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LATE TO THE LIGHT SHOW

Those who missed the aurora borealis hope for another chance — it’s possible

By Nick Stoico and Ken Mahan

GLOBE STAFF

A fan of natural phenomena, Dana Bullister has longed to view the northern lights, a bright, swirling display in the night sky, rarely visible in most of the United States.

Unfortunately, on Thursday, when a stunning aurora lit up the sky over Boston and beyond, the 34-year-old doctoral student at Northeastern University was busy with work. Unlike in April, when she traveled to Vermont to land a prime viewing spot of the total eclipse, Bullister didn’t have time to plan ahead for Thursday’s celestial spec-

tacle.

“I was right there in Vermont when the solar eclipse took place, and that was freaking awesome,” Bullister said in an interview Friday. “It would be amazing to see the northern lights, so I was a bit disappointed I didn’t see them yesterday. But I understand you really have to go to a low light-pollution place in order to see them.”

She is hoping for another chance this weekend, but for now, count Bullister among the many who have had to experience the dazzling display through the lens of others who posted photos on social media.

AURORA, Page A6



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JANE BARLOW/PA VIA AP; COURTESY OF JIM NEWTON; SAUL LOEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; STAN GROSSFELD/GLOBE STAFF

The northern lights on Thursday surprised and delighted people who never expected to see the celestial phenomenon from their hometowns, including (above) Boston as seen from the Squantum section of Quincy.

Mass General Brigham will postpone elective surgeries from Sunday through Wednesday due to a national shortage in IV fluids after Hurricane Helene. **B1.**

Florida residents returned to neighborhoods stricken by power outages and filled with soggy debris as the recovery from Hurricane Milton got underway. **A2.**

Visitors to the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum paid their respects to Ethel Kennedy, the widow of Robert F. Kennedy. **B1.**



Beauti-fall

Saturday: Sunny, pleasant. High: 68-73. Low: 44-49.
Sunday: Cloudy, cooler. High: 52-57. Low: 48-53.
Sunrise: 6:54 Sunset: 6:06
Comics and Weather, **D4-5.**
Obituaries, **C10.**

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Candidates look outside tradition to spread their messages

Podcasts, influencers gain new role in politics

By Aidan Ryan

GLOBE STAFF

Alex Cooper, host of “Call Her Daddy,” one of America’s most popular podcasts, often uses her show to delve into topics such as relationships, sex, and mental health, with celebrity guests such as Katy Perry and Miley Cyrus.

But this week, Cooper released an episode with presidential candidate Kamala Harris: 40 minutes, with no topics off limits that elicited from Harris a story about a private moment with her mother, who died in 2009 as her daughter was campaigning to become California attorney general. Her mother was in the hospital with cancer at the time and asked Harris how the race was going.



“Well, Mommy, they said they’re going to kick my ass,” Harris said. “At which point my mother turned her head, looked at me, and had the biggest smile — had the biggest smile ever. That was my mother.”

The interview was one of many that Harris and Republican candidate Donald Trump are giving to podcast hosts, TikTok influencers, and other friendly personalities outside traditional news outlets in the run-up to the Nov. 5 election. Amid years of media fragmentation, with so many choices for news, information, and enter-

CAMPAIGNING, Page A7

BU, graduate students reach deal to end strike

By Diti Kohli

GLOBE STAFF

Boston University and its graduate student union have agreed on terms for a new contract that would raise the graduate students’ pay, benefits, and job protections and end the longest such strike in American history.

The agreement, announced jointly on Friday afternoon, concludes seven months of sparring between

the administration and the union that represents 3,000 graduate students. Many teach classes, grade papers, and conduct research, and argued the school severely underpaid them for essential work.

Now the first-of-its-kind contract includes provisions to raise the annual stipend PhD workers receive to at least \$45,000, or \$20 an hour for graduate students, which would be as much as a 60 percent bump for

the lowest paid PhD students. It also expands health care benefits, parental leave, and commuting discounts, and introduces a \$3,500 annual subsidy for child care.

Union members have until Wednesday to vote on the agreement.

Meiya Sparks Lin, a graduate student in the English department, said the effort is proof that strikes work, **GRAD STUDENTS, Page A10**

‘It is worth reminding ourselves what nuclear weapons are: the most destructive weapons the world has ever seen.’

NOBEL COMMITTEE

Nobel honors work, lives of atomic bomb survivors

Peace prize committee notes growing attention paid to nuclear weapons

By Hannah Beech, Hisako Ueno, and Kiuko Notoya

NEW YORK TIMES

Cities blasted to rubble. Burned bodies and flayed flesh. Invisible waves of radiation coursing through the air. And the indelible image of a mushroom cloud.

The atomic bombs dropped by the United States on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki showed the world what an apocalypse looks like. Tens of thousands of people died in the immediate aftermath.

But some emerged from the devastation. Struggling with survivors’ guilt and sick with illnesses caused by the radiation, they were shunned for years as living reminders of the human capacity to engineer horror.

On Friday, Nihon Hidankyo, a collective of Japanese atomic bomb survivors, was awarded the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize for its decades-long campaign to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

The group was honored by the Norwegian Nobel Committee for “demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again.”

NOBEL, Page A6

PFAS poisoned their wells; now they are suing

Nantucket families take on chemical companies

By Sabrina Shankman

GLOBE STAFF

It started with the Skokans. In July 2023, a letter came to their home, a saltbox-style house on Toms Way, a small nook of a street not far from downtown Nantucket.

“Did anyone else get one of these letters?” Joanne Skokan asked at a cookout, explaining to her relatives and neighbors how the state was interested in testing the private well at her home.

Things moved quickly from there. Visits from researchers, tests in wells up and down the street, and then, results. Within months, the Toms Way residents would learn that many of their wells had high levels of PFAS, a group of compounds known as “forever chemicals” that can leach into water systems and cause health problems, including cancer, liver damage, and thyroid disease.

On Sunday, four households filed a class action suit against the manufacturers of the chemicals, including The 3M Co. as the lead defendant and more than a dozen others. It’s just the latest lawsuit that has targeted companies that produced chemicals to be used in just about everything from nonstick pans and the lining of food containers to the equipment that keeps firefighters safe and the foam they use to put out fires. Because these chemicals can take hundreds or thousands of years to break down in the environment, even a small spill can have lasting implications.

Nantucket is particularly susceptible to PFAS contamination because its subsurface soils are mostly sand and are highly permeable. As a result,

PFAS, Page A10



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Joanne Skokan said she “wanted to scream from the rooftops to say, ‘Everyone, test your well!’”