

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

# THE BOSTON SUN

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

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## BLO PRESENTS STAGE STREET AT BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Soprano Josie Larsen reaches amazing heights with *\*Audition Aria\** by Johann Strauss. It must be noted that there were no microphones or electrical amplification but the voices of the performers themselves that filled the Rabb Auditorium with song.



DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN PHOTOS

The audience filled the Rabb Auditorium and were entertained with the performance courtesy of the Boston Lyric Opera, Boston Public Library, and Bank of America. See more photos on Pages 7 through 9.

## Fenway CDC's proposed Beacon Hill project clears yet another procedural hurdle

By Dan Murphy

The Fenway CDC's proposed project, which will bring much-needed affordable-housing ownership opportunities to Beacon Hill, moved even closer to

reality after it garnered a unanimous vote of non-opposition from the Beacon Hill Civic Association Zoning and Licensing Committee at the group's virtual public meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 3.

The committee then voted 15-0-0 to approve a motion made by committee member Al Van Ranst not to oppose the requested zoning relief from the city's Zoning Board of Appeal.

(FENWAY CDC, Pg. 4)

## Mayor Wu and Josh Kraft top mayoral race in primary vote

By Dan Murphy

Incumbent Mayor Michelle Wu and rival Josh Kraft topped the ballot in a four-way mayoral race in the preliminary election on Tuesday, Sept. 9, paving their way for a rematch in the Nov. 4 municipal election.

According to the city's unofficial election results, Mayor Wu garnered nearly 72 percent of the ballot (66,398 votes) while Kraft, a 58-year-old political newcomer who has worked in the nonprofit sector and is the son of New England Patriots owner, Robert Kraft, trailed her with just over 23 percent of the ballot (21,324 votes). Domingos Darosa, a community activist,

came in third with under 3 percent of the ballot (2,409 votes), ahead of a perennial candidate for public office, Robert Cappucci, with just over 2 percent of the ballot (2,074 votes).

In a 10-way race for four open City Councilor at-Large seats, four incumbent councilors topped the ballot – current Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, with nearly 19 percent of the ballot (45,500 votes); Julia Mejia, with more than 17 percent of the ballot (42,245 votes); Erin Murphy, with just over 16 percent of the ballot (38,981 votes); and Henry Santana, with nearly 13 percent of the ballot (30,670 votes).

(ELECTION, Pg. 3)



Mayor Michelle Wu.



Josh Kraft.



# EDITORIAL

## WE ARE ALL LAB RATS FOR RFK JR.'S DANGEROUS IDEAS

The performance last week by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee confirmed what any thinking person already knows: Kennedy is compromising the health of every American in order to pursue his dangerous ideas about vaccines and basic scientific research.

Kennedy's firing of Dr. Susan Monarez as the head of the Centers for Disease Control (just one month after he himself had appointed her to that post and her confirmation by the Senate) because Dr. Monarez refused to sign off on the untested and unproven recommendations of Kennedy's recently-named vaccine panel laid bare Kennedy's long-held desire to undo decades of public health policies that have made America the world's model for the eradication of infectious diseases.

In June, Kennedy removed all 17 members of the key independent advisory panel (the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) that makes vaccine recommendations to the government. He quickly replaced the panel with eight new members, most of whom have espoused views that align with Kennedy's regarding skepticism about the safety and efficacy of vaccines as an essential tool for public health.

In addition, during his short tenure as HHS Secretary, Kennedy has terminated vaccine research projects that use the mRNA technology that produced the COVID-19 vaccines during the first Trump administration that saved millions of lives. These cutbacks not only will threaten to eliminate the use of mRNA vaccines for respiratory diseases, but also will affect the promising research of using mRNA technology for cancer prevention and cures.

Kennedy's unfitness to be HHS Secretary was obvious from the moment he took office when, during the measles outbreak this past winter in West Texas and New Mexico (the largest in the U.S. in 20 years), he not only downplayed the severity of the outbreak, but also offered the dangerous suggestion that parents give their children high doses of Vitamin A and doc liver oil both as a preventative and as a treatment for a measles infection -- and a number of children whose parents took that advice ended up in the hospital with liver damage caused by Vitamin A overdoses.

Ever since the introduction of the Salk polio vaccine in the 1950s (an era when American moms annually canvassed their communities to raise funds for the March of Dimes for polio research), America has been the world's model -- the gold standard -- for public health policy. Our universities and hospitals have led the world in biomedical research that has led to breakthroughs in our understanding of diseases ranging from cancer to Alzheimer's to cardiovascular disease to infectious diseases of all sorts.

However, with Kennedy at the helm of HHS, we now are entering a Dark Ages for scientific research that promises to end America's pre-eminence in this field -- and that inevitably will result in disastrous health outcomes for Americans of all ages.

## LONG SEASON AHEAD FOR PATS' FANS

We realize it's just one game at the start of a long-season (literally), but it seems clear that this is going to be another long-season (metaphorically) for Patriots' fans.

The Pats' loss to the Raiders at Gillette on Sunday was a total snoozer; it's one thing to lose, but another thing altogether to play uninspiringly.

Our observation was brought all the more into focus after watching the incredible game between the Bills and the Ravens Sunday night. That was the kind of epic contest that delighted Patriots' fans for almost 20 years during the era of Brady and Belichick, but which now is just a distant memory.

As we have noted before, as long as the AFC has Patrick, Josh, Lamar, and Joe (every fan knows them by their first names), the Pats will be looking from the bottom-up.

Hopefully, we won't be missing too many games this season between the top teams in the league because the Pats will be televised in their local market instead.

## Mayor Wu announces applications open for Spooky Streets and Fall and Harvest Grant

Special to the Sun

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Community Engagement Cabinet's Office of Civic Organizing announced applications are now open for the Spooky Streets Grant Program. Residents and community groups who apply and get approved will receive a mini-grant for \$300 to purchase items such as candy, pumpkins, decorations, and face paint, making it easier and more affordable for neighborhoods to host Halloween and Fall and Harvest block parties. This announcement builds on the Mayor's work to make Boston a home for everyone and City efforts to create fun and safe programming for kids and families to build community and enjoy Boston neighborhoods.

"I'm excited to bring back Boston's very popular Spooky Streets program, which has helped families and neighborhoods safely celebrate Halloween and fall with their friends and community through lively block parties," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I look forward to seeing the creativity of our residents shine through their costumes and decorations this fall!"

This summer, the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing provided 110 grants to residents and community groups totaling \$61,700 across 18 neighborhoods in Boston through the City's Block Party Grant Program. The Cummings Foundation provided funding to support the Mayor's efforts to help residents activate their neighborhoods with events that bring unity and joy.

"We're excited to bring back the Spooky Streets Grant and expand its reach this year with the generous support of The

Cummings Foundation," said Director of the Office of Civic Organizing Nathalia Benitez-Perez. "These grants empower communities to celebrate together and create lasting memories for kids and families across Boston. The Spooky Streets Grant gives neighbors the chance to transform their streets into festive, traffic-free spaces and build new traditions during the Fall and Harvest season."

For residents interested in applying, please see below:

- Apply for the Play Street Closing Permit first here. Then you will be prompted to apply for the \$300 Spooky Streets mini-grant. Applying for a permit does not guarantee a grant. You must apply for the mini-grant separately to be considered for the Spooky Street grant.

- To be eligible, all block parties must be free and open to the public. Residents cannot sell or charge for anything at the event.

- Block parties cannot be hosted on parks or private lots, and must be on a public street.

- Block parties must be hosted the week leading up to Halloween from Friday, October 24 - Sunday, November 2.

- Block parties do not have to be Halloween-themed.

"Last year's grant made it possible for us to bring our neighborhood together in a really special way. We were able to purchase food and favors for our neighbors, which made the gathering both welcoming and fun for everyone. The light-up Halloween favors we purchased with the grant helped keep all of our trick-or-treaters safe as the evening got darker. It also made the neighborhood very festive with children in bright necklaces, rings, and bracelets," said Philip Cheng, Dorches-

ter resident. "Our block party definitely elevated our typical Halloween—it gave neighbors a chance to connect, enjoy public spaces and strengthen our sense of community. I hope to see the Spooky Streets Grant program for many years to create a sense of belonging that lasts well beyond the event itself."

"With Mayor Wu's support, block parties have become a vital part of Boston, uniting neighborhoods in a joyous way," said Brianna Millor, Chief of the Community Engagement Cabinet. "Spooky Streets and Harvest Season grants inspire residents to carry the joy of community into the fall."

In partnership with the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics (MONUM), the City of Boston has streamlined the block party permit application process to improve constituents' experience and speed up approvals. The City has also expanded what activities are allowed at block parties without additional permits, including potluck food, tables and chairs, 10 by 10 tents, and more. A Block Party Planning Guide is available to help explain the planning process of hosting block parties in neighborhoods.

The deadline to apply for a Spooky Streets grant is Monday, September 22 at 5:00 p.m. The application can be found here (along with the necessary application for a Play Street Closing Permit), and residents and community groups can visit [boston.gov/spooky-streets](http://boston.gov/spooky-streets) to learn more.

The Office of Civic Organizing is committed to collaborative partnerships and programs that promote engagement, awareness, and service in communities throughout the City of Boston.

## THE BOSTON SUN

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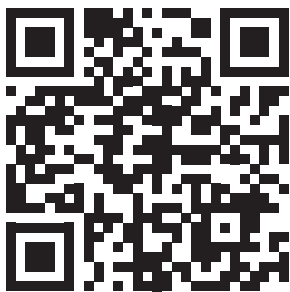
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# News in Brief

## CHARLESGATE FARMERS MARKET OPEN SUNDAYS

The Charlesgate Farmers Market returns this summer to Charlesgate Park. The market will be held Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. until October 12 under the Bowker Overpass at Commonwealth Avenue between Charlesgate East and Charlesgate West with easy access from the communities of the Back Bay, the Fenway and Kenmore Square.



## NABB TO HOLD FORUM ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS SEPT. 18 AT COPLEY BPL

The Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) will present its annual housing forum, called 'Ending Street Homelessness: What is Working

in Boston,' on Thursday, Sept. 18, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Copley Branch of the Boston Public Library at 700 Boylston St.

The forum will be moderated by Lynn Jolicoeur, WBUR senior producer, and panelists will include Sheila Dillon, the City's Chief of Housing; and Lyndia Downie, CEO of the Pine Street Inn, among others who will present community experiences with the development of affordable and supportive housing. Models from Back Bay, Beacon Hill and Jamaica Plain will be featured; formerly homeless tenants will tell of their stories; and President Trump's new executive order concerning homelessness will be discussed.

Register online for the forum at: <https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/689656df4afabc39de501846>

## BEACON HILL VILLAGE TO OFFER PANEL DISCUSSION SEPT. 22

Beacon Hill Village presents 'Living Well Ending Well Season Kickoff: Falls Prevention Panel' on Monday, Sept. 22, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

In recognition of Falls Prevention Week this September, Beacon Hill Village (BHV), in

partnership with Boston Public Library (BPL), will be hosting a Falls Prevention Panel at the BPL Central Branch. This panel includes three experts in their fields providing different perspectives on the topic of falls prevention. This session of Living Well Ending Well will be moderated by BHV's Executive Director, Melissa Interest, LICSW.

Panelists will include Dr. Rachel Wadkins, who specializes in neurological and vestibular rehabilitation at Massachusetts General Hospital; Cindy Sullivan, who specializes in Midlife and Senior Fitness with a focus on exercises for the Total Body including strength, balance, endurance and flexibility, with private or group classes; and Dr. Anand Bery, a neurologist and otoneurologist with unique subspecialty fellowship training in neuro-vestibular and balance disorders.

The panel session will last 60 minutes, followed by questions from the audience. Additional resources will also be available afterwards.

Advance online registration required through the BHV website at [beaconhillvillage.org](http://beaconhillvillage.org), or by calling Beacon Hill Village at 617-723-9713. Registrants will receive a reminder with event information via email the day

prior to the program.

## WLP'S SPAGHETTI DINNER RETURNS OCT. 9 TO FAIRMONT COPLEY PLAZA HOTEL

Women's Lunch Place's annual Spaghetti Dinner will take place 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 9, in the grand ballroom of the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, located at 138 St. James Ave. This year's event is called 'At the Table Together.'

Visit <https://womenslunchplace.org/spaghetti-dinner> to reserve a seat for the event, or to learn about sponsorship opportunities.

## 'NIGHT(MARE) IN THE STACKS' EVENT COMING OCT. 31 TO COPLEY BPL

The Boston Public Library Fund has announced the return of 'Night in the Stacks,' now transformed into 'Night(mare) in the Stacks: Celebrating Boston's Spooky Stories.'

For the first time, the evening will take place on Halloween night—Friday, Oct. 31, from 8

p.m. to midnight—at the Central Library in Copley Square. The event is hosted by the Emerging Leaders, young Bostonians dedicated to supporting the Library's crucial role in the city.

Guests will step inside the historic McKim Building and discover a one-of-a-kind celebration where they can explore every haunted corner. Tickets include an open bar; curated small plates and desserts; live music and dancing; tarot card readers and a wandering haiku poet; and

exclusive access to the BPL's new exhibition, 'Revolution! 250 Years of Art + Activism,' which opens just days before the event, as well as a tax-deductible donation to the Boston Public Library Fund.

Proceeds from Night(mare) in the Stacks support the Boston Public Library's free programs and services, empowering learners of all ages and backgrounds across the city.

Tickets are available now, with prices increasing as Halloween approaches. Visit [www.bplfund.org/nits](http://www.bplfund.org/nits) to learn more and purchase your tickets.

# State Health Officials announce additional human cases of WNV in Massachusetts

Special to the Sun

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has announced two additional human cases of West Nile virus (WNV) in Massachusetts this year. One is in a man in his 40s who was likely exposed to the virus in Hampden County and the other is in a man in his 80s with exposure in Middlesex County.

These cases bring the total number of confirmed WNV infections this season to four. As a result, risk levels for WNV have been elevated to high in Ashland, Framingham, Marlborough, Natick, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, and Wayland.

"Given how many mosquitoes have been found carrying West Nile virus this summer,

we expected that there would be human infections this year," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. "Infections can continue to occur until the first hard frost of the season, which is likely still many weeks away. We are encouraging everyone to continue to take the necessary steps to protect themselves from mosquito bites, including by using mosquito repellent, wearing long sleeves and pants to reduce exposed skin, and to drain anything that may be collecting water outside your home."

The first WNV-positive mosquitoes in the state this year were announced on June 17. Since then, 376 mosquito samples have tested positive for WNV so far this season from Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Middlesex,

Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties. There has also been one animal case of WNV this year in a goat.

The risk for WNV is now high in 28 municipalities in Suffolk, Middlesex, Essex, and Worcester counties and moderate in 175 cities and towns in Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties.

In addition to WNV, Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) has also been detected in mosquitoes in Massachusetts this year. There have been 21 EEE-positive mosquito samples and no human or animal cases so far this year.

Starting next week, DPH will update the public on WNV cases in Massachusetts via weekly

(WNV, Pg. 6)

## ELECTION (from Page 1)

Former District 3 Councilor Frank Baker placed fifth in the race, with nearly 11 percent of the ballot (26,240 votes), trailed by Alexandra Valdez, a City Hall veteran who currently serves as director of Boston's Office of Cultural Affairs, with nearly 8 percent of the ballot (18,930 votes).

Marvin Mathelier, a small business owner and Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council

member, garnered nearly 6 percent of the ballot (13,826 votes), while Will Onuoha, assistant general counsel and director of health and safety for the Boston Water and Sewer Commission and a former longtime City Hall worker, received under 5 percent of the ballot (11,216 votes).

These eight candidates will all proceed to the Nov. 4 municipal election.

**CHA**

**Cambridge Health Alliance**

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We are seeking participants for a clinical research study about buprenorphine, methadone or naltrexone. The study will include both individuals who use these opioids and a control group of individuals who do not.

If you are between the ages of 21 and 59, you may qualify for a research study at The Cambridge Health Alliance that focuses on how buprenorphine, methadone or naltrexone affect people's weight, blood sugar and pain.

**The study involves:**

- One up to 8-hour session
- Weight/height, waist measurement, body fat percent, a diet assessment, measurements of blood sugar and lipids, surveys and urine tests
- Up to \$60 provided for participation

**617-665-1177**  
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**CHA-IRB-21-22-75**  
**Approved on 12-26-2024**





ELLEN ROONEY PHOTO

## TREE FALLS ON BEACON STREET

A reader took this photo on Sunday morning, Sept. 7, showing a felled tree across Beacon Street between Hereford and Gloucester streets.

“Apparently this tree was marked for removal tomorrow, but took it upon itself to go down early,” the reader wrote in an email to this publication.

# MBTA offers free late night service to mark the start of extended service

Special to the Sun

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) announced last month that, effective August 24 as part of Fall 2025 service changes, all subway lines and eight frequent bus routes will offer extended

service on Fridays and Saturdays with five of the MBTA's most frequent bus routes with the highest number of later riders offering extended service every day of the week. Trip end times for these lines and routes will be about

(MBTA, Pg. 5)

## FENWAY CDC (from Page 1)

Per its agreement with developer JDMD, the nonprofit Fenway CDC (Community Development Center) is redeveloping two adjacent properties located

at 27-29 Hancock St., which are both currently zoned as lodging houses, into a total of 15 units at 80-100 percent AMI (Area Median Income) for new home-

owners.

Construction is expected to take around 15 months to complete, after kicking off at the end of this year or in January of next year. Closing on the sale of the residential units is then expected to follow in the third quarter of '27, said Eddie Quinn, real estate project manager for Fenway CDC.

The committee's determination on this matter came with provisos that a restriction on any new roofdecks on the buildings be memorialized; that a transportation management plan be submitted by the applicant; and that an effort be made to give precedence for housing to displaced former neighborhood residents via any available legal means.

During public testimony, Harold Brink, president of Homes on Hancock – a grass-roots group which continually advocated for the creation of adequate affordable housing at 27-29 Hancock St. – said his group had worked closely and extensively with both Fenway CDC and the city in developing the current project layout, and that his group is “very much in support” of this latest project iteration.

Likewise, John Gulliver,



D. MURPHY

Two adjacent properties at 27-29 Hancock St., which the Fenway CDC intends to redevelop into 15 affordable homeownership units.

co-founder of Homes on Hancock, as well as a BHCA board member, said he is “very confident the Fenway CDC will do a great job.”

Gulliver also noted there is now only one affordable homeownership unit on Beacon Hill, so the proposed project would

have a significant impact in the neighborhood.

“After years of dedication from neighbors, stakeholders, and elected officials, we're thrilled to take this critical step forward in supporting Fenway CDC's proposal,” said Gulliver in a statement. “The affordable homeownership solution at 27/29 Hancock will help meet the immediate needs of Beacon Hill and the city as a whole.”

JDMD, which developed The Archer Residences – a luxury condo building on Temple Street – purchased 27-29 Hancock St. in 2018, with plans to gift the buildings to another developer for the creation of off-site affordable housing units to satisfy its IDP (Inclusionary Development Policy) with the city for the Archer project.

Meanwhile, the committee's determinations on this matter was ratified by the BHCA board at the group's monthly meeting on Monday, Sept. 8.



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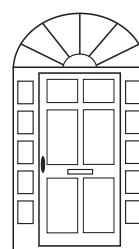
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## MBTA (from Page 4)

one hour later compared to current service end times. Extended service will also be added on some ferry lines on Fridays and Saturdays through the end of September with additional trips added.

To encourage riders to take advantage of the extended service, all subway lines, bus routes, ferries, Commuter Rail lines, and the RIDE trips will be free on Fridays and Saturdays beginning at 9 PM through the end of service September 5 – 6, September 12 – 13, September 19 – 20, September 26 – 27, and October 3 – 4.

Read below for more about extended service or see the original press release.

### Weekend Extended Service

- **Subway:** Service for the Red, Orange, Blue, and Green lines will be extended by about one hour on Friday and Saturday nights. Frequency during the one-hour of extended service will be about every 30 minutes on the Ashmont and Braintree branches of the Red Line and each of the Green Line branches, and about every 15 minutes between Alewife and JFK/UMass on the Red Line, on the entire Orange Line, and on the entire Blue Line.

- **Bus:** Service on Bus Routes 1, 22, 39, 66, 110, SL1, SL3, and SL5 will extend by about one hour on Friday and Saturday nights. Frequency during the one-hour of extended service will be approximately every 30 minutes.

- **Ferries:** Service for some ferry lines will extend by one to two hours with additional trips on Fridays and Saturdays beginning Friday, August 29, through Saturday, September 27:

- **On Fridays:** Hingham/Hull Ferry: An additional Hingham/Hull Ferry roundtrip will be added to the schedule departing about one hour later than current schedules. This trip departs Hingham to Long Wharf at 10:15 PM; the trip departs Long Wharf to Hull and Hingham at 11 PM.

- The current last departure from Hingham is at 9:15 PM with the last departure from Long Wharf at 9:55 PM.

- **On Fridays and Saturdays:** East Boston Ferry: Additional East Boston Ferry trips will be added to the schedule with service extended to 10 PM. The last trip from East Boston to Long Wharf will depart at 9:30 PM; the last trip from Long Wharf to East Boston will depart at 9:45 PM.

- The current last departure from East Boston on Fridays is at 7:30 PM and on Saturdays is at 8:30 PM with the last departure from Long Wharf on Fridays at 7:45 PM and on Saturdays is at 8:45 PM.

- **On Fridays and Saturdays:** Charlestown Ferry: Additional Charlestown Ferry trips will be added to the schedule with service extended to 10 PM. The last trip from Charlestown to Long Wharf will depart at 9:30 PM; the last trip from Long Wharf to Charlestown will depart at 9:45 PM.

- The current last departure from Charlestown on Fridays is at 8:15 PM and on Saturdays is at 6:15 PM with the last departure from Long Wharf on Fridays at 8:00 PM and on Saturdays at 6:00 PM.

- **Lynn, Winthrop, and Quincy Ferries:** The last trip for these routes will remain as they are on Fridays and Saturdays.

- Updated Ferry schedules will be available soon at [mbta.com/Ferry](http://mbta.com/Ferry).

### Daily Extended Service

- **Bus:** Service on Bus Routes 23, 28, 57, 111, and 116 will be extended by about one hour every day of the week. Frequency during the one-hour of extended service will be approximately every 30 minutes.

The current cost of the extended service on subway lines and bus routes for additional operations personnel hours is approximately \$2 million.

Schedules for all lines and routes vary. Riders are strongly

encouraged to check schedules in advance and use the MBTA's Trip Planner as well as the MBTA Go app to plan their travels. Regular fares will be charged for all extended services.

The MBTA previously announced additional Fall 2025 service adjustments. More information and detailed service schedules are available here.

The MBTA continues to serve a critical role in supporting the economic vitality of Massachusetts. Over the past two years, the agency has focused on providing dependable, frequent, and accessible service that riders can rely on. Through initiatives such as extending evening service and the Better Bus Project, the MBTA continues to optimize routes, improve connectivity, and enhance the rider experience.

For more information, visit

[mbta.com/ServiceChanges](http://mbta.com/ServiceChanges) or connect with the T on X @ MBTA and @MBTA\_CR, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or TikTok @thembta.

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) opened America's first subway tunnel in 1897, pioneering public transportation in the United States. Today, the MBTA is one of the largest public transit systems in the country, operating an extensive network of subway, bus, Commuter Rail, ferry, and paratransit services across 176 cities and towns. The MBTA is undergoing a transformative period, focusing on cultivating a culture of safety and excellence, modernizing infrastructure, and improving reliability and accessibility. Current priorities include accelerating critical infrastruc-

ture repairs, expanding accessibility, and reducing emissions. The MBTA is committed to providing dependable, frequent, and accessible service that riders can rely on while supporting the region's economic vitality. Through initiatives like the unprecedented Track Improvement Program, Bus Network Redesign, and Rail Vision, the MBTA aims to connect communities and improve riders' daily experiences and trips. For questions or assistance, riders are encouraged to contact the MBTA Customer Center at 617-222-3200. Members of the press are encouraged to contact [mediarelations@mbta.com](mailto:mediarelations@mbta.com). For the latest updates on MBTA services, projects, and initiatives, visit [MBTA.com](http://MBTA.com) or follow @MBTA on social media.

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# Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health opens state-of-the-art emergency supply warehouse

Special to the Sun

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has unveiled its new, interoperable emergency supply warehouse, a critical resource that strengthens the state's ability to respond quickly and effectively and provide the equipment, supplies, and medical resources needed to deliver care during public health emergencies and disasters.

State and local officials, emergency preparedness leaders, and community health partners gathered with DPH representatives to mark the occasion, touring the bright and expansive space – which has been operational since July 1, 2025 – and learning

about its many capabilities and features.

The new DPH warehouse is strategically located in Franklin, at the intersection of I-495 and I-90, offering easy access to major highways. It is adjacent and directly connected to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) warehouse, which will facilitate rapid, coordinated statewide response during times of crisis. Spanning 75,000 square feet, the facility houses more than 21 million individual items – from personal protective equipment to bandages and dressings to refrigerated medical products.

"This warehouse is so much more than just shelves of materials, equipment, and supplies – it represents resilience, readiness, and a collective commitment to respond quickly and fully to

care for our communities when disaster strikes," said Secretary of Health and Human Services Kiame Mahaniah, MD, MBA. "Today we mark an important investment in the safety, health, and well-being – and peace of mind – for those who live in, work in, and visit Massachusetts."

"Massachusetts has faced many public health crises over the years – from the Great Molasses Flood in 1919, to the Cocoanut Grove Nightclub fire in 1942, to the Blizzard of '78, and more recently the Boston Marathon Bombing and the COVID-19 pandemic," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. "We have learned critical lessons from each of these disasters and other emergencies, large and small. And we have taken all

those lessons to heart and turned them into action. This warehouse embodies that action – that commitment – and it allows us to stand with our health care and public health partners and be ready for the next crisis we will inevitably face together."

The DPH warehouse provides more than 4,000 pallet storage positions across three levels, with 1,000 square feet of cold-chain storage for refrigerated products. A 10-door loading dock supports the facility's high-throughput operations. State-of-the-art security and video monitoring technology protects staff and products, while advanced data-logging systems help maintain inventory integrity.

"We are thrilled to be in this wonderful new location that strengthens our capacity to support the greater health care sys-

tem during times of crisis, said Kerin Milesky, Director of the DPH Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management. "This new facility enhances our need to adjust our approach and processes based on the latest science and best practices, and respond to the nuances of different kinds of emergencies. This warehouse is our promise to every resident that when the next emergency comes, we will be ready to respond, safeguard health, and help our communities recover."

September is designated as National Preparedness Month, a time for individuals, families, and communities to plan for emergencies. For information about proactive measures to maintain safety and protect people, pets, and property, visit [mass.gov](http://mass.gov).

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## WNV (from Page 3)

press releases each Friday if new cases are confirmed. Surveillance information, including cases, will continue to be updated on a daily basis and posted online at Massachusetts Arbovirus Update. DPH encourages everyone to use this online resource regularly to stay up to date on risk levels in their community

and around the state.

People have an important role to play in protecting themselves and their loved ones from illnesses caused by mosquitoes.

### Avoid Mosquito Bites

- Apply Insect Repellent when Outdoors. Use a repellent with an EPA-registered ingredient, such as DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), or oil of lemon eucalyptus (p-menthane-3,8-diol (PMD) or IR3535) according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30 percent or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age.

- Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours. The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or

early morning in areas of high risk.

- Clothing Can Help Reduce Mosquito Bites. Wearing long sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

### Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- Drain Standing Water. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by draining or discarding items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty unused flowerpots and wading pools and change the water in birdbaths frequently.

- Install or Repair Screens. Keep mosquitoes outside by having tightly fitting screens on all windows and doors.

### Protect Your Animals

Animal owners should reduce potential mosquito breeding sites on their property by eliminating standing water from containers such as buckets, tires, and

wading pools – especially after heavy rains. Water troughs provide excellent mosquito breeding habitats and should be flushed out to reduce mosquitoes near paddock areas. Horse owners should keep horses in indoor stalls at night to reduce their risk of exposure to mosquitoes. Owners should also speak with their veterinarian about mosquito repellents approved for use in animals and vaccinations to prevent West Nile virus (WNV) and EEE. If an animal is suspected of having WNV or EEE, owners are required to report to the Department of Agricultural Resources, Division of Animal Health by calling 617-626-1795, and to the Department of Public Health by calling 617-983-6800.

Learn more about mosquito-borne diseases, including all WNV- and EEE-positive results on DPH's Arbovirus Surveillance Information page, which is updated daily, or by calling the DPH Division of Epidemiology at 617-983-6800.

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## SEND YOUR NEWS

The Boston Sun encourages readers and residents to submit their local news! Engagements, weddings and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Submitting does not guarantee publication that week. Content will be printed on a space available basis. Items should be e-mailed to [stephen.quigley@reverejournal.com](mailto:stephen.quigley@reverejournal.com) & [deb@thebostonsun.com](mailto:deb@thebostonsun.com)



BOSTON LYRIC ORCHESTRA STAGE STREET AT BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Bass-baritone Zizhao Wang brings his performance of *\*Catalogue Aria\** from *Don Giovanni* through the audience to the stage below.jpg



Bass-baritone vocalists Devon Russo and Zizhao Wang combine their voices and emotion to *\*Come dal ceil precipita\** from *Macbeth*.jpg



Laura Santamaria, Zizhao Wang, and Mary Kray bring some fun to the audience with *\*Czárdás\** by Johann Strauss.jpg



The whole vocal ensemble of Zizhao Wang, Mary Kray, Devon Russo, Jamie Larsen, and Laura Santamaria perform *\*Czárdás\** by Johann Strauss.

Photos by Derek Kouyoumjian

The Boston Lyric Opera brought its Street Stage tour to the Main Branch of the Boston Public Library. It was supposed to be the final installation of the Library's Concert In The Courtyard series but inclement weather necessitated moving the show

inside to the Rabb Auditorium. Nonetheless it was a breathtaking presentation of opera, show tunes, and classical music that gave the audience plenty of everything. Be sure to catch the Street Stage as they visit Curtis Hall in JP on September 11 and Titus Sparrow Park on September 14.



Bass-baritone Devon Russo and soprano Laura Santamaria present a punctuated finish to the *\*Music Lesson Scene\** from *Daughter Of The Regiment*.jpg



Soprano vocalists Laura Santamaria and Josie Larsen contribute their voices and humor to *\*Rain Quartet\** from *Regina* by Marc Blitzstein.



BOSTON LYRIC ORCHESTRA STAGE STREET AT BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Pianist Brett Hodgdon is the Chorus Director and Head of Music at Boston Lyric Opera.



Boston City Councilor Sharon Durkan offers remarks.



Boston Lyric Opera Artistic Director serves as MC and welcomes everyone to the performance.



In her performance of *\*Fable\** from *The Light in the Piazza* by Adam Guettel, mezzo-soprano Mary Kray brings profound emotion with her voice and persona.



Bass-baritone Zizhao Wang hits a high point in his performance of *\*This Nearly Was Mine\** from *South Pacific* from Roberts and Hammerstein.



Audience members are captivated by soprano Josie Larsen's performance of *\*Or sai chi l'onore\** from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.



Bass-baritone Devon Russo, mezzo-soprano Mary Kray, and soprano Laura Santamaria perform in the *\*Music Lesson Scene\** from *Daughter Of The Regiment*.



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Mezzo-soprano Mary Kray and soprano Josie Larsen have some fun with *\*Rain Quartet\** from *Regina*.

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BOSTON LYRIC ORCHESTRA STAGE STREET AT BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Pianist Brett Hodgdon, bass-baritone Devon Russo, mezzo-soprano Mary Kray, and soprano Laura Santamaria perform in the *\*Music Lesson Scene\** from *Daughter Of The Regiment*.



Pianist Brett Hodgdon, soprano Laura Santamaria, and bass-baritone Devon Russo bring *\*They Can't Take That Away From Me\** from *Shall We Dance* by George Gershwin to life.



Pianist Brett Hodgdon, sopranos Laura Santamaria and Josie Larsen, bass-baritone Zizhao Wang, and mezzo-soprano Mary Kray perform *\*Rain Quartet\** from *Regina* by Marc Blitzstein. The choice of this piece had added humor due to the inclement weather barring the intended performance in the Library's courtyard.



The performance ends with *\*Champagne Finale\** by Johann Strauss as bubbles full the stage and lift everyone up, in spite of the weather outside.

Governor Healey celebrates Hasbro's decision to relocate headquarters to Massachusetts

Special to the Sun

Governor Maura Healey is celebrating Hasbro, Inc.'s announcement that the company has signed a lease to relocate its Rhode Island operations to Massachusetts, comprised of the primary headquarters for Hasbro's toy, board game and licensing businesses, and a majority of corporate services. This move is expected to bring at least 700 jobs to Massachusetts. The Healey-Driscoll Administration has been working closely with

Hasbro while the company evaluated where to relocate its headquarters.

"We are thrilled that Hasbro has chosen Massachusetts as the home of its new headquarters, and we're ready to support the hundreds of jobs they will create here," said Governor Healey. "We're proud to welcome this iconic company to Team Massachusetts — where we are number one for education, health care and innovation, and ranked the best state to live in, to raise a family, to be a woman and to be a working parent. I'm grateful for the leadership of Chris Cocks and his team at Hasbro, and for the hard work of my economic development team that helped make this possible."


Hasbro is the latest company to choose to start, relocate or grow in Massachusetts. Just last month, Keurig Dr Pepper announced they are acquiring JDE Peet's and basing the global headquarters for their Global Coffee Co in Burlington, Massa-

chusetts. Earlier this year, LEGO opened its new U.S. headquarters in Boston, supporting 800 jobs. Biogen is planning a new global headquarters and innovation hub in Kendall square.



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# New statewide grant programs to support local infrastructure projects

Special to the Sun

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has launched two new grant programs to advance local infrastructure and economic development projects and bring more federal dollars into Massachusetts. The programs will provide technical assistance support for municipal and tribal infrastructure projects that are seeking federal funds or have received federal funds. The administration has created these programs with a focus on rural towns and Gateway Cities.

"More technical assistance means revitalized downtowns, safer roads, new homes and more jobs in our communities," said Governor Maura Healey. "These new tools will provide critical support to our local government leaders and will be an important part of our continued work to make Massachusetts the best place to live, work and do business."

"As a former Mayor, I know how impactful these resources will be to our local government leaders," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "I look forward to seeing the impact of these programs across Massachusetts transportation, climate, housing and economic development projects."

These grant programs will be

administered by the Administration's Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office and draw on interest from the state's Stabilization Fund, without reducing the Fund's balance. They were created through Governor Healey's federal funds bill.

"In this time of national economic uncertainty, our Administration is using every financial tool available—including leveraging interest from our Stabilization Fund—to sustainably support Massachusetts cities and towns," said Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew J. Gorzkowicz. "These grants will help ensure that every community, regardless of size and access to resources, is well-equipped to compete for federal funding. I look forward to seeing these funds improve resilience, drive local economic development, and fix vital infrastructure across Massachusetts."

"Our office has travelled all across Massachusetts to hear from municipal leaders about barriers to advancing infrastructure projects and heard across the board that more technical assistance is critical," said Federal Funds and Infrastructure Director Quentin Palfrey. "We're thrilled to launch these two programs to help our local leaders drive forward the projects that are most important to their communities and look for-

ward to the work to come."

"The Senate passed Governor Healey's federal funds bill last session because we shared the vision of unlocking new resources for cities and towns across Massachusetts," said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "This program delivers on that promise, giving local leaders the tools they need to bring infrastructure projects to life that will make their communities even better places to live, raise a family, and run a business. I'm excited to see the Healey-Driscoll Administration launch this program, and I look forward to the great projects that will emerge from this funding in every corner of our Commonwealth."

"These grant programs will provide cities and towns with technical assistance as they apply for federal grants to improve their infrastructure and economic development projects," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "The House is proud to have supported the creation of these programs that will ultimately make our communities even better places to live."

The Municipal and Tribal Assistance Grant Program (MTTA) is a competitive grant program that will allow local governments and federally-recognized tribes to seek grants

for infrastructure, climate and economic development project activities. About \$2.5 million will be available via the MTTA program over FY'26 and FY'27. To qualify for funding under this program, applications must be intended for projects that are seeking or have received federal funding. Eligible uses for these funds include (but are not limited to) the following activities:

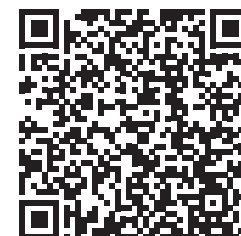
- Tax assistance (e.g. filing forms with the IRS for Direct Pay)
- Grant writing
- Project scoping and financial analysis
- Planning and feasibility studies
- Demonstration activities
- Post-award grant management support

Applications for the MTTA program are now open online at [www.mass.gov/forms/municipal-and-tribal-technical-assistance-grant-program-application](http://www.mass.gov/forms/municipal-and-tribal-technical-assistance-grant-program-application).

The Technical Assistance Grants for Regional Planning Agencies (TARPA) will be a formula-based grant program for Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) to provide direct technical assistance to cities and towns, particularly for infrastructure,

climate, and economic development projects. About \$2 million will be available over FY'26 and FY'27. To qualify for funding under this program, applicants must be one of the state's 13 RPAs seeking or have received federal funding. Similar to the MTTA program, TARPA funds may be used to address a variety of technical assistance needs for projects that RPAs are seeking or have received federal funds.

For more information about the programs, eligibility criteria, and upcoming events, please visit the FFIO website or contact Raffi Freedman-Gurspan, Associate Director of Federal Funds and Infrastructure at [Raffi.M.Freedman-Gurspan@mass.gov](mailto:Raffi.M.Freedman-Gurspan@mass.gov). Additionally, you can attend a presentation on both of these programs with opportunity for Q&A at FFIO's upcoming Federal Funds Partnership meeting on September 23. Register by scanning the QR Code.



## New Department of Elementary and Secondary data shows early college is steering more students towards higher education

Special to the Sun

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has released a new data analysis that shows the state's investment in Early College is paying off, reaching more students who previously were less likely to attend college by allowing them to earn at least 12 college credits at no cost while still in high school. Massachusetts Early College graduates are leaving high school already having taken an average of at least two college level classes.

The new data released also shows that 66 percent of Early College graduates immediately enroll in higher education after high school, with the majority enrolling at a public college or university in Massachusetts. Once enrolled in higher education, former Early College are also persisting - with 87 percent staying in college through a second term and 82 percent returning to college for a second year.

"The numbers don't lie —

Early College works. It gives students the confidence, skills and head start they need to succeed in higher education and the workforce," said Governor Maura Healey. "We're especially proud that this program is opening doors for students who have historically been left out of these opportunities, and that students are inspired to go onto higher education right here in Massachusetts, which means they are more likely to build their career and post-grad lives here. We're going to keep expanding Early College so that more students, families and employers can benefit."

"Massachusetts has the best public schools in the nation, but we know that access to higher education is not equal for all of our students. Early College is one of the most effective ways to close opportunity gaps and put young students on the path to success," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "This new data confirms what we've seen firsthand: when we invest in Early College, we're investing in brighter futures for

our students and a stronger workforce for our state."

Early College programs are a core part of the administration's Reimagining High School initiative, ensuring Massachusetts students are prepared for college or careers when they graduate. This school year, there are 69 high schools and 32 higher education institutions participating, supporting approximately 10,000 students. Families can use the Massachusetts School Finder to search for schools near them that offer Early College.

Massachusetts' Early College programs promote participation of students historically underrepresented in higher education. Hispanic or Latino students have the lowest college-going rates in the state at 43 percent, but 56 percent of Hispanic or Latino students who participate in Early College go onto college after high school. Early College participation is nearly even between low-income and middle/high income households. Forty-one percent of Early College graduates were Hispanic

or Latino, and 16 percent were Black or African American.

"We're seeing remarkable outcomes because Early College does exactly what it's designed to do: help students see themselves as college material, earn real credits before they graduate, and get the guidance they need to stay on course," said Education Secretary Dr. Patrick Tutwiler. "We're committed to ensuring every student who wants these opportunities can access them, no matter where they live or what their background is."

"Early College is one way students can graduate from high school ahead of the game, already knowing that they can handle college classes and having earned college credits," said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Pedro Martinez. "I hope the data we're seeing today will encourage many more high schools and colleges to help us expand this work."

"Early College is proving to be one of the most powerful tools we have to increase access

to higher education in Massachusetts. This data shows that Early College not only inspires more students to continue their education, but also helps them persist once they get there," said Higher Education Commissioner Noe Ortega. "We are grateful to our high schools and higher education institutions who are partnering to bring these life-changing opportunities to students across the Commonwealth."

Continued investments in Early College have been a key part of Governor Healey's Reimagining High School initiative. In June, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced 18 new Early College partnerships between high schools and colleges, bringing the statewide total to 73. These new partnerships will create up to 3,913 additional seats by 2030, with the goal of providing Early College access to as many as 20,000 Massachusetts students by the end of the decade.



# Encore Boston Harbor surpasses \$1 billion in tax revenue for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Special to the Sun

On Monday, August 25, Encore Boston Harbor passed the \$1 billion mark in gaming tax revenue generated for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts since its opening in 2019. This revenue directly benefits all residents of Massachusetts by funding a range of state initiatives, including local aid. Encore has been one of the largest generators of tax revenue in the Commonwealth since its opening in 2019.

This revenue is in addition to the more than \$330 million

Encore Boston Harbor has given in surrounding community fees, PILOT payments and Public Health Trust funding. The company has also paid more than \$1.3 billion in total employee compensation and benefits.

Furthermore, Encore Boston Harbor has been a generous philanthropic partner to local nonprofits, donating more than \$15 million to organizations operating in its surrounding communities and across the state.

"The dedication of our more than 3,300 employees, working each and every day to create

memorable guest experiences, has allowed us to generate significant revenues for Massachusetts over the last six years," said Jenny Holaday, president of Encore Boston Harbor. "Our employees take pride in Encore being a contributing partner to Massachusetts through our ability to generate significant tax revenues, impact the local economy with our spending, and financially support hundreds of local nonprofit partners."

Encore Boston Harbor, a Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star hotel, features more than

210,000 square-feet of gaming space, over 2,700 slot machines and nearly 200 table games. Situated on the Mystic River in Everett, Massachusetts, and connected to Boston Harbor, Encore Boston Harbor boasts 671 spacious hotel rooms, a Forbes Five-Star spa, salon and fitness center, specialty retail shops, a variety of dining and lounge venues, including Forbes Four-Star rated Rare Steakhouse and more than 50,000 square feet of ballroom and meeting spaces. The grounds feature a six-acre Harborwalk with pedestrian and

bicycle paths that provide access to the waterfront, an event lawn, public art and ornate floral displays. It is the largest private, single-phase development in the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The casino offers free self-parking for all guests seven days a week. Encore Boston Harbor is a proud partner of the New England Patriots, Boston Bruins, Boston Celtics and New England Revolution. For more information, visit [encorebostonharbor.com](http://encorebostonharbor.com) or follow Encore Boston Harbor on Instagram and Facebook.

## FRESH & LOCAL

### Jessica B. Harris, Food Educator

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

In 2020, the James Beard Foundation bestowed a Lifetime Achievement Award on Dr. Jessica B. Harris. The foundation described the criteria for this award. "The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual whose lifetime body of work has had a positive and long-lasting impact on the way we eat, cook, or think about food in America."

Of her, they said. "Harris's longtime focus on cuisines, ingredients, and techniques that, in one way or another, trace their lineage to the African continent is largely rooted in a desire to 'make sure that that record is kept and is acknowledged and is understood.'"

Much of what we know about the diaspora of African Cuisine comes from reading some of the 17 books she has authored, edited, or translated. We were enthralled and learned a great deal from her in the Netflix documentary series "High on the Hog."

And we've listened to her podcast and interviews. In Penny's case, it also stems from meeting this culinary hero at a class at Boston University, where Dr. Harris spoke about the foods and foodways of the African Diaspora. It was a fascinating discussion of the "Geography of

Food." Dr. Harris and food writer Clifford A. Wright discussed cuisine, culture, and the impact of irrigation systems as they traced the evolution of foodways through the ages.

#### A Talented Communicator

In a recent interview on the Tinfoil Swans, from Food & Wine, she revealed that she had wanted to be an actress and attended the High School for

the Performing Arts. Later, she became a journalist. These two career paths contributed to her ability to think, write, and articulate what she wants us to learn, not as a scholar with a PhD and academic expertise but as a gentle teacher who wants to share her family legacy with the world.

#### Where to Begin

First, we suggest watching the two seasons of "High on the

Hog" to see her surrounded by colleagues and young people she has inspired. Next, read a few of her books, many of which are available at local libraries. We suggest you start with "Iron Pots and Wooden Spoons: Africa's Gifts to New World Cooking." The Welcome Table: African American Heritage Cooking" comprises a well-researched collection of recipes.

From there, visit a library or

a good bookstore and choose your next Dr. Harris adventure. We recognize that each book contributes to our understanding of a culture that has long been neglected.

Finally, consider her latest "Braided Heritage," where she presents the evolution of 100 recipes as they interweave the cuisine and culture of Indigenous, African, and European ingredients and base recipes. You may have to place a hold to reserve a copy, as we did at our local library. (As book addicts, we always audition a book before we purchase it to see where it fits into our collection and if we want an ebook or a physical copy.)

#### Words of Wisdom

Throughout her writing and speaking, she drops tidbits of life wisdom here and there. In an interview, Dr. Harris was asked what she had learned from her studies. She replied, "Can I name three? Don't be set in your ways. Always be willing to change your mind, always be willing to be surprised, and always look to find joy." In addition to teaching us about food, she can teach us a bit about how to live.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Email [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.



Visit a library or a good bookstore and choose your next culinary adventure with Dr. Jessica B. Harris.



# Mayor Michelle Wu announces new resources to make fresh fruits and vegetables more affordable

Special to the Sun

Mayor Michelle Wu announced new initiatives to support low-income residents, including the 143,000 Boston residents who participate in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and expand access to affordable and fresh fruits and vegetables at sites across the City of Boston. As the federal government imposes new restrictions that attempt to limit Boston residents' access to crucial nutrition programs, City departments have expanded Boston's Double Up Food Bucks (DUF) program to two new grocery stores: Nubian Markets in Roxbury and the Dorchester Food Co-op in Dorchester. Additionally, the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) and Office of Food Justice (OFJ) launched a citywide marketing and outreach campaign about farmers market programs, ensuring residents facing constrained grocery budgets can count on city and state resources to help make fruits and vegetables more affordable.

"No one should face barriers when it comes to feeding their family nutritious food," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Thanks to our partners at the Boston Public Health Commission and Office of Food Justice, we're able to expand these critical programs to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables across the city. With this diverse set of initiatives, we're building a stronger food system for our community and making Boston a more accessible home for everyone."

According to the City of Boston and the Boston Public Health Commission's Live Long and Well population health equity agenda, one of the leading causes of early death in Boston is cardiometabolic disease, and access to fresh, healthy, affordable, and minimally processed food is essential for cardiometabolic health. According to recent data analysis by the Boston Public Health Commission for the 2025 Boston Community Health Needs Assessment, nearly 19% of adults in Boston reported that, within the past 12 months, the food they bought did not last and they could not afford to buy more food.

This data underscores the importance of nutrition assis-



PHOTO COURTESY MAYOR'S OFFICE JOHN WILCOX

Mayor Michelle Wu announced new initiatives to support low-income residents.

tance programs such as the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program (HIP). According to the 2025 Boston Community Health Needs Assessment Report, nearly 19% of households receive SNAP benefits, with the highest participation rates in Dorchester, Hyde Park, Mattapan, Roxbury, and the South End. The City of Boston and BPHC are encouraging residents to shop at farmers markets. Starting September 1, 2025, all Massachusetts residents paying for fruits and vegetables with a SNAP EBT card at farmers markets will automatically receive up to \$40-\$80 a month back on their EBT card, depending on household size. To encourage SNAP participants to shop at farmers markets, the City of Boston and BPHC are sharing multilingual, culturally relevant messages through advertising on buses, posters, newspaper and radio ads, mail, and social media to promote this campaign citywide. Residents can find their neighborhood farmers market at [boston.gov/farmersmarkets](https://boston.gov/farmersmarkets). For information on where HIP can be spent across Boston and Massachusetts, go to <https://dtafinder.dtaadash.ehs.mass.gov> to find farmers markets, mobile markets and farmstands.

"We are advancing our health equity goals by helping families access affordable, nutritious

food that supports both physical and mental well-being," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health for the City of Boston. "As we continue to advance our Live Long and Well health equity agenda, we are addressing the root causes of health disparities so people can live healthier lives."

The DUF program, managed by OFJ, provides customers paying with SNAP a 50% discount on fresh fruits and vegetables. This year, DUF has expanded to Nubian Markets in Roxbury and the Dorchester Food Co-op in Dorchester, joining existing grocery store participants: East Boston's La Union Market and Butchery, Bella's Market, and El Valle de la Sultana, and Davey's Super Market of Roxbury. In order to receive the discount at the point of purchase, customers simply need to pay for their fresh fruits and vegetables with their EBT card and ask for the Double Up discount.

"Building a more resilient and sustainable Boston means ensuring all our residents have access to healthy, locally sourced food," said Brian Swett, Chief Climate Officer. "These programs not only address critical food security needs but also strengthen our local food system, reduce our environmental footprint, and invest in the economic health of our neighborhoods. It's a powerful example of how environmental and social goals

go hand-in-hand."

"We are working to ensure residents can count on local resources to help them weather changes to the landscape of affordable food access," said Aliza Wasserman, Director of the Office of Food Justice. "There are major ripple effects of every SNAP dollar spent, and these programs leverage those benefits to keep dollars in the pockets of local farmers and support locally owned grocery stores, while helping make fresh fruits and vegetables more affordable."

"Access to nutritious foods is a critical public health tool, leading to healthier lives and happier families," said Shelly Yarnie, DTA Associate Commissioner for Food Security and Nutrition. "We applaud the City of Boston on this expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks program, and encourage Boston residents to participate to maximize the food purchasing support available – along with SNAP benefits and HIP benefits that are available."

On August 14, Nubian Markets held a community launch event with OFJ to celebrate residents' access to DUF. Boston's DUF program started in 2018 through a national grant, before receiving funding from the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, known as GusNIP, in 2021. The program supports the City's goals of increasing access to fresh, affordable, and healthy food for

residents, as well as supporting small, community-oriented grocers by incentivizing shoppers paying with SNAP to visit their stores.

The City's Office of Food Justice provides funds from its operating budget, which are then matched by USDA GusNIP grant funds. Every dollar the city invests is amplified, making healthy food more accessible and affordable for families in Boston while supporting local businesses. Since the start of Boston's Double Up Food Bucks program, SNAP shoppers have purchased more than \$1.6 million in fresh fruits and vegetables at local grocery stores. Over \$850,000 of this amount came from the DUF program discounts, which was made possible through the city's investment and GusNIP funds. Furthermore, preliminary surveys show the program is encouraging healthy habits, with 62% of participants reporting that they now purchase more fresh produce.

Both DUF and HIP are available for all SNAP beneficiaries/EBT cardholders buying fresh produce at participating Double Up stores or HIP vendors. For any questions and more program information, please visit [boston.gov/doubleup](https://boston.gov/doubleup) or email [food@boston.gov](mailto:food@boston.gov).

"Our mission to build a hub for food access in Roxbury that builds connections to the African diaspora is bolstered when we can ensure fresh food is affordable to residents at all economic levels" said Nubian Markets cofounder and general manager Yusuf Yassin. "We have been excited to offer the Double Up Food Bucks program to our customers at Nubian Markets, and neighbors are excited to purchase more healthy food to make their SNAP benefits go farther."

These campaigns are supported by the Boston Public Health Commission and the City of Boston Mayor's Office of Food Justice, with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Program and the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, project award no. 2021-70030-35762, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.



Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
BACK BAY			
123 Botolph T	Lg And Kt 2019 RET	123 Saint Botolph St #9	\$985,000
Coker, Thomas G	White, Mary C	183 Commonwealth Ave #1	\$2,650,000
Ryan, Patrick M	Tsoi, Albert L	26 Isabella St #9	\$867,500
Billington, Michael E	Jarudi, Izzat	279 Beacon St #1	\$1,070,000
Schena, Michela	Huang, Chaoying	283 Commonwealth Ave #2	\$2,068,000
32 Comm Holdings LLC	Delp, Alexandra	32 Commonwealth Ave #2	\$3,100,000
Froot, Mark M	Wallace, William K	334 Beacon St #5	\$1,100,000
Ghorbani, Rachael	Nast, Adam	35 Lawrence St #4	\$725,000
Strout, Adam	Bisgood Realty TLLC	377 Commonwealth Ave #3	\$600,000
Loduca, Gaspare	Bonney, Alison G	416 Marlborough St #608	\$1,375,000
Schatzi Holdings LLC	Jrm Commonwealth LLC	63 Commonwealth Ave #4	\$5,600,000

BEACON HILL

Carenzo, Michael T	Jones, Jeffrey	3 W Hill Pl #3	\$7,200,000
73 Charles LLC	Ilgen, Sandra J	33 Chestnut St #5	\$1,218,750
Ma, Ying	Huang, Weihua	580 Washington St #310	\$930,000
Mendez, Eneas	Alice M Leslie 2014 RET	6 Whittier Pl #15H	\$540,000
9 & 3 Quarters Hancock T	R Wesselhoeft Iii RET	9 Hancock St #1	\$480,000
Deruyter Ft	Levisohn, Stephen R	9 Hawthorne Pl	\$75,500
Deruyter Ft	Weinberg, Ido	9 Hawthorne Pl #40	\$548,000

DOWNTOWN/WATERFRONT

Massimino-Garcia, Gregory	Muehlbauer, Diana L	16 Foster St #5	\$507,500
30 Townsend St LLC	Coates, Carleasa A	30 Townsend St	\$875,000
Dorothy T Lucas Lt	Guo, Winnie	65 E India Row #25H	\$639,000
Desrosiers, Elizabeth	Andrusier, Miriam A	67 Jamaica St #3	\$715,000
Xia, Weiming	85 East India Row Unit 1	85 E India Row #18A	\$580,000

BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE

Ostroff, Andrew	Marsh, Regan H	12 Bradford St #2	\$1,521,000
Jarvis, Linda V	Gillespie, Brooke	5 Dwight St #2	\$995,000
Concannon, Stephen C	Hodges, Sarah	9 Milford St #2	\$3,850,000
Heavey, Grace	Nichols, Michael J	120 Mountfort St #101	\$420,733
Lee, Bonnie Y	18 Parkman Street LLC	20 Parkman St #1	\$765,000
Jadin, Laurence	Botts, Kate	251 Heath St #108	\$755,000
Rohling, Monika E	Glidden, Timothy D	33 Pond Cir	\$1,850,000
Mk Melvin Properties LLC	Clemons Jr, Curtis	34 Cobden St	\$375,000
Rice, James	Brookfield Rt	34 Egleston St #4	\$135,000
Groma Boston Growth Fund	Peter J Luiso T2010	388 Arborway	\$1,465,000
Mccormack, Croan	Doyle, Kerrie A	42 Carolina Ave	\$1,210,000
Kramer, Carolina G	Page, Savannah	63-65 Brookley Rd #3	\$658,250
M Britton Lykes 2000 RET	Amelie L Ratiff T	65 Burroughs St #65	\$2,315,625
Kwan, Wai L	Watermark Doyles LLC	69 Williams St	\$334,700
Innocent, Jonathan J	Innocent Richard Est	9 Winthrop St	\$840,000
Elhadidy, Farah	Gonzalez, Daniel	92 Seaverns Ave #2	\$1,225,000
Zadeh, Tara	Waldbauer-Tuross RET	994 Centre St #994	\$850,000

Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The dormer window in the last clue is on 153 Worcester Street. An article in BU Today noted that architect Charles Bulfinch designed the South End. And that, “In 1973, the South End was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as ‘the largest urban Victorian neighborhood in the country.’”

You’ll find the next clue in the Back Bay.

Do you have a favorite building or detail that you would like to be featured? Email Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

THIS WEEK'S CLUE





# Hayden names Jeffrey Locke, former Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Trial Court as head of Integrity Review Bureau

*Special to the Sun*

Suffolk District Attorney Kevin Hayden has announced the appointment of Jeffrey A Locke, former Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Trial Court, as chief of the office's Integrity Review Bureau (IRB), which reviews potential wrongful convictions.

"Judge Locke's impeccable record of fairness and impartiality combined with his deep knowledge of the law and trial procedures give him an ideal

skill set to lead the IRB. He has a balanced perspective that comes from many years of giving all sides equal consideration, with favor only to facts and evidence. These are crucial qualities in an IRB leader," Hayden said.

Hayden said Locke's mandate will be to lead an independent bureau dedicated to investigating wrongful convictions. District Attorney Dan Conley in 2004 created the office's Conviction Integrity Panel, formalizing the structure for wrongful conviction reviews begun in the

1990s under DA Ralph Martin. The CIP served as the precursor to the IRB established by DA Rachael Rollins.

"I have full confidence that Judge Locke and his staff will enhance the office's historic commitment to conviction integrity review," Hayden said.

To ensure the independence of the IRB's work, and consistent with best practices, Locke will report directly to Hayden.

"I am honored to be entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that criminal convictions in

Suffolk County have been justly obtained. I look forward to working with District Attorney Hayden and his talented team," Locke said.

The Integrity Review Bureau investigates credible claims of innocence, wrongful conviction, and other circumstances that may have produced an improper judicial result. The IRB's mission is to determine if an innocent person has been convicted of a crime, or if trial errors or new evidence make a defendant's conviction unreliable, or if a conviction or sentence is not in the interest of justice.

Locke was Chief Justice of the Trial Court from January 19, 2022 through December 21, 2023. He was appointed by the Supreme Judicial Court after serving as a judge on the Superior Court since 2001.

Locke served as chair of the Massachusetts Sentencing Commission from 2018 to 2022. He was the regional administrative justice for criminal cases in Suffolk County from 2012 to 2015, and for all cases in Plymouth County from 2007 to 2011. He has served on several court committees, including the SJC Standing Advisory Committee on the Rules of Criminal Procedure; the Superior Court Committee on Sentencing Best Practices; and the Trial Court Fiscal Task Force.

Prior to Locke's appointment

to the bench, he served as commissioner of the MA Department of Social Services from April 1999 to October 2001, initially in an interim capacity. He was district attorney in Norfolk County from 1997 to 1999.

Locke has taught trial practice at Boston College Law School since 2018 and previously taught at Northeastern School of Law. He received his law degree from Boston University and a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University.

All charged individuals are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Suffolk County District Attorney Kevin Hayden's office serves the communities of Boston, Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop. Our office handles more than 20,000 cases a year. Nearly 160 assistant district attorneys practice in nine district and municipal courts, Suffolk Superior Court, the Massachusetts Appeals Court, the Boston and Chelsea Juvenile Courts and the Supreme Judicial Court. Our office employs some 300 people and offers a wide range of services and programs for anyone encountering the criminal justice system. We are committed to educating the public about our mission and services while focusing on crime prevention to keep the residents, workers and visitors of Suffolk County safe.

The Beacon Hill Times - [beaconhilltimes.com](http://beaconhilltimes.com)  
The North End Regional Review - [northendregionalreview.com](http://northendregionalreview.com)  
The Boston Sun - [thebostonsun.com](http://thebostonsun.com)  
The Charlestown Patriot-Bridge - [charlestownbridge.com](http://charlestownbridge.com)



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# A cursed brick and unsolved mystery await you at Old North Church

New artifact on display during After-Hours Crypt Tours; begins Sept. 18

Special to the Sun

This fall, the Old North Church Historic Site will open the doors to one of Boston's most spine-chilling, little-known artifacts —the infamous cursed brick, now on display in the church's historic crypt. This eerie relic, accompanied by a mysterious note and shrouded in unanswered questions, is the latest addition to the After-Hours Crypt Tours, which begin September 18 and run through Halloween weekend.

Earlier this year, Old North Church received an unexpected package postmarked from San Jose, Calif., with no return address. Inside, a single brick, wrapped carefully in plastic, and a brief, cryptic note that read: "My husband took this from the crypt. We have had a string of bad luck and we want to return the brick."

The note raises unsettling questions: Why did the couple take the brick in the first place? What kind of bad luck followed them? And most intriguingly—did the brick's return end their misfortune?

A video sharing the brick's story can be seen here. Since its return, the brick has been on display in the crypt, placed on a pedestal with the note for visitors to contemplate during their tours. The object, along with its mysterious backstory, has become a curious point of interest, adding an extra layer of intrigue to the already fascinating crypt.

But the mystery doesn't end there. After the brick was returned, something strange happened: the lights in the crypt mysteriously stopped working. The breaker did not trip. Though the electrical issue was quickly resolved, the unusual timing left many wondering if the supernatural connection between the brick and the church's crypt might be more than just coincidence.

This fall, the cursed brick

and its tale of bad luck will be front and center during the After-Hours Crypt Tours. These 45-minute guided tours take visitors into the heart of Boston's oldest surviving church, offering a glimpse into the lives and stories of over 1,100 individuals buried in the crypt, including important figures from the Revolutionary War like Captain Samuel Nicholson and Major John Pitcairn.

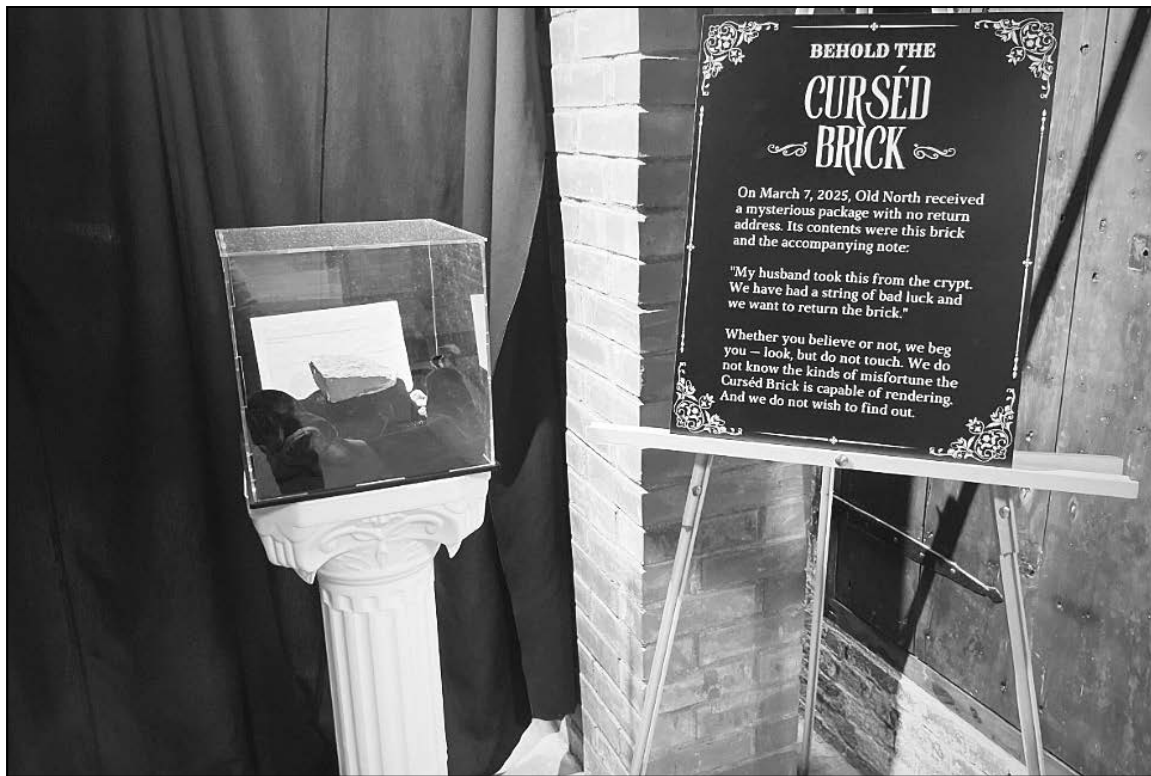
The crypt, with its dimly lit corridors and narrow spaces, houses 37 brick tombs—some sealed with slate or wooden doors—that have remained undisturbed for nearly 300 years. While the crypt is a fascinating historical site, the new cursed brick adds an eerie, supernatural element for those seeking a truly spine-tingling experience this spooky season.

After-Hours Crypt Tours will be available Thursday through Saturday nights starting on September 18. Beginning on October 16, tours will run nightly through November 1. Tours are offered at 5:30 and 6:15 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per person. Due to the narrow, confined spaces of the crypt, tours are not wheelchair or stroller accessible.

Visitors should be prepared for a slightly eerie and definitely unforgettable experience. Old North Church is an active place of worship, and visitors are asked to respect the sacred space during their visit.

The brave souls who dare to explore the crypt can learn more and purchase tickets to reserve their spots today: <https://www.oldnorth.com/admission-pricing/>

Established in 1991 as the Old North Foundation, Old North Illuminated is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is responsible for historic site operations and interpretative, educational, and preservation programs at the iconic Old North Church Historic Site. A secular organization that is independent of Christ Church in the City of Boston, Old North Illuminated welcomes approximately 500,000 visitors annually while overseeing the preservation of an enduring symbol of American independence. Old North Illumi-



nated serves a wide audience by creating meaningful experiences through educational outreach, site-specific programming, and historical analysis. ONI works collaboratively with the City of Boston, the U.S. National Park Service, the Freedom Trail Foundation, and other partners to foster educational and inter-

pretive programs for students and visitors while engaging the public in Old North Church's history and its role in inspiring liberty and freedom. In 2024, Old North Illuminated was presented with a Leadership in History — Award of Excellence from the American Association for State and Local History, the

most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of American history. The award-winning project, "Expanding History at Old North Church," encompassed a new exhibit, audio guide, and online video series. For more information, visit: [www.oldnorth.com](http://www.oldnorth.com).

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