



Fall River-area players nominated for 2025 Otto Graham Award

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The Herald News

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SANTA’S HELPERS



Somerset Gas & Auto Repair owner Elie Rad and Jean Nicholas secure Santa on County Street in Somerset on Dec. 9. COLIN FURZE/THE HERALD NEWS

Sheriff Paul Heroux says closing Ash Street Jail could save millions

Frank Mulligan
The Standard-Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

NEW BEDFORD – Bristol County Sheriff Paul Heroux is reiterating his call to close Ash Street Jail, saying it could be done for \$10 million. The job would pay for itself in three years through savings in utilities and maintenance costs and staff overtime, he said. The over 200,000-square-foot, 137-year-old building is owned by the state. He said it needs about \$11 million in essential repairs.

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Bristol County Sheriff Paul Heroux gave media and state representatives a tour of the Ash Street jail in New Bedford to discuss closing it in January 2023. PETER PEREIRA/THE STANDARD-TIMES

Watuppa Heights lawsuit could see an end

Judge to mediate dispute

Dan Medeiros
The Herald News
USA TODAY NETWORK

FALL RIVER — The yearslong lawsuit that has left the former Watuppa Heights housing project property in legal limbo could be over in less than a month. A mediation by a judge could potentially end the lawsuit, and pave the way for that 10-acre property at Rodman and Warren streets to be reused. The lawsuit was first filed in 2021 in Bristol County Superior Court by two former Watuppa Heights residents and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, a statewide nonprofit dedicated to helping those experiencing homelessness and housing inequality. On Feb. 9, 2021, former residents Juanita Thompson and Marilyn Gomez and the nonprofit sued the Fall River Housing Authority; the city of Fall River; Timothy Barrow, then-executive director of FRHA; and Mayor Paul Coogan. The defendants claimed the city “refused to honor their contractual obligations to develop an affordable rental housing development for very low and extremely low-income families and elderly individuals” at the 10-acre site on Rodman and Warren streets. According to a recent court filing, all parties have agreed to undergo court-assisted mediation in front of a neutral judge, with a mediation session scheduled for Jan. 9. Superior Court Justice Susan E. Sullivan will serve as the mediator.

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A sign along Warren Street warns people to keep out of the site once known as the Watuppa Heights housing project, on Oct. 13, 2024. DAN MEDEIROS/THE HERALD NEWS

Professor: Lawsuit is fight for free speech, rights

Case challenges her firing over Kirk comment

Keenan Thomas
Knoxville News Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK

KNOXVILLE, TN – A scholar suspended for her crass social media comment about the assassination of Charlie

Kirk says she is fighting for “everybody’s rights” in her lawsuit seeking to regain her tenure-track professorship at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. University of Tennessee System leaders could be called to testify in the federal suit filed Oct. 29 by assistant professor of cultural anthropology Tamar Shirinian and her attorney, Robb Bigelow. Shirinian asserts the univer-

sity and UT System violated her First Amendment free speech rights and is applying a double standard in its plans to fire her. “I was frankly shocked by the university’s actions against me,” Shirinian told the Knoxville News Sentinel on Dec. 5. “I don’t understand how they could possibly justify terminating a faculty member for expressing her own private opinions in her own private life.”

Shirinian spoke at length with the Knoxville News Sentinel, part of the USA TODAY Network, in an interview that is available on the Knoxville News Sentinel YouTube channel. In that conversation, she opens up about the hate-filled comments she received after social media provocateur Robby Starbuck posted a screenshot of

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