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 the day in his speech, “The Negro Mother.”

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BMC Turns TEDx

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 15 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 at.

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The Cake needs more time in the oven

The Cake Lyric Stage Company of Boston, through February 9. 617-566-5078 or lyricstage.com

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 Bekah Brunstetter play “The Cake”—now in its Boston debut at the Lyric Stage Company of Boston—would agree. The owner of the various Bake Shop in Indiana has never seen her cake come out of the oven as she had hoped, but that hasn’t stopped her from trying her hand at baking. The question is whether or not she will be successful in her endeavors.

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Ask Dog Lady
Advice on Pets, Life, Love

By Monica Collins

Dear Dog Lady,
Good morning. I have been reading your column and have a different slant on the woman who walks with the dog friend who refuses to pick up after her dog. I cannot imagine a woman walking in a park with her dog and not picking up after it. It is not only disrespectful, but it is also illegal.

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Dog Lady
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Dear Clar,
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 dispensed 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 finer your “take me prisoner” approach. Dog Lady would only 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 BioBag, a very good disposable bag brand available through chewy.com.

Dear Dog Lady,
My parents have a Shihpo (cross between a poodle and a Shih Tzu) 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 watching her food thinking that it is the issue, it is 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 bleeding bumps on a cute little dog, you are breaking 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 a new veterinarian pronto. Also, tell them to stop giving human food immediately. Find dog food that is anti-allergenic. Dog Lady recommends two brands: Solid Gold and Newman’s Own Organics. 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.

Dog Lady say? These inner dogs tell us to finish everything in our bowl, sniff out possibilities, keep 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 discussions. Our agenda will include the following:

7:00 p.m. Welcome and announcements (BFNSA Board).

7:10 p.m. Record keeping (Matt Mues) - Treasurer’s Report.

7:15 p.m. Public Safety update (BFPA and Jonathan Alves).

7:20 p.m. Introducing the Alexandria-Ball Neighborhood Association. The "Alexandria-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 Shawmut avenues and over to Ball Street (next to Jim Rice Field) and the roof of the Boston Water & Sewer Commission building. ANNA representatives will talk about concerns and issues in that part of the neighborhood and what priorities we’ll focus on shared priorities.

7:35 p.m. Update from the City on "Mass/ 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 "Mass/Cans 2.0" initiative to address the challenges of homelessness and addiction in the South End, including heightened services for people affected by the opioid crisis and quality of life impacts on residents. As always, questions and comments will be welcome.

Note: The City of Boston’s Mass/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 look forward to sharing the latest updates with you.

Accessibility: A sign language interpreter will be available. If you need assistance with a disability, please call in advance.

To learn more about the group, visit our website at www.blackstone-franklin.org.

Cake

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

Much as there are several fine elements in director Courtney O’Connor’s musical Lyric Stage show, the idea of a couple’s wedding cake-centered play needs even stronger consistency and more story 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, Brummett (“This Is Us”) 2015 play righty presents its four characters—the couple Jen and Mary, and Della and her younger brother 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 dinosaurs. She also,natively believes that her confection could conquer ISIS where annies and governments struggle to do so. Meanwhile she hopes to win the Great American Bake Off and assure its (203rd, yes!) “handmade hoot” (think of his paint gun on the Great British Baking Show).

Ultimately, though, Della’s greatest challenge is to do a job about the cake that Jen—the daughter of her best friend—would like for her upcoming wedding to African-American Mary. While the gregarious baker claims “I don’t see color,” the unprejudiced does have a serious problem with sexual orientation as does Tim—who admits he “can’t pick and choose” what comes to laws about gays. At this point, an alliance in the play to Soledad and Conneror would have done well to bring in the cities’ elated threat of strangers a factor as striking in the usual homophobia explanation.

Brummett does provide balance with considerable dialogue about both Jen’s complicated family dynamics and Mary’s back story. Achieve wedding day approaches, though, the playing and Della’s decision-making seem less convincing. Is Della really open to change? Does Tim’s surprise for Della constitute genuine equal opportunity or a predictable device? Not a bad idea, sake, can freeze like a real understanding between Della and Tim if the latter fear that the former hates her?

These questions are likely to prove nagging for some theatergoers.

Under director O’Connor’s careful guidance, there should be no question that the pacing is sharp and the cast fantastic. Karen MacDonald—always one of the Hole’s premier actresses—is a true standout. In body language and accent as well as a blend of family caring and chauvinism, she proves commanding/valuable as a kind of flawed Everyman. Fred Silverman, Jr. has all of Tim’s judgmental posture and courtesies. As master players, they improve upon the couple’s otherwise somewhat conventional bedroom scenes. Chelsea Dietch captures Jen’s heart as well as her frustrations. Kisi Silberhaye finds all of Mary’s face and feeling. Dietch and Silberhaye have the naturalness of soul-to-soul newlyweds.

Near the end of the play, Della quotes the First Corinthians observation that “Love is always kind.” In that light, “The Cake” needs stronger texture and more satisfying attention to the love the title confection represents.
Legacies 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 20, members of the Blackstone’s Student Union along with dozens of partner 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 nonprofit organizations will come together with Blackstone School faculty for a morning of work projects to shower love (and some paint) on the school. There will also be projects to improve St. Stephen's after-school program space.

Following a bunch 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 Informed Movement, alongside teams 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 learning 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 administration, 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 walls with inspirational messages on walls and canvases. By the end of the day, there will be many more images of the school’s mascot, Shrimpmutt the Shark, around the hallways of the school.

The Blackstone’s Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, Lauren Blumle, sees how the day builds a deeper 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 Blumle. "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). The district's practice of partnership with ICE, which 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/NoICEinBPS.

St. Stephen’s Youth Programz Teen Organizer Nikkia 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 it takes 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/SSYP2020. For more information, contact help@ssypboston.org.

To learn more about St. Stephen's Youth Programs, visit www.ssypboston.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.
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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.

**South End Community Health Center**

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**2020 ANNUAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2020**

6:00pm
at the South End Community Health Center
1601 Washington Street (3rd Floor), Boston, MA

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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