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In Read case, state law shields autopsy

With report on homicide victim under wraps, speculation is filling the void

By Sean Cotter
GLOBE STAFF

They are the photographs that launched a thousand theories: the body of John O’Keefe, the former Boston police officer found dead in a snowstorm in January 2022, lying on an autopsy table, scrapes and scratches covering his arms, swelling around his eyes.

These photos, according to the supporters of Karen Read, the woman accused of murdering O’Keefe, are evidence that the prosecution’s

claims she backed her car into him and left him for dead are wrong. The autopsy photos, made public only because Read’s defense lawyers included them in a court filing, suggest that Read is the victim of a massive police coverup, her supporters say, and that O’Keefe actually was beaten by others and possibly attacked by the dog who lived on the property where his body was found.

It was these photos that led Lisa Pycrz to protest on Read’s behalf outside Norfolk Superior Court dur-

ing a recent hearing. Next to her, another woman held a sign that read “Where’s Chloe?” — the dog in question. One social media profile invoked the O.J. Simpson case in summing up the importance of what Read supporters believe the autopsy photos reveal: “If the arm was bit, you must acquit!!!”

While the photos were made public by the defense, the full autopsy report providing context, including the medical examiner’s official conclusions and analysis of O’Keefe’s injuries, remains shielded from release by state law. Some experts say Read’s case is a perfect example of why these documents

should be public, as they are in several other states: In their absence, speculation fills the void.

“Massachusetts has a reputation for being one of the most secretive states in the country for open records law,” said Jeffrey Pyle, a Boston attorney who focuses on First Amendment issues. “Courts are making decisions based on documents that the public can’t see.”

He said transparency is key to ensuring oversight of judges and the court process in general, including during the many decisions around evidence and other motions that lead up to a trial.

READ, Page A10

Tufts calls for end of Gaza tent protest

Other area schools weigh how to proceed on the student demonstrations

By Nick Stoico
GLOBE STAFF
and Daniel Kool
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Tufts University on Sunday said an encampment set up by students protesting Israel’s war in Gaza “must end” as the school begins to prepare for its commencement, the latest effort by school officials in the Boston area to wind down demonstrations as they try to balance students’ right to free speech while readying their campuses for the year’s biggest event.

The call for the Tufts encampment to conclude came a day after MIT president Sally Kornbluth released a video message calling for an encampment there to end soon. Both encampments remained in place as of Sunday night.

Meanwhile, officials at Emerson College said they are hoping students arrested on their campus won’t face legal action after police cleared an encampment last week. Emerson leadership announced Sunday that it would not be bringing university disciplinary action against students who were arrested.

While protests have roiled campuses across New England and the country, Tufts officials Sunday appeared to be aiming for an encampment de-

PROTEST, Page A7

Israeli leaders could face arrest warrants

Blocking humanitarian aid cited in possible court action

By Ronen Bergman and Patrick Kingsley
NEW YORK TIMES

Israeli officials increasingly believe that the International Criminal Court is preparing to issue arrest warrants for senior government officials on charges related to the war with Hamas, according to five Israeli and foreign officials.

The Israeli and foreign officials also believe the court is weighing arrest warrants for leaders from Hamas.

If the court proceeds, the Israeli officials could potentially be accused of preventing the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and pursuing an excessively harsh response to the Hamas-led Oct. 7 attacks on Israel, according to two of the five officials, all of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter.

The Israeli officials, who are worried about the potential fallout from such a case, said they believe that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel

MIDEAST, Page A6



JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

Cheryl Kulacz planted flowers in her backyard in memory of her son, Curran. He died two years ago from a drug overdose.

Closing a gap in addiction treatment

For years, hospitals lacked expertise. Mass. initiative aims to change that.

By Chris Serres
GLOBE STAFF

Each year, hundreds of people addicted to drugs and alcohol show up at Massachusetts hospitals suffering agonizing withdrawal symptoms such as violent shaking and vomiting. Often, they are sent on their way with a list of numbers for local treatment programs.

Yet when Dan arrived last spring at Massachusetts General Hospital with a fever of 105 and the ultra-lethal opioid fentanyl in his system, he was treated to a much different response. Within hours, an addiction treatment specialist visited Dan in his hospital room and asked him what he needed to feel better. He was prescribed methadone, a drug that eases withdrawal symptoms and cravings, and connected to outpatient counseling.

“The experience was life-altering,” said Dan, 46, who declined to share his full name due to concerns over the stigma associated with drug



FAMILY PHOTO

Kulacz said Curran, who battled addiction for 12 years, might be alive today if he had received better hospital care.

use. “It was the first time that a hospital treated my pain and addiction without judgment. I could think straight again.”

For decades, programs that treat people with addiction have operated largely outside the inpatient hospital setting. Hospitals employ specialists who treat all sorts of ailments, from heart disease to pneumonia, but if the illness is an addiction or related to substance abuse, most hospitals lack the expertise and resources to treat them. As a result, patients with serious addictions are frequently discharged without plans for treatment — a missed opportunity to help more people recover.

Now, this longstanding gap in the state’s health care system is rapidly closing — driven by the relentless scourge of overdose deaths and emerging evidence that hospitals play a vital role in responding to the opioid crisis.

This July, under contracts with the state, 15

ADDICTION, Page A10

In Lowell, migrants’ arrival strikes a sympathetic chord

City’s Cambodians recall their journeys, offer help, compassion

By Daniel Kool
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

LOWELL — Vanna Howard watched as Khmer Rouge militants captured her father in the late 1970s during the group’s reign of terror in Cambodia. She watched as three of her younger siblings and her grandparents were lost to sickness and starvation in a genocide that killed more than 1.7 million people.

Now Howard, a state representative, and other Cambodians in Lowell are watching with empathetic eyes as dozens of new migrant families trickle into Lowell — the latest stop on a harrowing journey that took some through multiple countries in search of opportunity. She said she sees reflections of her experi-

ence in the newest wave of migrants arriving in Massachusetts.

When Howard fled Cambodia, making her way to a refugee camp in Thailand, she walked for “weeks and weeks, similar to the folks who have been coming to our border” in the United States.

“We need to treat this matter with empathy, with compassion,” Howard said, her voice cracking with emotion. “Nobody wants to leave their home country. The decision to leave their home country — it has to be so bad that you are willing to risk your life to flee.”

The state announced last week that it would move nearly 70 migrant and homeless families from Bedford to the UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center. Many of those being relocated are Haitian migrants who fled a country consumed by gang violence.

Throughout the Commonwealth, local responses to influxes of sheltering migrants have been mixed. But Howard,



PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF

Lowell City Councilor Paul Rathay Yem, seen shopping in New Pailin Market, says Haitian migrants, like Cambodians before them, seek to build new lives.

a Democrat who represents the 17th Middlesex District, which includes parts of Lowell, said feedback from her constituents about the new arrivals “has been positive, especially from my fellow Cambodian folks.”

Lowell City Councilor Paul Rathay

Yem, who also fled Cambodia decades ago, said Lowell is a “city of immigrants,” and its Cambodian community is especially quick to offer sympathy and support to newcomers.

“Most Cambodians are sympathetic

LOWELL MIGRANTS, Page A7

Former president Donald Trump’s habit of uttering falsehoods may work against him in his Manhattan criminal trial. **A2.**

Massachusetts will deploy hundreds of small sensors in low-income areas to measure harmful air pollutants. **B1.**

Making the gray’d

Monday: Increasing clouds.

High 63-68, low 47-52.

Tuesday: Cloudy, some rain.

High 51-56, low 45-50.

Sunrise: 5:42. Sunset: 7:42.

Obituaries, **C9.**

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

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