

## State failed to tell blind drivers to get off road

For months, no notices were sent to those with new vision loss diagnosis

By Jason Laughlin  
GLOBE STAFF

For most of the past two years, Massachusetts failed to regularly notify people with severely impaired vision that they must surrender their driver's licenses, undermining a process intended to keep motorists who cannot safely operate cars off the roads.

Over the past two years, the Registry of Motor Vehicles, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, repeatedly went multiple months without sending a single notice, including an eight-month stretch beginning in January 2023. None were sent during the first four months of this year, and then in May, the RMV sent notifications to 352 people.

The commission receives an average of 148 new diagnoses of legal blindness each month and shares that information with the Registry. That agency identifies people on the commission's list with driver's licenses. Once those matches are confirmed by the commission, the RMV is supposed to notify those drivers to surrender their licenses.

But, the gaps in notification occurred because the commission failed to confirm the RMV's list of people no longer eligible to hold licenses, the RMV said.

Advocates for people with blindness described the lapses as a troubling failure to provide valuable guidance and guardrails for people struggling to come to terms with a life-changing medical diagnosis.

"Obviously the public is at greater risk; the person driving is at greater risk," said Amy Ruell, a former member of an advisory board to the commission.

BLIND, Page A10

## North Shore surprised by shark visits

Crane Beach sightings keep swimmers ashore

By Nick Stoico and Billy Baker  
GLOBE STAFF

IPSWICH — As great white sharks have become a regular threat on much of the Massachusetts coast, the North Shore has largely escaped the sharky feeling that makes people hesitate before dipping a toe in the ocean.

But that may have changed this week, after eight reported shark sightings off Crane Beach in Ipswich — including a pack of five swimming together — forced officials to close the beach, and left residents and experts asking if the shark problem has finally migrated north.

"Something is holding their attention," said Greg Skomal, a senior fisheries biologist with the state's Division of Marine Fisheries and a leading expert on white sharks, who said the North Shore is normally more of a "transient" area for sharks.

Another shark was recently reported off Plum Island in Newburyport, according to the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy's tracking app, Sharktivity.

So now, during a long stretch of glorious late summer weather, Crane Beach, a popular North Shore destination, was closed to swimmers the past two days because of the sightings. On Wednesday, a nonprofit that manages the beach said it wouldn't reopen until Monday.

SHARKS, Page A10

## A big cut in rates after long lull

Fed indicates more reductions ahead soon

By Jeanna Smialek  
NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The Federal Reserve cut interest rates Wednesday by half a percentage point, an unusually large move and a clear signal that central bankers think they are winning their war against inflation and are turning their attention to protecting the job market.

"Our patient approach over

the past year has paid dividends," Jerome Powell, the Fed chair, said during his news conference. But now "the upside risks to inflation have diminished, and the downside risks to unemployment have increased."

The Fed's decision lowers rates to about 4.9 percent, down from a more-than-two-decade high.

The pivot comes in response

▼  
**0.5%**  
Fed rate cut brings its key rate to  
**4.75 - 5%**

to months of fading inflation, and it is meant to prevent the economy from slowing so much that the job market begins to weaken more painfully. Officials have been keeping a careful eye on a recent uptick in the unemployment rate, and by starting off with a big cut, the Fed is in effect taking out insurance against a bigger employment slowdown.

Reinforcing that cautious message, the decisive reduction came alongside economic projections that suggested a swifter

pace of rate cuts than officials had envisioned just a few months ago. Officials now expect to make another half-point reduction before the end of the year.

"We're going to take it meeting by meeting," Powell said. "We made a good, strong start to this, and that is frankly a sign of our confidence, confidence that inflation is coming down."

While Powell said that the Fed was not yet ready to declare

INTEREST RATE, Page A6



ANDREW BURKE-STEVENSON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Aimee Giles-Scott (right) embraced another visitor after looking at the Gun Violence Memorial Project in City Hall featuring her son Myles Van Frazier. He was shot and killed by police in Chicago. Giles-Scott said he was having a bipolar episode.

## 'It's like it never leaves your mind'

Gun violence memorial honors the lives of the victims

STORY BY JULIAN E.J. SORAPURU | GLOBE STAFF

At least once a week, Linda Smith visits the same park bench in Roslindale. If someone else is sitting there, she patiently waits for them to leave.

It's her place of peace — a place where she can take a seat and reminisce about her son, Dre'Shaun Johnson. His love of sports, his on-the-go nature, and, most of all, his lighthearted personality and big smile.

The bench was one of Johnson's favorite spots, too, before he was shot and killed in April 2022. Johnson was 23 years old.

"I think about him every day. It's like it never leaves your mind," Smith said recently. "He's always in my heart. All day. Every day."

That's why she loaned items that remind her of Dre'Shaun — his Red Sox T-shirt, brown baby shoes, and a dog tag with his photo — to the Institute of Contemporary Art through the Gun Violence Memorial Project. The installation was created by the local architecture firm MASS Design Group and artist Hank Willis Thomas, who also partnered on "The Embrace" sculpture on

MEMORIAL, Page A7

## Families of color show rise in income; gaps still striking

By Tiana Woodard and Vince Dixon  
GLOBE STAFF

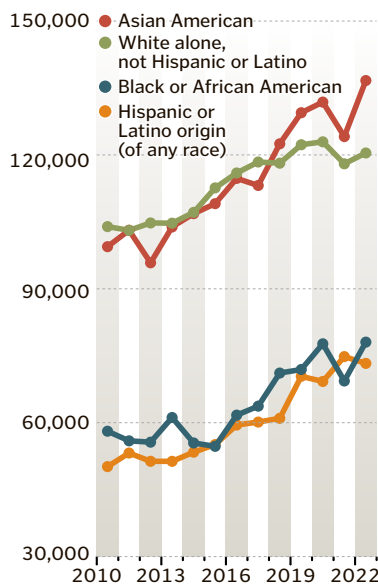
Black, Latino, and Asian American households in Boston had larger increases in their incomes compared to white Bostonians over the past decade, but have still not gained enough ground to eliminate the racial income gap in a part of the country notorious for its stark inequities.

Since 2013, the median income of Black Boston households has grown 16 percent, and its grown 30 percent for

both the typical Latino and Asian American family in Boston, when adjusted for inflation, according to data released last week by the US Census Bureau. However, white families in Boston still earn tens of thousands of dollars more a year and are the only group in the city proper to exceed more than \$100,000 in median household income, the data show. These trends are similar at the regional and state levels.

That the typical white family still has

INCOME GAP, Page A7



### Median income in Greater Boston metro area, by race

Median income for Asian American, Black, and Latino households in the Greater Boston area has increased over the years. Median income for Asian American households is higher than any other group.

SOURCE: US Census American Community Survey 1-year-release 2010 - 2023 • Values have been adjusted for inflation; Black and Asian American/Pacific Islander groups include people who are Hispanic or Latino. Values for Hispanic or Latino represents members of all races.  
VINCE DIXON/GLOBE STAFF



AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

## More blasts in Lebanon

Twenty people were killed and hundreds were wounded when walkie-talkies owned by Hezbollah members exploded across Lebanon on Wednesday, a day after pagers (left) used by the group detonated, killing 12 and injuring thousands more. **A4.**

The owner and manager of the cargo ship that caused the deadly Baltimore bridge collapse prioritized profits over safety, Justice Department attorneys asserted in a new civil claim seeking more than \$100 million. **A2.**

### A grayed above



A former lawyer for James "Whitey" Bulger will lead the prosecution in Karen Read's retrial. **B1.**

The state Cannabis Control Commission's research chief said she will take medical leave for job-related post-traumatic stress. **D1.**

**Thursday:** Cloudy and breezy. High: 66-71. Low: 60-65.  
**Friday:** Windy, touch of rain. High: 65-70. Low: 56-61.  
Sunrise: 6:29 Sunset: 6:46  
Comics and Weather, **D5-6.**  
Obituaries, **C9.**

VOL. 306, NO. 81

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Suggested retail price  
\$4.00

