Big Ideas Mean Gutsy Decisions

Boston Public Schools could unlock $100 million for education resources by considering such moves as closing schools and re-examining teachers’ wages, a financial advisory committee asserted Tuesday in a “10 Big Ideas” report.

The school system is asking for community input on the ideas, which aim to offset projected budget gaps of $20 to $25 million per year, every year.

The committee stressed that the ideas listed in its long-term financial report are intended to ignite a community dialogue about ways to deal with anticipated budget shortfalls.

CONTINUED ON page 6
It would seem that America is serious about combatting violence. The preventive steps extend down to the smallest children and their games. We’ve all heard the extreme cases of a small child suspended for making an imaginary gun with their fingers during playtime at school.

Curiously the most lucrative game played by adults seems unable to grasp the concept. About 2 years ago, Baltimore running back Ray Rice was suspended for assaulting his girlfriend. However, after a tape of the assault surfaced and was shown nationwide, National Football Commissioner Goodell increased the punishment due to criticism that he had been too lenient. This was true, but we also have a system that prohibits being punished twice for the same offense. Apparently, Goodell didn’t get the message, because NY Giants field goal kicker Josh Brown was suspended one game for abusing his wife. That was before a diary by Brown detailing his abuse was made public. Now “day late and a dollar short” Goodell, trying to cover up his slap on the wrist punishment, once again, has suspended Brown indefinitely.

If only Mrs. Brown had claimed her husband had deflated footballs before kicking them. You can be sure “Roger the Dodger” would have moved like lightning.

“Roger to the Rescue”
Halloween is this coming Monday, and like practically every holiday now, a tiny minority of crazies is out to spoil it for everyone else. For this occasion, much, but not all, of the lunacy is happening on America’s liberal college campuses and they don’t get much loonier than UMass-Amherst. This year there, it’s reported that the intellectual zombies - a combination of nutty professors and mind numbed students - have decided that there will be what they’ve labelled a ‘Costume Racism Evaluation and Assessment Meter’ or SCREAM. This SCREAM meter will set forth guidelines for students to follow, which determines the degree of offensiveness of a person’s chosen costume. And you know, this bunch can find something offensive about pretty much everything. They even have a color code where green is the least offensive and red is the most.

Now it goes almost without saying that as far as Halloween costumes are concerned on campus, white students might just as well stay home and watch TV. Parties for them are out, because no matter what they choose to wear, it will make some sensitive little snow flake of a student immediately go into meltdown and run for the sanctuary of their ‘safe space’ and seek immediate trauma counselling. As far as the UMass kook squad and PC police see it, you’d better not wear a sombrero, because it will offend Hispanics. Dress up as an Indian Princess and you are anti-Native American. I’m guessing that one shouldn’t even dress in a Minnesota Vikings Football jersey because it will mean you are disrespecting Swedes and Norwegians.

But it’s not just on campuses. The silliness is spreading elsewhere. Some towns even try to regulate, restrict and outright ban certain costumes at festivals and neighborhood Trick or Treating. My family’s heritage is Italian. So, by liberal logic, if someone comes to our door on Halloween dressed as Don Corleone, Paulie from the Goodfella’s movie or Al Capone or even one of the Super Mario Brothers, since that’s how Italians are often portrayed in the media, we should call the cops and say we’re being harassed by bigots.

It gets even worse in the ever-nuttier state of California. There, last year it was reported that one student at a campus party was berated by fellow students and a professor for dressing in a cardboard box. But as sure as Senator Liz Warren howls at a full moon, it figured that there would be some who even find a cardboard box offensive. The reason given? Cardboard is made from fallen trees, so to dress in cardboard must mean that you are insensitive to the plight and the ongoing destruction of the Amazon rain forest and you must hate the environment. Yes, these people are this crazy.

The best way to put a stop to the holiday wreckers and killjoys is to hit them with a little backlash. On Halloween, if you are one who celebrates by dressing in a costume, wear any damn costume you choose, offensive or not. The choice is yours.
Window Into The State House

Window Into The State House provides our readers a synopsis of important issues of interest, past and current, that are being proposed, debated or acted upon by the Massachusetts Legislature. Many issues that are not related to local city government services are acted upon and have a direct impact on daily life. They are tax policy, transportation infrastructure, judicial appointments, social services and health, as well as higher education.

We will excerpt reports from the gavel-to-gavel coverage of House and Senate sessions by news sources focused on this important aspect of our lives. These sources include a look ahead at the coming week in state government and summaries and analyses of the past week, re-caps of a range of state government activity, as well as links to other news.

Reports from around the commonwealth seem to show an impressive turnout in early voting as town and city clerks opened the doors for people to cast early ballots for the first time, Chris Villani of the Herald reports. There were few reports of problems with the new system. Clerks on the North and South shores reported steady crowds all day. In Springfield, more than 400 turned out for early voting, according to a report from Peter Goonan at MassLive. In Cambridge, the first-day crowds were so large that some voters walked away rather than wait in line to vote.

Health care as an Achilles heel?

As far as pocketbook issues are concerned, hammering away at health-care insurance costs isn’t bad, particularly when ObamaCare premium costs are now spiraling out of control and health-care prices in general continue to take a bigger and bigger chunk out of people’s incomes, as the Globe’s Priyanka Dayal McCluskey reports today. In Massachusetts, families now pay an astounding 7.3 percent of their income on health care premium, up from 5.7 percent just five years prior, the Globe notes. So it’s not surprising that Donald Trump is now pounding away at ObamaCare and health-care costs in general, as reported by the Herald’s Chris Casidy. But is it enough to truly help Trump? Maybe a little. But not a lot, considering the nation’s unemployment rate is only 4.9 percent and incomes are slowly rising.

Help Wanted: Bay State workers, decent pay, free meals, apply to Team Trump

From the Herald’s Chris Casidy: “Donald Trump’s Bay State campaign is offering paid jobs with free meals to canvass for the brash billionaire in the two weeks ahead of the Nov. 8 vote. An email from Trump Team Massachusetts touts ‘opportunities available for PAID POSITIONS.’” OMG. Paid positions, with free room and board? It’s almost as good as consulting! But it’s in N.H. It chillly up there!

Weld unofficially completes break with Libertarian Party

Former Gov. Bill Weld, still nominally running as the Libertarian Party’s vice presidential candidate, blasted away at Donald Trump yesterday, as he has promised to do in recent weeks, but there was something missing at his press conference yesterday in Boston: An outright call to back Democrat Hillary Clinton or a full-throated plea to back the Libertarian ticket, according to reports by SHNS’s Katie Lannan (pay wall) and the Globe’s Frank Phillips. “This is only about Trump,” said Weld, as Phillips reports. And it certainly wasn’t about Clinton or Libertarian presidential nominee Gary Johnson, either.

Hiller signing off at Channel 7

From the Herald’s Gayle Fee: “Longtime Boston TV political reporter Andy Hiller, who has been skewering local, state and national pols on Boston TV for nearly 40 years, is leaving Channel 7 after the presidential election. Word from inside is that Hiller, host of the 7News segment ‘The Hiller Instinct,’ will depart when his contract runs out around the end of the year.” Which, as Gayle notes, is when WHDH is expected to lose its NBC network affiliation. Hiller is apparently not retiring and will probably end up in another gig soon, Gayle notes.

Baker stars in pro-Question 2 television ad

Gov. Charlie Baker is expending some of his large stockpile of political capital by going all out in favor of Question 2, campaigning door-to-door yesterday on behalf of the pro-charter school initiative and appearing in a new TV ad for Question 2, reports Janet Wu at WCVB TV. “Imagine if your kids were trapped in a failing school,” Baker says in the new 30-second ad. “Public charter schools give parents a choice.”

‘Drugged driving’

The issue of “drugged driving” has taken center stage in the battle over Question 4, which would legalize marijuana in Massachusetts, reports Gintautas Dumcius at MassLive. Opponents of the measure gathered outside the State House yesterday to warn of roadway mayhem and tragedies if Question 4 is approved. Supporters of Question 4 are countering that the presence of marijuana in somebody’s system is not an indication of impairment, Dumcius reports.

Talk about timing: Massive pot greenhouse for medical patients could get huge boost if Question 4 passes

A Colorado company is planning to build a giant pot greenhouse in Freetown, initially to provide an ample supply of marijuana for medical patients who need the weed to treat illnesses. But, whoa, if Question 4 passes next month and recreational marijuana is legalized in Massachusetts, AmeriCann Inc. says it will speed up its construction schedule and likely rent some of its cultivation space to a retailer of recreational cannabis, reports the Globe’s Dan Adams.
Reading Between The Lines

“Volley Against Violence”

OUR big Holidays are arriving. First comes Halloween followed a month later by many folks’ favorite Holiday, Thanksgiving. Today, however, let’s introduce a new Holiday that falls between both, November 18. That is this year’s date for the Volley’s Against Violence “Time”.

Held at the Boston Sportsmen’s Tennis Club at 950 Blue Hill Ave. Now why publicize a “time” in Dorchester to the people in Southie? The answer lies in the reality that this program crosses all boundary lines, geographical and social.

When you hear yet another criticism of the police please consider this program. Teaching inner city kids the genteel activity of tennis is not the usual direction of city sports. Football, baseball, hockey and basketball are the traditional sports we remember. Maybe the question should be, “why not” tennis?

A group of Boston Police officers felt there is no, why not”, and years ago began the program “Volleys Against Violence”. The program has five core tenets; RESPECT for all including resolving conflicts without violence. EFFORT focusing on self-improvement. SELF-DIRECTION focusing on setting personal goals. HELPING and showing sensitivity to others. TRANSFERENCE on how to be a role model.

These lessons are taught in small groups by volunteers. Just who are those volunteers? First, Sta-6 Captain Joseph Boyle. Without his backing the program doesn’t succeed. To use a phrase common today, the Captain not only supports this program he has, “doubled down”, giving one of the program founders Officer Frank Williams all the manpower support requested.

Naturally, however, this is not a case of being ordered. Frank is inundated with volunteers like Sgt. Timmy Gaughan, Officers Perry Roy, Danny Long, George Billote and Sean Sullivan. The true, honest, dedication needed could never be forced. Instead each one of these officers epitomize the true dedication to their profession that the usual media portrayal seeks to ignore.

No one forces their volunteerism. Instead it’s a reflection of how and why they become officers in the first place. It’s in their DNA to help where and when needed. They really don’t need to be asked. This program is a perfect example. We can be pretty sure none of those officers is a budding Arthur Ashe or John McEnroe. They, in fact, had to learn the game to teach it. That’s just what they’ve done. That plus recruiting volunteers with perhaps a “speck” more ability to assist in teaching the game and life’s “other” lessons. The sportsman’s club itself generously contributes some of their own personnel as instructors.

The winter is a perfect time for the program. The temperature drop this past weeks gives a preview of the weather coming our way. Too cold for outside but keeping the kids inside does little for a quiet evening. For the next 2 ½ months, until Dec 16 an alternative for cabin fever is available. Every Friday night between 6-8 lessons and instruction are available. Boston Police from Station 6 provide transportation.

When they arrive, the kids join with the tennis balls flying all over the place, groups of about 8 with an instructor, gather to discuss whatever the topic of the day is important to youth. Particular attention is paid to insure everyone participates in the conversation. Consider any program a child could be involved in and try to think of a safer one.

We all know that sadly violence or violent acts can happen anywhere at any time. Could there possibly be a safer situation than one with armed police officers as instructors, teachers and drivers. Now don’t be alarmed, no one is running around with weapons. It’s just comforting to know they’re around. The experience and interaction the kids receive has no price. Who knows your child might become a tennis player, and many have.

Finally, the police have done their job. Their voluntarism goes above and beyond. Let’s do our share. If you have a child, consider the program. If not try to support the program on Nov. 18th or maybe send a little something. Info on the fundraiser can be found at: www.sportsmenstennis.org/community/volley-against-violence/

Take care till next week.
A bill filed by State Representative Nick Collins related to public safety and hot works was signed into law last week. This bill, cosponsored by both Rep. Collins and Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly (D-Arlington), was drawn up after the tragic fire caused by unpermitted welding that took the lives of two Boston Firefighters in the Back Bay in 2014. The bill will establish a commission consisting of primary fire safety officials in the Commonwealth, members appointed by the Governor and Legislature, as well as experienced professionals in the burning and hot works trades. The commission will evaluate the current regulations, punishments and penalties of welding practices to avoid future fires. It will also investigate and study the current requirements for obtaining licenses and permits governing cutting, welding, and other hot work processes that involve an operation capable of initiating fires or explosions to determine if the state fire code adequately protects the safety of the public and first responders.

“The safety of our Commonwealth’s citizens must always be our priority, especially our firefighters and first responders,” stated Rep. Collins. “It is my hope that this commission will find and fix the flaws under current requirements and practices to ensure accidents like the fire in the Back Bay never happen again.”

Have some family fun! Games, crafts, story time. Come in your costume! Admission is free for all ages. Parking is free, too.

commonwealthmuseum.org
email: specialevents@sec.state.ma.us
Phone: 617-727-9268
COLUMBIA POINT, BOSTON
Driving: From 93N: take exit 15 From 93S: take exit 14
Public Transit: Take the Red line to JFK/UMASS and take the free #2 Bus to the Commonwealth Museum at the Massachusetts Archives

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

“...CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

“This report is a courageous step towards financial stability for our schools and deep investments in our students,” Superintendent Tommy Chang said in a news release. But as reported in a Metro Publication, Richard Stutman, president of the Boston Teachers Union, disagrees.

“The city has gone decades without a good facilities plan and a good, down-to-earth financial plan,” he said. “To put people in charge of [the financial report] who have created these problems and tolerated these problems for years isn’t a recipe for success.”

Stutman, a member of the advisory committee that wrote the report, said that he was disappointed with the meetings because “the team was basically directed to do more with less and I just thought that was a bad way to begin the discussion.”

The first three ideas proposed by the report focus on transportation:
• Changing student assignment policies by immediately moving all students to schools that are closer to their homes or providing transportation to only those students who attend home-based schools;
• Not offering busses for students who live a certain distance away—

the report says that Boston Public Schools provides buses to students who live further away than the state-required distance for bus service;
• Making bus routes more efficient by serving multiple schools on one route. Other proposed ideas include closing schools, negotiating teacher salaries, changing the state tenure law and streamlining such central office operations as paid administrative leave.

The report also brought up the issue of charter schools and proposed advocating state legislature to adjust the education funding formula.

“With dramatically rising Charter School costs, underfunded charter school reimbursement and stagnant state education revenue, the Massachusetts’ charter school finance model is broken for Boston,” the report states.

The advisory committee began working on the report in 2015. Although Chang said that “these efforts could result in the reallocation of significant dollars,” Stutman said the committee failed to generate imaginative proposals.

“They built themselves a very narrow box to look in… They shorted themselves by thinking small and thinking ‘how can we do more with less and be content about our decision,’” he said. “I think it’s a disservice to our schools to think like that.”
NEW EMT RECRUITS HIRED TO IMPROVE EMS RESPONSE TIMES

Recent recruit class will meet heightened demand for emergency medical services

Martin J. Walsh announced that Boston Emergency Medical Service (EMS) academy class 2016-2 has begun their training as EMT-Recruits as part of the Mayor’s FY17 investment to reduce EMS response times. This class will increase Boston EMS’ count of uniformed employees by 24 personnel, allowing for deployment of two additional ambulances when they graduate in March of 2017.

Through his dedication to improving city services for the people of Boston, Mayor Martin J. Walsh closely monitors key EMS metrics through tools such as CityScore. Based on CityScore data, EMS identified the trends associated with growing response times: since 2008, the number of clinical incidents and ambulance transports rose by 16% and 14%, respectively. Based on this analysis, Mayor Walsh approved the expansion in Boston EMS’ uniformed employees, the first increase in seven years. This investment will help meet the heightened demand for emergency medical services and reduce the median response times for the city’s highest priority calls.

“Investing in our emergency medical services means investing in the health and well-being of all Boston residents,” said Mayor Martin J. Walsh. “As one of the leading EMS systems in the country, Boston EMS serves our residents with compassionate and excellent pre-hospital care, protecting the safety of individuals and the health of the community. I’m pleased to welcome this new class of recruits and thank them for their service to our city.”

The 6-month academy begins with a 3-month classroom didactic program and concludes with a field internship working in ambulances. This also marks the first time Boston EMS has ever run two concurrent recruit classes, the first, Academy 2016-1, began their employment in June of this year and vacated the classroom just five weeks ago.

As a bureau of the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), Boston EMS is committed to serving Boston’s residents through clinical excellence, emergency planning and preparedness, and community outreach.

“I am grateful to Mayor Walsh, whose enthusiastic support of Boston EMS has ensured continual excellence in pre-hospital care, and I am also grateful to our new class of recruits, who will play a vital role in serving Boston’s vulnerable populations,” said BPHC Executive Director Monica Valdes Lupi. This class of recruits includes seven female recruits and 17 male recruits, all of whom are state-certified EMTs. The hiring process began in early July, with review sessions, a written exam, a practical exam, and an oral interview. Throughout the training program the recruits will be continually tested and evaluated. Only those who successfully complete the program will take part in the graduation ceremony and be promoted to department EMT.

Boston EMS is the only ambulance service in the country that offers such an extensive new-hire training program. The department views the academy process as an essential investment in personnel to ensure they are best prepared to work in a busy urban environment and meet the array of pre-hospital needs of patients across the City. In addition to expanding their clinical skills, Boston EMS training personnel and representatives from partner agencies prepare the recruits for scenarios beyond the routine, including mass casualties, hazardous materials exposures, and active shooter incidents.

“I’m happy to welcome this newest class of recruits. As a member of the interview panel, I was particularly impressed with their qualifications and commitment to the profession,” said EMS Chief James Hooley.
Dogs and their human companions are now welcome to enjoy the new East First Street Dog Park which opens today. Massport worked alongside state and local elected officials and the MBTA to design and construct the $400,000 dog park for the residents of South Boston.

The quarter-acre park is located on East First Street, between M Street and O Street, and features benches, a pet fountain, and doggie exercise equipment.

At Massport we work hard to be a good neighbor. We will continue to find new opportunities to balance healthy growth and a commitment to creating projects that enhance the quality of life for our nearest neighbors.

For more information on Massport visit www.massport.com.
Recent South Boston Real Estate Sales

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$529,000 & $559,000

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BPDA Public Meeting
902 E. SECOND STREET
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

PROJECT PROPOSED BY:
Peter Zagorianakos, of 902 East Second Street, LLC

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Community Update with regard to proposed changes to the approved Small Project Review to increase the total unit count from 36 units to 39 units. The Proponent is seeking a determination that the proposed changes do not significantly increase the impacts of the project.

MAIL TO: LANCE CAMPBELL
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

PHONE: 617.918.4311
EMAIL: Lance.Campbell@Boston.gov

BostonPlans.org | @BostonPlans
Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary
Bicycles and Motor Vehicles: Same Rules on Boston’s Streets?

H ere at South Boston Today, we get plenty of calls, texts, emails, social media tweets and posts and yes, even hand written ‘snail mail’ letters delivered to us by our good friends from the US Postal Service. Much of this communication comes in as questions and inquiries about a wide variety of issues. Some we know the answers to and can respond to right away. For others, we must check with knowledgeable sources to make sure that we get the accurate information before replying. One of the issues coming up lately are the rules of the road or street, when it comes to bicycle riding in Boston – particularly when they share the same pavement with motor vehicles.

So, we contacted the City of Boston’s Transportation Department to get some answers and spoke with the very helpful and cooperative Stephanie Seskin, who is the Acting Transportation Director for the City of Boston. Stephanie answered all the FAQs, as well as providing other information people need to know about the Bike/Motor Vehicle rules.

First, it’s important to note that most of the policy and regulations are determined by the Massachusetts State Legislature on this issue. We’ll touch on and answer several questions here and provide the link as reference for additional questions.

Are bicyclists, riding on city streets required to follow the same rules as people driving cars? The answer is a clear YES. Though some bikers and car drivers were surprised to learn this, stopping at red lights obeying flashing lights, stop signs slow zone signs, speed limit signs etc. is the law whether riding on 4 wheels or 2.

Turn signals: Are bicyclists required to use them? YES. Though few bikes come with electronic turn signals, using hand signals is the rule when making a turn, changing lanes, coming to a stop etc. It’s important that those sharing the road with you know exactly what you plan to do before doing it – the same as those driving cars.

Bike lanes: Are cars allowed to drive in marked and designated bike lanes? NO. Although a motor vehicle can enter a marked bike lane when making a turn. Are Bikes allowed to travel out of the designated lane into the area where cars travel? YES. Yet this is an area that causes many of the received complaints.

Why, drivers ask, if there are designated bike lanes, should a bicyclist be allowed to stray from that lane and merge in with cars, trucks and buses? This is one of those areas that seems to be causing tension between the two groups and even some tempers to flare and seems to be causing the occasional collision and quite a few near misses. This is an area that some people feel needs more work to solve potential problems.

Can Bicyclists use any road they want? Almost but not quite. There are ‘limited access’ highways where bikes are banned. These roads are clearly marked.

Can bikes be ridden on sidewalks? YES, though city officials do not recommend it as it can pose a safety hazard to pedestrians. And it’s also important to note here as well that bicyclists, just as drivers of motor vehicles, must always yield to pedestrians.

Another source of concern by many drivers of motor vehicles is bikes passing them on the right. But it is allowed according to the law. This too can pose a danger; particularly to the bicyclists. Some drivers stress that it makes it hazardous when signaling for a right turn if a bike comes flying up on the right and nearly gets hit. Bicyclists on the other hand state that if the drivers were paying more attention, there would be no problem. But with all the potential distractions travelling on city streets, being alert to every possible situation and scenario is seldom possible.

We asked Stephanie Seskin how she thought the addition of bike lanes in Boston was going. Was it a good plan? Is it working well? Is it overall a good idea? And what are the plans for the coexistence of Bikes and Motor Vehicles on Boston’s streets? She said that overall, they believe it is a plan CONTINUED ON PAGE 14
St Peter Academy K2 Students Have Some Moves...

Yoga moves that is! For brain breaks, students have been working on their best stretches and poses with the help of Maximo (GoNoodle). Check out their poses in the accompanying photos!

And yoga isn’t the only movement happening in Master Teacher, Ms. Gina Sacriponte’s classroom – K2 Students are moving through October’s challenging curriculum with curious and joyful minds.

In Writer’s Workshop, K2 started practicing with the editing process by participating in meaningful discussions with partners. Students were taught how to constructively critique, ask thoughtful questions, and share ‘noticings’ with their writing partner. Mrs Sacriponte commented, “It was amazing listening in to their conversations today...they have each come such a long way with their understanding of the writing process already!”

In Social Studies, K2 has been learning all about Christopher Columbus. Students are reading about his famous journey and made some predictions about what would happen next in this true story. So far, they know that Christopher Columbus is set to sail to The Indies with the allowance given by the king and queen of Spain. So...will Columbus ever make it to The Indies? Take a look at K2’s very thoughtful predictions in the photo.

October’s field trip was a blast learning all about fire safety with South Boston heroes!

K2 loves working with their creepy, crawly Halloween themed learning centers during literacy and math this month. Take a look at the pictures showcasing the fun (and hard work)! Enjoy!

Meet the exemplary teaching staff of St. Peter Academy at their Early Childhood Education Open House on Wednesday, November 9 from 9:00-11:00 am. Can’t make the open house but want to learn more – Private tours are available upon request.

St Peter Academy, an independent community based private school, is South Boston’s only Toddler through Grade 8 School. It is privately funded, enriched with extended learning hours and summer programs, and fosters a nurturing, safe and individualized environment. The student/teacher ratio is 6:1 which is ideal for creating exemplary instructional models filled with interactive learning opportunities. The school is located at 371 West Fourth Street and is currently accepting applications for the year round toddler program and 2016 school year – To learn more about the school and all programs visit www.stpeteracademy.com or schedule a private tour by contacting Ms. Doreen Brown or Ms Maria Blasi at 617-268-0750 or email SPA@StPeterAcademy.com.
Halloween is a big deal across America and events celebrating it come in many forms. A look at Disney World’s Halloween is truly dazzling and not too far away from our own community, in Salem, Massachusetts, for reasons we all know, the festivities there are world famous.

But here in South Boston, thanks to the Castle Island Association and all its wonderful volunteers along with the hard working DCR on site staff, we too have a famous and unique way of celebrating the season called the ‘Children’s Magical Halloween Castle’ where Fort Independence is turned into a spooky but welcoming wonderland that has just seen its 34th successful year this past weekend.

This two-day event held last Saturday and Sunday once again brought smiles to the faces of the crowds of families that turned out. And even though Saturday’s weather was soaking wet and cold, C.I.A. president Bill Spain reports that more than 1,300 people showed up during Saturday’s soaking rain deluge and
thousands more came on Sunday as the weather improved. And why not? This is a long established and much looked forward to tradition that is so famous and so much fun it keeps people coming back year after year; many even driving in from other states to be part of the experience. And all of it is free to the public. Now THIS is how Halloween at Fort Independence should be celebrated, not the pay to get in, restricted Fright Nights that were once proposed by some.

Last weekend’s event included the usual entertainers, magicians, story tellers and a trip through the ‘magical castle’ that was decorated to perfection by the creative minds and efforts of dedicated volunteers but each year, it just gets better and this year was no exception. Attention to detail and the desire to make each year more impressive than the previous is what makes this beautiful event so popular. The consensus was unanimous and expressed perfectly by first timer 6-year-old Kaylee Finn who when asked what she thought of it all answered the question with one word – “AWESOME!”
Annual Blood Drive in Memory of James M. ‘Jim’ Kelly This Saturday

he memory of neighborhood hero and advocate of all things South Boston, James ‘Jimmy’ Kelly will live on forever in the hearts and minds of the thousands of people that were touched by this great man. For the last four years, an annual blood drive has been held as one of the ways to honor him in a positive way. To give one’s blood to fellow human beings who in many cases their very lives depend on it is truly a noble cause that would make Jim Kelly proud.

This coming Saturday, October 29th, the tradition continues as the family and friends of the former Boston City Council President, highly effective neighborhood advocate and tireless protector of this community, in cooperation with the American Red Cross are preparing to hold the 5th annual blood drive in Jim Kelly’s memory. It will once again be held at the South Boston Catholic Academy building at 866 East Broadway from 9:30am till 2:30pm.

The Annual Jim Kelly Memorial Blood Drive has been a success each year it has been held with every year bringing in more donors than the year before. And why wouldn’t it be a success? To take part in such a worthy cause while honoring the memory of a great man such as Jim Kelly is something to be proud of.

Those who can give blood can just show up at the location and donate. If you’d prefer a specific time to give, you can call in advance to get an appointment which will get you in and out that much quicker by calling the American Red Cross at 1-800 -- red cross or by visiting the Red Cross website at www.redcrossblood.org. But even if you are not able to donate blood, why not stop in anyway and say ‘hi’ to and meet and greet Jim’s children Jamie, Sandra and Tommy as well as Jim’s grandchildren who will also be there. They would appreciate it and would love to see you there as well. And the odds are quite good that Jim himself will be looking down from above smiling.

Those who knew Jim Kelly are sure he would be grateful for those who turned out in his memory with the goal of benefitting others with the gift of life, especially to those who need it most. This is who Jim Kelly was and helping others has always been what he’s all about. What a perfect way to honor the memory of a great man.

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**BICYCLES & MOTOR VEHICLES: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10**

that is working well, but like all relatively new programs, there is room for improvement. She said that currently, Boston has 105 miles of on-street bike lanes and plans to expand on that number and make it into even a better, well connected network. There will be challenges to this goal, as there are with most large undertakings, but the benefits are that it provides a healthy, fun, inexpensive mode of transportation to many people who either would rather not or perhaps can’t drive on crowded city streets.

Listening to the feedback from both the bikers and motor vehicle drivers, both groups have advice that they would like the other group to follow. Some bicyclists insist that they want to be given the same consideration and respect that’s given to those driving cars. While many in cars say that some of those on bikes act as if the rules of the road/street don’t apply to them and that everyone is required to get out of their way and give them special treatment. They believe that attitudes like this is what causes accidents, injuries and sometimes even fatalities.

Here is some sound advice for all, which comes from a reader who both drives his car and rides his bike to get around Boston: “When driving your car, be mindful that if you hit a person on a bike, the odds of the biker getting seriously hurt is high because of the lack of protection provided.” To those biking along city streets he says, “You’re not special, you too must follow the rules and if you want that respect you’re demanding, it’s wise to remember, you get respect when you give respect.”

If you want to get more details on the rules of the road on city streets for bikes and cars you can log onto https://www.boston.gov/departments/boston-bikes/bike-laws-boston

**TYNNAN HAPPENINGS**

**FALL GYM PROGRAMS**

**HALLOWEEN PARTY**
The Tynan Community Center Council Annual Halloween Party will be held today October 27th from 3:30-5:00 pm for children 10 & under. Please join us for some ghoulish games, freaky fun, frightening food and Costume Parade with prizes. Party will be held in the Cafeteria.

**TOTS GYM**
Tots gym is for boys and girls, ages 4-6. This program will be held on Monday and Thursday afternoon, from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. The participants will enjoy free play time followed by simple game activities that will help develop their motor skills but most importantly have fun while keeping active and learning new games. There is an annual membership fee of $5 for the year. If interested to stop by on Monday or Thursday to register. Spaces are still available.

**JUNIOR GYM**
Junior gym is for boys and girls, ages 7-11. Classes will be held on Monday and Thursdays 4-5 pm. The children will enjoy playing various recreational games, such as Medic, Dodgeball, Kickball, Capture the Flag and much more. There will be a $5 membership required. Stop by Monday or Thursday to register.

**FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**AGES 7-11**
Registration is still taking place for the boys and girls Flag Football League. If you have not registered, you may stop by the Tynan any afternoon to sign up. The league will begin Tuesday, November 1st. There is still time to get on a team. A $5 membership fee is required.

**TEEN PROGRAMS**
We are in the process of planning a teen boys’ flag football league on Fridays. Stop by and register with Greg in the gym. Katie O’Connell is working on a Fitness and Conditioning Class for Teen Girls Only. The Tynan is also in the process of locating an area for a Teen Center we hope to open very soon. Please watch the Tynan Happenings for further information.

**ADULT COED VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE**
Our annual Coed Volleyball League will begin Thursday, November 3rd. Games will be played on Thursday evenings. We are looking for individual players who would like to participate in the recreation league to fill some empty slots on existing teams. If you are interested, please contact Kathy Davis at the Community Center @ (617) 635-5110. Practice time for interested participants will be held tonight at 7 pm.
With six teams having a bye, there are only 13 games on the NFL schedule for Week 8. And last week, the only remaining undefeated team — the Minnesota Vikings — lost its first game of the season. The Vikings’ 21-10 loss to the Eagles in Philly was one of only two games I got wrong in Week 7, which means we’re getting closer and closer to the perfect 5-0 week.

Let’s get to work. Here are my picks for Week 8:

**NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (-7) over Buffalo Bills**
-On paper, this is a rematch of Week 4, when the Bills shut out the Patriots 16-0 at Gillette Stadium. In reality, it’s a game between the Bills and a completely different Patriots team. In Week 4, Tom Brady was still serving his Deflategate suspension, and Rob Gronkowski was still not being used the way he’s capable of being used, as he was working his way back from an injury. Heck, the Patriots’ backup quarterback was also injured, and third-string QB Jacoby Brissett was 17-of-27 for 205 yards. Bills running back LeSean McCoy had the only touchdown that game.

They’ll run into an Andrew Luck who’s feeling pretty good about himself after throwing for 353 yards and three touchdown passes in a 34-26 win at Tennessee on Sunday. The Colts are now 3-4 after beginning the season 1-3, and they can probably see that, once again, nobody in the AFC South is going to run away with the division this year. Indianapolis has to feel pretty good about their chances. But they’ll still have to do something about that porous defense. If Kansas City can keep up with New Orleans’ offense like it did last week in a 27-21 win over the Saints, then I expect Alex Smith and company to be able to do the same with Indy. KC is another road favorite, but I’ll take it. Chiefs by six.

**NEW YORK JETS (-4.5) over Cleveland Browns**
-I know what you’re thinking: “How can you pick the Jets?”

Well, for starters, they are playing the 0-7 Cleveland Browns. Real quick, let’s play some trivia. Who is Cleveland’s quarterback? You have to google it, don’t you. Don’t feel bad. So did I. All you truly need to know is that Ryan Fitzpatrick is back under center for the 2-5 Jets, and based on recent comments he’s made, he clearly feels disrespected by everyone in the organization for being benched. Well, now that Geno Smith is injured and New York has gone back to Fitzpatrick, I expect the veteran QB to play as motivated as he’s ever been. And that should be enough to beat the Browns, in Cleveland. Another road favorite. But why not? Jets by 10.

**PHILADELPHIA EAGLES (+4.5) over Dallas Cowboys**
-The Cowboys are coming off their bye week, and are one of only four teams in the NFL — along with New England, Minnesota, and Seattle — that have just one loss. And after losing the season-opener to the New York Giants, Dallas has rattled off five straight wins, with none more impressive than a 30-16 win over Green Bay at Lambeau in Week 6. But the 4-2 Eagles are coming off a huge win over the Vikings in Week 7, handing them their first loss of the season. Carson Wentz wasn’t great in the win, but we’re starting to find out just how good this Eagles defense is, as they rank third in the NFL in points-per-game allowed at 14.7. Look for Philly’s solid defense to take advantage of a somewhat rusty Dallas offense after a bye week. I’ll take the points.

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