



CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT - BRIDGE



Photos by Seth Daniel

Colin Kyle of the Charlestown Townies Bantam team approaches the goalie during a shooting on Monday just before burying the puck in the net at Emmons Horrigan O'Neil Rink in Charlestown as part of the shortened Mayor's Cup tournament being held this week. The Bantams beat Allston-Brighton 3-2 in the shootout and will advance.

Mayor's Cup tournament goes full force this week with much action

By Seth Daniel

The Charlestown Youth Hockey Association (CYHA) boys' and girls' teams have won seven out of eight early games this week in the revived Mayor's Cup tournament – paving a way to hopefully bring home several Cups to the Town once again.

Mixed amongst a steady slate of league games, the Mayor's Cup is usually held over Christmas break in December and January as a double-elimination tournament held at fun locations like rinks at Northeastern and Boston College. However, it was postponed this year due to COVID-19, but suddenly brought back as a single-elimination tourney this week at various rinks around Boston – including Emmons Horrigan O'Neil Rink in Charlestown.

The action has been incredible

(MAYOR'S CUP Pg. 8)

CNC CORNER

The Charlestown Neighborhood Council will hold a virtual public meeting on Tuesday March 2 at 7pm. The agenda includes a presentation by the developers of One Mystic Avenue in Charlestown (in Sullivan Square) and an update on the open spaces around the Little Mystic Channel. Instructions on how to attend the meeting will be posted on our website within 72 hours of the meeting time - <https://charlestownneighborhoodcouncil.org/Calendar.html>. For questions, please send emails to cnc02129@gmail.com.

IAG responds to Bunker Hill project

By Seth Daniel

The new residential building on the Bunker Hill Mall fronting Rutherford Avenue had its first public meeting on Monday night via Zoom with the Impact Advisory Group (IAG) and heard some concerns about parking and design of the building – which is designed by renowned Boston architect David Manfredi for Mall owner New England Develop-

ment (NED).

The meeting began with an introduction to the project by the development team, including Joe Twohig of NED. The building, in short, is a seven-story structure built around the current 99 Restaurant on the Mall property, with 240 units of housing – some of which are micro-units and 20 percent of which will be affordable

(PROJECT Pg. 12)

Diner proposed at former Grasshopper Restaurant

By Seth Daniel

The owners of Monument Restaurant have requested an all-alcohol restaurant license and are proposing a new diner concept for where the former Grasshopper Restaurant used to be on Bunker Hill Street.

The proposal would apparently run simultaneously with a separate proposal by the current building owner that is before the Zoning Board of Appeals to demolish the building and construct a new residential structure. It was the understanding of those close to the situation that if one proposal were approved, the other would go away.

There will be an online Zoom meeting Thursday, Feb. 25, at 6 p.m. to discuss the item in depth with the owners.

The ownership of the Monument said their plan was just starting and they hope to hear from the community about the plan and

also answer any questions that might come up.

The item that triggered the meeting is the request for a new All-Alcohol liquor license for the diner, as well as the new common victuallers license. Both will be going before the Licensing Board if the proposal seems to meet the muster of the community. There would be some construction build-out if the restaurant space were approved to modernize and make the space into a diner.

The Grasshopper residential property is potentially slated to go before the Zoning Board at the end of March.

Grasshopper owners Kevin and Lynn Smith operated the very-popular breakfast and lunch spot for more than 10 years, but announced its closure in 2019. Both were ready to retire after a life-time of working very hard, and had hoped to develop the property for their family.

The Lt. Quinn Scholarship applications are now available

By Kevin Kelly

The Lt. Michael P. Quinn Scholarship was established in 1969 and over the past 52 years nearly \$250,000 has been award-

ed to "Townie" high school graduates looking to pursue a college education. Applications to be considered the 53rd Quinn Schol-

(SCHOLARSHIP Pg. 15)

EDITORIAL

AN UNFATHOMABLE NUMBER

When COVID-19 first came into our national consciousness more than a year ago, it was just a blip on the news. The prospect that a viral bug originating halfway around the world would alter every aspect of our lives seemed inconceivable.

And even if the virus did come here, America was not some third-world country. We had confidence that the world's best medical care system and scientific minds would work together to prevent something as seemingly trivial as a mere virus from overwhelming our nation.

But one year -- and 500,000 American lives -- later, that which was unimaginable has become a nightmarish reality.

To be sure, the unprecedented incompetence and outright malevolence of the previous administration contributed substantially to amplify and worsen the problems brought on by the pandemic.

But even in a best-case scenario, the virus would have upended every aspect of our lives. Although the politicization of the virus contributed to our nation's suffering, the pandemic still would have caused death and economic turmoil to an unprecedented extent.

The official count of 500,000 COVID deaths was surpassed this week. Let's hope that as we move forward and as the daily numbers of deaths and hospitalizations continue to decline, we have learned that despite our high-tech lifestyle, we are no match for Mother Nature.

The pandemic has exposed many problems in our country, including the inadequacy of our health care system, especially for minority groups, and the danger of politicizing scientific information.

Hopefully, we have recognized our multitude of mistakes and we will make the necessary investments in our health care and pandemic detection systems to ensure that we will be ready for the next pandemic.

As the philosopher succinctly put it, those who do not learn from the past are condemned to repeat it.

SPRING IS IN THE AIR

This winter has not been a particularly difficult one for us in the Northeast, although February has been colder and stormier than January.

But with temperatures reaching the 50s by the middle of this week, there is the feeling that spring is just around the corner.

We realize that "spring" is a relative term for those of us living on the Massachusetts coast, but undeniably the onset of warmer weather will provide more opportunities to get outside and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine after months of being cooped-up amidst our pandemic quarantines.

Spring traditionally symbolizes rebirth and rejuvenation. That thought is especially meaningful in the spring of 2021.

Hopefully, the coming of spring and the availability of mass vaccinations will enable all of us to emerge from our cocoons and allow us to return safely to our pre-pandemic lives.



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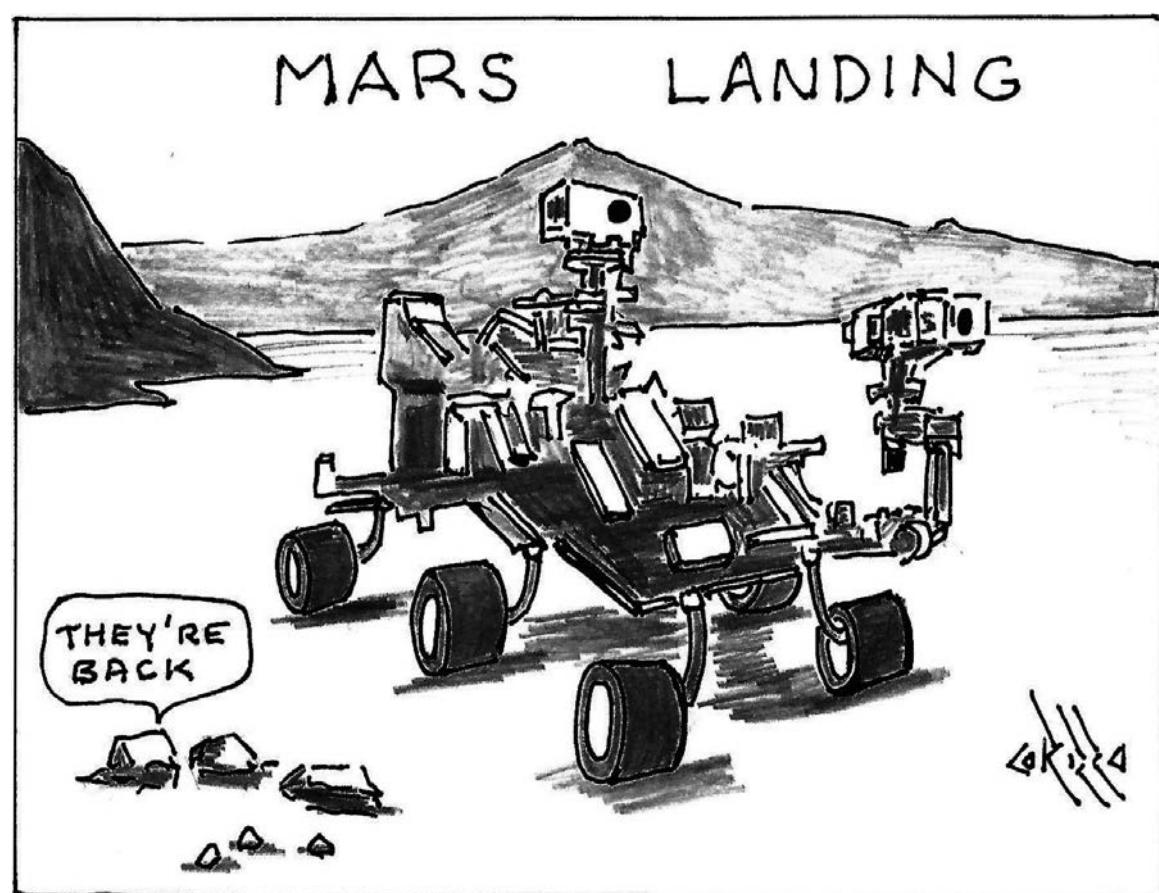
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WITH PERSEVERANCE ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

GUEST OP-ED

Making your funeral arrangements

Dr. Glenn Mollette

A good friend died recently. At the age of 80 all his life insurance had expired and his savings was spent. His family, financially, were living from week to week. His failing health along with Covid-19 put him in an Intensive Care Unit for days apart from his family where he died. His hospitalization brought more bills and financial hardship for those left behind. Needless to say, there wasn't any money to pay for a casket, embalming, plot of ground and a grave marker.

His young adult son put together their dire scenario and sent it out to everyone his family knew. Within a week 103 friends had given \$20,300 to momentarily rescue this family from their perilous situation. It was enough money to buy a casket, embalming, a plot of ground and a small grave memorial marker.

Do you have 103 friends who would give \$20 to \$2000 each to pay for your burial expenses? I know I do not. Such an outpouring was a testimony to his life and the lives of so many he had touched. This story is a sad reminder that we must take prudent steps toward covering our burial/funeral costs.

I don't want my wife or children to have to figure it out after I'm

dead. Often, we don't get a choice. We die way before we have time to make our final arrangements. This happens a lot. This is why we need to do it now or as soon as we can.

Another dear friend recently died very young. Her family was strapped for cash and went the route of cremation. Cremation is costing between \$2500 to \$7500 depending on where you live. Not cheap. My Navy son said, "Dad, just cremate me and scatter my remains over the north Atlantic." I pray he lives to be a hundred and his grandchildren have to do that.

Some of you know my wife died back in 2002. Her funeral cost me about \$10,000 and her grave plot was \$600. I was cash strapped at the age of 47. I had nothing but medical bills and a house payment. I wasn't prepared for a funeral, mentally or financially. The only thing that saved me was a year before she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a good friend sold us small life insurance policies. He also talked us into paying extra for a disability waiver on the policy. The disability waiver was the only way I was able to maintain that life insurance policy which we used 13 years after he sold it to us. It was the only way I could have paid for that funeral, unless I could have borrowed more money on my house. This was doubtful

because I already had a second mortgage on the house from trying to pay other medical bills. I would have been hurting and probably would have had to go the cheapest route available for her funeral. It was simply the grace of God and a wise insurance agent who saved us in that respect.

My mother and father in law both died recently and their funeral expenses alone were over \$14,000 each. Fortunately, they had saved enough money to cover these costs. You can spend less and you can spend more of course. The question is do you want your family to have to figure it out? Sit down with a trusted funeral director and begin making preparations now. Decide which route you want to go. Decide how much you want to spend. You can plan everything. Pick out everything. Most likely pay for everything. Just make sure you are dealing with a very trusted funeral director. Write out everything you want done including music, speakers and anything specific you want them to say. It's up to you of course. Make several copies of your wishes and what you have done. It's amazing how people lose stuff.

When we are dead, we won't

(Op-Ed Pg. 3)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WRONG, WRONG AND WRONG AGAIN

Dear Editor:

The proposals for Pier 5 are WRONG, the place is WRONG, and the time is WRONG.

Pier 5 is up for grabs. Prioritize or ensure that Pier 5 is used to protect the community from climate changes.

Just the facts:

Charlestown is surrounded on three sides by water. Our population is swelling to over 22,000 residents and growing in the next few years, all within one square mile.

----The three proposals submitted to the Boston Planning and Development Board, consist of affordable housing, floating residences, and houseboats on the Pier 5 site, as well as involving some portion of the water sheet. These proposals are unworthy for Pier 5 and WRONG.

<http://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/pier-5-request-for-proposals>

Putting residences on a piece of land or pier that juts out directly on the ocean is ill conceived, absurd, and WRONG.

----Charlestown is in a flood zone. Currently during ocean storms, water does flow over onto the pavement here in the Navy Yard. Climate change, rising sea levels, ocean currents, increased winds, suggest that the time for these proposals is WRONG.

https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/document_files/2017/01/crb_-_focus_area_charlestown_2.pdf

To make the wrongs RIGHT, we in Charlestown must work to ensure that Pier 5 is developed into greenspace, a living shoreline, climate buffer and waterfront park for the whole community and beyond. We need to get this RIGHT.

Please learn more about these proposals and make your voice heard. Climate readiness needs to be promoted now by actions, not just words on a paper or report.

The petition online: <http://chng.it/5z5gcQ26j2>

We ask for your support by signing the petition as well as encouraging others to take a stand

OP-ED (from pg. 2)

care. We won't know, but we care now. I know most of us care about those we leave behind. This is one way we can help them to know how and what we want done and relieve their burden by making the arrangements ourselves.

Glenn Mollette is the publish-

er of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist – American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.

Ann Kelleher

STATEMENT OF AARP MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Editor:

On behalf of our 775,000 members and all older Massachusetts residents, we thank Governor Baker for opening the next phase of COVID-19 vaccinations to people aged 65 and over and those with certain health conditions.

We are also pleased to see that the local Boards of Health will be able to vaccinate homebound seniors, and that efforts are focused around outreach to vulnerable, hard to reach populations, including homebound seniors, individuals who participate in 'meals on wheels' and others who are eligible but not able to travel to a vaccine site.

AARP Massachusetts has been urging policymakers to prioritize the vaccination of older Americans because of the risk they face from COVID-19. Since the start of the pandemic, nearly 95% of the deaths from COVID-19 have been among people 50 and older. The science has clearly shown that the older people are, the higher risk they face if they contract COVID-19.

We support the prioritization of older Americans in the vaccine allocation process.

Mike Festa

WE DO NOT NEED A FLOATING COMMUNITY

Dear Editor

I fail to see the desirability of building out over the water (on Pier 5) in Charlestown. Open water is a collective good, enjoyed by all. It is not private property for individual use.

The Boston Harbor, unencumbered by private use, benefits us all. We do not need a "floating community," especially at the cost to all who benefit from precious open space.

Jane O'Neil

Three townhouses and demo proposed at 41 Bartlett St.

By Seth Daniel

The long-time family ownership of the 1830s-era home at the corner of Bartlett and Elm Streets detailed a plan to develop three townhouses with parking on the lot and demolish the two-family home that has been the hub of their family for generations.

At an online neighborhood meeting for Boston Landmarks concerning the proposed demolition, Ed O'Connell said his family has roots in Charlestown going back more than 100 years and his parents, the late Stan and Lois, had desired their property be developed appropriately when they passed.

"We love the neighborhood and it was my parents' wishes when they passed to develop 41 Bartlett in a way that was respectful to the neighbors and in a way that our family can be proud of."

Attorney Pat Sweeney represented the family and proposed alternatives to demolishing the home, and gave a brief history of it. The home was built around 1837 for John Badger and originally was 2.5 stories and had four



The two-family home at 41 Bartlett St. is being proposed for demolition, with a rebuild of three townhouses. The O'Connell family said their parents desired to have the property developed in a way that honored the neighborhood.

large chimneys. Major renovations throughout the ages, including a gut rehab in 1969, eliminated most of the historical significance.

Now the plan is to demolish the existing home, and build three, new three-story townhouses side-by-side on the site with garage parking underneath and one off-street parking space as well. The height of the new structures would be the same as surrounding homes.

"In no development scenario would there be more than three units," said Sweeney.

Some neighbors were concerned about the trees on the site, and others were concerned about curb cuts. At least one neighbor would have preferred the unit count stay at two, as it is now.

However, others had good things to say about the plan, including Charlestown Preservation Society (CPS) President

Amanda Zettel. She said the addition to the housing stock would be much-needed and is so far being done appropriately.

She did say she would like to see the design be a little more modern and not try to copy the historic nature of homes – which cannot be done entirely any longer. One instance is that stairs leading to the front door are no longer allowed, though they are very much prevalent in the older homes. She pointed to 6 Soley St. as an example of modern architecture that fits well into the historic stock.

"I'd like to see more contemporary design rather than try to mimic the historic fabric, which you can't fully do," she said.

Sweeney said they have a Landmarks hearing on March 23, and any construction project of this nature would likely have a 16 month buildout, if approved.

Endicott College announces student on Dean's List

Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Fall 2020 Dean's List students. In order to qualify for the Dean's List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below "C," have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

Maeve Fittz, Nursing, daughter of Julie Treanor and Liam Fittz met these requirements.

Endicott College offers doctorate, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree programs at its campus on the scenic coast of Beverly, Mass., with additional sites in Boston, online, and at U.S. and international locations. Endicott remains true to its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts education with internship opportunities across disciplines. For more, visit endicott.edu.

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Sometimes when I first awake
I think that you're still here,
And for a fleeting moment
The clouds all disappear.
For you brought endless sunshine
Until you went away,
And now I miss you desperately
Each minute of the day.
You would not like to see me sad
So what I try to do,
Is to live a bright and happy life
In memory of you.
For though I'll always miss you
And it's dreadful being apart,
I haven't really lost you
You're still here in my heart.

Love, Frank

CITY PAWS**Short and Sweet**

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Imagine someone in authority talking to you and what you hear is "yadda, yadda, yadda," IMPORTANT, "Blah blah blah ..." or "LISTEN TO ME!" As far as your dog is concerned, you sound like a chattering chipmunk with an occasional word like "SIT!, GOOD GIRL!, or NO!" popping up here and there.

Now think about some of the best-trained, working dogs like herding sheepdogs, K-9 first responders, and real service dogs. These animals have learned behaviors requested with one word, sound, hand signal, or a combination of those.

What we can all learn from the professionals who train and work with these animals is to keep our directions short. And, since we know that dogs are sensitive to the tone of your voice, we suggest you also keep it sweet.

Lessons from the Pros

Sheepdog handlers use a combination of words and whistles to guide the herding work of their dogs. For example, the "Whee-Whee-Whee" whistle sound or the word, "Come here" calls the

dog to the shepherd's side.

K-9 first responders are taught to obey commands, often in a foreign language, and only from their human partner. Each has a related hand signal in case silence is needed for safety. Specific signals might tell the dog to, "Search for a man," "Search for an article," or "Release the bite."

Real service dogs learn about 30 basic one or two-word commands. Many of these are ones that would be great for any companion animal to master. For example, "Watch me" – to make eye contact, "Get busy" – to go to the bathroom, and "Release" – to be done with work."

Listen to Yourself

What do you sound like when you ask your dog or cat to do something? Yes, there are times when a sudden irruption in barking or yowling will startle us, and our voice, when we correct the animal, is harsh.

However, you may actually achieve the result you want more often if you practice speaking to your animals in an upbeat manner with a smile punctuating your words. Since we're the ones who

select the command words, try to find words that are softer in sound and used less in the real world. We like the word "Hush!" instead of "Quiet," or "Stop barking!"

The other trick we use is to give our dog a command she knows to distract her from unwanted behavior. You could try a bright and cheery, "Come here!" If those words are practiced consistently and sometimes resulted in a treat or nice ear scratch, you'll increase your success rate.

Vocabulary Basics

Stanley Coren, PhD, of the University of British Columbia, estimates that "... dogs' mental abilities are close to a human child age 2 to 2.5 years." He is quoted by the American Psychological Association as saying, "As for language, the average dog can learn 165 words, including signals, and the "super dogs" (those in the top 20 percent of dog intelligence) can learn 250 words."

When our first Westie Sassy worked at our company, the staff created a list of the words she knew. As the list grew, there were words we never used but that a particular staff member favored.



Our Poppy is very good at obeying the "Watch me" request when her dinner is being prepared.

We suggest this as a great family exercise. Once you have a list, simplify it where you can and see if

you can reach an agreement on the short and sweet words you will use

to guide your furry family members through well behaved days.

Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.

Edwards files order to discuss implementation of reforms to ZBA

Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards has filed a hearing order to discuss the implementation of

reforms to the Zoning Board of Appeals that she proposed and were implemented by Mayor

Walsh in an executive order in February of 2020.

"The ZBA continues to be one of the main sources of constituent calls and emails to my office," said Councilor Edwards. "Last year I filed some reforms that the Mayor implemented through an executive order. We've made some progress in making the board more accessible and transparent, but not all of the commitments have been met and the pandemic has added

new challenges to accessibility. We need to check in and have a conversation about what we can do to ensure residents have a voice when projects in their neighborhood are going through the process."

The hearing will also address financial disclosure requirements that were required as part of the executive order.

"I filed a hearing order recently on the inclusionary development policy because we need to be

exploring all options to create and preserve affordable housing. It's more important now than ever," added Councilor Edwards. "Being able to know who owns what will be key as we move forward with affordable housing reforms."

The hearing order will be introduced at Wednesday's council meeting and assigned to a committee. A public hearing will then be scheduled where members of the public will be able to testify.

University of Maine announces fall 2020 Dean's List

The University of Maine recognized 4,133 students for achieving Dean's List honors in the fall 2020 semester including Caroline Collier and Kaley Kyle of Charlestown. Of the students who made the Dean's List, 2,670 are from Maine, 1,366 are from 38 other states and 97 are from 35

countries other than the U.S.

Due to the unusual and challenging circumstances faced this semester amid the global pandemic, the university has modified its Dean's List policy for the fall 2020 term. The requirement that students earn 12 calculable credits to be eligible for Dean's List has

been waived. Instead, students will be eligible 1) if they earned Dean's List recognition in spring 2020 and have placed all of their fall 2020 courses on pass/fail; or 2) if they have earned a minimum GPA of a 3.5, regardless of the number of credits taken, in fall 2020.

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MALDEN CATHOLIC HOLDS ROLLING RALLY FOR ACCEPTED STUDENTS

Photos & Story by Marianne Salza

Malden Catholic High School (MC) held an Accepted Students Rolling Rally on February 13 to welcome the incoming Class of 2025. Families paraded in line through the back parking lot, honking their horns in celebration to begin the spirited festivities that included triumphant music and a performance by the MC cheerleaders.

"This has been an outstanding enrollment season," announced Mr. John Thornburg, Headmaster. "We are up to 140 students enrolled."

Scholars filed individually through a line of applauding cheerleaders as their names were announced. With a burst of confetti, Mr. Thornburg presented each student with a certificate of admission on stage.

"Malden Catholic is the only school in the area that has continued to hold in-person classes," explained Mr. Thornburg. "What Malden Catholic has to offer cannot be delayed."

Students received a special \$500 waived registration fee, and Malden Catholic backpack gift for registering.



Peter Walsh, holding his certificate of admission, with Headmaster Thornburg.



Morgan Hardy, holding her certificate of admission.



Isabella Mejia receiving her MC backpack gift for registering



Cheerleaders performing during the opening celebration of the Accepted Students Rolling Rally.

MALDEN CATHOLIC STUDENTS ACHIEVE HONOR ROLL FIRST QUARTER

Malden Catholic High School students have completed the coursework for the first quarter for the 2020-21 school year. Malden Catholic divides honors into three sections: Headmaster's List, First Honors and Second Honors.

Headmaster's List is achieved by having over a 90 in all classes, First Honors is achieved by having over an 85 in all classes and Second Honors is achieved by having over an 80 in all classes.

The following Charlestown resident achieved:

Headmaster's List:

Daniel Bethlendy
Chengxiang Lou

Second Honors:

Nora Reilly



Katana O'Keefe holding her certificate of admission, with Headmaster Thornburg.

\$747

Average List \$/Sq.Ft.

Year	List	Sale
2020	\$747	\$760
2019	\$724	\$740
2018	\$730	\$736
2017	\$673	\$681
2016	\$641	\$651

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CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

North Washington Street Bridge construction look-ahead through Mar. 6

This is a brief overview of construction operations and impacts for the North Washington Street Bridge Replacement Project. MassDOT will provide additional notices as needed for high-impact work and changes to traffic configurations beyond those described below.

VIBRATORY HAMMER

NOISE IMPACTS

•A vibratory hammer is being used to install the five cofferdams which will be needed to build the piers of the new bridge. Installation of each cofferdam takes about two weeks.

- The project team has positioned a combination of hanging sound blankets and temporary barrier to minimize noise impacts from the vibratory hammer. These measures will be adjusted as needed and appropriate.

- The vibratory hammer is operated place during the day (7 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULED WORK

- Crews will be repairing warehouse piers and columns, installing and conducting maintenance of

silt curtains, and installing cofferdams.

WORK HOURS

- Most work will be done during the daytime (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

WORK THAT HAS BEEN COMPLETED

- Prior to 2/21/21, crews continued preparatory work to build the new bridge. Cofferdam installation is 95% complete.

PROJECT NEWSLETTER POSTED

- Work on the North Washingt-

ton Street Bridge began in August 2018. Since then, the project team has accomplished a lot. As of February 2020, we have transferred all utilities (gas, electric, fiber, communications) onto the temporary utility bridge, demolished the old bridge's center swing span and piers, and have started to build the foundations of the new bridge.

- A project progress newsletter has been posted to the project webpage detailing the above accomplishments and many more.

TRAVEL TIPS

Westerly sidewalk, Lovejoy Wharf stairs near Converse are open to the public with the opening of the temporary bridge, the adjacent section of the Harborwalk passing under the bridge remains closed.

The Tudor Wharf Walkway (under the bridge next to the water in Paul Revere Park) will be intermittently closed for safety during construction operations, with access provided via the Water Street underpass.

Baker announces plan to eliminate remote learning for elementary schools by April

By Lauren Bennett

Governor Charlie Baker on Tuesday announced that the state has a goal of getting elementary school students back into the classroom full-time by April.

"I think we all know that when COVID hit last year, just about this time, teachers, staff, and students experienced an incredible disruption to their daily routines in school," Baker said, "and ever since, have been adapting and adjusting to the challenges that came with the pandemic."

Baker said that districts across the state have made adjustments to help their students adapt to the challenges put forth by the pandemic, "but I think we all agree

there's no substitute for in-person learning, especially for kids in elementary school," he said.

"Our administration has been clear for months that the best place for kids is in the classroom," Baker said.

He said that Jeff Riley, the Commissioner of the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, began a process on Tuesday with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education "to get more kids back into the classroom full time by phasing out remote-only learning in April" and allow students, beginning with elementary school students, to attend classes in person Monday through Friday.

Baker said that the process would begin with students in

elementary school, and that the state "hope[s] to be moving ahead soon," he said. "We know the pandemic's been difficult on everyone, but it's been really tough on kids and their parents as they struggle to be out of the classroom and detached from their teachers and their peers."

Approximately 80 percent of the state's school districts are currently providing some sort of in-person learning, whether it be a hybrid model or fully in person, Baker said.

"Districts with in-person learning, regardless of how high COVID transmission is in their community, have seen few, if any, examples of in-school transmission," Baker said. He said that with "proper

mitigation strategies" and compliance with protocols, "schools across the Commonwealth have been able to safely welcome kids back to the classroom for many months now."

However, about 20 percent of the state's school districts are still fully remote, which translates to about 400,000 kids, Baker said, "most of whom haven't been in a classroom since March [of last year]."

Baker said that students' "social, mental, and emotional well-being has been significantly impacted" by being out of the classroom.

"The science is pretty clear on this one: there are now dozens of reports from all over the world that it's safe to be in school, and doctors and public health experts, including Dr. Fauci, all agree that getting kids back in school needs to be a top priority," Baker said.

He said that the state has "committed funding, resources, and supports to schools and districts to return to classrooms."

Commissioner Riley said he would "take a phased-in approach

to returning students to the classroom, working closely with state health officials and medical experts."

He said he would work first to return elementary school students to in-person learning, "with the plan likely extending to middle school grades later in the school year and possibly high schools as well."

Parents who do not wish to send their children for in person learning will not be required to do so, and they can remain learning remotely through the end of the school year, Riley said, adding that "there will be a waiver process for districts who may need to take a more incremental approach," Riley said, adding that fully remote schools could first transition to a hybrid model.

Baker said that "with COVID cases and hospitalizations continuing to decline and vaccines well underway, it's time to set our sites on eliminating remote learning by April and starting with elementary schools."

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Charlestown sees increase in positive COVID-19 cases

By John Lynds

Last week the cumulative COVID-19 positive test rate in Charlestown as well as the weekly positive test rate increased according to the latest data released on Friday by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC).

According to the BPHC report, of the 13,365 Charlestown residents tested for the virus since the pandemic began 8 percent were found to be positive by last Friday. This was an increase of 1.3 percent from the 7.9 percent reported by the BPHC two Fridays ago.

Last week, 968 residents were tested and 2.7 percent were positive. This was a 42 percent increase from the 1.9 percent that tested positive two Fridays ago,

Citywide, 29,757 residents were tested and 3.8 percent were COVID positive--a 21 percent decrease from the 4.8 percent test-

ing positive two weeks ago.

At a press briefing last Thursday Mayor Martin Walsh said the average number of positive tests recorded each day was 209. That's down by about 13% from the week before, and daily new cases have continued to go down since early January.

"Our current community positivity rate was 4.8 percent," said Walsh. "That's below our 5 percent threshold, and the lowest positivity we've seen since October. The rate went down in every neighborhood, and every neighborhood is now below 8 percent, which is good news. An average of 4,263 people were tested each day. That's up by 3 percent over the week before and does not include college testing."

The Mayor said Boston continues to work with the State on the vaccine rollout.

"On Wednesday, the Governor announced that, as of February

18, anyone 65 or older, or who has two or more qualifying medical conditions, is now eligible for the vaccine," said Walsh.

The Mayor noted that moderate and severe asthma are now included in that list of conditions, which is a good thing.

"This was an important decision, to ensure that more residents of color who face elevated risk are eligible sooner," said Walsh. "In addition, everyone in Phase 1 continues to be eligible if you have not been vaccinated yet -- including health care workers, first responders, and residents and staff in long-term care and congregate care settings."

The full updated schedule is at Mass.gov/CovidVaccine.

Walsh said the City of Boston will continue to advocate on behalf of Boston residents, and increase equity in this process for any resident or community that may face barriers. He said the City is focusing on access in the Black community; the Latino community; the Asian community; and our immigrant communities.

"We're also focusing on access for elderly residents and those with disabilities," he said. "We're doing targeted outreach to these communities through City departments, Community Health Centers, and nonprofit partners."

The infection rate in Charlestown and surrounding neighborhoods increased 2.2 percent in one week according to the latest city statistics.

The BPHC data released last Friday showed Charlestown's infection rate increased 2.2 percent and went from 531 cases per 10,000 residents to 542.9 cases per 10,000 residents.

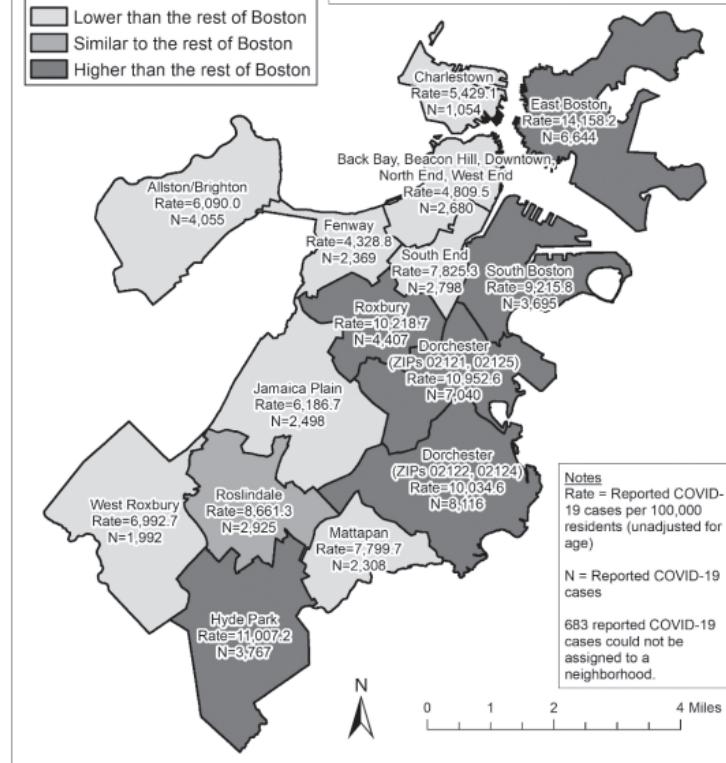
Twenty-three additional residents became infected with the virus last week bringing the total to 1,054 confirmed cases in the neighborhood.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 3 percent percent last week and went from 56,079 cases to 57,794 confirmed cases in a week. Thirty-seven additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,251 total deaths in the city from COVID.

COVID-19 rate (unadjusted for age)

- Lower than the rest of Boston
- Similar to the rest of Boston
- Higher than the rest of Boston



Data source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (Jan. 1, 2020, to Feb. 18, 2021, 9:28 AM); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018 5-year estimates (2014-2018)

Data analysis: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Evaluation Office

On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 stats by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

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MAYORS CUP (from pg. 1)

so far.

A major highlight to kick things off Monday night in Charlestown was a victory by the Bantams over Allston-Brighton in a shootout. The game was a tough, grind through regulation with a 1-1 tie – the only goal for the Townies coming from Luciano Cincotti in the third period. The shootout featured goals from Colin Kyle and a very nifty netter from Adam Whitney to take the Townies up 2-1. Goalie Ben Rosa sealed the deal with a stop on the Allston-Brighton shooter, delivering a great win. The Bantams also won on Tuesday over Hyde Park.

The girls' side of things saw a very hard-fought win by the U12's at the Charlestown rink on Tuesday night against what has become an arch-rival in Allston-Brighton. The teams have battled all season in fast and competitive contests. The stage for Tuesday's game was set on Sunday night when the two teams battled to a 1-1 tie in Brighton. On Tuesday night, the Townies came ready to play and Coach John Sutich commented that every player made a meaningful contribution in the win. It was a fast game and evenly matched once again. However, the Townies controlled the offensive end and had numerous shots on



Colin Kyle fires off a shot from the wing for the Bantams, though it was stopped by the Allston-Brighton goalie.

goal. Gianna Young notched two goals late in the game, and Goalie Erin Alves was solid as usual in the net, notching a shutout.

The U12 girls will play Dorchester later in the week for all the marbles, and hopefully a second Cup in two years.

Other results are below and the action continues all week:

- Monday -
- Squirt AAA - Charlestown 5, Hyde Park 4 (Shootout)
- Mite AAA - Charlestown 5,

South Boston 4
Mite A East - Hyde Park 5, Charlestown 4

Peewee AA - Charlestown 3, Dorchester 0
Bantams - Charlestown 3, Allston-Brighton 2 (Shootout)

- Tuesday
- U10 Charlestown 8, Parkway 0
- U12 Charlestown 2, Allston-Brighton 0
- Bantams Charlestown 3, Hyde Park 0



Goalie Big Ben Rosa stands 6 feet, 7 inches in the goal, but has no trouble getting low to stop this shot.



When the rubber met the road on the final shootout attempt, Goalie Ben Rosa held strong and propelled the Townies to an exciting win in the first round of the Mayor's Cup.



James Heath for the Townies played tough defense all night on a quick Allston-Brighton offense.



Luciano Cincotti scored the lone goal in regulation to tie the contest 1-1 at the nine minute mark in the third period.



Coach Bob Teduits congratulated the Townie Bantams after a solid win Monday.

Good Luck, Players

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U12 LADY TOWNIES ADVANCE TO MAYORS CUP FINALS



Amaya Gosselin-Neves pushes the puck down the boards as the Townie bench watches carefully.



Shae Gould gets a break away from an Allston-Brighton defender in the first period.



Estelle Corbitt brings the puck out from behind the net and looks up the ice to pass to a teammate.



Coming all the way from the defense, Phoebe Niese breaks away and takes a shot on goal.



Goalie Erin Alves notched a shutout in the win Tuesday against what has become an arch-rival in Allston-Brighton.



Georgi Schenker passes the puck back to a teammate from the wing.



Abby Deroeve moves the puck into the offensive zone.



Rory Shields eyes the puck for a breakaway.

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South End State Rep. Jon Santiago launches mayoral campaign

By Seth Daniel

Bringing a wealth of experiences from the State House, the emergency room and overseas deployments in the military to the table, South End State Rep. Jon Santiago announced on Tuesday his intentions to run for mayor.

Santiago has been considering run since January, and has said as much in the media, but not made an official announcement until now. He has been surveying resident groups on Zoom and in other forums privately for the last month, and was even known to be on several Zoom meetings in Charlestown lately with a core group of early supporters in the Town.

He made the announcement in a two-minute video available in English and Spanish.

He comes into the race as the only major male candidate in a field of three women from the Boston City Council, including Councilors Andrea Campbell, Annissa Essaibi George and Michelle Wu.

More importantly, though, Santiago said he comes into the race ready to listen and engage, he said. As a doctor in the emergency room at Boston Medical Center, a physician in the Army Reserves and a state representative, he said his approach has always been to engage and listen to people first. That, he said, will be more important than ever in what he said was an historic, open-seat election for mayor.

"I think this mayor's race will

be the most consequential mayor's race in our City's history," he told the paper, noting issues of COVID-19, health care, good schools and a revived economy.

"We are a City of neighborhoods and many are different, but I'm hearing from everyone that they want to come back building a better and stronger Boston," he said. "That message is resonating all over the city. I feel comfortable going to Southie and West Roxbury and having conversations because they are about the same things as in Roxbury and Dorchester. People all want good schools, housing options, good transit, access to vaccines and they really want to be heard. My goal is to reach out to each and every area of this city...The people of Boston need someone ready to serve...That's the way I've always done medicine and politics. My first state rep race I knocked on 9,000 doors...I think right now people want someone who will bring them together and engage and listen and be respectful."

That approach – which he hinted would be different than many polarizing forces nationally – has been honed at the State House, where he has been trusted early with key positions advising on COVID-19. Also, it has come in the emergency room as he has embraced solutions to the recovery and opioid epidemics he sees at the hospital daily. With the Mass/Cass area in his district, and seeing its effect on people every day at work, Santiago said there is no

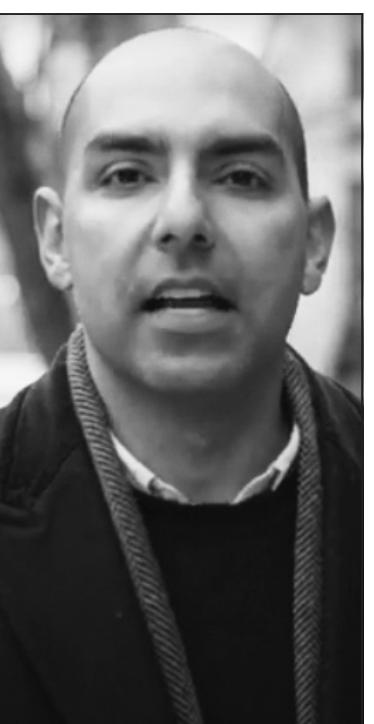
other candidate that is as equipped to understand the opioid epidemic and to forge real solutions to combat it.

"I live a block from Mass Ave and walk to work every day and I understand what it's like to find needles in your front garden, people passed out on your front steps or someone overdosing and needing help," he said, noting that he has already secured more than \$1 million in state funds to address the epidemic. "I'm proud of those victories, but we have a lot more work to do. I'm the best candidate to understand the situation and to live the situation."

Santiago also credits his military service in the Army Reserves, where he is a captain, as forming how he would lead as mayor. In fact, after working on the COVID front lines at the Boston Hope Hospital in the South Boston Convention Center, Santiago was deployed to the Middle East as a physician treating soldiers and allies in Kuwait. He returned from that deployment in December.

"Many Puerto Ricans joined the military as a way to do something with their life and to be a part of something bigger than themselves," he said, noting his uncle and grandfather were also in the military. "I joined seven or eight years ago...It taught me about leadership and bringing folks together...I'm very proud of that. The military will teach you how to get things done."

In his announcement for mayor, Santiago stressed that the next



Rep. Jon Santiago

mayor will write a "new chapter" for all of Boston. He said that new chapter would include a more equitable City for everyone.

"We are living through an

unprecedented crisis, the impact of which will last far beyond today," said Santiago. "It's a turning point for our city, but in it I also see great possibilities. I see and hear it in the voices of my neighbors, patients, and constituents. I've spent my life in service to others and now I'm running for mayor to lead us through this moment and to a recovery rooted in equity and opportunity. I will bring our city back, stronger than ever."

Santiago added, "Today, we set out to bring neighbors together to write the next chapter of our Boston story."

Santiago is currently serving his second term as the State Representative for the 9th Suffolk District representing the South End, Roxbury, Back Bay, and Fenway neighborhoods of Boston. He is an emergency room physician employed at Boston Medical Center, the city's safety net hospital. He serves as a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve and has deployed overseas. Prior to these experiences, Santiago served as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic. He lives in the South End with his wife, Alexandra.

Constitution hosts First Space Force Transfer Ceremony

Staff Report

The first Space Force commissioning ceremony aboard USS Constitution occurred Feb. 4, formally transferring an Air Force captain into the Space Force.

The Space Force is a military service that organizes, trains, and equips space forces in order to protect U.S. and allied interests in space and to provide space capabilities to the joint force.

"The Air Force gave me the amazing opportunity to learn and grow as an Airman, an experience I will never forget," said newly-transferred Space Force Capt. Benjamin Berezin. "However, I couldn't pass up the once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of this new branch of service and to help launch its initial success as a Guardian."

A trip to nearby Hanscom Air Force base opened Berezin to the idea of holding his transfer ceremony aboard Old Ironsides.

"Two years ago, I drove cross country from New Mexico to Massachusetts with my father," said Berezin. "Old Ironsides was one of the first places we visited upon our arrival while trekking

along the Freedom Trail. Thankfully, we were able to explore the museum and hear the blast of the cannon at sundown, a sound that resonated within me and helped to solidify those memories."

After being selected to serve in the Space Force, Berezin's memories inspired him to reach out to the crew of Constitution.

"I did not know, at first, whether I would be able to have a ceremony on the frigate," said Berezin. "But it was that memory which led me to explore and ask the question 'Can I once again take an oath to support and defend the Constitution on a ship that bears the same name?' Thanks to its amazing crew, the answer turned out to be yes!"

Two years after his trip to Massachusetts, Berezin found himself once again aboard Constitution with his father by his side, as he officially transferred to the Space Force.

"I will strive to leave as lasting of an impact as the Constitution left on me," said Berezin. "Our space systems and infrastructure should be as enduring as this stellar ship."



Jon Santiago, a South End State Rep. and physician at Boston Medical Center, announced on Tuesday that he will be running for mayor of Boston. His announcement came on video Tuesday (as seen here) and makes him the fourth major candidate in the open-seat mayoral race.

Students ready for return to hybrid learning

By Seth Daniel

Several hundred students are slated to begin their first day of in-person learning this school term on Monday in the long-awaited hybrid education model, but for some of those children, they will be walking into the school for the first time after having nearly one year of school under their belt.

On Monday, Boston Public Schools (BPS) will return students for hybrid education in grades K1-3. Though some special education students have been in the buildings since December, Monday will mark the first time general education students have been back in buildings since last March. Many students, however, have also chosen to remain in remote education for the remainder of the year.

The pandemic has brought out all sorts of oddities and unique situations, but one of the strangest is the fact that many first-year kindergarten students will have gone to school a majority of their first year without actually having gone to school.

"Everyone says they feel relieved and confident and excited," said Corey Zehngebott, who has a first-year kindergarten student headed to the Harvard Kent on Monday. "The teachers are excited and I know my daughter can't wait. She's excited to meet the other kids that she has only really met on Zoom since last fall...I'm super excited for her to finally be able to go and meet the teacher and her classmates."

Zehngebott said they never really got to have that true "first day" experience that every parent and child files away as a cherished memory and a milestone in grow-

ing up. Instead, they've been by the school a couple of times to look into the kindergarten windows, and they've met the art teacher once during a supply pick-up day outside the school.

"Meeting the art teachers was really just a coincidence, but it was this huge momentous occasion for my daughter," said Zehngebott.

Charlotte Maon is in the same situation. She has a first grader at the Warren Prescott School, but her son was also slated to join the W-P as a first-year kindergartner this year. That, of course, has been delayed, but Maon said Monday can't come soon enough.

"I was afraid because he is very comfortable at home and having mommy and daddy around him," she said. "Luckily the teachers on Zoom have been preparing them for going back to school. The teacher has been showing them the cubby and what the classroom looks like...My son is very excited to go back to school now. It wasn't like that a few months ago. He wants to see what the classroom looks like and wants to play with his friends. He has friends, but they're only virtual friends now."

Both parents said they are not worried about the virus being spread in schools, and trust the science put out by the state and federal governments about in-person schooling being safe.

"These kids need it," said Maon. "I was ready to send them Sept. 1. I have been waiting for this moment...Everyone has different thresholds, but my husband and I feel confident. We are in a country always afraid of liability and because of that everything is prepared very carefully and safely. I have no concerns."

According to BPS statistics as of

this week, a majority of Charlestown students have chosen hybrid learning or were automatically entered as hybrid. A total of 1,092 students in Charlestown have opted for in-person learning this spring, which amounts to 62.5 percent.

A smaller percentage, 656 students at 37.5 percent, have opted to remain remote through the school year and not return in-person.

Likewise, one of the virus metrics that was required was to be below 5 percent positivity city-wide before any return, and at the moment the percent positive in Boston is 3.8 percent.

Students will return on a rotating schedule throughout the week in hybrid. On Monday and Tuesday, Group A will come to the school, and Group B will be remote. On Wednesday, everyone will go to remote school, but one Thursday and Friday, Group B will go in-person and Group A will be remote.

Harvard Kent Principal Jason Gallagher said they will be welcoming about 60 new students into the building in each group. With the special education students that are already there, that will account for about 150 kids in the building each day.

"We're pretty excited," he said. "We've been doing really well here the last couple of months with high-priority kids. We brought more back in February. Now we're ready to open the school for more students. The teachers this week are working hard to make sure classrooms and schools are ready. We're just dotting our I's and crossing our T's to be ready for Monday."

"It is interesting because the



Both the Harvard Kent and Warren Prescott Schools in Charlestown are poised to welcome hundreds of K-3 students back to their buildings for hybrid education on Monday. Part of that will be rolling out the red carpet to welcome them, as was done at the W-P earlier this year for some special education students that have already returned.

students have been together online since September, but many haven't always met each other," he continued. "We know there have been playdates and they've picked up supplies, but they have never met each other in school. We are curious to see how that plays out. It's something that's never happened in history."

Like the Harvard Kent, the Warren Prescott is also very busy preparing the school for a return of students. Principal Michele Davis said they have set up their remote school schedule to seamlessly integrate in-person learning and they hope there aren't any hiccups.

"Our schedule works both remotely and in person so this will aid in a smooth transition," she said. "All rooms have air purifiers, sanitizer, and the appropriate cleaning supplies."

"Social distancing signs are on display throughout the school and protocols will be reviewed and emphasized with students during the first week," she continued. "Our main goals are safety and making sure that students feel welcomed and supported. The W-P staff have had great success connecting with students virtually, but can't wait to welcome students in person."

Both Gallagher and Davis said they plan to make it a special occasion, and have secured a red carpet at the entry door to welcome students and families back, or even for the first time ever.

Maon said she thinks it's important to get her kids back in school, and she also said she still isn't convinced it will really happen – that things have been delayed before. However, she said she remains hopeful and knows it is more important for kids like her young son to learn how to raise his hand, wait his turn to speak, and adhere to social queues that are only absorbed in person with other kids.

What she and Zehngebott are worried about is the potential loss of families that are leaving Charlestown, or shifting students to private schools that have been in-person for months.

"Kids should always come first and I don't think kids really are first at BPS," she said. "I'm worried that people are leaving the neighborhood because of the school situation. Warren Prescott was a hot school last year, and now it's not a full class...Schools outside the city are open, and that's what people need."

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PROJECT (*from pg. 1*)

housing at two income tier levels. There are 49 residential parking spaces and 29 retail spaces. Twohig also said they have access to a lot of parking existing in the Mall already as well, a topic that the IAG asked for more clarification on for future meetings.

"This is a community center and it has been a long time and that's very important to us," said Twohig. "It's been that way for 40 years...The days of just building a retail project and that's all it is isn't what we do. Everything we do now is more mixed use."

He said the residential building and an upgrade to the existing Mall property on Main Street – along with any future plans for the Mall – will revolve around the 'Live, Work, Play' concept that is how life has been trending for city residents over the past decade.

"That's just how people live today," he said. "People just don't want to go and spend four hours in a mall and that's their day trip. People don't live that way today. They certainly don't want to do that in the era of COVID-19."

Manfredi said the building will be a major Gateway to the neighborhood, and they plan to present it that way by using appropriate brick around the lower floors and a tremendous amount of glass on the higher floors facing the Cambridge side. He said the building and the upgrades to the Mall will bridge the gap between the world of cars and the world of pedestrians and make this area of Charlestown more pedestrian-friendly.

"This is right in the middle between that part of Charlestown that is very auto dependent and that part of it that is very pedestri-



A view of the proposed residential building on the Bunker Hill Mall from the West School Street and Main Street intersection.

an-centered," said Manfredi. "Our goal is to expand that pedestrian part of Charlestown."

As part of the design, there would be four "townhouse" style units facing Austin Street that will have front doors onto the sidewalk. That is an effort to knit the building into that part of the neighborhood which features front doors to the sidewalk facing the larger boulevard-style roadway.

"We really want to put front doors on Austin Street, and we have four units that do that," said Manfredi.

As part of the mitigation, NED proposes to make a \$600,000 repair to a major water and sewer line under their property. They also intend to revamp the Main Street side of the Mall, fix the

pocket park there and modernize the entry points to the Mall from Main Street.

There is also a \$1 million community fund contribution as well.

IAG Member Tera Lally was the first to chime in and she advocated for allocating that money to the Charlestown Neighborhood Council (CNC) so they could disperse it to the community – as they did with mitigation money from Spaulding for the last several years.

She and others, including Toby Goldstein, had questions about the parking situation. They were worried that even though the development is prime territory for public transit and Transit Oriented Development, many might have cars and want to park them on the street.

The biggest revelation of the evening was that getting approval for the Compact Living Units means that residents at that address aren't allowed to participate in the neighborhood residential sticker program.

That was a shock to everyone, as it's the first Compact project in Charlestown and few knew that was a stipulation of that program.

"As part of the Compact Living Policy, all residential at the building will not be allowed to get residential parking stickers and the parking will be unbundled from the rent to discourage residents from owning cars," said Risa Meyers of NED.

Said Twohig, "Most people don't want to do that, but if we believe in what we're preaching

and what this is, we have to do that because it protects the neighborhood."

IAG Member Nico Skiadas said he liked the building and the design and said it would be a feather in the cap to have a Manfredi building in Charlestown.

"There is a lot to like about this," he said.

"It will be a gateway into Charlestown," he continued. "I really think this is going to be the primary entrance into the Town. The question becomes what can be one to create more of a boulevard feel down Austin Street."

The next meeting for the Mall project is a general neighborhood meeting online on March 10 via Zoom at 6 p.m.

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Stories from the Shipyard

USS Mason

By Mike Manning - Chair,
Friends of the Boston Harborwalk

The USS Mason, an Evarts-class destroyer escort, was ordered by the US Navy in early 1943. Her keel was laid down on October 14. Mason was launched off Boston Navy Yard (Charlestown) Shipways within a month, completed at Pier 8, and commissioned on March 20, 1944. As the name implies, destroyer escorts were designed to escort trans-Atlantic convoys supplying the Allied nations - Great Britain and the Soviet Union - with essential war materiel. These were extremely hazardous voyages for the convoys as they were susceptible to German Navy (Kriegsmarine) U-boat attacks throughout the entire journey. Additionally, on the approaches to the European mainland, the convoys were also preyed upon by German Air Force (Luftwaffe) attack aircraft.

Escort vessels, in order to protect the convoys and themselves, carried a formidable array of anti-submarine sonars, anti-aircraft radars, and weapons. Weapons included cannon and guns of various calibers, depth charges, and hedgehogs. (A "hedgehog" was an anti-submarine weapon fired in similar fashion to a mortar. Typically, multiple hedgehogs were launched from the deck of a surface warship).

The Mason was named after a US naval aviator, Newton Henry Mason, who served as a Hellcat fighter pilot onboard the carriers USS Saratoga and USS Lexington in the Pacific Theater of Operations (PTO). On May 8, 1942, during what would become known at the Battle of the Coral Sea, Ensign Mason flew from Lexington for his first and final combat mission. Only a few hours into the action, he was shot down when he encountered a group of Japanese fighters from the Japanese aircraft carrier Shikoku. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions that day.

What distinguished Mason from other warships in the US Navy during World War II was the fact that her crew was composed primarily of young African-American sailors. She had a complement of six officers and nearly 200 enlisted crewmen. The captain and officers were white as no Black officers were commissioned until very late in the war. The

only other vessel with a similar crew composition was the USS PC 1264 - a submarine chaser. These were the only two US warships in the entirety of World War II naval operations to have predominantly African-American crews.

In the early 1900s, Black sailors were confined to roles as messmen, stewards, barbers, and laborers. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) petitioned President Roosevelt to expand the roles of African-American sailors on-board warships. Along with the passionate advocacy and public prodding of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, the president ordered naval leaders to accommodate more Black seamen aboard fleet vessels. However, the Navy Department initially resisted this order citing potential lack of efficiency and order aboard warships. Eventually, a compromise was reached, where African-American sailors were assigned duty at shore commands, aboard coastal defense vessels, with con-

struction units, and aboard select US Coast Guard cutters. It was not until June of 1942 when this policy became official. Incredibly, it took nearly two additional years before any US Navy warship was assigned Black crewmen beyond roles as messmen or stewards.

USS Mason was commissioned on a snowy March day in 1944, under the command of Lieutenant Commander William M. Blackford, a descendant of abolitionist Mary B. M. Blackford of Virginia. (Mary B. M. Blackford (1802 - 1896), a native of Fredericksburg, Virginia was a staunch abolitionist. Her anti-slavery work began in 1829 and included the funding of a girls' academy in Liberia in 1837 as part of the controversial Colonization Movement). Affectionately known by the crew as "Big Bill", Blackford steadfastly defended his men from the naval establishment's low expectations, including the derisive name "Eleanor's Folly" because of the First Lady's desegregation efforts.

Despite this denigration, over



Images courtesy of National Archives and Record Administration - Still Pictures Division

the next eighteen months, the men served competently in the final stages of the Battle of the Atlantic guarding and guiding convoy vessels in the midst of lone German U-boats or in some instances wolf-packs. (Wolfpacks were groups of German U-boats designed to intercept and attack Atlantic convoys). Mason escorted six convoys in

trans-Atlantic crossings.

In one incredibly monotonous and stressful crossing, Mason escorted Convoy NY-119 from South Brooklyn, New York to Falmouth in Great Britain. The convoy was made up of 14 civilian merchant ships, four Navy

(USS MASON Pg. 15)

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Our outside fall program was so successful we would like to do it again in the spring.

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New Advisory Group members named for PLAN Charlestown

By Seth Daniel

Some 26 people have been chosen for the long-awaited PLAN Charlestown Advisory Group, which began meeting last night, Feb. 24, beyond newspaper deadlines.

The Advisory Group had been rolled out more than a year ago when PLAN Charlestown kicked off in the packed gym of the Warren Prescott January 2020 – a time that seems like another world and in another life, but was only a short 12 months ago.

After many COVID-19 delays, PLAN Charlestown's process was renewed last summer and fall on Zoom and has had online meetings since. The Advisory Group, however, has been longer in the making.

This week, the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) announced 26 members and booked the Feb. 24 meeting to start that part of the neighborhood planning process. A PLAN Charlestown general meeting will be coming up in March, with an eye towards addressing major planning for Rutherford Avenue and Sullivan Square. That looks to be a focal point of the overall planning process from the BPDA's perspective as it represents one of the few parts of Charlestown that could be radically changed over the next decade.

The members of the Advisory Group include:

Melissa (Doherty) Brennan, Chris Kushcel, Amber Christoferson, Elaine Donovan, Shannon Fitzgerald, Tina Goodnow, Intiya

Isaza-Figueroa, Joanne Massaro, Ryan McCarthy, James Donovan, Nico Skiadas, Paul Sullivan, Stephanie Ward, Brian Callahan, Mary Chippa, Sarah Coughlin, Karie Everett, Anda French, Julie Hall, Nancy Johnson, Lisa McGoff Collins, Zaire Richardson, Phil Smith, Karson Tager, and Amanda Zettel.

Some members did comment prior to the meeting about their expectations and about being chosen for the long-term process.

"I think the PLAN for Charlestown is long overdue as development has been piecemeal for far too long," said Brennan. "It will be interesting to see what initiatives and opportunities present themselves through these discussions."

Massaro has been a very vocal participant in the meetings to date,

and said she is excited at the process, but feels development is rushing ahead of the plan.

"In a more rational world, planning would precede development," she said. "But we seem to be doing it backwards in Charlestown. While I'm glad the planning process has begun, I'm concerned allowing development to rush ahead will make the plan moot. As a community we have much work to do, and a lot of ground to cover. We need to look at public as well as private parcels to determine what should be allowed to be built on them."

Beyond that, she said there will also be a robust discussion about whether or not to extend Urban Renewal in the Town.

Finally, she said piecemeal development sets precedent,

and she said she hopes the City will impose a moratorium on all Article 80 projects in order to let the plan and the Advisory Group work without distraction.

"Allowing development to continue before planning is complete will likely box us in," she said. "Project by project planning as we are doing now sets precedents like height and density without the benefit of considering the broader context that a robust and thoughtful planning process could. The City can help by imposing a moratorium on any projects that trigger Article 80, even if the review process has begun. PLAN Charlestown could serve this role if it's allowed to proceed first."

For the Record

CMA SCHOLARSHIP

The Charlestown Mothers Association is pleased to offer up to \$13,000 in college scholarships, to men and women who have been residents of Charlestown for at least five years, and will be attending college full-time this fall. The amount of each scholarship awarded will be determined by the CMA Scholarship Committee. Last year, CMA awarded eight scholarships. Copies of the application are available at the "Scholarship" tab on the CMA website, www.charlestownmothersassociation.org. The completed application is due by April 23, 2021.

SCHOOL MEAL SUPER SITES/CHARLESTOWN

Every Monday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

- Edwards Middle School - 28 Walker St.
- Harvard/Kent Elementary - 50 Bunker Hill St.

COMMUNITY MEETING, 229-231 BUNKER HILL ST

There will be a community meeting to discuss an application for a new All-Alcoholic Beverage license for a new restaurant - currently titled Monument Diner. Please Note: This license application is a separate proposal from the current ZBA proposal for this property.

When: Thursday, February 25th 2021, 6:00pm

Where: Virtual Meeting Link: bit.ly/3qitzOb. Or call in at

1-408-418-9388: Access Code: 179 089 4325

EMISSIONS PERFORMANCE OPEN HOUSE

The City of Boston is developing a new policy to curb carbon emis-

sions from existing large buildings. Retrofitting these buildings - a key strategy to lowering emissions - can improve energy efficiency, lower energy costs, enhance the health of our residents, create construction and energy jobs, and protect our climate. We are hosting an open house to present the draft policy, recap the process that informed its design, and give our community members an opportunity to provide feedback.

Date: Tuesday, February 23

Time: 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Link: Register here

Interpretation and translation services are available to you at no cost. If you need them, please contact katherine.eshel@boston.gov or call 617-635-4946 by Wednesday, February 17.

SCHOOLS INFO

•School Return Timetables – March 1-4 – Students in K0-Grade 3 (Groups A and B); March 15-18 – Students in Grades 4-8 (Groups A & B); and March 29-April 1 – Students in grades 9-12 (Groups A & B).

•BPS Priority Registration – Priority registration for school year 2021-22 began on Jan. 5 for students entering grades K0, K1, 6th, 7th and 9th grades. Assignment notifications are on March 31. Students entering K2 and all other grades have priority registration on Feb. 8 and ends on April 5. Assignment notifications for those grades is on May 28. There are informational Zoom sessions about registration on Sat., Feb. 27, at 10 a.m. BPS Welcome Centers are temporarily closed to the public, but registration can be done online and via phone. Call (617) 635-9010 to schedule a phone appointment with a specialist.

•P-EBT Cards - All BPS students

will have more P-EBT funds for this school year. If you received P-EBT funds in the past, look for funds to be allocated the last week of December. New to P-EBT? You will get a P-EBT card in January or check your existing EBT card for funds. Learn more at www.MAP-EBT.org or call the Assistance Line at 877-382-2363.

REPORTING WORKPLACE SAFETY CONCERN

Workers in any size organization have options if they feel they are being pressured into an unsafe situation. Attorney General Maura Healey has created resources for workers to report safety concerns during reopening. They include an online form at the Attorney General's website and a dedicated Fair Labor hotline at 617-727-3465. People can also find those resources by calling 311.

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.

WARREN PRESCOTT SCHOOL DATES

•March 10 - Site Council Meeting

From the Feb. 24 License Board meeting, 1 p.m., online:

CT Eatery, LLC; D/B/A: Tradesman Charlestown: 50 HOOD PARK Dr. Has applied for a Common Victualler 7 Day All Alcoholic Beverages License. In one large room on ground floor with multiple seating areas and bar, kitchen, restrooms and storage in rear (5,535 sf total), with seasonal outdoor patio on private property (April November) along Hood Park Drive and Rutherford Avenue. Manager: MEVZAD DURAKOVIC. Closing Time: 1 a.m.

From the Feb. 25 Public Improvement Commission hearing, 10 a.m., online:

•284 Bunker Hill Street, Wall Street; Charlestown – Specific Repairs – On a petition by Lion House Condominium Trust

From the Feb. 25, 10 a.m., CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES HEARING:

Order for a hearing to discuss the proliferation of electronic billboards in the City of Boston. This matter is sponsored by Councilors Ed Flynn and Councilor Michael Flaherty and was referred to the Committee on City and Neighborhood Services on October 21, 2020.

From the Feb. 26, 2 p.m., CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS HEARING:

An ordinance extending and enhancing protections for tenants facing displacement by condominium or cooperative conversion.

USS MASON (*from pg. 13*)

vessels, and a small flotilla of tugboat-towed barges. The average speed was a meager 5 knots (approximately 6 miles per hour) for nearly the entire duration of the voyage. Compounding this low speed, the convoy encoun-

tered a fierce storm with torrential rain and mountainous waves. The force of the gale was so powerful that the Mason's steel decking split. In the midst of the storm, with heaving 50 foot high seas, two damage control crew mem-

SCHOLARSHIP (*from pg. 1*)

ars are available online or can be picked up at the Charlestown Public Library, the Charlestown Boys & Girls Club Teen Center, and the Charlestown High School Guidance Office. The application deadline is April 15, 2021. The scholarship includes \$12,000 for the first year of college and \$6,000 for the second year and the criteria includes promise of academic success, substantial athletic achievement, responsible citizenship and financial need. For any questions about the scholarship, please contact Ronan FitzPatrick at 617-242-5493.

Noted for his academic and athletic achievement, Michael Quinn accomplished so much in his 23 years. He was a product of his Charlestown upbringing where looking out for your neighbor, respecting elders, hard work and "having your friend's back" were ingrained in him at an early age. Michael graduated from Boston Latin High School and the College of the Holy Cross where he achieved Hall of Fame status at both schools as a two-sport (football and hockey) Scholar Athlete. After graduating from college, Michael attended Officer Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia and finished first in his class. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1968, assigned to "H" Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Division and deployed to Vietnam.

AUGUST 29, 1969: As the "H Company" platoon leaders huddled in the darkness of the Quang Nam Province in South Vietnam, U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Michael

Quinn was tasked with leading his infantry unit on a reconnaissance mission to seek a water supply and identify enemy troop movement. Stealthily executing their directive, Quinn and his troops happened upon a large invading enemy force heading in the direction of "H Company." Realizing that the only way to alert his fellow marines of the dire situation was to draw fire on his position, Quinn dispatched members of his unit back to "H Company" and engaged the enemy. While that fateful decision resulted in Lt. Michael Quinn making the "ultimate sacrifice," it also prevented the loss of many lives. He was recognized for his bravery and awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart and is honored on Panel 18W, Row 8 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C.



Lt. Michael P. Quinn.



Images courtesy of National Archives and Record Administration - Still Pictures Division

USS Mason

bers welded a seam between the cracked steel plates and made a critical and durable repair.

Despite the storm and the subsequent damage, she was able to lead the battered convoy to the port of Falmouth. Incredibly, Mason immediately set back out to the Atlantic to search for a few strays that could not keep up with the main body of the convoy. She was accompanied by two British vessels - HMS Rochester and HMS Saladin. Not far into the westward voyage, the British ships signaled that they were returning to port due to the deteriorating weather conditions. However, Mason continued alone in a fruitless search for any stragglers.

Following this particular convoy mission, Lieutenant Commander Blackford made an official request for a commendation for his crew. Additionally, the Commodore of Convoy NY-119, Alfred Lind, was so impressed with the Mason's performance during the Atlantic crossing; he recommended that the Navy place a letter of commendation in the files of every crewman aboard. The Navy did not act on either officer's request for 51 years. Finally, in 1995, at the Washington, D.C. Navy Memorial, the few remaining survivors of the Mason's crew received their official letters of

recommendation from Navy Secretary John Dalton.

Despite her crew's heroic contributions to the overall war effort being ignored or completely forgotten, the war service record of the Mason did contribute to new opportunities for African-Americans in the post-war Navy. Eventually, the US armed forces were formally desegregated in 1948 with an executive order from President Harry S. Truman.

For more about USS Mason, stop by the interpretive sign along the Charlestown Harborwalk, at

Charlestown Navy Yard (summer of 2021).

There are two books and a documentary film about the USS Mason:

- Proudly We Served: The Men of the USS Mason (1999) by Mary Pat Kelly

- Onboard the USS Mason: The World War II Diary of James Dunn (1996) by James Dunn

- Proud: Produced (2004) by ThEntertainment based upon the Mary Pat Kelly book

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