

# The Boston Globe

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## Steward seeks buyers while state watches over hospitals

Health system says it has temporary financing, no plans to close in Mass.

By Jessica Bartlett and Suchita Nayar

GLOBE STAFF

Steward Health Care is exploring the sale of multiple Massachusetts facilities to other health systems, as it works on a longer-term plan to resolve a financial crisis that could further stress the state's overburdened health care system.

On Friday Steward announced it had secured a temporary lifeline, while Massachusetts officials said they have begun daily monitoring of many of the system's nine hospitals, which serve about 200,000 patients combined annually and span Eastern Massachusetts from Haverhill to Fall River. Regulators have also been in talks with other hospitals to determine their capacity to accommodate additional patients and staff.

"We know the critically important role our hospitals and health care providers play in our communities," Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh said in a statement. "That's why we're actively engaged in contingency planning as Steward navigates its financial challenges, not only for Steward as a system but for each specific community where Steward operates in Massachusetts."

In a statement, Steward said it was continuing to work with state regulators. "We welcome their interest and collaboration as we continue to provide high quality care for our patients."

STEWARD, Page A6

## US retaliates with airstrikes in Syria, Iraq

Attacks against Iranian forces signal new upsurge in war in Middle East

By Helene Cooper and Eric Schmitt

NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The United States on Friday carried out a series of military strikes against Iranian forces and the militias that they back in seven sites in Syria and Iraq, marking a sharp escalation of the war in the Middle East that the Biden administration has for four months sought to avoid.

►The Bidens met with families of the service members killed in the drone attack. A5.

The airstrikes, targeting command and control operations, intelligence centers, weapons facilities, and bunkers used by Iran's Revolutionary Guard's Quds Force and affiliated militia groups, made good on President Biden's promise to respond to a drone attack in Jordan on Sunday that killed three American soldiers and injured at least 40 more service members.

The military action also sought to send a message to Iran and the militias it backs that contin-

AIRSTRIKE, Page A5

## Teachers reach agreement in Newton, ending 2-week strike

Tentative pact follows rancorous dispute that left city's schools closed for 11 days

By Mandy McLaren and Christopher Huffaker

GLOBE STAFF

Following 11 days of shuttered schools and a bitter public feud, Newton's School Committee and the Newton Teachers Association reached a tentative contract agreement Friday night, ending the state's longest teachers strike in de-

cades and returning nearly 12,000 students to class Monday.

The agreement, which will cost the district \$53 million more than the current contract over four years, includes a 12.6 percent cost of living increase over four years for teachers, a larger increase for classroom aides, and a dramatic expansion of paid parental leave.

All parents will get up to 60 days of parental leave, with at least 40 of them fully paid. Parents can use sick leave to be paid for the full period.

The announcement brings to a close a two-week-long illegal strike that pitted neighbor against neighbor in the tony suburb, forced parents to scramble for child care, left special education students without needed therapies, and saw 2,000 educators huddle on picket lines in the bitter cold.

The sixth strike by teachers in

Massachusetts since 2022, the Newton work stoppage demonstrated the lengths unions are willing to go to for improved working conditions, even if it costs them hundreds of thousands of dollars and public good will. It could serve as a model for other dissatisfied unions in the state to follow suit. Alternatively, the strike could become a cautionary tale for other unions given the strife that divided the Newton community.

NEWTON, Page A10

## A STARTUP NEWSPAPER IS BIG NEWS IN IPSWICH

After his online readership seemed to peak, the editor went old school

By Billy Baker

GLOBE STAFF

IPSWICH — John Muldoon said there are two reasons to explain why a person would choose to start a print newspaper in this day and age. The shortest is "madness."

Muldoon is Irish, so re-read that word in a brogue. Now to the longer version of Muldoon's story: Picture a guy from Ireland in his early 50s who moved to Ipswich with his wife in 2015 so she could care for her sister, and almost immediately created a local news website about a town he had known for minutes, in a climate where local news outlets were folding by the day.

As a young man, he'd worked in journalism in the United States, starting at the Wellesley Townsman in the late '80s and later at the Conway Daily Sun in New Hampshire, where he met his wife, Kristen.

Muldoon left journalism when they had children, but says the bug never left him. "That was really my problem."

So in Ipswich, starting fresh, he decided to just try it on his own, with a basic

NEWSPAPER, Page A7



A Remington Standard typewriter, part of the office decor, hearkens back to newspapers' early days.



PHOTOS BY CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF

John Muldoon worked on a story for the Ipswich Local News in his home office. The weekly paper is delivered to 9,300 homes.

## Epstein's back and hope's on the horizon

New role once again puts him in the room where decisions are made

PETER ABRAHAM

COMMENTARY

Theo Epstein rejoined the Red Sox on Friday. Cue the duck boats.

If only it were that easy.

Epstein will not be sweating roster moves at 11:30 p.m. after a tough loss or flying across the country to make franchise-altering deals. He has lived that life and has nothing left to prove after breaking two curses and collecting three World Series rings.

Epstein is not the boy wonder general manager from Brookline anymore. He's a 50-year-old private equity investor with a home in Greenwich, Conn.

A 628-word press release from Fenway Sports Group was careful to point out that Epstein's role as a senior adviser will encompass the Red Sox along with all the other teams and enterprises under its ever-expanding umbrella.

Epstein is stepping down from his consulting role with Major

ABRAHAM, Page C2



JIM DAVIS/GLOBE STAFF/FILE/2009

Theo Epstein won't be the Sox' general manager, but his mere proximity to the team bodes well for fans.



### Sol provider

**Saturday:** Windy, sunny.  
High: 35-40. Low: 23-28.  
**Sunday:** Mostly sunny.  
High: 35-40. Low: 25-30.  
Sunrise: 6:56 Sunset: 5:00

Comics and Weather, **D4-5**.

Obituaries, **C9**.

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**The district attorney prosecuting the Georgia election interference case against former president Donald Trump acknowledged a "personal relationship" with a prosecutor she hired to manage the case but argued that it was not a reason to disqualify her. A2.**

**The January jobs data should dispel any concern that the job market might tank** under the weight of high interest rates, writes Larry Edelman. **D1.**

**Boston Public Schools officials are preparing to enroll migrant children** staying at the temporary shelter in Roxbury. **B1.**

**Israel's defense minister has signaled that Israeli ground forces could advance on Rafah** — one of the last southern cities in the Gaza Strip that they have not yet reached. **A4.**