

Everett Independent

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Everett High winter sports season on hold for now

Special to the Independent

The start of the Everett High School winter sports season is being delayed hold due to the increased number of coronavirus cases in the city.

The School Committee voted 8-0 last week to allow EHS winter sports teams to begin practices as early as Dec. 15, but the Board of Health recommended against proceeding this week. School officials are hoping that the coronavirus case numbers will stabilize and the season can get underway sometime in January.

Everett High Director of Athletics Tammy Turner was set to participate in a GBL athletic directors' meeting Wednesday to discuss the winter sports season and other related topics.



Everett's Dan Skeritt could be the next member brought in to the School Committee is another Charter Change is approved by the Council on Monday.

Skeritt says he's ready to serve on the School Committee if asked

By Seth Daniel

Everett's Dan Skeritt said he has been contacted by City Clerk Sergio Cornelio as possibly gaining an at-large seat on the School Committee, and if approved, he is ready to join the board.

Skeritt, a long-time Everett resident, just lost out on a seat in the last City Election by nine votes – a very slim margin. However, if the Council approves an 11th member

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The BMC supply team walking the first shipment of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID19 vaccine to the pharmacy on Monday morning. The first deliveries of vaccine will be administered to front-line medical workers on Wednesday morning.

Pharmacy technicians loading the first two trays into the freezer in the inpatient pharmacy, 1,950 doses total. BMC was one of 145 sites across America to receive their first COVID vaccine dosages as part of the federal Operation Warp Speed project. See Page 12 for story.



CHA Everett ready to receive COVID-19 vaccine, to immunize priority hospital workers first

By Seth Daniel

The CHA Everett hospital has received its first doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID19 vaccine this week and could begin vaccinating prioritized workers at the facility this week or early next week.

Dr. Melisa Lai-Becker, chief of the Emergency Department at CHA Everett, said the facility applied for and received 975 doses of the vaccine, which is the smallest amount one can receive from the federal government's Operation Warp Speed vaccine project. She said having the vaccine on hand is an amazing thing, but she cautioned that it's going to be a long slow process with several limiting factors to deal with along the way.

"It looks like we are very fortunate that we'll be receiving a shipment of 975 doses," she said Monday night. "The goal is if you order that first 975, you need two injections spread two or three weeks apart, then you'll get a second set of 975 doses...

We might be able to start vaccinating by the end of the week, but we're being very methodical so we can make sure things are organized. There is no rush. The vaccine is arriving to us in these deep freeze systems in vaccine grade glass that can withstand all kinds of transportation. Once it's here, apparently there is a window of 35 days to keep it in its original container and use it."

The hospital has been tasked with figuring out

See VACCINE Page 6

Tech Wreck

City Council tries but fails again to have a meeting

By Seth Daniel

The biggest news out of what was to be a very eventful City Council meeting on Monday night was the fact that it was over before it started.

Major technical issues once-again at ECTV prevented the Council from pulling off an online meeting, frustrating members of the Council who said they are at the mercy of the leadership of ECTV and tired of looking foolish as they try unsuccessful

fully time and again to have online meetings.

This comes as virtually every other board in the City – from the Retirement Board to the Planning Board to the School Committee – routinely hold online meetings successfully and have done so for months. At the Council, though, getting an online meeting going has been elusive.

On Monday night, the Council started out roughly when a Committee of the Whole failed to draw

a quorum, and there were also technical issues. They believed they had it straightened out, but in fact they did not.

When the meeting was supposed to start, technical issues with new equipment began to sur

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Major change

Council looking to add 11th School Committee member, Committee had hoped for dialog first

By Seth Daniel

In another quiet and quick change to the City Charter, the City Council is looking to next Monday to change the number of seats on the School Committee – bringing one more seat on to make it potentially 11 members instead of nine.

The matter would likely have been debated and voted on Monday night with little notice to the public on the change had there not been more technical issues at the Council meeting that forced them to adjourn before addressing that matter.

The move is sponsored by four City Councilors and is in response to the Council recently voting to add the mayor to the School Committee – a request that is now being considered by the State Legislature. By adding the

mayor, it created an even number of votes and allowed a tie vote to happen. With the 11th member, the possibility of a tie would no longer be an issue.

It is a major change that the Councilors felt would help out the School Committee once the mayor became a voting member next year.

"From watching the School Committee Meetings during the past couple months, it was evident that if the Mayor became a voting member, then an additional member should be added to make the total number 11," said Councilor Anthony DiPierro. "This was not only their request, but the proper thing to do. The discussion has been ongoing for months now and I do not see the need to kick the can down the road and

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CITY OF EVERETT CELEBRATES CHANUKAH

Mayor Carlo DeMaria proudly hosted the 4th Annual Menorah Lighting with Rabbi Yisroel Baron. The event occurred in front of City Hall on Monday, December 14, 2020 at 6 p.m. and was featured on Facebook Live. It will soon be available for viewing on ECTV.

"It was truly an honor to host our annual Menorah Lighting ceremony with Rabbi Baron," said Mayor

Carlo DeMaria. "Celebrating Chanukah is very important to our community and it is unfortunate that we were unable to have a traditional ceremony."

The City of Everett is committed to be inclusive to all faiths and was proud to participate in a Chanukah celebration. Members of the Everett City Council along with the City Clerk were also in attendance to for the ceremony.



Rabbi Baron and his son, Mendy, light the Chanukah candles as Mayor Carlo DeMaria looks on.

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## COVID-19 BRIEFS

## Council // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1


At the same time as the 11th person being added, the School Committee is also getting a change for the time one needs to be out of office to take a City or School position. Right now, the School Committee requires a one-year "cooling off" period before one can take such a job. However, the State Law and City Council rules only require 30 days. Now, a Change is being proposed to make the School Committee 30 days as well to keep everything consistent.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MAYOR CONCLUDES SCHOOL COMMITTEE LISTENING TOUR,

Mayor Carlo DeMaria last week cancelled the final two Listening Tour dates regarding his new potential position on the School Committee and thanked those who provided him input.

The Listening Tour began in November following the sudden proposal put before the City Council for him to become a voting member of the City Council. After some controversy arose from that, he began a Listening Tour that was to conclude before the Dec. 14 Council meeting.

cil meeting. However, the Council voted earlier than expected and approved the change.

DeMaria continued the Listening Tour though, but cancelled the final dates last week due to low participation.

“Your voices have been heard,” he wrote. “I have received feedback from hundreds of you through email, phone call, private messages, and these listening sessions. We have had great conversations with a loyal group of participants and for that we are grateful.

“I am looking forward to the next steps in this process,” he continued. “As Mayor, I hear from

residents on a daily basis and I cannot wait to bring the ideas and suggestions of all residents to the Everett School Committee. I promise to always voice my concerns and the concerns of residents while standing up for what is right for our children.”

He said he is not only the mayor, but also a parent of an Everett Public Schools student. He pledged to do all he can to fill in the gaps and work with the existing members of the School Committee once approved by the State Legislature.

It is estimated he could join the Committee as a voting member as early as February or March.

Winter Wonderland to be in Everett on Dec. 20

Mayor Carlo DeMaria is pleased to announce that a Winter Wonderland drive-thru event will be held in the City of Everett.

Sponsored by Mayor DeMaria and the First Lady of Everett, the event is meant to brighten spirits and spread the holiday cheer while ensuring residents remain safe. This will be a drive-thru event and held at Wehner Park on Sunday, December 20, 2020. Residents will be welcome to attend beginning at 5 p.m. The event will end at 8 p.m.

“This year is different, so we had to pivot with our plans. What is our usu-

al Christmas extravaganza will be modified to adhere to the State’s guidelines,” said Mayor Carlo DeMaria. “The pandemic has made this year challenging, and we want to spread as much holiday cheer as possible to ensure that this is a magical Christmas for everyone. The children of Everett have displayed their maturity throughout the year, and I hope that these festivities can bring them joy and happiness.”

The route for the Winter Wonderland will be around Wehner Park.

- Start at the entrance of Lynn Street from Broadway.

- Cars will line up on the northbound lane of Broadway from Ferry Street.
- Cars will then take a left onto Shute Street.
- To conclude, vehicles may take a left onto Broadway heading southbound or a right onto Broadway heading northbound.

The Winter Wonderland will include live music and festive lights. Santa Claus and other holiday characters will be making a special appearance to help the City of Everett get into the Christmas spirit. Cars will be allowed to enter the Winter Wonderland at 5 p.m. sharp.

Meeting // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

face as IT professionals coordinating the meeting couldn’t retrieve the code to get through a new firewall – a firewall put in place to prevent meetings from being hacked and deleted as happened in October.

The Council attempted to stage the meeting, but it was choppy, with it being on fine for a few seconds, and then bumping off for a few seconds. Council President Rosa DiFlorio gave it maximum effort, but it wasn’t to be.

that one’s fault. If there’s a problem, let’s fix it. I don’t care if it’s ECTV. I don’t care if it’s technical problems. It’s eight months of (expletive deleted).”

DiFlorio said it’s time to invest some major money into the building and make sure it is up to 21st Century standards so they can have meetings. She said she plans on having Zoom meetings until June, and hopes they can completely renovate the Chambers during the summer.

“This is a problem,” she said. “I understand the building is old and our technology is old, but it’s time to spend the money to fix what we have to fix. There’s money in the Stabilization Fund. We need to be able to run our meetings. We have to fix this problem.”

Florio are not taking transparency and the ability to run a smooth City Council meeting seriously. This adds to the list where we need to improve what we are doing as a City because it is embarrassing.”

Councilor Michael McLaughlin said he spent four years at Everett High School (EHS) in the television communications department, and offered to help in any way he could if it would mean having meetings like every other Board and Commission in the City.

We all know that cats and dogs love to chew (and unfortunately swallow) a surprising array of household items. In fact, one of the most common claims we receive at Trupanion is for Foreign Body Ingestion.

The holidays, along with all of its festive decorations, provides additional chewing opportunities – and potential emergency visits to the veterinarian – for our furry friends. So as we all start to deck the halls this holiday season, Trupanion, a leader in medical insurance for cats & dogs, offers up these 5 holiday items (along with related mishaps from Holidays past) to keep pets away from this holiday season.

- 1) Tinsel

Tinsel and ribbon can cause a tangled mess in the intestines if swallowed by a pet – ideally it should not be used in households with cats. A British Shorthair cat from Oregon ingested tinsel which resulted in a trip to the veterinary – the Trupanion policy paid out \$807

- 2) Ornaments

Make sure to hang any small or fragile ornaments high enough on your tree to avoid the wagging tail of your dog or a paw swipe from your cat. Although keep in mind, that for many cats there is no safe height. A lovable pooch in Washington state made an emergency visit to the vet when they ate a Christmas ornament – the Trupanion policy paid out \$4,495

- 3) Holiday lights

Pets are drawn to holiday lights, just like we are. The only difference is they may be tempted to chew on them. Be sure to also keep the electrical cords taped down or out of reach. A Brittany spaniel from Indiana succumbed to the temptation to chew and ingested some Christmas lights. After a trip to the veterinarian the Trupanion policy paid out \$1,566.

- 4) Turkey bones

Bones from turkey and other traditional main courses around the holidays can have dangerous effects when in the mouths of dogs and cats. Cooked bones especially can splinter and break, causing serious internal injury. An enthusiastic dog in Alberta found himself at the veterinarian after he ingested some turkey bones a few days after Christmas – the Trupanion policy paid out \$3,800.

- 5) Holiday plants and trees

Many holiday plants can cause gastrointestinal upset if ingested by your dog or cat. These include holly, mistletoe and amaryllis. A Shih Tzu from California ingested poinsettias, which are toxic to dogs. After a trip to the veterinarian the Shih Tzu was back in tip top shape – the Trupanion policy paid out \$59. Lilies are also extremely toxic for cats, even contact with the pollen or water in the vase may be enough to cause kidney failure.

“If you have a Christmas tree, make sure it is secure – it doesn’t take much for a cat or excited dog to knock it over, said Dr. Sarah Nold, Staff Veterinarian at Trupanion. “You should also take care to restrict your pet’s access to the tree’s water or ingestion of the tree’s needles, because both may cause vomiting and diarrhea, and can contribute to a tipped tree.”

After three people spoke in the Public Speaking portion – with great frustration and harsh words, the Council adjourned without even scratching the surface of their agenda.

“The Administration accepts full responsibility for the inadequate sound quality and connectivity issues that occurred during the Dec. 14 Council meeting,” said Deanna Deveney, Communications Director. “Upon a preliminary review, the issues presented came from two different sources. The first being a result of a security upgrade in ECTV and the second a connectivity issue caused by the live feed inability to connect to the internet component of the server. We will continue to work to resolve these problems as quickly and diligently as possible.”

Council President Rosa DiFlorio said she was irate after the adjournment and got very angry with the situation. She said it’s time to fix the issues once and for all.

“We had technical issues again,” she said. “This is eight months now and I am frustrated to no end. This is over. I want ECTV to fix it. I don’t care if it’s this one’s fault or

Councilor Fred Capone said he was frustrated as well, particularly since there was a lot of heavy business on the agenda that needed to be addressed before the end of the year.

“It’s beyond comprehension to me that a City with a budget in excess of \$200 million can’t figure out how to broadcast a City Council meeting,” he said. “It’s a very simple function.”

Councilor Gerly Adrien was frustrated because she had one piece of legislation on for the Committee of the Whole, which wasn’t held due to technical issues and also lack of a quorum. She said the failure to be able to have an open and online meeting shows a lack of leadership in the City.

“I am tired of the lack of leadership in Everett,” she said. “The technical issues that we continue to have show that Mayor DeMaria and Council President Di-

“In times of crises it is easier to point fingers and blame one another,” he said. “At the end of the day, that gets no closer to a final resolution to the problem. I’d rather not talk about who did what or why. I’d rather talk about how working collaboratively together will ensure the people of Everett can engage in their City government and have access to understand the vital decisions we make bi-weekly to productively move our City forward.”

DiFlorio and City Clerk Sergio Cornelio said they would be dividing the meeting in half and holding two meetings, one on Wednesday and one on Monday.

The meeting on Weds., Dec. 16, will feature the matters of re-appointments and swearing in new Councilor Rich Dell Isola to finish the term of former Councilor Peter Napolitano. That will be a test run for the new equipment.

Meanwhile, on Dec. 21, the Council will take up that last half of the agenda, which has several contentious and important matters – such as potentially adding an 11th member to the School Committee.

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Skeritt // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to the School Committee, and the State Legislature okays the change, he would now be in the winner’s circle.

“Sergio called me and said he had to legally inform me about the proposed change and asked if I would be interested in the serving,” said Skeritt. “I said absolutely. I love this community. Everything I do and think is for the community and especially the children. I live in the community and want

to support the community, especially the young ones among us.”

Skeritt works for the Cambridge Public Schools as a liaison and said he has been working straight out since March to help support families, and would bring that to the Everett School Committee too.

“I would be working in Cambridge and serving in Everett in an equal capacity and that is something I would look forward to,” he said. “All the experi-

ence and hard work I’ve gathered from March to December supporting families in Cambridge will be on the table.”

Skeritt also said if he joins, he would be collaborative.

“No one or no one team will be able to do it alone,” he said. “I look forward to collaborating with the stakeholders, which are the students and parents and the educators and School Committee members.”

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# Everett Independent

President: Stephen Quigley

Editor in Chief: Cary Shuman

## THE VIRUS IS IN OUR HOMES

We now are fully amidst the holiday season. Hanukkah is here and the Christmas and New Year's holiday week is fast-approaching.

Public health officials at all levels of government have been warning us for months that we must change our usual manner for celebrating the holidays if we are to have any chance of stopping the deadly spread of the coronavirus.

Unfortunately however, far too many of us have been ignoring these warnings. Families and friends continue to gather for holiday celebrations as if they are completely oblivious to the existence of a pandemic.

But consider these somber and alarming statistics recently released by the state: The overwhelming numbers of active coronavirus clusters across Massachusetts between the period of Nov. 1-November 28 (coinciding with the Thanksgiving holiday time frame) were traced to households, which accounted for 9393 of the state's 9883 clusters and 23,756 of the 26,451 confirmed cases.

In other words, the coronavirus is being spread by family and household members to each other.

This transmission of the virus among household members is nothing new, but its prevalence is striking -- about 90 percent of new coronavirus cases are now occurring within our homes.

The arrival of vaccines is wonderful news, but until each of us has a "jab" (that's what the British call getting a shot) in our arms, none of us are safe and all of us have to assume that everyone we come into contact with is a carrier.

We realize that staying apart from our family members and friends during the holidays is tough medicine -- but it's the only prescription that will work to suppress the spread of the virus.

## THANK YOU, GOV. BAKER

We'd like to take a moment to express our appreciation to Gov. Charlie Baker, who has demonstrated incredible leadership during the past nine months of a crisis that is unprecedented in our state's history.

Day-after-day, Gov. Baker has confronted a deadly pandemic and an economic collapse (not to mention a dangerous president from his own party) with a degree of intelligence, competence, and assuredness that is unmatched by any governor in the country.

Massachusetts has been very fortunate to have Charlie Baker's steady hand at the tiller of our ship-of-state during this stormy period. And (to extend the metaphor), although we know there are still some rough seas ahead, thanks to Gov. Baker's helmsmanship, we can see clearing skies on the horizon.

## REMEMBER THE NEEDY

We saw a statistic the other day that was absolutely mind-numbing: 18% of all Americans, and 24% of American children, do not have enough to eat on a daily basis.

We mention this because during this Christmas season, when many of us normally would be splurging on holiday parties, vacations, and the like, those of us who are fortunate enough not to fall within the 18% must consider how we can use our unspent resources to help our fellow Americans who are dealing with a situation that is even worse than what America faced at the height of the Great Depression.

Hopefully, Congress will get its act together shortly and provide relief for those in need. But until that happens, it is up to each of us to do what we can to assist our fellow citizens through donations to organizations -- of which there are many -- that will help to ensure that every American at least has enough to eat every day.

# Independent Forum



WINTER SOLSTICE... SHORTEST DAY. DEC. 21

GUEST OP-ED

## Disappointment in expanded abortion

By Catholic Bishops of  
Massachusetts

The consistent teaching of the Catholic Church is that life begins at conception and ends with natural death. As the Roman Catholic Bishops of Massachusetts, we at all times hold firm to that teaching so as to promote the preservation of life and to create a culture of respect for life as the foundation of a just and moral society.

Today, we are deeply disappointed at the recent

legislative action that, if enacted, would expand access to abortion in Massachusetts. The direct, intentional taking of a human life, regardless of the purpose or circumstances, is not morally acceptable and is particularly harmful to the common good. Most troubling is the fact that under these provisions, women will have greater access to late term abortions throughout the term of their pregnancy with no specific statutory requirement that a physician

utilize lifesaving medical equipment if a child is born alive.

Despite our disappointment we are hopeful that the full legislature accepts the language proposed by the Governor to retain 18 as the age of consent, as provided by the current Massachusetts law, and not reduce the age to sixteen. Clearly, a young girl of age 16 needs the guidance and support of a caring adult when considering the possibility of a decision that will affect

her for the rest of her life.

We remain committed to life and pray for the end to all abortions. Our society is best served by the protection of every person's life, including those waiting to be born and those approaching natural death. We pledge ourselves to work to bring about a more just society that offers humane and effective alternatives for women facing a crisis or difficult pregnancy.

## LETTERS to the Editor

### THE HOLY SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

To the Editor:

My dear friends in Christ, close your eyes, fold your hands. For a moment let your sorrow fade. Why, oh, why are you afraid? Has this world stripped you of your faith?

Close your eyes and on bend knee, listen to an angel pray and once again prepare the way so you'll see a Gift that's given.

For you, a time of Joy! Behold, a baby boy! - from Good News by Avalon

The holy season of Christmas is almost upon us, a season of hope and joy. The Advent journey we've been on has called us to repentance and preparation, and now we stand just outside of the great city of Bethlehem, ready to meet our Savior.

This year has been so very hard for so many of us, but through it all, our faith has given us the courage and the stamina to make it through. It has brought about great pain and loss, but it has also brought about extraordinary courage and compassion- we have seen it manifest itself in the doctors and nurses and frontline workers who selflessly offered themselves to save lives, give comfort and bring hope. We saw it in scientists and technicians who worked long hours to discover the light at the end of this long tunnel- a vaccine that soon will bring an end to this nightmare and allow us to dream of what the coming year may bring to us all- to be with those we love again, to make plans for

the future confidently, to be together again.

We also saw it in one another- how we reached out to one another, embraced technology that gave us new ways to share the moments in our lives, found ways around and through the challenges that faced us along the way, and came to see that even though we were physically distant, our faith, hope and love connected us- Christ was present in us, through us, with us. We opened our churches, shared and taught the timeless truths of our faith through Zoom, reached out to those in need, anointed the sick, and buried too many people, but we also celebrated baptisms, first communions, Confirmations, and even rejoiced in weddings. I saw it every day as our Collaborative staff and community reached out, following protocols, using the technology, innovating, all the while understanding why we needed to protect not only ourselves but one another. It's been different, and at times it's been frustrating, but we held the torch of our faith high, and we look to a brighter 2021 with renewed hope- ever looking up and looking ahead. And now... Christmas.

As we rejoice in the birth of our Savior, we understand how different this Christmas is. So many of the members of our Collaborative family cannot be with us- please know that through your prayers, you are present... we miss you, but we un-

derstand. If you feel in anyway unsure, please do not feel obligated to attend. We will be live streaming the Christmas Eve Mass from OLG at 4 pm on our Facebook page. The Cardinal's suspension of the obligation to attend Mass remains.

If you can join us, please keep in mind that we will follow all the guidelines of keeping each other safe. Both churches have a limit of 70 people- if we go over the limit, there will be seating downstairs- the 4 pm Mass in both parishes will be shown on a screen in the halls, and a Eucharistic Minister will distribute communion. As we have done every weekend, names will be taken in the interest of contact tracing, temperatures will be taken, and masks are mandatory. Ushers will help keep the social distancing, and we sincerely ask everyone's cooperation and understanding- soon we will be free- but not yet- there's too much at stake.

As we look up and look ahead at the star and the bright promise of a new year, I express my sincere gratitude to Linda DeCristoforo and our incredible staff, Frs. Michael, Tom & Brian, Deacon Xavi and seminarian Sean, Bros. Jay-Ar and Jonathan, members of our committees, faith formation teachers, ministers and lectors, musicians and so many people who help make our Collaborative the blessing that it is. I pray that 2021 brings new hope, new joy and new blessings for you and your

family, our collaborative, and the world. Please keep in touch with us via Facebook, email, our web page and YouTube.

Have a merry Christmas and a blessed New Year- look up, look ahead. Yours in Christ,

**Fr. John Sheridan,  
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The Christmas collection will benefit the Clergy trust fund.

Please give generously. Thank you!

### CONGRATULATIONS, DR. WALENSKY

To the Editor:

On behalf of the entire Mass General family and with enormous pride and admiration, we congratulate Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH, chief of Infectious Diseases at Mass General, on her ap-

# Everett Independent

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# Baker awards \$11.7 million in Skills Capital Grants to educational institutions

The Baker-Polito Administration last week announced \$11.7 million in Skills Capital Grants awarded to 47 educational institutions across the Commonwealth to update equipment and expand student enrollment in programs that provide career education.

Twelve of the organizations are receiving a Skills Capital Grant for the first time.

To date, the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded approximately \$92 million in Skills Capital Grants to nearly 300 different programs. Through Skills Capital Grants, schools have expanded their enrollment

of students learning skills in high-demand occupations, enabling more than 16,200 additional students to enroll in educational programs that are prioritized by employers across Massachusetts.

“At a critical time in our Commonwealth, these Skills Capital Grants will increase flexibility and support for schools and educational institutions to launch new programs and help more students develop important technical skills and prepare them for high-demand industries,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “As our economy moves forward, it will be crucial for young people to develop the im-

portant technical skills that local employers need to grow their businesses.”

The Skills Capital Grants are awarded by Governor Baker’s Workforce Skills Cabinet, which was created in 2015 to bring together the Secretariats of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development to align education, economic development and workforce policies in order to strategize around how to meet employers’ demand for skilled workers in every region of the Commonwealth.

The competitive grants are awarded to educational institutions that demon-

strate partnerships with local businesses, as well as align curriculum and credentials with industry demand to maximize hiring opportunities in each region of the state. The 2018 Economic Development Bill, filed by the Governor and passed by the Legislature, established an additional \$75 million in Skills Capital Grant funding.

The following local organizations received awards in this round:

- Bunker Hill Community College, Boston - \$400,000 Associate of Science Degree in Registered Nursing: The grant will support a new nursing Innovation Pathway program for students from

Madison Park Vocational Technical School, in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Boston. The college will also make critically needed updates to its registered nursing program’s simulation labs. BHCC will install a networked web-based video capture system in all three laboratory classrooms, allowing faculty to view and evaluate student performance.

- Everett High School, Everett - \$85,000 Culinary Arts Program: The high school will open an onsite bistro to create an in-house experiential learning opportunity for students. The experience will build students’ re-

al-world skills so they can meet the expectations of employers.

- YMCA of Greater Boston, Boston - \$217,648 Industry Certification Workforce Training: The YMCA of Greater Boston’s Training Inc. is a workforce development training program serving underemployed and unemployed adults with certificates in high-demand entry-level occupations that have a good pathway for career growth. The program collaborates with dozens of employer partners to recruit qualified candidates, and design and implement training curriculum that matches employers’ needs.

# First marijuana store in area opened Nov. 10, and it has quite a tale

By Seth Daniel

It seems like an eternity since marijuana was legalized in Massachusetts and people began talking about opening cannabis stores, but now Chelsea – just next door to Everett – has seen its first adult-use store open on Nov. 10, yet it’s more than the routine story of a “pot shop.”

Western Front held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Webster Avenue in the Parkway Plaza on Nov. 10, and then become the first marijuana business to open in Chelsea and in the overall area. Western Front is an equity licensee, meaning they are minority-owned and focused in an Area of Disproportionate Impact (ADI) – meaning a place where the war on drugs hit harder than in other places. Chelsea is one of 29 ADI communities. Everett, on the other hand, cannot qualify to have marijuana stores due to voting ‘no’ on the marijuana legalization ballot question some years ago.

The 3,000 sq. ft. store in Chelsea will offer all kinds of cannabis products, including flower/buds, gummies, tinctures, edibles and oils – to name a few – in an extremely highly-regulated and safe environment. A full new buildout of the store was massive, with it being a vacant building for a long time before the partners began work on the venture.

“It was a shell when we first came in,” said owner Marvin Gilmore. “There was nothing here...We made it first-class and I think you can see that.”

Indeed the store is now a first-class operation with plenty of natural light, ample space and numerous kiosks for choosing and purchasing products. There is also a teaching and learning component of the operation on the other side of the store that will focus on educating people about marijuana and helping aspiring entrepreneurs to learn how to start their

own stores.

Yet one of the most interesting things about the store is not the once-illegal, now legal, sale of marijuana to those over 21 years of age. Rather, the real story comes in the ownership – particularly Gilmore.

The owners are all three Cambridge residents, including Gilmore, Dennis Benzan and Attorney Tim Flaherty. The three Cantabrigians have been longtime friends, with Gilmore being a mentor to both for a long time.

Gilmore is a World War II veteran with a rich life story, and a life that hasn’t slowed down with age – fueled by a desire to always continue helping disadvantaged folks who might need a leg up.

There are a few reasons for that, he said, and getting into the marijuana industry as an equity applicant followed the same trajectory as when he couldn’t get a veterans home loan – and thus founded United Bank, now OneUnited - the largest black-owned bank in the United States.

Gilmore’s grandparents were born into slavery in Alabama, and he also served with distinction in World War II. Both are defining moments for him.

“My grandmother was born into slavery and lived to be 107,” he said. “My parents had come up from Alabama to Cleveland and then to Boston. They sent me down to Alabama to learn and understand how we had been treated in the past. That inspired me to work for people and to work to make change and I’ve been doing that all my life. When this opportunity came, I knew Chelsea and where it had been in the old days. We put together a team and it has gone great...This is a very, very underprivileged and poor community. If we can bring this concept to Chelsea and get this store to take off and put people to work – it’s a great idea.”



Western Front Owners Marvin Gilmore, Dennis Benzan, Tim Flaherty, General Manager Cassandra Leetz and the rest of the employees gather for a photo of the new Western Front cannabis store on Webster Avenue at the Parkway Plaza in Chelsea. The store opened on Nov. 10 and was the first cannabis store to open in Chelsea and the surrounding area.

The store is not only looking to pull customers from the surrounding areas like Everett, but also employees who might fit the criteria and need a chance to break into this new industry.

Gilmore also served in World War II, and because he was black, he was not able to get on the airplane to come home with the white soldiers. He had to find another way home, as the white soldiers wouldn’t ride with him.

“My beginning fighting prejudice came in the army because we had two armies in World War II – the white army and the black army,” he said. “I wanted to see if I could challenge that. I wanted to change it.”

Meanwhile, once home, as a veteran he was entitled to a home loan, but they wouldn’t grant it to him – which pushed him to found the OneUnited Bank.

He currently serves on the Board of the Boston Redevelopment Authority’s EDIC, he’s an accomplished musician that graduated from the New England Conservatory

(playing the Vibes), started the successful Cambridge nightclub Western Front, and even traveled to the Deep South with Celtic legend Bill Russell during the Civil Rights Era to “make change.”

Gilmore, who said he doesn’t smoke cannabis, said all of his life has been an “uphill battle,” and helping others get a leg up in any business – including cannabis – meshed with his long business and philanthropic career.

Benzan, the first Latino vice mayor of Cambridge and one of the only Latino liquor license holders there, said they are a team of firsts. He said he was impressed by the legislation that brought cannabis to Massachusetts – as it put a priority on minority communities, people that had been arrested disproportionately in the War on Drugs and sought to use the new industry as a way to create wealth for those that had been affected.

“Western Front and the cannabis industry was another opportunity to be first,” he said. “We have investors that reflected the minority community real-

ly like no other cannabis company in Massachusetts. We’re doing everything possible to provide opportunities for young people of color, whether Latino, African American or others. Truthfully, that’s why I’m in this and for no other reasons.”

Benzan said that’s reflected in the workforce at the store, which features many people of color and those who simply need a leg up.

“When I first came in and saw the numbers of black and brown faces, I have to say I had a little bit of emotion,” he said. “We’re going through an incredibly difficult economic pandemic, and that’s being felt mainly in the communities of color.”

General Manager Cassandra Leetz said she is one example of a Latina who has found great opportunity in the cannabis industry. Her mother came from Costa Rica and she grew up in New York. She joined the Navy and was deployed worldwide as an intelligence specialist. However, after discharged, she said she struggled to find opportu-

nities. Employers didn’t understand her skill set or didn’t believe she had such skills, and she often found herself underemployed. That went on for many years, until Western Front took a chance on her.

“They could have brought in a cannabis industry professional from outside the state to run this, but they picked me,” she said. “It’s been an honor to do this and I’m very proud to take my experience and be able to work with the people in Chelsea and the people we’ve hired.”

Flaherty said they have truly enjoyed working the past three years to get their state and local approvals. He said he felt like their company – which is looking to expand already to Cambridge and a third, undisclosed location – embodied what an economic empowerment applicant should be.

“From our investors to our staff, we have assembled what I think the state envisioned for economic empowerment candidates,” he said. “It’s exceptional.”



# westernfront

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21+Content





Supt. Priya Tahiliani, Assistant Principal Paolo Lambresa, Principal David Brady, and Exelon Generation Northeast Region General Manager Archie Gleason are pictured with students who attend the Lafayette School e-Learning Center.

## Exelon Generation provides 300 brand new coats to EPS students

As part of its continued support of the Everett Public Schools, Exelon Generation has graciously donated 300 winter coats to our students through a collaboration with Operation Warm. This is the third consecutive year Exelon has made this generous gesture to provide warmth to hundreds of children. The coats will be distributed to students throughout the district, under the direction of principals and assistant principals, over the rest of the holiday season,

“We’re pleased to help Everett Public School students dress warmly for our cold New England winters,” said Archie Glea-

son, General Manager, Northeast Region, Exelon Generation. “On behalf of our district, my sincerest thanks to Mr. Gleason and the employees of Exelon Generation for this thoughtful and timely donation,” said Superintendent of Schools Priya Tahiliani. “These are very challenging times, and we are grateful for Exelon helping us endure them. These coats will certainly brighten the holidays for our students.”

Operation Warm is a national nonprofit that creates brand new, high-quality coats for children in need. Every child, regardless of their economic situation, deserves a brand-

new coat. They partner with compassionate individuals and organizations across North America to give the gift of warmth, confidence and hope to millions of children in need. Operation Warm believes a brand-new coat is more than a coat, promoting self-esteem, school attendance and outdoor play. To learn more about Operation Warm, visit [OperationWarm.org](http://OperationWarm.org).

Exelon Generation is a FORTUNE 100 company that works in every stage of the energy business: power generation, competitive energy sales, transmission and delivery.

## Vaccine // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

who is the first to get the vaccine in their Group 1A round of vaccinations. She said at CHA Everett, they have made the highest priority those who are geographically closest to those with COVID-19.

“The first will be those who are most likely to come into contact with patients who have COVID-19,” she said. “It will be based on geography in the hospital instead of just your role. For example, if you’re a radiologist reading in a reading room and not coming into contact with patients, that’s different from a radiology tech that goes into the room of the patient with COVID-19 and snaps the X-ray... We really want to make sure our housekeeping and back of house service providers in the Emergency Department and ICU are highly prioritized – the food service team as well.”

The process at the hospital with the first group and others will include a slow trickle of vaccinations, she said. Dr. Lai-Becker said there has been a remarkable and reassuring amount of information coming from the federal and state government, and from manufacturers as well. That information has included the fact that about one-third of those in the clinical trials for the vaccine felt slightly sick for about a day or two after the second shot. That means, she said, they need to take precautions and be ready for people to be out of work following vaccination. Being that there are a lot of patients seeking care now for COVID-19 at the hospital, they can’t very well lose huge swaths of the staff to a vaccination reaction.

“We certainly wouldn’t want 70 percent of the staff getting vaccinated on the same day because we don’t want to run the risk of tons of people being out,” she said.

At the same time, she said it will be important for people to be patient and wait for the right time. She said it is probably overly optimistic to think that low-risk people will have the vaccine available by May, but she said it is

incredible to think that 10 million doses (or 5 million people) will be vaccinated by the end of the year – only about one year from when the virus was truly recognized.

“I feel very good about it and I’m also trying to be as realistic about it as possible,” she said. “It’s incredible to think the first folks here in Boston are about to get the first vaccine in days if not hours. One other thing to temper and keep in mind is it’s not an actual 300 million doses that falls into our laps... I’m fixated on and reminded there are 330 million people in the United States and each person requires two doses... It is incredible there will be 10 million doses produced by the end of the year just for Pfizer and Moderna. But that really means that 5 million out of 330 million will be vaccinated.”

As a further example, she said CHA Everett has 975 doses now, and presumably 975 doses coming for the second booster. However, there are more than 1,000 people working in the high-priority COVID-19 areas. That example is one that she said is important for people to remember as the vaccine rolls out. It won’t be a flood of healing, potentially, but a slow trickle over many months.

“The vaccine coming does not mean that the firehose is hooked up to the fire hydrant, and we are putting out a fire in someone’s backyard,” she said. “We’re not dousing someone’s fire pit with a firehose. This is a coordinated series of bucket brigades going on throughout everyone’s neighborhood.”

•GLASS COULD BE A SLOWDOWN

Dr. Lai-Becker said she and others in the Emergency Department have never known so much about the simple supplies they use until COVID-19 hit. They learned about what goes into making masks, ventilators, and how complicated the process is and the supply chain for making them is.

Now, they are getting those same lessons with the vaccine, and it could be glass – of all things

– that slows down the complete rollout of the program. Apparently, the glass used for all vaccine vials is a very special glass that is required for everything from the flu shot to an MMR booster. It has a special manufacturing process and it’s not likely that it will be able to keep up with the demand for vaccine. That could become a limiting factor in the process. Already they have packaged five doses for every vial in the Pfizer vaccine to limit the amount of glass being used.

“As it turns out, they won’t be able to have single-dose vials because it would be difficult to produce that much glass,” she said. “The glass used for this vaccine and all vaccines is a special grade of glass needed for vaccine storage, whether a flu shot or a rabies shot. I guess the production of this glass is one limiting factor in producing vaccine.”

•SKEPTICISM IS NATURAL, BUT NOT NECESSARY

If one talks to any number of folks around the area, there are some strong opinions on either side of the coin about whether or not they will get the vaccine for COVID-19. After all, it employs a brand new process using messenger RNA (mRNA) rather than using an actual part of the virus to build up immunity. Some have no fear of that, and some do.

Lai-Becker said the process doesn’t change one’s DNA, as has been postulated by many, and she said there has been so much written about it and the process has been extremely transparent. Also, tens of thousands of people have volunteered already to get it in clinical trials, and they have been studied carefully.

“Pfizer uses mRNA and I totally understand people hearing RNA and thinking – is that DNA?” she said. “They wonder if you’re going to be messing with their DNA. I can understand people think about this. I watch movies. Who hasn’t at least heard of Frankenstein? I’ve had a chance to review all the information myself and participated in Webinars on it. As someone who works in healthcare, looking at the data and how the vaccine works, it both makes sense and looks to me like it’s a really important advance and breakthrough that is as big if not bigger than the first vaccines for smallpox.”

She explained that the mRNA is put into one’s body and gives instructions for the body to produce one of the “spikes” that is seen on the COVID-19 “crown.” Then the mRNA dissolves like any other mRNA in the body. That spike circulates around and causes the body to take note and eradicate it – teaching the body to eradicate anything else like it, including the actual COVID-19 virus.

“It’s so beautiful actually because it’s so straightforward and goes so classically with smallpox and what Jonas Salk did with Polio... It tells the body to fight without actually having to fight the virus.”

## Real Estate Transfers

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Aldana, Karla Y	Herrera, Hector	9 Calhoun Ave	\$725,000
Rindone, John W	Barker, Jason C	30 Chelsea St #612	\$141,667
Thelisma, Alexandra	Revollo, Shirley	21 Chisholm St	\$599,000
Cormier, Walter J	Cocco, William M	67 Clarence St	\$555,000
Tran, Kimberly M	Sullivan, Shane	28 Corey St	\$1,000,000
Baral, Ajit	Durkin, Phyllis	20 High St	\$849,900
Morgan, Annie	Masse, Vanessa J	9 True St	\$508,000
Buckley, Meaghan	Regan, Mary K	200 Vine St #2	\$367,500
Walcott, Pamela	Rocco-Puleo, John	120 Wyllis Ave #416	\$515,000

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# 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

Published in the East Boston Times, Revere Journal, Everett Independent, Chelsea Record, Winthrop Sun Transcript, Lynn Journal and Charlestown Patriot-Bridge

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT FRI. DEC. 18<sup>th</sup>** **PHOTOS TO BE PUBLISHED WEDS. DEC. 23<sup>rd</sup>**





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Director of Marketing and Communications  
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## Person-centered care is essential to providing care in the home setting

Most of us are faced with that question each year. So, as you see your parents or grandparents this holiday season—either safely in person or virtually—and express your love and thanks to them for all they have done, include Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) in that conversation by giving them the opportunity to talk about what they really need and want to make their quality of life better in 2021.

Discuss how they are doing around the house and ask what their daily routine looks like. Is it becoming increasingly difficult to get up and get dressed in the morning? Is it a challenge to navigate successfully in the bathroom? Have there been any falls or other accidents in the home? Are they preparing healthy meals and eating them? These are just some of the issues that a MVES care manager can address with you and your parents. Consultations are free and there are no obligations. Options and choices will be presented for consideration by your parents and you as caregivers.

The great news is that most individuals will be fortunate to live well into their older years. The other news is that while it may be hard to accept as people age, many will eventually require some type of assistance. But ask any older adult where they prefer to live as they age and the response will likely be “at home.”

MVES’ Home Care Program provides access to a variety of in-home and community based services

that make these daily activities easier. The program is available to individuals age 60 and over who need help with a range of daily tasks. People can receive services no matter what their income level may be and the fees are based on a sliding scale. Care managers will provide all the information on eligibility guidelines, fees, availability of services up front as you consider options that make the most sense for your parents and you as a caregiver. We understand that each person and family have different needs and we tailor care plans to meet those unique circumstances and needs. And we will continue working with you and your parents for as long as you need us and the advice and care planning is always free!

A fundamental advantage of living at home is that the individual is able to keep control over their daily life. They get to continue living by their own schedule, choosing when they want to eat, sleep, and socialize. MVES describes this as person-centered care and does everything possible to support each person’s ability to receive care at home on their own terms in the safest matter. Home care can help older adults remain in their homes and be healthier, more socially engaged and independent. In fact, research shows home care can expedite healing and improve older adults’ quality of life. It can also prevent or delay the need for long-term care, which is financially better for individuals and their families.

Frank, 87, of Chelsea, is receiving homecare services including home-making, a medication dispenser, a personal emergency response system, nutrition counseling as well as home-delivered meals. As the caregiver, Frank’s son is pleased with the services. “Mystic Valley Elder Services provides support for both my father and my family in a caring manner. They knew my father’s likes and dislikes and provided a care plan that met all of his individual needs,” said Frank’s son. “I’m so grateful to the staff who have helped my father age in place. Because they have adapted to my father’s needs, he continues to feel independent.” And since Frank is very low income and is eligible for Mass-Health coverage, his services are no cost to him.

MVES believes everyone should have the ability to live life to the fullest, with dignity. Through the Home Care Program and the care manager’s customized care plan, older adults are given the support they need to remain in their homes and communities.

Make this holiday special for your parents, and think about how you can give them additional support and reassurance through MVES’ range of home- and community-based services. When you need to understand your options for the care of a loved one, call us at 781-324-7705 or visit [mves.org](http://mves.org) for more information.

About Mystic Valley Elder Services

Celebrating 45 Years of helping older adults keep

their independence, Mystic Valley Elder Services is a non-profit agency located in Malden, Mass., that provides essential home- and community-based care and resources to older adults, adults living with disabili-

ties, and caregivers who reside in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winthrop, regardless of their income level. Agency services in-

clude coordination of home care, transportation, Meals on Wheels, and information and referrals. For more information, please call (781) 324-7705 or visit [www.mves.org](http://www.mves.org).




## MAYOR CARLO DEMARIA

*cordially invites you to his  
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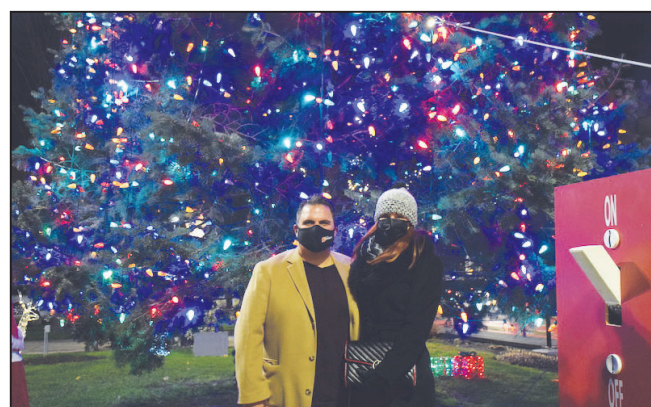
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*For the safety of the community and our staff,  
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- Follow the route at all times.
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## LIGHTING OF THE EVERETT SQUARE CHRISTMAS TREE



Mayor Carlo DeMaria joined his wife, Stacy, on Dec. 3 after lighting the Everett Square Christmas tree in fine fashion. Though it was socially distanced and broadcast on Facebook – no big crowds with families there to see Santa this year – it was a jolly time. The mayor lit trees at Wehner Park and the Everett Housing Authority before getting to the big tree in Everett Square.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

STABILIZATION FUND APPROVED

CHELSEA - Help is on the way for homeowners that find themselves with increasing tax bills, as the City Council voted 10-0 to transfer \$750,000 to the Homeowner Stabilization Program to help some owner-occupants with tax increases.

The Homeowner Stabilization Fund had been in existence and had a \$250,000 balance this fall, but after the tax rate was set and it was discovered many people were going to get his with tax increases – particularly two-family and three-family homeowners – it was proposed to be expanded. The program combined will have \$1 million in funding and will be available to those making under \$119,000 as a household.

Councillors were in agreement on the program, but Councillor Giovanni Recupero wanted clarification and wanted to send it to committee.

“I want homeowners to get it, but I want to know how they’ll be disbursed,” he said. “Will it be one sum of money for everyone under \$119,000? If it’s one amount for everyone, I’m for it. But if its not, then we need to talk about it.”

His motion for committee was defeated 1-9.

Council President Roy Avellaneda explained that the Council had gone over the program in detail for more than an hour before the last meeting with Planner Alex Train.

The matter was moved to a vote and approved 10-0.

City Manager Tom Ambrosino said he believed the program would roll out for taxpayers in January following the issuance of the first tax bills.

•CARES ACT

The City Council approved its second CARES Act payment on Monday night of \$4.029 million – money that comes from the federal government for COVID-19 related expenses.

Ambrosino said the amount was \$3 million above the previous allotment provided by Gov. Charlie Baker. The money will be used to fund all of the COVID relief since July 1. That includes the Chelsea Legal Clinic,

Rental Assistance Round 2, Chelsea Eats and the Food Pantry program.

•CENSUS WAS A DUD IN CHELSEA

It was reported on Monday night that early indications appear that Chelsea, at least officially, will have a smaller population in the 2020 number than it did in the 2010 number – a number that was entirely too low back then.

It was bad news for all facets of government in the City, from simply having a good count of residents to losing out on millions in federal funding.

“Unfortunately, due mostly to the COVID-19 pandemic, our outreach efforts were constrained,” said Ambrosino. “As a result, our self-response rate was lower than hoped for and worse than in 2010.”

The self-response rate is made up of those that sent in their Census forms or filled it out online earlier this year. It doesn’t include those that were counted last summer and fall in door-to-door efforts.

State data for the Census 2020 is expected in early 2021, and data for cities like Chelsea is expected to come in the spring.

SANTA PARADE ON DEC. 19

CHELSEA - Santa’s always been mobile, but COVID-19 this year has him moving quite efficiently.

The City, Chamber of Commerce and a number of partners are coming together to have Santa Claus hosted in a parade through Chelsea on Dec. 19 from 3-5 p.m. Residents can look out their windows, from their porches/balconies or on Facebook.

Chelsea Police, Chelsea Fire, Cataldo Ambulance and several classic cars will accompany Santa through the streets.

The three routes are as follows (maps are available on the City of Chelsea’s website):

•#1 – Chestnut to Medford to Beacon to Mulberry to Chestnut to Everett Avenue to Essex Street and back on Congress Avenue.

•#2 – Park Street to Central Ave/Willow to Marlborough to Highland Street to Broadway/Stockton to Clark Avenue

to Orange Street to Carter Street to Washington Avenue to Jefferson Avenue.

•#3 – Jefferson Avenue to Exeter Street to Wesley Street to Washington Avenue/Prospect to Springvale to Washington Avenue to Sagamore Avenue to Bloomingdale Street to Washington Avenue.

COVID RATE IS WAY UP

EAST BOSTON - As experts predicted, the post-Thanksgiving COVID-19 surge is here and numbers are once again through the roof in East Boston.

After a 35 percent decrease in the local COVID positive test rate during Thanksgiving week, those testing positive for COVID last week increased a startling 78 percent.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) last Friday, 25,677 Eastie residents were tested for COVID and 21.9 percent were found to be positive for the virus, a 78 percent increase from the 12.3 percent reported two Fridays ago. Eastie again has the highest positive test rate in all of Boston.

Overall since the pandemic began 14.5 percent of Eastie residents here have been found to be positive.

The citywide positive test rate also increased dramatically last week and went from five percent of Boston residents testing positive for the virus to 11.9 percent--a 138 percent increase.

At his daily press conference last Thursday Mayor Martin Walsh said there is a sharp increase in viral activity and there’s an urgent need for vigilance: The Mayor said that after a couple of weeks of declining numbers Boston is now seeing, in the wake of Thanksgiving, a significant uptick in COVID activity.

“On Wednesday and Thursday, we recorded a combined 960 new cases in Boston, and Wednesday’s number for Massachusetts was the highest since the pandemic began,” said Walsh. “In addition, we are seeing more patients admitted to Boston hospitals due to

BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE...



One never knows how normal things will play out in the pandemic, and that was the case for the Warren Tavern’s annual Toys for Tots drive – which nets many toys for needy kids in the Town. Some were nervous, but Charlestown was more generous than ever this year. Kim Mahoney, of the Tavern, said they had the largest amount of toys ever given for the drive. Here, on Sunday, staff members at the Tavern posed with a few of the many toys that were collected before doing an online raffle drawing.

COVID-19. Since Friday (Nov. 27), we’ve seen an increase of about 70 patients. We’re going to be monitoring the data, working closely with our hospitals and health care leaders, and bringing relief and resources where they are needed.”

Walsh said in the meantime, Bostonians must double-down on their personal precautions.

“Wear a face covering that covers your nose and your mouth when you are outside your house,” said Walsh. “Wash your hands frequently and use hand sanitizer. Clean and disinfect your surroundings, especially at work. If you are an employer, make sure your workers have what they need to be safe, and allow as many people to work from home as possible.”

The Mayor asked seniors, in particular, to take extra care and continue to stay at home as much as possible.

The Mayor repeated his request that everyone get tested, especially if you have reason to think you’ve been exposed to COVID-19, or if you spent Thanksgiving with a group larger than your immediate household.

“Currently, we have over 30 testing sites in Boston,” said Walsh. “You can find them listed and mapped at [boston.gov/coronavirus](https://boston.gov/coronavirus), or you can call 311.”

The free mobile testing site in Eastie is located in Central Square Park.

“The City will continue to invest in free mobile sites and bring them to neighborhoods where COVID activity is higher,” said Walsh. “Our mobile sites are free and open to anyone, regardless of whether you have COVID symptoms or not.”

Eastie’s infection rate rose by 7.5 percent according to the data released by the BPHC last Friday. Eastie’s COVID infection rate went from 757.7 cases per 10,000 residents to 814.6 cases per 10,000 residents. The citywide average is 420.8 cases per 10,000 residents and Eastie still has one of the highest infection rates in all of Boston.

An additional 267 Eastie residents contracted the virus with 3,823 confirmed cases, up from the 3,556 reported two weeks ago.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases

of coronavirus increased 11.4 percent last week and went from 27,228 cases to 30,342 cases in a week.

Nineteen more Boston residents died from the virus and there are now 938 total deaths in the city from COVID.

MENDEZ HONORED

EAST BOSTON - Rep. Adrian Madaro and the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus (MBLLC) recently honored NOAH’s (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) Manlio Mendez as a Latinx Trailblazer for his continued impact on the East Boston community despite grim challenges.

Madaro nominated Mendez for his many contributions to Eastie through his work with NOAH and beyond.

Mendez was born in El Salvador and immigrated to the United States in 1992. He moved to Boston in 1995. He overcame the challenges many new immigrants face, including learning English, obtaining legal status, finding work, and a decent, safe affordable home. But he loved the city and the opportunities Boston offered.

In 2003, Mendez began working as a community organizer at NOAH and now serves as their Senior Community Organizer.

For years, Mendez has helped countless new immigrants transition to life in the United States by teaching them English, providing information about resources to support their families, and uplifting the leadership of community members who are eager to create positive change.

Mendez leads NOAH’s ESOL programming, 2020 Census outreach, citizenship classes, and community building efforts.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic Mendez has led efforts to distribute food and basic necessities to residents impacted by economic and food insecurity.

Madaro said Mendez’s passion is to help others learn the skills necessary to organize for social justice.

“Manlio (Mendez) is committed to helping our neighbors learn and grow their leadership skills, and to have patience with the process of creating positive community change,” said Madaro. “I am incredibly proud to be able to nominate Manlio for this year’s award. He is an incredible organizer and force for change in East Boston and among our Latinx community. I

deeply appreciate all of his hard work, dedication, and commitment to our neighborhood”.

The annual celebration recognized the rich cultural history of the Massachusetts Latinx community and serves as a valuable opportunity to learn from one another.

“I have always believed the diversity of the Commonwealth is one of its greatest assets, and celebrating cultural heritage not only instills a sense of personal pride, events like this allow others to share in that celebration, which fosters understanding and appreciation and makes our state a better place for all,” said Speaker Robert DeLeo.

The event was filled with powerful remarks offered by nominees, who served as a testament to the resilience and innovation of the rising population of Latinos across the Commonwealth who continually impact their communities despite challenges.

“The Latino contributions are shaping a new and diverse Massachusetts,” said Chairman of the MBLLC, Representative Carlos González (D-Springfield). “We are teachers, principals, nurses, doctors, builders, motivators and are motivated to make a difference in our communities for the next generation. Somos un pueblo - we are one community.”

Nominated by legislators of the House and Senate, each 2020 Latinx Trailblazer has demonstrated exceptional leadership and served as powerful reminders that leadership means a dedicated investment in the power of community.

The MBLLC was created in 1973, with the intent to be a leading voice on Beacon Hill for communities of color across Massachusetts.

SIERRA IS FIRST WOMAN TO WORK IN DPW

LYNN - Maraya Sierra wasn’t aware that she was the first woman in the history of the city to work in the Lynn Department of Works Street Division.

But when she learned of her groundbreaking achievement, the 35-year-old Lynn resident was understandably proud.

“It feels good – the crew treats me well, they’ve all been welcoming like I’m part of the team,” said Sierra. “I didn’t know I was the first woman in the division. But I feel it’s a good thing. There are a lot of

COVID-19 has changed everything.

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# Councilor Capone, Fire Union concerned about low staffing levels

By Seth Daniel

Staffing levels in the Fire Department have dipped to very low numbers and have many of the rank and file concerned – as well as one city councilor.

Councilor Fred Capone has an item on the agenda for the meeting next Monday, Dec. 21, and he said he hopes to get some answers about the staffing levels in the Fire Department.

ment. He said he was first alerted to the issue during Budget Hearings when he looked at the numbers, and due to experience, felt they seemed low.

On Monday, he’s hoping to get more information about the situation in the Department.

“This isn’t my expertise, but from what I can see we’re at a critical level in staffing,” he said. “I think it’s a dangerous situation and I wondering

how this is affecting morale. I really think it could be a very, very dangerous situation.”

Fire Chief Tony Carli wasn’t immediately available to respond to those concerns.

However, Fire Union President Craig Hardy said he shared the concerns of Councilor Capone.

Hardy said on the books there are 83 firefighters, which is about 20 too

few. However, he said the numbers are further depleted by four out on injury and five out due to COVID-19.

“You are at very low and dangerous levels,” he said. “The overtime is up for sure and members are working so much. We’re filling the shifts to protect the city, but we’re at bare minimum. The City has attempted to hire a few times, but the process has always stopped.”

Hardy said there hasn’t been any new hires on the Fire Department for five years. That, he said, will create problems in the present and in the future. He said the Chief has been a good advocate for new hires with the Administration, but there hasn’t been any success as of yet. If new hires do come, however, he worries that replacing one-fifth of the Department all at once will lead to a very inexperienced staff – and also a large exodus of retirees in 30 years or so.

“It’s not the way to build a Fire Department,” said Hardy. “It’s almost like we’re forgotten at times because we are a very good Fire Department. The members have been doing a fantastic job, especially during COVID-19. They are doing the job and coming to work.”

## Region // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

movements going on right now and to be part of it is pretty cool.”

Sierra began her employment in the Lynn DPW in October and it’s been a busy schedule each day. “We do street work, paving, tree work, pot-holes – things like that,” said Sierra.

Last Thursday, Sierra was contributing to the Street Division’s meticulous paving of a sidewalk and driveway on Bennett Street. The weather was cold and winds were brisk, but the DPW contingent worked diligently to make the sidewalk safe for the public and complete the job.

Sierra credits the expertise of her foreman, Dan Baetzel, and the other members of the DPW crew for helping her making a seamless transition to the department.

“Dan is my foreman and he’s been teaching me a lot and he’s a great teacher,” said Sierra. “The crew makes sure I’m safe on the job. I was really nervous when I started, but they made me feel so welcomed, like one of them.”

“I also want to thank [DPW Associate Commissioner] Lisa Nerich, [DPW Commissioner] Andy Hall, and [DPW Street Superintendent] George Potter for giving me the opportunity and believing in me to take part in this,” said Sierra.

“We’re very happy that Mariah is breaking new barriers as the first woman in the DPW Street Division,” said Nerich.

DPW foreman Dan Baetzel said Sierra has been an excellent addition to the team.

“It’s been great – ever since she’s been on the department, she’s been a great addition,” said Baetzel. “She gets her assignments every day, goes out, works hard, does her job – she’s been a blessing to have on my crew. Everyone gets along well with

her. We got a great team of individuals down here in the DPW.”

DPW crew member Danny Cannata said, “This is my first week on the job and my first day I worked with Mariah and she’s great to work with. She’s good at the job. She’s actually showing me what to do. I enjoy working with her.”

Sierra previously worked for Aero Snow Removal and American Sweeper in plowing and street-sweeping operations. She had been working for Jet Blue at Logan Airport for seven years and received her Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) with the MBTA.

“I can’t work in an office,” she says of her path toward mechanically inclined, outdoor places of employment. “I have to be outside doing things. I also like working in my hometown keeping the city nice and neat.”

Maraya graduated in 2004 from Lynn Classical where she played in the basketball program under the direction of varsity coach Gene Constantino and JV coach Geoffrey Boyd. “I was a freshman when Helen Ridley was a senior,” recalled Maraya. “I was at the game when Helen broke the scoring record. I actually know Helen well. I used to play street basketball with her. She’s a very good person and very dedicated to the sport.”

Maraya praised her favorite educator at Classical, Mrs. White, who was her English teacher. “She’s really dedicated to the kids,” said Maraya. “She went above and beyond for her students.”

After Classical, Maraya continued her education at the New England Institute of Art in Brookline.

Sierra and her DPW crewmates received a preview of New England’s cold winters Friday with the first snowstorm of the season. With her experi-

ence in snowplowing, the first woman in the DPW Street Division will be helping the department keep Lynn roads safe for motorists and residents alike, free of the wintry hazards of snow, sleet, and ice.

### KEEFE SEEKS COLLABORATION BETWEEN ASSESSOR’S AND BUILDING DEPARTMENTS

REVERE - City Council President Patrick Keefe said that the assessment from the tax collector’s office on homes doesn’t always correlate with the use as defined in the Building Department’s Office.

Keefe said he would like to see a collaboration between the Assessor’s Office and the Building Department “because there are many cases in the city where a home is assessed as a two-family, but in the Building Department as a one-family.”

“This situation exists more often in single-and-two-family homes, typically homes that were built without all the proper building permits to have a legal in-law or legal accessory dwelling,” said Keefe. “Now as the homes are getting sold, these homeowners are finding that they cannot legally sell it as a two-family, because it’s not on the books as a two-family and it triggers an issue with the Fire Department because they can’t issue a smoke detector’s certificate if the house has not been legitimized.”

Assessor Dana Brangiforte and Building Commissioner Louis Cavagnaro joined Keefe and the Council in discussing the issue at the City Council meeting Monday night.

“It’s going to take a long time – I’m not expecting this to change overnight and be fixed in

a year or two,” said Keefe. “It’s going to take years. The sooner we can coordinate this, it will be beneficial for everybody. Some homeowners will have to spend money to legitimize their homes, but rather than having to deal with it years later upon the sale of their home, I think it will create less confusion and make the residents of Revere a little happier if we begin the process now. There will be a lot more consistency in the process. It’s very confusing to sell your home and your tax bill says it’s appraised as a two-family and you go to sell it, and you’re told it’s a one-family because that’s what the Building Department has listed.”

The Council approved Keefe’s motion that Mayor or Brian Arrigo request the Assessor’s Office to coordinate with the Building Department relative to home assessments.

### APPOINTMENTS ARE APPROVED

REVERE - The Revere City Council unanimously approved Mayor Brian Arrigo’s appointments to various city boards at the Council meeting Monday night.

Following are the appointments:

- Elle Baker to the Historical Commission
- Cathy Penn to the Planning Board
- Fatou Drammeh to the Revere Housing Authority
- Brian Vesce, Asmaa Abou-Fouda, and Jason Barone-Cichocki to the Disability Commission
- Dr. Toby Pearlstein and Stephanie Carvalho to the Library Board of Trustees
- Deborah Guimaraes, Brendan O’Brien, Catherine Daze, Quin Li, and Yesenia Arango to the Cultural Council

### HOLIDAY PARADE PLANNED

WINTHROP - The Class of 2021 is doing

what they can to spread some cheer this holiday season. On Sunday, December 20 at 3pm, Winthrop High School seniors will be decking their vehicles out for a festive car parade that will follow the route that Santa’s firetruck makes on Christmas Eve. Led by the Winthrop Police Department, the last two cars of the parade will be collecting food, toys, and winter accessories for those in need. Participants are asked to wear a mask.

“I continue to be so proud of the students of the Class of 2021,” said Senior Class Advisor, Marissa Ferrara. “They are always looking for ways to give back to the community and continuously put other’s needs ahead of their own. When Sofia approached us with the idea, we knew it was a great way to inject some holiday spirit during these very different times. These children all have such bright futures and Winthrop should be proud.”

The idea to host a parade came to senior, Sofia Vitale, when she was decorating her Christmas tree and reflecting on the glum 2020 season.

“My mom and I talked about how giving always feels so good,” said Vitale. “I want to give this parade to the community to spread some holiday cheer in a safe way. And I also want give to the families in need of some assistance, hopefully making their holiday the best it can be.”

On board with wanting to spread some holiday cheer, Vitale’s classmate, Jenna Dorr, offered her support, helping the parade come to life.

“The senior class is looking to do something special for the holiday season, which is a hard time for many families,” said Dorr. “This parade will not only be able to provide families in need with toys, canned food, and winter accessories, but also unite

the senior class. We have not been able to do activities or see many of our classmates for a long time so I think this will bring everyone some holiday cheer.”

If you have any questions, please reach out to:

Sofia Vitale: 781-816-3496

Jenna Dorr: 617-756-9792

Marissa Ferrara: 617-605-4939

Carla Vitale: 781-704-5819

### COUNCIL TACKLES SOME ISSUES

WINTHROP - The Winthrop Town Council met remotely for its regularly scheduled meeting on Dec. 1, where it confronted a recent loss, voted on hate and received updates on the town’s water and tax rates.

Community Loss

Council President Phil Boncore choked up as he called for a moment of silence for Amy Gallagher, who passed away Nov. 30 at the age of 51. Gallagher, who worked with special education students at the middle school, was a beloved member of the community.

Police Chief Terence Delahanty delivered an emotional tribute to Gallagher, calling her “a good friend, more like a sister.”

“It’s a significant loss for the community,” he said. “There was so much Amy did and she didn’t expect anyone to thank her for it.”

“It’s very unfortunate and a sad day for Winthrop,” said Town Manager Austin Faison. “Amy worked hard for the town. She will be sorely missed.”

DPH Director Meredith Hurley offered a tearful acknowledgement of the loss.

“We are all reeling from the loss of Amy,” she said. “She always made me feel like I’ve been here forever.”

## Letters // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

pointment as director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). President-Elect Joseph Biden and Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris yesterday announced the members of the leadership team who will be shaping, overseeing, improving and ensuring the health, well-being and safety of our nation. Dr. Walensky will be an integral part of this national health executive team, whose first and most pressing challenge will be directing and implementing the United States’ response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

A Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and the Steve and Deborah Gorlin MGH Research Scholar 2015-2020, Dr. Walensky is an

inspired choice for this top public health role. She is an accomplished clinician, scientist and educator who will bring creativity and boldness, wisdom and compassion to her new role. Committed to equity and fairness, Dr. Walensky has been a relentless advocate for ensuring that the highest quality healthcare is accessible and available to underserved communities, a priority that has defined her leadership in the Mass General Division of Infectious Diseases.

For the past 10 months, Dr. Walensky has been leading and supporting staff in her division as they battle against COVID-19. She has played a critical role advising Mass General and the Mass General Brigham system in all

aspects of understanding, controlling, treating and preventing the virus. At the state level, she has served on Gov. Baker’s COVID-19 Advisory Board, shaping key decisions and actions. She also has helped both the medical community and the public sort through changing guidelines and conflicting information, co-authoring more than a dozen COVID-related papers, organizing infectious disease leaders across Boston to publish a series of important op-ed pieces, and reaching millions as a medical analyst on CNN.

Dr. Walensky is internationally recognized for her work in the field of HIV/AIDS. She has pushed U.S. and global policy toward routine HIV screening and promoted

the idea of HIV treatment as prevention. As the first investigator to assess the survival benefits of AIDS treatment, Dr. Walensky, through her fierce advocacy, helped increase investment in research and treatment. She is a past chair of the National Institutes of Health’s Office of AIDS Research Advisory Council.

When she takes the reins of the CDC this January, Dr. Walensky will lead a federal agency responsible for protecting and guiding the nation’s public health and safety. Headquartered in Atlanta, the CDC is part of the Department of Health and Human Services, with more than 10,000 employees and a budget of approximately \$12 billion. The CDC coordi-

nates, supports and funds a vast range of programs including immunization, HIV/AIDS, emerging infectious diseases, environmental health, disease prevention, injury prevention, and public health preparedness and response.

Dr. Walensky holds an undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis, a medical degree from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and a master’s in public health from the Harvard School of Public Health. She trained in internal medicine at Hopkins and in infectious diseases in the MGH/BWH combined fellowship program. She and her husband, Loren Walensky, MD, PhD, a physician-scientist at Dana-Farber Cancer In-

stitute and Boston Children’s Hospital, are the parents of three sons.

In Dr. Walensky, the new administration has chosen a fearless, brilliant and compassionate ally who will give her all to protect and advance the health of our nation – just as she has done for patients, colleagues and the community at Mass General.

**Peter L. Slavin, MD**  
**Mass General President**  
**Timothy G. Ferris, MD**  
**Mass General Physicians Organization CEO**  
**Katrina Armstrong, MD**  
**Chief, Department of Medicine**



## OBITUARIES

### John Henry Piantedosi

Last surviving family member and founder of the Piantedosi Baking Company

John Henry Piantedosi, “Papa” or “The Baker,” a lifelong resident of Winchester and formerly of Boca Raton, FL, passed away on December 8 at the age of 96 surrounded by his family.

John leaves behind his beloved wife Mary (Vetrano) and six children, Mary Ellen Margosian and her late husband, Fred of Lexington and Chatham, John and Eileen Piantedosi of Bedford and Chatham, William Piantedosi of West Palm Beach, FL, Carol Ann and Frank O’Brien of West Roxbury, Diane Piantedosi of Winchester and Joseph S. Piantedosi of Winchester and Laconia, NH. In addition to his children and their spouses, he leaves 9 grandchildren: Sarah, Julia, John, Victoria, Aris, Gregory, Rachel, David and Joseph.

John was the last surviving family member and founder of the Piantedosi Baking Company located in Malden, which today is 105 years old and boasts a national and international business clientele. The bakery was started in 1916 in Everett by his parents, Salvatore and Mary, and became a very successful family-run business with their 3 sons, Carmine, Joseph and John. John would tell of coming home from school at seven years old and going off to work in the bakery, along with his older brothers every afternoon and weekends. Today the bakery is still privately owned and operated by the third and fourth generations of the Piantedosi family.

The only time in his life when John did not work at the bakery was when he served in the armed services as a Marine for three years from 1943 to 1946.

After the service, he returned home to the bakery and soon after met the love of his life and his bride of 69 years, and they began a family.

John’s passions were many. He loved to golf. He was a long standing member of Nashawtuc Country Club, Winchester Country Club and Broken Sound in Boca Raton. He was known by the club members for the endless hours he spent on the driving range, offering a tweak here or there to fellow golfers, observing golf swings and honing his own skills.

His family loves to tell the story of John, later in life, having surgery to insert a stent in his heart a week before his 80th birthday. He was given permission by his cardiologist to play a golf tournament at his country club



a week after the surgery, and shot an 80 on his actual 80th birthday!

Even in retirement, John never lost his love of baking and cooking. His blueberry and apple pies were legendary. His pizzas were always pre-made and ready to be baked and served to any spontaneous guest. John and Mary shared the joy of hosting friends for beautiful delicious meals, however their hospitality and generosity was not limited to just friends! Any workman who found themselves lucky enough to be at the Piantedosi house during lunchtime was invited to sit at the kitchen table and eat with the family. No one left disappointed. Cooking and baking was in his DNA and sharing it was his pleasure.

John was an avid reader and began his days with four newspapers. He consumed the WSJ and followed the stock market daily.

But the thing that brought him the most joy in the last years of his life was any time spent with his grandkids. He never missed a school event, he loved their frequent visits, and they loved their Papa. Even their friends became Papa’s friends. They all got golf lessons from Papa and lots of lectures about the importance of doing well inschool and hard work. He spoke often to them of gratitude and love. He was so proud of them. With all John’s life accomplishments, he would tell you his grandkids were his proudest legacy.

Papa will be laid to rest with his brothers, their wives and his parents in the family Mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett. Donations in memory of John’s beautiful life can be made to St Jude Children’s Hospital, 501 St Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

Services were private due to COVID restrictions but were live streamed on Saturday, December 12. To view the service, please visit [sainteulalia.org/live-stream](https://sainteulalia.org/live-stream) Arrangements under the direction of Lane Funeral Home Winchester. For online condolences, please visit [www.lanefuneral.com](https://www.lanefuneral.com).

### Robert Martin Sr.

Civil Right Activist and graduate of Everett High School, Class of 1950

Robert Martin Sr. went home to glory on Friday, December 11 at the age of 89. He lived in Marlborough until his passing. Robert Sr. was born on March 25, 1931. He was one of nine children born to Lucy and Jared (Jerry) Martin in Everett: Helen Reap, William Martin, Geraldine Jefferson, Elizabeth Watson, Joan Harris, Dorothy Long, Carol Holt and Richie Martin.

He graduated from Everett High School in 1950 where he excelled in sports like football, track and field. Robert later graduated from Franklin Technical Institute as a certified automobile mechanic.

He met and married his late wife, Dorothy Bess in 1949 with whom he had four children. He had a total of five children. During his life he worked at Cote Ford

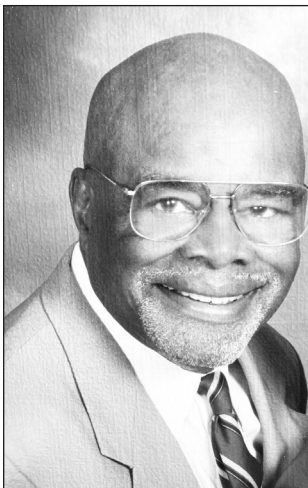
and United Parcel Service for many years advancing to the position of supervisor before retiring.

Robert (Big Bobby) lived in Everett, Boston, Framingham, Vineland, NJ, New Orleans LA, Martha’s Vineyard and Marlboro MA.

Wherever he and his family moved, church membership was an essential part of creating a home. He was a lifelong member of Emmanuel Baptist Church, but also attended Charles St. AME Church and First Baptist Church of Vineyard Haven. He was also a founding and beloved member of Greater Framingham Community Church. One of his greatest passions was being a

videographer who brought quality programming to the Framingham community. He received the Framingham Public Access TV, Lifetime Achievement Award.

He was an avid gardener, sports aficionado, and a devoted motivator and “surrogate Dad”,



for many young people. He was very active in NAACP during the 1960s civil rights movement and became a community activist during the hearings leading up to Boston Public School’s desegregation order.

He was also Massachusetts state delegate to the Democratic National Committee and generously donated to many charitable organizations.

He had a great sense of humor. He was a storyteller who loved to laugh and to make others laugh. He was known as a creative problem solver. He loved pets of all kinds and was especially fond of children.

He is survived by his children: Robert Martin Jr. (Judith), Joyce Martin-Williams (Edward), Pamela Green (Isaac), Jerald Martin (Caroline) and Dammond Bonner. His beloved grandchildren are: Ahmed Martin, Tracey L. Martin, Isaac Green II, Anica Green and Tara Martin.

Remembrances can be made as charitable donations to Greater Framingham Community Church, 44 Franklin Street, Framingham, MA 01752.

Services will be private and by invitation on Tuesday, December 22 at 2:30 p.m.

at Duckett Funeral Home, 656 Boston Post Road, Sudbury, MA 01776. Please call (978) 443-5777 or visit the website for additional information.

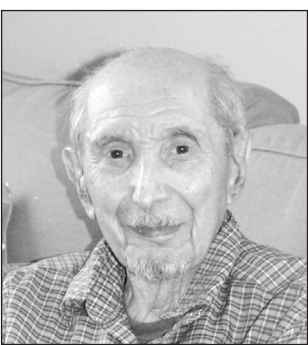
### John Corrado

World War II US Army Veteran

John E. Corrado of Revere died on December 8 at the age of 98.

John proudly served his country in the United States Army in WWII. He was a recipient of the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Ribbon, American Theater Campaign Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal and the Army of Occupation Medal of Germany. A member of the V.F.W. Mottolo Post, John and his wife, Paula were devout parishioners of St. Anthony’s Church where John was a member of the Holy Name Society. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Born in East Boston on January 25, 1922 to the late Pasquale and Lucy (Fredestefano) Corrado, he was the beloved husband of 60 years to Paula (Fala); devoted father of John B. Corrado and his wife, Karen of Revere, and Paul Corrado and his wife, Domenica of Lynnfield; dear brother of Joseph P. Corrado and his wife, Ann of Revere and



the late Adeline Corrado; cherished grandfather of Christopher and Catherine Corrado; step grandfather to Jamie Hershey and her husband, Jarrod, and Kristin Degou and adored great grandfather of Theodore Harrison and William Hershey. He is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews and great nieces and great nephews.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Anthony’s Church, 250 Revere St, Revere and

interment followed at Holy Cross Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL 60601 or at [alz.org](https://alz.org). For guest book please visit [www.buonfiglio.com](https://www.buonfiglio.com).

## National Grid commits to helping customers during COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the country, National Grid is urging customers experiencing hardships to make use of the company’s many energy management and assistance programs.

With shorter days and cooler nights and more people working from home, energy consumption will rise over the next several months. National Grid recommends that customers act now and review the Company’s energy payment options, efficiency programs and discount rates, steps that can help reduce the bill impact from increased use of gas and electricity during the winter.

“We know this has been a very challenging year for many of our customers and we are here to help,” said Marcy Reed, president of National Grid in Massachusetts. “More than ever, now is a good time to learn about our billing options, discount rates and nation-leading energy efficiency programs.”

At National Grid, we’re committed to providing reliable and affordable energy for all our customers, especially during these unprecedented times. Energy supply prices change annually on November 1 and winter supply rates are typically higher than summer supply rates.

The world has changed and with many homes being used as classrooms and offices, we understand customers may be confronting unanticipated expenses. If you find yourself in the position of having trouble paying your bill, we can work with you to find the best payment solution possible.

**Managing Bills**

This has been a difficult year and we want to do our part. Several options are available for income-eligible customers, including a discount rate, forgiveness programs and aid through the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), a federal fuel assistance program. Customers can also make use of our budget billing plan and various payment options.

Thousands of customers have benefited from our assistance programs for many years and we encourage anyone in need to make use of them. More information is available at [ngrid.com/billhelp](https://ngrid.com/billhelp).

National Grid also provides a long list of energy efficiency tips on its energy efficiency page. Here are a few examples:

- Revisit your thermostat settings to make sure they’re changing with the

weather and your schedule.

- ENERGY STAR® certified LED light bulbs can help you save every day at home because they use 90 percent less energy and last 13 times longer than traditional bulbs.

- Lower your water heater setting to 120°F to save energy and prevent scalding

- Smart power strips can help you control the amount of energy your electronics use. If you don’t have one, unplug the electronics you aren’t using.

**Our Continuing Customer Commitment**

During these unsettled times, National Grid has provided more than \$2 million in charitable giving in support of the communities in which we live and work. We have a long history of showing up on behalf of our friends and neighbors, lending a hand when assistance is needed. Helping our customers manage their energy costs has always been important – now more than ever. For more information, visit [ngrid.com/payment-assistance](https://ngrid.com/payment-assistance).

**Understanding Options for Purchasing Energy Supply**

Approximately four percent of National Grid natural gas customers and 49 percent of National Grid electricity customers procure their energy from competitive suppliers. These prices may be different from National Grid’s supply costs. National Grid encourages customers to understand the details of such contracts and review available information at [www.ngrid.com/masschoice](https://www.ngrid.com/masschoice). Whether you use an alternate supplier or not, National Grid will continue to deliver your energy safely and reliably, respond to all service and emergency needs, and restore power during storms.

About National Grid

National Grid (NYSE: NGG) is an electricity, natural gas, and clean energy delivery company serving more than 20 million people through our networks in New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. National Grid is transforming our electricity and natural gas networks with smarter, cleaner, and more resilient energy solutions to meet the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

For more information, please visit our website, follow us on Twitter, watch us on YouTube, like us on Facebook and find our photos on Instagram.

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CAMBRIDGE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

51 Inman Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139-1732  
617-349-4396

CONNECTICUT COMMISSION ON HUMAN  
RIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES

21 Grand Street, 4th Floor  
Hartford, CT 06106-1561  
860-541-3400

MAINE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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Augusta, ME 04333  
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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 togeth-  
er, spiritually while they  
can't physically. Their  
virtual sanctuaries can be  
accessed via their face-  
book page, "Zion Church  
Ministries."  
For more information,  
they can be reached on-  
line at [zionchurchministries.com](http://zionchurchministries.com) or via email at  
[office@zionchurchministries.com](mailto:office@zionchurchministries.com)

Church at the Well Everett  
News and Notes

Church at the Well Ev-  
erett is a new church for  
Everett that will begin  
meeting in 2021. Check  
us out on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/churchforeverett)  
[churchforeverett](http://churchforeverett) to view  
weekly devotions and up-  
dates, visit us at [www.for-](http://www.for-)

[everett.church](http://everett.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](http://www.everettcan.com)  
to request any additional  
help.

Glendale United Methodist Church  
News and Notes

Glendale United Meth-  
odist 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.

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a.m.

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to choose your particu-  
lar week and leave a copy  
of your dedication in the  
mail in that is on the Pas-  
tor'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 appoint-  
ment.

Bread of Life Donations  
– This outreach is being  
done to honor the Unit-  
ed 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.glen->**  
**[daleumc-everett.org](http://www.glen-)**  
**Glendale United**  
**Methodist Church**  
**Pastor David Jackson**  
**392 Ferry Street (across**  
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**Please enter the church**  
**by the driveway on**  
**Walnut Street**  
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A public service message from the U.S. General Services Administration.

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](mailto:editor@everettindependent.com).

The Everett Independent assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertisements, but will reprint that part of  
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Glendale Christian Lighthouse Church  
News and Notes

Sunday 10:30 AM Wor-  
ship service.  
Wednesday hour of  
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and Bible Study, via  
Zoom.  
“Whatever you do,  
work at it with all your  
heart, as working for the  
Lord, not for human mas-  
ters,” Colossians 3:23  
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**Pastor**  
**[pastorlarry@](mailto:pastorlarry@thelighthousechurch701.net)**  
**[thelighthousechurch701.net](http://thelighthousechurch701.net)**

Mystic Side Congregational Church  
News and Notes

Mystic Side Congrega-  
tional Church is located  
in Everett, on Malden-Ev-  
erett border, at 422 Main  
Street. We offer a warm,  
inviting atmosphere, and  
all are welcome. Our Sun-  
day Church service starts  
at 10:30 a.m. and Commu-  
nion is offered on the first  
Sunday of each month. A  
very pleasant coffee hour

and socializing follow our  
services. Parking is avail-  
able 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  
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**422 Main Street**  
**Everett, MA**

Grace Anglican Episcopal Church  
News and Notes

Grace Anglican Episco-  
pal Church is open and wel-  
coming to all.

There are 3 services on  
Sundays: 10am English,  
1pm South Sudanese (Din-  
ka) and 3pm Haitian Cre-  
ole.

Come all and let us walk  
together in this season of

hope, renewal and new be-  
ginnings.

**Grace Anglican  
Episcopal Church**  
**67 Norwood Street,**  
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**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 Can-  
non

Weekly Mass Schedule  
at Immaculate Conception  
is as follows:

Saturday (Sunday Vig-  
il) 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 Com-  
munity  
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 Benedic-  
tion of the Most Blessed  
Sacrament at 6:30 p.m.  
All are invited to spend  
a few moments with Our  
Blessed Lord

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make a donation. Our se-  
lections are great and var-  
ied. Please stop by the ta-  
ble and see what we have.  
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The Zonta message board gets the word out of “NO to Violence Against Women.”



## Zonta message board decries violence against women

As part of Zonta’s annual Fall advocacy campaign, “Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women,” the Zonta Club of Chelsea and North Shore has partnered with the City to get that message out. During the International Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, November 25th through December 10th, the electronic message board outside City Hall has proclaimed exactly that, in Spanish and in English.

The newly re-named Zonta Club of Chelsea and North Shore has historically been a staunch financial supporter of HarborCov. Past Fall campaigns have included partnerships with a local taxi company to raise awareness of domestic violence and the available local resources, and to provide travel vouchers for HarborCov residents in need of assistance. The club also provides college scholarships to girls graduating from Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop, Everett

and Saugus high schools, and provides food vouchers to families in those communities.

The Zonta Club of Chelsea and North Shore recognizes that one of the many tragedies of COVID 19 is the increase in domestic violence. The club’s message is the continued support of local agencies that denounce violence against women and provide safety and services. HarborCov’s hotline number is 617 884-9799.



Zonta Club members are, L to R.: Joan Lanzillo-Hahesy; Diane Cambria; Bonnie Fishman; Sheila Arsenault; Janis Tatarka, President, and Theresa DiPietro. Photos by Georgia Green.

## Boston Medical Center receives first shipment of COVID-19 vaccine Monday

By Seth Daniel

Boston Medical Center (BMC) received the area’s first doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID19 vaccine on Monday morning, taking it into cold storage immediately and preparing to vaccinate front-line medical workers on Wednesday.

BMC said it received 1,950 doses Monday morning and would equitably disperse them throughout the front-line workers at the hospital.

“This morning, Boston Medical Center received 1,950 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID19 vaccine,” read a statement. “Beginning Wednesday, we will begin the first wave of vaccinations to front line health

care workers, a group including doctors and nurses from our ICU and Emergency Department and patient floors that treat COVID-19 patients, but just as importantly, employees from environmental and support services, and other crucial positions that work in COVID-positive patient areas.”

The doses were put into a freezer at the BMC inpatient pharmacy.

Mass General Brigham (MGH) confirmed on Tuesday it had received its first shipment of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Mass General Brigham received an initial shipment of nearly 9,000 vaccine doses to be allocated proportionally across the 12 hospitals in its system. They will

begin vaccinating health care workers at the hospitals on Wednesday.

In an historic press conference on Monday, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, Dr. Moncef Slaoui and General Gustave Perna – all members of the Operation Warp Speed vaccine team – reported on the first shipments of the Pfizer vaccine.

The reported that 2.9 million doses of the vaccine had been shipped and another 2.9 million would be held back for the second booster dose that will be given to those inoculated in 21 to 28 days. The Pfizer vaccine requires an initial shot and a second booster for full immunity, they said.

Those shipments would continue through Tuesday, and Wednesday and the rest of the week likely, Perna said. He said they have used a public/private partnership with the federal government, UPS and FedEx to distribute the doses, and now are entering into a “steady drumbeat” of constant shipments as the days and weeks go on.

“The point here is the initial push that we have shows we can execute,” he said. “Now we’re starting our drumbeat of continuous shipments of vaccine.”

All vaccine shipments destinations and dosage amounts are determined by each state’s governor, they said. For Massachusetts,

Gov. Charlie Baker issues an initial priority list last week that is now being followed in the first dosages. There were 636 sites across the United States identified to Operation Warp Speed, with 145 getting shipments on Monday.

There were 425 that would receive shipments on Tuesday, and 66 on Wednesday.

All expected the Moderna vaccine, also a two-shot program, to get emergency use authorization by the weekend, and that would start to be shipped out by next Monday, Dec. 21. There would be approximately 100 million doses of that vaccine available initially as there has been more time to

manufacture in the run-up to authorization.

They expected to be able to vaccinate 100 million people by the end of the 1st quarter of 2021.

Meanwhile, Azar said they are confident they will have enough vaccine for anyone that wants it and that no American would have to pay for the vaccine if they want it.

“No American faces an out of pocket expense for this vaccine,” Azar said.

The Centers for Disease Control has authorized \$140 million to pay for long-term planning for the vaccine. Meanwhile, Operation Warp Speed is paying for the vaccine cost and all of the supplies, including syringes and other materials.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### RENTAL/ MORTGAGE RELIEF

Mayor Carlo DeMaria is pleased to announce that 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 online at this address: <http://everettcares.cityofeverett.com/covid-19-aid.../>. 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.

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 2 paystubs from the last 30 days of unemployment.

ment. 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 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 \$1.3M in relief funds or December 30, 2020.

#### 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. Please send letters to [Santa@ci.everett.ma.us](mailto:Santa@ci.everett.ma.us).

#### 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!

#### VICTIM TRANSPORTED ON MONDAY WITH GUNSHOT WOUND

At approximately 2:45 p.m. on Monday, there was a report of gunshots fired inside of a residence located on the 100 block of Broadway in Everett.

There was no threat to the public at the time.

The victim has been transported to Massachusetts General Hospital for a single gunshot wound. The injuries are non-life threatening.

The EPD actively investigating the scene.



THE 25 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS CONTINUE. The Everett Police Department has been on a tear over the last week with their annual 25 Days of Christmas gift-giving binge. Over the past week, they’ve given bicycles, toys, sports equipment and other fun stuff to kids they meet out and about on the beat. Here, on Day 13, it was a lucky day for Miguel when Officer Williamson bumped into him.