

BREAKING: Dartmouth officials warn residents after bear spotted in town

“Notice 06/28/24:

A black bear sighting has been reported at Destruction Brook Woods – DNRT. **KEEP YOUR DOGS ON LEASH** and be aware of your surroundings.

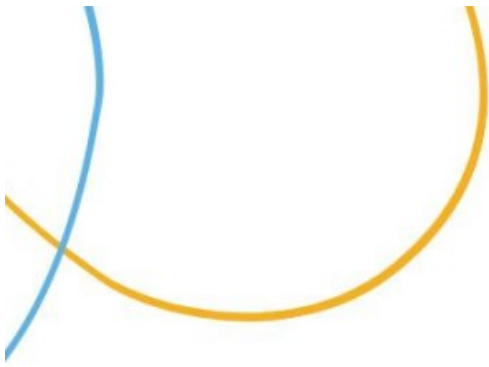
Black bear attacks are very uncommon and they rarely become aggressive when encountered.

If you do encounter a bear, talk loudly in a calm voice and back away slowly. Do not approach the bear.

Learn more: dnrt.org/coexisting-with-black-bears.”-Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust.

South Coast’s BayCoast Bank announces promotions of three exceptional team members

“SWANSEA, SOMERSET, BERKLEY, FALL RIVER, MA – BayCoast Bank (baycoast.bank), a long-time community savings bank serving the people and businesses on the South Coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, is pleased to announce three key promotions.



Congratulations Sally Almeida

Human Resource Officer

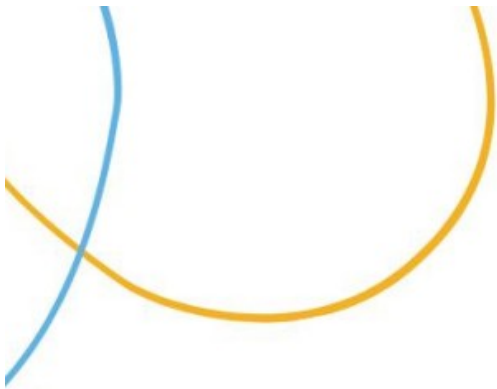
BayCoast Bank photo.

Sally Almeida, a resident of Somerset, Massachusetts, has been elevated to the position of Human Resource Officer for BayCoast Bank. Her responsibilities include processing payroll and related reports for the Bank and its subsidiaries, maintaining accurate employee records, facilitating the annual compensation process for over 500 employees, coordinating onboarding for new hires, as well as maintaining compliance with federal, state and local employment laws and regulations. Almeida previously held the position of Human Resource Generalist.

Almeida, who holds an Associate's degree from Bristol

Community College, also graduated from the New England School for Financial Studies at Babson College. She holds Level 1 and Level 2 Human Resource Certifications from the Associated Industries of Massachusetts. Almeida began her career in the financial industry as a teller for BankFive in 1993. She later moved over to Human Resources in 2011, where she stayed until her hiring by BayCoast in 2019.

Almeida is dedicated to her community, serving as Team Co-Captain for The American Cancer Society's Relay For Life of Greater Fall River. She has volunteered for the organization for more than 12 years in memory of her father, who passed away from lung cancer in 2011.



Congratulations Monica C. Creador

Systems Administration Officer

BayCoast Bank photo.

Monica C. Creador of Fall River, Massachusetts, has been promoted to Systems Administration Officer for BayCoast Bank. In this role, she administers and manages various Information Technology (IT) systems including the installation of BayCoast's Interactive Teller Machines (ITMs) and Automated Teller Machines (ATMs), antivirus/antimalware systems, and mobile device management. She also works closely with the Bank's IT Helpdesk staff supporting technical service requests. Creador previously served as Systems Administrator. Creador began her career in the financial industry in 2006 as a Customer Service Associate. She later held positions

including Customer Service Supervisor, IT Helpdesk Technician, and IT Helpdesk Manager.

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Creador is currently pursuing her Master's degree in Information Technology Management.



Congratulations
Alex W. Lapointe
Commercial Operations Officer

BayCoast Bank photo.

Alex W. Lapointe, a resident of Berkley, Massachusetts, has been promoted to the position of Commercial Operations Officer for BayCoast Bank. In this role, he works with the Commercial Operations team to maintain the Bank's commercial loan portfolio and address customer inquiries. He also works to improve Bank efficiencies to enhance the overall customer experience.

Lapointe joined BayCoast Bank in 2017 as a Commercial Operations Specialist. He also served as a Commercial Operations Team Lead and Investor/Compliance Analyst.

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science, Alex is a 2019 graduate of the Leadership South Coast program.

"I am proud to announce the advancement of three professionals in our BayCoast community," said Nicholas M. Christ, President and CEO of BayCoast Bank. "Sally, Monica, and Alex are dedicated individuals who demonstrate a strong commitment to our community and BayCoast family. We congratulate them on their promotions and wish them future success."

About BayCoast Bank

BayCoast Bank is a long-standing community bank providing financial products and services to the people and businesses on the South Coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island through 25 branches and loan production offices, with more coming soon. The Bank offers a family of complete financial services through its subsidiaries: BayCoast Mortgage, BayCoast Financial Services, BayCoast Insurance, Plimoth Investment Advisors, and Priority Funding. For more information, visit baycoast.bank or call 508-678-7641."



BayCoast Bank photo.

Biden Debate Performance Rattles Massachusetts Democrats

By Sam Drysdale
State House News Service

Sen. Jason Lewis of Winchester called for President Joe Biden to step down as the Democrats' nominee for president in the race against former President Donald Trump this fall, following a nationally televised debate between the candidates Thursday night.

“President Biden has contributed a lifetime of distinguished public service to our nation. In 2020, he rose to the

challenge of defeating Donald Trump and restoring dignity and honor to the presidency,” Lewis posted on X Friday morning. “Under his leadership, our country has made tremendous progress. But now it is time for him to step aside.”

Lewis called for an open Democratic Party convention this summer to select a presidential nominee to run in November. “Our party has many younger leaders who are experienced, talented, and ready to step up and defeat Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans,” he wrote.

In the hours since the debate ended, Democrats of all levels have dodged questions about the president’s performance. Several national outlets have reported that some in the party are considering alternatives to Biden.

Gov. Maura Healey – a staunch Biden supporter who has been campaigning for the president – told reporters Friday afternoon that the president’s debate performance was “tough to watch.”

“Joe Biden had a bad debate performance – it was tough to watch,” Healey said at the State House on Friday, according to a video posted to X by Politico reporter Kelly Garrity.

“I also saw Donald Trump stand up there and lie. I saw he bragged about overturning Roe, once again, and taking away care for women. I also heard him talk about his refusal to talk about the results of the last election, and refusal to commit to accepting results of the next election and refusal to denounce the insurrection. So, you know, it’s more of the same from Donald Trump, and the stakes couldn’t be higher,” Healey said.

When a reporter asked if the Democratic party needs to rethink Biden’s nomination, Healey did not respond as she was walking away.

“I know I’m not a young man, to state the obvious,” Biden said

in a speech Friday afternoon. “Folks, I don’t walk as easy as I used to. I don’t speak as smoothly as I used to. I don’t debate as well as I used to. But I know what I do know: I know how to tell the truth, I know right from wrong, and I know how to do this job.”

Rep. Mike Connolly also took to social media to air concerns about Biden’s debate showing and his prospects in a general election rematch against Trump.

“There is no way to defend President Biden’s atrocious performance last night. We have to figure out a way to stop Trump from winning the election,” he wrote on X.

City of New Bedford installs network of air quality sensors across city

“Exciting news for New Bedford! We’ve installed a new network of air quality sensors across the city to provide real-time, neighborhood-level data.

This initiative will help ensure cleaner air and support our transition to sustainable energy.

See full details here“-City of New Bedford.

New Bedford Fire Department's Anthony Poente recognized for service to community

"Congratulations to New Bedford Way Award Winner Anthony Poente, Fire Department!

It's hard to find someone who hasn't seen Poente around New Bedford the past couple of years. He's heavily involved in neighborhood and civic groups and is always conducting fire safety trainings, senior cooking safety programs, car seat installation events, and first aid classes. He leads the FD's SAFE (Student Awareness Fire Education) program at City schools along with his regular duties as a firefighter and life safety educator. Outside of the job, he's spent countless hours over the years coaching youth sports, including baseball and high school football. His supervisors praise his "high level of enthusiasm and pride in his work." Congrats Anthony!

The New Bedford Way Awards shine a spotlight on City workers who go above and beyond for their City and its residents. They're the smiling face you see at City Hall; the person behind the scenes who makes everything run smoothly, the person out in the heat fixing the road or landscaping one of our many parks; or the police officer, firefighter or other emergency worker who is dedicated to keeping New Bedford an amazing place to live, work, and raise a family. The 2024 New Bedford Way Award winners, nominated by their supervisors, were recognized at a recent ceremony at Buttonwood Park and shared on social media over the last week. Our last recipient will be highlighted tomorrow."-City of New Bedford.

Southcoast Health announces New Bedford's St. Luke's Hospital earns baby-friendly redesignation

“NEW BEDFORD, Mass. – Southcoast Health officials are proud to announce that St. Luke's Hospital has once again received the prestigious Baby-Friendly designation by Baby-Friendly USA, the accrediting body and national authority for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in the United States.

This distinguished honor is granted after a thorough review process and demonstrates that St. Luke's Hospital adheres to the highest standards of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

These standards are built on the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, a set of evidence-based practices recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for optimal infant feeding support in the significant first days of a newborn's life.



Southcoast Health photo.

“This respected international designation is meaningful validation of the skilled and compassionate care our team members demonstrate every day to our patients and their families,” said David O. McCready, President and CEO of Southcoast Health. “I am extremely proud of all the work our Family Centered Unit has put into this achievement, and grateful we are able to provide this exceptional care for families in our community during this special time in their lives.”

This designation recognizes the hospital for providing breastfeeding mothers information, confidence and education before, during and after childbirth. Designated facilities promote and practice policies such as optimal early bonding care via skin-to-skin contact with mother and baby immediately after childbirth and keeping babies in their room to help prepare parents for going home.

“I want to congratulate our entire team in the Family Centered Unit at St. Luke’s Hospital on this accomplishment. It is

thanks to their collective hard work and dedication that we achieved this recognition,” said Kim Pina, MSN, RN, Executive Director of the Family Centered Unit/Level II Nursery at Southcoast Health.



Southcoast Health photo.

With this redesignation, St. Luke’s Hospital remains part of the growing list of more than 20,000 Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers throughout the world, 565 of which are in the United States. These facilities provide an environment that supports breastfeeding while respecting every patient’s right to make the best decision for their family.

“We’re immensely proud of our team. This recognition reflects our commitment to not only supporting breastfeeding but ensuring that all mothers and infants receive the highest quality care and guidance,” said Michelle Murray, Lead Lactation Consultant at St. Luke’s Hospital. “By following Baby-Friendly guidelines we are providing evidence-based maternity care practices that allow us to best support new mothers in this journey. We’re excited for all we will continue to accomplish in the next five years.”

St. Luke’s Hospital was previously designated in 2018

following the same 5-year-long assessment beginning in 2013. Throughout the designation period, hospital leadership will report key statistics annually over the next five years to ensure they are maintaining these requirements.

To learn more about Maternity Services at Southcoast Health, please visit: www.southcoast.org/services/maternity-services/

About Southcoast Health

Founded in 1996, Southcoast Health serves communities across southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island as the largest provider of primary and specialty care in the region. The not-for-profit, charitable system includes three acute care hospitals – Charlton Memorial in Fall River, St. Luke's in New Bedford (a Level II Trauma Center), and Tobey in Wareham, Massachusetts with a physician network of more than 675 providers.

The system has established more than 65 service locations across the South Coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, including six urgent care locations, a Visiting Nurse Association, the Southcoast Health Cancer Center, the region's only Level II Adult Trauma Center and numerous ancillary facilities.

Southcoast Health has been recognized consecutively for five years in a row as a Newsweek's World's Best Hospital from 2019-2024 and named a Maternity Care Access Hospital for 2023-2024 by U.S. News & World Report. The organization was recognized as the best place to work for the sixth consecutive year by Southcoast Media Group's community choice awards.

With upward of 7,500 employees, Southcoast Health is the largest employer in southeastern Massachusetts, and one of the largest employers in the Commonwealth, according to the Boston Business Journal. More information is available at www.southcoast.org.

About Baby-Friendly USA

As the accrediting body and national authority for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in the United States, Baby-Friendly USA is responsible for upholding the highest standards in infant feeding care by coordinating and conducting all activities necessary to confer the prestigious Baby-Friendly designation and ensure the widespread adoption of the BFHI in the US. Learn more about Baby-Friendly USA and the BFHI at www.babyfriendlyusa.org."

Massachusetts officials confirm tornado touches down in North Attleboro

"MEMA East Regional Manager Allen Phillips joined Town of North Attleboro officials and the National Weather Service survey team this morning as they assessed damage from last night's storm.

US National Weather Service Boston MA has confirmed a tornado occurred in North Attleborough last night. Further details regarding path length and EF rating will be forthcoming after the survey has been completed.

Take a moment to review tornado safety tips on our website: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/tornado-safety-tips>."-Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.



Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency photo.



Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency photo.



Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency photo.

New Bedford gang member sentenced 8-11 years for shooting 7 bullets into Ash Street Jail neighborhood

A 26-year-old New Bedford gang member with a history of gun related offenses was convicted by a jury of his peers this week of brazenly firing at least seven shots at a vehicle driving along Court Street in May of 2022, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

After a three-day trial, a Fall River Superior Court jury convicted Rayshond Lewis of Attempted Assault and Battery by Means of a Firearm, Carrying an Illegal Firearm-third offense, carrying a loaded illegal firearm and larceny.

The defendant was sentenced today to serve eight to 11 years in state prison. The state prison sentence will not begin until he completes a five to 10 year state prison term he was sentenced to earlier this month for violating the terms of his probation connected to a violent 2017 home invasion.

On May 3, 2022, the defendant was a passenger in a vehicle that travelled to the Ash Street Jail. The other occupants got out of the car to check on a defendant they believe was being held at the jail. While this was occurring, the defendant hopped out of the passenger's seat and fired at least seven shots at another motor vehicle that was driving by at the time. No one was struck or injured during the incident, but bullets did strike a nearby house, front porch and parked vehicle.

The larceny conviction was connected to an incident about a week after the shooting where the defendant stole his ex-girlfriend's cell phone.

The trial was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Matthew Sylvia and Shawn Guilderson, and the state prison sentence was imposed by Judge Claudine Cloutier.

"I am extremely pleased that the jury held the defendant accountable for this lawless act of violence which could have killed or injured people in the area. The defendant is a very dangerous individual who has previously been convicted of two prior firearm offenses. In addition, at the time of these offenses, he was on probation for a violent home invasion in which he strangled the victim," District Attorney Quinn said. "The court appropriately sentenced him to consecutive prison terms for the firearm charges. The two sentences amount to more than 20 years in prison. In addition, the defendant is awaiting trial for allegedly stabbing two inmates while he was held at the house of correction. The citizens of New Bedford will be much safer now that the defendant will be off the street for a long time."

Massachusetts Public Health Awards \$8.3 Million for 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Network

The Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced that \$8.3 million in state and federal grant funding will be awarded to five community organizations to support the

continuation of services for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Network. The funds will provide infrastructure, operational capacity, and staffing to these organizations so they can offer emotional support, and de-escalation to those who call the 988 Lifeline, seeking someone who will listen, understand, and be present.

“The 988 Lifeline is critical to ensuring that Massachusetts residents can access the care that they need how and when they need it, whether that’s via call or text,” said Governor Maura Healey. “We know how important it is to have these resources in place, and I am thrilled that continued funding means that these organizations will still be able to make 988 available to anyone who needs it.”

“Everyone in Massachusetts, no matter how they identify or what language they speak, should be able to access the resources that 988 provides,” said Lt. Gov Kim Driscoll. “We can prevent an unnecessary loss of life by continuing to provide this life-saving resource, which can mean everything for an individual who just needs help or some form of connection in a time of crisis or need.”

The five crisis call centers are being funded by DPH’s Suicide Prevention Program as part of the Massachusetts 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Network. The 988 Lifeline Network is available 24/7, 365 days a year, via phone, chat, and text to provide free and confidential support to those experiencing emotional distress or thoughts of suicide. It features dedicated support for veterans, Spanish speakers, LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults, videophone and TTY services for the Deaf and hard of hearing, and translation services spanning more than 200 languages.

“We will do whatever we can to prevent the pain and tragedy of suicide,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh. “It is imperative that we identify people who are suffering and provide comprehensive resources and support to

those who find themselves at a loss and unable to cope. One important and simple thing we can do is preserve the funding for this important lifeline that can help deescalate a crisis, connect someone to life-saving services, and offer hope.”

“When someone is struggling with feelings of despair, a caring and compassionate presence on the other end of the 988 Lifeline can be lifesaving,” said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. “Suicide prevention is a critical public health responsibility, and the 988 Lifeline is a resource that offers emotional support at some of the most vulnerable moments in a person’s life. Seeking help for mental health is a sign of strength, and we want all residents of the Commonwealth to know that they are not alone, even in the darkest of times.”

Suicidality, suicide attempts, and suicide deaths among Massachusetts residents are a significant and preventable public health issue. Data from the 2021 Massachusetts Violent Death Reporting System reported that there were 596 suicides in Massachusetts, a rate of 8.5 per 100,000, with 22 percent of suicides resulting from firearms. The Commonwealth seeks to reduce the incidence of suicidal ideation, behavior, and deaths in Massachusetts through compassionate crisis services. The 988 Lifeline is a core component of this strategy.

Funding for the five community organizations will begin July 1, 2024, and will continue for two years.

The Suicide Prevention Services crisis call center funding recipients are:

- Family Services of the Merrimack Valley
- Samaritans of Cape Cod and the Islands
- Samaritans, Inc, Boston
- Samaritans of Fall River and New Bedford, Inc. dba

Samaritans Southcoast

· United Way of Tri-County, Framingham

This summer, DPH will launch a statewide public awareness campaign to promote the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and inform people throughout Massachusetts that they can access it by calling or texting 988. The campaign will run in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole and will include TV, radio, social and digital media, and out-of-home.

New Bedford's Pina-Christian recognized for advocating underserved, underrepresented residents

“Congratulations to New Bedford Way Award Winner Marcelina Pina-Christian, Department of Community Services!

As a Project Director, Marci is a dedicated advocate for underserved and underrepresented residents, especially through the Face-to-Face Meditation Program and Neighborhood Outreach Unit. She's a staple at neighborhood meetings and events across the City, listening to residents and working to solve problems. She successfully chaired the MLK committee for years, and is now mentoring the next generation to carry the program forward. Her colleagues call her a “champion of all the great things the City does” and describe her as having a big heart and kind word for all. Congrats Marci!

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City of New Bedford photo.