COVID
Grip Tightens

Walsh announces city will remain in Step Two, Phase Two of reopening plan for “at least” three more weeks

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Martin Walsh announced on Tuesday that Boston will remain in Step Two, Phase Two of the state’s reopening process for “at least another three weeks,” until January 27.

Walsh said that as of Monday, Boston had 431 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 and two more people had died from the virus. The current community positivity rate is 8.8 percent, which he said was up from last week.

Walsh called the rise in cases “concerning,” adding that hospital rates are also rising. He said that 93 percent of non-surge adult ICU beds in the city are currently occupied, which is the “highest we’ve seen in quite some time.”

Walsh said that “this is one of the most serious points in the pandemic so far,” and if the positive cases do not go down, “we will need to look at more restrictions.”

Walsh originally announced in mid-December that the city would “temporarily” revert to Phase Two, Step Two to help slow the spread of the virus and ensure hospitals would be able to adequately care for patients.

Boston will now remain in this phase until January 27, after which the public health data will be reevaluated. The restrictions include a 10 person limit on indoor gatherings and a 25 person limit for those nuptials.

City Councilor Bok reflects on her first year in office

By Dan Murphy

When she was sworn in as the District 8 City Councilor on Jan. 6 of last year, Kenzie Bok never could have anticipated the unprecedented trials ahead during her first year in public office.

“I came in thinking that I would be very focused on affordable housing,” said Bok, who prior to becoming the youngest serving member of the Boston City Council at age 30, worked as the Boston Housing Authority’s Senior Advisor for Policy and Planning, “because that’s what really drove me into running in the first place.”

In her first month on the job, Councilor Bok began “laying the policy groundwork for housing-related initiatives we’d end up launching later in the year,” she said, which included one propos-
EMISSIONS BILL IS A BIG STEP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The approval on Monday by both houses of the Massachusetts legislature of a bill that requires the state to reduce its carbon emissions by at least 85% below 1990 levels by 2050 represents a huge step toward the goal of mitigating the effects of climate change in our state.

Although the total carbon emissions emanating from Massachusetts obviously is only a small fraction of global emissions, the legislation provides a blueprint for other states and private industry to follow.

Some say that the ultimate goal of net-zero by 2050 is unattainable, but we're underestimating the reality of what is happening in the world today.

The 2020 season for the New England Patriots came to a merciful close this past weekend. The woeful Pats finished with a 7-9 record, their first losing season since 2000, and missed the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

We have to admit that we feel badly for young Patriots’ fans, those born after 1990, who have become accustomed to the dominance and excellence, year-after-year, by Bill Belichick’s crew. This season has been jarring.

Admittedly, even for those of us who are long-time Pats’ fans who can try what those of us who know but youth is adventurous and will begin to look like it will become a feasible source of energy within 10 years, making the goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 more than just a dream.

Most excitingly, the progress in the development of hydrogen fuel cells, which has been more than two decades in the making, finally is beginning to look like it will become a feasible source of energy within 10 years, making the goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 more than just a dream.

We applaud the action by Gov. Charlie Baker and our legislature in bringing to fruition an environmental action plan that recognizes the pressing need to address the issue of climate change.

Although the pandemic rightly is in the forefront of government leaders’ attention today, that problem will seem like a stroll in the park if we do not take immediate action to avert the looming climate catastrophe that threatens our planet’s very existence.

IT WAS A GREAT RUN, PATS’ FANS

The 2020 season for the New England Patriots came to a merciful close this past weekend. The woeful Pats finished with a 7-9 record, their first losing season since 2000, and missed the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

We have to admit that we feel badly for young Patriots’ fans, those born after 1990, who have become accustomed to the dominance and excellence, year-after-year, by Bill Belichick’s crew. This season has been the equivalent of having an ice bucket thrown over your head, a rude wake-up call to the reality of the ebb-and-flow of professional sports that the Patriots alone among all sports franchises in the modern era have managed to avoid for an unprecedented two decades.

Admittedly, even for those of us who are long-time Pats’ fans who can recall all of the decades of ignominy, from Braves Field to Fenway Park to Harvard Stadium and then to Schaefer Stadium, the relegation of the Patriots to the bottom tier of the NFL this season, in which Foxboro and Gillette Stadium no longer were the epicenter of the football universe, was jarring.

So let’s be grateful for the two decades of fun that Bob Kraft and his team brought our way.

But as the proverb says, all things must come to an end -- and so they have for our Patriots.

It was a nice ride – and those championship banners always will be there to remind us of the good times.
Beacon Hill COVID update listed

By John Lynds

Last week the cumulative COVID-19 positive test rate in Beacon Hill and the surrounding neighborhoods dropped but the weekly positive test rate rose slightly.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) last Friday, overall 36,974 Beacon Hill, Back Bay, North End, West End and Downtown residents have been tested for COVID-19 and the data shows that 4.6 percent of those tested were COVID positive—a 54.4 percent decrease from the 10.1 percent two weeks ago.

Last week 3,967 residents were tested and 36 were positive—a 9 percent increase from the 3.3 reported two Fridays ago.

Citywide, 8.8 percent were found to be COVID positive last week.

“The average number of positive tests each day for Boston residents was 413,” said Mayor Martin Walsh at a press briefing Tuesday. “That’s up slightly compared to the week before. Our current community positivity rate was 8.8 percent. That is up from the week before. Our case numbers are concerning, and our hospital numbers are higher than we’d like.”

The Mayor said that 93% of adult Non-Surge ICU beds are occupied, the highest Boston has seen in a long time. The Mayor said that he and his team are in constant contact with local hospitals, and that he needs everyone to do their part.

“This is one of the most serious points of the pandemic so far and if numbers don’t improve, we’ll have to look at more restrictions. So everyone needs to wear a mask, avoid crowds, and stay six feet apart,” said Walsh. “Every time you do these things, you could be saving a life. We will beat this thing, if everyone buckles down.”

The Mayor also discussed the need for personal safety while indoor dining. He said that the City of Boston continues to monitor the data closely and limit indoor dining capacity to levels the public health experts say are safe.

He thanked local restaurants for following safety protocols, saying that they have been very cooperative. The City continues to support them with small business relief funds, technical support, and outdoor dining programs, and making it easier for them to offer safe pickup and delivery.

But, the Mayor said, he needs patrons to do their part, too.

The Mayor said local contact tracing efforts make it clear that even though indoor dining itself isn’t a high risk factor, too many people are going out to dinner with people outside their bubbles, increasing the risk for COVID-19 transmission. He said that sometimes they see other people they know and “table hop,” which has to stop.

“We can keep local restaurants open... but only if people follow the public health guidance,” said Walsh. “So, if you’re indoor dining: only go with people in your bubble; keep your mask on when you’re not eating; and don’t mingle with other tables. It’s not just about your safety... It’s about our hardworking waiters and waitresses, hosts, and busboys who are working hard so that you can have a good time. Be respectful and help us spread the word about this.”

The infection rate in Beacon Hill and surrounding neighborhoods increased 7.5 percent in one week according to the latest city statistics.

The BPHC data released last Friday showed Beacon Hill, Back Bay, North End, West End and Downtown had an infection rate of 321.9 cases per 10,000 residents, up from 299.3 cases per 10,000 residents.

One hundred twenty-six additional residents became infected with the virus last week and the total number of cases in the area increased from 1,668 cases to 1,794 cases as of last Friday.

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 8.5 percent percent last week and went from 38,872 cases to 42,195 confirmed cases in a week. Thirty-seven more Boston residents died from the virus and there are now 1,025 total deaths in the city from COVID.
science and Pre-K sports, there are open opportunities for you to come into the Firehouse at flexible times and enjoy the wide array of enrichment programs and athletics with the comfort of knowing who you’re in the class with in an individualized space. These semi-private classes are open to all ages and led by our trained staff. For further information and to sign up, call the Front Desk at 617-227-5838, or visit www.hillhouseboston.org.

Baker signs police reform legislation

Gov. Charles Baker signed “An Act Relative to Justice, Equity and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth,” a controversial piece of legislation that creates a mandatory certification process for police officers, increases accountability and transparency in law enforcement and gives police departments a greater ability to hire or promote only qualified applicants.

“This bill is the product of bipartisan cooperation and thanks to the Black and Latino Caucus’ leadership on the hugely important issue of law enforcement accountability, Massachusetts will have one of the best laws in the nation,” said Baker. “Police officers have enormous difficult jobs and we are grateful they put their lives on the line every time they go to work. Thanks to final negotiations on this bill, police officers will have a system they can trust and our communities will be safer for it.”

Former Speaker Bob DeLeo added, “I am proud that the House lived up to its vow of listening to folks with lived experience in enacting one of the most comprehensive approaches to police reform in the United States since the tragic murder of George Floyd. My unyielding gratitude to Speaker Mariano and Chairs Cronin, Michlewitz and Gonzalez for their persistent effort to improve our law enforcement system. I am confident that the House of Representatives will build on this achievement in the time ahead and am humbled that legislation which promotes fairness and equality are part of the House’s legacy.”

“I am grateful to the Governor and key leaders in the House and Senate for their wisdom in coming together to carry this bill across the finish line,” said Sen. William N. Brownsberger (D – Belmont). “I believe that within five years, the Commonwealth will be a significantly better place as a result of this legislation.”

“This law represents a long-standing position as what are now qualified applicants. For police officers can use physical force, and specifically bans the use of chokeholds and prohibits firing into a fleeing vehicle unless doing so is both necessary to prevent imminent harm and proportionate to risk of harm. The bill also generally precludes officers from using rubber pellets, chemicals, or canine units against a crowd. Violations of any of these provisions may provide grounds for an officer to have their certification suspended or revoked.

The bill places strict limits on the use of so-called “no-knock” warrants, requiring such warrants to be issued by a judge and only in situations where an officer’s safety would be at risk if they announced their presence and only where there are no children or adults over the age of 65 in the home. The legislation provides for an exception when those children or older adults are themselves at risk of harm. In addition, the bill requires law enforcement to seek a court order when conducting a facial recognition search except in emergency situations.

The legislation includes key provisions of the State Police reform legislation the Administration filed in January that provide new tools to improve accountability and discipline within the Department and to enhance diversity in the Department’s recruitment and promotional practices. Those key provisions include establishing a State Police cadet program, enhancing the Colonel’s ability to address and correct misconduct, updating rules governing promotions of uniformed members to officer positions, removing the requirement that the Governor look exclusively within the State Police when appointing a colonel, and creating a new criminal offense for police officers who knowingly receive payment for a fraudulent claim of hours worked.
al to build new public housing in the city and another to enhancing Boston’s commitment to cooperative housing.

“Cooperative housing is something that stabilizes a lot of folks in the district and anchors a lot of our neighborhoods,” she said.

But when COVID-19 took hold of Boston during Councilor Bok’s third month, the city was faced with an unprecedented and unforeseen public-health crisis.

“When the pandemic hit, in some ways, it shifted everything,” Councilor Bok said. “In other ways, especially with housing, it deepened the needs of what was already there.”

In the spring, Councilor Bok and her colleagues found emergency housing for the homeless and raised the need for public housing vouchers for families while the threat of eviction for families loomed as they struggled to pay the rent.

“We became focused on cooperative housing as part of the solution,” she said, “along with buying apartments that were going into foreclosure [to house residents].”

When asked what accomplishment regarding housing she’s most proud during her first year in office, Councilor Bok doesn’t hesitate in her reply: the city’s “Fair Housing Zoning Amendment.”

“It has really been a partnership with Councilor [Lydia] Edwards and the Mayor’s Administration to make Boston the first city in the country to embed a commitment to fair housing in our zoning code and in our development process,” said Councilor Bok, adding that the policy experience she brings to the job was useful in drafting language for this.

The amendment, which passed last month, is scheduled to become law next week via the city’s Zoning Commission.

“What’s so exciting is that it’s a really important tool for the city, but zoning has historically been used across Boston and nationwide at times for the purpose of segregation and racial discrimination in housing,” Councilor Bok said. “So it’s extremely powerful to reverse that dynamic and use zoning proactively to bring about a more inclusive city.”

Moreover, she added: “We’re the first in the country. We’ve come up with a really original mechanism for making sure as we grow as a city, and that we grow inclusively and take active steps to make sure every project is a part of building a Boston for all.”

Helping residents of her district as they have struggled with food insecurity over the last year also topped Councilor Bok’s first-year priorities.

“It was immediately clear that we were hit by a tsunami of need when it came to food in the city,” she said, “and I’m proud to have partnered with the city departments to imagine what we could do at a larger scale of magnitude to really transform assistance from providing one-off food needs...to delivering thousands of boxes of meals to our most vulnerable population.”

And it all started with a pilot program in the Fenway, Councilor Bok said, “with a bunch of partners to show it could be done.”

In the new year, Councilor Bok will be working with Mayor Marty Walsh’s Administration to get a commitment to undertake an evaluation of the city’s Payment of Taxes (POIT) program for major universities, hospitals and cultural institutions because, she said, their real estate assessments haven’t been updated since 2009.

“It’s an important part of the equity puzzle when you think about how real-estate tax rates have gone up for the rest of the city,” Councilor Bok said. “And also, we have an acute need for resources as we come back from the pandemic and to tackle serious inequality in our city that has only deepened because of COVID.”

In this budget year, Councilor Bok also worked tirelessly to secure $8 million for a first-time homebuyers program that, she said, has already helped a lot of families in its first three months, 80 percent of whom were people of color.

Councilor Bok said she looks forward in 2021 to “accelerating the work she started last year.” A lot of initiatives have real traction and will give me plenty more to do in the year to come,” she added.

These initiatives range from forming an Urban Climate Conservation Corps to requiring greater police accountability, and Councilor Bok has also proposed the creation of the Boston Sestercentennial Commission to provide a wider and more equitable lens on history in planning for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in 2026 while encouraging the city to take a closer look at the “tools” it now has to ensure historic preservation.

“If I’m really leading a major push on historic preservation on the commemoration front,” she said.

Councilor Bok, whose office launched an impromptu youth job program over the summer and advocated for 1,000 year-round youth jobs this school year, also remains committed to creating more youth employment opportunities in the city.

“Youth employment is something that’s going to be important as young people recover from the current crisis, she said, “and that’s one thing I’m going to push for in the current year.”

Councilor Bok began her service in public office during which has undeniably one of the most tumultuous years in Boston’s history, but through her resolve and unwavering commitment to her city, she rose to the occasion and now looks forward to tackling the challenges ahead.

“It’s been a challenging year to be a first-year councilor, but I’ve also loved getting up every day and thinking about how to help people in our district in this time,” she said. “It has given me a really strong sense of purpose through this crisis, and I’ve felt very humbled by the trust that the people of District 8 have put in me.”

**Walsh (from pg. 1)**

limit on outdoor gatherings, both in public and private spaces.

Activities and businesses to remain closed include gyms, indoor fitness centers, museums, aquariums, and indoor gaming and arcades, among others. One on one training sessions may continue, Walsh said, and indoor recreational and athletic youth activities may continue with a 10 person limit for those 18 and under.

The state’s additional restrictions that went into effect on December 26 also still apply, the mayor said. This includes office space at 25 percent capacity, indoor dining at 25 percent capacity with a 90 minute time limit, and places of worship at 25 percent capacity. Bar seating is not allowed in Boston without written permission from the Licensing Board. For the complete list of restrictions, visit boston.gov/reopening.

Walsh reiterated that these restrictions are “not about targeting specific sectors as a cause of the virus spread,” but the goal is to limit spread and reduce the amount of time people spend outside of their homes with others.

“If metrics get worse we might have to implement further restrictions,” Walsh said.

He also talked about safe dining and thanked Boston’s restaurateurs “for following the safety protocols,” but added that “we need patrons to do their part.”

He said that “too many people are going out to dinner with people outside of their bubble,” and said that people should not “table hop” if they see someone they know in a restaurant. People should also keep their masks on when they are seated at their table and not actively eating or drinking.

“We need to keep local restaurateurs open, but only if people follow the public health guidelines,” Walsh said.

He also said that everyone should be getting tested for the virus, as the state has more than 30 testing sites. “We’re asking you to make it a New Year’s resolution,” he said.

Walsh also said that he will be delivering his annual State of the City address next week, but this year it will be “completely virtual.” The event will be on January 12 at 7:30pm, and will be livestreamed on boston.gov, as well as TV news stations.

“2020 was one of the hardest years in Boston’s history,” Walsh said, and thanked “everyone for doing their part.”

**Bok (from pg. 1)**

THE BEACON HILL TIMES

Bok

\[\text{By Gary Drug} \]

\[\text{For over 75 years, Gary Drug has been serving the residents of Beacon Hill, the West End and the Back Bay.} \]

Stay Home, Stay Safe

Your Neighborhood Pharmacy

Neighborhood Delivery Service

Monday thru Friday

Delivering Your Medication

And Other Essential Items

Store Hours: Mon - Fri 8am-8pm
Sat & Sun 9am-5pm

Copy & Fax Service • Neighborhood Delivery Service

We accept most prescription drug plans
Let Gary Drug Be Your Neighborhood Pharmacy
59 Charles Street • Phone 617-227-0023 • Fax 617-227-2879

Want Neighborhood News delivered right to your hands?

Subscribe to The Beacon Hill Time’s Newsletter and never miss a thing!

Visit thebeaconhilltimes.com or scan the QR Code
The Esplanade Association celebrates 20th Anniversary


To mark the 20th Anniversary of the Esplanade Association’s successful public-private partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Esplanade Association (EA) will present “Hatched: Breaking through the Silence,” a four-week illumination and sound experience to provide a family-friendly and physically-distant celebration at the famed DCR Hatch Memorial Shell.

“Hatched” will cut through the darkness of the winter months, offering a public space for joy and optimism in the New Year. The work is an original 15-minute offering a public space for joy and optimism in the New Year. The work is an original 15-minute offering over 300 opportunities to enjoy the work in the open-air landscape of the historic Hatch Shell Oval Lawn.

“Hatched” is the fifth and most ambitious offering in the Esplanade Association’s public art program, which includes four art murals currently on view in locations throughout the 3.2-mile linear park. Public art has become a core element of the Esplanade Association’s mission to support the ongoing health and vitality of the 64-acre Charles River Esplanade through capital restoration work, park improvement projects, horticultural care, public program-

When I think of the Hatch Shell, I envision gorgeous music, community, and a love for my city. Memories of concerts, walks, and bike rides along the Esplanade come to mind. With Hatched, my team and I are elated to create a new type of expression that brings original music, visuals, and new technology to the iconic structure, encouraging viewers to form a new memory of the space - a memory that will carry us into the New Year and beyond, celebrating creativity, resilience, and joy.”

“The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Charles River Esplanade serves as an incredible natural resource offering countless recreational opportunities for visitors to enjoy year round,” said DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery. “Engaging visitors in unique ways like public art displays ensures the park remains timeless, and the Baker-Polito Administration is pleased to continue its public-private partnership with the Esplanade Association.”

Powered by Epson laser projectors, “Hatched” will bring vibrant color and form to the inner surface of the Hatch Shell. With custom-built weather housing for the projectors, the experience presents a rare opportunity to experience projection mapping in the winter months and will bring joy no matter the New England winter weather.
State announces availability of $4 million to fund electric-vehicle charging infrastructure

The Baker-Polito Administration announced that an additional $4 million has been made available to support new and enhanced electric-vehicle charging infrastructure programs across the state, as part of the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (MassEVIP). These programs, funded by the 2017 settlement of the Volkswagen (VW) diesel emissions court case, will provide $1 million in funding for fast-charging stations, $1.5 million for public-access charging stations, and $1 million for workplace and fleets charging station infrastructure.

“Shifting a zero-emission transportation system is essential as we seek to cut greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The electric vehicle charging programs announced today will also provide economic development opportunities across Massachusetts and support the growth of innovative clean energy jobs,” said Gov. Charles Baker. “This announcement builds on our recent commitment to launching the Transportation and Climate Initiative Program to reduce transportation emissions and invest in cleaner, more affordable transportation options for Massachusetts residents.”

The Massachusetts Volkswagen Settlement Beneficiary Mitigation Plan announced last December committed the Commonwealth to designating 15 percent of the VW funding to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, totaling approximately $11.25 million. The Administration has previously made $5 million in VW funds available for various MassEVIP programs, and today adds $1.5 million in funding for a new competitive Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) program, $1.5 million for a new rolling-enrollment Public Access Charging (PAC) program, and an additional $1 million for a revamped Workplace and Fleets (WPF) charging program.

Administered through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), MassEVIP is making these funds available to private, public and non-profit employers, and educational and multi-unit residential property owners in the Commonwealth in order to install standard Level 1 (120-volt) and Level 2 (240-volt) EV charging stations, as well as Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) stations.

“Adding more charging stations to our current network will accelerate and increase market demand for electric vehicles,” said MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suzberg. “Drivers will have greater access to convenient and reliable public fast-charging locations, reducing range anxiety and allowing them to travel without concern about where to charge.”

Under this new and enhanced funding under the VW settlement, MassEVIP will fund electric vehicle charging equipment and installation costs through the following programs:

- An additional $1 million for a rolling-enrollment Workplace and Fleets (WPF) charging program, extending the existing $1.5 million program, for a total of $2.5 million. Improvements over the prior Workplace Charging and Fleets programs include allowing private and non-profit fleet owners to apply, adding Level 1 stations as eligible equipment for fleets, and adding coverage of installation costs for workplaces.
- An existing $1.5 million for a rolling-enrollment Multi-Unit Dwelling and Educational Campus charging program. Improvements over the prior program include reducing the minimum number of residential units from 10 to five, allowing educational campuses to apply, and adding coverage of installation costs.

The additional funding is made available in the following programs:

- An existing $1.5 million for a rolling-enrollment Public Access Charging (PAC) program, extending a prior fully subscribed $2 million competitive version of this program. Improvements over the prior PAC program include accepting applications on a rolling basis and adding Level 1 charging stations as eligible equipment.

BHCA (from pg. 1)

If you see paper permits on trees or gas lamp poles issued by the City of Boston for moving or construction vehicles that are EXPIRED, please feel free to remove and discard them. Every little bit helps!

4. BOS:311

311 is an easy to remember telephone number that will connect you with the City’s Constituent Service Center. The center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. It is the best way to report an issue that the City should resolve.

311 provides access to all non-emergency City services. You can call 311 from any telephone, or you can call directly to 617-635-4500. You can also connect with 311 by downloading the mobile app, or by submitting a request or concern online at https://www.cityofboston.gov/311. The mobile app allows you to easily send a photo of the problem you are reporting. You can even Tweet @BOS311.

We recommend that our neighbors use this service whenever they have a question or concern to which the City can respond.

5. Upcoming BHCA Events:

- 311 is an easy to remember telephone number that will connect you with the City’s Constituent Service Center. The center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. It is the best way to report an issue that the City should resolve.

BHCA (from pg. 1)

If you see paper permits on trees or gas lamp poles issued by the City of Boston for moving or construction vehicles that are EXPIRED, please feel free to remove and discard them. Every little bit helps!

4. BOS:311

311 is an easy to remember telephone number that will connect you with the City’s Constituent Service Center. The center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. It is the best way to report an issue that the City should resolve.

311 provides access to all non-emergency City services. You can call 311 from any telephone, or you can call directly to 617-635-4500. You can also connect with 311 by downloading the mobile app, or by submitting a request or concern online at https://www.cityofboston.gov/311. The mobile app allows you to easily send a photo of the problem you are reporting. You can even Tweet @BOS311.

We recommend that our neighbors use this service whenever they have a question or concern to which the City can respond.

5. Upcoming BHCA Events:

- There will be no Zoning & Licensing meeting in January 2021.
- January Board of Directors Meeting – Monday, January 11, 2021, by Zoom

Members of the public are welcome to attend our board meetings. If you are interested in attending this month’s Zoom meeting, please email us at info@bhcivic.org, with your contact information.

*Visit the Beacon Hill Civic Association website www.bhcivic.org or call the office (617-227-1922) for more information on any of these events.
If you missed us at your front door every Thursday
Please go to
www.beaconhilltimes.com

The Beacon Hill Times
December 31, 2020

2020 Year in Review

Igloo Village at 75 on Liberty Wharf offers unique outdoor-dining experience

Markus Ripperger first conceived of Igloo Village at 75 on Liberty Wharf – the restaurant's cluster of eight heated, self-contained plastic bubbles designed for private outdoor dining – about two years ago, but the dream didn't become reality until this past fall when the restaurant was looking for unique ways to stay in business amid the pandemic.

Ripperger, president and CEO of Hampshire House Corporation, which owns and operates the Seaport restaurant, as well as 75 Chestnut and Cheers Beacon Hill, said the first bubble, which measures around 12 feet in diameter, arrived from Florida-based Gardening USA in October and was soon deemed such a success that 75 on Liberty Wharf ordered eight more that arrived in early December.

"As a small restaurant, we wanted something so we can continue having people enjoy outdoor dining, even though the summer season is no more… so we've reinvented our outside tables for the wintry time," Ripperger said. "People love to have some..."
nity meetings have revealed most
students would attend two days a
week in groups.

Re-Opening Plan and called for more safeguards.

According to the latest data
the rate of 91.7 cases per 10,000
and Downtown had an infection
time rose only 2.8 percent in the past
rate of 2.8 percent in the past
so it’s weekly COVID-19 stats by
vice versa.

As the draft plan Boston Public
School (BPS) Superintendent
on the draft plan Boston Public
school committee.

There are several fountains and other places, including the Mirabella Pool, in the area to cool off this summer,

The Beacon Hill T

THursday, July 30, 2020 FREE

COOLING OFF ON THE COMMON

By Seth Daniel

THE BEACON HILL TIMES

THE BEACON HILL TIMES

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER

The stained glass in the last clue is on 78 Beacon Street built circa
1848. Until 1992 it was the office of the Unitarian Universalist Service
Committee. It has been a single-family home since 1994.

Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send
an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

THIS WEEK'S CLUE
Baker-Polito administration announces
First Week Hikes at all state parks

For the 30th year in a row, the State will offer residents and visitors the opportunity to explore the great outdoors through the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) First Week Hikes program in celebration of the start of the New Year.

An alternative to the traditional First Day Hikes, First Week Hikes encourage visitors to enjoy outdoor activities on their own throughout the first week of the New Year, until Friday, Jan. 8. This year, DCR celebrates 30 years of this tradition in the Commonwealth. Additionally, it marks 10 years that all 50 states have adopted this happy, healthy New Year's tradition.

“First Day Hikes are a time honored tradition for many people across the Commonwealth, with thousands of visitors ringing in the New Year with a hike in a state park,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Kathleen Theoharides. “It is with pleasure that the tradition continues and we are pleased to offer safe, healthy, recreational opportunities through these First Week Hikes.”

Historically, First Day Hikes are popular adventures guided by DCR staff. In an effort to provide residents and visitors with outdoor recreation opportunities for the New Year in a safe manner during the COVID-19 pandemic, DCR will implement the following changes for this year:

• Extending the traditional one-day hike to any day or multiple visits during First Week 2021 to prevent crowds forming at parks;
• Introducing self-guided adventures to encourage social distancing in place of guided offerings, for a list of recommendations visit the DCR website.

“Taking a stroll in your local park for First Week Hikes is a great way to kick-off the new year, build tradition, and discover the stunning natural and recreational resources that Massachusetts has to offer,” said DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery. “For the 30th year, the state parks system has provided hiking opportunities on January 1, and while this year may look a little different, DCR still encourages people to get outdoors safely.”

Ahead of an adventure outdoors, watch the DCR First Week Hike video and see the following guidance:
• Pick a local park near you, not necessarily a state park;
• Print or download a trail map;
• Check the weather forecast and dress appropriately;
• Keep your hike short and safe;
• Be flexible – if a park is busy, visit another park or return at a later time; and,
• Return to your car by 4:30 p.m. before the sun sets;

DCR asks visitors to park in designated areas only, if a parking lot is full come back another time. Many visitor centers remain closed. However, restrooms or porta-johns within many DCR parks remain open. Dogs are to be on leash in state parks unless signage designates otherwise. Dogs are not permitted on DCR Water Supply Protection areas. To find a dog-friendly park, visit the DCR website.

First Day Hikes were started at the Blue Hills Reservation in the Town of Milton in 1992 in an effort to promote year-round outdoor recreation, and to motivate the public to explore the Commonwealth’s awe-inspiring natural resources. A growing collection of participating states culminated in 2012 when all 50 state park systems joined together to sponsor America’s State Parks First Day Hikes Initiative, which has since become the signature nationwide program for the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD).

Area A-1 sees 20-percent drop in Part One crime as ’20 draws to a close

As 2020 was drawing to a close, Area A-1 had seen a 20-percent decrease in violent and property crime from the previous year, according to Boston Police.

Between Jan. and Dec. 27 of last year, 1,905 incidents of Part One crime were reported in the district that includes Beacon Hill, Chinatown, Downtown and the North End as opposed to 2,393 during the same timeframe in 2019.

No homicides were reported in 2020, down from one the previous year, while rapes and attempted rapes fell around 33 percent as the number dropped to 18 from 27 in 2019.

Robberies and attempted robberies saw a nearly 21-percent decrease, with 122 incidents reported in 2020 as opposed to 154 the previous year.

Incidents of domestic aggravated assault were down slightly in 2020, with the number dropping to 23 from 24 the year before, while non-domestic aggravated assaults were down almost 29 percent as the number climbed to 210 from 270 in 2019.

The rate of commercial burglaries, on the other hand, nearly doubled as the number climbed to 127 in 2020 from 66 the previous year.

Residential burglaries, meanwhile, were down slightly as the number dropped from 46 to 30 in 2019, while incidents of other burglary dropped to none from nine. Incidents of larceny from a motor vehicle saw a nearly 39-percent uptick as the number climbed to 291 in 2020 from 209 the previous year.

In contrast, other larcenies were down around 33 percent as the number fell to 997 from 1,490 in 2019.

Auto thefts were down about 19 percent, with 71 in 2020, compared to 93 the previous year.

Citywide, Part One crime was down 5 percent as the number of incidents dropped to 16,491 from 17,415 in 2019.

Robert “Bob” Matson, passed away Thursday, December 10, 2020, at Winchester Hospital in Massachusetts.

Bob was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on August 4, 1937, to Matti and Mary Matson. He attended local schools, graduating from Maynard High School in 1955.

In keeping with family tradition, Bob joined the United States Army in 1956. After completing basic training, he served with the 10th Mountain Division as a light infantryman in Bavaria, Germany. Bob was on active duty for two years and then transitioned to the Army Reserve, where he concurrently worked for Raytheon Technologies. Bob retired from the reserves in 1962, after having achieved the rank of Sergeant (E5). He earned a Good Conduct Medal and received an honorable discharge.

Bob left Raytheon to spend the next 20 years in the insurance and securities business, working for New York Life, Travelers, and Prudential. He was highly regarded and received numerous awards and accolades.

Bob stepped away from the insurance and securities industry to pursue a career working for city government organizations in the Greater Boston area. He worked for the Boston Fire Department, assisting the city’s first responders. Throughout his time working for the city he also kept himself busy as an independent contractor in property management from which he recently retired.

Serving the community was a central focus for Bob; he dedicated his time and talents to The Boys Club of America and the March of Dimes. He was honored by those organizations and received many awards and praise for his service. Bob also served in a leadership role with Waltham Jaycees, Political campaigns and neighborhood watch programs all benefited from Bob’s passion for his community.

Bob had an insatiable appetite for reading; he particularly loved American history and financial periodicals. He found great joy in staying connected with his fellow veterans. He cherished time celebrating special occasions with family and traveled throughout the country to be present for family events. He had a passion for all local sports teams and enjoyed cheering on the New England Patriots, Boston Red Sox, Celtics, and Bruins. His hobbies included collecting coins, maps, and stamps.

Bob held a special place in the hearts of many people. Bob’s sister, Mary Ann, said, “He truly blessed me in many ways, particularly in my running career. He was always supportive and a great encourager.” Bob was proud of his children and had his own way of showing it. He was dependable, generous, and a pillar in his community. Bob will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

Bob is survived by his long-time companion, Judith Carlsson, of Reading, MA; his sisters, Mary Ann Matson of Nashua, NH; and Joan (Matson) Willett and her husband Richard of Ludlow, VT; his sons, Rob Matson and his wife Elizabeth of Castle Pines, CO; Glenn Matson and his wife Stephanie of Las Vegas, NV; and his daughter, Elizabeth Van Vechten and her husband Brian of Castle Pines, CO; 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation in Bob’s name to an organization that he was devoted to: The Happy Crew (http://thehappycrew.org) or your preferred charitable organization.

Visitation will be held at Fowler-Kennedy Funeral Home, 42 Concord Street, Maynard, MA. 01754 on Friday, January 15, 2021 11:00am-12:00pm, followed by a graveside service at 12:30 pm at Glenwood Cemetery 260 Grant Road, Maynard, MA 01754.
With trips to far-flung destinations on the back burner for a while, we can still enjoy some “dining chair travel.” This approach takes armchair travel to the next level by stimulating more of your senses as you enjoy the food of your imaginary destination.

For many years this has been a favorite way to explore foodways we find interesting, but far too much effort to visit in person. We’ve developed a fun way to explore countries, regions, and cultures with friends.

First, think of friends who are open to learning about a place and its foodways and plan a day around exploring that topic. Typically, we would begin with someone suggesting a place, culture, beverage, or food they want to experience in context.

Next, comes research to learn more about the dining table destination. In the years we’ve been doing this, the resources for continuing education about food have expanded beyond library books and visits to shops for authentic ingredients, to free ebooks, travel, and cooking videos. We’ve also enjoyed the expansion of the cultural food scene in this area. Now we can find, for example, Thai, Indian, Ethiopian, and regional Chinese restaurants serving less Americanized food.

A Visit to Spain

For example, one virtual visit to Spain found us planning a menu around paella. Even a complex dish like this is easier with more minds to read the how-to and hands to execute the steps. On that particular day, our shopping trip took us to Formaggio Kitchen for their recommended Spanish wines, cheeses, cured meat, spices, and accoutrements to add to the flavor of the experience. From there we visited New Deal Fish to pick up the seafood for our main course.

When wine, cheese, and cured meat is part of a foodway, we try to begin the day in the kitchen by pouring a glass of wine and setting up a serving board of goodies for nibbling while we work. (If it’s a culture without these items, we might start with the street food of the area. In some cases we make it, in others, we order takeout.)

In this instance, the other couple had a patio and grill. That made our main course more authentic by cooking it over glowing coals. The delicious pan of paella with its crusty bottom was placed in the center of the table where (in pre-COVID days) we all ate the section in front of us in proper Spanish communal fashion. We all shared what we’d learned about the dish, the wine, the cheese, and the flan we made for dessert over hours of table conversation.

Other Options

If cooking is not your passion, you can still learn about the food and beverages of a specific place and choose a local restaurant to taste what appealed to you. If you are open about wanting to learn and it is a small family-owned and operated spot, you have built-in teachers.

On our first visit to Lucy Ethiopian Cafe near Symphony Hall in Boston, we ordered the food our gracious host recommended and shared it with friends using pieces of lovely injera bread to pick up and bring bits of food to our mouths.

As the host came by to see if we were happy with his food, he told us about the cafe’s role as a social center for the local Ethiopian community and the role of coffee and cafes in his culture. It was a memorable afternoon of enjoyment and education.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

At Lucy Ethiopian Cafe, we shared a meal with friends using pieces of lovely injera bread to scoop up bits of food.
CAMPION AND COMPANY
FINISHED 2020 AS THE
#1 OFFICE
IN BACK BAY & BEACON HILL*

#1 BOSTON
OFFICE FOR SALES
OVER $2.5M+*

#1 AGENT
IN
NEW ENGLAND*

TRACY CAMPION AND THE TEAM AT CAMPION
ENDED THE YEAR WITH
$886 MILLION IN CLOSED SALES.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU IN 2021!

CAMPION
AND COMPANY

172 NEWBURY STREET • BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS • 02116 • 617.236.0711

*MLS