South End News

August 13, 2020 [Vol. 40, No. 49]

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Local news for and about Boston's best neighborhood

Several Boston colleges file 'de-densification' plans with city

COURTESY ADAM GAFFIN
WWW.UNIVERSALHUB.COM

Several Boston colleges have filed plans with the city to take over all or parts of local hotels and apartment buildings to house students this fall.

Even with anticipated reduced numbers of students on campus, schools say they need extra space because Covid-19 planning means eliminating triples and four-person units and making room to house any students who test positive on Covid-19 tests for two weeks at a time. The proposals need the approval of both the BPDA and ISD.

Among the filings with the BPDA:

Northeastern University

Northeastern has proposed renting 11 floors in the Westin Copley Place to house up to 575 students in 290 rooms - and up to 40 staffers in 40 more rooms. Northeastern says it is talking to the hotel about possibly renting several ballrooms and conference rooms, as well as the Gretta Luxe and IJ Fox stores, for use as classrooms, faculty and staff offices, a "grab and go" dining area and a mailroom for students housed there.

The university also wants to rent the entire Midtown Motel on Huntington Avenue for to house up to 297 students and 8 staffers in 157 rooms, and wants to increase the number of students it houses in apartment buildings with which it already has leases on Hemenway Street, Huntington Avenue, Symphony Road, Westland Avenue, St. Stephen Street and Columbus Avenue by as many as 328 in 147 apartments.

The school also wants to rent Symphony Hall's Cohen Wing for use as a student cafeteria.

Boston University

BU wants to take over the six-story 1047 Commonwealth Ave. in

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The White Women Of Portland, Oregon Aren't Listening

by Rev. Irene Monroe
contributing writer

Several white Americans have asked me: Is this a movement, this civil unrest Americans are seeing across the country — protests against anti-Black violence and police brutality, demands for systemic change? Or, is it a moment that is likely to die out in a couple of months?

My response: It depends on how you choose to become involved, and how well you can listen as an ally.

Recent demonstrations by some white women in Portland, Ore., — hypothetically done in the name of protesting for racial justice — have made clear that they are not listening or collaborating with their Black women neighbors.

For example, Portland's "Wall of Moms" was initially thought to be an act of allyship, responding to the George Floyd protests. Their actual goal, however, was to get federal officers out of the city. Their chant said it all: "Feds stay clear, moms are here!" and "Feds go home!"

Now, these moms have been called out by Black community leaders of Portland, Ore., for assisting in diverting attention away from the Black Lives Matter movement. The president of the Portland NAACP, E.D. Mondainé, denounced their involvement and that of other white protesters in a Washington Post op-ed that called it "a white spectacle."

WOM is accused of excluding Black moms, showing disregard for the safety of Black protesters, and co-opting the Black Lives Matter movement protest for their agenda — like an avarice WOM member filling out forms to become a 501c3 nonprofit.

Let's also remember the viral images of "Naked Athena," an unclothed white woman and performative activist, who won accolades for flashing federal officers as a brave and bold ally of the cause. That her demonstration won such applause is another example of co-optation.

"There was a very deep feminine place in myself that felt provoked," said Naked Athena, who goes by the name Jen, on the podcast "Unrefined Sophisticates." "I'm notoriously naked. I just have been

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SE Cancer Survivor Hopes to Inspire Others to Participate in Jimmy Fund Walk

South End resident, Allie Klein, and her mother crossing the finish line, 2019

SUBMITTED BY JIMMY FUND

South End resident, Allie Klein, plans to participate in the Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai for the fourth year this fall, even though the Walk is now virtual. Allie was diagnosed with

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Advice on Pets, Life, Love

BY MONICA COLLINS

Dear Dog Lady,

I have a 10-month-old female Aussie/Pyrenees mix. Sweet and lovable, she is a rescue. She is also terrified of traveling in a car and I have a nine-hour drive to a new home coming up soon.

I have tried Dramamine, Tylenol, not feeding her, putting her in a large open crate, feeding her in the crate, taking her short distances to the dog park (which she loves), everything. She soils and drools every time. She weighs about 50 pounds. Is there a safe way to sedate for her long drive?

—Karen

Dear Karen,

Yikes, you've given your dear dog human grade Dramamine and Tylenol? No, no, no.

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PUBLIC EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

The Census impacts funding for programs like Head Start and grants for special education and public schools

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Vote!

Here's how

The Massachusetts primary election is on Tuesday, September 1.

First, be sure you are registered to vote. https://www.sec.state.ma.us/VoterRegistrationSearch/MyVoterRegStatus.aspx

Or, register to vote here by August 22, to vote in the September primary. https://www.sec.state.ma.us/OVR/.

Next, vote. There are several ways to cast your ballot.

Vote by Mail

Fill out the application form for a mail-in ballot that you received in the mail. When you receive the ballot in the mail, fill it out, sign it and send it back. No postage is necessary. The Election Department must receive your ballot by August 26.

You can also bring your completed mail-in ballot to an early voting location, listed below, or to a polling station on election day.

If you didn't receive an application in the mail, you can download one here: https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleev/early-voting-by-mail.htm

Early In Person Voting

Early voting is on Saturday, August 22—Friday, August 28 at various Boston locations:

Saturday, August 22, 11:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. Boston Public Library, McKim building.

Sunday, August 23, 11:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. Boston Public Library, McKim building.

Monday, August 24, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. City Hall Election Department

Tuesday, August 25, 9:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. City Hall Election Department

Wednesday, August 26, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. City Hall Election Department

Thursday, August 27, 9:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. City Hall Election Department

Friday, August 28, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. City Hall Election Department

Vote on Election Day

The Massachusetts primary election day is Tuesday, September 1. You can vote in person from 7:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Masks are required or will be provided. Hand sanitizer will be available.

Register to vote! The deadline for voter registration in September is August 22. The link for online registration is https://www.sec.state.ma.us/OVR/.

Can you volunteer? The Election Department needs poll workers: 617-635-3767 or 617-635-0905

Where will you live until you can call this 'Home' again? Your association policy won't cover your additional living expenses. Condo owners NEED Personal Condominium Insurance for that. Aside from replacing your personal property, it will help you with rent, while you're still paying your mortgage. Contact us.

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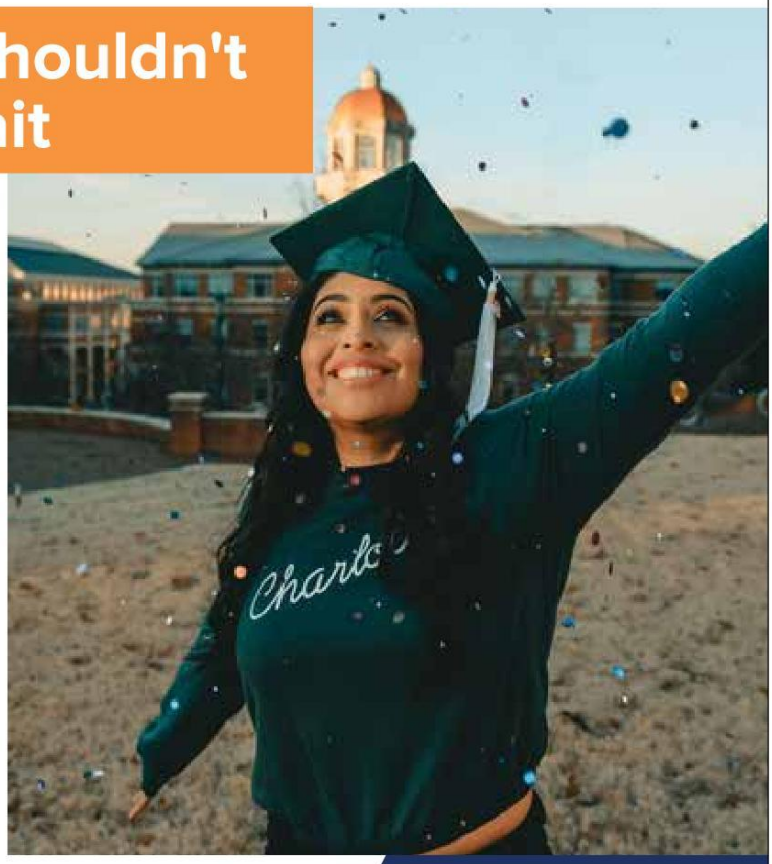

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Crime

Man slashed in the neck at Mass. Ave. and Albany Street

COURTESY ADAM GAFFIN
WWW.UNIVERSALHUB.COM

Shortly before 9:30 p.m. on Monday, August 10, a man was slashed in the neck at Mass. Ave and Albany Street.

The victim fell to the ground, then ran through traffic a half block down Massachusetts Avenue before Boston EMS found him and transported him back a half block to the Boston Medical Center emergency room. Injury not considered life threatening.

It's at least the third knife attack in the general Mass/Cass area in the past two weeks. The victims of the two other two attacks died.

Dog Lady

Continued from page 1

Please, make an appointment with a real veterinarian and take your sweet puppy. The vet can offer dog medicine to sedate your pup during the long car ride. The vet might also be able to help with techniques for keeping your dog quiet in the crate. At best, you will get advice from a medical professional. Don't prescribe for another species. "Ask Dog Lady" may know her way around dogs but she is not a veterinarian.

Your letter provides a good opportunity to remind readers with dogs to have a regular veterinarian to care for your pet. You simply can't cheap your way out of this necessity. Dogs need regular care.

Dear Dog Lady,

I got a shelter dog, a Shih Tzu. She was estimated to be four or five years old. I love her madly already. She took to my two other dogs, a collie and a Chi-weenie (Chihuahua/Dachshund mix) immediately, but she only initiates interaction with them in the fenced-in backyard. She mostly shies away from me but I know we are making progress because she shows personality and isn't completely passive.

I want to have a consistent approach with her. I don't know whether to stay away from her and let her come to me (if she ever will) or pet and stroke her gently. Right now, I do both. I also pretend to lick her and let her watch me cuddle and love on the other dogs. I have an indoor enclosure for her. I did not want to put her back into a crate. What is your advice? I would appreciate any help.

—Mary

Dear Mary,

Pretending to lick her sounds a little over the top. Let your other dogs engage in that uniquely doggish behavior for real while you forge a human path. Good to have reliably predictable behavior towards her because, with dogs, consistency is the mother of reinvention.

Allowing your dog to approach you is good. Keep a tasty treat handy to give her when she makes the first move. And don't think unkindly of the crate. A safe place away from the madding crowd could be just what your shy Shih Tzu needs to help her feel secure and right at home in your home.

Dear Dog Lady,

I have two miniature Australian shepherds. They are the gentlest dogs around my wife and son you could ever meet. They are loyal, cuddly, lovable pets. Around strange people or animals, they are vicious. What can I do to fix this if anything? They are two-years-old.

—Greg

Dear Greg,

What does "vicious" mean? They bite? If so, work with a certified canine trainer to stem or stop this behavior and, please, keep them away from people or animals.

If "vicious" means they nip at peoples' heels and bark, the Aussies' behavior is understandable. These are herding dogs. It will be tough to train the dogs out of this innate behavior with strangers but try your best. By assuming the position as leader of the pack, you train them to modify their herding ways. Exert your authority over each one. Stand tall and don't let them push you around. Reward for good behavior with food treats.

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South End News is published every Thursday.

Letters policy

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 PO BOX E14, Boston, MA 02127; FAX to 617.464.7286; E-mail: letters@southendnews.com

Monroe

Continued from page 1

that way for several years now and there's not anywhere that you can't find me naked. ... I'm a sex worker and my nakedness is political. It's my expression."

Both WOM and Naked Athena contested criticism, saying they had good intentions. "I want us to remember why we're here," said Lakayana Drury, executive director of Word is Bond, a Portland-based nonprofit, NBC News reported. "What's happening downtown is not a Black issue."

John Lewis's posthumous essay "Together, You Can Redeem the Soul of Our Nation," which he requested to be published in The Washington Post on the occasion of his funeral, stated, "Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself."

To improve our democracy, we need to first listen to one another.

Martin Luther King made that request decades ago. King's 1967 speech, "The Other America," at Stanford University said, "A riot is the language of the unheard." During the summer of 1967, 159 race riots erupted across the country. In the speech, King asked: "What is it that America has failed to hear?"

The Wall of Moms and Naked Athena failed to hear what their local NAACP and Black Lives Matter movement requested of them as allies. However, with the cacophony of voices and continued violence in the streets of America, we all, in various ways, are missing the vital importance of listening.

George Floyd's death was an inflection point for many Americans, and many more people are now listening. Nevertheless, listening to one another across our differences and perceived well-intentions is difficult because it requires being non-defensive, hearing without judgment, taking notice and responsibility of one's actions, and acting toward the requested change.

In my opinion, there are five levels of listening.

Ignored listening makes no effort to listen. Pretend listening gives a feign appearance to be listening. Selective listening hears only what serves one's own agenda, as the WOM and Naked Athena did. Empathic listening hears with both one's heart and mind to understand a person's feelings and struggles.

However, what King preached about in depicting the Beloved Community, and what Lewis also wrote about in his final essay — "a nation and world society at peace with itself" — requires compassionate listening.

Compassionate listening and empathic listening are related. They differ in that compassionate listening not only hears with one's heart and mind, but it is listening with an impetus to help and to improve the lives of the suffering. Compassion means "to suffer together."

From a theological perspective, I understand compassion to be both rooted in a praxis of action and an ethic of social justice. In other words, it is a type of consciousness and an "awokeness" to other's distress — emotionally, personally and systemically — with a desire to alleviate the suffering. Therefore, compassionate listening is an understanding of the interconnectedness between ourselves and others, and it opens us up to the world, providing an opportunity for radical inclusion.

The Wall of Moms and Naked Athena might have had a better outcome and faster success in getting the federal officers out of the city had they listened and embraced BLM's intersectional concerns and goals. Federal officers are inextricably tied to systemic anti-Black racism and police violence.

They could have confronted the problem, together. But it starts with listening.

Desensification

Continued from page 1

Allston's Packard Corner to house up to 179 quarantined students after positive tests. The building, which has the Caffe Nero on the first floor, served as spillover housing for BU when it renovated Myles Standish Hall a few years ago.

While in quarantine, students will have full access to wireless internet in their accommodations, so they are able to attend classes remotely and participate in virtual student activities. Each unit is equipped with a full kitchen and a washer/dryer. Bed linen, pillow, and towels will be provided by BU. The accommodations also include a supply of groceries and beverages, and BU Dining Services will provide regular delivery of prepared meals for reheating, fresh fruit, produce, and dairy products.

The building would have full-time security at the door, BU says.

Suffolk University

Suffolk has proposed parts of several hotels to house both well and quarantined students.

The school is proposing to rent 75 rooms in the Hyatt Centric Faneuil Hall to initially house all students arriving from outside New England, New York and New Jersey for two weeks of quarantine at the beginning of the semester and to then reserve the rooms for any students who test positive during the school year.

The school is also proposing to rent 162 rooms in the DoubleTree Hilton on Washington, 156 rooms in the Wyndham Hotel on Blossom Street and 80 rooms in the Boxer Hotel on Merrimac Street.

New England Conservatory

The school wants to rent up to 98 single-occupancy rooms in the Revolution Hotel, 40 Berkeley St. in the South End, with an area for students to pick up dropped-off meals and possibly with space to set up two to three practice areas for students.

Jimmy Fund

Continued from page 1

Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia in May 2015. After years of treatment at Dana-Farber, Allie started her own team, Acute Lymphomaniacs, and walked in the 2017 Jimmy Fund Walk. "Participating in the Walk was my bookend to that period of my life," Allie writes. "As I move forward in my life, I really enjoy the sense of community the walk brings. It's a big piece of my life."

Allie is normally able to get a group of family members and friends to join her on Walk Day, but this year she has to think differently. "We wanted to reach $100,000 this year, but we may have to temper our expectations," Allie writes. "But cancer doesn't stop." So neither does Allie.

This year, she plans on trying to get others around her to walk with her from a socially responsible distance. "I love being surrounded by people who are all working towards the same goal," Allie says. "They all have a collective understanding of what you have been through."

The Walk will still take place on Sunday, October 4th. While the event will not physically bring walkers together along the famed Boston Marathon® course due to safety concerns, it will continue to unite the community to raise funds to support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Participants are encouraged to walk their way virtually, whether it be in their neighborhoods, hiking trails, or their own treadmills! The Jimmy Fund Walk has raised more than $145 million in its 30+ year history. You can find out more about Jimmy Fund Walk: Your Way here.

To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk), to support a walker, or to volunteer, visit www.JimmyFundWalk.org or call (866) 531-9255. While the Jimmy Fund Walk will look different this year, we are all together, wherever, against cancer.

If you would like to learn more about Allie or schedule an interview, I would be happy to help you. Please let me know if you are interested.

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Usual Unusual debuts as podcast

Usual Unusual,
presented by SpeakEasy Stage Company, Boston Project podcast beginning August 14 (episodes 1 and 2) and continuing through September 18 (episodes 3,4,5,6,7). Available on all podcast streaming services. 617-482-3279 or speakeasystage.com. hhtps://the-boston-project-podcast.simplecast.com

By Jules Becker
Contributing Writer

In post-Stonewall America, LGBTQ bookstores became both essential sources and significant meeting places. Repertoire would range from Oscar Wilde and E.M. Forster classics (respectively "The Portrait of Dorian Gray" and "Maurice") to major modern fare by the likes of James Baldwin (Giovanni's Room), Armistad Maupin ("Tales of the City") and Terrence McNally ("A Man of No Importance"). No less than Tennessee Williams and Patricia Nell Warren gave readings from their works at a Village venue.

Now acclaimed out dramatist M.J. Halberstadt (a Norton Award winner for his "The Launch Prize") has set his latest play "Usual Unusual" at a fictional Hub LGBTQ bookstore of the same name—a work to be heard on all podcast streaming services in seven episodes beginning Friday (the first two) and running weekly through September 18.

While allowing that "I am ashamed to admit that I did not shop at the Boston LGBTQ bookstores (such as Calamus) when they were around," the 31 year old Long Island-bred former Brookline writer—who has just moved to Northampton—recognizes them as "a cultural phenomenon," one that has inspired his play. "I hope there can be a way of looking at this play as a living document," he declares. Halberstadt has described "Usual Unusual "as a kind of "Frankenstein's Monster" of a draft and "more a blueprint than a work of art."

Likewise he sees the situation of the play as "about the evolving moment." Quite simply, the future of the South End bookstore depends upon the views and objectives of co-founders Penn and Margo (both 65) and younger counterparts Charlie and Ryan (both 26). Penn looks to retire to a house on the Cape with his (unseen) spouse Griff, while Margot may have a different approach to the store's fate. Halberstadt observes, "I think Penn feels he is excommunicated from a changing community. "The playwright, who suggests that these bookstores are "built on a tradition of storytelling," has him wondering from where the new great LGBTQ novels will come.

By contrast, Charlie—who wants to run the store—seems determined to take it "into the modern era." That modernity includes overhauling book selection, revolutionizing Reading Night and knitting circles (with Halberstadt into knitting himself). Ryan, whom the playwright notes "is willing to stick his neck out," speaks of Truth Books—in his case suggesting reading the novel "Call Me By Your Name" before seeing the film. "There are characters that are setting boundaries," alerts Halberstadt.

His play means to demonstrate "What is the answer to XYZ with each character. "Halberstadt sees the characters—cisman, ciswoman, binary, non-binary, white, Black and Asian—as "authentically human and flawed and believable." The playwright's dialogue does reveal affinities and differences between them as much as it deals with the evolution of bookstores like the title one. Halberstadt's writing smartly balances emotional conflicts and attention to cultural and historical detail. The author sees his play as a work in progress, but its insights and characters do deserve a careful hearing.

The inaugural Boston Project podcast will be directed by Megan Sandberg -Zakian and sound designed by Elizabeth Cahill. Expect to hear a tinkling doorbell at entrances and exits as well as a beaded office curtain. Heading the seven-member cast are Eddie Shields as Charlie and Will McGarrahan as Penn. Debra Wise will voice Margot and Michael John Ciszewski Ryan. Rounding out the cast are Rasheedat "Ras" Badejo, Olivia Cole and Han Park.

Halberstadt is "forever humbled to SpeakEasy for taking it ("Usual Unusual") on." The August 14 beginning is about 45 minutes long, while the other episodes range from 19 to 25 minutes. Calling the podcast version "a first step, a launch pad," he does hope to see the play actually staged someday.

MJ Halberstadt in front of the old Calamus Books site. Photo credit Nile Scott Studios

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