



Boston Schools Are In A Quandary

Boston Public Schools have mostly been closed since March, the start of the pandemic. When cases started to tick up again in October, the city abandoned plans to start reopening schools and shut down in-person learning for high needs students by the end of that month. Walsh acknowledged that long-term remote learning will likely cause difficulties for children who need to catch up after months out of the classroom.

Two weeks ago, Boston Mayor

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EDITORIAL

Who Comes Up With These 'Covid' Rules?

With all the new 'rollbacks', resets, do overs and back to the drawing board announcements regarding the endless Covid 19 situation, our local small businesses could be in for an even rougher ride than they have been going through for months. They are hurting badly and put bluntly and sadly – if this disarray of tactics by those “experts” in command continues, many of these small businesses will not survive for much longer.

With many people still out of work because of virus concerns, the situation is also critical for some families as they wonder and worry how they will

provide for their children. Is there no one who can get a handle on this and come up with a workable plan? Doubling down on tactics that have been proven failures apparently is not the answer. It recalls that often used saying – ‘One definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over again and expect a different outcome’.

Does it make sense for officials to allow shoppers to cram into the ‘big box’ stores but limit the hours of operation and capacity of small stores and restaurants? Why are large street demonstrations with sometimes thousand of participants encouraged if it’s for a ‘politically correct’

cause and their organizers issued permits, but church attendance is limited and in some cities actually frowned upon? And who made up the rule that you must wear a mask to walk in the door of an eating establishment but can then immediately remove it once you step inside?

Earlier this week, it was reported that one high school was told that their wrestling team’s participants can continue with their matches, but because of Covid precautions, the competitors aren’t allowed to shake hands after the match. Take a second and think about that one. To ask this question again – Who comes



up with these plans? We would have to conclude that its no one qualified to make such decisions. And as we see it, unless there is much better than just a reasonable chance of a

successful outcome, don’t do it. Because the only result of the guess work that seems to be going into these decisions is that the lives of real people are being ruined.

“It is Christmas in the heart that puts Christmas in the air” - W.T. Ellis

DEDHAM SAVINGS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SUPPORTS NOTRE DAME EDUCATION CENTER



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Here for the journey.

The Dedham Savings Community Foundation has donated \$10,000 to Notre Dame Education Center. These monies will be used toward technology upgrades for their new 10,000 square foot facility at 200 Old Colony Avenue in Boston. The renovation is anticipated to be complete

in 2021 and the grant will fund such key elements as Wi-Fi hotspots, phone and internet cabling, security cameras and more.

Notre Dame Education Center is a comprehensive adult education center founded in 1992 and located in Boston, MA. Adult programming serves participants in learning English

and preparing to take high school equivalency assessments. Youth programs include high school diploma completion and high school equivalency preparation. Workforce development programming is also available to all participants.

ABOUT DEDHAM SAVINGS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Dedham Savings Community Foundation is a privately funded foundation created by Dedham Savings in 2000 to provide financial support to charitable organizations that serve disadvantaged populations within the Bank’s community reinvestment area. These communities include Dedham, Needham, Norwood,

Sharon, South Boston, Walpole, and Westwood and contiguous areas. Typical requests are received from schools, libraries, family service organizations and non-profit organizations. The Trustees of the Foundation accept grant requests from community organizations and make awards twice per year.

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The Information Center



Were There 'Irregularities' In The Election Ballot Counting?

SOUTH BOSTON TODAY

John Ciccone

Note: talk back to John Ciccone by email at jciccone@southbostontoday.com

As of this writing, there is still quite a bit of controversy over the possible election fraud that is said to have taken place last month. Whether you believe there was fraud and cheating with ballot counting isn't really the whole point of the questions being asked. Most Republicans believe there was cheating and feel that if it was fair, president Trump would have won in a landslide. A majority of Democrats say they believe everything was above board and Biden was the winner.

Pelosi, Schumer, Schiff, the Clintons, the group of radical loons that call themselves 'The Squad' and many other high ranking Democrats are demanding that there be no investigations into how the election was handled, while high ranking Republicans want a thorough investigation. Ok, I know, these are all facts that most everyone who are following the argument know. But many people wonder why, all of a sudden, Democrats in congress and their media allies are against investigations into possible wrong doing, when for the last years, most of their time was spent on them; so much so that congress got very little work done for the American people, if any at all. And wouldn't you think that if they are so confident that there was no voter fraud, they themselves would be all for looking into the matter; SERIOUSLY looking in to the matter, to prove once and for all that no fraud took place so that all suspicion would finally be laid to rest?

When Pelosi and her coven were demanding investigations

into what they insisted was the president's wrong doing, they based their whole case on hearsay, rumors, forged documents and testimony from partisans that ultimately proved questionable if not totally made up. In the current controversy over the election, hundreds of election officials from around the country; poll workers, supervisors etc. have signed affidavits and given sworn statements; under oath in some cases saying that yes, they indeed witnessed ballot tampering taking place. There are actual videos showing illegal vote tampering; ballots that went missing, ballots that mysteriously appeared after the counts, votes being cast by people who have been dead for years, people that voted more than once, non citizens were caught voting as well. So, with all of these suspicious activities, witnessed, documented and filmed, wouldn't it make sense to make getting to the bottom of all of these accusations a priority? And shouldn't every loyal American want to find out for sure if our nation's elections are rigged and if so, put a stop to it and prosecute anyone and everyone that was behind it; this, for the benefit of our country going forward? One would think so. But as we witness what's taking place now, as Democrat officials fighting tooth and nail to lay it all to rest, it sure isn't the case. Nothing to see here folks, let's move on and unite. Fat chance of that happening.

It's almost comical to see the cast of characters from Hollywood, the news media and of course ultra partisan Democrats urging everyone to unite and ac-

cept the results of the election. This, from people, who for the last four years refused to accept the results of the previous election. Instead, they vowed to resist, they shouted consistently that 'Trump was not their president', they attacked not just the president but his wife and his children. They openly and publically wished he and his family dead on many occasions. Can we forget the idiot washed comedian when she held up that severed Trump head as her prop, or the Broadway plays

that showed the president being stabbed which won praise from liberal 'art' critics or when the likes of Robert DeNiro as he shouted 'F..k Trump' to the wild applause from the hate filled Hollywood crowd in attendance at the boring 'celebrity' awards show? Is there anyone who really believes that tens of millions of patriotic Americans are going to forgive and forget how their president was treated and be in the mood to unite? To quote the great Sam Elliot - "I don't think so cupcake"

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Window Into The State House

Window Into The State House provides our readers a synopsis of important issues of interest, past and current, that are being proposed, debated or acted upon by the Massachusetts Legislature. Many issues that are not related to local city government services are acted upon and have a direct impact on daily life. They are tax policy, transportation infrastructure, judicial appointments, social services and health, as well as higher education. We will excerpt reports from the gavel-to-gavel coverage of House and Senate sessions by news sources focused on this important aspect of our lives. These sources include a look ahead at the coming week in state government and summaries and analyses of the past week, re-caps of a range of state government activity, as well as links to other news.

Make that two: Harvard professor Danielle Allen is the latest to eye a gubernatorial bid

Now that members of the nation's Electoral College, including the electors in Massachusetts, have officially declared Joe Biden the official winner of the November presidential election, it's time to start thinking of ... the 2022 gubernatorial race. And now there's a second candidate exploring a 2022 bid – Harvard political science professor and Democrat Danielle Allen, who unveiled a new website and released a video yesterday touting her possible/likely run for governor in two years.

SHNS's Matt Murphy, the Globe's Matt Stout and Commonwealth's Shira Schoenberg have more on Allen's Corner Office ambitions. Recall: Republican Geoff Diehl is also eyeing a run for governor. Of course, we're

still awaiting word on whether Charlie Baker will seek a third term.

Time to celebrate: First coronavirus vaccines arrive in Massachusetts

A four-reporter team at WBUR has a good rundown of yesterday's arrival of the first vaccine doses at hospitals across the state. They were literally celebrating outside Boston Medical Center yesterday, as Universal Hub reports (with video).

One of the first people to receive a shot in the state? A World War II veteran, as SHNS's Katie Lannan and Michael Norton report (pay wall). COVID-19 vaccine doses are expected to arrive today and later this week at other hospitals, including at UMass Memorial and South Coast Health, reports MassLive and South Coast Today. Moderna's second vaccine is

also close to winning final approval, according to a report at the Globe.

Here's something we hadn't thought about, via the Taunton Gazette: "Could vaccine deliveries be disrupted by this week's snowstorm?"

Boston and other cities band together to impose their own restrictions

Vaccine doses may be arriving in Massachusetts. But there won't be enough vaccines to stem the current second-surge tide, so Boston, Brockton, Lynn, Newton, Somerville and other communities have banded together to impose their own coronavirus restrictions, including the closure of gyms, museums and movie theaters. The BBJ's Gintautas Dumcius and the Globe's Shirley Leung and Danny McDonald have more on the localized action, not to be confused

with state government action. Some say the move is too little, too late. From GBH: "Boston Epidemiologist On Further COVID Restrictions: 'The Time To Act Was A Month Ago.'"

MBTA scales back proposed service cuts – for now

Under pressure from local polls, transit activists and riders, the MBTA yesterday scaled back its originally proposed across-the-board service cuts to plug the agency's pandemic-era operating deficit. But some cuts will nevertheless go forward early next year, with the T taking a wait-and-see approach to future cuts. WBUR's Zeninor Enwemeka and Commonwealth's Bruce Mohl have more.

Meanwhile, they're happy (somewhat) on the South Shore. From the Patriot Ledger: "MBTA will soften cuts, save some ferry service." The T's action and non-action came after members of the state's local congressional delegation told the transit authority to hold off on cuts until Congress has time to pass a stimulus package, as SHNS Chris Lisinski (pay wall) reports.



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Watch Those Exit Numbers



The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is in the process of converting all exit numbers on freeways to a milepost-based numbering system, per Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements. Currently, interstates and freeways in Massachusetts utilize a sequential exit numbering method. Construction began in the Fall of 2020 and is anticipated to be completed in the Summer of 2021.

This notice is to inform you that exit numbering conversion will begin on Interstate 90 on December 13, 2020. Construction details are as follows:

- Corridor: Interstate 90 (Massachusetts Turnpike)
- Location: Boston to West Stockbridge
- Approximate start date: Dec. 13

- Approximate construction duration: 4 weeks
- Hours of operation: 8:00 PM - 5:00 AM

Please note that all work is weather dependent and construction dates may be adjusted accordingly. This work will not impact the tolls on this roadway.

For more information on the project and construction status, to leave a comment or sign up for project updates, please visit: <https://www.newmassexits.com/>



Councilor Flynn Holds Hearing on Water & Sewer Infrastructure

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn held a virtual hearing on issues relating to water and sewer infrastructure in the city yesterday. The hearing included panelists from the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) and the Boston Groundwater Trust (BGWT), and discussed the safety and maintenance of our water and sewer infrastructure, services provided by BWSC, and other related issues.

In the hearing, John Sullivan, the Chief Engineer from BWSC, gave a presentation about the work that the commission is doing to maintain water and sewer infrastructure and water safety. In particular, he spoke about BWSC's work in identifying

and replacing lead pipes, and urged that if residents suspect that their house might have lead pipes, they can contact BWSC for an inspection, and can get up to \$2,000 in credits for the cost of a pipe replacement. He also advised that to ensure that lead is not in their drinking water, residents should run their cold water faucets in the morning for 30 seconds to 2 minutes or until the water feels cold prior to using the water for drinking or cooking. Also discussed was the Betterment Policy for residents with private ways open to public travel who wish to connect their private sewers to BWSC's system, as well as public testimonies from

residents about their experience with private sewers, lead pipes, and other issues. Christian Simonelli, the Executive Director of the BGWT, also spoke about his work and the importance of maintaining our groundwater level that submerges the wood pilings beneath foundation in many parts of the city, which is critical in preventing the wood pilings from rotting.

"Reliable and safe water and sewer infrastructure is at the very foundation of the basic city services that a local government must provide to its residents. Without maintaining the integrity of our system and clean water, our modern city's economic conditions and outlook would be in jeopardy. I want to thank the panelists, colleagues, and residents who attended for an informative discussion on our water and sewer infrastructure," said Councilor Flynn. "It is critical that our system remains safe and well maintained, and that there are policies in place to ensure



that residents have access to safe drinking water and sewer service. I look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders on this issue."

For more information on the hearing, please visit <https://www.boston.gov/public-notices/13675546>, or contact Councilor Flynn's office at 617-635-3203 or Ed.Flynn@Boston.gov.

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Councilors Ed Flynn, Michael Flaherty, and Liz Breadon File Resolution Commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the Great Famine (Gaelic: An Gorta Mor)



Boston City Councilors Ed Flynn, Michael Flaherty, and Liz Breadon are sponsoring a resolution at this week's Council meeting to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the Great Famine, also known as the Irish Potato Famine, or An Gorta Mor in Gaelic.

The Great Famine was a main reason for many Irish to flee as refugees to the United States during the mid-1800s. From 1845 to 1849, Ireland experienced a potato blight that devastated the country, when its potato crops were destroyed by a strain of water mold. This led to massive starvation and suffering, and it was estimated that one million died from starvation and malnutrition-related diseases, and another million left as refugees. Even prior to the potato blight, many Irish faced discrimination and socioeconomic hardship at home, as they were prohibited from owning or leasing land, as well as voting or holding elected office because of their Catholic faith. Tenant farmers were also forced to pay rent to the landowners and export large quantities of food to Great Britain.

On account of these issues, many Irish refugees fled Ireland to the United States on overcrowded and poorly-provisioned "coffin ships" to cities such as Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and many were suffering from famine-induced illnesses such as cholera, measles, tuberculosis, and other respiratory infections. Between 1841 and 1850, it was estimated that almost 50% of the total immigrants to the United States were Irish, and by 1850, the Irish had made up a quarter of the population in these cities.

More than 175 years after the Great Famine, food insecurity unfortunately remains a critical issue in our country, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In an October report published by Feeding America, Massachusetts has seen the highest increase in the percentage of residents facing food insecurity of all states, with more than one million people who are struggling to get enough to eat. Children, immigrant families, as well as many in the Latinx, Black and Asian communities are disproportionately impacted. With this resolution commemorating the

175th anniversary of the Great Famine, we must not only remember the hardship that many Irish immigrants had to endure during the famine and living in poverty in America, but to also recommit ourselves as a city and country to those who are currently facing hunger during the public health and economic crises of today.

"The Great Famine remains a painful and stark reminder of how hunger can bring suffering to so many, and it is important that we recognize how food access continues to be a critical issue for many families and neighbors in need," said Councilor Flynn. "On this 175th anniversary, let us reflect on how the Great Famine impacted millions of Irish people, and use this reminder of our past to recommit ourselves to supporting families and people struggling with food security during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond."

"We have seen near-unprecedented food insecurity across the country as our nation has struggled to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic," said Councilor Flaherty. "As both the pandemic and the Irish Potato Famine remind us, events beyond our

control can arise at any moment, and we need to ensure our systems of public support are strong enough to provide meaningful and timely aid to all those in need."

"The lesson I take away from reflecting on the tragedy of the Great Hunger in Ireland in the 1840s is that government action in a crisis has consequences," said Councilor Breadon. "One million people died of starvation or disease, millions more were displaced or migrated out of sheer desperation in order to survive. It was a disaster that was compounded by the indifference and inaction of the British Government of the day. Ireland was a net exporter of food while millions starved. Sadly tenant farmers around the world face similar problems today due to displacement and climate change. Our collective action can impact the lives of so many people, we need to help our food insecure neighbors and we need to work together to address the global challenge of climate change."

For more information, please contact Councilor Flynn's office at 617-635-3203 and Ed.Flynn@Boston.gov.

Boston's Community Choice Electricity Program Makes Boston Sustainable

By Mayor Martin J. Walsh

Boston is a leader on climate action. We're preparing our communities for climate impacts like coastal flooding and heat waves, and we're cutting the emissions that cause climate change to begin with. We've committed to becoming carbon neutral by the year 2050, and we've developed a Climate Action Plan to get us there.

An important part of this work is bringing more clean, renewable energy into our city. And now, we're taking another big step in this work with the rollout of our Community Choice

Electricity program. This is our policy to combine the buying power of Boston's homes and businesses, in order to get more stable and affordable electricity rates and bring more clean energy into our city. CCE allows the community to make informed electricity choices, increases utilization of renewable energy, and helps protect vulnerable populations who are most at-risk from the climate crisis.

The City has been sending notices to residents who are enrolled in Eversource Basic Service. The notice lets you know that you're being enrolled in the clean energy program starting February 1. You don't have to do anything to get that benefit and be part of this program. The Community Choice Program is an opt-out program, meaning that customers who are on Eversource Basic Service will be automatically enrolled unless they choose to opt-out. We're also providing discounts for 20,000 low-income residents, through a solar energy program.

The opt-out period goes from December 4, 2020, through January 11, 2021. During this time, customers can opt-out by signing and returning a postage paid opt-out card received by mail. Customers can opt-in or out at any time without penalty, and have the option

to "opt-up" to receive 100 percent renewable electricity. Participation in the program will only change where a customer's electricity is coming from, not how it is delivered to their home.

The program will officially launch in February 2021 and will be the largest municipal aggregation program in New England. This is an opportunity for residents to be in better control of their energy consumption by placing power in the hands of the City rather than a company or utility. I assure everyone that the City of Boston is committed to moving forward with affordable and stable electric rates, and we are a trusted resource for residents seeking information on their electricity options.

We are committed to making sure that residents have all the information they need about this program and their options. Starting December 14th, the City of Boston's Environment Department will host a series of 11 webinars for residents and businesses. Staff will answer questions on how the program works, customer benefits, electric rates and renewable energy offered, key features, and what to expect over the next few months as the program launches.

I encourage everyone to attend one of these webinars to learn more about how this program will benefit our



goal to make Boston a more sustainable and resilient city. More information about these webinars, including instructions for registering, is available at Boston.gov/community-choice-energy.

Recently, I was named the Chair of the US Climate Mayors. This is an opportunity to highlight the progress we're making here in Boston, and work with our fellow cities to promote climate action at the national level, as well. As cities across the country continue to look to Boston as a leader in this work, our Community Choice Electricity program will be a key component of our efforts. I encourage all Boston residents to support this work by participating in this program, and continuing to take climate action in your everyday lives. For more information about the City of Boston's efforts, and about other steps the City is taking, visit Boston.gov/environment.

5 Ways to check on Mom's well-being this holiday season.

- ✓ Give a Hug: Do you notice weight changes, increased frailty?
- ✓ Ask about Friends: Especially given the current state of our world, are there still signs of active friendships?
- ✓ Open the Medicine Cabinet: Is Mom taking her medications as prescribed?
- ✓ Check the Mail: Look for unopened mail or unpaid bills
- ✓ Inspect the Kitchen: Look for expired food, broken appliances

Use this checklist to look for warning signs during your holiday visits. If your mom isn't doing well at home alone, **Compass on the Bay** may be the perfect solution. We offer an innovative enriching approach to senior living and alzheimer's care.



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The Wine Guy

When The Temperature's Down...

Your supply of hearty red wines should be up! Here are some timely suggestions for knocking our winter chill down to size.

Pine Ridge 2017 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, (\$39.99), is one of the best from the 2017 vintage; even at \$40.00 a bottle, it drinks like a Cab that should cost twice the price. Deep notes

of black currant, blueberries and an earthiness that comes from a strong minerality. If it's steak, lamb or a roast for dinner, this is one to have on hand. Winemaker Mike Beaulac says it's one of the best he's crafted in his time there and that's saying a lot, as he's won numerous gold medals for his reds and whites.

Pinot Noir Chehalem Mountains, Corral Creek Vineyards, 2015, (\$49.99) is another great example of a great "winter red". Although Pinot Noir isn't typically a heavy red, this Oregon wine is deeper tasting and has more body to it than its French cousins.

If your grill is still out, try some salmon with lemon and bernaise sauce. It'll be a perfect pairing and bring out the wine's tart cherry notes and it's unusually earthy, gritty tone.

Beaulieu Vineyards, 2015 Tapestry Reserve Red Blend, (\$64.99), is a masterful wine made from five different varieties of Rhone and Bordeaux grapes. It has

a huge nose with notes of caramel, tabac and leather that mingle with deep red fruit flavors. Try this one with a nice Filet or Beef Wellington and you'll notice right away how this one brings out the beefiness in both the meat and the wine.

Avalon Lodi Cabernet Sauvignon, 2017, (\$12.99). Juicy aromas of dark fruit, mocha, and spice meet with hints of vanilla. On the palate, black cherry, red raspberry, and plum are followed by a long, smooth finish. Avalon Cabernet Sauvignon's ripe fruit and clean acidity make it a versatile food partner. Enjoy a glass on its own or with your favorite foods like grilled burgers, pizza, and rotisserie chicken.

Since Christmas is looming up, I thought I'd end this week's column with something bubbly. **J Vineyards, 2013 Sparkling Wine, (\$59.99)**, presented a stellar growing season and was the second in a series of vintages characterized by warm, dry and generally excellent growing conditions. A near-perfect

flowering and fruit set in the spring ushered in a summer free of rain, followed by a balanced growing season that extended into the fall. Harvest was one of the earliest in J's history. They began in early August by hand-harvesting whole grape clusters at night when they reached maturity. This beautiful vintage delivered wines of intensity and finesse and will be a standout on any holiday table.

Talk to The Wine Guy at jdris8888@gmail.com



I Was Just Thinking...



by Kevin Devlin

My question is, why would you put someone on the front page of your magazine who didn't deserve it.

"The Man of the Year idea caught on with a bang and, some-

what surprised, we decided to make it an annual event," Prentice (Time publisher) wrote in 1945. "The choice is in no way an accolade, nor a Nobel Prize for doing good. Nor is it a moral judgment. (Al Capone was runner-up in riotous bootleg 1928.) The two criteria are always these: who had the biggest rise in fame; and who did the most to change the news for better (like Stalin in 1942) or for worse (like Stalin in 1939, when his flop to Hitler's side unleashed this worldwide war)."

Those who did the most to change the world shouldn't include mass murderers. Adolph Hitler was on the front cover in 1938. He must have been laughing into the night when he saw his picture on Time. Boy, are they going to be surprised, those stupid Americans, I bet you he was thinking, when he was planning to plunge the world into the Dark Ages. The architect of the Holocaust. The father of Death which along with the leaders of the Japanese Empire, were responsible for 55 million deaths. I'm just surprised they didn't

put Emperor Hirohito on the cover in 1942 after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. He certainly changed our world, that's for sure.

Then we have Joseph Stalin who was recognized by Time in 1939 and 1942. The Man of Steel was a ruthless tyrant. Another architect of Death. Stalin initiated the Great Purge or the Great Terror, "a campaign of political repression in the Soviet Union that occurred from 1936 to 1938. It involved a large-scale repression of relatively wealthy peasants (kulaks); genocidal acts against ethnic minorities; a purge of the Communist Party, government officials, and the Red Army leadership; widespread police surveillance; suspicion of saboteurs; counter-revolutionaries; imprisonment; and arbitrary executions. Historians estimate the total number of deaths due to Stalinist repression in 1937-38 to be between 950,000 to 1.2 million."

Didn't the people at Time know about this? Didn't they know he was a murderer? Of course, they did.

Now, I'm obviously not inferring that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris (soon to be president mark my words, possibly no later than this upcoming July) are anywhere in the dastardly category of Comrade Stalin or Herr Hitler, because they certainly aren't. Yet, as determined by Time's erroneous standards, what did Harris and Biden do to deserve such recognition? Hide in his basement while written and social media suppressed the news to propel him into office? Lie (mis-speak the truth) about his son's, and his possible involvement, in shady dealings? And what did Harris do? Remain silent regarding so-called peaceful protests? Just what did she do?

Sometimes Fame can be a treacherous beast, so how can you not include morality as integral to any such choices?

Why would you not consider negative behavior, or the lack of positive impact, as disqualification?

If those are your parameters, dismissing immorality, why even label it with such a misnomer?

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12/22**

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Msgr. Thomas J McDonnell and Frank Kelley Christmas Dinner Update

Please call 617-586-5824 if you would like a meal delivered to your home. Meals will be delivered on December 24th between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. (Safety protocols in place).

We will not be able to gather in person or accept food donations this year. Our greatest need for support is drivers to deliver meals to our neighbors. Volunteers should meet at Florian Hall, 55 Hallet St Boston, MA 02124 @ 10:45 a.m. on December 24th.

Any questions email: manning.danielr@gmail.com



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4 Foods To Avoid This Holiday Season When It Comes to Pet Safety

Because of the upward trend in COVID-19 cases, many restaurants will not be open for indoor dining this holiday season. That means small, family gatherings around the dining room table will be the celebration of choice in households across the U.S. this year.

This also means that our pets will have more opportunities to snack on foods that they really shouldn't.

Not only can some thanksgiving foods be toxic to your pet, table scraps and extra treats can add up quickly. Just a 5 oz serving of dark meat turkey for your small dog can be the caloric equivalent of an entire 8-inch pumpkin pie for you!

In fact, data from Trupanion, a leader in medical insurance for cats & dogs, reveals that pet owners

with overweight pets can spend as much as five times more in veterinary expenses than pet owners with average-sized pets.

If you have a puppy, kitten or multi-pet household, here are some food groups to avoid with your pets during the holiday season.

Foods and ingredients that are potentially toxic for dogs and cats this holiday season...

Butter and other fats

Garlic, Chives, Onions, Scallions

Raisins, Currents, Grapes

Candied sweet potatoes or yams

4 foods to watch out for this upcoming holiday season as your pet positions themselves under your dining room table

1) Turkey

A small amount of lean, light meat is okay but make sure to keep



the skin, fat, and any dark meat far from your furry friend. Most importantly, make sure that your dog does not get a hold of any cooked bones as they can cause choking or be ingested and damage to your pet's digestive system.

2) Stuffing

Stuffing often contains onions,

chives, garlic, and/or scallions.

Those ingredients are toxic to pets so make sure to keep your furry friend far away from the stuffing! Plus, with the added butter, stuffing is likely a fatty treat that your pet does not need.

3) Mashed Potatoes

Bland mashed potatoes are okay. But as with stuffing, any mashed potatoes prepared with garlic, onions, scallions, or chives should definitely be kept away from pets as these foods are toxic to dogs and cats.

4) Pumpkin Pie, Apple Pie and Pecan Pie!

It's best not to purposely feed pie to your four-legged friend. Instead consider one of the many dog-friendly versions that gives your pup a taste of pumpkin pie without all of the sugary sweetness.

What A Year!

The year 2020 will likely be remembered as the year of the pandemic. But it also brought thousands of new puppies and kittens into our homes, and as part of our families, as we looked to them for comfort and com-



panionship. Since the start of the pandemic, Trupanion has noticed an uptick in COVID-related pet names. Since March, people welcoming new pets in their home are

giving them names to match the moment with names that include Corona, Rona, Covi, and even COVID. Pet owners have also given a nod of approval to Dr. Fauci as they have started naming their favorite furry friends, Fauci, a new trend since the start of the pandemic.

This prompted us to take a deeper dive into the most popular dog and cat names of 2020.

Trupanion, a leader in medical insurance for pets, surveyed its database of more than 530,000

dogs and cats for the top 50 dog names and the top 50 cat names of 2020.

The results are in:

Top 10 most popular dog names of 2020

1) Bella 2) Charlie 3) Luna 4) Lucy 5) Max 6) Bailey 7) Daisy 8) Cooper 9) Molly 10) Lola

Top 10 most popular cat names of 2020

1) Luna 2) Bella 3) Oliver 4) Charlie 5) Lucy 6) Leo 7) Max 8) Milo 9) Lily 10) Simba

Boston Schools continued from front page

Marty Walsh said he didn't anticipate public schools fully opening before Christmas break, as the city continues to bear its second major surge in coronavirus cases. It's now been pushed to the new year. At the time, Walsh said, "I know there are parents all across the city... saying, 'Reopen schools'. I support you. But right now, we are not prepared for that, not when you have 400 new cases today." The mayor said he'd be able to share a plan for reopening schools in the next few weeks. Well this week he stated that he hoped to be able to reopen Boston's public schools in January, and to have

a plan in place on how to safely reopen them sooner.

"As we continue to move forward, if we get these numbers down, and we set benchmarks — and we're below those benchmarks right now — we'll begin the process of reopening schools right after the new year, hopefully," Walsh said.

Meanwhile, the Boston Teachers Union passed a vote of no confidence in Boston Public Schools superintendent Brenda Cassellius just hours before more than two dozen additional schools were set to resume in-person learning for high-needs students. The vote was held at an emergency meeting Sunday night.

In a letter sent to members on Sat-

urday, the union said it did not believe the 28 schools set to reopen Monday would meet safety provisions in place at the four Boston schools where in-person learning for high-needs students resumed last month.

Despite the vote, more than 1,500 students in Boston with complex disabilities and language needs are expected to return to classrooms. An additional 28 schools will reopen to accommodate returning students. Air purifiers have been installed in schools without HVAC systems, Cassellius said.

The reopening comes after more than 80 parents and advocates gathered in Nubian Square on Sunday, calling for Boston Public School ad-

ministrators to allow more high-needs students to return to in-person learning. Organizers said that the distinct is excluding many students who are struggling with remote learning and need the additional attention. The union told members to prepare potential action measures before the start of the school day on Monday, including a 10-minute "standout," if an agreement isn't reached with BPS Superintendent Dr. Brenda Cassellius. Prior to Monday's reopening, less the 200 students had returned to four Boston Public Schools for in-person learning. Cassellius said Boston Public Schools will release its timeline for when all schools will reopen early next year.

South Boston Catholic Academy News

3rd Grade News

From our 3rd Grade Teacher, Mr. Cole Stautberg... Recently, in 3rd grade, students have been learning about the indigenous populations that lived in this region prior to Europeans arriving in the early 17th century. They have specifically studied the Wampanoag tribe and their way of life. Students have explored

the culture, the survival skills, and the crafting skills that the Wampanoags needed in order to prosper in the region. The class thoroughly enjoyed molding pinch pots and painting them with patterns and petroglyphs--a small glimpse of what one chore might have been for a citizen of the Wampanoag tribe. They have also learned some of

the games that Wampanoag children would play not only to have fun, but to also practice necessary life skills, such as hunting.

The 3rd grade class has also been observing the Advent season. Each week, students have "lit a new flame" in their Advent Wreath. As each week begins, students have been discussing what Hope, Love, Peace, and Joy mean to them. They are critically thinking about how they already do employ those values into their lives, and how they can allow them to have a stronger presence in their everyday

actions. Students have seemed to enjoy expanding their worldview and learning about spreading light to all those who may find themselves in darkness during this difficult time in our world.

On Wednesday, December 10, 2020, we had a school Mass and the 3rd grade class did a great job participating at this Mass. While the 3rd graders and their teacher were at church, the rest of the students and faculty were able to watch this Mass livestreamed on the Parish Website in their own individual classrooms.



Massport's Winter Coat Drive Benefitted Children in East Boston and South Boston

Over 70 employees donated coats and winter accessories



The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) announced a successful turnout for this year's Winter Coat Drive. Over 70 employees donated their time and money to purchase

40 coats and other winter accessories and deliver them to Crossroads Family Center in East Boston and Condon Community Center in South Boston.

"We are so proud of the sup-

port and generosity shown by the employees here at Massport," said Massport Director of Community Relations and Government Affairs Alaina Coppola. "During these tough times, it is crucial that we look out for our neighbors. The coats, gloves and other winter accessories we provided will not only keep these children warm but also provide relief to their families during this holiday season."

Massport delivered 20 coats, gloves and hats to children at Crossroads Family Center and another 20 coats and winter accessories to children at Condon Community Center. The children range in age from two to 17 years old.

"We are thankful for our part-

nership with Massport and being able to work with them again on this year's Winter Coat Drive," said Shakira Floyd, Program Coordinator at Crossroads Family Center. "During these hard economic times, these donations will allow families to dedicate their resources to other important needs."

"Thank you to Massport for the incredible donation of coats and winter items for our most vulnerable families here in South Boston," said Barbara Kelly, Program Supervisor at Condon Community Center. "As we approach winter, being able to provide the basic need of a warm winter coat is more important than ever."

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) owns and operates Boston Logan International Airport, public terminals in the Port of Boston, Hanscom Field, and Worcester Regional Airport. For more information, please visit massport.com.



I went 2-3 against the spread in Week 14. My record on the season is now 35-27-3. We've got just three weeks left in the regular season, so let's dig in for a strong finish.

There'll be a pair of Saturday games this weekend. No more byes. And the playoff races are tight.

What else is there to say? Here are my picks for Week 15:

LAS VEGAS RAIDERS (-3) over Los Angeles Chargers:

-This is a must-win game for the 7-6 Raiders at home on Thursday Night Football. The Raiders are coming off a 44-27 loss to the Indianapolis Colts. In fact, Vegas has lost three of its last four. The Raiders' only win in that stretch came against the winless Jets, so that's not saying much. That said, Vegas is still very much alive for a Wild Card spot in the AFC playoff picture. Right now, they're on the outside looking in. All that matters is Thursday night. If they lose to the 4-9 Chargers who have already been eliminated from playoff contention, then the Raiders' season is over, barring losses from both the 8-5 Miami Dolphins and 8-5 Baltimore Ravens,

who are ahead of Vegas in the standings. I'll take the Raiders to stay alive with a 10-point win on Thursday night at home.

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS (-6) over Atlanta Falcons

-The 8-5 Buccaneers beat the Minnesota Vikings last Sunday, 26-14, and if the playoffs began after Week 14, Tampa Bay would be the No. 6 seed in the NFC. With their division belonging to the New Orleans Saints, the best the Buccaneers can do is sneak up into the No. 5 seed, which is currently held by the 9-4 Seattle Seahawks. The only way they have a chance of making that happen is to beat a 4-9 Falcons team that's lost two straight and may be without star receiver Julio Jones once again with a lingering hamstring injury. This game on Sunday at 1 p.m. in Atlanta will be the first of two games between these two teams in the final three weeks of the season. The second matchup will be in Week 17 in Tampa Bay. The bottom line is, Tampa still has something to play for. Atlanta doesn't. The spread is surprisingly low here. So give me the Buccaneers by 13.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS (-5.5) over Washington

-This game is Sunday at 1 in D.C. Washington is in first place in the NFC East at 6-7 and has won four straight. It's a somewhat remarkable story, given the improbable comeback of veteran quarterback Alex Smith after a brutal leg injury. Add Chase Young's defensive dominance to the mix, in a brutal division mind-you, and suddenly you've got a No. 4 seed that'll be hosting a Wild Card playoff game if they can keep playing solid football the next three weeks. On the other end, the 9-4 Seahawks have won three of their last four, and would actually be going to D.C. to play Washington in that aforementioned Wild Card playoff game, if the playoffs began after Week 14. I've been high on Washington over the last month, and they've covered the spread for me multiple times. But I think this is the one that gets away from them. I think Seattle takes this by a touchdown.

BALTIMORE RAVENS (-13) over Jacksonville Jaguars

-The 8-5 Ravens have won two straight, including a wild win on

Monday night over the Browns in Cleveland. Lamar Jackson made big play after big play late in the game, even after missing a few possessions while being attended to for "cramps" in the locker room. The Ravens are currently on the outside looking in at the AFC playoff picture, but their final three games are against the 1-12 Jaguars, the 5-8 Giants, and the 2-10-1 Bengals. So, realistically, Baltimore should win all three. But one game at a time. I expect the Ravens — knowing what's at stake — to crush the Jaguars at home on Sunday at 1.

LOCK OF THE WEEK: PITTSBURGH STEELERS (-12.5) over Cincinnati Bengals

-The 11-2 Steelers have lost two straight, so they'll absolutely bounce back with a win over the 2-10-1 Bengals in Cincinnati on Monday Night Football. The only question is, how much will the Steelers beat them by? Pittsburgh beat Cincy by 26 points last month. The only thing the Bengals have to play for is a better draft pick. Steelers by 20.

Follow Danny on Twitter and Instagram @DannyPicard.




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SPORTS TODAY

PATRIOTS LOSE TO RAMS, NEED MIRACLE TO MAKE PLAYOFFS

SBT Staff

The New England Patriots haven't officially been eliminated from playoff contention just yet, but they'll need an unrealistic amount of help to get in.

After Thursday night's 24-3 loss to the Los Angeles Rams, the Patriots fell back below .500 with a 6-7 record, and only three regular-season games remaining. Those games are against the Miami Dolphins, Buffalo Bills, and New York Jets.

The only way New England can get into the playoffs is by clinching one of the three AFC Wild Card spots. Those three Wild Card spots are currently held by the 9-4 Cleveland Browns, the 9-4 Indianapolis Colts, and the 8-5 Miami Dolphins. The two teams on the outside looking in that are ahead of the Patriots in the Wild Card race, are the 8-5 Baltimore Ra-

Tweet of the Week



vens and the 7-6 Las Vegas Raiders.

Assuming the Browns and Colts will each win at least one more game in the final three weeks of the season, the only real playoff path for the Patriots is the final Wild Card spot, which, as previously mentioned, is held by the Dolphins.

The biggest problem though might be the easy schedule for the Ravens, as their final three games are against the 1-12 Jacksonville Jaguars, the 5-8 New York Giants, and the 2-10 Cincinnati Bengals. If Baltimore wins just two of those three games and gets to 10 wins, that will prevent the Patriots from getting into the playoffs.

If the playoffs began after Week 14, the 12-1 Kansas City Chiefs would get the first-round bye in the AFC. In

the Wild Card Round, the No. 2 seed Steelers would host the No. 7 seed Dolphins, the No. 3 seed Bills would host the No. 6 seed Colts, and the No. 4 seed Titans would host the No. 5 seed Browns.

Over in the NFC, if the playoffs began after Week 14, the 10-3 Green Bay Packers would get the first-round bye. In the Wild Card Round, the No. 2 seed Saints would host the No. 7 seed Cardinals, the No. 3 seed Rams would host the No. 6 seed Buccaneers, and the No. 4 seed Washington would host the No. 5 seed Seahawks.

It should also be noted that no team in the NFC has yet to be mathematically eliminated from playoff contention.

Right now, the Chiefs are the heavy favorite to win Super Bowl LV at

WHAT TO WATCH

NFL THURSDAY, DEC. 17
LA Chargers at Las Vegas Raiders (-3)
8:20 P.M. FOX/NFLN

SATURDAY, DEC. 19
Buffalo (-6.5) at Denver
4:30 P.M. NFLN

Carolina at Green Bay (-8.5)
8:15 P.M. NFLN

SUNDAY, DEC. 20
New England at Miami (-2.5)
1 P.M. ESPN

Kansas City (-3) at New Orleans
4:25 P.M. CBS

Cleveland (-3.5) at NY Giants
8:20 P.M. NBC

MONDAY, DEC. 21
Pittsburgh (-12.5) at Cincinnati
8:15 P.M. ESPN

+180. The Packers have the second-best odds at +700, followed by the Saints at +800, the Rams at +1000, and then the Bills, Steelers, Seahawks, and Buccaneers all at +1200.

If the Patriots don't make the playoffs, it will be the first time they miss out since 2008.

New England plays the Dolphins in Miami this Sunday at 1 p.m.



RED SOX SIGN RENFROE TO ONE-YEAR DEAL

SBT Staff

The Boston Red Sox signed right fielder Hunter Renfroe to a one-year, \$3.1 million deal this week. The move sets the Red Sox' 40-man roster at 40.

Renfroe, 28, spent last season with the American League champion Tampa Bay Rays, but was designated for assignment last month. The Rays

acquired Renfroe from the San Diego Padres in a five-player trade last December.

In parts of four seasons with the Padres, Renfroe hit more than 25 home runs three times, including a career-high 33 home runs in 140 games in 2019. He didn't have the same success in Tampa Bay though, hitting just .156 with eight home runs and 22 RBI in 42 games of the Covid-shortened season.

Renfroe was originally drafted by the Red Sox

out of high school in the 31st round of the 2010 Draft, but he decided to play college ball instead at Mississippi State. Renfroe was then drafted by the Padres in the first round of the 2013 Draft.

With Jackie Bradley Jr. still a free agent, the Red Sox outfield will have Andrew Benintendi in left field, Alex Verdugo in center field, and Renfroe in right field.



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