

# the *Whistler*

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

September/October 2020

Special Edition

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

We are excited to get this edition of *The Whistler* out to you after a hiatus, because there is so much news to share and so many stories to tell.

The last seven months have been tough for every one of us, and tough on our organization. I think back to that week in March when our lives as we knew them came to a screeching halt as the pandemic turned from a faraway news story to our reality in Cambridge.

I had no idea what we were in for, and our path through this pandemic and the social unrest in

our country has brought many twists and turns. I remember making the difficult decision to cancel our March 12th fundraising event that we'd spent months planning. Little did I know, that was the first of many agonizing, painful, and difficult decisions that I would need to make in the coming months.

The list of challenges is long, and is in some ways unique to us, and in some ways universal. Canceling events was terribly disappointing. Cutting dedicated and talented people from our staff, some of whom had been with us for over a decade, was gut-wrenching. Hitting the pause button on our vibrant community programs was painful. Through so much uncertainty, we have looked to our mission and values to guide us. We had no choice but to find new ways to show up for our community.

Despite the hardships, there have many moments of gratitude for the support we have received. Donations have generously provided us with a little more certainty, volunteers have helped to fill the gaps, and our staff have been incredibly creative and hardworking.

As I read through this *Whistler* and look back at all that we've managed to do as a community and for our community during this crisis, I feel much pride. We are far from being done living and working in a pandemic, but I feel hopeful about

## NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



**November 10, 7:30 PM**

ZOOM - RSVP by visiting  
<http://bit.ly/anc-rsvp>

## AGENDA

- *Neighborhood name change next steps*
- *Additional items TBD*

our ability to come together and find our path forward. We will emerge from this as a different organization with a different name, but the values and focus on community will be intact.

Sincerely,  
Maria LaPage  
Executive Director

## ANC News

### EDITOR'S NOTE

Please find minutes from community meetings, September through October 2020 in chronological order.

Thank you,  
Phoebe Sinclair, Community Liaison  
Jessica Leach, ANC Scribe

### NOTES FROM SEPT 29 SPECIAL MEETING

On September 29th, Agassiz Neighborhood Council returned virtually for its first meeting since January 14th. After a long time apart, the meeting was set up to allow members and residents to reconnect and reflect on the neighborhood over the past months. Around 25 people signed up to join ANC via ZOOM, and while many were Agassiz residents, some were from nearby communities or members of Agassiz Baldwin Community staff and Board.

To kick off the meeting, Community Liaison Phoebe Sinclair acknowledged that September marked the Neighborhood Council's 50th year, noting the many changes and accomplishments of ANC over time. In a more recent change, Ms. Sinclair announced that, with the shift to virtual meetings, she will host and facilitate meetings going forward with the community still determining what topics are discussed.

These were Ms. Sinclair's remarks regarding the change:

"All things change, and we're looking to discover what ANC can be going forward, and methods we can use. In the coming months, in addition to regular Council Meetings that will look like what you're used to, we'll be calling on you --our community-- to help us shape a Council and civic programming that can address many levels of life.

With regards to this change, I've been empowered to say that the leadership at ABC is devoted to continuing to support the Council as a community-building effort and forum. My role will be to hold the space that you create together. I'm trained in consensus building, dialogic practices, and my personal interest is in bringing diverse and divergent voices together. This can be challenging without skilled, professional support, especially in a moment when the divides between people are painful and acute."

Following a brief overview of communication agreements and a tutorial of ZOOM functions and practices, the group was asked to reflect and respond to these two questions:

- What stands out for you about living in your neighborhood at this time?
- Describe an 'act of community' that you witnessed or participated in.

While answers varied in details, there was an overarching theme that emerged while each person took their turn to respond. Many attendees have lived in this community for decades - some their whole lives, some transplanted from elsewhere - but it seems their gratitude for this neighborhood feels especially strong now.

"I've really appreciated having a neighborhood in this time," said Joel Bard, who noted how "lucky" it is to "feel comfortable" in a neighborhood.

Tom and Jill Delbanco remarked on the "communal spirit" they've witnessed over the last few months, from more people sitting outside their homes and engaging with neighbors to

small “block party” gatherings. Many others also reflected on how the increased traffic on sidewalks allowed them to see or meet people they normally wouldn’t.

“The practical social network that a neighborhood can be is really compelling to me,” said Lawrence Neeley, who is also a member of the ABC board. “The actual fabric of this neighborhood is pretty amazing.”

“I have always felt welcome in this country, and I’d just like to say that I appreciate very much, the way that I’ve been welcomed into the hearts and minds of my neighbors,” said Richard Barran, who is originally from the United Kingdom.

Some words of appreciation were dedicated to the quiet moments of quarantine, like the ability to slow down enough to notice the local wildlife or enjoy nearby green spaces. Others words described moments of action, such as the regular gatherings on the Mass. Ave. median in support of Black Lives Matter, or the outreach to those who might be in need of support.

“I have a neighbor who markets for me every week,” Kate Frank shared. “It’s a surprise to be on the receiving end of so much generosity. I get shopped for, but I also make meals for a friend . . . I think there’s a lot of that spirit in the neighborhood.”

Sue Kriegsman, resident and member of the ABC board, said that she’s particularly enjoyed the little free libraries around town.

“In a time when the actual libraries were closed, it was nice to walk around and pick up books, knowing that when I put books out other people were taking them,” she said. “It’s one way to really get to know your neighbors.”

After the September 29th Special Meeting, ANC meetings resumed a normal monthly schedule starting October 13th. To receive reminders and ZOOM links for future ANC meetings, please

RSVP at: <http://bit.ly/anc-rsvp> or email Phoebe Sinclair at: [psinclair@agassiz.org](mailto:psinclair@agassiz.org).

## **NOTES FROM OCT 13 MEETING**

### **Neighborhood Name Change Update**

The following timeline was shared by Phoebe Sinclair at the October 13th ANC meeting:

#### **January 2020**

January 14 - Maya Counter, CRLS High School Senior and Sacramento St. resident, opened a discussion at the meeting about removing scientist Louis Agassiz’s name and renaming the neighborhood for Maria L. Baldwin, who was the headmaster of the formerly-named Agassiz School in the early 1900s. Those present voted to change the neighborhood name and seek support from the City Council in creating a process that appropriately engages the larger community.

January 28 - A letter was sent to the City Council with the following language, voted on by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council:

“There is a strong consensus in the neighborhood council in support of a name change, to be discussed in forums over the coming months with an opportunity to educate neighbors about the relevant issues, with the objective to come up with a recommended name from the neighborhood.”

#### **February 2020**

February 10 - A City Council Policy Order determined that City staff would be dedicated to this effort:

“WHEREAS: Related to this larger, ongoing discussion, a meeting of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council on January 14, 2020 featured a discussion amongst neighborhood residents who feel that the time has come for this neighborhood to be renamed from one that honors Louis Agassiz whose work has been used by white supremacists since the 1800s to justify their shameful and misguided positions to one

that honors someone the neighborhood can be rightfully proud of, such as Maria L. Baldwin or another lesser-known light from our city's rich past; so therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the appropriate City staff to work with the residents of the Agassiz neighborhood in furthering this important neighborhood conversation and in helping make a determination as to how to arrive at an appropriate, official name change for this neighborhood; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council on this matter in a timely manner."

### **March through July 2020**

The effort was put on hold while ABC staff went on furlough or were laid-off during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

### **August 2020**

August 5 - Maya Counter, Phoebe Sinclair, Kate Frank, and Maria LaPage reconnected and met around next steps

August 20 - Phoebe Sinclair introduced the effort to Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager with Cambridge Community Development

### **October 2020**

October 5 - Neighborhood reps Maya Counter and Kate Frank met with ABC team members Maria LaPage, Jess Leach, and Phoebe Sinclair, and with City staff, Iram Farooq and Daniel Wolf, Neighborhood Planner, about what a process might look like, and next steps

### **Tensions**

Throughout conversations with various parties over the past year, there have been a number of competing tensions. I want to name that these exist, and that they may continue even after a neighborhood name has been decided upon. This is not an exhaustive list.:

- Desire to change the name, which some residents have expressed as "a long-time coming", connected to a wish to not spend a lot of time in process
- Involve the wider community beyond those who show up to ANC meetings
- A desire to honor Louis Agassiz's scientific legacy
- Acknowledgment and redress of the harms resulting from racism and white supremacy espoused by Louis Agassiz
- Desire to uplift Maria L. Baldwin, especially during this cultural moment

### **Next Steps**

We'll be returning to an upcoming ANC Meeting with a proposed multi-step plan that encourages engagement at different levels. The goal is to have a name before the City Council by the end of the year / December 2020.

### **Neighbors Say No To Shared Streets**

At the October 13th meeting, Neighborhood Nine residents Steve Bardige and Heddi Siebel joined Agassiz Neighborhood Council to discuss the Shared Streets pilot pro-



gram implemented by the City of Cambridge, announced in late May 2020. Mr. Bardige and Ms. Siebel are part of an effort called "No To Shared Streets," which has organized a petition to voice concerns over implementation of the program.

According to Mr. Bardige and Ms. Siebel, they are among nearly 200 other residents who "bike, walk and drive, and found the shared streets pilot dangerous."

Though the city has halted expansion of the program, Mr. Bardige and Ms. Siebel said, "The city still lacks a meaningful and transparent process in which the needs of all Cambridge residents are fully considered."

“What we’re upset about most is that this roll-out happened without any neighborhood discussion,” Ms. Siebel said. “Our goals are to get more transparency, to [ask the city] to create a safer, better design . . . and make intelligent decisions about how we can be a safer city for bikers, drivers, and pedestrians.”

Using a short slide presentation, Ms. Siebel and Mr. Bardige talked through their specific concerns with the current pilot program, which included cars and bikes having to zigzag or make wide turns around barrels, which can create dangerous debris in the road and the potential for collisions between cars, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Their slideshow also talked through the background of the Shared Streets pilot program as well as their timeline for creating the petition.

“As far as we can tell, it’s been implemented uniquely in Cambridge,” Mr. Bardige said, comparing the local program to how Shared Streets have been introduced to other cities in Massachusetts. “It’s the unique implementation that has caused us great concern.”

After Phase I of introducing the pilot program on Garden, Magazine, and parts of Harvard Streets, and posting notices on candidate streets (including Sacramento Street) in Phase II, residents met individually with two City Councilors in August to understand the City’s goals and the various influences on the program’s direction. In mid-September, they emailed the petition with 165 signatures to the City Council, City Manager and Traffic Director. By late September, the city announced the plan to stop Phase II expansion but continue Phase I pilots only “until snow begins to fall.”

Mr. Bardige then described what the petition is asking of the city, which includes halting the Shared Streets program and ensuring that future changes be based on “needs of all Cambridge residents, meaningful neighborhood input, honesty about the goals and clear metrics of success.”

### **Community Response**

After the presentation, participants were invited to respond with comments and questions. As part of the new, online format, Ms. Sinclair invited attendees to speak in small groups of five, each asking their individual question or offering an idea or comment. After each group of speakers, Mr. Bardige or Ms. Siebel responded.

“You’ve made a diagnosis of shortcomings, but it would be good to come up with a therapy with some suggestions that people might be able to gather around,” Tom Delbanco said.

“It was much more successful [on Harvard Street] in terms of getting people to use the streets,” said Itamar Turner-Trauring, who noted that he had used the shared street with his child for safe bike riding. “It’s not perfect, but they did a much better job of getting people to use it as a shared street for everyone.”

“The name ‘No to Shared Streets’ doesn’t sound particularly positive, so you might think of changing your name to something not quite as negative as that,” Ted Live suggested.

Mr. Bardige said the group consciously stayed away from making proposals but were open to hearing them from others. Some other commenters seemed to appreciate that approach.

Kate Frank shared that she thought Mr. Bardige and Ms. Siebel’s four main points about establishing criteria, measuring it, using clear data, and asking for community input “should not be blunted by positive suggestions.” She added, “I think I could share the streets better without the barrels.”

One Sacramento Street resident, who also was questioning the safety of Shared Streets, said that they felt particularly concerned for the nearby playground on the corner of Oxford Street.

“Children sometimes come out of the playground into the street,” they said. “Are we encouraging

more of that? It's extremely dangerous and frightening. Certainly, we should have more signage about children playing and slowing down."

Kathy Dalton, Living Well Network Manager and Neighborhood 9 resident, also expressed concern over young people's safety, "a shared street is not going to solve [problematic bike routes on streets that students use to get to the Cambridge Upper Schools]. I would like to see the city become more friendly to bicyclists, but I don't think it's up to citizens to come up with what that [solution] is." She added, "There are national models. Instead of trying something that's kind of random, we should look at best practices."

"We'd very much like to see a broader discussion from a city planning perspective," Mr. Bardige said in response. "How do we use these streets? How do we create safe ways for kids to get to the upper schools and high school?"

"I'm not sure a shared street is what we need," Ms. Siebel said. "I think we need good designated bike lanes. There are committees working on that, but I'm not sure that they're traffic designers or if they care about everybody. We're just trying to get to the table and have a conversation with the city."

Mr. Bardige is open to suggestions and questions, and welcomes emails at: [sbardige@gmail.com](mailto:sbardige@gmail.com).

Those interested in signing the petition can do so by visiting [www.NoToSharedStreets.org](http://www.NoToSharedStreets.org), or by emailing: [NoThanksSharedStreets@gmail.com](mailto:NoThanksSharedStreets@gmail.com)



## Community

### AGENCY UPDATES

If there was ever a word to fully encompass how the last six months have felt, "uncertain" would be it. Whereas our agency calendar was typically solidified far in advance, we now operate under much tighter timelines. In this time, we've learned to address uncertainty by working quickly to adapt to the needs of our community. That's led us to somewhat new and unfamiliar but often exciting places for our organization. Because of *The Whistler's* long absence, we wanted to take this opportunity to update the community on exactly what those places are.

#### Staffing

In April, our Executive Director Maria LaPage had to make the difficult decision to furlough or lay-off the majority of our staff, leaving only herself, two members of the Children's Programs leadership team, Andrea Breen and Ashley Yee, and Living Well Network Manager Kathy Dalton. This was a painful but necessary step to increase the long-term stability of the organization and bolster our chances of weathering this storm. Thanks to many generous donations, many from program families who donated their tuition payments for canceled programs, we were able to maintain health benefits throughout the furlough period. We were able to begin rehiring some full-time and part-time staff in June to launch our restructured Outback Summer Program, which then allowed us to eventually rehire even more staff over the summer and beginning of fall to helm other programs and responsibilities.

While we are now a smaller organization than we were all those months ago, we are taking this as an opportunity to unify our programs and work more closely and collaboratively. We've recently joined our afterschool and Maud Morgan Arts programs to create an art and play-based out-of-school-time curriculum.

### **Organization Name**

On Wednesday, June 10th, our Board of Directors voted to approve the following resolution: “We renounce the racist legacy of Louis Agassiz. To better align our name with our ongoing organizational anti-racist values and practices, the ABC Board is removing the Agassiz name from our organization. We will embark on a community-oriented process to develop a new organization name that better reflects our mission and values.”

We are still in the process of determining what community input on this decision will look like, which is occurring simultaneously but separately from the discussions around changing the neighborhood name.



### **Food Pantry Delivery Service**

One of our first steps outside our typical programming was to help coordinate and manage volunteers to deliver groceries, medications and some other household essentials by bike.

In early April, to help expand access to food and essential supplies to those in need, we partnered with Cambridge Community Center, which created a COVID-19 emergency food and supply pantry, and the Cambridge Bike Safety Group, which had hundreds of cyclists looking to be matched to the right volunteer opportunity.

Since the program began, we have served over 50 households and deliver approximately 50 boxes of food every week. We continue to coordinate these deliveries twice a week and have grown this grassroots effort into a formalized program to help meet widespread food access needs throughout Cambridge.

### **Print & Mail Service**

In April, we launched a “Print & Mail Service.” This program was created to support community members in printing and mailing forms for unemployment and other essential benefits without having to make risky trips to access a printer.

### **Pen Pal Program**

To help our community combat isolation, loneliness, and boredom, we introduced the “Pen Pal Program.” In April, we invited folks of all ages to sign up to be connected to a local child, family, or adult and had 27 potential pen pals sign up!

### **Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Grant**

In July, we were one of nine nonprofits chosen by the Cambridge Community Foundation to receive a grant from the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund. With this grant, we hosted a Free Household Goods Pantry on July 23rd.

We invited families and individuals who were struggling to cover the cost of household essentials to partake of such items as toiletries, basic medications, diapers, cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and paper towels. While many of these items were purchased through the grant, some were also donated by community members in the week leading up to the pantry. Despite an intense rainstorm, we still successfully ran the pantry and were able to give away our entire stock.

The remainder of this grant was used to pay rent and utility arrearages for families in our community who were struggling. We wrote over \$9000 of checks to help low income families catch up on unpaid bills, maintain secure housing, and avoid utility shut-offs.

### **Please Support Our Work**

The last six months have been some of the most challenging we have ever faced as our agency, and world, was turned upside down. Nothing about our work could go on as usual, but we knew we needed to step up and help our community however we could, despite the financial challenges our organization is experiencing.

These new programs and services are made possible through the incredible support of our donors. No contribution is too small to make a difference, and each gift helps us respond to the urgent needs of our most vulnerable community members. Thank you for your generosity.

If you're able to contribute, please visit:  
<http://bit.ly/donatetoabc>.

## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS UPDATES

After we closed along with Cambridge schools in March, it was challenging to imagine what having in-person childcare would look like and when we'd be able to offer it again. While we planned and re-envisioned, we continued our family/community engagement through weekly virtual hangouts and a Pen Pal program (see our agency updates for more information on that). We were also able to send out about 20 care packages of school supplies, crafts, books, and activities to families in need of the extra support at home.



After surveying the community's needs, concerns and comfort levels with in-person care, we were thrilled to introduce and open registration for the newly restructured Outback Summer Program in June. To minimize risk and adhere to new guidelines while creating a somewhat normal summer experience for youth, we split the program into two half-day registration options, either AM or PM. Within those, we created separate "pods" of two teachers and 10 children based on age, which ranged from JK to 6th grade. In continuation of our Equity and Access Initiative, 25% of our enrollment was saved for students attending Outback through financial aid.

From July 6 to September 15, we served over 80 young people in three different three-week sessions, two of which were originally planned. A third was added following the initial success and in response to the State's decision to delay the

start of the school year.

Luckily, being primarily outdoors is already built into the Outback experience. While the backyard's appearance changed with areas separated by large event tents for each cohort, (a transformation that took place in just a few days, made possible by a group of volunteers, for whom we are so thankful) being outside all summer didn't feel like a huge shift.

Even with masks on all day, sometimes in uncomfortably hot weather, and social distancing, children happily participated in many of their favorite summer activities: arts and crafts, performing plays and dance routines, running through the sprinklers, exploring nature, playing sports at Sacramento Field and even receiving an Outback t-shirt. Thanks to the hard work, creativity and flexibility of our teaching staff, we offered a varied, engaging and safe curriculum for all ages.

As the summer wound down, we heard from so many families about the positive impact of in-person care. Many reported a boost to their child's and their own mental health from the opportunity for safe peer interaction and childcare. We witnessed new connections and friendships between both kids and families and were heartened by the sense of community that was dearly missed while programs were closed.

For those who couldn't join us in person, or only joined us for a portion of the summer, there was the option to order "Outback in a Box," to recreate some of the fun at home with arts activities and materials, games, sports equipment and STEAM challenges. With the help of Cory Shea, Director of Maud Morgan Arts, we fulfilled about 20 orders of these boxes, which were also available to purchase through financial aid.

We are continuing and adapting the outdoor in-person model into the rest of the school year by offering a full day of programming consisting of virtual learning support and afterschool. Our staff quickly adjusted our backyard space to accommodate up to 39 students simultaneously

connecting to remote classrooms in socially distant and supervised environments. We have also taken the exciting step to merge afterschool with Maud Morgan Arts classes to offer an art and play-based out-of-school-time program that will meet the needs of developing motor skills, building peer relationships, and other off-screen experiences that are integral to a child's education.

For more information about our programs and registration, please visit our website or contact [registration@agassiz.org](mailto:registration@agassiz.org).



### **FAREWELL TO ANDREA BREEN**

Prepared by Maria LaPage, Executive Director

After six years at our organization, Andrea Breen will be moving on from her role as Director of Children's Programs in mid-November to start an exciting new chapter in her life. While her presence in our community will be sorely missed, we are grateful for the years she spent in leadership positions in our children's programming.



Andrea could always be counted on to elevate relationships with families, youth, her colleagues, and staff. An incredible advocate for others, Andrea tackled challenge after challenge with creative problem solving and a growth mindset.

We could not have pulled through the early days of the pandemic without her leadership and determination to maintain our organization's mission despite an unclear path forward. During

this time of social distancing, we understand that there are many members of our children's programs community who are unable to see Andrea in person before her departure. If you wish to send a message to Andrea, please do so by visiting: <http://bit.ly/notestoandrea>.

2020 continues to be a year of uncertainty, change, and reinvention for our agency. We are excited to share that our former K Afterschool Co-Site Director, KC Nogueira, will be taking on a new leadership role as Director of Distance Learning Support.

### **REMEMBERING FRED IANNAZONE**

From "Central Barber Shop's Fred Iannacone Dies at 78" by Charles Xu, originally published in "The Harvard Crimson", May 30, 2020

As Massachusetts hair salons and barbershops open their doors during the state's reopening plan, customers at Cambridge's Central Barber Shop will miss a familiar presence.

Longtime barber Alfred J. "Fred" Iannacone Jr. — whose purported customers included former President Barack Obama and actors Matt Damon and Tommy Lee Jones — died of COVID-19 on April 20. He was 78.

For more than fifty years, Iannacone's customers lined up as early as 5 AM to get their haircuts from him. Edward Chalmers, a long-time customer at Central Barber Shop, described Iannacone as an "old-school" barber whose business became a "melting pot," with first responders, retirees, and Harvard affiliates all flocking to his storefront on Mass. Ave.

"He had people from all walks of life," Chalmers said of Iannacone's clientele. "It didn't matter whoever was in that shop at that time. You were comfortable being down there."

Chalmers recalled that he first met Iannacone when his father took him to get their hair cut. Since then, he has visited Central Barber Shop

with his own children to receive a “classic barber-shop” experience — complete with lollipops for kids and a few “older gentlemen sitting around all the time.”

Iannacone’s son, Steven Iannacone, said his father fell in love with his job after graduating Medford High School. While his peers entered the lucrative real estate business in the 1960s, Iannacone entered barber school to earn a barber license.

"[His friends] used to always joke with him that maybe [he] should have went into the real estate. That's where all the money is," Iannacone said. "And he's like, 'No, I love what I do.'"

“He loved his people. He loved his community.” Iannacone added. “He loved running a business and he was very content with that.”

Chalmers said Iannacone could chat about anything from local news to sports at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.

“When you sat in his chair, it’s like you were reading *The Boston Globe*,” he said.

Despite health issues toward the end of his life, Iannacone will be remembered by his customers for his punctuality and consistency.

Anthony J. Salvati, a co-worker at Central Barber Shop, said that Iannacone’s commitment to his craft was unparalleled, recalling a day when Iannacone hobbled to work immediately after losing his toe due to complications related to diabetes.

“He wasn’t even worried about the toe! He was more mad because he had to miss work,” Salvati said. “And he told me how he had never missed a day of work — ever.”

With Iannacone’s passing, Chalmers said Cambridge will lose someone who created a space that anyone could enjoy.

“You don’t realize it until you really think about it, but it’s a simple pleasure going to get a haircut and talk about the day,” he said.

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You can read Fred Iannacone's full obituary in the Harvard Crimson by visiting: <http://bit.ly/crimsonfred>.



## Living Well Network

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### RECAP OF LIVING WELL NETWORK PROGRAMS

Prepared by Kathy Dalton, Living Well Network Manager

While we paused most of our programming in April, we made the strategic decision to continue the services of the Living Well Network (LWN), because we consider the job of supporting and engaging the older members of our community to be especially vital at this time. Over the last six months, LWN refocused its work online and in the community.

#### Cambridge Mask Alliance

In April, we began providing masks to residents of our community who are 60 and over, and since then, we have distributed over 1,000 face masks. We have continued this work for the broader community by joining with a dozen other nonprofits, the “Cambridge Mask Alliance,” to ensure that everyone in Cambridge has access to a face mask.

#### Wellness

Also in April, we began making calls to the members and some others we could reach to check in on how they were doing; some have chosen to continue to receive these wellness calls.

Around the same time, our yoga and meditation classes went online to help keep our community fit in mind and body.

### **Food and Resources**

Early on we published a list of resources for food and food shopping and we have helped those in need connect to available resources.

We have published the Living Well Update weekly through the summer, a much applauded resource for ways to stay active and engaged during these times. You can subscribe by visiting: <https://conta.cc/2SHA8eh> and selecting "LWN General Interest."

### **Virtual Engagement**

As online usage increases to help communities engage safely, we've helped residents learn to connect on ZOOM and continue to offer this as a free service. We are providing one-on-one technology assistance via phone and computer for our members.

Our book group on aging has met every two to four weeks for meaningful discussions and has created its own small community. You can read some of our book reviews in upcoming editions of the Living Well Update.

In addition to all these new or re-imagined supports and services, LWN also sponsored an online seminar, "Countdown to Downsizing" which is now available on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/LwnCountdown>

### **Upcoming**

As winter follows fall, we are rolling out another year of snow removal services for LWN members. Other upcoming events include a Living Well Sampler to offer residents an opportunity to sample a variety of mind and body practices including yoga, meditation, tai chi, healthy cooking, and fitness walking over the course of seven Mondays, which you can still sign up for!

November will feature a panel on elder law, and we are in the planning stages of further seminars. Look for program announcements in the weekly Living Well Update.

The Living Well Network isn't just for old or retired people. It's for any Cambridge resident who is 55 and over—perhaps that includes you?

You can join the Living Well Network now or support our work by visiting: <http://bit.ly/living-well-network>.

### **LIVING WELL SAMPLER**

What can you do to keep healthy, fit, and engaged during this time? Living Well Network presents a seven week series to help you and others 55 and over find something



you enjoy. We will work to support each other as we try new things or maybe revisit old ones. Most sessions will be held on ZOOM with an optional physically distanced fitness walk, weather permitting. Our healthy cooking and eating class will be tailored to the participants.

There will be seven Monday sessions: one each of yoga, tai chi, meditation, cooking, parkour, and fitness walking with a final "Next Steps" session. Space is limited. This pilot program will be free, however there is a fee of \$12 for food for our cooking and eating session. We will meet on Mondays at 3:00 PM.

To join us, visit:

<https://forms.gle/3FHe7zk2CeAGWxKs9>

**What:** Living Well Sampler  
**Where:** Live online (ZOOM)  
**When:** Starting Monday, Nov 2nd  
Continuing for 7 weeks  
3:00–4:15 PM

# Maud Morgan Arts



## CHANDLER GALLERY CLOSURE

Since opening in the 1970s, there have been few times when the Chandler Gallery (formerly the Sacramento Street Gallery) hasn't been full of art and community. Unfortunately, as we will continue to not host our usual monthly exhibitions, this year and the foreseeable future are now part of those times.

Hilary Tait Norod's "If You're a Chair, I'm a Chair," now has the distinction of being the final show in the gallery before our closure in March. While the original reception was set for March 19th, we instead got to share Hilary's incredible sculpture and painting work in a series of videos that went live on June 18th, which you can still view on the Maud Morgan Arts Instagram page (@MaudMorganArts). Here is an excerpt from our press release about the show:

"The heart of 'If You're a Chair, I'm a Chair,' the latest show at the Chandler Gallery, is a sculpture made of two antique wooden chairs. After cutting them down on their inner sides, artist Hilary Tait Norod bound them together with many layers of different materials, such as yarn, rope and scraps of wood, 'to unite them as one.' The once-separate pieces became more than just a love seat, but a representation of the artist's marriage."

We would be remiss not to thank Boriana

Kantcheva, who served as our Gallery Coordinator from 2011 and helped make the Chandler Gallery as wonderful a place as it's been. We hope there will be a time soon when the gallery walls will be again full of artwork.

Until then, feel free to revisit some of the incredible, unique, and inspiring shows we've hosted in the past by visiting: <http://bit.ly/pastexhibitions>.



## INTRODUCING "HANDBUILDING AT HOME"

Although we wish we could all be in the ceramic studio together, MMA has developed a new "Out of the Box" program: Handbuilding at Home!



Participants who register for the program will receive a curated box filled with enough ceramics materials for up to four people. The box will include one 25lb bag of clay, ware boards (to build from), clay tools and an in-person glazing appointment with our studio tech Bob.

Our take-home boxes will also include guidelines to start your ceramic handbuilding projects, handbuilding techniques, and home maintenance. Our team also made a list of suggested YouTube tutorials, interesting ceramic artists to check out on Instagram and a link to our Pinterest page for inspiration.

## City Wide

### STAND OUT ON MASS AVE

Prepared by Ruth Ryals, Neighborhood 9 resident

Bring your family, friends, dogs, your home-made signs, your masks and join your neighbors at Porter Square to "Stand Out Against Racism" to show how upset we are with institutional racism and continuing police violence against people of color, and the lack of justice for them, in this country. We "stand out" every Sunday from 10:00 AM -12:00 Noon at Porter Square.



If you are an artist or enjoy making artistic things with messaging, please consider making and bringing or donating a sign!

We welcome ALL of our neighbors and friends to join us. There is plenty of room around the Square and up/down Mass Ave to stay distanced and make an impact on passersby and drivers.

No RSVP needed, please join us! For more information, contact Ruth at: raryals@gmail.com

### DAILY NEWSLETTER FEATURING COVID-19 UPDATES

Marjorie Decker, State Representative, publishes a daily e-newsletter that highlights "relevant COVID-19 updates and resources." Sign up or learn more at: <https://www.decker4rep.com/news/> or contact: repdecker@gmail.com

### VOTING IN CAMBRIDGE

Vote at your usual polling place on Tuesday, November 3rd, 7:00 AM-8:00 PM. If you requested a mail-in ballot but decide to vote in person there is a procedure to follow at the polls.

Learn more: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/covid19/Voting>

### OFF-LEASH HOURS AT SACRAMENTO FIELD MADE PERMANENT

Prepared by the City of Cambridge

On September 23rd, the City of Cambridge announced that the pilot of off-leash dog use at Sacramento Field will transition into an ongoing program, similar to several other successful shared use locations around the City. Shared use off-leash areas are places where dogs are allowed off-leash in outdoor spaces located near other park uses and activities. These spaces differ from dedicated off-leash spaces that are generally fenced to facilitate the containment of off-leash dogs.

"Based on the evaluation of the pilot program at Sacramento Field, we are pleased to transition the off-leash hours into a permanent program in this previously underserved area," said Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development. "Retaining the early morning off-leash hours allows the park space to serve multiple neighborhood users throughout the day."

In response to the public's interest in implementing an off-leash dog program at Sacramento Field, the City explored the feasibility of allowing dogs off-leash during limited hours. With a community process that included feedback from nearby residents and park users, the City piloted a program from November 8, 2019, through August 31, 2020. The designated off-leash area was available to dog owners each morning from 7:00- to 9:00 AM. During the pilot, the City evaluated adherence to its off-leash dog rules and the impact of off-leash dogs on noise, dog waste, conflicts with users, and field conditions. Since instituting the pilot program, most dog owners have adhered to the City's off-leash rules, and there have been no noticeable impacts from dogs on the condition of the field.

Learn more at: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/offleash>.

# Community Calendar

## November 2020

Tuesday, November 3

Election Day

Tuesday, November 10

7:30-9:00 PM

ANC Meeting (see page 1 for agenda)  
Receive ZOOM link by RSVPing at <http://bit.ly/anc-rsvp>  
All are welcome, please join us!

Wednesday, November 11

Veterans' Day holiday, ABC & Maud Morgan Arts school programs and office closed

Tuesday, November 24

Thanksgiving Potluck (Virtual), time and program TBD

Thursday, November 26

Thanksgiving holiday, ABC & Maud Morgan Arts school programs and office closed through **Friday, November 27th**

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community, distribution 2,000. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or email. The newsletter is also posted each month online at [www.agassiz.org](http://www.agassiz.org). Items of interest to the neighborhood should be submitted for consideration no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

## The Whistler September/October 2020



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