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HOLIDAYS IN JAMAICA PLAIN PGS. 4-6

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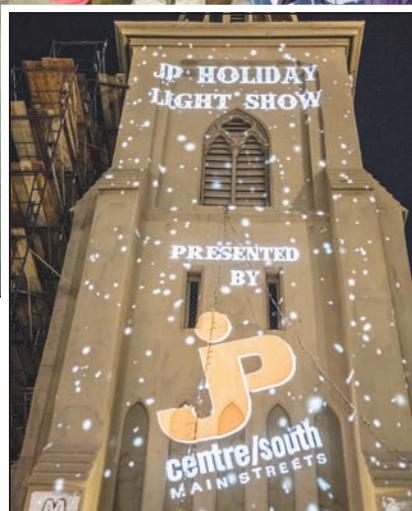
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## ANNUAL JAMAICA PLAIN HOLIDAY STROLL



PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN  
JP Honk, shown above, puts on a musical spectacle in front of JP Licks as part of the JP Centre South Main Streets Holiday Stroll. Shown to the left, the Holiday Light Show was held at the First Baptist Church as a mesmerizing display was projected onto the steeple. See more photos on Pages 10 and 11.

## Forbes Building's future sparks concern at JPNC

BY GAZETTE STAFF

The Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council (JPNC) held its regular monthly meeting this past Tuesday.

Chairman Will Cohen and members Dave Baron, Michael Reiskind, vice-chair Bernie Doherty, Nick Chaves, Gert Thorn, Peg Preble, Omer Hecht, Paige Sparks, Rene Welch, and Sarah Freeman were in attendance.

The principal source of discussion among the members focused on the future of the Forbes Building at 545 Centre St., which has provided apartments primarily for low-income tenants for four decades.

The Forbes was constructed more than 40 years ago pursuant to a state program that provided state-backed, low-interest construction loans to developers with the requirement that 75 percent of the units be rented at below-market rates for low-income residents for a period of 40 years.

The property, which is owned

by the Jamaica Plain Company, is the last of these properties in the city whose low-income rental agreement has expired, essentially freeing the owner of the property to charge market-rate rents for all tenants.

State and city officials have been in negotiations with the Jamaica Plain Co. for more than a year in order to find a pathway to maintain the Forbes as a low-income rental housing complex.

However, the delay in reaching an agreement -- which reportedly hinges on the amount of money being sought by the owner vs. what the city and state have been willing to offer -- has proven vexing for the tenants, almost all of whom are senior citizens and/or disabled persons, who have been left in a state of limbo with no written guarantee as to their future.

On hand for the meeting were two representatives from the Jamaica Plain Co., attorney Jeff Sacks, a community development attorney with the law firm Nixon

Continued on page 2

## BCDC seeks another meeting with BMS Paper about development

BY ADAM SWIFT

The Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) had its third go-round at the BMS Paper mixed-use development at 3390 Washington St. at its Dec. 13 meeting. There was positive feedback

about issues that were addressed by the architect regarding the site plan and the project's relationship to the neighboring Pine Street Inn project.

However, the commissioners said they would like to see the project come back before them for

at least one more review to provide more information about access at the main driveway as well as the design of the restaurant planned for the development.

The 3390 Washington St. proj-

Continued on page 3

## BCDC pide otra reunión con BMS Paper

BY ADAM SWIFT

El 13 de diciembre, Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) discutió el desarrollo de BMS Paper en 3390 Washington St. El proyecto propuesto incluye

160 unidades departamentos, un restaurante, estacionamiento fuera de la calle para 195 vehículos, y todas las comodidades asociadas.

El arquitecto David O'Sullivan demostró que su empresa había abordado preocupaciones

anteriores con respecto al plan.

El nuevo diseño reduce el estacionamiento y el tráfico, agrega espacios verdes y paisajismo, e implementa medidas de seguridad para los peatones.

Los arquitectos habían considerado un techo verde para

The Independent Newspaper Group office will be **closed** on **Monday, Dec. 26** in observance of the Christmas holiday..

The office will reopen on **Tuesday, Dec. 27**

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**

## JPNC

Continued from page 1

Peabody, and Dot Joyce, a former press secretary for Mayor Tom Menino who is a consultant employed by the Jamaica Plain Co.

Joyce told the members that there is no plan to increase the low-income tenants' rents in the immediate future and that the "full preservation of the Forbes" as a building for low-income tenants "is the ultimate goal."

She added that the owner wants to make the building 100 percent affordable housing.

"This is the last-expiring use in the city from 40 years ago," said Sacks. "The people who have invested in the building have done their time and the limited partnership wants to move on. They're not looking to take it to market or sell this building. They want it to go forward for another 40 years."

Despite these seeming reassurances from Joyce and Sacks, the discussion, which also was attended by tenants of the Forbes Building, often turned heated.

JPNC vice-chair Bernie Doherty, who has been a passionate advocate for the tenants, emphasized that the current residents are primarily senior citizens and "are deserving of respect. We talk and talk and

talk, but see little or no action," said Doherty. "This is a money pool, but let's talk about the humanity that's involved here. There is no reason that these residents should live in fear."

The residents of the Forbes, most of whom have called the complex their home for many years, spoke of the stressful situation that the impasse has created.

"There was a promise for an affordability plan back in May, but here we are in December without a plan," said one resident.

Another resident added, "What baffles me, and what we have been disturbed about, is that it never has been put in writing that the building will remain affordable. Everybody is under stress and it is affecting their health. We are concerned about our long-term future."

Said another resident, "There are residents whose leases expire at the end of December, less than two weeks, and they are under a tremendous amount of stress with no guarantee that their rents will not go up."

Council member Gert Thorn said the owner, the city, and the state must get together and talk to each other.

"We should be rallying the people on the side of the tenants and get all of the players together. Nothing is happening and I can see us being back in this same situation a year from now," Thorn said.

He suggested that the JPNC take the initiative to bring city, state, and company officials together to work out a plan for the Forbes Building's future.

Joyce reminded the council members that the owner "has no obligation to maintain the Forbes as an affordable apartment building."

That comment drew a rebuke from those in attendance, who suggested that it was in the nature of a threat.

"The ownership is negotiating with the state and city in good faith about the terms of the future status of the building," replied Joyce.

Sacks noted that "these sorts of negotiations are not subject to being conducted in public" and reminded all in attendance that rents were frozen for the low-income tenants for 2022 into 2023.

The council ultimately voted to have Doherty and Thorn draft a letter that will be sent to the mayor, the state, and the owner of the building asking that they come together at a future JPNC meeting in order to work toward a resolution of the problem. The full council will vote on the exact wording of the letter at its next meeting.

Omer Hecht reported on the meeting for the DCR's Arborway reconstruction project that was held last week and told the members that another meeting will be held this coming week.

Sarah Freeman added that although the meeting was designed for stakeholder organizations only, members of the public also were able to make comments.

Zoning Committee chairperson Dave Baron presented the report from the Zoning Committee's meeting of December 7 at which the committee approved two requests for variances.

Baron said the first involved a request by the owners of one of the condos at 225 Lamartine St., which presently is a two-unit condo building, who are seeking to convert their one unit into two units. The work will be done entirely within their existing unit and will not enlarge the footprint

of the building.

The other matter involved the property at 34 Sedgwick St., a two-family home, in which the owners are seeking to add a dormer and to demolish an existing garage at the rear of the property in order to construct an addition to their home.

Baron said a number of neighbors supported the application.

The full JPNC voted to approve the recommendations of the Zoning Committee. The homeowners now will go before the City of Boston Zoning Board of Appeals with the favorable recommendation from the JPNC.

Paige Sparks reported about the recent meeting of the Outreach Committee, which she chairs. She recommended that Doug Rand be accepted as a community member of the Outreach Committee and the full council did so.

Sparks said that the committee is working on its objectives to engage and recruit more members of the JP community, including high school students, to become involved with the JPNC.

Sparks also presented two amendments to the JPNC's by-laws that she said will extend the reach of the JPNC into the Jamaica Plain community.

The first amendment would allow non-resident students over the age of 16 who attend schools in JP to become members of the Outreach Committee.

After some discussion, the council members voted 6-4-1 in favor of the motion. However, because a change to the by-laws requires a 2/3 majority vote to pass, the amendment failed.

There also was a lengthy discussion about Sparks's second proposed by-law change that would limit community members to two terms on any of the council's various sub-committees.

If a community member

wished to remain on a sub-committee beyond the two-term limit, then he or she would have to run for a position on the JPNC itself and then be appointed to that particular sub-committee.

However, the amendment drew widespread opposition. Baron noted that there was value to the longevity of members on these sub-committees and Thorn added that volunteers who serve on committees should be allowed to serve for as long as they are able to do so without being forced to run for election to the JPNC itself.

Doherty also commented that "long-serving community members of committees make outstanding contributions to these committees" and suggested that residents who volunteer to serve on these sub-committees may not want to run for an elected position on the JPNC.

Peg Preble noted that one problem with "throwing people off" committees is that the council presently is having difficulty finding volunteers to fill its vacant seats, referring to JPNC chair Cohen's statement at the beginning of the meeting that there presently are five vacancies on the JPNC itself with no apparent takers for the seats.

The council voted 7-2-2 against the amendment.

Michael Reiskind provided an update of the Public Service Committee. He said that a request of the Brendan Behan Pub, 378 Center Street, to change the closing time of its year-round patio from a 10:00 closing to a midnight closing recently was approved by the Boston Licensing Commission.

In their final business of the evening, the members elected Renee Welch as the new chair of the JPNC's Housing Development Committee.



**Brendan Behan Pub**

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SU22P2322EA  
Estate of:  
Eladia Amable Ross

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A. Ross  
Date of Death:  
11/26/2019

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for S/A - Formal  
Adjudication of Intestacy  
and Appointment of Personal  
Representative has been filed by George W.  
Ross, Sr. of Roslindale, MA  
requesting that the court  
enter a formal Decree and  
Order and for such other  
relief as requested in the  
Petition.  
The Petitioner requests  
that: George W. Ross, Sr. of  
Roslindale, MA and George  
W. Ross, Jr. of Jamaica

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Personal Representative(s)  
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Without Surety on the  
bond in unsupervised  
administration.  
IMPORTANT NOTICE  
You have the right to obtain  
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the Court. You have a right  
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To do so, you or your  
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regarding the adminis-  
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distribution of assets and  
expenses of administra-  
tion.  
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J.  
Dunn, First Justice of this  
Court.  
Date: November 25, 2022  
Felix D. Arroyo  
Register of Probate

12/23/22

JP

# BCDC

*Continued from page 1*

ect includes approximately 160 residential units, an improvement and expansion of the existing business on-site, a moderately priced neighborhood-style restaurant with off-street parking for 195 vehicles, and all associated amenities.

At the Dec. 13 meeting, project architect David O'Sullivan of Sullivan Architects pointed out many of the improvements that have been made to the outdoor space, the landscaping, and the traffic circulation.

"We want to create a real clear path through Washington Street to get to the back residential building," said O'Sullivan. "We've also worked on the courtyard area, we've reduced some parking, and we've added some greenspace."

Some of the changes were made to make the property safer for pedestrians, creating a buffer between the sidewalk and the start of the parking on the site.

"We are doing some traffic calming where we are doing asphalt partway up the driveway, and then having an area of pavers to break up the driveway," O'Sullivan said.

A green roof was considered for one of the two buildings, but it was decided that the building could not support it. O'Sullivan said there will be solar panels on the roofs of both buildings.

Jennifer Uhrhane, who heads the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association, said her group appreciates many of the recent changes that were made to the plans for the project.

"I'm happy to see some things incorporated that we've been asking for for quite some time," she said. "It looks like there are a

lot of improvements that address some of our concerns about the courtyard and pedestrian safety."

She said she also appreciated the addition of different materials and pavers in the courtyard area.

However, Uhrhane said she still had some concerns about bicycle access and the overall look of the buildings.

"The pedestrians now have a protected colonnade walkway on the Pine Street Inn end of the driveway, but I don't see how this is accommodating for bike safety, it still seems very car-centric in terms of the driveway entry off of the street," Uhrhane said.

As with much other new development in that area of Jamaica Plain, Uhrhane said she was concerned about the color scheme of the proposed buildings.

"It is still a very neutral gray building," she said. "I appreciate

that there is a bit more articulation in the facade, so it's not quite as flat, but there is still a lot of gray and a lot of neutrals."

She said she would like to see some more creativity with the colors and materials used in the project.

Several of the design commissioners also reiterated that they would like to see a stronger design on the entrance for the proposed restaurant.

In other BPDA news affecting Jamaica Plain, on Dec. 15, the BPDA board approved a project that will adaptively reuse the landmarked Blessed Sacrament Church building, converting it into a mixed-use development while preserving the historic building.

The project will include 55

income-restricted housing units and a community room operated by the Hyde Square Task Force. There will also be 55 bicycle parking spaces on site, as well as a Blue Bikes station.

The housing component will include a mix of studio, one- and two-bedroom units, and as part of the project, there will be a new, accessible plaza space along the front of the building.

According to the BPDA board, the project is consistent with the city's goal to increase housing opportunities, including affordable housing and a wide range of housing options for the neighborhood. In addition, the board stated the project will increase the safety and appearance of the area with new lighting and landscaping.

# BCDC

*Continued from page 1*

uno de los dos edificios, pero el edificio no podía soportarlo. O'Sullivan dijo que habría paneles solares en ambos techos.

Jennifer Uhrhane de Stonybrook Neighborhood Association dijo que su grupo aprecia muchos de los cambios.

"Estoy feliz de ver que se incorporaron algunas cosas que pedimos", dijo.

Sin embargo, Uhrhane expresó su preocupación por el acceso para bicicletas.

"Los peatones tienen una pasarela protegida en el extremo del camino de entrada de Pine Street Inn, pero no veo cómo esto se adapta a la seguridad de las bicicletas", dijo.

La elección del color del edificio no impresionó a Uhrhane, quien lo llamó "un edificio gris muy neutro" e instó a un mayor uso del color.

Además, varios comisionados de diseño dijeron que preferían un diseño más atractivo para la entrada del restaurante. Han solicitado otra reunión con BMS Paper para revisar los asuntos.

## Iglesia de Blessed Sacrament

En una nota relacionada, la junta de BPDA aprobó la reutilización de la histórica iglesia de Blessed Sacrament, convirtiéndola en un desarrollo de uso mix-

to conservando sus elementos históricos.

El proyecto incluirá 55 unidades de vivienda con restricción de ingresos y una sala comunitaria operada por Hyde Square Task Force. También habrá 55 plazas de aparcamiento de bicicletas y una estación Blue Bikes.

La residencia incluirá una combinación de estudios, uni-

dades de uno y dos dormitorios y una plaza accesible.

Según la junta de BPDA, el proyecto coincide con el objetivo de la ciudad de aumentar las oportunidades de vivienda. La junta declaró que el proyecto también mejoraría la seguridad y la apariencia del área con nueva iluminación y paisajismo.


  
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# Italian Home for Children hires special education veteran

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The Italian Home for Children that is located at 1125 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain, announced the hiring of Robert “Bob” Johnson, former President and CEO of Special Olympics of Massachusetts Inc., as the organization’s new Vice President of Agency Advancement. In this position, Bob will lead fundraising, partnerships, and marketing efforts for the 103-year-old non-profit mental health organization.

With more than 40 years of experience in a variety of sectors in special education including teacher, public school administrator, state regulator, non-profit

fundraiser and CEO; Johnson joins Italian Home for Children as the agency is expanding its programs and expertise serving children with behavioral health diagnoses, autism spectrum disorder, and intellectual and developmental delays.

“The tremendous history and mighty mission of the Italian Home for Children align perfectly with my lifelong personal mission, to serve children with special needs and mental health issues and help them maximize their potential and personal growth,” Johnson said. “I am especially excited to be joining the Italian Home in a role that combines my two great passions: raising money and helping stu-

dents and families with special needs. I can’t wait to get started helping many more people know about this organization and its great work and growing our community of supporters and partners.”

Among his many roles prior to joining the Italian Home for Children, Johnson served from 1998-2013 as CEO of the Special Olympics of Massachusetts, Inc. (SOMA), where he led the capital campaign for and oversaw the construction of the Yawkey Sports Training Center in Marlborough, Mass., and established several highly successful fundraising and health-related initiatives.

“Bob is a proven and out-

standing leader, and has some of the greatest experience in understanding, working with, and telling the stories of people with special needs,” said Jeff Nothnagle, former Board Chair of SOMA. “His appreciation of inclusion and incredible contributions to the Special Olympics and state of Massachusetts show that he has the passion to strengthen a community and grow support for a purpose-driven mission.”

Prior to his work at SOMA, Bob worked as the Director of the Bureau of Program Audit and Assistance at the Department of Education’s Division of Special Education, where he worked on the first rewrite of Massachusetts’ landmark 1974



Robert “Bob” Johnson.

special education law, Chapter 766, and led the drafting of the state’s “Regulations for the Approval of Private Schools Serving Publicly Funded Special Needs Children.” Today, more than 80 “766-approved” schools throughout the Commonwealth serve thousands of students with the most complex special needs, about two-thirds of them public school district students placed with approved schools through public-private partnerships.

“We are so pleased to have someone with the knowledge, track record, and dedication as Bob join our already impressive team,” said Susan Keays, CEO of Italian Home for Children. “Throughout his career, Bob has uplifted every institution he has worked with, and the Italian Home is honored to have him aboard as we continue to navigate our path forward from the pandemic and expand our programming, admissions, and partnerships across the state in a time when our services are needed more than ever.”

Johnson’s appointment will also help support Italian Home for Children’s recent announcement of plans to launch two new Youth Community Crisis Stabilization (YCCS) programs in partnership with Boston Medical Center in early 2023 as well as pioneer a specialty Community Based Acute Treatment (CBAT) program for youth with autism and intellectual/developmental delays, called the Neurodevelopmental Unit (NDU). The NDU is expected to open in late Winter/early Spring 2023. The nonprofit currently offers residential, day, and community-based programming that allows youth and families to strengthen the skills and relationships needed to thrive in their communities.

Bob earned his B.S.E. and M. Ed Degrees in Education and

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# Fuel assistance benefit levels increased to \$2,200

STAFF REPORT

At the urging of ABCD and other Community Action Agencies, more LIHEAP funding is now available to people in need this winter. The maximum benefit level has been increased to \$2,200, from \$1,600 which will help struggling families, individuals and elders to make it through the harsh winter season. ABCD continues to accept new applications for Fuel Assistance and encourages everyone to explore the potential for assistance.

Residents are urged to see if they meet the guidelines for the increased benefit. The program will run through April 30, 2030.

Residents of Boston, Brookline or Newton can apply by calling at 617-357-6012. Residents of Malden, Medford, Everett, Winchester, Melrose, Woburn or Stoneham can call 781-322-6284. Visit [bostonabcd.org/heat](http://bostonabcd.org/heat) for information about ABCD's Fuel Assistance Program including a listing of neighborhood centers.

Application assistance is available in-person by appointment at all ABCD neighborhood centers including:

ABCD Central Office; ABCD Roslindale; Allston/Brighton Neighborhood Opportunity

Center; Brookline Fuel Assistance; Chinatown; Dorchester Neighborhood Service Center; East Boston; John F. Kennedy Center; Mattapan Family Service Center; Mystic Valley Opportunity Center; Newton Fuel Assistance; North End/West End Neighborhood Service Center; Parker Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Service Center; Roxbury/North Dorchester Neighborhood Opportunity Center; South Boston Action Center and the South End Neighborhood Service Center.

A Massachusetts-based non-profit human services organization, ABCD provides disadvantaged residents in the Boston and Mystic Valley areas with the tools, support, and resources they need to transition from poverty to stability and from stability to success. Each year, we serve more than 100,000 individuals, elders and families through a broad range of innovative initiatives as well as long-established, proven programs and services. For 60 years, ABCD has been deeply rooted in each neighborhood we serve, empowering individuals and families and supporting them in their quest to live with dignity and achieve their highest potential. For more information, please visit [bostonabcd.org](http://bostonabcd.org).

## JP ARTS COUNCIL ELECTS NEW MEMBERS



The Jamaica Plain Arts Council recently held their annual meeting at the Sam Adams Pub. The year's events were reviewed and plans were formulated for the upcoming year. The following members were elected to the Board are shown from left: Anne Brown, Susan Duprey, Robin Radin, Alison Cupples, Anne Sasser, Keyse Angelo and Gail Bos. Board members not pictured are Glen Hawkins, Constance Cervone and Cristina Hajosy.

## Johnson

Continued from page 4

Special Education Administration from Westfield State University. In 2010, Bob was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Public Service from Westfield State. He has been married to his college sweetheart, Ellen, for 52 years.

Together they have four grown children and 10 grandchildren.

Founded in 1919, Italian Home for Children promotes the growth and well-being of youth, adults, and families with social, emotional, behavioral and educational needs through a broad range of specialized services, including residential placements, day treatment services, educational programs, and community

based mental health treatment. All of the services provided by Italian Home for Children are directed toward the primary goals of reducing acute mental health symptoms, increasing skills, reunification of children with their own or alternative families, and/or the preservation of families at risk. For more information, visit [www.italianhome.org](http://www.italianhome.org)

## Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll



### 'BUDDY'

Buddy is a housetrained, social dog who loves people and other dogs. He is about a year old and very smart. He will thrive on lots of exercise and training to keep him busy!

"Gazette Pet of the Week" is sponsored by Sarah Carroll, REALTOR®  
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Wishing you health and happiness in 2023!



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# Jamaica Plain/Mission Hill Gazette

## 2023 Publishing Calendar

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### JANUARY

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### FEBRUARY

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### MARCH

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### APRIL

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### MAY

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 Mission Hill Gazette  Jamaica Plain Gazette



# Wu announces reappointments to Boston School Committee

STAFF REPORT

Mayor Michelle Wu last week announced the reappointment of Jeri Robinson, currently the Chairperson, and Quoc Tran to four-year terms on the Boston School Committee. The Boston School Committee is the governing body of Boston Public Schools.

“I’m proud to reappoint Chairperson Jeri Robinson and Quoc Tran back to the Boston School Committee, to continue the groundwork we’ve started to enhance the learning experience and school infrastructure for our children and families,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “Both Jeri and Quoc are champions for all our students and school staff, and they’re committed to digging in and making the systemic changes our communities need. I want to thank them both for their leadership and look forward to continuing our work together.”

“I’m honored to continue my life’s work of preparing children for a bright future,” said School Committee Chairperson Jeri Robinson. “Boston Public Schools has entered a new era, and I’m

excited as ever to work alongside my fellow Committee members and BPS administration to deliver the world-class education students, staff and families deserve.”

“The experience I gained as a Boston Public Schools parent and teacher helped me serve effectively in my first term,” said Boston School Committee member Quoc Tran. “I’m grateful for the opportunity to carry on building a system that will nurture the next generation of City leaders and workers alike.”

“Jeri Robinson’s steady and reliable work as chairperson, and Quoc Tran’s well-rounded perspective have made them trusted and valuable partners since I returned to Boston Public Schools,” said Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper. “I’m thrilled they’ll remain in place as we continue to improve facilities, foundations, and outcomes for students and families across the City.”

Both Robinson and Tran’s terms were set to expire in January of 2023.

The School Committee is responsible for:

- Defining the vision, mission, and goals of the Boston Public Schools;

- Establishing and monitoring the annual operating budget;

- Hiring, managing, and evaluating the Superintendent; and

- Setting and reviewing district policies and practices to support student achievement.

The School Committee meets approximately twice per month during the school year to adopt, review and modify policies and practices that support teaching, learning and improved student achievement. With the exception of executive sessions, Committee meetings are open to the public, feature public comment periods, and are broadcast on Boston City TV.

Robinson, now retired, served as Vice President of Early Childhood Initiatives at the Boston Children’s Museum. She brings more than 40 years of experience in teaching and consulting in the fields of early childhood and museum education. She is the developer of the PlaySpace exhibit –one of the earliest prototypes for early learning family spaces in children’s and other

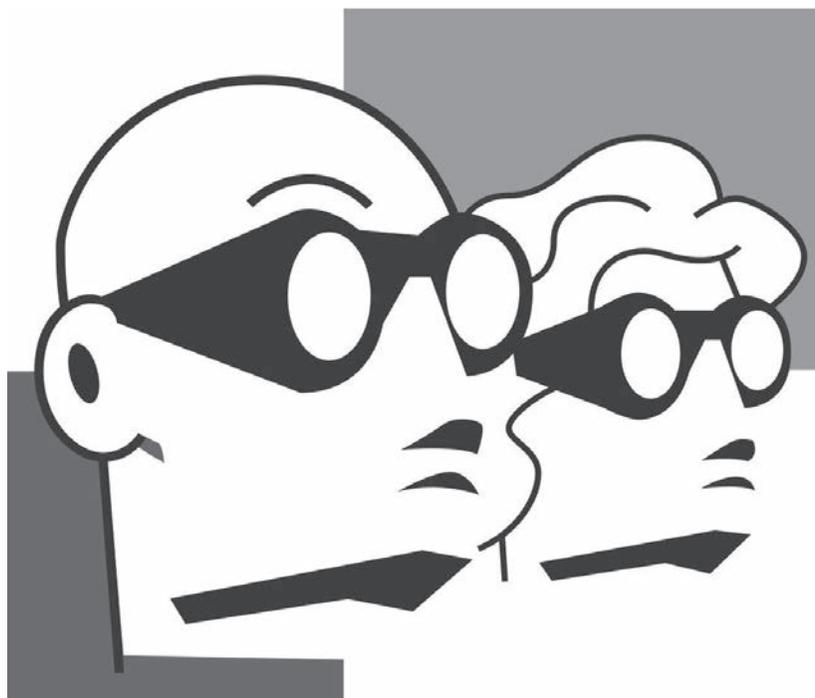
museums – founder of the Boston Cultural Collaborative for Early Learning, and co-founder of both Families First Parenting programs and “Countdown to Kindergarten.” For many years, she has provided training and consultation to schools, early child programs, museums, and other organizations.

Ms. Robinson is a proud graduate of Girls Latin School. She received her B.S., M.S. Ed. and an honorary Doctorate in Education from Wheelock College, and serves on numerous boards dealing with family, community, multicultural, and early childhood education issues. In recognition of her work, Ms. Robinson has received awards such as the Wheelock Centennial Award, the Boston Parents Paper Family Advocate Award, the Women Who Care Award, and the Lucy Wheelock Award, was a 2004 participant in the Schott Fellowship in Early Care and Education. In 2005, she was named to the American Association of Museums, Centennial Honor Roll, in recognition of her contributions

to the museum field in the past century and in 2010, was the recipient of the Abigail Elliot Award, given by BAEYC.

Tran is the parent of four BPS graduates. Prior to his retirement as secretariat deputy director of the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, he developed and implemented diversity and inclusion strategies for over 22,000 employees, and created diversity and affirmative action plans to retain a diverse workforce. Prior to this role, he was the executive director of the Vietnamese American Civic Association (VACA), where he managed all operations of the organization related to serving the social and public assistance needs of Vietnamese refugees and immigrants. Mr. Tran was a BPS high school teacher for six years. He holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering, a master’s degree in education from Northeastern University, and a doctoral degree in law from Suffolk University.

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# Wu announces the Space Grant program to help small businesses

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the launch of the SPACE Grant program in partnership with the Office of Economic Opportunity & Inclusion (OEOI). The program will identify creative ways to bring people back to major commercial districts, revitalize the economy as we emerge from the pandemic, and close the racial wealth gap. Through this program, up to 50 local entrepreneurs will receive substantial grant funding to help them open new storefront businesses in vacant commercial spaces across Boston, with particular emphasis on major commercial hubs like Copley, Downtown, Fenway, and Seaport to increase the diversity of storefront businesses in these neighborhoods.

The SPACE (Supporting Pandemic Affected Community Enterprises) Grant program will provide grants of up to \$200,000 over a three-year period to subsidize rents, upfront capital costs, and necessary infrastructure to help local, small, diverse businesses seeking to fill vacant storefronts. The City plans to collaborate with MassDevelopment, Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation, Downtown Boston BID, Main Streets, local commercial banks and CDFIs,

and property owners to ensure that participating small business owners have access to additional financial resources and assistance to open and thrive in their new locations. The City expects the first cohort will include approximately 10-15 businesses.

"The SPACE grant program is critical to bolstering our local economy and will help local, small, diverse businesses open new locations across our neighborhoods," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "This grant program addresses commercial vacancies by connecting entrepreneurs with crucial support and the chance to grow. I'm thrilled to launch this program and grateful to our Economic Opportunity & Inclusion Cabinet and all of our partners for their critical work to ensure that Boston's thriving, inclusive and equitable for all."

OEOI has received preliminary interest from a range of entrepreneurs through a recent survey and the Boston Main Streets. This initiative will prioritize helping Boston small businesses that were most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Arts, creative economy, and entertainment;
- Childcare;
- Fitness, recreation, wellness;

- Food service and production;
- Laundry services;
- Repair and maintenance;
- Restaurants; and
- Retail

The SPACE Grant program is funded by a \$9 million investment from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to aid in Boston's local economic recovery, and will support both entrepreneurs looking to open their first brick and mortar storefront business, as well as current small businesses in the City of Boston looking to expand to new locations within the city.

Grantees will be matched with technical assistance providers that are part of OEOI's Small Business Technical Assistance Program to set them up for success. In addition, grantees will benefit from workshops and one-on-one coaching to guide them through the operational steps of opening a new storefront location. These skills will include lease negotiation and other legal support, financial, marketing, or other areas of expertise. To assist interested entrepreneurs, OEOI will hold a virtual workshop in mid-January 2023 focused on how to write a business plan for entrepreneurs. For more information, sign up for the City's small business e-newsletter.

"The SPACE Grant program is a direct response to the immense need for innovative ways to fill storefront vacancies and bring vitality to our neighborhoods that we heard from business

owners on the ground, whether through our weekly Main Streets walks, surveys, or our one-on-one engagement," said Segun Idowu, Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion. "I am grateful to our team and our partners who built this program, and am happy to launch an effort that will bring about a more robust economy and greater diversity to our city."

Businesses can apply to the SPACE Grant program online at: [boston.gov/space-grant](https://boston.gov/space-grant). Applications are available in multiple languages.

First cohort application deadline: February 17, 2023  
Grantees chosen: April 2023

## Eligibility:

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be considered for a SPACE Grant:

- Business must be incorporated in a Qualified Census Tract OR one of the prioritized business industries mentioned above.
- Business must have fewer than twenty-five employees (not including the business owner).
- Business owners must provide proof of a Boston business address (e.g., a signed lease, business permit / license / title, utility bill in which the business is named directly, or other home office documentation).
- Business and business owners must be in good-standing with the City of Boston.
- Business must provide a copy of its up to date Business

Certificate.

"The Wu Administration's SPACE Grant Program is a gamechanger for Downtown Boston and our neighborhoods. Providing direct financial and technical assistance to those looking to activate our vacant retail spaces will reduce existing barriers that limit equitable access to these storefronts. This program will open economic opportunities downtown to a wider array of entrepreneurs, make our streets livelier and safer, and support wealth-building for small business owners from a diversity of backgrounds. The Downtown Boston BID and our members are prepared to fully support this effort and to help new businesses thrive and become long-term fixtures Downtown," said Michael Nichols, President of the Downtown Boston BID.

"As a Main Streets director, I am very excited for the SPACE Grant Program. This is a progressive push forward that meets the basic needs of our small businesses, while filling the vacancies that can plague our neighborhoods," said Ginger Brown, Executive Director of JP/Centre South Main Streets.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted Downtown and its businesses, and the Wu Administration remains committed to its Downtown Revitalization plan, announced in April 2022 to address decreased foot traffic and consumer spending. As Boston aims to encourage people back to its commercial centers, the City is moving forward bold initiatives to increase consumer confidence and support small businesses. While Boston aims to activate spaces in all of our neighborhoods, the City is also seeking to ensure its Downtown core is flourishing.

To learn more, please visit: <https://www.boston.gov/space-grant>

The vision of the Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Cabinet is of a resilient, equitable, sustainable, and vibrant city that centers people and creates opportunities to build generational wealth. The Cabinet consists of five City departments, including the Office of Consumer Affairs and Licensing, the Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion, the Office of Small Business, the Office of Supplier and Workforce Diversity, and the Office of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment.

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\*All participants will receive a \$25 gift card after completion of their visit. To complete the visit, participants must create an account, give consent, agree to share their electronic health records, decide whether they want information about their DNA, answer health surveys, have their physical measurements taken (height, weight, blood pressure, etc.), and give blood and urine samples, if asked.

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# JP CENTRE SOUTH MAIN STREETS ANNUAL HOLIDAY STROLL



Kirk Israel of JP Honk jams out with the rest of the band in front of JP Licks.



Gymaica is a pop up store that set up operations where the 7/11 was. Selling their uniquely designed T-shirts, hats, cards and other items were personal trainer Dale Cumberbatch with his wife Elizabeth and their kids Emerson and Danae.



Gift shop On Centre was a popular stop.



At Salmagundi, Stephanie Elman and Haley Abing try on some fancy hats.



Bridget Burns is looking sharp in her hat she found at Salmagundi.



A customer looks over potential gifts at On Centre.



Customers shop at Susanna, looking for exciting gifts to give.

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# JP CENTRE SOUTH MAIN STREETS ANNUAL HOLIDAY STROLL



JP Honk keeps jamming in front of JP Licks.



The Holiday Light Show was held at the First Baptist Church as a mesmerizing display was projected onto the steeple.

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

JP Centre South Main Streets held their annual Holiday Stroll and Light Show. Stores throughout JP were open late and offered added incentives for shoppers

to drop in such as discounts and holiday cheer. Free musical performances were placed on the route and a light projection show at the First Baptist Church was a welcome way to help celebrate the Holiday Season.



At Susanna Kristen Uyemura looks through the wide range of jewelry.



Customers look over potential gifts at On Centre.



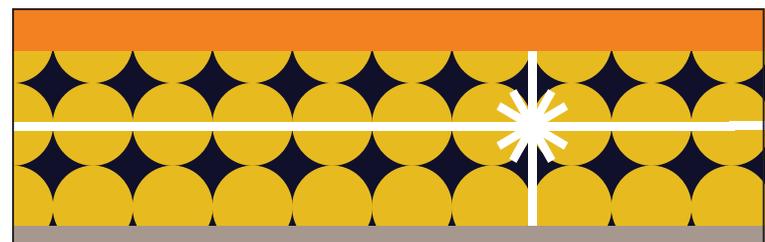
The Holiday Light Show at the First Baptist Church steeple shone brightly into the night.



Kristi Wilson is happy to be part of the Holiday fun as she wraps presents at Susanna.



Salmagundi offered stylish and classic fashions for all.



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# Wu joined city officials to discuss winter preparations currently underway

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Mayor Michelle Wu joined City officials at the Public Works yard on Frontage Road to discuss winter preparations currently underway in the City of Boston, and resources to offset rising utility costs available to residents, including older adults and

individuals experiencing homelessness. This year, three minority-owned businesses (MBEs) and or women-owned businesses (WBEs) were awarded contracts for the clearing, plowing, and salting of staircases and footpaths across the City.

“From the tools to clear snow from our City streets, to resour-

es to help residents save on their electric bills - Boston stands ready for winter weather,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “This year we’re also proud that several of our snow removal contracts are also investing directly in our local communities. I encourage residents to get ready, check our snow clearing regulations, and

check in on neighbors.”

The Public Works Department (PWD) currently has 40,000 tons of salt on-hand to treat City streets. Along with 170 pieces of in-house snow clearing equipment, the PWD has the capability to place over 800 additional pieces on the roads during larger storms. As part of their neighbor-

hood plowing operations during winter storms and to ensure the safety of riders following events, PWD allocates pieces of equipment to clear snow from Boston's dedicated bike lanes.

This year three companies owned by women or people of color were

*Continued on page 13*

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# Winter weather

*Continued from page 12*

awarded snow removal contracts, with two of those contracts being part of the City of Boston's Sheltered Market Program to advance equity in procurement with direct outreach support from the Department of Supplier and Workforce Diversity. To assist the Public Works Department during snow and ice control operations, bids were issued to clear, plow, and treat staircases and footpaths across the City of Boston before, during, and after inclement weather events.

These one-year contracts were divided into five separate zones and awarded to Casablanca Services Inc. (two zones), NS Contracting (two zones), and A & M Home Services (one zone). Both Casablanca Services and A & M Home Services are owned by people of color, while NS Contracting is both minority and women-owned. A & M is based in Dorchester and NS Contracting in Roxbury.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) monitors forecasts and maintains open lines of communication with the National Weather Service. OEM also works across City departments and with external partners to ensure coordinated response plans are in

place. Residents can sign up to receive AlertBoston notifications by phone, text, or email in the event a snow emergency/parking ban is declared.

As temperatures drop and utility costs are expected to rise, Mayor Wu is reminding residents, small businesses, and local organizations to opt in to Boston Community Choice Electricity (BCCE). This City-run program gives residents three options for electricity pricing and renewable energy. Even on the most expensive 100% renewable option, the average residential customer would save over \$70 versus Eversource's upcoming/winter 2023 Basic Service rate. On the cheapest BCCE plan (20% renewable energy currently, 22% starting January 2023) the average residential consumer would save nearly \$90/month. Individuals interested in learning more should visit [Boston.gov/BCCE](http://Boston.gov/BCCE) to opt in, opt up, or opt out at any time.

### Rules on clearing snow:

- Property owners must fully clear snow, sleet and ice from sidewalks and curb ramps abutting the property within three hours after the snowfall ends or three hours after sunrise if the snow ends overnight. Curb and pedestrian ramps to the street should be cleared fully and continually over the duration of the



Mayor Michelle Wu (center) joined City officials at the Public Works yard on to discuss winter preparations currently underway in the City of Boston.

storm to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities. If a storm will last over an extended period of time, property owners are asked to continually check ramps abutting their property for compliance.

- Removal of snow, ice from a private property to the street or sidewalk is prohibited.
- Failure to comply with the rules can result in fines issued by PWD's Code Enforcement Division. Fines associated with improper removal of snow can be found here.

### Parking during a declared snow emergency:

- If a snow emergency is declared, cars will be ticketed and towed if parked on a posted snow emergency artery.
- Space savers must be removed within 48 hours after a snow emergency has been lifted. Please note: space savers are NOT allowed in the South End and Bay Village.
- During declared snow emergencies, discounted parking is available at some parking lots and garages for Boston residents. A list of discounted parking garages can be found here.

### Trash and recycling:

- During severe snowstorms, recycling and trash collection may be canceled, but this is extremely rare. Most often, severe snowstorms can cause delays in service. To view your neighborhood recycling and trash schedule, locate a textile dropbox in your neighborhood, and to find out what items you CAN and CAN'T recycle, download our free Trash Day App.
- Crews have a difficult time reaching trash barrels and recy-

cling carts placed behind snowbanks. Please clear an area at the curb for collection or place containers next to or in front of snowbanks.

### Caring for vulnerable populations:

- If you see homeless and vulnerable individuals out in the cold who appear immobile, disoriented or underdressed for the cold, please call 911.
- The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) utilizes a city-wide network of emergency shelters, outreach providers, city agencies and first responders to assist those in need of shelter.
- Boston's emergency shelters are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and amnesty is in place for those with nonviolent restrictions. Men can access shelter at the 112 Southampton Street Shelter, and women should go to the Woods-Mullen Shelter at 794 Massachusetts Ave. BPHC and the City work closely with shelter providers in the city to ensure that no client is

without shelter, food, resources, and a warm respite from the cold.

- From Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 9:00 p.m., please call 617-534-4440 to facilitate access to shelters. Outside of these hours, guests should access shelter directly.
- During extreme cold weather, street outreach teams operate with extended hours and provide mobile outreach vans on the streets in the evening and throughout the day.

### Safety tips:

- If you are able, keep catch basins and fire hydrants clear of snow and debris. This will help prevent flooding and allow for access in the event of an emergency. For a map of catch basins and fire hydrants, visit here.
- Shoveling snow requires significant exertion; please be cautious and pay attention to symptoms. Stop if you feel chest pain, shortness of breath, lightheaded, nauseous/vomiting. Call 911 if those symptoms do not resolve quickly.

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# Wu announces two-day hockey fan festival on City Hall Plaza

STAFF REPORT

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the National Hockey League (NHL®) will hold NHL Winter Classic Plaza™, a two-day free, non-ticketed fan festival on December 30th and December 31st on the newly reopened City Hall Plaza. City Hall Plaza will host interactive hockey-themed activities, including appearances by Boston Bruins alumni. NHL Winter Classic Plaza™ builds up to the 2023 Discover NHL Winter Classic®, an outdoor regular season hockey game that this

year will be at Fenway Park on January 2nd, 2023.

“We’re excited to host Bruins fans and Boston families for one of the first big events on City Hall Plaza since we reopened the space,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “Especially during the colder months we need spaces to bring people together. I encourage everyone to come out to build community and get ready to cheer on the Bruins.”

City Hall Plaza will treat hockey fans to many interactions and experiences, including autograph sessions featuring current

and former Boston Bruins greats, family-friendly hockey interactives, giveaways, food, and an appearance by the oldest trophy in sports – the Stanley Cup®. NHL Winter Classic Plaza™ will run Friday, December 30 from 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., and Saturday, December 31 from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. A full list of activities that are free and open to the public can be found here.

“An event of this nature and size is exactly what we designed the renovated City Hall Plaza for,” said Chief of Operations Dion Irish. “This is a great opportunity for Boston families to see the new features of the Plaza while building excitement for the 2023 Discover NHL Winter Classic®. I want to thank the NHL for their partnership in hosting this family-friendly event.”

The 2023 Discover NHL Winter Classic® outdoor game will feature the Boston Bruins facing off against the Pittsburgh Penguins at Fenway Park on Monday, January 2, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.

The hockey fan festival builds on Mayor Wu’s vision to reimagine how the City can use public spaces to foster community and a

family-friendly environment. In November, Mayor Wu reopened City Hall Plaza as a transformed civic space for all residents, with universal accessibility, new communal spaces, increased environmental sustainability, and critical infrastructure improvements. Phase 1 of the City Hall Plaza reopening includes the planting of 250 new trees, 3,000 new shrubs, and over 10,000 new perennials and grasses. The renovation also includes an increase in green infrastructure through permeable surfaces that will soak up stormwater.

**72151302**  
**CITY OF BOSTON/COUNTY OF SUFFOLK**  
**BOSTON CENTERS FOR YOUTH & FAMILIES**  
**(BCYF)**

**Invitation For Bids**  
**Painting of Office Spaces**

**EV00011666**  
 Contact Information  
 Varnie Jules  
 617-635-4920 x 2149

The City of Boston, Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF), (The Official) is seeking written quotations from qualified contractors for the procurement of the following services: **Painting of Office Spaces at the City of Boston, Boston Centers for Youth & Families, (BCYF)**

The bid documents including the Scope of Services will be accessible on online from **Monday, December 19, 2022 through Tuesday, January 3, 2023** by visiting the City of Boston Public Procurement website <http://www.cityofboston.gov/procurement/> and accessing the Event ID # EV00011666, or by calling Varnie Jules.

Total Wall Space to be covered with paint: 3523 sf. **A walk-Through has been scheduled for Thursday, December 27, 2022 at 11:00 AM.** The contact person for this walk-through is David Curran at [David.Curran@Boston.Gov](mailto:David.Curran@Boston.Gov) or 617-594-4468. The City of Boston, BCYF is located at 1483 Tremont Street, Boston (Mission Hill), MA 02120.

All written quotes shall be filed electronically **no later than 4:00pm on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.** The Written Quote Contract awarded pursuant to this invitation for bid will commence on or about Friday, January 23, 2023 and will end on June 30, 2023.

**Marta E. Rivera, Commissioner**

## BPHC issues flu advisory to providers; residents are reminded to get annual flu vaccinations

STAFF REPORT

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) issued an advisory to Boston health care providers alerting them about concerning levels of flu activity during the early stage of flu season, as well as the slow uptake of flu vaccinations and COVID-19 boosters.

BPHC is urging providers to apply the CDC’s Health Advisory Network (HAN) recommendations to address increased respiratory virus activity and to mitigate severe strain on the healthcare system. The recommendations call for COVID-19

and flu vaccination to prevent the spread of both illnesses; diagnostic testing to guide treatment and clinical management; treatment protocols for confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 and flu; and proactive messaging that supports public health outcomes to raise awareness about the current flu season.

“The best way to avoid getting sick with the flu and to reduce your risk of severe infection is getting your annual flu shot. Now that the holidays are here, taking this important, yet simple step is vital for protecting yourself and others when celebrating with friends and family,” said Dr.

Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. “Everybody 6-months and older should get their flu vaccination as soon as possible.”

The Boston Public Health Commission has set up several standing sites in communities throughout the city to make it quick and convenient for residents to get their annual flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, and COVID-19 testing.

All services are free for individuals ages 6-months and older, with no appointments or IDs required:

- Boston City Hall, Haymarket Room 240 (2nd floor), 1 City Hall Sq., Boston.
- Open Mondays from 7am-1pm and Wednesdays from 12-5pm.



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# Holiday Comfort Food

BY PENNY CHERUBINO

What special comforting foods do you plan to include in this year's holiday celebrations? Food and feasting are part of the Christmas, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, and Kwanzaa year-end celebrations. When you reflect on past seasons, it may be friends and family gathered around food traditions that you remember most clearly.

Penny always craves the French pork pie or tourtière her Aunt Sophie included in holiday meals. Ed often talks about the lasagna his grandmother made in addition to the turkey, ham, and numerous side dishes on their holiday table.

Many Italian families begin their December celebration with a traditional Feast of the Seven Fishes on Christmas eve. Your holiday table may only be complete with mulled cider, roasted chestnuts, plum pudding, or even the much-maligned fruitcake.

**Holiday Baking**

Even those who seldom bake often have one or two holiday specialties that they create this time of year. There are cultural traditions like Swedish gingerbread, Swiss Zimtsterne, German lebkuchen, French bûche de Noël, British mincemeat and plum pudding, and all-American toll house cookies.

Even those who don't bake can buy a wide assortment of holiday baked goods. We always enjoy a selection of panettones. Penny is one of those hold-outs

who still loves a good fruitcake! Yes, there are excellent fruitcakes available by mail order. This year's selection came from the Vermont Country Store.

**Making New Traditions**

As we grow and our taste evolves, we may decide that some traditional foodways and holiday happenings don't fit our current tastes or lifestyles. It is perfectly okay to make your own. We have substituted a pile of lobsters or Dungeness crabs for the feast of the seven fishes.

This year we'll combine Penny's love of lobster with Ed's passion for pasta and give the cook a night off. We'll order the Lobster Spaghetti as take-out from Little Whale on Newbury Street to enjoy on Christmas Eve.

After all, celebrations are a perfect time to be a bit extravagant. It's also time to buy treats we'd typically avoid. Eggnog and whipped cream show up in the refrigerator with a plan to get back on track in the new year.

**New Year's Eve**

The new year is one holiday everyone can enjoy. We prefer a quiet New Year's Eve celebration with particular food favorites and a great bottle of sparkling wine to being out and about with a big crowd.

Most years, that is an evening of appetizers, great cheese, and charcuterie. It's the perfect food

*Continued on page 19*



This year, we plan to order the Lobster Spaghetti from Little Whale on Newbury Street to enjoy on Christmas Eve.

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# STONYBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION HOLDS HOLIDAY STROLL

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

The Stony Brook Neighborhood Association held their first annual Holiday Stroll-Along with three stops throughout the neighborhood. Food and drink awaited visitors at each stop as neighbors got together with each other to enjoy their community together.



The bonfire was a welcome feature with the first snow of the season coming down.



At 75 Brookley Road, hostess Laura Sylvan lays out food for her guests stopping in for the Holiday Stroll-Along.



Neighborhood Stroll organizer Roberta Hantgan with Paige Sparks.



Lewis looks around at the neighborhood fun.



Nick Walther relaxes with some of the snacks laid out.



Tulin Dadali with Camero.



Emily Lowenberg and her daughter Ivy warm up by the bonfire.



Pete Fraunholez.



Tim Lindgren.



Alcortis Clark.



91 Williams Street had ample space for a bonfire for the adults and a trampoline for the kids.



## Keep fats oils and grease out of your pipes this holiday season!

Excess fats, oils, and grease (FOG) may result from preparing food and should never be poured down the sink, or flushed down the toilet. FOG that's poured into the sink or toilet will harden in the pipes causing backups in your plumbing and Boston's sewer system.

Always dispose of FOG into the trash.

**BWSC encourages you to Can The Grease!**

After cooking, let FOG cool in the pan. Once cooled, pour or scoop FOG into a can, cover the can with a BWSC Grease Lid and store it in the freezer until full and dispose of the can on your regular trash collection day.

**Boston residents can request a FREE BWSC Grease Lid! Call BWSC at 617-989-7599, or request one online at [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org).**



**Boston Water and Sewer Commission**

# STONYBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION HOLDS HOLIDAY STROLL



132 Williams Street was the final stop in the Holiday Stroll-Along, and a perfect scene for the Holiday Season.



The Neighborhood Stroll was off to a strong start at 75 Brookley Road.



At 91 Williams Street, hostess Emily Lowenberg greets visitors.



Tulin Dadali and Bradley Cohen.



Kids have fun in the enclosed trampoline.



Gretjen Helenehoists daughter Aurelia Ruth up high to get a view of the Holiday magic. .



Chantal and David Reed.



Hosts Ralph Daniels and Karla Monkevich at 132 Williams Street greet guests.

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## EDITORIAL

## Merry Christmas

This is the most wonderful time of the year, to paraphrase the popular song, with holiday music playing in the malls and on our car radios, resurrecting our earliest childhood memories of Christmases-past.

We choose just the right tree, decorate it carefully with our family-heirloom ornaments, and when we first turn on the lights, it brings a smile to the faces of even the oldest among us.

Despite the hectic rushing to and fro, everybody, it seems, is in a good mood. We endure the traffic and the long lines in stores because we know that what we are doing will bring joy and happiness to others.

For those of us with young children, we get to see Christmas through their eyes, giving us a second-chance to experience the wonder and joy that we felt when we were their age.

Although all of us celebrate the holiday season in our own way, the common thread is one of peace, joy, and happiness, regardless of religious or secular beliefs. Whether it be Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or a Seinfeldian Festivus, the spirit of the season imbues us with a sense of togetherness that transcends whatever negativity may exist both in our own lives and in the world around us.

We wish all of our readers a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season.

## A great World Cup

We don't pretend to be big soccer fans, but even we were caught up in the excitement and the drama of the World Cup, which reached its climax this past Sunday with the exciting and exhilarating victory by Argentina in a shoot-out over defending champion France.

As long-time Boston sports rooters, we know of the passion that we and our fellow local fans have for our local teams. But our enthusiasm does not even come close to that of World Cup fans for their heroes.

The raw emotion among the fans in the stands, their raucous celebrations in the streets back home, and the individual stories of fans who traveled thousands of miles (and who spent their life savings) just to be on hand were epic.

Moreover, it was a World Cup for everyone, including the U.S., which qualified for the cup for the first time in eight years and made it through the knockout round, but especially for the fans of underdog Morocco, which became the first team from Africa and the Arab world to reach the semifinals.

At a time when there is so much misery and conflict in our world, the World Cup brought nations together as no other event can.

We'll be looking forward to the 2026 Cup when it will be hosted in No. America by the U.S., Mexico, and Canada.

## PLEASE WRITE...

The Gazette welcomes letters to the editor. Word limit: 500.

Deadline: Friday at 5 p.m. one week before publication. Letters may be emailed to [letters@JamaicaPlainGazette.com](mailto:letters@JamaicaPlainGazette.com). Please include address and telephone number for verification purposes.

Anonymous letters will not be published.

More information: 617-524-2626



## OP-ED

## Light and Strength for Christmas

BY DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

When I was a child at Tomahawk Elementary School in Martin County, Kentucky there were many kids who got little to nothing for Christmas. I had classmates who I would never ask if they got anything for Christmas because I already knew the answer. Some of these kids were just glad to be in school. At school they could receive a free lunch and have access to a bathroom which they didn't have at home. This also meant they could wash their faces and their hands which was difficult at home especially in the winter months. While most of us didn't have much, what we did have seemed like a lot to those who had nothing.

This is where you need to stop and think. You stress about all you may not have but what do you have in comparison to those who have nothing? Do you have a place to sleep? Do you have a comfortable bed? Is your house or apartment warm and comfortable? Do you know you will have food to eat on Christmas day? Do you have a television to watch? Do you have a telephone? Do you have a few dollars in your pocket?

I'm very aware there are millions of Americans who are below the financial income poverty level. They have it tough. Our cities are filled with growing numbers of homeless populations. People are sleeping under bridges, overpasses and on riverbanks. Too many of these have met with unfortunate circumstances in life due to bad choices, addictions, unemployment, mental illness, and family issues. The list is never-ending. This doesn't make their lives any easier. Just because there is a reason for the problems doesn't make their burdens lighter or unnoticeable. Their reality is still harsh and painful.

Millions more immigrants are coming to America. Where will they sleep? Where will they work? Many of them will work for \$8 an hour and work hard but many of them will be homeless or stranded in homeless shelters on government dependence for a long time. Would any of us want to trade places with them? I don't think so.

Whatever darkness you are facing this Christmas is your reality. Seeing the hurts of others doesn't make your troubles go away. However, if you can be thankful for

the life you have, then maybe Christmas will take on a whole new light.

Look to the most special gift of all this Christmas – the baby in the manger. Shepherds raced to see the baby just as the angels said they would. Wise men came from the east and worshipped him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Mary and Joseph did the best they could as peasant parents of a new baby boy.

Keep the scripture of Isaiah 9:6 handy this Christmas. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

May His peace comfort your heart and be your light and strength through this season and every day to come.

*Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist – American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.*

# Massachusetts unemployment and job estimates for November

STAFF REPORT

The state's November total unemployment rate was 3.4 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point over-the-month, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development announced Friday.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' preliminary job estimates indicate Massachusetts gained 17,300 jobs in November. This follows last month's revised gain of 10,000 jobs. The largest over the month private sector job gains were in Leisure and Hospitality, Education and Health Services, and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities. Employment now stands at 3,710,600. Since the employment trough in April 2020, Massachusetts gained 677,100 jobs.

From November 2021 to November 2022, BLS estimates Massachusetts gained 144,200 jobs. The largest over the year gains occurred in Leisure and Hospitality, Education and Health Services, and Professional and Business Services.

The November unemployment rate of 3.4 percent was

three-tenths of a percentage point below the national rate of 3.7 percent reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The labor force decreased by an estimated 13,000 from 3,745,600 in October, with 7,300 fewer residents employed, and 5,800 fewer residents unemployed over-the-month.

Over-the-year, the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was down by 1.4 percentage points.

The state's labor force participation rate – the total number of residents 16 or older who worked or were unemployed and actively sought work in the last four weeks – dropped by 0.2 percentage point at 65.3 percent over-the-month. Compared to November 2021, the labor force participation rate was down three-tenths of a percentage point.

## November 2022 Employment Overview

Leisure and Hospitality gained 5,700 jobs over the month. Over the year, 29,100 were added.

Education and Health Services gained 3,700 jobs over the

month. Over the year, 28,400 were added.

Government gained 3,000 jobs over the month. Over the year, 13,000 were added.

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities gained 2,900 jobs over the month. Over the year, 18,300 were added.

Professional, Scientific, and Business Services gained 1,400 jobs over the month. Over the year, 28,400 were added.

Other Services gained 1,000 jobs over the month. Over the year, 1,200 were lost.

Information gained 500 jobs over the month. Over the year, 6,400 were added.

Construction gained 300 jobs over the month. Over the year, 10,900 were added.

Financial Activities lost 300 jobs over the month. Over the year, 4,800 were added.

Manufacturing lost 1,000 jobs over the month. Over the year, 6,100 were added.

## Labor Force Overview

The November estimates show 3,607,200 Massachusetts residents were employed and 125,300 were unemployed, for a total labor force of 3,732,600.

The unemployment rate at 3.4 percent was down 0.1 percentage point from the revised October rate of 3.5 percent. Over-the-month, the November labor force declined by 13,000 from 3,745,600 in October, as 7,300 fewer residents were employed, and 5,800 fewer residents were unemployed. The labor force participation rate, the share of working age population employed and

unemployed, decreased by two-tenths of a percentage point to 65.3 percent over-the-month. The labor force was down 22,100 from the November 2021 estimate of 3,754,700, with 31,700 more employed residents, and 53,900 fewer unemployed residents.

Detailed labor market information is available at [www.mass.gov/economicresearch](http://www.mass.gov/economicresearch).

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## LEGAL NOTICE

### Ellis Early Learning

Attention: Vended Meals Companies

The above institution is soliciting invitations for bids for vended meals to their Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) program site(s). The Vendor would provide meal services according to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations and guidelines as well as Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Food and Nutrition Programs policies and guidelines.

Vendors and/or their representatives may submit bids to:

Name of Institution: Ellis Early Learning Institution's mailing address: 58 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116

A bid packet will be available by email at [tammyhillery@ellisearlylearning.org](mailto:tammyhillery@ellisearlylearning.org) to all potential bidders by January 3, 2023.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Potential bidders should email questions to Tammy Hillery at [tammyhillery@ellisearlylearning.org](mailto:tammyhillery@ellisearlylearning.org) by Wednesday, January 11, 2023. The institution will email its response to these questions by Friday, January 13, 2023. All questions will be answered in writing only and sent to everyone by Monday, January 16, 2023.

All bids must be submitted no later than [12:00 PM] on [Wednesday, January 18, 2023].

All bids are subject to review by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Food and Nutrition Programs, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148.

The public bid opening will be at (3:00 PM, Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 58 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA).

## Fresh & Local

Continued from page 15

to sit and enjoy over a long evening as we savor a great wine. Shopping for our celebration is half the fun. We visit our favorite area food and wine shops and wish them success in the new year.

While you enjoy your once-a-year holiday traditions, consider spreading the pleasure over the year by treating yourself to some of your favorite aspects of this season throughout the months ahead.

For example, on New Year's Eve 2007, we made a Sparkling Resolution that we have faithfully kept. We resolved to drink more sparkling wine and toast the first of every month with a glass of bubbles. We might give thanks for something nice that happened in the past month or raise a glass to an event or goal for the upcoming weeks. If you don't drink wine, you can enjoy

a glass of any special beverage. The point is to treat yourself to small celebrations of food and drink that lift your spirits.

*Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Send an email to [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.*

The opinions expressed on these pages are not necessarily those of this newspaper.

# Jamaica Plain GAZETTE

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