

BMC Named 'Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality'

Three Years in a Row

The hospital was recognized in the Healthcare Equality Index 2016 national survey.

Boston — Boston Medical Center (BMC) has been recognized as a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality" by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, the educational arm of the country's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights organization. BMC earned top marks in meeting non-discrimination and training criteria that demonstrate its commitment to equitable, inclusive care for LGBT patients, and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing the quality health care and respect they deserve. This is the third year in a row BMC has been named a Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality.

"Receiving this designation from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation is an honor, and a testa-

ment to BMC caregivers' commitment to exceptional care for our LGBT patients," said Kate Walsh, president and CEO of BMC. "In addition to providing high-quality medical care with the respect and dignity all of our patients deserve, BMC, in collaboration with Boston University School of Medicine, was the first in the country to use an evidence-based curriculum to teach transgender medicine to the future physician workforce, another sign of our commitment to the LGBT community."

The findings were part of HRC Foundation's Healthcare Equality Index 2016, an annual survey that encourages equal care for LGBT Americans by evaluating inclusive policies and practices related to LGBT patients, visitors and employees.

BMC is one of a select group of 496 healthcare facilities

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Easter

More Photos on page 5



The choir singing on Easter Sunday at the Cathedral.

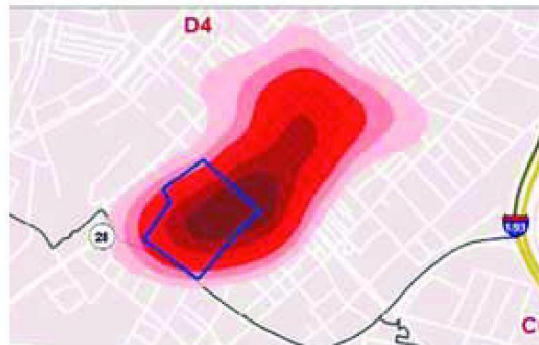
Lenox Street gang sweep fails to show results

Drug sales, violence in development continue

COURTESY ADAM GAFFIN
WWW.UNIVERSALHUB.COM

Federal and local authorities hailed the arrests last Thursday's arrests of alleged gang members at the Lenox Street development as a major blow against the crime and violence that has made residents virtual prisoners in their own homes, in a

Continued on page 2



Map showing density of gunfire incidents in lower Roxbury, South End, 2014-2015. Blue marks Lenox Street boundaries. From an affidavit in the case.

Feds Pick Up 27 in Sweep

South End Alleged Gang Members Charged With Drug And Firearm Offenses

SUBMITTED BY DA'S OFFICE

Twenty seven individuals, many of whom are affiliated with the

Lenox Street Cardinals, and other street gangs operating in the Lenox Street Housing Development area of Boston's South End, have been charged with federal and state drug and firearms offenses on Friday.

Seventeen federal indictments and one criminal complaint were unsealed today in U.S. District Court in Boston, charging 19 defendants with distribution and possession of

drugs and firearms in the Lenox Street Housing Development. In addition, eight individuals from the same area were charged in criminal complaints with drug distribution by state authorities.

"Through their sale of weapons and drugs, these defendants bring violence, fear and intimidation to a

Continued on page 3

Teen convicted of killing Nicholas Martinez

COURTESY ADAM GAFFIN
WWW.UNIVERSALHUB.COM

A Suffolk Superior Court jury today convicted Raymond Concepcion of the shooting murder of Nicholas Martinez as he sat in a car stuck in traffic on Southampton Street in 2012.

Concepcion, just 15 at the time of the murder, was the gunman who got out of another car and fired the fatal shots, prosecutors charged.

Because of his age, Judge Jeffrey Locke sentenced him to life in prison with the possibility of parole after a minimum of 20 years for murder, as well as a concurrent term of four

to five years for unlawful possession of a firearm.

Two other Hyde Park residents also faced charges for the Oct. 17, 2012 incident. Those men, Jaquan Hill, 24, and Shakeem Johnson, 25, pleaded guilty to manslaughter last month, earning them sentences of 12 to 14 years in state prison.

Lenox

Continued from page 1

complex where gang members boldly took over entire hallways for joint-smoking parties and didn't think twice about getting into gun and knife fights.

But an affidavit by the lead ATF agent in the case paints a different picture: One of revolving-door justice where gang members get out of prison—or just skip pre-trial bail—and return to Lenox Street to pick up where they left off, selling heroin, Ecstasy, crack and guns, and defending their turf against perceived slights from other gangs leaving residents no better than before a sweep, no-trespass orders from the BHA be damned:

In 2011, the residents of Lenox contacted the Boston Police Department to request help in attacking drug dealing from the hallways and other areas of the Project. That investigation resulted in 21 arrests. In 2012, ATF and BPD did another South End investigation that resulted in more Lenox Street, Villa Victoria, and Annunciation Road Gang members being charged with drug and firearm offenses.

Unfortunately, the problems at Lenox associated with gun and drug activity have persisted. Although crime in District D-4 went down in 2015, Lenox was still considered to be one of the city's 10 hotspots for violence for that year. The Boston Police Department's Boston Regional Intelligence Center identified 30 shootings and over 75 reports of shots fired in the area of the Development between March of 2012 and June of 2015. During the course of our operations, two of the Targets

were shot and a third was murdered, all around the area of the Development. BPD's BRIC has also identified Lenox as being one of several areas of the city involved in an uptick in year-end violence between December 4, 2015 and January 7, 2016, when there were 28 people shot including 5 fatal shootings and has identified the Lenox Street Cardinals as being involved in two of the City's most active gang disputes in 2015.

The Lenox Street Cardinals and smaller gangs that also operate out of Lenox have become so entrenched that the ages of the people arrested this week range from their early 20s into their 30s.

And the gangs show no signs of going away, continuing to recruit young members, ATF Special Agent Peter Kelley writes. He asked a federal judge order even the youngest members held without bail, despite their lack of long records, because:

[T]he activities described herein are adversely affecting the quality of life for hundreds of people who live in and around the Development and the Targets simply will not conform their conduct to the requirements of the law.

They are also a violent bunch: Of the 19 people indicted by a federal grand jury this week, Kelley writes, 11 have been shot or stabbed, some more than once. In a 2014 YouTube video, one alleged gang member, Ellis Santos, showed off the scars from the 23 bullets he took in a single 2010 incident. In fact, the feds and BPD originally had 20 people under surveillance last year, but one got murdered.

The sweeps were aimed at what are technically two developments next to each other

between roughly Melnea Cass Boulevard and Massachusetts Avenue in lower Roxbury—Lenox and Camden—and overlooking Ramsay Park, which gang members turned into an open-air drug bazaar so blatant that Mayor Walsh made cleaning the park up one of the goals in state-of-the-city address in January:

I was moved when a group of young people came to see me at Ramsay Park in the South End last summer. They told me what it was like to grow up right next door to a park that was too unsafe to use, and how they've been working to fix that. They are here tonight. I'm happy to tell them: because of your advocacy, and with your input, we are going to completely renovate Ramsay Park.

"It is ATF's hope that these investigations are a positive step in that direction," Kelley writes in his affidavit.

But Kelley's affidavit repeatedly highlights how difficult that will be, through short bios of the 19 people charged in federal court—another 8 face state charges. Typically, they have long records; many show them repeatedly returning to Lenox despite "no trespass" orders from the BHA.

Take, for example, Byron Alexander, whom the indictment says goes by "Shizz," and the affidavit says is known as "Buns." He was allegedly recorded selling crack to an informant at Lenox Street last year despite a "no trespass" order by the BHA—his indictment this week was for that sale:

Approximately one hour after that buy, he was arrested on a state warrant and 21 more bags of crack cocaine were recovered from him at booking. ...

Alexander has a lengthy criminal record

that includes convictions for a 2015 Assault and Battery, a 2011 conviction for Possession to Distribute Class D, and a 1997 group of convictions that included Involuntary Manslaughter, Armed Robbery, and Assault with a Dangerous Weapon. Alexander was sentenced to 10-15 years on the latter group of convictions. BPD records also indicate that Alexander was shot in 2012 in the area of the Lenox Street Housing Development.

Or take Pablo "Migo" Moreta:

PABLO MORETA, a/k/a "MIGO" is an identified member of the Lenox Street, Mass Ave. Tremont Street, and Villa Victoria Gangs who sold Ethylone (which he described as the "pure form of ecstasy") and two firearms (one of which was a starter pistol) to the CW inside the Lenox Street Housing Development. Moreta was shot in 2012 and ordered out of BHA Properties on January 2, 2015. His record includes 2 drug distribution convictions and he currently has multiple cases pending against him, two of which he has already admitted to committing.

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Raid

Continued from page 1

community in the heart of this City," said United States Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz. "Lenox Street's residents, surrounded by illegal activity and the violence that accompanies it, are made to feel like prisoners in their own homes. As the Department of Justice, we are committed to assisting residents in reclaiming their right live in a peaceful environment free from drugs, guns and violence."

"ATF will continue to aggressively partner with its federal, state, and local law enforcement counterparts to dismantle criminal street gangs, and their drug trafficking and violence committed through the use of firearms," said Daniel Kumor, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, Boston Field Division. "Furthermore, it demonstrates that law enforcement will not stand by and allow these criminal street gangs to get away with such acts, which creates fear for the residents within the community."

"These arrests send a strong message that illegal drugs and guns have no place on the streets of Boston," said Boston Police Commissioner William B. Evans. "I want to commend all of my officers and our partners from the ATF, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office for their coordinated efforts during this lengthy investigation."

"The children and families who live at the Lenox Street Housing Development deserve a safe, healthy environment free of the violence that goes hand in hand with the drug trade.

Local, state, and federal authorities will never waver in our commitment to those families and their right to live free of fear," said Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley.

The investigation was initiated in January 2015 with the principal goal of curtailing drug and gun trafficking that tyrannizes the Lenox Street Housing Development and severely disrupts the lives of residents. The Development and surrounding areas have historically suffered from the violence that accompanies these illegal activities. According to the Boston Police Department's Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC), the Lenox area was one of the City's top 10 hotspots for violence in 2015. In fact, there were 30 shootings and more than 75 reports of shots fired in the area from March 2012 to June 2015.

The following defendants were charged in federal indictments or criminal complaint with:

Distribution of controlled substances within 1,000 feet of a public housing project:

- 1) Byron Alexander, aka "Shizz"
- 2) Dontane Bryant, aka "Tane";
- 3) Tyler Deloach, aka "Tek";
- 4) John Depina, aka "Dough";
- 5) Stephen Freeman, aka "Shizz";
- 6) Perry Hasberry, aka "Percy"
- 7) Rasean Hills, aka "Bleed";
- 8) Keron-Randall Lewis, aka "Talent";
- 9) Frank Melo, aka "Cuts";
- 10) Pablo Moreta, aka "Migo";
- 11) Anthony Nunez, aka "Dizzo";
- 12) Hassan Parham, aka "Hizzy";
- 13) James Richardson, aka "9-Ball";

- 14) Derek Roberts, aka "Keas";
- 15) Ellis Santos, aka "Slim Black";
- 16) Anthony Williams aka "Batz."

Distribution of a controlled substance:

- 17) Lawrence Bogarty, aka "LB"; and
- 18) Daryl Tolbert, aka "Blaze."

Felon-in-possession of a firearm and ammunition:

- 19) George Deeble, aka "Smiley"; and
- 20) Pablo Moreta, aka "Migo."

Ten of the nineteen federal defendants were arrested this Friday.

The charge of distribution of controlled substances within 1,000 feet of a public housing project provides a mandatory minimum sentence of one year and no greater than 40 years in prison, a minimum of six years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$2 million. The charge of distribution of a controlled substance provides a sentence of no greater than 20 years in prison, a minimum of three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million. The charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition provides a sentence of no greater than 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office charged the following individuals in criminal complaints:

Distribution of cocaine:

Spencer Oyeyemi
Danielle Stokes
Monique McFarlin
Marquetta Matthews

Distribution of heroin:
Hector Delvalle

Distribution of methamphetamine:
Shomari Copeland

Possession of a firearm:
Markus Perry

Possession and illegal sale of firearm and ammunition:
Steven Allen

The investigation is continuing.

The case is being investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Boston Field Division; Boston Police Department's Youth Violence Strike Force and District D-4 Drug Control Unit; and the Boston Housing Authority Police. The federal cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys in Ortiz's Organized Crime and Gang Unit. The state cases are being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys in Conley's Gang and Drug Units.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

BMC

Continued from page 1

nationwide to be named Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality. Facilities awarded this title meet key criteria, including patient and employee non-discrimination policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity, a guarantee of equal visitation for same-sex partners and parents, and LGBT health education for key staff members.

"Despite all the progress we've made, far too many LGBT people still lack inclusive and affirming healthcare. Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality are helping to change that, and, in the process, making the lives of LGBT patients and their families better each

and every day," said Chad Griffin, President of the Human Rights Campaign. "LGBT people have a right to be treated equally in all aspects of our lives, and HRC celebrates Boston Medical Center for its work to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all patients."

The Healthcare Equality Index offers healthcare facilities unique and powerful resources designed to help provide equal care to a long-overlooked group of patients, as well as assistance in complying with regulatory requirements and access to high-quality staff training.

For more information about the Healthcare Equality Index 2016, or to download a free copy of the report, visit www.hrc.org/hei.

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Pet of the Week





Bunny

Meet **Bunny**, a beautiful sweetheart looking for a new start! She is friendly toward everyone, but can be a bit shy when she first meets you. She loves going on walks and playing with squeaky toys, and would love someone who has the time to give her the exercise she needs. She would do best as the only pet in the home. **Bunny** has had no accidents at the shelter, but could always use a refresher once she gets into the home. If you are interested in meeting this little love, come down today!

For more information on **Bunny**, or any of the other animals currently residing at the Animal Rescue League of Boston, please contact us at 617.226.5602. The shelter is open Tues through Thurs 1-7pm & Fri through Sun 1-4pm, excluding some holidays.

Also, be sure to check out our:
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ASK DOG LADY



Advice on Pets, Life, Love

BY MONICA COLLINS

Dear Dog Lady,

My dog, Ellie, is a great Lab/redbone coonhound mix. She's an absolutely great loving dog with two little habits that can wear on people a bit: She loves licking and sniffing! Basically she will lick and sniff you as much as you let her. Is there any way to deter her or curb those traits? The sniffing is particularly an issue when female guests come into my home and she will run right up and stick her nose right where it doesn't belong, if you know what I mean?

—Dan

Dear Dan,

Your dog was born to pick up a smell. Asking a Lab/redbone coonhound mix not to sniff is like asking for an answer in plain English as to why she

sniffs female guests in embarrassing fashion. You can, however, train your dog to respect boundaries when company comes. The most immediate way to do this is to put Ellie on a leash to greet guests. If she gets out of hand, command her to sit and stay — or simply put her in another room. Reward her with a treat when she is calm.

Nothing is more annoying than being pounced upon by a rogue sniffer or jumper when visiting someone's home. You are being a perfect host to seek to contain this behavior. Your dog will never stop sniffing and licking but you can corral Ellie's energies by keeping her on a leash when guests arrive and distracting her with treats and "sit/stay" exercises.

Dear Dog Lady,

Dogs that eat smartphones should get an award because there will be one less phone ringing during the movie. The people who are surprised when their dogs chew on shoes, cell phones — or anything they don't want the dogs to eat — are idiots for thinking dogs should know better. After all, a dog's world is limited to: Eat it. Chew on it. Sleep on it. Pee on it. (And uproariously greet an owner as if he has been away for twenty years when he's only been gone for five minutes). I say shame on us for giving our dogs the chance to make a choice with stuff.

—Guy

Dear Guy,

Shame on us for making it hard for them — for leaving cell phones around for them to chew, for strewn underwear or designer shoes in their path, for not putting away the chocolate, the raisins, the onions, Macadamia nuts or anything toxic for them to eat, and for speaking to them in English or Spanish or French or Farsi or any language they don't understand.

House pets are limited to the choices we give them. And when we lead chaotic lives, they do too. We cannot leave stuff around and be surprised or shocked

when they chew it. We cannot expect our dogs to know the difference between an iPhone and a squeaky toy. We cannot think they chew things out of spite.

When dogs are bored, they chew; when they have excess energy, they chew; when they have nothing else and we provide the temptation, they chew our things.

Dear Dog Lady,

We adopted a five-month-old puppy from a shelter. She's great in every way and a quick learner. The only thing we cannot get her to do is take a walk away from the house. She stops dead in her tracks and looks back toward the house and whimpers sometimes. We've tried different paths around the house as well as street walking and walking in the woods. Please help us. We need to walk our puppy.

—Beth

Dear Beth,

Walk your puppy with other dogs. Others with tails will motivate her and teach her. She will quickly learn how it's done. Ask another dog keeper in the neighborhood if you and no-go puppy can tag along.

For a recalcitrant puppy, the lessons learned from another of its own species could be the incentive to step along. Walk — or try to — at the same times every day. Anytime you see another human at the end of a leash, follow that dog with your balking buddy. The more you tail other dogs, the more your puppy will get it.

Right now, there's no incentive for her to move. Walking on the leash is a learned skill. As you encourage forward motion, coax puppy onward in a high-pitched, happy voice. Keep treats handy so you can bribe her to put one paw in front of the other. The right tone and the right food tools are the keys for moving in the right direction.

Go to www.askdoglady.com to read chapters from "Book of Shorty: A Little White Dog Leads Me Home" on the new blog.

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Publishers:

Jeff Coakley [ext. 202]
Sue O'Connell [ext. 215]

Editor-in-Chief:

Sue O'Connell [ext. 215]
sue.southendnews@gmail.com

Editorial Design Manager:

Daniel J. Raps
danielj.raps@gmail.com

Contributing Writers:

C.D. Hermelin
Michele D. Mamiscalco
Jack Maypole, MD
Dog Lady

Display Advertising:

Jeff Coakley [ext. 202]
jcoakley@southendnews.com

Classified Advertising:

classifiedads@southendnews.com

Letters to the editor:

letters@southendnews.com

Calendar listings:

sencalendar@southendnews.com

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PO BOX E14,
Boston, MA 02127
(617) 464-7280; FAX (617) 464-7286

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A skillful Debate, a predictable Housewives

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BY JULES BECKER

Adolescents—gay and straight—have a hard enough time running the gauntlet of growing pains at home and school. Those pressures and demands are compounded in an age of computer chatrooms and technological overload—as demonstrated by a trio of very different teenagers in Stephen Karam's prescient and insightful 2007 Off-Broadway comedy "Speech and Debate" (first workshopped at Brown). In their own respective ways, out

Howie, closeted Solomon and straight Diwata find the title school group and mode of self-articulation both haven and hot seat. Bad Habit Productions' riveting revival makes this alternately amusing and affecting combination catch fire at the Boston Center for the Arts.

Individually Howie, Solomon and Diwata feel like misfits. Howie, a transfer student to the play's North Salem High, wonders if he will be able to avoid the kind of gay-bashing he experienced at the Boy Scouts and hopes his new school will allow the establishment of a gay-straight alliance. Solomon writes for the school paper, tries to push the envelope there with controversial subjects and initially conceals his own issues—namely his true sexuality. Diwata displays an ambition greater than her talent, regularly lands the role of an extra-avenue featured one, but undauntedly looks to act and sing as conflicted young Mary Warren in her own musical variation on Arthur Miller's Salem, Massachusetts-set "The Crucible." Can these different drummer students find harmony and understanding together or struggle with impossible discord?

As the three thoughtful iconoclasts come together at the school's new Speech and Debate club, they form an unusual Three



Students rehearsing in "Speech and Debate"

Musketeer-like group committed to exposing drama teacher Mr. Healey as someone who preys on teenage males. The title of the club and the play also functions as a metaphor for the ways in which they work out their own issues. As improvisation, poetry, music and various elements of public speaking join the mix, Diwata's variation becomes a true collaboration encompassing Howie's interest in time travel to bible days and Solomon's curiosity about the possibility that Abraham Lincoln was gay. While each adolescent continues to explore the issue of Healey's culpability, their respective emotional and intellectual odysseys

see **THEATER**, page 6

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To be considered for publication, letters must be no longer than 500 words; refrain from extreme personal attacks; be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Writers should refrain from making incorrect statements since they may be barred from future issues. Deadline is noon Tuesday for Thursday's paper. To send us letters: Mail to 46 Plympton St., 5th floor, Boston, MA 02118; FAX to 617.464.7286; E-mail: letters@southendnews.com

Easter

Continued from page 1



(Left) Easter at the Cathedral (Center) Cardinal O'Malley greeting people after Mass (Right) Cardinal O'Malley preaching

Crime Report

SUBMITTED BY BPD

At about 7:20 PM on Tuesday, March 8, 2016, officers from District D-4 (South End) responded to a radio call for shots fired in the area of 96 West Newton Street, a Boston Housing Authority Property.

Upon arrival, officers observed a male fitting the suspect's description a short distance from the original address. Officers stopped the male and while speaking with him, a 9mm ammunition casing fell from his pocket. Simultaneously, officers canvassing the area for discarded evidence observed

a loaded black 9mm Ruger P95DAO with a high capacity feeding device in a gap between a nearby building and porch.

By virtue of a written trespass notice from the BHA to the suspect and the unlawful possession of the shell casing, officers arrested 19-year-old Isaac Almedarez of Roxbury for Trespassing and Unlawful Possession of Ammunition. Statements made freely by Almedarez in front of officers during the booking process lead officers to additionally charge him with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, Unlawful Possession of a Large Capacity Feeding Device, and Discharging a Firearm within 500 Ft. of a Dwelling.

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CITATION G. L. c. 210 § 6	Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court
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Any unnamed or unknown parent and persons interested in a petition for the adoption of said child and to the Department of Children and Families of said Commonwealth	
A petition has been presented to said court by Tammy Rudolph of Boston, MA requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to	Docket No. SU16A0005AD Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street PO Box 9667 Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300
Natalee Amyra Rudolph	
IF YOU DESIRE TO OBJECT THERETO, YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY MUST FILE A WRITTEN APPEARANCE IN SAID COURT AT: Boston ON OR BEFORE TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM) ON: 4/7/2016	
WITNESS, Hon. Joan P. Armstrong, First Justice of this Court. Date: January 25, 2016 Felix D. Arroyo, Register of Probate	

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court	
Estate of: Isaac Barnes Date of Death: 09/24/2015		Docket No. SU16P0570EA	
<p>To all interested persons: A petition has been filed by Jacqueline Fratus of Needham Heights, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order of testacy and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. And also requesting that Jonathan J. Davey of Quincy, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve on the bond in an unsupervised administration.</p> <p>You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before 10:00 a.m. on 04/21/2016.</p> <p>This is NOT a hearing date but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an Affidavit of Objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you.</p> <p>The estate is being administered under formal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but recipients are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration</p>		Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street PO Box 9667 Boston, MA 02114 (617)788-8300	
WITNESS, Hon. Joan P. Armstrong, First Justice of this Court.			
Date: March 15, 2016		Felix D. Arroyo, Register of Probate	

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Theater

Continued from page 4

become the strongest focus of Karam's disarming play.

If "Speech and Debate" sounds too diagrammatic and serious, think again. Karam demonstrated a skill for blending thoughtful drama and humorous exchanges in his earlier IRNE Award-winning "Sons of the Prophet," and he does so here as well. That humor is particularly rich as the trio works on their parts—for example, an observation in the musical about Lincoln's attentions to men in uniform and a dance sequence in which Diwata strips down to a nude colored body stocking and Howie and Solomon to their underwear. At the same time, there are sharp subtleties about privacy on the one hand and the distinctions between adolescence and adulthood on the other.

Rebecca Bradshaw's tight direction of a strong ensemble fully captures the plays' subtleties, dramatics and humor. Katie Elinoff has all of Diwata's idiosyncratic charm and unflagging spirit. Evan Vihlen catches Howie's vulnerability as well as his gradual emergence from diffidence. Ross Magnani moves convincingly from defensiveness to an embrace of his identity. Veronica Anastasio Wiseman is equally convincing as advising Teacher and self-promoting Reporter. The revival's vivid design virtually becomes a character as technology alternately serves and seduces the students. Particular credit goes to Seif Allah Salotto-Cristobal's complementing projections and Andrew Duncan Will's evocative sound design.

While plugging her book on adolescents, Reporter does observe the following about the students' efforts: "If you go to listen, you will leave talking." Likewise, Bad Habit Productions' richly compelling revival of "Speech and Debate" will have theatergoers considering Karam's still timely talking points long after leaving Deane Hall.

Reality television should be as fertile ground for hilarious spoofing as award-winning Broadway shows have been for "Forbidden Broadway." Not surprisingly, the Shubert Theatre playbill for "The Realish Housewives of Boston: A Parody" promises a lively mix of "brawls, booze and Botox" and a "totally original—and outlandish—parody performance... guaranteed to leave you and your best frenemies laughing 'til you cry your eyelashes off!" The parody performance is certainly original—in fact the collaboration of veteran Chicago-based comics Kate James and Tim Sniffen—but unfortunately far from outlandish.

While director Eric Hoff makes the title quintet distinctive and designer Theresa Akers handsomely appoints the set where they alternately brawl and bond, bitchy banter is more predictable than inspired. Governor Baker and Mayor Walsh are rightly referenced, but location allusions amuse more when they speak of Provincetown and Revere. Be prepared for some mildly humorous audience participation in which theatergoers are briefly involved in housewives' complications. Look for mild innuendo about politically ambitious Gwen's lesbian relationship with (unseen) a jail inmate nicknamed Python and the interest of haughty Ravonka's (a possible allusion to Ivanka Trump?) unseen Baron husband in well-oiled Turkish wrestlers.

Katie Caussin has the right attitude as Gwen, and Lori McClain is convincing as haughty Ravonka. Katy Carolina Collins has her moments as supposedly idyllically happy C.L., while Lindsey Pearlman is smartly sarcastic as Brooke. Enjoy Gavino is a standout as likeable but clueless Desiree. Jackson Evans displays versatility as Andy Cohen—like host Randy Bowen, a flamboyant yoga guru and a busy Italian photographer.

At one point "The Realish Housewives" speaks of "so much pain and so much drama right before our eyes." Ultimately, this mild-mannered parody provides too little real pleasure.



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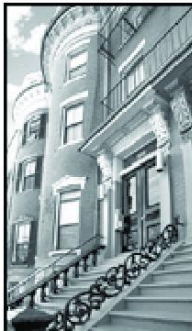
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