

Everett Independent

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An up-close look

Everett Firefighters participate in multijurisdictional Training

Special to the Independent

Mayor Robert J. Van Campen and other City leaders recently got an up-close look at the intense, hands-on training firefighters undergo to prepare for emergencies where every second counts.

Everett firefighters joined crews from neighboring communities for a multijurisdictional training exercise at 210 Beacham Street, a building owned by an affiliate of The Davis Companies. The property provided firefighters with a rare opportunity to train inside a real structure and recreate some



PHOTOS COURTESY THE CITY OF EVERETT

Everett firefighters prepare to enter the training facility for a simulated search and rescue operation.

of the challenging conditions they could encounter during an emergency.

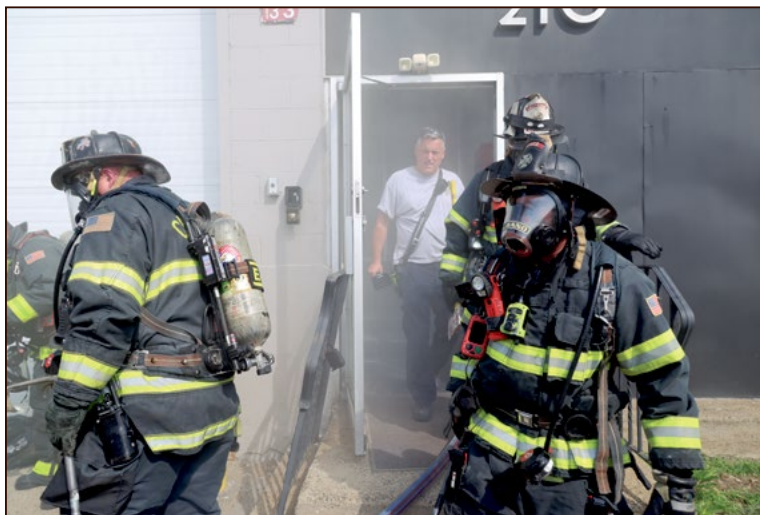
The exercises simulated what firefighters experience when entering a burning building, including alarms sounding, little to no visibility, extreme heat and a limited supply of air. A firefighter's air tank may provide only about 15 minutes of working time under strenuous conditions.

The training focused heavily on search and rescue, including navigating large and small areas, locating and extracting downed firefighters and rescuing individuals who may be trapped beneath large objects. In some scenarios, it can take approximately 17 firefighters working together to safely remove a downed firefighter.

"Real-life training is essential in the fire service," said Everett Fire Chief Joe Hickey. "It gives our firefighters the opportunity to practice these skills before they have to put their lives on the line to save someone else or one of their own. The more we train, the better prepared we are when a real emergency happens."

Everett is part of a mutual aid network with Revere, Chelsea, Malden and Medford, meaning firefighters from these communities regularly respond alongside one another during major incidents. Over the past year, the departments have expanded opportunities to train together

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Firefighters exit the training facility after completing a search and rescue exercise in simulated smoke and high-heat conditions.

Everett voters go to the polls for primary election Sept. 1

By Cary Shuman

Everett voters will cast their ballots in the State primary election on Tuesday, Sept. 1.

City Clerk Sergio Cornelio said polls will be open at 12 buildings in the city on Tuesday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

With few contested races on the ballot, Cornelio expects a

low turnout of approximately 4,000 out of Everett's 25,400 registered voters to participate in the election.

Sen. Sal DiDomenico and Reps. Joseph McGonagle, Dan Ryan, and Judith Garcia are all unopposed in their bids for re-election.

See ELECTION Page 3

ECG hosts Rep. Pressley, Commissioner Randle for urban farmers convening

Special to the Independent

On August 13, Everett Community Growers (ECG) cohosted an intimate roundtable conversation with Congresswoman

Ayanna Pressley and Commissioner Ashley Randle of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources on the

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Everett Community Growers staff and youth celebrate Urban Agriculture Week with Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley.

Everett Independent

President: Stephen Quigley

Editor in Chief: Cary Shuman

A “WAR” THAT WE ACTUALLY ARE WINNING

It was almost 55 years ago -- on December 23, 1971, to be precise -- that President Richard M. Nixon officially declared the “war on cancer” when he signed the National Cancer Act of 1971.

The legislation committed \$1.5 billion (\$12 billion in today’s dollars) over three years to expand the capabilities of the National Cancer Institute and create new research centers to find cures and treatments for cancer.

At the time, Nixon stated he hoped the bill would be looked upon in the future as the most significant action of his presidency, comparing it to the ambition of the moon landing. Since 1971, the federal government has spent an estimated \$200 billion to \$300 billion in research, while total national expenditures on overall cancer care and medical treatment have reached trillions of dollars.

Early detection, better treatments, and a massive decline in smoking successfully have reduced cancer deaths. Still, despite these efforts, an estimated 30 million Americans have died of the dreaded disease over the past 55 years. In short, though we have made much progress since 1971, we still had far to go.

That is, until last week.

The joint announcement by pharmaceutical companies Moderna and Merck heralds a new era in oncology. They revealed that Moderna’s targeted mRNA cancer vaccine, when combined with Merck’s immunotherapy drug Keytruda, significantly slowed the recurrence of deadly melanoma and prevented its spread to other parts of the body.

Just as each of us has unique fingerprints, cancers are entirely different in everyone. Even two people with the exact same diagnosis can have completely different genetic mutations, tumor behaviors, and treatment responses. That is why a drug like Keytruda is highly-effective for many patients, but not for others.

Moderna’s mRNA drug changes the game by designing a treatment specific to every patient’s unique version of the cancer. A small sample of the cancer is extracted from the patient so its DNA can be genetically sequenced. Moderna then tailors a custom mRNA drug designed to train the patient’s own immune system -- specifically their “killer” T-cells -- to recognize and aggressively attack those specific cancer cells.

This breakthrough technology is critical in two major respects. Obviously, it will be of enormous benefit to Americans who presently have been diagnosed with cancer. But its impact also will be crucial in treating the many early-onset cancers that inexplicably are on the rise among younger people.

Colorectal cancer is seeing one of the sharpest and most alarming increases among young adults under 50, rapidly becoming a leading cause of cancer death in this age group. Doctors are also seeing noticeable increases in several other early-onset cancers among Gen Xers and Millennials, including triple-negative breast, thyroid, kidney, pancreatic, uterine, and stomach cancers.

For these generations, personalized mRNA technology could completely rewrite their prognosis.

In a world where it seems the news is all bad all the time, the announcement of Moderna’s breakthrough cancer therapy offers a rare, profound sense of hope. We may finally be turning the tide in a half-century-long war, bringing us closer than ever to a cure for this dreaded disease.

Independent Forum

LETTER to the Editor

TRAFFIC IN EVERETT

To the Editor,

As a lifelong resident of Everett, I am finding myself more and more unhappy with what I see on the roads of Everett. Traffic is a nightmare, and there are many people breaking the law because they are either ignorant or inconsiderate of the safety of others and themselves. Some examples of what I see daily are: texting while driving, not stopping at stop signs and red lights, going the wrong way

on one-way streets, and making U-turns on main drags. What really bothers me is they get away with it, and because they are not being held accountable, they continue to break the law and put everyone in danger. We have a real public safety issue going on here.

I am not writing just to express my feelings, but also to offer a suggestion and provide a possible solution. I strongly feel we can alleviate some of the traffic and make the roads safer if we change the light cy-

cles at major intersections so that each of the four sides gets their own dedicated green light (with a green arrow if possible). This would allow everyone taking a left turn to make the turn safely and eliminate the guess work on whether someone is going to let them go or not. Many times, traffic is backed up on Broadway and Ferry Street simply because people cannot make a left turn until after the light turns red.

David Oliveri

NEWS IN BRIEF

MEAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN EVERETT

Mystic Valley Aging Services Provides Meals to Homes and Senior Center

As the City of Everett’s community meal program concludes on August 31, 2026, Mystic Valley Aging Services is available to help residents affected by the change.

Mystic Valley Aging Services provides home-delivered meals through its Meals on Wheels program. For people on a doctor-recommended diet, specialized meals are available: low-carb, cardiac health, renal care, and low-lactose. Mystic Valley offers several cultural menus: Asian/Vietnamese, Caribbean, and Kosher. There is also a vegetarian menu and three texture options: soft, ground, or pureed.

In addition, Mystic Valley offers community-based meals in collaboration with Everett’s Connolly Center and Glendale Towers.

Mystic Valley Aging Services supports older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers. Since 1975, the nonprofit has connected residents with food assistance

and a variety of other services and resources.

For assistance, please call 781-324-7705, email info@mves.org, or learn more at www.mysticvalleyaging.org.

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UPCOMING EVENTS AT EVERETT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Parlin Adult and Teens

Parlin Book Group, Parlin Meeting Room, and Zoom. Monday, August 31st at 6:00 pm. Discuss Samantha Shannon's *Among the Burning Flowers*. Call Kathleen at (617) 394 2300, or send an email to slipp@noblenet.org, for the Zoom link, or join us in person!

Parlin Childrens

Storytime and Singalong with Karen, Parlin Children's Room. Wednesday, September 2nd at 11am. Join us for a fun-filled morning of singing and storytelling with Karen! Suggested ages 0-6.

Creative Drama Class. Parlin Children's Room. Wednesday, September 2nd at 3pm. Children ages 5 - 12 will enjoy using creativity and imagination through role-playing, improvisation, and storytelling.

Story Time Adventures with Mrs. McAuliffe Parlin Craft

Room. Friday, September 11th at 11:00 am. Join us on Fridays for our enchanting Story Time! You will be whisked away on magical adventures through the pages of your favorite books. Get your wiggles out after the story with singing and stretches. Build a simple craft. Bring a friend or make a new one in our circle of friends. Recommended for children ages 5 and under.

Shute Adult and Teens

Ready Player One Games, Shute Meeting Room, September 9th at 2:30 PM. Level up your Wednesdays with our ultimate gaming hangout! Grab your friends and dive into fun Nintendo Switch and PlayStation games. Recommended for ages 11 and up.

Shute Children's

Storytime at the Shute Shute Children's Room. Mondays at 10 AM and Tuesdays at 12 PM.

What's better than a good story? Sharing it with friends! Join Miss Val at the Shute Library for Fairytale Fun!

Master Builders: Lego Free-play: Shute Children's Room. Thursdays from 3-5PM. Free-play session with Legos and other building blocks. Bring a buddy, or make a new one, as you explore your imagination brick by brick! We provide the space and the materials to let your vision take shape. What will you create?

Spintronics - Stem Free-Play Join us at the Shute Memorial Library every Friday afternoon from 2:30 - 4:30 PM for a STEM-based free-play session. Use mechanical circuits to solve puzzles, or see if you can build a bridge large enough to span the distance and sturdy enough to hold the weight. For Ages 8 and up.

Revere man arrested on cocaine trafficking charges

Special to the Independent

A Revere man was arrested on drug charges last week following a two month undercover investigation between the Revere Police Drug Unit and the Everett Police Drug Unit.

On Friday, August 21, Juan Reyes, 48, of Revere was arrested and charged with three counts of distribution of a Class B substance (cocaine), trafficking a Class B substance, possession with intent to distribute Fentanyl, and possession with intent to distribute a Class B substance.

Undercover Everett detectives made several purchases of cocaine from Reyes during the two-month investigation into someone selling cocaine and other drugs in Everett and surrounding cities, according to police.

Based on this information, police stated that detectives were able to get arrest warrants

for Reyes for distribution of cocaine, as well as court authorized search warrants for his residence and cars in Revere.

On Friday, August 21, police stated that Reyes was stopped a short distance from his home by a Revere police patrol. A forced entry was made into the residence in Revere. He was arrested on scene for outstanding Everett police warrants for sales to the undercover detectives and brought back to the Everett police department. He will be charged in Middlesex District Court with the undercover buys.

As a result of the search warrant at the residence, approximately 8 kilos of cocaine was seized, according to police.

Also seized were two vehicles from the residence that were allegedly used during the commission of the sales to the undercover detectives, including a Volkswagen Jetta and a Mercedes C43 convertible; as

well as \$3380 in cash.

The Massachusetts State Police also assisted with K9 searches.

"I would like to commend the work of all departments in this investigation and arrest," said Everett Police Chief Paul Strong. "This is another example of the teamwork that is needed to bring these drug dealers to justice and to stem the flow of dangerous drugs in our communities and the lengths these detectives, and officers will go to get the job done.

Revere Police Chief Maria LaVita praised the teamwork between the departments.

"This is another unbelievable example of what happens when the Revere Police Department works well with other agencies," LaVita said. "Specifically our partnership with Everett Police Department and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has been nothing less than outstanding."

Election // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Incumbent Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan is being challenged by David Solet in the Democratic primary.

Incumbent Governor's Councilor Terrence Kennedy is being challenged by Diann Mary Baylis in the Democratic primary in the Sixth District.

In the marquee election of the day on the Democratic side, incumbent U.S. Sen. Edward J. Markey is being challenged by Congressman Seth Moulton

for the seat that has a six-year term. The winner will face off against Republican candidate John Deaton in the general election on Tuesday, Nov. 3.

Expected to generate a strong turnout statewide on the Republican side is the gubernatorial primary between Michael Minogue and Brian Short-sleeve. The winner will face off against incumbent Gov. Maura Healey in the general election.



Ready for Primary Election Day in Everett on Tuesday, Sept. 1 are (from left) Director of Elections Kristin Foote, City Clerk Sergio Cornelio, and Elections Director Caryn Antonelli.

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Firefighters // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on a consistent basis.

“We all have the same mission and the same goals, so it only makes sense that we train together,” said Hickey. “When we’re responding to an emergency, we need to know how to work as one team. Training together also reinforces just how important adequate staffing is to safely and effectively accomplish the job.”

Mayor Van Campen joined City leaders and managers at

the training to better understand the physical demands firefighters face and the resources necessary to keep both firefighters and the public safe.

“Watching this training first-hand gives you a much deeper appreciation for what our firefighters are asked to do,” said Mayor Van Campen. “The conditions they work under, the teamwork and communication required, and the speed at which everything has to hap-

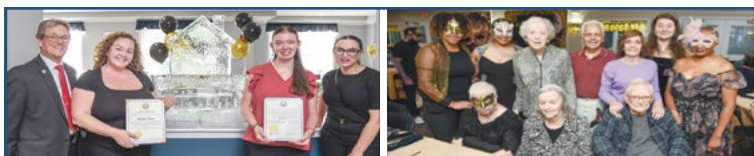
pen are incredibly impressive. As Mayor, seeing this first-hand helps me make more informed decisions when we’re talking about investments in public safety, staffing and equipment.”

An affiliate of The Davis Companies, made the vacant property available to Everett and surrounding communities for the training exercise. “As the son of a firefighter, I’ve always had a deep respect for the men and women who run toward dangerous conditions to protect others,” said Mike Cantalupa, Chief Development Officer at Davis.

“Providing a place where firefighters from Everett and surrounding communities could train in realistic conditions and prepare at the highest level simply felt like the right thing to do. It was an honor to play a small part in supporting the people who serve and protect our communities.”



Chelsea Fire Chief John Quatieri and Everett Fire Chief Joe Hickey speak with Everett Mayor Robert Van Campen during the training exercise.



Prospect House Assisted Living & Memory Care just celebrated its 25th anniversary! Everyone had fun, and residents enjoy life every single day in our vibrant community! Select affordable 1BR or studio apartment homes financed under the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program are available now!

Residents who qualify pay reduced monthly rent on housing: \$1800 for a studio and \$1929 for a 1-bedroom. Meals, personal care, services, and activities are optional at additional cost.*

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A Revere firefighter stands atop a fire apparatus during the multi-jurisdictional training exercise.



Pictured from left: Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez, The Davis Companies Chief Development Officer Michael Cantalupa and Everett Mayor Robert Van Campen.



Pictured from left: Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez, Everett Fire Chief Joe Hickey, Chelsea Fire Chief John Quatieri and Everett Mayor Robert Van Campen.



Mayor Robert Van Campen observes as firefighters prepare to begin a search and rescue simulation.

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DiDomenico secures \$250,000 for ALS Association of Massachusetts

Special to the Independent

Senator Sal DiDomenico secured language in this year's budget that will direct \$250,000 for the ALS Association of Massachusetts to pro-

vide home care services and essential equipment to patients living with ALS. DiDomenico has been a champion for this organization and for ALS research for years, and this investment marks yet another

year bringing needed resources to this critical organization.

"During my speech on the Senate floor about my amendment, I spoke about my Mom's courageous battle with ALS and her enduring love for her

family," said Senator DiDomenico. "My Mom was the kindest, most selfless and most compassionate person I have ever known. We are hoping that one day there will be a cure, but until that happens the ALS Association continues to provide life-changing services and equipment that ensures individuals with ALS live with dignity and receive the support and care they deserve."



Senator DiDomenico speaking in favor of his budget amendment to support the ALS Association of Massachusetts on the Senate floor.

Pioneer Charter School of Science (PCSS I) ranked #27 in Public High Schools by U.S. News & World Report

Special to the Independent

Pioneer Charter School of Science (PCSS I) is proud to announce its ranking as the #27 public high school in Massachusetts by U.S. News & World Report in its recently released 2026-2027 Best Massachusetts High School rankings. This places PCSS I among the top performing high schools in the state, #23 in the Boston Metro Area, and #114 among charter schools nationally.

The U.S. News & World Report rankings are a highly respected measure of schools' performance, taking into account factors such as college readiness, state assessment proficiency and performance, college curriculum, underserved student performance, and graduation rates.

PCSS I, located in Everett, was one of eight charter public schools that ranked among the top 30 high schools in Massachusetts, including its sister school in Saugus - PCSS II. This year, 108 seniors from both PCSS campuses were accepted to 140 distinct colleges, including Yale, Northeastern, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Boston University, and received more than \$20 million in total scholarships.

"At Pioneer, our goal is to prepare our students for the highest education and career success," said Sanela Jonuz, Executive Director of PCSS I. "Seeing our team of staff, students, and families' hard work

pay off is rewarding, and we are honored to be listed in the top 30 public high schools in Massachusetts."

PCSS I students returned to school this Monday, August

17th, for their 2026-2027 academic year. Enrollment information can be found online at Enroll - Pioneer Charter School

See PCSS Page 10

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FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

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- Newspaper to be published in

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PHOTOS RECEIVED WITHOUT INFO WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED

DEADLINE FRI, SEPT. 11TH

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Council on Aging announces September programming at the Connolly Center

Special to the Independent

The City of Everett's Council on Aging has planned a full month of activities and programs for older adults at the Connolly Center, 90 Chelsea Street.

September programming includes:

Super Bingo – Wednesday, September 2 at 12:30 p.m.

Join the Council on Aging for an afternoon of Super Bingo. Participants must bring their bingo "chips." Reservations are required, as seating is limited. Refreshments will be served.

Senior Social – Wednesday, September 9 from 11:45 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The monthly Senior Social

returns with lunch, music and dancing. This month's menu includes garden salad, vegetable soup, a choice of baked fish or stuffed chicken, rice pilaf, seasonal vegetables, dessert and coffee. Guests can enjoy music and dancing with Ray Cavichio. Tickets are available for purchase through September 4.

Acrylic Pour Art Class – Tuesday, September 15 at 1 p.m.

Let your creativity flow during an acrylic pour art class. No artistic experience is necessary. Space is limited to 20 participants, and reservations are required by calling 617-394-2323.

Pizza and Presentation: Estate Planning – Thursday, September 17 at 12:30 p.m.

Enjoy pizza while learning more about estate planning, including the differences between a will and a trust. The presentation is hosted by the Everett/Saugus Elks #642. Reservations are required.

Meals and Reels – Thursday, September 24 at 12:30 p.m.

Enjoy traditional lasagna and garden salad followed by a screening of the historical docudrama Young Washington, which explores the life of George Washington before the American Revolution.

Ongoing Programs

Haircuts with Maria are offered on the second Tuesday of each month. Participants should arrive with freshly shampooed hair and must make an appointment with Cathi.

Fitness with Josie continues every Tuesday at 6 p.m. This free, drop-in class is open to adults ages 50 and older.

Crochet Club meets every Tuesday at 11 a.m.

Daily Lunch through the Mystic Valley Meals on Wheels Program is served at 11:30 a.m.

SHINE Counseling is available on the first Wednesday of each month. Those looking for help understanding Medicare benefits or navigating health care can make an appointment with Joanne at 617-394-2260.

The Connolly Center Gift Shop is open every Monday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and offers household items, jewelry, clothing and more.

Older adults who need trans-

portation to medical appointments or grocery shopping can contact SCM Transportation at 617-625-1191 and press #2 to reach the appropriate operator. Please provide at least two days' advance notice.

Save the Date: Indoor Yard Sale

The Council on Aging will host its biannual Indoor Yard Sale on Saturday, October 17, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Connolly Center. Shoppers can browse small furniture, clothing, toys, kitchen items, books, antiques and more.

Vendors are still being accepted, and crafters are welcome. For more information, contact Cathi at 617-394-2323.

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Farmers // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

future of urban agriculture in Massachusetts' 7th District. Held at the Tremont St. Community Garden, Everett's sole community growing space, this gathering brought together Everett Mayor Robert Van Campen, State Senator Sal DiDomenico, urban farmers, food advocates, and youth in agriculture for an open dialogue focused on expanding state and municipal support for urban farmers, addressing the problems and potential solutions for land access, and strengthening city-farmer relationships. The convening was part of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' (MDAR) annual Urban Agriculture Week.

Everett Community Growers is dedicated to building a more just and equitable environment through urban agriculture, youth development, policy advocacy, and community engagement. Founded by Everett residents seeking space to grow fresh food, ECG operates Everett's only community garden,

community farm, and farmstand. As the sole organization devoted to environmental and food justice in Everett, ECG grows and distributes fresh, nutritious produce while leading community-driven change efforts.

Massachusetts Urban Agriculture Week is an annual awareness week that celebrates agriculture in cities and urban neighborhoods. Throughout the week, urban agriculture organizations and community groups from across the state hold events highlighting the important role that urban agriculture plays in local food access and strengthening community belonging. 2026 was the third year the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources hosted Urban Agriculture Week.

"This convening was a bold confirmation of the vital role Massachusetts urban agriculture plays in creating and maintaining healthier cities," said Rebecca Kelley, Director of Programs at Everett Com-

munity Growers. "Community gardens and urban farming provide holistic community-driven solutions to a broad range of issues present in cities like Everett. They provide resilience in the face of climate change, improve health outcomes, build food sovereignty initiatives, and provide space for facilitating community-driven impact."

Everett Community Growers, Inc. (ECG) works to build a more just and equitable environment through urban agriculture, youth development, policy advocacy, and community engagement. ECG operates Everett's only community garden (Tremont Street Community Garden), community farm (Northern Strand Community Farm), and farmstand program, providing fresh produce, community-led education, and workforce development opportunities, including its flagship Youth Crew program, to residents across Everett. Learn more at everettcommunitygrowers.org.

West Nile Virus risk level raised to high in Everett

Special to the Independent

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has raised the West Nile virus (WNV) risk level in Everett to high following the confirmation of a human case in Middlesex County.

This is the second confirmed human case of West Nile virus in Massachusetts this season.

West Nile virus is most commonly spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquitoes that carry WNV are found throughout Massachusetts, including in urban communities. While people of any age can become infected, adults over the age of 50 are at greater risk of developing severe illness.

With Everett now at a high risk level, residents are encouraged to take additional precautions to prevent mosquito bites, particularly from dusk to dawn when many mosquitoes are most active.

Protect Yourself from Mosquito Bites

- Use insect repellent. When spending time outdoors, use an EPA-registered repellent containing ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus, following all product instructions. Permethrin can be used on clothing and gear but should not be applied directly to skin.

- Cover exposed skin when

possible. Long sleeves, long pants and socks can help reduce mosquito bites.

- Be mindful of peak mosquito hours. Mosquito activity is often highest between dusk and dawn. Residents should consider limiting outdoor activities during these hours and use extra precautions when outside.

Reduce Mosquitoes Around Your Home

Residents can also help reduce mosquito populations by eliminating standing water where mosquitoes can breed. Empty water from flowerpots, buckets, wading pools and other outdoor containers, regularly change the water in birdbaths, and check gutters and drains for standing water.

Residents should also make sure windows and doors have tightly fitting screens and repair any holes or damage that could allow mosquitoes inside.

The City will continue to monitor guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and share additional information with residents as needed.

For more information about West Nile virus, mosquito-borne illnesses and current risk levels across Massachusetts, visit the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's mosquito-borne disease resources at www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito.

PROFESSIONAL BOXING ON TAP AT ENCORE BOSTON HARBOR ON SATURDAY, AUG. 29



Looking forward to the professional boxing show at Encore Boston Harbor on Saturday, Aug. 29 are (from left) Elite Boxing Management co-founders Rich Cappiello and Joe Lake, their undefeated (22-0) middle-weight contender Francis Hogan, who will fight in the main event, and legendary boxing promoter Jimmy Burchfield.



Notables in the boxing community are pictured at the press conference at Sullivan's Tap in Boston for the Aug. 29 boxing show at Encore Boston Harbor.

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Everett hosts urban agriculture roundtable with Congresswoman Pressley, MDAR Commissioner Randle

Special to the Independent

The City of Everett welcomed Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (MA-07) and Massachusetts Commissioner of Agricultural Resources Ashley Randle to the Tremont Street Community Garden this week for a tour and roundtable discussion on urban agriculture, food access, and environmental stewardship. The event, held during Massachusetts Urban Agriculture Week, brought together farmers, environmental advocates, and local officials from across Greater Boston.

Hosted by Everett Community Growers (ECG) in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), the gathering spotlighted local efforts to bring residents closer to fresh, affordable food.

Mayor Robert J. Van Campen opened the discussion by describing the challenges some Everett residents continue to face in accessing fresh, nutritious food, referring to parts of the city as a “food swamp” — an area where highly processed, low-nutrition food is far more available than fresh, healthy options. He outlined the city’s response: after a ten-year hiatus, a farmers market returned to Everett Square this summer, held every other week with the goal of moving to a weekly schedule next year. The City ensured that all vendors at the market accept EBT, making fresh, local produce more accessible to residents using public food assistance. The Mayor also noted that the city’s Food Policy Council, which identifies barriers to healthy food access and develops recommendations for local food policy, will soon present its findings to the City Council.

“Events like this are important because they bring together the people working at every level to improve access



City Councilor Katy Rogers, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, and Mayor Robert Van Campen browse the gardens after the Urban Agriculture Roundtable.



Mayor Van Campen addresses the crowd at the Tremont Street Community Garden.



Attendees listen during the Urban Agriculture Roundtable event at Tremont Street Community Garden.



Elizabeth Cordero of Everett Community Growers discusses ECG’s work in Everett.



Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley speaks about urban agriculture’s place in improving food access in the Greater Boston area.



Massachusetts Commissioner of Agricultural Resources Ashley Randle discusses the community-building aspect of urban agriculture.

McGonagle, local businesses support veterans at Run to Home Base

Special to the Independent

Rep. Joe McGonagle was thrilled to participate in the 2026 Run to Home Base 5K/9K to support healing the invisible wounds of veterans across the country. He brought donations from several Everett businesses to support Home Base Charleston, a veteran’s organization run in conjunction with Massachusetts General Hospital and the Boston Red Sox to address the mental and physical wellbeing of veterans returning from service. The 17th annual event raised more than \$3.5 million for the cause and saw thousands participate.

“I am a huge fan of Home Base and the work they do, so participating in this event is a no-brainer,” said McGonagle. “This is my second year doing it and I hope to continue the tradition. The people you meet and the stories you hear are nothing short of inspirational. I’m so grateful for organizations like Home Base with leaders like General Jack Hamond who dedicate themselves to this cause. I am also so grateful for the incredible businesses we have in our Everett community who recognize this as well. I’d like to thank Everett Bank, White’s Auto Body and Sabatino Insurance for their generous contributions to this most worthy cause.”

Home Base is a national nonprofit dedicated to healing the invisible wounds of war for Veterans of all eras, Service Members, Military Families and Families of the Fallen through world-class, direct clinical care, wellness, education and research – all at no cost to them – regardless of era of service, discharge status or geographical location. The program was founded by Massachusetts General Hospital and the Boston Red Sox.

Since 2009, Home Base has served more than 60,000 Veterans and their Family Members and trained over 85,000



Rep. Joe McGonagle participating in the 2026 Run to Home Base.



Rep. Joe McGonagle collecting donations from Everett Bank.



Rep. Joe McGonagle collecting donations from White's Auto Body.

clinicians across the nation, and we remain at the forefront of discovering new treatments to ensure a brighter future for Warriors and their Families.



Rep. Joe McGonagle (right) with Home Base Executive Director General Jack Hamond and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll.



Rep. Joe McGonagle collecting donations from Sabatino Insurance.

FRESH AND LOCAL

Semi-homemade meals

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

If you're responsible for providing food for your home dining table, you have three levels of work to consider. The easiest level is ordering or bringing home takeout food

prepared elsewhere; the next level is homemade food from scratch; and the middle level is semi-homemade.

Rotisserie Chickens

The best example of this practice is demonstrated by the

millions of rotisserie chickens sold each year in this country. Costco alone sold 157.4 million rotisserie chickens at \$4.99 in 2025.

In an interview with The New York Times, reported, "For consumers, the draw of a whole rotisserie chicken has long been that it's 'a cost-efficient meal,' said Johnny Novokmet, 29, who rates and reviews grocery-store and fast-casual rotisserie chickens on social media. A rotisserie chicken with a side of rice, he said, can be as low as \$10 and stretch across multiple meals."

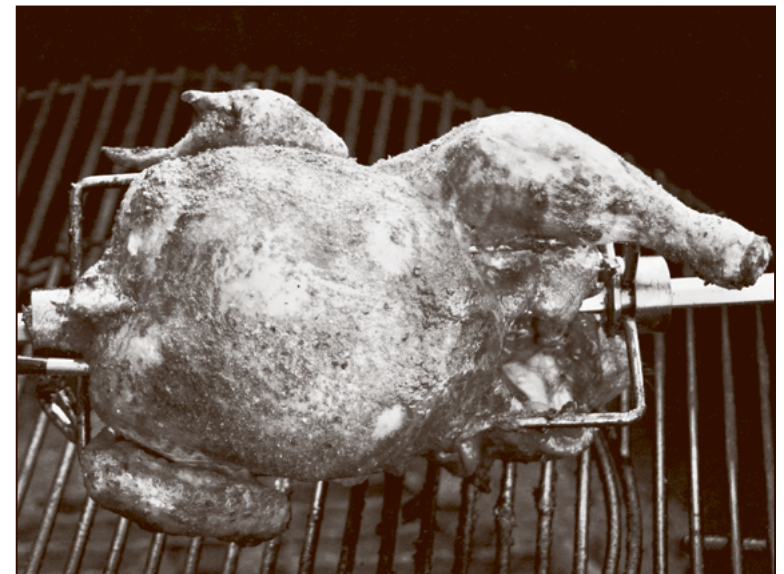
We're rotisserie chicken fans, but we seldom serve it on the bone. Hand stripping the meat is easier when it's warm. Often we make chicken stock from the bones, skin, and stray bits.

Depending on how we plan to use the meat, Penny often leaves the white meat in whole pieces because it slices better when it's cold. The dark meat is reduced into bite-sized bits that are perfect for salads, tacos, or as a protein addition to many other meals.

A favorite semi-homemade meal is a curried chicken salad that includes chopped apple, celery, scallions, fennel, shredded carrots, chicken chunks, and a big handful of raisins. We dress it with olive oil, vinegar, curry powder, and Aleppo pepper.

More Choices These Days

Another favorite salad is Gỏi Gá, a crunchy Vietnamese chicken salad. It consists of shredded chicken, cabbage, carrots, red onion, herbs, and



Many semi-homemade meals begin with a rotisserie chicken.

nước chấm as a dressing. You top it with fried shallots and chopped peanuts.

Once, this took a lot of preparation. It would begin by slicing and frying shallots to crispy perfection. Today you can buy a perfectly good version for toppings or snacking. Next, you would poach the chicken unless you already have a deboned rotisserie chicken on hand. Finally, shred the cabbage and carrots, then chop the herbs and onion. Whatever shortcuts you use, mix the nước chấm yourself and let it sit for a few minutes to meld.

What to Make and What to Buy

We all have factors that influence whether we buy or make a dish. You may love homemade pizza but hate making the dough. You can purchase pizza dough in many places today.

You may feel that cooking certain foods creates too much

mess or odor in your kitchen, and opt to add something like salmon to your meal, using a cooked takeout piece or a canned version from your pantry.

Today, more high-quality foods are available in cans, and in many cases they are prepared in a variety of flavors, making them the centerpiece of your meal when served over rice or grains with a side salad.

The next time you're trying to decide what's for dinner and the idea of making a big mess or doing a lot of cleanup is pushing you away from your choices, think about which part of the meal you can easily delegate by visiting a store, restaurant, or your own pantry.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Email Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

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PCSS // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Of Science 1.

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PCSS I, located in Everett, serves students in Grades K through 12 from several communities North of Boston, including Everett, Chelsea, and Revere. PCSS II, locat-

ed in Saugus, serves students in Grades K through 12 from Saugus, Salem, Peabody, Lynn, and Danvers.

Seventh annual Strike Out Cancer Tournament at Glendale Park

Special to the Independent

Nine women's teams participated in the Seventh Annual Strike Out Cancer Tournament on Saturday, Aug. 22 at Glendale Park.

The tournament is a fundraiser, and it is held in honor of Kim Nicolo, a cancer survivor, and the late Carol Sikora, who passed away in 2021 after a courageous battle against the disease.

"Usually, we hold this tournament in September, but this year we decided to do it in August because my birthday and Peter Sikora's mother's [Carol Sikora] birthday is August 23, so we figured this would be a great weekend to host it," said

Kim.

Kim and Peter credited the assistance of board members Kristin Bairos, Paul Leone, one of the tournament's umpires, and Paul Dobbins.

"Proceeds from the tournament go to families in the community that are in need," noted Kim. "We donate to various charities."

An Everett resident and a 1991 graduate of Everett High School, Kim, who said she has been cancer free for seven years, is in her 23rd year as a paraprofessional at the Madeline English School. Kim recalled the tremendous support she received from her colleagues at the school during



The team trophies are pictured at the Seventh Annual Strike Out Cancer Tournament at Glendale Park.

her health battle. "They were amazing, a huge source of support. They were awesome," said Kim.



The Seventh Annual Strike Out Cancer Softball Tournament was held last Saturday at Glendale Park. Pictured at the tournament are (front row, from left) Tanja Nicolo, Kim Nicolo and her granddaughter, Isabella Pizzi, and James Nicolo. Back row, (from left) are Peter Sikora, Karin Foppiano, and Gianna Colantuoni.

Roundtable // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

to fresh, healthy food," said Mayor Van Campen. "Here in Everett, we're doing our part through our farmers market, Community Fridge, and partnerships with local organizations, while looking for new opportunities to expand urban agriculture and community gardening. I'm proud to see Everett be part of this larger effort to build healthier, more accessible food systems across Massachusetts."

Rebecca Kelley, ECG's Director of Programs, shared the organization's roots in Everett, tracing its growth from the city's first community garden on Florence Street in 2012 through the Northern Strand farm, a youth agricultural training program, and Broadway Farm, which has supplied produce to Everett Public Schools and local families. The Tremont Street garden itself grew out of a resident-led effort to turn an underused municipal lot into growing space.

Commissioner Randle spoke to the role urban agriculture plays in building community

and expanding access to food that reflects the cultural traditions of Massachusetts' diverse population, and Congresswoman Pressley praised Everett and municipalities like it for advancing food access and resident-driven solutions at the local level.

Everett was joined at the event by City Councilor At-Large Katy Rogers and State Senator Sal DiDomenico, along with representatives

from the USDA Farm Service Agency, Grow Boston, the Massachusetts Food System Collaborative, the Urban Farming Institute, GreenRoots, and other regional partners.

The City of Everett remains committed to expanding access to fresh, local food and fostering ongoing partnerships that support community gardening and urban agriculture throughout the city.

THE BOSTON WICKED NORTH SHORE WICKED LEMONADE STAND MARATHON

Everett youths set up a lemonade stand Saturday on Broadway in coordination with the Boston Wicked North Shore Lemonade Stand Marathon. Pictured at the stand are Ana Beatriz DeAndrade Oliveria, Seraphina Fabrizio, Julietta Fabrizio, and Domenic Fabrizio.



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EVERETT HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PROGRAM HOLDS INSTRUCTIONAL CLINIC AT THE STADIUM

The Everett High School football program, under the leadership of head coach Rob DiLoreto, held an instructional clinic on Wednesday, Aug. 20 at Everett Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Everett High School football players joined many Crimson Tide Youth Football players in agility and technique drills during the two-hour session. DiLoreto was assisted by his staff of assistant coaches.

More than 100 athletes participated in the well-attended event.

DiLoreto addressed the play-

ers at midfield, emphasizing the outstanding tradition of Everett High School football and the incredible success enjoyed by Crimson Tide teams through the years. DiLoreto also noted that the site of the clinic was on a field named for former head coach John DiBiaso Jr.

The huge turnout on a hot summer night affirmed that DiLoreto is building a resurgent Everett High program in coordination with Everett Crimson Tide Youth Football who has an increased enrollment this season. ECT President Nick Olson attended the clinic.



Youth football coaching icon and current Everett High School freshman football coach Peter Forte and EHS assistant coach Malik Love.



Everett High School head football coach Rob DiLoreto and Nick Olson, president of the Crimson Tide Youth Football and Cheer organization.



Former Everett High School and Anna Maria College football teammates Dylan Cyprien (left), an EHS assistant coach, and Joe D'Onofrio, Everett Crimson Tide Football Director At-Large and a member of the Everett School Committee.



Everett Crimson Tide Youth football players, pictured with Everett High assistant coach Malik Love and ECT coach Kevin Vachon at the clinic held Aug. 20 at Everett Veterans Memorial Stadium.



Everett Crimson Tide Youth Football President Nick Olson and his son, Kaleb Olson.



Robson Amaral and his 4-year-old son, Henry Hofman Amaral, pictured at the football clinic.



Everett Crimson Tide Football players, pictured with Football Director At-Large Joe D'Onofrio and coach John Cinelli.



Marcello Bezerra, pictured with his grandparents, Claudia Bezerra and Hamilton Bezerra.

EVERETT HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PROGRAM HOLDS INSTRUCTIONAL CLINIC AT THE STADIUM



Everett High School and Everett Crimson Tide Youth Football players and coaches are pictured at the football clinic held on John DiBiaso Jr. Field at Everett Veterans Memorial Stadium.



Deysi Blanco, pictured with her daughter, Maria Ramirez, her son, Hector Ramirez, and his friend, Gabriel Germano.

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EHS Roundup

EHS ATHLETES REPORT FOR THE 2026 FALL SEASON

Everett High athletes reported for tryouts and practices for the 2026 sports season this past Monday.

The Crimson Tide will be returning almost all of their coaches from 2025: Rob DiLoreto for football, Dom Persuitte for girls soccer, Rodney Landaverde for boys soccer, Brendan Haheys for

cross-country, Michael Fineran for girls volleyball, and Dave Peach for golf.

The lone newcomer to the Tide's coaching ranks for the fall of 2026 is Yasmeen Akib for the EHS field hockey team.

The volleyball team will be the first to open the season with a match at Lawrence on September 3. Otherwise, all of the Tide teams will get their 2026 campaigns underway after Labor Day.

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH HOLDS UNISOCIAL KIDS EVENT



The Universal Church held a Unisocial Kids Event Saturday afternoon featuring food, games, and other fun activities. Pictured above is a contingent from the Everett church.

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EVERETT YOUTH BUILD SKILLS AND MAKE MEMORIES THROUGH CRIMSON KIDS SUMMER PROGRAM

Special to the Independent

The City of Everett’s Crimson Kids Summer Program gave local youth a summer filled with new experiences, friendships and opportunities to build skills they can carry with them well beyond the program.

Hosted by Everett Youth Development and Enrichment, the annual six-week program offered sports, arts and crafts, team-building activities, educational enrichment and field trips throughout the summer. Participants visited destinations including TD Garden, Franklin Park Zoo and Connors Farm before wrapping up the program on Friday, August 21 with a field day outside the Recreation Center.

While keeping kids active and engaged during the summer, Crimson Kids also gives participants opportunities to develop skills like teamwork, responsibility, communication and leadership.

“Crimson Kids gives our young people a place to have fun, try new things and build confidence,” said Roberto Velasquez, Director of Youth Development and Enrichment. “It’s great to watch the friendships and growth that happen over the course of the summer.”

Programs like Crimson Kids

also provide young people with positive outlets and opportunities to feel more connected to their peers and community.

“Keeping young people connected and engaged is an important part of prevention,” said Eric Mazzeo, Assistant Director of Youth Substance Use Prevention. “Crimson Kids gives them a positive environment to build relationships, discover new interests and feel like they’re part of something.”

The program concluded with water balloons, a bouncy house, games and a cookout with burgers and hot dogs.

“Programs like Crimson Kids are an important investment in Everett’s young people,” said Mayor Robert J. Van Campen. “They’re having fun and making memories, but they’re also learning how to be part of a team, take on new challenges and build confidence in themselves. Those are skills that will serve them in school, in the workforce and throughout their lives.”

The City of Everett thanks the counselors and staff at Everett Youth Development and Enrichment for their work throughout the summer to create a welcoming, engaging and positive experience for Everett youth.



PHOTOS COURTESY THE CITY OF EVERETT

Shown (above and below) are scenes from the Crimson Kids Summer Program. A six-week program that provides Everett youth with opportunities for recreation, enrichment and personal growth.



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