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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023

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CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

GIRLS BASKETBALL SENIOR NIGHT



The Charlestown High School girls basketball team honored the lone senior on the team, Ariana Alarcon, prior to the game with Brighton on Thursday, February 9. She was presented with flowers and a canvas photo.

Wu announces new PowerCorpsBOS career pathway in building operations

Special to the Regional Review

PowerCorpsBOS joined A Better City and Roxbury Community College (RCC) for an orientation event to receive an overview of

the newest PowerCorps building operations career pathway, skills to support the transition to energy efficiency and carbon reduction in Boston buildings. This program is a partnership between Power-

CorpsBOS, Roxbury Community College's Center for Smart Building Technology and A Better City (ABC). Program participants will study at RCC's Center for Smart Building Technology and receive in-service learning opportunities within large buildings coordinated by A Better City.

"Creating career pathways through skills and job training is essential to growing our green workforce, especially as we work to transition more buildings to renewable, efficient energy," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm grateful to our partners for working with

(CAREER Pg. 3)

BCYF Clougherty Pool project feedback wanted

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

The Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF), the Public Facilities Department (PFD), and Fennick McCredie Architecture held a meeting at the Charlestown High School Cafeteria on Monday, Feb. 13, looking for feedback regarding proposals for the BCYF Clougherty Pool project.

During this meeting, designs for the new pool itself, the pool deck, and the bathhouse were revealed to give residents in attendance the opportunity to provide feedback on what they would like to see regarding a new and improved neighborhood pool.

The currently closed pool area

has about 7,600 square feet of pool space, and according to Mark Mariano from Weston & Sampson, the current pool configuration limits its inclusivity and ability to hold different programs.

"What we're trying to do is vision this pool to not only give the city another 50 years of service life but to meet the community's needs for that time ... We would like to incorporate many features that would serve the community for a long period of time," said Mariano.

These features include learn-to-swim programs, lap swimming, inclusive accessibility to the pool,

(POOL Pg. 4)

FATHER-DAUGHTER DANCE



A special day was offered to fathers (aged 18 and up) with their daughters (aged 3 and up) for crafting activities, cookie decorating, and dancing at St John's Church in Charlestown. Just in time for Valentine's Day is a bonding experience for Dads and their daughters. Shown are participants of the Father/Daughter dance lessons with instructor Jackie Bowden owner of Mini Movers.

The Independent Newspaper Group Office will be Closed on Monday, Feb. 20th in observation of President's Day. We will reopen on Tuesday at 9:30 am. Deadlines are Friday, Feb. 17 at 12 p.m.



EDITORIAL

THE SKY IS FALLING?

With U.S. jets shooting down numerous unidentified flying objects seemingly every day over North American air space in the past week, we're all wondering, "What the heck is going on?"

As this is being written, the only thing we know for sure is that the first object that was shot down off the coast of South Carolina was a Chinese spy balloon.

Our military reportedly has adjusted its radar to try to spot more incursions -- which explains why the last three objects were picked up, whereas previously they may have gone unnoticed -- but one thing that these incidents have taught us is that our radar detection apparatus needs a serious upgrade.

It's tempting to joke about it -- Saturday Night Live did a funny skit about the Chinese spy balloon. And for our part, as we were watching the home videos and comments made by civilians, it made us think of the episode from the old TV show "F Troop" from the 1960s (yes, we are that old) when a balloon was shot down with bows and arrows, whereas this balloon was shot down by an F-22 Raptor fighter jet.

But there are so many unanswered questions and so many theories. Were the three other objects that were shot down also spy aircraft from another country? And if so, from where? Or were they owned by a private entity that also might be doing some sort of covert surveillance? How about aliens from outer space?

We'll only know the full story when all of those aircraft are recovered and analyzed. And it wouldn't be surprising if a few more objects are shot down in the coming days.

But in the meantime, let's hope we don't become a nation of Chicken Littles.

THE VICTIMS IN TURKEY AND SYRIA NEED OUR HELP

The ongoing tragedy because of the devastating earthquake that struck the nations of Turkey and Syria is the worst humanitarian disaster the world has seen in many years.

More than 35,000 people have died and that number is sure to rise even further in the coming days.

Natural and other disasters in our part of the world have been barely a blip compared to what the people of Turkey and Syria are dealing with. To put the earthquake in perspective, the combined death toll from the Surfside condo collapse in 2021 and Hurricane Ian in 2022 was 250. Both were terrible tragedies, but that number is less than one percent of the earthquake's death toll.

In addition, tens of thousands have been injured and millions more have been left homeless -- all told, this is a disaster of unimaginable proportions.

There are many international organizations from which to choose to assist with disaster relief efforts and we urge all of our readers who have the ability to do so to make a donation.

The Independent Newspaper Group reserves the right to edit letters for space and clarity. We regret that we cannot publish unsigned letters. Please include your street and telephone number with your submission. The Independent Newspaper Group publishes columns, viewpoints and letters to the editor as a forum for readers to express their opinions and to encourage debate. Please note that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Independent Newspaper Group. Text or attachments emailed to editor@reverejournal.com are preferred.

GUEST OP-ED

School bullying must stop, everyone must work together

Dr. Glenn Mollette

Four New Jersey teenagers have been charged in connection with the attack of a 14-year-old girl who later took her own life after video of the incident was posted on social media.

One juvenile is charged with aggravated assault, two juveniles are charged with conspiracy to commit aggravated assault and one juvenile is charged with harassment, Ocean County prosecutor Bradley D. Billhimer told CBS News in an email. (cbsnews.com)

Adriana Kuch, 14, was found dead in her Bayville home on February 3, two days after the disturbing video of the attack at Central Regional High School was posted online. The video showed girls throwing a drink at the teen, then kicking and dragging her down school hallways. They pushed Adriana into red lockers lining the school hallways and one of the girls in a pink shirt punched Kuch repeatedly. (Source CBSNews.com)

When I was an elementary child riding the school bus, we had a few fights on the bus. One young man who didn't live that far from me was constantly getting into fights on the school bus. One day he had a kid down repeatedly punching him in the face. The bus driver stopped the bus and escorted both boys off the bus while still a couple of miles from their homes. We then drove off and left them on the road. I don't recall seeing the fight continue as they now had to walk or hitchhike a ride to get home. Since the one boy was being beaten so bad, I don't think the driver made the best decision since the other kid could have finished him off on the rural road we were traveling. However, it did appear the fight had stopped as we drove off. Most likely not having a bus audience, bleeding and having to walk home changed the scenario.

In the sixties and seventies there were bad things that happened in schools that often got swept under the rug. With no social media kids usually ended up working it out or staying away from people we didn't like. Often many of us never took our school problems home because our parents had enough problems without having to worry about our school fusses. Or, we were afraid we might get in trou-

ble at home.

School children face challenges. There are ongoing pressures from bullies who must be corralled and disciplined, dismissed from school or in some cases put in a place where they can get rehabilitation and help for their psychotic issues. Locking a 14-year-old up in jail for years solves nothing. However, kids that bring about injury or death to another student need mental help and rehabilitation before being freed to invoke pain on someone again. Most likely if your family has lost a family member to a bully you want the offender locked up for life.

Even though my school era was not a perfect world Schoolteachers and principals had authority to paddle our butts. They had authority to discipline us, suspend us from school and could put bite with their bark. We knew the teachers ruled and we respected them. I can remember see paddling's that I never wanted to get and received a couple myself.

No school has the ability to patrol every corner of a school facility. Bullying, fights and bad things typically occur in unsupervised spaces. Schools can't hire enough security guards or have enough monitors to patrol ever corner.

Every day in every state in America a private school is starting or the ground work is being formulated.

Ten years from now almost every city and even small community in America will have a private or faith-based school. Some of these will only be elementary schools but many have or will develop junior and senior highs. Such schools are not free of their

own issues but parents across America are desperate for safe places for their kids. Parents want a place where there is zero tolerance of bullies and an administration who means business about protecting the children. They want an environment where their children can be mentored, taught and prepared better for life, college or to move into adult jobs.

Parents don't want a school who they feel is working against them or hiding things from them.

Life is like this. The world is like a jungle most days. There are bullies in the workplaces, neighborhoods and mean people can be found all over. This is why we have the right to call 911. We can file charges against people with the police. We should have the right to carry a firearm and defend ourselves. We have to work to help each other and protect each other.

Teachers, administrators, parents and students must work together for safety and security. Children and teachers must feel safe with an environment free from bullying, hazing or intimidation. Kids should not have to wake up every day fearful of going to school. Neither should the school staff and parents.

The issue of bullying and school safety requires school boards, all staff, parents and students to work together. It's not a task for a few to accomplish but a job for us all.

Glenn Mollette is the publisher 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.



THE CHARLESTOWN PATRIOT-BRIDGE,

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CAREER (from pg. 1)

us and the students participating for their commitment to helping lay the foundation for a clean, green future.”

PowerCorpsBos works to train residents for green jobs after program completion, while focusing on career pathways into jobs that work to mitigate climate change to protect the environment. The first PowerCorps cohort graduated in December. All of the 21 program graduates either have a new green job or are enrolled in additional training. An ‘earn and learn’ program, PowerCorpsBos pays members to participate in hands-on training and provides them with career readiness support, and connections to employers in the green industry. PowerCorpsBOS is a partnership that is led by the Worker Empowerment Cabinet and the Environment Department, in collaboration with Community Safety, Office of Youth Employment and Opportunity, and Boston Centers for Youth & Families. The goals of PowerCorpsBOS are to promote workforce development for young people in growing industries while supporting environmental stewardship.

“The core mission of PowerCorpsBos is to create pathways to earn a livable wage while also helping to care for the environment,” said Davo Jefferson, Executive Director of PowerCorpsBos. “We are grateful to partner with RCC and ABC to ensure PowerCorps graduates are able to move directly into careers in the green building industry.”

In Boston, 70 percent of our greenhouse gas emissions come from the building sector,” said Reverend Mariama White-Hammond, Chief of Environment, Energy and Open Space. “By creating a building operations career pathway through PowerCorps, these graduates are preparing for high quality careers which will support our carbon neutrality goals.”

“Congratulations to PowerCorpsBOS for creating this innovative partnership with Roxbury Community College and A Better City,” said Trinh Nguyen, Chief of Worker Empowerment. “Expanding opportunities for sustainable jobs at living wages is part of the City and Worker Empowerment’s mission and we look forward to facilitating this new pathway.”

The building operations pathway is training for jobs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in large

buildings by teaching participants skills to maintain building operations at peak efficiency. The curriculum is being offered by RCC’s Center for Smart Building Technology in their state of the art lab and includes topics ranging from conducting energy audits to maintaining electrical, HVAC and plumbing systems. Participants will learn on the job with the goal of transitioning to an employee at the end of the six month training program.

A Better City has supported this partnership by working with member businesses and institutions to establish in-service learning opportunities in Boston-based large buildings. Participating organizations include the City of Boston, Beacon Capital Partners and their building operator partner, NEWMARK, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, C&W Services, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, JLL, and MassGeneral Hospital. A Better City’s work has been made possible by support from the Linde Family Foundation and the Barr Foundation.

The inaugural PowerCorps cohort were trained in urban forestry. The 21 graduates assisted 87 acres of public land, removed 284 bags of invasive material, worked with 18 service project partners, planted 61 trees, underwent 16 hours of tree climbing training, earned three college credits from UMass Mount Ida in Arboriculture, talked to 68 employees in private to public industry, worked with four different City departments, pruned 32 trees, attended International Society of Arboriculture New England chapter conference, participated in 12 hours of mock interviews, and completed 16 hours of financial literacy courses. Graduates worked with Boston Housing Authority and UMass Mount Ida Campus to learn skills like tree protection, including pruning, felling, limbing, and bucking.

The City of Boston’s green jobs program is inspired by the Philadelphia PowerCorpsPHL model that builds opportunities for young people by tackling pressing environmental challenges and developing the skills required to secure meaningful work. The priority of PowerCorpsBOS is to create equitable and inclusive workforce pipelines into green jobs for historically marginalized young people.

Priority populations include returning citizens, court-involved residents, youth who have experienced homelessness or housing instability, and young people who have been in foster care. In Boston, the program is designed with “earn and learn” practices to ensure that members enter and succeed in career green job pathways. Members go through specifically tailored phases, in a field of their choosing, that embed service and equity, as well as direct connections to job openings. The program also offers connections to continuing education opportunities, including through the City’s Tuition Free Community College program. Not only current PowerCorps members, but also their families and alumni who are Boston residents, are eligible for TFCC.

“This partnership is not only a wonderful opportunity but essential to diversify the industry and create economic self-sufficiency for our community members,” said RCC Interim President Jackie Jenkins-Scott. “RCC is proud to offer both workforce and degree programs in Smart Building Technology, ensuring Boston residents are leaders in this growing field.”

“Public private partnerships are a vital strategy for building a green and growing city for everyone,” said Yve Torrie, Director of Climate, Energy & Resilience at A Better City. “This PowerCorpsBOS partnership is poised to enhance our City’s economic health and competitiveness, while promoting equitable growth for the in-demand jobs of today and tomorrow. We are immensely grateful to the City of Boston for their vision, to RCC for their curriculum expertise, and to the participating A Better City member companies and institutions for stepping up to provide real-world training and employment opportunities.”

“We are thrilled to support the City of Boston’s program to build and train a workforce that will run the energy efficient buildings of the future,” said Jim Tierney, JLL New England Market Director and A Better City Board Chair. “A Better City member companies are providing state-of-the-art buildings as a training opportunity for hands-on experience in building operations. These buildings showcase the latest in technology and sustainability preparing trainees for the jobs of the future.”

EBNHC introducing the Office of the Patient Advocate

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

Equity is one of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center’s (EBNHC) biggest focuses this year in all facets. With equity in mind and to improve patient service, the EBNHC is creating the Office of the Patient Advocate.

In a press release, Greg Wilmot, EBNHC’s President and CEO said the office will “provide patients, a significant number of whom are immigrants and non-English speakers, with an additional access point to address and resolve any concern that may arise.”

Elida Acuña-Martínez, EBNHC’s Senior Director of Interpreter Services and the Office of the Patient Advocate, described what its creation means for over 100,000 patients that the health center serves.

“By creating this office, we send a clear message to our patients and empower them to advocate for themselves and their families. Our team is here to support them in doing just that,” said Acuña-Martínez in the same press release.

The creation of this office will undoubtedly be massive in the health center’s emphasis on equity in that it will serve patients that may face barriers in the healthcare realm. For example, according to statistics provided by EBNHC, 71% of its patients are below 200% of the federal poverty level, and 70% of patients are served best in a language that is not English.

Along with creating the Office of the Patient Advocate, the EBNHC has been hard at work in other areas to promote equity

in its care.

The health center has created a diversified staff to better understand and serve its patients, with 50% of its 1,500 staff members being from its service area, 32% speaking Spanish, and 45% being Latinx.

EBNHC has also done tremendous work with its Interpreter Services Department, offering interpretation in-person, over the phone, and via video. EBNHC statistics revealed that the health center provided over 205,000 interpretations to patients in its last fiscal year with these services – a figure comparable to Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH).

As a new year gets underway, it is evident that with the creation of the Office of the Patient Advocate, the EBNHC is taking significant steps to provide the best and most equitable care to its patients.

“I know that East Boston Neighborhood Health Center is not just a medical provider, but a trusted-community-based organization that provides our neighbors with hope, care, and critical resources,” said Acuña-Martínez in the press release.

“We want our community to know that there are people in every corner of our organization who are here to advocate for them and help them achieve the best health care for themselves and their families,” said Wilmot in the press release.

For more information about the new office, you can visit <https://www.ebnhc.org/en/visitor/patient-info/patient-experience.html>.

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Chief Jemison welcomes new Director of Planning Aimee Chambers

Chief of Planning Arthur Jemison today announced the hiring of Aimee Chambers, AICP as the new Director of Planning. Her professional experience includes a wide range of planning and urban design work from affordable housing development to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure design. The planning team led by Chambers, which is currently housed at the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA), will move to a new City Planning & Design Department, which was announced by Mayor Wu in her 2023 State of the City, to restore planning as a core function of City government. As the City Planning & Design Department is being formed to drive the city's planning function, the BPDA will continue to build out a strong planning team to deliver on the Mayor's vision for resilient, affordable, equitable growth.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Aimee

to our leadership team, where she will serve a critical role helping us create a more resilient, affordable, and equitable future for Boston," said Chief of Planning Arthur Jemison. "Aimee's experience in other municipalities will bring new perspectives and momentum for delivering our bold vision for the city."

Chambers will be responsible for implementing the Mayor's vision for citywide land use planning strategies and action plans that shape equitable long-term growth. This vision includes a City-wide plan to rezone and enhance squares and corridors, creating the opportunity for thousands of new housing units and neighborhood small businesses, retail, and jobs. It also includes completing neighborhood plans, bringing them to zoning, and building out the zoning team to evaluate and modernize the zoning code.

"I am very excited to be joining

the team at such a pivotal point in time for planning work in Boston," said Director of Planning Aimee Chambers. "Thank you to Chief Jemison for recognizing and valuing my passion for equitable planning principles, service delivery, and zoning analysis. I look forward to serving the Wu Administration and delivering outcomes focused on resilience, affordability, and equity for the people of Boston."

As Director of Planning, Chambers will also work closely with Deputy Chief of Urban Design Diana Fernandez to ensure a seamless integration of planning and urban design policies to shape the built environment of the city. Another goal of this planning work is to make the development process more predictable for community members and developers, and to reduce the number of proposals that require relief from the Zoning Board of Appeal.

Chambers has worked across the non-profit and public sectors for 12 years as a planner and project manager and, prior to that, as a foster care case manager. She most recently served as the Director of Planning for the City of Hartford, Connecticut, where she led planning and zoning for the city. Chambers also has experience in climate change-related disaster resiliency working for the Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance as a contractor for the State of Louisiana Office of Community Development - Disaster Recovery Unit. In each of the communities that she has served, Chambers has centered her work on the implementation of programs that engage with and advocate for residents and worked to amplify the voices of people of color and underserved populations.

Chambers is a 2019 Next City Vanguard (Newark, NJ) and was nominated in CT Magazine's

40 Under 40, Class of 2022. She graduated from Manhattan College with a degree in Sociology and Urban Studies. Her master's degree in Community Planning is from the University of Maryland-College Park.

As the City of Boston's urban planning and economic development agency, the BPDA works in partnership with the community to plan Boston's future while respecting its past. The agency's passionate and knowledgeable staff guides physical, social, and economic change in Boston's neighborhoods and its downtown to shape a more prosperous, resilient, and vibrant city for all. The BPDA also prepares residents for new opportunities through employment training, human services and job creation. Learn more at bostonplans.org, and follow us on Twitter @BostonPlans.

POOL (from pg. 1)

play areas, shade areas, and more, all to make the new pool a place everyone can enjoy.

"We'd like to incorporate our features to these pools that will help all age groups and all abilities to be able to commingle in the pool," said Mariano.

In terms of pool designs, residents were given three options to peruse and provide feedback on. There was one option that only housed one pool at the site and two options that contained two pools.

"Any pool that you see up here will incorporate all the same features. There's nothing that we're going to miss out," said Mariano to meeting attendees.

"The only difference between a single-pool and a two-pool system is kind of just how we configure that to the site." Mariano also mentioned that an obvious benefit of the two-pool system is that if one has to shut down for a period, the other one can still run.

In the designs, pools would range from 7,200 to 7,960 square feet; all depths would be from zero – a beach entry – to around eight feet, and all will have swim lanes, ramps, and spray features. Some key differences in each design include the number of swim lanes and how much surface area is left for design on the deck.

As for pool deck design aspects,

Weston & Sampson's Johnathan Law spoke about different plans for seating, shading, the deck itself, the color of these features, and more. Law also mentioned that the project would maintain the already present bleachers at the pool.

Law presented two options for deck layouts incorporating different features, such as artistic shading structures, different seating, and more.

Finally, renovation plans for the bathhouse were also introduced. Notably, the bathhouse is being preserved and not demolished, so it is essentially a refurbishment. The windows and doorways to the pool deck are also being maintained.

"The bathhouse is going to be very different than the current one, although we're using the same building," said Deborah Fennick, Principal of Fennick McCredie Architecture.

In addition to a new elevator being installed which will also have access to the roof deck, there are new plans for each level of the bathhouse.

Level one will hold amenities such as bathrooms, locker rooms, lockers, and more. "We're making the locker spaces as compact as possible while providing the code-required number of showers and toilets, which are based on the

size of the pool," said Fennick.

The idea behind compacting locker space was to fit as many of those amenities mentioned on the first level for ease of access and to open up space elsewhere in the bathhouse.

That extra open space will allow for a community room to be built on level two, which could be used for things like birthday parties, functions, and meetings. Other level two amenities could include lifeguard offices and even a concessions area.

As for the roof terrace, it has not been fully designed yet, but it will preserve the current canopy up there.

Regarding feedback among residents at the meeting, it was scattered and touched upon many things, such as moving the lifeguard offices in the bathhouse, wanting to use personal chairs for seating, making the area inclusive for those with disabilities, and much more.

The PowerPoint from Monday's meeting, which gives visuals for all these plans, can be found at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/boston-centers-youth-families/bcyf-clougherty-pool>. A survey will also be posted so residents can make their voices heard regarding what they want at the new pool.

NEWS BRIEFS

MICHAEL P. QUINN DINNER DANCE RETURNS APRIL 1 TO KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

Michael P. Quinn's mission of assisting the talents youth of our beloved town has been made possible by your continued support.

Preparations are now underway for the 54th annual Michael P. Quinn Dinner Dance on Saturday, April 1, at the Bunker Hill Knights of Columbus Hall, 545 Medford St. in Charlestown.

The 2022 Quinn Scholar, Elle M Woods, will be saluted during the Dinner Dance. Elle is a 2022 graduate of Boston Latin School who is matriculating at Northeastern University, Bouve College of Nursing.

The program book will be dedicated to John A "Jack" Whelan, who passed away on July 12, 2022. Jack was a legendary Townie who gave much for the betterment of the community. Commanding Brigadier General Kyle B Ellison, Marine Corps, War fighting Laboratory/Futures Directorate, Vice Chief, Officer of Naval Research, will be the featured speaker.

The evening meal will be pre-

pared by Sandra McLaughlin, and entertainment provided by Alan La Bella. Tickets are \$ 50 and can be purchased by writing to P.O. Box 290216, Charlestown, MA, 02129; emailing maryfitzpatrick10@comcast.net; or calling Ronan at 617-242-5493.

OLD CHARLESTOWN SCHOOLBOYS ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIPS

The Old Charlestown Schoolboys Association has announced that a number of scholarships are available to any Charlestown schoolboy who: is a senior in high school; is a resident of Charlestown; and will be entering college or preparatory or technical school or will be entering the sophomore, junior or senior year in that school.

Applications are available from the Charlestown Branch of the Boston Public Library, the Boys & Girls Club, St. Mary/St. Catherine of Sienna offices, and the St. Francis de Sales office.

Applications must be received no later than March 24.

If you have any questions, call James O'Brien at 617-543-5384.

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CHARLESTOWN HIGH TRACK TEAM



Photo by Patrick O'Connor

The Charlestown High track team get together for a group photo on Tuesday, February 7, at the Reggie Lewis Track Center in Roxbury prior to taking part in the annual BPS track championship held every year in February.

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SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Patriot-Bridge encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to deb@reverejournal.com.

SENIORS SWEETHEART VALENTINE'S DAY BREAKFAST

Derek Kouyoumjian photos



Boston City Councilor Gabriela "Gigi" Coletta hands Valentine's Day cookies, provided by Johnny Pomodoro Restaurant on Main Street in Charlestown, to Marie Contrado and Vinnie DeLeo.

Massachusetts State Reps. Dan Ryan and Aaron Michlewitz organized a Seniors Sweetheart Valentine's Day Breakfast at the Nazzaro Community Center, bringing together the Walk The Beat ladies from the North End and Charlestown.



Golden Age Center Director Meaghan Murray, Boston Police CSO Chrissy Vraibel, and Aaron Michlewitz staff member Karen D'Amico put together breakfast plates.



Massachusetts State Rep. Dan Ryan hands out Valentine's Day bouquets, provided by Baby Boyle Bouquets, to attendees of the breakfast.



Massachusetts State Rep. Aaron Michlewitz hands out Valentine's Day bouquets, provided by Baby Boyle Bouquets, to attendees of the breakfast.



Massachusetts State Rep. Aaron Michlewitz hands out breakfast plates to some of the Walk The Beat ladies from Charlestown.



City Hall Liason to the North End Ciara D'Amico with her mother Karen, who works at the office of Massachusetts State Rep Aaron Michlewitz



Massachusetts State Reps. Aaron Michlewitz and Dan Ryan handed out Valentine's Day bouquets, provided by Baby Boyle Bouquets, to attendees of the breakfast. They organized the Breakfast bringing together these active ladies who reside in their districts.



Nancy Testa with Maryann Longo proudly holds their Valentine's Day bouquets, provided by Baby Boyle Bouquets in Charlestown.



Rita Mulkarm gets a Valentine's Day cookie, provided by Johnny Pomodoro Restaurant on Main Street in Charlestown, from Boston Police Sgt. Gino Provenzano.

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SENIORS SWEETHEART VALENTINE'S DAY BREAKFAST

Derek Kouyoumjian photos



North End residents Laura Benvenuto and Beverly Ranese show off their Valentine's Day sweaters.



North End resident Frank Contrado holds his Valentine's Day gift.



The team from Boston Police A1 Station.



Boston City Hall Liason to the North End Ciara D'Amico with Maryann Longo, Joanne DiFronzo, and Dolly Gambali.



The Nazzarro Community Center was the setting for the meeting of the two Walk The Beat teams.



Gina Susi, Grace Luongo, Maria Gasvrro, and Rosa DiMao with Andretti Stanziani Legislative Aide to Dan Ryan (center).



Boston Police Officer Lauren Woods, Massachusetts State Reps Dan Ryan and Aaron Michlewitz (center), Boston City Councilor Gabriela "Gigi" Coletta, Director of Community Engagement Enrique Pepin, City Hall Liason to the North End Ciara D'Amico, Lydia Edwards Chief Of Staff Eduardo Moreno, and City of Boston Chief Of Community Engagement Briana Millor.



Boston Police CSO Chrissy Vraibel and Golden Age Center Director Meaghan Murray with The Charlestown Walk The Beat Team.

LOCAL AUTHOR'S LATEST WORK

Tom MacDonald at Charlestown Library to discuss his new crime novel

Award-winning author Tom MacDonald has published his fifth Dermot Sparhawk crime novel, The Murder of Vincent Dunn. Tom will be at the Charlestown Library on Thursday, February 16, at 6:00 PM to talk about the book. In 2021 Tom's "Nashua River Floater" was a finalist in the Shamus Awards Best P.I. Short Story category.

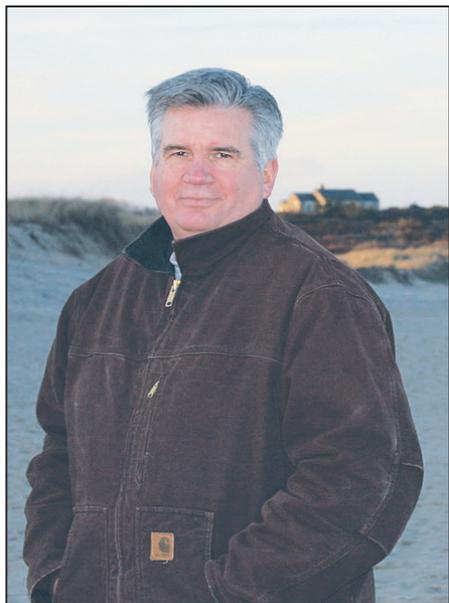
His first book, The Charlestown Connection, won the Next Generation 2012 Indie Book Awards, Best First Novel and was nominated for the 2012 International Thriller Awards, Best First Novel. A Finalist for American Librarians Association 2011 Book of the Year Award, and nominated for the Reader's Choice Award, Salt Lake City Utah Library Association.

Tom's second novel, Beyond the Bridge, a prequel to The Charlestown Connection,

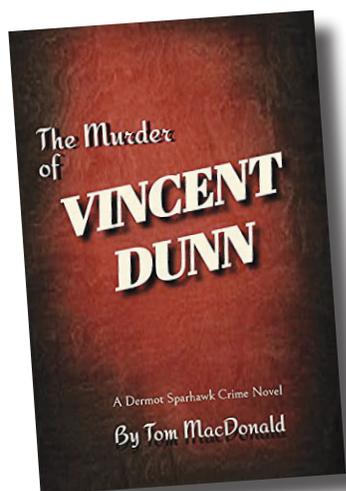
was published 2013 and

received an Honorable Mention at the 2013 New England Book Festival and was a Finalist for the 2013 Best Book of the Year CLUE Award, and a Finalist for the 2013 USA Best Book Award in the Fiction Thriller/Adventure category. His third, The Revenge of Liam McGrew, was a Finalist for Best 2015 Crime Novel of the Year—Beverly Hills International Book Awards. His fourth, Murder in the Charlestown Bricks, was a finalist for the 2019 Indie Book of the Year.

Tom is the Director of Harvest on Vine Food Pantry, a ministry of St. Mary-St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Charlestown. He teaches creative writing at Boston College's Woods School of Advancing Studies.



Tom MacDonald.



Charlestown again central to a crime story, but with a difference

Everyone thinks they know Charlestown, the small, historically Irish-Catholic neighborhood of Boston sometimes referred to as the bank robbery capital of the country.

The "Green Square Mile," as it's been known, has given novelists and filmmakers alike plenty of fodder for crime stories. Authors Dennis Lehane (Mystic River, Gone Baby, Gone), Chuck Hogan (Prince of Thieves), and Tom MacDonald (The Charlestown Connection, The Murder of Vincent Dunn), have each drawn inspiration from the tough, working-class town and its infamous Code of Silence. Dennis Leary and Ben Affleck have both put Charlestown's rep for turning out bank robbers at the core of films, Leary with Monument Ave., and Affleck with The Town, based on Hogan's novel.

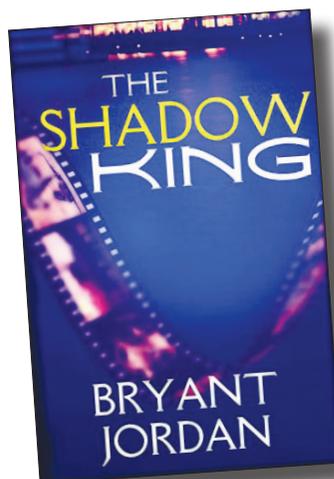
But with The Shadow King, a Charlestown crime novel Bryant Jordan.

at last has a Townie-born and bred author, Bryant Jordan.

"The idea for the story came from some old congressional testimony I came across while in Washington," Jordan said. "Like my protagonist, Jimmy Lyons, I was always interested in movies. The testimony I found dealt with a very different kind of entertainment-industry scandal, one that planted the seed for The Shadow King.

In the novel, Jimmy Lyons agrees to help Chinatown restaurant owner Zhang Wei get in touch with a Townie gangster, Mickey Ryan. Zhang wants to buy back some old movies Ryan stole from him, and offers Lyons \$2,000

(JORDAN Pg. 11)



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Charlestown 2022 vs. 2023

Year to date Statistics (Single Family) per MLS

Table with 4 columns: Listing Inventory on 2/15, Listing Units, Average Days on Market, Average List Price, Average \$/SF, Approx. Months of Supply. Rows show 2022 vs 2023 data with percentage changes.



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Wu announces call for artists to redesign neighborhood signs

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the launch of the Neighborhood Sign Redesign program in partnership with the Office of Arts & Culture, the Department of Property Management, and the Department of Innovation and Technology. Across Boston, neighborhood signs welcome residents and visitors to the diverse communities that make up the City. The City of Boston is seeking artists to redesign these signs. Artists are invited to submit up to three conceptual designs based upon a template provided by the City.

"Our neighborhood signs are often the first thing residents and visitors see when they cross into different areas throughout Bos-

ton," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm excited for this program to empower our residents to create welcoming, creative signs to reflect the unique, vibrant neighborhoods and communities they live and work in."

"This is an exciting, new opportunity to recognize that Boston's arts community is embedded in every neighborhood of Boston," said Kara Elliott-Ortega, Chief of Arts and Culture. "Whether someone is a longtime resident of a neighborhood or a visitor seeing a neighborhood for the first time, they'll be greeted by vibrant, inspiring artwork that reflects the talent and creativity of our city. We look forward to supporting

local artists in this new initiative and creating new opportunities to celebrate their work!"

"Boston is home to many talented artists. This is such a great opportunity to continue to financially invest in artists' practices while beautifying our neighborhoods," said Brianna Millor, Chief of Community Engagement.

"Boston is a city of amazing neighborhoods rich in culture, creativity, and filled with diversity. We are proud to take every opportunity to promote our artists, including engaging them in developing our neighborhood welcome signs. I'm very much looking forward to seeing their talents displayed across our city," said Dion

Irish, Chief of Operations.

Artists must be at least 18 years old and must live or work in the City of Boston to participate. Preference will be given to artists who live or work in the neighborhood where each sign is located. Selected artists will receive a \$1,000 stipend for their artwork. This program is funded in part by an investment from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to aid in Boston's local recovery and will support local artists.

Submitted artwork should align with the City of Boston's Curatorial Vision. The Curatorial Vision for the City of Boston is to foster the creation and collection of artworks that reflect the peo-

ple, ideas, histories, and futures of Boston, the traditional homeland of the Massachusetts people and the home of the neighboring Wampanoag and Nipmuc peoples. The City aims to commission and approve artworks that engage communities and directly respond to, enrich, and enliven the urban environment.

The deadline for artists to submit designs is March 3, 2023. The City will select artists by mid-March and will work collaboratively with them to refine final designs.

Interested artists can apply and learn more at boston.gov/sign-redesign.

Boston's COVID-19 metrics continue to trend downward

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) shared the following updates on the city's COVID-19 metrics:

COVID-19 particles in Boston's wastewater decreased by 47% over the past 14 days and are now at an average of 1,014 RNA copies/mL (data as of Jan. 29).

Seven out of the 11 neighborhood's tested are below the city-wide average.

The XBB variant accounted for 83% of all viral particles sampled.

New COVID-19 cases per day increased by 1.4% over the past seven days, which is considered a stable trend, but have decreased by 16% over the past 14 days (data as of Feb. 5).

Boston hospitals had 179 new COVID-19 related hospital admissions through February 6. This trend decreased by 8% over the

past seven days and by 15% over the past 14 days.

BPHC also announced it will continue to offer free COVID-19 vaccines at sites throughout the city at least through the end of 2023. The decision comes after the Biden administration announced its plans to end the national public health emergency for COVID-19 on May 11, which will end federal funding for state and local COVID-19 responses. Free vaccinations have been a major part of BPHC's effort to control the spread of COVID-19, save lives, and remove barriers to care that led to major racial disparities in COVID-19 cases and mortality.

"Offering free COVID-19 vaccines has been an indispensable part of our pandemic response in Boston and will become even more important as the national public

health emergency ends," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission and Commissioner of Public Health. "Equity-focused, public health polices like this are why we have been able to significantly reduce pandemic related racial and ethnic health disparities in Boston."

New data from BPHC show the city has made substantial progress over the past two years in narrowing the racial inequities in COVID-19 mortality rates. At the outset of the pandemic, Black and Latinx residents in Boston saw higher case and mortality rates due to COVID-19. In 2020, Black residents had an age-adjusted mortality rate of 171.2 per 100,000 residents, the highest among any ethnicity. Latinx residents had the second highest annual mortality rate

in 2020 of 141 per 100,000 residents. These rates have decreased by more than 60% for both in 2022. COVID-19 mortality rates among Black individuals in Boston are now down to 58.9 per 100,000 residents and 53.6 per 100,000 for Latinx residents. Though inequities have narrowed, age-adjusted mortality rates are still significantly higher among Black and Latinx Bostonians than white Bostonians (22% and 12% higher, respectively) due to COVID-19.

Much more work remains to close these gaps and ensure greater health equity in Boston, namely increasing COVID-19 vaccination and booster uptake, which remains the most effective to prevent severe COVID-19 infection that can result in hospitalization and death.

Suffolk County remains at

medium risk for community transmission according to the CDC. As such, BPHC reminds residents to take proper precautions to reduce their risk of contracting COVID-19.

Test for COVID-19 before and after gathering indoors.

Contact a health care provider about treatment options if you test positive.

Stay home if you're sick.

Wear a mask indoors and on public transportation.

Stay up to date on your COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters.

If you have not received a COVID-19 booster since September 2022, you are due to receive the bivalent, omicron-specific booster.

Get your annual flu vaccination.

Wash hands and disinfect shared surfaces regularly.

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Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts celebrate youth mentoring

On Feb. 4, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts (BBBSEM) celebrated youth mentoring at the agency's 24th annual Big Night at the House of Blues in Boston. Guests danced the night away to music by Michael Franti, supergroup Ezra Ray Hart, and Boston's own French Lick. Held in-person for the first time in two years, the nonprofit's largest fundraiser also featured Daphne Lopes, proud guardian of Little Aren and community activist as she was honored with the James J. Pallotta Award. The event raised more than \$1.5 million to support the organization's year-round community, site-based and campus-based programs.

Mark O'Donnell, President and CEO of Big Brother Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts, emceed the event and spoke about the importance of mentoring, now more than ever, as the need from youth and families has never been higher.

"Children are still feeling the effects from COVID," says O'Donnell, a former two-time Big Brother. "Post-pandemic children benefit from a caring adult mentor who can help build social skills and self-confidence. We need more male identifying volunteers, as well as volunteers that speak different languages, to help create positive relationships between matches."

Lopes, a Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts Constituent Advisory Board member, proud guardian of Little Brother Aren, and community activist,



Shown (left to right) are BBBSEM Board Chair Rosemary Sheehan, Big Brother Ryan Hathaway, Guardian and James J. Pallotta Award recipient Daphne Lopes, BBBSEM President and CEO Mark O'Donnell, and auctioneer John Terrio.

shared her passion and gratitude for BBBSEM programming as she accepted the James J. Pallotta Award. In addition to thanking the village around her, including other guardians in the program, she shared a self-written poem.

Big Night is the nonprofit's largest annual fundraiser. Since its inception in 1998, Big Night has raised more than \$42 million,

supporting one-to-one friendships between young people and adult mentors.

"I've seen firsthand the impact that mentoring makes in a child's life," says O'Donnell. "We rely heavily on the revenue that comes from special events like Big Night to continue running our programs. We need the public's support and partnership as we continue serving

as many youth and families as possible."

Now more than ever, youth need additional academic, social and emotional support. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts partners with families to provide children with one-to-one relationships with caring adult mentors who help them reach their fullest potential. In its 74th

year, BBBSEM aims to serve nearly 4,000 youth.

The nonprofit is already looking forward to next year's 25th anniversary Big Night to be held at the MGM Music Hall on Feb. 23, 2024.

For more information, to become a volunteer or to register your children, visit: www.emassbig.org.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts is an innovative, energetic organization that is making a real difference in the lives of nearly 4,000 youth annually by providing them with an invested, caring adult mentor in long-term, professionally supported relationships. With research and proven outcomes at its core, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts is working to defend the potential of children facing adversity and ensure every child has the support from caring adults that they need for healthy development and success in life. The organization's vision is to inspire, engage and transform communities in Eastern Massachusetts by helping youth achieve their full potential, contributing to healthier families, better schools, more confident futures and stronger communities. Throughout its 74 years, the largest Big Brothers Big Sisters affiliate in New England has created and served more than 20,000 matches. For more information about the agency and its mission, visit www.emassbig.org.

Boston's most popular dog names released

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department's Animal Care and Control Division reminds city dog owners that the annual deadline for licensing their pets is March 31. All dogs in Boston require a new license each year.

"We take this time each year to remind pet owners not only that licensing your pet is the law, but a license is your pet's ID and provides their best chance to be returned home if they become lost," noted Animal Care and Control Director Alexis Trzcinski. "If your dog ever gets out, the chances of being reunited are greatly increased with a license."

In preparation for the 2023 licensing deadline, the Animal Care and Control Division released licensing data from the previous year to reveal the most popular dog names of 2022.

The most popular male dog name in 2022 was once again Charlie with 81 registered in Boston, while Bentley brought up the back of the pack with 23 males

with that name. The top female name registered was also the same this year, Luna, with 114 registered while 25th place went to Piper with 27 licensed.

The data also provides the 25 most popular dog breeds registered in Boston. In 2022 the top ten breeds were Labrador Retriever with 1,694 registered, Golden Retriever (727), Chihuahua (480), German Shepherd (392), Miniature Poodle (331), Pit Bull (321), Yorkshire Terrier (314), Shih Tzu (312), Beagle (311), and Australian Shepherd (296).

All dog owners need to license their dogs by Friday, March 31, 2023. Dogs must be licensed if they are older than six months. Owners must provide a copy of their dog's current rabies certificate. For spayed and neutered pets, owners must submit proof of spaying or neutering if they have not done so previously.

Licensing fees are \$15 for a neutered male or spayed female or \$30 for an intact male or female.

The dog licensing fee is waived for service animals and residents age 70 and older. Owners must also pay any outstanding Animal Care and Control fines. The fine for an unlicensed dog is \$50. Please call (617) 635-5348 or email animalcontrol@boston.gov with any questions about the licensing process or to update your information in the database.

For an in-depth guide on dog licensing, including a link to license your dog online, visit Animal Care and Control's how-to article.

The City of Boston will also host a series of dog licensing and pet vaccine clinics from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays from March 4 to June 3 at seven BCYF community centers. For details, fees, and locations please visit boston.gov/animals or call (617) 635-1800.

Animal Care & Control posts photos of adoptable pets on their social media accounts at [instagram.com/bostonanimalcontrol](https://www.instagram.com/bostonanimalcontrol), [twitter.com/animalboston](https://www.twitter.com/animalboston) and [facebook.com/bostonanimal](https://www.facebook.com/bostonanimal).

Top 25 female dog names of 2022

Based on City of Boston 2022 Licensing Data

- 1 Luna
- 2 Bella
- 3 Daisy
- 4 Lucy
- 5 Lola
- 6 Penny
- 7 Rosie
- 8 Stella
- 9 Bailey
- 10 Sadie
- 11 Molly
- 12 Ruby
- 13 Chloe
- 14 Coco
- 15 Maggie
- 16 Lily
- 17 Millie
- 18 Sophie
- 19 Olive
- 20 Winnie
- 21 Pepper
- 22 Lulu
- 23 Willow
- 24 Ellie
- 25 Piper

Top 25 male dog names of 2022

Based on City of Boston 2022 Licensing Data

- 1 Charlie
- 2 Cooper
- 3 Teddy
- 4 Max
- 5 Finn
- 6 Oliver
- 7 Milo
- 8 Winston
- 9 Rocky
- 10 Ollie
- 11 Louie
- 12 Toby
- 13 Gus
- 14 Henry
- 15 Buddy
- 16 Tucker
- 17 Archie
- 18 Leo
- 19 Jack
- 20 Bear
- 21 Bruno
- 22 Ziggy
- 23 Jackson
- 24 Duke
- 25 Bentley

LOCAL STUDENTS EARN ACADEMIC HONORS

NAMED TO DEAN'S LIST FOR THE FALL 2022 SEMESTER AT QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY

The following area student Timothy McGinley of Charlestown was named to the dean's list

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

Quinnipiac is a private, coeducational, non-sectarian institution located 90 minutes north of New York City and two hours from Boston. The university enrolls 9,500 students in 110 degree programs through its Schools of Business, Communications, Education, Computing and Engineering, Health Sciences, Law, Medicine, Nursing and the College of Arts and Sciences. Quinnipiac is recognized by U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review's "The Best 387 Colleges." For more information,

please visit qu.edu. Connect with Quinnipiac on Facebook and follow Quinnipiac on Twitter @QuinnipiacU.

STUDENTS NAMED DEAN'S LIST

Stonehill College is proud to recognize the students named to the Dean's List this semester. To qualify for this honor, students must have a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better and must have successfully completed all courses for which they were registered.

Rory Carrier of Charlestown
Felix Tan of Charlestown

Stonehill College, a Catholic institution of higher learning, was founded by the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1948. Located on the beautiful 384-acre campus and former estate of Frederick Lothrop Ames in North Easton, Massachusetts, it is a community of scholarship and faith, anchored by a belief in the inherent dignity of each person.

Through more than 100 academic programs in the liberal arts, sciences, business and pre-professional field, Stonehill College provides an education of the highest caliber that fosters critical think-

ing, free inquiry and the interchange of ideas for over 2,500 students.

Stonehill College educates the whole person so that each Stonehill graduate thinks, acts and leads with courage toward the creation of a more just and compassionate world.

HOLY CROSS ANNOUNCES FALL 2022 DEAN'S LIST

College of the Holy Cross congratulates the following students

who were named to the Fall 2022 Dean's List for outstanding academic achievement during the fall semester of the 2022-23 academic year.

Elizabeth Griffith of Charlestown, member of the class of 2024

James Hauser of Charlestown, member of the class of 2025

Nicole Soto-Guerrero of Charlestown, member of the class of 2024

To qualify, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5

or higher.

About Holy Cross

The College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., is among the nation's leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 3,100 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life.

JORDAN (from pg. 8)

just to connect him to Ryan. He takes the deal, albeit reluctantly. His own gang-connected father had been killed years earlier, and Lyons is in no hurry to follow in those footsteps. But he soon finds himself in the middle of a possible gang war as Zhang, Ryan and South Boston mobster Whitey Bulger vie for the films that have a whiff of blackmail about them. And if that's not enough to worry about, he's being stalked by the man who killed his father.

Though fiction, Jordan sets the story against the backdrop of Charlestown in 1974, as neighborhood drugs are getting harder, overdoses are claiming lives, and armed robberies, including of banks, are taking a heavy toll. Adding to the tension is the looming plan to desegregate Boston schools through forced busing. Charlestown, a nearly all-White

community that wants to keep it that way, is on edge over the thought of sending its children to predominantly Black schools while Black students sit in Charlestown classrooms.

"I spent nearly 40 years writing non-fiction. I covered courts, cops, town government, business. Everything except sports. The second half of my career I spent covering the military," Jordan said. "There's no way I could write a novel set in Charlestown, or anywhere, really, and leave out the harsh realities, the dark side. Every place has a dark side. It's just important to remember that everyplace has a good side, as well."

Bryant Jordan was born and raised in Charlestown. He graduated from Charlestown High School in 1969 and several months later joined the Army. He served

in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division from 1970 to 1971. A 1979 graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, he earned a BA in Journalism/English Studies. He worked for several newspapers in Massachusetts, including The (Quincy) Patriot-Ledger, The Cape Cod Times and The (Attleboro) Sun Chronicle. He also was the Business Editor for The Keene Sentinel and a correspondent for The Manchester Union Leader in New Hampshire. He later worked for Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times, just outside Washington, DC, and Military.com, a DC-based online news operation, where his beats included Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, and the White House.

Jordan retired and moved to Ireland with his Charlestown-born and raised wife, Linda, in 2016.

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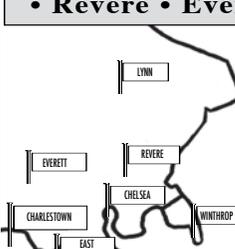
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FRESH AND LOCAL

Steam it!

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

If all you're steaming is vegetables, you are missing out on a world of easy cooking. Just think of all those Dim Sum carts filled with bamboo steamer baskets of dumplings, fish balls, buns, and cakes.

New England cooking includes many steamed favorites. We love clam shack "steamers," the local name for soft-shelled clams steamed in salt water, wine, or beer. Steaming is our preferred way to cook lobsters or crabs. Traditional Boston brown bread is steamed in a coffee can. This makes sense when you realize that many colonial homes did not have

an oven.

Steaming is a great way to cook fish at home. Classic Asian recipes for scallion ginger fish and French fine dining Paupiette de Sole are both steamed. Delicate fish can be steamed off the burner in just the residual steam in the pan. This helps prevent overcooking.

Double Duty

Melissa Clark recently published her recipe for One Pot Salmon and Rice in the New York Times. She started by steaming a pot of coconut rice with a bit of green curry paste added for zest. When the rice was about half cooked, she added the fish. She wrote, "...since salmon's so easy-



Steamed dumplings are always a treat! (photo by Rasmus Gundorff Sæderup)

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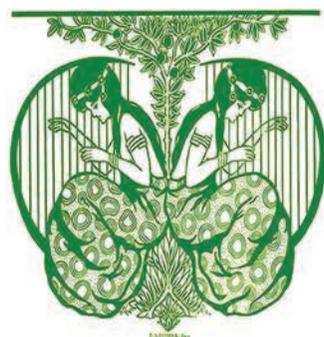
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going, draping the filets right on top of the rice to steam struck me as the simplest way to go, with the fewest dishes to wash afterward."

Clark is right about clean-up. Not only will you use fewer pots and pans when you steam things but this wet cooking method also makes those things you use easier to clean. Another trick used by those who do a lot of steaming is to protect the steamer with parchment paper with holes to let steam move about. You can make your own or buy these premade to fit popular steamer sizes.

Equipment

You can spend money and take up space with specialized steam-

ing appliances. However, there's a good chance that your kitchen will have something that can be used to steam food. A soup pot with a folding steamer basket will work fine for many items. Other food can be steamed on a heat-resistant dinner plate.

Most companies that sell pans offer a multi-pot with a couple of baskets that let you steam more than one item at a time. These come in various materials and price points from aluminum to stainless steel. Some cooks use their rice cookers as steamers. Instant Pots have steamer settings.

Simple multi-level bamboo steamers let you cook different food on each level, and you can

remove each item from the stack when it is cooked to your desired doneness.

If you have a wok, you could use it for steaming. Although wok guru, Grace Young warns that this might ruin the seasoning patina. She suggests a second wok just for steaming and boiling.

Steaming Tips

Never underestimate the danger of burns with steam. Use protection for your hands when you touch the pan or steamer. Always lift covers away from your face, so the cover protects you from the steam.

Make certain any plate or bowl you use in a steamer is heat resistant. To encourage good steam circulation, put an upside-down saucer under your food dish to lift it from the bottom of the cooking pot.

Make sure the water does not boil away. You can open the steaming vessel to check the water level. While this is most important when steaming a whole chicken or large pudding, it can also happen with shorter cooking times.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

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