



THE

Fenway News

HYPERLOCAL NEWS FOR THE FENWAY, AUDUBON CIRCLE, KENMORE SQUARE, UPPER BACK BAY, PRUDENTIAL, LONGWOOD, AND MISSION HILL SINCE 1974 • VOLUME 52 NUMBER 5 • MAY 1–MAY 29, 2026

Could Consolidation of Mel King Academy Bring New Uses for Fenway, Audubon Sites?

CIVIC AGENDA

Thu, May 21
**Love The Fenway—
Ten Together**

Celebrate the 10th anniversary of the only dedicated civic space in the neighborhood, the Fenway Community Center. Join neighbors at Eastern Standard for food, beverages, music, and a silent auction. The night will honor Mike Ross, Josh Zakim, Kenzie Bok, and Sharon Durkan alongside Northeastern VP John Tobin. Mayor Michelle Wu serves as an honorary co-host, and proceeds support FCC's free programming. 6-9pm, 775 Boylston St. **Order tickets by May 15 at tinyurl.com/Ten-Together.**



PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF

A tattered flag flutters above the entrance to the now-closed Mel King Academy [formerly McKinley School, left] at 50 St. Mary's Street. As the City works to consolidate the Academy in the South End, new uses could come to the 1920s-era school buildings in Audubon Circle and the Fenway. The Fenway building on Peterborough Street, above, will close in June.

is clear—they will remain empty. As neighbors likely noticed, 50 Mary's St. (the original McKinley Elementary) was vacated in June 2025. The 1923 building had served middle-school students. The former Martin Millmore School, at 97 Peterborough St. has functioned as a high school specializing in vocational classes like woodworking and culinary skills, but it will close this June.

Both sites have surface parking lots, convenient for non-BPS parking, whether legal or not. For years the Peterborough lot offered game-day parking for a fee that went to the school, a use authorized by the Zoning Board of Appeal. It also offered spots to the Seventh Day Adventist Temple on non-baseball Saturdays.

The next steps for these two City buildings—and the role of community

organizations—could be significant. Presumably, the School Committee will be involved, but the Public Facilities Department and the Public Facilities Commission are the key decision makers.

Might the City issue a request for proposals for housing? On June 23, 2025, the City Council passed an ordinance (Chapter X, Section 12 of the City code) giving priority to housing in reuse of surplus municipal property. The ordinance charges the Mayor's Office of Housing to produce annual reports and feasibility studies once a property has been assigned to its list.

Alternately, might the neighborhood elementary school envisioned in the 1992 Urban Village Plan for the West Fenway be considered a viable option?

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

BY ALISON PULTINAS

There has been a sudden step forward for the Melvin H. King South End Academy, the three-location Boston Public Schools (BPS) program that serves students diagnosed with moderate to severe behavioral, psychological, and emotional issues.

Boston has proposed a new therapeutic school at the largest of the three sites, the former Mackey Middle School at 90 Warren Ave. in the South End. The other two buildings—97 Peterborough St. in the West Fens and 50 Saint Mary's St. in Audubon Circle—both date to the 1920s.

With a 48-hour deadline for submitting the paperwork required for applying for state aid in 2026, Brian McLaughlin of the City's Public Facilities Department and BPS's Chief of Capital Planning Delavern Stanislaus collaborated on presentations to the City Council's Ways and Means Committee and the full council on April 15 and to the School Committee the next day. All votes were supportive, and the application went to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) by the April 17 deadline.

Perhaps the most surprising news is that the submission described expected enrollment at the future

school as a maximum of 100 students. Changes in BPS's special education policy encourage inclusion and providing services within general-education classrooms rather than outside placements. The Mel King Academy program currently only enrolls 80 students, a major reduction from years past. According to the presentation, the future school would serve only 5th- through 12th-graders.

The MSBA uses a drawn-out, multiphase process for helping municipalities fund school renovations and construction. Boston's previous application for Madison Park Vocational High School has reached the "Eligibility" phase after clearing the initial "Statement of Interest" phase. BPS expects to hear in July whether it will advance to the "Feasibility" stage.

The process for Madison Park will influence whether Boston's application for the Mel King Academy is accepted. Stanislaus stated that building a facility for just 100 students should be considered in a different way, implying that it would not compete with the much larger Madison Park proposal. The number of projects in a community typically factors into the MSBA board's consideration of applications.

Meanwhile, the immediate future of the Academy's two local buildings

CITY FUMBLE MEANS TROUBLED STRETCH OF BOYLSTON WILL WAIT 5 YEARS FOR FIX

BY STEVE WOLF

The City's failure to produce a plan for redesigning a "high threat" Fenway intersection means that safety-focused reconstruction of the point where Brookline Avenue, Boylston Street, and Park Drive cross—along with four blocks of Boylston to its east—won't qualify to receive federal funds before 2031. On April 16, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which allocates federal transportation funding in Greater Boston, voted to reallocate \$8.15 million in funding to another Boston project. The MPO said the City bore responsibility for the loss after it failed to produce a plan for a shovel-ready project, despite having had six years to produce one.

The MPO vote first came to public

attention on the Streetsblog Mass website (mass.streetsblog.org) in an article by Christian MilNeil.

The loss of funds highlights three significant transportation issues, two in the Fenway and one across the city.

First, the City has had 15 years to develop a plan for the repair work, initially identified as a candidate for redesign in 2011. MassDOT says 14 crashes, one fatal, occurred at the intersection alone between 2019 and 2021 (the latest data it has released). Those crashes landed the crossroads in the top five percent of intersections statewide for collisions. *The Boston Guardian* reports that the City's "High Crash Network," a list of least-safe streets and intersections in Boston, includes the stretch of Boylston from Ipswich Street up through the intersection.

LETHAL INTERSECTION ON PAGE 3 >



PHOTO: COURTESY OF IOANNA ROSE

State Honors Fenway's Arthur Rose

Monday, April 6, seems likely to stand out in Arthur Rose's memory—even though his memory stretches back 107 years. On the morning of April 6, a police motorcade collected Rose from his Church Park apartment and, sirens blasting, sped to the State House for a meeting with Gov. Maura Healey. The governor presented Rose a certificate memorializing his service in World War II, including the 1944 D-Day landing, and in the Korean War. Shown at the presentation, from left, are State Sen. Lydia Edwards, State Rep. Jay Livingstone, Healey, Rose, and Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll.

Rose will likely make more memories next month when he joins a group of about 25 U.S. veterans on a trip to France organized by the Best Defense Foundation to mark the 82nd anniversary of D-Day. The National WWII Museum estimates that about 920 veterans of the war lived in Massachusetts as of 2025 (out of a national total of 45,000).

—STEVE WOLF

FENSVIEWS

LETTERS

Gratitude for the Neighborhood, its Institutions, and People TO THE EDITOR

With boundless gratitude, the Friends of Fenway Studios express our appreciation for your continued support. Not even “technical difficulties” prevented *The Fenway News* from being the stellar example of an organization dedicated to spotlighting and elevating its Fenway neighbors!

Our annual “Open Studios” takes place in November, and you have always been supportive, highlighting it in advance and publishing photos afterward. However, a technical glitch resulted in our 2025 photos and event write-up not reaching you until this past March—yet you ran them in your April issue.

Friends of Fenway Studios is a nonprofit that raises funds for the studio building’s restoration and preservation, while promoting the captivating history of its founding artists and its talented current artists.

The assistance you provide throughout the community is invaluable, and you’ve been doing so for more than half a century! Your dedication brings to mind the strong sense of community demonstrated by the wonderful people at Room & Board, the furniture store at Newbury Street and Mass. Ave. Manager John Hotz and team leader Dawn Michelson have happily provided support within and beyond the Fenway!

Last June, the Fenway Gallery (part of Fenway Studios) featured works by 25 staff members from the Isabella Stewart Gardner

Museum. When I presented the idea of this exhibition to John and Dawn, they loved that it would promote not only our acclaimed artists but also up-and-coming artists from the Gardner. They generously underwrote the “Donuts and Champagne” we served our 700 visitors! Mrs. Gardner was very fond of serving donuts and champagne at her legendary soirees. Naturally, we wanted to honor her tradition!

An employee-owned B Corporation (certifying commitment to sustainability and community), Room & Board makes 90 percent of its products in the USA. Stroll over to the stunning showroom and say hello.

Thank you both for your priceless dedication to the neighborhood!

**LYNDA MCNALLY, PRESIDENT
FRIENDS OF FENWAY STUDIOS**

THE Fenway News

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MUDDY RIVER SYMPOSIUM MARKS 20 YEARS OF STUDENT SCIENCE

PHOTOS: JACK TAN



BY CAROL LASKY

Thirty-one research project posters on subjects ranging from green infrastructure to environmental justice rimmed the room at the 20th Annual Muddy River Symposium at Simmons University on April 7.

A collaboration between the Colleges of the Fenway Center for Sustainability and the Environment and the Muddy River Restoration Project Maintenance and Management Oversight Committee (MMOC), the event showcased sustainability as an urgent, intergenerational goal. “For 20 years, the Muddy River Symposium has provided a venue for hundreds of students concerned with environmental and sustainability issues to engage with this work, share it with others who have similar concerns, and strategize about how to protect and preserve the environment,” explained Colleges of the Fenway Center director and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences associate professor Devan Hawkins.

This year’s keynote speaker was Emily Norton, executive director of the Charles River Watershed Association. She spoke about progress made in cleaning up the Charles as well as the

complexities of addressing sewage discharges, polluted stormwater runoff, defunct dams, and, increasingly, impacts from climate change like drought, extreme heat, and storms that threaten river health as well as human health and safety.

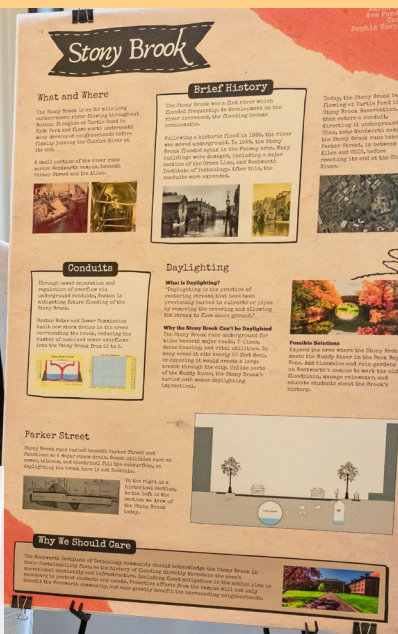
The Third Annual Frances Allou Gershwin Local Social Action Award—named in honor of former MMOC chair Fran Gershwin—was given to “The Course of the Stony Brook,” an investigation by Wentworth Institute of Technology students Aaron Chmura, Cash Eck, Ava Pendleton, and Sophie Vorperian. The project is described as an investigation of “the history and path of the Stony Brook, as well as the infrastructure used to monitor and manage it. Research included mapping the brook’s underground conduits and reviewing data from the Boston Water and Sewer Commission. The findings highlight the importance

of public awareness of hidden urban infrastructure. Increasing community understanding of systems like the Stony Brook is critical for improving preparedness and reducing risk in the event of future flooding in Boston.”

Carol Lasky lives in the East Fens.



Cash Eck and Ava Pendleton, two of the Wentworth students whose research on the Stony Brook won the Frances Allou Gershwin Local Social Action Award.



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NEW SIGNALS PROMISE SAFER PASSAGE AT AUDUBON CIRCLE

Audubon Circle recently got its second set of pedestrian-activated crossing lights. The new equipment helps pedestrians and cyclists cross Beacon Street at Miner Street, a spot where drivers heading out of Kenmore Square have often ignored a yield-to-pedestrians sign as they speed down the overpass above the Mass. Pike in hopes of beating the long light at Park Drive. The same configuration has improved driver behavior noticeably just a few blocks away on Park Drive near the staircase and bus shelter at Fenway Station on the D Line. When pedestrians push a pole-mounted button at either end of the crosswalk or in the median, yellow LED lights flash above warning signs in all three locations. In the photo at far right, two pedestrians used the new signals to cross Beacon toward Miner Street.



PHOTOS: STEVE WOLF

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



A ghost bike memorializes librarian Paula Sharaga, who died in February 2019 when her bike was hit where Brookline Avenue crosses Park Drive.

through a planned development area for Longwood Place—the mixed-use project that will eventually replace Simmons University’s residential campus

between Brookline Avenue and Pilgrim Road (below)—the Planning Department promised a comprehensive study for the neighborhood that would account for projected travel demand from more than

6 million square feet of development proposed or approved within a quarter mile of the intersection. The BPDA board approved the PDA in March 2024, but, as noted, no study has appeared more than two years later.

The third, citywide issue: The Wu administration appears to have halted work on all transportation projects across Boston after calling a 30-day “pause” on projects in April 2025. In early March of this year, City Councilor Enrique Pepén sent a letter to Wu charging that multiple street-reconstruction projects “have been on pause for some time and are facing the end of their respective contracts.” (One example of the slowdown: the *Globe* has reported that the City installed 600 speed humps on local streets in 2024 and only two dozen in 2025.) Pepén argued that the 30-day pause had turned into a year-long moratorium.

Pepén’s letter coincided with a *Globe* story reporting that Wu had required every transportation project citywide to get approval from her office. That looked

like a response to Josh Kraft’s efforts to generate populist energy for his mayoral campaign in 2025 by targeting bike infrastructure and bus-only lanes, which many city drivers resent—or at least complain about on social media.

On April 22, the City Council’s Planning, Development, and Transportation Committee held a hearing on the citywide pause that ran more than 2.5 hours. One reason for its length: Several councilors had plenty to say about paused projects in their districts, and 50 members of the public wanted to weigh in. They almost uniformly condemned the pause on projects as a threat to the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. Others criticized a lack of transparency and metrics for measuring progress. Some also questioned the wisdom of allowing federal funding to lapse, citing the impact of inflation and the potential loss of other federal funds, such as for the redesign of Blue Hill Avenue in Dorchester and Mattapan.

Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.

> **LETHAL INTERSECTION FROM PAGE 1**
Second, the City has failed to deliver the Fenway transportation plan it promised to complete by spring 2025. As the Planning Department pushed

Despite Continued Pushback, BPDA Board OKs Longwood Place Phase I

BY ALISON PULTINAS

As readers know, the plan to replace Simmons University’s block-long residential campus on the west side of Brookline Avenue with highrise, mostly commercial buildings is a partnership between the school and its chosen developer, Skanska USA. Skanska is building a 19-story dormitory on the main campus, which the University anticipates will open in 2027.

Simmons counts on the income from Skanska’s 99-year ground lease of the Brookline Avenue parcels as a lifeline to help it survive in the competitive world of higher education. The first phase of Longwood Place project will start in seven months, says Skanska’s Russell DeMartino. Construction is expected to take five years.

Notwithstanding the expected approval vote at the BPDA Board on April 16, local civic organizations and individuals continued to submit letters in early April. On bostonplans.org, there are 77 pages of responses from the public.

Given the tight April 1 deadline for comments, it seems unlikely that Boston Civic Design commissioners saw the comments before their April 7 discussion and unanimous vote in favor of the project. Shadow concerns were not mentioned during the hearing.

In response to a query, Brittany Comak, assistant communications director at the Planning Department wrote that “it is not required nor customary for BCDC Commissioners to review public comments submitted separately to the Planning Department, though they may do so at their own discretion.”

The official memos drafted for the BPDA board ahead of their monthly meeting include public agency comments on proposed projects but not comments from the public.

The overriding criticism of the Longwood Place proposal is the duration of the new shadows on public parkland, along with concerns about the investors’ dependence on life science labs for the commercial buildings at a time when demand for those labs has dropped significantly. There were also questions about the Planning Department’s role in requiring two acres of publicly accessible open space. This land will be shaded most of the year because of the height of the new buildings.

At the end of the BPDA board hearing, Chief of Planning Kairos Shen said the public realm improvements and the positive impacts of the creation of new open space did not get enough attention because of the overemphasis on shadow impacts on the Emerald Necklace.

The official public hearing scheduled

for 5:40pm on April 16 allowed speakers in-person or online to speak for two minutes in favor or in opposition to the proposed project.

Councilor Sharon Durkan testified early to offer her excited support and specifically thanked the Winsor School and the Longwood Collective for their input. In an unusual move, the school and the organization hired an outside architectural and planning firm, Stantec, to analyze and review the 1,600-plus-page filing that Skanska submitted in February. Durkan mentioned several times in her speech that the design team met with her often, and she expects to be involved in planning for the programming of the interior forum space.

Longwood Place’s classification as a Development Impact Project will require skanska to contribute linkage funds. Durkan asked that Mission Hill and the Fenway be considered the primary recipients of those funds.

The April 16 hearing went smoothly for the proponent. Construction industry

business agents spoke in favor, as did Tom Yardley, executive director of the Longwood Collective. Immediate abutters—the Winsor School and the condominium owners at 114-122 Riverway Square—support the development plans.

Addressing concerns about the oversupply of commercial lab space, Yardley stressed the proximity of the site to LMA hospitals. Asked if Skanska would build without first securing an anchor tenant, Skanska’s DeMartino said that he “can’t say we would go forward on spec right now.”

Like others, Yardley expressed strong support for the “activation” of what he described as the existing 1,000 feet of uncomfortable street frontage along Brookline Avenue. Two other speakers in support called the Longwood Area “kind of creepy,” and said they look forward to managed green space and new retail. Curiously, no one mentioned the long stretch of narrow sidewalk from Longwood Avenue to Short Street adjacent to the Winsor School’s tall playing-field fence.

Representatives from neighborhood organizations—the Fenway Civic Association and Audubon Circle Neighborhood Association—spoke in opposition. Tim Horn of Fenway Civic expressed support for Simmons, but apologized for being the first downer of the night. He was frustrated and disappointed that alternative designs could not get the shadows off the public parkland and the river.

Dolores Boogdian of the Audubon Circle Neighborhood Association spoke of traffic resulting from a new 520-car garage feeding into already gridlocked intersections nearby.

The single residential building in the first phase, 227 rental apartments (84 studios, 100 one bedrooms, and 43 two bedrooms) includes six units for tenants at 50 percent of area median income. The other income-restricted levels range from 70 to 120 percent of area median income to fulfill the inclusionary zoning requirement.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

RUNNING FOR FENWAY CARES



PHOTO: FENWAY CARES

Connor Frasier ran the 130th Boston Marathon to raise funds for Fenway Cares, the all-volunteer initiative that distributes free, fresh produce to Fenway neighbors in need. Originally from Colorado, he said that “I currently serve as an officer in the United States Marine Corps and arrived in Boston in the spring of 2024. This will be my third official marathon (fifth if you count a couple of backyard and treadmill efforts), and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to toe the start line in Hopkinton.”

At Its Annual Meeting, Fenway Forward Confers Service Awards and Asks ‘What Makes Community?’

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

On April 16, Fenway Forward (formerly the Fenway Community Development Corp.) marked its 53rd anniversary at its annual meeting at Simmons University. The well-attended meeting saw 109 participants.

Sarah Jenness, board president, welcomed attendees and introduced the board of directors.

The first order of business was the election of board members, with the re-election of Dolores Boogdian and James Smith and the election of new members Frederic Crafts and Cecilia Esteves.

The group honored poet Charles Settles, departing board member Rosaria Salerno, and the Fenway Community Center with its annual Community Service Awards.

Executive director Steven Farrell discussed the projects the organization is working on, including Fenway Cares, Taste of the Fenway,



Left to right, Charles Settles, Rosaria Salerno, and Mallory Rohrig (for the Community Center) poses with Community Service Awards.



Porchfest, the Free Market, and the upcoming Fenway Ball. Among real estate developments, Farrell described the 15 condominiums at 43 Hemenway St.—Fenway Forward’s first homeownership project.

Following Farrell’s presentation, the

meeting turned to the topic of defining community. Moderator Jonathan Cohn introduced panelists Rachel Wilson and Romy St. Hilaire, who discussed what they like about the Fenway and what makes it a community. Their conversation sparked table discussions by people in attendance.

The meeting ended with a raffle of tickets to Taste of the Fenway and the Fenway Ball. *Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.*

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



MAY 12 LANDMARKS HEARING SET FOR 3-4 FOLSOM AVE.

PHOTO: CHRIS LOVETT



The Boston Landmarks Commission will hold a demolition-delay hearing on May 12 for a house built in 1847 at 3-4 Folsom Ave. in Mission Hill. The hearing will take place almost exactly a month after the Commission approved an initial petition to give the building city landmark status. Built by brothers Henry and Alonzo Folsom, the building was the home of Alonzo’s son, Augustine, a famed photographer of New England historic buildings.

Fenway Forward Lobbies State Lawmakers

PHOTO COURTESY OF FENWAY FORWARD



Fenway Forward joined community development corporations from across Massachusetts at the State House on April 15 for Massachusetts Association of CDCs annual Lobby Day, when advocates meet with legislators to promote key CDC priorities, including rent control, tenant protections, and increased resources for affordable housing. The Fenway Forward delegation visited seven different legislative offices.

SOX BOX

FRI, 5/1 7:10PM	SAT, 5/2 4:10PM	SUN, 5/3 1:35PM	THU, 5/7 7:10PM
FRI, 5/8 7:10PM	SAT, 5/9 4:10PM	SUN, 5/10 1:35PM	TUE, 5/12 6:45PM
WED, 5/13 6:45PM	THU, 5/14 6:45PM	FRI, 5/22 7:10PM	SAT, 5/23 4:10PM
SUN, 5/24 1:35PM	TUE, 5/26 6:45PM	WED, 5/27 6:45PM	THU, 5/28 4:10PM

DASHBOARD

TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UPS

BACK BAY Monday and Thursday **FENWAY** Tuesday and Friday **MISSION HILL** Tuesday and Friday

STREET CLEANING

Street cleaning (and towing) resumed on April 1. In the Fenway, you need to check both City and DCR schedules to see when street cleaning takes place. Find City info at tinyurl.com/s9fyarf8. See the DCR schedule at tinyurl.com/4usvd8w3.

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10
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MAYOR MICHELLE WU

MAY 21, 6-9PM

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NEWSLINES

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

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

Plans for the future of the Hynes Convention Center have done a 180 since Maura Healey arrived in the governor's office. When her predecessor, Charlie Baker, proposed selling the Back Bay facility for redevelopment, Upper Back Bay businesses pushed back quickly—and hard. Now the Commonwealth will sink nearly \$120 million into deferred maintenance and new systems for the building, including heating/cooling, roof repairs, energy-saving upgrades, and improved accessibility. The icing on the 881,000-square-foot cake: a complete interior makeover for a more sophisticated look. Already begun, work will continue over five years. 📌 **Kenmore Square's Whoop made headlines again last month. After announcing in March that it would add 600 employees, the maker of digital monitors for athletes go a major boost in the venture-capital market with a big funding round. According to the *Globe*, Whoop raised \$575 million, setting the company's worth at \$10 billion. A list of blue-ribbon investors, including the Mayo Clinic, strengthens speculation that the company plans to move into medical-data tracking.** 📌 Looking to downsize, a BU prof held a sale of her 500-volume cookbook collection. Proceeds went to José Andres's World Central Kitchen. 📌 **Lawsuits filed by five families charge that Brigham & Women's Hospital disposed of fetuses or newborns who died at the hospital rather than returning the remains to the parents, according to a report in the *Globe*.** 📌 In a feature showcasing places to eat along the Marathon route, the *Globe's* Food section highlighted Standard Italian on the edge of Audubon Circle; MIDA in the West Fens; Lucie at the Colonnade Hotel; and Sonsie on upper Newbury. 📌 **Dr. Benjamin Ebert, CEO of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, expects a groundbreaking for the new DFCI/Beth Israel cancer hospital this fall. In an interview with the *Globe*, he said that deconstruction—dismantling rather than demolishing the Joslin Institute building now on the site—should wrap up by October.** 📌 More from the *Globe* Food section [obviously, ICYMI reads that part of the paper very closely]: an unflattering story about Time Out Market's falling-out with vegan restaurateur Mary Lattouf. Lattouf closed her two stalls at the food hall—Lulu Green and Café Lulu—after a Samuels & Associates consultant told her she'd have to start offering dairy—that is, non-vegan—products at Café Lulu or lose her status as the only stall selling coffee in the food hall. That exclusive status was the very inducement TimeOut dangled in front of Lattouf to get her to sign on in the first place. 📌



Two Green Line Closures Will Affect Local Travel

The MBTA has announced two transit shutdowns that will affect local riders into June:

- The **C Branch** of the Green Line will close between Kenmore and Cleveland Circle for maintenance May 6–17. Free shuttle buses will replace service on the route.
- The **E Branch** of the Green Line will suspend service between Government Center and Heath Street May 30–June 5. Instead of shuttle buses, the T encourages passengers to use the 39 bus and switch to the Orange or Green lines at its Back Bay Station terminus.

Local Schools Line Up Graduation Plans

Once again, Leader Bank Pavilion in the Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park is the destination for many commencements held by local schools. The venue will host Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences and Massachusetts College of Art and Design this month, followed by Boston Latin School's ceremonies in June. Live Nation operates the amphitheater under a license agreement with Boston's Economic Development Industrial Corporation, its owner. Northeastern's weeklong graduation ceremonies, which used to take place at now-demolished Matthews Arena (see photo below), will also take place at the Leader Bank Pavilion. The university already held two large commencement ceremonies on April 29 at Fenway Park. Simmons University, Emmanuel College, and Wentworth Institute of Technology will hold commencements at the MGM Music Hall on Lansdowne Street, also operated by Live Nation. Berklee College of Music will again use Agganis Arena at Boston University.

The Fenway and Mission Hill Get New Neighborhood Liaison

The Mayor's Office announced in March Samantha Courage as the new Office of Neighborhood Services liaison for Back Bay, Beacon Hill, the Fenway, Kenmore, and Mission Hill. Courage brings nearly a decade of experience across multiple City departments, having spent significant time in the Zoning Board of Appeal's Legal Division and in the City Council District 8 Office.

Area Restaurants Close Their Doors

Chacho's Pizza & Subs at 1502 Tremont St. in Mission Hill appears to have closed. Yellow Door Taqueria at 1619 Tremont St. has also closed. Fenway Johnnie's formally announced closure of its Fenway branch at 96 Brookline Ave. in one of the blocks slated for demolition under the "Fenway Corners" development plan.






CONGRATULATIONS

to this year's 15 Moakley Scholars!







The **Moakley Scholarship program**, established over 20 years ago, has helped nearly 200 city of Boston employees attend Northeastern to further their education and improve the city's services. The scholars are picked by the city in a highly competitive process and covers full tuition.

SPRING PUTS A LITTLE SPRING IN EVERYONE'S STEP

PHOTO: ALISON PULITINAS

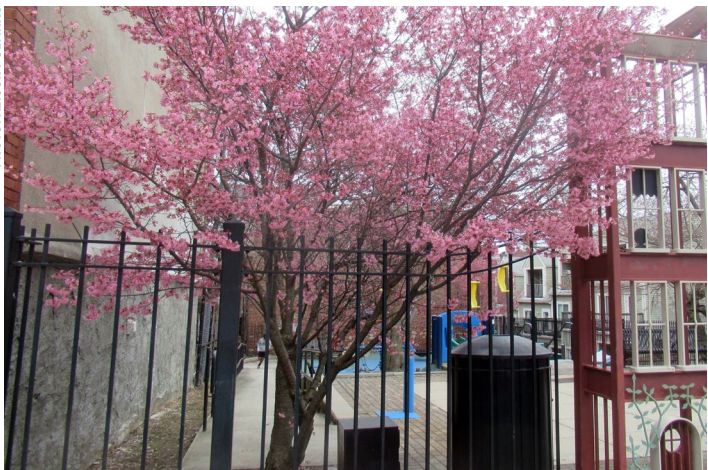


PHOTO: STEVE WOLF

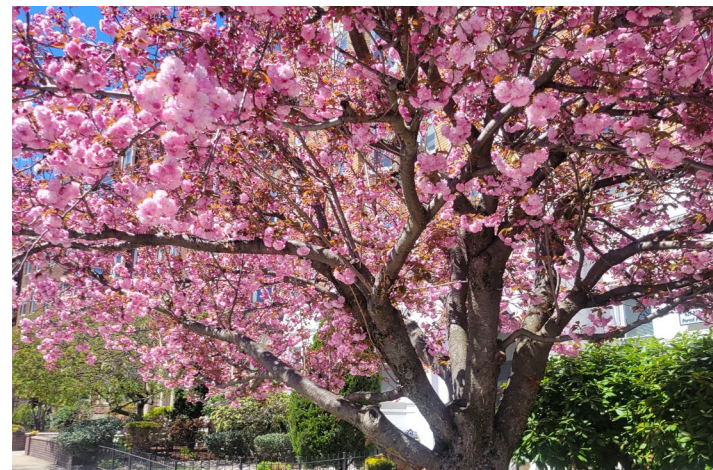
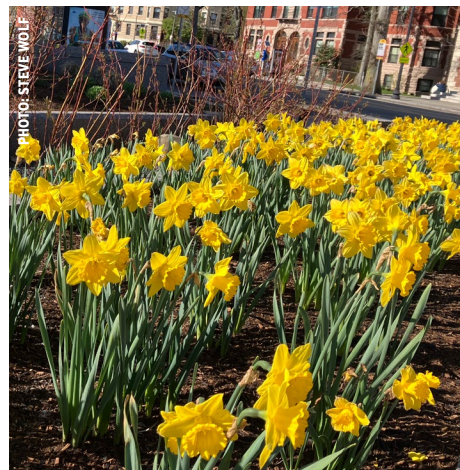


PHOTO: RUTH KHOWAIS

After an unusually harsh winter, local residents welcomed the harbingers of spring. From left, flowering cherry in the Gibbons Playground on Delle Avenue in Mission Hill; daffodils in the planters ringing Audubon Circle; and an even showier flowering cherry on Park Drive.

The Arts

In Gardner Exhibition, Artists Probe the Elasticity of Identity by Turning the Camera on Themselves

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

Photography is a mirror," reads a sign at a special exhibit at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. "It can also conjure new realities that reveal multiple truths."

"Persona: Photography and the Re-Imagined Self" in the Hostetter Gallery focuses on artists who imagine different versions of themselves.

These 80-plus works from 31 artists explore identity and alter egos and play with gender. The photos are very dramatic.

Gillian Wearing, for example, was influenced by French photographer Claude Cohun. She channels Cohun in a photograph entitled "Me as Cohun Holding a Mask of my Face." Nearby is an actual self-portrait of Cohun with a shaved head at age 20.

South African photographer and visual artist Zanelle Muholi takes on different personas to challenge stereotypes. In one portrait she appears as an elder with a turban; in another she is a miner referring to the Marikana massacre in 2012, when South African police opened fire on striking miners.

In 12 black-and-white resin prints, Yinka Shonibare retells *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde. In his version, Shonibare casts himself as Dorian Gray, who trades his soul for youth and beauty.

In a series of giclee prints called "Trailblazers," Lina Geoushy portrays herself as notable women in Egyptian history: nuclear physicist Sameera Moussa, the first woman to hold a post at Cairo University; Doria Shafik, who campaigned for women's rights in Egypt; and Inji Efflatoun, in the forefront of the anti-colonial movement who was imprisoned for her political activities. Geoushy in her portraits becomes all of these women.

In four self-portraits, Narcissister (a *nom d'artiste*) wears plastic masks and wigs representing conventional beauty standards for mannequins in the 1950s. She uses various skin tones to reflect multiracial identities, and on some of the masks she depicts imperfections with cracks and gashes.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE GARDNER MUSEUM

Narcissister, "Untitled Self-Portrait Series (Pink Nails)," 2012. The American artist created a series of images included in the show that play with and undermine conventional standards of beauty for women.

One of the more dramatic photographs is by Hakeem Adewumi. In a pigment print of himself, he replaces his face with a multi-headed Hydra from Greek mythology as if to say that he is unknowable.

Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens. "Persona: Photography and the Re-Imagined Self" runs until May 10.

TAKE THE 'JOYWALK' ART CRAWL MAY 7

The Fenway Alliance's "Joywalk" returns Thursday, May 7 from 4 to 8pm. Joywalk's crescent-shaped path runs more or less along the southern side of the Back Bay Fens, from Fenway Studios on Ipswich Street to Simmons's Trustman Art Gallery at 300 The Fenway. It includes free entry for 13 "independent galleries, historic museums, and hidden gems," including Kaji Aso Studio, the MFA, the Gardner, and Berklee's Art Windows on Mass. Ave. This year's program adds two intriguing features. New Edgerly Plaza—the new-ish public space in front of Whole Foods in the East Fens—will host an art market of handmade goods ranging from jewelry to pottery to prints. And our own "Urban Detective" columnist Ed Ballo will lead two public art walking tours, one in the East Fens (3pm) and one in the West (5:30pm). Get details and a map or register for either walking tour at fenwayculture.org/joywalk.

As 'Art In Bloom' Turns 50, MFA's 'Framing Nature' Explores How Nature Inspires Art

In March, the MFA opened a show to celebrate the 50th anniversary of "Art In Bloom," its popular annual pop-up that pairs elaborate flower arrangements with the artworks that inspired them. "Framing Nature: Gardens and Imagination," on view through June 28, gathers roughly 120 pieces from the museum's holdings in a thematic look at how artists have used the idea of the garden to shape their work. The exhibit ranges widely, covering more than 2,000 years of art from Japan to Persia to Mexico, with many steps in between. Works range across media, too, from Chinese scrolls to a 1950s Dior gown to a room-sized video showing seasonal changes at "Tenshin-en," the museum's Japanese garden. The photo here hints at the show's wide reach and winking juxtapositions: Two visitors examine a massive 16th-century tapestry while seated on a 21st-century bench. Wisconsin artist Tom Loesser crafted the bench, "Dig 23" (2015), from a varnished, raw-edged slab of timber and the handles of 22 (curiously, not 23) shovels and other gardening tools. The Flemish wool-and-silk tapestry, "Vertumnus Throwing off His Disguise" (1600-1650), depicts an episode from Roman mythology set in a formal garden that stretches out behind Vertumnus and Pomona, the story's protagonists. —STEVE WOLF

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF

LAST CALL

These local shows close this month. Catch them while you can.

CLOSING MAY 7

MISFITS (SIMMONS TRUSTMAN GALLERY) Lavaughan Jenkins and Masha Keryan explore the link between boxing and art.

CLOSING MAY 10

PERSONA: PHOTOGRAPHY & THE RE-IMAGINED SELF (GARDNER) How artists have used photography to show the world how they see themselves.

CLOSING MAY 30

FROM YORKTOWN TO THE HOTEL D'YORK: WINNING PEACE (MASS. HISTORICAL): See a rare copy of the Treaty of Paris, which ended the American Revolution, in an exhibit drawn largely from MHS's own holdings.

CLOSING MAY 31

> **MIDNIGHT MARCH (MASSART)**: In a dark, star-spangled room, Masako Miki's vibrantly colored "monsters" re-interpret an ancient Japanese myth.

> **DIVINE COLOR: HINDU PRINTS FROM MODERN BENGAL (MFA)** The introduction of lithography to India made vivid Hindu devotional prints accessible to millions and helped shape a national culture.

> **PRESS & PULL: TWO DECADES AT THE ROBERT BLACKBURN PRINTMAKING WORKSHOP (MASSART)**: The New York City workshop's fascinating story plus a sampling of striking and beautiful prints produced by its artists.

The Arts

KASHKASHIAN AND HAMELIN MAKE MEMORABLE MUSIC AT JORDAN HALL

PHOTOS: MICHAEL GUTIERREZ



Upper photo: Kim Kashkashian on viola joined Marc-André Hamelin on piano. Lower photo: the ensemble of nine violist

BY MICHAEL GUTIERREZ

A decorated duo consisting of Kim Kashkashian (viola) and Marc-André Hamelin (piano), joined forces on a blustery winter's night to headline a February performance of 20th- and 21st-century works at Jordan Hall, part of the New England Conservatory's regular "faculty recital" programming.

In addition, the duo was joined by guest musicians Geneva Lewis (violin), Marcy Rosen (cello), Petra Berényi (cimbalom), and an ensemble of nine violists, including Sheila Browne, Beth Guterman Chu, Wenting Kang, Sebastian Krunnies, Yu-Chen Lu, Melissa Reardon, Jonathan Vinocur, Stephen Wyrzynski, and headliner Kashkashian.

The nine violists opened the show with selections from Bartók's *44 Duos*. The

selections, originally intended as a series of pedagogical exercises for two violins, were arranged and performed with contributions from all nine violists. Kashkashian cannot help but shine, even as a single viola in an ensemble, and she took lead at several key passages in the piece.

Kashkashian and Hamelin closed out the first half of the program as a pair with a rendition of Shostakovich' *Sonata for Viola and Piano*, op. 147. The composition was the last penned by the composer, weeks before his death in 1975 due to complications from lung cancer.

After a brief intermission, the program concluded with a pair of offerings from Hungarian composer György Kurtág, *Tre Pezzi*, op. 14e and *Tre Altri Pezzi*, op. 38a, and a piece by French composer Gabriel Fauré, *Piano Quartet No. 2 in G Minor*, op. 45.

Though the subtitle of the evening's performance was "New Beginnings," the Kurtág works were familiar stomping grounds for Kashkashian, who, in 2012, became the first violist ever to win a Grammy, thanks to her recording of Ligeti and Kurtag solo viola works.

More than a decade later, she reminded everyone in Jordan Hall why the voting members of the Recording Academy took notice.

Michael Gutierrez lives in Mission Hill. He is the editor of *Hump Day News* (humpday.news).



Kashkashian and Hamelin

PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



AUCTION PULLS IN \$1 MILLION

April's MassArt auction, the school's big fundraiser, raised more than \$1 million for student scholarships. Students, alumni, and other supporting artists contribute artworks to the annual event. Tickets for auction's gala this year went for \$359. The premium item in the live auction on April 11 was an Alex Katz portrait, "Marisa," printed from woodblock and linocut plates. It sold for \$22,000. Professor and alumnus Matthew Hinçman's "Gilded Age: Time Expired" (pictured), a gold-plated cast concrete parking meter, sold for \$10,000 after 14 bids.

Head to the Fenway Grill and Bar for Mediterranean Fare

BY MARY ANN BROGAN

Fenway Grill and Bar, located at 100 Peterborough St. in the West Fens, is open and operating. Soon it will also have a liquor license.

Fenway Grill and Bar has filled the spot that Thornton's Grill occupied for decades. While wine and spirits aren't yet available, a traditional Eastern European fruit punch made with pears is a delightful alternative. Other juices and sodas are available, along with Turkish coffee and a variety of teas.

All menu items are made fresh with quality ingredients (and a lot of love). The menu is inspired by the flavors of the Mediterranean, particularly Turkey. The atmosphere is casual and welcoming, with pennants of the many colleges in the area displayed over the bar. There is an array of framed posters hanging on other walls—a photo of Marilyn Monroe even made the cut. Staff are pleasant, attentive, and enthusiastically answer any questions about the menu.

There are options for breakfast, soups and salads, American-style pizza, eastern Mediterranean flatbreads (pide), and lahmajun (pizza without cheese) as well as chicken, steaks, lamb, and generous platters of kebab. The Grill even features a "Fenway King Burger" and an appetizer sampler if you just can't decide. All dishes are beautifully presented and carefully cooked to perfection. Vegetarian options include Turkish bulgur bites (delicious), salads, lentil soup, and a soup of the day.

With spring having arrived, the patio offers a welcome place to enjoy a taste of the Mediterranean. As the



PHOTOS: MARY ANN BROGAN

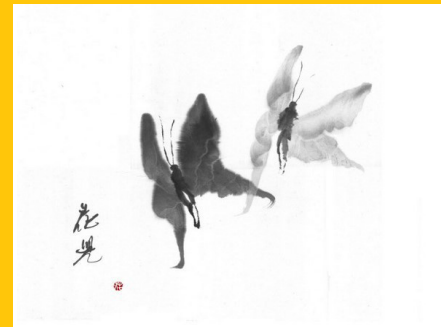


Upper photo: a glimpse into the interior. Lower photo: Fenway Grill's take on pide, a Mediterranean flatbread.

weather warms, you might even imagine you're there. Check out fenwaygrillbar.com.

Mary Ann Brogan lives in the East Fens.

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May CALENDAR

Now ➔ **Sun, 5/31**

HARVARD STAFF ART SHOW: LONGWOOD. Open to the public on weekends (ID required). Sat 10am–4pm and Sun 12–5pm. Countway Library, 695 Huntington Ave. **FREE**

Now ➔ **12/19**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY plunders its holdings for 1776: *Declaring Independence*, which shows how the document developed—see a draft handwritten by Thomas Jefferson—and how from the Revolution through today it has built “a complex legacy as a national beacon for celebration and protest.” Mon, Wed-Fri 9:30am-4:45pm; Tue until 7:45pm; Sat 10am-3pm. 1154 Boylston Street. More info at masshist.org. **FREE**

Mon, 5/4

Here’s a musical surprise: First Monday at Jordan Hall pops up at NEC’s Plympton-Shattuck Theater at 255 St. Botolph St. **THE BORROMEO STRING QUARTET** and two soloists present a concert including Gershwin (a chamber version of Rhapsody in Blue) and Copland’s Suite from Appalachian Spring. 7:30pm, free but reservation required at tinyurl.com/FirstMonday.

Every Wed, 5/8 ➔ **6/24**

Fenway Civic Association hosts **FREE TAI CHI CLASSES** at Symphony Park (39 Edgerly Rd.) from 9:30am to 10:30am. The class provides instruction in beginning yang style tai chi, taught by Sifu Huan Zhang. All are welcome. **FREE**

Thu, 5/7

The MFA’s Global Cinema Now series presents **“SIRĀT,”** a joint French/Spanish film that won glowing reviews at Cannes last year. A Spanish father and daughter search for a missing family member and contemplate their own mortality at a rave in the Moroccan desert. 7pm, MFA Remis Auditorium. Tickets \$12 member/\$15 nonmember at mfa.org/programs/film.

Fri, 5/8

The **LONGWOOD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** plays its final concert of the season. The LSO, composed of medical professionals and students, performs Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 in D major, “Titan” plus a work

commissioned for the orchestra. All LSO concerts benefit grassroots healthcare groups; this concert benefits Vinfen, a community-based advocacy and service-provision group for people with mental health issues and developmental disabilities. 8pm at Jordan Hall. Tickets \$15/32/49 adult; \$12/27/42 senior/ \$10 student at longwoodsymphony.org/concerts.

Sat, 5/9

In partnership with LiveableStreets, Mattapan Food & Fitness, Boston Cyclists Union, and community partners, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy has organized a **“PEDAL THE NECKLACE”** bike ride series along the Emerald Necklace. Ride at a relaxed pace for 3 to 4 miles, with volunteers helping lead riders safely on bike paths and lanes through Boston and Brookline. Free snacks and water available at the start of each ride. Bluebikes will also offer a limited number of free rentals if you don’t already have a bike, with each ride starting near a Bluebike station. Register at emeraldnecklace.org/event/pedal-the-necklace-franklin-park-to-jamaica-pond. For this ride, meet at the Shattuck Visitor Center (125 Fenway) and bike to the Boston Common. 10am. Open to all and **FREE**

Sun, 5/10

Please join the Fenway Civic Association for their annual **BIRDS OF THE BACK BAY FENS**, starting at 7:30 a.m. This guided bird walk with Nature Man Mike features the sign and sounds of the array of birds in the Back Bay Fens each spring. All levels are welcome. Bring binoculars and a friend! Meet at the Japanese Bell outside of the Kelleher Rose Garden (by the footbridge across from the

Museum of Fine Arts) in the Back Bay Fens. **FREE**

Tue, 5/12

Join the Fenway Civic Association for its **64TH ANNUAL MEETING**, 5:30–8pm at the Massachusetts Historical Society (1154 Boylston St.). Social time will be followed by a welcome and short presentation by the board. The event will also feature an open house featuring a self-guided tour of MHS as it commemorates the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. The exhibit includes manuscripts, artifacts, and rarely seen treasures capturing a monumental moment in American history. **FREE**

Thu, 5/14

Join your neighbors for the May meeting of **FENWAY FORWARD’S ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**, a group of residents interested in advocating together for affordable housing and other neighborhood needs. Dinner will be provided. Contact lruijsanchez@fenwayforward.org for more information. 6-7:30pm, Fenway Community Center, 1282 Boylston St. **FREE**

Fri 5/15

HANDEL + HAYDN SOCIETY plays a nearly all-Bach program in the intimate Old South Church sanctuary. Two Bach cantatas and Brandenburg Concerto No. 6. Telemann’s *Cantata* wraps up the evening. 7:30pm at Old South Church. Tickets \$97–126 at handelandhaydn.org.

Sat 5/16

The fourth annual **GREATER ROXBURY BOOK FAIR** celebrates storytelling and creativity. Vendors, food, entertainment, and book signings. 9am-5pm, Roxbury Branch of the BPL, 149 Dudley Street. Details at tamcc.org/savor-the-square. **FREE**

Thu 5/21

- The MFA’s bargain **THIRD THURSDAY** gets you into the museum 5–10pm for a mere \$5 and let’s you make art, learn about modern sculpture, listen to a 45-minute classical mini-concert, and line up at a Nick Shea pop-up where you can get your portrait drawn on a card. Museum of Fine Arts, 5–10pm, \$5. Details at MFA.org.
- Join the Fenway Community Center to celebrate its 10th anniversary at **LOVE THE FENWAY**. The nonprofit serves the 42,000-plus residents who call the Fenway home. In 2025 alone, it saw more than 15,500 visits, hosted more 640 programs, and distributed more than 4,500 boxes of fresh produce as part of the Fenway Cares collaborative. Get tickets to the event at tinyurl.com/Ten-Together 6–9pm at Eastern Standard, 775 Beacon St.

Sat 5/23

The “unstoppable engine of joy that is **PINK MARTINI!**” joins the Boston Pops in a program that should tickle all ages and tastes. 7:30pm at Symphony Hall. Tickets, selling fast, \$59–135 at tinyurl.com/PopsAndPink.

SENIOR EVENTS

The Pererborough Senior Center is a drop-in center. Stop by for a program or two and bring your friends! Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 12–3:30pm. For more information call Tracey or Ariana at 617-536-7154.

- Tuesday, May 5 & 26 at 12pm: TRIVIA AND BINGO
- Thursday, May 7 at 12pm: MOTHER’S AND FATHER’S DAY BRUNCH WITH NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY
- Tuesday, May 12 at 11:45am: MOVIE: “SOMETHING’S GOTTA GIVE”
- Wednesday, May 13 at 12pm: SPANISH

BINGO

- Wednesday, May 13 at 1pm: KARAOKE AND LIP SYNCING
- Thursday, May 14 at 12pm: PEDESTRIAN SAFETY WITH BRIGHAM AND WOMEN’S HOSPITAL
- Tuesday, May 19 at 12pm: SHAKES AND GAMES
- Thursday, May 21 at 12pm: SOOTHINGTOUCHTOGO FREE 10-MINUTE CHAIR MASSAGES
- Wednesday, May 27 at 1pm: POPSICLES AND PLANTERS
- Thursday, May 28 at 12pm: COFFEE WITH DISTRICT 4 COMMUNITY POLICE

@ THE CENTER

The Fenway Community Center is open six days a week. Visit fenwaycommunitycenter.org for details.

- Monday, May 4 & 18, 5:00pm: BASIC SPANISH FAVORITES
- Monday, May 11, 5pm: NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY MUSIC PERFORMANCE
- Wednesday, May 27, 3:30pm: DESIGN BASICS | COLOR THEORY AND COLOR WHEELS WITH GRACE

MISSION HILL HAILS RITES OF SPRING

On April 24 Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services organized Arbor Day plantings at Fitzgerald Park, with the help of Northeastern University’s “Lorax” Steve Schneider (left) and volunteers. The honey for sale came from the park’s on-site beehives (far right, top). Mission Hill Little League opened its season the next day, and gray skies did little to discourage fans, who lined up hot dogs and hamburgers (far right, bottom). The league has free registration for ages 4-12 is still open at missionhill-littleleague.org.



‘BEEP BASEBALL’ COMES TO FENWAY PARK



On April 12, Fenway Park hosted its first “beep baseball” game. This event featured local teams of blind and low-vision athletes playing a modified version of the sport that uses audible cues, including a beeping ball and buzzing bases, to guide players.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BOSTON RED SOX

PHOTOS: ALISSON PULLINAS