

# The Boston Globe

Serving our community since 1872

W E D N E S D A Y , J A N U A R Y 3 1 , 2 0 2 4

## Surprise and frustration over shelter plan

Loss of rec center brings anger in Roxbury along with sympathy for migrant families

By **Matt Stout**  
GLOBE STAFF  
and **Daniel Kool**  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Governor Maura Healey’s fast-moving plan to convert a Roxbury recreational center into a shelter for hundreds of migrant and homeless men, women, and children reverberated through the neighborhood Tuesday, sparking a mix of surprise, sympathy, and frustration among

residents who’ve long felt ignored by the state and city.

Healey administration officials said late Monday that the Melnea A. Cass Recreational Complex will begin serving as a temporary overflow shelter for families starting on Wednesday, with space to hold up to 400 people.

The decision, foreshadowed last week in a community meeting, marks the state’s latest attempt to

accommodate the thousands of migrant families who have been arriving in Massachusetts — including scores who have been sleeping at Logan Airport — and have strained the state’s overwhelmed emergency shelter program.

But the plan for the state-owned Roxbury center stands out, both for its size — officials estimate it can serve up to 125 families — and the disruption it will bring to a predominantly Black neighborhood whose residents rely on it for a dozen programs, sundry community events, and more.

Said Hassan Ahmed, a cofounder of Boston United Track and Cross Country, a nonprofit that provides a free track-and-field program to Boston youth, said the move left his program “homeless.”

“We come in [for practice Saturday], and folks at the front desk were like, ‘Just to let you know, today’s your last day.’ . . . We were told that our permit was revoked and we were out,” Ahmed said.

Healey said in a letter to lawmakers that she is “committed to working” with the city and lawmakers to

**SHELTER, Page A7**

## Students, alums press Harvard for change

Lawsuit cites bias on campus; new candidates seek leadership roles

By **Mike Damiano and Hilary Burns**  
GLOBE STAFF

Harvard University faced new challenges Tuesday, from pro-Palestinian and Muslim students alleging the school has not protected them from harassment and racism, and from alumni pressuring school leadership to focus on free speech and broadening the school’s conception of diversity.

A legal group representing 14 Harvard students asked the Department of Education this week to investigate the school for allegedly failing to protect them from discrimination and targeted harassment due to their Muslim, Arab, or Palestinian backgrounds, or their pro-Palestinian views.

Six alumni, with wholly different views of what ails Harvard, are racing to collect thousands of signatures as part of an insurgent campaign to join Harvard’s Board of Overseers and steer the school in a different direction.

Meanwhile, Kenneth Griffin, a megadonor who gave Harvard so much money that it named its largest graduate school after him last year, said at a conference Tuesday that elite universities now produce “whiny snowflakes” instead of “leaders and problem solvers” because of their excessive focus on “microaggressions [and] a DEI agenda.”

Griffin said he is not currently supporting Harvard financially, joining a chorus of other major donors who have lambasted the school since the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack on Israel.

**HARVARD, Page A6**

## Troopers are accused in commercial license scheme

By **Sean Cotter, Laura Crimaldi, and Travis Andersen**  
GLOBE STAFF

The State Police sergeant who administered commercial driving tests in Stoughton described some of the applicants he tested as “a mess,” “an idiot,” or “brain dead.”

But the sergeant, Gary Cederquist, issued them commercial licenses anyway, federal prosecutors allege, with “a golden handshake” in exchange for gifts such as a new snow blower, a driveway renovation worth about \$10,000, supplies of bottled water and candy, and a coffee machine for the trailer his unit used as an office.

On Tuesday, Cederquist, 58, and five other men were arrested and charged with running a scheme that officials say resulted in more than two dozen people getting commercial licenses over about five years without passing or sometimes without even taking the required tests.

Besides Cederquist, who prosecutors say was in charge of the State Police commercial driver’s licensing unit, three others are current or former state troopers who have ties to the unit.

Four other state troopers are alleged to have re-

**TROOPERS, Page A6**



DANIELLE PARHIZKARAN/GLOBE STAFF

ElevateBio makes cell and gene therapies at a 300,000-square-foot facility near the intersection of Routes 2 and 128 in Waltham.

## BEYOND KENDALL, BIOTECHS FINDING THEIR SPACE

Besides cheaper land, Watertown, Waltham, and others offer conveniences

By **Robert Weisman**  
GLOBE STAFF

Move over, Kendall Square.

Folks in the biotech nerve center may shudder at the notion. But the next miracle drug for lung cancer or epilepsy is just as likely to emerge from Arsenal Yards in Watertown or the shadow of Fenway Park.

The spread of the biotech sector — to smaller clusters in Boston, Watertown, Waltham, and beyond — picked up speed in recent years as Cambridge became congested and the cost of lab space skyrocketed. Even with demand for space dampening in the past year as startups retrenched, the newer clusters have capitalized on lower rents and more ample space to compete with Cambridge for biopharma tenants.

Last year, nearly 60 percent of venture

capital for Massachusetts life sciences companies was deployed to companies outside Cambridge, the highest share since 2019, when the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council began tracking that metric, according to a report the council released this month. That was up from 51 percent outside Cambridge in 2022, and 42 percent in 2021.

The new clusters are already having a broad impact on communities outside the traditional biotech hub, bringing jobs, tax revenue, and a cutting-edge vibe but also more traffic and pressure on real estate costs. Venture dollars stayed largely within Eastern Massachusetts last year, but moves are afoot to accelerate the industry’s expansion to cities and towns in the state where space is more plentiful.

“We need the scale, in terms of space,

that isn’t ideally suited for Cambridge,” said David Hallal, chief executive of ElevateBio, which outfitted a 300,000-square-foot facility to make cell and gene therapies near the intersection of Routes 2 and 128 in Waltham.

Six-year-old Elevate, which has about 140 employees in Massachusetts, reeled in the state’s largest venture capital round in 2023. It raised just over \$400 million to expand capacity at its “genetic medicines foundry,” a contract manufacturing plant that supports more than 20 drug makers.

Other large venture outlays went to biotech startups such as Cardurion Pharma in Burlington (\$300 million), Aiolos Bio in Boston’s Back Bay (\$245 million), MapLight Therapeutics in Burlington (\$225 million),

**BIOTECHS, Page A7**

## On the picket line, different motivations

Three Newton teachers, and one former, talk about what they need for their jobs and what’s missing

By **Mandy McLaren**  
GLOBE STAFF

They have presented a united front, their royal blue winter caps adding a dash of color to their spirited rallies and picket lines.

But while the striking teachers of the Newton Public Schools have walked out over common grievances, each educator has their own motivations for entering the profession, and their own reason for participating in the longest teachers strike in recent Massachusetts history.

Here are the stories of three Newton teachers — and of a fourth who is not on a picket line or even a Newton teacher anymore, having quit over some of the very reasons her former colleagues are now on strike.

**NEWTON, Page A5**

►Questions and answers about the strike. **B1.**



LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

Out-of-pocket expenses shouldn’t be ignored, said Melynda Meszko-Cameron (center). “I’m the teacher with the snacks.”



### Well-gloomed

**Wednesday:** A bit warmer. High 36-41. Low 28-33.

**Thursday:** Showers. High 42-47. Low 33-38.

High tide: 2:36 a.m., 2:52 p.m.  
Sunrise: 6:59 Sunset: 4:56

**Weather and Comics, G6-7. Obituaries, C9.**

VOL. 305, NO. 31

\*

Suggested retail price  
\$3.50



**Chita Rivera, a force-of-nature dancer, singer, and actress, died at 91.** She found stardom in the original Broadway production of “West Side Story” and dazzled audiences for nearly seven decades. **C9.**

**A new landlord is taking over Faneuil Hall Marketplace,** raising hopes at City Hall that long-awaited improvements could be coming. **B5.**

**The Instant Pot is too good a tool to sit on your shelf and gather dust,** so here are some tips to get started. **G1.**