

Questions About Water Quality Swirl as Muddy River Dredging Begins

PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



BY ALISON PULTINAS

“One impaired waterbody.” That’s the official nomenclature for the Muddy River. The label refers to the pollutants and traits that affect the water quality—“DDT, E. Coli, Oil and Grease, Dissolved Oxygen, PCB in Fish Tissue, Total Phosphorous, Taste and Odor, and Turbidity,” according to engineering firm VHB’s I-90 ramp application to the Boston Conservation Commission, submitted for a hearing on April 1.

Those ingredients make for a toxic mix. As Spring 2020 brings an assortment of Muddy River endeavors, whether the pollution problem can be solved isn’t clear. Some fear that it will get worse. Caroline Reeves of the Muddy Water Initiative has called the Muddy River the most polluted tributary emptying into the Charles River.

According to its announced schedule, the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) Phase 2 Muddy River Flood Mitigation work mobilizes in May. The multimillion-dollar project primarily involves mechanical dredging in 13 areas of the 3.6-mile-long waterway, beginning at Leverett Pond in Brookline. The contractor is Charter Contracting Company.

The Boston Parks Department’s phragmite mowing and future landscape restoration will take place in conjunction with the federally funded ACE project. The cutting started last year and will cease when the ACE work begins. It is most important that the mowing be done in the summer after the reeds flower but before seeds develop.

The community-driven Muddy Water

Initiative (MWI) has raised funds to install a WaterGoat, netting to catch floating debris, that will be installed upstream from the Ipswich Street bridge near Fenway Studios. City and state approvals are nearly complete, and the Boston Conservation Commission voted to approve it on March 18. WaterGoat is the brand name for a Florida manufacturer’s product that’s in use in five states. Round buoys keep the net afloat; anchors secure it on both sides of the riverbank and can be locked in place. Fish and birds can easily dive beneath the net. MWI hopes to get it in the water early this summer.

WITH STUDENTS AWAY, THE TURKEYS WILL PLAY

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



Emboldened by a deserted Northeastern campus and sparse traffic on Ruggles Street, a band of wild turkeys took command of a berm overlooking an NU parking lot next to Ruggles Station for some quality foraging. Despite warnings from elected officials, the fowl displayed a brazen disregard for social distancing.

CORONAVIRUS & THE FENWAY

The last few weeks have turned everyone’s lives upside-down. Whether you’ve lost your income or are just looking for ways to occupy your time at home, we’ve got resources and coverage of some of the biggest local changes:

- This issue of the paper will appear online only.
- Area restaurants offering takeout need your support! SEE PAGE 2.
- The Fenway Cares initiative

links to resources for help and volunteer opportunities—PAGE 1.

- Other emergency resources for cash-strapped residents appear in a box on PAGE 6.
- Stay sane for potentially weeks of sheltering in place with ideas and resources on PAGES 6, 7, 8.
- The Mission Hill Fenway Neighborhood Trust has extended its grant-application deadline to April 30. See ad on PAGE 2.

MWI founder Caroline Reeves calls the Muddy River “the string on which the Emerald Necklace is strung.” Her advocacy in the last 18 months has created a partnership with the New England Grass Roots Environment Fund and also raised private funds. Last August, State Rep. Jon Santiago secured a \$12,000 local earmark that will help pay for the environmental consultants required for the permitting process and for the Florida workers to install the device.

A professional waste-removal company will be hired for the first year of this three-year pilot program.

The Muddy Water Initiative has brought together a professional advisory board that includes biologist Ellen Faszewski of Boston University and Lucy Kumpf of the Charles River Watershed Association. MWI has also partnered with the Colleges of the Fenway, offering a spring sustainability course open to students from all five schools. The Colleges of the Fenway will also host a virtual Environmental Forum on April 14 in place of

their annual Earth Day event.

In another Muddy River-related project, the Parcel 12 development at Massachusetts Avenue and Newbury Street Extension moves ahead this spring. Samuels & Associates will alter the Newbury Street on-ramp to the turnpike, moving it to the west. Some of the work will be as close as 39 feet from the riverbank. The design adds six new storm catch basins and widens the grass median between Newbury and the ramp. According to their March filing with Conservation Commission, “a 36-inch outfall to [the] Muddy River, which collects all drainage at this site, will see a net-reduction in impervious cover.”

At its April 1 online hearing, the Conservation Commission will review the proposal for the ramp reconfiguration. Also on the agenda is a discussion about new regulations related to the Boston Wetlands Protection Ordinance, which Mayor Walsh signed on Dec. 23.

A March 5 draft of the new regulations is posted on the City’s website and open for public comment. The ordinance gives the Conservation Commission power to adopt more extensive wetland protection, including inland and coastal-flood resilience zones that currently do not exist in City regulations. The commission also could extend protection for riverfront areas beyond the current 25 feet.

On Feb. 10 of last year, *Boston Globe* reporter Milton Valencia quoted Joe Orfant, former chair of the Conservation Commission, as saying “I don’t think we think a lot about the wetlands resources in Boston.”

Zara Zsido, a local environmental activist, would agree. In 2013 she was part of a group that demonstrated against the ACE Phase 1, which eliminated mature trees along the Muddy. The protest did not seem to make a difference to decision makers, who allowed the cutting of more than 200 trees, primarily to create room for construction vehicles and staging areas for the work on the waterway.

ACE plans, presented at a Feb. 27 public
> MUDDY RIVER on page 4

New Group, Fenway Cares, Forms to Meet Virus Crisis

BY STEVE WOLF

Moving at lighting speed to respond to the coronavirus emergency, six neighborhood organizations have agreed to form a “hyperlocal” mutual aid network and information clearinghouse in the Fenway. Within a week, Fenway Cares completed its first project, working with District 8 City Councilor Kenzie Bok to get more than 300 boxes of fresh produce distributed to households across the neighborhood.

Jaya Aiyer, community organizer at the Fenway CDC, said Fenway Cares will address both public health and economic impacts of the emergency on Fenway residents. Organized by the CDC, the Fenway Community Center, Operation PEACE, Fenway Civic, the Fenway Alliance, Grace City Church, and individual

residents, the network aims to serve as a resource for people needing help, looking for reliable information, or wanting to volunteer to help neighbors.

“We’re acting more as a conduit,” Aiyer says, to connect residents with resources and each other. For example, it can direct a resident to specific City- or State-sponsored programs, provide updates on citywide initiatives, and direct volunteers to specific activities designed to help their neighbors. The founding groups hoped “to take advantage of connections we have in the community” combined with their knowledge of resources available to help residents ride out the pandemic.

Within a week of the initial organizing call on March 17, Fenway Cares volunteers jumped into action to help distribute produce provided through

Fresh Truck. The mobile market typically travels to neighborhoods poorly served by supermarkets to sell fresh produce—in essence, it’s a farmers market on wheels. After restaurants closed for everything but take-out orders, wholesale distributor Katsiroubas Brothers donated a substantial supply of its unsold produce. Physical-distancing requirements had forced Fresh Truck to suspend its regular schedule, and the governor’s shutdown of “non-essential” business further threatened operations. The deliveries on March 24 helped Fresh Truck win designation as an essential business that can keep working to deliver fresh food to distressed households during the pandemic.

In all, more than 190 households received 25 pounds of fresh produce each, and St. Cecilia took another 125 cartons, many of which went to Fenway

households. Normally, each carton would have cost \$25, but Bok’s office covered the cost of the ones that didn’t go to St. Cecilia. Volunteers followed public-health guidelines, wearing disposable gloves and staying six feet from each other and carton recipients.

After the sponsors announced Fenway Cares’s formation to their networks, more than 40 residents signed
> FENWAY CARES on page 3



**FenwayCares@
FenwayCommunityCenter.org
(617) 446-3949**

Proposed Cannabis Shop Puts Focus on Terrace St. Corridor

BY ALISON PULTINAS

A March 9 public meeting at the Tobin Community Center, convened by the Mayor’s Office to discuss Raíces on the Hill, a retail marijuana business proposed for 123 Terrace St., was possibly the last large gathering in

Mission Hill for many months. Mike Ross, a real estate lawyer and former city councilor, made a presentation for the business. Coincidentally, his firm, Prince Lobel Tye LLP, also represents the developers of a five-story rental project at 111 Terrace St., next door to the future cannabis store. The

Boston Zoning Commission made cannabis establishments an accepted conditional use in 2018.

Incorporation filings with the state indicate that the current officers for Raíces on the Hill are former State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez and Robert E. Hoffman of North Reading, financial operations director at Prince Lobel Tye. Hoffman is also listed as manager for Mission Hill Investors LLC, formed last year “for the purpose of acquiring equity in other businesses.”

Ross explained that Sanchez and Alex Oliver-Dávila, executive director of Sociedad Latina, will own 51 percent of the company, and that an additional 20 to 25 investors have, in his words, a “chunk of tens of thousands” already invested.

More than 100 community members attended the meeting at the Tobin. Opposition was muted, and attendees were primarily concerned with safety and traffic impacts. Rafael Ruiz, who will lead the security staff at Raíces, said the facility will add lighting and bring activity to the street. However, as of now, marijuana customers typically pay for the product with cash or a debit card because federal prohibitions against cannabis operations preclude the use of credit cards. Will walking to the business from Roxbury Crossing or Jackson Square feel safe?

Ross said conversations were underway at City Hall about improvements for Terrace Street. He did not mention that his developer client, the owner of the oddly shaped three-story building at 111 Terrace St., promised up to \$37,500 for a consultant to fund a transportation study. During a zoning review last year, the developer committed to starting the study before any building permit is issued. In March, the Boston Landmarks Commission signed off on a demolition application for the property.

The key community benefit from Raíces is the promise of 10 percent of net annual profits distributed to local nonprofits. The target date for opening is May 2021, but, Ross conceded that date could prove optimistic,

given the length of time expected for state and city review.

Matthew O’Hara of South Boston owns 123 Terrace St. and multiple other properties on the street. Ross said his client would try to keep Diablo Glass Studio, temporarily closed, onsite and have the business become Raíces’ tenant with a below-market rent. The glassblowing studio was initially founded by Anne Sasser, who now owns the Stonybrook Metal Arts studio in Jamaica Plain. Later, local resident and real estate entrepreneur Sean P. Clarke took charge of the studio.

However, it wasn’t explained how or who would pay for the CrossFit on the Hill gym, which opened in 2012, to be converted to house the glassblowing studio. Gym patrons will be the losers; their space is already on a month-to-month lease. Some members have transferred to a new CrossFit franchise on Melnea Cass Blvd., opened last year by former CrossFit on the Hill coaches.

Uses on Terrace Street have always been a mix; except for busy traffic, present conditions are not so terribly different from the era of breweries, stables, and wood-frame houses. Today, there are two autobody shops; Boston Building Resources, a nonprofit for new and used home-improvement supplies; Diablo; CrossFit on the Hill; and architecture and contractor offices at 103 Terrace St. Approximately 75 apartments are scattered in between, 62 of them at the Oliver Lofts in the former Highland Spring building near New Heath Street. The wood-frame houses at Terrace Place and the three-unit buildings at 124 and 126 Terrace St. are archaic remnants from a different era. Other parcels are vacant because of fires in the 1970s. The original 1867 Highland Spring brewery at 165 Terrace St. was demolished in 1981 and now serves as New England Baptist Hospital’s large employee parking lot.

Terrace Street was labeled a manufacturing strip in the 1979 Southwest Corridor plan, which described the parcels as too narrow for major development. Between the difficult

TERRACE STREET on next page >

SUPPORT OUR RESTAURANTS!

Local restaurants need your help during the shutdown. Take-out orders put much-needed cash into their hands, so spend locally and tip generously to make sure they survive. With restaurants adjusting hours frequently, please double-check hours when placing your order, or visit www.boston.gov/departments/small-business-development/support-boston-restaurants for updates. Restaurants that have temporarily closed don’t appear on this list.

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- Basho** | 11:30am-9pm; 12-10pm weekends | (617) 262-1388
Call or visit website to order.
- Bar Louie** | 11am-12:30am | (617) 812-9950
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- Bennett’s Sandwich Shop** | 10am-8pm | (857) 239-9736
Call or visit website to order.
- Boston Burger Company** | 11am-10pm M-W; 11am-11pm Thu-Sat; 12-8pm Sun. | (857) 233-4560
Call or use Grubhub, DoorDash to order.
- by CHLOE** | 11am-9pm weekdays, 10am-9pm weekends.
Visit website to order.
- Dumpling Palace** | 11am-3am | (617) 266-8888
Call or use Grubhub to order.
- El Pelon Taqueria** | 11am-9pm | (617) 267-9090
Call or visit website to order.
- Energize** | 9am-6pm | (857) 317-3868
Call or use UberEats to order.
- Eventide** | 12-7:30pm | (617) 545-1060
Call or visit website to order.
- Five Guys** | 11am-10pm | (617) 936-3657
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- Ginger Exchange** | 11:30am-11pm M-Sat.; 12pm-10pm Sun | (617) 867-9999
Call or visit website to order.
- Gyro City** | Open 11am to 9pm | (617) 903-4248
Call to order.
- Haju Kitchen** | 11:30am-10:15pm M-Sat.; 12pm-11pm Sun | (617) 982-7118
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- Hojoko** | 4pm-9pm | (617) 670-0507
Call or visit website to order.
- Honeygrow** | 10:30am-8pm M-Sat | (857) 991-1647
Call or visit website to order.
- Love Art Sushi** | 10:30am-10pm M-F; 11am-10pm Sat-Sun | (617) 982-6953
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- Moby Dick of Boston** | 11am-10pm | (617) 236-5511
Call to order.
- Neighborhoods Coffee and Crepes** | 7am-4pm M-F; 8:30am-4pm Sat-Sun | (617) 262-7700
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- Orfano** | 12pm-8pm | (617) 916-9600
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- Pad Thai Café** | 11:30am-10:30pm M-Sat; 12pm-10:30pm Sun | (617) 267-282
Call or visit website to order.
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- Pho Basil** | 11:30am-10pm M-Thu; 11:30am-10:30pm Sat.; 11:30am-10pm Sun | (617) 262-5377
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- Saloniki** | 12pm-10pm | (617) 266-0001
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- Shah’s Halal Food** | 11am-11pm Sun-Thu; 11am-12am F-Sat | (617) 936-3955
Call or visit website to order.
- Sol Azteca** | 4pm-9pm Tue-Sun | (617) 262-0909
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- Sombrero Chiquito** | 11am-9pm | (857) 265-3254
Call to order.
- Sufra Mediterranean Food** | 11am-12am | (781) 645-8080
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- Sweet Cheeks Q** | 12pm-8pm | (617) 266-1300
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- sweetgreen** | 10:30am-10pm | (857) 233-2673
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- Symphony Sushi** | 11:30am-10:30pm M-Sat; 12-10pm Sun | (617) 262-3888
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- Thaitation** | 11am-10pm M-F; 12-10pm Sat-Sun | (617) 585-9909.
Call or use Grubhub to order.
- Tiger Mama** | 12pm-8pm | (617) 425-6262
Call to order.
- Wahlburgers** | 12pm-8pm | (617) 927-6810
Call to order.
- Yard House** | 11am-9pm | (617) 236-4083
Call or visit their website to order.

MISSION HILL

- Ginger Exchange** | 11:30am-9pm | (617) 739-8888
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- il Mondo** | 10am-11:45pm | (617) 277-7161
Call or visit website to order.
- Laughing Monk** | 11am-9:30pm M-F | (617) 232-8000
Call to order.
- Lilly’s Gourmet Pasta** | 11am-8:30pm M-F; 12pm-9pm Sat | (617) 427-8080
Call to order.
- Mike’s Donuts** | 5am-3pm | (617) 427-6828
Call to order.
- Milkweed Café** | 7am-9pm | (617) 516-8913
Call to order.
- Mission Bar and Grill** | 11am-7pm M-F | (617) 566-1244
Call to order.
- Penguin Pizza** | noon-10pm | (617) 277-9200
Call to order.
- Solid Ground Cafe** | 6am-1pm | (617) 487-5557
Call or visit website to order.

MISSION HILL/FENWAY NEIGHBORHOOD TRUST DEADLINE EXTENDED!

Responding to virus-control measures, the Trust has extended the deadline for proposals from organizations seeking funding for projects and programs intended to serve residents of the Mission Hill and Fenway neighborhoods.

Please visit www.missionhillfenwaynt.org for our on-line application.



Proposals must be submitted no later than midnight on April 30, 2020. Please email hello@missionhillfenwaynt.org with any questions.

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> **TERRACE STREET** from facing page topography and the train tracks, there just wasn't enough land. The slope between Parker Street and Terrace Street is very steep, a 60-foot grade difference. The three-way stop at the Cedar Street intersection, which residents complained about at the meeting, is a product of the Southwest Corridor. The new bridge was intended as an east-west connection to replace other closed streets. However, the volume of traffic using Terrace Street to bypass Columbus Avenue or Parker Street was probably not expected 40 years ago.

Businesses have come and gone on the street: warehouses, light manufacturers and 19th-century breweries—Rueter and Alley's Highland Spring, James Kenney's Park Brewery and the Union Brewery, where Jim Lewis later opened Mississippi Foods. In the first decade of the 20th century, the Donovan family had 30 stables for show and harness-racing horses at 123 Terrace St.

Article 59 of Mission Hill's zoning states that "the purpose of Local Industrial Subdistricts is to encourage the preservation of the existing manufacturing and industrial base in a manner that is sensitive to and preserves the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhoods, and to encourage the development of new job opportunities within the Mission Hill Neighborhood District." The Terrace Street local industrial subdistrict extends from Tremont to New Heath Street. Both sides of the street are included, except from Alleghany Street to Tremont Street, where only the east side of the block lies in the district.

Residential use is forbidden in the

industrial subdistrict, but artist live-workspace is allowed. However, in 2018 and 2019, construction of 184 apartments on five different parcels was approved, and most are not for artists. Primary Development has 21 under construction; the other projects have not begun. Sixty units are permitted for the city-owned parcel at 77 Terrace St. The Department of Neighborhood Development's Joseph Backer told this reporter that Sebastian Mariscal's innovative project, building into the hillside, will possibly start in late spring. However the transfer from the Department of Neighborhood Development won't happen until the private lender finalizes its support. More housing has been approved closer to Jackson Square at 154 Terrace St.

Next door is Oliver Lofts, where residents are now organizing a petition drive to protest cutbacks in building security, high parking fees, and the loss of indoor bike storage, among other concerns. Oliver's owner, the Winn Companies, is the proponent for 64 condominiums at 154 Terrace, all but three of them market-rate. According to resident David



PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS

One of the last large meetings on Mission Hill before coronavirus concerns shut the city down discussed the planned retail cannabis store, Raices on the Hill, proposed for 123 Terrace Street.

Mynott, the Oliver Lofts Tenants Association, formed in 2012, comprises residents who both rent and own their units. Many are people of color, elderly, and families with small children; some receive housing vouchers. The association is working with the housing organization City Life/Vida Urbana to petition elected officials and city hall staff to help negotiate their troubles with current management. Some of the issues in their petition include:

1. NTQ's (notice-to-quit) being issued inappropriately.
2. Inappropriate language.
3. Barricading management office.
4. Being unapproachable and unwelcoming of residents.
5. Harassment (watching residents through surveillance).
6. Entering residents' units without proper notice.
7. Refusing to complete annual paperwork in a timely manner.
8. Ignoring residents' safety concerns.
9. Ignoring incidents and break-ins.
10. Overcharging residents/inaccurate resident rent ledgers.

11. Pressuring residents to pay bills they don't owe.

Changes coming to Terrace are being met with mixed opinions, but what won't change are the physical constraints: a narrow corridor between rocks and the Orange Line tracks, with access only at either terminus or the Cedar Street bridge.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

DO YOU HAIKU?

In response to disruption caused by the coronavirus, Kaji Aso Studio in the East Fens has pushed back the deadline for its annual haiku contest. First prize is \$300, and the deadline for submissions is now July 15. For directions on submitting entries, go to www.kajiasostudio.com.

> **FENWAY CARES** from page 1 up as volunteers. Relatively new to her job at the CDC, Aiyer said that "something that immediately struck me is how passionate and caring [Fenway] residents are." For the immediate future, the group will work to find "creative ways to help people who are seriously homebound," says Aiyer. They will start with obvious needs like delivering food and medications. The network intends to stay flexible so that it can build an understanding of what

people need and respond to a rapidly changing situation. Gabriella Mora, a West Fens resident, played a role in the initial effort to set up Fenway Cares. She sees it as a natural extension of the sense of community in the Fenway, one that could grow to encompass more residents. "It's also a bit of a model of how we could always be living—'Hey, I'm your neighbor. How can I help?'" Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.

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APPLY: masspromisefellows.org/apply



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Beyond experience and an interest in serving youth in grades 6-12, all applicants must have a high school degree or GED, be at least 17, be a US citizen, national or permanent resident, and willing to comply with a criminal background check.

For more info:
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N Northeastern University
City and Community Engagement



FENS VIEWS

Fenway Cares Reminds Us: Pulling Together Matters

BY STEVE WOLF

Testimonials don’t come any better than this: *I was losing hope yesterday as I lost my job due to this pandemic. I was told I didn’t qualify for food stamps due to my past income [from] working as a medical PCA. I posted my info online and [a volunteer with Fenway Cares], a woman with a gentle voice, called me and told me it’s going to be okay. Just hearing the words*

GUEST OPINION

from someone I don’t know in my community, just really made me feel better. I explained to her how I’m having a hard time now with not being able to afford food or rent until I start working again. She assured me to let me know [that] she has resources to help. So sweet!

Even its founders don’t know exactly what form the new Fenway Cares coalition will ultimately take (see page 1), the very fact that it exists at all says a lot about our community. It holds out hope in one of the grimmest periods of recent American history, and it tells us something heartening about ourselves that we might not have recognized.

Here are a few lessons we can take away from this initiative and the community that created it.

Not every Fenwickian lives in a shiny new building: your next-door neighbor may really need help. For years the Fenway served as Boston’s “gateway neighborhood,” a magnet for new arrivals thanks to cheap rents and lots of transit. The city’s real estate boom, symbolized by the 20-story buildings that have risen in the West Fens, has made those cheap rents just a fond memory. Yet income for roughly 38 percent of the neighborhood’s households falls below the poverty line. Even if that figure includes many college students, a sizable collection of low- and moderate-income apartments, alongside multiple senior-housing developments, translate into hundreds, if not thousands,

of neighbors living on the edge. The gratitude of a neighbor cited at the beginning—responding to the distribution of produce engineered by Fenway Cares and City Councilor Kenzie Bok’s office—reminds us of the need to look out for *all* of our neighbors.

The neighborhood wins when community leaders put aside their differences. The first two Fenway Porchfests showed us that local groups can work toward a common goal despite past disagreements. Fenway Cares unites six groups with sometimes-unrelated missions to support their community during this public-health emergency. That unity of purpose bodes well for future cooperation for the good of the neighborhood. After rising to this occasion, maybe we can finally move past long-simmering friction.

Grassroots efforts will keep people from falling through the cracks. Mutual-aid groups with goals like those of Fenway Cares have sprung up all over metro Boston in just a few weeks. Folks have rolled up their sleeves to volunteer time and money to help neighbors deal with a range of problems caused by the stay-at-home directive, providing everything from food deliveries to financial and emotional support. People delight in calling Bostonians cold and stand-offish (admit it: you do, too), but these grassroots efforts paint a very different picture, and we should embrace it.

Last month *The Boston Globe* published a thoughtful letter from East Fens resident Arlene Ash, a biostatistical researcher at UMass Medical School, underscoring the urgency of observing physical distancing to slow and reverse the spread of coronavirus. She warned against letting physical separation become the enemy of human connection. We’ll need both to contain the virus—or, as Ash put it, “we can protect ourselves only by protecting others.” What other approach even makes sense for this extraordinary time? Fenway Cares offers a great model of looking out for everyone as we move deeper into the uncharted waters of the pandemic.

Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.

Working Professionals Deserve Affordable Rents

BY LISA FAY

For forty years, community groups around Boston—particularly in East Boston, Fenway, North End, Chinatown, and Roxbury—have pleaded with developers and landlords to build and maintain affordable housing. For forty years the developers and landlords have refused to listen to these pleas.

For too long, government officials have let them run amok, ignoring neighborhood concerns about building housing that professionals can afford and have money left off to enjoy their lives.

GUEST OPINION

Many developers say they cannot afford to build these affordable units. What they are really saying is that they *do not want* to build these units at all. Developers do not want to be forced to build what the community wants. While taxes and construction costs are high, developers are ruthless in demanding that their costs be recovered quickly rather than spreading the costs over time.

These developers believe it is the government’s job to build housing for low-income people, “those kinds of people.” Well, those kinds of people are us: teachers, hospitality workers, computer geeks, construction workers, first responders, artists and writers, car mechanics, architects, public servants, and the best of the rest. They do

not believe it is their responsibility to build housing for people covering all ranges of income and public assistance.

Developers and landlords are behaving like children. They want what they want when they want it. They want to build housing for the highest bidder, regardless of what surrounding neighborhoods want. They seek wealthy residents who can live without government assistance or bank loans. Their degree of greed is shocking.

Skyrocketing housing costs are having a detrimental effect on professionals. Many have moved out of state for cheaper housing. People are travelling further to get to their jobs.

Some developers are throwing a bone out, proposing to build microunits at hefty prices. Scape wanted to build microunits on Boylston Street that would have rented at \$2,600 a month, before they decided on \$1,600.

It is fair to say that developers and landlords are disobeying public policies and acting immorally in setting oppressive market prices.

New housing policies must be established to ensure that housing is real for everybody, particularly for renters. Developers need to be much more moderate in their pricing. Rent control must be brought back.

We do not have a housing crisis. We have a moral crisis. Americans know how to build housing well. Let Boston lead the way.

Lisa Fay lives in the West Fens.

What Goes Up, Must Come Down—and Vice Versa



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS

March saw big changes on both the east and west ends of the 401 Park development. Workers regrade the corner of Park Drive and Brookline Avenue (photo at left) after Samuels & Associates took down its ice skating rink for the season. Meanwhile, at the other end of the property (photo at right), demolition of the building at the corner of Fullerton Street cleared a site for a 506,000-squae-foot, 14-story lab/office building approved by the BPDA in 2017. The City issued a building permit in February.

> MUDDY RIVER from page 1
meeting at Emmanuel College, didn’t specify how many trees would be cut for temporary access routes and staging in Phase 2. Online filings were also unclear. There will be at least 100 planted.
Zsido fears that Phase 2 dredging will stir up and redistribute toxic sediments. She also worries that disposal of phragmites is

equally fraught with danger, given the metals that the reeds absorb. Would stricter wetland regulations have influenced ACE’s monitoring of Phase 1 work and the plans for Phase 2?
Unless the flow of the water speeds up substantially, how much will water quality really improve? At the Feb. 27 meeting, it was acknowledged that velocity remains a

major challenge. The hopeful conclusion of the ACE presentation states that “water will move through the system faster” after project completion, but there are a lot of factors involved. The Charles River Dam limits the speed of the Muddy River’s flow, and that isn’t changing, at least not yet.
Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

THE Fenway News

Serving the Fenway, Kenmore Square, Audubon Circle, upper Back Bay, lower Roxbury, Prudential, Mission Hill, and Longwood since 1974

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“Comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.”

The founders of The Fenway News adopted this motto to express their mission of exposing and opposing the dangers the neighborhood faced in the early 1970s—rampant arson, predatory landlords, and a destructive urban renewal plan. If the original motto no longer fits today’s Fenway, we remain committed to its spirit of identifying problems and making our neighborhood a better and safer place to live.

> FREQUENCY <
The Fenway News reaches distribution sites on the Friday closest to the first of each month. Our next issue will appear on **Friday, May 1.**
> DEADLINE <
The deadline for letters, news items, and ads for our next issue is **Friday, April 24.**

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

A LOT HAPPENED IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SINCE THE LAST ISSUE, INCLUDING...

Before plunging in, ICYMI has a profound question: Where does this bumper crop of purple and blue disposable gloves—like exotic flowers blossoming in streets, drains, and parks—come from? With health care providers desperate for them, ICYMI wonders why have so many suddenly appeared in our streets? ➡ **Two LMA hospitals announced work on different lines of coronavirus treatment. Brigham & Women’s has become a test site for remdesivir, an antiviral drug developed by Gilead Sciences and one of the first possible treatments to undergo testing in humans. Meanwhile, Beth Israel hopes to start clinical trials in September for a potential vaccine it developed with Janssen Pharmaceutical. The company and hospital have collaborated on other vaccines, including ones for the Ebola and Zika viruses. Johnson & Johnson, which owns Janssen, grabbed headlines at the end of the month by announcing that it would produce one billion doses of the vaccine—assuming tht trials go well—by early 2021.** ➡ Speaking of the BI, Kevin Tabb, CEO of Beth Israel Lahey Health, announced a salary cut for himself [50%] and other top execs [20%] as the healthcare system struggles to rein in costs associated with the pandemic. On closer inspection, it turns out the cuts only cover the second quarter—at least for now. ➡ **Remember the bitter fight to prevent completion of the biolab at BU Medical Center in the South End [officially, the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories]? *The Fenway News* covered**



the years-long effort to block approval, led by activists who wanted to know why risky and dangerous activities always seemed to end up in low-income, nonwhite neighborhoods. According to *The Globe*, the lab, which opened in 2017, has begun conducting rapid, large-batch tests of up to 20,000 existing drugs and compounds to see if any prove effective in stopping coronavirus. ➡ Grocery giant Albertson’s announced it would install plexiglass shields to protect cashiers at all its stores from potential coronavirus infection. Although the company promised installation across all stores within a week of its announcement, the Fenway Star still did not have the shields by month’s end. ➡ **Finally, ICYMI did find a few scraps of non-coronavirus news. The T’s board of directors approved a contract to build two new stops on Commonwealth Ave. for the Green Line’s B branch. One will replace BU West and St. Paul Street, and a second one will replace Pleasant Street and Babcock Street. Fewer stops will reduce travel times on the line.** ➡ The BPDA formally signed off on changes in Phase 2 of the Fenway Center, the \$1 billion air-rights project to be built on a platform above the Mass. Pike just west of Kenmore Square. Meredith Managment won approval to build offices and lab space rather than housing, as it originally proposed. Phase 1 is nearing completion, and construction on Phase 2 could begin this summer, although the pandemic throws that schedule into doubt. ➡

DASHBOARD

➔ TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UP

- **BACK BAY:** Trash and recycling on Monday and Thursday
- **FENWAY:** Trash and recycling on Tuesday and Friday
- **MISSION HILL:** Trash and recycling on Tuesday and Friday

➔ STREET CLEANING

While the City of Boston began street cleaning again on April 1, in light of the stay-at-home order and the difficulty of finding alternative parking, it will suspend ticketing cars parked in designated street-cleaning zones until further notice. Your best bet is to check the City’s web page with temporary transportation information, www.boston.gov/news/temporary-parking-enforcement-changes-place-due-covid-19

Neighborhood Newsline

City Loosens Parking Rules To Help Residents During Pandemic

To address the altered transportation needs of residents during the public health emergency, the City has made changes in its parking-enforcement policies, including:

- Residents with a valid resident sticker may park in metered or two-hour parking spaces without having to pay a meter fee, or adhere to the time limit—as long as the space lies within their neighborhood. For cars lacking the relevant resident sticker, standard time limit and meter requirements remain in place.
- The Boston Transportation Department (BTD) has suspended ticketing and towing for street cleaning, given the difficulty of finding alternative places to park in neighborhoods.
- BTD will not ticket for expired inspection stickers or registrations, given the challenges of renewing inspections and registrations while nonessential businesses remain closed, which (as of March 31) will continue through May 4.

Other changes include pick-up zones outside restaurants, as they shift to takeout-only business, and free Bluebike passes and parking for hospital employees.

BPDA INCOME-RESTRICTED HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

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3 INCOME-RESTRICTED UNITS

| # OF UNITS | # OF BEDROOMS | PRICE | MAXIMUM INCOME LIMIT IN AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) |
|------------|---------------|-----------|--|
| 1 | 1 | \$186,400 | 80% AMI |
| 1 | 2 | \$221,900 | 80% AMI |
| 1 | 2 | \$288,700 | between 80% and 100% of AMI |

MAXIMUM INCOME PER HOUSEHOLD SIZE
(2019 LIMITS, PROVIDED BY BPDA)

| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | 80% AMI | 100% AMI |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | \$63,500 | \$79,350 |
| 2 | \$72,550 | \$90,650 |
| 3 | \$81,600 | \$102,000 |
| 4 | \$90,650 | \$113,300 |
| 5 | \$97,950 | \$122,400 |
| 6 | \$105,200 | \$131,450 |

Applications are available online or by email from April 13, 2020, to April 26, 2020.

After careful consideration and an abundance of caution, the City of Boston has decided to cancel the in-person application distribution period. To request an application online, please visit: bit.ly/50symphony

If you cannot complete the application online (recommended), please call us at 617-306-4540 to request that we mail you one and to ask for any guidance you might need to complete the application.

When you call, you will be asked for your full name, complete mailing address, and phone number. This is a City and HUD requirement.

For more information please visit: www.thehenrylottery.com or contact us via email at thehenrylottery@nemoves.com

DEADLINE: Applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than Friday, May 1, 2020

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For more information, language assistance, or reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities please call 617-306-4540 or email thehenrylottery@nemoves.com

Equal Housing Opportunity

MFA Plans for an Extended Shutdown

If you missed seeing the MFA’s big show of Lucien Freud’s self-portraits during the first half of March, you might not get to see it at all. That, in a nutshell, represents the problem facing the MFA—and other cultural institutions: the museum built its budget around income from that show and a Jean-Michel Basquiat retrospective that would have opened in April, and now it’s lost for good. The Museum released a statement in late March saying it doesn’t expect to reopen before early July (even that may turn out to be optimistic). As it considers layoffs and other “significant cost containment measures,” it canceled all public programs through the end of the summer; said it will pay staff through April 11; and touted plans to develop new exhibitions, programming, and learning content online.

City Extends Deadline to Apply for Fenway Beautification Grants

The Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) has extended to May 12 the application deadline for Fenway Community Benefits funds, which provide up to \$100,000 for temporary or permanent beautification projects. Applicants must submit a plan to the BPDA that describes how their proposal will use the funding to produce the greatest measurable benefit for the community, and all projects must be fully accessible to the public. As part of the Fenway Park Demonstration Project in 2013, the Red Sox agreed to contribute \$1,000,000 over 10 years to be used toward beautification efforts in the neighborhood.

B.U. Wants to Change Approved Uses for Kenmore Sq. Building

Boston University proposed an amendment to its institutional master plan focusing on two floors of leased space at 540 Commonwealth Ave. , a three-story building Kenmore Square building at the corner of Brookline Avenue (McDonald’s and Santander Bank) on the first floor. The BPDA’s Edward Carmody is taking comments until April 13, but a scheduled public meeting has been cancelled.

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People & Places: Gerry Cooper

in the very early days of the famed music school. He dropped out of Berklee and moved back to Michigan, where he attended Eastern Michigan and Toledo universities. He went back and forth between Michigan to Boston.

After driving taxis for a time, he eventually opened a record store, Looney Tunes, in 1988. It was first on Mass. Ave. and then moved around the corner to Boylston Street. He eventually sold out to Pat McGrath, then opened King of Records in the West Fenway a few years later. Looney Tunes was a great record store, at a time when the neighborhood was full of record stores. It has since moved to Allston.

As we walk toward the garden from the West Fens, Gerry tells me about his history in the Fenway. He was very involved with the community through King of Records. One of the things he was most proud of was a window display to inform people about the AIDS epidemic while it was at its height. A benefit was eventually held, raising money for children with AIDS and incarcerated mothers with AIDS. His store was a center for artists and musicians in the Fenway and surrounding areas. He also converted part of the store into a makeshift apartment where he lived with his son. As the years went on and the demand for vinyl decreased, the store became more of a kaleidoscope of everything. All this is very evident in his garden.

If you know Gerry, you likely know his garden—it's hard to miss. It's one of the larger plots, and it's prominent alongside the walkway on the Boylston Street side. It has the homey feel of someone's backyard, with artistic touches throughout; old cast iron pans here, sculptures there, things hanging off trees, and trellises. He calls himself "a self-proclaimed connoisseur of trash picking," but it's an exquisite form of trash picking that delights the senses as you look in every corner of the garden and find something new. He uses it much as people use a popular backyard. He's had weddings, memorial services, spontaneous parties, and on some summer evenings, people just come by and play music.

Chef and photographer Steve Harnish lives in the East Fens.

PHOTO: STEVE HARNISH

BY STEVE HARNISH

Gerry and I met on a crisp, sunny, late-winter day just before the world turned upside down. He picked his large garden in the Victory Gardens as his favorite place in the Fenway. He calls it his "spiritual temple," and when you look around at the scattered art pieces and bric-a-brac, you can see why. As we sit and chat, people walk by and call out or wave. He's at peace here. It's a peaceful, comfortable place—reminds me more of a welcoming living room or den than a garden.

Gerry moved to the Fenway in 1965, attending Berklee College of Music

With Concerts MIA, Classical Moves Online

BY BRYAN CLAGUE

Here's some wonderful news: Since they can't perform live, many of the world's greatest arts organizations are opening up their archives during the pandemic. Some of these are free; some cost a bit to rent, like an on-demand movie; all are truly worthwhile:

- Listen to the Berlin Philharmonic, one of the world's top orchestras, play Beethoven's 6th or Mahler's 4th. www.digitalconcerthall.com/en/concerts
- Watch the Vienna State Opera—another world leader—perform The Magic Flute or Der Rosenkavalier. www.staatsoperlive.com/
- Listen to chamber music or watch performances by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center: www.chambermusicociety.org/watch-and-listen/?mc_cid=366c6e74a0&mc_eid=0f11eec249
- For some of the most beautiful singing I've ever heard, listen to a recording of Montserrat Caballé singing in an ancient Roman amphitheater: www.youtube.com/results?search_

query=casta+diva+caballe+orange

- This Arkansas orchestra will soothe all your coronavirus anxiety with bedtime lullabies: www.cnn.com/2020/03/25/us/coronavirus-arkansas-symphony-orchestra-wellness-trnd/index.html
- Boston, of course, has its own very fine orchestras:
- The Boston Symphony Orchestra needs no introduction, of course: www.bso.org/brands/bso/at-home/bso-at-home-week-1-bso-music-directors.aspx;
- Boston Baroque has performances available at <https://baroque.boston/listen>;
- Handel+Haydn Society posts a new performance daily in its "Listening Room" at <https://handelandhaydn.org/hh-listening-room/https://handelandhaydn.org/hh-listening-room/>
- A Far Cry, which explores modern classics in residence at the Gardner Museum, posts new clips daily at <https://afarcry.org/watch-live>.

Brian Clague, a professional violinist, lives in the East Fens.

COUNTWAY REVAMP GETS UNDER WAY



Construction recently began on the Huntington Avenue entrance of the Harvard Medical School's Countway Library in Longwood. The work includes both interior and exterior upgrades and this new entry bridge for access from Huntington.

PHOTO: ALISON PUTINAS

COMMUNITY meetings

THU, APRIL 9 Fenway CDC Organizing Committee meeting, 6pm to 7:30pm via Zoom phone/video. To join the Zoom meeting, call (929) 205-6099, meeting ID is 928-856-821.

ONGOING Free one-to-one financial coaching telephone session. To schedule your per-

sonal session, please contact Kris Anderson at kanderson@fenwaycdc.org or at (617) 267-4637 x 29.

ONGOING Free Career Clinic telephone session. To schedule a personal session, contact Kris Anderson at kanderson@fenwaycdc.org or at (617) 267-4637 x 29.

EMERGENCY RESOURCES

- If you or your family has a specific urgent need, **CITY COUNCILOR KENZIE BOK** asks that you call her office at (617) 635-4225.
- **ABCD PARKER HILL/FENWAY** (714 Parker Street, Roxbury) is open and operating its food pantry for pick-up. Before visiting, call the pantry at (617) 445-6000; hours are 9am-3pm on Mondays, 9am-5pm Tuesdays through Thursdays, and 9am-4:30pm on Fridays.
- **LIFEBOAT PANTRY**, operates every Tuesday and Thursday, 3-6pm, at the Boston Temple, 105 Jersey St. For more information, contact Kris Anderson at kanderson@fenwaycdc.org or (617) 267-4637 x29.
- If you're looking for aid or wish to make a donation, visit the **UNITED WAY'S** website at <https://unitedwaymassbay.org/get-involved/covid-19-family-fund>.
- If you work with a nonprofit seeking assistance, or you'd like to make a donation, visit the **BOSTON RESILIENCY FUND**, modeled on the One Boston Fund established after the Marathon bombings. Visit www.boston.gov/departments/treasury/boston-resiliency-fund.

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The Arts

Museum Closed? No Problem With Virtual Tours

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

One of the many activities I miss during this time of home confinement is going to Fenway museums and seeing the courtyard

TUFTS LAUNCHES VIRTUAL GALLERY

In addition to the museums mentioned in this article, the Tufts University Art Galleries have launched an app with resources that include virtual tours. The app allows you to tour the galleries' spring exhibitions with a virtual walk-through feature, as well as images and gallery texts. Search for *Tufts University Art Galleries* in app stores to find the app.

at the Gardner or the Impressionists at the MFA. Fortunately, we can visit these beloved institutions—virtually.

A website called artsandculture.google.com takes you on a virtual tour of almost any famous museum in the world, including our very own Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts.

The tour for the Gardner is amazing. There are at least 32 slides, featuring every room on the three floors of the museum. What makes this tour so special is that by touching a tab, you can rotate the view to see all sides of the room, making you feel as if you are there. Start with the famous courtyard, then

move to the red-lined room with Titian's *Europa* and the famous full-length portrait of Isabella Stewart Gardner by John Singer Sargent.

On the first floor there's another Sargent, *Madame Gautreau Drinking a Toast*, and down a long hallway with walls covered in ceramic tiles, another Sargent, *El Jaleo*. In a yellow-fabric-lined room on the first floor hangs James McNeill Whistler's *Harmony in Silver and Blue*.

On the second floor, you can see elaborate tapestries and cabinets filled with ceramics, along with Ander Zorn's portrait of Gardner in Venice. Also, on the second floor in a red-walled room is Raphael's *Count Tommaso Inghirami*, and in another room Raphael's *Pietà*. The second floor gives a wonderful view of the courtyard and also contains my personal favorite, Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait, Age 23*, which, fortunately, was not stolen during the infamous heist.

The third floor has a painting by James McNeill, entitled *Whistle*, and Botticelli's *Virgin and Child with an Angel*.

The MFA tour takes you to several sections of the museum. There are sculptures and ceramics from ancient Greece and Rome, antiquities from Egypt, and both European and American paintings. Particular paintings and sculptures are featured, rather than room views.

You can view Claude Monet's *Rouen Cathedral* or Mary Cassatt's *In the Loge* or John Singleton Copley's *A Boy with a Flying*

Squirrel or Winslow Homer's *The Fog Warning*. A lesser-known painting shown, *Elijah in the Desert* by Washington Allston, was donated in 1870, the first work of art in the museum's collection. Also of interest is a glazed-brick mural of a striding lion from ancient Babylon, an 1880 wooden cabinet with gilding and inlay, and a ceramic bowl from ancient Greece. Clicking on the title for each work gives you extensive information about it.

If history is your forte, try a virtual tour of the Massachusetts Historical Society. This museum, on Boylston Street in the East Fens, has extensive collections of papers by John Quincy Adams and Thomas Jefferson. The virtual tour focuses on the letters and papers of Jefferson, third U.S. president and principal author of the Declaration of Independence. The slides open a window into Jefferson's inner life through extensive notes on his activities and ideas, giving modern audiences a glimpse into the mind of the architect of American freedom, himself a notorious slave owner.

There are letters to Adams and to his granddaughters, a manuscript copy of the Declaration, a copy of the speech Jefferson



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

The MFA virtual tour features In the Loge, with its famous web of watchers and the watched, by Mary Stevenson Cassatt.

delivered at his installment as president, and many architectural drawings. Jefferson designed his home at Monticello after many architectural plans and, influenced by time spent in France, kept his private spaces separate from public spaces. Jefferson strongly believed that a country that could feed itself could maintain political independence. To this end, reflected in diagrams and lists, he experimented with new fruits and vegetables and devoted much of Monticello to agriculture. *Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.*

E Pluribus Unum: Uplifting 'Concert' Video Shoots to Viral Fame on YouTube

Shelbie Rassler, a Boston Conservatory at Berklee student majoring in composition, worked with more 70 fellow musicians from Berkee and the Conservatory to produce a "virtual orchestra" performance of Burt Bacharach's "What The World Needs Now is Love." Rassler said the idea came to her on her flight home from from Boston after the school shut its doors and moved classes online in the wake of coronavirus clampdown. With singers, instrumentalists, and dancers—most performing from their homes (with the occasional pack of Clorox wipes in the background)—Rassler produced a joyful, compelling and uplifting rendition of the 1960s pop classic. By press time, the the video had passed 1,500,000 views on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=QagzdvvzHBQ).

ART IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



On Sunday, March 22, a guerilla artist placed a face mask on the one of the baby head sculptures flanking the Fenway entrance to the MFA. (The sculptures, by Antonio Lopez, are known as "Day" and "Night.") The Boston Globe later tracked down the artist, Peter Agoos, who recruited his nephew to help him install the mask, made of cling wrap. Although the museum had closed the previous week, its administrators didn't take kindly to the installation and had it removed the next day.

Stream 30,000 Films for Free, Thanks to Your Library Card

BY STEVE WOLF

The Boston Public Library rides to the rescue of Bostonians sheltering in place—as long as they've got a library card. That's the ticket to a 30,000-title film library on [kanopy.com](https://www.kanopy.com), a consortium of libraries and universities that lets you stream free movies on any digital device.

You can't beat the range or the quality of Kanopy's films. True, you won't find big franchise films (studios are too busy milking more money out of them), but you'll find almost anything else, from classic silents to artsy midcentury hits to recent Academy Award winners. Kanopy also offers Kanopy Kids, a dedicated children's section with entertaining and, yes, educational fare geared to viewers 2 years and older.

Sign up and begin creating a list of titles you want to watch (it's easy to lose track of time while putting that list together—but most of us suddenly have lots of time on our hands). Like Netflix, Kanopy groups films by categories; choose films right from the landing page or click on a title to jump to a plot summary, cast, and running time. You'll also see a sidebar with other titles—think "people who bought this product also viewed" on Amazon—and a viewing window for the film itself. But take care: that window isn't a preview but the film itself. Once you click on it, you've used up one of the eight films you can stream every month.

Kanopy can help you keep your streaming costs down while in self-isolation (and maybe without a salary) with choices like:

- **SCREWBALL COMEDIES:** Try *His Girl Friday*, with its mile-a-minute banter between Rosalind Russell and Cary Grant, or Preston Sturges's woefully underrated comedy *Miracle at Morgan Creek*.
- **RECENT INDIE HITS:** *Moonlight*, *Lady Bird*, *Midsommar*, *The Florida Project*, *Room*.
- **FILMS NOIR:** Dark and cynical takes on life like *The Strange Love of Martha Iver* (Barbara Stanwyck at her scheming best), *D.O.A.*, *Woman on the Run*, *Detour*.
- **THE CRITERION COLLECTION**, staples of 20th-century art house theaters—these films still show up at the Brattle—with titles like *The Conformist*, *Black Orpheus*, *The Seventh Samurai*, *Bicycle Thieves*, *Cleo from 5 to 7*
- **RECENT COMEDIES:** The Brothers Franco in *The Disaster Artist*, Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant in the delightful adaptation of the play *Florence Foster Jenkins*; the blasphemous but wildly funny *The Little Hours*; Taika Waititi's [*Jojo Rabbit*] deadpan vampire mockumentary *What We Do in the Shadows*
- **CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD:** *A Place in the Sun*, *Chinatown*, *The Great Dictator*, *Ace in the Hole*, *Charade*, with its iconic pairing of Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant
- **DOCUMENTARIES:** Agnès Varda's *Places Faces*, *The Queen of Versailles*, *Supersize Me*, *Bill Cunningham New York*, and *Obit*—a truly fascinating look at how *The New York Times* prepares obituaries.

As noted, you need a library card to sign up (a university ID works, too, assuming the university sponsors Kanopy), but the process is quick and relatively painless. More to the point, it opens the door to a century's worth of high-quality films you can fall in love with.

Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.

Coronavirus

VIRTUAL CALENDAR

BOOKS

- **SAY NOTHING**, by Patrick Radden Keefe, brings back the horror of the years of Northern Ireland’s “Troubles,” history that many of us lived through. Grounded in incredible research, it has a hook that gets you right from the start. There’s a local angle with the Boston College Archives fiasco, but the heartbreaking story is the real thing. Keefe profiles, non-judgmentally, key people involved in the Troubles, raising profound questions about violence, politics, class, power and the definition of war. Penguin released a paperback edition in February; check local bookstores with delivery options. Why frustrate you with a hard-to-find recommendation? It’s worthwhile reading, I promise.
- **IN UPSTAIRS AT THE WHITE HOUSE: MY LIFE WITH THE FIRST LADIES**, J.B. West reminisces about his tenure as chief usher of the White House from 1941 to 1969, responsible for every detail from executive planning to setting a table for state dinners. Reading West’s retrospective view of residents and guests from Truman to Johnson is a delight; one gains a glimpse of history from a very personal perspective. I highly recommend this book. While a light read, it grabs one’s interest because of the power of our own relationship to these interesting times.
- **DAVID COPPERFIELD** by Charles Dickens, last read as an assignment, now reading it for enjoyment! Dickens is full of dry humor, a wonderful child’s take on life, and details of old England.
- **THE ESSEX SERPENT**, by Sarah Perry, assembles a large cast of flawed but sympathetic characters in rural England in 1893, all fixated on a sea monster rumored to have snatched livestock from banks of the nearby estuary and killed a man. You’ll care deeply about how the intertwined stories resolve themselves in this artful mix of comedy and drama—written with unusual style and beauty—that manages to weave in topics from feminism to Marxism to the question of how faith can co-exist with science.
- **VIVA DURANT AND THE SECRET OF THE SILVER BUTTONS**. A teen girl solves the mystery of the Missing Silver Buttons in the hand-clap chant: Miss Mary Mack on a visit to New Orleans to visit her grandmother. Entertaining and fun story that breathes new life into a chant that we spent hours doing as a kid.

TV SHOWS

- In **BIG MOUTH** (Netflix)—the funniest and filthiest cartoon you’ve ever seen—four friends in suburban New York enter the scary worlds of junior high school and



In the few short weeks since the pandemic exploded in the U.S., the City and State have shut down all “nonessential” activities that draw crowds—including the performances, shows, and exhibitions that normally fill this page. With the Fenway’s cultural institutions shuttered and everyone spending as much time inside their homes as possible, we asked dozens of folks in the Fenway, Mission Hill, and Audubon Circle to recommend books and streaming options that their hunkered-down neighbors might turn to for comfort, distraction, or escape. Here’s what they recommended.

- puberty. The astute take on the adolescent psyche never precludes rapid-fire jokes or overlooks a way for 12-year-olds to misunderstand sex. The phenomenal voice cast reads like a Who’s Who of Hollywood’s cool kids, from John Mulaney, Maya Rudolph, and Jenny Slate to Jordan Peele, Andrew Rannells, and Fred Armisen.
- **TASKMASTER** (YouTube) is a British panel show where comedians compete in a series of creative and quirky “tasks.” The official Taskmaster YouTube channel uploads a new free, high-quality episode every Tuesday, and the first four seasons are already available. In response to COVID-19, Taskmaster is engaging social media users to participate in tasks that anyone can do within their own home. Submit suggestions via Twitter using the hashtag #Hometasking. Visit <https://twitter.com/AlexHorne> for instructions.
- I have been enjoying **CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM** (HBO). Show is produced by and stars Larry David, the creator of Seinfeld. Larry David is a truly obnoxious and funny character. Other celebs playing themselves include Ted Danson and Richard Lewis. It’s in its 10th season but there’s really no need to go back to Season 1.
- My new guilty pleasure is **ZOEY’S EXTRAORDINARY PLAYLIST**, a feel-good series about a young woman who develops the capacity to hear people’s innermost thoughts through songs and musical numbers. The very appealing and talented cast includes a gender-fluid next-door neighbor who is wicked funny and

- has a remarkable singing voice. Think Glee meets This Is Us, as Zoey grapples with her father’s Parkinson’s-like decline. Lauren Graham (Lorelai on Gilmore Girls) and Mary Steenburgen add serious acting chops and give each episode class. (The series began on NBC in February; you can stream episodes, with ads, free on NBC.com.)
- **THE EXPANSE** (Amazon Prime) is based on the novel series of the same name (also highly recommended). It’s a space opera set in the not-too-distant future in which humanity has colonized much of the solar system. Despite this level of technology, the same problems that we deal with now follow us off-world. It offers drama, intrigue, relatable characters and a level of technology more believable than found in most science fiction series.

MOVIES

- Watch classic films. Start with two of the greatest noirs, **DOUBLE INDEMNITY** and **OUT OF THE PAST**. (Indemnity—free on Starz, rent on YouTube, Amazon, iTunes; Past—rent on Amazon). Or try Japanese films, much beloved by the late, great Steve Brophy, such as Ozu’s **TOKYO STORY** (available free on Kanopy.com; see story on page 7). For a TV binge, nothing has approached **THE WIRE**. (HBO or streaming on HBO Go)
- Watch **BISBEE 17**, (Amazon) an award-winning documentary that landed on dozens of 2018 Best Movie of the year lists. It tells the story of a violent anti-immigrant union-busting campaign in the copper mining town of Bisbee, Arizona in 1917 and the community’s efforts 100 years later to confront its past through art, storytelling, and a reenactment of the round up. It’s fantastic and moving. One of the main participants is Laurie McKenna, a Mass Art graduate.

MUSIC

See East Fens musician Brian Clague’s recommendations for streaming classical music on p6.

MORE BOOKS: TRIDENT WEIGHS IN

We asked Katherine Nazzaro, social media director and lead bookseller at Trident Booksellers and Café on Newbury Street, for book recommendations if titles that you might not have heard of. You can order books for delivery from Trident, and their cafe is still open for takeout orders. www.tridentbookscafe.com



- **THE LAST UNICORN** by Peter S. Beagle. A classic fantasy novel, this book tells the story of the last unicorn, who embarks on a journey to find out what happened to the rest of her kind. The first time I read this book I was already nostalgic for it. Beagle weaves a fantastic tale about storytelling, about magic, and what it means to be alive. There is nothing about this book that isn’t beautiful and compelling
- **WE RIDE UPON STICKS** by Quan Barry. Filled with ’80s nostalgia, this book introduces us to a Danvers field hockey team that turns to witchcraft to win its season. What starts out as innocent superstition eventually turns into both a revolution and a dark obsession. A fun, lighthearted read centered on the strength of teen friendship.
- **EMPRESS OF FOREVER** by Max Gladstone. This fast-paced space epic clocks in at almost 500 pages, so it’s sure to keep you captivated for a while. Join Vivian Liao, a tech CEO, as she gets sucked into the future, learns about a space dictator, and fights to get home. Facing a completely alien space (pun intended),

Liao teams up with a wonderful cast of characters to fight for the liberation of all sentient beings. An excellent and fun story built on the importance of caring for each other.

- **TROJAN WAR MUSEUM** by Ayse Papatya Bucak. My first review of this short-story collection was nothing more than a string of exclamation marks because I was so excited about it. Each story had me thinking “the next one can’t possibly be as good—this is my new favorite short story,” and each time I was wrong. The title story, especially, is one I know I’ll come back to over and over again.
- **THE STARLESS SEA** by Erin Morgenstern. There’s something truly special about this book. Very rarely does a book not only suck you in but leave you feeling more settled and powerful than when you started. A book of magic, it plays with the structure of narrative and the way time works. By the time I’d finished, reading it I was almost physically shaking—and after I was done I didn’t want to talk about anything else.
- **SMALL GODS** by Terry Pratchett. This book is about a turtle god who loses his mojo, meets a janitor, teams up with some fantasy ancient Greek philosophers, and fights against the shackles of organized religion. Terry Pratchett, with his incredible humor and wit, is always an excellent choice, and this makes a perfect introduction to the Discworld.



PODCASTS

- **TINY DESK (HOME) CONCERTS** has repackaged a long-running NPR feature as short videos (roughly 15 minutes), shot at home, by a huge variety of musicians in many genres. A round-the-world musical adventure with a unique vibe. You can subscribe for weekly episodes, as you would for a podcast, at www.npr.org/series/tiny-desk-concerts/
- Allston-based **PRX PODCAST GARAGE**—a community recording studio, classroom, and event space for audio storytellers—maintains a list of “neighborhood podcasts” made by local artists, located at www.podcastgarage.org/neighborhood-podcast-list
- **THE SHAPE OF CARE** explores the many facets of caregiving and the unique challenges that people face in our caregiving system. The latest episode discusses caregiving in the face of COVID-19 and previous stories focus on LGBT+ elder care, Alzheimer’s Disease, and healthcare policy. [iTunes, Spotify, Radio-Public and other platforms]
- **ON THE MEDIA** hosts Brooke Gladstone and Bob Garfield believe passionately that reliable news plays an essential role in keeping democracy running—so they never shy away from roasting big media outlets across the political spectrum that fall down on the job. Smart and entertaining, this podcast has for the last month focused almost entirely on understanding medical and scientific reporting about coronavirus. (Listen free/subscribe at www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm. Also on WBUR-FM, Sat. at 2pm, and WGBH-FM, Sun. at noon).

AND THE REAL WORLD...

- Get in touch with your relatives and write up that **FAMILY HISTORY** that you’ve been meaning to do “sometime.”
- Send a **GOOD MORNING/ AFTERNOON/ EVENING** to folks you’d typically greet each day or folks you haven’t been in touch with but would like to see. It has become part of my new routine.
- Write (or continue) a **PERSONAL JOURNAL**.
- Hone your **COOKING**. Bake a pie.
- Keep **COMMUNICATING** with one another, as we are doing with this happily encouraged Fenway News initiative.
- **WRITE A HAIKU**. Consider submitting your best to Kaji Aso Studio’s annual Haiku Contest, which is continuing online and by mail. \$3 entry per haiku poem. Cash prizes for first-, second-, and third-place winners.
- Fill out your **CENSUS FORM!**
- Learn how global warming affects human health and how we can cut its impacts with **THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE** an edX course from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. It includes an intro to climate science, highlights the impact of climate change on infections, nutrition, and migration, and shows what we can do to respond to climate change. A highly recommended, accessible overview.
- I once attended a meet-up with the Boston chapter of **URBAN SKETCHERS** and was welcomed warmly—although I was out of my league as an occasional colored-pencil sketcher. Whether or not you draw or paint, I recommend their website and related links for a beautiful look at city life around the world. www.urbansketchers.org.

Contributors

A big thanks goes to our contributors: Arlene Ash, Mary Ann Brogan, Bob Case, Leah Camhi, Tracey Cusick, Jessica Feldish, Kate Finnegan, Christopher Freiss, Kathy Greenough, Sam LaTronica, Jennifer Leonard, Joanne McKenna, Mary Ann Nelson, Leslie Pond, Alison Pultinas, Karla Rideout, Mat Thall, and Steve Wolf