By Dan Rabb

Is the Baker administration using fuzzy math when it comes to justifying the proposed sale of the Hynes Convention Center? Many in the Back Bay think so. Community leaders have expressed skepticism about figures cited by state authorities regarding how much the property may be worth and just how much the aging convention hall contributes to the economy of the Back Bay. “Our experience has been that the numbers that they’ve put out have been both inflated on the sales figure and deflated on the economic impact.” Continued on Page 2

By Dan Rabb

If you’re planning on shipping out gifts and cards to your loved ones this holiday season, it is best to visit the post office prior to Monday, December 16. That will be the busiest day of the year for mail and delivery drop-offs nationwide, said Stephen Doherty, United States Postal Service (USPS) communications specialist. Continued on Page 2

By Joe Walsh

Every two weeks, about 100 residents stop by the Fenway’s Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral to buy 12-pound bags of fruit and vegetables. The type of food varies by season, but it is always fresh and healthy. The price? Just $2 per bag. A collaboration between the Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway CDC) and local nonprofit Fair Foods, this low cost program is on its fourth year in the neighborhood. Fair Foods buys fresh surplus produce from distributors and delivers it to places like the Fenway, where residents then pick up the goods. Continued on Page 2

By Joe Walsh

Amid modern Boston’s towering skyscrapers and subterranean highways, a public official dedicated to weighing fish might seem out of place. But it’s technically required by state law.

In 1888, the Commonwealth instructed every coastal city and town to appoint an independent “public weigher of fish.” This official earned a princely 20 cents per 1,000 pound to ensure that the day’s catches were measured accurately. Even though the job is now largely obsolete, the law remains on the books, meaning that places like Boston are still expected to hire a fish weigher.

This law might be a red herring nowadays. Boston does not appear to be violating the law. Continued on Page 2
Fish Law
Continued from Page 1

to have a dedicated fish weigher anymore, but the city probably isn’t at risk of running afoul of state authorities. The city’s Inspectors’ Services Department (ISD) has a weights and measures unit that regulates all goods, including fish.

“Weights and Measures regulates the scales once the goods reach the market,” ISD spokesperson Lisa Timberlake told The Boston Guardian in an email.

But when the fish weighing law was passed, these measurements were no joke. Some fishermen were dishonest about the size of their hauls, fishers stuffed their weight to earn a higher payout, one federal report found. Fishing was still important to Massachusetts’ economy, and if mariners or dealers were not honest about their wares, it could wreak haddock, er, havoc, on the industry.

To prevent these shenanigans, state legislators passed a law directing towns and cities to choose a fish weigher. These officials measured fishing boats’ hauls for a nominal fee if the buyer, seller or majority of the boat’s crew requested it. Any scalawags who interfered with this work faced a fine of up to $50.

The law was surprisingly controversial in Boston. In 1890, members of the City Council groused that neither the city’s fishermen nor the dealers on T’Wharf, now Long Wharf, wanted an official weigher. A cottage industry of private weighers already existed, councilors said, so the system was a pointless irritant.

“I don’t believe the weight of fish has realized enough from his office to pay for the fish that he has eaten,” joked Councilor Charles Wallace Hallstrom. Others saw some use for the system. Public officials were less prone to corruption than private weighers, and they could mediate disputes, some councilors said. But Hallstrom suggested that dealers just measure hauls with “their own scales,” drawing laughter from fish-minded councilors.

Halstrom urged the state to repeal the law, but his gambit failed. William P. Cherrington was reappointed as Boston’s fish weigher three weeks later, and the policy has remained on the state’s books ever since.

Over the last 131 years, Boston’s public fish weighers have gradually faded into history. State regulators no longer expect fishermen to measure their product at the dock, though a spokesperson for the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation said that fish weighers are still used in other port cities like New Bedford. In most cases, local agencies like ISD now handle weights and measures, the agency noted.

But was the law ever necessary in Boston? For Cherrington, who eventually quit his job in frustration, the answer is likely no. After two years as Boston’s weigher, he was reportedly never asked to weigh a single fish.

“It is an empty honor, and a mighty little one too,” an official told The Boston Globe in 1890.

Black Monday
Continued from Page 1

“As far as the collections, the amount of mail that’s coming into our system, Monday’s going to be the busiest day,” said Doherty. “That’s when a lot of people finally realize they’ve got to send those holiday cards or they’re not going to get there in time.”

Low Cost Food
Continued from Page 1

regardless of income. This system is accessible and affordable, staff say, and it’s growing in popularity.

The Fenway location is one of several dozen that Fair Foods operates in Greater Boston, including a longstanding location on St. Botolph Street, and Fenway organizers said it is a successful program so far. Volunteers initially distributed 50 bags of food in the Fenway every two weeks, but orders doubled in size over the last four years, with even more demand in the summer months.

“They have a good crew over there. They have a lot of volunteers,” said Fair Foods Executive Director Nancy Jamison. “We imagine this year that we’ll do a lot of outreach at that site.

Fair Foods can supply such inexpensive produce because of the relationships it forged with wholesalers nationwide, starting when the group was founded in 1988. Transportation issues and market variations often prevent wholesalers from delivering all of their food to stores, Jamison explained, so they can send surplus to Fair Foods at a steep discount instead of letting it go to waste.

The organization uses this method to “rescue” thousands of pounds of fresh, supermarket quality fruits and vegetables every week, Jamison said. The group then sells it to residents at a nominal price of $2, which Jamison combines with grants and donations to fund the program.

Fair Foods also unique in its system for distributing food to residents. Unlike assistance programs like food pantries, Fair Foods does not require participants to show financial need, inviting any community member to stop by.

Hynes
Continued from Page 1

figure,” said Meg Mainzer-Cohen, executive director of the business-oriented Back Bay Association (BBA).

“We want a third party to come in and really look at this,” said Mainzer-Cohen.

The Baker administration announced in September that it intended to unload the Hynes, part of a plan to fund a $500,000 expansion of the larger Boston Convention and Expo Center (BCEC) in South Boston. The 30-year-old Hynes, they argue, is out of date, under-booked and hemorrhaging money at the rate of $400,000 annually.

Legislative approval is required for the sale, and administration has been busy making its case to lawmakers. In the days following the announcement, administration officials told a Back Bay delegation that they expected the sale to fetch around $300 million, the bulk of the BCEC expansion costs.

Mainzer-Cohen familiar with development in the Back Bay has suggested this figure is laughably optimistic. The 5.6 acre site sits over the Mass Pike and connects to Copley Place and two hotels amidst an interconnected tangle of commercial infrastructure, making any redevelopment an expensive proposition.

An uncertain approval process also awaits. If the state’s target price is based on comprehensive analysis, the administration is not revealing its methods.

“It is very unclear to me how they came up with the numbers that they did,” said State Representative Jay Livingston, whose district includes much of the Back Bay. “Even if they had some developer do some market research, that has been a very private process.”

In a written statement to The Boston Guardian, a Massachusetts Convention Center Authority spokesperson said the state worked with multiple experts to inform its decision to sell the Hynes, and that an analysis of comparable properties showed the convention center “could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars.”

While the state may be eager to tap into Boston’s building boom, Back Bay leaders worry that the governor’s appointees spearheading the Hynes sale have little or no experience with urban development on this scale.

“It seems like a bunch of suburban non-developers who are very excited to play Boston developer and excited to throw around these big numbers,” said one elected official. “None of them have any idea what they’re doing.”

Back Bay stakeholders also said the state undervalues the Hynes’ role as an economic driver for the neighborhood.

They point to the fact that many successful convention centers lose money but serve as so-called loss leaders, bringing in tax revenue and consumers to local businesses. Indeed, the Hynes still brings in hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, patronizing everything from restaurants and retail shops to Duck Tours.

The Baker administration argues that redevelopment of the property will increase the site’s economic impact, and has commissioned consulting firm RKG Associates to study the issue. A report is due to be released in the coming weeks.

Yet some local groups don’t trust the state to keep its fingers off the scale. The BBA has spent over $100,000 to fund an independent audit of the Hynes’ economic impact and development possibilities for the site. Mainzer-Cohen says the study will be released around the same time as the state’s report.
Remembering Hillbilly Ranch

By Dan Rabb

With Dolly Parton premiering a musical in Downtown Boston this week, some locals may be scratching their heads. This city may be the hub of the universe, but it's a thousand miles north of the Grand Old Opry.

While no one can accuse Boston of being the Nashville of the northeast, the Emerson Colonial stage where Parton's "Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol" debuted lies just feet away from what was once the epicenter of country, western and bluegrass music in New England. In the 1960s and 1970s, Park Square's Hillbilly Ranch brought live country and western music to the city and helped Boston make its modest mark on the country music landscape.

From 1960 to 1980, the Hillbilly Ranch was the only venue in Boston devoted to country music. Something of a landmark with its stockade fence façade, the bar's patrons could hear live country, western and bluegrass five nights a week. The bulk of the entertainers were locally based acts transplanted from across the south, but the bar also hosted performances by legends like Johnny Cash and Loretta Lynn.

The Hillbilly Ranch found success from the moment it opened its doors, tapping into two trends rapidly changing the face of the city. In the 1940s and 1950s, Americans from rural areas...
Hut Heist
On December 3 at about 4:23 pm, one officer responded to a radio call for an armed robbery at Sunglass Hut, 86 Newbury Street.

Upon arrival, the officer noticed the victim/employee was shaking and stuttering, obviously stunned by what she just experienced.

The victim stated that an unknown man entered the store and headed to the back section where he began to stuff a Barnes & Noble shopping bag with 19 pairs of sunglasses, valued at $7,600. The day before, the victim witnessed the same man entering the store and leaving with 26 pairs of sunglasses.

During round two, the suspect claimed the first robbery was easy and told the victim, “If you grab the phone, I will put a bullet in your head.” The suspect told the victim he had a lime green sole.

Three additional officers arrived on scene and collected the video surveillance.

Seeing Double
On December 4 at about 12:26 pm, an officer took a walk-in report for fraudulent impersonation.

The victim informed the officer that she was aware someone had stolen her identity for employment purposes. A state department employee was shaking and stuttering, obviously stunned by what she just experienced. The victim told the victim her identity was being used and so the victim took it upon herself to confront the employee.

A manager said they could not locate or confirm that a person with the victim’s name was working at the business. Then the victim attempted to contact the business headquarters, but heard nothing back.

Stay Calm
Several officers responded to Fitness Hub, 223 Newbury Street, on December 4 around 7 pm for reports of an armed robbery.

Officers talked to the victim/employee who said she was at the checkout counter when an armed man approached her. The man had a six to eight inch serrated knife.

He told the victim to stay calm as he reached behind the counter to take roughly $200 from the register before running out the door.

Officers searched the area to no avail. Detectives arrived to process the scene.

Job Opening
An officer took a walk-in report for an auto theft around 9:30 am on December 5.

The victim said his employee parked a company vehicle at 1 East Lexo Street around 12:45 am. Around 6 am, the victim realized the truck had been stolen. Looks like there’s a job opening!

The vehicle is a white Ford F-350 with lime green soles.

Valet Violators
On December 8 around 5:58 pm, one officer responded to a radio call for two illegally parked vehicles at Deuxave, 370 Commonweal Avenue.

The deus cars had been parked in valet zones for an hour, according to a valet attendant from the restaurant. This faux pas commonly ends in tickets and towing. This situation was no different.

The officer attempted to locate the vehicle owners but had no luck. After checking with a sergeant, the officer was granted permission to call a towing company and bid the vehicles adieu.

Beacon Street Break In
One officer responded to a radio call for a breaking and entering at the 200 block of Beacon Street around 4:47 am on December 8.

The victim told the officer that 20 minutes earlier while she walked her dog outside, an unknown man broke into her basement apartment. The suspect took the victim’s iPhone 8 Plus and a 13 inch MacBook Pro. These items are valued at roughly $2,000 total.

Unfortunately, the victim claimed she could not provide a better description for the suspect other than he wore all black. There was one other witness.

The victim did admit the door that the suspect entered through was unlocked. After using the Find My iPhone tracking app, the victim saw her phone was last located at Court Street before being turned off.

Keep Your Burberry Close
One officer responded to a radio call for a larceny report on December 8 around 4:30 pm at the 1100 block of Boylston Street.

The emergency that the officer hastily made their way to was for a missing Burberry hoodie. The victim said an unknown person must have stolen his $600 zip-up hoodie straight out of his laundry.

The hoodie went missing between the hours of 2 and 3 pm when the victim started a load in his building’s common laundry room. After returning to retrieve his clothing at 3 pm, he did notice an “unfamiliar” short blonde woman carrying lots of bags.

Sorry Sideswiper
On December 8 around 1:15 pm, an officer took a walk-in report for a hit and run at the intersection of Washington and East Concord Streets.

After parking her car at about 11 pm on December 7 and leaving the restaurant, the victim discovered the front driver’s side had been hit. The unknown assailant did leave a note though admitting to sideswiping the victim’s car and a “Sorry.” along with a telephone number.

The victim went to the police first and said she would try to reach out to whoever wrote the note.

Window Pane
On December 8 around 9:40 pm, one officer responded to the 100 block of Chandler Street to take a breaking and entering report.

The victim said she returned home to find one of her windows open, though she knew she had not opened a window since September. The window opening to a fire stairwell was opened halfway and damaged, along with two other damaged windows.

Not only were the windows damaged, but her front door was as well. Thankfully, the victim saw nothing out of order except for the windows and door.

Detectives arrived and officers advised the victim to get new window and door locks.

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By Joe Walsh

An army of volunteers braved cold weather last weekend to decorate all of the Hill’s lampposts with festive garlands, a holiday tradition that is now in its 20th year.

The annual tradition reached its porcelain anniversary this week, leaving Beacon Hill’s 1,089 gas lampposts adorned with large garlands and bows. More than 100 residents and friends volunteered for the decorating effort this year, a massive undertaking marshalled by longtime organizer Ivy A. Turner.

This work was not easy, according to Turner. Chilly weather slowed down the volunteers, plus this season’s garlands were thick and tougher to work with. But the neighborhood still managed to rally for the effort, with motivated teams trudging across the Hill with ladders all weekend. Almost all the lamps were decorated on Saturday.

Continued on Page 6
The Boston Guardian

Hillbilly Ranch
Continued from Page 3

poured into cities where jobs were more plentiful. Boston was no exception, particularly in the wake of World War II and the Korean War, which established Boston as a major military port and industrial center. These transplants had nowhere in Boston to hear the music they grew up on.

“In Boston, there were the shipyards in Charlestown and Quincy and factories all over town,” said photographer Henry Horenstein, a documentarian of country music history. “People came here for work, but at night they wanted a place to go out and hear their music.”

Soon after the Hillbilly Ranch opened its doors, Boston began demolishing Scollay Square, pushing the red light district into the Combat Zone. Located where the State Transportation Building now stands, the Hillbilly Ranch found an immediate clientele in the soldiers and sailors who frequented the area. The bar was enough of a fixture on country’s national touring circuit that it was immortalized in a John Lincoln Wright song following its closure in 1980:

They tore down the Hillbilly Ranch
They wrecking ball blew it away
They put up a government building
The Hillbilly’s gone away

Yet the Hillbilly’s influence on American music has not gone away. While New England has never been a fertile breeding ground for country musicians, the bar provided a home for the city’s small country scene throughout the ’60s and ’70s. These artists profoundly influenced Boston’s exploding folk revival scene in the ’60s, and many of those musicians began mixing bluegrass and other rural American styles into their sound.

Two friends from Massachusetts founded Rounder Records in 1970 to give those artists a platform, launching the style that would eventually be known as “roots” or “Americana,” along with the careers of artists from George Thorogood and Belt Fleck to Alonzo Kraus.

“They discovered these folk singers that connect-
country and old time mountain music and bluegrass music,” said Horenstein. “They saved that music for posterity.”

20th Anniversary
Continued from Page 5

and Sunday, and additional volunteers dealt with
stragglers during the week.

“We had very good turnout,” Turner said. “People volunteer without conditions. They volunteer happily.”

Even if the weather was brutal, this was not the
organizer’s first rodeo. Turner has served as the
Hill’s dean of holiday decorating for more than
two decades.

When locals like Turner and Hampshire
House Owner Tom Keneshaw revived the Beacon
Hill Business Association in 1995, one order of
business was to introduce winter decorations. This
effort initially only included lampposts on Charles
Street and outside businesses. By 2000, though,
the group teamed up with the Beacon Hill Civic
Association to decorate the entire Hill, a special
celebration of the new millennium.

The first year was daunting,” Turner said. But
residents caucused their friends and neighbors into
helping out, and the groups somehow managed to
drape a garland onto every Hill lamppost for
December 2000.

“We spent months planning,” Turner said.

Tubman House
Continued from Page 7

11 residential units set aside for live-work spaces
for artists who have been displaced from the
Piano Factory and other nearby locations, home
ownership opportunities, new minority equity
investment opportunities for communities of
color, construction and permanent employment
for more women and people of color, and
almost 5,000 square feet of space dedicated to
community programming for non-profit partners
and neighborhood groups. The sale will also allow
USES to double their service capacity. And finally,
the development team has worked with all six
existing non-profit tenants to assist them with
relocation at no financial cost to them.

We recognize that development and gentri-
fication issues have divided our neighborhood for
decades. Since taking office less than two years ago,
we have been outspoken against displacement and
have worked tirelessly with residents and activists
to seek solutions to our housing crisis and fight for
a more equitable and inclusive future. In this case,
there will be far more harm in losing childcare,
education, mentoring, after-school and
summer programs, and financial empowerment
services for our most in need neighbors, than the
sale of an inefficient building costing USES more
than $350,000 annually to operate and in need of
millions of dollars of deferred maintenance.

However, given the existing socioeconomic
disparities in our community, to do anything
that undermines the survival of institutions that
provide critical services to vulnerable families is not
an option. The only choice before us is one that
ensures the viability of USES well into the future.

Kim Janey is Boston City Councilor for District 7,
and Jon Santiago is State Representative for the 9th
Suffolk District.

Bike Lanes
Continued from Page 7

the downtown and peripheral neighborhoods
for bikers and pedestrians.

While a new bike lane along Stuart Street is
expected within a year, BTD officials are currently
exploring design options for a series of improve-
ments to facilitate bike travel from the end of the
Southwest Corridor Park near Copley through to
the Financial District. The so-called Southwest
Corridor Extension, they said, will bring the most
significant changes to Bay Village and Park Plaza.

“The idea is that we want to bring the experience
of the Southwest Corridor, which is a family
friendly biking and walking path, and bring it into
Downtown,” said BTD Planner Nathaniel Fink.

“We need to find a way for people to circulate
into and around this area in a way that feels more
friendly and inviting.”

A string of major building projects planned in
the years ahead may also lead to additional bike
lanes and improved crossings. Expected develop-
ments at the Motor Mart Garage, 212 Stuart Street
and 288 Tremont all have bike lanes and other
public realm improvements as conditions of their
approval.

BTD’s Fink says the upcoming work will not
only help commutes, but will improve quality
of life for Bay Village residents, making it easier
to cross streets and further connecting the neighbor-
hood with the Back Bay and South End.

Another beneficiary of the changes will be
tourists, according to Fink. He says the city regular-
ly receives complaints that the neighborhood is
impossible to navigate without insider knowledge.

“We’re talking to residents and commuters, but
we’re also thinking about how we can improve
this experience for international tourists or tourists
from other parts of the country,” he said. “We
want them to experience the city intuitively.

Grants
Continued from Page 5

Association. This year’s winners pitched
a range of small cultural, charitable and
environmental projects to the BHCA,
earning the organization’s support out of a
pool of 20 applicants.

“We were really happy that we got so
many applications,” said BHCA President
Robert Whitney.

The grant money is flowing from a
decades old trust fund, initially set up as a
community benefit from a Cambridge Street
deal real estate development. This year, with
the fund’s assets topping $500,000, the BHCA
decided to start giving out a portion of its
annual returns to worthy local organizations
that plan to enhance the neighborhood’s
civic life.

This year’s largest beneficiary was the
Old West Church, which earned $10,000

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Haywood, who represented the church
along with Pastor Sara Garrard.

Another $5,000 went to the Beacon Hill
Friends House, a cooperative living space
with roots in the Hill’s historical Quaker
community. The grant will subsidize the cost
of living in the house for some prospective
residents, making the space affordable and
inclusive for a more diverse swath of the
city’s population.

Meanwhile, about half of this year’s grants
were for cultural and historical endeavors,
totaling $5,000. The Beacon Hill Art Walk
plans to advertise its walking tour of hidden
neighborhood artistic gems, the Nichols
House Museum earned funds to build a new
learning center for visitors and Hill resident
Jack Burton earned $500 to interview
residents and produce a multimedia “oral
history” of the neighborhood.

Finally, the Esplanade Association earned
a grant to set up community cleanup days
near the new Fanny Appleton Footbridge at
Charles Circle. A small park now exists at
the base of the bridge, and the organization
hopes to use $2,500 to set up a volunteer
program with the BHCA for that space.

“We certainly didn’t want to see it
immedi-
ately fall into decline,” said Michael Nichols,
the Esplanade Association’s executive
director. “We’re excited about partnering
to make sure that it stays beautiful.

The Community Fund’s first year was
encouraging, according to Whitney. The
applicant pool was healthy, he said, and the
grants went to a diverse slate of causes.

“The group we got was a great start,”
Whitney said. “We tried to look at different
kinds of applications.”

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Boston Guardian

6 | December 13, 2019
Tubman House Sale will benefit community

By Kim Janey and Jon Santiago

We have listened carefully to the debate surrounding the sale of the United South End Settlements building at 566 Columbus Ave., known as the Harriet Tubman House. We have also spoken to countless neighbors who are committed to ensuring that USES can continue to serve South End and Roxbury families, as it has for the past 127 years.

As your elected officials, we cannot and will not imagine a South End without USES and the important services they provide to neighborhood families. Therefore, while we understand the frustration of some in our community, and as difficult as this situation is, we support USES in their mission to save their organization from financial ruin by selling their building.

Founded by six African-American women in 1906, the Harriet Tubman House opened on Holyoke Street in the South End as a home to black women migrating from the South. Moving to several locations before settling on Columbus Avenue, the legacy of Harriet Tubman has never been tied to bricks and mortar but to its commitment to serving those most in need. Today, her memory is honored with programming and services aimed at disrupting the cycle of poverty, as is the mission of USES and the various tenants that have called this building home over the years.

There are currently over 350 children and families who rely on USES services, over 80% from communities of color and over 70% from low-income families. Many of USES’ families need these services to stay afloat in an otherwise expensive neighborhood. If the sale of 566 Columbus does not go through, USES will be forced to shut down and close its doors permanently. That would only exacerbate the gentrification we seek to curtail.

Without USES, we will lose our largest local provider of social services to low-income families. As your elected officials, we will not allow this to happen and will fight to ensure that non-profit organizations in our community can continue their good work into the future.

Regarding USES’ proposal, a socially responsible and viable plan with community input has been crafted for the sale of its property at 566 Columbus Ave. They selected a locally invested development partner and a diverse team that understands our neighborhood because its members live and work here. This sale will have other benefits, including affordable housing that exceeds the city’s requirements.

City Planning Bay Village Bike Lanes

By Dan Rabb

The new decade will bring new bike paths and pedestrian crossings to the streets surrounding Bay Village, long a perilous nexus of wide roadways and awkward intersections with little infrastructure for bikers and walkers.

Although in recent years the City of Boston has prioritized the creation of bike lanes and other infrastructure to give residents commuting options other than an automobile or the T, there is little evidence of these efforts on Park Plaza and Bay Village’s major roadways. A tangle of major thoroughfares like Tremont Street, Columbus Avenue and Charles Street, the neighborhood’s roadways remain notably car-centric despite lying at the nexus of bike routes from the outer neighborhoods to the city’s main employment hubs.

“I’ve almost been hit on my bike a thousand times here, because there is no bike infrastructure whatsoever,” said Joshua Dankoff, a Jamaica Plain resident who bikes through the area daily on route to his job in the Financial District. “It’s overall a really bad area for anyone trying to get through on a bike. No matter what age or ability, it’s just really bad.”

But all this will soon change, according to planners at the Boston Transportation Department (BTD). Starting in fall of 2020, the city will kick off a series of projects that will add bike lanes, improved traffic signals and crosswalks to Bay Village’s surrounding roadways. The bulk of the work is part of a broader initiative to better connect...
‘Tis The Season To Do Good

Toy Drives
Park Street Church is collecting toys and clothing for the Root Cellar, a ministry partner that ministers to refugees and asylum seekers in Lewiston, Maine. New and unwrapped items will be accepted. Donations can choose one item for a child or sponsor multiple. The last day for drop-offs is this Sunday, December 15 in the family ministry check-in area at 1 Park Street.

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) is in the process of gathering toys for their annual Holiday Toy Drive. Last year, ABCD collected more than 6,000 toys for children in the Greater Boston area. The organization requests new, unopened toys for children ages 0 to 12. No toys mimicking violence or weapons will be accepted. Those interested in donating have until 5 pm on Friday, December 13. Drop-offs will be accepted at 110 Claybourne Street, Dorchester. Fill out a Google form and find more information at BostonABCD.org.

The Home for Little Wanderers are coordinating a Big Wishes Gift Drive from December 2 to 21. If you want to fulfill a child or family's wish list, please do so by December 13. Their website, TheHome.org, provides general gift ideas, Amazon wish lists and ways to host your own gift drive. New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at your nearest Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, such as 399 Boylston Street, 10 Berkeley Street or 66 Beacon Street until Tuesday, December 17.

Winter Clothing Donations
Boston winters are tough for everyone, but not every person has access to warm clothing. Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) is hoping to change that. Throughout the winter, ABCD is accepting donations of coats, scarves, boots, gloves, hats and anything else to help families bundle up. The organization will also gladly help set up individual coat and winter clothing drives. Call (617) 348-6559 or email Give@BostonABCD.org for more information.

Now through January 12, Anton's Cleaners will be collecting winter outerwear through Coats for Kids. Winter clothing in good condition for children, babies and adults will be accepted. Make sure to empty out the pockets of the coats and only donate clothing with no stains, broken zippers or tears. Anton's cleans all donations free of charge. Donate at any of the following locations: 37 Charles Street, 203 Mass Ave or 116 W Broadway. J. Crew and Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams have teamed up with One Warm Coat for a coat drive. Anyone who donates a gently worn piece of outerwear will receive $25 off their purchase of $125 at J. Crew. Donations are being accepted until December 26 at J. Crew, 100 Huntington Avenue and Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, 142 Berkeley Street.

Holiday Cards for Hope
Friends of Boston’s Homeless has 11 different Boston winter scenes to choose from. Orders of over 100 are able to be customized. Cards are only $1, but make sure to order in advance to get your cards in time for the holidays. Visit FOBH.Long/HolidayCards/ for more information.

For $20, The Home for Little Wanderers will send 12 unique holiday cards designed by local children. The Home’s programs benefit children in every stage of life through special education, foster care, behavioral health and adoption. You can even order a 2020 calendar filled with original children’s artwork, perfect for a meaningful gift. Visit TheHome.org to order.

Choose from nine different winter designs for your holiday cards this season from Rosie’s Place. All proceeds go to funding assistance for the 12,000 women Rosie’s Place helps each year. Packs of 10 cards are sold for $20, variety packs of 15 are sold for $26 or you can customize your own. Shop online at RosiePlace.org or call (617) 518-0238. Project Bread provides food to those in need and works to end the cycle of hunger. By purchasing a holiday card from them, you can help feed a local Massachusetts family. The cards are designed by local artists with over 20 different design options and varying price points. Order online at ProjectBread.org.

First Church in Boston,
Unitarian Universalist
66 Marlborough St – (617) 267-6730
Friday, December 13
Back Bay Ringers winter concert in the Sanctuary, 5:30-10:30 pm.
Saturday, December 19
Solstice service with poetry, music and special guest, Aine Minogue. 6 pm.
Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. 5:30 pm.

Trinity Church
206 Clarendon St – (617) 536-0944
Friday
Wedyly lunchtime organ recitals. 12:15 pm.
Saturday, December 14
Two free Candlelight Carols events, a holiday tradition since 1909. 4 and 7 pm.
Sunday, December 15
Candlelight Carols benefit show, tickets range from $45 to $120. 4 pm.

First Baptist Church of Boston
110 Comm Ave – (617) 267-3148
Wednesday
Bible study. 6:30 pm.
Sunday
Worship with an organist and four-part music sung by the Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by Park Street Orchestra. 7-9 pm.
Friday, December 20
Blue Christmas service with singing and prayer, along with jazz and a cappella music. 7-8 pm.

First Baptist Church of Christ, Scientist
250 Mass Ave – (617) 450-2000
Tuesday, December 31
First Night Pipes on the Plaza organ concert. 4-5 pm.

In the Pews

First Night Pipes on the Plaza organ concert. 4-5 pm.

Mondays, Fridays, Saturdays
Two guided tour options where visitors can learn about the chapel’s art and architecture or climb the church tower and visit the crypt. Varying prices and times.

Weekends in December
Drop in the church to hear about the origins of holiday traditions at the first church in New England to celebrate Christmas.

Sunday, December 15
Morning Light worship in the intimate Little Chapel with music, prayer and reflection, 64 Beacon St. 9 am.

Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Eve family service with a special nativity service. 5 pm.

Christmas Eve lessons and carols, a traditional service with full choir and candlelight. 10:30 pm.

Park Street Church
1 Park St – (617) 523-3383
Friday, December 13
A Park Street Family Christmas Extravaganza with a capella performance, games, a skit, cookie decorating, photo booth and more! RSVP: Families@ParkStreet.org. 7-9:30 pm.

Sunday, December 15
Lessons and carols, music sung by the Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by Park Street Orchestra. 7-9 pm.

Friday, December 20
Blue Christmas service with singing and prayer, along with jazz and a cappella music. 7-8 pm.

Tuesday, December 24
A service intended for families with young children with a live nativity scene and sermon. 3 pm.

Traditional service with choir, brass, harp and timpani accompanying carols. 5 and 7 pm.

The First Church of Christ, Scientist
250 Mass Ave – (617) 450-2000
Tuesday, December 31
First Night Pipes on the Plaza organ concert. 4-5 pm.
How About a Low Tech Gift This Year?

Finding the perfect holiday gift can often be a daunting task. Wish lists may seem impersonal, many times filled with trendy gadgets and gizmos. To gift an item from the hand and the heart, some shoppers may try to consider ditching the Amazon orders this year and instead handmade a unique present.

But do not let the stress of creating a one-of-a-kind piece deter you. Support the community by looking to local artisans for guidance, or simply buy a piece straight from the source.

On the Hill at 15R Charles Street is Rainbows Pottery Studio, a creative space where customers pick an already high quality crafted pottery piece, such as a mug, wine glass or ornament, and customize it through painting. Owner Allie Carroll also takes special orders if a customer wishes for a professionally done piece and has gift cards for those who wish to give the experience itself.

“The beauty of making a gift is that it comes from the heart and takes actual time to make, not like going to the store and using your credit card,” Carroll said.

In the South End, Minni studio at 71 Thayer Street hosts art sessions aimed at the youngest of artists. Minni’s workshops are supervised by professional artists and are suitable for various ages. Children will often leave with a craft for themselves and someone else, along with a skill they can use in the future. The studio also hosts Design + Wine workshops where adults can play with quality materials and produce anything from beeswax candles to leather coasters.

For a different kind of art, consider teaming up with SoWa Mosaics at 450 Harrison Avenue to create a colorful glass mosaic piece. Audrey Markoff Dunn has over 15 years of experience creating mosaics and shares her knowledge through workshops and private sessions. She has helped customers create mirrors, trees and even mini Citgo signs.

“If someone wants to make a different pattern or go a little bit out of the guide that I’m providing, that’s fine too and everything always turns out good,” Markoff Dunn said.

There are also plenty of holiday markets with an abundance of artisan gifts for purchase. The Fort Point Arts Community is highlighting smaller works of art at their Holiday Small Works Sale now through January 1 at 70A Sleeper Street. Mark Stock, an artist who takes inspiration from his aerospace engineering background, and Jen Mecca, a screen printer and fashion designer, are this week’s featured artists.

This Saturday, December 14 is the Fenway Community Center’s Pop-Up Holiday Bazaar from 9 am until 4 pm. The event is free to attend and will have original artwork, prints, handcrafted jewelry and delicious treats.

Last year, the Copley Society of Art at 158 Newbury Street won a Best of Boston award for Best Art Gallery. Now until December 23 is your chance to snag some affordably priced fine art from one of the city’s top galleries. Hundreds of small artworks in a variety of mediums, such as photography, painting and sculpting, will be for sale. The society will also host a watercolor workshop on December 17 for those who wish to not only shop handmade, but also handmake.
Considered a parlor triplex, it goes without saying that this residence is thoughtfully designed and sure to charm any visitor. Each area of this home is utilized well, whether it be for architectural flair or practicality.

Every inch of the home offers something different, like the grand family room with its ornamental molding, the living room with its natural light and bow window, as well as the two outdoor spaces and their gracious size.

236 Commonwealth Avenue has three bedrooms, four full bathrooms, two direct access deeded parking spaces and multiple fireplaces.

The front door opens up into the first floor family room with an adjacent kitchen and dining area.

The renovated chef’s kitchen has enough counter space for any need. The counters are made from granite and are paired with oak cabinetry. The kitchen has stainless steel appliances, several glass front cabinets and finishes off with a bright eat in area. A large separate island in the kitchen area maximizes the space and has direct access to a sunny outdoor deck.

The formal family room has nearly 11 foot tall ceilings and decorative molding from floor to ceiling. The crisp wainscoting and coffered ceiling make this area stand out and it is accessorized with a crystal chandelier. This first floor family room has an open concept with an additional dining area that fits snugly in front of windows overlooking the private deck.

The second floor living room has a rounded brick fireplace surrounded by built-in shelving and a separate wet bar. A classic bow window brings in plenty of sunshine and looks out to the private deck.

Accessible from the living room is a full bath with a statement chandelier and a mural depicting the Public Garden in bloom. The same floor has a separate laundry room fitted with cabinets, counter space and a sink. Down the hall is the master bedroom with dark hardwood flooring, a fireplace and a bow window.

The master bedroom is bright, airy and has an en-suite bathroom drenched in marble. This luxurious private bath features a steam shower and double vanity. Also in the bathroom is an additional linen closet and wall shelving.

The master also has not one, not two, but four closets and a personal fireplace.

The other bedrooms are located on the garden level and are graciously sized. The bedrooms have desirable traits such as one full en-suite bath, walk-in wardrobe and bow window. Unit 2/3 is 2,100 +/- square feet and priced at $2,775,000. The home is located between Fairfield and Exeter Streets and is directly in front of the Comm Ave Mall, walking distance to public transportation, Trader Joe’s, Boston Public Library, the Charles River, Public Garden and Newbury Street. Contact Judy Pagano of Gibson Sotheby’s at (617) 257-2431 for more information.
51 Hancock Street
Beacon Hill, Boston

Offering an elegant one bedroom condominium in Beacon Hill. Completely stripped back to the studs, this unit was renovated using old-world techniques in a modern open-plan layout. Sleep like royalty in the stunning queen-sized built-in bed. Entertain your guests or work from home at the huge kitchen island under the showpiece 18-light chandelier. Perfectly restored original windows, gleaming walnut hardwood floors and a lovely fireplace area are all part of the charm. Included in the sale are all the furniture components and most of the decor for a true move-in ready “buy-the-look” opportunity. Listed at $669,900.

Listed Exclusively by Marc Marsan
Red Brick Real Estate, LLC.
617-686-0958
marc@redbrickre.com

BREWSTER & BERKOWITZ
REAL ESTATE

Beacon Hill Condominium - 34 Hancock Street Unit 1E

This pristine one bedroom apartment, part of a two building, 17 unit, professionally managed condominium association, is situated on a lovely, wide tree lined street. The pet friendly, smoke-free building has recently been renovated and the unit is in move in condition. There is a new roof, new gutters, a new boiler, and modern thermostats in every apartment. The building has all new ceilings, a new intercom buzzer system and breaker panels. The apartment has a washer/dryer, excellent finishes and high-end appliances. There are six on-site rental parking spaces ($275/m) if available. This apartment is conveniently located near all of the amenities of Cambridge Street.

$s635,000

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NEW LISTING!

236 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE #23 | BACK BAY

New Listing! Stunning Back Bay Parlor Triplex 3 bedroom, 4 full bath residence with 2100+ square feet featuring two private outdoor spaces, and two direct access parking spaces. Every room is exquisite with exceptional original detail throughout. Enter upon a lovely open Family/Dining room featuring a handsome fireplace, and a bow window looking out to your private deck. Beautifully renovated cook’s kitchen. Upstairs overlooks Commonwealth Avenue with its grand formal living room with separate bar area, a fireplace, soaring ceilings and beautiful detail. Separate laundry room. Stunning master bedroom with en-suite luxury marble bath. The 2nd & 3rd bedrooms are spacious and flooded with natural light. Enjoy your own private patio with gated direct access to two parking spaces. This stunning home is located between Exeter & Fairfield Streets in a prominent brownstone with elegant common areas. Truly a must see home!

Offered at: $2,775,000

Judy Pagano
617-257-2431
Judy.Pagano@GibsonSIR.com
JudyPagano.com

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