

# THE BOSTON SUN

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

## 'THE GIVING TEA' AT LENOX HOTEL



Photo by Derek Kouyoumjian

Lucy Santoro attempts her best high tea moment at the Lenox Hotel's 'The Giving Tea' event on Sunday, Dec. 16. With guests like Massachusetts First Lady Lauren Baker and the Nutcracker Bear, the event was able to raise money for the Wonder Fund, which benefits children in state custody.

## BBAC continues contentious Newbury Street proposal to January hearing

By Lauren Bennett

Located on what's known as "the block of death," the buildings at 356, 358, and 260 Newbury St. could be in for a major facelift should a contentious proposal be accepted by the Back Bay Architectural Commission.

The architects previously presented a proposal as an advisory review, and returned before the Commission on Dec. 12 with an official proposal for the buildings. The proposal includes the

construction of a penthouse addition and roof decks, along with a restaurant at the dig out on the ground level, open retail at the first floor, and a boutique hotel above, according to Meyer and Meyer Project Manager Adam Gilmore. The hotel is proposed to have 18 units.

The point of contention within the Commission and also the community is the way the buildings will look—Meyer and Meyer is pro-

(BBAC Pg. 3)

## BMC, Botticelli request no marijuana facilities within a half-mile of each other

By Seth Daniel

Boston Medical Center (BMC) and former U.S. Drug Czar Michael Botticelli – now director of the Grayken Center for Addiction Medicine at BMC – said they have concerns about retail marijuana facilities and request

that none be sited within a half-mile of the South End hospital campus.

"BMC shares a neighborhood with many individuals who have not yet found their path to recovery and are severely comprised by

(MARIJUANA Pg. 2)

## Community gets update on redevelopment plans for Villa Victoria arts center

By Dan Murphy

The community received the first update on the status of the stalled redevelopment of the Villa Victoria Center for the Arts during a meeting on Monday, Dec. 17, at the Blackstone Community Center.

Peter Munkenbeck, a member of the design team since April, said the board of IBA - the community organization founded in 1967 to ensure that residents of the Villa Victoria housing development in the South End maintain "long-

term control over their housing and neighborhood" – decided about a year and a half ago to undertake an extensive renovation of the envelope of the building at 85 West Newton St.

When the contractor began work to restore the roofs of the sanctuary and parish house in September of 2017, however, it was soon determined that the tower could no longer support the weight of the steeple and belfry, and that some wall elements could no longer support the roof.

Construction was put on hold that November as a result.

In May of 2018, the design team took what Mulkenbeck described as a "first pass" at remedying the situation and concluded that in addition to the \$10.9 million already spent on the project, it would cost another \$6 million to complete. The team opted instead in August to erect a temporary roof and "essentially mothball" work on the sanctuary, Mulkenbeck

(VILLA VICTORIA Pg. 3)

## Huntington Wine and Spirits: a local favorite

By Lauren Bennett

On a chilly Thursday morning, delivery people are greeted with a smile and directed by owner Steven Rubin as to where to place their hand trucks of alcoholic beverages. Many people are drawn here for the customer service experience and friendly atmosphere

when purchasing their wine or beer.

This is family-owned Huntington Wine and Sprits, which has been serving the Symphony and Northeastern University area since 1936—first as a local market. Known as Huntington Market, it offered the neighborhood fresh meats and groceries, with liquor

and wine added later on. Though it has been closed for about 15 years, the store also once held Big H Deli.

Today, the store only offers beer, wine, and spirits, and fourth-generation owner Steven Rubin prides himself in the great customer ser-

(HUNTINGTON WINE & SPIRITS Pg. 5)

## TITUS SPARROW CHRISTMAS PARTY



Photo by Keiko Hiroimi

The Merry Dickens Carolers enjoyed singing a holiday favorite during the Titus Sparrow Park Winter Party last Sunday, Dec. 16, in the South End park. Neighbors enjoyed hot beverages, sweets and singing.





# EDITORIAL

## ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON

This is a wonderful time of the year, to paraphrase the song, with holiday music playing in the malls and on our car radios, resurrecting our earliest childhood memories -- even for the younger set -- of Christmases-past.

We choose just the right tree, decorate it carefully with our family-heirloom ornaments, and when we first turn on the lights, it brings a smile even to the oldest among us.

Despite the hectic rushing to and fro, everybody it seems, is in a good mood. We endure the traffic, the long lines in stores, and more, because we know that what we are doing will bring joy and happiness to others.

For those of us with young children, we get to see Christmas through their eyes, giving us a second-chance to experience the wonder and joy that we felt when we were their age.

Although all of us celebrate Christmas in our own way, the common thread is one of peace, joy, and happiness, regardless of religious or secular beliefs. Whether it be Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or a Seinfeldian Festivus, the spirit of the season imbues us with a sense of togetherness that (unfortunately) only comes once a year.

We wish all of our readers a happy holiday season.

## ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS -- SAFELY

Christmas this year is part of what for many people will be a four-day weekend, which means that for many of us, we will be indulging in the "Christmas spirit" early and often.

By no means do we wish to cast negative thoughts, but we would be remiss if we did not remind all of our readers to enjoy the holiday weekend safely. This especially means that we should be careful not to drink and drive, not only as to ourselves, but also as to those whom we know and love.

If someone appears to be under the influence, it is incumbent upon all of us not to let that person get behind the wheel of a car. Call an Uber if you have to -- if it is within our ability to prevent a tragedy, we must be sure to do so.

## THE BOSTON SUN

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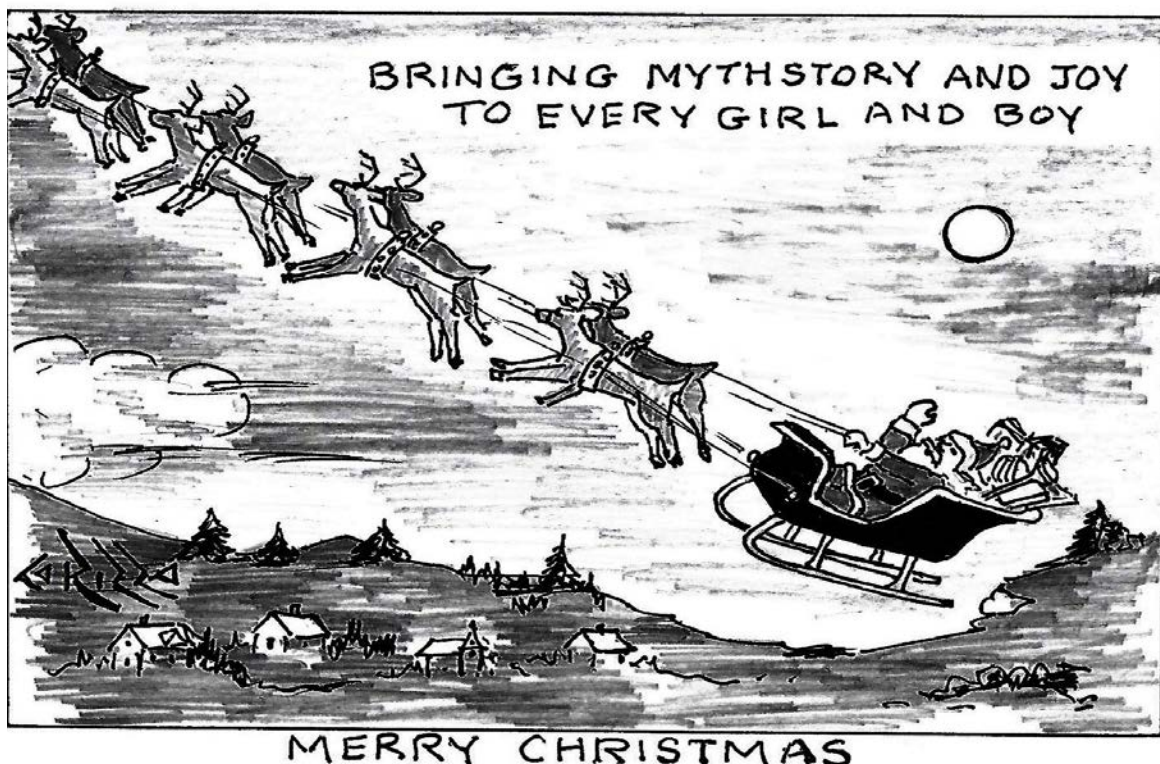
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## Orchard Gardens students say not much has changed at their school

By Seth Daniel

Only weeks after Orchard Gardens K-8 school staff told the Sun about homeless encampments at their school and a student getting stuck by a dirty, discarded drug needle on the playground, the school community rallied once again on Tuesday to say that not much has changed.

Though the school has been dealing with the unsavory fruits

of the opioid epidemic in their schoolyard for some time, the school at the epicenter of the problem on the Mass/Cass corridor began speaking loudly this month.

Initially, the shocking reports of homeless, addicted people camping on their schoolyard, and a student getting stuck with a dirty needle, prompted action and promises. However, students and parents said they are still finding needles and other such problems

at the school.

On Tuesday, they staged a stand-out in front of the school, holding signs that begged Mayor Martin Walsh to speak up.

Walsh said Wednesday morning it is unacceptable that children are dealing with dirty, used needles in their school environment. He said there are many things being done.

"It is completely unacceptable

(ORCHARD GARDENS Pg. 3)

## MARIJUANA (from pg. 1)

their addiction, significant mental health issues and homelessness," Botticelli said. "Given the burden that many in this neighborhood face, the siting of these facilities has the very real potential to exacerbate their problems. BMC is at the very epicenter of Boston's effort to prevent and combat the ravages of addiction, and placing retail marijuana outlets in proximity to BMC and its surrounding vulnerable populations would undermine our collective efforts, and credibility, in this life-and-death struggle in which we are all engaged."

The comments came during an open community meeting Dec. 12 for the siting of a medical marijuana facility, Liberty Compassionates, at 591 Albany St. -- which is a short walk from the BMC campus.

Botticelli and BMC asked that the City not site any marijuana

facility within a half-mile from the edge of BMC. He said the request did include the Liberty site, which he said is close to where more than a dozen treatment programs and treatment facilities reside.

Botticelli was the nation's Drug Czar under President Barack Obama, and has since taken a position as director of BMC's Grayken Center, which focuses on treating and researching opiate addiction -- as well as new and innovative recovery methods.

Botticelli, who has been critical of the efforts to legalize marijuana, said he believes that putting dispensaries near vulnerable populations, such as at BMC, could be detrimental to recovery efforts.

"BMC treats thousands of people with alcohol and substance use disorders every year," he said. "We are acutely aware of how vulnerable people in early recovery are. The siting of these facilities in

proximity to BMC and its patients in early recovery would be particularly destabilizing and could even trigger relapses."

Botticelli concluded his comments by saying BMC is near many low-income and vulnerable populations, youth, homeless individuals, and those with mental health, substance use problems. He said BMC is worried that siting a marijuana facility near those populations could be detrimental.

"As you are well aware, we are in the midst of an epidemic, where thousands of individuals in the Commonwealth are suffering from opioid, alcohol and cannabis-use disorders and we are worried that having facilities near our medical campus will put our patients at increased risk and perpetuate these cycles of addiction, negatively impacting recovery efforts," he said.



## BBAC (from pg. 1)

posing a lot of features made out of glass, including existing doors, as well as some stone elements that would be replaced with cast glass to match the existing details. The glass doors on the floor above the ground level would lose their stoops in this design, much to the dismay of many Commissioners and community members.

The project has been compared to a Chanel store in Amsterdam that uses bricks made out of glass. Gilmore said that since the advisory review, the area of glass has been scaled back 40 or 50 percent.

Commissioner David Eisen said he is concerned about the ornate elements being made out of glass. "It looks sort of like my grandmother's crystal, and I'm sorry to say that's not really a compliment," he said. He suggested doing the reverse; making the ornate elements out of materials that are expected for the area but making the "simpler, blockier elements" out of glass.

"I really like the idea of trying to reinvent the 21st century [using] some of the ways the buildings were made in the 19th century, but I'm sort of questioning the choices you've made about which materials," Eisen added.

"I don't see the elements that we're replacing as particularly ornate, though, frankly," Gilmore responded. "Yes, they're more ornate quote unquote than a block...those are fairly simple; they're more complex than a block but they're not ostentatious," he said.

Commissioner Jerome CooperKing said he thinks it could go "one way or the other," and said to Eisen, "If I'm hearing you right, you're afraid it might look cheap." CooperKing said that he believes the design has the potential for that, but also just the opposite. "It could look like a jewel; it could look like something that is

shockingly beautiful," he said.

BBAC Chair Kathleen Connor said that the project is noticeably different than what was presented in the advisory review, and that it was evident that the glass has been scaled back. "The devil is in the details; I think there are many merchants that would love that exposure from a glass standpoint and that particular part of Newbury Street to have something be so vibrant is a very positive move," she said.

Much of the hearing about this application was regarding whether or not to have a subcommittee regarding the design. Some Commissioners felt that it was best worked out with the full Commission during a regular hearing, while staff and other Commissioners felt that having a subcommittee would allow the project to be considered thoughtfully and carefully so the renovations can be done in the best way for the community.

"It's about respecting the old and injecting the new and having that synergy; that is what would make this successful," Connor said.

CooperKing was concerned with the precedent this might set for the rest of the area, as this much glass is not typical on the historic street. He did, add, however, that he realizes this kind of a project is not affordable for everyone on the street to execute.

Since the stoops on the doors on the floor above the restaurant are proposed to be removed, the doors appear as if they're floating, which Commissioner Weintraub said looks strange and other Commissioners agreed with. Eisen said this project is "not quite ready for prime time."

Meg Mainzer-Cohen of the Back Bay Association expressed her support for the proposal. "We want this to be a home run, we want this to be a success," she

said. "This is tremendously expensive and it will draw people just to look at this as it exists."

Mike Jammen from Urban Meritage owns a few buildings on Newbury Street, and he said that this proposal is "phenomenal."

Others were not as enthusiastic right off the bat. Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay said that she is concerned with the depth of the restaurant, and would like to see "some kind of balcony or base for the floating doors on the second level." She also had concerns with the entry point, and thinks it will be difficult for people to decide where the point of entry is. The architects agreed that a canopy over those "floating" doors would be a good solution.

Laurie Thomas from the Garden Club of the Back Bay said that she thinks the project is "cool," but Newbury Street isn't the place to do this kind of project.

Tom High from backbayhouses.org contributed his two cents to the subcommittee discussion. "I'm surprised to hear there's any hesitancy about the process," he said. "This is an important building. This is an important project and a subcommittee can process it very quickly and come back to the Commission in January with a recommendation."

After deliberating for a little while, the Commission ultimately decided to continue this application to the January hearing and form a subcommittee prior to that hearing. The subcommittee will work through details with the project proponents and provide provisos at the hearing in January. All commissioners with the exception of Patti Quinn requested to sit on the subcommittee.

After the motion passed, Connor told the architects and the community, "We want to do this the right way."

## VILLA VICTORIA (from pg. 1)

said.

Since that time, the design team has brought Kennedy & Violic Architecture of Roxbury on board and determined that it would cost \$12.4 million to rebuild the tower, mount the steeple on top and fix the deteriorating wall elements.

Mulkenbeck said the design team must now choose from four possible solutions.

The first option, which Mulkenbeck described as "unlikely," would be not to rehabilitate the building at all and instead completely demolish it.

A second alternative would leave the parish house intact while razing the sanctuary, only to replace it with a new building that

would adjoin the existing parish house.

The third option would call for the demolition of the parish house and sanctuary while preserving some elements of both that would be incorporated into a new structure.

A fourth alternate, which Munkenbeck said wasn't a likely solution, would "somehow find a design that preserves all the existing building elements."

The design team hopes to narrow the choices down and present them to the community in the spring, as well as decide on a "concept," which would be filed with the South End Landmark Commission in June, Munkenbeck

said.

Vanessa Calderon, executive director of IBA, said while the building's unexpected closure has created complications for Villa Victoria, including the relocation of its preschool and art classes to other sites, the new facility would ideally accommodate all of the organization's offices and programming under one roof.

"We're committed to the building and our programs, and we're do our best to make it work," Calderon said. "We're thinking how we can make this space truly exceptional for the next 50 years and beyond."

## Northeastern officials look to recent achievements and immediate goals

By Dan Murphy

Northeastern officials highlighted some recent accomplishments and imminent goals during a public meeting of its University Task Force held under the auspices of the Boston Planning and Development Agency on Wednesday, Dec. 12, at the Alumni Center.

Kathy Spiegelman, vice president and chief of campus planning and development, cited the completion of 234,000 square-foot Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Complex (ISEC) at 805 Columbus Ave. two years ago, as well as the LightView Apartments at 840 Columbus Ave., which will offer lodging for 825 students when it opens in the fall of 2019, among the university's major recent achievements.

Two new student-housing developments are also proposed for Ryder parking area on Leon Street and the Renaissance parking garage on Columbus Avenue, respectively, providing a total of 175 additional student beds to meet the university's commitment of 1,000 beds.

Northeastern is also undertaking an ongoing emergency project at Hemenway Apartments to relocate students and affordable housing residents; the project is targeted for completion in the spring.

Also slated for completion in early 2019 is a pedestrian crossing that would connect the campus on Columbus Avenue with the rest of the university's property that extends to Tremont Street.

Elsewhere, Northeastern has made a \$26 million investment in construction and committed a

further \$82 million in maintenance costs to redevelop the city-owned William E. Carter Playground on Columbus Avenue into a state-of-the-art park.

Maureen Hickey, director of strategic initiatives in campus planning, said the university has filed two documents with the city outlining future development plans – one for the proposed Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Complex 2 (ISEC2), which would provide space for 100 "principal investigators," and another that would include the proposed redevelopment of Punter's Pub at 450 Huntington Ave., which Northeastern acquired two years ago.

John Tobin, vice president of city and community affairs, discussed offerings that Northeastern has geared towards the surrounding community, including Learning Link, which allows local residents ages 55 and older to audit classes free of charge; and Foundation Year – a first-year college program offering "wrap-around support" and "integrated tutors" to Boston residents, with priority given to applicants living within neighboring zip codes of the campus.

Northeastern also recently sponsored Impact Lending – a program that provided affordable loans to small businesses and again gave priority to places of businesses with nearby zip codes. Loans were given to 35 women- and minority-owned small businesses via Impact Lending, and the university is now assessing the program's effectiveness to figure out how to proceed with it, Spiegelman said.

## ORCHARD GARDENS (from pg. 2)

for young children in the City of Boston to be exposed to needles of any kind, particularly while they are at school," he said. "We have taken steps to protect our students from the harm of the opioid epidemic by increasing the capacity of the Mobile Sharps Unit, prioritizing substance-use education and prevention, and training staff on how to properly dispose of any encountered needle."

Marty Martinez, chief of health and human services, said parents and students may not feel like things are changing, but many things are being done behind the scenes.

He said it is a delicate balance that they're trying to achieve.

He said making sure the school environment is safe and free of dangers is a top priority, but he also said they need to do everything they can to make sure the folks in the neighborhood that are

dealing with a disease get the help they need too.

He said they have mobilized the Sharps Team to make a sweep every morning at 7 a.m. at the school, and that's been happening. He said they remove needles and debris. He also said they have been using the bike cops, even in the cold, to go to the school early and move people along from the school ground and the parking lot. They have also added four outreach workers to the area, and will be bringing on two more soon. They will be charged with interacting with the addicted community in the area and making sure they can get to services.

He added they just had a meeting on Monday with the Police, School Department, Office of Recovery Services, and the public health agencies to see what more could be done to eliminate the issues at Orchard Gardens.



## EIGHT STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Photos by Seth Daniel

The Eight Streets Neighborhood Association held its annual Holiday Party at the Boston Eagle on Tremont Street last Tuesday, Dec. 11. Scores of neighbors joined in the fun to chat over drinks, pizza and a fun raffle. President Michael Almond said it was a great turnout and deemed it another successful gathering.



Mark and Catherine Davidson with their children, Victoria and Peter.



Bill Whelan and Megan Gates.



Doreen Biebusch shows off the wine she won in the Eight Streets raffle to Vice President Ted Pietras.



John Delano, the sponsor of the party, with Robin Johnson and Julia Hibbard of Hingham Savings.



Bernard Peterson, Treasurer Colleen Fitzpatrick, President Michael Almond and State Rep. Aaron Michlewitz.



Eve Ward, Jennifer Haupt and Rich Helle.



Having a blast on the holidays were Beverly Shafer, Misha Zvonar, Vanya Zvonar and Dagmar Sternad.



Bobby Morris and Robert Dunn.



Linda Reisert with President Emeritus John McLachlan.



## HUNTINGTON WINE AND SPIRITS (from pg. 1)

vice the store offers the community.

"We're a real neighborhood store; we cater not just to the Northeastern population and the professors, but also the local residents and businesses and the music community," Rubin said.

The store's knowledgeable staff is available to assist customers as they shop. "We don't want anybody walking around—that's why we stress customer service," he said. He added that if a certain product is not in stock, they will order it and have it ready for the customer within a day and a half to two days. He said that a lot of people will go to the local restaurants and like a certain wine, "and then we bring it in for them."

Rubin said his store differs from other liquor stores in the area because it's one of the largest in downtown Boston, and offers great selection and service "keeping with a neighborhood feel."

With Northeastern University right down the street, Huntington Wine and Spirits is a go-to for many students and professors. "We go by the school calendar, we actually get slow when Northeastern's out on break," Rubin said.

To draw people in for the holidays, Rubin says they emphasize their delivery service during the holiday season, as well as their annual wine sale—any five bottles of wine are 20-percent off storewide. "That's a big draw and wines start at \$5.99," he said.

The store's popularity isn't just limited to the immediate neighborhood. "People from the South End will come on a weekend because of our selection and our wine sale," Rubin added, as well as people from the Fenway.

Huntington Wine and Liquors also does beer, wine, and spirits tastings on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, which Rubin said always draws in a crowd. "That provides what I call the local experience, the neighborhood experience," he said.

### HOLIDAY BUYING GUIDE

Rubin provided the Sun with his recommendations for wine, beer, and liquor that will get everyone in the holiday spirit.

#### BEER

Rubin suggests "real heavy beers" for the holidays, and any beer with nutmeg. His recommendations from his stock include the Sam Adams Winter Classics pack, Harpoon Winter Warmer, a vanilla porter, or a whiskey barrel stout. He said he also recommends any craft cider for the holidays, as they pair well with any food.

#### WINE

"French roses and sparkling roses are always a hit at the holidays," Rubin said. As for reds, "you'd want a more full-bodied, drier-style wine," such as Cabernet Sauvignon. "You don't want a light fresh and fruity," he added. His recommended winter wine is a red blend, such as Cooper and

Thief, which is aged in bourbon whiskey barrels, or Santa Rita Secret Reserve Red Blend, which sells for \$7.99 at Huntington Wine and Spirits—the "best value in the store," Rubin said. For white wines, Rubin recommends staying away from sauvignon blancs and leaning towards a full-bodied chardonnay from California or France. "Anything with ripe apple and pear flavors" is a good choice, Rubin said.

### SPIRITS

Rubin's favorite spirits for the winter include Fireball cinnamon whiskey, McGillicuddy's menthol mint, and Jagermeister. He also recommends any bourbon, because there's "nothing like a good bourbon on a cold winter day," he said. And then "there's always the 'old faithfuls', I call them," he said—Bailey's original cream and Kahlua.

With New Years around the corner, Rubin's value recommendations for sipping while waiting for the ball to drop are "any sparkling wine from France that doesn't say champagne," he said. These wines are produced right outside the champagne region, so they are much more affordable than champagne, even though there's really no difference. "These wines run for \$15 or under, so 'you're saving money by having it the next town over,'" he said.

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

### •TITUS SPARROW WINTER PARTY

The Friends of Titus Sparrow Park invite everyone to a Festive Winter Party on Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. There will be:

- Singing by the Very Merry Dickens Carolers.
- Small gifts for children who attend.
- Hot Chocolate and Coffee provided by the South End Food Emporium.
- Snacks provided by Pepsico.

Please consider bringing some food to share. For those interested, the Friends are supporting the Union United Methodist Church Christmas Gift Drive that provides gifts for children in need, including many in shelters. They asked for wrapped gifts, labeled with content/gender/age/size. For simplicity, we are focusing on books and games for children ages 2-12.

### •THE GIVING TEA AT THE LENOX

Join The Lenox Hotel and First Lady Lauren Baker in giving joy to deserving children across Massachusetts. Every gift placed under the tree, every dollar spent at the tea goes directly to the children served by the Wonderfund. Create

a tradition of giving to others at the Giving Tea.

Adults can enjoy holiday teas, cocktails and savory sandwiches while children decorate cookies & gift tags which will be oriented toward sending messages of hope and joy, child to child, across the Commonwealth for all the presents under the Room in Your Heart tree and to take home.

Cookie and Gift Tag Decorating • Gift Bags • Live Music • Special Guest Appearances • Holiday Attire Suggested.

All attendees are asked to bring an unwrapped gift/gift card to be placed in The Lenox's ROOM IN YOUR HEART, benefiting the annual holiday drive for the WONDERFUND

The Giving Tea takes place on Sunday, Dec. 16, from 2-4 p.m. in the Lenox Hotel, Back Bay.

### • BOSTON WARD 4 DEMS HOLIDAY PARTY

The Boston Ward 4 Democratic Committee will be having its annual holiday party on Tuesday, Dec. 18, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Shun's Kitchen (520 Columbus Ave.). Join local Democrats for an evening of good cheer to celebrate victories

(CONTINUED ON Pg. 10)



Huntington Wine and Spirits owner Steven Rubin gets into the Christmas mood.

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## LENOX HOTEL PRESENTS 'THE GIVING TEA' TO BENEFIT THE WONDER FUND

Photos by Derek Kouyoumjian

The Lenox Hotel was the setting for the latest round of Giving Teas, a benefit event held on Sundays for the holiday season to benefit the Wonder Fund.

The Wonder Fund is a non-profit that works with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) in providing children serviced by the agency with short-term comforts such as toiletries, pajamas, toys, and other necessities. Longer-term benefits from Wonder Fund include gym membership, summer camps, musical programs, and such. These items are often taken for granted but become helpful in times of stress and conflict as are experienced by these children.

This is the first year of partnership with the Lenox Hotel hosting the Giving Tea service. Participants



*The Nutcracker Bear says hello to Maddie Taylor and Lynn Burke.*

enjoyed the typical comforts of tea service, but were visited by Massachusetts First Lady Lauren Baker, as well as The Nutcracker Bear from the Boston Ballet production.

Music, arts and crafts, juice

boxes, and other kid-friendly foods were on hand. Also benefiting the Wonder Fund was the "Room In Your Heart." The Lenox Hotel has arranged in Room 300 at the hotel to fill the room to the ceiling with toys and gifts for children.



*Cousins Brodi Morales and Tahtiana Morales pose with Massachusetts First Lady Lauren Baker and Gianna Brazzo.*



*The Nutcracker Bear thanks Massachusetts First Lady Lauren Baker, Maureen Hailer, Christine Baker, and Karen Valeri for their efforts in making Giving Tea happen at the Lenox Hotel in the Back Bay on Sunday, Dec. 16.*



*The Sajovic Family hangs with The Nutcracker Bear.*



*The Nutcracker Bear hangs out with noted teddy bear fan...Joyce Chin from Boston.*



*The Nutcracker Bear hangs with sisters Lucy and Reilly Santoro and their cousin Jack Egan.*



*The Nutcracker Bear hangs with Brodi Morales.*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
Monday, December 24 5:30 p.m.

Solstice Service...poetry & music

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Thursday, December 20

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## ANNUAL TITUS SPARROW PARK WINTER PARTY

Photos by Keiko Hiromi

The Titus Sparrow Park Winter Party took place at Titus Sparrow Park in the South End on Sunday, Dec. 16. This beloved holiday tradition continued this year with many holiday songs from the Very Merry Dickens Carolers, hot beverages and sweets.



▲ Steven Sloan and Sarah Sloan dancing to the Very Merry Dickens Carolers.

► Annemieke Meissner enjoying hot chocolate at Titus Sparrow.



Derrick Bessaoud, Steven Sloan, Mary Jo Sloan, Alexander Bessaoud and Gary Bailey during Titus Sparrow Park Winter Party.



Charlie Lowell, and Claire and Ellie (L-R) enjoying the Merry Dickens Carolers.



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## ATTENTION TO DETAIL

BY PENNY CHERUBINO

### THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The well-windowed turret in the last clue is on 82-90 Dartmouth St. built circa 2000 and designed by Finegold Alexander Architects. In a decision to approve a change to the original building plans, the South End Landmark District Commission noted that the building, especially the front entry, takes its design cues from the surrounding historic architecture.

The next clue will be found in the Back Bay.

Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.

### THIS WEEK'S CLUE



# 19 Isabella St., 67-69 Church St. return to the Bay Village Licensing/Planning Committee

By Lauren Bennett

Two projects returned to the Bay Village Licensing and Planning meeting on Dec. 17 to provide the community with design updates: the church at 19 Isabella St., and 67-69 Church St.

The Isabella St. church project presented first, with Harry Collings from New Boston told the Bay Village community that they have received some feedback based on the last presentation and their preliminary meeting with the historic district commission. Collings said that nothing has been filed with the Boston Planning and Development Agency [BPDA] yet, but next steps include having a formal hearing with the Bay Village Historic District Commission (BVHDC), and then a date can be set to appear at the Zoning Board of Appeal.

The project consists of making changes to the front of the building for accessibility, and creating an addition to turn the church into condos. Jim Alexander of Finegold Alexander, the architecture firm for the project, said that while the original design had a heavy railing system, the details of the railings are "very consistent with what is currently there." As was presented at the BVHDC, the proposal now includes the lowering of the center door for accessibility, with the stairs to the side doors remaining. Alexander said that they are looking more closely at the detailing of the windows throughout the church, and the addition cannot be seen from Isabella Street. David Goldman from New Boston Ventures added that per suggestion from the BVHDC, the existing church doors on the front of the facade will be fixed open, with the new doors behind them.

The finish for the addition could be a metal panel with a dull finish, or a cementitious panel that would have a soft finish in the gray family, though nothing has been officially chosen yet. Goldman also said that any color decisions will

have to go through the BVHDC and the BPDA for final approval.

Alexander said they received comments that the color of the rear of the church was too dark, so they've introduced a lighter color. There will also be a roof deck and livable space on the roof of the building, but it will be set back from the edge, and all of the sills will be lowered.

Some community members were concerned with the harshness in color change and appearance from the addition to the historic church. "We don't want to mimic the historic building with the addition," Goldman said. This is by no means a final evolution," he added. "This is a direction."

Bay Village Licensing and Planning Committee member Sarah Herlihy said she would like to see better renderings of the buildings, as the shadow on the top of the building in the pictures that represents the roof deck is "deceiving."

"I don't think you're there yet with those materials that you're using," she added. "I just don't think this is there yet."

The general community feeling at the end of the presentation was that the front of the building was executed very well, but the side of the back facade is too bold and would need to be scaled back. Goldman said that he would like to have a smaller working group of community members to work with the architects on the details.

At 67-69 Church St., where restaurant Erbaluce sits (for a few more weeks), architect Anthony Piermarini presented his proposal to the Committee for the third time. Attorney Marc LaCasse said that since they were here last, a Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services abutters meeting was held regarding the project. He added that after approval from the BVNA, the project can move to the Zoning Board of Appeal, which he said wouldn't happen until at least February. "Once zon-

ing relief is obtained, we can go to the landmarks for their approval," he said.

The project at 67-69 Church St. consists of a four-and-a-half story building with commercial space on the ground floor and residential units above. It has been presented to the staff at the BVHDC, as well as preliminarily to the BPDA, according to Piermarini. He said that they are looking to restore the historic base of the building and open it up to the street, as well as put windows in the recessed brick locations on the side of the facade.

"That whole corner gets new treatment at the top," Piermarini said. He said that the plans have not changed since the last presentation, and they are hoping to weave the new addition with the historic restoration. They are proposing a warm metal palette for the addition. The party wall side will have antiqued bronze panels with a patina look, Piermarini said.

The half-story head-house on top of the fourth story is angled towards Shawmut Street, and remains a point of contention with abutters whose view the head-house will block. Sarah Herlihy said that she also does not agree with the half-story.

Gaye Bok of the BVNA said that she thinks this building is too tall, and since Erbaluce is leaving anyway, wondered why the bottom floor can't be used for condos instead of restaurant space.

Bok was told by the team that they need a certain amount of sellable square footage to cover the cost of the "expensive restoration," and condos on the first floor won't be sellable because they'll be right on the street. The development team believes that having a restaurant there will bring the street to life and allow for more glass and larger windows than what currently exists.

The BVNA will continue to have discussions with the development team and the community regarding both of these projects.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Recycled newspapers can be made into cereal boxes, egg cartons, pencil barrels, grocery bags, tissue paper and many other products, including new newspapers!





## ANNUAL FAUSA LUNCHEON



The FAUSA Luncheon is underway.

Photos by Derek Kouyoumjian

FAUSA is the alumni arm of FAWCO, the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas, an organization for Americans who have lived overseas over an extended period of time. It can be difficult to adapt oneself to a foreign culture and

then return home to re-acclimate. It's in this where FAWCO comes in as a support group to help with the social transitioning. The yearly luncheon serves as an opportunity for women in the Boston area who have worked overseas or accompanied their husbands or partners in their work, to reconnect to American life and share stories of their challenges living abroad.



Originally from South Korea, and now living in Paris with her husband, Sanchu Gavell speaks about her experiences transitioning from living in one culture and going to another.



This year's participants of the annual FAUSA Luncheon.



These four ladies have all lived in Italy: Diann Silvia, Barbara Santoro (who has also resided in Africa and Mexico), Nancy Thornley, and Joanna Datillo.



Judy Fitzsimmons has lived in Libya, Ghana, London, and Nigeria, and Lorraine Connolly has spent more than two years in England.



Originally from Iowa, Dee Hajjaj has lived in Kuwait for 30 years, Beirut for 20 years, and Venezuela for two years. Jill Morris has lived in Kuwait for 14 years, London for two years, and Canada for a year.



FAUSA regional coordinator Charlotte DeWitt has lived in Stockholm for more than 10 years, and Barbara Santoro has lived in Italy, Africa, and Mexico



Jean Lawrence has lived in Shanghai, Milan, and Rome.



# NEWS BRIEFS

## BLC APPROVES RELOCATION OF ROBERT BURNS STATUE

The Boston Landmarks Commission approved on Monday the relocation of the Robert Burns statue from its current location in Winthrop Square back to its original location in the West Fens. The statue was originally dedicated in the Fens on Jan. 1, 1920, and several community members have expressed their dissatisfaction with its current location. They wanted it to be back in its original location in time to mark the centennial of its dedication. The original foundation for the statue in the Fens has been found, and it will be placed back on that. The BLC approved the relocation of the statue with the proviso that it is done in coordination with the Parks

Department so as to not get in the way with all of the construction that will be occurring in the area.

## BACK BAY HAPPENINGS

•The NABB Police Panel/Public Safety Committee will hold its next meeting on Dec. 27 from 6 - 7 p.m. in the sanctuary of the First Church of Boston, 66 Marlborough St. For more information, please feel free to email Charles Neckyfarow @ publicsafety@nabbonline.com.

## SOUTH END DATES

•The Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association will NOT have a December meeting. They will start again in January. It will take place on Monday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m. in the Blackstone Community Center.

•Compassionate Organics will hold its official community engagement meeting on Jan. 10, at 6:30 p.m. in the AC Marriott Hotel, 225 Albany St. The proposal is to put a marijuana dispensary at 633 Tremont St. The public is invited to ask questions.

•The South End Forum Opiate Working Group has released its meeting schedule for Winter/Spring 2019. The group will meet at 4 p.m. in the Crosstown Hilton on Jan. 29, Feb. 19, March 19, April 23, and May 21.

•The South End Forum will meet for its first quarterly meeting of 2019 on Jan. 8 at 6 p.m. in the South End Library. One topic of conversation among many will be the re-design options for Tremont Street.

•The BPDA will hold a public meeting regarding the Alexandra Hotel on Jan. 9 from 6 -7:30

p.m. in the second-floor Training Room of the Boston Water & Sewer Commission Building, 980 Harrison Ave., Roxbury, MA 02119. The proponent proposes to retain and restore the facade of the Hotel Alexandra, and construct a new, approximately 150-room, 12-story boutique hotel with ground-floor restaurant and cafe space, and a rooftop level bar/restaurant.

## FENWAY TIMES

•Friday, Feb. 8, and Saturday, Feb. 9, - Red Bull Crashed Ice | 20,000 expected per day | TBA-TBA.

The entertainment license for the 2019 Fenway Park Concerts has been filed, and requests approval for a maximum of 12 concerts in 2019, which is the same number that the City authorized for 2018,

according to Claire Durant, director of business and government affairs for the Red Sox. "For next year's concerts, we will implement all of the measures that we used this year to address and mitigate local impacts," she said in an email newsletter. "We hear your concerns and remain committed to open and candid communication on this and all topics."

The 2019 Fenway Garden Society board has been elected, with Elizabeth Bertolozzi returning as the president and Rick Richter returning as the VP of the Park. Pamela Jorgensen will be the treasurer, Michelle Parkos will be VP of communication and marketing, and David Patel, Sr. will be the VP of administration. "We are so excited and honored to have the opportunity to participate at this level in the coming year," Bertolozzi said.

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS (from pg. 5)

from 2018 and prepare for the new year. There is a suggested donation of \$15 to cover the cost of the buffet provided. For more information, email ward4dems@gmail.com.

## •SOUTH END LIBRARY HOLIDAY CONCERT

The South End Library Holiday Concert with Pat Loomis and his

Friends is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 18 at 6:30 p.m. This year, a Special Guest is being booked, as well, perhaps even a vocalist. Pat Loomis will be there on the sax; with Antonio Loomis, guitar; Jim Dower, piano; Colescott Rubin, bass; and Benny Benson on drums. A holiday dinner will be served, as always. This program is jointly funded by the staff of the library and FOSEL.

## • HOLIDAY EVENTS AT THE PRUDENTIAL CENTER

SANTA IN THE CITY: Now through December 24

Capture the magic of the holiday season and bring the kids for a special photo with Santa in his Winter Wonderland located in Belvidere Arcade. A variety of photo packages are available, starting at \$19.99.

## 31 NIGHTS OF LIGHT...10TH ANNIVERSARY: December 1-31

Celebrating 10 years of raising awareness for our community of nonprofit groups and the causes they tirelessly support, Prudential Center will shine a light on Boston nonprofit organizations this holiday season. Each night of December, the top of Prudential Tower is lit a different color in support of that night's partner. 31 Nights of Light was created to help

community organizations gain key visibility during the holiday season. Participating groups will "flip the switch" each night, with a host of musical performances and speakers each night. From Rosies' Place, Boston Bruins Foundation and Cradles to Crayons there are some amazing organizations being highlighted.

(HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS Pg. 11)

# For the Record

From the Dec. 19 St. Botolph Architectural, City Hall, 5 p.m.: VIOLATION

•258 West Newton St.: Ratification of unapproved work at rear of the structure visible from a public way.

## DESIGN REVIEW

•6-12 Blackwood St. Proposed Work: At rear of the structure replace existing windows with new fenestration. In all three light wells at the rear of the structure install decks and corresponding doors for each deck, repoint brick, and brick small windows.

•102 St. Botolph St. Proposed Work: At rear of the structure 1st floor, install 10'-0" wide glass door and 6'-0" deep deck. Install penthouse setback from St. Botolph Street.

•117 St. Botolph St. #1. Proposed Work: At rear of the structure construct 1 story carport over two existing parking spaces. Install roof deck on top of new carport. Replace two existing windows to create a door and sidelights for roof deck.

•17 St. Durham St. #5. Proposed Work: At front, sides and rear facades of the structure, all levels, remove non-historic aluminum windows and replace with one over one aluminum clad windows.

From the Dec. 19 School Committee meeting, Bolling Building:

•Report: BuildBPS Phase II Update

•Action Item: Closure of Urban Science Academy and West Roxbury Academy

•Report and Action Item: Recommendation and Approval of Isaacson Miller as Superintendent Search Firm

From the Dec. 19 Conservation Commission Meeting, City Hall:

Orders of Conditions accepted:

•Notice of Intent for DEP File No. 006-16XX from CDM Smith on behalf of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department for phase 2 of the Muddy River flood damage reduction limited project located along the Muddy River, Boston, MA (Inland Bank, BVW, LUW, BLSF, Riverfront)

•Notice of Intent for DEP File No. 006-16XX from CDM Smith on behalf of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department for the landscape rehabilitation limited project located

along the Muddy River, Boston, MA (Inland Bank, BVW, LUW, BLSF, Riverfront)

From the Dec. 20 Boston Water & Sewer Commission meeting, BWSC HQ:

•Commission Authorization to Award Contract No. 18-309-011, Water and Sewerage Works Improvements in the Back Bay and South End.

•Commission Authorization to Award Contract No. 19-309-009, Sewer and Drain Condition Monitoring in Fenway/Kenmore, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, and Mattapan.

From the Jan. 8 Licensed Premise Violation Hearing, City Hall, 10 a.m.:

•The Pitcher's Mound, Inc., doing business as: Diamond At Fenway, 72 Brookline Ave., Fenway. Date: 10/23/2018; Sale of alcohol (draft beers) to two intoxicated patrons at 4th floor, Boylston Porch Pub behind Cumberland Terrace.

•A.T.G., Inc., doing business as: Clerys, 331 335 Columbus Ave., South End.

Date: 10/12/2018, Minor in possession of alcohol in inside premise (Beer + Vodka).

•Baseball Tavern, Inc., doing business as: Baseball Tavern, 1270 Boylston St., Fenway.

Date: 10/04/2018, Minor in possession of alcohol (Vodka) inside premise. Failure to check ID properly (Expired MA. License).

•Comm 973 Group LLC, doing business as: T's Pub, 971 973 Commonwealth Ave., Back Bay.

Date: 10/04/2018, Minor in possession of alcohol inside premise.

•Alumni Assoc Of Omicron Chapt. Of Phi Sigma Kappa, doing business as: M.I.T, 487 Commonwealth Ave., Back Bay.

Date: 10/13/2018, Minor in possession of alcohol (Natural Light Beer) inside premise. Occupants smoking inside premise. Overcrowding in excess of licensed capacity of 26 residents, 150 persons inside premise. Expired ISD Certificates, expired on 5/31/2018; Expired Boston Fire Assembly Permit, expired on 6/30/2018.

•Highgate Hotels, L.P., doing business as: Taj Boston, 15 Arlington St., Back Bay.

Date: 10/16/2018, Two patrons of hotel bar observed in possession of alcoholic beverages (Stella Bottle Beer, Vodka + Tonic) on public sidewalk in front of hotel entrance.



## D-4 POLICE NEWS

## UNWANTED RETURN VISITOR

On Wednesday, Dec. 12, at around 4:45 p.m., police responded to a radio call for a known shoplifter at Victoria's Secret at 82 Newbury St.

On arrival, officers met with a loss-prevention investigator, who said he observed a male suspect, known to have shoplifted from Victoria's Secret on previous occasions, place three bottles of Love Star perfume, values at \$116.88, in his coat pocket and then leave the store without paying for the merchandise.

During a pat-frisk of the suspect, police recovered the three allegedly pilfered bottles of perfume from his person. The suspect told officers he had never shoplifted from the store prior to this incident.

The suspect was charged with larceny – shoplifting under \$200 and transported to District 4 headquarters, where he was booked in the usual manner.

## BOMBS AWAY

On Thursday, Dec. 13, at approximately 1:55 p.m., officers responded to 222 Berkeley St. for a bomb threat.

Upon arrival, police spoke to the director of security who said the company had received three emails stating if they didn't pay a \$20,000 Bitcoin ransom, a bomb would explode on the premises.

Police seized the emails as evidence, and the Bomb Unit was notified of the threats.

That same day at about 4:30 p.m., police responded to 142 Berkeley St. for another bomb threat.

On arrival, the officer spoke to the victim who was instructed to pay a \$20,000 Bitcoin ransom or a bomb would explode.

The Bomb Unit was duly notified of the incident.

## VEST-ED INTEREST

On Sunday, Dec. 16, at around 7:23 p.m., police responded to a radio call for a shoplifter in custody at Saks Fifth Avenue at 1 Ring Road.

Upon arrival, store security told officers that the female suspect had attempted to steal a red Canada Goose vest, with a \$440.63 price tag, by putting it on and then concealing the vest beneath her own winter coat. The suspect then continued to shop throughout the store before leaving through its Ring Road street exit.

When security guards confronted the suspect outside the store, she attempted to flee on foot down Ring Road towards Boylston Street. Security guards were then able to apprehend the suspect and recover the stolen vest.

The suspect was charged with shoplifting by asportation and transported to the police station, where she was booked without incident.

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS (from pg. 10)

## •BACK BAY BALL (30+ EVENT)

Looking for an age appropriate upscale New Year's Eve option? All are welcome at this 5-star option overlooking the Boston Common, and for a good cause. The perfect way to usher in 2019 is by joining in and going to the Back Bay Ball. Obviously, there's more to New Year's Eve than just waiting for Ryan Seacrest to ball drop in Times Square. This year, Bostonian's can celebrate the arrival of 2019 at the Annual Back Bay Ball on Dec. 31, 2018 at the Westin Hotel.

Scrumptious dinner stations open at 7 p.m. and reception stations are available from 9-10:30 p.m. Entry into the celebration for socializing, midnight celebration, and party favors all included. There will be both Oskar Wylde live band and a DJ Peter from Club T to ensure an epic dance party. Silent Auction and photos to benefit The Ellie Fund, whose mission is to provide essential support services for breast cancer patients to ease the stresses of everyday life, allowing the focus to be on family, recovery and healing. The event is black-tie optional with a cash

bar, 21+, and discounted hotel rooms are available until deadline. Tickets starting at \$75-\$150 use code NYE19 for \$100 off (full price = \$199 - \$299).

## •EAST BERKELEY NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL

East Berkeley Neighborhood Association (EBNA) will host a winter social in the new year at the Lion's Tail in Ink Block on Thursday, Jan. 3, at 6:30 p.m. There will be complimentary appetizers and a cash bar. Put it on your calendar for the new year.

## AROUND THE CITY

## TWO MILE HOLLOW

Apollinaire Theatre Company presents Leah Nanako Winkler's hilarious play, Dec.21-Jan. 20:Friday, Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, Jan. 13,20, at 3 p.m., at Chelsea Theatre Works, 189 Winnisimmet St., Chelsea. Reception with the cast follows. \$30;seniors, \$25; students, \$15. 617-887-2336,apollinairetheatre.com.

## URBAN NUTCRACKER

Anthony Williams' fun, holiday two-act, two-hour program for all ages, featuring dancers from the newly-founded City Ballet of Boston, appears Dec.20-30, at Boch Center Shubert Theatre, 265 Tremont St., Boston:Dec. 20,21,26-28, at 7 p.m.;Dec. 22,23, 29, at 1 and 5:30 p.m.; and Dec.30 at 1 p.m.Tickets,

\$28-\$118. bochcenter.org, 617-532-1116, groups@bochcenter.org.

## MADELINE'S CHRISTMAS

Boston Children's Theatre presents this one-hour delightful seasonal musical play, Dec. 20-23, based on the book by Ludwig Bemelmans, book, music by Jennifer Kirkeby and Shirley Mier, at Boston Center for the Arts Calderwood Pavilion, 527 Tremont St., South End, Boston; boxoffice@bostontheatrescene.com, 617-933-8600. Cape Cod Theatre Company/Harwich Junior Theatre presents the play through Dec. 30. capecodtheatrecompany.org, info@capecodtheatrecompany.org, 508-532-2002.

## BADFISH

The trio performs a tribute to Sublime, Dec. 26, 8 p.m., for audi-

ence members 18+ years old, at the Sinclair, Boston.\$20-\$25.

## THE LITTLEST ANGEL

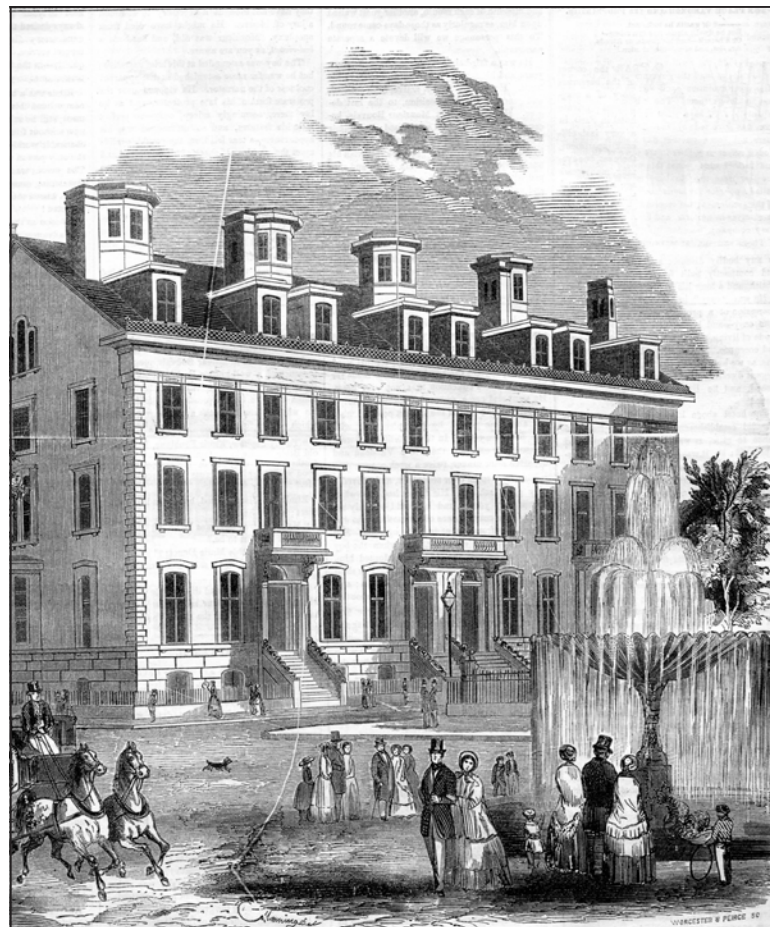
Anna Smulowitz presents the Christmas classic musical, with music by Bill Plante Jr. and Michael Yelle, Dec. 27-30, at Firehouse Center for the Arts Market Square, Newburyport. firehouse.org, 978-462-7336.

## SAILOR MOON SHOUJO SPECTACULAR

Music, burlesque, dance and drag abound in Firehouse Center for the Arts' event, and be sure to dress in costume for the contest, Dec. 29,8 p.m., Market Square, Newburyport. Tickets from \$15.

## LOOKING BACK AT BOSTON

COURTESY OF THE SOUTH END HISTORICAL SOCIETY



East Brookline Street, 1851. This week's featured image is an 1851 engraving of Franklin Square and East Brookline Street. The image was on the front page of Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion in November 1851. Inside the issue, it describes the image as "the fine block of buildings now completing, situated on the corner of Washington and Brookline Streets, fronting Franklin Square. The location of these dwelling-houses is admirable, at a most desirable distance from the turmoil of the business portion of the city, and yet at a most accessible point by omnibus at every hour of the day. The novel width of the 'Neck,' the fine trees that ornament the neighborhood, and the spacious and airy beauty of Franklin and Blackstone Squares, have attracted the attention of person who desire choice building lots and a fine location." This location is now the Cathedral Housing Development. The South End Historical Society was formed in the 1966 and continues to advocate for the preservation and history in the neighborhood. The organization is located on Chester Square and holds many treasures of the South End's distant and near past.



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