

Collaboration with DA's assistance dog "Chief," leads to New Bedford child rapist conviction

Thanks to a collaborative effort from police, prosecutors, Children's Advocacy Center staff and "Chief," the Bristol County District Attorney's new assistance dog, a 44-year-old New Bedford man was convicted of aggravated rape of a child and sentenced to serve 15 to 20 years in state prison, District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Lawrence Trahan was convicted on May 6th of aggravated rape of a child, and indecent assault and battery on a person under the age of 14 after a three-day trial in Fall River Superior Court.

In December of 2017, the first report of a potential child rape involving this defendant was made to New Bedford police detectives. As a result of this information, the district attorney's office set up forensic interviews with the alleged victim at the Bristol County Children's Advocacy Center. During those interviews, the victim, a 10-year-old girl, told investigators this defendant touched her in "weird places like her arms legs boobies and butt." She said this happened more than 20 times. She specifically said the defendant put his tongue in her vagina and his penis in her buttocks. The defendant knew the victim in this case.

During trial preparation, the victim in the case was having difficulty talking any further about the sexual assaults and traumatic experiences she went through, and it was unclear whether she would even be able to testify at trial. At that time, Chief and his handler, Samantha Dias, who works for the

district attorney's office as a forensic interviewer, met with the victim. During the victim's time with Chief, her extreme anxiety subsided and she began to feel more confident in her ability to testify about the sexual assaults.

Chief is the newest member of the Bristol County District Attorney's Office whose primary duties will be providing support to children during forensic interviews at the Children's Advocacy Center of Bristol County. Children and vulnerable adults participate in forensic interviews when there are allegations of any type of abuse (sexual abuse, physical abuse, commercial sexual exploitation, witness to violence). In forensic interviews, victims are asked to share details of their traumatic experience, and offering an assistance dog, when appropriate, can provide those being interviewed with a sense of comfort and safety.

Chief joins the District Attorney's Office from NEADS World Class Service Dogs, a nonprofit located in Princeton, MA. The presence of this steady, well-trained dog in the justice system can humanize stressful situations, have a calming effect, help build trust and assist prosecutors in gathering more information about a case which in turn leads to better prosecution efforts. They can also provide a sense of normalcy for vulnerable crime victims, including, children who have experienced a form of trauma and developmentally delayed adults.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Matthew Friedel, and the 15 to 20 year state prison sentence was imposed by Judge Renee Dupuis. Upon the defendant's eventual release from prison, he will immediately be placed on supervised probation for an additional five years.

The terms of his probation will include GPS monitoring, the completion sex offender treatment, prohibition from living in a household with a minor child, no unsupervised contact with children, no employment that puts him in contact with children

and no volunteerism that includes contact with children. The defendant must also register as a sex offender.

“I am pleased the jury held the defendant accountable for sexually abusing this young child. Unfortunately he had access to the child through his relationships with the victims’ mother. Sadly, the victim’s mother supported the defendant during the trial. I commend the victim for her courage in disclosing the abuse and perseverance during delays in the case,” District Attorney Quinn said. “I would like to thank the entire investigatory and prosecution team, including our new support dog, Chief, for their efforts in this case. A substantial prison sentence was warranted.”

PACE Kicks Off 40th Year of Service to New Bedford Community with Celebration

In recognition of the organization’s founding date of May 3, 1982, People Acting in Community Endeavors (PACE) Executive Director Pam Kuechler kicked off the agency’s 40th year with a celebration across eight PACE program sites throughout the city on May 3, 2022.

The celebration started with PACE’s two Head Start childcare centers, at 32 Madison Street and 247 Smith Street, respectively, where staff gathered and unveiled a custom-made PACE picnic table to mark the occasion.

The tour continued at the agency’s newly acquired food pantry, which is under development, before stopping at PACE YouthBuild at 89 Merrimac Street. YouthBuild members and program staff

unveiled a custom-made PACE sign and celebrated with the agency's administrative leadership.

Ms. Kuechler and the administrative staff gathered for a luncheon with employees from multiple programs at the agency's main office at 166 William Street, followed by fun games including trivia covering PACE's history of serving the community.

In the afternoon, the team continued on to the PACE Housing Opportunity Center at 308 Cottage Street, where staff greeted the delegation with confetti and 40th anniversary themed treats. PACE's Child Care Works program unveiled an interactive walk through the history of the program and agency at their site, 127 South Second Street, before the day concluded with PACE's Fuel Assistance Program at 261 Union Street. At this last stop, the Fuel Assistance team gathered with longtime employees Fran Stubbs and Lorraine Khazan, the first employee hired by PACE in 1982.

Reflecting on the day, Executive Director Pam Kuechler summarized, "PACE's many dedicated staff members have been committed to providing excellent services to Greater New Bedford residents since 1982, and celebrating this important milestone of 40 years is a celebration of their immense contributions to their community. Together, we have helped hundreds of thousands of people access educational and economic opportunities alongside services to meet their basic needs."

At each stop throughout the day, PACE livestreamed celebrations and announcements on its social media pages.

Ms. Kuechler invited members of the community to join in the celebration, stating, "The celebration is just beginning. We will be highlighting the strength and history of PACE's programs throughout our 40th year, and invite you to follow along on social media, by reaching out to learn more or to

volunteer, and by joining us at the 40th anniversary gala planned for May of next year.”

For more information, follow PACE on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pacenewbedford or visit the agency’s website at www.paceinfo.org.

About PACE, Inc.

PACE, Inc. delivers innovative and effective services to members of the Greater New Bedford Community in their pursuit of brighter futures. PACE programs include: Child Care Works, YouthBuild – New Bedford, Head Start, Housing Opportunity Center, Fuel Assistance, Lead Program, Clemente Course, Tax Preparation, Health Access and Food Bank.

Massachusetts Sheriff Hodgson rallies Sheriffs across country to increase communication between DHS, law enforcement

“Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson rallied about 130 Sheriffs from across the country in an effort to increase communication between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and local law enforcement in communities from coast to coast.

In a recently sent letter to U.S. Sens. Ron Johnson, Rob Portman and Rick Scott, America’s Sheriffs urged them to introduce and pass federal legislation that would require DHS

to notify local law enforcement if it will be placing illegal immigrants in their communities.

With the Biden Administration set to eliminate Title 42, experts have estimated hundreds of thousands of migrants will be crossing the border into the United States in the coming months.

“My home, my family and my heart are in Bristol County, Massachusetts, and I swore an oath to do everything I can to keep the people of Bristol County safe,” Sheriff Hodgson said. “As part of this oath, I joined about 130 of my fellow Sheriffs in urging increased communication on illegal immigrants being bused, flown and placed in neighborhoods across the country.

“Bristol County residents Christopher Mills and Sabrina DaSilva lost their lives at the hands of illegal immigrants. North of Bristol County in Milford, Mass., Matthew Denice lost his life when he was dragged to his death by a drunk illegal immigrant behind the wheel,” Sheriff Hodgson continued. “I fully believe that not every illegal immigrant in our communities has criminal intentions, but to reduce the risk of harm, this is the responsible thing and the right thing to do to give Bristol County residents the maximum opportunities to be safe.”

Sheriff Hodgson was invited to a roundtable discussion before these members of Congress last year on the topic of illegal immigration, and this letter served as a follow up to that discussion, which was carried on C-SPAN.” -Bristol County Sheriff’s Office.

PUPDATE: Massachusetts coyote puppy mistaken for a dog introduced to foster sibling

"We know you have been waiting for a pup-date on the young Eastern Coyote we have been caring for. Well, we have some exciting news: he was finally introduced to his foster sibling and they are getting along swimmingly!

She is a young female pup who was transferred to our hospital from the Wildlife Rehabilitators Association of Rhode Island. She is about two weeks younger and a bit smaller so we have been waiting until she caught up in size to formally introduce the two.

It was a little slow at first, but once they felt each other out they quickly began to bond. Before long they were wrestling and playing with each other, which is a crucial to their normal development. Due to the size discrepancy we are not leaving them together full time yet, but they will spend a couple hours a day together so that they continue to bond. Once the female is a little larger they will move into a larger cage together where we will provide natural climbing items, enrichment activities, and regular health checks.

Our primary goal is to raise the pair as naturally as possible. When it comes time for release it is critical that they have the skills they need to survive and have a healthy fear of humans. Having a sibling to model behavior from goes a long way towards maintaining their wild instincts and we are so grateful that these two bonded so quickly.

As rewarding as this process is, it takes A LOT of resources to do it right. Each of these pups will require hundreds of hours of care and cleaning, about 300 lbs of specialty food, regular veterinary checks, and all of the preventative

medications and vaccines that it takes to get them prepared to start their lives in the wild. Will you consider making a donation today to help us get them home? Follow the link here to donate.

Thank you for your support and join us in wishing these two good luck! If you have questions about peacefully existing with co-coyotes or about an animal in need please call our desk we will be happy to assist.

#easterncoyote #pupdate #fostersiblings #wildlifevetcare #naturelovers #makingprogress #goodnewsmonday.” -Cape Wildlife Center.

Newborn puppies abandoned in Massachusetts, left in box on side of the road

“On Friday night, May 13, 2022, between 8:00pm-9-00pm, six newborn puppies were left in a box on the side of Cedar Street in Holliston, Massachusetts.

These puppies are now being cared for by animal control. The Holliston Police Department is seeking information related to these puppies, which are estimated to be less than one week old.

Any tips to assist in locating the person(s) responsible for abandoning these puppies will be greatly appreciated. **Tips can be kept confidential.** Contact the Holliston Police Department directly at 508-429-1212 or email Detective Ciara Maguire at maguire@hollistonpolice.com or contact the MSPCA at

lawenforcement@mspca.org.

Abandoning animals is illegal in Massachusetts. If you cannot care for a pet, contact any local shelter or the MSPCA.

**** Be advised that these puppies are NOT available for adoption at this time and we cannot respond to inquiries. ***"*
Holliston Police Department.



Holliston Police Department. photo.



Holliston Police Department. photo.



Holliston Police Department. photo.

New Bedford nonprofit receives \$25,000 from Boston's Latino Equity Fund

Eight local nonprofits to receive COVID-19 recovery funds to promote economic development, health equity and wellbeing in Latino communities.

The Latino Equity Fund (LEF) today announced \$200,000 in grants to eight Latino-focused organizations as part of the LEF's COVID-19 Response Fund partnership with The Boston Foundation. The funds will be distributed to the grantee partners as they continue to provide enhanced services to help Latino communities recover from the strains caused by COVID-19 and the longer-term economic challenges the pandemic unleashed.

The grant announcement comes as the new report, ¡Avancemos Ya!: Persistent Economic Challenges and Opportunities Facing Latinos in Massachusetts was published by The Latino Equity Fund in partnership with Boston Indicators and the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at UMass Boston.

The report seeks to highlight opportunities to improve economic conditions among Massachusetts' Latino communities. The report traces the historical and demographic roots of the state's unique Latino communities, and outlines six trends that have shaped the current situation for the state's Latinos and that can serve as pathways for future opportunities.

The pandemic exacerbated long-standing challenges facing Latinos. Today, for example, a quarter or more of the 800,000 Latinos in Massachusetts struggle with food insecurity, and data show Massachusetts Latinos have low rates of intergenerational economic mobility. Yet the report also sheds light on how the economic rebound from the 2020 recession provides opportunities to improve socioeconomic conditions.

“LEF’s mobilization of funds is a true testament to our commitment to action in response to data and advancing recovery for many of our community leaders still balancing the effects of COVID on their operations,” said Evelyn Barahona, Director of Latino Equity Fund. “We selected organizations whose leadership and position in the community is mission critical to promoting economic prosperity, health equity and wellbeing for Latinos in Massachusetts.”

Eight nonprofits will each receive \$25,000 to aid in the continued development of resources for accelerating and promoting sustainable pathways for recovery. The funds support organizations working in areas such as job training, economic and income supports for businesses and families, affordable housing and homebuying programs, increased access to early education and care to allow caregivers greater ability to

work, and support for entrepreneurs and others targeting areas of opportunity in the Gateway Cities.

The organizations include:

1. Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy (Boston)
2. Maverick Landing Community Services (MLCS) (East Boston)
3. Mujeres Unidas Avanzando (MUA) (Dorchester)
4. La Alianza Hispana, Inc. (Boston)
5. Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores (New Bedford)
6. Latinx Health Collaborative (Boston/Regional)
7. The Latino Health Insurance Program, Inc. (Framingham)
8. Sociedad Latina (Roxbury)

“These grants address a number of the issue areas highlighted in ¡Avancemos Ya!, as part of the LEF’s larger strategy to work with our nonprofit partners to provide greater equity for Latinos,” said Juan Fernando Lopera, Co-Chair of the Latino Equity Fund. “At a time when Massachusetts faces an outstanding need for workers, empowering our talented, entrepreneurial and fast-growing Latino communities to fill that need is a crucial step that provides benefits for everyone in the state.”

“LEF is committed to deepening our community investments to provide culturally sensitive and timely grantmaking,” said Aixa Beauchamp, Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Latino Equity Fund. “Through responsive and innovative initiatives, we can create a community and philanthropic network for diverse donors to connect and learn. We will continue to aid Latino and BIPOC communities through this public health and economic crisis to see a brighter future.”

Two defendants arrested, charged with shooting 36-year old New Bedford man to death

Two men have been apprehended in connection with the April 29th homicide of 36-year-old Luis Miranda in New Bedford, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Jonathan Medina Perez, 41, was arrested early this morning at his home on Pleasant Street in Fall River. He is charged with Murder and Two Counts of Armed Assault with Intent to Murder.

Jonathan Goncalves, 33, of New Bedford was arrested on Saturday at his family's home on Washington Street in New Bedford, and charged with Accessory to Murder-Before the Fact and Accessory to Murder-After the Fact.

The arrests came as a result of an extensive investigation by Prosecutors from District Attorney Quinn's office, State Police Detectives assigned to District Attorney Quinn's office and New Bedford Police detectives.

Both defendants will be arraigned this morning in New Bedford District Court. The arraignments will be handled by Assistant District Attorney Shawn Guilderson, who coordinated the investigation into the homicide.

At 1:01 am on April 29, ShotSpotter alerted New Bedford Police to shots being fired in the area of 193 Weld Street. When first responders arrived on scene, they located a male gunshot victim as the lone occupant of a Chrysler Sebring. The victim, later identified as Miranda, was determined deceased on scene by New Bedford paramedics.

More information on the details of the investigation will be

revealed during both defendants' arraignments today.

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife: "How to plant a bumblebee-friendly garden"

The loss of bumblebees and other native pollinators can have devastating consequences on the biodiversity of Massachusetts. Learn how to plant your garden to help pollinators.

Spring is here, and that means many people are starting to plan and plant gardens and flowerbeds around their homes. Many native bumblebee species are in decline and can benefit from thoughtful gardening choices. Before you start planting, review the tips below to ensure your yard is a welcoming place for native bumblebees and other pollinators.

The decline of bumblebees

The number of bumblebee species in Massachusetts has dropped from 11 to 7, with 3 of the 7 (*B. fervidus*, *B. terricola* and *B. vagans*) in danger of disappearing from the state in the next decade if current trends continue. These losses can have devastating consequences for native biodiversity with cascading impacts across the ecosystem. The diversity of bumblebees impacts the diversity of native plants. In turn, these native plants provide food and homes to an array of insects and animals.

Multiple threats are contributing to the decline of bumblebees. Some threats, like introduced parasites, are very

difficult to combat directly. Luckily, the effects of these threats may be offset by measures such as providing more habitat by planting a bumblebee-friendly garden.

Planting tips

- Avoid pesticide use, particularly those containing neonicotinoids.
- Avoid cultivars of native plants which don't produce floral nectar. In most plants, you can check for nectar by removing the flower from the base and squeezing it—a bubble of clear liquid means it has nectar. For species with a nectar spur, you can check for nectar by placing a light source behind the flower.
- Avoid exotic plants—they can have dramatic negative effects on bumblebee-native plant relationships and can contribute to bumblebee decline.
- Design plantings to ensure nectar and pollen are available for bumblebees throughout the entire growing season.
- Create nesting and overwintering sites. A dry, protected cavity containing straw, small clumps of moss, and/or dried grass located on or below the ground is ideal.
- Diversity matters! Bee abundance is not the same as bee diversity. Observe visiting bumblebees and notice if there are different species of bees.

Recommended native plants* for bumblebees

All bumblebees need adequate sources of floral nectar and pollen throughout their life cycle to keep populations humming. A truly bumblebee-friendly garden needs a variety of native plants that flower throughout the growing season.

- Aster (*Eurybia macrophylla*, *Symphyotrichum laeve*, *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*)
- Bee balm (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- Blue flag iris (*Iris versicolor*)
- Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)
- Carolina rose (*Rosa carolina*)

- Common buttonbush (Cephalanthus occidentalis)
- Dogbane (Apocynum androsaemifolium, Apocynum cannabinum)
- Goldenrod (Solidago flexicaulis, Solidago odora, Solidago rugosa)
- Joe-pye weed (Eutrochium maculatum)
- Meadowsweet (Spiraea alba, Spiraea tomentosa)
- Milkweed (Asclepias incarnata, Asclepias syriaca, Asclepias tuberosa)
- Old field toadflax (Nuttallanthus canadensis)
- Spiked lobelia (Lobelia spicata)
- St. John's Wort (Hypericum canadense, Hypericum punctatum)
- Spotted touch-me-not (Impatiens capensis)
- Swamp thistle (Cirsium muticum)
- Pasture thistle (Cirsium pumilum)
- Turtlehead (Chelone glabra)
- Virginia rose (Rosa virginiana)
- Wild yellow indigo (Baptisia tinctoria)
- Wild raspberry (Rubus occidentalis)

** Please note: Common plant names are provided in this list for easy reference, but always double check the species you purchase is native! Use the GoBotany tool to look up if a species is native.*

More ways to help bumblebees

Share what you're seeing in your garden and help scientists learn about the food source and habitat requirements of different species of bumblebee. The "Bee-cology" Project is a citizen science initiative that is crowdsourcing information about Massachusetts bumblebees. Learn more about the project and how to submit your observations.

OPINION: “Sheriff Hodgson’s commitment to New Bedford’s Ash Street Jail is why he gets my vote”

The following is an opinion sent to New Bedford Guide. It does not reflect the opinion of New Bedford Guide, nor is it an OP-ED. In fairness and objectivity, we share opinions from our readers whether we agree or disagree with their opinion.

“To the Editor:

It being an election year, it’s no surprise that a big issue I’ve seen in the media with regard to the Sheriff’s race is the Ash Street Jail and Regional Lock-Up in New Bedford.

The jail opened in 1888. It’s more than a century old. It used to house pirates, infamous ax murderer Lizzie Borden and all manor of troublemakers in the old whaling days of New Bedford and Bristol County. The last public hanging in Massachusetts took place right there in the visiting area, or at least that’s how the urban legend goes.

I’ve read and heard the calls from Sheriff Hodgson’s political opponents to close the jail. It’s too old, they say. It’s too expensive, they say. It has a laundry list of problems, they say.

They’re wrong. You know how I know they’re wrong? I ran the place for several years.

In 2014, I was given and accepted the opportunity to lead the team at the Ash Street facility as Assistant Deputy

Superintendent of Security. Over the next five years, I witnessed the work and compassion shown by each and every staff member there. The Ash Street team took and continues to take enormous pride in the facility and its stellar reputation in law enforcement circles.

The facility is clean, quiet and safe. It passes annual inspections/audits from several different organizations, from the state Department of Corrections to the city Fire Department and Health Department. These successes are squarely the reflection of the hard work and dedication of the staff.

Every day while at Ash Street, I saw inmates in classes and programs, taking advantage of the educational, substance abuse and other opportunities offered by the Sheriff's Office to help them get back on the road to success. Every day I saw it.

Aside from the jail, law enforcement agencies from across the county use the regional lock-up to house their arrestees so they don't have to hold them at the police stations. If someone is arrested in Dartmouth, Rehoboth, Berkley or any other community in Bristol County, they can be brought to Ash Street before their court appearance, which frees up police resources in the communities which would otherwise be tasked with watching an arrestee.

The BCSO Civil Process division is also based at Ash Street, and provides a valuable and necessary service to the community.

The Ash Street Jail is not the dilapidated money pit that political activists and candidates say it is. It is a vital county asset, manned by capable, diligent and outstanding officers.

I take great pride in the facility, and Sheriff Hodgson's commitment to this facility and the corrections professionals who work there are just another reason why he has my vote in November.

Have a story, opinion, or talent you want to share? Email us at info@newbedfordguide.com.

Joseph Oliver III
Dartmouth.”

Massachusetts State Police Air Wing, an eye in the sky for local fire departments during recent wildfires

“Over the last couple of weeks the Massachusetts State Police Air Wing has assisted Fire Departments throughout the state with multiple large wildfires.

Using both their aircrafts’ fire mapping technology, as well as their FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared) cameras, MSP flight crews have been able to identify the size and shape of the fires and the areas of greatest concern. The Air Wing can provide fireground incident commanders with real-time video and still images of the scene, allowing firefighting assets to be placed where they are needed most.

This video was taken by an MSP Air Wing crew during a support mission over a May 1 wildfire at the Blue Hills State Reservation in Milton. The crew in Air 3, responding from the unit’s Plymouth Airbase, was in communication with both the Quincy and Milton Fire Departments. The fireground command post in the Blue Hills was monitoring live video downlinked

from the helicopter to assist commanders in making tactical fire suppression decisions.

#policeaviation

#wildfireseason

#firefighting” -Massachusetts State Police.