South End *News*

December 6, 2018 [Vol. 39 , No. 48]

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Local news for and about Boston's best neighborhood

A few gifts from *the Grinch*

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas,
tour at Boch Center Wang Theatre, Boston, through December 9. 800-982-2787 or bochcenter.org

By Jules Becker

Have you ever thought of the Grinch as a green-faced variation on Ebenezer Scrooge? After all, both characters initially hate Christmas but eventually embrace its basic values of human kindness and car-

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A scene from "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

Photo by Michele Maniscalco

VNA Care's 13th Annual Heroes a Success

Submitted by VNA

VNA Care, a nonprofit visiting nurse association, recently honored industry leaders while raising more than $250,000 during the 13th annual Heroes in Health Care Gala at the Mandarin Oriental, Boston. The Honorary Gala Chairs and Presenting Sponsor of the event were Amy and Joshua Boger.

The Gala is VNA Care's signature fundraising event and has raised millions in essential funding for home health care provided by the 132-year-old VNA of Boston and

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Gala Co-Chairs Linda Hope-Springer, Loriann Meagher and Holly Chaffee

An Enchanted tree lighting at Worcester Square

By Michele D. Maniscalco

After 56 years as a strictly local production taking place after sundown on the first Sunday of December, Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association's annual Christmas Tree Lighting became part of the citywide Mayor's Enchanted Trolley Tour on Saturday,

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JP to consider joining SE in space saving ban

Courtesy Adam Gaffin
WWW.UNIVERSALHUB.COM

Jamaica Plain, which has rapidly risen to rival South Boston for the boldness, obnoxiousness and inventiveness of its space-saving fervor, could join the meeker South End in trying to ban space saving altogether.

The Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council's had scheduled a hearing for tonight—but moved it to Jan. 8—to consider whether JP should try to emulate the South End's four-year-old ban on winter space saving. That ban does not have universal acceptance.

Currently, outside of the South End, Boston lets parkers reserve a space for up to 48 hours after the end of any formal snow emergencies.

ABCD Adopt a Family Needs Your Help

Submitted by ABCD

Action for Boston Community Development is reaching out to families, organizations and companies who want to help children, families and seniors in need this holiday season by adopting a family! It's a way for you and your loved ones or colleagues to experience the spirit of giving and truly make a difference for others.

The need is huge. Right now ABCD Adopt a Family has 129 families waiting to be "adopted" and only 62 donors to fill those wish lists. And there are so many more families who are calling daily asking to be matched with a donor. Here is an example of a family requesting adoption for the holidays:

A single mom living in a Dorchester shelter with her two-year-old son Jayden. Alasia works as a Certified Nursing Assistant and is on several waiting lists for affordable housing. She is trying hard to put food on the table, clothes on their backs, and save for a rental deposit.

There is no extra money for

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Joseph James Bennett

November 29, 2009

"At sunset as I stand on a mountaintop a great bird that was once by my side approaches, he is small in my sight but grows larger on approach, until I am blessed with a full sight of his graceful wings and proud countenance. He lands and looks intently at me, tilts his head as if to say: "it will be OK, I must go now and you will feel happiness again". All too quickly he takes to the sky again; he grows small on the horizon and disappears from my view. I say with sadness: There, he's gone! Yet I know he must leave, as there are others awaiting him in another place where I cannot yet travel. Soon they will take on his view as he reaches his final destination, a place of peace.

At sunrise, sitting alone, I now see a new bird approaching coming into my sight, growing larger upon his approach. He lands and sits comfortably by my side and does not falter. He now looks forward into the horizon with me each day. As the great bird that is now in another place predicted happiness has returned. I now find myself truly blessed to be in the presence of the new bird's graceful wings, pound countenance and good company."

Remembered in our hearts always,
Gary

City Councilor Michelle Wu Releases Report on Youth Transportation Challenges

Submitted by Councilor Michelle Wu

Boston City Councilor At-Large Michelle Wu announced the results of a grassroots research initiative conducted by her office this past summer to survey hundreds of Boston students about their transportation needs and preferences.

The Boston Youth Transportation Project research was led by a policy fellow in Councilor Wu's office, Lily Ko of Tufts University's Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning program. The project analyzed how transportation options are affecting Boston high school students, and assessed youth attitudes regarding various modes of transportation in light of the City of Boston's climate change goals.

"We often talk about transportation challenges from the perspective of employees and the economy, but it's important to highlight just how significantly transportation challenges are shaping the lives of Boston youth," said Councilor Wu. "Transportation costs, unreliability, and safety concerns are major barriers for our students as they seek educational, social and economic opportunities across the city. We must take policy action, because the health and prosperity of our society and economy depend on this next generation of leaders having opportunities to thrive."

The research explored factors related to youth transportation experiences, such as the Boston Public School policy for students to be eligible for a subsidized transit pass, called an "M7 pass," MBTA fares and service reliability, Transportation Network Company services like Uber and Lyft, preferences between various transportation modes and links to opportunities for jobs, household income, education and social interactions.

"The findings revealed that there are young people who cannot access opportunities available to them, and worse, that their transportation experiences put them at risk for discipline with educational and transit authorities, limit their learning and earning potential, produce social apprehension, affect relationships with their parents, and reduce their ability to meet basic needs," the report concludes. "These issues were not only exacerbated by the city's M7 walkzone policy, but also by the lack of reliable public transit service."

Transportation accounts for between 25-33% of the City of Boston's greenhouse gas emissions. Boston's climate plans include a goal to reduce emissions from transportation by 50% from 2005 levels by 2030.

"Their strong preference for car use and increasing familiarity with TNCs indicate that much work still has to be done before future generations will shift away from the "car is king" mindset," said author Lily Ko. "This suggests that progress on improving this biking environment should be made more aggressively than in the 15 year plan proposed by Go Boston 2030. Otherwise, there is indication from our youth that Boston's congestion issues will become exponentially worse. At the same time, public transit must become a more competitive option."

The full report is available at: http://bit.ly/BostonYouthTransportation2018.

ABCD

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holiday gifts. On her wish list for Jayden are: a warm snowsuit, mittens, hat, books appropriate for a two-year-old, a set of blocks and large legos, the toy trucks and trains that he loves! She can't imagine what it would mean to have them under the small tree she hopes to decorate.

"ABCD Adopt a Family is a win-win for all and the need out there is greater than ever," said ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew. "Please let the spirit of the holidays inspire you to put smiles on the faces of families struggling to make ends meet – your help in this holiday season will give them hope and joy that lasts all year long!"

Drew said ABCD will expand the Adopt a Family initiative into a year-round program that boosts opportunity for low-income families and brings people of diverse economic backgrounds together in positive ways all year round.

Time is running out. Please contact ABCD today to choose a family for you or your organization to adopt! We will give you a "wish list" for your family and help you every step of the way. Visit bostonabcd.org/adopt-a-family

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Tree Lighting

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December 1.

About 250 guests of all ages started gathering in the square at 4:00 PM, greeting friends and listening to swinging renditions of Christmas musical favorites by the Yvonne Aubert Quartet. Among them were state senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (2nd Suffolk); District 2 city councilor Ed Flynn and his daughter, Caroline; district 3 city councilor Frank Baker; city councilors at large Annissa Essaibi George and Michelle Wu and South End/Bay Village liaison Faisa Sharif.

Around 4:30 PM, a police escort heralded the arrival of Mayor Martin J. Walsh and his retinue, which included Fast Freddy Murphy of MIX 104.1 FM, emcee for the event and Santa and Mrs. Claus, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, the Nutcracker and a group of Toy Soldiers.

The toy soldiers Rudolph danced in the street, the mayor offered his greetings to neighbors, introduced Mr. And Mrs. Claus and announced the lighting of the tall, grand tree in the square. Once the tree was shining with multi-colored lights, Santa and Mrs. Claus invited children onto the trolley to tell Santa their Christmas wishes.

Elsewhere in the square, local eateries provided free food and beverages to warm the attendees. There were treats to satisfy all appetites including pizza slices from Café Quattro provided pizza, hot chocolate and chocolate chip cookies from Blunch, chili from Mike's City Diner, plantain soup from Teranga, sandwiches from 7-Eleven and hot chocolate and coffee from Jaho.

Children and couples danced to the music. After the mayor and his entourage departed, WSANA president George Stergios and member Peter Zimmer drew the raffle. Prizes comprised a three-month family membership to the Huntington YMCA, a case of wine from Seiyo, tickets to the Duck Tour and the Museum of Science, gift certificates to Flour, six-week unlimited class to Barre 3 fitness studio and the grand prize, $500 cash.

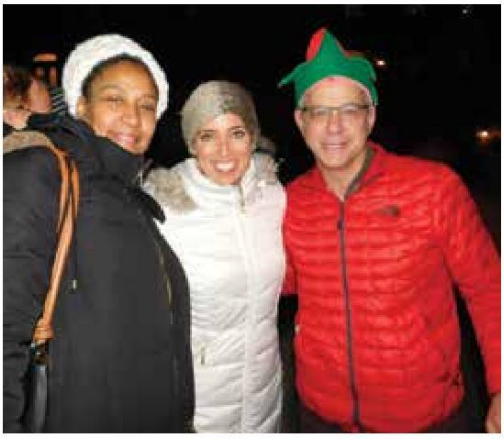
The drawing, whose proceeds were not yet available at press time, will benefit future WSANA programming such as the summertime Music in the Square concert series, as well as a donation to a local charity that will be chosen by the membership.

Stergios seemed pleased with the Mayor's visit to the Worcester Square Tree Lighting, which has been an annual tradition for over 50 years. "We have asked the Mayor Menino and then Mayor Walsh to make an appearance at the Tree Lighting for many years, as long as I have been active in WSANA.

This year, before we even sent out an invitation, Faisa mentioned that the Mayor would like to include Worcester Square on his trolley tour. Why Worcester Square? Because we have the best damn tree lighting in the whole city, that is why," Stergios said. Change comes with a price: adding WSANA's tree lighting displaced longtime resident Greg Jackson, whose red-bespectacled Santa has listened to children's wish lists and handed out presents at the event for years. "Because of the Mayor's schedule, we had to move the event from Sunday to Saturday. Because the Mayor has his own Santa Claus, we had to lay off our own adorable Santa for this season. We did not want to confuse the kids."

Parking was banned on both sides of Worcester Square from 2:00-600 PM to accommodate the three trolleys that accompanied the Mayor and his retinue, which caused consternation some among residents of the area who complained on Facebook's South End Community Board that there was not sufficient notice for car owners.

Commenting on the event in a follow-up email, Stergios observed, "It was the first time the trolley tour stopped at Worcester Square, and while everything went smoothly, I think that we learned that there is no reason to have a parking ban on both sides of the square and that we can keep the band playing while Santa entertains the tots. I do not expect that the Mayor will come every year but I do hope that we can get in his regular rotation."



(Top Left) State senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, center; George Stergios, right (Top Right) Ed and Caroline Flynn, left (Bottom Left) Dancing toy soldiers (Bottom Right) Listening to the Yvonne Aubert Quartet. All photos by Michele Maniscalco

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Grinch

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ing. If the transformed Grinch cuts roast beef at the table of the warm-hearted Whos, the redeemed Scrooge of course surprises hard-working employee Bob Crachit and his family with a prize goose.

Most importantly, both Dickens and Dr. Seuss champion festivity essentially free from commercialization—something regrettably missing in the Timothy Mason (book and lyrics)-Mel Marvin (music) 1994 version (2007 Broadway) of "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical."

Dr. Seuss' 1957 picture book classic should have served as a clear guide to the author's anti-materialistic bent. Quite simply the prolific children's book writer turned the Grinch into a 53 year old grump (the author's own age at the time) living in a cave on Mount Crumpit north of Whoville.

A hermit described by narrating loyal though unloved dog Old Max as possessing a heart "two sizes too small" finds the good-natured noisiness of the Christmas-loving Whos insufferable. Wisely, the Broadway production includes the telling song "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch," a snappy trio –Old Max. Young Max and the Grinch—with music by Albert Hague and vivid lyrics by Dr. Seuss himself.

The Grinch makes his opening position unequivocal in the busy though unextraordinary Mason-Marvin number "I Hate Christmas Eve." By contrast, the citizens of Whoville affirm their feeling for the holiday both early on and much later in the affectionate Hague-Dr. Seuss winner "Welcome, Christmas."

The Grinch show does take its title character from villain—the first focal one in a Dr. Seuss book—to offbeat hero as he restores tree, food and gift that he stole and gets to know the Whos.

Admittedly children in the Boch Center Wang Theatre audience did not seem to mind the no-intermission 90-minute time frame. There are moments when a snow falling effect and details in John Lee Beatty's Dr. Seuss story-influenced set design may help keep young theatergoers involved. Adults may tire of fairly conventional moves for the Whos' in the original choreography of John DeLuca and co-choreography of Bob Richard. They may also be wary of the show's lack of real comment about the loss of holiday spirit when gifts take center stage.

Still, "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical" has some occasional treasures under Matt August's somewhat unsubtle direction. Gavin Lee as the Grinch is eye-catching throughout whether capturing the seemingly formidable creature in deep vocal moments with Paul Lynde-recalling attitude or sharply phrased put downs of the holiday. His stage right slide is a vivid highlight. Mackenzie Mercer (who alternates with Avery Sell) displays remarkable stage presence and a strong voice as Cindy-Lou Who, the family member who seems to have a striking influence on the Grinch—most notably in a duo with Lee on "Santa for a Day." Ken Land has some touching stretches as Old Max, while Aleksa Kurbalija captures Young Max's energy and gusto in the reflective dog's memories. The Whos are more Whats than real characters.

Is this musical as one of a kind as the Grinch? Dr. Seuss would likely say 'No!'

VNA

Continued from page 1

end-of-life care provided by VNA Hospice & Palliative Care.

"The success of the event would not have been possible without the financial support of our generous sponsors. We are also fortunate that the event brought together a tremendous group of people who are now more committed than ever to our mission and vision," said Laura Wise, manager of Fund Development.

At the Gala, VNA Care presented Heroes in Health Care awards to Agios (accepted by Dr. David Schenkein, CEO); Thomas A. Croswell, President and CEO of Tufts Health Plan; and Dr. Joan Y. Reede, Dean for Diversity and Community Partnership of Harvard Medical School.

John R. Greed, president and CEO of Mutual of America, a Trustee Sponsor, served as Fund the Mission chair. Gala co-chairs were Loriann Meagher of the South End and Linda Hope-Springer. Gala Committee co-chairs were Debra Angeloni and Renee Picard Walsh.

Part of VNA Care, VNA of Boston was the first organized visiting nurse association in the United States and provides vital health care services in people's homes. When a patient nears the end-of-life, specialized care focused on pain and symptom management is provided by VNA Hospice & Palliative Care. Together with VNA Care Network, VNA Care serves more than 200 communities in Eastern and Central Massachusetts. For more information, visit http://www.vnacare.org.

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South End Student Inducted into BC High's National Honor Society

SUBMITTED BY BC HIGH

Dylan Mullin

Dylan Mullin of the South End, a junior at Boston College High School, was one of the 135 students inducted into the Robert J. Fulton, SJ chapter of the National Honor Society at the Hunter-Fahey Commons on November 15, 2018.

Mr. Michael McGonagle '70, Vice Principal for Ignatian Mission & Identity, gave the Invocation.

The National Honor Society Officers, Paul Alexis of Dorchester, Giacomo Coraluppi of Newton, William Donoso of Weymouth, Marcus Lespasio of Norfolk, Maxwell Loeb of Hingham and Charles McMahon of Norwell welcomed the guests and spoke about the pillars of excellence that guide the work of the Society: scholarship, character, leadership and service.

The new members received congratulations and certificates from Ms. Jennifer Ehalt, Associate Director of Admissions, Dr. Charles Drane Assistant Principal and Mr. Thomas Smith, Academic Dean. Earlier, the inductees received gold NHS pins that were worn on their jacket lapels during the ceremony.

NHS Moderator Ms. Ehalt welcomed the new members. Mr. Matthew Joyce '01, member of the BC High Science department was the Guest Speaker, whose message was one of congratulations and he recalled the most important lesson he learned in his time at BC High, "to give until it hurts." A lesson that has been a guide throughout his life. "Giving in all things can really give our lives meaning."

Maxwell Loeb '19 read the NHS Pledge and Giacomo Coraluppi gave the blessing. Dr. Matthew Finnegan and the BC High Concert Band provided the music for the ceremony.

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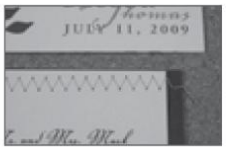

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