MLK Day of Action
There are times when you must take a stand

By Lee Sternhauser
St. Stephen's Youth Program

In a country increasingly divided by race, war, and wealth, people are desperately seeking leadership that speaks of love. This intersection of issues is not only what we are facing in Boston in 2020, it is also what the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was facing when he stepped to the podium in Atlanta to give his 1967 speech often called, "The Three Evils of Society." King addressed the challenge of poverty, the war in Vietnam, and the injustices of the South. He called for "a time to make whole the system of values in our country." The South End News community is invited to participate in the 2019 MLK Day of Action.

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BMC Turns TEDx

SUBMITTED BY BMC

TEDxBeaconStreet hosted its first healthcare-focused event on January 7 on the Boston Medical Center and Boston University School of Medicine campus — a hub of Boston’s medical innovation. With a group of 13 world-class speakers from around the country, the forum highlighted new perspectives and innovative ways to tackle the healthcare crisis, from policy reform and economic impact to a focus on what it means to be a patient and the social determinants of health. Dr. Carl Street, chief investigator for BMC’s Center for Transgender Medicine & Surgery.

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The Cake needs more time in the oven

By Jules Becker

Is baking an art? Certainly legends like Jacques Pepin and the late great Julia Child would wholeheartedly say that it is. Perhaps Della, the fictional practitioner in the Rebekah Brunette play "The Cake"—now in its Boston debut at the Lyric Stage Company of Boston—would agree. The owner of the dog, who refuses to pick up after her dog, cannot imagine even continuing to walk with her and her dog. She told me, "I would met her socially without the dogs, but until she picks up after her dog, I just can’t be her friend. Sorry, but it’s the way I feel as a dog owner. I don’t even like walking my dog and seeing someone has left dog feces without picking it up and that person is not here to be seen. Picking up after your dog is a matter of respect for the environment; leaving it behind is downright disgusting."

Continued on page 4.

Advice on Pets, Life, Love

By Monica Collins

Dear Dog Lady,

Good morning. I have a question about your column and a different slant on the woman who walks with her dog, who refuses to pick up after her dog. I cannot imagine even continuing to walk with her and her dog. She told me, "I would meet her socially without the dogs, but until she picks up after her dog, I just can’t be her friend. Sorry, but it’s the way I feel as a dog owner. I don’t even like walking my dog and seeing someone has left dog feces without picking it up and that person is not here to be seen. Picking up after your dog is a matter of respect for the environment; leaving it behind is downright disgusting."

— Clare

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Dog Lady
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Dear Clare,

Thank you for your letter, which is a great topic to start the New Year—even if you disagree with “Ask Dog Lady” for the mild-mannered Dog Lady dispensing when dealing with a walking friend who does not pick up after her dog. Actually, Dog Lady realizes her initial response should have been stronger and likes your “take no prisoners” approach. Dog Lady would now add this: Pick up always and always pick up with a biodegradable bag so we don’t pollute the planet with dog poop wrapped in plastic. Dog Lady uses BioBags, a very good degradeable bag brand available through chewy.com.

Dear Dog Lady,

My parents have a Shih-Tzu (cross between a poodle and a Shitzu) that has these bumps on her. The vet says these are vesicles that burst. This doesn’t seem right. These bumps are small and circular they break open and bleed. She is groomed regularly and they have tried washing her food thinking that is it the also and also one of those dogs that are dander-less. My parents do give her human food once in a while. Any thoughts on what this might be?

— Eliza

Dear Eliza,

Shouldn’t the dog be called a Shihpoo? Actually, if you have to write “Ask Dog Lady” about blisters bumps on a cute little dog, you are barking up the wrong tree. Dog Lady is not a vet nor does she play one in any medium. You need to steer your parents to your veterinarian. Also, tell them to stop giving human foods immediately. Find dog food that is anti-allergen. Dog Lady recommends two brands: Solid Gold and Neuman’s Organic. There are others, of course, but these two are dependable good. This little dog needs an intervention. You’re in a great position to help.

Dear Dog Lady,

The other day, I was sitting at Starbucks and overheard a woman urging her friend to “walk your inner dog.” That got me thinking. Do all of us have inner dogs? If so, what are they telling us?

— Betty

Dear Betty,

Naturally, we all have inner dogs. (Can you what else would

Dog Lady say?) These inner dogs tell us to finish everything in our bowl, sniff out possibilities, leap at the moment, and leave our mark all over the world. To “walk your inner dog” means to step out into the world confidently and happily, although “unleash your inner dog” sounds a more exultant note. And this reminds Dog Lady of wish “Happy New Year” to all dear readers.

Write: askdoglady@gmail.com.

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Blackstone/Franklin Square Neighborhood Association

The Blackstone/Franklin Square Neighborhood Association General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 21st, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., at DH Police Station, 2nd Floor Community Room, 650 Harrison Avenue.

AGENDA

Join us for our next general business meeting. Bring your friends and neighbors, and participate in the discussion. Our agenda will include the following:

7:00p.m. Welcome and announcements (BFSNA board).
7:10p.m. Record keeping (Matt Mues). Treasurer’s Report.
7:15 p.m. Public Safety update (BFD and Jonathan Alves).
7:20 p.m. Introducing the Alexandra-Ball Neighborhood Association. The “Alexandra-Ball Neighborhood Association” is a brand-new organization formed to advocate for residents living on the other side of Mass Ave. from us, in the area bounded by Harrison and Shrewsbury avenues and over to Ball Street (next to Johnnie Rose Field) and the west side of the Boston Water & Sewer Commission building. ABNA representatives will talk about concerns and issues in that part of the neighborhood and we’ll discuss shared priorities.
7:35 p.m. Update from the City on “Mans/Cans 2.0” (Chief Marty Martinez). City of Boston Health & Human Services Chief Marty Martinez will be back to discuss progress to date on the City’s “Mans/Cans 2.0” initiative to address the challenges of homelessness and addiction in the South End, including heightened services for people afflicted and better mitigation of public safety and quality of life impacts on residents. As always, questions and comments will be welcome.

Note: The City of Boston’s Mans/Cans Task Force (an advisory group to the City, representing services providers, institutional stakeholders and residents in the South End, Newmarket and environs) had its first session in December and will meet monthly going forward. BFSNA has a seat on this panel and we’ll keep you updated as events develop.

www.facebook.com/blackstone-franklin

Della’s Sweets—well-tailed and visually designed by Matt Whiton—would certainly insist that any novice baker make sure to cone all of the ingredients as she does and follow the directions.

Much as there are a few fine elements in director Courtney O’Connor’s mixed-lyric Stage fright, the lesbian couple’s wedding cake–centered play needs a stronger consistency and more to say about the intersection of love and understanding with that baking.

Inspired by a case involving a baker’s unwillingness to create such a wedding cake, Brumletter (“This Is Us”) 2015 play righty presents its four characters—the couple Jen and Mary, and Della and her plumperbrowser Tim—as characters rather than types. Della in particular possesses a degree of unaffected charm that sometimes offsets her Christian fundamentalism-based bigotry. Speaking about her showcased Noah’s Ark cake, she points to what she claims are dreams. She also naively believes that her connection could conquer ISIS where Rome’s animus and governments struggle to do so. Meanwhile she hopes to win the Great American Bake Off and assure its (beard but unseen) household head (think of his counterpart on the Great British Baking Show).

Ultimately, though, Della’s greatest challenge is to do about the cake that Jen—the daughter of her best friend—would like for her upcoming wedding to African-American Macy. While the gregarious baker claims “I don’t see color,” she unequivocally has a serious problem with sexual orientation as does Tim—who admits he “can’t pick and choose Bake-off” when it comes to laws about gays. At this point, an allusion in the play to Solom and Gomorra would have done well to bring in the cities’ elicit hatred of strangers as a factor in striking the usual homophobia explanation.

Brumletter does provide balance with considerable dialogue about both Jen’s complicated family dynamics and Macy’s back story. As the wedding day approaches, though, the plotting and Della’s decision-making seem less convincing. Is Della really open to change? Does Tim’s surprise for Della constitute genuine gay pro quo or a predictable device? Notwithstanding cake, can one be a real understanding between Della and Meg if the latter fears that the former hates her? These questions are likely to prove nagging for some theater-goers.

Under director O’Connor’s careful guidance, there should be no question that the pacing is sharp and the cast fits. Karin MacDonald—always one of the Hebb’s premier actresses—is a true standout. In body language and accent as well as a blend of family_ caring and chauvinism, she proves commandingly watchable as a kind of flamed Everysman. Fred Silverman, Jr. has all of Tim’s judgmental posture and coyness. As master performers, they improve upon the couple’s otherwise somewhat conventional bedroom scenes. Chelsea Dielch captures Jen’s heart as well as her frustrations. Kists Sidleby finds all of Macy’s fire and feeling. Dielch and Sidleby have all the naturalness of soon-to-be newlyweds.

Near the end of the play, Della quotes the First Continental’s observation that “Love is always hard.” In that light, “The Cake” needs stronger texture and more satisfying attention to the lose the title confection represents.
MLK
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legies of racism, poverty and militarism, saying, "And there are times when you must take a stand that is neither safe nor polite nor popular, but you must do it because it is right."

On Monday, January 21st, members of the St. Stephen’s congregation, along with dozens of partners and organizations will be following King’s example by taking a stand during their tenth annual MLK Day of Action. Close to 200 volunteers from the South End neighborhood, suburban churches and synagogues, professional groups and non-profit organizations will come together with Blackstone School faculty for a morning of work projects and shower love (and some paint) on the school. There will also be projects to improve St. Stephen’s after-school programs space.

Following a lunch of tasty food, stimulating conversations about King’s legacy, and inspirational words from City Councilor Ed Flynn, there will be a teach-in focused on the issues faced by immigrant students in the Boston Public Schools. Trainers from UnAfraid Educators and the Student Immigration Movement, along with teens from St. Stephen’s, will be equipping participants to work together to ensure immigrant BPS students both feel safe and are safe.

The Blackstone Elementary School is just this sort of loving community, a place where all students feel safe and can focus on learning and academic achievement. This is largely thanks to the dedicated work of the school’s administrators, teachers, and staff. Many of whom will be coming to the MLK Day of Action on what would otherwise be a day off from work. Teachers and volunteers will be beautifying classrooms. Parents of students will be sorting through donations for the school’s compassion closet of clothes, food, and hygiene products. College students will be painting murals with inspirational messages on walls and corners. By the end of the day, there will be many more images of the school’s mascot, Shamwani the Shark, around the hallways of the school.

The Blackstone’s Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, Lauren Blonde, sees how the day builds a strong community of love. "MLK Day is an opportunity for volunteers and participants to bring to life our school’s guiding principle of Ubuntu, which means 'I am because you are.' We are all connected because we value equality and we want our students to succeed," said Blonde. "We are honoring King’s legacy with what we will do on this day," she added.

Recently, it became public that BPS has shared the information of more than 130 students with Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE), jeopardizing these young people’s safety and futures. To help our schools be safe havens for students, trainers will be asking participants to sign and spread a petition that will ask BPS to have clear communication with families before their information is shared with the Boston Police Department, which often leads to reports to ICE. The petition also requests more training for administrators and Boston School Police, among other demands. The petition can be found at bit.ly/NoCEEinBPS.

St. Stephen’s Youth Programs Teen Organizer Nikki Jean-Charles is among those excited to be part of the MLK Day of Action. She believes caring for students by making their classrooms sparkle is one of the right things to do. So is taking a stand to protect immigrant students.

"I want to surround myself with a community that is ready to learn and spread peace the way King taught," said Jean-Charles. "I want to be part of the new generation of leaders, educating others to build a better future and continuing the fight for civil rights."

To join this community of leaders at the MLK Day of Action, which starts at 9:30am at the Blackstone Elementary School, 580 Shawmut Avenue, sign up at tinyurl.com/sypmlk2020. For more information, contact fresh@bostoncity.org.

To learn more about St. Stephen’s Youth Programs, visit www.ssyboston.org or drop by 419 Shawmut Avenue.

We are grateful for the Massachusetts Service Alliance, which is helping to fund and support the MLK Day of Action.

 infertility.

SSYP staff person Katrina Scott with new friends at the 2019 MLK Day of Action at the Blackstone Elementary School.
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feeling patient outcomes. The event featured speakers from BMC and BUSM as well as from Johns Hopkins, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and the US Digital Service and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. All talks were recorded and will be shared on the TEDx platform.

Marty Makary, chief of Johns Hopkins Liver Transplant Center and health policy advocate

**BMC**

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**South End**

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**2020 ANNUAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2020**

6:00pm
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Please confirm your attendance
RSVP at development@sechc.org
Light refreshments will be served.

**Community Meeting**

**PLAN: Nubian Square**

**Nubian Square Workshop**

**Monday, January 27**

6:00 PM - 7:45 PM

980 Harrison Ave
2nd Floor Training Room
 Roxbury, MA 02119

**Event Description**
The January PLAN: Nubian Square workshop will build upon previous PLAN: Nubian workshops and will focus on the Campus High Urban Renewal Plan, which Crescent, Malcolm X & Putnam, and P3 are all a part of. We will discuss the history of the urban renewal plan, how it impacted the area, and how it is discussed in relation to PLAN: Nubian Square. We will also be discussing the urban design guidelines for Crescent Parcel, and Malcolm X and Putnam Parcels.

As with all previous workshops, feedback provided will be taken into consideration for incorporation into the RFP documents. Throughout the evening there will be opportunities for attendees to engage in dialogue with City and BPDA team members, regarding urban renewal and urban design guidelines.

**Contact:**
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Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor Boston, MA 02201
617.918.4488 | mugy.undemir@boston.gov

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