

The Boston Globe

Serving our community since 1872

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2025

Epstein files leave Justice swamped

‘Over a million’ more documents discovered

By Perry Stein
WASHINGTON POST

On Monday, three days past the congressionally mandated deadline for the Justice Department to release the entire trove of Epstein files, a top prosecutor in Florida sent an emergency request to employees in the Miami US attorney’s office.

The Justice Department immediately needed prosecutors over Christmas week to volunteer to review and redact information on documents from the sex-trafficking investigation of Jeffrey Epstein so the materials could be released to the public.

“We have an obligation to the public to release these documents and before we can do so, certain redactions must be made to protect the identity of victims, among other things,” the email read, according to a copy obtained by The Washington Post. “I am aware that the timing could not be worse.”

That urgent request reflects the Justice Department’s choppy and often frenetic rollout of the massive Epstein investigatory files. In mid-November, Congress passed the Epstein Files Transparency Act, which ordered the release of nearly all unclassified government files on Epstein by Dec. 19, with necessary redactions.

Nearly a week past the deadline, the department appears to still be struggling to get its arms around the massive project and find an orderly way to make the files available to the public.

Officials announced on Wednesday that the FBI and prosecutors in New York had discovered **EPSTEIN, Page A7**

Despite claims, massive SNAP fraud is rare

Trump team’s allegations don’t stand up to scrutiny

By Mara Kardas-Nelson
GLOBE STAFF

When Leah B. Foley, the US attorney for the District of Massachusetts, announced federal charges against two men alleging they had illegally trafficked nearly \$7 million in food stamps, or SNAP benefits, at two small storefronts in Mattapan, she was quick to blame local authorities.

The Department of Transitional Assistance, the Massachusetts agency that oversees SNAP, allowed one of the defendants to receive SNAP benefits, despite running a thriving, if illegal, business, where he processed hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, Foley said in a press conference last week.

“This case exposes a serious breakdown in oversight,” she said. “It appears that the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance conducted virtually no due diligence when reviewing his application.”

Foley’s comments echoed what the Trump administration has been claiming for months: that there is widespread waste, fraud, and abuse within the antihunger program. “The level of fraud and corruption and double dipping and selling benefits is astounding,” Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins told Fox News in November. **SNAP, Page A6**

THE JOYS OF TOYS

Jeremias Dacosta, 5, laughed with Santa (otherwise known as William Schaaf) at the annual Menino Toy Drive on Wednesday. Dacosta’s family was one of 300 who received free holiday gifts at the Catholic Charities Teen Center at St. Peter’s parish in Dorchester. Two of the late mayor’s grandchildren, Samantha and Taylor Menino, now run the toy drive. **B1.**



LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

‘When I talk about this, I want to cry.’

SHAOYI LI, 38, a single mother who relies on Section 8 for her housing

Longtime Chinatown residents fear they’re being priced out

By Danny McDonald
GLOBE STAFF

For Yuying Deng, a 74-year-old retiree, Boston’s Chinatown neighborhood is her world.

It’s where she shops for food, socializes, and has medical appointments.

“It’s all in here,” she said recently in Cantonese. “Everything is in Chinatown.”

But after decades of living there, she recently received a letter from her building’s property management team saying her affordability restrictions for her home will expire in the coming months. She is now among the many worried she’ll be priced out.

Buffeted by a relentless tide of gentrification, working-class and poor residents in Chinatown are expressing alarm that the world they know seems

on the precipice of being swept away. On average, rents here have climbed in recent years, far outpacing wage increases, and some low-income tenants in the neighborhood, nestled right next to downtown, fret that the people who own the buildings they live in will not be able to resist the allure of development.

Deng, who grew up in Guangzhou, has lived in her Section 8 apartment on Beach Street in Boston for 20 years. She’s on a fixed income: She receives \$441 a month in government assistance. Her out-of-pocket rent payment is a pittance. Including utilities, she pays about \$110 a month to live here, she said.

But that could change. The letter from property management told her **CHINATOWN, Page A10**



LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

Yuying Deng, 74, has lived in her Section 8 apartment on Beach Street for 20 years but is concerned about a possible rent increase.

Pokémon cards bring business — and thieves

By Camilo Fonseca
GLOBE STAFF

When Ron Zeida woke up in the middle of the night to a barrage of texts, he knew something was wrong.

On Dec. 1, a burglar broke into his Vanguard Comics store in Barnstable and swiped roughly \$1,000 worth of merchandise from the shelves. In under a minute, the thief left the store’s glass door shattered and its tight-knit community shaken. Three weeks later, police are still combing for leads, Zeida said.

But given the range of merchandise that Vanguard carries, it could have been much worse.

“We have very high-end Pokémon inventory, high-end Magic [The Gathering] stuff,” Zeida said. “I think that’s partially why we were targeted.”

What’s so “high-end” about a couple of Pokémon trading cards? The fact that the right one can retail for several tens of thousands of dollars.

Retailers say that, just as interest in Pokémon and similar trading card games has skyrocketed since the pandemic, so too has the value of certain rare and unique cards. And the soaring sticker prices have not **CARDS, Page A10**

The Trump administration is reportedly seeking contractors to help it overhaul the immigrant detention system in a plan that includes renovating warehouses to hold 80,000 detainees. **A2.**

Health officials warned that an out-of-state visitor who spent time in Boston and Westborough has measles, and other people may have been exposed. **B1.**

A 21-year-old woman was killed and two people escaped after a fire broke out in a Needham home. **B1.**

As the year winds down, it’s a good time to look at the best sports photos taken by the Globe staff. **C1, C6.**



Nipping at your nose

Thursday: Seasonable. High 38-43. Low 10-15.

Friday: Quite bitter. High 21-26. Low 19-24.

Sunrise: 7:12 Sunset: 4:17

Weather and Comics, D5-6.

VOL. 308, NO. 178

Suggested retail price
\$4.00



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM GLOBE SANTA
HELPING TO BRING BOOKS & TOYS TO KIDS IN NEED

Globe Santa
70 Years of Giving



DONATE VIA VENMO



DONATE AT GLOBESANTA.ORG



Boston Globe FOUNDATION