

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2026



FREE

# CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

## THE BLIZZARD OF '26



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY MIKE MEJIA

Shown above, City of Boston workers clear snow during the snowstorm on Monday, Feb. 23.

In the photo to the right, the snow and the wind added a hat to the garden statue.

See Page 16 for more photos.



COURTESY PHOTO

## ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

### DiDomenico files for re-election

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Senator Sal DiDomenico has pulled nomination papers for his re-election to the State Senate. DiDomenico now needs to collect 300 signatures from constituents over the coming months to ensure his name will be listed on the ballot.

"Thank you to the residents of Cambridge, Charlestown, Chelsea, and Everett for your support,

trust, confidence and friendship throughout my tenure, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue fighting on your behalf for critical funding and transformative legislation that improves daily life in my district and throughout Massachusetts," said Senator DiDomenico. "You have given me one of the great honors of my life and I sincerely appreciate the privilege to serve you in the State Senate."



Senator Sal DiDomenico is shown with his nomination papers for re-election.

## Coletta Zapata files second round of legislative filings

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata has filed several legislative proposals with the Boston City Council, including the establishment of a Boston Emergency Relief Fund, reforms related to the Zoning Board of Appeal, and a resolution recognizing Women's History Month, with additional filings expected in the coming months.

"I'm proud to advance a legislative agenda that responds directly to the needs and priorities of Boston residents and reflects our commitment to building a more equitable, responsive, and resilient city," said Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata. "From establishing the Boston Emergency Relief Fund to streamline immediate financial assistance for residents displaced by emergencies, to strengthening accountability in our zoning process and recognizing the contributions of women in our communities, these efforts reflect our focus on delivering meaningful results. I look forward to continuing this work to ensure Boston operates efficiently and effectively for all residents."



City Councilor  
Gabriela Coletta Zapata

Councilor Coletta Zapata's filings include:

An Ordinance establishing the Boston Emergency Relief Fund creates a groundbreaking dedicated city fund to provide immediate financial assistance to residents displaced by emergencies like fires or building collapses, helping cover essentials such as temporary housing and basic needs. This legislation responds directly to repeated displacement events in our district and addresses community feedback by creating a clear, standardized system so families are not forced to rely solely on

(FILINGS, Pg. 2)

### CNC MEETING DATES

CNC General Meeting, Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 7 PM, Knights of Columbus

The Charlestown Neighborhood Council will hold an in-person public meeting on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Knights of Columbus, located at 545 Medford Street, Charlestown. The agenda will include an update from Representative Dan Ryan. Please bring your questions and neighborhood concerns to the meeting or email us at [cnc02129@gmail.com](mailto:cnc02129@gmail.com)



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COMPASS

# EDITORIAL

## WE ARE SO DONE WITH WINTER

When winter finally released its icy grip last week, with temperatures reaching above freezing for the first time in weeks, we had figured the worst of this winter season was behind us.

Needless to say, that was wishful thinking.

As native New Englanders, by no means were we so naive as to believe that Mother Nature would fail to have a few surprises remaining for us.

When March 1 starts to roll along on the calendar, we always are reminded of the proverb we first learned as young children at Our Lady of Grace parochial school in Everett: "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb."

So we were well-aware that nasty weather still lay ahead. We were braced for a lion, but we weren't expecting a prehistoric beast.

So we were both incredulous and exasperated as we listened to the weatherman's increasingly-dire predictions for a major weather event headed our way as this weekend approached.

We've all become familiar with the relatively-recent meteorological term of "bombogenesis" to describe the rapid intensification of a storm system that seems to take on a life of its own.

But we did not anticipate the fury of this week's blizzard that had such a wide impact and that caused so much misery for so many of us.

We well remember the Blizzard of '78, the No Name Storm of 1991 (also known as The Perfect Storm), and the Snowmageddon Winter of 2015.

We took all of those major weather events in stride. As impactful as they were, they were simply annoyances for us at the time. But we were younger then, and youth has a way of brushing aside even the harshest of circumstances -- a four-foot drift looks like a playground instead of a back injury waiting to happen.

Despite the frigid temperatures, we still ran outside almost every day throughout this winter, even in the face of daily, single-digit wind chills. We were determined not to let Ol' Man Winter get the better of us.

But truth be told, this winter season of 2026 has pushed us over the edge. The "lion" finally bit us -- and Florida suddenly seems very appealing.

## WHY HASN'T THE NHL BANNED FIGHTING?

Our love of hockey dates back to the 1960s, the golden era when "Bobby Orr and the Big, Bad Boston Bruins" (that was the title of a book that we've had since our youth) ruled the hockey world and the B's were the toast of the town.

We recall the bad blood between the Bruins and some of their notable opponents, the Canadiens and the Rangers (among others), and well recall the game when Derek Sanderson got into a fight with a member of the Chicago Black Hawks -- Sandy pulled off an opponent's jersey and then, while skating around the rink, jersey in hand as if it were a trophy, tossed it into the stands (in Chicago!).

Fighting was not merely just a part of the game, it was even expected. Each team had its "enforcer" who could be expected to take a run at the other team's star player, which in turn would trigger a retaliatory run by the enforcer on the other side, and mayhem inevitably would be the result.

We were just youngsters at the time and just accepted it as "part of the game." It was a time when goalies still didn't wear masks and certainly no player wore a helmet.

Times have changed. Goalies wear expensive masks and every player is helmeted. Teams no longer devote a roster spot to an enforcer and rates of fighting have decreased significantly.

But fighting remains a part of the game and is tolerated to an extent not seen in any other sport. The fans still lust for blood and cheer with every punch. ESPN shows the highlights of every fight.

We were thinking about this as we were watching -- and thoroughly enjoying -- the Olympic hockey matches these past two weeks. It was so nice to watch a game with no flights and none of the chippiness and illegal hits that are trademarks of the NHL. The teams just skated relentlessly up and down, without the long delays caused by brawling and fighting.

Fighting remains a vestige of pro hockey's brutal past -- and in our view, the sooner the NHL bans it all together (which it could easily do with harsher penalties than just a five-minute major), the better.

The time has come to retire the Rodney Dangerfield joke, "I went to a fight the other night, and a hockey game broke out."

## FILINGS (from pg. 1)

ad-hoc fundraising during crises. It ensures Boston can respond faster, more equitably, and with greater stability for residents facing sudden emergencies.

Home Rule Petition reforming the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and An Ordinance modernizing and increasing transparency at the Zoning Board of Appeals:

This coordinated ZBA reform package modernizes Boston's zoning process by increasing transparency, creating formal City Council oversight, strengthening conflict-of-interest safeguards, expanding representation, including renters, neighborhood voices, and environmental expertise, and improving public access to hearings, records, and decision-making data. Together, these proposals respond directly to feedback from residents across our district about fairness, accountability, and accessibility at the Zoning Board of

Appeal, helping ensure development decisions are more transparent, equitable, and aligned with neighborhood needs while rebuilding public trust.

Resolution recognizing March as Women's History Month reaffirms Boston's commitment to advancing gender equity and protecting women's rights, especially as many women continue to face economic, health, and safety disparities. It honors the historic contributions of women in Boston and signals the City's commitment to local leadership and action at a time when federal protections for women's rights are being challenged.

Last month, Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata filed her initial legislative proposals, including a resolution in support of Bill SD.3607: An Act Protecting Access to Justice; hearings on coastal protection funding, reviving the "Red Shirts" pro-

gram to assist with basic city services, and addressing drink spiking and drug-facilitated sexual assault; an ordinance establishing street food carts in the City of Boston; and a resolution condemning the unlawful killing of Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti by federal ICE agents.

During this term, Councilor Coletta Zapata will serve as Chair of the Committee on Government Operations and Vice President of the Boston City Council. The Boston City Council meets on Wednesdays at 12pm in the Iannella Chamber of Boston City Hall. City Council meetings and hearings can be found at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/city-council>

For additional information please contact the Office of Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata by phone at (617) 635-3200 or by email at [gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov](mailto:gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov).

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151.

We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to [deb@reverejournal.com](mailto:deb@reverejournal.com).

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PATRIOT-BRIDGE**

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# Applications now accepted for The 2026 Lt. Michael P. Quinn Scholarship

Applications are being accepted for the 57th annual Lt. Michael P. Quinn Scholarship and the winner will receive \$20,000 for the first year of college and the opportunity to receive \$10,000 for the second year. The application form must be received by April 15, 2026 and can be downloaded at [www.quinnscholarship.org](http://www.quinnscholarship.org). The criteria include promise of academic success, athletic achievement, responsible citizenship, and financial need.

## Banquet set for March 28, 2026

The annual Quinn Scholarship banquet will be held at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 545 Medford Street, Charlestown on Saturday, March 28, with dinner prepared by Sandra McLaughlin and entertainment provided by Alan La Bella. Ticket cost is \$50 and can be purchased by E-Mail at [maryfitzpatrick10@comcast.net](mailto:maryfitzpatrick10@comcast.net) or you can contact Ronan FitzPatrick by phone at (617) 242-5493.

2025 Quinn Scholar Grace Gans Linnane, an East Boston High School graduate who is matriculating at Assumption College, will be recognized at the event. Featured speaker for the evening will be U.S. Marine Corps Brigadier General Joseph A. Katz, a native of Boston and Commanding General/4th Marine Logistics

Group. General Katz enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1995 and holds a Bachelor of Science in Power Plant and Facilities Engineering from Massachusetts Maritime Academy as well as a Master of Business Administration from the Naval Postgraduate School and Master of Strategic Studies from the Marine Corps War College. He also deployed with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Special Operations Unit (2002), and served as Military Transition Team Advisor in Fallujah, Iraq (2005) and Logistics Commander during Operation Enduring Freedom in Helmand Province, Afghanistan (2012).

## The ultimate sacrifice

AUGUST 29, 1969: As "H Company" platoon leaders huddled in the darkness of the Quang Nam Province in South Vietnam, U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Michael Quinn was tasked with leading his infantry unit on a reconnaissance mission to seek a water supply and identify enemy troop movement. Stealthily executing their directive, Quinn and his troops happened upon a large invading enemy force heading in the direction of "H Company." Realizing that the only way to alert his fellow marines of the dire situation

was to draw fire on his position, Quinn dispatched members of his unit back to "H Company" and engaged the enemy. While that fateful decision resulted in Lt. Michael Quinn making the "ultimate sacrifice," it also prevented the loss of many lives.

Fellow Marine John Krga recalls: "I had the honor and privilege of serving under Lt. Mike and remember that fateful day all too well as a group of us volunteered to retrieve him, hoping he was still alive. I am not surprised to see that Mike's memory lives on through the people he touched just as he lives on in me."

Lt. Michael P. Quinn was recognized for his bravery and awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart and is honored on Panel 18W, Row 8 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C.

## A life remembered

Noted for his academic and athletic achievement, Michael Quinn accomplished so much in his 23 years. He was a product of his Walford Way working-class upbringing where looking out for your neighbor, respecting elders, hard work and "having your friend's back" were ingrained in him at an early age.

Michael graduated from Boston

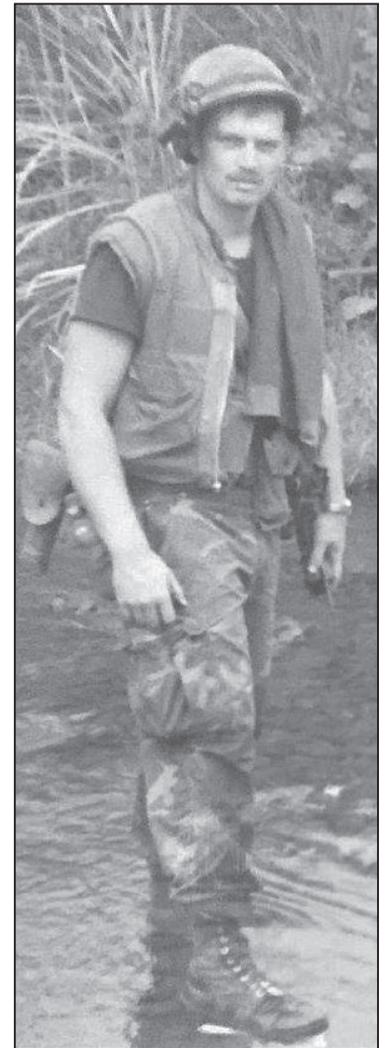
Latin High School and the College of the Holy Cross where he captained the football and hockey teams and achieved Hall of Fame status at both institutions establishing a reputation as a ferocious competitor.

After graduating from college, Michael attended Officer Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia and finished first in his class. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1968, assigned to "H" Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Division and deployed to Vietnam.

To continue Mike's legacy, the Lt. Michael P. Quinn Scholarship was established in 1969 by his family and friends (most notably Eddie Johnson, Stephen Driscoll and Ronan FitzPatrick) and more than \$350,000 has been awarded to "Townie" high school graduates looking to pursue a college education. While the anguish of Michael's loss is palpable so many years after his passing, the inspiration of his legacy - recounted annually by Quinn Scholarship committee members and esteemed guest speakers - is truly special.

*"Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference. The U.S. Marines don't have that problem."*

~ Ronald Reagan



Lt. Michael P. Quinn

## Some residents raise concerns about anti-drone effort

By Dylan Shobe

With millions expected to descend onto the World Cup this spring, some Boston residents voiced concerns about the implementation of anti-drone technology that might be deployed to monitor the games.

They said they are suspicious about what would happen to the technology when the matches are over and who will have access to it, given preexisting surveillance devices in Boston.

They also recall this month's spectacle in El Paso, Texas, when US Customs and Border Protection agents used an anti-military laser to shoot down what they said were cartel-linked drones, only to discover they were party balloons.

"We're hungry for order, we're hungry for structure and I'm hungry to hear what logistics will look like because we haven't heard anything," said Eryn-Ashlei Bailey, a member of the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council.

The state announced last month that it received \$21.2 million in grant funding from the federal government to cover safety measures, including additional personnel and methods to detect, destroy or disable malicious-drone activi-

ty at the World Cup. The investment will ensure state and local law enforcement agencies "are equipped to safeguard residents and visitors during events like the World Cup," said public safety and security Secretary Gina Kwon in a press release.

The grants include nearly \$11 million for the Boston Police Department, nearly \$4 million for the Foxborough Police Department and nearly \$7 million for the Massachusetts Police Department.

Funding comes from the federal Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems Grant Program, which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"These grants will help state and local police agencies bolster security, training and equipment to keep residents and visitors safe throughout the games and surrounding celebrations," Gov. Maura Healey said in a press release announcing the grants.

The grants are part of a larger \$500-million initiative that will be split over the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years, according to FEMA documents. The World Cup and America 250 celebrations will receive priority, with unallocated funds directed to next year.

FIFA World Cup 2026™ will

be staged across 16 host cities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and include 104 matches. It is expected to attract 5 million people.

Boston will host seven matches this summer at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, according to Boston Host Committee for the World Cup's website.

In addition, thousands are expected to descend onto Boston City Hall Plaza to celebrate the game in the heart of the city, and World Cup watch parties will be held throughout the neighborhoods.

Authorities have said that as part of their World Cup planning, they aim to keep the public safe.

Bailey said that she is concerned about counter-drone technology deployed in communities that face constant pressure from Immigration Customs and Enforcement agents. She said she also worries about overpolicing people in communities of color who are fearful of ICE.

"People are afraid," she said. "Then you're bringing in this mass, powerful technology. The default would be, 'We don't want this technology. We want to pro-

(DRONES Pg. 5)

## DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

The Charlestown Democratic Ward 2 Committee will hold their caucus to choose delegates to the Democratic State Convention on **March 19, 2026**, at the Charlestown Branch of the Boston Public Library at 179 Main Street. The Chair will call the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. You must be a registered Democrat, residing in Charlestown to vote. For further information, please contact Chairperson Paul Hollien [paul.hollien@gmail.com](mailto:paul.hollien@gmail.com)



**Bunker Hill  
Community College**

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Bunker Hill Community College invites proposals to operate shuttle bus services. The successful proposer will be responsible for all phases of shuttle service operations within BHCC.

The Request for Proposal BHCTAS26 is available to download from the College's website. Please visit <https://www.bhcc.edu/news/>. The deadline for proposal submission is April 03, 2026.

Bunker Hill Community College  
250 New Rutherford Avenue, Boston, MA 02129  
[bhcc.edu](http://bhcc.edu)

## DIDOMENICO HIGHLIGHTS LITERACY BILL AHEAD OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE NEGOTIATIONS

Senator Sal DiDomenico spoke at the Educators for Excellence panel discussion, which was centered around his early literacy bill that has been passed through the Senate and House. DiDomenico highlighted the urgent need to get his bill signed into law, “we can all agree that teaching our kids to read and write is one of the most important skills we can instill in them, but far too many children in

our schools are not meeting basic literacy benchmarks. Working with our teachers and administrators, this legislation will institute evidence-based curriculum to ensure all our students’ success in early literacy and give them the bright futures they deserve. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House to put this bill on the Governor’s desk for her signature.”

DiDomenico was appointed as the lead Senate negotiator on the conference committee with

the House to reconcile differences between the two literacy bills that each chamber approved. The first

conference committee meeting will be in the State House this week.



Senator Sal DiDomenico speaking at the Educators for Excellence panel.



Senator Sal DiDomenico alongside Educators for Excellence organizers and speakers.

## The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy announces its 2026 winter programming lineup

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy announced its 2026 winter programmatic lineup, featuring interactive light displays, seasonal attractions, and new family-friendly experiences designed to bring energy, wonder, and community to Downtown Boston throughout the cold-weather months.

Continuing the Conservancy’s commitment to vibrant placemaking year-round, this winter’s programming transforms The Greenway into a playful, illuminated landscape where residents and visitors alike can explore, connect, and celebrate the season.

### WINTERACTIVE on The Greenway: Trumpet Flowers by Amigo & Amigo

As part of Downtown Boston Alliance’s annual WINTERACTIVE exhibition, the Conservancy is excited to present Trumpet Flowers by acclaimed design studio Amigo & Amigo at Dewey Square through March 2026. Trumpet Flowers is supported by the Greenway Business Improvement District (BID), and features luminous, trumpet-shaped blooms inspired by vintage gramophones and musical instruments. The glowing sculptures will create a warm and whimsical gathering place, inviting passersby to pause,

interact, and experience art in an unexpected winter setting.

### The Frostival Ferris Wheel on The Greenway with Extended Carousel Hours

For the first time, the Greenway Conservancy plans to host a 76-foot gondola Ferris Wheel adjacent to the Greenway Carousel during the month of February 2026, as part of Meet Boston’s city-wide winter campaign, Boston Frostival. The Frostival Ferris Wheel on The Greenway will offer riders sweeping views of Boston Harbor and the North End, adding a spectacular new winter attraction to Downtown Boston.

To complement the Frostival Ferris Wheel on The Greenway, the Greenway Carousel will extend its season through February, giving families another whimsical way to experience the park during Boston Frostival and enjoy harbor-inspired rides in the heart of winter.

Both the Greenway Carousel and the Frostival Ferris Wheel will feature complimentary community days courtesy of Highland Street Foundation, where riders both young and old can enjoy a spin on either attraction for free.

The Carousel will be free to ride on Thursday, February 19, from 12 to 8 p.m., and the Ferris Wheel will be free to ride on Friday, February 20, from 12 to 9 p.m.

If your organization is interested in sponsoring a free day of fun, you can reach out to us at [eventproposals@rosekennedygreenway.org](mailto:eventproposals@rosekennedygreenway.org).

### Introducing the Greenway Winter Playway Map

This winter, the Conservancy will debut a new Greenway Winter Playway Map, designed to help families explore The Greenway and Downtown Boston even as temperatures drop and snow begins to fall. The playful guide will highlight winter-friendly routes, activities, and points of interest, encouraging children and caregivers to stay active and curious all season long. A limited number of printed copies will be available for a limited time at the Greenway Carousel, and families can also download a printable version via the link above.

### Winter Lights in the North End

To brighten the darker months, festive Greenway Winter Lights will return to the North End, sponsored by the Greenway Business Improvement District (BID), transforming the park into a glowing evening destination. The illuminated displays will enhance the seasonal atmosphere and provide a welcoming backdrop for winter strolls, neighborhood visits, and after-dinner walks through the

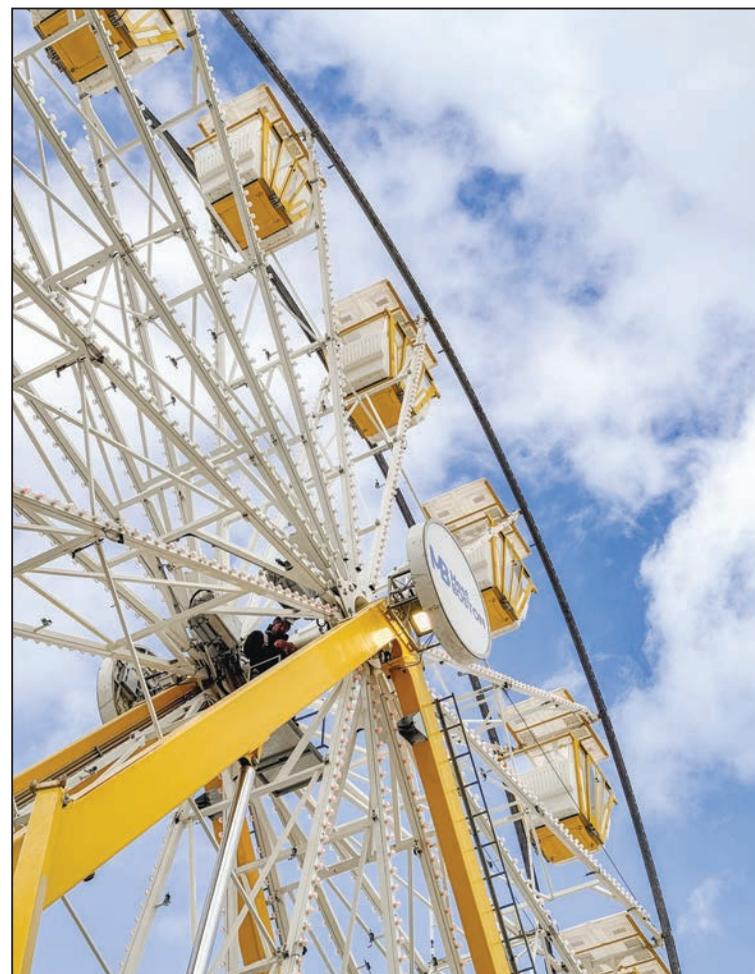


PHOTO COURTESY GREENWAY CONSERVANCY STAFF

The Frostival Ferris Wheel.

city. The REDNOSE Holiday Lights & Decor team installed the lights in the park and used more than 3,000 bulbs to illuminate the per-

golas in the North End! The lights will be on view through February 23.

**DRONES** (from pg. 3)

tect our neighbors.’”  
 She said she hopes authorities will hold public conversations in communities near the World Cup, including Boston, about how these safety measures would be used.

David Chase Brewster III, another neighborhood council member, said while JP will be a distance away from the Boston World Cup matches, he is concerned about the increasing use of technology by people with bad intentions and by the government, which is supposed to protect the

people.  
 Drones are inexpensive, small and easy to hide, he said.  
 “I see this being a concern of the Boston police,” said Brewster. “I would be happy if bad guys aren't driving drones into my house.”

*Dylan Shobe is a student in the Boston University Journalism program. This story is a partnership between the Charlestown Patriot-Bridge and the Boston University Journalism program.*

**GREENWAY** (from pg. 4)

“We hope these winter programs inspire families to bundle up and rediscover the beauty of our city’s green spaces,” said Eileen Ong, Director of Programs and Outreach at the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy. “The Greenway becomes something truly special in winter, and these fun, festive experiences invite people of all ages to explore, play, and make memories together.”

**Discover The Greenway in Every Season**

While many associate The Greenway with warmer months, the park remains an inviting destination all winter long. Visitors can enjoy the unique beauty of the Conservancy’s gardens as they transition into dormancy, revealing winter interest such as evergreens, textured seed pods, ornamental grasses, and vibrant pops of color from winterberry and holly bushes that attract birds throughout the colder months.

Open lawns across the park also provide space for spontaneous winter fun, from snow play to peaceful seasonal strolls after a fresh snowfall.

No matter the weather, The Greenway offers visitors countless opportunities to explore and engage with Public Art, and this winter is no exception. In Chinatown, Misa Chhan’s Year of the Snake is on display, encouraging visitors to reflect on the themes of legacy and resilience of Cambodian diasporic communities, as well as a series of flags featuring the Chinese character fu, meaning ‘blessing’ and ‘luck’. Chhan’s installations are on display through the end of January 2026.

In Dewey Square, Jewery Gibson’s your spirit whispering in my ear continues to shine bright in the heart of downtown Boston with its brilliant colors and geometric designs. Featuring the artist’s own handwritten text and a series of found objects from his materials archive, the mural invites viewers to find inspiration in past and present generations, the planet,

the universe, and all living things surrounding us. Gibson’s mural is on display through April 2026.

Farther north, near the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Seaport Boulevard, Ja’Hari Ortega’s Big Hoops to Fill continues to delight park goers both young and young at heart, and remains open throughout the winter months, paying homage to the door knocker bamboo hoop earrings popularized in the 80s and 90s. This working swing set is a tribute to the themes of rest and play and an invitation to reclaim recreation and relaxation as a practice of radical care. Ortega’s installation is on display through October 2026.

In addition, a lighting and pathways improvement project led by MassDOT is currently underway and will continue over the next several weeks. These enhancements will improve visibility, safety, and accessibility throughout the Dewey Square and Fort Point Channel areas of the park, creating a brighter, more welcoming experience for winter visitors.

**Stay Connected**

Please note that all programming is subject to weather conditions and final permitting. The Conservancy’s calendar is updated regularly with the latest information. Follow the Greenway Conservancy on Facebook and Instagram (@rosekennedygreenway) and sign up for the weekly e-newsletter to stay informed.

The Rose Kennedy Greenway is a contemporary public park in the heart of Boston and one of the most visited attractions in the Commonwealth, welcoming millions of visitors annually. The Greenway is managed by the Greenway Conservancy, a non-profit responsible for the care and activation of the park. The majority of the Conservancy’s annual budget is made up of generous community donations that help cultivate a gathering space where all are welcome and celebrated.

**DiDomenico celebrates new Community Health and Nutrition Center**

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Last week, Senator Sal DiDomenico attended the Greater Boston Food Bank’s official launch of The Takeda Center for Community Health and Nutrition in Boston. This Center will create greater access to nutritious and medically tailored food for com-

munities throughout Eastern Massachusetts. The Takeda Center was made possible by a four-year, \$4 million grant from Takeda, the largest-ever donation in the food bank’s history. DiDomenico has been a longtime supporter of the Greater Boston Food Bank and this contribution combined with funding he secures each year will

ensure that more food insecure individuals and families will be reached.

“This extraordinary accomplishment demonstrates the commitment to health, nutrition equity, and community wellness, by both the Food Bank and Takeda” said DiDomenico.



Senator Sal DiDomenico with Catherine D’Amato (third from left), President and CEO of the Greater Boston Food Bank, and Robbie Goldstein (far left), Massachusetts Department of Public Health Commissioner.



# Flynn to hold a hearing on purchasing snow melting machines

On Tuesday, March 3, at 2 p.m. in the Iannella Chamber at City Hall, Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn will hold a hearing to discuss the City of Boston purchasing snow melting machines. The hearing will also cover hearing orders from Councilor Brian Worrell and Councilor Enrique Pepén on other snow removal strategies and the creation of a snow corps.

Residents who would like to testify at the hearing in-person, or virtually via Zoom, are invited to please contact [shane.pac@boston.gov](mailto:shane.pac@boston.gov). If you would like to also provide written testimony, you can email the committee at [ccc.csit@boston.gov](mailto:ccc.csit@boston.gov) or email [ed.flynn@boston.gov](mailto:ed.flynn@boston.gov). Neighbors are also invited to watch the livestream of the hearing at the following link: [www.boston.gov/city-council-tv](http://www.boston.gov/city-council-tv).

Following a significant storm with over 23 inches of snow, Councilor Flynn wrote a letter to both Mayor Wu and Interim Chief of Streets Nick Gove to thank dedicated city employees who worked under extremely difficult conditions. At the same time, Councilor Flynn relayed the areas of opportunity and improvement for the city's response. Due to the feedback he received from dozens of calls, emails, and letters from residents and businesses to their elected officials and public servants, Councilor Flynn advocated for the City of Boston to explore the potential purchase of snow melting machines.

Specifically, Councilor Flynn highlighted reports that New York City deployed eight snow melting machines to remove snow from

streets, sidewalks, and bus stops that would have otherwise taken weeks to melt. New York City has used these melting hot tubs for nearly 20 years, which remove 60-120 tons of snow per hour. In the difficult winter of 2015, the City of Boston rented machines at a cost of approximately \$600,000, while Massport purchased two snow melters for \$555,000 at that time. The city also benefited from New York state lending two for free.

Councilor Flynn noted that District 2 neighbors continue to provide feedback on public safety issues, including difficulties navigating streets and sidewalks and limited accessibility for all (our seniors, persons with disabilities, and young families with strollers), along with restricted access

to fire hydrants and catch basins. Neighbors shared reports of difficulties with road accessibility for first responders (an ambulance on Huntington Avenue), the inability of neighbors and families to return to park cars on snow emergency routes following removal of the parking ban (L Street, First Street, Dorchester Street), and the difficulties of residents to utilize MBTA bus stops (Tremont Street).

In 2015, Boston experienced significant snowfall, with 24.6 inches from January 26-27th, 16.2 inches on February 2nd, and 23.8 inches from February 7-9th. Councilor Flynn echoed the concerns of many constituents on calls for a similar response to the winter of 2015, when many two-way streets were also turned one-way for weeks.

“With significant snowfall an inevitability in Boston, it's critical that the city explores investment in snow melters, and any other equipment, to ensure accessible pathways and roads for all - including first responders, our seniors, persons with disabilities, and young families,” said Councilor Flynn. “On account of the many concerns I've heard on public safety, accessibility, and quality of life - I believe it is critical that we deliver these enhanced basic city services to support both our neighbors and Boston's local economy as well.”

For more information, please contact Councilor Flynn's office at 617-635-3203 or [Ed.Flynn@Boston.gov](mailto:Ed.Flynn@Boston.gov).

## More snow shoveling? Don't let blizzard cleanup blow out your back

### Tips you may not know to avoid injury when shoveling back-to-back snowstorms

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Winter is here with a vengeance, and at this point in the season a lot of shovelers are already feeling it in their aching backs and other body parts. Those living along the East Coast who are experiencing the bombogenesis blizzard are surely dreading cleanup after yet another winter storm. To avoid

putting too much stress on the body, an expert at the University of New Hampshire offers some little-known tips on how to stay physically safe when digging out.

Storm after storm, repetitive shoveling can take a toll on not only the back but also the knees, shoulders, wrists and heart. To avoid any serious injuries, Dain LaRoche, professor of kinesiology

and associate dean for research at UNH, shares some do's and don'ts that you may not know to stay physically safe at any age.

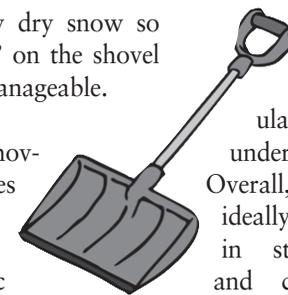
“While it seems simple, shoveling is actually a deceptively high-risk task, similar to other occupational tasks that require frequent lifting of heavy items,” said LaRoche. “It's important to be aware of how to hold the shovel, how to lift the snow and to take it slow.”

Here are some things most people don't realize:

- The Shovel:
  - The shovel head should be kept as close to the body as possible to reduce impact on the lower back.
  - Try to keep the torso as vertical as possible and lift with the legs.
  - Ergonomic shovels that have a bend allow the shovel head to be closer to ground and can help minimize bending.
  - How to Shovel:
    - Pushing snow is better than lifting.
    - Avoid twisting to throw snow sideways, try to shovel snow straight ahead.
    - Try to minimize how high you lift the snow which can increase the workload on back and shoulders. Avoid lifting above the waist.
    - Swap arms periodically to distribute the weight across the body's muscles.
    - Taking smaller shovel loads will reduce the muscular load over time.
    - Wet snow is significantly

heavier than fluffy dry snow so take smaller 'bites' on the shovel to keep the load manageable.

- Warm up:
    - Ease into shoveling until muscles warm up - muscles and tendons are less elastic when cold and may be more susceptible to injury.
    - Wearing proper clothing is important to prevent overheating, sweating and causing additional strain on the cardiovascular system. Layer and remove layers as you get warm, put them back on if you get cold.
    - Take a Break:
      - Be sure to take breaks. If there is a lot to shovel, break it up into sections.
      - Stop when feeling fatigued, strained or weak - when mechanics might be compromised.
      - Heed Heart Warnings:
        - Stop shoveling If you feel lightheaded, have chest pains, irregular heartbeat, dizziness, shortness of breath, joint pain or other significant discomfort.
        - Shoveling is heavy work that people may not be used to and can cause increased stress on heart, lungs and muscles.
- “Shoveling makes the heart work harder because the upper body is doing intense effort while the lower body stays mostly still, which can cause blood to pool in the legs,” said LaRoche.
- This elevated demand underscores the importance of taking



precautions during extreme winter weather events, particularly for individuals with underlying health conditions. Overall, LaRoche reminds that ideally people should engage in strengthening, stretching and cardiovascular exercises throughout the year to stay healthy and help with overall aging but also help condition the body so shoveling is not so burdensome.

LaRoche has expertise in physiology, biomechanics, technology and human performance. His work bridges fundamental discovery with real-world application, examining how exercise and technology can enhance health and functional capacity across the human lifespan, from optimizing elite athletic performance to promoting mobility, independence, and vitality in older adults.

The University of New Hampshire inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 15,000 students from 50 states and 87 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top-ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. A Carnegie Classification R1 institution, UNH partners with NASA, NOAA, NSF, and NIH, and received over \$250 million in competitive external funding in FY24 to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

### BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR & SHOVEL YOUR SIDEWALK

Property owners must clear sidewalks within 3 hours of snowfall ending or 3 hours after sunrise if it snows overnight.

For more winter weather info & resources, visit [Boston.gov/snow](http://Boston.gov/snow)



# Wu backs Ed Markey for Senate, praising record of delivering for Boston

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

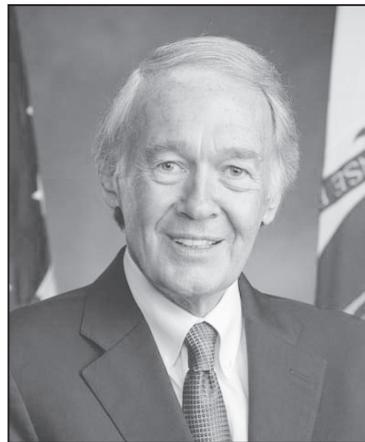
Boston Mayor Michelle Wu announced her endorsement of Ed Markey for re-election to the Senate, citing his unwavering leadership, progressive vision, and record of delivering for the city of Boston.

“Senator Markey has been a longstanding partner for Boston families, standing strong on our values and delivering results by bringing resources and solutions,” said Boston Mayor Michelle Wu. “He is a bold leader on national issues like climate, health care, and economic justice, while also delivering reliable and responsive constituent services for residents



Mayor Michelle Wu

every day. I am grateful for our continued partnership here in Boston and pleased to endorse him for re-election.”



Senator Ed Markey

Since Mayor Wu took office, Senator Markey has worked hand-in-hand with her administration to deliver major federal investments

to Boston – strengthening transit infrastructure, including \$472 million to replace the North Station Draw One Bridge and modernize rail capacity at North Station, advancing clean energy and climate resilience efforts, supporting improvements in Franklin Park, and backing neighborhood initiatives that serve working families and young people. In partnership with Mayor Wu, Senator Markey and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley introduced the Freedom to Move Act to build on Boston’s fare-free transit pilots.

“Mayor Michelle Wu is one of the boldest and most visionary leaders in America today. I am deeply honored to earn Michelle’s

endorsement,” said Senator Ed Markey. “Michelle leads with courage, clarity, and compassion – always putting working families first and never backing down from a tough fight. Michelle and I don’t just share values – we deliver results. From confronting the climate crisis to protecting our immigrant communities, to expanding affordable housing and building a city where every neighborhood can thrive, she is shaping the future of Boston with urgency. Together, we will continue to fight back against Donald Trump’s chaos, protect our neighborhoods, and make sure Boston stays No. 1 – in innovation, in equity, and in opportunity.”

## Boston nonprofit awarded \$1.5 million to link high school learning opportunities to in-demand careers

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

EdVestors, a longtime Boston-based school improvement nonprofit organization, announced it has been awarded \$1.5 million to strengthen its city-wide effort to scale career-connected learning opportunities and deepen students’ sense of purpose, belonging, and social capital. The grant is made by the Pathways Impact Fund, a national initiative of StriveTogether.

“Boston’s young people bring tremendous assets, and it is our responsibility to help them see and pursue the full range of opportunities available,” said Marinell Rousmaniere, CEO of EdVestors. “This investment strengthens our collective work across our city to connect students’ talents and interests to real-world pathways and expand access to experiences that open doors after high school.”

Anchored by over two decades of partnership with Boston Public Schools (BPS) and backed by a growing body of research, EdVestors is a critical local connector focused on driving the systems-level alignment needed to put BPS’s 46,000 students on a path to economic mobility. Core to EdVestors’ strategy is the recognition that students need not just skills but experiences to help them make informed choices and build connections to put those skills to work after high school. Through the New Skills Boston network, which EdVestors facilitates, enrollment in pathways programs, including

health care, life sciences, and business finance has doubled in the last five years, and nearly half of the BPS Class of 2024 completed an internship by graduation.

Over the next three years, EdVestors will expand access to high-quality career pathways for thousands more Boston students while strengthening advising, career-connected learning, and accelerated coursework across the system. Working with key partners, EdVestors will support deeper student engagement and stronger postsecondary transition supports, so more young people enroll in and complete college or career training.

“EdVestors has been a valued partner to Boston Public Schools for more than two decades, helping us strengthen the citywide partnerships that ensure our students graduate prepared for college, career, and life beyond the classroom,” said Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper. “This continued support advances our shared commitment to expanding access to meaningful, career-connected learning experiences so every BPS student can discover their path and pursue their goals with confidence.”

This grant award to EdVestors is part of the Pathways Impact Fund’s \$7.5 million commitment to regional intermediaries working to scale high-quality pathways across five states. Backed by several of the nation’s largest philanthropies, the Fund’s strategy focuses on ensuring that more young

people have access to high-quality advising, accelerated coursework, and career-connected learning that lead to purposeful pathways and economic mobility.

“EdVestors understands that pathways aren’t just about career skills—they’re about helping young people discover who they are and who they can become,” said John Garcia III, executive director of the Pathways Impact Fund. “We’re investing in their continued growth because this is exactly the kind of coordinated, student-centered approach we believe can transform pathways work across the country.”

EdVestors’ mission is to advance equitable, meaningful education that prepares every Boston student to activate their power and shape their future. EdVestors is a school improvement organization that combines strategic investments, content expertise, and collaborative implementation to drive system-level impact in Boston schools. EdVestors works at the classroom, school, and district level, serving as a connector that partners across sectors, a champion that shines a light on the bright spots in Boston schools, and a catalyst for systems change. Since 2002, EdVestors has raised and invested over \$57 million in school improvement efforts. Learn more at [www.edvestors.org](http://www.edvestors.org).

About Pathways Impact Fund  
The Pathways Impact Fund, backed by several of the nation’s largest philanthropies, is a national effort to ensure more young people are on pathways with purpose,

gaining the experiences beginning in high school that build momentum to fulfilling, well-paying careers and economic mobility.

StriveTogether is a national network of community partnerships that bring together neighbors, including youth and families, nonprofits, businesses, schools and more, to work toward a future where youth can thrive in their communities. Cradle to Career

Network members change the way their communities work together by building connections, sharing resources and using data to put more young people on a path to economic mobility. Our work helps young people meet seven key life milestones so that they have the opportunities they need to reach their goals, and, ultimately, thrive. Learn more at [StriveTogether.org](http://StriveTogether.org).

### THE 2026 LT. MICHAEL P. QUINN SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are being accepted for the 57<sup>th</sup> annual Lt. Michael P. Quinn Scholarship. The winner will receive \$20,000 for the first year of college and the opportunity to receive \$10,000 for the second year. Criteria include promise of academic success, athletic achievement, responsible citizenship, and financial need. Download at [www.quinnscholarship.org](http://www.quinnscholarship.org).  
Application deadline April 15, 2026



### The 57<sup>th</sup> Michael P Quinn Scholarship Dinner Dance

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## BEACON HILL WOMEN'S FORUM HOSTS GUEST SPEAKER MEREDITH GOLDSTEIN

Photos & Story by Marianne Salza

Associate editor for The Boston Globe, Meredith Goldstein, presented "Love in the Modern Age: Insights from an Advice Columnist" during the February 10 Beacon Hill Women's Forum at The Union Club of Boston. The feature writer shared her relationship perspectives, and how her work has changed in this digital age since she began her "Love Letters" column, and later, podcast, in 2009.

"Opinions I have have radically changed. Back then, I was like, 'Be polite. You can't ask someone out by text,' and now I would say, 'Call them? They're going to think there's an emergency,'" exclaimed Goldstein. "The boundaries and the way people talk have changed so much."

Born in New Jersey and raised in Maryland, Goldstein attended Syracuse University, where she met many people with ties to Boston. Their love for their home, and investment in the city's news coverage attracted Goldstein.

At the difficult time when Goldstein began her journalism career, organizations were starting to shrink; but she convinced The Boston Globe of the value in the topic of love. For hundreds of years, advice columns have been historical commentary on the dynamics of domestic life and relationships.

"Love Letters" was one of the first features in The Boston Globe to be reverse published: questions were posted and commented on first, and then published in print.

"The internet is a meaner, scarier place now, but it can also be wonderful," admitted Goldstein.

"2009 was a beautiful time. When we first started 'Love Letters' I would post a question, and people would comment, but we were manually approving the comments. Then it became automated. Some days I think we should go back."

The "Love Letters" storytelling podcast highlights the unique experience of individual stories and has become popular, with the majority of listeners being women between the ages of 25-45. Fifty-percent or more of guest speakers are coupled, but some are single. Goldstein hopes to share a broad range of stories from people of all ages.

"I think couples are looking for virtual community through a podcast, a parasocial relationship with people they don't know, and answers on how to keep their lives bigger," said Goldstein.

Considering the comments that she receives from wives mentioning that "Love Letters" is the first column their husbands read in the morning, and from men who do not yet accept themselves as her demographic, Goldstein estimates that readers of her column are predominantly male between the ages of 55-70.

"This excites me," embraced Goldstein. "I also think there's some sexism and misogyny. I think, back in the day, there was some assumption that it wasn't important. In 2026, I don't face that anymore. I think everybody at The Boston Globe thinks there are more important things than 'Love Letters' but understands how love and how we love each other is tied to everything."



Beacon Hill Women's Forum members gathered at The Union Club of Boston for the February 10 presentation by Boston Globe reporter, Meredith Goldstein.

Topics range from the loneliness epidemic, health insurance laws, public policy, and finances, to break-ups and lessons learned, as well as gender, infidelity, relationship structure, privacy, happiness, and the search for love.

"I happen to think there's a 'Love Letters' story on every person's beat," said Goldstein, who compared the week leading up to Valentine's Day to her Super Bowl.

Goldstein recalled having read an early 20th century Yiddish advice column based in New York.

(BHWF Pg. 9)



Meredith Goldstein, feature writer for The Boston Globe's "Love Letters" column and podcast, describing love in the digital age.



Danielle Bodley, Pam Bugbee, Sarah Perry, Sharon Cantor, and Annie Newman.



Julie Madjar, Mary Beth Kelley, Meredith Braunstein, and Mimi Sun.

**BHWF** (from pg. 8)

Some issues, like suddenly stopping communication – referred to as ghosting today – are relatable at any time in history.

Social media-related problems; however, are different. With the prominence of remote work, people often have difficulty connecting.

“Feeling lonely because the internet tells you you are lacking is a problem,” Goldstein stressed. “When apps became the primary way people were dating, what I saw was a level of dating fatigue that I felt was like a health condition. People would say to me, ‘I’m so tired, but I feel like if I don’t swipe all night, I could be missing someone.’”

Goldstein, who has been reporting on love for 17 years, considers herself to be a more passive advice columnist who will ask a guest how he or she feels about a relationship, basing her response on the fragment of relationship information she receives.

“Universally, loss is horrible. Grief is hard,” Goldstein explained about a common theme she observes. “A lot of people now don’t know if they’re doing okay. This has long been a thing. There’s not a lot that celebrates what we have, and that can skew our perspective of all the great things we have.”

In addition to her successful “Love Letters” column, Goldstein – who lives in Boston with a collection of romance books and a cotton candy machine -- is the author of young adult novels, “Chemistry Lessons,” and “Things that Grow,” as well as the memoir, “Can’t Help Myself: Lessons and Confessions from a Modern Advice Columnist.”

Read or submit to Meredith Goldstein’s “Love Letters” column by visiting [Boston.com/LoveLetters](http://Boston.com/LoveLetters).



Linda Blessing, Meredith Braunstein, and Perla Fernandez, BHWF Vice President and Graphic Designer.



New BHWF members, Jen Corapi, Kaitlyn Bricker, and Jackie DiPersio.



Grace Lee and Nancy Chabot, BHWF Program Co-Directors, with speaker, Meredith Goldstein, and Janine Jay, BHWF Co-President.



Linda Blessing, Maryellen Callanan, BHWF Book Group Co-Director, and Dina Yorke.



Grace Lee, BHWF Program Co-Director, and Ying Cao.

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# Downtown Boston records region's fastest office-market recovery rate

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Downtown Boston is currently experiencing the fastest post-pandemic office market recovery of all primary office districts in the region, according to a new report released last week by the Downtown Boston Alliance (DBA).

The DBA service area, which comprises Downtown Crossing and much of the Financial District, recorded its sixth consecutive quarter of declining vacancy, according to the Newmark Q4 2025 Office Report. Since reaching its pandemic-era peak, the district's vacancy rate has improved by 3.3 percent. This recovery rate is more than double the 1.5 percent improvement seen in the Back Bay while also significantly outpacing Kendall/East Cambridge and elsewhere.

"The data is clear: Downtown Boston is recovering faster than any other major office hub in the area, and there is a palpable new

energy as more companies and workers enter the neighborhood more often," stated Michael J. Nichols, president of the DBA, in a press release. "Now, intuitively, the region's most accessible office district is also the most rapidly healing one from the scars of the pandemic."

Added Liz Berthelette, head of Northeast Research and National Life Science Research for Newmark: "Downtown Boston's office core is quietly putting together one of the most durable recoveries in the region, with the Downtown Boston Alliance area posting several consecutive quarters of improving fundamentals. Positive tenant movement from firms like HarbourVest and Schneider Electric, together with the steady repositioning of obsolete office assets to alternative uses, have meaningfully reduced vacancy and reinforced the appeal of the submarket. Looking ahead, the DBA area is poised to build on this momen-

tum, as a constrained development pipeline, ongoing office-to-residential activity, and strong, transit-oriented demand set the stage for continued strengthening of office market fundamentals."

The DBA area distinguished itself in the fourth quarter as the only submarket in the region, which also includes the Back Bay, Kendall/East Cambridge, and the Seaport District, to achieve a 'trifecta' of encouraging indicators, including simultaneous positive net absorption; declining vacancy; and increasing asking rents, respectively.

The completion of Winthrop Tower (with 812,000 square feet of now almost-entirely-leased Trophy/Class A+ office space) and the reinvestment of several property owners, including Synergy Investment at 101 Arch and DivcoWest at 1 Lincoln, also show the neighborhood is rapidly aligning with post-pandemic tenant demands.

Furthermore, 1.2 million square feet of DBA-area office buildings are in the process of converting to other uses, including residential, hotels, and experiential retail, out of the 16.6 million square feet. Two projects are now complete, with another 15 "office-to-everything" conversion projects in the pipeline.

"We've always believed in the strength and resilience of Boston," said David Greaney, Chief Executive Officer of Synergy. "The latest Newmark report shows meaningful signs of stabilization downtown, and our recent acquisitions of 99 High and 101 Arch reflect our continued confidence in the city's resurgence and our commitment to shaping its next chapter. The fundamentals that make Boston exceptional - its world-class institutions, leading universities, and unparalleled talent base - aren't going anywhere. As innovation accelerates, particularly in AI and founder-led growth, we

see Boston uniquely positioned to lead, and we intend to invest alongside that momentum."

Other factors cited for the area's rapid recovery rate by tenants include its transit performance as subway ridership at DBA-area stations increased every quarter of 2025, surpassing 4.4 million rides in Q4.

Also, city-supported initiatives like Color Flows, Boston Blooms, and the DBA's Winteractive art exhibition, which drew 800,000 visitors in 2025, along with overall year-round programming, have helped boost the area's foot traffic toward a milestone of 3 million monthly.

Moreover, tenant interest has risen as city-sponsored programs, like the S.P.A.C.E. grant program and Creative Enterprises initiative and the DBA's own business-attraction efforts, have led to a 50-percent decline in retail vacancy.

# Licensing Board approves five liquor license upgrades for beer and wine applicants

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The Boston Licensing Board recently approved five applications from beer and wine licensees upgrading to non-transferable all alcoholic beverages licenses. The approved applicants include Life Time and Trident Booksellers in the Back Bay, Mi Pueblito Orient Heights in East Boston, and Little Sage and Pappare Ristorante in the North End. The Licensing Board will send the five applications to the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission for investigation and final approval.

"These upgraded liquor licenses will strengthen our communities, connect our residents to more vibrant spaces and expand opportunities for our entrepreneurs," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm thrilled for these businesses and continue to encourage restaurants to take advantage of this upgrade and apply for an available liquor license. As these businesses con-

tinue to grow and thrive, the City will continue to do all we can as a partner to make this process easy and convenient for businesses across neighborhoods."

As part of the Fiscal Year 2026 Massachusetts State Budget, the State Legislature gave municipalities across Massachusetts the opportunity to opt into legislation that allows licensees permitted to sell only wines and malt beverages to trade in their license for a non-transferable all alcoholic beverages license.

Mayor Michelle Wu introduced this legislation to the City Council, and on September 20, the City Council approved the adoption of this legislation. On October 21, the Boston Licensing Board held an informational hearing to receive public feedback from licensees and opened a public comment period, which closed on December 3. On January 8, the Board voted on the final regulations. The guidelines

include eliminating the need for a community process for anyone who has already completed the process in the past two years. On January 29, the Board approved the first five beer and wine upgrades—these businesses were the first in Massachusetts to take advantage of this legislation.

"We are grateful for the opportunity the City is providing with the upgrade to an all alcohol license," said Courtney Flynn, Co-Owner of Trident Booksellers and Cafe. "As a family-owned small business for 40 years, we are always looking for ways to better serve our community. We believe this upgrade will provide a more robust experience for our customers, whether they are attending one of our events, hosting a private party, or dining solo. The license will help us continue to grow and maintain our place as a vibrant, welcoming space in the heart of Back Bay."

"This is exactly how the new legislation was intended to work," said Kathleen Joyce, Chair of the Boston Licensing Board. "We have created a pathway for existing beer and wine establishments to expand. We're pleased to see strong interest and will continue reviewing applications and moving them through the approval process."

The beer and wine upgrades, alongside the 2024 influx of new liquor licenses, enhance the City's ability to support diverse local entrepreneurs and boost economic growth.

After Mayor Wu and the Boston City Council filed a successful Home Rule Petition, Governor Maura Healey signed legislation on September 11, 2024, bringing 225 new liquor licenses to Boston. This batch was the single largest addition to Boston's liquor license quota since the end of Prohibition. With this influx, the City is able to support diverse local entrepreneurs and boost economic growth. Specifically, the legislation created:

195 zip code-restricted licenses (both all alcohol and beer and wine) in Charlestown, Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roslindale, Roxbury, South End, and West Roxbury, to be granted to the City over three calendar years

15 all alcohol licenses for community spaces, including non-profits, small theaters, and outdoor spaces

12 transferable all alcohol licenses

3 all alcohol neighborhood restricted licenses in Oak Square, Brighton

On December 18, the City of Boston Licensing Board approved the first three transferable all alcohol licenses. The Board approved applications from Ama, the new restaurant in Allston from Comfort Kitchen's Pearl & Law Hospitality Group; Leather District coffeshop Gracenote; and Merengue Express in Mission Hill.

In total, the Board has approved over 60 liquor license applications. In early 2025, the Licensing Board approved 37 new liquor licenses.

During the summer, the Licensing Board approved 21 neighborhood restricted licenses and three community space licenses. This fall, the Board approved four neighborhood restricted licenses, and on December 18, approved the first three transferable all alcohol licenses.

Potential applicants—both for new licenses and those interested in upgrading beer and wine licenses—are encouraged to start the process as soon as possible. The Mayor's Office of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, the Office of Neighborhood Services, and the Office of Small Business staff will continue to support potential applicants. The City of Boston Licensing Board hosts virtual office hours addressing the liquor license application process. Applicants can also make a drop-in appointment with the Boston Licensing Board at City Hall, Room 809 by contacting 617-635-4170 or emailing [licensingboard@boston.gov](mailto:licensingboard@boston.gov).

When reviewing additional applications, the Board will continue to factor in evolving neighborhood needs, market realities, the strength and sustainability of an establishment's business plan, and the applicant's ability to further economic growth for surrounding businesses.

Learn more about applying for a liquor license or upgrading an existing license on the Licensing Board website.

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# Winning proposals of the participatory budgeting initiative announced

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Office of Participatory Budgeting (OPB) announced the winning projects of the second cycle of the Participatory Budgeting Initiative, "Ideas in Action." The eight winning proposals reflect priorities identified and selected by Boston residents and will direct \$2.2 million in community-driven investments across the City.

The winning proposals include: Immigrant Legal Defense Fund, Neighborhood Fresh Food Access Initiative, Bridging the Gap: Assistance for Housing Stability, Immigrant Career Pathways: Bridging Language and Employment, Green My Block, Workforce Training Programs Focused on Trades, Youth Financial Literacy and Empowerment Workshops, and Small Business Development Resource Program.

As part of the participatory budgeting process, residents submitted ideas for how the City should allocate \$2.2 million. Community members then helped shape and refine proposals alongside city staff for the voting phase. Following a public voting period, residents selected the projects that will receive funding beginning the spring of 2026.

"Participatory budgeting continues to demonstrate what is possible when residents have a direct voice in shaping Boston's future," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "The projects selected this year reflect our communities' focus on housing stability, immigration support, workforce opportunity, youth empowerment, small business growth, and climate resilience. We are grateful to every resident who

participated and look forward to implementing these investments across our neighborhoods."

Participatory budgeting was established following voter approval of a ballot measure in 2021. Mayor Wu and the Boston City Council adopted the ordinance establishing the office in 2023. Each year, funding from the City's operating budget is invested in one-time and non-recurring community-driven projects across Boston.

The process is open to all Boston residents aged 11 and older, regardless of citizenship status. Voting is available in multiple languages and accessible both online and in person, with outreach conducted in partnership with community-based organizations and City departments to ensure broad participation. This cycle, a total of 4,841 votes were collected from residents across the city.

"Through collaboration with community partners, guidance from the Office's External Oversight Board, and partnerships with City departments, we worked to build on the success of the inaugural cycle and strengthen accessibility and equity in this second round," said Renato Castelo, Director of the Office of Participatory Budgeting. "We look forward to advancing implementation to ensure these investments are delivered effectively and translate into measurable progress across the city."

Each of the eight winning proposals will receive dedicated funding, and relevant departments will oversee its implementation. Details on each proposal are to the right.

Rank	Votes	Proposal	Funding	Lead Department
1	3733	Immigrant Legal Defense Fund	\$400,000	Office of Immigrant Advancement
2	3035	Neighborhood Fresh Food Access Initiative	\$500,000	Office of Food Justice
3	2805	Bridging the Gap: Assistance for Housing Stability	\$200,000	Mayor's Office of Housing
4	2091	Immigrant Career Pathways: Bridging Language and Employment	\$300,000	Office of Workforce Development
5	1930	Green My Block	\$100,000	Office of Green Infrastructure
6	1661	Workforce Training Programs Focused on Trades	\$300,000	Office of Workforce Development
7	1556	Youth Financial Literacy and Empowerment Workshops	\$250,000	Center for Working Families
8	1202	Small Business Development Resource Program	\$150,000	Office of Small Business

The Office of Participatory Budgeting will work with the lead departments on next steps for implementation later this year.

The Office of Participatory Budgeting (OPB) provides an offi-

cial point of entry for Boston residents to contribute to the City's budget process. OPB continues to advance its mission by furthering public engagement and direct democratic involvement, building

collective capacity on issues of racial and social justice, and aligning with the City's goal of achieving and embedding equity and inclusion into City practices.

## Orange line will be suspended between Back Bay and Forest Hills for nine days

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The MBTA is reminding riders that Orange Line service will be suspended between Back Bay and Forest Hills for nine consecutive days, February 28 – March 8.

The MBTA will continue signal upgrade and modernization work on the Orange Line. By upgrading and modernizing its signals, the MBTA will significantly increase operational efficiency and improve scheduling reliability for riders.

Riders can find complete information at [mbta.com/OrangeLine](http://mbta.com/OrangeLine). More information on these service changes and alternate travel options is below:

Free and accessible shuttle buses will make stops between Back Bay and Forest Hills.

Riders are also encouraged to consider the Commuter Rail for

fare-free service between Forest Hills, Ruggles, Back Bay, and South Station. The trip between Forest Hills and Back Bay on the Commuter Rail is approximately 10 minutes.

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More information is also available through in-station signage and public announcements. Transit Ambassadors and MBTA staff will be available on-site to offer information and assistance during these service changes. Riders are encouraged to subscribe to T-Alerts or to follow the MBTA

on X @MBTA for up-to-date service information.

For more information, please visit [mbta.com/OrangeLine](http://mbta.com/OrangeLine) or connect with the T on X @ MBTA, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or TikTok @thembta.

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## FRESH AND LOCAL

# Eat your roots

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

This column began as guidance on eating seasonally by including lots of root vegetables in your winter menus. Then Ed suggested we also include the ties that many cultures have to specific root vegetables.

He was right. His Italian family never included rutabaga in their meals. However, it was often on the tables of Penny's Irish family, and it was a must for holiday meals. Moreover, her family often referred to it as "Swede."

### Familiar Roots

You may not have considered how many of your food choices come from family history. Most of us have a few universally loved roots in our pantry: potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, beets, and sweet potatoes, which are having their moment in the sun.

If you have Asian ancestors, your supplies might include ginger, galangal, turmeric, ginseng, water chestnut, lotus root, and daikon.

Climate and growing conditions often make root vegetables a staple in a given area. In Eastern Europe and the Scandinavian countries, ancestors survived on what they could grow and store for their diets. Those diets are heavy in potatoes, turnips, parsnips, and beets.

Some tropical cultures embrace cassava, jicama, yams, and salsify. Without realizing it, you may be using other root preparations like arrowroot, tapioca, and horseradish.

### New Flavors

Shopping trips to supermarkets and stores catering to other cultures have enabled us to try Jerusalem artichokes, kohlrabi, rutabaga, turnips, celeriac, parsnip, and burdock. Some of these are popping

up in traditional produce sections, making it easy to buy a sample to add variety to your winter roots.

### Root Preparations

We most often roast, boil, and mash our root vegetables, or add those that can be eaten raw, such as radishes, carrots, turnips, rutabaga, kohlrabi, and celeriac, to slaws and salads.

However, as you venture into unfamiliar territory, check because some roots, such as cassava, are toxic unless cooked properly. Cassava, like many roots, has multiple names. Some people know it as yuca, manioc, mandioca, and tapioca.

You might introduce new root combinations, such as mashed potato and rutabaga. We use this to top baked dishes like shepherd's pie. And the next time you make coleslaw, consider enhancing the celery flavor with celeriac and adding color and tang with radishes and shredded daikon.

In soups and stews, root vegetables add bulk, nutrition, and color. Cut a new root to a size that will cook at about the same time as



Rutabaga is a root vegetable we always keep on hand for soups, stews, or as a mashed side dish.

your carrots and potatoes, or add a new flavor, such as fennel, to the base of onions and celery as you sauté them.

Roasted whole potatoes and sweet potatoes serve as the base for a meal when we stuff them with everything from canned beans and sausage stuffing to leftovers.

### Ancestral Dialogue

In Food and Wine, Chef Kevin Gillespie explained how a trip to Scotland changed his attitude toward cooking. "It reframed my cooking not as personal expression, but as ancestral dialogue. To be a future ancestor, I realized, is to carry forward not only one's own story, but the stories of those who

endured, adapted, and fed others before us."

As you choose the root vegetables and recipes to cook, share the stories of your personal connection to some of them with your friends and family. If, like us, you love learning about other food traditions, expand your selections to include those of other cultures and pass them forward as well. Cooking and dining can be a form of armchair travel and mini-adventures into history and the unknown.

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

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## Maple Sugaring at DCR

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

DCR is offering maple sugaring programs at parks across the state. Learn how to make maple syrup, a skill learned from Indigenous people from the northeast. Activities vary depending on location but include identifying maple trees, tapping trees, and gathering sap.

All ages welcome, children must be accompanied by an adult. Dress for the weather.

Reasonable accommodations are available upon advance request.

### Maple Sugar Days

Saturday, March 14 and Sun-



day, March 15

Blue Hill Reservation

11 Hillside Street, Canton MA

Preregistration required: Maple Sugar Days

Join us for a fun and informative guided exploration into all things maple sugar! Learn about the fascinating local history of maple sugaring and the evolution of the practice over hundreds of years. Learn how

trees are tapped and practice drilling yourself, and finish your tour inside our aromatic sugar shack where you will see (and smell!) just how maple syrup is made! Families and curious adults are welcome!

Please preregister for a time slot for this event, and please arrive promptly at your chosen time.

### Maple Sugarin' Days

Saturday, March 14,

10:00am - 2:00pm

Breakheart Reservation

177 Forest Street, Saugus, MA

Meet inside Visitor Center

Join us for this FUN annual event! Experience the process of maple sugarin' from tapping a tree to sampling real maple syrup. Our hands-on tour includes the history of maple sugaring from Native Americans to today, tree identification & tapping, wood splitting, the evaporator and a tasting station! For more information, call (781) 233-0834

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# REVOLUTIONARY SPACES INVITES THE PUBLIC TO ITS MARCH EVENTS

Special to the Patriot-Bridges

Revolutionary Spaces invites the public to its March events at the Old State House and Old South Meeting House. Please find details below, and I'm happy to coordinate interviews.

Sunday, March 1 & March 8 – Boston Family Days (Free Admission) – In partnership with Mayor Wu's Boston Family Days, free admission for Boston school-aged children and up to two guests on the first and second Sundays of the month. Register online at <https://www.boston.gov/family-days-signup#/forms>.

Wednesday, March 5 | 10:30 AM – Crispus Attucks Day & 256th Anniversary of the Boston Massacre – Public wreath-laying ceremony at the Boston Massacre commemorative plaza outside the Old State House honoring the five men killed on March 5, 1770. For more info, contact [info@revolutionaryspaces.org](mailto:info@revolutionaryspaces.org).

Saturday, March 14 | 10:30 AM–2:30 PM – Hands-On History Day: 250th Anniversary of Evacuation Day – Family-friendly activities at both historic sites, including crafts, games, gallery talks, music, and more. Included with general admission; free for children 12 and under.

Sunday, March 21 | 9–10 AM – Sensory-Friendly Mornings at the Old State House – Early-access hour at the Old State House with adjusted lighting and sound, limited attendance, and hands-on activities for visitors who benefit from a quieter museum experience. Register online at <https://revolutionaryspaces.org/visit/sensory-friendly-mornings/>.



[revolutionaryspaces.org/visit/sensory-friendly-mornings/](https://revolutionaryspaces.org/visit/sensory-friendly-mornings/).

All Month – The Road to Revolution is a new exhibition at the Old State House, developed with

the Massachusetts Historical Society, featuring a rare 1776 printing of the Declaration of Independence. On view through January 2027.



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MGH Health Care Center.....	73 High St.
Hood Park (Tradesman).....	50 Hood Park Dr.
Boston Public Library (Charlestown)	..179 Main St.
Schrafft's.....	529 Main St.
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Newtowne Market .....	87 Medford St.
Community Center.....	255 Medford St.
365 Convenience Store.....	275 Medford St.
Annas Café .....	275 Medford St.
Jenny's Pizza .....	320 Medford St.
McCarthy's Liquors.....	9 Moulton St.
Bunker Hill Cleaners .....	Moulton St.
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Santander Bank .....	437 Rutherford Ave.
Hood Park.....	500 Rutherford Ave.
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Gatehouse Apartment.....	75 W School St.
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Police Station.....	20 Vine St. Hayes Sq.
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## Amid area development, Fenway Free Market connects neighbors

By Julia Hendler and Erin Cromwell

Boston residents gather monthly at the Fenway Community Center (FCC) to exchange clothing, toys and household items at the Free Market, an event designed to reduce waste and build community.

The market is unique in that residents drop off unwanted items and take whatever they find useful, all free of charge.

The event is hosted in collaboration with Fenway Forward, an organization the FCC works closely with. Formerly known as the Fenway Community Development Corporation, Fenway Forward is a neighborhood advocacy group that strives to preserve the integrity of the Fenway neighborhood through initiatives such as expanding affordable housing and strengthening community engagement, according to the Fenway Forward website.

Sage Carbone, the community programs director at Fenway Forward, said free markets are uncommon because they're hard to fund, but they provide an essential service to the community.

"The whole point is that we are learning to live in an economy that doesn't need to be based on capitalism and how much money you make or what you have," Carbone said. "It's also about what you give."

FCC Executive Director Malory Rohrig said the event is designed to serve the neighborhood's key demographics by making it more convenient for them to

dispose of unwanted items.

Two of the "highest populations [in the Fenway] are college students and senior citizens," she said. "Both groups that are looking to offload items and don't necessarily have the means or the cars to get rid of those items."

People of all ages browsed the donation tables while snacking on free pizzas served by the market. While parents shopped, their children played in the community center's kiddy corner.

"Not only are we helping to keep the things out of the trash, but we also are helping to facilitate this connection point and intergenerational aspect as well," Rohrig said.

Richard Dunshee, 61, lives in East Boston, but discovered the FCC through his frequent visits to the Fenway Victory Gardens, where he has managed a garden plot since 1994. Dunshee spent the entire day at the market, chatting with other attendees and the organizers.

"You get to meet a lot of people," Dunshee said. "You get to spend some time here, sit down and talk to them."

It's the people, he said, that keep him coming back.

Although not from the Fenway, Dunshee remembers what it was like before much of the current development — when a McDonald's restaurant stood where the FCC now operates. Today, the center shares its West Fenway address with a luxury apartment building, where units rent for

as much as \$9,000 per month, according to online listings.

While the past couple of decades have seen heavy development in the Fenway, it is one of Boston's poorest neighborhoods, Carbone said. Thirty-seven percent of residents live below the poverty line, more than double the city-wide rate of 18%, according to Fenway Forward's 2023-2025 Community Investment Plan.

"[The neighborhood includes] the have and have-nots," Regina Fink, director of constituent services for State Senator Will Brownsberger, said, who pointed out the sharp contrast between the luxury apartments and low-income housing co-existing in the Fenway.

Brownsberger's district encompasses most of the Fenway, and his team was at February's market distributing free and reduced-fare Charlie Cards for eligible residents.

Vicki Moulton, a self-proclaimed regular at the FCC, said she uses the event to shop for herself, friends and family.

"I like the free stuff, obviously," Moulton said. "But I also like connecting with the neighbors, because I see people here sometimes that I don't see otherwise."

*Julia Hendler and Erin Cromwell are students in the Boston University Journalism program. This story is a partnership between The Charlestown Patriot-Bridge and the Boston University Journalism program.*



Attendees browsing the market's tables.

ERIN CROMWELL PHOTOS

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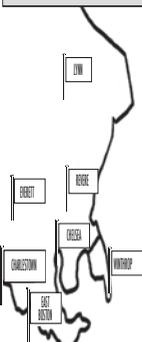
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### SCENES OF SNOW REMOVAL ACROSS THE CITY

MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY MIKE MEJIA

The City of Boston's snow removal crew was out in full-force during Monday's snow storm.

Boston had 17.1 inches, according to the National Weather Service's official measurement site at Logan Airport. This put the city over 60 inches for the winter. It's the first above average snowfall season in four years.



***"Who Was Saint Patrick, and Should Brigid of Kildare Regain Her Saintly Status?"***

**On March 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Charlestown Branch Library, the lively and learned Professor Richard Kearney will deliver a free illustrated lecture bringing us a more vivid understanding of the two Irish saints. The Charlestown Library Friends offer this talk and the concert below.**