

# TELSTAR

Roxbury Tenants of Harvard Publication  
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Roxbury Tenants of Harvard  
Executive Office  
11 New Whitney Street  
Boston, MA 02115

Dear RTH Residents,  
COMMUNITY First....

RTH is not just a great place to live, work or play. It is not just a place to work out, enjoy recreation, fitness or wellness activities. It is not just a place that offers great programs, resident services or special events. It is an organization that strives to create and strengthen bonds between people in our community.

Community is important because it allows people to interact with each other; share experiences, develop values and relationships and work toward a common goal. It is an understanding that we are stronger together and weaker when divided. It is what allows us to be good neighbors who care and look out for one another despite our differences - our age, sex, orientation, ethnicity, culture, primary language, or our varying perspectives.

Our world, our country, our city and our neighborhood face many challenges. I see the bonds that tie everyone together fraying at an alarming rate. When thinking about the RTH Community, I am reminded about the importance of UNITY throughout our history. I can't help but think that it is unity that will help us as we prepare for the future together. We value and support community bonds that foster civility and interconnectedness among all residents, regardless of where they live or come from.

We have such a rich, interesting, history. Unfortunately, this history is unknown to too many in the RTH community. To truly appreciate living in RTH it is worth learning about our struggles and perseverance as a community; we overcame long odds to survive and become one of the best places in Boston to live, work and play. Starting this Fall look for information sessions about our RTH history. Come meet your neighbor and learn about the RTH mystique.

Here at RTH, we believe that building a better community is just as important as building a house. We support residents with the resources they need to be good neighbors and members of a larger community. We believe 'community' is not just a feel-good element of life or a kind expression of citizenship - it is an effective way to build social capital and valuable skills that can facilitate upward mobility. It is this strong sense of community and caring about our neighbors that is really at the heart of RTH.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of you who help make our commitment to a stronger RTH community a reality. The possibilities that exist for our organization inspire me; I am humbled by our responsibility to house the homeless, help feed the hungry, promote a healthy lifestyle, and nurture the potential of every resident in our community.

I look forward to hearing your stories, and ideas for new ways to serve our community, and together, build a better us.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you enjoy your "RTH experience" even more. Feel free to contact me anytime with your questions, concerns or suggestions. I look forward to working with you. Together, we can increase the sense of COMMUNITY to make RTH an even better neighborhood.

Sincerely,

*Karen*

Karen T. Gately  
RTH Executive Director  
617-232-4306  
kgately@roxburytenants.org

## Saint Patrick's Day

Deborah Zanellato, Health Wellness Director



This year the Saint Patrick's Day event fell on March 17th, the actual holiday itself. We had approximately 165 attendees, who enjoyed a traditional Irish meal of Shepherds pie from Penguin Pizza, and entertainment from the Kevin Driscoll Band and Irish step dancers from the Hansen Keohane School of Irish Dance. The photo booth was a huge success, as it always adds fun to any event.

St. Paddy's Day started as a religious celebration in the 17th century to commemorate the life of Saint Patrick and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland. This "Feast Day" always took place on the anniversary of Patrick's death, which was believed to be March 17, 461 AD.

All countries that celebrate St. Patrick's Day have the traditions of hosting parades, drinking, and eating Irish food. Symbols of shamrocks, leprechauns, and pots of gold are commonly seen with a theme of green. This applies to both clothing and objects. United States Irish immigrants carried over their traditions and holidays. In the U.S., two notable first parades for this holiday are Boston's founded in 1737, and New York's founded in 1762, which now has an audience of over one million yearly. Today, everyone willing and whether they are Irish or not, wears green and pinches anyone who isn't wearing the color. They also attend grand parades and drink alcohol. The U.S. started the pinching tradition in the 1700s from the belief that people not wearing green would be pinched by leprechauns. Various cities, such as Chicago, dye their fountains or rivers or paint the traffic stripe of the parade route green.

Many other countries like Denmark, France, South Korea, Norway, and Argentina celebrate St. Patrick's Day, each with their own unique festivals, parades, and traditions. But at the core, it's a holiday where everyone can participate in Irish culture through their own traditions.

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## WOMEN OF COLOR TRAILBLAZERS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Jen Lewis, Director of Middle School and Teen Programs



A'Aliyah Gaines, Dolores Pullen, Abigail Navarro, Jen Lewis, Beverly Moss, Carolyn Robles, May Vaughn, Carmen Torres  
Missing from photos: Kelly Tse, Cey'Ara Hutley-Waldron

Despite the early morning departure on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 10 strong women of RTH were “On the Move”, traveling to Mount Holyoke College for the Women of Color Trailblazers Leadership Conference. This conference, in its fifth year, was organized and hosted by Mount Holyoke’s Students of Color Committee, and this year’s keynote speakers were National Women’s March organizers, Linda Sarsour, Carmen Perez, and Tamika Mallory.

Our RTH group consisted of women of all ages, from teens to young adults to women of more years and experience! We all chose different workshops to attend in the morning and after lunch: topics included Personal Leadership Essentials, an International and Domestic Students of Color Dialogue, Women in Leadership, Poetically Writing to Heal and Empower, Building an Engaging Personal Brand, Activating and Engaging in Self-care. As we walked to these different sessions, we were able to see the beautiful Mount Holyoke campus!

Lunch was a bountiful array of delicious Indian dishes and the lunchtime entertainment was presented by two dance groups, one Bhangra (Indian folk dance group) and one fusion group, combining Bollywood and hip-hop.

The highlight of the day were the keynote speakers, Linda Sarsour, Carmen Perez, and Tamika Mallory. These powerful women spoke passionately about their social justice work, sharing their personal stories of what brought them into their work and what brought them together. They shared how their work is not just their vocation but a lifestyle, emphasized how everyone can bring their gifts to the movement, and how important it is to take care of each other. Their points re-kindled the passion that we as RTH women activists have for continuing to fight for social justice in our own communities!

It was a full day of learning and inspiration that was well-worth the long ride. We enjoyed the event so much that we are planning to attend again next year!

### An Artsy Evening Enjoyed



A group from RTH joined Marilyn Casey for a wonderful night out at the Bella Luna & The Milky Way restaurant where Marilyn showcased her art series: “Modern Spiritual Expressions”, as well as many recent works. Her paintings graced the gallery walls throughout the restaurant where they were enjoyed by all over a festive night full of laughter, beautiful paintings, music and a delicious meal. Thank you Laura Adams for organizing this special celebration of art and to all who joined us. Congratulations Marilyn!

The Senior Art Class meets every Wednesday in the Flynn Senior Center from 11:30am-1:30pm. The group enjoys painting most of all and no experience is required. We look forward to having you join us!

## Mission Hill Senior Prom: A Night To Remember

Laura Adams, Senior Programs Director

On December 3rd, over 175 Mission Hill seniors attended the Senior Prom at the Harvard School Public Health. Seniors looked fabulous walking into the prom dressed up and ready for an unforgettable night of fun, dancing, and dinner.

During the cocktail hour, piano music played while seniors mingled and finally found their way to their seats. A sit-down dinner of baked chicken, mashed potatoes and vegetables was provided by Sebastian's. It was served by students and volunteers from the Harvard School of Public Health and Wentworth University.

After dinner the dance floor opened. With the-DJ playing hits from different eras; the dance floor was full all-night long. Seniors were having the time of their lives shaking things up on the dance floor.

One of the highlights of the evening was the crowning of not one, but two Kings and Queens of the prom. Both couples are residents of RTH; Mr. Nian Zhong Mai and his lovely wife, Wu Nu Zou, and Mr. Ke Fu Li and his lovely wife, Xiu Fang Cheng. Both couples have been married for over 60 years.

Each person took pictures with a professional photographer and received a coffee mug as a memento.

The Prom committee raffled off gift baskets and gift cards which were donated by local businesses. It is always fun to see the seniors jump for joy when they hear their name being called as a winner.

"I'm delighted that the prom was a success; we wanted to make the seniors feel very special and show them how much they are appreciated. They are the real stars of the Mission Hill Community. Harvard T.H.Chan School of Public Health was pleased to be the host this year." said RaShaun Nalls, Director of Community Engagement for Harvard T.C. Chan School of Public Health.

This prom was a collaboration of several Mission Hill Community partners: Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard T.H. School of Public Health, Massachusetts Eye and Ear, Mission Hill Health Movement, Mission Hill Senior Legacy Project, Northeastern University, New England Baptist Hospital, Roxbury Tenants of Harvard, Trinity Management, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Wingate Management and the Tobin Community Center. The committee worked together to offer an evening of fun and friendship to honor our seniors.

This annual Mission Hill Senior Prom is an event that all the seniors look forward to. The main goal of this annual event is to address social isolation and build community bonding among Mission Hill's senior residents. With all the positive feedback, and the joy that was felt and seen at this prom, I expect to see more seniors at our next prom.



## RTH Resident Services Coffee Hour

Marta Franklin, Resident Services



Filis de Pena, Blanca Guzman, Marta Franklin

Every month, RTH Resident Services schedules an afternoon for coffee and information with our residents at each of the high rises. The Coffee Hour gives both residents and employees an opportunity to get better acquainted at the resident's own familiar space, and it also gives us the opportunity to sit down and talk about concerns and schedule a meeting or talk. Residents also share their ideas of what they would like to see in our department and how to make their visits to our offices more comfortable and productive.

At the Levinson Building Coffee Hour in March, a resident expressed that she looks forward to having residents participate in the planting and care of the grounds of our property in Mission Park. She added that participation in one's community translates to caring and keeping the grounds clean and colorful. We look forward to having you stop for a cup of coffee or a greeting at our next Coffee Hour.



Marta Franklin and Rika Ostrovskaya



## Mission Hill Seniors on the Move

Laura Adams, Director Senior Programs



Harvard School of Public Health, New England Baptist Hospital, Tobin Community Center, Mission Hill Senior Legacy Project and Roxbury Tenants of Harvard recently participated in distributing New Balance sneakers to 100 Mission Hill elderly residents at an event held at the Tobin Community Center on Saturday, May 19th. Each senior received a pair of sneakers and a t-shirt with the slogan "Mission Hill Seniors On The Move" on it. All of the seniors agreed to become more involved in physical fitness activities in the community.

John Jackson, Administrative Coordinator, Tobin Community Center, was a driving force behind the idea. "It is a dream come true to finally make this day happen", said Jackson "Seniors want to be independent for as long as they can be, and they know that physical fitness is a big part of that. With the new sneakers, they can participate in more physical fitness activities."

"I have witnessed more seniors walking around the RTH complex with smiles on their faces. They tell me they are so pleased with their new sneakers. They are walking more!" "I am so grateful that we were able to provide sneakers to this first group of Mission Hill seniors and I hope we can make it happen again." said Laura Adams, RTH Director of Senior Services.

There are many fitness activities for seniors in the community such as Easy Steps, Healthy Moves, Tai Chi, Yoga, Spin, walking groups and the Sr. Celtics program. We are very fortunate to have the RTH Community Center right in our backyard, with so many machines and classes readily available. Please stop by the RTH Community Center for a complete listing of classes and/or sign up to learn how to use the machines.

A huge thank you to Harvard School of Public Health for purchasing the sneakers and New England Baptist Hospital for the t-shirts and healthy snacks.

For more information about our weekly RTH Walking Groups contact Deb Zanellato at 617-232-4306 ext. 203 or stop by the RTHCC

## Chinese New Year

Jason Zahn, Resident Services Manager

With some help from our Board members, staff and volunteers, RTH 2018 the Year of Dog Chinese New Year Celebration was held at RTH Community Center on Sunday, March 3, 2018.

Chinese New Year, which is based on traditional Lunar calendar and also known as the Spring Festival, is considered the biggest holiday among the Chinese communities around the globe. It is one of the world's most prominent and celebrated festivals.

The RTH event's special guests this year included Massachusetts State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, State Representative Jeffrey Sanchez, and Linda Lin, Marketing Director from Tufts Health Plan (as the event's sponsor). Karen Gately, Executive Director of RTH, Pauline Lin and Kyle Wu, both RTH Board members, delivered speeches about unity and community at the celebration.

Dinner was served in the evening, along with some entertainment performed by RTH residents. Shown are some of the highlights.



2018 is a Year of the Dog. In Chinese astrology, each year is related to a Chinese zodiac animal according to the 12-year cycle.



**Gǒu nián jíxiáng (狗年吉祥)**

“Good luck for this Dog year”

## Resident Wellness Day

Scott Amaral, Director of Resident Services

On April 26<sup>th</sup> Resident Services sponsored our third annual Resident Wellness Day at RTH. The event took place at the Parks building from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. We were able to bring back the popular features that we had offered last year, which residents really seemed to enjoy. This year we were able to once again offer, free haircuts with two licensed hairstylists cutting hair, blood pressure screenings, make your own stress balls, chair massage, reiki, nails, DIY body lotions, and information on the Aging Well at RTH program and current programs at the gym. We also offered gift bags to the first 50 residents. In keeping with our Wellness theme, each resident received a refreshing bottle of water and two pieces of fruit. The event ended with many residents winning numerous raffles prizes. There were over 115 residents that came by the event. Many residents commented to the Resident Services staff how much they enjoyed the day and how much it meant to them.

This event was planned months in advance and had participation from all the Resident Services staff, our intern, Alex Lee, Asuncion Velez from both Trinity Management Companies, which supplied some discounted rent raffle prizes and Asuncion Velez helped at the manicure station painting nails along with Teresa Naranjo. I would like to thank Jacquie Boston for helping at our popcorn station, Steven Goodman and Dolores Pullen for working the Welcome Desk, and our Simmons Graduate intern, Alex Lee, for taking the lead in planning the event. I would be remiss if I did not say a special thank you to Jason, Yelena, Marta, Cherie and Laura who all put in a lot of hours to have a successful event.

### Resident Services Social Work Intern



Alex Lee

As have interns in the past, RTH social work interns are an integral part of the Resident Service Department and team. RTH, as a community rich in diversity and history, provides a wonderful opportunity to the interns to learn about working in a housing community. Our MSW (Masters of Social Work) Intern, Alex Lee, from Simmons College, finished up the second part of his two-semester internship in early May 2018. During his internship here, he was great rolling up his sleeves and helping in the department and he made great strides in his learning. One of his big projects at RTH was being the lead person in running our annual Resident Wellness Day event we hold each spring. He did a great job getting everything and other staff organized and ready for the event. We had record number of residents attending this year. We also held a farewell reception for him, so the residents and staff had a chance to say good-bye and to wish him well on the next step of his professional journey.



***"Health is not valued till sickness comes."***

Thomas Fuller

## Young Men's Leadership Conference Highlights

Curtis Williams, Welcome Desk Director



The Welcome Center staff have made a commitment to collaborate with other departments, such as the Sports & Teen departments, to venture out on outside collaborations such as a trip to a Young Men's Leadership Conference which was hosted by Morehouse College this past spring.

On March 17<sup>th</sup> we had the awesome opportunity to take a few youth to this conference. During the conference, the presenters spoke of equality, education, responsibility and that young men in this country have unlimited possibilities to succeed. Although they have the ability and the opportunity to become more successful and do more than the generations before them, it does come with a price; such as the influence of social media, peer pressure, cost of education, and the mindset of a country under great scrutiny and how the youth/teens have been treated by police. The presenters gave great examples, they spoke directly to the young men in the audience and had a panel to help the parents adjust to the way society is trending towards our young men. Whether they were black, white, Hispanic, it didn't matter, they gave these young men, as well as the advisors who were there, great lessons and tools to be successful.

The most powerful thing happened after the conference was over. One of the young men with us said "I am proud to be a black man today". That statement by the youngster shocked us, but when he elaborated on his statement, we understood that the black men he sees growing up in his surroundings, and media perceptions made him feel indifferent towards black men, but the speakers from Morehouse College showed him what being a young black man can look like. They were eloquent speakers and dressed very well, and told their life stories which reflected their upbringing and the choices they made along their paths. They also spoke about the notable alumni of Morehouse College: Spike Lee, Samuel L. Jackson, Jeh Johnson, and Edwin Moses just to name a few.

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## Unity Day

Cherie Milton, Resident Services



Antoinette Lassuer



Roxanne Haecker



Jacquie Boston



Sofia Deng and Cherie Milton

Black History was kicked off by Unity Day on Saturday February 17, 2018 with a message of harmony and to recognize and acknowledge the struggles of the past to the present day.

We were honored to have Karen Gately, Jacquie Boston, Roxanne Haecker, Beverly Moss, and Sophia Deng speak to us about what Unity means to them from their individual cultural experiences. Antoinette Lassuer entertained us with a poem on Unity. Children participated with making Black History posters. Residents left with a common feeling of togetherness and a sense of purpose.

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**"Pit race against race, religion  
against religion, prejudice  
against prejudice. Divide and  
conquer! We must not let that  
happen here."**

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

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## Black History Celebration

Beverly Moss, Director of Technology and Library Services



Jacquie Boston, Gerard Jean-Leger, Deborah Sharriff, Rev. Art J. Gordon, Portsha Gordon, Karen Gately, Beverly Moss

In the United States, February is observed as Black History Month when we celebrate and remember the important contributions and achievements of African Americans throughout our nation's history which, for the most part, have been historically taken for granted. In remembering history, we recognize, acknowledge, learn and understand about the struggles and challenges that African Americans faced and overcame in this country. It is also a time delegated for reflection, open dialogue, interdisciplinary education, and shared advocacy initiatives. Too frequently the most negative aspects of African American communities get highlighted, and are subjected daily to unfair stereotypes and assumptions.

We should never forget the high price of those who have paid - even to the extent of experiencing unthinkable humiliation and even death - to attain civil rights for all. There were many who answered the call and stood up and suffered the consequences of being brave participants in this struggle. Every day we need to remember the traditions and significant accomplishments due to the likes of Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., and all those who made colossal contributions in the civil rights struggle.

The goal of the RTH Black History celebration is to entertain, rejoice and educate. Our RTH Black History celebration provides us an opportunity to correct many of the misrepresentations, misunderstandings and fallacies of African American culture, and to promote opportunities for open communication and discussion and personal interactions between our many cultures.

"It is also a time to reflect upon many of the laws and societal rules that this country has adopted that continue to hold us in bondage even without the chains", says Regina Edwards. As Mandela once said, "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

The theme for this year's celebration was "the Evolution of Music". Our celebrations included showing the movie "Hid-



Rev. Art J. Gordon



Deborah Sharriff



Gail Phillipoden



den Figures" which is the untold story of 3 brilliant African American women who worked at NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), who crunched the numbers for and served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of Astronaut John Glenn into orbit and helped turn the Space Race around!

Residents representing African-American, European-American, Asian, Latino, and Russian cultures shared their thoughts and perspectives on what unity meant to them during our Unity Day celebration. We ended our celebration with a soulful dinner.

We would like to specifically thank our keynote speakers Deborah Sharriff, BNN-TV, and Rev. Art J. Gordon, Pastor, St. John Missionary Baptist Church, for their words of encouragement, inspiration, motivation, and the charge to keep moving forward. We were also treated with spectacular performances by Gail Phillipoden (percussionist), Celestine Cox, Anjela Peeples, Area 51 Majorette Dance Group, Danielle Cunningham, Antoinette Lasseur, and the RTH Dancers.

## Sewing Classes

Roxanne Haecker, Director of Community Education and Workforce Development

Why look like everyone else on the street when you can design and create clothing that fits your style, your body type, and your budget? Learning to sew can open a new realm of creativity to explore and has practical applications, as well. You can make unique clothing, curtains, pillows, bags, etc. out of brand new cloth or repurpose existing items and fabric.

We offer three levels of sewing instruction in 8-week cycles: ***Sewing Basics*** for absolute beginners in which students learn to use a sewing machine, read and follow a pattern, and complete a pair of pajama pants; an intermediate class, ***Techniques of Sewing***, which builds on the skills learned in the Basics class; and an ***Advanced Sewing Workshop*** in which students work on individual projects. We are also offering two additional workshops this summer- ***Making a Bag*** and ***Home Décor***.

Sewing class members say they find great satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment in creating their own clothing and learning new skills! Some have commented that they find sewing to be a very grounding and even therapeutic activity. They also enjoy the social aspects of meeting as an ongoing group .... "I made new friends with some people I wouldn't ordinarily hang out with. It's a nice evening out and we have a lot of fun, too!" said a new class member.

Are you interested in taking a sewing class or workshop? Classes are held in the evenings at the Flynn Kitchen, 805 Huntington Avenue. Each 8-week class cycle is \$25 for RTH residents and \$150 for non-residents. RTH provides sewing machines, but you may also bring your own if you prefer. Classes are limited to 8 or 10 students depending upon the class level and workshop. Most classes are taught in English, but we have had class cycles in Spanish, and English and even a class that accommodated English, Spanish, and Russian speakers! We are happy to offer classes in other languages to meet the needs of RTH residents but we do need a minimum of 8 students per class and some lead time to find qualified interpreters.

For class schedules, please refer to the upcoming "What's Up" publication, and watch for flyers listing new classes on the community bulletin boards. Need more help? Contact Community Education 617-232-4306 x703 [rhaecker@roxburytenants.org](mailto:rhaecker@roxburytenants.org)



*From Homemade to  
Handmade*

## ASK A GERIATRICIAN

### Beth Israel Deaconess Senior Health

Dr. Jeremy Whyman



**Question:** What vaccinations should older people get?

**Answer:** As people get older, our immune system gets weaker, making it easier to catch certain diseases. Vaccines can help prevent diseases that can be very dangerous by helping the body develop immunity to these diseases and fight them in the future.

There are 5 vaccinations which are recommended for adults older than 65:

1. INFLUENZA (“The Flu”). You need a dose every fall.
2. PNEUMONIA 23 and the newer PREVNAR 13
3. TETANUS, DIPHTHERIA and PERTUSSIS (whooping cough) also called DTaP. After getting the DTaP, you need a Td booster shot every 10 years.
4. SHINGLES (for adults older than 60). This is a new shingles that was just released

**INFLUENZA (FLU)** viruses are very clever about changing themselves every year to keep from being killed by the vaccine, so every year the scientists try to outsmart the flu virus by changing the vaccine. Some years they are more successful than others. This year, the flu vaccine was only about 30 % effective in preventing the flu. There is a high-dose flu vaccine which is offered to people older than 65 and offers a bit more protection against the flu.

There are now **2 PNEUMONIA** vaccines that people older than 65 should get. The older Pneumovax 23 has been shown to be effective in preventing pneumonia caused by those 23 particular variations of the pneumonia bacteria. More recently, in 2011, a new pneumonia vaccine called Prevnar 13 was released to help prevent 13 additional types of pneumonia.

People over 65 should get both pneumonia vaccines, but not at the same time. It is better to wait a year between vaccines. If you have not had any pneumonia vaccine, start with the Prevnar 13, then wait 1 year to get the Pneumovax 23. Each vaccine should be effective for a lifetime, so you do not need to repeat them.

The **TDAP** protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (“whooping cough”). This should be gotten every 10 years. Pertussis is carried by many children, so anyone who spends time around children should get it.

**SHINGLES.** The new shingles vaccine, called Shingrix, is now available at your local pharmacy. It is far more effective than the first shingles vaccine, nearly 90% effective! It is 2 injections 2 to 6 months apart. Some people have side effects, such as a sore arm or feeling a little achy or feverish, but these are temporary. You can get the new vaccine even if you have had shingles or the old shingles vaccine. They are still testing to see if people on chemotherapy or who have suppressed immune systems can take it.

Vaccines, like medications, can cause side effects. Most of these

side effects are mild and improve in a few days, whereas the diseases that the vaccines are made to prevent can be deadly.

If you are sick with a cold or are taking steroids, it may be best to wait awhile before getting a vaccine.

It is important to keep a record of your immunizations, since people often get different vaccines at different places, such as doctors’ offices, flu clinics, and pharmacies.

## RTH Senior Department Receives Grant for Mystery Trips

Laura Adams, Director of Seniors Services

The Senior Department is thrilled to have received a \$4,000 grant from the Mission Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Trust Inc. The Mission Hill / Fenway Neighborhood Trust, Inc. administers and operates a fund that gives grants to community-based Mission Hill and Fenway non-profit organizations, community development corporations, and other civic groups dedicated to promoting and enhancing quality of life in the community through projects and programs for residents in the arts and education, youth sports and recreation, activities for seniors, community gardens, affordable housing, social services, and whatever the board of the Mission Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Trust deems appropriate.

Laura Adams, Director of Senior Services states “With additional financial support we will be able to increase the number of seniors that participate, as well as expand the number of trips, and improve the quality and variety of the trip destinations”.

We have hosted several Mystery Trips where we have brought seniors together, which resulted in, increasing their confidence and self-esteem and forming friendships. We would like to increase and create more on-going opportunities for seniors to interact with each other, build relationships, decrease isolation and help our seniors enjoy the world outside of RTH. It is on “Mystery Trips” that community connections are made. Together seniors are empowered and supported to enjoy the experiences that enrich their lives.

Mystery Trips are exciting and adventurous. You are given a clue and told how to dress, but you do not know where you are going. The trips are very popular, and demand is growing for activities off site for our growing senior population. These trips for seniors are fun, as they offer participants a chance to explore a new destination and simultaneously learn something new, master a new skill or develop a new hobby. Mystery trips are excellent opportunities to meet new people and have fun with those you know. It’s a mystery where we will go but it will be worth the trip!

A huge “Thank you” goes out to the Mission Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Trust Board of Directors for selecting the RTH Senior Department as a grant recipient.

## Young Philosophers

Roxanne Haecker, Director of Community Education and Workforce Development

A heartfelt thank-you to the Boston Public Library and their innovative Bibliocycle program and to the wonderful Grove Hall and Parker Hill children's librarians who pedaled the Bibliocycle over to Mission Park, helped our children select and sign out books, invited us to the grand re-opening of the Parker Hill library, read Leo Lionni's *Frederick* to our children, and led an insightful Socratic discussion afterward.

Yes, that's right! A Socratic discussion with children on a beautiful, sunny day in the middle of Mission Park. Children (who are always asking "Why?" and are very concerned with fairness) are philosophers by nature. We're especially proud of Ms. Stephanie's Young Philosophers who listened to the story attentively, considered the questions posed, shared their ideas, and responded thoughtfully to the responses of others.

The story of *Frederick*, a little field mouse who won't help his fellow field mice in their busy preparations for the cold winter months ahead, raises many philosophical questions. Instead of gathering food and supplies, Frederick gathers words for the long winter days when the mice run out of things to say while waiting for spring and sun rays for the cold dark winter days. Frederick is preparing a surprise for his fellow mice.

The Young Philosophers pondered questions about the nature of community- what's a community? Does everyone have to do his or her part? Is it fair for Frederick to get some of the food even though he didn't help gather it? Why? Why not? They thought about the value of work- was Frederick really working? Was his work worth as much as the other mice's work? And they even talked over the nature of poetry- was having poetry as important as having food for the mice?

The Young Philosophers decided that what Frederick did- create poetry- was valuable because "...he helped the mice have hope when their food was almost gone, and they were tired of the cold winter and maybe scared they would starve before the springtime. But he should have helped them get food and stuff, too, because then they would have had more stored up and maybe they wouldn't be close to running out. And he ate some food all winter, too." In the end, they agreed that poetry was valuable, but he should gather food AND make poetry. "What if they ran out of food and they all died before he even got to say his poem?"

We're looking forward to the reopening of the Parker Hill branch of the Boston Public Library and seeing what new books and programs will be there waiting for us to discover.

Volunteer classroom readers, storytellers, and literacy champions always welcome! Please contact Roxanne [rhaecker@roxburytenants.org](mailto:rhaecker@roxburytenants.org)



Do you have an idea or suggestions for an article in the newsletter? Contact Beverly Moss at [bmoss@roxburytenants.org](mailto:bmoss@roxburytenants.org) or call 617-232-4306 ext. 601.

We reserve the right to accept or reject any article for publication and/or edit for clarity.

## 12 & Under Basketball League

George Russell, Sports Coordinator



The basketball league consisted of 4 teams of equal number of boys and girls under the age of 12. We started the league in January and it lasted until the month of April. The kids looked forward to playing against each other with their parents and friends watching them put on a great performance. We encouraged the kids to go out and have fun while also being safe and mindful that they're a team and not individual players. At the end of the league, the kids were given an opportunity to attend the Basketball Hall of Fame trip as a reward for their participation. A handful of the youth joined the trip to see their favorite player's memorabilia along with the history of the sport. It was great to see the kids getting a chance to dunk the basketball, shoot around, and play the challenge games. We would like to thank all the parents who allowed their kids to participate in both the league and the Basketball Hall of Fame trip.

## RTH Teen Center Birthday Parties

Cey-Ara Hutley-Waldron, Sumaya Barre,  
Kelly Tse, Tajanee Smith

## RTH Supports Roxbury Community College Fundraiser



Beverly Moss, Director of Technology and Library Services, Roxbury Tenants of Harvard, Dr. Valerie Roberson, President, Roxbury Community College, Charnita McClain, Founder, Hydrate Boston, Dr. Yvonne Anthony, Professor, Roxbury Community College

Roxbury Community College hosted a fund-raiser on Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at New England Conservatory of Music's Jordan Hall. The funds raised will benefit the schools' student support services programs which provide tutoring in Mathematics (Calculus and Statistics), English and Writing, Biology and the Sciences.



Sumaya Barre (shown) Photographer: Cey-Ara Hutley-Waldron

The monthly teen birthday party was started with an idea by a teen named Kelly Tse. When she was turning 15, she liked the idea of throwing a birthday party and inviting her friends to enjoy and have the time of their lives downstairs in room 117. Her next great idea was to throw a party at the teen center where Kelly just wanted to invite her friends. With the help of Jen (Director of Middle School and Teen Programs), the idea of having monthly parties came to existence and it was open for every teen in the community.

Members of Events Crew and any other teens interested in the birthday parties are welcome to help and support by attending monthly meetings. Volunteers pass flyers and make phone calls to notify the community about the birthday parties. The activities that you will find at a birthday party include - but are not limited to - board games, dance battles, ice-cream making, and mini competitions. Of course, we provide food and snacks! We also have raffles so teens can win prizes. At the end of the party, the teens and staff wrap up and clean up.

[www.roxburyparties.org](http://www.roxburyparties.org)

## Cooking Classes in the Flynn Kitchen

Roxanne Haecker, Director of Community Education and Workforce Development

Wednesday night is cooking night in the Flynn Kitchen! All demonstrations include nutritional education and instruction in heart healthy methods of preparation. Classes are generally limited to 12- 16 participants, while we can usually accommodate up to 25 for demonstrations. Over 80% of these classes have had wait lists, so sign up early when you see a class you'd like to take. We call those on the wait list if an opening comes up or for the next similar cooking class so that everyone gets a chance to participate.

April's class was "A Taste of Italy", a vegan cooking class with chef Diana Goldman of Beantown Kitchen, our Jazz Up Your Vegetables partner. Many of the participants were graduates of one of the RTH Jazz Up Your Vegetables courses. This was a hands-on class with participants chopping, mixing, kneading, baking, setting the table, and even pitching in for clean-up afterward. In a small group setting, they learned to prepare simple, healthy, plant-based dishes- Italian Eggplant Dip; Rustic Springtime Vegetable Pizza (made from scratch)- each individualizing their pizzas with toppings of their choice including olives, red onions, fresh basil, spinach, vegan "mozzarella cheese", mushrooms, red, green, yellow, and hot peppers, and more; Tuscan Chickpea Argula and Barley Salad; and date caramel apples. Everyone enjoyed sitting down together at the candlelit table, relaxing with lovely Italian music (thanks, Sue Amer!) in the background and Italian wine chosen to complement the meal.

Several class participants called or emailed after the class thanking RTH for offering such cooking classes, remarking on how much they had learned about plant-based diets, preparing tasty vegetable dishes, what a lovely evening they had socially and how much they looked forward to future classes. Sitting down to share a meal in friendly company is good medicine!

### Taste of Italy



### Cent' Anni!

One way to make sure you get to attend a class is to volunteer. We always need help with before class preparation, during class serving, and after class clean up. If you would like to, or know a resident who would like to volunteer in the kitchen or serve at RTH events, you must be handy in the kitchen, have good customer service skills, and be Servsafe certified. The on-line course may be accessed at home or in the Betty Powers Library and Computer Center, but the test must be taken either in my office or the computer center. This class is provided free of charge for volunteers.

### "Heart Healthy Seafood Nutrition Workshops Are Back!"

One-session seafood nutrition and cooking demonstrations by professional chefs

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday evening of each month

6 pm

Flynn Kitchen

Free - but you must register

Check out the What's Up for complete schedule and for other cooking classes

For more information contact Roxanne Haecker at [rhaecker@roxburytenants.org](mailto:rhaecker@roxburytenants.org) or call 617-232-4306 ext. 703



## Flynn House Face Lift

Nancy Weinstein, Director of Operations



### Flynn Way Renovation

- Demolition completed
- Stone walls at the Flynn entry installed, bluestone caps ordered
- Concrete reinforced walls along Huntington Ave., under construction, 50% complete
- Starting installation of the granite at units 1803, 1801, and 1799
- Masonry on the front walls to begin week of July 9<sup>th</sup>
- Installation of curbing and concrete walkways at the front of Flynn ongoing
- Estimated to open the Flynn front entry July 27<sup>th</sup> to be able to walk to the Levinson Plaza along new sidewalks



The Mission Park site improvement work is ongoing, with Flynn Drive project well underway. The demolition is complete; stone walls are being constructed, which will be capped with bluestone as you see in other areas of the campus. We have quite a bit of work ahead before the project is complete – new roadway, granite curbing, new sidewalks and plantings, with plenty of benches to allow residents to socialize or just enjoy the day.

We understand having the building front entrance closed during construction has been an inconvenience. We estimate that the front entry will be reopened by the end of July, which will allow access to the Levinson Plaza along new sidewalks. Thank you for your patience while we improve this part of the property.

## Victory Day 2018

Yelena Piliavsky, Resident Services



Chavi Bansal's Vimoksha Dance Company with guest RTH dancers perform her "Breath and Balloons" a movement piece created "to experiment with the conscious...Using the cues of balloons I felt that through movement I could literally contrast the feeling of being lifted and lightness- that joy that children have when holding a balloon- with the heaviness of the reality around us".



Sandeep Das, Grammy award winning tabla player and composer, told rapt listeners about the ever-recurring cyclic rhythm of the universe and how this perception of the cyclic nature of life is reflected in Indian classical music through tala, recurring time measures or rhythmic cycles. Aspiring

players in the crowd were excited to hear about the many places around the world he had played his tablas and performed with Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble. How could they learn to play drums, too? His answer? Practice, practice, and more practice! They were amazed to learn that Mr. Das played hours every day for over twelve years to master his craft and still practices daily. Nothing comes without work and practice!



Sandeep Das and Beverly Moss led the group in clapping out the 16 beat teentaal, a taal that is common in Indian classical music.

It has become a RTH tradition to mark Victory Day at the beginning of May. Victory Day is a holiday that commemorates the victory of the Soviet Union over Nazi Germany in the Great Patriotic War. It was first inaugurated in the 16 republics of the Soviet Union following the signing of the German Instrument of Surrender late in the evening on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945 (after midnight, thus on May 9<sup>th</sup> Moscow time.) The Soviet government announced the victory early on May 9<sup>th</sup> after the signing ceremony in Berlin.

For the RTH Russian community, Victory Day is a special day for the remembrance of the great loss of life. RTH sponsors a wonderful event for all of the RTH community and especially the Russian community. All RTH residents were welcomed to enjoy this celebration.

The Victory Day Celebration had 110 residents that attended the event. Residents enjoyed a concert performed by a Children's Choir called "Lucky Ten", food, and a friendly atmosphere. There were two veterans of World War II who were glad to get together to mark the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Victory Day. Good memories of the old days, food, and a glass of wine made their eyes wet, and faces smile. Every veteran at the event got a bouquet of lovely spring flowers.



## Governor Baker Comes to RTH



Governor Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, and Undersecretary Chrystal Kornegay visited the RTH Community on Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, to share an ‘Announcement Relative to Housing Production’. Even *we* didn’t know what the details of the housing announcement were, so there was a bit of mystery to the presentation.

RTH was ready! The RTH Community Center gymnasium was filled with housing advocates from across the Commonwealth and residents wanting to join us for this announcement. Press covered the event, and we made it onto the local news.

RTH Executive Director, Karen Gately had the privilege of welcoming the Governor to the neighborhood, his first visit. She briefly shared the RTH story of how this nonprofit community, was born 50 years ago out of a highly contentious standoff between Harvard’s affiliated hospitals and its neighbors; there were protests and stalemate as the expansion of the institutions came up against well-established homes and their residents.

That initial confrontation has evolved into an amazing story: in which is perhaps the largest-scale town/gown cooperation in the country for the mutual benefit of residents, workers and patients – a million square feet of new hospital and research facilities and a million square feet of new or completely rebuilt low and moderate-income housing for its neighbors.

The Commonwealth and the City have been staunch allies of RTH since the 1970’s when we came to terms with the Hospital, saved our historic neighborhood and began to build almost 1000 new homes. Most recently we completed the Mosaic on the former Mass Mental Hospital site; 145 units, of which over 100 are for low and moderate-income residents, and in collaboration with the YMCA of Greater Boston offer Child Care for 90 kids and a community playground.

As a part of that development process, Brigham and Women’s Hospital built 70,000 square feet of brand new facilities for

DMH. The Hospital obtained a prime site for a state of the art Hospital facility that also supports research. In this partnership there was truly something for everyone!

The Governor’s announcement did not disappoint those of us who care about Affordable Housing in Massachusetts. He shared details of a comprehensive new initiative to substantially increase housing production across the Commonwealth, the “Housing Choice Initiative”. The initiative creates rewards for cities and towns that deliver sustainable housing growth, and provide some changes to zoning that will make the development process less cumbersome.

As you are well aware, metro Boston rent prices are among the highest in the country. The Commonwealth’s financial and technical assistance, and grant funding, will help further the goal of new housing production.

Everyone enjoyed hearing from the most popular Governor in the country and the important announcement that he came here to make in support of affordable housing. At the end of his announcement the Governor stopped to talk with RTH Board Members and Executive Director.



*Left-right:* Israil Tselnik Carol Menton, Jacquie Boston, Gov. Baker, Billy Sullivan, Donghui ‘Sophia’ Deng, Jack Anderson, Karen Gately

## Chinese Class

Roxanne Haecker, Director of Community Education and Workforce Development



### Why Learn Mandarin?

Why does the billionaire CEO of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, study Mandarin? Maybe to learn about and gain an appreciation for the rich heritage of a culture considered to be one of the great ancient civilizations with written records going back 4,000 years?

Or maybe it gives him a business advantage to be able to connect with the over 1.3 billion Mandarin speakers in China and several more millions in countries around the world? Over the past 35 years, China has become what is arguably the world's largest economy. It is definitely gives him a competitive advantage to be fluent in Mandarin and know about the Chinese culture.

Would you like to give your child the future career advantage of knowing Mandarin? RTH offers three levels of instruction – beginners, intermediate, and advanced- for school aged children. Classes run from September through June and are open to resident and non-resident students. Please pick up an application at the Betty Powers Library, the RTHCC Welcome Desk, the RTH After School desk, or Roxanne at [rhaecker@roxburytenants.org](mailto:rhaecker@roxburytenants.org)

Students are placed in appropriate level classes by experienced, native Mandarin teachers. Please enroll now to ensure a seat.

#### Good brain exercise

Studies suggest that learning Chinese uses more parts of the brain than are required for other languages. As there are numerous differences between learning Chinese when compared with the English language, including tones and characters, it is believed that learning Chinese takes more brain power! Whereas English speakers only use the left temporal lobe, speakers of Mandarin use both. Furthermore, learning to write characters can help with motor skills and visual recognition will keep the mind sharp.

[www.roxburytenants.org](http://www.roxburytenants.org)



### RTH Seafood Club

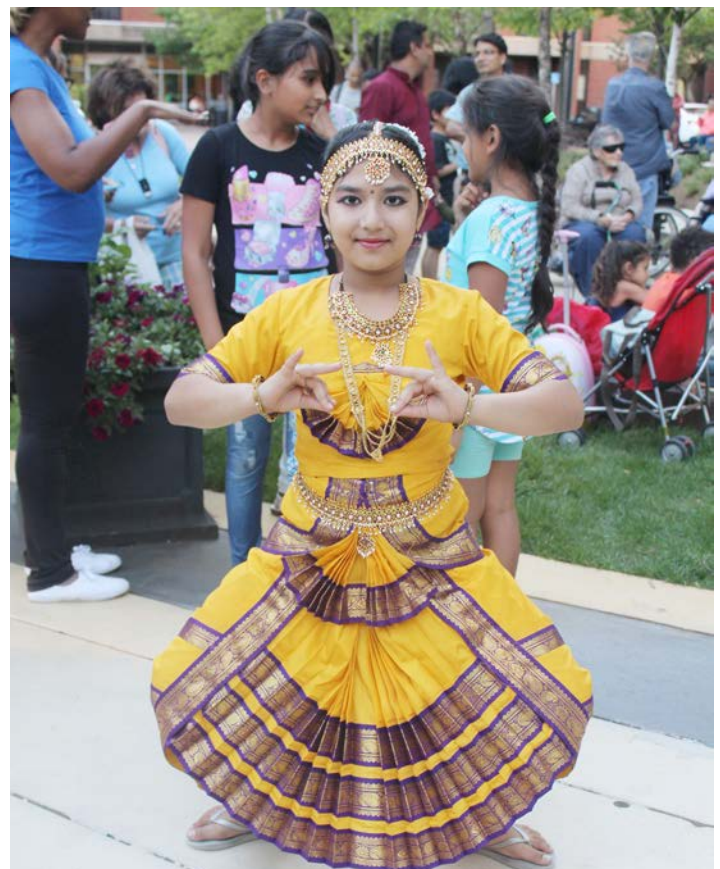
3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month

Haddock | Fish Heads | Salmon

Right off the boat at the Fish Pier!

New offerings seasonally - always discounted

Contact Roxanne Haecker at [rhaecker@roxburytenants.org](mailto:rhaecker@roxburytenants.org) or call 617-232-4306 x 703



Bhawana Kumari performed the Bharatnatyam dance, an Indian classical dance, during July's Music on the Plaza.

## Music on the Plaza

### "I Won A Bike!"



# Cherie Milton Jackson

1966-2018

ment and support she provided to every single family; even creating a support group for families who graduated from the Family Nurturing program.

Scott Amaral said, "As Cherie's supervisor and as part of our department we spent a lot of time together with all the events, meetings and programs. We often joked that we spent more time here than we did with our families. In the four year I have been here I feel as though I really got to know her on a personal level and I always enjoyed her positive up beat attitude which was contagious.

After long days at the office you could hear her singing, which left us all in a great mood. We have all tried to adjust to coming in the office and not seeing her, but it has been hard because so many things we do and people remind us of her. Her impact on us and the residents she came across at RTH will be felt and remembered for a long time."

Most of all Cherie will be remembered for making work and life "fun" for all those who she touched. Her presence with her infectious smile, contagious laugh, and passion will be greatly missed.

Cherie's spirit will endure and her contributions will not be forgotten!



RTH Resident Service Coordinator, Cherie Milton passed away suddenly on May 28, 2018.

Cherie had been a member of RTH staff since 2009. Cherie was passionate about her work and the needs of low-income families. She diligently worked ensuring our residents had the help they needed. She volunteered to support our families who attended family camp, helping them get acquainted to spending time in the great outdoors.

Cherie was also responsible for coordinating the first Unity Day here at RTH; where she ensured all voices were represented and heard and that all participants had the opportunity to share their experiences and culture. She often expressed this was her favorite RTH event.

In addition to working as part of the Resident Services' staff team she also served as the coordinator of the ever-popular Family Nurturing Program, which she led for 3 years. She will be remembered for her enthusiasm for life and the encourage-



Left photo: Anna Adams and Theresa Parks enjoy the activities at the July Music on the Plaza.

Right photo: Jimmy Gately hosts the "Jimmy's Hot Dog and movie night

## RTH Families Attend Autism Eats

May Vaughn, Youth, Family and Community  
Engagement Director



### Autism Eats Mission

Autism Eats provides autism-friendly non-judgmental environments for family dining, socializing and connecting with others who share similar joys and challenges.

Going to a family restaurant should be an enjoyable experience. A time to relax, enjoy good food and spend time with your family. Unfortunately, for those who have a child with autism, dining out can be anxiety provoking and stressful. As parents, we may feel that “all eyes are on us” when our kids exhibit certain behaviors, have outbursts or refuse to sit still. Other diners may be disturbed and the well-intentioned wait staff doesn’t really know the best way to help.

Now the 2<sup>nd</sup> year attending, five RTH families and over fifteen residents participated this year. Families had the opportunity to meet new families, hear about resources and have fun.

For more information about programs and services for children with special needs contact May Vaughn, Youth, Family and Community Engagement Director at [mvaughn@roxburytenants.org](mailto:mvaughn@roxburytenants.org) 617 232.4306 ext. 201.

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Jordan Randolph and George Russell work out regularly!

### ANONYMOUS

### Tip Line

617-232-0436

If you see something  
Say Something