

TURNING THE PAGE ON 2009

Change hit the suburbs west of Boston this year in a big way. It brought a jump in unemployment, a search among towns for tax money to pay for the area's appetite for good schools and services, new faces in the political lineup, and a threat to a valued museum. There's always next year.

IT WAS THE ECONOMY, STUPID

WE'RE WORKING ON IT

8.4%
STATE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE in October, three percentage points higher than a year earlier

100%
Portion of COMMUNITIES WEST OF BOSTON in which unemployment increased in that same period

HIGHS AND LOWS

115.1%
Increase in the unemployment rate in SHERBORN from last October; the rate rose from 3.3% to 7.1%

39%
Increase in BOLTON, where the rate rose from 4.1% to 5.7%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

HIGHEST IN 2008: BELLINGHAM
6.2% (now 10.4%)

HIGHEST IN 2009: PLAINVILLE
10.5% (was 5.2%)

LOWEST IN 2008: LINCOLN
3.1% (now 5%)

LOWEST IN 2009: DOVER
4.8% (was 3.2%)

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN CITY GROW?

SHOWING HIS ROOTS

It was quite a year for Newton native **John Krasinski**, who seemed to be everywhere. Star of NBC's hit TV show "The Office," he appeared on the big screen in "Away We Go" and the just-released "It's Complicated" with Meryl Streep and Alec Baldwin, and in The Boston Globe newsroom in November, where he showed us he hasn't lost touch with his local roots.



NEW MAN AT THE TOP

Newton elected its first African-American mayor, **Setti Warren**, replacing Mayor David Cohen, who is stepping down after 12 years in the top job. History didn't come easily; Warren won by just 463 votes. The New York Times featured Warren earlier this month, a sign that expectations are high and attention is not likely to abate.

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

3 State titles each won by Lincoln-Sudbury Regional and Wayland high schools

- **Wayland:** Boys' and girls' swimming (Div. 2); boys' golf (Div. 3)
- **Lincoln Sudbury:** Girls' swimming and girls' cross country (both Div. 1), and boys' volleyball

FORECLOSURES

2,196
Foreclosure petitions issued from January to October in the 53 communities covered in Globe West

326
Foreclosure petitions in Framingham, the region's highest number

3
Foreclosure petitions in Sherborn and Bolton, the lowest in the region

HOME VALUES

MEDIAN PRICE OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

HIGHEST: WESTON
\$1.203 million

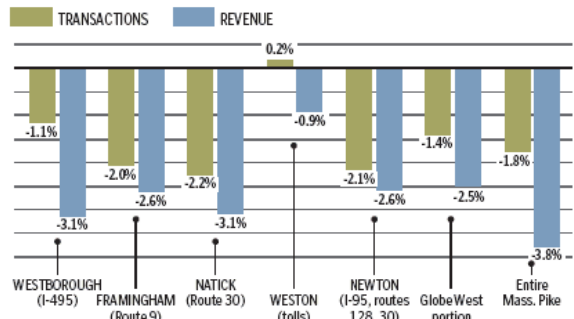
LOWEST: BELLINGHAM
\$240,000

GLOBE WEST MEDIAN
\$481,707



THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Traffic and revenue along the Mass. Pike were down compared with a year ago.



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

CRAP SHOOT

Milford is entertaining a developer's overture to build a **resort-style casino** along I-495. Eventually, the town could host a huge Foxwoods-style complex with 2,000 hotel rooms, a dozen restaurants, a convention center, a nightclub, and retail stores. But first the state Legislature would need to expand gambling in Massachusetts. Milford's leadership seems wavering by the promise of new jobs and tax revenue, but surrounding communities fret about traffic, crime, and spillover.



BLOOM WAS OFF THE ROSE

The year started with the shocking announcement that the **Rose Art Museum** at Brandeis University

NOT A PRETTY PICTURE

The 120-acre former **Polaroid property** in Waltham has a new owner and an uncertain future. Mortgage holder Helaba Bank forced an auction but then became the new owner after no acceptable bids came in. In December, Helaba announced it was scrapping plans for a 1.7 million-square-foot office and retail complex and starting over to reflect a changed economy.

NOTABLE BY THEIR ABSENCE

■ **Richard J. Egan**, 73, billionaire cofounder of information-storage giant EMC Corp. of Hopkinton, who served 15 months as ambassador to Ireland, died in August.

■ **Mark Fidrych**, 54, former major-league pitcher, died in an accident at his farm in Northborough in April.

THE PRICE YOU PAY

18 Communities in the Globe West area that adopted a local-option **meals tax**

16 Communities that adopted or amended a **room occupancy tax** in 2009



...would be closed and its collection of 7,000 works would be sold, prompting workers in May to start packing up the artwork (left). After a public outcry spread from the campus to the art world, the university backed down and decided to keep the museum open, but let the director's contract expire and reserved the option to sell some works.

