

## South End businesses and Phase 2 of reopening

BY MICHELE D. MANISCALCO

As Spring's gentle renewal gives way to summer's heat, the South End business community is also heating up and some warm-weather pleasures are returning with a "new normal" as the COVID-19 shutdown enters Phase 2 of reopening. Restaurants and other business owners are tapping their creativity to welcome customers back with both safety and panache.

Restaurants and stores are reducing occupancy and instituting new hygiene requirements as well as installing protective barriers and 6-foot markers on floors to enforce social distancing. Even with these new limits, South End shoppers and diners seem to be flocking back to their favorite haunts.

While South Enders have been able to frequent many of their favorite dining establishments via take-out and delivery during the shutdown,

many have sorely missed the experience of breaking bread with friends at local restaurants and cafés. When Phase 2 began on Monday, June 8, diners rebounded to outdoor dining tables with new spacing and other protective measures. Under the Phase 2 rules Governor Baker announced on June 6, restaurant dining is outdoors only, with tables at least 6 feet apart or separated by barriers.

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### ASK DOG LADY



#### Advice on Pets, Life, Love

BY MONICA COLLINS

Dear Dog Lady,

I just split with my boyfriend after two years. We had 2 dogs together, he took the older dog with him and I have the 10-month-old puppy, Winston. Will my puppy be OK? I worry not just because my boyfriend is gone but, most importantly, because of the other dog leaving.

— Marie

Dear Marie,

The loss of your boyfriend probably won't impact your dog at all. The loss of your boyfriend's dog is the big deal because your dog is used to being part of a pack. Make sure Winston has a lot of social interaction with other dogs. Dog love us but

*they love other dogs more. If things are civil, you might also ask your ex if you can get the two dogs together from time to time.*

Dear Dog Lady,

We have been social distancing long enough and soon my family will be able to go to my parents' lake cabin in New Hampshire on most weekends with our two little dogs. We will be there along with my sister's family and their little dog. My parents also have a medium-sized dog. In all, there are four dogs, six adults, two teenagers, and a nine-month-old baby. Most of the time this is absolute bliss.

However, my parents' rescue dog can become very aggressive and has attacked all three of the other dogs multiple times unprovoked, to the point of drawing blood. He's also attacked the humans — me several times, both of my teenage sons many times, and even my mother, his owner, a few times.

Nonetheless, my parents have made the decision to keep him. I understand this is their right to do but I don't feel safe having my children or animals at the lake anymore. I

find it so disappointing because this causes a divide in our family. I do not understand why my parents continue to take risks and jeopardize the safety and well-being of their family. I find it so hurtful.

My sister's family is more understanding and tolerant of the dog. I have to wonder if I am the one out of line here. Is there something I'm missing? I know how much they love their dog and I love my dogs like my children, so I understand. But I also see my parents as not taking steps to do the things they know would make us safe, like keeping their dog on a leash at all times, etc. They talk about it, but it just becomes more and more lax. Any suggestions or thoughts on things I am missing?

— Lori

Dear Lori,

*You're missing parents who are shirk their responsibility to protect your family from a violent dog. Dog Lady understands why this is so disappointing and sad for you.*

*Enlist the help of your sister in an effort to convince your parents to pro-*

*Continued on page 5*



Photo credit - Celso Enrique

## Urbanity Dance to Present Dance Festival Virtually

SUBMITTED BY URBANITY DANCE

This year's Boston Contemporary Dance Festival (BCDF) will be held virtually on Saturday, August 15th. Founded in 2012 by Betsi Graves, the festival is produced each year by Urbanity Dance. BCDF celebrates contemporary dance artists from across the United States, inviting the greater Boston community to experience this art form at its finest. Graves describes the festival as, "a vision to bring together dance makers and dance lovers that would not otherwise gather, to share best practices, to inspire a deeper curiosity of this craft, and to offer a 'step on the ladder' for developing choreographers looking to have their work professionally produced and witnessed." Although the festival is usually held in person, it will transition to a virtual event this year for the safety of the community.

This year's festival will feature two showcases of video showings: the first show "On Stage" will feature work performed and filmed on a proscenium stage and the second show "On Film" will serve as a platform for dance artists who have created dance works specifically for the screen. "On Stage" will take place at 6 p.m. EST and "On Film" will take place at 8 p.m. EST. With widespread performance space closures in the past year, the first show will allow dance artists to present their previously created work. The second show encourages choreographers to utilize non-traditional spaces and video editing as important components of the final work.

"I see this virtual version of BCDF as an opportunity. What can we do this year that we would not necessarily be challenged to do if we

*Continued on page 2*

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Online

## Dance

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were planning a proscenium performance? Can we dig further into the creative necessity to advance dance film? Can we reach people who would otherwise not have access to travel funds to come to our dear city? Can we share best practices for how companies across the

globe are reinventing movement vocabulary in their own communities post-COVID, and how we can leave this art form for the better when we reemerge? The answer to all, is yes," says Graves.

Each showcase will feature work from both local and global companies and choreographers. The festival aims to grant local artists a platform to produce their work, while

ensuring that the local community can experience choreographic voices from across the world. During such unprecedented times, artists are in need of an outlet to share their work. The festival will allow both local and global dance artists to safely gain exposure and receive feedback. "I am enthusiastic to see how we can create a marked virtual gathering of contemporary movement makers and move-

ment lovers," says Graves.

Starting June 12th, choreographers and companies from around the world can apply. Both showcases will be capped at 200 applications each. Applications are due July 10th, and will be reviewed and selected by a panel of a number of established dance leaders from across the United States.



Photo credit: Olivia Moon

News from...

# Friends of South End Library

SUBMITTED BY MARLEEN NIENHUIS, FOSEL

**Events**

Widely Praised Novelist and Lambda Award Winner, Carter Sickels ("The Evening Hour"), Will Discuss His Latest Work, "The Prettiest Star," via ZOOM on Tuesday, June 23rd, at 6:30 PM

Atlanta Journal-Constitution review suggests the theme of the "toll on smalltown America" during the AIDS epidemic is not dissimilar from the impact on rural America of the Covid-19 pandemic of today. "What happens when a son comes back home, and he's sick with the most feared disease of our time?" is the question at the root of tale. Kirkus Reviews called the book a "brutally fresh kind of homecoming novel."

For more information visit <https://www.friendsouthendlibrary.org/>

**Annual Members' Meeting**

The FOSEL Annual Members' Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 1, at 6:00 PM, via ZOOM.

FOSEL's joint Members/Annual Board Meeting in March was canceled due to the pandemic. Instead, the board held a separate Annual Meeting on May 7 via ZOOM. We had hoped to hold out and convene an in-person Members' Meeting, but given the uncertainty we are facing, we thought it best to move ahead with a virtual Members' Meeting.

At the Annual Board Meeting in May, the directors voted to elect a new slate of directors to govern for 2020 and to approve a series of changes to FOSEL's bylaws. At the upcoming

Members' Meeting, the Members will be asked to vote to confirm the 2020 slate of directors and to approve the bylaws changes. Links to the list of the 2020 slate and to a copy of the bylaws highlighting all changes can be found below. The most important of the bylaws changes is a governance shift from a Membership governance structure as we now have to a board only governance structure.

The idea behind creating a Membership organization in 2006-7 was that FOSEL wanted to be broadly supported by the community for the Library's benefit. Over the years we have been able to achieve that aim in another way, namely by producing programming and successfully advocating for Library and Park renovations.

With membership governance, the Membership had to meet on a regular basis and keep minutes which, unfortunately, did not happen, nor were Membership rolls kept up. The primary driver of the proposed governance change was eliminating these types of administrative obligations while still enabling all interested to continue to participate in FOSEL programs, receive our newsletter, and keep up our efforts to make the South End Library and Library Park the best they can be.

After the change, all will still be welcome to attend the board's Annual Meeting. And, financially, we will still invite you to be supporting members on an annual basis at a donor level you can afford. However, with the approval of the bylaws amendments, the governance of FOSEL will be the responsibility of the board of directors alone.

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# Pride in the South End



(Left) Bloom Couture Floral Studio, 769 Tremont Street. (Right) Concord Square. Phoytos by Michele Maniscalco

## Phase 2

Continued from page 1

In response to the guidelines, Petit Robert Bistro, 480 Columbus Avenue, augmented its al fresco seating with a temporary patio extension in the parking lane in front of the restaurant, a series of planters creating a decorative barrier to the traffic lanes. Anoush'ella, 35 W. Newton Street, has also taken a stylish approach to safe dining with black, wrought-iron style backings to the plexiglass separators between outdoor tables.

Some South End eateries are not as well-situated for outdoor dining and are contemplating their next steps to re-opening strategically. Café Quattro, 817 Harrison Avenue, has survived the shutdown with ongoing take-out and delivery service as well as retail sales of Italian grocery imports and baking staples.

With respect to expanding service, chef/owner Evan Butland said, "I haven't yet decided how I will proceed with allowing customers back inside. I'm taking it very slow to see how things progress. So far, it seems customers are comfortable picking up at the window, and I am confident they are easily able to socially distance outside, rather than our confined space inside."

While Butland has not ruled it out, outdoor seating is a trickier option for Café Quattro. He explained, "I'm also on the fence for outdoor dining amid safety concerns. It will be very difficult to police any outdoor seating for both me and my staff while we are in the midst of trying to serve customers in a safe way."

Local retailers are also returning to provide safe, on-site shopping. According to Bradley St. Amand, director of operations for GTI Properties, the SoWa Open Market returned on Sunday, June 7 from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM as a farmer's market, with about 20

vendors as opposed to the usual 60 or so, with no food service or non-food vendors allowed under Phase 2 rules.

"It went really well," St. Amand said, adding that in addition to returning vendors, first-timers included fishmongers Wood Island Wild, ice cream makers Sisters of Anarchy, coffee bean vendors Native Columbian, and Uncommonly Good bakery plied their wares. The market's COVID-19 guidelines are posted at <https://www.sowaboston.com/sowa-farmers-market>.

Apparel and gift store Flock, 274 Shawmut Avenue, faced a dilemma at the beginning of the shutdown in late March because it was in the process of creating a web site and was not immediately prepared to switch to on-line sales. Flock came on-line a few weeks into the shutdown and co-owner Dani McDonald reports that the store began on-line sales with shipping, delivery and curbside pickup as soon as COVID-19 regulations allowed.

On June 9, the store opened its doors with a limited schedule: Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 11:00 AM-4:00 PM with a limit of 6 customers at a time. McDonald said that Flock now has a plexiglass divider at its wrap and offers masks, hand sanitizer and gloves for customers. McDonald said the store's biggest challenge is "Understanding customer behavior and needs. After 10 years, I was in a great place in terms of how I buy products for the shop and I could anticipate what future seasons would look like. This seems much more challenging now more than ever. For example, I used to focus on buying dresses for wedding guests, baby showers, graduations, engagements, etc. but I'm not sure what that looks like in the Fall or even next Spring for that matter. This presents a challenge for me, as buying for apparel usually happens 4-6 months in advance."

McDonald said Flock's comeback was strong: "We had a great first week open.

Friendly faces who wanted to come back and support us which was really great. We've also had some new customers which is great to see as well."

Empire Loan, 1130 Washington Street, remained open for loan payments, item redemption and new loans through the shutdown due to its status as a financial institution, but was able to resume retail sales only when Phase 2 began on June 8. Michael Goldstein, owner of the 8-store Empire Loan chain which has shops in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, observed that when retail sales, which comprise about 51 per cent of the store's revenue, returned, "There was a lot of pent-up demand for jewelry. In the first week, sales were on pace with what we normally sell in December." G

oldstein reported that the South End store has made COVID-19 compliant modifications, and there will be plexiglass sneeze guards at each of its showcases by Thursday, June 18. At Maison de Mer, 23 Dartmouth Street, co-owner Bill Lagorio has not yet reopened his South End store, but he and his business partner have sold much of the existing inventory on-line. Lagorio is considering a mid-July reopening for the 140 square foot South End store pending continued decline of COVID-19 cases, and sees the eventual reopening as an opportunity for renewal.

Maison de Mer's glass front door was shattered earlier this year, and the glass was replaced on Monday, June 15. Before reopening, Lagorio plans to refresh the space as well as the inventory. Lagorio said, "The problem is, the store is so small, you have to limit it to one person at a time. [The extra time] will also give us a chance to spruce up the store. We moved everything out of that store, and we've been selling it through Marblehead. Everything we bring in will be brand new. It will be like a grand reopening. It's giving us a chance to look at opening with a fresh start."

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# Senate Passes Legislation to Collect Vital Public Health Data

## Establish a COVID-19 Diversity Task Force

SUBMITTED BY THE OFFICE OF  
SENATOR SONIA CHANG-DÍAZ

The Massachusetts State Senate on May 28th passed bipartisan legislation to promote equity and transparency as the Commonwealth continues to confront the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bill, An Act Addressing COVID-19 Data Collection and Disparities in Treatment, will increase the amount of statewide, publicly available data as it relates to the coronavirus. The legislation also establishes a task force to study and make policy recommendations to address health disparities for underserved and underrepresented communities during the pandemic. The bill advanced to the governor.

“This pandemic has been particularly devastating for Black, brown, and immigrant communities across the state, and this bill is a vital step towards helping us craft an equitable recovery,” said Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz

(D-Boston). “The bill’s data requirements are rigorous, comprehensive, and time-sensitive and — so importantly — it takes the next steps beyond data and requires the development of action steps to address COVID-19 disparities. Many thanks to Senate President Spilka, Senator Rodrigues, and Senator Comerford for ushering through such a strong bill, to the Black & Latino Caucus, and to so many in the healthcare and social services communities—in particular, the Massachusetts Public Health Association—for their dedicated and thoughtful advocacy throughout this process.”

“This strong, comprehensive bill will help us begin to address the disparate impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare, especially among our communities of color and other vulnerable populations,” stated Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). “I am proud of the thoughtful and collaborative work my Senate colleagues, as well as the Senate Working Group, did to advance this urgent piece of legislation. I look forward to it becoming law.”

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### Dog Lady

*Continued from page 1*

teet other dogs and humans by hiring a trainer to create a training regimen and evaluate their dog’s aggressive behavior. A behaviorist could also be the one to advise your parents whether there is hope for this dog. If they don’t want to

do that, they must keep their dog restrained in the home so it cannot attack freely. If you and your sister are a united front on this, you will have more strength to convince your parents to do the right thing — for the entire family, which includes their dog.

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# Senate

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"Thanks to the leadership of Senate President Spilka, the bill we passed today is a true reflection of the Senate's teamwork," said Senator Michael J. Rodrigues (D- Westport), Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. "Owing to the collaborative spirit and input of Senators Brownsberger, Comerford, Chang-Diaz, Cyr, and Jehlen, this critical legislation increases transparency and ensures we have access to the important data necessary to effectively and precisely fight this pandemic."

"This legislation has two major wins: data transparency and government account-

ability," said Senator Jo Comerford, co-chair of the Committee on Public Health and Chair of the Senate COVID-19 Working Group (D-Northampton). "Public access to comprehensive data is foundational to a strong democracy and a healthy government is one that commits publicly to address any disparities and inequities found in the data. Thank you to the advocates who organized effectively around this legislation. And thank you to the Senate President, Chair Rodrigues, and colleagues for their tenacious efforts and commitment to propelling this bill across the finish line."

Under the bill, the Department of Public Health (DPH) is required to compile, collect and issue daily online reports on the number

of people tested for COVID-19, positive cases, hospitalizations and deaths along with the gender, race, ethnicity, primary residence, occupation, disability, age and primary language of each case.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of cases statewide, the legislation also requires that daily reports include data and demographic information from municipalities and counties with more than 25 positive cases, elder care facilities, as well as state and county correctional facilities. Facility-specific information will be made publicly available while maintaining individual privacy. In addition to requiring greater data collection, the bill requires the Executive Office of Health

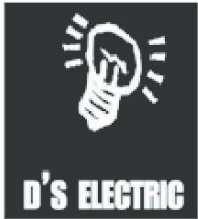
and Human Services to describe the actions it is taking to address disparities identified through the data collected.

In response to increasing concerns about the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and disproportionately impacted populations, the legislation also establishes a task force to study and make policy recommendations for how to address these health disparities. The task force is required to issue an interim report by June 30, 2020, with a final report due August 1, 2020.

The bill, which is the latest action by the Senate to address the COVID-19 public health crisis and its effects on Massachusetts, now advances to the governor's desk.

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