



FEBRUARY 2, 2023



THE BEACON HILL TIMES

T H E R E A R E N O T I M E S L I K E T H E S E T I M E S

Skating with Friends returns to the Frog Pond

By Dan Murphy

The Friends of the Public Garden will be hosting its third annual Skating with Friends event on Sunday, Feb. 19, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Frog Pond on the Boston Common.

The event will feature free skate rentals (while supplies last), along with free hot chocolate, courtesy of the Friends' partner, the Skating Club of Boston. Skating assistants will be on hand for the event, and Frog Pond Freddie will make an appearance as well.

Free skating sessions begin at 10 a.m.; noon; and 2, 4, and 6 p.m., with space limited to 225 skaters per each 90-minute session. Free tickets are available beginning 30 minutes prior to each session.

Steve TenBerge, the Friends group's finance manager and Brewer Plaza liaison, wrote, "Last year's event was limited to 125 skaters per session due to the smaller rink, but this year, a full-



COURTESY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE PUBLIC GARDEN

Guests to the Frog Pond on the Boston Common enjoying last year's Skating with Friends event, hosted by the Friends of the Public Garden.

size rink is available, and it can accommodate 225 skaters each over the five sessions. We invite everyone to join us for a magical day of skating surrounded by the

sights and sounds of the City."

Visit <https://friendsofthepublicgarden.org/2022/12/06/february-19-2023-skating-with-friends/> for more information.

Wu sets ambitious agenda in State of the City Address

By Stephen Quigley

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu delivered her State of the City Address at the MGM Music Hall next door to Fenway Park last week in which the mayor noted the achievements that have been accomplished over the past year and outlined a vision for making Boston a greener and more affordable city in which to live and work by 2030.

"The state of the city is strong," said Wu adding, "We have the resources, the resolve, and responsibility to make it even stronger."

Wu praised city employees for making "every accomplishment and constituent service delivered, every detail of the agenda we're

(Wu Pg. 3)



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY ISABEL LEON

Mayor Michelle Wu delivers remarks during the 2023 State of the City address at the MGM Music Hall.

See page 8 for Mayor Wu's complete speech.

Upstairs Downstairs celebrates its 12th anniversary under current ownership

Special to Times

On Sunday Feb. 5, Upstairs Downstairs Home at 69 Charles St. will celebrate its 12th anniversary under the ownership of Laura Cousineau.

Laura assumed ownership of the business in 2011 on a whim and with meager savings, but has since put her own stamp on the business and transformed the store into a magnificent showcase of exquisite design and color, especially now in her newest location at 69 Charles St.

The combination of old and new is beautifully curated in seven rooms brimming with antiques, furniture, tables, chairs, home decorations, and local artwork of every variety and taste.

Laura has used her background, expertise, and love to provide a



COURTESY OF UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS HOME
Laura Cousineau, owner of Upstairs Downstairs Home.

Sports betting begins at Encore Boston Harbor

By Cary Shuman

Encore Boston Harbor President Jenny Holaday said it all about the opening of the Wynn-BET Sportsbook Tuesday at the five-star resort/casino in Everett.

"It's sports betting in the nation's best sports town," remarked Holaday. "Everyone is thrilled and excited it's here."

Holaday was joined by Everett Mayor Carlo DeMaria, Speaker of the House Ron Mariano, State Reps. Joseph McGonagle and Dan Ryan and an array of professional athletes at the grand opening of the new sportsbook which is another step in Encore bringing a

spectacular Las Vegas-style experience to Everett.

"This has been long overdue," said DeMaria, who led the way for the Encore resort/casino to be built in the city. "People have been able to go to other states to wager on sports. We made the same argument when we were bringing the casino to Everett – why not keep the money here in the community? This sportsbook is a very nice facility."

DeMaria said he had the opportunity to chat with Johnny Damon, one of the sports celebrities in attendance at Tuesday's event. "I thanked him for breaking the Curse of the Bambino,"

remarked DeMaria.

An historic day for Massachusetts

Boston sports fans, who have enjoyed several championships by the New England Patriots, Boston Red Sox, Boston Celtics, and Boston Bruins in this century, can now legally wager on professional and college sports at Encore – and they're excited about the opportunity.

Mike Capone of Malden was one of the first patrons to wager after Holaday personally led the countdown to the 10 a.m. launch of the betting kiosks inside the

(ENCORE Pg. 3)

(UPSTAIRS Pg. 7)

Wu submits home rule petition to end urban renewal

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu on Monday submitted to the City Council a proposed Home Rule Petition to end Urban Renewal in Boston. If approved by the City Council, the Home Rule Petition would be sent to the State House for approval by the Massachusetts legislature. The proposed legislation would create new tools to meet future needs such as climate change resilience infrastructure, and retain the Boston Planning & Development Agency's (BPDA) ability to enforce restrictions that protect community assets, such as affordable housing and open space. The proposal will also update the statutory mission of the BPDA by establishing a new charter for advancing resilience, affordability, and equity. Mayor Wu today also submitted an order to the City Council requesting a two-year extension of remaining Urban Renewal plans to

allow time for legislative approval of the Home Rule Petition.

Urban Renewal

The proposed Act would end the ability to make land takings based on blighted, decadent, or substandard conditions in the City. It also entitles the agency to enforce any conditions and restrictions in existing plans that protect important community benefits such as affordable housing, open space, and community uses.

New Charter

The legislation directs the BPDA to prepare and implement plans that address three key planning principles: 1) resiliency, including climate change mitigation and adaptation; 2) affordability, including the creation and retention of affordable housing and support for local businesses; and 3) equity, in the form of community development plans that ensure the equitable distribution of benefits derived from development in the

City, and redress historical inequitable policies that may have led to inequities in the City's growth. The legislation would require that all plans be approved by the mayor.

Modernizing the BPDA

Since 2016, the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) has been the operating name of two legal entities: the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) of Boston. This legislation will simplify Boston's quasi-governmental entity by abolishing the BRA and EDIC and transferring the powers and duties of those entities into a new, singular entity named the BPDA. As Mayor Wu announced in her 2023 State of the City address, the quasi-governmental entity, which will be named the the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) legally upon passage of this legislation, is envisioned to be staffed

by City employees who work for a City Planning & Design Department and report to the Chief of Planning. The migration of current BPDA staff to this new City department will take place over the next 1 to 2 years.

Temporary Urban Renewal Extension

The Order submitted today, which requires approval of the City Council, the BPDA Board, and the Commonwealth's Department of Housing and Community Development, extends protections on 12 existing Urban Renewal plan areas beyond the current sunset date of March 31, 2023. The extension will guard land use protections currently in place and give time for the Home Rule Petition to pass. Once passed, the temporary extensions will remain in place through March 31, 2025, or until passage of the proposed Home Rule Petition.

Executive Order on New Direction for Planning and Development

In her 2023 State of the City last week, Mayor Wu announced a new direction for planning and development that ensures resilience, affordability and equity goals guide the City's growth. Today, Mayor Wu also issued an Executive Order to ensure that direction. The Executive Order directs the BPDA to invest in reforming Boston's zoning code and to prioritize community engagement in that planning work. It also directs the Chief of Planning to create a coastal resilience delivery team responsible for preparing Boston for sea level rise and directs the BPDA to use its portfolio of property to advance the City of Boston's priorities. The Executive Order also instructs the BPDA to use its existing powers to act in accordance with the Home Rule Petition filed.

NEWS BRIEFS

CHILDREN'S WINTER FEST RETURNS TO BOSTON COMMON FEBRUARY 22

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department present the annual Children's Winter Festival on the Boston Common Parade Ground on Wednesday, February 22, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit boston.gov/winterfest for more information about this family-friendly school vacation week event.

The free festival is open to all and offers music, giveaways, winter activities, treats, and crafts. Featured attractions include large inflatable installations such as the All-Star Challenge, Everest Climb 'N' Slide, and a Fun House Maze. Kids and their caregivers can also enjoy rides in the park on the Trackless Train, a ski lift photo booth, slap shot hockey, snow throw, pop-up mural activity from the Mayor's Mural Crew, a LEGO build activity with a Master Model Builder, and much more.

The event is hosted in partnership with title sponsor Highland Street Foundation, presenting sponsor L.L. Bean, contributing sponsors Dunkin', H.P. Hood, College Hunks Hauling Junk & Moving, and media sponsor The Boston Globe. Additional support is provided by Xfinity, Mission Realty Advisors, LEGO® Discovery Center Boston, Lighthouse ArtSpace Boston, and the Baby Lab at UMASS Boston.

The Boston Common Parade Ground is located at the corner of Beacon and Charles Streets. Call (617) 635-4505 or email parks@boston.gov for more information. To stay up to date with news, events, and improvements in Boston parks, visit Boston.gov/Parks, join our email list at bit.ly/Get-Parks-Emails, and follow our social channels @bostonparksdept on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

POETRY DISCUSSION: THE WORK OF REGIE GIBSON

Join King's Chapel members and clergy to read and discuss poetry and recorded performances of local poet, educator, and literary performer Regie Gibson on Mondays, February 6, and 13, at 6:00 PM via Zoom

Contact kentwitt@gmail.com to register and receive materials.

The two sessions will be followed by a Reading/Performance by Regie Gibson

Letter and Spirit: The Rants, Chants, and Coos of a Literary Musician

Sunday, February 19, 1:00 PM, In-Person and via Zoom

Come join Regie Gibson for an afternoon of story, spoken word poetry, music and song. This will be an intelligent, thoughtful, bluesy, jazzy, touching exploration into what it means to live, laugh, and love as a human being.

Regie Gibson is a multi-faceted

artist and workshop leader who has worked with schools, churches, and synagogues in Boston and New York. Read more about his award-winning poetry, music, and acting career on Regie's homepage.

Register at laura@kings-chapel.org for the in person event.

FALL 2022 GRADUATES ANNOUNCED AT UA

The University of Alabama (UA) awarded over 1,650 degrees during its fall commencement ceremonies on Dec. 10, 2022.

A recent economic analysis found that a degree from The University of Alabama can pay more over time than investments in United States stock market indexes. The University provides numerous opportunities for service and growth to help prepare future generations through its educational, cultural and social experiences. UA is not only home to competitive academic programs, expert faculty and a beautiful campus, but it is also the place Where Legends Are Made.

Students listed as candidates to receive degrees include:

Leah Doolin of West End received Master of Arts

Jerry Theiler of West End received Master of Arts.

The University of Alabama, part of The University of Alabama System, is the state's flagship university. UA shapes a better world

through its teaching, research and service. With a global reputation for excellence, UA provides an inclusive, forward-thinking environment and nearly 200 degree programs on a beautiful, student-centered campus. A leader in

cutting-edge research, UA advances discovery, creative inquiry and knowledge through more than 30 research centers. As the state's largest higher education institution, UA drives economic growth in Alabama and beyond.

NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDUP

NICHOLS HOUSE MUSEUM RESUMING TOURS

The Nichols House Museum at 55 Mount Vernon St. is resuming tours this week, with tours taking place Thursday-Sunday at 10 and 11 a.m., and noon.

Visit <https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book-to-check-availability-and-purchase-tickets>.

GIBSON HOUSE MUSEUM TO OFFER VIRTUAL PROGRAM ON 'SARGENT'S WOMEN'

The Gibson House Museum will offer a virtual program called "Sargent's Women: Four Lives Behind the Canvas" on Tuesday, Feb. 7, from 7 to 8 p.m.

In this illustrated virtual lecture, author Donna M. Lucey will explore the extraordinary experiences of four women painted by the iconic, high society Gilded Age portraitist John Singer Sargent. Each woman inhabited a rarefied world of large fortunes and strict

conventions yet managed to do something unexpected to upend society's rules. Basing her research on original letters, and diaries, Lucey uncovered stories of forbidden love, family conflict, ambition, desire, and triumph.

Admission is \$12 for non-members of the museum and \$10 for members. Register at <https://www.thegibsonhouse.org/events>.

UPCOMING HILL HOUSE HAPPENINGS

Hill House will be hosting a free Valentine's Day Party, featuring games, crafts, and a singalong, on Wednesday, Feb. 8, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the Firehouse at 127 Mt. Vernon St.

Also, Hill House will be hosting its annual Wine Dinner on Thursday, March 30, at Beacon Hill Bistro at 25 Charles St. Cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. Tickets and sponsorships are available at <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E22709&cid=28>.

WU (from pg. 1)

sharing here tonight — this is only possible because of you.

“Our cabinet is two-thirds people of color,” Wu noted. She singled out Boston natives Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox; Trinh Nguyen, the Chief of Worker Empowerment; and Segun Idowu, Chief of Economic Opportunity and Development, for their commitment to Boston’s residents.

“Three bus lines are entirely fare free,” said Wu, “and now we are accelerating over two dozen, new, dedicated bus lanes, expanding our bike network, and organizing even more neighborhood Open Streets events.”

The mayor highlighted that public safety will be important, noting that 900 guns were taken off the streets and that violent and property crime are at the lowest levels in 15 years.

Bringing welcome news to many neighborhood residents who have bitterly complained about the indifference of the Boston Planning and Redevelopment Agency, Wu called for “charting a new course for growth, with people as our compass. Tomorrow, I’ll sign an executive order establishing a Planning Advisory Council to fully integrate long-range planning, and begin modernizing our zoning code.”

Wu noted that she aims to “sustainably” increase the population of Boston from its current number of 675,000 to 800,000.

Affordable housing also figured in her goals. Wu said that more than 3,800 housing units were permitted, including 1,300 affordable units.

Wu said “every square foot of city-owned property” has been analyzed “and we have identified several parcels that could be used for affordable housing units.”

If “local builders work with us to design high-quality, affordable homes that enhance the surrounding neighborhood, we will give you the land for free. And we will pro-

vide increased mortgage assistance so our residents can afford to buy these homes,” said the mayor.

Wu set a goal of 2030 to have the city’s public housing developments become fossil fuel-free.

“Our neighborhoods must be climate resilient and community-focused. This year we will launch a civic space master plan,” said the mayor.

Wu also offered some examples “of the things we’re doing right now to strengthen our schools, support our teachers, and do right by our students.”

She pointed out the brand new Boston Arts Academy in the Fenway, and the resurrection of the decade-old plan for the Josiah Quincy Upper School in Chinatown to become the city’s next state-of-the-art high school.

“This project was kicked off in 2012: three mayors and six superintendents ago. Students in the first grade when this project started will have graduated from high school by the time it is finished,” said Wu.

She pointed out the early college and innovation pathways at five high schools and the partnership with UMass Boston that will provide real-life work experiences and offer college-level courses in finance, healthcare, and biotech.

Wu closed her speech saying, “Boston is a city that will never stop reaching — up toward the progress we know to be possible, and out to the community whose work makes it lasting.”

District 8 City Councilor Kenzie Bok said, “In her State of the City, I think Mayor Wu articulated a vision about how Boston can plan and grow sustainably by investing in public goods. She was focused on the right issues: housing affordability, climate resiliency, racial equity, and educational excellence. It’s really about ‘Boston for all.’ I’m excited to work together to deliver that ambitious agenda.”

ENCORE (from pg. 1)

casino.

“I bet a couple of Super Bowl props and parlays tonight for hockey, college basketball,” said Capone. “It’s fantastic to be a part of history. Encore did a great job with this. It’s really a good time.”

Artie Ells, a Chelsea resident, wanted to be a part of an historic day for Massachusetts.

“This is just another great day for the area,” said Ells. “This resort is a beautiful place. It still amazes me that it’s here. Everything here is first-class.”

Sports broadcaster Sean McDonough served as the master of ceremonies for the event. “It’s great to see so many people here as we commemorate the first sports bets in Massachusetts,” said McDonough.

Holiday told the large gathering, “I want to thank you, ladies and gentlemen, fans, for coming out to celebrate this historic moment with us. This has been a wonderful team effort, and we’re really excited to bring legal sports betting to the Commonwealth.”

Wynn Vice President of Trading Alan Berg expects the WynnBET Sportsbook to be a very successful operation. There are WynnBET Sportsbooks in ten states.

“I think it’s going to be phenomenal,” predicted Berg. “Boston is one of the biggest sports cities in the world as far as I’m concerned. So, the pent-up demand — I think we’ve been hearing about for so long — and the excitement have reached a big pitch at this point. We’re trying to give Boston the best product possible, and I think we’re ready to do that.”

State, local officials excited about launch of sports betting

Rep. Joe McGonagle of Everett attended the grand opening ceremonies for the WynnBET Sportsbook.

“I’m excited to see the launch of legalized sports betting in Massachusetts,” said McGonagle, who supported the legislation. “Sports betting in Massachusetts will be creating more jobs, and we’re hoping they will be jobs for Everett residents.”

Rep. Dan Ryan of Charlestown supported the effort to bring legalized sports betting to Massachusetts.

“Sports betting is here. The Legislature, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, and the state’s constitutional officers have weighed this possibility with great diligence to ensure that the jobs, revenue, and entertainment created by this venture will have a positive impact on our local cities and towns,” said Ryan.



Rep. Aaron Michlewitz, Speaker of the House Ron Mariano, and Rep. Jerald Parisella are pictured at the grand opening of the WynnBET Sportsbook at Encore Boston Harbor.

State Rep. Jessica Giannino of Revere was also a supporter of the legislation to allow legalized sports betting in Massachusetts.

“Massachusetts residents are passionate about their sports. This legislation will allow fans to bet on their favorite teams but do so in a regulated manner that promotes responsible gaming, while bringing in millions of dollars of revenue that has previously been going to our neighboring states or to illegal operations,” said Rep. Giannino. “I was proud to serve on the Economic Development Committee under the leadership of Chairman Jerry Parisella and work on this important legislation. I am thankful for the work of Speaker Mariano and his tireless effort in getting this bill across the finish line.”

Rep. Jeff Turco of Winthrop voted in favor of the legalized sports betting bill in Massachusetts. “To be blunt, I’m sort of gaming skeptic, but the simple reality of gaming in Massachusetts is it’s here. We have the most successful lottery in the country. Our gaming industry is doing very well. It’s simply doesn’t make any sense to have all the gaming we do and exclude one of the more profitable elements, not just for the casinos, but also for the Commonwealth. The decision on gaming was made decades ago, and this is just a natural expansion of it, and I supported it, and proudly so.”

Rep. Adrian Madaro of East Boston said he voted in favor of the legalized sports betting bill.

“Legalized sports betting means fans can enjoy games in a whole new way,” wagering responsibly while creating jobs and raising revenue for important state services,” said Madaro. “I was pleased to vote



Encore Boston Harbor President Jenny Holaday is pictured adjacent to the WynnBET Sportsbook area inside Encore Boston Harbor, commemorating the first day of legalized sports betting in Massachusetts.

in favor of this bill. I look forward to seeing the economic growth that comes from this new industry in Massachusetts.”

Lynn City Councilor Brian LaPierre said, “This is awesome. Today is an historic day for Massachusetts. Sports wagering has been a long time coming for our state. It’s going to bring in millions of dollars in new state revenues that can go to our schools, our roads, and housing concerns throughout the Commonwealth. This is a great, one-stop shopping experience for anyone who likes to dabble a little bit on sports betting. You can bet all the games and come and have a great time at the beautiful Encore resort.”

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EDITORIAL

GET READY FOR THE COLD!

We may have just finished what reportedly ranks as the fifth-warmest January on record, but by the end of this week, we'll be experiencing our coldest weather in seven years when an Arctic blast dips into the United States and delivers temperatures that will start to plummet during the day on Friday and extend through Sunday morning.

The weatherman is telling us that the temp will be at six below zero in the Boston area when we wake up Saturday morning and will reach no higher than 15 throughout the entire day.

In addition, the Arctic blast will be riding a northwest wind of 20-30 miles per hour, bringing the dreaded wind chill factor into the range of -20 or lower.

For those of us who live along the coastline, we will be treated to the eerie spectre of "sea smoke," the water vapor that forms when really cold air moves over the relatively warmer water (which presently is at a temperature of about 40 degrees in Boston Harbor).

Fortunately, this cold snap will be gone in a snap -- less than 48 hours -- with the temperatures getting back to more-seasonable levels by Sunday when the wind direction shifts from the northwest to the southwest.

Needless to say, outdoor activity of just about any kind will be impossible during the day on Saturday. While that may be a minor inconvenience for most of us, for those who are homeless, the extreme cold will be deadly, particularly for the recently-homeless who have not experienced weather this cold.

We trust that local officials and charitable organizations will do their best to get the homeless off the streets and into warming shelters during this life-threatening period.

As for the rest of us (who can turn our TV onto some golf tournament in California or Hawaii for a vicarious experience), we should make sure that all windows and storm windows are shut tight throughout our homes to ensure that cold air does not infiltrate, with the potential to cause freezing pipes. It also is smart to make sure that our thermostats are kept high enough to ensure that outside walls that have water or heating lines (and that may not be fully-insulated) are kept warm enough to prevent freeze-ups. We realize that this will increase our heating bills -- but that will be far cheaper than repairing the damage from a frozen pipe that bursts.

Ol' Man Winter has been kind to us up to now -- but this weekend he'll be letting us know that we should not take him for granted.

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL IS A PUBLIC GOOD

We were pleased to see that Chelsea's newly-elected State Representative, Judith Garcia, announced last week that she has co-sponsored An Act to Advance Health Equity, a bill that aims to close the gap in healthcare by prioritizing equity in state government, regulating data reporting on health equity, and improving access to and the quality of healthcare for historically-disadvantaged communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought into stark contrast the disparity in outcomes between those in our society who have good health care options vs. those who do not. The COVID-19 death rates in poorer communities far exceeded those in wealthier communities (which is typical for just about every disease and illness known to man).

Based on a data analysis of more than 3,000 counties across the US, Americans in poorer counties died at almost twice the rate of those in wealthier counties at the start of the pandemic. That dichotomy became even more pronounced in the later waves of the pandemic, when death rates in economically-disadvantaged counties were three and four times the rates of more-affluent counties.

But those of us who are fortunate enough to have access to healthcare should not be deluded into thinking that this is "someone else's" problem. The COVID-19 pandemic proved conclusively that what happens anywhere can have serious implications everywhere.

Communicable diseases are "communicable" because they spread and, as we learned from COVID-19, viruses do not discriminate between rich and poor. Persons in wealthier communities overall may have had better outcomes because of better access to healthcare, but when viruses spread rapidly through communities without good healthcare options, it is inevitable that all of us are affected (and infected).

The simple point we're trying to make is that in our interconnected world in which we rely on each other for everything, it is to the advantage of everyone to make sure that every member of our society has access to quality healthcare.

This is both a moral imperative and a common-sense goal that benefits every member of society.

We applaud Rep. Garcia for sponsoring this bill and we urge the legislature to pass it forthwith.

GUEST OP-ED

Classified document stink piles

Dr. Glenn Mollette

An Old Testament story records an overwhelming infestation of frogs throughout Egypt. There was no place in Egypt where frogs were not present in large numbers. The plague was sent in response to Pharaoh's attitude toward the Israelite people who lived in slavery under his rule. When God ended the plague there were piles of dead frogs all over Egypt. In the streets, bedrooms, bathrooms, closets, storage facilities, and places we can only imagine. It became a very stinky situation as they raked up the dead frogs and piled them up all over Egypt.

The Classified Document saga seems to be growing in similar fashion to the dead frogs of Egypt. They appear to be everywhere and they stink. The odor has to be particularly bad for Presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden as well as Vice President Mike Pence.

First came the big raid of Trump's home in Florida. Late at night, FBI agents went through his home and personal items and carried out boxes of documents. Next, we hear that Biden has had classified documents in his home for years. They seem to be scattered everywhere throughout his house. Then, Mike Pence in Indiana has more classified docu-

ments. What are these men doing with these documents? They are scattered out like the dead frogs of Egypt.

Again, what are these individuals doing with classified documents? I used to keep a big box of comic books when I was a kid. I would read a comic and then put it in the box. Sometimes I would read them again. I definitely knew that I had them. Why would past administrations hold on to classified documents? How did they get to the locations where they were found?

The National Archives has asked all the former Presidents to check for classified documents. Jimmy Carter? Where would he have them? In his family Bible? Mixed in with old Sunday school lessons that he has taught at the local Baptist Church? I don't think so but you never know who might have picked them up, packed them in a box, and placed them on a shelf in his garage. What about George W. Bush? Could documents be under the seat of his old truck? Bill Clinton has emphatically stated he does not have any classified documents but he has made emphatic statements before. These former Presidents have said they do not have such documents.

Did Trump carry these documents out of the White House

when he and his family climbed aboard the Presidential helicopter? I've never seen Trump or Biden carry anything. Which aid picked up some boxes and tossed them into the moving van? Where is White House security when it comes to classified documents?

Only time will tell and we may never know for sure about the plethora of classified documents. We hope they aren't reading some of them in China or Russia. Who can say for sure where they are not being read? We do not know for sure whether or not someone else has them. Could another family member have a box or two somewhere? How much money would China, Russia or others pay for classified documents?

Democrats and Republicans will point fingers and scream about all this in the next election. Both sides will try to make the other side look worse but it appears there is plenty of stink everywhere.

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.

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'Make Way for Ducklings, the Musical' coming to BU's Wheelock Family Theatre

By Times staff

Mrs. Mallard and her aquatic kin from Robert McCloskey's classic children's book will come to life on the stage for the first time when "Make Way for Ducklings, the Musical" comes to Boston University's Wheelock Family Theatre for performances from Feb. 17 through March 12.

The stage's Ducklings will trek through some of Boston's most celebrated landmarks, including the Public Garden, the State House, Louisburg Square on Beacon Hill, the Longfellow Bridge, and the Charles River. The Ducklings then make their way down Mt. Vernon Street, Charles Street, and Beacon Street before heading back home to the Public Garden during a journey filled with song and dance.

Emily Ranii, the play's director and artistic director of Wheelock Family Theatre, describes the musical as a "tour of the city we call 'home'" and added that the "songs are one bop after another, and Boston audiences will particularly get a kick out of all of the local references."

Ranii said in a press release: "As we were all increasingly at home during the pandemic, the question of 'what makes a home' took on new meanings. Mr. and Mrs. Mallard's quest for a forever home and the community that surrounds it resonated all the more."

Michael J. Bobbitt, the musical's co-writer and co-creator, said in a press release: "Even though this work started before I moved to the Boston area, so much of the play has been enhanced by my immersion into the Boston Community."

Added Bobbitt: "The story builds on the tropes of classic and golden age musical comedy but touches on themes that everyone can relate to. My little secret when writing children's plays is that I truly try to entertain the adults as much, if not more than the kids. I think it's a toe tapping, sing-along,



D. MURPHY PHOTO
Nancy Schön's "Make Way for Ducklings" sculpture in the Public Garden.

laugh out loud, hug your children kinda show."

The production will feature some familiar faces from WFT@BU, like Jared Troilo and Ricardo Holguin, as well as newcomers and a talented youth ensemble.

"Make Way for Ducklings, the Musical" was co-commissioned by Wheelock Family Theatre and Adventure Theatre in Glen Echo, Maryland and adapted for the stage by Bobbitt, Sandra Eskin, and William Yanesh. The production is directed by Ranii, and its music is directed by Jon Goldberg and choreographed by Joy Clark.

Single ticket prices range from \$24-48 and can be purchased by calling 617-353-3001 or visiting wheelockfamilytheatre.org. Tickets can also be purchased at the Wheelock Theatre box office at 180 Riverway in Boston.

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Trust and accountability are the foundation of Wendy's career as a top-selling agent. Her in-depth knowledge of the market and extensive network provide Wendy's clients with a competitive advantage, and exceptional results.

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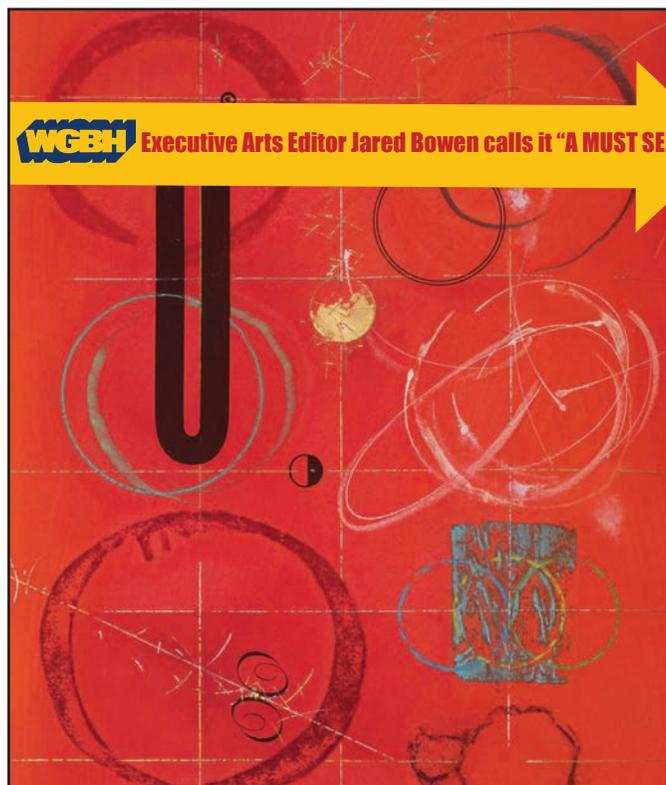
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Wu leads the 43rd annual homelessness census

Special to the Times

With record setting cold weather approaching this weekend, Mayor Michelle Wu on Tuesday night led a group of volunteers, including U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development officials, City officials, State officials, homelessness services providers, and public health and first responders, in conducting the City of Boston's 43rd annual homelessness census. The street count is part of the City's comprehensive yearly census of unsheltered adults, youth, and families in emergency shelters, transitional housing, domestic violence programs, as well as individuals living outside. The census

helps inform the City of Boston's policy development and allocation of resources for households experiencing homelessness.

"Boston's annual homelessness census is an opportunity to assess the need for housing across our neighborhoods and move us closer to ensuring that every resident has a safe, healthy, affordable place to call home," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Last night's Census is critical to ensuring that the City moves with urgency and care as we work to improve the lives of our residents and build a Boston for everyone. I am grateful for our state and federal partners and our volunteers across the city for working with us to safely undertake this year's

count and who made this year's census possible. With this important data, we'll continue taking action to tackle our housing crisis across city departments and ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-repeating in Boston."

This year, more than 200 volunteers canvassed 45 areas after midnight, covering every city neighborhood, Logan Airport, and the transit and parks systems. Volunteers canvassed assigned areas, identified those sleeping on the street, conducted a short survey, and provided individuals with important safety information and items to help keep warm. The surveys will be closely analyzed to ensure accuracy, and then cross-checked and combined with the results of a shelter count. The annual homelessness census required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is a key component in Boston receiving more than \$38 million in federal



Richard Cho, HUD Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Housing and Services talks to the group conducting the census as Mayor Michelle Wu looks on.

grant funding for housing and services for households experiencing homelessness in Boston.

"Every year, cities and towns across America are required by HUD to do their Point-in-Time count, an assessment of homelessness on one night in January," said Richard Cho, HUD Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Housing and Services. "But this is about more than numbers – it is an opportunity to come together to understand that behind each data point is a human being who is struggling to survive and ultimately find their way back home. I applaud Mayor Wu and the City of Boston for their commitment to this issue and their continuous work to find solutions to the most pressing housing needs for their citizens."

In 2021, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) launched House America, a new federal initiative that invited mayors, city and county leaders, tribal nation leaders, and governors into a national partnership. House America made investments

provided through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to address the crisis of homelessness through a "housing-first" approach. As part of the House America initiative, the City of Boston committed to rehouse 1,100 households experiencing homelessness and build over 650 units of housing for people facing housing insecurity by the end of 2022. The City exceeded the goals set by HUD by housing 1,161 individuals and creating 739 units of housing.

"The homeless census brings together government, non-profit organizations and community volunteers to understand the needs of our unsheltered neighbors and to renew commitments to solve this critical issue," said Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing. "The City remains committed to ending homelessness through the creation of permanent supportive housing, providing services that assist our most vulnerable residents and tracking our progress. Boston has

(CENSUS Pg. 7)



Lyndia Downie, President and Executive Director, Pine Street Inn helps with the homeless census.

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CENSUS (from pg. 6)

the lowest number of unsheltered individuals in the country, but even one person on the street is one too many.”

The City of Boston and its partners continue to work to end chronic and veteran homelessness using the Housing First approach, an evidence-based approach to ending homelessness that uses principles such as the philosophies that everyone is “housing ready” and everyone deserves permanent and stable housing without preconditions like sobriety or treatment. City agencies and community partners have dramatically redesigned the way services are delivered to homeless individuals, increasing resources devoted to housing and deploying new technologies to match homeless individuals with housing and services.

“The annual census is an important tool that shows our progress toward ending homelessness in Boston,” said Lyndia Downie, President and Executive Director, Pine Street Inn. “We are proud that Boston’s street numbers are very low, especially in comparison to many cities across the country. However, as long as there is anyone on the street or in shelter, our work is not done. We must

continue to focus on strategies to move vulnerable individuals off the street, out of shelter, and into the safety and stability of permanent housing.”

In September 2022, the City of Boston submitted a grant proposal of \$41 million to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support Boston’s homelessness programs in 2024, through HUD’s McKinney Homeless Continuum of Care program.

“Homelessness is a public health crisis that significantly increases the risk of poor health outcomes,” said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. “The Boston Public Health Commission will continue to work with Mayor Wu and the City of Boston to improve access to housing and provide critical wraparound services to support the health and wellbeing of our residents who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability.”

In June 2022, Mayor Wu announced that the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Boston on the night of the census decreased by 2.4 percent,

from 1,659 individuals in 2021 to 1,545 individuals in 2022. This reduction builds on a decrease of 24.7 percent from 2020 to 2021, which was due in part to a coordinated effort by city agencies and homeless service providers to create alternative housing, shelter, and healthcare options that concentrated shelters during the first wave of the pandemic. It also reflects sustained and successful efforts in housing individuals experiencing homelessness and at-risk individuals, and diverting individuals from emergency shelter to safe alternatives when possible. Additionally, in 2022, with the support of many City agencies and partner organizations, more than 470 individuals formerly living unsheltered in the Mass/Cass area have been connected with low-threshold, supportive housing.

The results from this year’s homeless census will be available in the coming months.

The Mayor’s Office of Housing is responsible for housing people experiencing homelessness, creating and preserving affordable housing, and ensuring that renters and homeowners can obtain, maintain, and remain in safe, stable housing. The department



Mayor Michelle Wu (right) talks with a homeless person during the annual homeless census.

develops and implements the City of Boston’s housing creation and homelessness prevention plans and collaborates with local and national partners to find new solutions and build more housing affordable to all, particularly those with lower incomes. For more information, please visit the MOH website.

The Boston Public Health Commission, the country’s oldest health department, is an inde-

pendent public agency providing a wide range of health services and programs. It is governed by a seven-member board of health appointed by the Mayor of Boston. The mission of the Boston Public Health Commission is to protect, preserve, and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable. For more information, please visit www.bphc.org.

UPSTAIRS (from pg. 1)

warm and welcoming atmosphere to all who enter. Laura studied at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, specializing in interior and textile design.

Twelve years and counting, Laura has produced many highlights, art receptions, charity events, and a dozen fantastic Christmas holiday strolls right here in the heart of Beacon Hill. This past Dec. 1, around 1,000 people came to celebrate with Upstairs Downstairs during the stroll.

“Through the COVID-19 pandemic and other economic challenges we have met them all so we could continue to serve our community,” said Laura. “We are so grateful to have earned the trust and loyalty of our neighbors, fellow businesses and visitors from all over the country and around the world who return again and again each year.”

Added Laura: “We look forward to seeing and welcoming everyone. Please join our staff and all the fun and enjoy our celebratory cupcakes and storewide discounts on the finest we can offer.”

To celebrate, Upstairs Downstairs will be offering 20 percent off items storewide on Saturday, Feb. 4, and on Sunday, Feb. 5. For

more information, contact Laura Cousineau directly by phone (617-367-1950), email ([Lauraupstairs-](mailto:Lauraupstairs-downstairs@gmail.com)

downstairs@gmail.com), or via its Instagram page (@Upstairsdownstairsantiques).

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Mayor Wu's State of the City Address

Mayor Wu delivered her first State of the City Address on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at MGM Music Hall. The following is her speech:

Good evening, Boston! Tonight we're at the beautiful new MGM Music Hall, and I want to thank the Red Sox and Fenway Music Company for hosting us, and for your commitment to our city.

I'm grateful to be joined by partners in public service: Council President Flynn and Boston City Councilors, Chair Robinson and the Boston School Committee, Mayor Janey, Ambassador Flynn and Mrs. Flynn, Governor Healey, Senate President Spilka, Attorney General Campbell, Treasurer Goldberg, State Representatives and Senators, US Attorney Rollins, county officials. Thank you so much for being with us. And to our interpreters, thank you for helping us reach all of our residents this evening, in seven languages.

A year ago this week, I was bundled up for my first snowstorm as mayor, riding shotgun with our Superintendent of Streets, Mike Brohel, as he drove the dark, icy roads before dawn, and worked



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MAYOR'S OFFICE

Rep. Aaron Michlewitz with Suffolk County Sheriff Steven Tompkins.

with his team to salt, scrape, and win back the pavement from the snow. By the time we got to City Hall, Al Vilar was already hunkered down in the Traffic Management Center, lunch packed for a long storm, monitoring eight gigantic screens for anyone who might need help on the roads. As the rest of our city slept, Boston's 311 and 911 call-takers answered phones throughout the night, to send services where needed, while emergency management crews, EMS, police, and fire stood ready.

Our city is carried by so many people whose faces most of us never see. Who aren't on the news, or on stage accepting awards, but after a full day of serving our constituents, still find time to coach softball at Charlestown High Field or pack meals for new immigrant families in Mattapan Square.

That's why, on your way in tonight, you saw the beautiful portraits of just a few of these civic heroes. To all our City Workers: Every accomplishment and constituent service delivered, every detail of the agenda we're sharing here tonight—is only possible because of you. I'm so proud to work alongside you.

It's been three years since we've been able to celebrate—and reflect on—the State of our City in person. And we've all felt the collective toll of these years and the continued impact on our hearts and minds, on local businesses and household budgets.

Boston has always been resilient.

But when resilience goes from a strength that we call on, to a constant state of being, it's time to stop hardening ourselves against the world, and start changing the world we live in.

Real change comes from community, so I knew my first and most important job as mayor was to build the team Boston deserves.

That team is here tonight. Our Cabinet is two-thirds people of color! We're BPS parents, and graduates. We speak Spanish and Arabic, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, and more. We speak honestly about Boston's past, present, and future, because we've lived the challenges and shared the dreams of the families we now get to serve.

The young man who started as a lifeguard in our community centers, now oversees them as our Chief of Human Services: José Massó.

The school lunch lady's daughter, who found her calling as a teacher, then launched a nationally recognized high school in Dorchester, is now our Boston Public Schools Superintendent: Mary Skipper.

The boy from Roxbury who wanted to serve and protect, who—against all odds, and over nearly three decades—rose through every level of leadership at the Boston Police Department, is now our Boston Police Commissioner: Michael Cox.

The girl who watched her refugee parents wash dishes at restaurants so their kids could lead a better life—now leads our efforts to ensure that all workers, no matter where they were born or what language they speak, have health, safety, and dignity on the job, as our new Chief of Worker Empowerment: Trinh Nguyen.

The toddler who took his very first steps in City Hall daycare, grew up to hold city leaders accountable for vast racial disparities in city contracting as President and CEO of the Black Economic Council of MA, and is now our Chief of Economic Opportunity & Inclusion: Segun Idowu.

Just like our communities, this team refuses to accept that things must be how they've always been. We're taking on the hard, complicated issues our residents face, no matter how deeply entrenched or politically fraught.

When we took office with winter looming, and hundreds living in unsafe, unsanitary encampments—we didn't look away: We built a new model for housing and services so tents could come down and people could heal. And through the Newmarket BID's Back to Work program, folks who were once living at Mass & Cass are now part of the team working to keep the area clean and safe for everyone. Some of those leaders are here tonight. Mike, and Mike, Tim, Carlos, and Melissa: we are honored to be doing this important work together.

When Omicron spiked and pushed our hospitals to the brink,



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY JEREMIAH ROBINSON

Gov. Maura Healey, Mayor Michelle Wu and State Treasurer Deborah Goldberg after the 2023 State of the City Address at the MGM Music Hall in Fenway.

we didn't turn away: taking decisive action for public health, because, no matter the backlash, Boston will never compromise on protecting our people. And I want to thank everyone at the Boston Public Health Commission, Executive Director Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, and all of our public health and healthcare workers.

When we learned the MBTA would finally make major repairs to the Orange line—but with just two weeks' notice—we didn't back away: every City department stepped in to keep Boston moving and proved that a more connected, coordinated system is possible. Tonight, I'm renewing my call for the people of Boston to have a seat on the MBTA Board.

Under extraordinary circumstances, our team has refused to settle. Over the last year:

We made three bus lines entirely fare-free. Now, we're accelerating over two dozen miles of new dedicated bus lanes, expanding our bike network, and organizing even more neighborhood Open Streets events.

We worked alongside residents in Egleston Square and business partners to secure a Community Peace Garden on Washington Street; and helped 40 artists in Uphams Corner go from facing eviction to owning their own building—the Humphreys Street Studio is here to stay. And, this year we'll make Boston's largest investment ever in artists and the arts.

We made the spaces and services of our City more accessible: opening a new, fully-accessible City Hall Plaza and senior center in Orient Heights, partnering with the City Council and our Disability Commission to require closed captioning on public TVs, connecting 19,000 seniors to services; and making our 311 app multi-lingual for the first time, in eleven languages. We reopened a newly renovated Roslindale Branch

library...this year we will reopen the Faneuil Branch in Oak Square, and begin design in Fields Corner and the South End.

Our Office of Early Childhood made dozens of new Pre-K classrooms free for our littlest learners and launched a professional development program to help early educators teach in Boston, debt-free. We fought off a state takeover of Boston Public Schools, onboarded a new district leadership team, and just welcomed our first electric school buses at the Readville bus yard.

Our police officers took nearly 900 guns off our streets and worked with community to achieve the lowest level of Part One, violent and property crime in 15 years. I want to thank Commissioner Michael Cox for coming home to Boston, Superintendent-in-Chief Greg Long for your service over 18 months as Acting Commissioner, and all our officers for your hard work.

We are looking to end community violence with new strategies to address trauma and provide essential supports—from our Youth Safety Task Force, to an alternative crisis response program with EMS and behavioral health services. And, this April, we will launch a Fire Cadet Program thanks to the leadership of our new Fire Commissioner, Paul Burke.

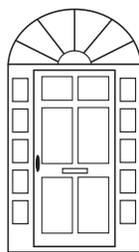
We also graduated our first class of students from Boston's PowerCorps program, training young people from our neighborhoods for great jobs in the green economy. Many of them are here tonight.

We've invested in longstanding Legacy Businesses and are helping new entrepreneurs fill vacant retail spaces to revitalize our neighborhood commercial districts. And we're excited that Lego is building their North American headquarters in Boston this fall. We made

(STATE OF THE CITY Pg. 9)

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STATE OF THE CITY *(from pg. 8)*

progress on closing the supplier diversity gap, awarding contracts worth more than \$100 million—from school lunches to snow removal—to businesses owned by women and people of color. Thanks to legislation passed by the City Council and approved by the state legislature last month, we'll be able to do even more. And we did all this on top of filling 5,000 potholes, collecting more than 500 tons of curbside composting, and plowing through 53 inches of snow last year.

In so many other cities, none of this would have been possible. But Boston has never let anyone else define our possibilities.

It's thanks to the people of Boston that I can stand here tonight and say—the state of the City is strong.

And we have the resources, the resolve, and the responsibility to make it even stronger. As we look to the year ahead, our administration is focused on building a green and growing city for everyone.

Doing so will require that we reckon with—and rebuild—the systems that got us here. When the “Boston Redevelopment Authority” was created nearly 70 years ago, its purpose was singular: to clear the way for new development, even if that meant displacing tens of thousands of working class, immigrant, and Black and brown residents.

Since 2016 it's been called the Boston Planning and Development Agency, or “BPDA,” but the focus on building buildings rather than community has held back the talent of its staff and deepened disparities in our city.

Over the last decade, Boston saw the largest building boom in generations: cranes in the sky and jobs on the ground. But that growth wasn't harnessed for the benefit of all our communities. Not planning for community stability meant that even as our population grew, many were squeezed out. Not planning for affordability, and transit, meant that housing prices soared, and traffic snarled. Not planning for sustainability meant that as new development reshaped our skyline, public infrastructure continued to age: subway tracks and school buildings, pools and community centers.

Now, stronger storms and hotter summers raise the stakes. The pandemic has thinned our usual Downtown crowd, and inflation has forced many workers to balance two or three jobs just to keep milk in the fridge or make rent. In this moment of need, we have an opportunity and an obligation to change how we plan for Boston's future.



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY ISABEL LEON

Mayor Michelle Wu delivers remarks during the 2023 State of the City address at the MGM Music Hall.

Under the leadership of our Chief of Planning, Arthur Jemison, we're charting a new course for growth, with people as our compass. Tomorrow I'll sign an executive order establishing a Planning Advisory Council to fully integrate long-range planning, and begin modernizing our zoning code. It will be led by Chief Jemison and consist of Cabinet chiefs in capital planning, transportation, climate, housing, and the arts.

Over this next year, we'll shift planning efforts from the BPDA to a new City Planning and Design Department—to expand planning and urban design as a coordinated effort that guides our growth. Our vision is for Boston to sustainably reach our peak population of 800,000 residents with the housing and schools, parks and public transit to support that growth.

Next week we'll file a home-rule petition to formally end the decades-old urban renewal mission of eradicating so-called “blight and urban decay,” and instead rededicate our resources toward Boston's urgent needs today—resiliency, affordability, and equity. Together, these changes will, for the first time since the 1960s, restore planning as a central function of City government.

I've also charged our team with improving the uneven and unpredictable approval process that frustrates community members and developers. Next month, we'll form a steering group of real estate and community leaders to recommend changes to our Article 80 development review process. We'll simplify and accelerate timelines so that good projects get shovels in the ground faster. We'll also transfer compliance and enforcement from the BPDA to the Office of Housing so our communities can

be confident that we're always getting the full benefit of development agreements.

Of course, we can't grow sustainably unless our residents are secure in their homes. Our housing crisis displaces children and families, drives down enrollment in schools, hurts local businesses, increases homelessness, and strains our public health and safety systems.

So, our housing plan must be just as comprehensive. We'll deploy every tool, every strategy, and every resource to create more housing that residents can actually afford. We will prioritize keeping residents in their homes, and closing the racial wealth gap by boosting home ownership.

Last year, our Office of Housing permitted 3,800 housing units—the most since 2018, including 1,300 affordable units—the most in a generation. And we'll do even more by directing the bulk of our federal recovery dollars to housing. In the coming weeks, we'll be sending the City Council a Home Rule Petition on rent stabilization to end rent gouging, and protect our families from eviction and displacement.

And we're putting City land to work. We've analyzed every square foot of City-owned property and identified several parcels that could generate thousands of affordable housing units. We also have 150 vacant lots in our neighborhoods ready for housing. Local builders: work with us to design high-quality, affordable homes that enhance the surrounding neighborhood, and we'll give you the land for free. And we'll provide increased mortgage assistance so our residents can afford to buy these homes. We'll accelerate zoning changes for predictability and

equity in our growth. Our team will update zoning for squares and corridors across the City, and complete neighborhood planning processes to bring thousands of new homes and support the small businesses, retail, and jobs that make Boston a vibrant cultural hub.

Our neighborhoods must be climate resilient and community focused. This year we will launch a civic and green space master plan, and begin design for new community centers in Grove Hall and the North End.

And, we'll help residents invest in retrofitting older homes, like triple deckers, to save money on utility bills and protect against flooding and heat. And we'll walk the walk with municipal buildings, too.

Meeting our climate goals starts with ending our use of fossil fuels, so I'm signing an Executive Order requiring all new City construction and major renovations in our schools, municipal buildings, and public housing, to be entirely fossil-fuel free.

And because “green” and “affordable” go hand in hand, together with the Boston Housing Authority, by 2030, we will end the use of fossil fuel in the City's public housing developments. This will mean unprecedented investments to modernize these buildings and meet Governor Healey's ambitious goals for heat pump deployment—ensuring that the families with greatest need, benefit first—from healthier homes, and lower energy costs.

Together, we can build a Boston that's more green than concrete. Where housing is a given, not a godsend, and mobility is the minimum, not a miracle. Where the things we build inspire—but don't define—us; and where each generation shines brighter than the last.

Which brings me to the next generation. As mayor, and as a mom, fighting for the future that my two boys—and all our kids—deserve is what drives the urgency behind all that we do.

Like our approach to planning, Boston's approach to education has been deeply shaped by our history. The story is one that many of us know well—and it deserves telling—but that's for next year's State of the City. Tonight, I want to share a few of the things we're doing right now to strengthen our schools, support our teachers, and do right by our students.

I'll start with the spaces where learning happens: we know what world-class school facilities feel like. Just around the corner from here, is the brand new Boston Arts Academy—it's beautiful, energy efficient, meeting the needs and

the possibility of our young people. But we haven't been moving fast enough. The Josiah Quincy Upper School in Chinatown will be our next brand new, state-of-the-art high school, but the project was kicked off in 2012: three Mayors and six superintendents ago. Students in 1st grade when this project started will have graduated from high school by the time it's finished.

We're making changes to speed up not just individual schools, but our whole district. Our school design study will take a full year off the planning process for every new school in the City, and we'll get more projects going at once than ever before.

Of course, our vision for our students goes beyond facilities: Superintendent Skipper and I won't settle for anything less than academic excellence across all our schools, accessible to all our students. Under newly created leadership roles focused on academics and getting resources down to the school level, we're investing in staff, professional development, and curriculum—for the equitable literacy foundation that empowers rigor and engagement across all subjects.

We'll follow through on our landmark agreement with BPS teachers to co-design and transform how we serve students with disabilities by investing \$50 million in inclusion so every student gets the education they deserve. And, because we know our students are people and family members first, we are investing in social workers and counselors at every school, with dedicated bilingual social workers trained to meet the needs of our multilingual students and families.

Last spring, to prepare our students for tomorrow's opportunities, we announced new early college and innovation pathways at five high schools across BPS where young people get real work experience and take college level courses in fields like finance, health care, and biotech. Tonight, I am announcing that—in partnership with UMass Boston—we'll build on that foundation by piloting a Year 13 program at Fenway High School. This will give our students an additional full year of college-level courses debt-free as they transition to college and accelerate toward a degree.

If we expect our young people to be the leaders our world needs, then it's on all of us to take every step to ensure they have the skills and experience to meet this moment.

We recently celebrated the creation of our new Office of Youth

Real Estate Transfers

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BACK BAY			
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Markovic, Katarina	Orr, Margaret L	286 Beacon St #8	\$1,200,000
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Awad, Ahmed	Hmd Newbury Nt	249 Newbury St #R2	\$1,280,000
BEACON HILL			
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23 South Russell St LLC	Davidson, Elaine M	23 S Russell St	\$1,600,000
J B Small & M P Webster R	Mccullough, Gregory	3-5 Walnut St #1	\$1,761,000
BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE			
Panas, Alexander S	Kim, John J	1 Charles St S #14C	\$2,250,000
Li, Yichen	Fpg Lagrange Owner One	55 Lagrange St #801	\$775,000
Reed, Adrian	761 Harrison Church LLC	771 Harrison Ave #402	\$213,700
Hefferan, Michael	Anderson, Renee	530 Massachusetts Ave #1D	\$710,000
Kreder, Paul J	119 St Botolph LLC	119 Saint Botolph St #4	\$3,755,000
See, Alec K	Farahmand, Joan M	32 Traveler St #407	\$602,500
Eahg Boston 2 LLC	Thi Vi Boston LLC	90 Tremont St	\$82,630,000
Leddie, Colleen V	Moran, Kristine	1180-1200 Washington St #120	\$196,807
WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN			
Zhong, Huachun	Row Houses LLC	95 Hudson St #2	\$199,700
Rw 710 Rt	Sunrise T	20 Rows Wharf #709	\$4,250,000

Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The windows in the last clue are on 1 Milk Street. A tour of downtown prepared by the Downtown Boston Business Improvement District tells you to, "... look up to gaze the bust commemorating The Birthplace of Ben Franklin. Here, in 1706, Ben Franklin—printer, scientist, revolutionary, diplomat, philosopher, and considered by many the first true 'American'—was born."

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



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NFPA urges added caution when using home heating equipment

The National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) is urging the public to use added caution when heating their homes during the winter months, when nearly half (46 percent) of all U.S. home heating equipment fires occur. Home heating equipment is the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires and home fire injuries, and the third-leading cause of home fire deaths and direct property damage.

According to the latest Home Heating Fires report from NFPA, an average of 44,210 home heating fires occurred each year between 2016 and 2020, resulting in an estimated 480 civilian deaths, 1,370 civilian injuries, and \$1 billion in direct property damage.

“During the coldest months of the year, home heating equipment kicks into high gear, so making sure it is in good working order and used properly is critical to

reducing the likelihood of fire,” said Lorraine Carli, vice president of Outreach and Advocacy at NFPA. “By better understanding when and where home heating fires happen, people can take the steps to minimize associated risks and safely heat their homes.”

Home fires caused by heating equipment were less likely to occur in the overnight hours from midnight to 6 a.m. (13 percent), but they accounted for more than two out of five fatalities (43 percent), as well as disproportionate shares of injuries (22 percent) and direct property damage (20 percent).

Space heaters are most often responsible for home heating equipment fires, accounting for one-third of the fires, as well as the vast majority of associated deaths (88 percent) and injuries (80 percent).

NFPA offers these tips and guidelines for safely heating your

home during the winter months:

Heating equipment and chimneys should be cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.

Keep anything that can burn at least three feet (one meter) away from all heating equipment, including furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves, and space heaters.

Always use the right kind of fuel, as specified by the manufacturer, for fuel-burning space heaters.

Create a three-foot (one meter) “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.

Make sure space heaters are in good working order and used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. Turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

Fireplaces should have a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be

cool before putting them in a metal container, which should be placed outside at least 10 feet away from your home.

All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.

Make sure smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are located throughout the home; test them monthly to ensure that they’re working properly.

NFPA offers a wealth of home heating safety tips, information, and resources to help better educate the public about ways to safely heat their homes. In addition, NFPA’s “Put a Freeze on Winter Fires” campaign with the U.S. Fire Administration works to pro-

mote a host of winter safety issues, including home heating.

For this release and other announcements about NFPA initiatives, research, and resources, please visit the NFPA press room.

About the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®)

Founded in 1896, NFPA® is a global, self-funded, nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. The association delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission. For more information, visit www.nfpa.org. All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed online for free at www.nfpa.org/freeaccess.

Free tax preparation for Boston and Mystic Valley residents offered

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) urges all residents of Boston and the Mystic Valley who earned \$60,000 or less in 2022 to schedule a FREE in-person tax prep appointment at one of our neighborhood sites by calling 617-348-6329 or visiting bostonabcd.org/tax.

ABCD is a co-founder of the Boston Tax Help Coalition, a public-private collaboration with the City of Boston, which seeks to ensure the full participation of all Boston residents in the City’s economic vitality and future. In addition, ABCD is a member of the Massachusetts Association for Community Action (MASSCAP) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) network and offers free tax preparation services in the Mystic Valley Area. Both the Boston and Mystic Valley coalitions fall under the federal VITA program.

ABCD’s IRS-certified tax preparers will prepare and electronically submit returns through in-person appointments and document drop off. Last year, ABCD helped 2,565 residents complete their state and federal tax returns, resulting in \$6,431,747 in federal and state refunds combined, \$1,454,056 in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) and \$72,597 in Child Tax Credits (CTC). That economic infusion channeled dollars back to hardworking families and revitalized businesses in under-resourced neighborhoods. For over 30 years, ABCD has provided more than 150,000 people across the city with free tax preparation services.

Those who may qualify for free tax preparation services include:

- People who earned \$60,000 or less in 2022
- People with disabilities
- Limited English-speaking taxpayers

ABCD tax volunteers are multilingual, and fluent in eight languages including English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Cape Verdean Creole and Haitian Creole.

“ABCD is proud to be a long-standing partner of the VITA program and the Boston Tax Help Coalition,” said ABCD President and CEO Sharon Scott-Chandler. “Free tax preparation services help empower people who are struggling by providing the necessary IRS-certified tax experts to complete their returns, ensuring that Greater Boston residents obtain every tax credit to which they are entitled. In doing so, money is channeled directly back into the hands of residents and under-resourced communities. People have an opportunity they don’t often have to access a lump sum of their hard earned cash and pay off debts or save toward things like buying a house or furthering education. With extraordinarily high food and energy prices today, they are also able to help meet immediate needs like rent and transportation.”

ABCD’S IRS-certified tax preparers will make sure that residents receive every tax relief measure to which they are entitled, including:

- EITC – Earned Income Tax Credit – one of America’s most effective anti-poverty initiatives – EITC is a tax deduction that rewards work. This year a Married Filing Jointly family with three or more children earning up

to \$59,187 and filing jointly will receive total federal and state EITC deductions of \$9,016 off their 2022 income tax. EITC can be claimed retroactively for the past three years, so eligible taxpayers can qualify for a sizable sum. The IRS estimates that one out of five eligible taxpayers will not claim EITC and will lose out on this important credit.

- CTC – CHILD TAX CREDIT – returns a maximum of \$2,000 in 2022. This is a non-refundable credit which reduces the tax liability. The CTC has been reduced to 30% of the total amount paid for

tax year 2022.

- SENIOR CIRCUIT BREAKER – a state tax deduction providing seniors age 65 and older who pay unsubsidized rent or property taxes. The maximum credit amount for tax year 2022 is \$1,200. If the credit owed exceeds the amount of the total tax payable for the year, the additional amount of the credit will be refunded without interest.

A Massachusetts-based nonprofit human services organization, ABCD provides disadvantaged residents in the Boston and Mystic Valley areas with the

tools, support, and resources they need to transition from poverty to stability and from stability to success. Each year, we serve more than 100,000 individuals, elders and families through a broad range of innovative initiatives as well as long-established, proven programs and services. For 60 years, ABCD has been deeply rooted in each neighborhood we serve, empowering individuals and families and supporting them in their quest to live with dignity and achieve their highest potential. For more, please visit bostonabcd.org.

Understanding heart disease discussion Feb. 14

Special to the Times

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both women and men. Join Drs. Kelley-Hedgepeth and Lewis on line, Tuesday, February 14, 2-3:30 p.m., as they present a brief overview of common cardiac conditions, including coronary atherosclerosis, heart failure and atrial fibrillation. They will review the treatments for these chronic heart diseases, the impact of lifestyle, and other strategies to stabilize disease. After their talks, they’ll welcome your questions.

Dr. Kelley-Hedgepeth is Board Certified/Eligible in Cardiovascular Disease and Echocardiography. She has extensive experience in managing coronary artery disease, heart failure, and arrhythmias. Dr. Lewis is an Instructor in Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Her professional interests include cardiac imaging, preventive cardi-



Alyson Kelley-Hedgepeth, MD



Dara Lee Lewis, MD

ology, women’s cardiac health, and general cardiology issues including coronary artery disease and valvular heart disease.

This program is presented in partnership with the Boston Public Library, as part of Beacon

Hill Village’s Living Well Ending Well series. Registration required online <https://beaconhillvillage.org> or by calling Beacon Hill Village at 617-723-9713. Registrants will receive the zoom link for the program.

Athenæum partners with BFO for free, three-part Chamber Music Series

By Times staff

When concert halls were shuttered at the height of the pandemic, the Boston Athenæum offered to provide rehearsal space for the Boston Festival Orchestra, and this

partnership has since blossomed into a new Chamber Music Series that will pair the BFO's music with the Athenæum's art exhibits.

The three-part series, which take place on Feb. 9, April 8, and

June 22, respectively, will be free to the public and held within the Henry Long Room at the Athenæum, located at 10½ Beacon St.

"The concerts will span many time periods, cultures and medi-

ums, prodding us to ask questions such as: Who is art for? In what ways can we use art to connect with our heritage? In what ways can we use art to reconcile with the past?" BFO conductor Alyssa Wang said in a press release.

The first performance, "Materialia Lumina," takes place on Thursday, Feb. 9, at 6 p.m. as the BFO pairs new and old works of classical music with selections of artists' books showcased in the Athenæum's current gallery exhibition, "Materialia Lumina/Luminous Books."

The second performance in the series takes place on Saturday, April 8, at 3 p.m., and it's inspired by "Re-Reading Special Collections," a new Athenæum initiative to reinterpret and recontextualize works of art from its permanent collection while reconsidering the constructs of race, gender, and class.

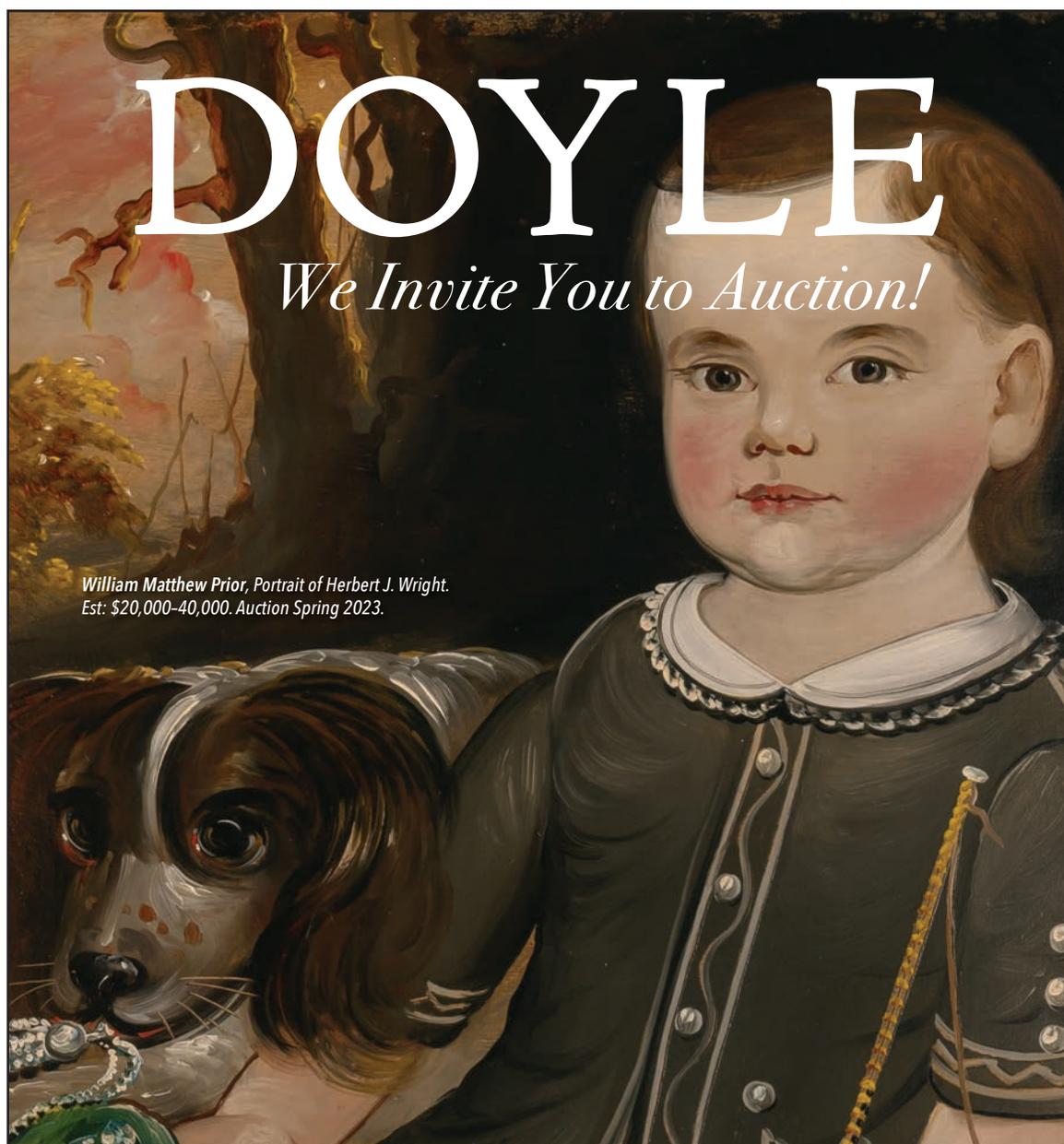
"A Place I Never Knew" - the third and final performance in the

series - will take place on Thursday, June 22, at 6 p.m. and juxtaposes a series of photographs by local photographer Tira Khan with the BFO's music to reflect bridges among Khan's Indian, American, and British heritages.

The performances will include opportunities for audience participation, including a chance to walk through the featured exhibits and speak with artists during post-concert receptions.

"For many audience members, these events may serve as the first introduction to the Boston Athenæum or the Boston Festival Orchestra," said Leah Rosovsky, director of the Athenæum, in a press release. "We hope that by mixing communities we strengthen the entire arts and culture community of Greater Boston."

The concerts are free to BFO subscribers, Athenæum members, and the general public, but registration is required at bostonathenaeum.org/events.



William Matthew Prior, *Portrait of Herbert J. Wright*.
Est. \$20,000-40,000. Auction Spring 2023.

American Paintings, Furniture & Decorative Arts Exhibition - Feb 1-16

10am - 5pm

Consignment Day - Thurs, Feb 16

10am - 4pm, By appointment only

LOCATION

236 Clarendon Street, Boston

CONTACT

Kathryn Craig & Chris Barber / 617-999-8254 / Boston@Doyle.com

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The Boston Athenæum at 10½ Beacon St.

D. MURPHY PHOTO