



# In search for the missing, authorities often turn to Boston's waterways

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**Police dive teams searched beneath the Zakim Bridge on Monday for Michael Kelleher, who has been missing since attending a Celtics game last week.**

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

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[On Sunday](#), more than two weeks after 23-year-old [Michael Kelleher](#) went [missing](#), police pulled his

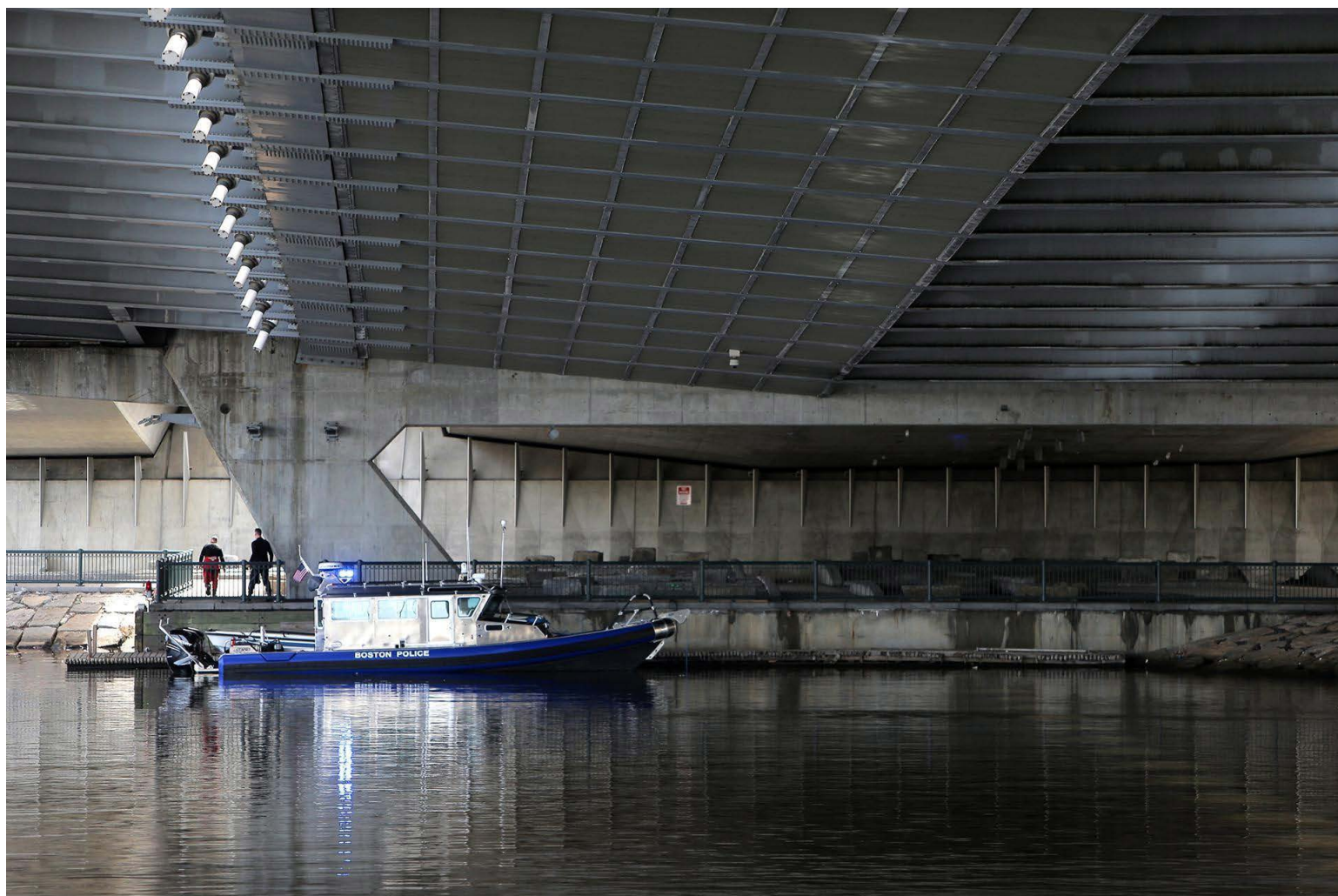


body from the Charles River.

It [wasn't the first time](#) tragedy has struck at the water's edge.

Between 2009 and March 2016, authorities searching Boston area waterways recovered the bodies of at least 11 people, mostly young men, who had previously been reported missing, in many cases for days.

The most recent of those cases was that of 22-year-old Zachary Marr who [went missing](#) in February 2016 while celebrating his birthday at a Boston bar. Authorities said they found [surveillance camera footage](#) that appeared to show him entering the Charles River nearby. More than four weeks after his disappearance, police pulled his body from the water there.



## Divers prepared to search an area.

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But Boston is not the only place where a series of deaths in similar circumstances have occurred within several months or years.



## Divers search for 23-year-old last seen after Celtics game

Crews used side-scan technology as Michael Kelleher's friends and family looked on.

Since 1997, the bodies of at least 10 young men have been pulled from rivers in and around the relatively small city of La Crosse, a college town along the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, according to news reports.

In numerous other communities, including other Midwest cities like Chicago, Minneapolis, and



Milwaukee, there have been clusters of cases of young men turning up dead in the water.

In New Jersey, the bodies of three young men were pulled from the Hudson River between early 2014 and early 2016, news reports said.

In England, 61 bodies, mostly of young men, were recovered from the canals of Greater Manchester between 2008 and 2014, according to media outlets there.

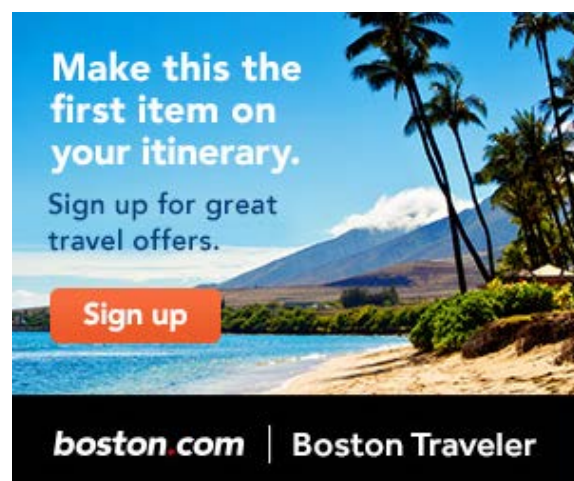
In Boston, as in other places, police have said the vast majority of the deaths were accidents or suicides. Often, drugs or alcohol were involved, according to authorities. In some instances, weather conditions were also bad.

The seemingly high number of cases, coupled with their apparent similarities, has prompted curiosity over the years, and even speculation that the deaths may somehow be connected and the work of a serial killer or killers.

But law enforcement officials working the cases — including the FBI, which weighed in on the Midwest cases — have stressed that they have found no connection between them.

Police in some cities, including Boston, have noted that the number of people rescued after falling or jumping into area waterways was significantly higher than the number of such cases that resulted in death. But the non-fatal cases are typically not well-documented.

Even certain fatal cases may receive less attention than others if, for example, the person hadn't first been reported as missing.



LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

**A flyer near the Zakim Bridge asks for information about Michael Kelleher.**

“Many of these cases are clearly accidental, others are clearly suicides, and in some the evidence doesn’t point conclusively in one direction or another, but there are no signs of trauma or other indications of foul play,” Jake Wark, spokesman for the Suffolk district attorney’s office, [told the Globe](#) last year.

In some places, officials have searched for solutions, including meeting with bar owners or exploring the idea of building barriers around waterways. But so far, no practical ways to prevent such cases have been found.

“In most cases, it’s nothing suspicious, just an overuse of alcohol,” former Boston police commissioner Edward F. Davis told the Globe a year ago.

## Related

- [Divers search for missing 23-year-old](#)

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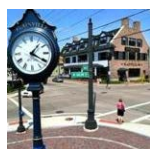
Damaging winds, quarter-size hail, and even a tornado are possibilities in Massachusetts today. [MORE...](#)

### Dick Albert, former Channel 5 weatherman, dies



“It’s a huge loss,” said Harvey Leonard. “It’s truly like losing a brother, that’s what I considered him to be.” [MORE...](#)

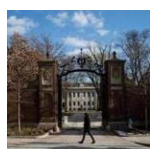
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## In Michelle Carter’s hometown, opinions vary on justice of her sentence

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## Mother of Conrad Roy III seeks \$4.2m in wrongful death suit against Michelle Carter

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More than 5,300 cyclists took off Saturday morning in the 2017 Pan-Mass Challenge, raising money for patient care and cancer research. [MORE...](#)

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Some people redeem so many winning tickets that they raise questions about the integrity and oversight of the \$5 billion state lottery. [MORE...](#)

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## Police disperse hundreds of youths in the North End

State Police spokesman David Procopio said Boston police requested Massachusetts State Police assistance with dispersing between 500 and 1,000 youths. [MORE...](#)

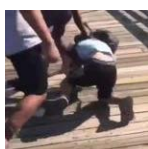
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John Sweeney averaged 65 miles a day, mostly along Route 20, a 3,365-mile ribbon of asphalt that is the longest road in the United States. [MORE...](#)

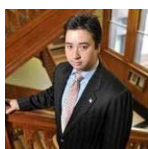
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## State Police investigate video of youths fighting on pier in Quincy

A video of youths being punched and kicked is making the rounds on social media. [MORE...](#)

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## Cambridge city councilor to leave politics

Cambridge city councilor Leland Cheung, the first Asian-American on the council, announced this week that he intends to leave politics. [MORE...](#)

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## This weekend, bus shuttles replace rail service on five lines



You might want to just stay home this weekend. [MORE...](#)



## Michelle Carter receives 15 months in jail; will remain free pending appeal

A judge sentenced Michelle Carter to two and a half years, with 15 months to serve and 15 months probation, for goading her boyfriend to kill himself in a high-profile texting suicide case. However, he allowed Carter to remain free while awaiting appeal. [MORE...](#)



## 'Dukes of Hazzard' actor arrested in Waltham

Tom Wopat was arraigned on a charge of groping a woman who was to share the stage with him in a local production of "42nd Street." [MORE...](#)

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