

PODCAST: New Bedford launches bike share program

The City of New Bedford and Zagster, Inc. today launched a new bike-share program that will provide New Bedford residents and visitors with a convenient, affordable and healthy way to get around the city.

Adoption spotlight at The Humane Society & Shelter SouthCoast

Live from The Humane Society & Shelter SouthCoast on 31 Ventura Drive in North Dartmouth to meet some animals. Want to adopt one of them? Contact (508) 995-6661.

This live stream is sponsored by Amaral and Associates, the areas most trusted and independent realtors. Check out <https://amaraladvantage.com/> for new listings and open houses.

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New Bedford adds three new police officers to the force

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Mayor Jon Mitchell, City Councilor president Linda Morad, City Councilors Joseph Lopes and William Brad Markey, Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro, Deputy Chief Paul Oliveira, Lt. Nathaniel Rodriguez and Police Chaplain Rev. David Lima were on hand to welcome the city's three newest officers.

The three new officers graduated Wednesday, April 11, from the Reading Police Academy. They were officially sworn in as New Bedford Police officers Thursday, April 12.

At Thursday's ceremony, Mayor Jon Mitchell welcomed the new officers to the department, describing public safety as the foundation of the city.

"Public safety is the first business of government," he said.

He said of the city's goals for quality of life, job opportunities, good schools and other important priorities, "none of it happens without a solid foundation of public safety."

He described police work as an avocation, "a call to service. It's an especially demanding job that not everyone can do. Sometimes people appreciate what you do, often they don't."

He thanked the families of the new officers for their support. "Being a police officer is a family affair," he said.

Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro congratulated the new officers for making it through a rigorous process. "Your dream did not end with the academy," he said. "It's just beginning. It starts today."

The new badges and patches they now wear have great weight, the chief said. "The responsibilities and burdens they carry are enormous," he said.

He encouraged the young officers to embrace the philosophy of community policing. "We need to be problem solvers," he said. "We help the public and the public helps us. It's a team effort. Treat people with compassion and respect, and I guarantee you'll get that back."

Officer Felix hails from Dorchester and grew up in Wareham before moving to New Bedford seven years ago.

He was inspired by a visit by a Boston Police Officer to his elementary school. "I was in awe of his presence," he said. "Every experience I've had since then with a police officer has been inspirational."

He especially credited the influence of one-time Wareham Police DARE officer, Lt. John Walcek, for his decision to pursue a career in law enforcement. "I've always wanted to help people," he said.

He is married and the father of two children.

Officer Oliveira was born and raised in New Bedford.

He served as a cadet with the New Bedford Police Department, where much of his work was done within the walls of the department, including time in telecommunications.

"Being a cadet inspired me to be on the road, dealing with

people,” he said. “I wanted to help not just on the phone but in person. I want to give back to the city.”

His family includes his girlfriend and her son.

Officer Ubri was born and raised in New Bedford. He decided to become a police officer when he met other officers and saw it was a “great career. They loved it. So I’m happy to be here.”

He said he looks forward to participating in community events and reaching out to people. “This city made me so I want to help the city,” he said.

He and his fiancée and two sons live in New Bedford.

Buttonwood Pond welcomes swan paddleboats

The City of New Bedford and La Gondola, Inc. launched swan paddleboats at Buttonwood Park’s pond today, offering a fun new recreation activity to one of the city’s most historic and cherished parks.

Buttonwood Pond is now home to six swan paddleboats, which will officially open for rides tomorrow, Saturday, April 14, 2018, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The boats are operated by La Gondola, Inc., which since 2004 also operates swan paddleboats at Roger Williams Park in Providence, R.I. The company’s owners and operators, Allen and Cynthia Days, approached the City about establishing a swan boat concession in New Bedford at Buttonwood Park, and have worked with City departments to plan the program and tailor it

to the City

"We are very pleased to welcome La Gondola and their swan paddleboats to New Bedford, and we thank Cynthia and Allen Days for their interest in bringing their paddleboat business to the city," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "The swan boats are a great new addition to Buttonwood Park that will provide residents and visitors with a unique new opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the park, an historic and beautiful New Bedford landmark designed by the highly respected landscape architect Charles Eliot of Olmsted, Olmsted, and Eliot in the late nineteenth century."

Cynthia Days, who owns and operates La Gondola, Inc. along with her husband Allen, said, "Buttonwood Park provides an ideal setting for swan paddleboats. It offers good, wholesome entertainment for families as well as a relaxing setting for couples."

The white swan boats can easily be operated by just one person and can accommodate up to four passengers, depending on size; life jackets will be provided. Swan boat service will officially open for rides this Saturday, April 14. Operating hours will be weekends, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m, April 14, 2018, through September 30, 2018, and daily during public school vacations, weather permitting. Ride rates are \$5 for children and \$10 for adults, with a portion of the fees going toward improving and maintaining open water habitat, maintaining water quality and providing safe recreational access to the pond.

Smoking Materials Cause of New Bedford Fatal Fire

State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey, Bristol District Attorney Thomas Quinn, New Bedford Fire Chief Michael W. Gomes and New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro said **yesterday's fatal fire at 176 Potter Street**, New Bedford was caused by the improper use of smoking materials. The Bristol District Attorney's office has identified the victim as Jaxson Leahy, 21. He called 9-1-1 saying he was trapped in a smoke-filled second-floor bedroom.