

COMING THIS WEEKEND



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# The Eagle-Tribune

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METHUEN HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## Neighbors alerted police to suspicious activity

By Teddy Tauscher

» ttauscher@eagletribune.com

METHUEN — What started as an investigation into one spa suspected of human sex trafficking has been followed by the closure of five businesses and a broad crackdown in the city.

Since at least 2023, residents and local business owners on Wallace Street have expressed concerns about the Beauty Garden Spa, formerly known as the Silky Rose Spa. However, it wasn't until this year and more recently when police began

to hear more frequent reports including of women entering the building and never leaving that police stepped up the investigation. Using an undercover officer, they made an arrest, Police Chief Scott McNamara said.

He said the department has been investigating human trafficking for about a year, though from a higher level.

The goal, according to McNamara, is to eliminate all human trafficking in the city.

After charges were made public the city employed a different strategy at other venues

suspected of human trafficking with city inspectors taking the lead. So far four more businesses have been shut down.

“Residents have reached out and asked us to take a look at some of the suspected spots,” Mayor D.J. Bearegard said. “I asked inspections to go down to those locations this week.”

Inspectors found numerous code violations on top of evidence of criminal activity.

“They saw things right there in plain sight and posted a cease and desist order,” he said.

The inspections resulted in

the closure of Eastern Bodywork Therapy on Hampshire Street; Oriental Spa, 119 Swan St.; Yellow Lilly Day Spa, 17 Baldwin St., #6; and Lavender Spa, 17 Baldwin St., #7.

“Our goal is to send a strong message that we are not going to tolerate it here,” McNamara said.

Bearegard said there have been some indications from inspectors already that other locations suspected of human trafficking had been abandoned. He said more specifics would be



TEDDY TAUSCHER/staff photo

The Beauty Garden Spa is one of five businesses the city has closed in the last few days in an effort to combat human sex trafficking in the city. Police have alleged the spa served as a front for prostitution.

SEE CRACKDOWN, PAGE 2



TIM JEAN/Staff photos

Max Byerley of Haverhill takes a big swing during the 55th annual Eagle-Tribune Santa Fund Hole in One contest, held at Murphy's Garrison Golf Center in Haverhill.

## Good day, good cause

HAVERHILL — It as a great day for golf and an even better day to raise money for a good cause.

The 55th annual Eagle-Tribune Santa Fund hole-in-one contest got off to a good start Wednesday at Murphy's Garrison Golf Center,

654 Hilldale Ave.

The four-day event will continue Thursday, Friday and Saturday and raise money for The Eagle-Tribune Santa Fund, which donates money to local families in need for the holidays.



ABOVE: Ted and Mary Murphy, owners of the golf center, watch over the golfers taking part in the 55th annual Eagle-Tribune Santa Fund Hole in One contest, held at Murphy's Garrison Golf Center in Haverhill. RIGHT: Soma Hayashi, 13, of Haverhill tries to sink a putt on the putting green contest.



## Haverhill's head of economic development retires

By Jonah Frangiosa

» jfrangiosa@eagletribune.com

HAVERHILL — After nearly 36 years of steering housing plans, OK'ing business expansions and countless city council appearances, Haverhill's longtime Economic Development and Planning director has stepped away from the podium.

As of Tuesday, William Pillsbury Jr. officially retired from the position and no longer works for Haverhill, City Clerk Kaitlin Wright confirmed. While he is off the city payroll for now, Wright added the former development director may still return to assist city hall in a part-time capacity.

On his final day in Room 201 at City Hall, the mayor's office recognized Pillsbury's decades of service with a formal citation—a thank you for dedicating a total of 35 years and 8 months to Haverhill.



William Pillsbury

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## Market Basket leadership before a judge

By Terry Date

» tdate@eagletribune.com

NORTH ANDOVER — The Market Basket battle over governance has landed squarely in court with a mid-December trial date.

A Delaware judge will rule on the Market Basket board's Sept. 9 firing of company president and CEO Arthur T. Demoulas, aka Artie T., and his challenge of that action.

The board claims Demoulas has ruled in an autocratic manner and stonewalled their attempts to carry out oversight obligations.

Demoulas claims the board seeks to oust him on behalf of his three sisters — Frances, Glorienne and Caren — who are motivated not to advance the company's best interests, but to channel more of the company profits to them and their family members.

The Demoulas sisters collectively own

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