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ELECTION 2024

Lines aren't clear on when older drivers are too old

More keeping licenses but few are checked

By Kay Lazar
GLOBE STAFF

David Hosford is anxious about a big test coming up in December. That's when the 87-year-old retired high school teacher will have his driving skills assessed to see if it's still safe for him to get behind the wheel.

Hosford was diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment about four years ago but seemed OK to drive. Recently, though, his neurologist had grown concerned about some deterioration and suggested Hosford take a safety test and stop driving until that evaluation was completed.

So for now Hosford and his wife, Diana, who does not drive, are relying on neighbors and friends to take them to appointments, shopping, and everywhere else they need to go. The wait time for backlogged safe-driving assessments can be several months in Massachusetts.

"We live out in rural Plymouth. The nearest loaf of bread is seven miles down the road," Hosford said. "There isn't any place to walk to."

Determining whether an older person remains safe to drive has become a third rail of aging as many people maintain their license far longer than most did a generation ago. At the same time, the proportion of fatal crashes nationwide involving older drivers has risen 73 percent since 2001, federal data show. Now, two new studies from local researchers underscore the challenges ahead.

"Most health care professionals do not have the requisite knowledge and training to assess driving competence," Dr. Kirk Daffner, director of the Center for Brain/Mind Medicine at Brigham and

DRIVERS, Page A9

Student's family accuses Brandeis in wrongful death suit

By Danny McDonald
GLOBE STAFF

The family of a Brandeis University student who died last December after changing their mind about taking their own life and crying out for help is suing the school and three public safety officers, alleging they did not properly respond to a call from a passerby for hours.

The wrongful death suit, filed Thursday in Middlesex Superior Court, details the final hours of Eli T. Stuart, a 20-year-old sophomore from Texas who was actively suicidal during an overnight period in early December, ingesting pills, and lying on a patch of frigid ground on campus before deciding they wanted to live. Stuart used they/them pronouns.

But Stuart's body was found almost 11 hours after a professor called the university's public safety force reporting someone was conscious and lying on the ground in a wooded area, according to the lawsuit.

"Brandeis University and its safety office failed Eli Stuart in almost every way possible," said Howard M. Cooper, an attorney representing Stuart's family. "Eli should be alive today."

The lawsuit also alleged Stuart's phone had recorded the student's cries for help, but said the Waltham institution and its officers left Stuart to "die alone and in agony for hours while crying out for help and making clear they did not want to die."

In a statement Thursday, Brandeis did not directly respond to the family's allegations, saying in-

BRANDEIS, Page A9

Swing state spotlight wearing down Pa.

Voters tire of endless barrage of ads, calls

By Tal Kopan
GLOBE STAFF

PHILADELPHIA — It was 10:30 a.m. on a Tuesday, one week before Election Day, and a DJ-spun bass was thumping loud enough to be heard for blocks in the heart of downtown Philadelphia. The gathered crowd was about to hear rap star Quavo perform — and urge them to cast a ballot.

The atmosphere was energetic. But beneath the surface, there was

palpable fatigue expressed by many attendees about the election and the barrage of ads, outreach, and attention that had smothered them as residents of one of the nation's most sought-after presidential swing states.

Kayla Culp, 29, a lifelong Philadelphia resident, said she was excited to be there for the performance and planned to vote for Vice President Kamala Harris. But she was ready for the election to be

over.

"I'm too tired of texts and phone calls," she exclaimed when asked for her thoughts on the race. "I didn't know living in a swing state was so much."

The event for Vote Early Day that morning was part of The Party to the Polls Purple Tour, a nonpartisan series of such get-out-the-vote gatherings. Canvassers walked through the crowd providing voting information, and local high school students were on hand to participate and then walk to City

Hall where some of them would vote for the first time.

From the plaza downtown to the suburbs, Pennsylvanians described similar levels of fatigue. The feeling transcended politics among voters as a common thread.

"I can't wait till it's over," Christina Nunan, 66, a retired nurse from Landenberg, said as she waited to vote early in suburban West Chester. "I'm sick of the ads. I'm sick of the mudslinging."

Nunan declined to share who

PENNSYLVANIA, Page A7

NO BONES ABOUT IT



ROBERT COHEN/ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Early voters in St. Charles, Mo., showed their identifications before making their choices on Thursday.

Black media bring perspective to Harris coverage

By Aidan Ryan
GLOBE STAFF

The day former president Donald Trump falsely claimed that Kamala Harris "happened to turn Black" at a Black journalists' convention in July, the nonprofit news website Capital B quickly published a story debunking the allegation.

While the outlet called out the lie — its headline: "Donald Trump's Pants on Fire Claim That Kamala Harris 'Became' Black" — Capital B didn't dwell on the vice president's race. Instead, executive editor Kelly Virella said the publication has focused on the issues most crucial to Black voters, such as Harris's record on criminal justice reform, reproductive rights, and the economy, including how her policy proposals could boost Black communities.

"We see it as his attempt to distract people from what the issues are," Virella said. "People want to know where the candidates stand on the issues. That's why we come back to the stakes."

Many outlets dedicated to serving Black communities see their roles as multifaceted. They must capture the history Harris could make if she, a Black woman of Indian and Jamaican descent, becomes the first female president — even

BLACK JOURNALISTS, Page A6

'I've been watching horror movies to calm down.'

MICAYLA NANN, a Simmons University philosophy major

With the end in sight, there's plenty to worry about

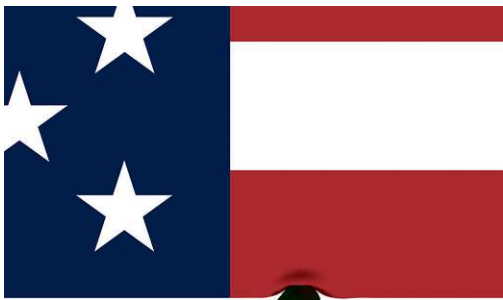
By Beth Teitell
GLOBE STAFF

It was the Sunday before Halloween, and Micayla Nann, a Simmons University philosophy major, was at Spirit Halloween in Brighton and in the mood for fear — of a certain sort. As she stood holding a bloody dagger, surrounded by scythes and skulls, she talked about the real terror: the election.

"I've been watching horror movies to calm down," she said.

Her friend Madeline Alphonse laughed a joyless laugh, and near the front of the store, Mack Straw, a giant demonic animatronic scarecrow on display, swiveled his rotten head and cackled. Crows cawed. An eerie wind howled.

And so it was all around the city, as Nov. 5 looms, and Boston braces for what feels like a Category OMG hurricane that is predicted, with 100 percent certainty, to slam into the United States.



But where will it make landfall? Who will it devastate? That part no one knows.

Here's what we do know: three-quarters of voters feel democracy is under threat, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll.

ANXIETY, Page A7

A NEW LEADER —

Archbishop Richard Henning, the former bishop of Providence, was installed Thursday as the seventh archbishop of the Archdiocese of Boston at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross. Cardinal Sean O'Malley, behind Henning, marked the end of his 21-year tenure. **B1.**



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

The National Weather Service issued a red flag warning for Southern New England due to extremely dry conditions. **B1.**

QAnon, arguably the most consequential political conspiracy theory in recent history, has largely disappeared from the news this cycle. Why? **B5.**

Customers who use natural gas to heat their homes will face a rate increase ranging from 11 percent to 30 percent in their next monthly bills. **B5.**

Harvard has no intention of "divesting from Israel," president Alan Garber said in a let-

ter to a student group. **B1.**

Some 8,000 North Korean soldiers are now in Russia near Ukraine's border and are preparing to help the Kremlin fight against Ukrainian troops. **A3.**

Every election cycle, writes columnist Shirley Leung, we allow special interest groups to make an end-run on our legislative process. It's not a good use of democracy, she says. **B5.**

Years after being traded by the Red Sox, Mookie Betts came up big in the Dodgers' comeback win in Game 5, making them World Champions. **C1.**

Day of the deck

Friday: Clearing, still warm. High 74-79. Low 45-50.

Saturday: Sunny, cooler. High 53-58. Low 36-41.

Sunrise: 7:18 Sunset: 5:37

Weather and Comics, G6-7. Obituaries, C11.

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