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Everett Independent

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Wednesday, December 9, 2020

A step backwards

Baker Administration announces statewide rollback to Step Three

By Lauren Bennett

The Baker administration on Tuesday announced that all Massachusetts cities and towns will roll back to Step Three, Phase One of the state's reopening plan, effective Sunday, December 13.

Following increases in hospitalizations and cases after the Thanksgiving holiday, the "sharp increase is putting a strain on our healthcare system and frontline workers," Baker said.

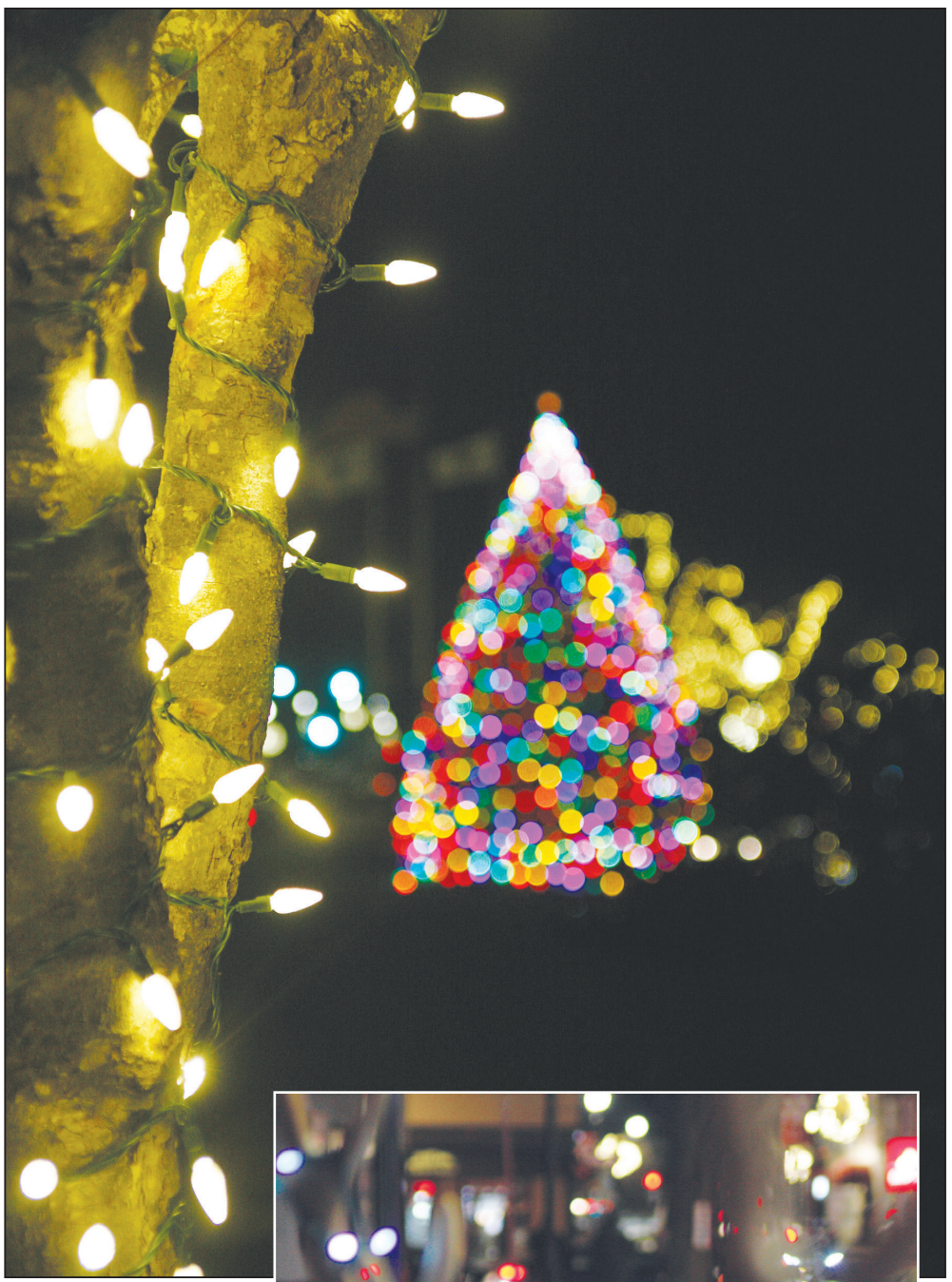
As of Monday, the state had 2,463 new cases of COVID-19, and the seven day average test rate is about 5.5 percent, the governor said. There are also 1,516 people hospitalized with the virus, and 302 in the ICU.

He said that continuing at this rate is "not sustainable over time" and will continue to put the healthcare system and healthcare workers at increased risk.

Prior to and "just after" Thanksgiving, Baker said that the "data was showing progress" from the restrictions put in place about a month ago, including a stay at home advisory from 10pm to 5am, and reducing the indoor gathering limit to 10 people. But as the state encounters a second surge of the virus and cases continue to increase, more

See BAKER Page 5

NON-TRADITIONAL HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING



Like most things, lighting the Christmas trees and sprucing up the city with lights for the holidays wasn't the same as in the past due to COVID-19, but Mayor Carlo DeMaria hosted virtual tree lightings in Everett Square, Ferry Street and at Wehner Park last Thursday, Dec. 3. In Everett Square, the huge tree towered above colorful lights – all flipped on by the mayor, this family and Bishop Robert Brown. See Page 6 for more photos.

Critical service

Cataldo's mobile integrated health service could be key for distributing COVID vaccine

By Seth Daniel

When Cataldo Ambulance company became the first in the state last year to become licensed for a mobile integrated health unit – something they dub SmartCare – they could have never imagined the unit would be called on for critical services during the COVID-19 surge, and now potentially to be a major distribution point for any COVID-19 vaccine.

That is just the case for the company's units, which services Everett and surrounding areas, as they have received word that they will be part of the distribution network for a vaccine when it arrives – not only for the general public, but also for vulnerable populations.

"We're getting inquiries already from local health departments," said Dan Hoffenberg, vice president of Cataldo. "I don't have all the details yet, but I'm told we're getting inquiries from local health departments asking about if we can be of service in helping to distribute the vaccine in each community. We're going to be a way for them to help administer the vaccine… When the vaccine rolls out to the general public, that's still being worked out."

President Dennis Cataldo said paramedics are being considered as a key part of that roll out, just as Gov. Charlie Baker put in the state's first order for the Pfizer vaccine last Fri-

See CATALDO Page 5

After one-year break, Dell Isola will return to City Council

By Seth Daniel

Former City Council President Rich Dell Isola will return to the Council perhaps as soon as next Monday to fill the vacancy now left by the resignation of Peter Napolitano – as is dictated by the City Charter.

Dell Isola, who was the last man out in the City Election in 2019, said he will take the seat and likely run again for it in the 2021 City Election.

"I'm going to go in like I left a year ago," he said. "When I became president last year, I said we had to work as a team. I hope that can happen. Me, personally, I don't see a team right now. We have to work together with the Mayor's Office, the School Committee and everyone as one. I'm going in as a team player and whatever is good for the residents, that's what I'll do."

He said he understands that there is what is likely to be a competitive City Election next year, and he's ready to cast his hat in the ring as of now to run for re-election.

"As of now, I am going to run next year," he said. "Being out for a year, you begin to look at politics differently. I want to have us working as a team."

City Clerk Sergio Cornelio said the City Charter dictates the at-large Council replacement process, calling for the sixth-place finisher in the five-seat race to automatically take the seat if accepted.

The caveat is that the City Election cannot be less than 90 days away (which would be August 2021) and that the replacement candidate must have received at least 20 percent of the ballots cast. In this case, the City Election is nearly 11 months away, and Dell Isola received approximately 33 percent of the ballots cast in the 2019 election.

Cornelio said the Council would have to vote on

See COUNCIL Page 5

Unanimous vote to bring back winter sports

By Seth Daniel

The Everett School Committee voted 8-0 on Monday to return some Winter Sports to Everett High School (EHS), allowing boys and girls basketball and hockey to begin practices as early as Dec. 15.

It is the first time any interscholastic sports have been given the okay in Everett since last year's Winter Sports season ended and no spring or fall sports resumed due to COVID-19. However, with long discussions had within the Greater Boston League (GBL), Supt. Priya Tahiliani and Athletic Director Tammy Turner said they felt prepared to safely offer these sports to students as soon as possible.

"We're asking for approval for this and have a recommendation, but are interested in discussion on it," said Tahiliani on Monday.

"Winter coaches are on

See SPORTS Page 3

Financial sacrifices last summer lead to property tax decreases across the board

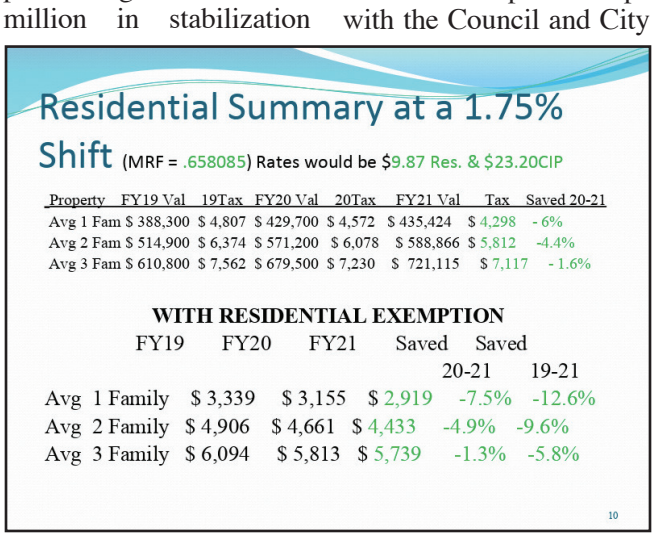
By Seth Daniel

Everett property taxpayers and water and sewer ratepayers will see no increases – and many decreases – across the board after the City Council and Finance Department took the actions that set the fiscal year tax rate – supplementing that with $8 million in stabilization tax relief to keep residents from having to shoulder more burdens amidst the pandemic.

Chief Financial Officer Eric Demas said the City is one of the few in the region that isn't seeing property tax increases this year, and that is something he said he was proud of due to the partnerships with the Council and City staff to go through the difficult monthly budgets and furloughs that took place in July, August and September.

"It was a combined effort between the City Council and the mayor," he said. "I'm proud of the finance staff here in the City. We utilized every single tool we had. That's why we went through three months of continuing budget resolutions last summer. We did that so we wouldn't have to raise taxes. We needed to ensure we weren't adding increased burdens that people couldn't handle…It's been a roller coaster ride. We knew what turns we had coming in the road, but we had to weather them to do what was best

See TAXES Page 2



Residential Summary at a 1.75% Shift (MRF = .658085) Rates would be $9.87 Res. & $23.20CIP

Property	FY19 Val	19Tax	FY20 Val	20Tax	FY21 Val	Tax	Saved 20-21
Avg 1 Fam	$ 388,300	$ 4,807	$ 429,700	$ 4,572	$ 435,424	$ 4,298	- 6%
Avg 2 Fam	$ 514,900	$ 6,374	$ 571,200	$ 6,078	$ 588,866	$ 5,812	-4.4%
Avg 3 Fam	$ 610,800	$ 7,562	$ 679,500	$ 7,230	$ 721,115	$ 7,117	- 1.6%

WITH RESIDENTIAL EXEMPTION

	FY19	FY20	FY21	Saved 20-21	Saved 19-21
Avg 1 Family	$ 3,339	$ 3,155	$ 2,919	-7.5%	-12.6%
Avg 2 Family	$ 4,906	$ 4,661	$ 4,433	-4.9%	-9.6%
Avg 3 Family	$ 6,094	$ 5,813	$ 5,739	-1.3%	-5.8%

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TOY DRIVE DONATIONS

On Tuesday, the City of Everett received a wonderful surprise from Jerry DiPierro of DiPierro & Sons Construction and his son, City Councillor Anthony DiPierro. The father and son donate these gifts to the City of Everett's toy drive yearly in memory of the late Angelo DiPierro and Ella Jade O'Donnell. Thank you to the DiPierro family for your continuous support of our community.

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Cases of COVID-19 continue to stay in double digits day after day

The numbers of COVID-19 cases in Everett were on a roller coaster ride over the past week, spiking likely due to Thanksgiving holiday gatherings, then settling back down again early this week.

The City saw the most cases reported over the past week than at any time since the spring, logging 410 cases. That was bolstered in particular by a shocking 106 cases reported on Dec. 4.However, cases immediately dipped down to 19 on Monday, and then up to a manageable 31 on Tuesday. Most were hoping the numbers would stabilize the rest of the week. There were 293 cases in the previous week.

The most recent numbers are as follows:

•Tuesday, Dec. 8 - 31
•Monday, Dec. 7 – 19
•Sunday, Dec. 6 – 51
•Saturday, Dec. 5 – 47
•Friday, Dec. 4 - 106
•Thursday, Dec. 3 – 64
•Wednesday, Dec. 2 – 49
•Tuesday, Dec. 1 – 43

Everett is still a beneficiary of the state Stop the Spread testing program and there is ample free testing all over the city right now through Dec. 31. There is no appointment necessary, and test results are usually available within 24 to 48 hours.

COVID-19 testing site for seniors

The City of Everett will be offering COVID-19 testing to seniors at Pope John XXIII High School beginning on Wednesday, December 9. Testing at this new location will occur every Wednesday, 5-8pm and Friday, 9am-noon through December 31.

Due to the vulnerability of seniors, the City of Everett has committed to provide more testing for residents in this age bracket. Seniors who wish to be tested at this new site must be an Everett resident over the age of 60. Proof of age and residency is required.

Testing will occur in the school's cafeteria on the first floor. Seniors are asked to enter through the rear entrance. It is important for those who get tested to wear a mask, use hand sanitizer, and practice social distancing.

- LEGAL NOTICE -
CITY OF EVERETT

BOARD OF APPEALS
484 Broadway
Everett, Massachusetts 02149
(617) 381-7445

To Whom It May Concern:
This notice is to inform you that a public hearing will be held on Monday December 21, 2020 at 7:00 PM in regards to an application for zoning relief. In response to Governor Baker's declaration of a public health emergency and the related Emergency Executive Order dated March 12, 2020, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall be meeting remotely until further notice. The audioconferencing application Zoom will be used for this purpose. An online link and telephone access number will be provided on all meeting agendas and also on the Board's website. This application will permit the public to access and participate in future Board meetings and hearings. Instructions for joining meetings in this manner will be provided on the City and City Clerk's website. In addition, Everett Community TV (ECTV) may provide coverage of these meetings. We extend our thanks for your understanding and participation in this manner, which is intended to keep members of the Board and the public safe.

Whereas a petition has been presented by:
Property Address: 168 Bucknam Street
Map/Parcel: D0-01-00003
Person Requesting: Mr. Adam Zuniga
117 Orleans Street.
East Boston, MA 02128

To the said Board of Appeals, the owner/applicant proposes to construct a new two (2) family on an existing 5814 sf lot that currently has an existing two (2) family residential building that was constructed in April 1928.
The owner wishes to convert the existing three (3) family dwelling into a four (4) family dwelling.
The plot plan submitted indicates that Six (6) parking spaces are proposed in the yard are several are stacked parked and requires backing into the street.
The permit is respectfully denied in accordance with The City of Everett Zoning Appendix A for the following reasons:

Reason for Denial:
• A four (4) family is not an allowed use in this district.
• The Floor Area is above the allowable at 1.22 FAR.
• The parking plan provided indicates that a vehicle will be required to be moved in order for the other vehicles to enter and leave the parking lot.
• Does not have the required 275 square feet per car.
• The parking plan provided indicates that a vehicle will be parked within the required minimum specified building Front setback of ten (10) feet and the corner setback of seven (7) feet.
• The parking plan provided indicates that a vehicle will be parked closer than eight (8) feet from a habitable window.
• The parking plan provided indicates that it will be necessary for vehicles to back into the street.
• The parking plan provided does not indicate an 18' aisle to allow vehicles to ingress and egress at the same time.

Zoning Ordinance:
1. Section 4 Dwelling Districts (a) Uses:
A. Uses. Within any dwelling district as indicated on the zoning map, no building, structure or premises shall be used and no building or structure shall be erected which is intended or designed to be used in whole or in part for any industry, trade, manufacturing, or commercial purposes, of for other than the following specified purposes:
1. A single or double semi-detached dwelling existing at the time of the first enactment of the Zoning Ordinance may be converted to provide not more than a total of three (3) dwelling units provided that the following standards are met:
Any addition shall comply with the front, side and rear yard requirements and height limitations of the Zoning Ordinance.
Where the existing building is already non-conforming, any alteration shall not increase the existing non-conformity. Parking in accordance with this Zoning Ordinance shall be provided for any additional dwelling units. (Ord. of 4-29-91)

2. Section 4 Dwelling Districts A Uses 17. Conversion of Dwelling. No new dwelling unit created by the conversion of an existing dwelling shall be permitted unless the requirements of minimum lot area and off-street parking are satisfied for all dwelling units in existence and proposed in the dwelling after the conversion or enlargement. (Ord. 02-046 of Oct. 22, 2003

3. Section 17 Off Street Parking (J): "Parking facilities shall be designed so that each motor vehicle may proceed to and from the parking space provided for it without requiring the moving of any other motor vehicle."

4. Section 17 Off Street Parking (I): Each required car space shall be not less than 9 feet in width and 18 feet in length exclusive of drives and maneuvering space, and the total area of any parking facility for more than five (5) cars shall average two hundred seventy-five (275) square feet per car. No driveways or curb cuts shall exceed thirty (30) feet in width. (Ord. 01-046/2001)

5. Section 17 Off Street Parking (K): "Parking facilities shall be designed so that no vehicles shall be parked nearer to any street lines than the minimum specified building setback for the Zoning District in which the parking facility is located."

6. Section 17 Off Street Parking (M): "No parking stall shall be located within eight (8) feet of any window of habitable rooms in the basement or first story level of any building."

7. Section 17 Off Street Parking (O): 4. "Except for one and two family dwellings, parking shall be designed so that it is not necessary to drive over sidewalks or curbs or to back into the street or driveway"

8. Section 17 Off Street Parking (O): 5. "All parking areas shall have an access road with a minimum of eighteen (18) feet to allow ingress and exiting at same time."

Mary Gerace – Chairman
Board of Appeals

Roberta Suppa - Clerk

Community Briefs

WATERFRONT TRANSPORTATION MEETING

The City of Everett invites you to join us on Wednesday, Dec. 9 @ 6 PM for our first public meeting as part of the Everett Riverfront District Master Plan. The meeting will be livestreamed on the City of Everett's Facebook page. We WANT to hear your feedback about the options! The Zoom link to join is on the event page.

CITY HALL EXPANDS LANGUAGE ACCESS

Did you know about this exciting news? Lionbridge is a telephone interpretation service that provides 24/7/365 on-demand, as-needed telephonic interpretation in over 380 different languages.

Everett 311 is the designated number to reach the city for any help. All 311 operators will have access to more than 380 languages. Lionbridge provides Arabic, Cantonese, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, to name a few. These services are available immediately to all Everett residents throughout all City of Everett departments!

IN MEMORY OF OFFICER GLEN BRILEY
Five years ago this month Everett Police Officer Glen Briley passed away due to natural causes while on duty. Briley is survived by his wife, Jeannine, and two children, Erin and Ryan. Briley began his career as a patrolman in Dec. 1996 and served as a member of the uniformed Patrol Division. He is greatly missed by our entire community.
Thank you for your service to our community and Rest in Peace, Officer Briley.

LETTERS TO SANTA/VIRTUAL MEET & GREET

Santa Claus is coming to town and the City is inviting all children in the City of Everett to write him a letter. Santa will virtually stop by on Zoom to meet the children and read the letters on Friday, Dec. 8 from 6-8 p.m. It will be limited to the first 300 participants. Please email letters or a photo of a letter by Wednesday, December 16, at 6 p.m.

GRACE FOOD PANTRY TOY DRIVE

The Grace Food Pantry will continue their Toy Drive efforts through Dec. 11, this Friday. Bring a new or unwrapped toy and help support local kids. The drop off times daily through Dec. 11 are 9 a.m. to noon at the Grace Church, 50 Church St. (behind City Hall).

Taxes / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for the residents."

On Monday night at a Special City Council meeting, the Council voted to make the maximum shift of 175 percent in the Minimum Residential Factor – shifting tax burden to the commercial/industrial properties. Meanwhile, they also voted in the 25 percent residential owner-occupant tax break. Those two things allowed the residential tax rate to be set at $9.87 per $1,000 of value and the commercial rate at $23.20.

The result is a reduction in tax bills for every residential classification even as values on properties have increased significantly since Fiscal Year 2019. For example, a single family home in 2019 was valued at $388,300 and in 2021 had increased to $435,424. Yet, for this year, the tax bill has gone down to $4,298 from $4,807 in 2019. That's a decrease of 6 percent.

Other tax bill savings included:

•Two family homes (average): $6,374 in 2019, and 2021 will be $5,812 (-4.4%)

•Three family homes (average): $7,562 in 2019, and 2021 will be $7,117 (-1.6%)

That is a substantial difference from surrounding communities such as Chelsea, where two-family and three-family properties increased significantly in value and their tax bills went up several hundred dollars on average as well. Chelsea set its tax rate last week.

For Commercial/Industrial properties, the tax bills have gone up, but in no way the same as they did in Fiscal Year 2019 as the Encore Boston Harbor casino opened and sent such property sky high. While values continued to go up, tax bills on those properties have leveled out a bit.

The average convenience store property would see a slight increase in taxes, going from $21,061 last year to $21,318 this year. However, this year will be down 26.6% from 2019 when bills skyrocketed.

Fast Food properties would see an average increase from last year of $564 ($44,516), but that is 28.4% lower than 2019 while the value of the property increased by 8.9% over that same period. So, property became more valuable, and taxes decreased – the best of both worlds for businesses.

Warehouse properties would be up by more than $3,000 this year over last year at $60,297 on average, but that is a 23.7% decrease from 2019.

Demas said it is a pattern on the residential and commercial/industrial that they did predict when he came to the city – saying that due to the Encore opening, property values would likely take a roller coaster ride over a period of years.

"I have been saying this since day one that Everett will go through a roller coaster ride with property values," he said. "Residential properties were taking off and carrying a large part of the tax responsibility. I said after we get to the opening of the casino, you would see industrial properties take off. They did in 2019. That is the way it looked and exactly what we predicted did come to fruition. It was challenging to explain because we had a $2.6 billion property – one of a kind in New England. You have to expect fluctuations."

This year, as in previous years, the City was able to supplement the tax levy with $7 million from the Stabilization Fund. It was uncertain if that plan would be able to play out earlier this year when COVID-19 first hit and revenues tanked, but Demas said there was a rebound and they were able to make that supplement.

That reduced the tax levy by $1.1 million. Everett is extremely unique in that it isn't using its full tax levy, with most municipalities in the area taxing all the way up to the Proposition 2 ½ limit. However, Everett has left an excess levy capacity of $58.21 million on the table, which is the star of the show in reducing the tax burden on residents and businesses. They have the ability to tax $150.18 million before hitting the Levy Limit, and came in taxing at $144.15 million.

That was supplemented by a very healthy New Growth number (which measures new construction and projects added to the property tax base), which was $2.42 million this year.

•WATER AND SEWER RATES STAY PUT

The tax bills weren't the only think on the docket Monday night, as the Council was to set the Water & Sewer rates as well. With the same approach, Demas said they used $1 million in Free Cash to stabilize the rate and keep it from increasing.

With MWRA foundational water and sewer rates going up by 5 percent this year, Demas said they were challenged to follow the mayor's vision of not increasing any fees or costs during the pandemic.

"We did use $1 million in Free Cash and that allowed us not to increase our rates this year," he said. "This is just as much an economic crisis as a public health crisis. Our focus is not to increase fees or costs on residents."

Send us Your News

The Everett Independent encourages residents to submit birth and engagement announcements, news releases, business briefs, honor rolls, social news, sports stories, and photographs for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at **385 Broadway, Citizens Bank Building, Revere, MA 02151**. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403. The Independent also encourages readers to e-mail news releases to **editor@everettindependent.com**.

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2021 Budget

DiDomenico announces strong fiscal year

Sen. Sal DiDomenico recently joined with his colleagues in the Massachusetts Legislature in passing a Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) budget to invest in programs and services across the Commonwealth. Funded at $46.2 billion, the budget aims to address the sweeping effects of the global pandemic and makes targeted investments in Senator DiDomenico's top priorities, including housing, food security, early education, children and families, and public health.

"Despite these unprecedented times, I am confident that the Fiscal Year 2021 budget we put forth is a strong and compassionate one; one that meets many of our most pressing needs, centers our most vulnerable populations, and moves our entire Commonwealth towards an equitable recovery," said Senator Sal DiDomenico. It makes critical investments in sectors most severely impacted by COVID-19 and focuses on many of the areas that have been my greatest concern throughout the course of this pandemic, including food security, housing supports, childcare, and public health. I know that in the Senate, each Senator had a voice in crafting our budget, and I am truly grateful to Senate President Karen Spilka and Senate Ways & Means Chair Michael Rodrigues for ensuring that many of our community's most urgent needs were included in this final FY21 budget."

Continuing the Legislature's support of targeted investments in education, this budget provides $5.283 billion in Chapter 70 education funding, an increase of $107.6 million over Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20). The education budget allocations include:

• $53 million in COVID-related student supports;

• $345.2 million for Circuit Breaker Special Education reimbursement;

• $117 million for Charter School Reimbursement; and

• $82 million for Regional School Transportation reimbursement.

Due to the pandemic, access to safe and affordable housing for many families across the Commonwealth has taken on new urgency. This budget makes targeted investments into rental and housing assistance to support families, tenants and property owners during this time of crisis:

· $180 million for Emergency Assistance Family Shelters;

· $135 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP);

· $50 million for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), as well as emergency changes to the RAFT program to increase the maximum amount of rental assistance that a household can receive from $4,000 to $10,000 and allow eligible households facing a housing crisis to access both RAFT and HomeBASE;

· $80 million for public housing subsidies;

· $56 million for homeless individual shelters;

· $13 million for homeless student transportation;

· $12.5 million for the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP), which provides rental assistance to people with disabilities;

· $11 million for Department of Mental Health Rental Subsidy Program; and

· $8 million for unaccompanied homeless youth.

Throughout the pandemic, Senator DiDomenico has worked on legislation to provide additional protections for renters and struggling homeowners to help stave off an eviction crisis. This budget includes many of reforms that Senator DiDomenico advocated for, including a new requirement ensuring tenants facing eviction better understand their rights.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the many housing challenges our Commonwealth and our district have long experienced, but now we face an eviction crisis we have never before seen," said DiDomenico. "I'm pleased this budget includes investments in key housing security programs, but I am especially encouraged by the language regarding "Notice to Quit" incorporated into the budget, which would require landlords to provide a form with information related to the eviction process and resources for tenants. I have been advocating for this Notice to Quit policy since the start of the pandemic to ensure that renters know their rights if and when facing eviction, and I am very pleased it has been included in our budget."

Food insecurity has become one of the most prevalent consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting children, adults and seniors alike. To that end, the conference report prioritizes access to food resources across the Commonwealth. Food insecurity investments include:

• $30 million for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program;

• $13 million in Healthy Incentives Programs to ensure vulnerable households have continued access to food options during the pandemic; and

• $1.2 million for Project Bread to support the Child Nutrition Outreach Program and the Food Source Hotline.

The budget also includes Senator DiDomenico's amendment requiring the Baker Administration to move forward with the creation of a SNAP Common Application program to connect eligible MassHealth/Medicare recipients with federal nutritional benefits. This amendment was modeled off of legislation the Senator sponsors to close the "SNAP Gap" in Massachusetts.

The budget builds on the Legislature's commitment to ensuring all children have access to high-quality early education and care (EEC) during this pandemic. As a longtime champion of early education in the Commonwealth, Senator DiDomenico spoke during the Senate chamber's debate about the major investments the budget makes in the childcare industry, and the long-term impact these investments will have for both providers and families. The budget includes $25 million for a new Early Education and Care Workforce and COVID-19 Supports Reserve to provide classroom stabilization grants, incentive pay for providers, and support for increased operational costs due to COVID-19. In addition, the budget invests in those who work with children by increasing rates for early education providers by $20 million and provides $40 million for a new reserve to cover parent fees for families receiving subsidized childcare for the remainder of FY21. The budget also includes the following EEC investments and initiatives:

• $15 million for Head Start grants;

• $10 million for EEC Workforce Higher Education Opportunities;

• $2.5 million in early childhood mental health grants;

• $11 million for child care resource and referral agencies; and

• Establishes the Early Education and care Economic review commission to review childcare funding and make recommendations on policy changes to expand access.

Highlighting the urgent need to strengthen public health infrastructure at the local, state and regional level to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget includes targeted investments aimed at redoubling our efforts and pushing forward with a proactive public health response to defeat this virus and its many consequences. The budget includes:

• $10 million for grants to support local boards of health to combat COVID-19;

• $1 million for a COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan program, focused on equitable vaccine distribution;

• $50M for domestic violence prevention services; and

· $169M for Bureau of Substance Addiction Services to provide assistance to those who are battling substance addiction.

Additional programs and services prioritized by Senator DiDomenico include:

• $46 million for Adult Basic Education Services;

• $20 million for summer jobs for at-risk youth;

• $29M for civil legal aid;

• $35.4M for early intervention services, and Senator DiDomenico's amendment providing $4.1M to mitigate fluctuations in services and costs caused by COVID-19 pandemic;

• $6.5M for pediatric palliative care;

• $350/child for the TAFDC clothing allowance;

• $510K for Safe and Supportive Schools;

• $1.8M for Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs and the Alliance of YMCAs;

• $250K for Operation A.B.L.E., employment training services for workers over the age of 45; and

• $250K for housing relief to the cities of Everett and Chelsea.

This legislation is now before Governor Baker for his signature.

McGonagle, House pass important housing funding

Rep. Joseph McGonagle, vice-chair of the Housing committee, along with Chair Kevin Honan of Brighton and their committee, are pleased to announce their significant funding victories for Housing opportunities in the Fiscal Year 2021 budget.

The 2021 budget was passed much later this year and in a first ever remote format due to COVID-19.

Just over $280 million of the $46 billion House budget was dedicated to housing priorities in the Commonwealth. Some of the major victories include $135 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), which works to maintain stability for families and individuals who are at risk of being homeless and $50 million for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), which provides families and individuals with temporary assistance to obtain or retain housing.

"I am extremely pleased with how the housing priorities made out in the 2021 budget," said McGonagle. "Housing stability and affordability have always been an important part of the legislature, but these issues became even more pertinent since the shutdown began in March.

State Rep. Joe McGonagle, vice chair, with Housing Chair Rep. Kevin Honan on the floor of the state House of Representatives after the passage of the State Budget.

With many people struggling to pay their bills, the last thing we need is more individuals and families on the street in the middle of a pandemic. I am hopeful this funding will allow the terrific housing organizations to keep operating and helping the Commonwealth. Thank you to Chair Honan, Speaker DeLeo and Chair Michlewitz for their work on this."

The full breakdown of the housing funds includes:

•$135 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)

•$80 million for the public housing operating subsidy. This subsidy supports more than 50,000 state public housing units. LHAs have done a wonderful job keeping their residents healthy with increased cleaning and safety protocols during this pandemic.

•$50 million for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT). This program is the core component of the Administration's Eviction Diversion Initiative.

•$4.1 million for Housing Consumer Education Centers. Nine member agencies statewide offer housing assistance, services, and information to low and moderate income residents. These centers are on the front lines of this pandemic, connecting residents with rental assistance and services they need to stay securely housed.

•$3.89 million for the Home and Healthy For Good Program, which places chronically homeless individuals into permanent housing with supportive services.

•$8.1 million for Alternative Housing Voucher Program, which provides rental assistance vouchers to non-elderly residents with disabilities.

•$1.5 million for Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP), which acts as a neutral third party between a landlord and tenants facing eviction and helps preserve tenancies at the housing court.

Sports / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

board with this proposal and are ready to make the best of what is not the best situation…We have put a priority on clubs and activities that are small in scope and that have a chance of being sustainable. We believe the athletic plan falls into that category."

The plan allows girls and boys basketball – both varsity and junior varsity – and hockey, which is mixed boys and girls at Everett High. Indoor track would be moved to the Fall 2 Season, which also includes football and is scheduled to being on Feb. 22. Wrestling is a high-risk activity under COVID and would likely be in the spring, if at all. The new Winter Season would begin Dec. 15, with practices able to start on Dec. 15.

Teams will have a maximum of 15 players per squad and 20 for hockey, and there will be try-outs posted soon. Players will have to wear a mask at all times in both sports, there are no locker rooms and benches would be arranged with social distancing. There will be no spectators allowed at any of the games, but Tahiliani said they are working with ECTV closely to make sure that games are broadcast live for friends, family and students to watch.

Interestingly, referees will be ask to enforce a protocol where there is limited amounts of loud cheering and yelling from the bench areas.

The first games, Turner said, would be in January after the break.

If necessary, sports might create a "bubble" if need be. For instance, Turner said if there is worry, they could designate Medford High as the location of all girls basketball games. Meanwhile, the teams will have different practice dates at Everett High as well to keep the teams segregated and to help with contact tracing.

"It is great to see the letters GBL back on the sports landscape where they belong," said Tahiliani.

Turner said the GBL has been active all fall in coming up with strict protocols to ensure safety of student athletes – and to also allow them to return for their social-emotional benefits that having been missing for months.

"The GBL athletic directors and athletic trainers have been working since the fall," she said. "We have been doing everything we can to come up with a winning plan because we know it the social-emotional benefit for the kids that we need…Because it's just the GBL playing each other, we can adapt. The AD's have been working together and building up the flexibility. We want to play and are willing to move to be able to do that."

Public Health Nurse Sabrina Firicano warned that there has been a major increase in November for cases among kids age 0-19. That is a concern for her, she said, in returning to sports and something to watch. She said it will need to be watched carefully and sports might spread the virus.

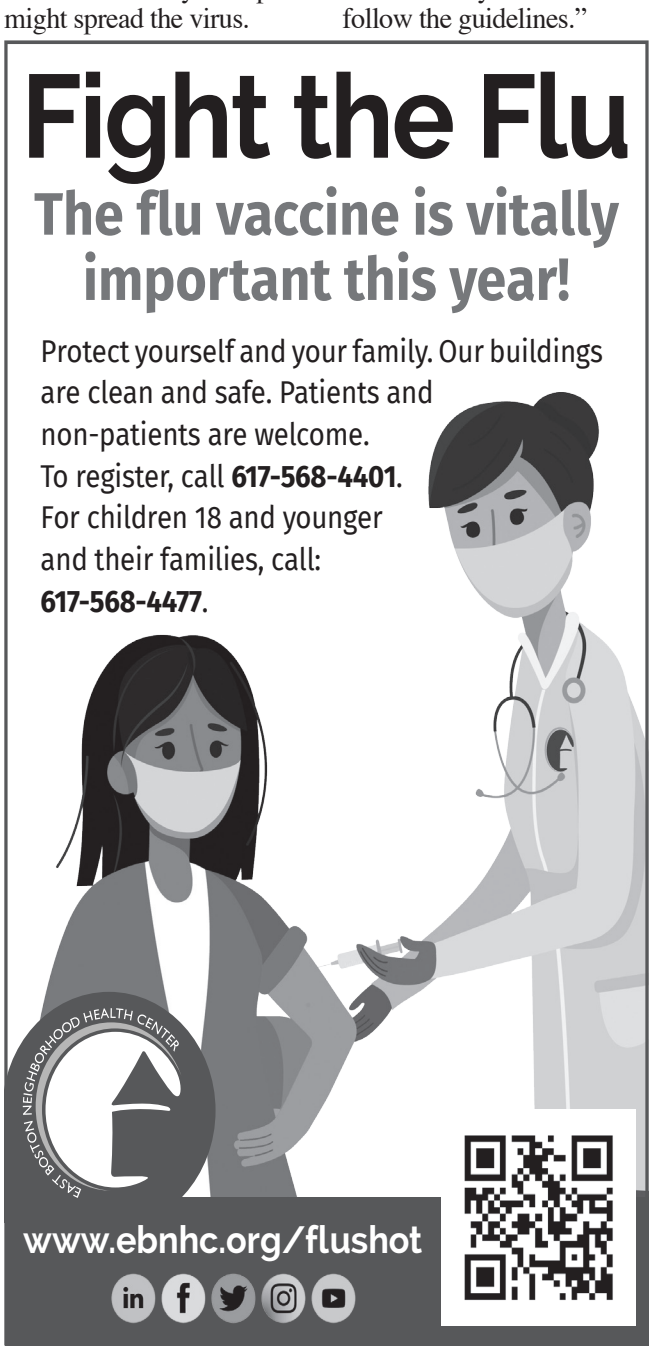
"As far as the spread, it could be a risk where there are players in close contact with each other," she said.

School Committee members Samantha Lambert and Dana Murray said they had read all of the protocols put out by the GBL and were impressed and comfortable.

"They are extensive and show a lot of thought and preparation went into the kids," said Lambert. "That's why I'm leaning towards voting 'yes.'"

She also said it will be important to press upon the kids how the virus spreads, and staying home from a game with symptoms is the right thing to do.

"The students may not see the impact of a chain virus," she said. "Whatever we can do to make sure they understand it's not just themselves, but their family and other people's families at risk if they don't want to follow the guidelines."



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Everett Independent

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Editor in Chief: Cary Shuman

Independent Forum

HAPPY HANUKKAH

The eight-day observance of Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, gets underway this Thursday, December 10, and will culminate next Friday, December 18.

In summary, Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Maccabees -- a group of fierce warriors who used guerilla tactics against an occupying army -- in 166 BCE when the Maccabees liberated the Jewish people from the Greek-based rulers who essentially had outlawed the Jewish religion.

When the triumphant Maccabees captured the city of Jerusalem, they quickly entered the Holy Temple, tossing out the images of the Greek gods that had been installed there by the occupying rulers.

When the Maccabees went to light the Menorah candles in the Temple, they thought they only had one day's worth of oil. However, the lights remained lit for eight days -- hence the miracle of the Festival of Lights.

Hanukkah is a joyous occasion for Jews world-wide, marked by large gatherings of friends and families and the playing of traditional games such as the dreidel and eating traditional foods such as latkes.

Although Hanukkah celebrations this year will be much more subdued than is typical because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we wish all of our Jewish friends a happy, healthy, and meaningful Hanukkah in 2020.

THE VIRUS IS A HUNTER -- AND WE ARE ITS PREY

It now has been nine months since lockdowns went into effect in many states, including here in Massachusetts on March 16. However, despite all of our previous efforts, the COVID-19 pandemic is surging across the entire United States.

The pleas of public health and government officials can only go so far if Americans fail to heed their warnings and do not take the common-sense and easy-to-follow steps of wearing masks, maintaining physical distance, and not congregating in group settings of any kind.

With the promise of a vaccine on the horizon, this is no time to let our guard down. The virus is everywhere and no one is safe from it. Each and every one of us must assume personal responsibility for the safety of ourselves, our families, and our friends.

The coronavirus is a living organism that is stalking us wherever we go and whatever we do. We are its prey -- and it requires that we must be ever-vigilant in order to avoid becoming another victim and spreading it to others.

Selfishness and failure to follow the rules simply are not options amidst this widening pandemic.

PEARL HARBOR WAS 79 YEARS AGO

It was 79 years ago this week -- December 7 -- that the nation of Japan launched its attack on Pearl Harbor.

The very next day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt convened a joint session of Congress in which he famously declared the attack as, "A day that will live in infamy," and asked Congress for a Declaration of War.

For more than two years prior to the attack, America had stayed out of the war that already had engulfed the rest of the world. By the time of the Japanese attack, Hitler's Nazis had conquered all of continental Europe and much of Africa, while the Japanese had invaded almost all of Asia, save for the U.S. outposts in the Philippines and other small islands in the Pacific.

Americans clung to the belief that our isolation, separated from the rest of the world by two oceans, would keep us out of the war. But after Pearl Harbor, we no longer could keep our heads buried in the sand.

The lessons of Pearl Harbor are many, but chief among them is that freedom isn't free -- and that we always must be vigilant to recognize the forces of evil that seek to destroy our way of life.

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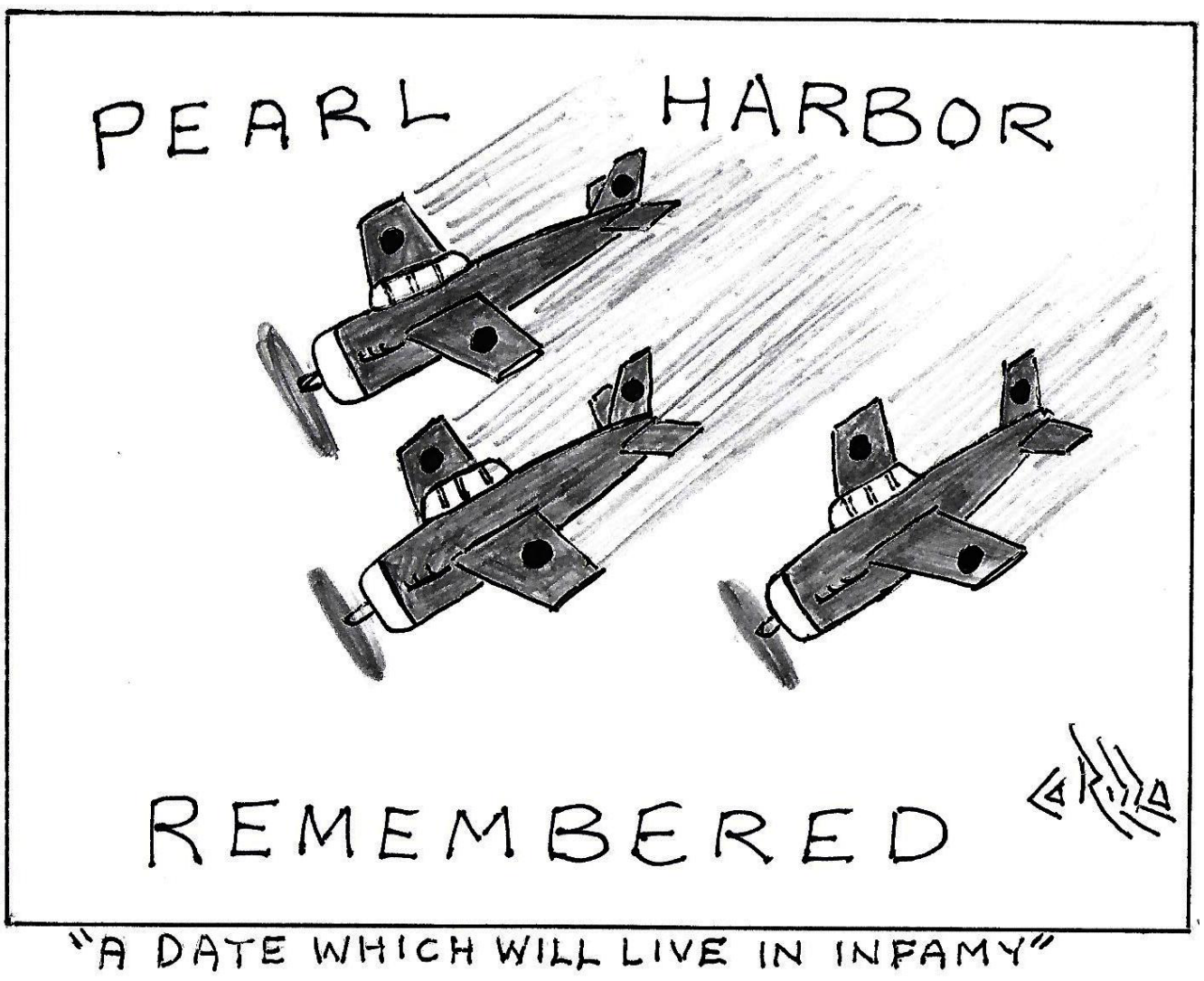

"A DATE WHICH WILL LIVE IN INFAMY"

LETTERS *to the Editor*

TO THE PEOPLE OF EVERETT

To the Editor:

Let me start by saying it has been a genuine honor to serve you, the people of Everett as an elected member of the City Council. My representing you at City Hall has given me the opportunity to be involve in many of the changes that have shaped the progress of our community over the past twenty years including reforming the City Charter and downsizing city government. Even after the City Council was streamed-lined from 25 members to 11, you elected me to continue to represent you at City Hall. Your faith is humbling.

As much as I have enjoyed serving on the City Council, recent personal events have caused me to reassess my service. I have submitted my resignation from the City Council in order to be eligible to apply for the soon to be open Assistant City Clerk's position at City Hall. In addition to my years of involvement in city government, my experience in the private sector in finance and banking, business, management and customer service round out the skills I would bring to the position. I have confirmed my eligibility under Massachusetts State Law with the State Ethics Commission. Nothing is guaranteed and I will have to apply like any candidate. Resigning from the Council is the first step.

In closing, I wish Assistant City Clerk David Ragucci a long and prosperous retirement. If appointed, I know these are big shoes to fill and I am ready for the challenge. To you my fellow Everett residents, I wish you a blessed and safe holiday season. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe!

Peter A. Napolitano

SENIOR VIRUS TESTING TIMES

To the Editor:

Supermarkets and other stores have established "Senior Hours: for the elderly. The cold inclement weather season will soon be here. I would ask that the Everett testing sites consider setting aside a designated time for the elderly and the handicapped. It is going to be very difficult for them to stand in line for a long period of time. I hope that the health agencies consider some arrangements for them.

In the spirit of the HOLIDAY SEASON, maybe the "Younger Generation" would allow elderly and handicapped individuals to go in front at the testing sites. A happy & HEALTHY HOLIDAIY to ALL.

Thank you,

Bob Sansone

WE IMPLORE YOU TO SIGN S.2963

(The following letter was sent to Gov. Charlie Baker and shared with the media as well.)

Dear Gov. Baker:

I am writing you on behalf of all of the Members of the Mystic Valley Area Branch of the NAACP to implore you to sign S.2963, An Act Relative to Justice, Equity, and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth. We urge you to sign this bill immediately with no amendments; this bill will improve policing in the Commonwealth as well as help continue the fight for a more just society for all.

On Saturday, December 5, 2020 the New England Area Conference of the NAACP met and unanimously agreed to uniformly support you signing this bill with no hesitation. The New England Area Conference of the NAACP covers all NAACP Branches within the Commonwealth, as well as New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, and Rhode Island. Policing reform is not an issue pertaining only to Minnesota and Georgia; we need reform in Massachusetts too. It is essential that we be at the forefront of policing reform in America.

Although the bill could have been stronger on limiting or abolishing qualified immunity, the Legislature's compromise police reform package builds on many of the reforms that you have proposed. Additionally, it also includes reform measures, such as a ban on chokeholds, and giving civil-rights stakeholders equal representation with police on the police oversight board. These are common-sense reforms with broad public support.

Please take this step in ensuring that Massachusetts is at the forefront of aiming for equality for all.

Zane T. Crute
President,
Mystic Valley Area Branch of the NAACP
Assistant Secretary, New England Area Conference of the NAACP

FINALIZE, PASS AND ENACT A COVID RELIEF PACKAGE

To the Editor:

With Election Day well behind us and most races settled, we renew our urgent request for action to help stave off further job loss on Main Street, especially as spiking coronavirus cases put economies across the country at further risk. A COVID RELIEF NOW Coalition survey of over 1,800 cities, counties and industry associations finds 80% of respondents indicating their financial health has been impacted negatively by COVID-19.

The time to advance the next round of COVID-related economic relief is now, during the 2020 lame-duck legislative session. Our country can't wait until 2021. Ninety-one percent of respondents believe that without another stimulus, their business, organization or government's condition will worsen.

New jobless claims again exceeded 700,000. There are signs that a once-nascent jobs recovery has markedly cooled—especially at the lower rungs of the income ladder. Thirty-five percent of respondents to our survey say their business, organization or government has slashed its workforce due to the current economic situation. However, the worst may be yet to come: 95% of survey respondents believe their organization or industry will face growing challenges—or be forced to shutter altogether.

Revenue shortfalls are imperiling the delivery of many public services for both city and county governments. In fact, most local governments believe they will face significant challenges in providing needed services.

Though certain segments of the economy have managed to adapt and thrive during the pandemic, others are at the mercy of coronavirus-related shutdowns, and have borne the worst of the economic fallout. Travel, for instance—which encompasses segments like lodging and transportation, but also has enormous downstream impact for industries such as restaurants, retail and business events—currently accounts for more than a third of all U.S. unemployment. Travel-supported jobs employed one in 10 Americans prior to COVID-19, but 4.5 million of those jobs are projected to be lost by year's end.

Spiking infection rates and new rounds of restrictions have profoundly diminished the outlook for an immediate economic recovery. Earlier rounds of legislative relief never anticipated the extended length of closures and protracted reopenings. Huge numbers of the most-impacted employers have already exhausted aid funds with a recovery yet to materialize—or were left unable to access the relief programs to begin with.

Although encouraging news on a vaccine offers a ray of light at the end of a long and very dark tunnel, under the best possible scenario it will not be widely available in time to prevent the permanent loss of more businesses and the communities they sustain.

A huge and diverse coalition of business and public-sector voices has been pleading with Washington for months to reach a new relief deal. Each

See LETTERS Page 5

Guest Op-Ed

MBTA cuts impact on commuters

By the Public Transit Public Good Riders, Workers and Communities United for Transit Justice

On December 2, 2020 we conducted a series IVR surveys of residents in communities

served by the MBTA during afternoon and evening hours. 467 individual respondents

completed the survey giving a Margin of Error of +/- 4.53%. Below are the topline results

of the survey.

QUESTION RESPONSE RATE

1. GENDER

Male 38.9%

Female 61.1%

2. AGE

Under 30 16.1%

Between 30-49 33.6%

Between 50-65 26.6%

Over 65 23.8%

3. Have you utilized public transportation in the last two years?

HAVE used public transportation 57.5%

HAVE NOT used public transportation 38.8%

UNSURE 3.7%

4. The MBTA announced it is planning millions of dollars in cuts to its services and

staff. Do you support cuts to public transportation funding?

OPPOSE 67.0%

SUPPORT 16.4%

UNSURE 16.6%

5. If the MBTA cuts millions of dollars in funding from the system, are you

CONCERNED about the impact it will have on SAFETY for riders and workers?

ARE CONCERNED 70.0%

ARE NOT CONCERNED 21.8%

UNSURE 8.3%

6. If the MBTA cuts millions of dollars in funding from the system, are you

CONCERNED about the impact it will have on the ability of frontline workers to

get to their jobs?

ARE CONCERNED 75.8%

ARE NOT CONCERNED 16.6%

UNSURE 7.7%

7. If the MBTA cuts millions of dollars in funding from the system, are you

CONCERNED about the impact it will have on local businesses and on a postpandemic

economic recovery?

ARE CONCERNED 69.9%

ARE NOT CONCERNED 22.0%

UNSURE 8.1%

(end of survey)

Cataldo / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

day. With the ability to be mobile on the SmartCare unit, it makes their team even more valuable.

"There is a lot of discussion right now about the roll out, but we'd certainly be able to help with the distribution," he said. "Certainly paramedics are a population that are being considered and would be available to do the COVID-19 vaccinations."

SmartCare, however, has already proven its worth during COVID-19 and has gotten high praise from physicians, particularly in Emergency Department settings. Right now, they are deployed to do testing in communities around the area, including Everett. Prior to that, SmartCare worked in its traditional role to take medicine to patients. Using remote technology, paramedics were able to interact with patients at their home and with a physician online to provide monitoring and care. Though they began that service in the summer of 2019, it became well-positioned to really help in COVID-19 as it allowed vulnerable patients to get in-person care without having to travel to a hospital and be exposed to the virus.

"SmartCare really was a service to fill in the gaps in patient care that utilized the skill set of a paramedic and adjust slightly to the role of a paramedic and be a home care provider," said Cataldo. "When it came to COVID-19, it became useful for several patients to be able to get care and not have to travel to the Emergency Room if not necessary."

SmartCare units are able to visit the home, do an assessment of the patient, and then bring the physician in online. There, the physician can consult with the patient and the paramedic and provide services quickly. In the past, that could have been a very long series of events – making an appointment, coming to the hospital two weeks later and then getting a resolution.

Hoffenberg said they have increased their calls by 500 percent a month since starting last year, and some of their customers now include the largest medical institutions in the United States.

"They're starting to recognize the depth of care we can provide for patients and contribute to their overall health," he said. "With little marketing and notoriety, we've grown quite a bit."

Now, after having proven so valuable in COVID and now becoming a key testing service, they are poised to be a key participant in what could be an historic delivery of medicine to the public.

"I think it will be a small runway where there is a little hesitancy for some to accept the vaccine as being safe and reliable for everyone," said Cataldo. "There are certain populations where the benefit far outweighs the concerns…I think everyone would agree all eyes are on this thing."

Council / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the matter, but that is a formality as the Charter is specific in saying the 6th place finisher is automatically the new councilor on a vacancy.

"By his vote, he automatically gets it," said Cornelio. "It goes to a vote of the Council, but the Charter says they 'shall' vote for that candidate. It is a formality vote really. He automatically receives it according to the Charter because he was 6th and had more than 20 percent of the ballots cast."

The Council has 30 days to take the action of voting Dell Isola in and swearing him into office. Cornelio said they were contemplating taking that action on Monday, Dec. 14, but the agenda hadn't yet been set.

Letters // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

passing moment guarantees more job losses and a hamstrung recovery.

We urge you to finalize, pass and enact a COVID relief package into law this year. The time for federal relief and leadership is now.

Asian American Hotel Owners Association
Cecil Staton, President & CEO

American Apparel & Footwear Association
Stephen Lamar, President & CEO

American Gaming Association
Bill Miller, President & CEO

American Hotel & Lodging Association
Chip Rogers, President & CEO

American Society of Association Executives
Susan Robertson, President & CEO

Go LIVE Together Coalition
Sue Sung, Director

International Council of Shopping Centers
Tom McGee, President & CEO

International Franchise Association
Robert Cresanti, President & CEO

National Association of Counties
Matthew D. Chase, CEO/Executive Director

National Conference of State Legislatures

National Governors Association
Bill McBride, Executive Director

National League of Cities
Clarence E. Anthony, CEO & Executive Director

National Restaurant Association
Tom Bené, President & CEO

National Retail Federation
Matthew R. Shay, President & CEO

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
Karen Kerrigan, President & CEO

Society of Independent Show Organizers
David Audrain, Executive Director

The United States Conference of Mayors
Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director

U.S. Travel Association
Roger Dow, President & CEO

THANK YOU, SCHIAVO CLUB

Mayor Carlo DeMaria is thankful for Carmen A. Schiavo & Associates for their generous donation to our annual holiday toy drive. "The Schiavo Club has been more than generous with the city and I am grateful for their helping hand," DeMaria said. The Schiavo Club is named after Carmen A. Schiavo, a U.S Marine corporal who was killed in action in Okinawa during WWII. It was founded with a mission to help support veterans. The Schiavo Club is known for their generosity, from donating its hall for events and functions, food and money to support many local businesses and causes. In 2019, the Schiavo Club donated over $36,000 to toy drives, Thanksgiving and the Brandon Conde fundraiser. Most recently, the Schiavo club donated another $200 to veterans' services, handed out 260 meals on Thanksgiving Day and donated hundreds of toys for the annual holiday toy drive. "Thank you for everything you have done for our city and residents," DeMaria said. Pictured are Paul Ruggiero (left), Mayor Carlo DeMaria (left center), Joe Rescigno (right center), and Rich Auger (right) surrounded by The Schiavo Cluc's toy donation.

COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER TO SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED

Led by the Everett City Council in partnership with the Everett City Clerk Sergio Cornelio, Mayor Carlo DeMaria, Senator Sal DiDomenico, the Everett School Department, GTA Landscaping, Attorney Anthony Rossi & Associates, and Ken Magno, proprietor of The Coldcut Factory, donated 90 full turkey family meals to residents in Everett. The meals were delivered the day before Thanksgiving. "It's important to for the community to come together to help those in need," said Mayor Carlo DeMaria. "The holidays can be a tough time for those less fortunate, and I am proud of the community for uniting for this worthy cause. This year has made the holiday season more challenging for some families, and I am happy to lend a helping hand." The residents who received these meals were very grateful for the assistance. The City of Everett has committed to provide assistance to the community this holiday season through the Holiday Assistance Program. Residents can apply for assistance on December 10th and December 11th from 9am-11am at the Connolly Center.

Baker / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

restrictions are being put in place.

He said that there is "hope" with the vaccine coming soon, but "we cannot simply wait for the vaccine to get here."

Reverting back to Phase Three, Step One will help to "reduce the opportunities this virus can have to spread," said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. Baker acknowledged that a lot has been asked of both residents and businesses over the past nine months, but everyone needs to continue to follow the guidelines in order to slow spread of the virus to ensure health and safety for all communities across the state.

"Today's announcement is meant to tighten up guidance and to ensure that all residents are taking the proper COVID-19 prevention measures, no matter where they are," Polito said.

Starting on Sunday, the outdoor gathering limit at event venues will be reduced from 100 people to 50, and people hosting outdoor gatherings with more than 25 people "will now be responsible for notifying their local board of health," Polito said. Additionally, the rollback requires indoor theaters, performance venues, and "higher contact indoor recreation businesses" to close, according to the state, and theaters and performance venues that are outdoors may not operate with more than 25% capacity, and not more than 50 people.

Statewide, capacity limits for arcades, driving and flight schools, gyms, libraries, museums, retail, offices, places of worship, lodging common areas, movie theaters, and gold facilities, will be reduced from 50 percent to 40 percent, the state said. Movie theaters may not have more than 50 people per theater.

Polito said that the administration is "hoping this will be a temporary closure," and that they will "consider reopening" indoor theaters and performance venues" when the data and hospitalizations improve.

Additionally, there are new guidelines for restaurants as well, including that masks are required at all times inside restaurants expect for when actively eating and drinking. No more than six people per table will be allowed, and all tables will have a 90 minute time limit. Also, musical performances at restaurants will no longer be allowed, and food court seating at malls will be closed.

Polito said that residents should only eat at restaurants with people in their immediate household. She added that all social clubs serving food must abide by the restaurant guidelines.

Inside gyms and fitness centers, masks are required at all times, and all office workers are also required to wear masks except when not in their own personal workspace, and the use of break rooms should be limited or eliminated. Polito also suggested that employers continue to use teleworking as much as possible to slow the spread.

"In order to beat this virus, we must all continue to do our part," Polito said.

Baker said that these new restrictions will help to prevent infection and the spread of the virus, "especially in indoor settings," and will also help to "reduce mobility" and the amount of time that people spend with those outside of their household.

"There's nothing more powerful than people playing their part and understanding their role," Baker said.

All of Us RESEARCH PROGRAM

Why have some communities not been a part of medical research?

You can help researchers develop new and better treatments that benefit all of us.

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*All participants will receive $25 after completion of their visit. To complete the visit, participants must create an account, give consent, agree to share their electronic health records, answer health surveys, and have their measurements taken (height, weight, blood pressure, etc.), and give blood and urine samples, if asked.

All of Us and the *All of Us* logo are service marks of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER

EVERETT OFFICIALS HOLD HOLIDAY TREE-LIGHTING

The City flipped the switch on its holiday and Christmas décor on Thursday, Dec. 3, blanketing the city with colorful lights at parks, along major thoroughfares and in Everett Square. Some new lights have been added, and Wehner Park was officially unveiled for its first holiday season after major renovations closed it until last month.

Mayor Carlo DeMaria said it was a non-traditional celebration, but that next year would be different.

"Tonight was untraditional, but I am so grateful to stand with my wife Stacy and Bishop Brown to light our Christmas tree in Everett Square, a long-standing tradition - - Everett's tradition," he said. "Because of the current circumstances, I was unable to invite our community to join us. I'm hopeful next year will be different. On behalf of my family and I, we hope your holiday season is filled with joy, gratitude, and of course social distancing. I look forward to coming together next year as a community to light our tree and celebrate the progress that has been made."

PHOTOS BY SETH DANIEL

Wehner Park was brightly lit with tree lights and a colorful Christmas tree – looking like a holiday oasis as one drove towards Malden.

The gigantic Christmas tree in Everett Square was a beacon in these difficult times, illuminating the Square along with several other decorations.

At the old Everett High School lawn, a Christmas village decked out in colorful lights brightened up that area of Broadway.

The Wehner Park Christmas tree brought a splash of the holidays to the northern side of Everett this year in the new, fully-renovated park.

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Pasquale (Pat) Roberto, Broker/Owner

Jolly Old Saint Nick won't be making any appearances for photos this year
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Please include which paper you want to be published in & the name(s) of individuals pictured
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DEADLINE TO SUBMIT FRI. DEC. 18th
PHOTOS TO BE PUBLISHED WEDS. DEC. 23rd

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EVERETT POLICE KICK-OFF THEIR 25 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

COURTESY PHOTOS

It's that time of the year again and the Everett Police are not letting COVID-19 stop them from spreading good will and a little cheer throughout the city. Everett Police kicked off its 25 Days of Christmas last week, ready to brighten the faces of children around Everett in these trying times. The effort has been a staple of Christmas for officers in the Everett Police Department for several years.

On the third day of Christmas, the School Resource Officers were lucky enough to run into little Jamilla, who was so excited to receive a little gift from EPD.

Books, Jewelry and Teddy Bears - oh my! On the fourth day of the 25 Days of Christmas, last Friday, Officer Nicole O'Donnell and Officer Frank Nuzzo greeted this young lady who was happy to see them.

Officer Frank Nuzzo helped get the effort going last week by looking for some of Everett's finest young residents. Officers will be on the lookout for kids being good this season to reward them spontaneously with gifts.

SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER

Last week, several members of the business community came together to wish the Everett Fire Department a happy holiday season and thank them for their service to the community. Charles Zammuto of Legacy Building & Development, Alfred Lattanzi of Everett Supply & True Value, Trevor Laliberte of TDL Landscaping and City Councilor Anthony DiPierro visited Central Fire Station to present each member of the department a gift bag filled with unique firefighter trinkets and holiday ornaments that can be brought home and enjoyed with their families.

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 25 BEGIN HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

The Teamsters Local 25 members and retirees are holding their annual Holiday Toy Drive to help children in need have a happy Christmas. The region's largest Teamsters union kicked off the drive by purchasing the first wave of toys at Target in Everett. Pictured at the kickoff are, from left, Bob McAllister, Cory DiLoreto, Paul Weiskel, Bill Grubbs, Local 25 Field Representative Mike Halley, and Local 25 Retiree Chapter President Joe Conti.

City introduces new municipal housing assistance program, supplements state efforts

Staff Report

City leaders are cheering the announcement on Monday by Mayor Carlo DeMaria to initiate a City-sponsored emergency housing assistance program for rental assistance, mortgage assistance and emergency housing assistance – a program called for by some City Councilors last month when it became apparent the state's RAFT program was causing residents to fall through the cracks.

Mayor DeMaria announced that starting Monday, the City will be providing rental assistance, mortgage assistance, and emergency housing assistance to Everett residents in need. The following application must be submitted to the City by 5 p.m. on December 22. The application can be found here: http://everettcares.cityofeverett.com/covid-19-aid-application/. Residents looking for additional assistance, other than housing, can fill out the application and specify what their needs are and the City will do whatever we can to meet those needs.

"I am extremely happy to see our own City Fund come into fruition," said Councilor Stephanie Martins. "I have repeatedly talked about the need for our own fund in Everett given the inefficiency of the state in addressing the issue in a timely manner and making funds really accessible to residents in need of immediate assistance. The guidelines left people behind and the timing was unacceptable.

"In November, Councilor McLaughlin and I made a big ask to allocate $2 million from Free Cash to establish a fund," she continued. "We have had the opportunity to meet with the Administration and CFO to explore other options to implement the request and address the need."

Councilor Michael McLaughlin said he was glad to see the administration take action on this program.

"I have supported this since day one because there are many that could fall through the cracks now that the moratorium has been lifted on evictions and foreclosures in the state courts," he said. "There is nothing more important right now than supporting all of our residents and making sure no one gets left behind or lost in the shuffle. Right now, housing is critical for our community."

Those unable to fill out the application electronically may come to City Hall during normal business hours to fill out a hard copy of the application. Please bring copies of all supporting documentation when applying.

Documentation must include proof that you are behind on your rent or mortgage, a printed bank statement and/or two paystubs from the last 30 days of unemployment. If you are unable to provide a printed bank statement please upload a signed attestation stating "I, (printed name)am unable to pay my rent/mortgage due to COVID19 and do not have the ability to provide a bank statement." Please include signature and date. This documentation will be necessary to complete the application process.

For housing assistance, the City of Everett is partnering with ABCD to use a portion of the City's CARES Act funding to provide financial relief to residents and families that are in immediate danger of losing housing due to financial hardship created by the pandemic. The City will refer approved applicants to ABCD, who will contact those residents and work with them to have checks issued directly to the tenant's landlord or to the homeowner's mortgage company. The City anticipates that if applicants provide all the information they need on the application, residents will have a rent or mortgage payment made within a week of the process starting the process. The City will provide up to $5,000 per individual resident or up to $10,000 in assistance for families. Applications will be processed on a first come, first served basis until the City has exhausted the $1.3 million in relief funds or December 30, 2020, whichever comes first.

Everett now follows the lead of Chelsea, which began a municipal rental assistance program last summer and is now on their second round of that program. Additionally, the City has allocated $1 million for a Homeowner Stabilization Program that will be distributed to owner-occupants in January.

Jolly Old Saint Nick won't be making any appearances for photos this year

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DEADLINE TO SUBMIT FRI. DEC. 18th PHOTOS TO BE PUBLISHED WEDS. DEC. 23rd

NEWS FROM AROUND *THE REGION*

CHELSEA EATS PROGRAM ROLLS OUT

CHELSEA - The Chelsea Eats debit card program – one of the first such municipal programs in the nation - has been nearly fully deployed for those who won the chance in the lottery last month, that allowed 2,000 residents to get a set amount loaded on their new cards every month through March.

After a number of logistical issues that had to be ironed out, City Manager Tom Ambrosino said the Chelsea Eats program started in earnest last week just before Thanksgiving, when the first amount was deposited onto the cards. The cards are procured through a Visa provider and can be used at any store in the region.

"We distributed the cards to residents at City Hall the week before Thanksgiving," he said. "We distributed about 1,500 cards of the 2,000 cards that we announced to lottery winners. We loaded that batch of cards with the first installment of money on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving and so far everything is going well."

The City has committed to funding the first two months, including last Tuesday's money and another loading in December before Christmas. Meanwhile, two donors have submitted large donations to the City to fund the months of January and February.

"That should get people to the end of March and hopefully there is a vaccine and everyone is able and everyone is back to work," he said.

The donations came from the Shah Family Foundation and the United Way, both of which like the idea of Universal Basic Income. Ambrosino said he isn't so much interested in that, but says it could help them secure more funding for beyond March.

"It's possible we could get more donations for that concept, but for now we can get people to March," he added.

The card is provided by Prepaid Expense Card Solutions, Inc. out of New York, and they have been a good partner with the City on this trailblazing program. He said the City would incur less than $10,000 in fees for the program, which officially can go until June 30, 2021 if there is funding.

Those who have the card get a set amount based on family size, Ambrosino said. Those with three or more in a family get $400 per load, two in a family get $300 and a single person gets $200.

The lottery was weighted to favor those who had more children, who were elderly, disabled, veterans or were in deep poverty. There was also a check for those who were already receiving state or federal public assistance. No one qualified unless they were under 100 percent of the federal poverty line, which is about 30 percent of AMI in Greater Boston.

Ambrosino said there are about 500 cards that weren't picked up and they have reached out to those individuals, but their contact information isn't helping. Letters have gone out, but it is assumed many moved on since the application period last August. Anyone not living in Chelsea does not qualify for the program.

CITY COUNCIL SETS TAX RATE

CHELSEA - The Chelsea City Council took every measure in protecting homeowners with rising tax bills in setting the tax rate at its regular meeting – but did so with a warning that next year those tools won't be in the toolbox if people are still struggling with the fallout from the pandemic.

The Council applied the maximum commercial shift of 175 percent to commercial property and away from residential property in an 11-0 vote, a move allowed by law and applied virtually every year.

That said, Council President Roy Avellaneda reminded everyone that this usual shift does create a hardship for small business owners – particularly this year when stores and commercial offices are sitting vacant at higher rates.

"I want us to all be cognizant this shift does unfairly burden the small commercial owners," he said. "I think of Madelyn Garcia who bought a commercial building in Cary Square and has $20,000 worth of taxes. To overcome that tax burden means you'll need to make 10 times that amount in revenue. She has to get $200,000 in revenue to get that. It's easy to shift to the commercial side, but we have to think about being fair to the small guy as well as the homeowner."

As well, the Council voted 11-0 to set the owner-occupant residential tax exemption at 35 percent – a rise of five percent and higher than the City had planned for. The City had been carefully rolling out that tax savings over five years and was expected to go to 32 percent this year, and 35 percent next year.

However, City Manager Tom Ambrosino said he recommended the 35 percent owner-occupant fee so that residents could have maximum savings during this difficult time in Chelsea.

"The maximum amount we can give is 35 percent and over the time I've been on the Council we've upped it consistently," said Councilor Damali Vidot. "However, after we apply this one there is no more room left to give any higher tax breaks. I want to urge this administration to do what it can. We're carrying burdens right now that, quite frankly, no municipality should have to carry. At this point, we've exhausted all the tools in the toolbox."

That program erases 35 percent of the value of a residential property that is owner occupied, up to a three-family home. That results in substantial savings on the tax bill for those homeowners occupying their homes in Chelsea.

That 35 percent, as Vidot said, is the maximum amount allowed by state law, a law that was changed in Chelsea's favor some years ago by Avellaneda. He said that effort was a second go-around for the savings, and he had tried previously with former Councilor Stan Troisi and they were rejected at the State House.

He said it was a "special moment" to be able to have that savings to give, and thanked Troisi for getting the ball rolling so many years ago

With all savings applied and shifted, the residential tax rate was set at $13.62 per $1,000 of value. The commercial rate came in at $26.65.

The largest tax increase is expected to hit two-family and three-family homeowners this year.

The Council has been submitted a request from Ambrosino to transfer $750,000 into the new Homeowner Stabilization Fund to help those with increasing residential taxes to get assistance. That program would likely roll out in January, and the Council is set to vote on the transfer at the Dec. 14 meeting. They are expected to approve it.

•GETTING THE VALUES RIGHT

One of the main issues on Monday night, and back to last year, was the questions raised by Avellaneda, Vidot and Councilor Giovanni Recupero about the valuations of multi-unit buildings of eight units or more.

Avellaneda has consistently said those larger buildings are undervalued in his estimation, and Vidot and Recupero have agreed with that.

"Those values are not up to the proper value in my opinion compared to how well they do on smaller properties," he said. "We have to no disagreement with how they value singles, two-families, condos and three-families. But we feel there is a lot of catching up to do with the others. That under-valuation puts an unfair burden on the smaller residential properties."

Vidot also stressed that she would like the Assessor's Department to look to an outside consultant or find a way to address these values.

"We have to make sure these bigger commercial buildings are being held accountable and paying their fair share so the burden is not on our residential or small business owners," she said. "We don't have any more to give."

Avellaneda said he would like to see a consultant brought on this year, particularly after Ambrosino announces the hiring of a new permanent City Assessor in the coming months.

"The clock starts ticking today for the Assessor's to do a better job with these identified properties in that sector so we don't have this problem next year," he said.

Ambrosino said they would be paying closer attention next year to those values.

"I think that will be the focus of attention in the next year," he said. "We're in the process of naming a new Chair of the Board of Assessors. That will be the top priority for that new person. When we present a tax rate next November I hope we can say with confidence those values are accurate."

MASSPORT DONATES HUNDREDS OF ITEMS TO VETERANS

Massport employees in front of the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea giving out donated personal care items to the veterans.

PLANS FOR PIERS PARK PHASE III DISCUSSED

East Boston - Two years ago, the Massachusetts Trustees of Reservation (MTR) submitted the only bid to Massport's call for a private/public partner to come forward and help fund the design and construction of Piers Park Phase III.

The dilapidated pier adjacent to Massport's award-winning Piers Park and the future Piers Park Phase II is being eyed by Massport as the future site of a third waterfront park.

Last week, MTR's Nick Black and Amy Eynatian briefed residents on where Massport and the MTR are in the process.

"We're going around talking to a number of neighborhood associations about our plans," said Black. "The reason why we're here tonight is an effort that we've been working on for about three or four years now to do something different and create something new within the City of Boston. What we're really trying to do is create a network of green public open space that is an iconic world class type of destination--a park that really supports the community's needs and provides access to the waterfront in a public way. We're also trying to really bring some value to Boston's climate resiliency goals and the issues we face in terms of storm surge and sea level rise. We're all trying to do this in a financially feasible manner which would be great."

MTR operates 120 miles of protected coastline, which includes over 60 miles of trails, and a bunch of beaches and all sorts of other natural habitats in the state.

See METRO NEWS Page 10

COVID-19 has changed everything.

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Study shows Everett has second slowest Internet speeds in Greater Boston

By Seth Daniel

In the digital highway, Everett's stuck in the slow lane.

A new study of median downloads speeds across the state by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) showed that Everett has the second slowest speeds in Greater Boston, just barely behind Chelsea and exponentially behind places like Wellesley and Weston.

Everett registered an average of 38.91 Megabits per second, which was only slightly higher than Chelsea's 35.56. It was far below neighbors like Revere (50.38) and Malden (54.82), and exponentially slower than Wellesley (141.08) and Weston (234.46). It is, for most, confirmation of something that's been known for quite some time, and something that COVID-19 has made more apparent as students struggle with connectivity in the all-remote schooling and workers confined to their homes frequently get kicked offline. Even expensive equipment can't fix the issues, as it's likely an infrastructure problem caused by years of City Council fighting with providers and the overall inequitable investment in urban areas by providers that seems to be a trend in the study.

Ryan Kelly, Josh Eichen and Matthew Zagaja of MAPC said they took on the study to find out about things that matter to people right now – such as internet speeds. The goal is to expand on the information, add more data, and help municipalities to solve these problems so good access to something as important as the Internet isn't determined by one's zip code.

"We very quickly identified digital access as something we wanted to study," said Eichen. "It enables education, access to healthcare, the ability to fill out unemployment claims, access to housing support services and food security – all of this is online now. It's very important, now more than ever, to get access.

The speed tests were accessed via an open data set from Measurement Lab, said Zagaja. While many haven't heard of Measurement Lab, it is the standard speed test used by Google. So, there is a ton of data and they analyzed those speed tests, isolated them to each zip code and ran through data from January to late November. In analyzing the data, they were able to tell if the speed test was done due to a problem with the internet that was fixed later. So, repair situations weren't included in the overall averages.

"It gives us a baseline of the numbers of individuals having an issue," he said.

Kelly added they not only want to help municipalities fix their digital issues, but also they want to help them gather information to know exactly what their problems are. He said many of the software companies and platforms used by municipalities have all kinds of connectivity data, and that can be asked for in contracts or agreements with those companies. Having that data, he said, will only help identify issues.

"We're also trying to empower municipalities to get their own date and improve the lives of their residents," he said.

They are also looking for all kinds of partners in addition to City government, including community based organizations, school districts, health care providers and community development corporations to name a few.

Speeds by Community

A sample of some of the median download speeds by community from across Greater Boston. Speeds are measured in Megabits per second.

- Chelsea – 35.56
- Everett – 38.91
- Somerville – 44.26
- Cambridge – 46.23
- Revere – 50.38
- Malden – 54.82
- Quincy – 58.26
- Medford – 65.21
- Arlington – 66.22
- Newton – 80.02
- Wellesley – 141.08
- Weston – 234.46

Eichen said one of the lenses of the study focuses on equity, and in many low-income urban areas, there isn't enough investment in digital access by providers. That is a trend by Internet providers to offer better service in wealthier suburban communities, a trend borne out by the MAPC data.

"MAPC as an organization has a major focus on equity," he said. "We want to encourage development and ensure that individuals don't have their economic mobility become stunted because of lack of access that is a central issue."

School Committeeman Frank Parker said this is one example – especially now with remote learning – of how inequity in education hits a community like Everett in ways that it doesn't elsewhere.

"The proof is in the pudding here," he said. "The more we try to be equitable, the more we discover how inequitable we are. Low income districts like Everett and Chelsea consistently fall behind the eight ball, and this shows us one reason why."

Councilor Stephanie Martins has frequently been critical of the City's internet service, and called on the Council to declare the bad service a public health crisis last month. She said she frequently hears from parents whose children are having trouble learning despite new equipment provided by the schools – not to mention her own struggles to try to get on and stay on at City Council meetings.

"It's internet justice and that's what I meant when I said that Internet access if a public health crisis," she said. "It's about accessing information, housing, education and paying bills. That's all on the internet now. I only wonder why a diverse community like Everett has been left behind. It makes me wonder if it's an intentional difference in speeds between wealthier communities and ours. It's not like we're not paying for it. We have the same packages as everyone else, but they're not delivering the same service."

Another piece of the puzzle in Everett, however, is the regulatory setup at the City Council and the historic aversion to technology companies and their expansion in the city. Just this summer, the Council rejected several antennae upgrades by Verizon Wireless that would have brought much faster service to several neighborhoods. The Council was sued by Verizon, and that case is still being litigated.

However, the trend of contentious situations between internet and cell phone providers and the Council goes back to at least 2006, said Clerk Sergio Cornelio. Back then, the Council denied about 15 to 18 small cell antennae to be put up, and the company sued the city and won. That same scenario is playing out right now with Verizon too. For the most part, he said, the Council approves most equipment, but only after many long meetings and discussions that can last for hours on a subject that most Councils don't have the power to regulate.

He said he has been trying to get the Council to give over the power to another Board that might handle it, maybe to take some of the politics out of the matter. Many times, Councilors are approached by a handful of residents that do not want the antennae near their homes for whatever reason. In those instances, councilors are forced to make a political choice on a technological issue.

"I've been trying to see if they would give over that authority to another Board that could specialize in this," he said. "That way it doesn't bog down a Council agenda for six or 10 weeks. I'm hoping there is an appetite for that in the future."

Even as he spoke over the phone, he said he has to go to a certain place in the basement of City Hall near a window to get cell service in the building. He said he figures that spot may be near to a cell antennae.

"We have to believe the science sometimes like we do with COVID," he said. "People have done the research on this."

Councilor Michael McLaughlin said he would rather give up the authority because it does put the Council in a tough position. He said when you're faced with a resident who is looking for help versus a cell phone company or provider – it's hard not to choose a resident who needs help.

"You want to help your residents and that's a difficult situation to be put in," he said. "I'd gladly give it up."

But not everyone is keen on it, and Cornelio said he would need to keep working on the idea in the coming year.

Parker said it has to be approached by the Council like it is a street or sidewalk repair in that it is a critical service – especially now. He pointed to the Council's own troubles with the Internet at its meetings, noting that two councilors were unable to vote on the contentious issue of putting the mayor on the School Committee last month. Due to internet access issues, Councilor Martins and John Hanlon could not register their vote on that hot-button issue and their votes weren't counted.

"I would like to see it approached from now on like it were repairs to streets or sidewalks or sewer pipes," he said. "If the schools and residents are having issues, what is happening with the businesses? Look at the Council. Perhaps if they'd have let these companies make their upgrades, we'd have better internet and they could have had a full contingent to vote on the mayor joining the School Committee."

Eichen said the MAPC study touches on so many things now that COVID has changed the way the world works, learns and conducts business.

"There are so many ways to share this," he said. "There is going to be more and more demand for high-speed, reliable internet. Businesses will be increasingly looking at this when they make decisions on where to locate. There may be companies that no longer need 15,000 sq. ft. downtown for an office, but may be able to use 5,000 sq. ft. in an inner suburb. But they might not get the same infrastructure there as they got in downtown Boston. Municipalities may see this as an opportunity to cash in under this scenario."

MVRCS INDUCTS 21 INTO NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School held a socially-distanced annual National Honor Society Induction recently as 21 members of the classes of 2021 and 2022 joined the ranks. National Honor Society membership rewards stout academic achievement. In addition at MVRCS, members of NHS are extremely active in student life, helping to host dances and raising money for worthy causes. "I am extremely proud of these 21 young men and women for their entrance to the National Honor Society," MVRCS Assistant Director Mr. Matthew Stone said. "This achievement won't be the first and certainly won't be the last for them as they continue to excel in a multitude of areas." Everett - Darnelle Felisier Pictured, NHS co-advisor Mrs. Elena Henreckson looks on as Mr. Matthew Stone delivers remarks at the 2020 National Honor Society induction ceremony.

LOCAL STUDENTS *EARN ACADEMIC HONORS*

REGIS STUDENTS MAKE THE DEAN'S LIST

Regis College is pleased to announce that 603 students made the Dean's List for academic achievement for the 2020 spring semester. The following students were among those who made the dean's list.

* Darcie Dupre, of Everett, class of 2023.

* Diana Concannon, of Everett, class of 2022.

To be eligible for the Dean's List as a senior, junior or sophomore at Regis, a student must have a semester grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.50. For first-year students, a semester GPA of at least 3.25 must be attained.

"I am very pleased to see so many of our students excelling across the university," said Regis College Vice President of Academic Affairs, Mary Erina Driscoll, PhD. "The Dean's List and the diversity of academic disciplines speak to a dedicated student body and to a faculty that promotes intellectual curiosity and achievement."

Regis College is a coed, Catholic university 12 miles west of Boston in Weston, Mass. With over 3,000 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students enrolled on campus and in fully online graduate programs, Regis provides an academically rigorous education within the schools of nursing, arts and sciences, business and communication, and health sciences. The Young School of Nursing at Regis has consistently been recognized by the National League of Nursing as a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education. In line with Regis' mission of providing innovative, industry-focused learning opportunities, the university offers academic partnerships with hospitals and local employers, a clinical dental center in Waltham, Mass., and bachelor's completion and accelerated nursing programs at its campus in Lawrence, Mass. The university's 20 NCAA Division III athletic teams compete within the Great Northeast Athletic Conference (GNAC). Inspired by the social justice values of its founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston, Regis engages with service initiatives within the local community and around the world. Visit https://www.regiscollege.edu/ to learn more.

THUY NGUYEN INDUCTED INTO THE HONOR SOCIETY OF PHI KAPPA PHI

Thuy Nguyen of Everett, was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society. Nguyen was initiated at MCPHS University.

Nguyen is among approximately 30,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10 percent of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 under the leadership of undergraduate student Marcus L. Urann who had a desire to create a different kind of honor society: one that recognized excellence in all academic disciplines. Today, the Society has chapters on more than 325 campuses in the United States and the Philippines. Its mission is "To recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others."

More About Phi Kappa Phi

Since its founding, more than 1.5 million members have been initiated into Phi Kappa Phi. Some of the organization's notable members include former President Jimmy Carter, NASA astronaut Wendy Lawrence, novelist John Grisham and YouTube co-founder Chad Hurley. Each year, Phi Kappa Phi awards $1 million to outstanding students and members through graduate and dissertation fellowships, undergraduate study abroad grants, funding for post-baccalaureate development, and grants for local, national and international literacy initiatives. For more information about Phi Kappa Phi, visit www.phikappaphi.org.

SEVEN EVERETT RESIDENTS NAMED TO HONOR ROLL AT BC HIGH

Boston College High School is proud to announce that the following students from Everett have been named to the school's First Quarter Honor Roll.

BC High successfully reopened for in-person learning this past September using a hybrid model, with two cohorts of students coming onto campus on alternating weeks. This model provided all BC High students with completely synchronous learning opportunities throughout the fall, regardless of whether the student was at school or at home. The school also implemented extensive safety protocols to help keep students, faculty, staff, and others safe and healthy during the global pandemic, and plans to continue offering in-person instruction in January.

1st Quarter High Honors

For High Honors a Sophomore, Junior, and Senior must have at least a 3.80 quality point average and all grades "C+" or higher. Freshmen need a 3.6 quality point average and all grades "C+" or higher.

- Antoine Fauche
- Santiago Vasquez
- Christian Topinio
- Christopher Affonso
- Cristian Salvador

1st Quarter Honors

For Honors a Sophomore, Junior, and Senior must have at least a 3.20 quality point average and all grades "C-" or higher. Freshmen need a 3.165 quality point average and all grades "C-" or higher.

- Colin Mastrocola
- Matthew Escobar Cedeno

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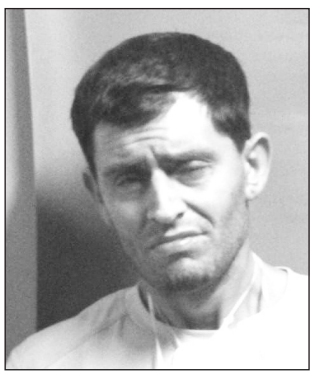
Police arrest Everett man for allegedly stealing packages

Arlington Police Chief Julie Flaherty reports that the Arlington Police Department arrested an Everett man who allegedly stole packages from several addresses there.

Patrick McLaughlin, 37, of Everett was charged with:

- OUI Drugs
- Receiving Stolen Property Over $1,200, Subsequent Offense (Two Counts)
- Receiving Stolen Property Under $1,200, Subsequent Offense (32 Counts)



Patrick McLaughlin, 37, of Everett, was arrested in Arlington for stealing packages.

On Saturday, Dec. 5 at approximately 2 p.m., officers responded to the area of Stowecroft Road and Columbia Road in Arlington to investigate a suspicious person in a motor vehicle.

Through the subsequent investigation, the operator, identified as McLaughlin, was determined to be under the influence of drugs and was placed under arrest for operating under the influence.

While speaking with McLaughlin, officers observed several Amazon packages inside the vehicle that appeared to be mostly sealed and have different names on the address labels.

During their search of the vehicle, officers found both opened and unopened packages containing a variety of merchandise from several different addresses in Woburn and Revere. A total of 19 Amazon packages were found in the vehicle. Inside the trunk of the vehicle, officers found many bags of clothing. A black BB gun was also found inside the vehicle.

McLaughlin was expected to be arraigned Monday in Cambridge District Court.

All suspects are innocent until proven guilty.

OBITUARIES

Lisa Morris

Former Printer at Alden Haulk Inc.

Family and friends are invited to attend a Memorial Visitation on Saturday, December 12, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Vertuccio & Smith Home for Funerals, Revere for Lisa E. (Belloise) Morris, 50, a longtime Everett resident, who died unexpectedly on Wednesday, November 25 at the Cambridge Health Alliance Hospital – Everett. A Funeral Service will immediately follow the visitation in the Funeral Home at 2:30 p.m.

Face masks must be worn at all times and social distancing must be maintained in the funeral home. All attendees are required to provide their name and phone number for contact tracing and temperatures will be checked prior to entering the funeral home. Only 25 people are allowed in the Funeral Home at one time. Guests are asked to visit briefly and to exit the Funeral Home to allow others to enter.

Lisa was born in Malden and was raised and educated in Everett. She worked in the printing business for most of her life and at Alden Haulk Inc. for over 10 years where she wore many hats. She worked in printing until she was no longer able to due to her declining health.

Lisa's favorite thing to do was to be with her family, it did not matter the occasion. The time she shared with her family is what she treasured the most.

One of Lisa's favorite hobbies was to draw, and she did it very well. She also had a deep interest in Lighthouses. She will be remembered for all the good times and the love she shared with her family.

The beloved daughter of Richard Morris of Braintree and the late Graceann M. Belloise, she was the loving mother of Stephanie M. Falzone and her fiancé, Jorge Figueroa and Mark A. Falzone, Jr., all of Everett; cherished grandmother of Nevaeh, Jadeilyn and Zaleia; dear sister of Richard Morris and his wife, Melissa of Whitman and Joshua Belloise of Everett. She is also lovingly survived by several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Interment will be held privately. Funeral Arrangements are entrusted to the care and direction of the Vertuccio & Smith, Home for Funerals.

To send online condolences, please visit www.vertuccioandsmith.com

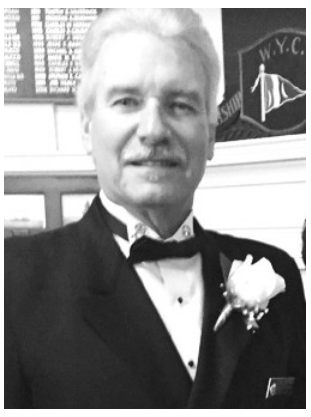
Michael Semertgakis

US Postal Service retiree

Michael A. Semertgakis of Cocoa Beach, FL, formerly of Everett, entered into eternal rest unexpectedly on Sunday, December 6 in the Cambridge Health Alliance-Everett. He was 73 years old.

Born in Boston, Michael lived in Everett for many years and recently in Cocoa Beach, Florida. He retired from the United States Postal Service as maintenance manager, was a member and Past Commodore of the Winthrop Yacht Club, a member of the Florida Lodge of Elks and the American Legion. Michael also served in the Army Reserve.

The beloved husband of Sally B. (Caso) for over 51 years, he was the loving son of Helen (DeAmelio) and the late Constantine Semertgakis of Everett. dear and devoted father of Danae Cardello and her husband, Michael of Peabody and Michael A. Semertgakis, Jr. of Everett; dear brother of John Semertgakis of Everett and



the late Mark Semertgakis and cherished grandfather of Sean, Kristina and the late MJ. Cardello.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Michael's visiting hours in the Cafasso & Sons Funeral Home, 65 Clark St. (Corner of Main St.) Everett, today, Wednesday, Dec. 9 from 9 to 11 a.m. with a funeral home service to follow at 11 a.m. COVID-19 protocols must be adhered to: face coverings, social distancing, etc. Interment private.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Michael's memory to DAV.org would be sincerely appreciated. Parking with attendants on duty.

David Michael Palangi

Retired Civil Engineer, property manager and great environmentalist

David Michael Palangi passed away Saturday, December 5 with his sister by his side at their home in South Hadley, after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was 71 years old.

Born and raised in Everett, the son of the late Adam M. and Lena M. (DeBiase) Palangi, David attended Everett Public Schools and graduated from Everett High School with the Class of 1967. After high school, David attended UMass Amherst and received a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering. He pursued his career in engineering at Farmer Engineering. David retired at an early age due to a medical condition that required weekly care. He later became a property manager for multiple properties he owned over the years. David also worked for a number of years at the US Post Office in Hadley. David was a great environmentalist. He was a subscriber of The Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy. David was an avid kayaker before being diagnosed with cancer in February. He will be greatly missed by his sister Barbara and by all of his cousins.

David is the beloved brother of Barbara Lee Palangi of South Hadley, loving cousin of Peter Ravanesi, Carol Clark, Bill Ravanesi, Paula Contilli, Linda Carafa, Nancy Stilwell, Monica DeBiase and the late Fred Abbruzzese and nephew of the late Carl and Anna Palangi.

David's funeral arrangements will be made at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations in David's memory may be made to The National Kidney Foundation on-line at www.kidney.org. We encourage family and friends to visit www.carafafuneralhome.com to offer condolences at this time by means of the online guest book or to send a personalized sympathy card. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the Carafa Family Funeral Home in Chelsea.

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Region // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Black said Massport has been working with the community and other stakeholders over the last two to three years to build out Piers Park Phase II. It was around this time Black said the MTR started having conversations with Massport about their waterfront initiative.

"A number of years ago we talked about the possibility of what would happen with Phase III, which is this rotted-out pier that sticks off the end of Piers Park. For us it's a really amazing location. It's centrally located right in the heart of the harbor and we think it could provide a really great connection point between East Boston and the city as a whole. It also has a fantastic history."

Black said MTR spent a lot of 2019 working with Massport and others to really investigate the site and understand what the conditions were so MTR could start to piece together what the possibilities would be for a waterfront park that is active and engaging.

"So one of the places that we turn to for inspiration is Brooklyn Bridge Park," said Black. "For those of you who may not have been there this is a series of five piers along the Brooklyn waterfront that overlooks the skyline in Manhattan. There's a lot of similarities between what you see in this old industrial waterfront (in Eastie) and Brooklyn. Unfortunately we only have one pier to work with, not five."

Black said as a result MTR really started to focus on what New Yorkers call Pier One in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

"This park is actually built into the footprints of the old pier that offers a wide variety of experiences for people and is a really close comparison to what we have opportunity wise at Piers Park Phase III," said Black. "So this is really where we started our thinking in terms of what we would like to see happen at this location in East Boston."

Black said MTR is looking to build a park that's both robust and resilient in Eastie.

"And what that means to us is that it can stand up to the elements," said Black. "We've seen a lot of issues with not only storm surges in increasing frequency but also tidal flooding that's happening on a regular basis, both in East Boston and across the city. The situation is probably just going to get worse. So we have to build a place, mindful of all of those challenges and also a place that can redevelop some of the ecology along the coast."

Black said MTR will start a community process to bring the community together to build this park.

"We have a few ideas in terms of the direction that we want to go but we're very excited about the community process to really start and have conversations with people in terms of what they would want to see there," he said. "You'll probably start to see a lot of us over the coming weeks. We're going to try to be a presence here as much as possible, because we want to really hear from folks who would use this park."

Eynatian, who is a Project Manager for the Waterfront Initiatives at MTR and an Eagle Hill resident, said the design phase for the future park will take the better part of the next year.

"We want to make sure we really have a chance to hear from the community about what you'd like to see happen there so if the design can reflect that," said Eynatian. "So things like, what type of programming you'd be interested in, what kind of concerns you might have about the project as well as increasing access to the water so there's a way for residents to come down and really engage with the harbor at the park."

Eynatian said MTR will be hosting a series of larger community meetings where MTR will invite residents to hear a little bit more about the project in more detail.

"This will give us the opportunity to really give folks a chance to engage in conversation about what you'd like to see at a new, free, open public park in East Boston," she said.

The first in a series of meetings MTR is planning to host will be in January.

"So as the year goes on, I'm hoping that in the summer we can do some more creative in-person programs," said Eynatian. "We're hopeful to be able to get out and engage with you in person but in the meantime we'll be doing a lot of different virtual opportunities and putting together some different ways to give us feedback. This is so folks can either join us live in meetings or give us feedback to make sure we can gather input from as many folks as we can."

LEGAL NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT DEPARTMENT
Middlesex Probate And Family Court
208 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION AND MAILING
Docket No. MI20D2777DR
Jaqueline F. Scheidt Cruz
Plaintiff
vs.
Jose I Cruz
Defendant
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The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for irretrievable breakdown of the Marriage B
The Complaint is on file at the Court.
An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.
You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:
Jaqueline F. Scheidt Cruz, 1 Noonan St., Apt. 2 Waltham, MA 02453
your answer, if any, on or before 01/04/2021.
If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.
WITNESS, Hon. Maureen H. Monks, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 16, 2020
Felix D. Arroyo
Register of Probate
12/9/20
EV

LEGAL NOTICE

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Notice is hereby given by Rigano's Towing Service 1081 Fellsway, Malden, MA, pursuant to the provisions of Mass General Laws, Chapter 255, Section 39A, that they will sell the following vehicles on or after December 10, 2020 beginning at 10:00 am by public or private sale to satisfy their garage keepers lien for towing, storage, and notices of sale. Vehicles are being stored at Rigano's Towing Service.
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CHURCH News

Zion Church - Everett

News and Notes

Senior Pastor Bishop Robert G. Brown will be hosting Virtual Masses to bring the people together, spiritually while they can't physically. Their virtual sanctuaries can be accessed via their facebook page, "Zion Church Ministries."

For more information, they can be reached online at zionchurchministries.com or via email at office@zionchurchministries.com

Church at the Well Everett

News and Notes

Church at the Well Everett is a new church for Everett that will begin meeting in 2021. Check us out on Facebook at www.facebook.com/churchforeverett to view weekly devotions and updates, visit us at www.foreverett.church to sign up for our newsletter and see how we can help you, or connect with the Everett Community Aid Network at www.everettcan.com to request any additional help.

Glendale United Methodist Church

News and Notes

Glendale United Methodist Church is open to all and we welcome people of all faiths, race, nationalities and sexual preference. No one is ever turned away. If you are looking for a new home church, we would like you to check us out and let us know what we can do to make church a better fit in your life.

Bible Study: Consider joining us for Bible study on Sunday. We meet in the Church Parlor off the Chapel from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m.

Sponsor the bulletin! For a $5 donation, you can dedicate the Sunday bulletin to recognize family, friends, or special occasions. There is a sign-up sheet in the Pastor's study. Feel free to choose your particular week and leave a copy of your dedication in the mail in that is on the Pastor's door. Please contact the Pastor if you have any questions.

Boy Scout Troop 814: Meet in Cooper Hall on Tuesday evenings from 6-9 p.m. Cub Pack 11 meets on Saturday mornings.

NA Meetings – Mon. Bring Your Own Book 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.; Thurs. I Can't But We Can, 8:00 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

AA Meeting – Saturday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Pastor's Office Hours: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Other times by appointment.

Bread of Life Donations – This outreach is being done to honor the United Methodist Women's Group, who for so many years were our outreach source. Please bring any food item(s) to church and place in the box located on the altar.

We are on the Internet
http://www.glendaleumc-everett.org
Glendale United Methodist Church
Pastor David Jackson
392 Ferry Street (across from Glendale Towers)
Please enter the church by the driveway on Walnut Street
617-387-2916
PastorDavidJackson58@gmail.com
Pastor's Office Hours: Saturdays 10 AM to 2 PM. Other times by appointment.

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A public service message from the U.S. General Services Administration.

Glendale Christian Lighthouse Church

News and Notes

Sunday 10:30 AM Worship service.

Wednesday hour of Power, worship, prayer and Bible Study, via Zoom.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters," Colossians 3:23

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Rev. Larry Russi, Sr. Pastor
pastorlarry@thelighthousechurch701.net

Mystic Side Congregational Church

News and Notes

Mystic Side Congregational Church is located in Everett, on Malden-Everett border, at 422 Main Street. We offer a warm, inviting atmosphere, and all are welcome. Our Sunday Church service starts at 10:30 a.m. and Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month. A very pleasant coffee hour and socializing follow our services. Parking is available in our lot next to the church on Wyllis Ave. (one way off Main Street). We look forward to welcoming you this Sunday.

Mystic Side Congregational Church
422 Main Street
Everett, MA

Grace Anglican Episcopal Church

News and Notes

Grace Anglican Episcopal Church is open and welcoming to all.

There are 3 services on Sundays: 10am English, 1pm South Sudanese (Dinka) and 3pm Haitian Creole.

Come all and let us walk together in this season of hope, renewal and new beginnings.

Grace Anglican Episcopal Church
67 Norwood Street, Everett, MA
Church Phone
617-387-7526 or 617-389-5765

Immaculate Conception Parish

News and Notes

Our Parish Staff: Father Joseph Chacha Marwa, S.M.A. Administrator;

Father Ernest Egbedike, S.M.A. Parochial Vicar;

Secretary Barbara Cannon

Weekly Mass Schedule at Immaculate Conception is as follows:

Saturday (Sunday Vigil) 4:00 p.m., Sunday 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m. (Family Mass), 11:00 a.m., and 5:30 p.m.

12:15 p.m. Spanish Community

4:00 p.m. Haitian Community

Masses are being held in the Chapel.

Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is held every Thursday from 7:45 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel. Each Thursdays' adoration will conclude the Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament at 6:30 p.m. All are invited to spend a few moments with Our Blessed Lord

Bring a Book-Buy a Book - We have a new Fundraiser Program in the back of the Church. It's called Bring a Book-Buy a Book. All books are a dollar and any money collected will go towards our Stain Glass Fund. Brink a Book and Buy a Book and make a donation. Our selections are great and varied. Please stop by the table and see what we have. Thank you

Immaculate Conception Parish
489 Broadway
Everett, Mass 02149
Phone 617-389-5660

SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Everett Independent encourages residents to submit birth and engagement announcements, news releases, business briefs, honor rolls, social news, sports stories, and photographs for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at **385 Broadway, Citizens Bank Building, Revere, MA 02151**. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403. The Independent also encourages readers to e-mail news releases to **editor@everettindependent.com**.

The Everett Independent assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertisements, but will reprint that part of the advertisement in which the error occurs. Advertisers will please notify the management immediately of any errors that may occur.

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Historic Figures

More than a name: Shute family goes way back in Everett

By Matt Lattanzi

The Shute family traces its history to the early ancestry of Massachusetts. Records show that a Shute house was built before 1700 on land which is in present-day Everett. In 1892, William Shute gifted $10,000 to the City of Everett to build a library in memory of his mother, Tabitha Nichols Shute. After purchasing suitable land from Edward Saunders, hiring a local architect by the name of William Lougee, and having a construction contract awarded to Fessenden & Libby, construction began in 1897 and the Shute Memorial Library was opened to the public on May 24, 1899. In total, the land and the building resulted in a final cost of $11,009.11 (or about $345,000.00 today, adjusting for inflation).

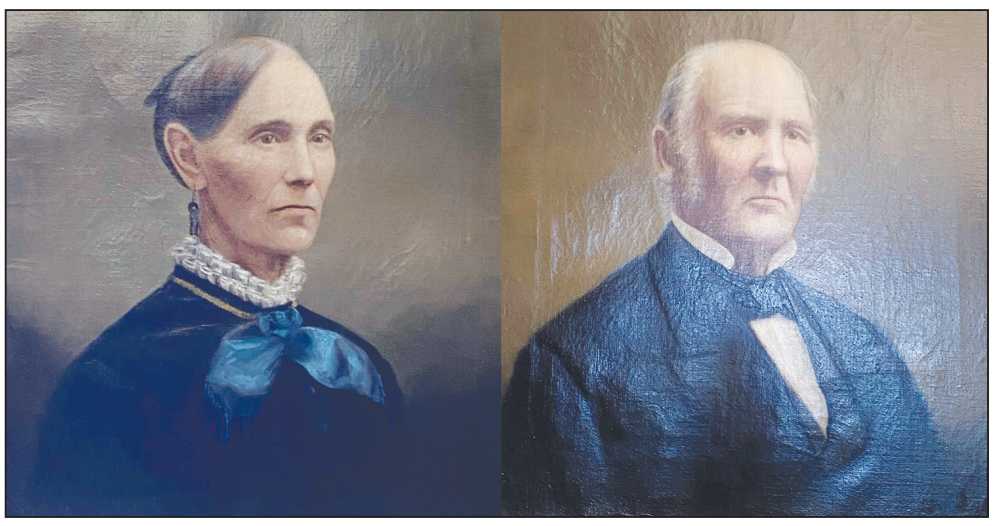
Tabitha Nichols Shute was born on December 26, 1805 in South Malden (present-day Everett). Tabitha lived the entirety of her life in Everett, working as a house cleaner. Tabitha married her husband, Henry Shute, on June 1, 1828, bearing six children, three daughters and three sons. She passed on August 28, 1885.

William Shute was born on May 17, 1831 in Everett, MA, eventually moving to Lynn, MA. He worked throughout his life as a "Morocco Dresser" – Morocco was a type of goat skin leather than was much lighter in weight than the more normal leathers at the time; Dressers were the people who actually tanned and/or softened the leather for the purpose of making them into shoes. In the later 1800s, the City of Lynn positioned themselves as the world capital for leather shoe manufacturing, with its 234 factories churning out over a million pairs of shoes every day.

At the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Shute Memorial Library, the following words were written: "In the United States, the sanctuary of liberty, a natural result of freedom of thought has been the founding of libraries. To preserve the memory of his mother, Tabitha Nichols Shute, a great advocate of freedom, William Shute bequeathed $10,000 to Everett, city of his birth, for the purpose of erecting a library."

We are forever grateful for the generous gift made by William Shute and constantly strive to uphold the values of Tabitha Shute by providing the necessary tools to ensure that freedom of thought is bestowed to all.

To read more about Everett history, peruse the Everett Libraries' collections, engage in various programs for all ages, or utilize one of the free online databases, be sure to check out the Libraries' new website (https://www.noblenet.org/everett/) and follow their Facebook page (@EverettPublicLibrary) for updates.



Tabitha and William Shute.

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBERED DURING CEREMONY IN CHARLESTOWN

A commemorative event was held in Chartlestown for the 79th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor on Sunday, Dec. 7. The event that was held on board U.S.S. Cassin Young in Charlestown.

Guest speaker Micheal Creasey, National Park Service of Boston Superintendent, and Religious Program Specialist Chief Select Jesse Kiepper spoke at the event.

Religious Program Specialist Chief Select Jesse Kiepper

Guest Speaker Michael Creasey, National Park Service of Boston Superintendent.

The memorial wreath is tossed overboard into the ocean.

Taps was played by a member of the Charlestown ROTC.

A memorial wreath is presented during the ceremony.

As cases surge, school return conversation pushed to January

By Seth Daniel

At one time, the Everett Public Schools had hoped to be in a hybrid education model by Nov. 30, but that's been scrapped as COVID-19 cases have surged in a "second wave," with the possibility of a hybrid now being in February.

Supt. Priya Tahiliani briefed the School Committee on Monday night at the regular meeting about the plan to return to school, and the fact that cases are just too high right now to even begin the conversation.

She said they hope to now have that conversation in January, with a potential hybrid school model rolling out in February.

"As a district, we are planning on bringing back as many students as we can as soon as we can but before we can do that we do need to experience a demonstrative and sustained flattening of cases," she said. "So this means we will not be able to revisit the conversation regarding going to a large-scale hybrid model. We want to revisit it in at least the second week of January. In the meantime, we just want to emphasize and re-emphasize health and safety and the role we all play in bringing this pandemic under control, especially in the coming holidays…Our plan is to begin is to return to a conversation about returning to school after the holidays with a hope of starting a hybrid model in February. I feel this is neither too ambitious or too cautious."

At the same time, she said they wanted to begin to bring back more children who are vulnerable and are in the CTE vocational program as well. That will include the use of a new rapid test system that the district has procured for free from the state and federal governments.

Tahiliani said they will be using the BinaxNOW Rapid Test in the schools, which will be administered by a third party known as Project Beacon. The tests shipped on Dec. 8, and there will be a live training with them on Dec. 11.

As we explore ways to best bring back more students for teaching and learning, the district is looking to use the BinaxNOW Rapid Testing, which comes free of charge," she said.

That test gives a result in 15 minutes and was shown in testing at Lawrence General Hospital to have a 98 percent sensitivity rate. Students and staff who are in the building and show symptoms will be given the tests on the spot. A positive test would mean they immediately go home and contract tracing would begin. Even if there is a negative test, and one has a symptom, they would be sent home and asked to get a traditional COVID test.

Right now there are fewer than 100 high-needs students in the schools, but that could change.

Just how that decision would be made has been in the hands of the Health Advisory Working Group that has consulted the Everett Public Schools for several months.

One of the key metrics will be the positivity rate in the city. That will need to go down to at least 3 or 4 percent for four weeks in order to consider bringing kids into any buildings, she said.

"We are currently at 8.39 percent and we're looking to be in the we would want to see that for several weeks between 3-5 percent," she said.

The ideal metric for returning would be to have a rate of 5 percent, preferably 3 percent, for three or four weeks.

"The lack of firm dates does not mean a lack of a plan," she said.

Other metrics include equipped schools, robust processes (such as testing and contract tracing) and external factors in the community.

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