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Lawsuit filed over hospital's warning

Salem facility told patients of possible infection

By Felice J. Freyer
GLOBE STAFF

The letter from Salem Hospital looked very ordinary from the outside, Melinda Cashman recalls. But when she opened it, she said, anxiety gripped her.

"We are reaching out to you because our records show that you had an endoscopy at Salem Hospital between June 14, 2021 and April 19, 2023," the letter said. "We recently learned some patients may have been exposed to an infection on the day of the procedure. After our review, it appears you are one of the patients who may have been exposed."

'What kind of infections could I have?'

MELINDA CASHMAN,
Describing her reaction to the letter from Salem Hospital

The letter did offer some solace: "Your risk of an infection is very low," it said. "To date, there has been no evidence of any infections resulting from this possible exposure."

Cashman received the letter late on a Friday, Nov. 3, and couldn't get more information until Monday. She spent the weekend worrying about "anything and everything that could happen," she said in an interview Friday. "What kind of infections could I have? How long did these take to show? How long do they stay in your system?"

Cashman is the first named plaintiff in a lawsuit filed Thursday by the Keches Law Group in Suffolk Superior Court. The suit

LAWSUIT, Page A10

One victim is dead after a person opened fire at New Hampshire Hospital, the state psychiatric hospital; police confirmed a state trooper fatally shot the suspect. **B1.**

The Republican chair of the House Ethics Committee introduced a resolution to expel Representative George Santos from Congress, citing the committee's damning report on the New York Republican. **A2.**

The Massachusetts economy shed jobs for the second consecutive month in October, the first back-to-back losses since the shutdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic, the US Labor Department said. **D1.**



Current events

Saturday: Windy, showers. High: 54-59. Low: 32-37.
Sunday: Some sun, windy. High: 47-52. Low: 30-35.
Sunrise: 6:38 Sunset: 4:20
Comics and Weather, **D4-5.**
Obituaries, **C10.**

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PHOTOS BY JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Joe Fahey (top with niece Anna) helped guide the redevelopment of Amesbury's downtown into the kind of place where pumpkins are sold on the lawn of Main Street Congregational Church (middle) and artists such as Tasha Cough (bottom) have their studios.

FEELING OF RENEWAL IN OLD MILL TOWN

Decades of planning, work paying off in Amesbury

By Billy Baker
GLOBE STAFF

AMESBURY — Two things are going to happen if you walk around downtown Amesbury with Joe Fahey, something he does most mornings now that he's retired.

The first is that he's going tell you his joke about what Amesbury was like when he arrived in 1979, tasked with revitalizing the barren downtown.

"There were no cars on the street. Many of the storefronts were vacant. Windows were bro-

ken. There were burnt-out buildings," Fahey said. "Everyone's tired of hearing me make this joke, but the only thing missing was tumbleweed."

And the reason he's made that joke too many times is because of the other thing that's going to happen on a walk with Joe Fahey, which is that he gets stopped constantly by locals who say something along the lines of: Isn't this amazing?

That's because the downtown Fahey walks around today is unrecognizable from the one he saw when he began his three-decade career over-

AMESBURY, Page A10

USDA plant maps affirm the cold is getting warmer

By Sabrina Shankman
GLOBE STAFF

When Tyler Caforio started doing landscaping work back in 2012, winter meant plowing every weekend bundled up in a heavy coat as he added to already sky-high snowbanks that refused to budge, thanks to persistent cold.

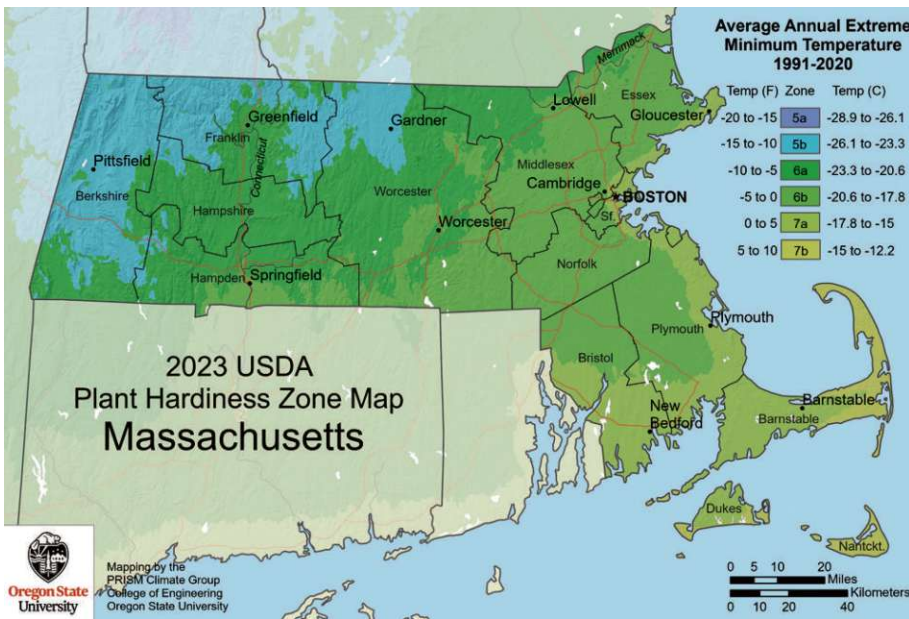
Only 11 years later, that's changed. A lot. If it snows, he can usually toss on just a sweat shirt to go out for the day. And the unfrozen ground quickly turns snow to slush, "like pudding on asphalt ... it's just a big mess," he said.

Caforio's business in Ashburnham,

in north-central Massachusetts, is in one of several parts of the state that have experienced a pronounced shift in its winter temperatures. The latest proof of that comes not in an academic finding or scientific report, but in an update this week of the US Department of Agriculture's plant hardiness map — a guide for would-be planters wondering how much cold their plants need to withstand.

Compared to the former map, which was from 2012 and looked at extreme minimum temperatures from 1976 to

WINTERS, Page A7



Israel says it plans southern Gaza push

Aid agencies warn of worsening crisis; limited fuel deliveries allowed

By Louisa Loveluck, Claire Parker,
Sarah Dadouch, Michael Birnbaum,
and Hazem Balousha

WASHINGTON POST

JERUSALEM — Israel signaled Friday that it was preparing to intensify military operations in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, foreshadowing a new phase of its war against Hamas in an area where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians had fled in search of safety.

The Israel Defense Forces are "determined" to push forward the offensive, military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said at a briefing Friday. "It will happen wherever Hamas exists, including in the south of the strip," he said.

For weeks, the IDF and senior Israeli officials urged civilians to leave Gaza City and other urban areas in the north, describing the region as a crucial base for Hamas operations. Close to half a million people heeded the calls and fled south, according to the United Nations, where they have packed into homes, schools, shelters, and camps.

Aid agencies have warned of the spread of disease and a worsening humanitarian crisis exacerbated by severe fuel shortages and rolling communications blackouts.

In recent days, Israel's air force began dropping leaflets near the southern city of Khan Younis, warning residents that anyone who is close to militants or their positions is "putting their life in danger." But it is unclear where Palestinians, many of whom are already displaced, would

GAZA, Page A5

She posts fliers knowing they'll be torn down

Some see duty to hostages, but others see propaganda

By Brooke Hauser
GLOBE STAFF

When Shirly Gurten leaves her house in Arlington these days, it's often with a backpack filled with posters and packing tape. The posters are of hostages who were kidnapped Oct. 7 when Hamas attacked Israel, killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting nearly 240.

The packing tape is for attaching the posters to utility poles near the Capitol Theatre on Massachusetts Avenue. Since protesters began ripping them down, Gurten has started putting the fliers in protective plastic sleeves and wrapping everything in more tape.

She doesn't see herself as an activist.

"I'm an Israeli," said Gurten, who was born and raised in Jerusalem. "We only know how to be proactive."

Gurten is among those who have been posting the fliers in cities around the world, from Cape Town to Cambridge, Kyiv to Mexico City. With their bright-red "KIDNAPPED" banner, the posters have emerged as a tangible, ubiquitous symbol of the Middle East conflict. But as Israel rejects global calls for a cease-fire and the reported

HOSTAGES, Page A6