



CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

Battle of Bunker Hill Day Parade will continue on...in the car

By Seth Daniel

Like the Revolutionary-era conflict that is celebrated throughout mid-June, the Battle of Bunker Hill Day Parade is not going down this year without a fight – or at least a festive drive around the Town.

Long-time Parade coordinator Arthur Hurley announced on Tuesday this week that if they can't have a traditional marching parade on June 14, then they will have a car parade to mark the occasion.

"We are having a car parade," said Hurley on Tuesday. "We'll go the traditional parade route and everyone will stay in their cars. Whoever shows up will be part of it. We hope people come down and decorate their cars for the occasion. We'll see how it goes."

The Parade had been cancelled late last month from its June 14 date, and to the disappointment of many – though it couldn't be helped. This week, Hurley said they decided they needed to have something, even it was just a car parade.

He said to participate people just need to show up in a car at 12:30 p.m. on Vine Street in Hays Square.

They'll line up the cars and then drive the route, with people encouraged not to congregate along the route in large numbers as the cars go by.

State Rep. Dan Ryan said he applauded Hurley and the organizers for doing what could be done in a tough situation.

"I truly appreciate the dedication and community spirit of Arthur Hurley, the Legion Post and the Parade Committee in keeping this tradition alive," he

(PARADE Pg. 2)

SMALL OBSTACLE



Photo by Seth Daniel

Taking a break in their hockey practice for a little girl on a scooter to pass by at Doherty Park last Thursday afternoon, Reardon Sweeney and Aaron Titcomb enjoyed one of the more beautiful afternoons in some time – but at a proper distance so as to stay well. All over Charlestown, residents are trying to get out when they can, and engage in activities that keep them apart, while also being together. See page 6 for more photos.

Three new test companies bid for Exam School Test

By Seth Daniel

Three high-level testing companies have submitted bids to Boston Public Schools to be the next Exam School Test provider – potentially administering their first test for entrance into the City's three elite 7-12 schools this fall.

Supt. Brenda Cassellius said they are happy with the bids and believe it will result in a much fairer test that opens up exam schools to a more diverse student body – something that has come under criticism over the last several years.

District officials had put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) earlier this year amidst some controversy with the old test, the ISEE. However, there were no responses, so they re-bid it and opened up the three bids on Friday, May 15.

The three bidders included:

- Strategic Measurement and Evaluation, of Illinois/Indiana.
- NWEA, of Portland, OR.
- Riverside Assessments, of Chicago.

"Boston Public Schools (BPS) is committed to expanding access to our nation-leading exam schools for more of our students, especially our Black and Latinx students who have historically been under-represented," said Cassellius in a statement. "A new test is the next best step to removing barriers by providing a fairer test that is aligned to the Massachusetts state standards, and to ensure the test has been reviewed and validated for bias. Our goal is for students to have a better chance at demonstrating their abilities with a test

(EXAM SCHOOL Pg. 2)

Charlestown sailor's WWII submarine is discovered

By Bill Durette

The USS Grayback was a highly-decorated submarine having earned two Presidential Naval Citations.

One of its crewmembers was Charlestown's George Ferry, who was lost at sea with the Grayback until recently when researchers were able to locate and recover the storied war-time sub.

The Grayback had a deadly reputation and was one of the

more successful submarines in the US Navy. It went out on 10 war patrols wreaking havoc on Japanese shipping. On one of its war patrols, in September-October 1943, the Grayback formed the first of the Submarine Force's highly successful "wolf packs," referring to a mass-attack tactic in which the Grayback, the USS Cero and the USS Shad teamed up to sink 38,000 tons of ships and damage 63,300 more worth

(SUBMARINE Pg. 2)

NEW Health Charlestown begins testing site outside clinic

By Seth Daniel

Charlestown has been plagued by low testing numbers – the lowest in the City by far – throughout the COVID-19 response, but now NEW Health Charlestown has stepped up to try to bridge that gap by establishing the first testing site in the Town.

Starting on Monday, NEW Health began testing by appoint-

ment in a tent outside their clinic on Tufts Street near Hays Square.

"We're starting off testing in 15 minute increments and probably 12 a day," said Kristen Simonelli, who is running the logistics of the operation. "Once we get in the groove of it, we believe we can begin triple booking appointments. Initially it will be 12 a day and we'll ramp up."

(TESTING Pg. 7)



Staff and administrators from NEW Health Charlestown pose at a safe distance in front of the NEW Health Charlestown COVID-19 test site, which opened up on Monday for testing. It is the first test site in Charlestown, and the early goal is to perform 60 tests per week. Charlestown is the least-tested neighborhood in Boston by a long shot.

For the latest news in Charlestown that you need to know, check charlestownbridge.com

SUBMARINE (from pg. 1)

of material on enemy convoys. The Grayback was responsible for sinking a fleet tanker and two transport ships, including one already damaged by the Shad.

Grayback's 10th patrol, her most successful in terms of tonnage sunk, was also to be her last. She sailed from Pearl Harbor on January, 28, 1944, for the East China Sea. On Feb. 24, Grayback radioed that she had sunk two cargo ships on Feb. 19 and had damaged two others. On Feb. 25 she transmitted her second and final report. That morning she had sunk the tanker Toshin Maru and severely damaged another. With only two torpedoes remaining, she was ordered home from patrol.

Due to reach Midway Island on March 7, Grayback did not arrive.

On March 30, the Navy reluctantly listed her as missing and presumed lost with all hands. All together Grayback sunk nine cargo ships, one submarine, one light cruiser, one destroyer and a tanker. From captured Japanese records, the gallant submarine's last few days can be pieced together. Heading home through the East China Sea on Feb. 27, Grayback used her last two torpedoes to sink the freighter Ceylon Maru. That same day, a Japanese carrier-based plane spotted a submarine on the surface in the East China Sea and attacked. According to Japanese reports the submarine "exploded and sank immediately," but anti-submarine craft were called in to depth-charge the area, clearly marked by a trail of air bubbles, until at last a heavy oil slick swelled to the surface. Grayback had ended her last patrol, one which cost the enemy some 21,594 tons of shipping.

According to a news release, the Lost 52 team discovered that historical documents erred in the translation of the longitude of where the Grayback sank. With the new data and newly discovered Japanese mission logs, the searchers were able to refocus their efforts, and by using groundbreaking robotics and technology, found the dilapidated sub 100 miles from the area recorded in the original historical records.

The submarine was found in 1,427 feet of water 50 miles south of Okinawa Japan. The lost 52 team was able to get a firsthand glimpse of the Grayback resting in its watery grave.

WWII submarine service was one of the most dangerous assign-

ments in the Navy. The casualty rate was significantly higher than any other type of ship in the Navy. There were 3,505 submariners killed during the war.

Along with George Ferry from the Grayback, there were four other Charlestown men killed serving aboard submarines - Anthony J. Parrino, Edward P. O'Rourke, Patrick H. McCormack and William D. Fitzgerald. All together Charlestown had 13 men in the submarine service with only eight men making it back home. For the ones who didn't, they will forever be on "Eternal Patrol."

So as we pay tribute to this year's 75th anniversary of the end of WWII, we must remember the sacrifices of all the Charlestown men and women who gave their lives.

Sacrifices that helped change a world at war to a world at peace.

Bill Durette is the founder of the Charlestown Veterans History Project.



Charlestown's George Ferry, who died on the Grayback submarine.



The Grayback submarine was one of the most highly-decorated underwater vessels in World War II before it was sunk in 1944.

There is an organization called the "Lost 52 Project" dedicated to finding all 52 of the US Navy's Submarines that were lost in World War II. To date only 11 of the 52 submarines have been located. Five of those submarines were discovered by the lost 52 project. Their latest discovery occurred last November when they discovered the USS Grayback (SS-208) near Okinawa, Japan. The Grayback was last heard from on February 26th 1944 while on their 10th war patrol in the Pacific. At the time, all 81 men were presumed lost and officially declared killed in 1946. One of those 81 men was 20 year old Seaman 1st Class George Ferry from Charlestown. George lived at 17 Russell Street and was the son of George and Rose Ferry. George was a graduate of Brighten High School. After high school he married Virginia Moran of Winchester. Shortly after Pearl Harbor was attacked, George enlisted in the Navy. He attending submarine training and was then assigned to the US Grayback in 1943.



An underwater photo of the Grayback, which researchers found recently in the East China Sea.

First Lt. James Connors following in the military path of Gillen family

By Seth Daniel

First Lt. James P. Connors is following closely in the footsteps of his uncle, the late Commander Robert L. Gillen, as he just finished Ranger training on May 15, and is being deployed from Ft. Drumm (New York) to Afghanistan.

Connors is the grandson of Renee Gillen Moffatt, and the nephew of Moe Gillen, of Charlestown and great grandson of Mary Gillen. He was a high school hockey star, winning the state championship alongside his brother, Ryan, at Marshfield High.

After high school, he used the

guidance and example of his uncle, Commander Gillen, to attend and graduate from Norwich University in 2017. He graduated officer school in October 2018 afterward.

He actually gave his first salute to his cousin, Capt. (Ret.) U.S. Navy Robert Gillen, son of Commander Gillen.

His grandmother Renee said he has attended the Bunker Hill Day Parade with his brothers, Ryan and Nevin - who are now in the Coast Guard - with the Gillen family on St. Martin Street.

Lt. Connors's father is Walter Connors, who is the son of Renee Gillen Moffatt.

EXAM SCHOOL (from pg. 1)

that reflects what they will be taught in school.

We will carefully review these bids to ensure they meet the criteria we set forth," she continued. "We understand the urgency families feel and we will continue to keep them informed as we move forward."

The first RFP was released on Feb. 17 after much controversy over concerns of bias and unfairness in the past regarding the ISEE. Supt. Cassellius pledged to revamp the test, but when bids were due on March 19 - COVID-19 had struck and there had been no bids. The second RFP went out, and this time there was a great deal of interest and three bids submitted.

Cassellius has said in the past she would like to have a decision made on the provider by mid-June, and has said students should prepare for the test as they would

have prepared for the ISEE.

Strategic Measurement was founded in 2006, and is led by Denis Jarvinen. The company is based out of Lafayette, Indiana.

NWEA is a non-profit organization that administers assessments worldwide, and started doing so in 1973 when educators from Oregon and Washington state school districts formed an association to build a new kind of testing system. The company is based in Portland, OR.

Riverside Insights is a company that split off from the Houghton Mifflin Company in 2018. Now a separate company, "We are moving forward with a focus that is sharper than ever on providing actionable insights derived from accurate, reliable, and consistent data that create opportunities to help people thrive," read the website.

PARADE (from pg. 1)

said. "I will certainly do my part to make sure we have an appropriate celebration."

Councilor Lydia Edwards said she would participate, and would work with the organizers to make sure it is safe and fun.

"I think it speaks to our resiliency in Charlestown," she said. "We don't give up so easily. I will

be there. I'll be in the car or walking beside it while my team drives. We probably need to talk about how it will work beforehand. We don't want people to congregate and we don't want it to look like a funeral march either. We'll work it out and do our best. We don't give up easy in Charlestown."

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New Charlestown High principal ready to lead school into the future

By Seth Daniel

Coming back to Boston Public Schools (BPS), the incoming leader of Charlestown High School is ready to take the school into a new, COVID-19 future in which the school could potentially expand and become integrated into a neighborhood education pipeline.

Joel Stemberge, 51, was chosen recently to be the new principal of Charlestown High to replace popular Principal Will Thomas – who has been tapped to lead a new 7-12 initiative in Hyde Park, and later, on Columbia Point in Dorchester. Stemberge, who lives in West Roxbury, returns to BPS after spending 11 years as the principal of Newton South High School. However, before that, he spent five years as the headmaster of the John D. O'Bryan School of Math and Science – one of the City's three exam schools.

"I always loved high school and the flows of it and opportunity for growth," he said. "It's definitely the place I wanted to spend my professional life. My decision to leave the classroom was like many other educators in that I wanted to support students and staff on a macro level. I'm very interested in ensuring that all students have equity and accessibility to programs that support their needs."



Principal Joel Stemberge is ready to take the reins at Charlestown High School on July 1, with current Principal Will Thomas moving to a high-profile assignment in Hyde Park and Dorchester. Stemberge is returning to BPS after having led Newton South High School for the last 11 years.

Stemberge said he grew up and went to school on the West Coast, but came to the East Coast with his wife – who is from here – after college. At O'Bryan, he said he had a great five years and it was his first time leading a school. He said he learned a lot of lessons there, trying to bring in a stronger Advanced Placement (AP) participation.

"I came in with a bunch of exuberance and energy and learned my enthusiasm and energy alone could not make the difference," he said.

He said he learned that one had to get everyone on board, from staff to students to parents. That is something over the five years he said he believes he accomplished.

At Newton South, he encountered an entirely different situation, and said he really enjoyed his 11 years there leading the school. The community has been fantastic, but over time, Stemberge said he found he enjoyed helping students who were underprivileged – especially students of color – who had a far different experience at the school than others.

"Early on there it became clear to me that depending on different students' background – particularly the black and brown students – there was a very different experience at Newton South than the white and Asian students," he said.

He said he worked on those issues about 20 percent of the time, but realized it was something he would rather do 100 percent of the time – perhaps in a district like Boston.

So he returned, interviewing in person before COVID-19, and getting his final interviews done online – which was a totally new experience for everyone.

"I live in Boston," he said. "It's the part of my job I'm really interested in – focusing on the 20 percent at Newton South that really need to have more attention paid to them. That's what I want to spend 80 percent of my time on now."

Already, Principal Will Thomas – who is at Charlestown until June 30 – has been meeting with Stemberge to help him understand the programming and complex nature of the school. Stemberge said he sees Thomas as a partner going well into next year to help him get acclimated and expand on the programs that have worked really well at Charlestown High – including the Pathways program partnership with Bunker Hill Community College.

"I'm looking forward to building on what was built there," he said.

To build up the school, Stemberge will have an immediate influx of funding and help as Charlestown High is one of 33 schools citywide to get major funding for social emotional supports and re-design.

"My job is going to be to make sense of these things and to make sure these new resources are integrated into what's there and not coming in like a sledgehammer," he said. "It's my job to translate what is coming in and what we're doing at the school already."

There is word that they will have three full-time social workers at the school, and there will also be robust discussions about acclimating the school more to the neighborhood by offering a middle school there – making it a 7-12 school.

That is something Supt. Brenda Cassellius has said she supports, and Stemberge said he thinks it could be valuable too.

"I'm all for that too," he said. "I love middle school and taught middle school. It's another two years to make sure the students are well and are getting the proper growth. There are the Pathways at Charlestown and it will be helpful to have students explore that in middle school and prepare for choosing a a Pathway before high school rather than coming in and trying to figure it out quickly. There are excellent opportunities there."

Stemberge said he is very excited as well to forge some relationships in the community, something that has already started in a greater way over the last five years. However, he said he hopes to get students even more involved in the community around them.

"I'm looking forward to seeing how that can be done," he said.

Stemberge will begin his tenure at Charlestown High on July 1.

Councilor Edwards calls on Secretary Galvin to show up for guidance on voting

By Seth Daniel

After Secretary of State Bill Galvin's office was a no-show last week at Councilor Lydia Edwards's critical Council hearing on how voting will take place this year, Edwards said she was "disgusted" and called on Galvin or his office to guide the counsel in some fashion going forward.

Edwards said they will have future working sessions to plan for how voting will take place in September, but especially in November, given the need to social distance and likely expand the absentee voting program. She hopes that, at a minimum, Galvin might send them a communication.

"I was disgusted," she said. "It simply was him totally dismissing the City Council and our conversation and the fact Boston was looking to him for guidance and he would rather give us none. I would hope at a minimum he can send a written statement. A message by Morse Code over telegraph, even a carrier pigeon would

work. Send us an e-mail, anything to demonstrate he [cares]."

Voting will be a tricky measure in November, and in the September Primary election, and the Boston Election Commission told Edwards's committee they are in favor of an expanded absentee voting program. However, they aren't going to simply mail ballots to everyone. As a compromise, the plan is to send out applications for absentee ballots to everyone in Boston. If the application is returned, and a voter is vetted, they can vote absentee by mail through the normal absentee system. However, that system works by needing a medical or travel excuse and the Council needs Galvin's office to endorse a system where such excuses are waived for absentee ballots.

"All eyes are on the State House now – period," said Edwards. "Boston has at least committed to sending out applications for absentee voting to everyone... We need the state to remove the excuse requirement for absentee ballots...In Boston, it's about

being safe and having access to the ballot. There should be a balance so people who want to go to the polls to vote – it should be safe for them to go and for the poll workers to provide ballots."

Edwards said the hearing – which was online – was called to make sure the City doesn't end up scrambling for a system late in the game – as was done in Wisconsin. She said Tuesday featured two special elections in Massachusetts and both worked out well with an absentee and in-person system – with most using the absentee mail-in method to vote.

She said getting Boston's system right is critical for the state as a whole, which is why they had hoped Galvin would participate.

"We know the secretary is busy, but one in 10 votes in the state comes from the City of Boston," she said. "If Boston is going to adjust voting, it has ripple effects across the state in many ways. We thought a demonstration of partnership and guidance from him in the conversation would be a good thing."

Galvin and the Council have long been at odds, and particularly last year when former Councilor Josh Zakim ran against Galvin. During those debates, Galvin mocked the role of the Council a number of times – creating some bad blood between himself and the member.

ZBA To Return In June, But What About The Reforms

Edwards said the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) will begin meeting again in June, and there are several high-profile projects that will get dates before the ZBA this summer – including projects in Thompson Square and at the Grasshopper Restaurant.

Beyond that, Edwards said she is concerned about the numerous reforms she had proposed for the ZBA before COVID-19 that she said never were instituted. Now, with the resumption, she said she wonders what the ZBA has been doing all the time that it hasn't been meeting if they haven't been working on the reforms she had suggested, and Mayor Martin Walsh had required to be put in

place.

What About Sidewalk/Street Seating At Restaurants?

As the ZBA resumes and restaurants prepare the long haul for re-opening their establishments, Edwards said she wanted to know what Charlestown thinks about sidewalk dining and closing off streets temporarily to help businesses.

Many in the North End, she said, had been vocal, but she was hoping to know what residents and restaurateurs were thinking in Charlestown.

Outdoor dining has been a major suggestion for re-opening restaurants as interior seating will be severely limited for some time, and having a summer outdoor option gives establishments more tables to conduct more business.

"There has to be a way," she said. "There has to be a better option. They will never be at full occupancy until the governor says they can be, but we have to save the restaurants...There are no absolute ways, but we need a balance."

EDITORIAL

MEMORIAL DAY, 2020

This will be a Memorial Day unlike any that Americans have known.

Ever since the official inception of the holiday on May 30, 1868, when the practice of decorating the graves of the fallen Union soldiers with flowers, wreaths, and flags officially became recognized by the order of General Logan at Arlington National Cemetery, Memorial Day (originally known as Decoration Day) has been a time for all Americans to come together to commemorate and honor those who made the Supreme Sacrifice to preserve our freedom.

When Memorial Day was moved to the fourth Monday of May starting in 1971, the three-day weekend also came to mark the official start of the summer season for Americans of all ages, who gathered for cookouts and other outdoor activities with friends and family.

But in this year of the coronavirus pandemic, all of the usual parades and festivities have been cancelled. With much of the nation still sheltering in place, gatherings of families and friends have been limited to the faux-reality of Zoom.

The pandemic also has brought another set of challenges to our nation, however. The stress we all are feeling, both from the threat of the virus itself and from the economic anxiety it has created, has brought into full view the many, deep fissures in our society which have been lurking beneath the surface for decades.

It is fair to say that America is as disunited as we ever have been since the end of the Civil War itself 155 years ago. This pandemic, rather than bringing us together to face and fight the common challenge of the coronavirus, is threatening to tear us apart and bring to an end the great American experiment.

In searching for appropriate words to capture this moment in which we find ourselves, the Gettysburg address that was delivered by President Abraham Lincoln on the site of the battlefield on November 19, 1863, rings most true, both in terms of honoring those who gave their lives in our nation's wars and for healing the wounds created by the current pandemic crisis.

We hope our readers take a moment to absorb Lincoln's words and reflect upon the meaning of Memorial Day in light of our current situation:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

LETTERS to the Editor

MANY THANKS

To the Editor,

Many thanks to fellow Charlestown residents who are wearing face masks or coverings throughout the community. For those not covering, I urge you to do so. The science and our experience is clear that wearing masks along with other measures can be effective in minimizing the spread of this vicious virus. The asymptomatic transmission is real and wearing a mask can prevent it. Remember that wearing a mask is to protect others - I am wearing one to protect you and would ask you for the same consideration. As Spaulding's President and personally, I have repeatedly seen the devastating effects of COVID at our hospitals and throughout our community. Your choice is to help save lives or put them at risk. Thank you.

David Storto,
President Spaulding
Rehabilitation Network,
Charlestown Resident

"OLD SCHOOLBOYS" ROCK!

To the Editor,

I would like to thank the Charlestown Old Schoolboys for awarding me the Palledoes/Powers Scholarship. As I prepare for my sophomore year at Colby-Sawyer College NH, such support means so much in helping me reach my goal of obtaining a college degree. Again, thank you very much "Old Schoolboys," you guys ROCK!

Conor Kelly

HARVEST ON VINE THANKS CNC AND SPAULDING

To the Editor, Two years ago the Charlestown Neighborhood Counsel in partnership with Spaulding Hospital granted \$3,750 to Harvest on Vine emergency food pantry to put toward a freezer. It took two years, but we found the additional money we needed to purchase it. We thank the CNC and Spaulding Rehab for their patience.

Tom MacDonald
Harvest On Vine

THANK YOU

To the Editor,
To the Old Charlestown

Schoolboys Association. I would like to Thank You for selecting me for one of the Schoolboy Scholarships. This Award will be put to good use as I continue my education at Stonehill College.

Thank You

Charles Page

THANKS "OLD SCHOOLBOYS"

To the Editor,

As I enter my senior year at St. Joseph College ME, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Charlestown Old Schoolboys. This year, I was awarded the Ralph W. Brown Scholarship and to be the recipient of such generosity from those who have done so much for our community is truly special. Again, thanks so much "Old Schoolboys!"

Patrick Kelly

ON REACTING TO COVID19

To the Editor,

As we move through the surreal days created by the Covid19 pandemic, it can be comforting and inspiring to learn the stories of those who survived similar challenges which, at the time, were unprecedented. These stories can lead us to acknowledge our human fragility but also our ability to persevere and prevail when our physical, emotional and mental well-being are threatened.

We know that the wounds inflicted by past tragic events, like the plague of 1348, the Spanish Flu of 1918, WW I, WW II, the polio epidemic, HIV-AIDS, impacted the lives of countless people and often changed the course of human history. In addition, with each event, these wounds came dangerously close to

crushing what is at the core of being human: resilience, courage and compassion. It behooves us to stay vigilant as we strive to protect our lives to also protect these qualities, they provide us with strength, but resilience, courage and compassion can be vulnerable when fighting a pandemic.

If life is what happens between what we plan, then the people who lost their lives, and the people who survived them during those times, witnessed how life unexpectedly can give us poisonous air

to breathe, or simply, take away our ability to breathe altogether. The human spirit, however, carries on, relying on

the desire to live and the hunger to survive. In the past few months there have been countless examples of resilience, courage and compassion. From sewing masks to donate to those who needed them to cheering on the medical professionals who worked tirelessly, modeling compassion and courage for the rest of us.

Equally, first responders, supermarket employees, other essential workers showed courage and empathy. Mental health professionals continue to highlight the importance of being part of a community, of paying it forward or of giving back, all actions that help us reap health benefits. We feel the need to stay connected as we awake every morning because we remember that there is a

pandemic and that we need to behave as if we had the virus. Everyone knows a story of someone who conquered challenges that seemed insurmountable. During Covid19, we can find the inspiration we need to move forward in these stories. The story that I rely upon is that of my parents who came of age during WW II in Italy. During the first week of social distancing dictated by the coronavirus, my 89-year old mother seemed unfazed by the pandemic, she seemed to think all the media reports and the health warnings were not relevant to her. She is naturally willful, but most importantly, she has an indomitable spirit nurtured by eight decades of practicing the resilience she learned as

a child. Recently, I talked with her about what it was like to grow up during WW II and its aftermath. She was 6 years old when Mussolini made an alliance with Nazi Germany and almost 13 when Italy switched sides and the Germans were already in Italy. She was 15 years old when the Allied Forces came to Italy.

She remembers how elated she was when the war ended and how thrilling it was to receive chocolate and nylon stockings brought by the Allies. In the past, when I asked my mother what growing up during the war and its aftermath was like, she spoke about how everyone she knew went to bed hungry, how there

GUEST OP-ED

Baker's reopening plans for the State

By Damali Vidot

I applaud the State Administration for stepping up and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable in Chelsea, Charlestown, and the rest of our impacted communities in Massachusetts. At a time when we need collaboration and transparency between local and state officials for life-altering decisions, it is essential to prioritize local voices in these conversations as state officials.

Since my involvement in the City of Chelsea's Pandemic Emergency Response Team - working alongside residents and community leaders and coordinating support from the state and the National Guard--I've stressed the importance of having a diversity of neighborhood voices in the planning of a response to this pandemic.

And most recently I've been struck the most by the conversations I've had, for example, with mothers in Chelsea and Charlestown, as they juggle the responsibilities of being a parent, provider, and source of strength for their families. And so it has become all the more urgent that the collective lived-experiences of these voices, as well, remain at the forefront of our deliberations to reopen the state.

Reopening our communities cannot force us to choose between public health or financial stability. Instead, it must be a coordinated, science-based plan, with leaders at the table who represent and have been most impacted by the crisis.

COVID-19 has shown us that the most vulnerable in our communities will continue to suffer long after this pandemic if we do not collectively work to build a resilient, equitable future.

The heartfelt dedication and work that has so far been devoted in response to this crisis is truly a testament to the collective efforts of many people from our community who share similar lived-experiences and who are all striving to create a more just and equitable future for everyone--no matter what side of the Tobin Bridge we're on.

For over 2 months, At-Large Chelsea City Councilor Damali Vidot has been at the center of the COVID-19 emergency response efforts in her city, working with the Chelsea Pandemic Response Team, organizing local elected officials, Massachusetts General Hospital, Beth Israel Lahey Health, faith-based leaders, non-profit organizations and others to secure life-saving resources for food assistance, emergency housing, financial assistance, and PPE to support both our front line responders and those most vulnerable in our communities.

Damali Vidotis At-Large Chelsea City Councilor. For more information on Councilor Vidot and the campaign, please visit our website www.votedamali.org. You can follow us on Twitter @DamaliVidot and on Facebook @DamaliVidot.. Councilor Vidot encourages all residents to register to vote at sec.state.ma.us/ovr, and to vote on Primary Day election day, Tuesday, September 1.

CLERGY VIEWPOINT

FROM THE CHARLESTOWN CLERGY ASSOCIATION

Tolerance

By Very Reverend James Ronan, VF - Pastor, St. Mary-St. Catherine of Siena Parish

I respect and admire the scientists and medical professionals who have worked to inform and shape policies for us from the start of this pandemic. The numbers, the data, the percentages, and various indices have made us all students again. It is of special interest because most of us try to figure out where we fall on the different scales forecasting what is or might be going on.

Quantifying characteristics of human behavior is something all of us find interesting. As soon as we hear a statistic like, "25% of everyone working remotely gets a headache", we think about ourselves and anyone we know working remotely. As the pandemic has engulfed us there are all kinds of statistics and many of them address the fear, grief, sickness, and death of this horror.

Are the consequences of COVID-19 only negative? In my own life, I have been thinking about how I am changing, for better or for worse. Maybe I am becoming lazy, I wonder, because of this open-ended schedule when I realize much ought to be tackled, yet I never quite get to it. Then I question if I am becoming indifferent to matters that previously seemed important and now don't seem to matter that much. And the self-reflection goes on, perhaps with you as well.

How about this: what percentage of the population is more tolerant of others today than a few months ago? Is the fact that the pandemic affects everyone in some way or another with no exceptions a unifying factor? I think so. When we look around, read, listen, and share informa-

tion, it quickly becomes evident our inconveniences, losses, and suffering may be matched, even exceeded, by another's.

The counterpoint to the tolerance scale is an old all too familiar axiom of us vs. them. The disease, worse than COVID 19, may be those who are putting forth divisiveness rather than unity, intolerance rather than acceptance, and indifference rather than empathy.

This is a pivotal moment for our community and world. I see and witness first hand edifying tolerance and acceptance in Charlestown and recognize it as the very best of the human spirit. We are all children of God and our prayer and our living must be at its best when it includes care for one another.

LETTERS (from pg. 4)

was no wheat flour to make bread or pasta and food rationing went on for a long time. Schools and places of employment were closed, farmers could not plant their crops because of landmines and other explosive remnants. She said that the grocery store shelves were empty because no deliveries could be made since roads, bridges and railroads were severely disrupted. She mentioned curfews, fewer interactions with people and how the fear of dying from bombs, land mines or hunger became a constant companion for everyone and how families mourned their loved ones who died alone. She sounded lighter, as if recounting a happy time, when she talked about how neighbors shared resources, children invented games and songs to keep boredom and fear away and the days were made bearable by little gestures of kindness.

I asked my mother if Covid19 reminded her of her life during WW II, she said "yes, it does, this is easier in so many ways but it also feels more threatening. One thing was easier during WWII: when the sirens stopped, announcing that the bombing had ceased, we could go outside and talk with friends and neighbors without worrying

about becoming ill and possibly dying from those interactions."

She understands that she is part of the demographic that is most adversely affected by this virus and I can't help thinking how elderly people who contract the virus now are dying without their family, alone, like the brave young men who fought in wars. I feel fortunate to be among those who didn't experience living during a war in a place occupied by the enemy. I wonder, however, if not sharing a collective memory of surviving such life-altering events fuels the anxiety we feel now and weakens the resilience we need to look beyond reopening dates. Becoming ill with the Coronavirus sounds as unpredictable as a sneeze, as devastating as a choking cough. This virus is as invasive as the enemy during a war, as threatening as a bomb falling too close. Those who have survived Covid 19 describe it like surviving a drowning. My mother can tell me about how long it took her to forget the fear of bombs and that of being maimed by explosive remnants but she can't speak to how the Covid19 pandemic will impact us. No one can tell us when it will end or how to proactively guard our resilience and courage and practice our compassion.

Perhaps, included in the recom-

mendations for staying virus free, along with washing our hands, practicing physical distance and wearing a mask, we could use some guidance on how to preserve our humanity.

Where do we look for inspiration to stay resilient now and in the wake of the Covid19 pandemic? Where do we find the courage to think about the number of deaths that occurred in a short period of time? How do we muster the compassion we want to show our fellow human beings while protecting

ourselves from the virus and its inevitable consequences?

It seems to me that if we are lucky enough not to have first-hand experience of surviving unimaginable events like the coronavirus, we need to hold on to the legacy of resilience, courage and compassion demonstrated by the people who experienced them and survived them. Maybe we need to seek out those people and ask them how they found the courage to fight fear, to stay resilient and to be compassionate during, and after the pandemic. We may find out that often they did it by embracing unprecedented uncertainty while letting the strength of humanity shine through.

Iolanda Volpe



CHARLESTOWN
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REPORTER - SETH DANIEL - SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF CHARLESTOWN RESIDENTS

Photos by Seth Daniel

Last Thursday was one of the more beautiful days in some time in Charlestown, and residents came out in large numbers to enjoy the day in ways that were safe – which is on the forefront of everyone’s minds when leaving the house for any reason. From playing street hockey to working in the garden to boating to celebrating a birthday in the back of a pickup truck – it was all happening.



Lyle rode his bike down to the HarborWalk to grab a seat in the sun and watch the working waterfront.



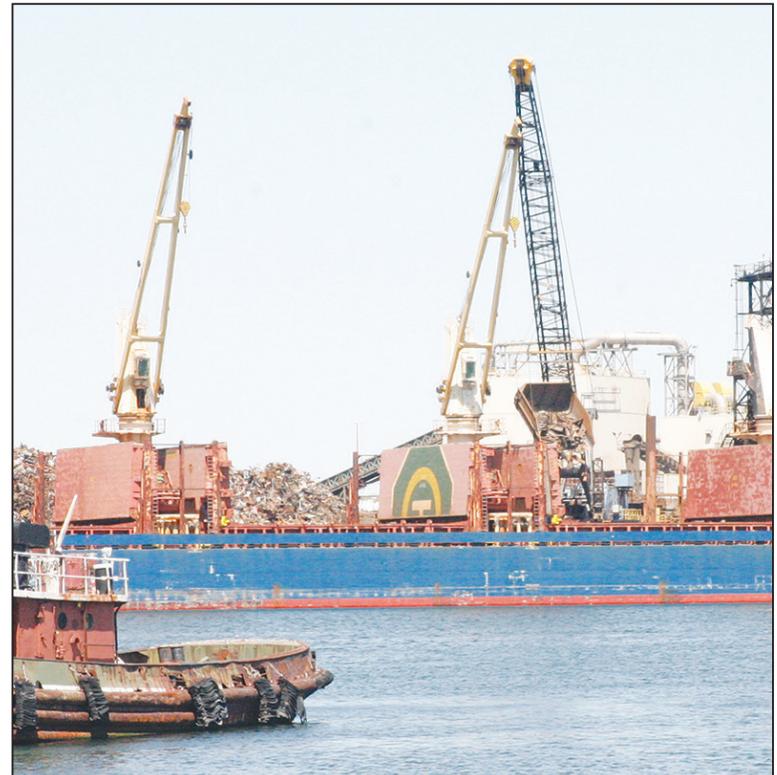
A speed boat blasts by the power plants and Encore Boston Harbor on the Mystic River on what was a calm and beautiful day for boating.



Regina Capozzi listened to Gov. Charlie Baker speak about re-opening plans in the state while planting tomatoes in her garden at Gardens for Charlestown on Main Street.



Marielle Dmohowski (left) celebrated her birthday in the back of a pick-up truck on Bunker Hill Street on Thursday. Taking a break from working at home with friend Angelina Giorgetti, the back of the truck looked like a good spot to celebrate with a cold drink before getting back to work. Happy birthday Marielle.



Across the Mystic River, a Schnitzer Steel crane loads up scrap metal on a freighter preparing to head out to sea. Work has continued at Schnitzer as it is an essential industry.

To remind us how important community and art are during these challenging and difficult times, FCNY is sponsoring a Photo Contest, inspired, and judged, by Charlestown photographer Ryan Pettaway.



The theme is, "Showcase What You Hold Dear in Your Community."

Please submit your photos to us in jpeg format at info@friendscny.org by Friday, June 5th. The winner will receive a voucher to purchase one of Ryan's photographic masterpieces.



To preview what you may win, check out Ryan's work at: <https://www.instagram.com/igcharlestown/> <https://www.ryart.net/>

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The Schraffts Center hasn't changed much despite the pandemic, with the large American flag flying as usual.

Priscilla Rojas elected as first woman and Latina to Chair the BPDA Board

The Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) Board on May 14 unanimously voted to elect Priscilla Rojas as Board Chair.

Rojas will be the first woman and Latina to hold the position. Appointed by Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Rojas has served on the BPDA Board since 2015 and has served as Interim Chair since December 2019.

“Through many years of dedicated service to her community and to the City of Boston, Priscilla Rojas has shown she is well-qualified to serve as Chair of the BPDA Board,” said Mayor Walsh. “I want to congratulate Priscilla on this great achievement, and thank her and all of the Board Members for their ongoing leadership to create a city that is equitable for all.”

“Over the past five years, Priscilla’s voice has helped guide the BPDA in its work to shape a more inclusive Boston for all,” said BPDA Director Brian Golden. “I look forward to continuing to work with Priscilla in her role as Chair.”

With a passion for organizations that promote the advancement of people of color, women, and the arts, Rojas serves as Board Treasurer and Audit Committee Chair for Futuro Media Group, an independent nonprofit organization committed to producing ethical journalism from a POC perspective. Rojas also served as a member

of the Boston Cultural Council for six years and was recognized in the 2016 Boston’s Extraordinary Women Campaign, highlighting women that do extraordinary work within the Boston community. Rojas is the Head of Internal Audit & Compliance at Takeoff Technologies, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from DePaul University. Rojas currently resides in Boston’s Leather District.

“I am pleased to be elected as Chair of the BPDA Board, and I want to thank my fellow Board Members for this honor,” said BPDA Chair Priscilla Rojas. “As Chair, I look forward to building on the work the Board has done to ensure there are opportunities for every resident of Boston.”

Since Rojas joined the Board in 2015, more than 58 million square feet of new development worth over \$30 billion has been approved by the Board. In 2019, the Board approved over 10 million square feet of new development worth \$5.5 billion and 4,715 residential units, including 1,216 income-restricted units, representing over 26 percent of total units.

The Board also voted to elect Michael Monahan as Vice-Chair. Monahan is the International Vice President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Second District, overseeing all New England affairs of the 40,000-plus members and over 50 local unions.

TESTING (from pg. 1)

The site will be open 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday to Friday, and appointments can be made by calling (857) 238-1100. The hotline will take the call and screen for symptoms, and if it’s deemed appropriate, will issue an appointment for testing at the site.

Board Chair Jason Aluia said it is critical to begin doing more testing in Charlestown.

“The biggest point to make here is this is the first testing site in Charlestown,” he said. “We saw that there is a need in the community. The Board and CEO Jim Luisi recognized Charlestown needed testing. We saw the data and the lack of testing and we had the staff and space to carry it out.”

Medical Director Anne Murray-Chiriboga said testing is the only way to fight the virus until there is a vaccine. So, expanding testing access is critical.

“The only way we’re going to minimize the effect of this is by testing people when they come in contact with someone is sick and by testing those who are identified with the contact tracing efforts,” she said. “We need them tested and if they are positive, get them isolated. The more we do testing, the better off we will all be.”

The Boston Resiliency Fund helped get the effort off the ground, and was a key ingredient in getting testing availability out



NEW Health CFO Vincenzo Scibelli and Medical Director Anne Murray-Chiriboga inside the NEW Health Charlestown testing tent. Testing is by appointment only and can be done as a drive-thru or walk-up operation.

to community health centers like NEW Health Charlestown. The grant was key in getting PPE and the tent facility set up. Testing will be performed on site, but a partnership with Quest Labs – and perhaps MGH – will help process the tests. It will take two or three days for results.

NEW Health CFO Vincenzo Scibelli said they look forward to ramping up operations and getting the testing numbers up in the Town.

“The goal is to ramp up testing in Charlestown and through

our partnership with MGH and Quest, we’ll be able to have a successful testing program that includes walk-up and drive-thru,” he said. “Our goal to start is to get 60 tests per week and the eventual goal is to ramp up and do more testing as time goes on...One of the biggest reasons we decided to open a test site here was to provide testing to our patients, many of whom are residents of Bunker Hill Housing development. They are our most vulnerable patients and we want to keep that from being a hot spot.”

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Testing picks up, while cases and rates remain low

By Seth Daniel

Testing has picked up and is about to really increase in the coming weeks, as Charlestown's 149 cases of COVID-19 remain the lowest in all the city.

The numbers of tests have grown by 60 percent in the latest results, which were released on Friday by the Boston Public

Health Commission (BPHC) for data through Thursday, May 14. The numbers of tests are expected to increase even more this week as a new testing site was established in the Town. That said, the numbers of those tested is still much lower than any other neighborhood, even as the positive rate for those tests is 17.2 percent – among the lowest in Boston.

The next lowest tested neighborhoods were still far higher than Charlestown, with West Roxbury at 1,581 tests and Fenway at 1,448 tests. Some neighborhoods like parts of Dorchester had tested more than 5,500 residents, and East Boston had tested 3,580 residents with a positive rate of 36.3 percent, which was the highest in the city.

Still, confirmed cases remained very low at 149, up 40 from last week, with an infection rate of 76.7 per 10,000 residents. The infection rate was also one of the lowest in the city, only behind Downtown/Back Bay/Beacon Hill at 62.3 per 10,000 and Fenway at 46 per 10,000.

East Boston, conversely, had 1,281 cases and a rate of 273 per 10,000.

Hyde Park had the highest infection rate at 279.9 per 10,000 – something that could be explained by the large numbers of nursing homes and elderly care centers in that neighborhood, though more research is needed on that matter.

Meanwhile, South Dorchester had the highest number of cases, with 1,746.

A clear need in Charlestown, though, is much more testing of a diverse section of the population to get a clearer picture of where the neighborhood stands.

On the issue of race, Black/African Americans are still affected at much higher rates than other races, with 39 percent of the cases in Boston coming from that population. The date, however, is incomplete with 20 percent of cases not reflecting any race. Hispanic residents also increased a great deal over the week, climbing

to 24 percent of the cases after having been at 17 percent last week.

Whites make up 25 percent of all cases, but whites make up 43 percent of all deaths (244 deaths).

As of Tuesday, May 19, there were a total of 12,050 confirmed cases and 5,121 people had recovered. There were 588 deaths from COVID-19 complications.

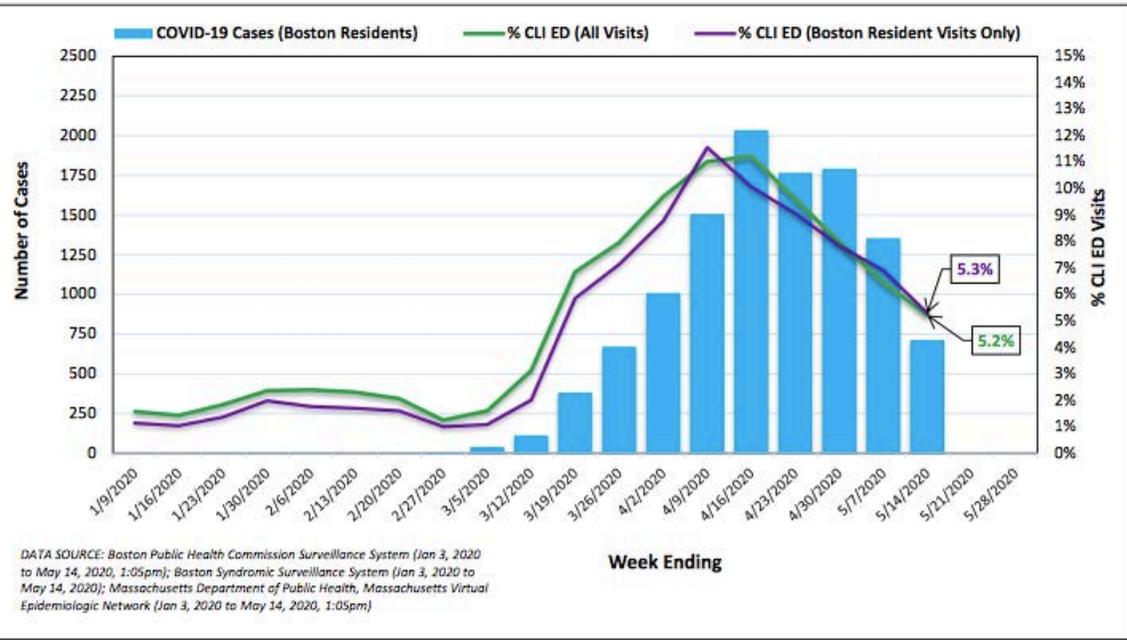
The numbers of women affected by the virus also continued to grow larger than men. That was first reported last week as the two genders evened out statistically for the first time, with men having been affected more previously.

Of all the cases, women made up 51.4 percent and men made up 47.4 percent.

Women's infection rate also grew, sitting at 166 per 10,000, with men at 165.4 per 10,000.

Most cases are still concentrated heavily in the older adult population.

Figures showed that one in three cases was a person 60 or older. Those age 50-59, though, made up the largest percentage of cases, with 17.2 percent of cases. Those 80 years old and above, had an infection rate of 578.7 per 10,000, much higher than all other age groups.



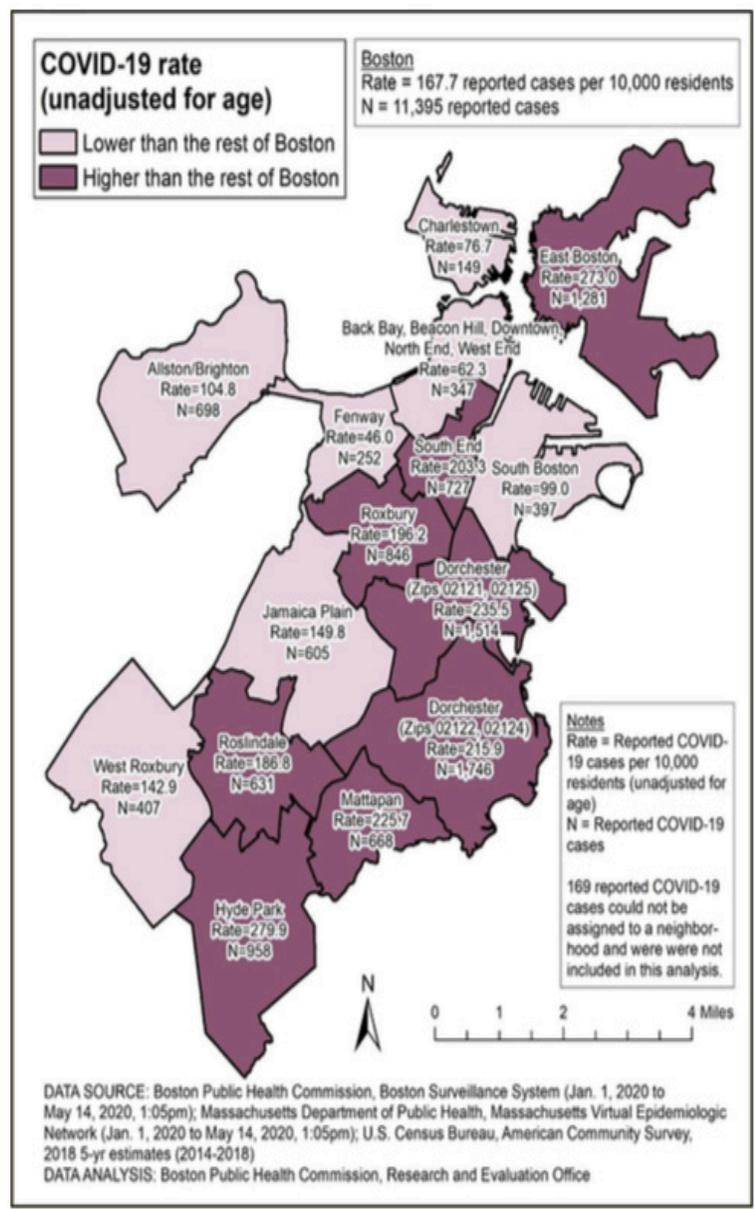
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Six businesses get grants from Small Business Relief Fund

By Seth Daniel

Six businesses in Charlestown joined more than 500 citiwide that received word of funding grants through the recently-established Small Business Relief Fund – a fund announced by Mayor Martin Walsh last month with initial funding of \$2 million.

Walsh announced the new business grant recipients during a press conference on Wednesday, May 13.

“The Small Business Relief Fund grants are critical to help struggling small businesses across the city address challenges brought on by COVID-19,” said Mayor Walsh. “These businesses are the backbone of our economy, and the lifeblood of our communities. I’m proud we are able to assist them during this time, and am grateful to our partners who have stepped up in a big way to support Boston’s neighborhood business community.”

In Charlestown, the businesses include:

- Boston Novelties LLC
- Moroccan Suites Boston
- Sleepy Panda

- Sojuba
- VIBE Wellness
- WAGS Charlestown

Within the overall program, 58 percent of the businesses receiving grants are owned by people of color, 48 percent are owned by women, 44 percent are owned by immigrants, and 95 percent went to businesses with 15 or fewer employees. The top 10 zip codes with the most recipients include East Boston, Jamaica Plain, Brighton, South End, Dorchester, Roslindale, and Roxbury. Charlestown was actually one of the neighborhoods with the fewest applicants and recipients.

An additional \$5.5 million in funding is being added to fully fund all eligible grant requests that were submitted during the application process, which combines newly available federal funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development; as well as commitments from Citizens Bank and Eastern Bank.

The City said it would continue to share updates on new small businesses that are funded as that information becomes available.

North Washington Street Bridge (Charlestown Bridge) Construction Look-Ahead:

North Washington Street Bridge (Charlestown Bridge) Construction Look-Ahead: May 17 – 30

TRAVEL IMPACTS OVERNIGHT LANE REDUCTIONS:

Overnight lane reductions in both directions will continue during weekdays from 9 p.m. – 5 a.m. At least one lane across the bridge and all turn movements will be available.

•N. WASHINGTON STREET INBOUND: Off-peak daytime lane reductions across the bridge and additional lane reductions at Keany Square will continue. One lane across the bridge and all turn movements will be available from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. on weekdays.

•N. WASHINGTON STREET OUTBOUND: Off-peak daytime lane reductions will continue across the bridge to City Square. One lane across the bridge and all

turn movements will be available from 7 a.m.–2 p.m. on weekdays.

DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULED WORK

•Construction of the temporary pedestrian/vehicle bridge including installing temporary fender system, assembling, drainage work, building of and welding of bridge spans, supports, and columns.

WORK HOURS

•Daytime (6 a.m.– 3 p.m.).
•From 5/25- 5/30, crews will be working in two shifts (5:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. – midnight) to install the temporary bridge fender system in the Charles River.

WORK THAT HAS BEEN COMPLETED

•Further construction of the temporary pedestrian/vehicle bridge, drainage work, and preparations for fender installation.

TRAVEL TIPS PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS:

The bridge’s eastern sidewalk is open and available to all pedestrians and cyclists with crossings at both Keany and City Squares. Please be advised that the DCR-controlled Charlestown locks can provide another alternate route but may close without warning and beyond control of this project. During Tudor Wharf walkway closures, pedestrian access will be provided via the Water Street underpass and guidance signage will be provided.

The contractor is coordinating with the TD Garden and local police to provide awareness and manage traffic impacts during events. For your awareness, there will be no events at the TD Garden during this look ahead schedule.

CHARLESTOWN BEAT

POLICE/COMMUNITY MEETING: Meet the police & discuss public safety issues on the last Wednesday of every month at the police station, 20 Vine Street, at 6:00 p.m., 2nd floor, community room. POLICE RELATED INFO: Contact the District A-1 Community Service Office at 617-343-4627.

Larceny

05/11/20 – A victim on Mt. Vernon Street reported the post-man rang her bell with a package delivery. A short time later when she went to get the package, however, she observed the box had been opened, that the sneakers delivered were gone.

Vandalism

05/14/20 – A victim on Starr

King Court reported unknown suspect(s) smashed the rear window of her motor vehicle, but nothing was taken.

Larceny in a Building

05/14/20 – A victim on Corey Street stated he went into another room when he had a friend over to his house, but when he returned, his friend was gone, as were his television and cellphone. The sus-

pect is known to the victim, and the matter is under investigation.

Larceny in a Building

05/18/20 – A victim on Decatur Street reported he had guests over to his home for dinner, but when they left, he observed his speakers were missing. The suspects are known to the victim, and the matter is under investigation

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Shegog, Barbara A	Fisher, George R	5 9th St #5	\$1,712,500
Demore, Margot	Farrugia, Christopher	40 Bartlett St	\$1,680,000
Gavin, Ryan	Zarechnak, Alexis	72 High St	\$2,895,000
Lilov, Gueorgui	Lepe, Juan M	496 Medford St #496	\$1,225,000
Oconnor, George E	Alden, Rhett	56 Monument Ave #3	\$1,549,900
Detullio, Kyle	O'Brien, Michael	23 Trenton St #1	\$800,000



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Boston water sales drop substantially as City comes to standstill

By Seth Daniel

There seems to be no end to the secondary effects of the COVID-19 virus, and now City officials are at a loss to figure out why water sales for home and commercial ratepayers are down – particularly for Boston.

The MWRA has taken steps to reduce rates this month to help cities and towns handle this year's coming budget complications, and that will be helpful as the Boston Water & Sewer Commission (BWSC) copes with having lost revenue due to lost water sales.

Water sales for Boston through May 8 were down 13.7 percent, something that was unexpected as people stayed home from work in greater numbers than before and big-water users like Logan Airport and the hotels were shuttered. The same was true in surrounding

cities, with Revere down 3.6 percent and Milton down 7 percent. Other bedroom community suburbs like Swampscott (12.7 percent), Winthrop (10 percent) and Stoneham (16.7 percent) showed major water sale increases.

"The question becomes is this a long-term thing or will it settle down and even out," said Fred Laskey, MWRA Director. "We will want to know if there is a permanent change in the water usage. If Boston and other large communities are down, then it could result in an increase for suburban communities. It's too early to push the panic button. We are looking at it, as are other communities."

Laskey said Boston accounts for a major part of the MWRA usage, and it is something very critical to watch.

"The big news is Boston sales are down dramatically," he said.

"The water usage in Boston is the biggest. It's one-third of our rate because they drive a lot of the usage because of their size. The sales are down and a lot of that we think is indicative of people tele-working."

Dolores Randolph of the BWSC said they are seeing a significant decrease from large users. The largest users are decreasing usage as much as 97 percent, she said. That includes Logan Airport, which is a major water user and has basically grounded most of the flights and human traffic that usually passes through. The same can be said for hotels, who use a lot of water and are empty for the most part.

"We're not surprised this is happening," she said. "We're looking at it and following the patterns like everyone else. It's too early to say, but we're not surprised given

For the Record

•Warren-Prescott School Dates:

School has been canceled for the remainder of the year.

•Harvard-Kent School Dates:

School has been canceled for the remainder of the year.

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Free breakfast and lunch will be provided throughout the school closure.

Meal Distribution sites in Charlestown and the North End:

•Charlestown High School - 240 Medford St, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

•Kennedy Center - 55 Bunker Hill St, 8 a.m. - noon

•BCYF Nazzaro - 30 N Bennet St. (North End), 9 a.m. - noon

From the May 21, Ways & Means Budget Working Session, Via Zoom online:

•10 a.m. - The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budgets for the Police Department (BPD), the Fire Department (BFD), and Boston Emergency Medical Services (BEMS). This hearing will also cover BPD revolving funds.

•2 p.m. - The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budget for

the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), including Recovery Services.

From the May 21 License Commission meeting, 10 a.m., Zoom meeting ([HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/88368490210?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88368490210?)):

•Proposed emergency amendment to the Board's General Rules Section 1.06 regarding the administrative review and approval by the Board of a temporary extension of licensed premise onto outdoor space.

•Proposed citywide removal of the condition of "alcohol with food only" on outdoor space or any other similar condition that prohibits the sale and service of alcohol on outdoor space without the service of a food item.

From the May 27 COMMITTEE ON CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES, 1 p.m., Zoom meeting:

Order for a hearing regarding the City of Boston purchasing liquor licenses. The Chair of the Committee is Councilor Flynn and the sponsor is Councilor Edwards.

From the May 28, Ways & Means Budget Working Session, Via Zoom online:

•10 a.m. - The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budgets for the Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) and Inspectional Services (ISD). This hearing will also cover the PEG Access fund.

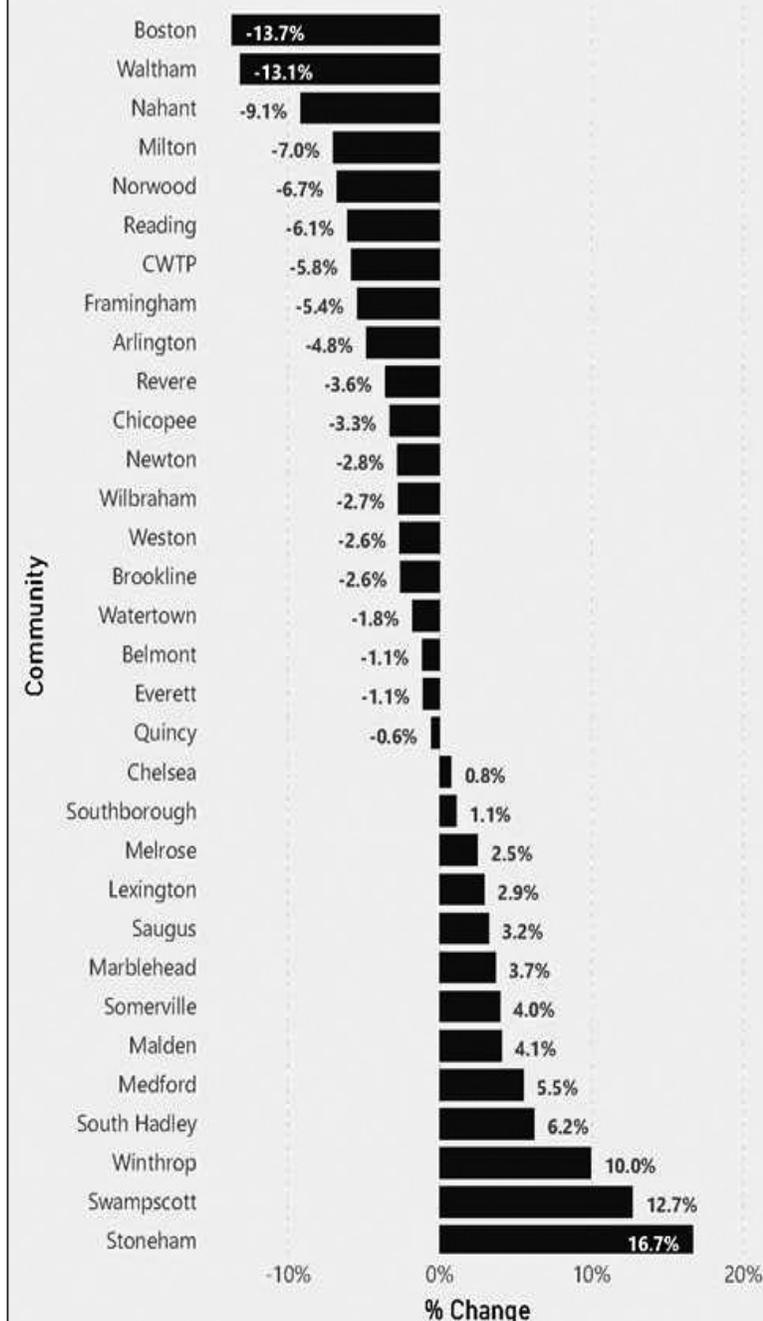
•2 p.m. - The focus of this hearing is the FY21 Budget for the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA).

•6 p.m. - The focus of this hearing is to hear public testimony on any aspect of the FY21 budget.

•HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM PROPERTY

Since taking office in 2014, Mayor Walsh has made fixing quality of life issues a priority in his administration. From investing in Public Works to making sure community policing is a staple in every neighborhood, we are making sure every neighborhood is clean, safe and a great place to live and work in. Unfortunately some properties in Boston need more help than others, and that's why we are here. If you know of a property that fits one of the following criteria: multiple calls to 911, one that's blighted or just a general concern, we encourage you to reach out to your neighborhood liaison.

Percent Change in Community Flows 2020



the decrease by large users."

The water and sewer system in most cities, like Boston, is fully funded by ratepayers. If less water is sold, but costs on improvements continue to go up, it could mean a rise in water bills. For Boston, one of the key potential reductions comes due to the slowdown of Logan Airport, which uses a lot of water.

Meanwhile, on May 6, the MWRA Board voted to reduce base rates to cities and towns significantly. MWRA proposed a 3.6 percent increase in February, but with reductions to its operating budget and capital financing, the rate increase, which goes into effect July 1, was lowered to 1 percent. These cuts will not result in any loss of service, and amount to \$29 million in reductions through the MWRA membership communities.

"We're in uncharted waters," said Laskey. "The finances are up in the air. They're talking about a state shortfall in funding and local

challenges will be apparent too. We thought it was the appropriate time to do this. The thing is we did this early. We usually don't set water rates until the end of June. These communities wanted to know and we did it early so they could plan."

In addition, the MWRA agreed to potentially defer over \$71 million in community loan payments. That stipulation – which will help communities with cash flow problems – allows them to defer payments on any Local Water Pipeline and Infiltration/Inflow loans with repayments due to MWRA in FY2020, FY2021 and FY2022.

The MWRA also received an allocation this month from the state to help debt service, which is typically used to pay off the Boston Harbor cleanup costs. This year the \$891,535 will be directed to communities to help reduce assessments further.

BWSC's share of that funding came out to \$263,122.

TO PLACE YOUR AD CALL 781-485-0588

NEIGHBORHOOD ROUND UP

“E” INC. PRESENTS: DISCOVERY PLANET

“e” inc - the planet science learning & action center based in Charlestown has just released its first set of online videos (YouTube) for its planet science show called “Discovery Planet.” The content is set up for Grades 3-5 or for younger children Grades 1-3, but are upbeat and entertaining for anyone. Check them out at this link https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvjTh5UNEVSSa9NGK9fo_JQ or search for eInc on YouTube.

FCNY PHOTO CONTEST OPEN TO ALL

To remind us how important community and art are during these challenging and difficult times, FCNY is sponsoring a Photo Contest, inspired, and judged, by Charlestown photographer Ryan Pettaway. The theme is, “Showcase What You Hold Dear in Your Community.”

Please submit your photos to us in jpeg format at info@friendscny.org by Friday, June 5th. The winner will receive

a voucher to purchase one of Ryan’s photographic masterpieces. To view some of Ryan’s work at visit: <https://www.instagram.com/igcharlestown/> or <https://www.ryart.net/>

CHARLESTOWN BRANCH LIBRARY REMAINS CLOSED

All locations of the Boston Public Library, including the Charlestown Branch, remain closed. Please do not make returns or donations until the library re-opens. All of our online services, collections, and programs are available at the BPL website at www.bpl.org. If you need a library card, sign up for an e-card at www.bpl/ecard. If you are having trouble with your card or need assistance, email the library at ask@bpl.org. Do you need to call the library? Call General Reference at 617-536-5400 and Tech Assistance at 617-859-2323. To contact the Charlestown Branch Library, email Branch Librarian Maureen Marx at m Marx@bpl.org, Children’s Librarian Eileen Whittle at ewhittle@bpl.org, and Adults Librarian Kathy Kire at kkire@bpl.org. Stay in touch with the Charlestown Branch of the Boston Public Library by visiting our Facebook page.

8TH HAYES SQUARE REUNION NOTICE

The Hayes Sq. Reunion Committee has decided to postpone our scheduled 8th HSR in October 2020. We as a group came to this decision reluctantly, but better to be safe than sorry. Additionally, thanks for your support and we promise to keep you all notified utilizing both the Charlestown Patriot and our own Facebook page. Stay safe and healthy. We hope to see you soon. HSR Committee.

TUTORING & HOMEWORK HELP: NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

The Charlestown Lacrosse & Learning Center is offering socially distant homework help and tutoring to ALL students that may need a little help navigating the virtual learning space this semester. For more information, please email to Reed at cllcexecutivedirector@gmail.com

FREE WELLNESS FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

ASANA Charlestown is now offering free live-streamed Yoga, Meditation, and Barre classes to Health Care Providers. The virtual studio’s aim is to offer a new way for people to sustain their wellness practices from home. If you or someone you know would like more information on this initiative, please visit www.asanacharlestown.com/health-care.

HARVEST ON VINE FOOD PANTRY APPEAL

The Food Pantry has had a great need at this time and has been very busy serving many residents in town. Donations of all non-perishable foods are greatly appreciated. Donations drops are: Food Pantry, 49 Vine St. (Hayes Square), The Cooperative Bank - 201 Main St. or the Parish Center - 46 Winthrop St. (by the Training Field). Or donate by sending checks to: Harvest on Vine, Parish Center, 46 Winthrop St., Charlestown, MA 02129. They are also looking for volunteers to assist with distribution. For more information, call Tom MacDonald 617-990-7314.

Massachusetts weekly unemployment claimant data

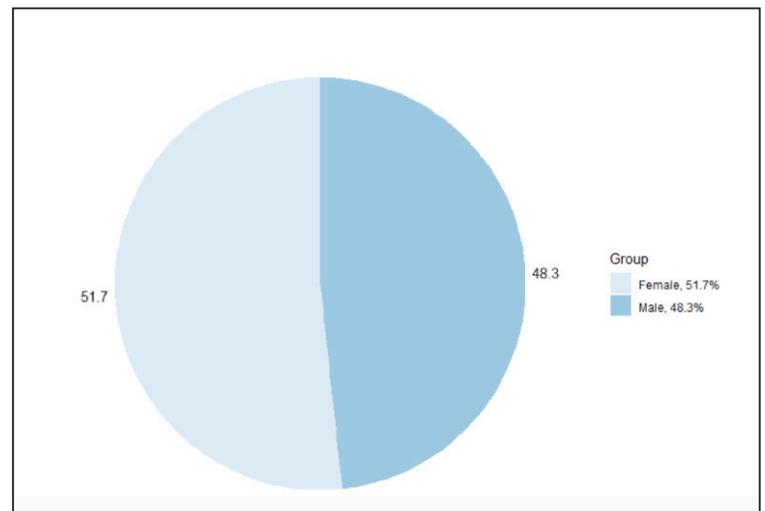
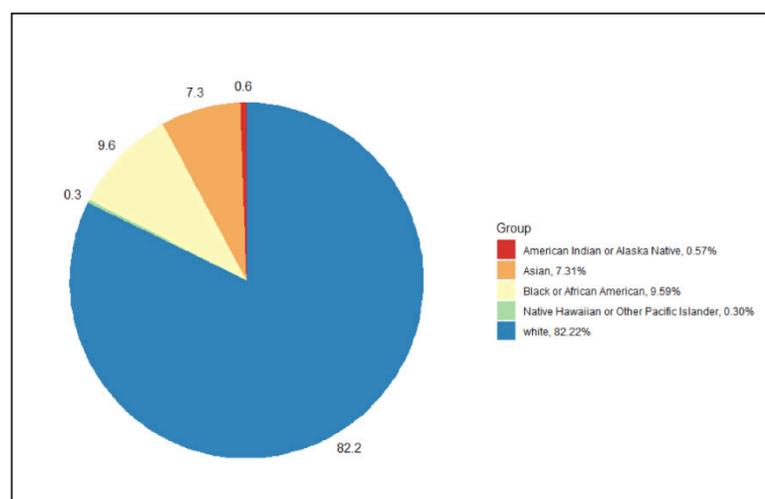
From May 3 to May 9, Massachusetts had 44,274 individuals file an initial claim for standard Unemployment Insurance (UI), a decrease of 10,949 over the previous week, and the sixth consecutive week of fewer initial claims filing over the previous week.

Since March 15, a total of 821,506 initial claims have been filed for UI. For the week of May 3 to May 9, there were a total of 576,172 continued UI claims, an increase of 3.6% over the previous week.

Since April 20, over 255,000 claimants have filed for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).

Between both the UI and PUA programs more than 1 million unemployment claims have been filed in the Commonwealth.

Over the last month, the customer service staff at the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) has grown from around 50 employees to over 1800. The remote customer service operation is now making over 32,000 individual contacts per day and DUA continues to host daily unemployment town halls – which have been held in English, Spanish, and Portuguese - and have been attended by over 240,000 constituents. Massachusetts was one of the first states to suc-



cessfully launch the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Due to DUA’s previous efforts to migrate their systems to the cloud, the first unemployment agency in the country to do so, the unemployment online platforms for both regular UI and PUA has maintained functionality throughout the surge in demand.

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John F. Kennedy Family Service Center

JFK COVID-19 Community Response

"We're in this together"

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and families we serve, **THANK YOU** for the outpouring of support for the JFK COVID-19 Fund! Our staff have been working around the clock to ensure critical safety nets are available during this challenging time. We simply can not do this work without the generosity, kindness, compassion, and support from our partners, donors and neighbors. Whether it's making someone smile, making a mask, showing up to distribute meals, or giving to those who need our help, every act of generosity has made lasting impacts on thousands of Charlestown children, families, and seniors. Thank You!



Special Thanks to our COVID-19 Community Fund Supporters

ABCD Boston - AGE Strong Commission - Anna's Cafe
 BCYF Charlestown Community Center - Boston Family Engagement Network
 Boston Housing Authority - Boston Police Department - Boston Public Library Fund
 Boston Resiliency Fund - Boston Public Schools - UPK - Bunker Hill Associates
 Bunker Hill Knights of Columbus - Cambridge Savings Bank - Century 21 Elite Realty -
 Charlestown Chamber - Charlestown Coalition - Charlestown Historical Society
 Charlestown Mother's Association - Charlestown Neighborhood Council - Charlestown Preservation Society
 Charlestown Resident Alliance - Charlestown Soccer - Chinese Progressive Association
 Christ Church Charlestown - City Fresh - Commonwealth Kitchen
 Councilor Lydia Edwards - Cradles to Crayons - C-TOWN Ventures - DC Beane and Associates
 Friends of Bill at 55 - Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard - Governor Charles Baker
 Golden Age Senior Center - Harvard Pilgrim - Harvard Kent - Harvest on Vine
 Mayor Martin J. Walsh - Mayor's Office of Food Access
 MGH Charlestown Health Center - MGH Institute of Health Professions - M.S Walker Distillery
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If you have questions about your 2019 contributions, or would like to get more involved, we would love to hear from you!

Please contact Crystal Galvin, Director of Community Services at 617-241-8866 x. 1352

cgalvin@kennedycenter.org or visit www.kennedycenter.org