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BIKE FOR KIDS



PHOTO BY SETH DANIEL

Noelly Kraus does her best pedaling around the track at English High School last Saturday, June 5, during the second annual Bike for Kids event. Some 25 selected kids from the neighborhood were treated to bike riding lessons, bike safety courses and brand new bikes as part of the day of fun. The effort is a collaboration between the KIT Cycling Club of Arlington, the Boston Police Community Service Officers, and HOPE Worldwide of the Boston Church of Christ. See Pages 6 and 7 for more photos.

E-13 police present crime stats at monthly community meeting

BY LAURA PLUMMER

On Thursday, June 3, District E-13 police officers presented its monthly virtual police and community relations meeting. The meeting is an opportunity for members of the public to ask

questions of local law enforcement.

At every meeting, officers provide local crime statistics. One chart examines Part One crime data. Part One crimes are more serious in nature, and don't include crimes such as vandalism

or drug dealing.

Part One crime distinguishes between burglary, robbery and larceny. Burglary involves accessing a residence or business unlawfully with the intent to

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La policía de E-13 presenta estadísticas de delitos

BY LAURA PLUMMER

El jueves 3 de junio, los oficiales de policía del Distrito E-13 presentaron su reunión virtual mensual de relaciones policia-

les y comunitarias. La reunión es una oportunidad para que el público haga preguntas a las autoridades locales.

En cada reunión, los oficiales brindan estadísticas de delitos

locales. Un cuadro examina los datos delictivos de la primera parte. Los delitos de la primera parte son de naturaleza más

Continued on page 10

JPA discusses zoning issues; swimming in Jamaica Pond

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Jamaica Pond Association met virtually on June 7, where members discussed two zoning matters as well as a petition to allow swimming in Jamaica Pond.

ZONING

The first zoning matter was at 757 Centre St. for a renovation to the existing Dunkin' location, including the change in zoning from "restaurant" to "restaurant with takeout," as well as the installation of a walk-up pickup window and the removal of restrooms for customer use.

Attorney David Krumsiek presented the proposal on behalf of

the owner, Chris DaCosta, who is part of the family who has owned the location for years.

Krumsiek explained that this store was eligible for a renovation last year, as it had gotten outdated. After several issues with the construction permits, the pandemic hit and it was decided that shifting to a takeout only option would be beneficial to the store, which has previously offered tables and chairs for patrons to sit and enjoy their food and drink.

The restaurant is now seeking a conditional use permit to operate as a restaurant with takeout,

Continued on page 2

Local bands reflect on pandemic; perform shows at Midway Cafe

BY LAUREN BENNETT

In an effort to return to a sort of normalcy, JP-based band Alex and the People, along with another band called Wildcat Slim, held an in-person concert at Midway Cafe on June 5.

"It was super crazy," said Alex Alvanos, leader of the band Alex and the People. "The show nearly sold out. The crowd was dancing and singing along and shaking off the Covid webs together."

The Gazette spoke with both Alvanos and Isaac Maupin of Wildcat Slim to learn more about what the bands have been up to and what they're looking forward to as things begin to open back up.

Maupin, who also plays in Alex and the People, used to live in JP but now lives in New York, said that Wildcat Slim is preparing to record their second album in July.

"We've been kind of cloistered," he said of the group and what they've been doing during the

pandemic.

Alvanos said that he's "been working on three different projects during quarantine." He said that his grandfather died at the beginning of the pandemic, so he was able to "hold some space for grief" and express it through his music. He also said he was able to talk with his father during the quarantine period of the pandemic to learn more about his family past and history. "Both trauma and joy show up in that," he said, which led to the creation of what he called a "video album."

Alvanos received a grant from the city to show the video album, titled "Yia Yia and Papa," the Greek words for grandmother and grandfather.

"COVID was weird, man," he said. "We had some shows lined up with friends," and when his album was released last April, he had more than 200 cassette tapes made.

Continued on page 5

State launches the “Let’s Go Out” campaign to support local restaurants

STAFF REPORT

Last week, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the launch of the “Let’s Go Out” campaign, an effort to raise public awareness of the importance of supporting local restaurants across the Commonwealth.

The campaign is being led by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT) in conjunction with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and industry partners. The launch of the \$1.9 million campaign is timed to coincide with the lifting of public health restrictions in Massachusetts and is scheduled to run throughout the summer, through September.

The mission of the campaign is to amplify the importance of restaurants as an integral part of daily life and a key driver of economic activity for the Commonwealth’s downtowns and

main streets. “Let’s Go Out” is an extension of the Administration’s “My Local MA” campaign that has been encouraging residents to shop, dine and stay local since last August.

“Our administration recognizes that the challenges created by the pandemic have made the last year tremendously difficult for the entire small business community, and especially for the restaurant industry,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “We have been proud to provide more than \$688 million in grants to help restaurants and other hard-hit small businesses navigate these challenges, and look forward to building on that support through the ‘Let’s Go Out’ campaign to ensure a strong recovery for restaurants across the Commonwealth.”

Campaign ads will capture the meaningful moments that play out in restaurants, such as celebrating special occasions, recon-

necting with friends, spending time with loved ones, or meeting someone new. Following the economic impact of COVID-19 on restaurants and the transition of many customers to delivery and takeout alone, this summer presents an opportunity for consumers to get out and reengage with friends and family, around the food they love in an atmosphere that invites emotional connections.

“As our restaurants reopen to capacity, it’s an exciting time for them to welcome back customers,” said MOTT Executive Director Keiko Matsudo Orrall. “The aim of the ‘Let’s Go Out’ campaign is to showcase the amazing diversity of restaurants we have across the state and encourage a return to in-person dining to support these businesses that are so critical to our economy. While there may be some changes at the restaurants, like new floor plans or contactless

payment systems, the unparalleled experience of in-restaurant dining is essential to connection and community.”

The campaign, which will run through September 2021, will feature statewide coverage including display ads, digital billboards, posters, and radio spots, as well as billboards at Fenway Park. Additional billboards and display ads will be featured on highways and at Logan Airport, in partnership with MassDOT and Massport. A TV spot will also air on broadcast TV, including on NESN during Red Sox games in late summer. The campaign’s landing page, VisitMA.com/LetsGoOut, features campaign information and a growing restaurant directory.

The “Let’s Go Out” campaign was developed in close collaboration with key industry stakeholders that offered their expertise and support, including the Massachusetts Restaurant Associa-

tion, Mass Restaurants United, and members of the Restaurant Promotion Commission.

“Over the last year, restaurant owners and their staffs have shown great resilience and creativity as they invented new ways to engage with customers while dealing with important but difficult safety restrictions. The fact is, however, that in-person dining is critical to the health of the restaurant industry. With the ‘Let’s Go Out’ campaign, Massachusetts is making it clear that they support restaurants, and are taking the issue seriously. The Massachusetts Restaurant Association is proud to be a part of this statewide effort,” said Massachusetts Restaurant Association President and CEO Bob Luz.

For information, go to VisitMA.com/LetsGoOut.

JPA

Continued from page 1

and adding the takeout window also triggered a zoning violation, Krumsiek added.

DaCosta added that there will be no changes made to the building footprint, and the window will be strictly for walk-up only—no drive through will be allowed. Additionally, the window is just for picking up a mobile order that has been placed ahead of time; customers are not allowed to place orders at this window.

All of the parking will be kept, and the plans to have the store be takeout only will be permanent.

“The app is the future,” DaCosta said. “It’s getting people in and out.”

JPA member Franklyn Salimbene said “I can’t help but think

the loss of seating inside the establishment is a bit of a loss to the community,” as he said he knows some folks who liked to sit inside the store and enjoy their morning cup of coffee.

Alexander Wood, a resident who lives right near the store, said he is supportive of this proposal but brought up a complaint about the new LED lights that illuminate the store. He said that they are shining into his and his neighbors’ apartments.

He said he has been trying to get in touch with DaCosta or his father-in-law for the past year regarding this issue, but has been unsuccessful.

He said that the LED lights “emit harsh light on Centre St.,” adding that is is a “really obnoxious bright light.” He suggested that either the light be turned off at an appropriate time, or a light guard be installed so that the neighbors don’t have to see it.

DaCosta said that “at the very least,” the light can be shut off once the store closes. He said that before the pandemic, it used to close at 10pm, but it has now been closing around 7pm.

He added that the LED lights are new for them as well, and he will look into a solution.

“I don’t want to be a bad neighbor for you guys,” he said.

“Light pollution is becoming more of an issue throughout the city and the country,” said JPA member Michael Reiskind, adding that some LED lights can be dimmed.

Wood seemed satisfied with DaCosta’s willingness to work with the neighbors on this issue, but the JPA decided they wanted to postpone a vote on the actual proposal until this issue is resolved.

“We will pick this up at the meeting in July,” Zoning Chair Kevin Moloney said, where the JPA expects to hear a solution that pleases both parties.

The other zoning matter was at 80 Prince St. where a couple proposed to renovate their basement to create more living space for their family, including an

office space, a TV area, a living room area, and a workout area.

Henry Spitzer and his wife Marley were at the meeting to talk about the proposal and answer any questions from the board.

Spitzer said that no exterior changes will be made to the basement, but there is a variance needed for Floor Area Ratio. The existing bathroom in the basement will be kept as a half bath, but the finishes will be upgraded.

This proposal was not controversial, and there were no issues or concerns from the JPA as this family is just looking to increase their living space.

The JPA voted to not oppose the proposal.

ZONING INFORMATION FOR JPA WEBSITE

The JPA also discussed draft documents for an FAQ and a flow chart that would be available on the JPA website to help applicants for zoning matters better understand the city process. There will be further discussion on this matter and edits made to both documents before they are made accessible to the public.

SWIMMING IN JAMAICA POND

The JPA also discussed a petition at swimjp.org that calls for the allowance of swimming in Jamaica Pond. The website also provides articles about swimming in the pond, as well as photos of the pond and water

quality information.

“I don’t think it’s going anywhere in the near future,” JPA Chair Rosemary Jones said of the idea.

The JPA was mixed on the petition, with some members adamantly against the idea, and others felt it should be a possibility.

JPA member Kevin Moloney said he grew up near the pond and said that “only rogue swimmers swam in the pond,” despite the fact that many articles outlined the fact that the pond had been regularly used for recreational swimming.

“This would be a terrible thing to happen,” he said.

“I don’t think it’s a particularly good idea,” JPA member Michael Frank said. “I also don’t think it’s within the realm of possibility,” he added, saying that he does not believe the City would want to be held liable for swimming in the pond.

Michael Reiskind said that this issue had also come up in 2008, and the JPA was in opposition to it then. He also said that Massachusetts “has a statute for Great Ponds” for ponds that are 10 acres or larger.

Reiskind said that Jamaica Pond is Boston’s only Great Pond, and it might have some effect on how the pond can be used, but he had not confirmed that.

The JPA might revisit this issue if it proceeds further.

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Boston Black Hospitality Coalition hosts Black Restaurant Month

BY JOHN LYNDIS

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted black communities at a disproportionate rate. During this devastating public health crisis, Black business owners were forced to grapple with an economic crisis that disrupted their livelihoods and significantly undermined the financial security of the most vulnerable community members.

A recent H&R Block survey of small businesses found that 53% of Black business owners saw their revenue drop by half, com-

pared to 37% of White owners, since the pandemic started.

“Black-owned businesses play such an important role in improving local economies and uplifting communities everywhere,” H&R Block Vice President of Small Business Ian Hardman said in a statement. “Clearly there’s a grave need to support small business owners, especially those hit hardest by the pandemic.”

It’s no secret that the restaurant industry in Jamaica Plain was one of the most heavily impacted industries during the pandemic with many owners forced

to cut staff, reduce capacity and, in many cases, close indoor dining for long periods.

In order to start boosting a return to Black-owned small businesses the Boston Black Hospitality Coalition, founded by Nia Grace and Royal C. Smith, who owns District 7 Tavern in Roxbury, launched Boston Black Restaurant Month in honor of the Juneteenth Holiday.

The Juneteenth Holiday commemorates the ending of slavery in the U. S. and is celebrated each year on June 19. The holiday gives the community at large a chance to learn about the positive contributions African Americans have made to society and the Coalition’s event hopes to bring more people back to Black-owned restaurants throughout Boston.

Throughout the month of June Bostonians can celebrate food, culture, and community with Boston’s Black-owned restaurants.

“Discover the traditional flavors that proudly showcase a rich and resourceful heritage,” the Coalition said in a statement. “Experience the hospitality of over 70 eateries and cocktail bars while enjoying a variety of specials, promotions, and events throughout the month of June. Treat your taste buds and share in our history by planning a visit today.”

In Jamaica Plain restaurants featured throughout the month of June are Blue Nile Restaurant at 389 Centre St. and Jamaica Mi Hungry at 225 Centre St.

Blue Nile is a cozy restaurant that serves up delicious authentic Ethiopian cuisine that has made

the Boston Magazine’s “Best of Boston” several times.

Jamaica Mi Hungry started off as a widely popular Boston food truck and recently opened its first brick and mortar location here in Jamaica Plain on Centre Street. The restaurant serves up Jamaican gems like jerk chicken are a must try here. The owners used their food truck to deliver food and supplies to residents during the pandemic.

You can check out the full dining guide of Black-owned restaurants across Boston at Boston-BlackRestaurants.com.

“Our businesses play a critical role in community and economic development,” said the Coalition. “Highlighting this we seek to ensure a prolonged future for our black-owned institutions.”

Wenham Street Cinema back in action

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Looking for a place to meet new neighbors, share some snacks, and enjoy films and concerts? The Wenham Street Cinema, a community gathering place for screenings and concerts in JP resident Matt Shuman’s garage, is back in full swing as all COVID restrictions are now lifted in the city.

The Gazette spoke with Shuman to learn more about recent programming at the Wenham Street Cinema, and what’s coming up for this summer.

The cinema’s season began in April with the screening of “Judas and the Black Messiah,” where attendees were limited to 15 and masks were required, according to the Wenham Street Cinema Instagram.

Shuman said that in early May, a screening of the Oscar nominated animated short films was held, where seating was also limited due to COVID restrictions.

Now that restrictions have been lifted, more events can happen and more people can attend. “We’ve doing a bunch more events and it’s been great,” Shuman said.

On June 5, the cinema showed “Paris is Burning” in honor of pride month. The documentary takes a look at 1980s ball culture in New York City. Other previous films include Alfred Hitchcock’s “Psycho” and “The Third Man.”

Shuman sad he’s “trying to get a good mix; a decent mix.”

This coming Sunday, June 13, the cinema will be showing the musical “Best Summer Ever,” where writer and producer Andrew Pilkington will attend, and on June 17, the HBO documentary “Crime of Century” about the opioid crisis will be screened. Jordy Lacks, an addiction medicine specialist at Boston Medical Center, will speak before the screening. Both shows start at 7:15pm.

All events are always free and open to everyone, Shuman said,

but he does ask that people bring their own chairs and some food and drink to share.

“It’s just been super, super fun to have people back together,” adding that it’s been “so insanely positive.”

The Wenham Street Cinema was also recently featured in WBUR’s “A 2021 Guide to New England’s Summer Drive-Ins and Outdoor Movie Pop-Ups” roundup.

Additionally, Shuman said that Chris Anotonowich, who owns Light of Day Records inside of Monumental Market on Centre St., said he wanted to hold some concerts this summer but didn’t have a large enough space to do so. Shuman offered his garage space for concerts, so four have been planned, one each in June, July, August, and September.

Shuman said he worked with the city to allow the entire street to be shut down for the concerts, which will be free to attend but the Venmo handles of the artists will be provided if people would like to make donations. A \$10 donation is suggested if attending a concert.

“That’s going to be some serious fun and really, really cool,” Shuman said.

The first concert will be on June 26 and will feature Will Dailey—who’s signed to CBS Records—doing two sets. The July 17th concert will feature Aaron Bear + Jade Madrone, and the August 28th show will feature the Foundation Movement and DJ Al Watkins and will also serve as a fundraiser for District 6 City Council candidate Kendra Hicks. The September 25 show will feature Genie Santiago and S6 Sol.

All show will be from 4-7pm, with the live music beginning at 5pm.

For more information about Wenham Street Cinema and all upcoming events, follow Shuman on Instagram @wenhamstreetcinema, or follow the cinema on Facebook.

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Two School Committee members resign after racially charged texts come to light

By SETH DANIEL

Two Boston School Committee members, including Chair Alexandra Oliver-Davila, have resigned this week suddenly amidst the unexpected release of text messages that were disparaging to white people – particularly to white parents from West Roxbury.

Chair Oliver-Davila resigned on Tuesday, and Member Lorna Rivera – a professor at UMAss-Boston – resigned on June 4. The disparaging text messages were part of a group of messages that were exchanged between members of the Committee during a marathon October 2020 meeting where the Committee voted in a temporary process for admission to the City’s three Exam Schools. It was a highly charged and controversial meeting, one where comments derogatory to Asian people were made in a “hot mic” moment by former Chair Michael Loconto. Those comments forced him to have to resign then, and other text messages were revealed also. However, the texts about “Westie Whites” between Oliver-Davila and Rivera weren’t included in that batch, but seemingly were

withheld by the City – something that is still being debated. When they were finally released on Sunday, it was a new revelation from a contentious meeting whose repercussions seemingly have no end.

Acting Mayor Kim Janey said she respected the decision of them to resign, but indicated it left a void of Latina leadership on the Committee.

“I respect and support the decisions of Alexandra Oliver-Davila and Dr. Lorna Rivera to resign as members of the Boston School Committee,” she said. “Ms. Oliver-Davila and Dr. Rivera have been dedicated stewards of the committee and passionate advocates for Boston families. Their private remarks, which were recently made public, were unfortunate and unfairly disparaged members of the Boston Public Schools community. As women of color who advocate for racial equity in our schools, I also understand their comments were made in the wake of death threats and unacceptable racist attacks that were frightening, offensive, and painful. As their time on the school committee ends, their work to lift up equity in Boston Public Schools must

continue.

“The shared experience of Ms. Oliver-Davila and Dr. Rivera, and their decision to step down, amplifies the need for meaningful dialog and important work we must do as a city to address racism,” she continued. “Sadly, their departure also leaves a void in Latina leadership on our school committee that I am determined to address.”

Supt. Brenda Cassellius said the situation will require accountability and community.

“The challenges BPS face will require both district accountability and community healing,” she said. “I will work alongside the School Committee to continue our work with our stakeholders as we dismantle systemic barriers to opportunity and open up access for all students. Creating a safe, welcoming, and culturally affirming environment for all students is a core value that we seek to live out every day.

The information shared...is disappointing and hurtful to the Boston Public Schools community, and to our larger efforts to combat racism in all forms,” she continued. “This is especially true after a year of racial reckoning and personal reflection

unlike any other.”

The departure of both came in a flurry, starting with Rivera on June 3, when she send an e-mail to City officials saying she needed to resign due to racist attacks on her that have continued since February. She said she has received racist e-mails and social media contacts from those that disagree with her position on the Exam Schools vote, and she said white supremacists are coordinating efforts to oppose programs like Ethnic Studies, diversity and inclusion activities.

“I am being targeted as a Latina gender studies professor who teaches about racism and patriarchy and oppression,” read the June 3 e-mail provided by the City. “Because of the harassment and overwhelming stress from School Committee-related work, my mental and physical health has deteriorated, so I need to resign and recuperate.”

It was a few days later that her texts to Oliver-Davila were revealed in the Boston Globe, particularly the one about disliking “Westie Whites” as they were released to that newspaper over the weekend.

Oliver-Davila released a statement through the Mayor’s Office earlier this week, after officially resigning on Tuesday. She said the meeting last October transported her back to when she was an immigrant youth, who was not worthy. She said the testimony on that night about the Exam School process pushed her over the edge to do something she now regrets.

“It was painful,” she wrote. “And in the heat of the moment it caused me to vent by sending

inappropriate personal text messages to one of my colleagues,” she wrote. “I regrettably allowed myself to do what others have done to me. I failed my own standards in this private exchange. These messages matched the sharpness of what was being delivered via public testimony that night.”

She said she has also been subject to constant racial undertones and personal attacks at School Committee meetings and in regular e-mails received by herself and other members. However, she said she did not want her actions to distract the Committee from its important work, and thus decided to step down.

Oliver-Davila is the long-time director of the Sociedad Latina program in Mission Hill, and became the chair in January.

At the moment, Vice Chair Michael O’Neill confirmed that he would assume the role of chair for the time being. At the next meeting, he said, he would convene the assembly of remaining members and the first order of business would be to select a new chair.

The meeting this week had been cancelled in the wake of the scandal, and the next meeting has not yet been called.

In the Exam School admissions change for the incoming class, the entrance exam was waived and a new seating formula was used based on zip code and grade point average. In that formula, Jamaica Plain did lose some seats from what it historically has received, but West Roxbury lost the most seats by the numbers.



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Alvanos, on the other hand, said that “I write like five songs a week and I throw most of them out.” He continued, “music and songwriting is an outlet for me,” and a way for him to be “able to process and make sense of the world.”

Alex and the People has a “70s meets 90s kind of dancy rock,” Alvanos said, but a lot of the work he’s been doing lately is “much more Greek folk,” and “some of it’s a little bit more like modern Indie folk.”

The show at the Midway was a breath of fresh air for both of the bands and their fans alike. Alvanos said that when the show was first booked, the intention was for it to just be a streaming show “with a very small in-person audience.”

Now that the COVID restrictions have been lifted, more people were able to attend the in-person show.

“I’ve played the Midway so many times,” Maupin said, adding that since he is no longer a JP resident, it is “sort of a homecoming” for him to play there again.

He said he had hoped it would “be a kind of breath of normalcy to people who liked going to see live music. For me, it’s very exciting and very comforting to have this happen again. I hope that is the experience of everyone.”



ibby rzegocki-scott photo

Alex and the People performing at the Midway Cafe on June 5 to a nearly sold-out crowd.

“I’ve just been leaving them in tiny libraries in Boston,” he said. Alvanos said that the album has been well received, but it was a challenge to promote it during the pandemic. He said that he and the other members tried to figure out how to play shows virtually so they could still share their music with others.

Maupin said that Wildcat Slim’s first album was released in 2016, and a couple of singles were released during the quarantine period that may make it onto the new record this year.

When it comes to the pandemic and writing new songs, Maupin and Alvanos had different viewpoints on the experience.

“I don’t write a lot of songs,” he said, but he said that “not having anywhere” to test his new songs during the pandemic discouraged him from doing much writing. He said that “having consistent rehearsal” is really what helps him with his songwriting.

Maupin described Wildcat Slim’s sound as “eclectic bar rock. We play in a diverse array of types within...[the] genre of rock music.”

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Bikes for Kids event on the track at English High School

PHOTOS BY SETH DANIEL

The 2nd annual Bikes for Kids event took place on Saturday, June 5, on the track at English High School in Jamaica Plain. The effort is a collaboration between the Keep It Tight (KIT) Cycle Club of Arlington, the Boston Police Community Service Officers, and HOPE Worldwide of the Boston Church of Christ. The first event came as a response to COVID-19 last fall, with the partnership putting together the event quickly to try to help kids learn to ride a bike, learn bike safety and to receive a new bike as well. This year, they got things moving quicker and held the sec-

ond event earlier in the summer so that kid would have more of a chance to ride their bikes and practice their new skills.

The event took varying skill levels, from those that could ride really well to those that had never touched a pedal before. A select group of 25 kids from around the neighborhood were treated to bike riding lessons, how to ride safely in parks and streets, and then were gifted a brand new bike courtesy of sponsor Landry's Cycles of Commonwealth Avenue.

KIT member Richard Hislop said this year they focused a lot

on how to ride safely, as many kids can ride a bike, but not as many know the proper safety procedures for the road.

"We did this in September last year, and this year we rallied and wanted to do it earlier so the kids would have more time with their bikes in the favorable weather," he said. "We have varying skill levels here today, but this year we really focus on bike safety. That's our key this year. Riding is one thing, but riding safely is another, and it needs to be taught to everyone...Last year we had 19 kids and this year we had 25. We want to continue to build this program and maybe expand it next year to make it larger or add a second location.

"We really see it as a unifying event with families in the community with HOPE Worldwide, the Boston Police and volunteers from KIT," he continued.



KIT volunteer Chad Mikkelson shows Austin Channer how to shift gears on his new bike, while his mother, Kafui Tsaka looks on.



Caregiver Solutions

with Meg Hogan, CEO of Boston Senior Home Care

When people hear the term "foster care," they typically think of the child foster care system. Adult Foster Care programs are quite different. Funded by MassHealth, Adult Foster Care supports a family member or friend* who is helping with activities of daily living, such as dressing, bathing, and meal preparation for older adults or people with disabilities in their own home.

By living with their caregivers, Adult Foster Care recipients benefit from personalized care, the ability to participate in family activities, and they can continue their familiar routines. It is especially beneficial to those with a disability or chronic health condition. In return, caregivers receive a monthly stipend to help with the financial responsibility of providing full-time care. Adult Foster Care is an innovative program and a win-win for caregivers, older adults, and people with disabilities in Massachusetts.

Boston Senior Home Care's Adult Foster Care Program is designed to support care recipients' unique needs, and to honor and value their desire to remain at home and in the community. Our experienced team of case managers partner with caregivers, providing a customized care plan along with training, support, and assistance. We know caregiving. You can depend on us.

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*Spouse or legal guardian not eligible.



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Richard Hislop, of KIT and HOPE Worldwide; Art Trapotsis of KIT; and Stephen Hislop of HOPE Worldwide.




Micaela Lewis has the handlebars of her new bike adjusted by KIT volunteer Chad Mikkelson.


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Julian Berroa learned to ride his new bike from KIT volunteer Pritesh Gandhi on Saturday.



Peyton Stallworth was happy to ride her new bike on Saturday, as her grandmother Sandra Glasper and KIT volunteer Art Trapotsis look on.



Jonathan Hislop, of HOPE Worldwide, helped the kids stretch and warm up before participating in riding stations.



Jacquelyn Marzeotti, Matt Marzeotti, Lilian Hislop and Elba Huertas, all of HOPE Worldwide, staffed the water station on Saturday – which was a critical stop on what was a scorching hot day.



HOPE Worldwide volunteer Juan Huertas helped gets kids to the appropriate learning stations.



Mikayla Roc and KIT volunteer Dan Butler.




Norrick Peart of HOPE Worldwide, Segovia Lucas of HOPE Worldwide, Amanda Hislop of HOPE Worldwide, and Evy Yeh of KIT.




Participant Reshaude Goodwyn with Police Officer Lylana Jones-Henderson.


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First Communion took place on Saturday, June 5, at St. Thomas Aquinas Church with Rev. Carlos Flor presiding and a good group of young people.



First Communion took place at Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Saturday, May 29, with Fr. Andrea Povero presiding over the group of boys and girls.

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ZBA approves cannabis store at 1589 Columbus Ave.

By Lauren Bennett

The Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) on June 8 approved the cannabis store proposed for 1589 Columbus Ave., as well as 12 units of housing and 31 parking spaces on Rock Hill Road.

1589 COLUMBUS AVE.

Attorney Marc LaCasse spoke on behalf of KG Collective, who is proposing the shop. He said that this application was approved by the ZBA at the April 27 hearing, but it has to be re-heard because there was a mix-up with the notification process for the hearing.

"Nothing has changed with respect to the proposal as presented to the board on April 27," LaCasse said. The project requires zoning relief because the Cannabis Establishment Use is conditional in Boston.

Lindsey Santana from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services said that the mayor's office was in support, as two community meetings were held in November and December of last year, and the project proponents

have "worked with multiple community groups" on concerns related to parking and traffic.

She said that the mayor's office feels "that the applicant has worked with the city and the community to address these concerns."

City Councilor Matt O'Malley was "strongly on record in support" of this project, and the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council had also expressed support.

The ZBA voted to approve the proposal with Boston Planning and Development Agency design review, and also that the approval is for this applicant only.

12 AND 29 ROCK HILL ROAD

The proposal at 12 Rock Hill road is to combine three lots and build a building for 12 residential units "with 19 parking spaces within the building itself," with additional ancillary parking at 29 Rock Hill Road, according to attorney Derric Small, for a total of 31 parking spaces.

"The site is remarkable because we have an approximate

42 foot change in elevation from Rock Hill Road to the rear of the site," said architect Ed Forte. There is a rock ledge going through the site from east to west, and the "abutting properties on Cranston St. to the north are sitting at about 40 feet higher than Rock Hill Road," he added.

There now is a mix of two and three bedroom units, and the unit count has been lowered from 15 to 12, Small said, as a result of comments made by the ZBA last time this project was before the board. The original proposal did not include any three bedrooms.

Additionally, there are two affordable units proposed, and the roof decks have been removed from the original proposal at the request of neighbors, Small said.

"This has been a culmination of a three year process with the community," he said. "We have reduced the number of units several times as a result of those community meetings."

There are 12 ancillary park-

ing spots proposed to be located at 29 Rock Hill Road, two of which are tandem spaces.

The team also discussed some of the violations, which include Floor Area Ratio (FAR), height, and setbacks. Small said that the FAR requirement is .6, and the proposed FAR is 1.8. The ancillary parking is also a conditional use, and the proposed height is one foot over the required height of 35 feet. Additionally, three stories are allowed but four are proposed.

Lindsey Santana from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services said that an abutters meeting was held in July of last year, and "the applicant has had an extensive community process for the past three years. They have met with multiple neighbors and have modified the plans to address concerns. Most of these concerns have been regarding parking and density. We understand that the project has been controversial but believe that the applicant has worked with the community to address

these concerns," she said.

The mayor's office was in support of the project, as was the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council and City Councilor Matt O'Malley.

Several neighbors on Paul Gore St, spoke in opposition of the project, saying that they do not feel the community process was adequate, and some were concerned with things like congestion and how this proposal will affect the neighborhood.

Dale Mitchell, also a Paul Gore St. resident, said that he and his husband are "immediate abutters," and "we are strong supporters of this development. We feel it will add, not detract, from the neighborhood." He said that this housing development is much preferred on the site to the existing vacant garages.

The ZBA ultimately voted to approve the project with Boston Planning and Development Agency design review, as well as screening and buffering for the ancillary parking.

Police

Continued from page 1

remove items. Robbery is taking items off one's person by force or intimidation. Larceny doesn't involve force, and includes shoplifting, pickpocketing, stealing lawn items or taking items out of a vehicle.

According to the summary, Part One crime in Boston is down 20 percent in the city compared to this time last year. Jamaica Plain is beating that with a reduction of 29 percent. There were 342 crimes reported in 2020 and only 242 reported this year.

Significantly, most crimes have seen a decrease, including homicide, rape, robbery, assault, commercial burglary, larceny from a motor vehicle and other larceny. Only residential burglary and auto theft saw an increase over this time last year.

A second chart compared the statistics of fatal and nonfatal shootings from 2019 to 2020. Out of the twelve precincts, JP ranked sixth in shootings (along with the South End), accounting for 4.5 percent of total shootings in the city. There have been three shootings this year compared to ten last year, a reduction of 70 percent, beating the citywide reduction of almost 10 percent.

The June 3 meeting was the first not hosted by Officer William Jones, who retired last month. Taking over for him at the police and community relations meeting will be Sgt. John Dougherty and Officer Patricia Darosa.

The police and community relations meeting is held on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30pm on Zoom. The next meeting will be on Thursday, July 1. All members of the public interested in public safety are encouraged to attend.

La policía

Continued from page 1

grave y no incluyen delitos como el vandalismo o el tráfico de drogas.

El crimen de la primera parte distingue entre el atraco, el robo y el hurto. El robo implica acceder ilegalmente a una residencia o negocio con la intención de retirar artículos. El atraco es quitarle objetos a la persona por la fuerza o intimidación. El hurto no implica la fuerza e incluye tomar objetos de un vehículo, una tienda o un patio.

Según el resumen, el crimen de la primera parte en Boston ha bajado un 20 por ciento en la ciudad en comparación con esta

época del año pasado. Jamaica Plain está superando esa tasa con una reducción del 29 por ciento. Se informaron 342 delitos en 2020 y solo 242 este año.

Es significativo que la mayoría de los delitos hayan disminuido, incluidos el homicidio, la violación, el atraco, el asalto, el robo comercial, el hurto de un vehículo motorizado y otros hurtos. Solo el robo residencial y el robo de automóviles experimentaron un aumento durante este período el año pasado.

Otro gráfico comparó las estadísticas de tiroteos fatales y no fatales de 2019 a 2020. De los doce recintos, JP ocupó el sexto lugar en tiroteos (junto con South End), lo que representa el 4,5 por ciento del total de tiroteos en la

ciudad. Han habido tres disparos este año en comparación a diez el año pasado, una reducción del 70 por ciento, superando la reducción de la ciudad de casi el 10 por ciento.

La reunión del 3 de junio fue la primera que no fue presentada por el oficial William Jones, quien se retiró el mes pasado. En su lugar estarán el Sargento John Dougherty y la Oficial Patricia Darosa.

La reunión de relaciones policiales y comunitarias se lleva a cabo el primer jueves del mes a las 6:30 pm en Zoom. La próxima reunión será el jueves primero de julio. Se anima a asistir a todos los miembros del público interesados en la seguridad pública.

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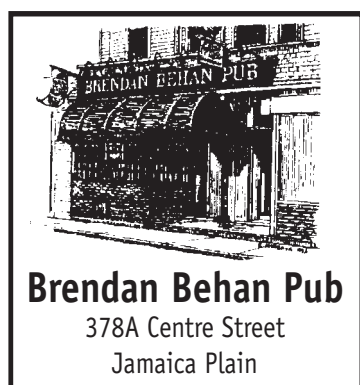
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Janey announces termination of BPD Commissioner Dennis White

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Acting Mayor Kim Janey held a press conference on June 7, where she announced the immediate termination of Dennis White as commissioner of the Boston Police Department (BPD).

“I reached this decision after carefully considering the results of an independent investigation into multiple allegations of domestic violence against Dennis White, along with testimony and information he provided during the hearing on June 1.”

Domestic violence allegations against White were brought to light after his swearing in on February 1. On February 3, Mayor Marty Walsh placed White on administrative leave while an independent investigation was conducted.

Janey said that “Dennis

White has repeatedly asserted that the domestic violence allegations against him are false, but he stated in his hearing and during the investigation that he has hit and pushed members of his household. The allegations and evidence of this behavior raised serious questions about his fitness to run the Boston Police Department, and Dennis White’s actions in recent weeks have done even more to erode public trust in his judgement and ability to lead.”

Janey added that “instead of expressing understanding, regret, growth, or contrition regarding his admitted actions about domestic violence, Dennis White instead has continued to campaign to vilify his former wife.”

She added that White “describes his circumstances as part of a pattern of falsely ac-

cused Black men.” The disparate treatment of Black people in our country is a genuine concern, but let’s be clear: racism is a burden carried by both men and women of color and I will not turn a blind eye to domestic violence against black women or any woman for that matter in the Boston Police Department or anywhere else.”

Janey also said that White refused to “fully cooperate” with the investigation, and that he was a “reoccurring presence” at BPD headquarters while he was on leave.

“As commissioner, he failed to lead by example,” Janey said.

She continued, “as mayor I am committed to leading positive change and systemic reforms to bring overdue transparency and accountability to policing in Boston. The time has come for us to turn away from the mistakes of the past and move toward a more

just and equitable Boston.

I am implementing several measures to reimagine the future of policing in our city and set the stage for a national search for a permanent commissioner to be named toward the end of the year.”

Janey talked about fully implementing the recommendations of the Boston Police Reform Task Force, as well as the Office of Police Accountability and Transparency (OPAT), which she said is currently actively investigating complaints.

Janey also said a mental health response pilot has been created with the city’s office of Health and Human Services as well as the BPD.

“In the coming weeks, I will name a committee of community residents, public safety advocates, and law enforcement professionals who will lead a

community engagement process to define what Boston residents seek from leadership within our police force,” Janey said.

Additionally, Janey announced that moving forward, “all candidates for BPD leadership” will be “subject to vetting and background checks.” She also said that the city will help to “strengthen” the BPD’s policy for domestic violence, as the existing policy is more than 15 years old.

“For the first time, we will propose a sexual assault policy to govern our police force,” Janey said. “The BPD will require steady leadership as we move forward.”

Janey also expressed her gratitude for Chief Greg Long, who has been acting as both the Chief of Police and the Acting Commissioner.

JP’s weekly test rate drops under a half percent

BY JOHN LYNDS

Jamaica Plain’s weekly COVID-19 positive test rate dropped under a half percent according to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) last Friday.

According to the latest data 1,143 Jamaica Plain residents were tested last week and 0.2 percent were found to be COVID positive-- a 60 percent decrease from the 0.5 percent reported by the BPHC on May 21.

Of the 38,003 Jamaica Plain residents tested for COVID since the pandemic began, 7.8 percent overall were found to be positive--this was a 1.6 percentage decrease from the 7.9 reported by the BPHC on May 21.

Citywide, the weekly positive test rate continues to decrease. According to the BPHC 13,064 residents were tested and 1 percent were COVID positive--this was a 9 percent decrease from the 1 percent positive test rate reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

According to the BPHC data, Jamaica Plain’s infection rate increased 0.2 percent since May 21.

Jamaica Plain went from 730.6 cases per 10,000 residents to 732.1 cases per 10,000 residents.

An additional six Jamaica Plain residents became infected with COVID-19 since May 21 and the number of total cases here went from 2,950 cases to 2,956 cases in the neighborhood.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased less than a half percent last week and went from 70,628 cases to 70,842 confirmed cases in a week. Three additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,386 total deaths in the city from COVID.

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Janey attends TSMS networking community event at Brendan Behan Pub

Three Squares Main Street (TSMS) brought dozens of members of the Hyde, Canary and Jackson Squares community to The Brendan Behan Pub on June 4, for an evening of tasty appetizers, networking, learning, and collaborative work to better understand this diverse and interesting community.

As our fiscal year comes to an end we celebrate our success and accomplishments at our Annual Meeting 2021. Thank you to everyone who came out or joined via zoom and a special thanks to our guest speakers Mayor Kim Janey and State Representative Nika Elugardo. TSMS recognized our Volunteers of the Year (Heidi Cartagena-Baez, Mike Pinkham and Jorge Ramirez) and the Business of the Year (Brendan Behan Pub).

Three Squares aims to create learning and understanding of the neighborhood's strengths through interactions with people and organizations based in the community. TSMS will continue through 2021 with volunteer committees gathering information from residents, visitors, community organizations, merchants, and commercial property owners. Staff and volunteers will also research and analyze demographic and economic data; neighborhood history and sto-



Boston Mayor Kim Janey.



Heidi Cartagena-Baez and Mayor Kim Janey.



Director of Boston Main Streets Program/Executive Director of Imagine Boston 2030 Natalia Urtebey and Executive Director Warren Williams

ries; and important buildings, physical features, and community resources. Consistent with its mission of creating a safe, visually vibrant, economically sound business district in Hyde, Jackson and Canary Squares, TSMS will use its volunteer-driven Design, Economic Development, Promotions, and Organization Committees to lead this exciting effort.

TSMS welcomes interested people to join our efforts to make a vibrant thriving community. To volunteer or to learn more call 617-522-3694 or email Warren@threesquaresmainstreet.org.

More information on Three Squares Main Street can be found at www.Threesquares-mainstreetsquare.org.



Executive Director Warren Williams and Mayor Kim Janey.



Executive Director Warren Williams, E-13 Boston Police Community Officer, State Representative Nika Elugard.

Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll



LEONA

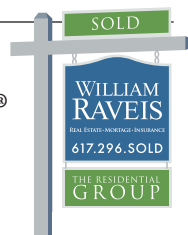
Stunning Leona was adopted as a pup from a local rescue, but years later she was returned due to her owner's health issues. She can switch from adorable lovebug to boisterous goofball on a dime! She loves exploring outdoors and running in a fenced-in yard. She also enjoys playtime with other pups close to her size who can keep up with her! While she needs some help learning her manners, like not jumping up and walking well on a leash, she is eager to learn. When she plays she likes to play rough, so she'd do best with sturdy teens 15 and up who can handle her mouth-on play and assist in her basic training.



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Boston Mayor Kim Janey, Jorge Martinez, Executive Director Warren Williams, Board President Oliver Baez, State Rep Nika Elugardo.



VALERIE GABRIEL PHOTO

Some of JP music instructor Mike Irwin's students performing a concert on the back of a truck on June 5. The truck made several stops around the areas where his students live.

JP music teacher holds concerts on the back of a truck

BY LAUREN BENNETT

JP resident Mike Irwin has been teaching music in the neighborhood since he was 19 years old—he started out doing private lessons, but now his focus is on teaching bands of kids to make music they're interested in.

During a non-COVID year, he teaches about 26 bands of kids ages 7-18, but this year, he said he only had about 20 bands.

"We meet for a school year," he said, and the "goal for the kids is to learn songs they choose." Irwin said that a lot of the bands consist of friends who want to play together, but he also puts kids together into small groups as well.

At the end of the year, the concerts are typically held at the Hard Rock Cafe downtown, with 10 bands for each show. "It's always been a fundraiser for something," he added. Most recently it's been for Zumix, and Hyde Square Task Force before that.

The bands rehearse in Irwin's studio space out of his Forest Hills home, but throughout the past year, rehearsals were held on Zoom because of the pandemic. Kids "shot clips of themselves at home" which were edited into a music video that can be viewed on Irwin's website.

"This year, the studio has enough room where we are spaced out," he said, and kids are required to wear masks.

"It's been really awesome to be meeting in person," he said. "Music doesn't really work so well" when people can't be in the same space.

He added that it's "great we

were able to modify and still make it work."

The first set of end-of year shows took place on June 5, where the same stage that was used at Hard Rock Cafe was built, but this time it was installed on the back of a truck—MJs towing in Hyde Park—and made two stops in Jamaica Plain. The first was at the Loring Greenough House, and the second was at a house on Robeson St.

"It was magic," he said, "when the truck rolled up at every spot" and people were "clapping and

yelling." He said it was a "really fun day to see people gathering outside."

It's been more than two years since his students had live shows, and about the same amount of time since Irwin played with his own band as well, "so it just felt great."

Another set of shows is scheduled for June 12 with the truck making stops in Brookline and Roslindale.

For more information about Irwin and his classes, visit mikeirwinguitarlessons.com.

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Boston Ballet announces 2021–2022 season

STAFF REPORT

Boston Ballet Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen has announced the return to live, in-person performances for the 2021–2022 season.

Live performances return in November with Nissinen's "The Nutcracker." The season includes eight world premieres including five in the female-led Choreographer program and world premieres choreographed by William Forsythe, Jorma Elo, and Stephen Galloway. George Balanchine's Chaconne and Ji í Kylián's Bella Figura also return to the Citizens Bank Opera House stage. The season concludes with the return of Mikko Nissinen's "Swan Lake". The 58th season also marks Nissinen's 20th year as artistic director.

"I am thrilled to announce Boston Ballet's triumphant return to live performances after a challenging year. I cannot wait to be in the theater with audiences as the curtain rises again," said Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen. "Last season, our organization adapted and innovated to create virtual content, and I am pleased to continue accessible digital performances to engage new and returning audiences."

Live dance returns to Boston with Mikko Nissinen's "The Nutcracker" (Nov 26–Dec 26). The annual production "...remains a masterpiece of music, movement and theatrical spectacle" (The Boston Globe) and is a cherished holiday treasure for audiences of all ages. The critically acclaimed production, featuring sets and costumes by award-winning designer Robert Perdziola, is set to Tchaikovsky's renowned score.

The spring season begins with Choreographer (March 3–13). The female-led program celebrates innovative voices across the art world with five world premieres. Ballet phenomenon

New York City Ballet Principal Dancer and choreographer Tiler Peck will build a brand-new work for Boston Ballet. She recently received accolades for her choreography at Vail International Dance Festival and for the film John Wick 3: Parabellum. Claudia Schreier brings her distinctive choreographic voice to Boston audiences, fusing together neoclassical technique with a contemporary vocabulary. She has choreographed over 30 ballets and her work has been commissioned by companies and organizations including Dance Theatre of Harlem, Vail International Dance Festival, American Ballet Theatre Studio Company, Juilliard Opera, New York Choreographic Institute, and Joffrey Winning Works. Visual artist Shantell Martin—internationally-acclaimed for her landscape of lines and existential questions—will create her first choreographic work. The multi-talented artist brings a playful approach to the stage and inspires audiences to tap into their own creativity. Principal Dancer and choreographer Lia Cirio will create her first main stage work for the Company. Cirio participated in BB@home: Choreographer in 2018 and 2019. She also created the peppermint wind for Boston Ballet School's Next Generation in 2019. Melissa Toogood brings the authentic voice of the American modern dance legacy to Boston with her world premiere. She is an award-winning dancer and choreographer of the highest caliber and represents modern dance today as no one else can. Toogood is both a dancer and rehearsal director for Pam Tanowitz Dance. She was a member of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and has taught Cunningham Technique internationally since 2007. The program will also feature conceptual art by writer, researcher, and artist

Emma McCormick-Goodhart. This program is the culmination of Boston Ballet's Choreographer Initiative, a multi-year commitment in support of emerging female choreographers. It was established in 2018 to give female dance students and professional dancers opportunities to develop choreographic skills.

The next program DREAMstate runs March 17–27. George Balanchine's Chaconne is a work of pure ballet for 27 dancers that weaves together life, love, and transcendent movement. Creative powerhouse and movement director for The Rolling Stones, Stephen Galloway creates a much-anticipated world premiere DEVIL'S/eye. Sensual yet sensitive, vulnerable and poetic, Ji í Kylián's masterpiece Bella Figura returns to the Boston stage following rave reviews in London, New York, and Boston.

MINDscape (May 5–15) is a physically demanding and mentally stimulating program, featuring world premieres by William Forsythe and Resident Choreographer Jorma Elo. Continuing his long-term partnership with the Company, William Forsythe's Blake Works I returns to the Opera House stage and is set to music from GRAMMY-nominated British musician James Blake's album "The Colour in Anything." Boston Ballet made the North American premiere of Blake Works I in 2019. Blake Works II will make its world premiere and will also feature the music of James Blake. Jorma Elo will create a new work, which juxtaposes classical ballet and contemporary dance in his own unique and honest style.

The season concludes with Mikko Nissinen's Swan Lake (May 26–June 5). The classical masterpiece follows the Swan Queen Odette and Prince Siegfried in a tale of romance, sorcery, and deceit. The second act,

originally choreographed by Lev Ivanov, is historically considered the finest piece of classical choreography for the corps de ballet. The production showcases the technical precision and emotional tonality of dozens of dancers, brilliantly transformed by Robert Perdziola's impeccable costume design and set to the timeless score by P.I. Tchaikovsky. Nissinen's production "vividly showcase[s] the company's excellent depth and range" (Karen Campbell, The Boston Globe).

Building off the success of Boston Ballet's first-ever virtual season, BB Virtual programming will continue this season. Featuring carefully curated works, the 2021–2022 virtual subscription will also stream full-length, season-favorite programs filmed at the Citizens Bank Opera House.

Subscriptions go on sale June 21. Single tickets go on sale September 8. Boston Ballet will follow government health and safety protocols for in-person performances, with more details released prior to each program. For more information on this season, visit bostonballet.org or call 617.695.6955.

All performances take place at the Citizens Bank Opera House (539 Washington Street, Boston, MA, 02111):

•The Nutcracker | November 26–December 26, 2021

Choreography by Mikko Nissinen

Music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

•Choreographer | March 3–13, 2022

*World Premiere
Choreography by Tiler Peck

*World Premiere
Choreography by Claudia Schreier

*World Premiere
Choreography by Shantell Martin

*World Premiere
Choreography by Lia Cirio

*World Premiere
Choreography by Melissa Toogood

With conceptual art by Emma McCormick-Goodhart

•DREAMstate | March 17–27, 2022

Chaconne
Choreography by George Balanchine

Music from the opera Orfeo ed Euridice

•DEVIL'S/eye
Choreography by Stephen Galloway

•Bella Figura
Choreography by Ji í Kylián

Music by Lucas Foss, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, Alessandro Marcello, Antonio Vivaldi, and Giuseppe Torelli

•MINDscape | May 5–May 15, 2022

Blake Works I
Choreography by William Forsythe

Music by James Blake

*Blake Works II
World Premiere

Choreography by William Forsythe

Music by James Blake

*World Premiere
Choreography by Jorma Elo

•Swan Lake | May 26–June 5, 2022

Choreography by Mikko Nissinen

Music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Blood donations desperately needed for cancer treatments

Blood donations needed for cancer treatments

The American Red Cross and the American Cancer Society have teamed up this June to encourage people across the country to Give Blood to Give Time and help ensure loved ones have the strength and support they need as they undergo cancer treatment.

According to the American Cancer Society, many patient visits and procedures were forced to delay or cancel early in the pandemic to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. With procedures resuming, blood donations are critical for cancer

treatments. Unfortunately, the Red Cross is seeing fewer blood and platelet donors give as the nation begins to climb out of this pandemic. This downturn comes at a time when the Red Cross continues to see strong demand for blood products, including platelets, by hospitals, causing concern for the sufficiency of the blood supply this month and throughout the summer.

The Red Cross currently has an emergency need for eligible donors in the area to make an appointment now to give platelets to ensure critical patient needs are met. Platelets, the clotting portion of blood primarily given

to cancer patients during treatment, must be transfused within five days of donation and, therefore, are always in great demand.

"Many cancer patients, especially those going through chemotherapy, will have a need for blood products during treatment," said Dr. Baia Lasky, medical director for the Red Cross. "When someone donates blood or platelets, they may not only help prevent life-threatening bleeding that can cause stroke or relieve some symptoms, like shortness of breath and headaches, but also give patients and their families the time and hope they need to fight back."

Some types of chemotherapy can damage bone marrow, reducing red blood cell and platelet production. Other times, the cancer itself or surgical procedures cause the need for blood products. About six blood products are needed every minute to help someone going through cancer treatment. Yet only 3% of people in the U.S. give blood. It is vital that more people donate blood and platelets regularly to meet that need.

To schedule a blood or platelet donation appointment, visit GiveBloodToGiveTime.org. As a special thank-you, those who come to donate through June 13

will receive a limited-edition Red Cross T-shirt, while supplies last.

"The need for blood in cancer treatments is an important and untold story," said Howard Byck, senior vice president of corporate and sports alliances, American Cancer Society. "The American Cancer Society is excited to be working with the Red Cross on Give Blood to Give Time. Through this partnership, we want people to know there are multiple ways they can help and make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients and their families."

Edwards enjoys political win in advancing structural change for City budgeting

BY SETH DANIEL

Several observers and prognosticators of Boston City politics are giving a tip of the hat to the astute citywide political path District 1 Councilor Lydia Edwards walked over the past year in getting her Charter Amendment for radical change in City budgeting past the Council and signed by Acting Mayor Kim Janey.

The complexity and detail of the amendment can sometimes overshadow the fundamental change that it would bring about. Edwards pointed out it has never happened before that Bostonians could have this much direct participation in the City Charter. Most Charter Changes go through a different process, and are reliant upon a full vote of the State Legislature. Using a different process few knew about, Edwards pushed the Charter Change to a vote of the public instead.

On Monday, Janey signed the measure, and pledged to allocate even more money to the participatory budgeting piece of the Charter Amendment – an charter change that would allow the Council to have more say in the

give and take of pieces of the City Budget and would also introduce a public participatory budgeting program to the process. Now that the measure is approved at the City level, it has to be reviewed by the Attorney General's Office, and if it meets muster, it would be placed on the November ballot and would be up to the voters to approve or reject it.

This week, Councilor Edwards said getting the amendment passed was tough work over the course of more than a year, but it was all done due to a promise she made during last summer's frustrating budgeting process – when many outside observers learned the Council has little power at the moment to negotiate or change the budget. They can either vote it down or vote it through. That, said Edwards, is something she hopes Boston voters want to change in November.

"I kept my word," she said. "I voted for the budget last year, and caught hell for it from a lot of people. I also said I would come back with something stronger and better. I made a promise that people would have more of a voice and could choose their system. I fought quietly diligently and consistently to get it this

far and I want to thank my staff and advocates and of course my colleague on the City Council."

The matter had passed the Council unanimously in May.

Janey said on Monday she had supported the measure while on the City Council and continues to support it. As an added bonus, she pledged an additional \$1 million in the FY 22 City Budget to create the first Office of Participatory Budgeting – all of that dependent on whether or not the measure clears Boston voters.

"On my first day as Mayor, I promised to bring new voices to the table and include those who felt shut out by City Hall," said Janey. "Signing this charter amendment delivers on that promise and creates a path forward for city budgeting that is more democratic, inclusive, and transparent. I want to thank the advocates and the Boston City Council for their partnership on this important issue."

If the charter amendment passes this November, both the City Council and the Mayor will have the authority to amend the City's budget in whole or in part, a power currently only held by the Mayor. Independent of the ballot measure, the amendment also establishes the Office of Participatory Budgeting, which will lead the Administration's efforts around expanding opportunities

for community involvement in the City's annual budgeting process. Guided by a community-based Participatory Budgeting Committee, the Office will be tasked with determining resident priorities when it comes to the City's investments.

"We are so grateful for Mayor Janey's support of this char-

ter amendment. Participatory budgeting will allow for residents across Boston to have direct decision making in our tax dollars, and strengthens our city's democracy, transparency, and civic participation," said Roxbury-based activist Armani White.



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America's oldest public high school graduates at America's oldest baseball stadium

STAFF REPORT

On Friday, June 11, The English High School (EHS) of Boston's 100 newest graduates will step into the history books as they will be the first graduating class to kick off a year-long celebration of the high school's 200th anniversary as America's first public high school, where alumni proudly follow a tradition of 'Honor, Achievement and Service to Mankind.'

The graduation from America's first and oldest public high school (founded in 1821) will take place at America's oldest baseball stadium – the legendary Fenway Park that opened in 1912. Ceremonies start at 12:30 pm.

The commencement speaker will be Gregory Hayes (EHS Class of 1967), Chairperson of the EHS Board of Directors, a Human Resources consultant and founder of several small businesses. He has worked with the U. S. Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, the MBTA, and Mass DOT, among others.

Although The English High School Alumni Association had been planning a traditional ceremony to commemorate this historic milestone, due to the

pandemic, plans changed and a virtual event is scheduled for October 2. The Alumni Association has already started to plan for the next in-person graduation event – in 2022.

This year's graduating class will receive stickers promoting the fact they are 'Proud to Be 200' with a logo designed by a current EHS sophomore Graphic Arts student. Throughout the summer they will receive additional merchandise to wear and share to help increase awareness about EHS and its illustrious history.

The English High School 200th Anniversary Celebration will be a virtual event on the evening of October 2, 2021. The program will include speakers representing alumni from the 1940s through the present along with a video about EHS Career Pathways. All EHS alumni, friends and family are invited to join the festivities via Zoom from 6:55 PM – 8:15 PM). To register and for more info, visit www.EnglishHighAlumni.org or call 781-956-4774. Contact Mike Thomas for Sponsorship and Investment Opportunities, Scholarship support, Commemorative Journal ads, and more: <https://www.englishhighalumni.org/donate>.



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Boston Teachers Union elects most diverse board in 76-year history

STAFF REPORT

The Boston Teachers Union (BTU) made history Wednesday night when the membership elected the most diverse board in the union's 76-year history. Nearly 3,000 members of the union mailed in ballots and voted in-person for this year's election, a 15% increase in votes since the last election in 2019.

Lea Serena is the first Black

person and Black woman to be elected as a field representative. Serena, who is Cape Verdean, won 51.93% of the vote in the race for Elementary Field Rep. Rosalinda Midence is the first Latina to be elected to the Executive Board. Casandra Samuel, A. Vanessa LaRocque – both black women – and Midence are also three new paraprofessionals who are joining the Board as well. The Executive Board is now

both over 50% women and people of color. (The union membership is 76% women and 48% people of color.)

"As educators in the city of Boston, we serve predominantly Black, Latinx, and AAPI students. The board that leads our union should reflect both the educators we represent and the community we teach, and the results of this election show that our membership agrees," said

BTU President Jessica Tang, who made history in 2017 when she was elected President as the first person of color to hold the position. "We are excited for this new chapter in our union history as we welcome our most diverse board yet."

"As a union, we will continue to build trust and build communities by breaking down walls of inequities for our students, families and members," said Midence.

"The Boston Teachers Union has a complex history on how we have handled racial issues," echoed Serena. "This win is not just a win for me; it's a win for all, and was made possible by dedicated members who have paved the way through their own leadership in and out the classroom."

The full results of Wednesday's election are available on BTU's website.

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Leventhal map center announces Garrett Dash Nelson as new president

STAFF REPORT

The Board of Directors of the Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center at the Boston Public Library announced last week that Garrett Dash Nelson, the Center's Curator of Maps and Director of Geographic Scholarship, will become President and Head Curator on July 16, following the departure of current President Connie Chin.

A historical geographer whose work bridges landscape history, urban and regional studies, and critical cartography, Nelson (l.) joined the Leventhal Map and Education Center in 2019, after three years as a Junior Fellow in the Society of Fellows and Department of Geography at Dartmouth College. During his tenure at the Center to date, Nelson has managed exhibitions in the Center's gallery and launched the digital exhibition *Bending Lines*, overseen development of new tools and resources to enhance access to the Center's vast holdings, and designed and hosted public-fac-



Garrett Dash Nelson, new Leventhal Map Center president.

ing community events that have brought the Center and its work into critical local and regional conversations about people and places.

Nelson holds an A.B. from Harvard College in Social Studies and

Visual & Environmental Studies, an M.A. from the University of Nottingham in Landscape & Culture, and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Geography with a minor in Culture, History, and Environment. He has been published in peer-reviewed journals on topics ranging from Frederick Law Olmsted to the spatial analysis of American commuting, as well as in public-facing outlets such as *The Boston Globe*, *Places Journal*, and *CityLab*. He is also a designer and developer, and has produced numerous interactive projects for researchers and the public.

"We are very pleased to welcome Garrett into the top leadership role at the Leventhal Map and Education Center," says Alan Leventhal, chair of the Center's Board of Directors. "His work is an appealing, impressive mix of academic rigor, and a keen sense of how to make the history and social implications of maps and data relevant to modern audiences. It is particularly exciting as we plan for the public reopening of

the Center's gallery."

"I couldn't be more excited to lead the Leventhal Map & Education Center right now," says Nelson. "It's an organization packed with talented staff, supported by thoughtful and committed board members, and brimming with creative ideas. Connie has done an exceptional job leading the Center in the past years, and we are on a solid footing to accomplish great things in the years to come."

For the next two months, Nelson will co-lead the Leventhal Map and Education Center with Chin, who has served as its President for five years. In her time at the Center, Chin strengthened the organization's financial position, evolved its move toward work that centers social justice, oversaw a major exhibition on the American West, launched a key partnership with the Washington Library at Mount Vernon, and developed the Center's core partnership with the Boston Public Library. Chin is leaving the Center to take another non-profit leadership position in the Boston area.

"We thank Connie for her extraordinary leadership and signal accomplishments for the Map & Education Center," Leventhal says. "We wish her well as she pursues another exciting opportunity."

Nelson says his vision for the future of the Center emphasizes the possibilities of working with maps across different ways of thinking. "I believe public humanities in the 21st century will be championed by institutions like the Leventhal Map and Education Center: organizations that can bridge between scholarly discoveries, a commitment to preserving history for the public trust, an ability to engage with a diverse mix of audiences, and a facility with the new methods made possible by digital technology. We are bringing those strengths together to make the case for why geography is so crucial for stories about the past, present, and future."

Nelson lives in Melrose, Massachusetts, with his wife and daughter.

Mass. Department of Public Health offers summer safety guidance

STAFF REPORT

With summer weather approaching, and as COVID-19 related restrictions on daily activities begin to lift, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) reminds residents to take recommended precautions to keep young children safe this summer.

PREVENT TICK BITES

Ticks can make you sick when they bite. They are most commonly found in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas. Ticks only attach when you come into direct contact with them — they cannot jump or fly. Follow these steps to help protect yourself from tick bites:

- Check yourself for ticks once a day — it's the single most important thing you can do.
- Use repellents that contain DEET on your exposed skin and those that contain permethrin on your clothes.
- When walking or hiking, stick to main pathways and the center of trails if you can. Brushing against tall grass and bushes will increase your exposure to ticks.
- Weather permitting, wear long-sleeved, light-colored shirts and long pants tucked into socks. This will help keep ticks away from your skin and make it easier to spot ticks on your clothing.

Because dogs and horses are particularly susceptible, talk to your veterinarian about the best ways to protect your animals from tick-borne disease.

PREVENT MOSQUITO BITES

The 2019 and 2020 mosquito seasons were active for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Massachusetts. This mosquito-borne illness appears generally in 2- to 3-year cycles, traditionally peaking during August. The presence of EEE last year, a relatively mild winter, and historical patterns suggest an active season this year.

While the risk for human infection of EEE or West Nile Virus won't happen until later this summer, people have an important role to play in protecting themselves from these illnesses which can be very serious. To prepare for mosquito season:

- Drain standing water in and around your house or yard to prevent mosquito breeding.
- Repair window and door screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home.
- Use a mosquito repellent with an EPA-registered ingredient according to the directions.
- Wear clothing to reduce exposed skin when weather permits.

For more information about preventing mosquito and tick-borne illness, visit www.mass.gov/mosquitoesandticks.

WATER AND POOL SAFETY

Drowning is a leading cause of death among young children, both nationally and in Massachusetts, with backyard pools posing the highest risk for children under the age of 5. To help prevent water-related injury and drowning:

- Children should be supervised in and around water at all

times.

- Whenever infants and toddlers are in or around water, including the bathtub, an adult should be within an arm's length at all times providing "touch supervision."

- Completely separate the house and play area of the yard from the pool area with a fence. Consider automatic door locks or alarms to prevent access.

- Remove floats, balls, and other toys from the pool after use so that children are not tempted to reach for them. After the children are done swimming, secure the pool so they cannot get back in.

- Keep rescue equipment (such as a shepherd's hook or life preserver) and a phone near the pool.

- For children who cannot swim, use a properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket. DPH, in cooperation with the USCG, has created a fit test video that can assist with proper fit testing of life jackets: <https://youtu.be/113VZf-NqPc>.

- Do not use toys such as "water wings" or "noodles" in place of life jackets. These are not designed to keep swimmers safe.

In public swimming areas:

- Select swimming sites that have lifeguards whenever possible, and swim only in designated swimming areas.

- Always swim with a buddy.
- Look for signage at beaches. DPH collects beach water quality data and notifies the public about bacteria levels to minimize swimming-associated illness and

injury.

WINDOW SAFETY

Falls are the leading cause of injury to children and falls from windows involving young children are especially serious. Window falls are preventable. Screens are not strong enough to protect children from falling out of windows. To prevent window falls, parents and caregivers should:

- Keep furniture — and anything a child can climb on — away from windows.

- Open windows from the top, not the bottom, when possible and lock all unopened doors and windows.

- Be sure children are always supervised.

- Install quick-release window guards which can be found in most hardware stores.

To learn more about childhood injury prevention, visit <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/injury-prevention-and-control-program>.

Additional tips on preventing falls among children can be found on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention fall prevention website.

CAR SAFETY

The inside of a vehicle can be a very dangerous place for children left inside. In the summer months in New England, the temperature in a closed car can rise quickly and the vehicle can become a deadly place for a child, left even for just a moment.

To keep young children safe in and around cars:

- Never leave children alone in

a parked vehicle, even when they are asleep or restrained, and even if the windows are open.

- Always check inside the vehicle - front and back - before locking the door and walking away.

- If a child is missing, check your vehicle first, including the trunk.

- Do things to remind yourself that a child is in the vehicle, such as placing your purse or briefcase in the back seat so you will check the back seat when you leave the vehicle.

- Always lock your car and keep the keys out of children's reach.

- Ensure adequate supervision when children are playing in areas near parked motor vehicles.

If you see a child alone in a hot vehicle, call the police. If they are in distress due to heat, get them out as quickly as possible and call 911 immediately.

Remember, all children ages 12 and under should ride in the back seat, properly restrained, even during quick errand trips. Infants and toddlers should remain in rear-facing car seats until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car safety seat manufacturer. At a minimum, children should ride rear-facing until they are at least one year old and weigh at least 20 pounds. You can find more information on child passenger safety on the DPH at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-public-health>.

Leading early education provider to expand its reach in JP

This September, Ellis Early Learning (formerly Ellis Memorial) will open a new nonprofit childcare center at 555 Amory Street in Jamaica Plain. Ellis Early Learning's South End campus is home to seventeen classrooms for children ages one month to twelve years and has earned an outstanding reputation for both its high-quality education and intentionally diverse model. In anticipation of expanding, Ellis recently updated its name to Ellis Early Learning and launched a new, colorful logo, to represent the organization's diversity and vibrancy.

The new Jamaica Plain site will serve 60 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Children will learn in six nurturing classrooms, custom-designed for various ages, and enjoy indoor and outdoor play spaces. This new full-time site also provides healthy meals and snacks. Eastern Bank Foundation and PNC Bank, both committed to supporting and uplifting the early childhood sector, are lead sponsors of the renovation, which is currently underway.

Ellis partners with families to

provide high quality early childhood education and out-of-school programs in a warm, nurturing environment. A recognized leader in the field, Ellis Early Learning supports children across the socio-economic spectrum, treasures diversity in all forms, and celebrates the joy of childhood. Lauren Kennedy, co-founder of Neighborhood Villages shares, "Ellis exemplifies excellence in early education and a commitment to educational equity. Its economically integrated model is one to be replicated. Neighborhood Villages is proud to partner and invest in Ellis, and we are eager to see it expand its footprint to serve more children and families."

Ellis has served Boston's working families since 1885. Once a settlement house, Ellis provides high quality early learning opportunities (in addition to out of school-time programs) in a socio-economically, racially, and culturally diverse environment. Ellis is thrilled to be expanding into Jamaica Plain (JP) this fall to serve more families, particularly at a time when the need for high quality early education

is so great.

What sets Ellis Early Learning apart?

- Rare in the sector, Ellis is economically integrated, serving families in financial need and families who have the means to pay market rate. Ellis proudly accepts vouchers and serves children in DCF custody.

- Ellis is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, putting it in the top 5% of early childhood programs nationally.

- Ellis is rated a level 3 out of 4 based on Massachusetts's Quality Rating and Improvement System, and is on track to achieve level 4.

- Due to our high level of quality, Ellis has received UPK funding from the City of Boston to support two K-1 classrooms that serve children in coordination with Boston Public Schools.

Tours for parents will begin in August, and enrollment for new families is in process. Families can join the waitlist any time.

ELLIS CONTACT: Lauren Cook, CEO, laurencook@ellisearlylearning.org and 617-377-4483

June is Adopt a Shelter Cat Month

STAFF REPORT

Cats star in some of the most viral videos on the Internet and some even grow to celebrity status on Instagram with millions of followers (looking at you, Nala Cat). Yet some of the coolest cats remain undiscovered at shelters and rescues across the country. Since cats are also the most at-risk pets across America, accounting for 69 percent of animals killed in shelters, it's crucial to find them loving homes.

Adopt a Shelter Cat Month takes place every June to highlight the immense need for cat adoptions and why a shelter is the best place to find your next feline friend.

"By adopting a cat, you're not only saving that particular cat, but you also make space for the next cat coming into a shelter," said Samantha Bell, cat expert at Best Friends Animal Society.

According to Bell, cats make great pets for just about anyone. "Whether you are hardly ever home or you are a total couch potato, there's a 'purrfect' cat waiting for you at a shelter or rescue," she added.

Bell offers the following tips on how to pick the right cat or kitten for your lifestyle:

- Busy? There are cats for that: Shelters and rescues often have two adult cats that have grown up together and would be happy to go home together. It's heartwarming to see a pair of cats who are already friends get to stay together. And while you're away, they'll have each other for company and security.

- Extroverts need love, too: If you are home quite often, then you'll have more time to play with an active kitty who needs lots of wand toy play time. Some cats can even be trained to walk

on a leash or go for stroller rides.

- Consider a solo artist: There are many cats who are great with people but terrified of other cats. They don't always make a great first impression on potential adopters, especially if they're in a shelter surrounded by other cats. But once they're in a home with you, they'll flourish.

- Involve the whole family: It's important to take everyone in the home, especially children, to meet all prospective cats so you can observe how they interact with the cat. Every child has their own unique energy, and every pet reacts differently to every child.

- Keep an open mind: Don't get hung up on color, sex or age. Not all cats' personalities fit into stereotypes. Every cat is an individual, so don't discount a cat because they aren't male or female or orange or fluffy. By doing so, you'll have the best odds of finding a great match.

With kitten season in full swing, many people will be tempted to adopt one (and let's be honest, it's hard not to succumb to that level of cuteness). But as Bell noted, kittens require an extra level of care.

That is why Best Friends encourages adopters to open their home to a pair of kittens, if possible. Bell explained why. "All cats have to bite and scratch; it's feline instinct," she said. "A pair of kittens learns that biting and scratching is something they should do to each other during playtime, and not to their humans."

To find your new best feline friend, visit www.bestfriends.org, where you'll find more than 3,300 network partners of shelters and rescues across the country.

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JP resident raises \$20,000 in Marathon

Jamaica Plain resident Elaine Gebhardt participated in her seventh Golf Fights Cancer Golf Marathon on June 3 and raised \$20,000 for DetecTogether, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit that teaches individuals how to detect cancer early and be active partners in their healthcare.

Gebhardt has previously played 100 holes in honor of family members and loved ones who've been diagnosed with cancer. This past Christmas, she received her own life-changing news with a breast cancer diagnosis. She completed her treatments on May 14th and nothing could stop her from participating in this year's event. Elaine states "I'm one of the lucky ones - my cancer was found early and I didn't require chemotherapy. When I began playing seven years ago, I was raising funds for those impacted by cancer that I hadn't even met. This year, I have personally experienced the importance of early detection and how it can save lives." Throughout the last seven years, Gebhardt has raised over \$75,000 to make an immediate and tangible impact on cancer patients and their families.

The 2021 Golf Marathon brings together two organizations - Golf Fights Cancer and DetecTogether - that are deeply



Elaine Gebhardt.

ly committed to fighting cancer and saving lives. Funds raised during this year's GFC event primarily benefit DetecTogether, a national nonprofit that teaches people how to recognize the earliest warning signs of cancer. "When cancer is detected early, people have the best chance of surviving and treatment can be

less invasive," says Tricia Laursen, DetecTogether President & Executive Director. "Knowing what to watch for and when to act is lifesaving." DetecTogether brings its education to firefighters, young adults and community groups for free, thanks to the generosity of supporters.

For the first time ever, GFC organizers added a second day of golf marathoning and have hit an unprecedented fundraising total of \$750,000. "The excitement for this year's event is amazing, as is the collective power of our fundraisers," says GFC Chairman & Co-Founder, Brian Oates. "It's incredibly inspiring to see the impact that people who share a common interest can make in the fight against cancer."

The Golf Marathon took place on June 3 and 4, 2021 at Juniper Hill Golf Course in Northborough, Mass.

Golf Fights Cancer (GFC) is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization that taps into the passion and generosity of all golfers to raise much needed funds for cancer related organizations and families living with the disease. Specifically, GFC makes targeted donations for equipment, services, and/or amenities that make an immediate positive impact on treatment and the experience for both the patient and family.

DetecTogether is a 501(c)(3) addressing an unmet need in the cancer world. We teach people how to identify early warning signs of cancer to save lives. We do not know who will get cancer, but we do know that 40% of us will receive a diagnosis in our lifetime.

Six tips to keep pets safe during storm season

While no one is immune from the devastation of a natural disaster, preparing before a storm hits is key to keeping everyone in your family—including your pets—safe.

"What's good for us is good for our pets," said Kris Kiser, President of The TurfMutt Foundation, an environment education and stewardship program, and President and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing manufacturers and suppliers of outdoor power equipment, small engines, battery power systems, portable generators, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars. "My dog is a member of the family, so we have a plan for keeping her safe in the event of an emergency, and we encourage all pet parents to do the same."

Here are six ideas from the TurfMutt Foundation to include pets safety when mapping out a disaster preparedness plan.

- Have pets microchipped. In the event of an emergency—natural or otherwise—you want to ensure your pet can get back to you if you're separated. Collars and ID tags, though important, can break or detach. Microchips—computerized and scannable implants about the size of a grain of rice—are more fool-proof since they're inserted under your pet's skin.

- Bring pets inside at the first sign of danger. Disasters can be disorienting for pets, and they could run away or hurt themselves reacting to loud noises and strange changes to their landscape. Also, rain, flying debris and high winds pose a danger.

- If you have to leave, keep pets with you. Leaving your pets behind during a natural disaster is never a good idea because they could escape or become exposed to a number of life-threatening hazards. Keep them on a leash or in a pet carrier so they don't

escape, even if you are in a "familiar" neighborhood.

- Determine where you'll go. You need a Plan B if you are advised by government officials to leave your home. Make a plan and develop a list of pet-friendly hotels open for business and outside your immediate area that you might evacuate to.

- Create a pet-friendly resource list. Research a list of veterinarians in the area should your pet need medical care (your regular vet may have some recommendations). Also, figure out which boarding facilities are nearby in case you need to separate from your pet for a time.

- Pack an emergency bag. Pack emergency provisions for pets well in advance of a catastrophe so you can evacuate your home quickly if needed. Choose an easy-to-carry bag, label it and keep it where everyone in the family can find it quickly. The bag should include a pet first aid kit; enough food and bottled water for a week (rotate this every couple of months to keep it from going bad); medications (check periodically to ensure medicines in your emergency bag don't expire); cleanup supplies; food and water dishes; bags (or litter for cats) for collecting waste; an extra collar and leash; photocopies of medical records; towels; recent photos of your pets; and a favorite toy or chewy for comfort. It's also a good idea to have a sturdy carrier or crate for each pet.

By keeping in mind these ideas, pet preparedness plans can be put into action ahead of a storm instead of spending valuable time trying to determine what needs to be done to best protect pets.

Learn More

For facts, tips and fun activities for families from the TurfMutt environment education and stewardship program, visit www.TurfMutt.com.

Car Heat Dangers

Elapsed Time (minutes)	Outside Air Temperature (°F)					
	70	75	80	85	90	95
0	70	75	80	85	90	95
10	89	94	99	104	109	114
20	99	104	109	114	119	124
30	104	109	114	119	124	129
40	108	113	118	123	128	133
50	111	116	121	126	131	136
60	113	118	123	128	133	138
More than 1 hour	115	120	125	130	135	140

Jim Hall, CCIM, Department of Geomatics, San Francisco State University

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LOCAL STUDENTS EARN ACADEMIC HONORS

PERTILE GRADUATES FROM BRYANT UNIVERSITY

At Bryant University's 158th Commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 22, 840 graduates of the Class of 2021 and their families and guests gathered on campus to celebrate earning a Bryant degree. Grant Pertile of Jamaica Plain graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree in Finance.

"There has probably never been a graduating class more deserving of a Commencement and celebration than the Class of 2021," said Bryant President Ross Gittell, Ph.D. "You have earned your degree under extraordinary circumstances. You successfully responded to unprecedented challenges."

About Bryant University For 158 years, Bryant University has been at the forefront of delivering an exceptional education that anticipates the future and prepares students to be innovative leaders of character in a changing world. Bryant delivers an innovative and uniquely integrated business and liberal arts education that inspires students to excel. With approximately 3,800 graduate and undergraduate students from 38 states and 49 countries, Bryant is recognized as a leader in international education and regularly receives top rankings from U.S. News and World Report, Bloomberg Businessweek, Forbes, and Barron's. Visit www.bryant.edu.

CAMILO PARTICIPATES IN DONNING OF THE KENTE STOLE CEREMONY

Samantha C. Camilo of Jamaica Plain was among the 44 members of The University of Scranton's class of 2021 who participated in the Jesuit school's inaugural in-person Donning of the Kente Stole Ceremony. The ceremony celebrates and honors the accomplishments of members of its class of 2021 from underrepresented identities who received their undergraduate degrees. The purpose of the ceremony was to highlight the success in overcoming the particular barriers and obstacles faced by students from these groups, particularly students of color, in attaining a higher education.

Camilo earned a Bachelor of Science degree in international business from the University of Scranton.

For the past two years, the Multicultural Center set out to

explore opportunities to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of students from underrepresented identities approaching graduation. The Donning of the Kente Stole Ceremony was a student led initiative that started with the research done by graduating senior Camila Robles Class of 2019, and the vision of Aba Amon-Kwafo Class of 2020, who lead the efforts to develop the proposal and approval of the Donning of the Kente Stole Ceremony and set the foundation for the ceremony to become a University of Scranton Commencement event.

"The Donning of the Kente Stole Ceremony is an important and significant step the University has taken to provide graduates of color with a positive, rewarding experience that recognizes their hard work and dedication to their education," said Samiel Torres, a member of the University's class of 2021 and the student leader of Donning of the Kente Ceremony Committee.

"We are here to celebrate you. And it is my opinion that the graduating class of 2021 is by far one of the most intelligent, resilient, and innovative graduating classes that I have ever seen, and probably that the world has ever seen. Time didn't stop for any of us during this pandemic, but you mastered the art of finesse, getting it done, and commitment. Wear your Kente stole proudly," said guest Glynis Johns, founder and CEO of the Black Scranton Project, who was selected by the students to speak at the event.

The ceremony, organized by the student committee members and Jose Sanchez, assistant director of the University's Cross Cultural Centers, took place on campus on May 21. The "Donning of the Kente Commencement Ceremony" was first held in the United States on May 15, 1993, at Westchester University of Pennsylvania. Through the years, The Kente Ceremony or versions of this ceremony have become an annual cultural achievement ceremony where families, colleagues, and friends gather to celebrate the accomplishments of graduates from underrepresented and marginalized communities receiving their undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees. The significance of the Kente cloth dates back to 12th century Africa and was worn by Asante royalty in the area of Africa that is now Ghana and today is used as a staple for special occasions.

In addition to Torres, Sanchez and Johns, also speaking at the event were: Robert Davis Jr., Ed.D. vice president for student life; Helen Wolf, Ph.D., director of

the Office of Campus Ministries, David Vergaray, member of the University's class of 2021; and AnnMarie Onwuka and Tiannah Adams, members of the University's class of 2022 and Donning of Kente Stole Ceremony Committee.

The University of Scranton is a Jesuit university located in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

UW-MADISON ANNOUNCES SPRING DEAN'S LIST

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognized Sara Pratt Col of Jamaica Plain studying Agricultural & Life Science, named to Dean's List for the spring semester of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Students who achieve at a high level academically are recognized by the dean at the close of each semester. To be eligible for the Dean's List, students must complete a minimum of 12 graded degree credits in that semester. Each university school or college sets its own GPA requirements for students to be eligible to receive the distinction. Most call the honor "dean's list", but some grant the "Dean's Honor List" and "Dean's High Honor List."

JAMAICA PLAIN STUDENT GRADUATES FROM CHAPEL HILL-CHAUNCY HALL SCHOOL

On June 5, Jake McConathy, of Jamaica Plain (02130), graduated as part of the Class of 2021 at Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall School in Waltham, MA.

Student speakers included Valedictorian Gabriel McCreath



Jake McConathy.

and Salutatorian Sidney Dual, each delivering an inspirational speech to their classmates. The commencement address was delivered by activist, author, educator, and former Broadway actor, Philip McAdoo, Ed.D. Since 2019, Dr. McAdoo has partnered with students at CH-CH, both in-person and virtually, to discuss the intersections of race, sexual orientation, identity, and equity through a diversity and inclusion lens.

In his commencement address, Dr. McAdoo spoke to the advocacy and resilience of the Class of 2021, emphasizing his confidence in the current generation of future leaders.

"When I look at the wonderful ways that you [young people] are showing up and you're advocating for yourself and friends- I feel really hopeful," said McAdoo. "I want to apologize one more time for leaving this world a mess for you. but I know, with all my heart, you are the ones that are going to make things better for us."

In his commencement address, Gibson shared his story of self-education, engagement with the meaning of words, and democracy, as well as calling upon the graduates to write the new narrative of the United States.

In his Valedictory speech, Gabriel McCreath discussed how the Class of 2021 has grown in so many ways, while still remaining true to themselves.

"I consider myself beyond lucky that I have gotten to know my amazing classmates at CH-CH. I love the way we support, affirm, and challenge each other to grow and change for the better," said McCreath. "Even when the world is made up of uncertainty after uncertainty, we remember the shapes of our souls - our own souls, our friends' souls, and our collective souls."

In her Salutatory address, Sidney Dual discussed unexpectedness, noting the level of growth that can come from such unforeseen challenges.

"It's scary when things don't go according to the plan you have, but you can't plan out life. You can, and should, have goals for yourself, but you have to be flexible in how and when you get there, how you achieve them, what that path looks like. For growth to happen, there must be change," said Dual. "Have faith and confidence in yourself. Listen to yourself, your feelings, heart, and soul. Be honest with yourself about what you want, and also about the challenges you will face on your way to get what you want. Don't be afraid to grow, even if it's in a new direction. Embrace the unexpected.

Welcome the change."

Head of School, Lance Conrad, Ed.D. closed the ceremony with a message to the graduating class,

"Your class fortitude and focus has been one of the most admirable graduating class happenstances I have ever had the privilege of experiencing as head of school," said Conrad. "You, Class of 2021, have demonstrated the strongest resolve and character that I have credited to any graduating class in my 15 years at the School. For that, I and the CH-CH faculty and staff profoundly thank you."

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall is a coeducational day and boarding school located in Waltham, MA. With over 190 years of history, the school remains dedicated to teaching the way students learn. Learn more at www.chch.org.

KILSON-KUCHTIC GRADUATES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Caila Kilson-Kuchtic of Jamaica Plain graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of New Hampshire over the weekend of May 22 and May 23, 2021. He/she earned a BA degree in Communication.

Students who received the honor Summa Cum Laude graduated with a GPA of 3.85-4.0; Students who received the honor of Magna Cum Laude graduated with a GPA of 3.65-3.84; and students who received the honor of Cum Laude graduated with a GPA of 3.50-3.64.

Students are only graduated after the Registrar's Office has certified that all degree requirements have been successfully completed. Participating in the commencement ceremony is the act of honoring and celebrating academic achievement.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 13,000 undergraduate and 2,500 graduate students.

PLEASE
RECYCLE

The 23rd Roxbury International Film Festival set for June 17-26

The Roxbury International Film Festival (RoxFilm), New England's largest film festival celebrating people of color from around the globe, kicks off its 23rd festival with *How it Feels to Be Free*, a documentary by Yoruba Richen on Thursday, June 17th at 5:30pm ET followed by *Memoirs of a Black Girl*, a feature film directed by local Thato Mwosa. Both film screenings take place in person at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), and online.

RoxFilm is also thrilled to announce it will be hosting an outdoor screening of the documentary feature debut of Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, *Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)*, on Saturday, June 19th as part of a Juneteenth celebration.

The 23rd festival will close with director Jamila Wignot's resonant biography, *AILEY*, which grants artful access to the elusive visionary who founded one of the world's most renowned dance companies, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. *AILEY* will close the festival on Saturday, June 26 at 4:00pm ET in person at the MFA.

RoxFilm festival all access passes are now available, and individual film passes will be available in June. The complete festival schedule will be announced soon.

"We are excited to be bringing the 23rd annual festival both in person and via online streaming," says Lisa Simmons, Director of the Roxbury International Film Festival. "Our partnership with the MFA gives us this flexibility and provides a way for audiences to come together indoors and outdoors in a safe way. This year we are excited to screen over 65 films that tell stories about reclaiming spaces, countering narratives, taking care of ourselves, and celebrating unapologetically."

Over the course of ten days, RoxFilm will showcase feature-length narrative films, documentaries, shorts and animated films that are truly independent. The festival has featured and celebrated both films and filmmakers of color for the past two decades screening over 1,500 films to over 35,000 attendees. RoxFilm will include online events such as panel discussions, one-on-one conversations, networking opportunities, filmmaker hangouts and Q&A sessions with filmmakers and special guests. Keeping to their mission, the festival will screen a number of local films and highlight films from Boston Public School students, Lynn's Raw Arts Program and other

student-made films from around the country.

Directed by Yoruba Richen, *How It Feels To Be Free* takes an unprecedented look at the intersection of African-American women artists, politics, and entertainment and tells the story of how six trailblazing performers, Lena Horne, Abbey Lincoln, Diahann Carroll, Nina Simone, Cicely Tyson and Pam Grier changed American culture through their films, fashion, their music and their politics.

Memoirs of a Black Girl is a coming-of-age-film where an astute and ambitious student named Aisha Johnson is one of the finalists for the coveted Conrad Scholarship. Aisha's goal is to earn the top prize. But one day when Aisha tries to do the right thing, her life is turned upside down, which puts her future in jeopardy. Aisha must learn to navigate life at home, in school, and on the unforgiving streets of Roxbury.

Directed by Thato Rantao Mwosa.

Thato Mwosa is an illustrator, screenwriter, playwright, and filmmaker. She has won several awards for her narrative films and documentaries. Her films have been broadcast nationally and internationally.

This year, RoxFilm takes place June 17 - 26, 2021 at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston with some events hosted virtually.

A complete list of RoxFilm events, screenings, and tickets will be available soon here.

Other confirmed films to be screened at RoxFilm and programs include:

Fab 5 Freddy will join RoxFilm to discuss his film *Fresh Guide To Florence* with Fab 5 Freddy. The film is a revelatory and iconoclastic look at 15th and 16th century Italian Renaissance art through the eyes of hip hop legend and art lover Fab 5 Freddy. Amidst rockstar artists such as Michelangelo and powerful patrons such as the Medici's Fab discovers groundbreaking images of a multi-racial and multi-ethnic society in artworks which have fallen through the cracks of art history and been neglected by art historians.

Shared Stories @ RoxFilm Programming: A Reckoning in Boston - Directed by James Rutenbeck

Kafi Dixon dreams of starting a land cooperative for women of color who have experienced trauma and disenfranchisement in the city of Boston. By day she drives a city bus; at night she studies the humanities in a tuition-free course. Her classmate Carl Chandler, a community el-

der, is the class's intellectual leader.

Executive Order - Directed by Lázaro Ramos

Set in Rio de Janeiro in a near and hypothetical future, *Executive Order* is a feature fictional film whose plot starts with the enforcement of a law that determines the compulsory return of all afro-descendants to their "countries of origin".

8 Wheels - Directed by Drew Powell, Ryan Everitt, Adrian and Gibbons

Chez Vous is the only Black-Owned roller skating rink in New England. As roller skating rinks close down throughout

the US due to COVID-19, this film takes a deep dive into what makes *Chez Vous* special.

The Daily Read program will return to RoxFilm, where scripts by RoxFilm alumni will be read by professional local actors. The Daily Read takes place LIVE during lunchtime from 12:00-1:00pm. Audiences have the opportunity to hear works in progress.

Panel Discussions will take place around the history of black film - The panel discussions program will look into film noir, the role white supremacy has played in film, and a conversation with black chefs. There will

also be discussions surrounding black storytelling, BIPOC media companies, animation, and much more.

The Roxbury International Film Festival is a competitive festival that awards certificates in the categories of Audience Favorite, Narrative Film, Documentary Film, Narrative Short, Documentary Short, Youth, Emerging Filmmaker, with a special award named after award-winning filmmaker Henry Hampton.

Festival passes are available and can be purchased here.

For more information on the film festival, visit www.roxfilm-fest.com.

LETTERS

It's time to let our kids play soccer, without masks

To the Editor:

On May 18, per updates in the MA Youth Soccer Guidelines, hundreds of youths resumed playing soccer without masks throughout our state. These updated guidelines aligned with revised policies of both the MA Early Education and Care and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that no longer required students to wear masks outdoors, even when distance cannot be maintained. Despite these science-based updates, several Jamaica Plain youth sports leagues, including JP Children's Soccer (a league for 3-to-6 year-olds), still require players to wear masks. Failure to enact the revised guidelines undermines the current science

on transmission risks, minimizes the benefits achieved through our collective role in supporting COVID-19 vaccination efforts and mitigation strategies, and leaves our children's joy on the sidelines.

These revised guidelines are based on data demonstrating the low risk of SARS-CoV2 transmission outdoors, including during youth sports, and in the context of our state's dropping case counts, test positivity, hospitalization, and death rates. In Jamaica Plain, we have among the lowest SARS-CoV2 infections and highest rates of vaccination in Boston. In fact, during the week of May 23-29, a week characterized by unseasonably warm 80-90 degree weather on

the soccer field, only seven total cases were reported (up from five the prior week). These current numbers equate to an infinitesimally low rate of outdoor transmission. Given these data, it seems more than reasonable at this time to let our young children play outdoor soccer without masks, particularly in the recent late-spring and upcoming summer heat and humidity. After a long 15-months, with abrupt closures of preschools and schools, extensive isolation from family, teachers, and friends, let's give our kids what they so richly need and deserve. Time to play with their friends and to see one another's smiling faces. Trust the science, JP!

SUZIE BERTISCH, MD, MPH

LEGAL NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION AND MAILING COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Probate and Family Court
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
Docket No. SU20D0132DR
Sumeiry Garcia Vs.
Hiram Gonzalez
To the Defendant:
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for irretrievable breakdown. The Complaint is one file at the Court.

An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would

negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon: Sarah Lee, Esq. Volunteer Lawyers Project, 7 Winthrop Square 2nd Floor Boston, MA 02110 your answer, if any, on or before 07/05/2021. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.

WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.
Date: May 18, 2021
Felix D. Arroyo

6/11/21
JP

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Probate And Family Court
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
(617)788-8300
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Docket No. SU21P1051EA
Estate of: William G. St Cyr
Date of Death: 04/01/2021

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Thomas W St Cyr of West Roxbury, 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: Thomas W St Cyr of West Roxbury, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration. IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 07/02/2021.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within

thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.
Date: May 21, 2021
Felix D. Arroyo
Register of Probate

6/11/21
JP

EDITORIAL

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2021

Graduation Day is one of the few occasions that brings a smile to the faces of everyone in a community, regardless of whether they have a personal connection to a graduate. It is an occasion when all of us share in the joy -- and pride -- that graduation day marks in the lives of our young people. For older folks, graduation day recalls a time when we too, were young and our entire future lay in front of us.

Graduation day marks a bittersweet moment for parents, friends, family, and teachers, as well for the grads themselves. As befits every turning point in our lives, it is a time of mixed emotions of joy, sadness, and reflection. Although the graduates and those close to them are looking forward to the exciting future that lies before them, they also will be looking back on the passing of their carefree youth and the experiences that have shaped their lives to this point.

The young women and men who will be receiving their diplomas no longer are considered “youths” in the eyes of the world. They are full-fledged adults who have been deemed ready to assume all of the rights -- and responsibilities -- that adulthood implies.

The graduates, most of whom have turned 18, can vote, run for public office, enter into contracts, be tried fully as adults in the criminal justice system, and fight and die for their country.

For the parents of the grads, watching their “little boy or girl” proceed to the podium to receive his or her diploma will be a poignant moment. No doubt every parent will be thinking of the sentiments expressed in the song, Sunrise, Sunset, from Fiddler On The Roof:

Is this the little girl I carried?

Is this the little boy at play?

I don't remember growing older

When - did - they?

When did she get to be a beauty?

When did he grow to be so tall?

Wasn't it yesterday when they - were - small?

Although economists these days tell us that the value of a high school diploma is not what it was a generation or more ago, the graduates should keep in mind, as they contemplate venturing out into an uncertain world, that their mere presence on the podium has proven that they have the ability and the determination to achieve whatever goals they may set for themselves.

We recently came across a news item that appeared in the Winthrop Sun on June 24, 1898. The article, which reprinted the Class Ode for the Winthrop High Class of 1898, is as timely today as it was 123 years ago, and sums up the feelings of all of us on Graduation Day.

The years pass by in swift array
We cannot check their onward flight;
The moments that were ours today,
Have passed forever from our sight.

Yet while the course of life moves by
We too, must never lag behind;
But work and strive as best we may
To aid and benefit all mankind.

This we must do, or soon too late
We think in sadness of our loss,
For “Each is Master of his Fate,”
Though some must bear a heavy cross.

And when the race of life is run,
This life that holds so much for each
Shall come the gentle words, “Well done!”
As we at last the goal have reached.

OP-ED

Boston needs more affordable housing

By COUNCILOR ANNISSA ESSAIBI GEORGE

Right now, Boston's residents are struggling to pay rent, our families can't find or afford stable housing, and too many individuals are experiencing chronic homelessness. The past year has only emphasized these realities and the effects will last long after the pandemic.

Affordability and accessibility of both rental units and homes for sale is key for a thriving city. We need to ensure that everyone who wants to call Boston home has the opportunity, option and a pathway to ownership to do so. We can start by building more housing and ensuring what we build is actually affordable for Boston's residents.

Our housing stock must also be a reflection of the needs of those who call this city home. That's why I've called for a hearing on our City's existing residential unit diversity, so we can understand what units we have and what units we need to equitably house our residents and more proactively shape an inclusive and thriving city. We need to see what's out there and then act accordingly. We need to plan, then build for the realities of our residents.

Much of our focus should be on creating housing for the many residents and families that don't qualify for subsidized housing, but still cannot afford

to pay market rate. This large gap is causing low to middle income families to fall through the cracks. We need affordable, multi-bedroom housing for our families and we need to push developers to build it. We must also look into amending and updating HUD's Area Median Income (AMI) standard for the city. The formula does not reflect the income of the many residents who need more affordable housing.

For those who do qualify for subsidized housing, the housing voucher allocation processes are not consistent and the number of available vouchers varies dramatically year to year. As Mayor, I will push for dedicated investments in public housing and extremely low-income housing and improve measures to prevent race-based and income-based voucher discriminatory behavior.

Housing production should also provide our residents more opportunities for home ownership. In order to address the affordable housing crisis and the racial wealth gap, we need to make sure our investments in affordable rental units and home-ownership units are aligned. Many of the residents in our City-funded rental units are paying about 70% of AMI, which equates to \$1,400 a month for a one bedroom unit. If they are able to pay that much in rent, they can also afford and sustain a monthly mortgage of the same

amount—we just have to make home ownership accessible!

The City also has to invest more in our first time home-buyers program, which not only prepares first time home buyers looking to purchase their first homes, but also offers residents, many of whom would not be able to otherwise, the opportunity to purchase a home by qualifying to make a below average down payment upon purchase and lower monthly mortgage rates.

Finally, more must be done to encourage the creation of more senior-specific housing and ensure that those who have made Boston their home can stay here. We must support our seniors to age in the community they call home by creating more secure and accessible affordable housing options, including housing for older residents who identify as LGBTQIA+ or older residents with disabilities.

I was born and raised in Boston. I feel so fortunate that my parents were able to settle here and make this city my family's home. I'm proud to raise my children here. I want that for all of Boston's families and anyone else that loves Boston enough to choose it over any place else in this world. As Mayor, I'll work relentlessly to make this happen.

Annisai Essaiabi George, is a City Councilor, At-Large and a candidate for mayor.

OP-ED

Why we all need expanded and improved Medicare for all

By MARIA TERMINI

Plain and simple we need Improved Medicare for All now to make sure everyone has the health care they need. Currently many people can't afford health care and they suffer and die and this is wrong. Health care is a matter of life and death, a human need, and a human right. Every day people are denied that right because they can't afford it, even with insurance. Our profit-based health care industrial system is the most expensive and complicated in the world. In order to keep their profits high, insurance companies are continually raising their premiums and increasing deductibles, copayments and out of pocket expenses.

Many people can't afford the co-payments. My friend Melinda is a single parent with a job that pays barely above minimum

wage. She pays premiums for her health insurance. Each time she takes her son to a doctor, she must make a co-payment of \$70 which is a financial hardship. Melinda herself hasn't been to a doctor in many years because she can't afford the co-payment even though she has some medical problems. So, she suffers and takes risks with her health. This is wrong.

We have about 1600 different insurance companies in the US and this results in high administrative costs, endless paper work and a very high overhead to pay for all their advertising and ways to deny care. This drives up the costs. The insurance companies pay their executives salaries of millions of dollars.

Insurance companies have many complicated regulations and the fine print is often unintelligible and with horrible con-

sequences. In New York City, a woman received an emergency heart transplant at a hospital in her health plan's network. However, no one bothered to tell her that the transplant surgeons didn't take her particular insurance. They billed her \$70,000 and sent collection agencies and lawyers after her while she was still home recuperating. She may have recovered but chances are good she has lost her home.

The cost of prescription drugs is soaring as the drug companies persist in making huge profits. Insulin is now so expensive some diabetics can't afford it. Some ration this most necessary drug, taking a dose every other day. Others have died. I was in Bolivia a few years ago and got bit by a dog and needed rabies

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OP-ED

Do you need Social Security?

Dr. Glenn Mollette

In 2020 over 64 million Americans were collecting Social Security.

The National Institute for Retirement Security (NIRS) has reported that Social Security is the only income source for 40 percent of retirees over the age of 60." (Forbes.com) The study also claimed that only 6.8 percent of retirees receive income from the three-legged stool of Social Security, a defined benefit pension and a defined contribution plan.

Another study conducted by researchers at the Social Security Administration, found that only 19.6 of Americans 65 and

over received at least 90% of their total incomes from Social Security. That's a big difference from the stat provided by the NIRS.

Nevertheless, the point is that for millions of Americans Social Security is either all they have or mostly all they have. Also, there are some government employees who have their own pension system and do not pay into Social Security.

Social Security taxes take a bite of our income from every check. Employers and employees each pay 6.2 percent of wages up to the taxable maximum of \$142,800 for 2021. The self-em-

ployed pay 12.4 percent. Some self-employed struggle with paying the 12.4 percent and look for creative ways to only report a small salary. This may enable you to have more cash now but your Social Security check will be much smaller when you become retirement age.

Religious objectors can often be exempted from paying the tax. I knew a minister who in his younger days did the paperwork to exempt out of Social Security. It was the one of the biggest mistakes of his life. When he became 65, he couldn't quit working. He had also drawn out most of his other pension savings for emer-

gencies.

With meager retirement dollars he was also faced with having to buy Medicare insurance. To make matters worse he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. At a relatively young senior adult age he had nothing with which to fight. He was tired from his long years of work. He had nothing financially saved. He couldn't stop working. Medical insurance became a dilemma and within two years he was dead.

Social Security is not a perfect world. It won't make you rich but you'll be glad you have the check and the medical insurance.

Keep this in mind the average monthly Social Security payment for 2021 is \$1,543, and the maximum you can receive at full retirement age is \$3,113

a month. If you have waited until you are 70 the amount is \$3,895.00. These figures change all the time depending on cost of living adjustments and how long you work and how much you pay into the system. Keep in mind the longer you work and the more you pay into Social Security, the more you collect at retirement.

So, go to work and be glad for every dollar withheld from your check for Social Security.

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.*

Op-Ed

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shots. They were \$35 each there. I got my final shot in the US and it was \$1300.

Our health care costs have actually increased despite the complex legislation known as the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obama care.) This legislation was written by the insurance companies and with their own best interests in mind. The reality is that the Affordable Care Act is not going to make health care affordable, only more expensive as premiums, deductibles and out of pocket expenses get higher and higher each year, escalating beyond the current rates of inflation. The costs go higher because of our profit driven system.

We cannot let this system continue. Our health is very important. We cannot be complacent and accept the health care system we have as the way things are. We must do something now about changing our health care system for the better. We need to get corporate profits out of the health care equation.

The solution to our health care crisis is Medicare for All, a system of non-profit single payer

health care, publicly funded and privately administered. Expanded and Improved Medicare for All will provide affordable health care for everyone, increased access to prevention and early intervention, providing dental and vision care. Preventive care is critical. I know too many women who have died because of delayed cancer diagnoses. Dental care is critical. A mother could not afford to take her nine-year old son to the dentist when he complained of a severe toothache. Her health insurance did not cover visits to a dentist. That toothache became a brain abscess and the boy died.

Medicare for All is a simple system, just like the current Medicare for those over 65, with a very low overhead. It will reduce administrative waste and bargain for the best prices for drugs and medical services. Hospitals and physicians will no longer need huge billing departments to process tons of complicated insurance forms. There will be no need for private health insurance. Improved Medicare for All would be funded by a small tax and all premiums, deductibles, copayments would be eliminated. We would pay a lot less for Medicare for All than the current bloated system.

Canada has single-payer

healthcare. In Canada no one dies because they are uninsured or can't afford health care. Canadians live longer and are healthier than us and spend about half per capita on health care costs than we do in the US. In Canada no one loses their home because they can't pay medical bills. Diabetics easily get the insulin they need.

We can only get Improved Medicare for All by passing legislation. There are bills in the Massachusetts Statehouse (House 1267 and Senate 766) and also the US Congress (HR 1976) for Expanded and Improved Medicare for All. I urge you to study these bills and insist your legislators support and pass them. It will not be easy but we must work for justice in health care and stop the suffering and dying when people can't get the care they need. We can make health care at last a truly enjoyed human right by creating Medicare for All, a health care system that put patients before profits, is comprehensive, covers every one, and is affordable.

Maria Termini is an artist and public speaker. She works with *Mass Care and Healthcare Now*. She welcomes your comments and can be contacted at: maria-termini2013@gmail.com.

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Immigrant students and educators reflect on the pandemic's impact on their education and lives

By JOHN LYNDIS

In early March, a few days before the COVID 19 pandemic closed down schools across Boston, Head of School at the Margarita Muñiz Academy in Jamaica Plain Dania Vazquez gathered her key staff, administrators, nurses, the school secretary and custodians because she wanted to have a conversation about what the school would do if a staff member or student brought COVID into the building.

They were discussing what the protocol would be when at some point a staff member asked, "Why are you so worried about this? This is not going to happen."

"You know what, 10 days later we had to go on lock down," said Vazquez. "I remember rushing the kids into the building and out of the building, giving them computers and books and paper and materials, and then gathering the teachers and saying, 'Listen, take the most important stuff. Take some books or whatever you need. But I think we'll be back after April vacation.'"

Vazquez's story was part of a



Head of School at the Margarita Muñiz Academy in Jamaica Plain Dania Vazquez during last week's "Suitcase Stories: Reflections from the School Year," to celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month and the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

virtual speaking series, "Suitcase Stories: Reflections from the School Year", to celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month and the end of the 2020-2021 school year. The event, sponsored by City of Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) and the International Institute of New England (IINE) gave im-

migrant students and educators the opportunity to share their experiences with remote learning and reflect on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on their educational journey.

Like many at the time during the early days of the pandemic Vazquez and her staff fully expected to be back in school in a couple of weeks.

"Little did we know what we were heading into," she said. "There was uncertainty and I even felt really scared. As time went on we had to figure out how to do remote learning."

Vazquez likened the quick switch to remote learning as building a plane while at the same time flying.

"At the beginning of May I decided to go in (to the school building) because I felt like I needed to be there," she said. "It was just so quiet. A couple of days after I went upstairs to check on the classrooms and I remember walking through and it was like the Twilight Zone. We literally ran out of the building (when the pandemic struck). There were still open books on tables and

there was stuff everywhere. It was like we were coming back in a few days but we hadn't. It was just so quiet, and cold and dark."

Growing up a Latina in Washington Heights, New York knew the struggles of living paycheck to paycheck.

"But you know what, this pandemic blew whatever I experienced as a young person out of the water," she said. "My Latino community, my black and brown students, were experiencing something that was set at warp speed."

Vazquez discussed parents losing their jobs, trying to navigate how to get SNAP benefits and the stress kids experience as families that were once stable were torn up by the pandemic.

"I had a mom call me to say that she lost her job, she had Coronavirus, and she didn't know what to do because her son, my student, was in his room freaking out," she said. "And that was heartbreaking. We had to struggle to figure out together what to do with another mother who called to say that she was in her final term of pregnancy and

didn't have food."

There were also calls from students depressed that they would not have a graduation or see their friends for the rest of the year.

"But my staff were all heroes," said Vazquez. "They were not just teaching--they were delivering Chromebooks, figuring out how to get food to families, figuring out housing vouchers for families losing their homes. I mean, we were doing everything to hold our community together."

With the pandemic slowing, Vazquez said she wrote a poem for her students called, "Getting Out of Zoombieland."

The poem reads, "The mother-ship is waking up/we're coming back at least some/Zoombieland still has grip/Maybe a little less with each day passing/With each one walking through the doors as connecting smiles onto the mass/Sounds in the hallways/The sun shining through colored windows/We are all waking up a little more/we have to do this together/Pulling each other up and out/It's a slow crawl out of Zoombieland."

BPL to welcome patrons back into the buildings

The Boston Public Library (BPL) announced plans to reopen its spaces to the public. On June 1, the Central Library in Copley Square has reopened for limited in-person services, and June 14, those services will be expanded, and all branch libraries not currently under reconstruction are planned to reopen. All reopening plans follow the latest city and state public health guidance.

"We are thrilled to have libraries across the city opening their doors next month," said Mayor Kim Janey. "Equitable access is a foundation for my administration and we are focused on providing services that bring residents joy and improve their quality of life. These are both qualities the library offers our citizens, and I hope in the coming weeks Bostonians will visit their local libraries, explore the spaces we've all missed, and take advantage of all the free resources the library provides."

"We are very much looking forward to welcoming patrons back into our buildings, including soon to the newly renovated Roxbury and Adams Street Branches," said BPL President David Leonard. "As difficult as it was to close our doors last March, I am proud

of the innovative programming and critical resources we were able to provide Bostonians over the last year, both virtually and on a limited basis in-person. Now that it's safe to begin reopening, we are getting ready to welcome you back and look forward to continuing the library's mission to provide services free to all. Our top priorities in the months ahead are aiding residents in equitable economic recovery and educational advancement, along with providing summer programming for all ages."

Central Library in Copley Square

Walk up services:

Beginning on June 1, patrons will be able to browse select books in the building, while other books will be available to be pulled on demand by staff. In addition, patrons will be able to pick up holds and check out books and DVDs; spend time in the courtyard; renew their library cards; and use public computers, print, and make photocopies.

On June 14, all remaining public floors will be open for browsing; the Children's Library and Teen Central will open; and the Book Delivery Desk in the McKim Building will be accessi-

ble to the public.

Services by appointment:

Patrons are able to make appointments to use the research collections, use the Kirstein Business Library & Innovation Center resources, or to request one-on-one computer assistance. Appointments can be made at bpl.org/reopening or by calling 617-859-5400.

Hours of operation:

Starting on June 1st, the Central Library will be open Mondays: 10AM – 6PM; Tuesdays: 10AM – 6PM; Wednesdays: 10AM – 8PM; Thursdays: 10AM – 6PM; Fridays: 9AM – 5PM; Saturdays: 9AM – 5PM; Sundays: Closed.

Branch Libraries

The library intends to open all branches not currently under construction on June 14. Visitors will be able to pick up holds and check out books; spend time browsing; use the library's computers for limited time slots, and print and make photocopies. Additionally, branch exterior spaces such as courtyards or reading gardens will be accessible to the public as well.

Until branches reopen, patrons can continue to rely on the BPL To Go program to check out items from their preferred

location. Once the branches have reopened, patrons will no longer need to make an appointment to retrieve their holds, and can pick up their items during open hours as normal.

The adjusted branch hours will be made available shortly.

Safety Requirements

Patrons visiting any library location will be required to wear a mask over their nose and mouth at all times, and abide by all staff instructions regarding safety.

Visitors will not be allowed to eat or drink inside the libraries or to use meeting rooms during this initial reopening phase.

Future Services

The library will be reopening additional services and spaces at the Central Library in the coming weeks, such as public meeting rooms, Art and Architecture Tours, and in-person programming, as staffing levels and staffing capacity return to normal.

Throughout the summer, programs for all ages will be available outdoors at many branch locations, from storytimes to ESL Conversation Circles.



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