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Mass. town squares off with battery park

Proposed energy project in Oakham sparks concerns over drinking water

By Danny McDonald
GLOBE STAFF

OAKHAM — There are strange mounds out here in the woods, among the stands of red oaks and hickories, that on closer inspection aren't part of the natural contours of the land.

They are antiquated piles of tires and car bumpers, old transmissions, and motorcycle gas tanks. The automotive parts have been here for years and appear embedded in the earth, covered with leaves and dirt; others have plants sprouting from them.

For a half-century, this was a junkyard, and it's now the backdrop to a pitched battle between this tiny, rural Worcester County community — population around 1,900 — and an energy company that wants to build a battery park on this property and state officials who are regulating that process.

Locals, citing project concerns about noise, fire risk, and potential contamination of a system that provides 2.5 million state customers with water, among other ills, say the future of this community, located **BATTERIES, Page A10**



CHRISTIAN KANTOSKY FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Matt Broderick showed the site of a proposed lithium battery storage facility in Oakham on Wednesday.

For college athletes, a season of uncertainty

Universities pare rosters amid compensation rulings

By Sophie Endrud
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON — As college students begin the annual migration back to campus, many of the athletes among them are returning to a state of limbo.

A series of recent court decisions and settlements aimed at resolving questions about compensation and eligibility for student athletes has had an unintended consequence: a number of schools have reduced the rosters of some sports programs and eliminated others entirely as they redirect money to the highest-earning sports.

There won't be any athletes returning to the diving team at the University of Virginia or at California Polytechnic State University's swimming team, or over 40 Olympic sports programs in NCAA Division I that have had their rosters eliminated over the past two years. The changes are effectively trade-offs in which schools choose to compensate some previously unpaid athletes on the biggest teams but take away opportunity for those in some lower-profile programs.

"A lot of us in non-revenue sports are worried about our sports still being here in a few years," said Gannon Flynn, a rising junior on the men's swimming team at Boston University who transferred to the school after being cut due to roster constraints at the University of Utah.

Hope had been building over the summer that Congress would act to resolve this issue and many **NCAA, Page A7**

'When I see these kids now, and they're hearing, . . . that is just amazing.'

DR. A. ELIOT SHEARER, *ear, nose, and throat surgeon at Boston Children's Hospital*



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Andrew Tynes snuggled with his 16-month-old son, Everett, before the toddler's surgery at Boston Children's Hospital.

Conquering the silence

Gene therapy offers toddler a chance to hear naturally, without an implant or other aid

By Brianna Abbott
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Everett Tynes sat upright in his hospital bed, blowing raspberries and flipping through a children's book that played music he couldn't hear.

Just 16 months old, Everett has been deaf since birth. He has a rare genetic variant that prevents sound signals in his inner ear from reaching his brain. But he was at Boston Children's Hospital in early August to undergo a remarkable treatment designed to restore his

ability to hear: a new, working copy of his defective gene delivered to his inner ear.

"A lot of it is about Everett's experience with the world around him," said Leah Hamel, 39, Everett's mom. "I do think he'll have access to more things if he has access to speech and hearing."

The gene therapy he received, called Otarmeni, was approved in April and is the first such treatment of its kind in the US. And Everett was the first patient at Boston Children's to receive the therapy after its approv-

al. Others are in the research pipeline.

On the morning of his surgery, Everett had to skip breakfast, and so was a little cranky. His father, Andrew, lay on the bed and rested Everett on top of him.

"Dude, you could just take a nap now, what do you think?" Andrew Tynes asked.

Everett fell asleep on his dad's chest before the nurses wheeled him into surgery.

Genetics are responsible for about half of hearing loss cases in newborns, and there are approximately 150 different known genes that can malfunction and lead to deafness. Now, therapies designed to restore or modify a person's genes are offering hope to families that their children would be able to hear nat-

THERAPY, Page A10

Sixth District tactics reflect divided party

Koh embraces role with Biden; rivals run away

By Anjali Huynh
GLOBE STAFF

ANDOVER — Keith Wentzel was torn. The North Andover resident liked two of the Democrats running in the crowded Sixth Congressional District primary but was undecided about whether to back state Representative Tram Nguyen or Dan Koh, a longtime aide to former US labor secretary and Boston mayor Martin J. Walsh.

But who was there Wednesday in an Andover park to help with that decision? None other than Marty Walsh himself.

Koh, he said, would "be a freshman in Congress, but he's not a freshman," Walsh told Wentzel as a local band accented their conversation. The difference between the two candidates, Walsh said, is "having lived experience in the political world."

The exchange encapsulated Koh's approach, and the kind of help he's getting, in the six-way primary. As Democrats here and elsewhere try to pitch voters on the need for wholesale change, Koh **SIXTH DISTRICT, Page A7**



Drops a hint

Monday: Humid and drizzly. High 72-77, low 65-70.

Tuesday: The sun returns. High 75-80, low 65-70. Sunrise: 5:53. Sunset: 7:42.

Weather and comics, **D4-5.** Obituaries, **C9.**

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The deadline for President Trump's cease-fire plan with Iran is set to elapse Monday as the conflict becomes an economic battle. **A3.**

Undocumented workers are finding themselves victims of wage theft and the subject of threats of deportation. **D1.**

From liberal arts colleges to research institutions, campuses are introducing majors tied into artificial intelligence. **B1.**

Officials look for ways to tame crowded, chaotic New York Harbor after the capsizing of a charter boat killed a mother and her infant daughter. **A2.**

Tommy John has died. The longtime pitcher lent his name to an elbow surgery that has saved the careers of hundreds of other players. **C9.**

The Sox dropped their series finale to the Pirates, 8-3. **C1.**

At the cross-currents of American history

This revolutionary helped save Washington's army. Should his decrepit farmhouse also be saved?

By Brian MacQuarrie
GLOBE STAFF

SWAMPSCOTT — The dilapidated, two-story, wood-frame house sits neglected at the edge of the cracked pavement of an unused parking lot. Weeds sprout from the buckled asphalt, and a tarp thrown across the building's roof is tattered and torn.

The farmhouse is a vacant, decrepit eyesore off a busy North Shore crossroads, but it also is the former home of General John Glover, a Revolutionary War hero whose famed Marblehead Regiment of mariners played a critical role in the fight for independence.

Now, nearly 250 years since Glover's troops ferried General George Washington and his soldiers across the Delaware River to an early, essential patriot victory at Trenton, the future of his farmhouse is uncertain.

National Development, a Newton-based company, is eyeing the four-acre site off Vinnin Square for a large apartment complex, local officials said. Negotiations continue over its purchase, exactly what the parcel would look like, and who would oversee it in the years to come.

That uncertainty has prompted anxious speculation. For many residents in Swampscott and neighboring Marble-



FILE 2004

Reenactors with Glover's Marblehead Regiment engaged at Gas House Beach in Marblehead.

head, the answer is simple: Preserve the house.

"When I look back at the contributions that Glover made to the founding of the country and getting our freedom, it's

something that coming generations need to be aware of," said Larry Sands, the captain of Glover's Regiment, a Marblehead unit composed of dozens **GLOVER, Page A6**

Another fiery day across Europe

Belgian nature reserve scorched; 2 killed in Greece

By Sylvie Corbet and Ahmad Seir Nassiri
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAELEN, Belgium — Fire-fighters battled a massive wild-fire that scorched a nature reserve in eastern Belgium and another on a Greek island near Athens where two people were killed on Sunday as hot and dry conditions fueled fires across parts of Europe.

A blaze in eastern Belgium burned about 12 square miles in the High Fens, a large nature reserve, in one of the country's worst wildfires in recent history.

About 600 residents in the nearby municipalities of Waimes and Bütgenbach, in Liège province near the German border, were told to evacuate on Saturday as winds shifted and smoke spread through the area. Authorities also advised tourists to leave, while a nearby gymnasium was opened to receive evacuees.

Liège provincial Governor Hervé Jamar said in a statement Sunday that more than 250 emergency personnel have been deployed, including over 100 Belgian and German fire-fighters, as well as police and military officers and civil protection staff.

Firefighting helicopters operated by Belgium's federal police and the Netherlands also helped.

In Greece, two people were killed in a wildfire Sunday on the island of Salamina, west of Athens, Greek firefighters said.

The bodies were recovered in the village of Peristeria, where strong winds fueled the rapidly spreading blaze. A second blaze was reported in the Selini area. Firefighting and coast guard vessels evacuated some 500 beachgoers in the area.

About 260 firefighters were responding to the blazes, in-



MICHAEL VARAKLAS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A helicopter dropped water on a wildfire Sunday on the island of Salamina, west of Athens. Two people were killed in the village of Peristeria on the island.

cluding 15 ground teams, 10 aircraft, and eight helicopters.

The island had been placed at high wildfire risk on Sunday, with near gale-force winds. “These conditions enabled the fire to quickly reach dangerous proportions and spread rapidly within seven minutes toward nearby residential areas,” said fire Brigadier General Vasileios Vathrakogiannis.

The blaze in Belgium has far surpassed a 2011 fire that burned nearly 5.4 square miles in the same area and was previously the country's largest wildfire on record, according to data from the European Forest Fire Information System.

Nicolas Yernaux, a spokesperson for the Public Service of Wallonia, said conditions were much worse this time.

“We’re dealing with something much deeper because we have very dry soil,” he said.

René Dahmen, chief engineer at the Department of Nature and Forest, said the fire was still spreading Sunday in an area that was difficult for crews to reach.

“On the eastern flank,

there’s a line at least a kilometer long where the fire is slowly advancing toward a municipal forest,” Dahmen said. “That’s the first priority now.”

Interior Minister Bernard Quintin said on X firefighters managed to keep the fire from spreading west and toward the German town of Monschau.

In Germany, local authorities warned Sunday that the fire was about just under a mile from the border.

Some farmers from both Belgium and Germany filled up tanker trucks, pumping water from a nearby lake before heading toward the fire area to help firefighters.

Belgium activated the European Union’s civil protection mechanism to receive assistance from other countries, EU Commissioner Hadja Lahbib, who is in charge of crisis management, said on X.

“The High Fens are burning, Belgium is not facing it alone,” Lahbib said. Sweden sent two water-bombing aircraft, while three helicopters — two from the Netherlands and one from the Czech Republic — were also

being deployed.

The fire follows weeks of unusually hot and dry weather. The High Fens’ mix of heathland and peat bogs has complicated efforts to contain the flames.

Belgium was hit by another spell of intense heat this week, with temperatures reaching about 98.6 in parts of the country Friday.

In France, firefighters battling a wildfire in a pine forest in the southwestern Landes region faced no major flare-ups overnight, Landes Prefect Gilles Claveul said. Authorities estimated the total area burned at 6.6 square miles, while about 650 people had been evacuated from their homes.

It was the third major wildfire in the vast pine forests of southwestern France this summer, following two others in late July.

A massive wildfire in the neighboring Gironde department burned about 162 square miles and forced the evacuation of about 220,000 people as it spread toward the Atlantic coast and the Bordeaux area.

Experts say visas used as a weapon

Trump’s travel bans keep a hold on the Americas

By Emiliano Rodríguez Mega, Emma Bubola, Gabriel Labrador, and David Bolaños
NEW YORK TIMES

MEXICO CITY — When Chilean officials signed an authorization for a 12,000-mile undersea cable connecting the country to Hong Kong, they were thrilled. They said the Chinese project would boost national connectivity and even reach Chile’s remote Easter Island.

But the mood shifted abruptly later that day in January after a senior official from the US Embassy in Santiago met with Guillermo Petersen, the chief of Cabinet at Chile’s Telecommunications Ministry. According to Petersen, the US official warned that the project could increase the risk of Chinese cyberattacks and that, if Chile forged ahead, the United States would issue a travel ban not only for the officials involved, but for their spouses and children as well.

Across Latin America, the Trump administration has deployed aggressive tactics to tighten its grip on the region. They include crippling tariffs and economic sanctions, strikes on dozens of boats in the Caribbean and Pacific, wading into foreign elections, and the capture of the president of a nation in his own capital.

But one of its most agile and surgical tools is also deeply personal: the US visa.

The meeting in Chile lasted just six minutes, Petersen said. But that was enough to persuade his government to put the project on hold.

“It was basically a threat,” Claudio Araya, then Chile’s telecommunications undersecretary, said this month.

The US ambassador to Chile, Brandon Judd, said in a state-

ment that these actions “were not a surprise,” as they followed years of discussions on the matter.

Visa sanctions, Judd said, “are not meant to punish, but to change behavior.” He added, “They did exactly that in this case.”

Typically used in the past to keep out security threats, fight corruption, or defend democratic institutions, travel permissions have been weaponized under the current State Department, experts say. The US government has revoked visas to target foreign leaders, ambassadors and other officials, judges, and journalists, among others — while quietly reinstating visas for some like-minded allies.

The Trump administration has been clear about its intentions to use this tool in the Americas.

In a statement in April, the State Department announced that it had expanded its policy on restricting visas to target those in the Western Hemisphere who “carry out activities that are adversarial to and undermine America’s interests.”

Washington has used its visa playbook to pursue varying goals. In some countries, the United States has aimed to replace China’s footprint with its own. In others, it has rewarded compliant, right-wing partners, even by punishing their political enemies. Elsewhere, it has pressured governments into folding to US demands or penalized those who question its policies.

This month, the Trump administration rescinded the visa of Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, the Brazilian ambassador in Washington, in a retaliation over Brazil’s delaying the approval of President Trump’s ambassador nominee and refusing entry to several other US diplomats. The US had previously stripped a Brazilian Supreme Court justice of his visa for prosecuting former president Jair Bolsonaro, a Trump ally.

He helped rescue Washington’s army. Can his home be saved?

►GLOVER
Continued from Page A1

of reenactors.

The farmhouse, Sands said, is a tangible reminder of a man who sacrificed throughout the war, lost his first wife during the struggle, and returned to buy and farm 180 acres that had been confiscated from a loyalist during the Revolution.

Glover commanded a racially diverse regiment of about 600 soldier-mariners, recruited almost exclusively from the busy fishing port of Marblehead. Its ranks included freed and enslaved Blacks, Native Americans, and a Jewish man, Abraham Solomon, who signed the muster roll in Hebrew.

“These sailors were used to serving with people from all over the world on shipboard,” Sands said.

National Development officials could not be reached for comment, but local officials said the company is open to keeping the long-abandoned farmhouse in its plans. From 1957 until the mid-1990s, the house had been operated as a restaurant by Anthony Athanas, who also owned the legendary Anthony’s Pier 4 in Boston.

Complicating the deliberations: The property, still owned by the Athanas family, touches three communities. The house lies in Swampscott, but the parcel also spills into Marblehead and Salem in a crowded triangle near the Tedesco Country Club.

The Swampscott Historical Commission has found the house to be historically significant and twice ordered nine-month delays for separate demolition requests.

The first demolition application was filed in 2023 by developer Leggat McCall. After that developer walked away from the project, another demolition request was submitted in 2025 by the Athanas family.

The family currently is negotiating with National Development over the company’s efforts to purchase the parcel, local officials said. The latest demolition delay expired July 20, and what



PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF

The farmhouse of General John Glover (top right) is on land at the corner of Swampscott, Marblehead, and Salem.

happens next is hazy.

Demolition “is so contradictory to what people think is the right thing to do,” said Edward Nilsson, an architect on the Marblehead Planning Board and wants the house preserved. That panel also would need to approve building plans for the site.

The endangered home is a case of Revolutionary War history hiding in plain view.

Although Athanas called his restaurant the General Glover House, the patriot’s connection to the property was not precisely understood until 2023, said Nancy Schultz, chair of the Swampscott Historical Commission. That’s when structural engineers hired by the town to examine the building concluded that as much as 80 percent of its frame dated to the 1750s or ear-

lier.

Instead of looking at a derelict building of undetermined origin, Swampscott and Marblehead officials say they now are convinced this was the 1,100-square-foot farmhouse where Glover lived from 1782 until his death in 1797. The general also owned a townhouse in Marblehead.

“The word on the street had been that there was nothing left of the original building” in Swampscott, Schultz said. “I think people didn’t really believe they were actually dining in the exact house where Glover had been living.”

National Development has offered to leave the Glover House standing amid its planned apartment complex of three multistory buildings and

140 units, and the company also has pledged \$250,000 toward its restoration, Schultz said. But its terms require that the house’s exterior be repaired before the apartment complex is completed, she added.

The developer also is proposing that the town maintain the house over a 99-year lease, Schultz said. But such an arrangement, she added, might make town officials think twice about a long-term commitment to keeping the Glover House in good order.

“We’re very pleased that National Development has come to understand how significant this house is to the community, to the county, to the state, and to the nation,” Schultz said.

No updated plans have been submitted to town officials, she

said. And if the Athanas family decides not to sell, the future of the farmhouse could be clouded further.

“We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Athanas family and offered many times to ensure their legacy is part of the story that the farmhouse tells,” Schultz said.

In the meantime, a community group called Save the Glover has raised more than \$600,000 in funds and pledges to restore and preserve the building.

Nilsson, the Marblehead architect, sees that effort as comparable in spirit to the grassroots fund-raising that saved the USS Constitution from being scrapped in the 1830s.

“The community has really risen to the occasion, in this year of any year, given Glover’s con-



tributions in 1776,” Nilsson said.

Not only did Glover’s Marbleheaders ferry more than 2,000 of Washington’s troops across the Delaware on Christmas night in 1776, they also rowed about 9,000 Continental soldiers from Brooklyn to Manhattan after the disastrous Battle of Long Island.

That evacuation, during the night of Aug. 29 and 30, 1776, saved the Revolutionary army from being destroyed and allowed Washington to carry the fight elsewhere.

Glover also is credited with helping found the American Navy by arming the Hannah, a fishing schooner he owned, at Washington’s direction to harass British shipping.

For Schultz and others, honoring Glover’s legacy can be accomplished in myriad ways at the farmhouse, in part because of a robust appeal that has attracted donations from around the world.

“We’ll have plenty of money to renovate this house and make it into something greater, whether it’s as a museum, or a memorial to Glover and his regiment, or as commercial or office space,” Schultz said.

“We’re just waiting to find out what’s going to happen,” she added. “You’re never out of the woods until the work is finished.”

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