

New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of October 19, 2020 –October 25, 2020

The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of October 19, 2020 –October 25, 2020 and they are as follows:

Eversource:

Eversource will replace the gas mains and service at the following locations:

- Hathaway Rd. from Highland St. to Nauset St. – (Main Relay)
- Bolton St. from Rivet St. to Fair St. – (Main Retirement)
- Carroll St. from Rockdale Ave. to Priscilla St. – (Main Tie-in/Services)
- Priscilla St. from Brigham St. to Priscilla St. – (Main Tie-in/Services)
- Crapo St. from Grinnell St. to Rockland St. – (Services)
- South St. from County St. to Crapo St.– (Services)
- Hill St. / Hillman St. / Foster St. / Thomas St. / Sycamore St. – (Services)
- Potomska St. / MacArthur Dr. from MacArthur Dr. to Potomska Dr.

Eversource will be doing final street and sidewalk restoration at various locations city-wide.

Other:

- Contractor (PA Landers) to continue underground utility work at MassDOT Project #606709, Roadway Reconstruction and Related Work (including signals) along a section of Kings Highway and

Tarkiln Hill Road. Construction to take place during regular working hours (Monday – Friday), police details and traffic controls will be in place.

- Contractor (PA Landers) working on sidewalk reconstruction at the intersection of Bliss St. and Bolton St.
- Contractor (PA Landers) working at Hazelwood Park retaining wall along West Rodney French Blvd.
- Contractor (PA Landers) repairing various street and sidewalk patches city-wide.
- Contractor (PA Landers) to begin road reconstruction of Cottage St. from Parker St. to Sycamore St. On-street parking will be restricted from 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM Monday – Friday in the posted work zone areas.
- Contractor (Bell Traffic) will be installing new traffic signals at the intersection of Acushnet Ave. and Ashley Blvd.
- Contractor (North Turf) will be on site at Hazelwood Park installing the new bowling greens.
- MassDOT will be making repairs on the bridge at I-195 eastbound over Route 18 ramp. Work will be from August 18th to November 30th.
- Department of Public Infrastructure will be filling potholes city-wide on a continuous basis.
- Department of Public Infrastructure conducting its annual street sweeping program city-wide.
- The contractor (Bay State Wind Water) scheduled to replace the Freetown municipal interconnecting water meters along Braley Rd. and Middleboro Rd. and continue large water meter replacements at various locations.
- The contractor (Green Mountain Pipeline Services) is scheduled to complete sewer cleaning and pipelining along Hamilton St., JFK Memorial Highway, Front St., Airport Access Rd. and Rodman St. The contractor is also scheduled to complete sewer cleaning and CCTV work along MacArthur Drive. It may be necessary to temporarily close lanes or have alternating one – way traffic at some locations. There are no detours anticipated during this week. Police officers will be onsite to direct motorists as necessary.

- Due to ongoing construction at the High Hill Reservoir residents may experience discolored water. The water is safe, and the discoloration will be temporary. We recommend allowing the water to settle for a few hours and then flushing your service line by letting the bathtub run for a few minutes until the water clears.

**** Please note: Contractors will continue to follow guidelines and protocol regarding COVID-19 social distancing while conducting work in construction zone.**

Due to the current COVID-19 situation the Department of Public Infrastructure will be closed to the public entry. Office staff is available to assist by email and telephone.

New Bedford roadwork sites for the upcoming week of October 13, 2020 –October 18, 2020

The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of October 13, 2020 –October 18, 2020 and they are as follows:

No Works Monday, October 12th

Eversource:

Eversource will replace the gas mains and service at the following locations:

- Hathaway from Highland St. to Nauset St. – (Main Relay)

- Hatch St. from Acushnet Ave. to Belleville Ave. – (Main Retirement)
- Bolton St. from Rivet St. to Fair St. – (Main Retirement)
- Summer St. from Locust St. to Durfee St. – (Main Retirement)
- Woodlawn St. from Brock Ave. to West Rodney French Blvd. – (Main Retirement)
- Carroll St. from Rockdale Ave. to Priscilla St.– (Main Relay)
- Crapo St. from Grinnell St. to Rockland St. – (Services)
- South St. from County St. to Crapo St.– (Services)
- Fair St. from County St. to Bonney St. – (Services)
- Hill St. /Hillman St. /Foster St. /Thomas St. /Sycamore St. – (Services)

Eversource will be doing final street and sidewalk restoration at various locations city-wide.

Other:

- Contractor (PA Landers) to continue underground utility work at MassDOT Project #606709, Roadway Reconstruction and Related Work (including signals) along a section of Kings Highway and Tarkiln Hill Road. Construction to take place during regular working hours (Tuesday – Friday), police details and traffic controls will be in place.
- Contractor (PA Landers) working on sidewalk reconstruction at the intersection of Bliss St. and Bolton St.
- Contractor (PA Landers) working at Hazelwood Park retaining wall along West Rodney French Blvd.
- Contractor (PA Landers) repairing various street and sidewalk patches city-wide.
- Contractor (North Turf) will be on site at Hazelwood Park installing the new bowling greens.
- Contractor (AECOM) to conduct bridge inspection of I-195 at County St and Purchase St on Tuesday October 13th. Working between the hours of 8:00am – 3:00pm. Single lane closure with the use of a police detail.
- MassDOT will be making repairs on the bridge at I-195

eastbound over Route 18 ramp. Work will be from August 18th to November 30th.

- Department of Public Infrastructure will be line painting at night at various signalized intersections city-wide.
- Department of Public Infrastructure will be filling potholes city-wide on a continuous basis.
- Department of Public Infrastructure conducting its annual street sweeping program city-wide.
- The contractor (Bay State Wind Water) scheduled to replace the Freetown municipal interconnecting water meters along Braley Rd. and Middleboro Rd. and continue large water meter replacements at various locations.
- The contractor (Green Mountain Pipeline Services) is scheduled to complete sewer cleaning and pipelining along Hamilton St., JFK Memorial Highway, Front St., Airport Access Rd. and Rodman St. The contractor is also scheduled to complete sewer cleaning and CCTV work along MacArthur Drive. It may be necessary to temporarily close lanes or have alternating one – way traffic at some locations. There are no detours anticipated during this week. Police officers will be onsite to direct motorists as necessary.
- Due to ongoing construction at the High Hill Reservoir residents may experience discolored water. The water is safe, and the discoloration will be temporary. We recommend allowing the water to settle for a few hours and then flushing your service line by letting the bathtub run for a few minutes until the water clears.

*** Please note: Contractors will continue to follow guidelines and protocol regarding COVID-19 social distancing while conducting work in construction zone.*

Due to the current COVID-19 situation the Department of Public Infrastructure will be closed to the public entry. Office staff is available to assist by email and telephone.

City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of September 21, 2020 –September 25, 2020

The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of September 21, 2020 –September 25, 2020 and they are as follows:

Eversource:

Eversource will replace the gas mains and service at the following locations:

- Hathaway Rd. from Town Line to Rockdale Ave. (Main)
- Davis St. from Riverside Ave. to 389 Davis St. (Main)
- Hatch St. from Acushnet Ave. to Belleville Ave. (Services)
- Conduit St. from Acushnet Ave. to Shaw St. (Services)
- Summer St. from Durfee St. to Locust St. (Main)
- Studley St. from County St. to Summer St. (Main)
- Woodlawn St. from Brock Ave. to W Rodney French Blvd. (Services)
- Bolton St. from Kaine St. to Rivet St. (Services)

Eversource will be doing final street and sidewalk restoration at various locations city wide

Other:

- Contractor (PA Landers) to continue drainage work at MassDOT Project #606709, New Bedford – Roadway Reconstruction and Related Work (including signals) along a section of Kings Highway and Tarkiln Hill Road. Construction to take place

during regular working hours (Monday – Friday), police details and traffic controls will be in place.

- Contractor (Private Contractor: Southcoast Development) will be conducting work within the roadway at the intersection of Acushnet Ave and Ashley Blvd. Police details and traffic controls will be in place.
- MassDOT will be making repairs on the bridge at I-195 eastbound over Route 18 ramp. Work will be from August 18th to November 30th.
- Contractor (North Turf) will be on site at Hazelwood Park installing the new bowling greens.
- Department of Public Infrastructure will be line painting at night at various signalized intersections city-wide.
- Department of Public Infrastructure will be filling potholes city-wide on a continuous basis.
- Department of Public Infrastructure conducting its annual street sweeping program city-wide.
- The contractor (WES Construction) is scheduled to complete the roadway line striping at the Front St./Elm St. and Merrimac St./Purchase St. locations.
- The contractor (Bay State Wind Water) is tentatively scheduled to replace the Freetown municipal interconnecting water meters along Braley Rd. and Middleboro Rd. and continue large water meter replacements at various locations.
- Due to ongoing construction at the High Hill Reservoir residents may experience discolored water. The water is safe, and the discoloration will be temporary. We recommend allowing the water to settle for a few hours and then flushing your service line by letting the bathtub run for a few minutes until the water clears.

*** Please note: Contractors will continue to follow guidelines and protocol regarding COVID-19 social distancing while conducting work in construction zone.*

Due to the current COVID-19 situation the Department of Public Infrastructure will be closed to the public entry. Office

staff is available to assist by email and telephone.

Member of New Bedford Latin Kings Chapter Pleads Guilty to Racketeering Conspiracy Charges

A former member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Massachusetts Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (“Latin Kings”) pleaded guilty today to racketeering charges. The defendant admitted to his role in a May 28, 2019 incident in New Bedford, where a rival gang member was shot at.

Luis Santiago, a/k/a “King Tiny,” 22, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO conspiracy. U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel scheduled sentencing for Dec. 17, 2020. Santiago was charged in December 2019, at which time he was a member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Latin Kings.

The Latin Kings are a violent criminal enterprise comprised of thousands of members across the United States. The Latin Kings adhere to a national manifesto, employ an internal judiciary and use a sophisticated system of communication to maintain the hierarchy of the organization. As alleged in court documents, the gang uses drug distribution to generate revenue and engages in violence against witnesses and rival gangs to further its influence and to protect its turf.

As detailed during the hearing, Santiago admitted that on May

28, 2019, he was one of multiple members of the Latin Kings who travelled to Dartmouth Street in New Bedford to confront and assault rival gang members. For this incident, Santiago was provided with a firearm by another member of the gang. The confrontation began as a fight, but at some point Santiago pulled the firearm and began to chase the rival gang members. Santiago fired one shot at the fleeing rival gang members, missing and striking a parked vehicle.

In December 2019, a federal grand jury returned an indictment alleging racketeering conspiracy, drug conspiracy and firearms charges against 62 leaders, members and associates of the Latin Kings. Santiago is the 11th defendant to plead guilty in the case.

The RICO conspiracy charge provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Correction; and New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was also provided by the FBI North Shore Gang Task Force and the Bristol County and Suffolk County District Attorney's Offices. Assistant U.S. Attorney Philip A. Mallard and Mark Grady of Lelling's Criminal Division are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The operation was conducted by a multi-agency task force

through the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), a partnership between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The principal mission of the OCDETF program is to identify, disrupt and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking, weapons trafficking and money laundering organizations, and those primarily responsible for the nation's illegal drug supply. More information on the OCDETF program is available here: <https://www.justice.gov/ocdetf/about-ocdetf>.

Massachusetts State Troopers arrest man with firearm, narcotics

At approximately 11 a.m. today Trooper Nidu Andrade and his Field Training Officer, a member of the H Troop Community Action Team, were on patrol traveling on Route 138 southbound in Canton. As they were approaching Route 93 they observed a gray Kia sedan traveling at a high rate of speed cutting off other vehicles.

The Troopers were able to catch up to the vehicle after it got stuck behind slower moving traffic. As it entered the on-ramp to Route 93 the operator increased speed to approximately 55 miles per hour where the posted speed limit is 35 mph. Trooper Andrade activated the cruiser's emergency lights and subsequently stopped it on Route 93 northbound prior to Exit 4.

After the vehicle stopped the Troopers approached it and attempted to identify the operator. After several minutes of conversation, it was determined that the operator provided a

false name and date of birth with the intentions of concealing his true identity.

He was removed from the vehicle and eventually identified as RICHARD WIGFALL, 30, of Holbrook. It was determined on scene that WIGFALL's driver's license was revoked for a prior charge of Operating a Motor Vehicle Under the Influence of Alcohol. He was placed under arrest and seated in the rear of Trooper Andrade's cruiser.

After WIGFALL was secured the Troopers attempted to conduct an inventory of his vehicle prior to it being towed from the scene. During the inventory WIGFALL forcefully struck the interior window of the cruiser he was seated in and shattered it. Additional Troopers responded to the scene for assistance.

Once WIGFALL was under watch Troopers continued the inventory. They located a loaded .380 caliber firearm with the serial defaced rendering it unable to be traced. WIGFALL does not possess a license to carry firearms. Troopers also located a small amount of a white substance believed to be Cocaine along with an open alcoholic beverage in the front cupholder.

Due to WIGFALL destroying the window on the first cruiser he was transferred to another cruiser then transported to State Police-Milton where he was booked. WIGFALL was able to post bail. He is expected to be arraigned at Stoughton District Court on the following offenses:

1. Possession of a Class B Substance;
2. Possession of a Firearm;
3. Possession of a Firearm with Defaced Serial Number;
4. Possession of Ammunition without FID Card;
5. Malicious Damage to Motor Vehicle;
6. Failure to Identify to Police;
7. Operating a Motor Vehicle with a Revoked License, Subsequent Offense;
8. Open Container of Alcohol in a Motor Vehicle;

9. Marked Lanes Violation; and
 10. Speeding.
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Massachusetts State and Local Police, Federal Law Enforcement crush drug trafficking organizations

In a less than two-day period late last week, Massachusetts State Police narcotics and gang interdiction Troopers and MSP's federal and local law enforcement partners in a joint task force dealt severe blows to two highly organized, high-volume drug trafficking organizations operating out of the Merrimack Valley, as well as to a Fall River-based street level drug operation supplied by one of the DTOs. The combined operations seized approximately 6 1/2 kilograms of suspected fentanyl, numerous pills, and a firearm, and resulted in several arrests, all in less than 48 hours.

The successful operations were announced today at Massachusetts State Police Headquarters by MSP Colonel Christopher Mason, Homeland Security Investigations Deputy Special Agent-in-Charge David Magdycz, Brockton Police Chief Emmanuel Gomes, and East Bridgewater Police Chief Paul O'Brien.



Massachusetts State Police photo.

The most recent of the three operations began Friday, August 28, when, as a result of a successful joint investigation in southeastern Massachusetts the previous day, the South unit of the Massachusetts State Police Commonwealth Interstate Narcotics Reduction and Enforcement Team – a task force comprised of State Troopers, East Bridgewater Police and

Brockton Police Officers, and agents from the federal Homeland Security Investigations Department – along with MSP Gang Unit Troopers, developed information about a fentanyl Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) operating out of Methuen.

Investigators arranged for the delivery of heroin by this Methuen DTO to a location in Boston. Commonwealth Interstate Narcotics Reduction and Enforcement-South Unit members (CINRET) and MSP Gang Unit Troopers established surveillance of the target location in Methuen.

At approximately 3 PM Friday team members observed a female member of the Methuen DTO exit the residence, enter a vehicle with a backpack and leave the area. A second woman was operating the vehicle. Team members surveilled the vehicle from the target residence in Methuen to Route 93 south in Boston where marked State Police cruisers from the State Police-Medford Barracks and the MSP Troop H Community Action Team conducted a motor vehicle stop. The uniformed Troopers located nearly 2 kilograms (1,836 grams) of fentanyl in the vehicle. Troopers arrested the two female suspects – ISADORA CASTRO, 29, and KAYLIN GUILLERMO, 33 – for drug trafficking and transported them to the State Police-South Boston Barracks for booking.

Meanwhile, surveillance remained in place on the residence in Methuen during the arrests. Investigators observed the main target of the DTO, ANTHONY LEVINE, 30, exit the residence and secrete suspected evidence in a motor vehicle in the parking lot. At this point LEVINE was temporarily detained as the investigation progressed. The residence, an apartment at 142 Pleasant Valley St., building 70, in Methuen, was then frozen pending search warrants for both the residence and target vehicle.

At approximately 1:20 on Saturday morning, the team executed search warrants for the target residence and motor vehicle. As a result of the warrants, the following narcotics were seized:

- An additional 1,745 grams of Fentanyl;
- 145 grams of methamphetamine;
- 12 bags of green pills believed to be Xanax with a total weight of 334 grams; and
- 6 bags of blue pills believed to be 30 Mg Oxycodone pills with a total weight of 67 grams.

Also located during the search warrant was approximately \$8,129 in US currency, which was also secured as evidence as suspected proceeds of illicit narcotics sales.

The main target in the DTO, ANTHONY LEVINE, 30, was allowed to leave the residence prior to the execution of the search warrant – because of the length of time it took to secure the warrant – and will be arrested on a warrant. LEVINE wears a court-ordered monitoring bracket as a result of prior involvement in the criminal justice system.

The arrests and seizure of the nearly 4 kilos of deadly opioids on Friday afternoon and early Saturday morning followed two other operations by the CINRET South unit that resulted in the seizure of an additional approximately 2.5 kilograms of suspected fentanyl and the arrest of a Lawrence-based supplier on Thursday.

That MSP CINRET investigation, which was assisted by the State Police Gang Unit and members of the Southeastern Massachusetts Gang Task Force, initially targeted the distribution of fentanyl and cocaine by two suspects in Fall River. That investigation, which included a series of controlled purchases of fentanyl from the two targets, allowed Troopers to obtain search warrants for an apartment in Fall River and two vehicles.

On the morning of Thursday, Aug. 27, the CINRET South unit MSP Gang Unit, and MSP Troop D Community Action Team, along with Fall River Police Gang Unit Officers, established surveillance of the 78 Liberty St. apartment. Shortly before 9 AM

surveillance teams observed two individuals leave the apartment and drive away. Investigators followed and stopped their car in Fall River. A search warrant executed on the car led to the recovery of a backpack containing approximately \$11,600 in US currency, secured as evidence as the suspected proceeds of narcotics trafficking.

Investigators then returned to the apartment and executed a search warrant, leading to the seizure of a digital scale consistent with use for drug distribution, US currency, and documents establishing residency of the apartment.

The team also executed a search warrant on a Cadillac Escalade parked at the apartment. That search led to the seizure of the following:

- 8 bricks of suspected fentanyl wrapped in cellophane and weighing approximately 814 grams;
- 2 plastic baggies containing suspected fentanyl weighing approximately 97 grams and 44 grams;
- A revolver and ammunition;
- A pill bottle containing numerous light blue pills, stamped M30; and
- A purse holding plastic baggies, a digital scale, and a knife.

During the execution of the search warrants, Troopers, Officers and Agents developed information identifying the Lawrence-based supplier of the narcotics seized in Fall River. CINRET and Gang Unit investigators were then able to arrange for a delivery of fentanyl by that supplier to a restaurant in Fall River on Thursday night.

The investigative team set up surveillance of the prearranged delivery location, an Applebee's restaurant in Fall River.

At approximately 9:15 p.m. Thursday, surveillance teams observed the suspected supplier pull into the restaurant parking lot. Team members approached the SUV and placed the

lone male occupant, JOSE BAEZ-LARA, 32, of Lawrence, into custody. Troopers and Officers immediately located a gift bag on the front seat. Inside the gift bag was a shoe box that contained 15 block packages that contained suspected fentanyl. The suspected fentanyl weighed approximately 1,534 grams with packaging. Troopers transported BAEZ-LARA to the State Police-Dartmouth Barracks, where he was booked on narcotics trafficking charges.

The two individuals at the initial Fall River motor vehicle stop will also face drug charges. Parts of that investigation are ongoing and no further information about them is being released at this time.

In all, from Thursday to the pre-dawn hours of Saturday morning, the MSP CINRET-South Troopers and their Brockton, East Bridgewater, and Homeland Security Investigations partners, the MSP Gang Unit, and MSP uniformed Troopers from Troops D, H, and A, CAT, worked tirelessly to take 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ kilograms of Fentanyl and heroin out of the hands of drug traffickers, and to seize additional illegal narcotics, weapons, and approximately \$13,000 of U.S. currency suspected to be the proceeds of drug trafficking.

Both alleged suppliers in the two separate Drug Trafficking Organizations – BAEZ-LARA in Lawrence and LEVINE in Methuen – were highly-organized, multiple-kilogram level opioid distributors. When CINRET and Gang Unit members arranged deliveries of narcotics, both targets were able to put together the requests and move large quantities of the product in a few hours, which leads investigators to believe they either had large quantities of fentanyl on hand or easily within access.

Intelligence developed by the CINRET-South Unit suggests that both BAEZ-LARA and LEVINE have been supplying fentanyl and heroin to street level dealers for more than a year, at least.

The dedication, teamwork and effort is a credit to all the partner agencies involved.

The Massachusetts State Police operate three CINRET regional units as part of the Department's overall narcotics interdiction mission. Each CINRET unit – one each in the southeastern, northern, and western parts of the state – is comprised of MSP Troopers and local police and HSI partners. Below are year-to-date enforcement statistics from these three highly active narcotics task forces.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE CINRET SOUTH UNIT	
CONTRABAND SEIZURES and ARRESTS – YTD 2020	
Fentanyl	6.6 Kilograms
Heroin	141 Grams
Methamphetamine	1.1 Kilograms
Cocaine	478 Grams
Crack Cocaine	29 Grams
Oxycodone	231 Grams
Xanax	435 Dosage Units
Adderall	73 Dosage Units
Currency, Suspected Drug Proceeds	\$316,835
Illegally-Owned Firearms	4
Arrests	25

MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE CINRET NORTH UNIT	
CONTRABAND SEIZURES and ARRESTS – YTD 2020	
Fentanyl	25.5 Kilograms
Heroin	7 Grams
Methamphetamine	1 Kilogram
Cocaine	2 Kilograms
Crack Cocaine	5.5 Grams
Oxycodone	200 Pills
Marijuana	51.5 Lbs.
Currency, Suspected Drug Proceeds	\$1,393,474
Illegally-Owned Firearms	12
Arrests	21
MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE CINRET WEST UNIT	
CONTRABAND SEIZURES and ARRESTS – YTD 2020	
Fentanyl	842.3 Grams
Heroin	27.2 Grams
Cocaine	58.2 Grams
Crack Cocaine	2 Grams
Currency, Suspected Drug Proceeds	\$110,338
Illegally-Owned Firearms	24
Arrests	22

New Bedford Chapter of Latin Kings member pleads guilty to racketeering conspiracy

A former probationary member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Massachusetts Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (“Latin Kings”) pleaded guilty yesterday to racketeering charges.

Emanuel Lopez-Velez, a/k/a “King Manny,” 22, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conduct enterprise affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, more commonly referred to as RICO

conspiracy. U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel scheduled sentencing for Dec. 10, 2020. Lopez-Velez was arrested and charged in December 2019, at which time he was a probationary member of the New Bedford Chapter of the Latin Kings.

The Latin Kings are a violent criminal enterprise comprised of thousands of members across the United States. The Latin Kings adhere to a national manifesto, employ an internal judiciary and use a sophisticated system of communication to maintain the hierarchy of the organization. As alleged in court documents, the gang uses drug distribution to generate revenue, and engages in violence against witnesses and rival gangs to further its influence and to protect its turf.

As detailed during the plea hearing, Lopez-Velez admitted that on Sept. 30, 2019, he was one of multiple members of the Latin Kings who travelled to Ruth Street and McGurk Street in New Bedford in order to confront and rob rival gang members, and was provided with a firearm to do so by another member of the gang. The Latin Kings members approached one of the rival gang members, surrounded him, pointed a firearm at the victim and demanded the victim's phone. During the gunpoint robbery, the victim ran from the Latin Kings, and Lopez-Velez was ordered by another to "get him." Lopez-Velez chased the rival gang member and fired one shot, hitting the victim in the back. The victim fell to the ground and was transported to the hospital, where he was treated and ultimately survived the incident.

In December 2019, a federal grand jury returned an indictment alleging racketeering conspiracy, drug conspiracy and firearms charges against 62 leaders, members and associates of the Latin Kings. Lopez-Velez is the ninth defendant to plead guilty in the case.

The RICO conspiracy charge provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court

judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; Commissioner Carol Mici of the Massachusetts Department of Correction; and New Bedford Police Chief Joseph C. Cordeiro made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was also provided by the FBI North Shore Gang Task Force and the Bristol County and Suffolk County District Attorney's Offices. Assistant U.S. Attorney Philip A. Mallard and Mark Grady of Lelling's Criminal Division are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

New Bedford's Community Foundation awards \$55,000 to 25 nonprofits providing youth summer programming

The SouthCoast Community Foundation awarded a total of \$55,000 in August to 25 local nonprofit organizations for summer programs serving youth in the region.

The awards were made from the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund, which the foundation established in March 2020 to support nonprofit organizations on the front lines of the

COVID-19 outbreak. To date, the fund has raised more than \$5.58 million and granted more than \$4.78 million to nonprofits providing emergency support for vulnerable populations, including the homeless, immigrant families, and those facing food insecurity in our region.

A wide range of corporations, foundations, and individuals have donated to the fund, responding to the Community Foundation's call to come together on behalf of our community. The partnership with the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund has come to a close, but the SouthCoast Community Foundation continues to make emergency grants of their own in response to growing community needs. Please consider making a donation on our website www.southcoastcf.org.

"Many of us have powerful memories of summers on Buzzards Bay and throughout the region, given the year we are all having, we owe it to our youth to help them create memories, make friends, breathe fresh air, learn a skill, and have a summer" said John Vasconcellos, President of the SouthCoast Community Foundation.

Among the recipients of the summer program grants is Gnome Surf, of Fall River. "We are a 501c3 nonprofit Surf Therapy program that provides an alternate and innovative form of healthcare that addresses both physical and mental health as well as, emotional well-being. We aim to create a world where kindness, love, happiness, compassion and self-confidence are available to All Kids of All Abilities." Said Chris Antao, Founder of Gnome Surf. "The SouthCoast Community Foundation has been instrumental in helping us to provide life altering services to over 750 families throughout Massachusetts. It has helped attract tourism and more support to small businesses in the area as well."

Details of each grantee's work can be found listed below. Grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 were distributed to the following organizations:

Grantees:

- Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative
- Attleboro YMCA
- Bay Coast Rowing Center, Inc.
- Boys and Girls Club of Fall River
- Boys & Girls Club of Greater New Bedford/Wareham
- Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro South
- Brockton Area Multi-Services, Inc.
- Buzzards Bay Coalition
- Citizens for Citizens
- Community Boating Center
- Dennison Memorial Community Center
- Dream Out Loud Center
- Gnome Surf
- New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks!
- NorthStar Learning Centers
- Old Colony YMCA
- Old Dartmouth Historical Society
- On Stage Theatrical Productions, Inc.
- Our Sisters' School
- PAACA
- United Neighbors of Fall River
- YMCA Southcoast
- Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc.
- YWCA of Southeastern MA

How to give

You can help those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting our region's nonprofits on the front lines. Donations to the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund may be made online at on our website www.southcoastcf.org.

For general questions and inquiries about the Fund, please direct your inquiry to emergencyfund@southcoastcf.org. For any questions regarding making a donation, please contact the Community Foundation's Development Manager, Tricia Grime at

pgrime@southcoastcf.org. Lastly, for media inquiries and interview requests, please contact Jasmyrn Baird at jbbaird@southcoastcf.org.

The SouthCoast Community Foundation is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common goal of improving the quality of life through philanthropy throughout the region. More information about the Foundation can be found at <https://southcoastcf.org/>

New Bedford's Buttonwood Park Zoo enters new phase of reopening

The Buttonwood Park Zoo is continuing its slow and steady reopening after being closed for 12 weeks due to the ongoing global health crisis.

BPZ00 initially welcomed back visitors in early June, with limited capacity, five days a week. Beginning Monday, August 3, 2020 the Zoo will again be open on Mondays and Tuesdays, restoring original operating hours of seven days a week, throughout the rest of the summer.

"The Zoo is thrilled to expand our reopening schedule to include seven-day a week guest access," said BPZ00 Director Keith Lovett. "We have received wonderful guest feedback on how comfortable they feel in our reconfigured Zoo and by being open all week, we are able to accommodate more guests, while

still being able to meet social distance guidance.”

All guests, including BPZ00 members are still required to reserve tickets online prior to visiting the Zoo at bpzoo.org/visit-overview/. Additionally, admission passes are again available through participating libraries. Tickets are available to purchase at the front desk, but admission cannot be guaranteed due to capacity limitations.

All the initial health and safety guidelines put in place in the first phase of reopening are still present, including requiring protective face coverings for all guests over the age of five, with a strong recommendation of face coverings for those aged 2-5. Social distancing markers are still in place, as is the one-way traffic flow around the Zoo. Indoor exhibits remain closed. The Northwood’s Gift Shop is operating an outdoor kiosk, and the Bear’s Den Café is offering window service. The BCSB Wildlife Carousel and the Baycoast Bank Black Bear Express remain closed.

“Although some of the Zoo’s buildings have remained closed based on State capacity requirements, the Zoo has been able to create several new experiences on our outdoor campus. These new experiences include increased “keeper chats” at our elephant habitat and other areas in the Zoo, the opening of new outdoor spaces for some of our birds and reptiles, and relocating the Zoo’s ever popular sloth pair, Bernardo and Sandy, to an outdoor Zoo habitat,” Lovett went on to say.

Zoo staff is also working on completely a new home for the Zoo’s Chilean pudu, the world’s smallest deer species. Native to Chile and Argentina, these animals have been living behind-the-scenes and will soon be visible to guests for the first time.

Guests will also be treated to a brand new StoryWalk® in August, when BPZ00 changes the book to “Planting a Rainbow” by Lois Ehlert. Just as in July, the StoryWalk® will be posted in

four languages, English, Portuguese, K'iche and Spanish thanks to an ongoing collaboration with the New Bedford Birth – 3rd Partnership. The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Storywalk® is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson.

In addition to these enhancements to the guest experience, BPZ00 has re-invented a number of popular programs and services that are traditionally offered in the summer months, including birthday parties. A limited number of outdoor birthday parties are available and include food, a designated outdoor party space and an animal encounter. For more information, email privateevents@bpzoo.org.

BPZ00 is also offering a “Summer Staycations Series” on Mondays and Tuesdays for 6-10 year olds in August as an alternative to the extremely popular ZooCrew summer camp. For more information about these programs, visit bpzoo.org/education-and-conservation/for-families/innovation-staycation/.

Another popular program returning this summer is an outdoor, socially distant version of “Creature Creations”. For more information or to register, visit bpzoo.org/education-and-conservation/for-families/creature-creations/.

Activists keep spotlight on drug consumption sites in

Massachusetts

Chris Van Buskirk
State House News Service

If supervised drug consumption sites were allowed in Massachusetts, Wrentham resident Lynn Wencus said the child she lost to overdose might still be alive today.

“As long as somebody is breathing, there’s always a chance for recovery,” the Team Sharing member said during a Wednesday rally.

The prospect of legal areas to consume controlled substances has long been a point of contention on Beacon Hill as questions about legality, implementation, and implications for professionals have circulated since the sites were first proposed.

Advocates for the measure gathered in front of the State House Wednesday urging the legislature to pass a bill that would (S 2717) create a 10-year pilot program for at least two sites where clinical professionals would monitor peoples’ use of controlled substances.

Organizers held the rally in honor of Aubree Esters, a longtime advocate for supervised sites. Sen. Julian Cyr, Senate chair of the Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Recovery Committee, said in the weeks before her death, Esters had spoken at length with Cyr’s staff about the legislation.

“This would give us another tool to save lives as the opioid epidemic continues to ravage communities across the commonwealth,” the Truro Democrat said. “This is ever more important in the time of COVID-19 when we have such isolation, when those who use drugs and who are struggling with drug use and addiction are so isolated.”

Under the legislation, the sites must provide hygienic spaces for consumption, on-premise health care professionals to monitor for overdoses, sterile injection supplies, and provide access to naloxone. The Department of Public Health would consider site operators for licensure only after local boards of health sign off on their participation.

Insite Vancouver opened in 2003 and became the first legal supervised drug injection site in North America and cities including Boston, San Francisco, Denver, and Philadelphia have considered opening similar locations.

“Let’s get these safe consumption sites going because we desperately, desperately need them,” Wencus, also a member of non-profit Team Sharing, said.

U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling has previously threatened to prosecute any effort to create a supervised consumption site program but in 2019 a federal judge in Pennsylvania ruled that the sites would not violate a section of the Controlled Substances Act as government prosecutors once alleged.

The bill is the result of nearly seven months of work from the Harm Reduction Commission, a group that was created after legislators toyed with the idea of creating the sites but instead decided to charge the commission to study the topic.

The Department of Public Health released data in early February showing that a total of 2,023 confirmed and estimated opioid-related overdose deaths occurred in 2019, down from 2,031 in 2018. The number peaked in 2016 at 2,097, according to the data, setting the overdose death rate at 30.5 per 100,000 residents.

Miriam Komaromy, medical director at Boston Medical Center’s Grayken Center for Addiction, recalled a time when naloxone was considered “bizarre and exotic.” Now, she said, the country finds itself in an era when the use of the opioid overdose prevention drug is common.

“Safe consumption sites are the same. They have excellent evidence for their benefit for saving lives, for engaging people in treatment if they’re interested in treatment, for helping to prevent the spread of infectious diseases,” she said at the rally. “There are so many reasons to embrace safe consumption sites and we can’t let the stigma and the politics overwhelm our efforts.”

Two-thirds of the Committee on Mental Health endorsed the bill in mid-May, sending it to Senate Ways and Means where it has remained over the past month.

The House voted Wednesday to extend formal sessions for the rest of 2020, and the Senate seems on board with that idea, raising the possibility that legislators could take up the bill at some point in 2020.

Mary Althoff turns 60 next week and has used IV drugs since she was 14-years-old. She said she would like to see a moment in time when injection drug users have the right and privilege to use in a safe environment.

“I’ve watched a lot of people overdose unnecessarily. I’ve lost a lot of lives unnecessarily. My life could have been lost unnecessarily,” she said. “So please bring it to bear, give these people an opportunity to do what they have the right and privilege to do.”