children to support pediatric vaccinations.

- \$675,000 has been awarded to 9 community organizations to support a new COVID-19 vaccine equity program to support the unique needs of rural communities.

The grants are the result of three major funding awards from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to the Commonwealth, building on the state’s investment to increase vaccine awareness and ac-

ceptance in communities hardest hit by COVID-19.

Award Recipients:

Massachusetts Community Health Workers for Resilient Communities (MA CRC) (CHW) \$10.65M (\$3.55M per year for 3 years)

- MGH Chelsea HealthCare Center
- Vaccine Community Access Partners (HRiA) \$2,105,754 Grant size: \$35,000 - \$50,000 per organization
- Chelsea Black Community, Inc.
- La Colaborativa

BRUINS *Beat* by Bob Morello

Bruins lick their wounds

It began as a festive night, the retiring of Boston Bruins jersey number 22 – Willie O’Ree, the first black man to play in the National Hockey League. Unfortunately for the Bruins, it was followed by a 7-1 beat down by the Carolina Hurricanes, which prompted captain Patrice Bergeron to suggest that the tape of that game be burned, and just try to move on. The latter, a suggestion his teammates, and many fans, will likely agree with. The loss put an end to Boston’s five-game win streak, while, the team’s play (or lack of it), made Tuukka Rask’s return to the net seem pre-

mature. The team’s play in front of Rask during the first period in which Carolina was able to deposit five pucks past him on 12 shots, and build an insurmountable lead, led coach Bruce Cassidy to replace Rask with Linus Ullmark in net to begin the second period. Following the team’s poor showing, Cassidy summed it up with: “We had nothing, they were clearly better than us in every area. We weren’t nearly good enough. We wouldn’t have been good enough against the worst team in the league tonight, we weren’t competitive.”

While five goals on 12 shots is a poor percent-

age, consideration should be given in that Rask has only returned to play in the Boston net for 80 minutes to date. Ullmark allowed two goals while facing 22 shots during his two-period stint. It will be interesting to see who Cassidy chooses to guard the net for tonight’s (Thursday 7:00pm) game as the Bruins host the revenge-seeking Washington Capitals, who were soundly beaten

by the Bs 7-3 on Washington’s home ice just over a week ago. In a Saturday matinee (3:00pm) the Winnipeg Jets will provide the competition, trailed by a Sunday (7:00pm) meeting with the struggling Anaheim Ducks on Garden ice to wrap up Boston’s seven-game homestand. Wednesday the Bruins will start a three-game road trip, they will be hosted by the red-hot Colorado

Avalanche (Wednesday 10:00pm), Colorado currently hold the top spot in the Central Division, having only lost one of their last ten games. Friday the Arizona Coyotes, currently in last place in the Central Division, will host Boston, having only won nine of the 37 games played this season, and finish up their brief road trip by taking on the Dallas Stars on Sunday (January 30 at 7:00pm), also in the Central Division in sixth place and out of a playoff spot at this time.

ICE CHIPS: Boston Bruins forward Brad Marchand was recently named the NHL’s first

star of the week for the week ending January 16. Marchand led the league in goals (6) and points (10) through four games this week, while also ranking tied for seventh in assists (4) among all skaters. The 33-year-old forward recorded at least two points in all four games this week, highlighted by his fifth career hat trick against the Montreal Canadiens on January 12. Marchand also had two goals and an assist in the Bruins 7-3 win over the Washington Capitals on January 10.

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Agero Employees grant MVES clients' holiday wishes

Mystic Valley Elder Services' (MVES) consumers recently received an unexpected but cheerful visit during the holiday season from their care managers who delivered over 100 care gift bags full of clothing, linens, games, books and other items they had on their "wish list," all donated by employees of Agero, a pioneer of the driver assistance industry based in Medford.

Agero has been contributing to their Giving Tree program since 2013 with more than 1,000 personal gifts shopped for and provided by employees to older adults in beautifully wrapped packages with items ranging in price from \$20 to \$200. The program operates by Agero staff letting MVES know how many gifts they will pledge to shop for each year. Case managers then nominate an older adult served by MVES who they feel is in need of items for personal use and enjoyment. Since the case managers know the older adults they serve so well, they create a "wish list" of items they know they would like and use. Each



Mystic Valley Elder Services consumer Daniel received gifts this year and was truly touched by the generosity of the staff at Agero.



Deborah Standke of Agero proudly displays all the gifts donated by employees for Mystic Valley Elder Services consumers

wish list is unique to that individual. Employees of Agero then "adopt" and shop for these older adults, collecting items on the list ultimately fulfilling their wishes.

Betsy Kantt, resident services coordinator at Mystic Valley Elder Services, shares her consumer's reaction to the gift:

"Artie's Secret Santa gave him a \$25 gift card to Market Basket and some chocolates. What was more special, however, were the 12 greeting cards which he received. Santa wrote one for each month. Artie opened them all at once and hung them up in his apartment next to the birthday card I gave him in August. He was thrilled to get them! They were the only Christmas cards which he got."

"We were so moved to see the multiple gifts so

thoughtfully chosen to brighten the days of older adults in need," said Jenny Vanasse, director of development at MVES.

"My consumer Daniel received gifts this year and was truly touched by the generosity of the staff at Agero," says Kerry Kawalski, MVES resident services coordinator. "He loved everything that he received. With every gift that he opened his smile grew bigger. Daniel wanted me to make sure that the folks at Agero know

how grateful he is for everything."

Agero is not just giving to MVES during the holidays, the organization has sponsored the annual MVES Spring for Independence fundraiser for more than a decade. This coming spring, Agero will be a Lead Sponsor of this event at \$20,000. They have also donated more than 230 bags of nonperishable food and grocery gift cards since 2010.

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