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

BY LEE STEENHAUSER
St. Stephen's Youth Program

In a country increasingly divid-
ed by race, war, and wealth, people are desperately seeking leadership that speaks of love. This intersection of times is not only what we are fac-ing 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 chal-
Continued on page 5

BMC Turns TEDx

TEDxBeaconStreet hosted its first healthcare-fo-cused event on January 7 on the Boston Medical Center and Boston Uni-
Continued on page 7

The Cake
Lyric Stage Company of Boston, through February 9. 617-585-
Continued on page 4

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Dog Lady
Continued from page 1

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 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 favors 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 Shetoo (cross between a poodle and a Shih Tzu) that has these humps on her. The vet says these are vein that burst. This doesn’t seem right. These humps are small and circular they break open and bleed. She is supposed regularly and they have tried switching her food thinking that it is the clue and is also one of those that are dander-less. My parents do give her human food once in a while. Any thoughts on what this may be?
—Eliza

Dear Eliza,

Shoudn’t the dog 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 see a veterinarian pronto. Also, tell them to stop giving human food immediately. Find dog food that is anti-allergic. 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.

Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA) Senior Care Options Program (MHC SNP) is a Coordinated Care plan with a Medicare contract and a contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts/EOHHS Medicaid program. Enrollment in the Plan depends on contract renewal to provide benefits for both programs to enrollees. CCA complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sex, age, mental or physical disability, health status, claims experience, medical history, genetic information, evidence of insurability or geographic location. ATENCION: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 866-610-2273 (TTY 711). ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, encontram-se disponibilizados serviços linguísticos grátis. Ligue para 866-610-2273 (TTY 711).

Dog Lady says? 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 to wish “Happy New Year” to all our readers.

Write: askdoglady@gmail.com.

Dog Lady, Continued

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?

—Betsy

Dear Betsy,

Naturally, we all have inner dogs. (C’mon, what else would 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 to wish “Happy New Year” to all our readers.

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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., 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:

7:00 p.m. Welcome and announcements (BFSNA board).

7:10 p.m. Record keeping (Matt Muenzer), Treasurer’s Report.

Cake

Della’s Sweets—well-taught and visually designed by Matt Whiton—would certainly insist that any novice baker make sure to taste all of the ingredients as she does and follow the directions.2

Much as there are several fine elements in director Courtney O’Connor’s mixed-lyric stage effort, 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, Bruntetler (“This Is Us’s”) 2015 play rightly presents its four characters—the couple Jen and Mary, and Della and her hamburger triad, 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 is a transgression. She also naïvely believes that her confection could conquer ISIS where armies and governments struggle to do so. Meanwhile she hopes to win the Great American Bake Off and assures us (heavily built, unspoken) homophone bout (think of his counterpart on the Great British Baking Show).

Ultimately, though, Della’s greatest challenge is that she’s about to marry the 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,” she unequivocally does have a serious problem with sexual orientation as does Tim—who admits he “can’t pick and choose” what comes to love about guys. At this point, an allusion in the play to Solom and Gorrnora would have done well to bring in the city’s clientele hatred of strangers as a factor in striking the usual homophonic explanation.

Bruntetler does provide balance with considerable dialogue about both Jen’s complicated family dynamics and Mary’s back story. The wedding day approaches, though, the plotting and Della’s decisions-making seem less convincing. Is Della really open to change? Does Tim’s surprise for Della constitute genuine . . .

Letters to the editor:

Letters to the editor: letters@southendnews.com

Calendar listings:

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Letters policy:

Letters to the publisher, letters must be no longer than 300 words, written in concise paragraphs, and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters should be double-spaced. We will post all letters online. We reserve the right to accept or reject letters, but we do not return them. Letters to the editor can be sent to letters@southendnews.com.
LEGIONS of racism, poverty and militarism, saying, “And there are times when you must take a stand that is neither safe nor popular, but you must do it because it is right.”

On Monday, January 20, members of the St. Stephen’s community 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 non-profit 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 afterschool program 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 Immigrant 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 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 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 canopies. By the end of the day, there will be many more images of the school’s mascot, Shammy the Shark, around the hallways of the school.

The Blackstone Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, Lauren Blonde, sees the day builds a sense of 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 school’s be safe haven 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/NoICEinBPS.

St. Stephen’s Youth Programs 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 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 9:30 am at the Blackstone Elementary School, 380 Shawmut Avenue, sign up at tinyurl.com/sypmlk2020. For more information, contact hello@bpsboston.org.

To learn more about St. Stephen’s Youth Programs, visit www.sypboston.org and 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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BMC
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Marty Makary, chief of Johns Hopkins liver transplant center and health policy advocate.

featuring 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.

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
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RSVP at development@sechc.org
Light refreshments will be served.

South End

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