

The T, ‘It’s not as bad as you think’

Compared to peer cities, Boston’s lines measure up

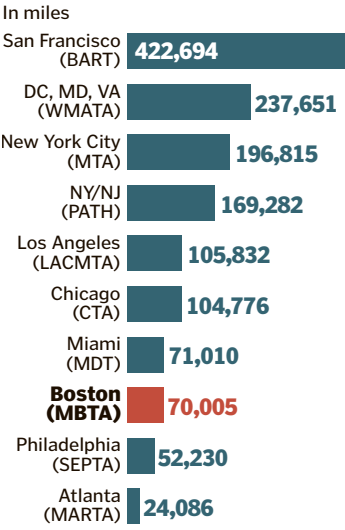
By Jaime Moore-Carrillo
GLOBE STAFF

Brian Kane, chief of the MBTA’s public oversight board, has spent much of his working life pointing out the T’s problems. As with many longtime Boston-area residents, his attitude toward the agency is often a tumultuous blend of dependence, fondness, disappointment, and, at times, unbridled rage. “The T is like the Red Sox for people from this region,” Kane,

a Brookline resident and former T employee, said. “It’s gonna break your heart, but we still keep going back to it.” Years of chronic delays, frequent breakdowns, and freak accidents have imbued the city and surrounding communities with a defensible collective angst regarding the transit agency. But do Bostonians, their patience worn down by its shortcomings over the years, take the T for granted? “It’s not as bad as you think it is,” Nigel Wilson, a public transportation expert at MIT, said of the T system writ large. “Obviously, everyone has their

SUBWAY, Page A10

Mean distance between major failures



SOURCE: National Transit Database. The Federal Transit Administration defines a major mechanical failure as one that prevents a vehicle from completing or starting a trip because of hampered movement or safety concerns. The Globe selected the 10 American heavy rail services with the highest ridership levels for comparison purposes.

KIRKLAND AN/GLOBE STAFF

Reasoning on Nigeria airstrikes questioned

Government OK’d hit, but target area not tied to Christian persecution

By Ruth Maclean and Saikou Jammeh
NEW YORK TIMES

After the US military launched airstrikes on sites in northwestern Nigeria on Thursday, President Trump said the targets were Islamic State group terrorists “who have been targeting and viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians.” Analysts say, however, that the situation on the ground is

more complicated. Sokoto state, which was hit by more than 12 Tomahawk missiles Thursday night, is populated overwhelmingly by Muslims, who bear the brunt of terrorist attacks there, according to analysts and groups that monitor conflict. Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto said recently that the area does “not have a problem with persecution” of Christians. And analysts are divided

over the existence of ties between insurgent groups in Sokoto and the Islamic State group. Some analysts say that the violent attackers in Sokoto, who are colloquially known as the Lakurawa, have links to the Islamic State group’s Sahel Province branch, which is mostly farther north and west, in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. But other analysts say evidence of those links is inconclusive, as the identity of the Lakurawa group remains

NIGERIA, Page A4

In a race to save the oceans’ diversity

At Nahant genome bank, scientists gather samples of marine life as climate change alters our world



PHOTOS BY DAVID L. RYAN/
GLOBE STAFF

Clockwise from top: a Forbes sea star; a sample of Hydrozoa in the Mississippi Canyon; a sample labeled Echinoidea, Green Canyon; the surface of a mussel shell seen through a microscope.



By Kate Selig
GLOBE STAFF

NAHANT — On a rocky outcropping a few miles northeast of Boston Harbor, scientists are racing to build a library of tissue and DNA from ocean creatures — before it is too late. It’s a last-ditch effort. As global warming drives ocean temperatures ever higher, some species have vanished and the populations of others have plummeted. If climate change continues unchecked, many marine species could face a mass extinction, rivaling the worst in earth’s history. To preserve the oceans’ historical record, researchers in Nahant, a peninsular town jutting into the Atlantic, are collecting samples from marine organisms around the world and distributing them to scientists. “It’s not difficult to do,” said Dan Distel, a marine biologist who serves as the director of Northeastern University’s Ocean Genome Legacy Center. “It’s not expensive to do. And of course, if we miss the opportunity, it’s too late.”

The center, a packed maze of lab equipment and preserved samples, and other biorepositories like it are increasingly crucial to climate change research. The Nahant collection has informed hundreds of studies, providing a baseline understanding of how species are doing while also tracking global trends. The repository houses common local species, such as spiky sea urchins and flatfish with their eyes trained skyward. But there are also some “real weirdos,” as Distel described them. A prized specimen from the Philippines is a preserved giant shipworm, a glistening, tubular

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Freeze frame

Saturday: Some snow. High: 22-27. Low: 16-21.
Sunday: Slightly warmer. High: 33-38. Low: 26-31.
Sunrise: 7:12 Sunset: 4:18
Comics and Weather, D4-5.
Obituaries, C9.

VOL. 308, NO. 180
*
Suggested retail price \$4.00



Lawmakers in about two dozen states have passed new child care programs this year, often backed by business leaders. A2.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he will meet President Trump in Florida on Sunday to discuss the latest draft of a peace plan. A3.

A custom label printer in Wilmington is closing, adding to a growing list of Massachusetts manufacturers that have shut down or moved as the state’s manufacturing footprint continues to shrink. D1.

Two seniors at Boston Latin School founded a club to reduce food waste; their idea took off. B1.

They’re all on the ski team

Even without a lift, Whaleback Mountain has a devoted base

By Amanda Gokee
GLOBE STAFF

Norman Berman has seen the promise and the pitfalls of Whaleback Mountain up close. The scrappy mountain rising up from around a bend on I-89 in Enfield, N.H., is where his children started to ski. It’s where he goes for serious skiing on a powder day. Over the past three decades, he’s seen the mountain close, reopen, and go through bankruptcy. Berman was there when a nonprofit was created to take over mountain operations in late 2013, yet another effort to keep it alive. When he was asked to serve on the nonprofit’s board, Berman quickly agreed. “My motivation always has been that I would hate to see Whaleback close,” he said. He’s not alone. The mountain is a beloved community fixture, with enough locals willing to open their pocketbooks to keep it afloat through seasons of financial distress, of which there have been many in its checkered history. This winter, it was only after frantic fund-raising efforts

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DANIEL SARCH FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Joe Scarfi (left) and Scott Damato of HKD Snowmakers fixed a snow-making machine as snow fell on Whaleback Mountain in Enfield, N.H.