

# The Boston Globe

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## Resurgence of bird flu sounding alarms

More mammals are getting infected; risk for humans low

By Alex Viveros  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

When Dr. Jonathan Runstadler was called to the scene at Nahant Beach in March, he found more than 70 dead birds littering the shoreline, including sea ducks, loons, and sea gulls.

State officials had called Runstadler, a virologist, to the North Shore

to test the dead animals for bird flu, which has been devastating wild flocks in New England since early 2022. Within a few days, Runstadler, of the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, confirmed that the birds were the latest victims of a highly pathogenic strain of H5N1, a bird virus that resurged in Massachusetts in January after waxing and waning over the previous two years.

This potent version of H5N1 has killed millions of birds in the wild and on commercial poultry farms around the world since it first

emerged in Europe in 2020. But of greater concern to scientists is this strain's ability to infect mammals. In the summer of 2022, it killed more than 180 gray and harbor seals off the coast of Maine. Last year, tens of thousands of seals and sea lions off the coast of South America fell victim. Last month, a sick goat in Minnesota became the first livestock animal in the United States to contract H5N1, and within the last two weeks, the US Department of Agriculture announced that cows had been infected for the first time on farms in Texas, Kansas, New Mexi-

co, Idaho, and Michigan.

"The globe is just being slammed by this virus," said Wendy Puryear, also a virologist at Tufts.

Most of the mammals infected with H5N1 over the last several years are believed to have contracted it directly from wild birds rather than from each other. But on Monday, state and federal officials reported a person in Texas was being treated for bird flu after having direct exposure to dairy cattle presumed to also be infected. If proven true, it could be a very rare case of

**BIRD FLU, Page A6**

## Healey putting hiring on hold

With revenues still down, freeze expected to start today

By Samantha J. Gross and Matt Stout  
GLOBE STAFF

Governor Maura Healey plans to institute a freeze on hiring in portions of the state government lasting at least through the end of the fiscal year in June, according to three sources with direct knowledge of the plan, another sign the state's rocky financial situation hasn't improved.

The freeze, which is expected to take effect Wednesday, comes just hours before the administration is slated to release its latest revenue projections, and could indicate that tax collections continue to lag behind the projections state officials use to budget public services.

Some details of the freeze remained unclear, including how much money the Healey administration expects to save with the move.

In a statement to the Globe, Healey's budget chief Matthew Gorzkowicz confirmed the move but characterized it as "hiring controls." He said the Healey administration is taking the action "as one tool at our disposal to responsibly manage spending over the next three months."

"These hiring controls, while temporary, will help ensure that the administration can balance the budget at the end of the year and preserve critical funding for core programs and services," Gorzkowicz said.

Certain positions, including those in direct

**HIRING, Page A7**

## PIECES OF THE PAST



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

The wreckage of sand schooner Ada K. Damon, which crashed onto an Ipswich beach over a century ago, is beginning to reemerge after recent storms that pummeled the coast. "When it became unburied in February, it was like we were getting to see an old friend who we hadn't seen in a long time," said Val Perini (shown), regional education manager with The Trustees. Beachgoers can see about 10 percent of the 83-foot ship. **B1.**

**Some of Israel's closest allies condemned the deaths of seven aid workers** killed by airstrikes in Gaza. **A3.**

**A limited number of vessels are bypassing the collapsed Key Bridge** with the opening of a second channel. **A2.**

**The Kraft Group unveiled designs for its proposed new home for the New England Revolution** on the Mystic River in Everett. **B5.**

**Mayor Michelle Wu signed an ordinance creating a new city planning department,** celebrating a key plank in her agenda. **B1.**

**Devra First finds herself won over by Gisele Bündchen's new cookbook,** and says the recipes deliver. **G1.**

## Buyout firm Cerberus says its investment in Steward yielded an \$800m profit

By Robert Weisman  
GLOBE STAFF

Cerberus Capital Management, which more than a decade ago snapped up the Massachusetts hospital system that became Steward Health Care, confirmed that its investment yielded a profit of about \$800 million.

The size of Cerberus's profit, on the eve of a Senate subcommittee hearing in Boston on the role of for-profit health care, serves as a stark contrast to Steward's current situation in Massachusetts. Facing a severe cash shortage that has resulted in many of its suppliers not being paid, Steward is trying to sell its eight remaining hospitals in the state and

'Cerberus's answers still don't provide a clear answer for how much Cerberus made off of the people of Massachusetts.'

SENATORS ELIZABETH WARREN AND ED MARKEY

has already struck a deal to sell off its physicians group network.

Cerberus paid \$246 million to the Boston Archdiocese for the chain of

six nonprofit Catholic hospitals, then operating as Caritas Christi Health Care, in 2010. A spokesperson for Cerberus confirmed to the Globe that the buyout firm more than tripled its investment.

The chain was converted into a for-profit system and rebranded as Steward, launching a national expansion and moving its headquarters to Dallas. Cerberus sold its interest in Steward in 2020.

In response to questions from Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, meanwhile, Cerberus indicated for the first time that the 2010 investment was its only cash outlay in Steward. Additional funding for the hospi-

**CERBERUS, Page A8**

## Hospitals shift on reporting of mothers

Citing inequity, Mass General Brigham won't automatically call presence of drugs abuse

By Matt Stout  
GLOBE STAFF

Hospitals within the Mass General Brigham system will no longer report suspected abuse or neglect to state child welfare officials solely because a baby is born exposed to drugs, targeting a practice hospital leaders say has long stoked fear in women in recovery from addiction.

The new policy, which Mass General Brigham is unveiling this week, is one in a series of changes coming to Massachusetts' largest health care system, including at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, and six other hospitals that have labor and delivery units in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

The hospitals will now require written consent for toxicology testing of any expecting mother or infant in most cases. Going forward, the hospitals will also limit such testing to cases where the results "will change the medical management" of the pregnant mother or her baby.

Hospitals leaders say current policies have varied from hospital to hospital, creating "unconscious

**MASS GENERAL BRIGHAM, Page A8**

LARRY LUCCHINO 1945-2024

## A driving force behind ballpark visions and Red Sox glory

By John Powers  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Larry Lucchino, whose tenure as Red Sox president included three World Series championships, with the first ending an 86-year drought, died Tuesday. He was 78.

Mr. Lucchino, whom franchise owner John Henry called "one of the most important executives in baseball history," also served as president of the Baltimore Orioles and San Diego Padres, both of whom made dramatic improvements soon after his arrival.

During his 14 years in Boston, beginning in 2002, the club reached the playoffs seven times and won the World Series in 2004, 2007, and 2013.

The cause of death was congenital heart failure, according to the Associated Press.

From 2016 to the time of his death,

Mr. Lucchino also served as chairman of the Jimmy Fund, which raises millions for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and is the Red Sox' official charity.

"To us, Larry was an exceptional person who combined a Hall of Fame life as a Major League Baseball executive with his passion for helping those people most in need," his brother Frank and family said in a statement.

Yet Mr. Lucchino's more enduring legacy could be the building/remodeling of five ballparks under his supervision.

"I once asked [former commissioner Bud Selig] what's the hardest thing he's ever done," Mr. Lucchino said. "He said, 'That's easy. Trying to get a ballpark built.'"

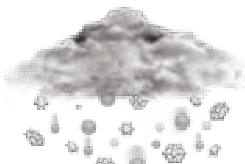
A Pittsburgh native who grew up watching Pirates games at Forbes Field, Mr. Lucchino favored old-style parks

**LUCCHINO, Page C6**



GLOBE FILE/2015

Besides serving as Red Sox president for 14 years, Larry Lucchino, a three-time cancer survivor, was chairman of the Jimmy Fund since 2016.



Slop sign

**Wednesday:** Rain and wind. High 41-46. Low 34-39.

**Thursday:** Tapering off. High 40-45. Low 34-39.

High tide: 6:35 a.m., 7:24 p.m. Sunrise: 6:23 Sunset: 7:13

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