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W E D N E S D A Y , M A Y 2 2 , 2 0 2 4

Islands' pot shops say rules threaten survival

State's restrictions on shipping by boat or plane put supply at risk, they contend

By Diti Kohli
GLOBE STAFF

Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket are at the risk of running low on cannabis this summer, amid a furious debate over whether marijuana can be shipped over the Atlantic Ocean.

In a last-ditch effort to keep the pot flowing, two dispensaries — Island Time in Vineyard Haven and Green Lady on Nantucket — sued

the Cannabis Control Commission on Tuesday, alleging that the state regulatory body's restrictions on shipping cannabis by boat or plane across state waters jeopardize their businesses.

The issue came to a head this month, after Island Time closed its doors on May 14, citing low stock, and Fine Fettle — the Vineyard's lone cannabis growing facility and only source of new supply — an-

nounced plans to close by September.

Shops are being “starved to death” by the “Commission's arbitrary, unreasonable, and inconsistent policy against transporting marijuana and marijuana products over any state's territorial waters,” a memo filed alongside the complaint in Suffolk County Superior Court reads.

The battle has thrown the state into a scramble to figure out how to keep the supply of cannabis stable for year-round recreational users, 500-some medical patients,

and an onslaught of visitors soon to arrive to the two destination islands.

Nicole Campbell, co-owner of Green Lady and a plaintiff in the suit, said the shipping challenges have unnecessarily forced the four dispensaries across the islands into financially precarious positions.

“People on the islands do not want to feel cut off from access to things that other people take for granted,” she said. “It's putting an extra burden on us that does not need to exist.”

CANNABIS, Page A7

Home prices hit new high: near \$1m

Even with sales on the rise, median reaches \$950,000

By Andrew Brinker
GLOBE STAFF

The Greater Boston housing market loosened up last month, with sales increasing and more properties hitting the market, but it wasn't enough to keep prices from once again hitting a new high.

The median sales price for a single-family home in the region reached \$950,000 in April, the Greater Boston Association of Realtors said Tuesday, a record for any month.

The 16 percent increase over April 2023 is a sobering reminder that the unmitigated housing crisis is pushing homeownership further and further out of reach for many buyers. While debates about how to solve the issue intensify, the latest market report underscored that there is no clear or immediate path to a solution.

“It's certainly a sobering statistic,” said Luc Schuster, executive director of Boston Indicators, the research arm of The Boston Foundation. “I don't think there's any clearer signal to the Legislature that they need to be working on all fronts to alleviate these price pressures. There's no question that this is a crisis.”

Perhaps more striking than the march toward the \$1 million mark is the fact that prices jumped significantly in a month when market fundamentals improved.

HOME SALES, Page A7

CELTICS ESCAPE WITH A GAME 1 WIN



BARRY CHIN/GLOBE STAFF

The heavily favored Celtics blew big leads before forcing overtime with a crucial Jaylen Brown three-pointer and finally taking care of the Indiana Pacers, 133-128, in the Eastern Conference finals at TD Garden Tuesday night. **C1.**

‘We lost a lot that day.
We lose a little more the more we do this.’

HILARY HALL, *sister of victim Sarah Cherry*

As convict in '88 murder fights on, victim's family feels the pain again



By Kevin Cullen
GLOBE STAFF

ROCKLAND, Maine — Debbie Crosman sat in a courtroom, staring intently, as lawyers grilled forensic scientists about cutting-edge DNA technology. A disturbing image appeared on a courtroom video screen, the tiny, bound, discolored hands of 12-year-old Sarah Cherry, Crosman's daughter. Crosman turned away, unable to look.

The picture brought to her all the searing pain of a fresh loss. But the photo was taken

36 years ago, when her daughter was abducted from a home where she was babysitting, taken to an isolated patch of woods, and raped, tortured, and murdered. It was a horrifying crime that riveted the entire state in 1988 and is still thought of as the most notorious in Maine history.

Crosman was forced to confront the wrenching details of the crime during the 1989 trial of a local farmer, Dennis Dechaine. She

KILLING, Page A8

Trump decides he won't testify and defense rests

Jurors may get case next week

By Ben Protess, Jonah E. Bromwich, Maggie Haberman, and William K. Rashbaum
NEW YORK TIMES

NEW YORK — The jury heard his voice, saw his tweets, and watched footage of him campaigning for the presidency. But in the end, the 12 New Yorkers weighing the fate of Donald Trump did not see him testify.

On Tuesday, the defense rested its case after Trump declined to take the stand at his own criminal trial, forfeiting his only opportunity to defend

himself but also avoiding what could have been a calamitous error. His decision made, his lawyers concluded the testimony phase of the trial, and next week, the jury is expected to begin the momentous task of determining whether the former — and perhaps future — president is a felon.

Defendants rarely testify, but Trump stands apart as the only US president to ever face a criminal trial, a serial litigant who thinks of himself as his own best advocate. Trump, who is once again the presumptive Republican nominee, had said repeatedly that he wanted to testify.

But Tuesday morning,

TRUMP, Page A6

Progress slow on BPS plan to improve, leaders say

By James Vaznis
GLOBE STAFF

Two years after acceding to a state-imposed improvement plan, Boston Public Schools has made progress in some areas but fallen short in others, including overhauling transportation, facilities, and programs for students with disabilities and English learners, local and state education leaders said Tuesday.

BPS has mapped out plans in a wide range of areas, from how to replace aging school buildings to improving the accuracy of data tracking. The district also has developed several academic improvement plans, including a blueprint on how to integrate more students with disabilities and English learners into traditional classrooms.

But many problems still persist that interfere with everyday schooling for students. Buses have yet to meet a monthly on-time arrival target of 95 percent or better — often coming in well below that — and the blueprint to overhaul special education was submitted a year late and will begin on a small scale this fall.

“We have more work to do to deliver on a promise of an excellent, equitable education for all students,” Superintendent Mary Skipper told the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Ed-

BPS, Page A8



Roast, bud

Wednesday: Hot.
High 84-89. Low 61-66.

Thursday: Hot again, T-storms.
High 81-86. Low 63-68.

Sunrise: 5:16 Sunset: 8:06

Weather and Comics, G6-7.
Obituaries, C11.

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Two Massachusetts men are facing federal charges stemming from an alleged murder-for-hire plot targeting a witness in a fentanyl drug case and a pair of criminal adversaries. **B1.**

EasyPay has agreed to cease doing business here after years of charging extremely high interest rates on short-term loans. **B5.**

The United Nations said it has suspended food distribution in Rafah due to a lack of supplies and insecurity. **A3.**

Devra First and Shirley Leung checked out 10 dim sum restaurants in the Boston area. They agree on the best. **G1.**



MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

BIDEN IN NEW ENGLAND

— President Biden made a number of stops on Tuesday, including in Nashua, where he took a selfie with supporters. In a speech there, Biden touted a law that helps veterans get benefits after having been exposed to burn pits. He later attended fundraisers in Boston, at the Seaport and in Back Bay. **A2, B1.**