The Boston Blobe

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Holyoke councilor purportedly in Russia

Video reportedly shows man facing porn charges enlisting in Kremlin army

> By Hanna Krueger GLOBE STAFF

A disgraced Holyoke city councilor who is wanted in court on child pornography charges has purportedly fled the country and is now serving in the Russian army, according to a video posted to pro-Kremlin media.

Wilmer Puello-Mota was ordered to appear in court in January. But days before the start of his trial, he boarded a flight to Istanbul, according to court records. A video posted Wednesday to a Russian social media channel reportedly shows the 28-year-old signing a contract to officially join the country's armed services as it enters its 25th month of war against Ukraine.

The short video appears to show Puello-Mota, clad in a puffy North Face jacket and khakis, walking through a snowy parking lot to a new military recruitment office and receiving a firm handshake from Russian military brass. The recruitment office was geolocated by the Globe to the city of Khanty-Mansiysk in the oil-rich, snowy region of Western Siberia. The facility, named the "Center of Russian Patriots," was opened in January 2024, according to local media reports.

The man believed to be Puello-Mota speaks directly to the camera, delivering a monologue in English, with Russian subtitles and **CITY COUNCILOR, Page A12**

A teaching moment on rat removal

Cambridge takes a new approach to rodents

> By Spencer Buell GLOBE STAFF

CAMBRIDGE — As in all cities, the raging battle between rat and humankind here never

We can reduce the number of the ferocious pests rifling through trash cans, lurking in sewers, and crisscrossing the sidewalks, but we cannot eliminate them: For every rat trapped, zapped, or otherwise neutralized, countless others are slinking around the next

To beat the rats, we have to be smarter than them. So in a city with some of the finest educational institutions in the world, it's no surprise to learn Cambridge would also host a Rodent Academy, a gathering of the sharpest minds in rat extermination, to plan the counteroffensive.

Dozens attended the two-day consortium this week in Cambridge at The Foundry building in Kendall Square, the first of its kind held here since 2011. In the crowd were business people, school officials, sanitation professionals — including a few from Boston and Somerville — there to learn how to hone their ratfighting skills and brush up on the latest techniques for spotting and exterminating

RATS, Page A9

N.J. quake surprises New England

Rumble felt into Mass.; no injuries reported

This story was reported by Nick Stoico, Shannon Larson, and John Ellement of the Globe staff and Globe correspondents Ava Berger and Alexa Coultoff. It was written by Stoico.

An earthquake centered in northern New Jersey sent shock waves up through New England on Friday morning, a rare event for the Northeast that startled many in Massachusetts and the region but caused no widespread damage.

The 4.8-magnitude quake, the strongest to hit the Northeast in more than two decades, was recorded at 10:23 a.m.

near Whitehouse Station, N.J., about 45 miles west of New York City and 50 miles north of Philadelphia, according to the US Geological Survey.

In Massachusetts, residents said they felt the ground tremble for several seconds, shaking homes and buildings in the middle of the morning. Kerin Miller, an English professor at

Bunker Hill Community College, said she was teaching a class over Zoom when a glass cabinet in the living room of her Andover home began to shake.

"It felt like somebody was stomping **QUAKE, Page A8**



earthquake was centered in western New Jersey but was felt in parts of New England.

Darker lines indicate greater intensity.

SOURCE: USGS GLOBE STAFF

A HISTORICAL LOOK



BOSTON GLOBE ARCHIVES

New England is no stranger to solar eclipses. The region has been in the path of totality five times in the last century, and there have been several annular eclipses (where the sun is not completely covered) visible in New England. Above, people in Boston used filters to take a look at the annular eclipse in 1940. More historical eclipse photos are on B4.

Businesses go all-in on eclipse

Camera shop and brewery are among those seeing dollar signs in moon's shadow

By Dana Gerber GLOBE STAFF

Before eclipse-induced darkness descends on your viewing spot of choice, would you buy a poster to commemorate the celestial event? What about a specialrelease beer? A lunar-inspired tat-

That's what businesses across New England — from gift shops to breweries to tattoo studios are hoping for as the region braces for tens of thousands of visitors seeking the best of the skyward spectacle on Monday.

In towns along the so-called path of totality - slices of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine in which the moon will en-



SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF

Scott Farber, owner of Hunt's Photo & Video in Melrose, said, "We honestly put [the eclipse] on our calendar in 2017."

tirely blot out the sun - many hotels are booked solid for wellabove-normal rates. But the economic impact of the tourism surge is expected to ripple out further than that: The Perryman Group, a Texas-based economic analysis firm, estimates that the US will see more than \$1.5 billion in spending directly related to the eclipse; of that, Vermont is expected to receive \$82.9 million, Maine \$8.3 million, and New Hampshire \$700,000.

Though there are looming anxieties about traffic, safety, or God forbid — cloudy skies, businesses feel a pressure to cash in on off-season crowds, especial-

ECLIPSE, Page A8

Making a future in woodworking class

For juvenile offenders, Gloucester program opens a new door



by former juvenile offenders at Cornerstone Creative.

JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

David Carpenter performed a jump on a skateboard made

By Billy Baker GLOBE STAFF

GLOUCESTER — The first part of the idea is that there is an ancient satisfaction in working with your hands.

"All my best and deepest conversations are when my hands are dirty," Adam Quinn said on a recent day in his shop, which is filled with many ways to keep them that way.

He calls the place the Cornerstone Creative, and he and his wife, Katie, opened it as a nonprofit in 2020, just steps from Pavilion Beach, as a way for teenagers on Cape Ann to learn a hard skill, woodworking, and see what happens while they do. If your hands are busy, walls come down, Quinn believes, especially with boys, the side of the species that bonds shoulder-to-shoulder.

For the first year-and-a-half, they ran an after-school program, free of charge. He worked as a carpenter during the day and at night taught kids to make cutting boards and picnic tables and skateboard decks. But it produced something else entirely,

WOODWORKING, Page A9

The Israeli military said that it dismissed two officers

and reprimanded three others for their roles in drone strikes in Gaza that killed seven aid workers on a food-delivery mission. A4.

The new manager of the Edgar P. Benjamin Healthcare **Center in Mission Hill prom**ised to do everything he can to keep it open. B1.

Greentown Labs, a symbol of the region's promise as a hub for addressing the climate crisis, is laying off 30 percent of its staff. D1.

Caitlin Clark and Iowa hung on to beat UConn and will take on South Carolina for the NCAA championship. C1.



Dullsville

Saturday: Clouds and showers. High: 42-47. Low: 34-39. Sunday: More clouds.

High: 44-49. Low: 34-39. Comics and Weather, **D4-5.**

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