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Does that Rembrandt come with the house?

No shortage of purported ‘sightings’ of stolen Gardner museum artworks in homes for sale

By Shelley Murphy
GLOBE STAFF

The tipster was startled. While scrolling through photos on Zillow of a luxury home for sale in Atlanta, there it was, hanging on the wall: what appeared to be one of the great masterpieces of the art world, worth more than \$100 million.

It sure looked like “The Storm on the Sea of Galilee,” the only seascape painted by Rembrandt and one of the 13 artworks stolen 34 years ago from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. With its dark, dramatic imagery, it looked convincing enough to the Zillow scroller to contact the muse-

um last year to report the sighting, which could bring a hefty reward.

The purported sighting was among about 20 tips reported to the museum over the past year from people who thought they saw one or the other of the two most recognizable stolen paintings, “The Storm” or Vermeer’s “The Concert,” in homes across the country that were staged for sale and featured in real estate listings, according to Anthony Amore, the museum’s security director.

“You know there’s a low probability that they’re our paintings,” said Amore, who ruled out each one as be-



SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF

Anthony Amore, the Gardner museum’s head of security, posed at the scene of the crime, which occurred 34 years ago Monday.

Russians line up to protest Putin

‘Voters’ heed last pitch from dissident Navalny for civil disobedience

By Francesca Ebel and Robyn Dixon
WASHINGTON POST

MOSCOW — On the final day of a presidential election with only one possible result, Russians protested Vladimir Putin’s authoritarian hold on power by forming long lines to vote against him at noon Sunday — answering the call of the late opposition leader Alexei Navalny and undercutting preliminary results Sunday night that led Putin to claim a landslide victory.

Russia’s Central Election Commission, which routinely bars any real challengers from running, reported late Sunday that Putin had received more than 87 percent of the vote with 75 percent of ballots counted. Putin quickly claimed a fifth term in office, extending his rule until at least 2030. He said he would continue his war against Ukraine where “in some areas our guys are simply cutting the enemy to pieces right now.”

Russia’s elections have long been widely condemned as neither free nor fair and failing to meet basic democratic standards, with the Kremlin approving candidates and tightly controlling media access. That meant Putin’s victory was preordained.

Navalny had urged the midday action before dying suddenly in prison last month.

In Moscow, many polling stations were deathly

RUSSIA, Page A6

‘As it currently stands, about 75 to 80 percent of all women who walk into the doors of Boston IVF walk out with a baby.’

DR. DENIS VAUGHAN, research director at Boston IVF



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

Embryologist Rebecca Brito worked in the in vitro fertilization lab at Brigham & Women’s Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, which legally requires many insurers to cover the procedure, has the nation’s highest percentage of births resulting from IVF.

Booming business in babies

In vitro fertilization is growing worldwide, especially in Massachusetts

By Felice J. Freyer
GLOBE STAFF

A clear blob floats on a tray below the microscope, its image projected onto a screen. A tool that on the screen resembles a glass straw, manipulated by the specialist looking into the eyepiece, approaches the blob and tugs at a small piece of it. A laser beam severs the piece, and the pipette sucks it in.

The blob is a human embryo, invisible to the naked eye, now destined for freezing at Brigham and Women’s Hospital’s IVF clinic. Meanwhile, the five or six cells in the pipette will be sent for genetic testing.

This procedure is one of the reasons why women today — those who can afford it — can have higher hopes that a baby will result

5.4%
Massachusetts births in 2021
that resulted from IVF

2.3%
The national average

In the United States, the IVF business
is projected to grow from
\$7.5 billion
in 2022 to
\$13.2 billion
by 2030

from in vitro fertilization: Fertility doctors have improved their ability to select embryos that will survive in the uterus.

As the Alabama Supreme Court ruling casts a spotlight on infertility treatment, two striking facts stand out. One is the increase in success rates, known as the “take-home baby” rate. The other is the reality that many women still go through the grueling IVF process without ever bringing home a baby. But that fact has not stopped the growth of the IVF industry, which is projected to reach \$13.2 billion by 2030.

According to data collected by the CDC, when an embryo created by IVF is transferred to a woman’s uterus, a baby results on-

IVF, Page A9

Warren may be targeted by crypto backers

Senator’s reelection race a possible test of industry’s increasing political power

By Emma Platoff
GLOBE STAFF

After claiming a handful of electoral successes on Super Tuesday, the wealthy cryptocurrency industry is pouring millions more dollars into other races around the country this year with the goal of knocking off critics and elevating allies.

One potential target: the senior senator from Massachusetts.

Elizabeth Warren, who drew no major opponents for the first 11 months after announcing her reelection bid, could now face two prominent challengers, both Republicans with ties to the crypto industry. John Deaton, a personal injury lawyer and crypto advocate, jumped into the Senate race in February, and Ian Cain, a Quincy city councilor and founder of a startup incubator for blockchain technology, is considering a bid as well.

As the young, flush crypto industry looks to grow its influence in Washington, Warren’s reelection race could be a major test of its political muscle. As one of the loudest advocates for regulating

CRYPTOCURRENCY, Page A8



Light brigade

Monday: Sunny and breezy.
High 47-52, low 32-37.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny.
High 44-49, low 30-35.

Sunrise: 6:50. Sunset: 6:54.

Obituaries, **B6**.

Comics and Weather, **D4-5**.

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Suggested retail price

\$3.50



Chicago officials have begun evicting some migrants from shelters, joining other cities that have made similar moves to ease pressure on over-stretched resources. **A2.**

A former official in Boston Public Schools has filed a lawsuit against the district, alleging she faced retaliation for raising concerns about moving English learners into general education classrooms. **B1.**

Liquor stores are fighting a bill in the Legislature that would make permanent a measure that allowed restaurants to sell drinks to go, offered first during the pandemic. **D1.**

Sixteen NCAA men’s basketball teams are heading to Boston, where TD Garden will host the East regional bracket on March 28 and 30. **C1.**

Our identity as hardy Bostonians is melting along with snowy winters

By Beth Teitell
GLOBE STAFF

Not to brag, Aaron Natti said, but he wears shorts all winter, no matter how low the temperature or how deep the snow. In fact, the more miserable the conditions, the better. Rugged is his brand. He breaks character only for funerals, weddings, and when his boss at the radio station forces him. But alas, these past two winters have been so balmy — almost legit shorts weather for *normal* people — that his machismo is threatened.

“It’s like losing an identity,” said Natti, 38, a producer for WROR’s “Bob & LBF in the Morning,” as he pondered the challenge of maintaining his swagger amid climate change. “I may have to start wearing tank tops.”

The rest of us are facing an existential question, too. Without our gutter-busting ice dams and space-saver vigilantes, who are we? Delaware? (Of course, at the rate the planet is warming, fretting about the relatively minor threat to our self-

IDENTITY CRISIS, Page A9



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

ST. PATRICK’S DAY FUN — A child reached out to grab a piece of confetti during Sunday’s St. Patrick’s Day parade in South Boston. Throngs of revelers cheered marchers, which included bagpipers, Marines, and firefighters. Horses and Irish wolfhounds were also on display. **B1.**