Why we need Black History Month

Trump is but one example

By Irene Monroe

February 1 begins Black History Month, a national annual observance since 1926, honoring and celebrating the achievements of African Americans.

To commemorate its start, President Trump hosted a "listening session" at the White House that left listeners scratching their heads wondering if he knew Frederick Douglass, a former slave, abolitionist, and orator, who died in 1895, and 2018 will be the bicentennial of his birth.

"Frederick Douglass is an example of somebody who has done an amazing job," he said of the orator. "He was a great leader and philosopher who has inspired more and more. I, too, am inspired by his words."

Expecting White House press secretary Sean Spicer to clarify what Trump meant regarding his comment on Douglass, Spicer, however, made it clear he, too, doesn't quite know if Douglass is dead.

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Not My America
But it is my Boston

By Gary Gatley

"Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free;"

"The wretched refuse of your teeming shore."

"Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:"

"I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

On Sunday, January 29th, 2017, 15,000 Bostonians joined over 1,000 Muslim immigrants from seven countries to enter the United States.

Ironically, as I stood near the Kahlil Gibran Memorial in Copley Square, I could not help but recall that Gibran was a Lebanese-American writer and philosopher who himself immigrated to the United States in 1895, at the age of 12.

As I looked out at the crowd, I was reminded of the words from the Emma Lazarus poem "The New Colossus":

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, your crowded slums.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:

I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

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Advice on Pets, Life, Love

By Monica Collins

Dear Dog Lady,

I am getting frustrated with my 1-year-old Labrador retriever mix dog. Yesterday, I ran out of the gate and ran away on me. I ran after him. It took one hour to get him that the pedastal of the Statue of Liberty and was engraved a bronze plaque and mounted inside the pedestal's lower pedestal's lower

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BCYF February Vacation Week Activities Offer Something for Everyone!

The February school vacation week is just approaching and Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) is urging families to make plans today to attend one of the many programs and activities being offered by BCYF centers. A complete schedule of BCYF centers' vacation week activities is available at boston.gov/bcyf.

A few highlights include:

- Full Vacation Week Programs:
  - Several centers including BCYF Blackstone, BCYF Charlestown, and BCYF Dorchester

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Monroe
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I think he went to highlight the contributions he has made. I think through a lot of the actions and statements he’s going to make, I think that the contributions of Frederick Douglass will be more and more.

The remarks from both Trump and Obama could have been an episode of "Drunk History," a TV comedy series where an uncredited narrator from historical events would which illustrate why we need Black History Month.

And, Dr. Carter Woodson, the Father of Black History were alive today, he would’ve been troubled by their remarks. However, it’s not just African Americans troubled by Trump’s lack of knowledge, or racism toward racial and ethnic groups.

"He’s embarrassing," Scott Keenan, who’s white, and the Boston Herald’s Food Editor stated. "It’s generally revealing of his lack of interest in the history of this country and civil rights struggles in particular.”

Sue O’Connell, publisher and editor of South End News and Bay Windows, and host of NECN's The Take with Sue O’Connell, who’s white, brought to my attention that Trump is not in tune with black history.

She reminded me that when Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson was being questioned about segregationists, he was the only candidate who mentioned the name of Harriet Tubman, and he asked the side of "Who’s Harriet Tubman?"

These two men, Trump and Johnson, regardless of their opposing political viewpoints, probably no idea who Harriet Tubman was. Trump, at least, is learning about Frederick Douglass for the first time.

Washington Gateway
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Peters Park Call to Artists

New mural on graffiti Art Wall

All (African American Alliance) Collective, Clay Lights, Washington Gateway Main Street, Friends of Peters Park, and Old Dorchester Neighborhood Association, in coordination with the Boston Art Alliance, invite Boston artists and submitting conceptual designs for consideration for a mural in Peters Park, in the South End on the Peters Park Art Wall.

For three decades, graffiti artists, community members, and international youth have come to view the Peters Park Graffiti Art Wall as a safe outlet for creative and cultural expression. Now the tradition continues with new concepts reflecting the traditional and cultural experiences of Boston and the South End community, to replace the existing mural.

Applications due February 26th.

If you are interested in sponsorship opportunities for this project or would like to make a donation, please contact WAGMS. The community hopes to raise $10,000 to support this effort.

Project Place on Washington

Lightening our Streets

If you are working with Project Place on Washington Street on a Wednesday, Friday, or Sunday, be sure to thank them. They are out there every week making our streets safer, clean, and trash barrels cleaner. This is the result of a recent cooperation with WAGMS, which we are proud to see the community moving forward.

Go to www.gateswaymainstreet.org

Dog Lady
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(or even walk) up and down the steps in our house. Until recently, he would climb the steps many times a day. From what I can tell, he hasn’t been injured - he walks and runs just fine. But he won’t even attempt to climb the stairs. He simply sits at the bottom (or at the top) and cries until we coax him up and bring him up (or down) in our arms. (Months ago, long before this behavior started, he took a spill down the stairs, but he seemed to recover just fine.) That isn’t life or death, but it is getting annoying. Any ideas?

— Charlie’s Church

Dear Charlie’s Church,

You should have Charlie thoroughly checked by a veterinarian because you never know if there’s some sort of infection that can’t be seen. If it checks out, you should get Charlie a new dog, or if you don’t have enough dog, you can consider a cat, even a cat that is a fixed one, because I care.

— G.W.

Dear G.W.

Thanks for your good words. If only everybody didn’t bother them.

Visit www.shorthair.com and read the new blog, "Shorthair News" and "Dog and the City"
Love Your Block!

Spring cleaning program encourages residents to get involved in their neighborhoods

Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced the 2017 program for “Love Your Block,” a high-impact spring cleaning program that encourages residents to improve their neighborhoods over the course of three weekends. Spring-cleaning activities include community gardens, pocket parks, public schools and sidewalks. Love Your Block, previously known as Boston Shines, will now include year-round cleaning, applications for innovative beautification rating programs and new ways for City-owned tool sheds.

“Whether you’re taking pride in your neighborhood, Boston becomes a better City for all,” said Mayor Walsh. “I encourage residents to participate in Love Your Block, and do their part to keep our City beautiful, friendly and welcoming place for residents and visitors alike.”

Residents can sign up to volunteer at Boston.gov.

A partial cleaning schedule for 2017 Love Your Block is below:

May 5-7
South End
Bay Village

May 12-14
South Boston
Roxbury
Five Points
Morton Hill
Jamaica Plain

For more information or Love Your Block, visit boston.gov/love-engagement/loveyourblock.

Letters Policy

The South End News welcomes letters to the editor.

All letters must be signed and accompanied by a mailing address and phone number.

Because of space limitations, letter should not be more than 200 words.

e-mail: letters@southendnews.com
fax: 617.464.7286
Considering Matthew Shepard

Berklee hosted the Boston premiere of Considering Matthew Shepard at Symphony Hall Sunday afternoon. The three-part fusion concert, composed by Craig Hella Johnson, is a musical response to the story of the gay University of Wyoming student who was beaten and left to die in a field beyond campus 19 years ago.

Johnson, who wrote the piece, conducted the Austin, Texas, vocal ensemble Conspirare in the performance, as well as choirs from Harvard, the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, and Berklee President Roger Brown, who attended, singing the plot succinctly for the first time. Berklee President Roger Brown and Boston Mayor Marty Walsh made introductory remarks, welcoming Johnson and Conspirare to Boston.

The CD Considering Matthew Shepard is nominated for a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Surround Sound. The award will be presented Sunday evening.

News from...

Action for Boston Community Development

Head Start, "Save Head Start!"

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCDD) will celebrate the opening of its new Head Start center serving Boston's Chinatown and South End communities on February 22 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. The state-of-the-art early learning center, located at 359 Harrison Avenue, Boston, will serve 194 low-income children and their families from birth to five-year-old, including infants, toddlers and pregnant mothers in Early Head Start.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, rector-chancellor of the Archdiocese of the Holy Cross, will speak at the event and visit with children, parents, and supporters.

"ABCDD is honored to welcome Boston's beloved Cardinal and many other dignitaries and guests to our ribbon-cutting ceremony serving low-income children and families of Boston's South End and Chinatown," said ABCDD President-CEO John J. Drew.

"These communities are home to thousands of families struggling to make ends meet and seeking the best education possible for their children."

ABCDD Head Start and Early Head Start provide quality education, health and well-being to poor children and families seeking support in better lives.

"These children are America's future," said Drew. "They deserve the very best in early education and care. Head Start provides that for more than 60 percent of poor children and families nationwide.

"ABCDD Head Start will open a new center in Malden this spring, enhancing the life-changing benefits of the national early learning program for low-income residents and providing expansion of the Early Head Start program with its critically needed services for infants, toddlers, and pregnant mothers.

ABCDD launches "Save Head Start" campaign

Drew said there is real concern among Head Start parents, educators, and supporters that Congress and the new administration may move to dismantle the longstanding, high-quality early care program that has provided opportunity for better lives for 35 million poor children and families over the past 32 years.

A former Head Start parent, Drew says, "there will be strong resistance to any threat to the federal Head Start program. The national commitment to our poor children and families must not be lost." He said, "Head Start could be an essential part of President Trump's commitment to closing the inequality gap.

He said that ABCDD's "Save Head Start" campaign is designed to ensure that the $500 million program survives and continues to benefit poor children and families.

It includes a website, HeadStart.org, and multiple initiatives to educate the public and policymakers about the program.

"I ask President Trump, Speaker Paul Ryan, and all members of Congress to keep Head Start as a high-quality federal program," said Mimi Tovar, Boston Head Start parent.

"Head Start has supported my children's education, health and growth. Because of Head Start, I have learned leadership skills and am returning to college to complete my bachelor's degree. We cannot lose Head Start."

Early Head Start/Early Education development research

ABCDD Early Head Start - a significant

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Supporting USES

Commerce Bank was a sponsor of the United South End Settlements (USES) 125th Birthday Party, held on January 28 at the Harvard Tawes House. Pictured at Commerce Bank’s presentation of a $300.00 check to USES for the celebration are, from left: USES President and CEO Maichannah Z. Weir Lytle; Brendan Ahern, Assistant Vice President and Manager of Commerce Bank South End office; USES Board Chair Julia Johannessen; and USES Vice President of Programs Julie Burke.

Originally founded as the Auerbach House in 1891, United South End Settlements was the first settlement house in Boston and the fourth in the United States. Its mission is to build a strong community by improving the education, health, safety and economic security of low-income individuals and families in Boston’s historic South End/Lower Roxbury and to serve as a national model of successful neighborhood engagement.

BCYF
Continued from page 1

Black History Month Basketball Tournament:
BCYF Gallivan Community Center is hosting their annual Black History Basketball Tournament for ages 19 and under on Thursday through Saturday of Vacation week, 1-6:30 p.m. Contact the center to register a team and for more information, 617-635-5252.

Girls-only Programming:
BCYF Girls Initiative is hosting a trip to see Hidden Figures followed by a discussion, roller skating party and a self-defense and self-esteem training with Girls Leap. Info: 617-635-4020 x2314.

Swimming
It may be cold out but BCYF’s 15 indoor pools are warm and offer open access swim time as well as structured aquatics programming under the watchful eyes of lifeguards. Several are offering free swim lessons all week as part of BCYF’s Swims for Safety program. Find your local pool here.

Advertisement for Boston Public Health Commission Boston Biosafety Committee members

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is seeking new members for its Boston Biosafety Committee (BBC) from the South End, Fenway, and/or Chinatown neighborhoods. The BBC provides technical assistance and advice on issues related to regulation and permitting of biological research laboratories in the City of Boston. Community members should be able to commit to two years on the committee.

BPHC permits and regulates research laboratories in Boston and the BBC has a role in advising the Executive Director of BPHC. Community members of the BBC have a role in communicating information on biological safety to the public and providing input on community concerns.

The BBC meets when required for review of research projects, laboratory permit applications, or other times requested by the BPHC Executive Director. The time commitment will average five hours a month, with some months having no meetings and some months having meetings with materials to review in advance.

Community members interested in being on the BBC should contact Julian Farland, Boston Public Health Commission Director of Biological Safety, at jfarland@bphc.org or 617-534-2814.

ABCD
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part of the new center and ABCD’s overall Head Start program — is unique among early learning institutions, leading the way in applying cutting-edge research on brain development in infants and young children to the needs of low-income families. The Early Head Start approach to working with low-income pregnant mothers, infants and toddlers can provide children the start in life they need, well before they get to the 3-year-old pre-kindergarten age that many city and state early education programs focus upon.

Early Head Start was launched in 1994 when scientific evidence showed that in understanding of the earliest brain development impacts human health, achievement and well-being across the lifespan. Massachusetts Senator Edward M. Kennedy was at the forefront of the movement, stressing that creating the right conditions in early childhood is more effective and far less costly than addressing a multitude of problems later on.

A full-day, full-year program, ABCD Head Start currently serves 3,700 low-income children from birth to age 5 and their families in 24 ABCD centers plus several partner sites throughout Boston, Mattapan and Everett. Early Head Start, now at 12 sites, serves 282 infants, toddlers and pregnant women.

Over the past 52 years, the federal Head Start program has improved the lives of more than 33 million children from poor families across America, providing them with the skills and confidence to succeed in school and life. It has given Head Start parents educational opportunities to move up the economic ladder, empowered disadvantaged families and revitalized communities. Head Start is renowned for its comprehensive services — education, health, dental, nutrition, social services — and intensive parent engagement.

Currently the national Head Start program is funded to serve only 42 percent of eligible preschool children and Early Head Start funding provides for only 4 percent of eligible infants and toddlers. ABCD says both programs should be expanded.

Increased funding has proven payback. A 2016 study by Nobel laureate economist James Heckman, The Lifespan Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program, found that for every $1 invested in Head Start there is a $5.2 return on investment to society.

“ABCD Head Start has been at the forefront of quality and innovation in its early education,” said Yvette Rodriguez, ABCD Vice President, Head Start & Children’s Services. “We have worked to fight childhood obesity, to involve fathers in their children’s education, to build school readiness, to provide opportunities for parents to build better lives and for our teachers to meet high standards. We are committed to joining with our colleagues across America to keep Head Start as a strong, national program.”

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Coldwell Banker supports Haley House

The Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office in Easton recently presented a $2,000 donation to Haley House. The donation was made through Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares, the company’s charitable foundation.

Haley House is a nonprofit organization based in Boston’s South End and Roxbury neighborhoods that owns and manages affordable housing units, operates a soup kitchen and food pantry, and runs cafes to provide healthy and nutritious meals and employment opportunities in inner-city neighborhoods.

“Haley House has helped some of the most vulnerable members of our community get back on their feet, and we are proud to make this donation to support their efforts,” said Roy Walker, managing broker of the Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office in Easton. “At Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, we feel it is vitally important to give back to our community.”

Affiliated sales associates and employees in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Exeter, New Hampshire have donated a portion of their sales commissions or proceeds to Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares, which supports nonprofit organizations throughout New England. Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares is a chapter of Realestoch Charitable Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in Delaware, tax ID 20-0755000. Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares’ primary purpose is to raise funds to provide financial assistance to housing-related causes in the communities where we have a presence.
We are the future of the LGBT community.

"The world still has its challenges but things are getting better. From the way we first met online to marriage equality to our daughter's upcoming Quinceañera, our life together is more fulfilling every day. We keep up with events and entertainment on EDGE, because that's where we see our future at its brightest."

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