

At Steward hospital, ER disarray put patients at risk

By Liz Kowalczyk and Felice J. Freyer
GLOBE STAFF

Struggling to breathe, the patient stepped out of the registration line in the hospital's overwhelmed emergency department to find help. Her chest hurt, she told the triage nurse on duty that evening at Brockton's Good Samaritan Medical Center. The nurse, backed up with more than a dozen waiting patients, thought it was anxiety and told her to get back in line.

That is where the patient collapsed. Medical personnel rushed in and tried to jump-start her

►Healey says Steward crisis is an "urgent priority" for her administration. D1.

heart using a defibrillator and life-saving medications, according to a state inspection document and an internal staffing report. But it was too late.

Two weeks after the patient's death on Sept. 13, state health inspectors arrived at the hospital, owned by for-profit Steward Health Care, to investigate. During their review of patient records, they found an emergency department with recurring staffing problems that at times seemed to be in near-meltdown.

Extremely sick patients had no assigned nurses, including one patient who was previously found unresponsive in a hallway. In another instance, an overworked nurse who was "extremely busy and was behind, trying to

ER, Page A9

Governor relied on insiders for guidance on two SJC picks

By Matt Stout
GLOBE STAFF

For decades, when openings on Massachusetts' highest court emerged, governors typically convened a wide-ranging group of seasoned attorneys to vet and recommend candidates, using a process in which debate was confidential, meetings weren't public, and timelines were malleable.

Even by those opaque standards, Governor Maura Healey's approach for her initial picks may be more insular than most, legal observers say.

Faced with two recent Supreme Judicial Court vacancies, the first-term Democrat leaned on a small, five-person panel, including three current or former Healey appointees, to vet and identify picks for the high court — employing a much tighter circle than those her predecessors relied on to make their initial SJC picks.

The eventual nominees it recommended were well-known to the governor, too: A former Healey appointee who succeeded her briefly as interim attorney general, and an appellate judge who was her romantic partner for 12 years.

While governors have wide latitude in how they vet and choose judicial candidates, legal observers worry that Healey's approach — and the connected picks that emerged from it —

SJC, Page A8

After bitter fight on housing, Milton voters say no to plan

Town's decision on development could have far-reaching effects in T communities

By Andrew Brinker
GLOBE STAFF
and Ava Berger
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

MILTON — In a vote that could set up a legal standoff with state officials and reverberate across Eastern Massachusetts, Milton voters on Wednesday soundly rejected a land-use plan that would have opened the town up to more multifamily development.

After weeks of fervent campaigning and political tension, Milton residents voted by a

54% NO

46% YES

substantial margin to overturn the town's state-mandated zoning plan, according to results released by the town clerk Wednesday night. "No" carried about 54 percent of the nearly 9,500 votes cast.

The vote represents a setback to the Healey administration's efforts to dig out of the state's housing crisis, and could crystalize local resistance to a broader vision of compel-

ling communities to build more. It could also prompt legal action from the state if the town does not find a way to comply with the MBTA Communities Act, which requires communities served by the T to zone for multifamily housing.

The Boston suburb of 28,000 was sharply divided, and even up until polls closed Wednesday night, it was unclear which way the vote might go. At polling places all day, volunteers on both sides held dueling "YES!"

MILTON, Page A9



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

The no voters in Milton were out Wednesday near the Cunningham Park Community Center, a day late because of the storm forecast.

With decades behind bars, older lifers hope their changes will set them free

Healey's commutation guidelines consider age, self-improvement

By Ivy Scott
GLOBE STAFF

For nearly all of his 50 years in prison, Daniel Ferreira has worked to get right with God, and with those around him, transforming his own life in the process.

Ferreira, 76, became a Christian four years after being sentenced to life for the 1973 murder of a Fall River police officer. He has since become an ordained minister, serving for a time as an associate bishop and preaching to youth around Massachusetts for several years through the state's now-defunct furlough program, which permitted incarcerated individuals with a record of good behavior to return to their communities for one weekend each month.

In 1987, Ferreira told the Globe that "through Christianity, I could love for the first time."

"In a way, I am as free as I will ever be," he added.

COMMUTATION, Page A12



SHARON CHEN

Daniel Ferreira (left), 76, and Lewis Dickerson, 75.

A daily losing battle at Brockton High

Teachers, parents, students describe violence, chaos

By Shannon Larson
GLOBE STAFF

Cliff Canavan grew up in Brockton and graduated from Brockton High School, where he has been a teacher for more than two decades.

He hasn't taught anywhere else and doesn't want to. But with the school beset with widespread misbehavior and frequent bouts of violence, he wonders how much more he can take.

In December 2022, his arm was broken when he tried to

break up a fight after school, one day after he had remarked to other teachers that it was only a matter of time before someone got "seriously hurt — or God forbid — killed," he recalled.

Teachers, staff, parents, and many students at Brockton High are expressing concern about the conditions. In interviews and emotional testimony at a recent School Committee meeting, teachers described fist fights that draw crowds of on-lookers, open drug use, and verbal harassment of faculty.

"When I'm asked by people outside of Brockton, in Brockton, 'What's going on at Brockton High? Is it really as bad as

they say it is?' I say, 'No. It's much, much worse,'" guidance counselor Martin Feroli said at the Jan. 31 meeting. "Teachers and administration staff are sworn at, shoved, and met with a staggering level of disrespect that most people, I would hope, would not even show toward their worst enemy."

But at a school where more than 60 percent of the students are Black and 20 percent are Hispanic, some parents and community leaders expressed concern that only one narrative is being heard. The discipline problems are associated with a range of factors, they said, from the lack of Black educators to

BROCKTON HIGH, Page A8

The Boston City Council side-stepped debate on a resolution in support of a negotiated cease-fire in the war in Gaza, avoiding what has previously been a contentious topic. B1.

Israel carried out extensive air-strikes in southern Lebanon in response to a deadly rocket attack, as efforts to prevent a major expansion of the war in the Gaza Strip continued. A4.

A federal judge dismissed a class-action lawsuit brought against the Chelsea Soldiers' Home on behalf of three veterans who died of COVID-19. B1.

Eversource Energy completed its protracted quest to find a buyer for two offshore wind farm projects, signing a \$1.1 billion deal with Global Infrastructure Partners. D1.



Dusting, the wind

Thursday: Light snow late. High 35-40. Low 28-33.

Friday: Some sun, gusty. High 35-40. Low 25-30.

High tide: 3:03 a.m., 3:35 p.m.

Sunrise: 6:42 Sunset: 5:16

Weather and Comics, D5-6. Obituaries, C10-11.

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\$3.50



SHOOTING AT PARADE



ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

A total of 22 people were hit, including eight children, at the end of a parade Wednesday in Kansas City, Mo., celebrating the Chiefs' Super Bowl win. One person was killed, police said, and three people are in custody. A2.