

NABB · NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION OF THE BACK BAY

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What You Need to Know about Groundwater: A Guide for Property Owners

DURING THE 19TH CENTURY, more than 2,000 acres of Boston were built on landfill. If you live in the Back Bay, there is a 95% chance your building was constructed on wood-pile foundations.

Throughout the 20th century, as Boston continued to grow and change, there was concern that groundwater levels could drop too far to protect wood-pile foundations, allowing them to dry out and rot. Eventually, buildings supported on compromised foundations require extensive and costly repair or possibly demolition.

For the past few years, the Boston Groundwater Trust has been monitoring 150 wells throughout the city and seeks to drill another 850 wells for data collection. Current readings indicate that groundwater levels now may be too low in many locations in the city, including the Back Bay.

This is why property owners in Back Bay must become vigilant about groundwater conditions in their neighborhood, take preventive or remedial measures to protect their buildings, and demand immediate repair of defective underground infrastructure (e.g., sewers, tunnels, underpasses, retaining walls, vaults and piping).

A CHECKLIST FOR PROPERTY OWNERS WITH WOOD-PILE FOUNDATIONS

☛ Watch for visible indications of deterioration.

Damaged foundations and resulting settlement is likely to create stresses, visible from the exterior, in exposed front and rear walls of a typical brick row house. Step cracks in brick work at the corners of

window and door openings and out-of-level stone lintels and sills are some indications of potential damage, which should be verified through physical inspection by a building professional—a builder, engineer, or architect—with experience in this area.

☛ Verify groundwater elevations for comparison to top elevation of your wood piles.

The Boston Groundwater Trust monitors groundwater elevations in some locations and posts them on its Web site at www.bostongroundwater.org. Some individuals have installed private monitoring wells of their own at an estimated cost of \$2,000. Others have had a test pit dug to provide access for physical examination of some of the piles, verification of the existence and condition of the wood and a visual sighting of the groundwater level. Estimated cost is \$3,000–\$4,000.

☛ Recharge water into the ground.

An effective method of mitigating potential foundation damage in the presence of marginal or apprehended groundwater depression is the manual addition of water to the ground in the vicinity of the wood piles. Prevailing conditions in the Back Bay suggest this as an attractive, normal provision of long-term property maintenance. Concern for the quality of water being added to the aquifer limits acceptable sources, but rainwater from rooftops and paved areas generally works well. Several options are available, some requiring City permits:

- Disconnect your rainwater leader piping, install a dry well and reconnect to the sewer system for overflow protection from flooding.
- Use rooftop rainwater as an irrigation source for plantings.

- Install porous parking surfaces.
- In some extreme conditions, an underground slurry wall has been installed to conserve water and block dissipation of recharged water away from foundations.

Tap water has also been used as a more predictably available recharge source, usually connected to a simple perforated distribution pipe. This can, however, become very expensive.

☛ Repair deteriorated wood piles

Sometimes repair of deteriorated wood piles is referred to as underpinning. It involves excavating under a building's perimeter walls, removing the rotted wood and introducing steel pipe supports that are subsequently encased in concrete. A typical row house might have 150 individual piles, all of which must be treated in small groups so as to not

PEOPLE & PLACES TO CONTACT

- ☛ *What the City is doing about groundwater levels:*
City of Boston Department of the Environment, Toni Pollak, commissioner, 617-635-3850. or toni.pollak@ci.boston.ma.us
- ☛ *Excavations in a nearby building:*
City of Boston Inspectional Services Department, Gary Moccia, assistant commissioner, 617-635-5306
- ☛ *Dry-well installation procedure:*
Boston Water & Sewer Commission, John Sullivan, chief engineer, 617-989-7444
- ☛ *Defect in underground infrastructure:*
Public Improvements Commission at Boston Department of Public Works, Joe Casazza, commissioner, 617-635-4900
- ☛ *Foundation repair contractor:*
ChuteHall Construction, Alf Chute, 617-825-5676
- ☛ *Groundwater consultation about your home and information on installing monitoring well:*
Haley & Aldrich—Consulting Geotechnical Engineers, James Lambrechts PE, 617-886-7388
- ☛ *Existing groundwater levels:*
Boston Groundwater Trust, www.bostongroundwater.org
- ☛ *Help with getting a response or to share groundwater information:*
NABB Groundwater Committee, 617-247-3961 or nabb@worldnet.att.net

RECENT GROUNDWATER EVENTS

- NABB joins with other neighborhood groups to present an informational session in May. Nearly 300 people attend, but City officials decline to participate.
- City Department of the Environment convenes an information meeting in June and includes the Department of Public Works. Toni Pollak is named liaison for the City and promises a new policy statement in September. Public Works Commissioner Joe Casazza reverses departmental policy on observation wells and expedites approval of well program proposed by Boston Groundwater Trust.
- In late June, 15 neighborhood associations, including NABB, write to the mayor requesting his direct involvement in the groundwater issue. To date, no response has been received.
- The City increases proposed funding for the Boston Groundwater Trust from 0% to 50% of its previous annual level and says it will help find the balance.
- The Boston Groundwater Trust receives \$25,000 from the City at the close of fiscal 2001-02, maintaining the monitoring program for six months. The balance of fiscal 2001-02 operating expenses are funded by the City's drawing down donations for capital improvements.
- The Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) announces a \$25,000 grant to the Boston Groundwater Trust for new well construction.
- The Boston Groundwater Trust votes to start construction of 25 new wells—hoping for a mid-September start—contingent upon receipt of the BWSC grant and the fiscal 2002-03 appropriation from the City.
- At least \$1.6 million is included in the state Environmental Bond Bill for expansion of the observation-well network through the efforts of Reps. Paul Demakis and Byron Rushing and Sen. Steven Tolman.
- The Boston City Council holds a hearing on wood-pile-foundation damage and groundwater depressions. A South End neighborhood, adjacent to the Columbus Center air rights proposal over the turnpike, identifies a deep groundwater depression and pleads for help in identifying and repairing the leak. Neighborhood leaders suspect construction defect in a retaining-wall system built by the MBTA and Amtrak.
- The Boston Groundwater Trust receives \$25,000 from the City for fiscal 2002-03.

destabilize the building overhead. It is dirty, inconvenient and can be expensive—as much as \$250,000, exclusive of possible interior-finish damage to occupied spaces in the basement. It can also involve complicated coordination with neighbors, who likely share foundations under party walls.

Preventive measures and groundwater-management policies are cost-effective measures that can help homeowners avoid this extreme treatment.

State Legislature Approves “Slingshot” Study

BY MARTHA M. WALZ

IN THE FINAL DAYS OF the legislative session in July, the state legislature authorized the expenditure of \$15 million for a study of the so-called “slingshot” or u-turn ramp that would allow drivers to travel from the new convention center to the Back Bay on the Massachusetts Turnpike.

The proposed elevated ramp would be built somewhere between the Prudential-Copley tunnel and the Allston-Brighton tolls. Vehicles heading west on the pike would use the ramp to make a u-turn into the eastbound lanes, thereby allowing them to use the Prudential-Copley exit into the Back Bay (see accompanying map). The slingshot is strongly supported by the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, which is concerned that conventioners staying in Back Bay hotels will not have quick access to the new convention center on the waterfront.

The slingshot has superficial appeal, but a thoughtful analysis of the proposal raises numerous concerns. When the convention center opens, there will be an insufficient number of hotel rooms on the waterfront, and, as a result, conventioners can be expected to stay in the Back Bay hotels. Over time, as more hotels are built on the waterfront, the shortage of hotel rooms within walking distance of the convention center will diminish and, eventually, be eliminated. Thus, the need to facilitate vehicular movement between Back Bay hotels and the convention center will also be eliminated. The slingshot, a permanent roadway structure that may cost \$100 million or more, is intended to solve what is, at most, a short-term problem. The study recently authorized by the legislature should closely evaluate the long-term need for the slingshot so we do not spend

great sums of taxpayer money solving a temporary problem.

In addition, the recently authorized study should consider public transit alternatives to the slingshot. After spending billions of dollars on the Big Dig, it is time to invest in our woefully inadequate public transit system. For example, the feasibility of using the existing commuter rail tracks for a shuttle train between Back Bay Station and the waterfront should be explored, as should enhancements to the Green and Silver Lines.



This map from the turnpike master plan shows locations being considered for a slingshot ramp.

These more environmentally friendly solutions may be better for the Back Bay than adding hundreds of cars and buses to our streets.

The slingshot study must also consider how the ramp would interfere with development of the turnpike air rights. The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA) is presently evaluating a development proposal by John Rosenthal for one of the locations being considered for the slingshot. That site, alongside Landsdowne Street behind Fenway Park, could generate significant revenue for the authority if buildings rather than a ramp were built. Similarly, the ramp's proposed location immediately west of Massachusetts Avenue would prevent any air rights project from being built

there. Instead of buildings covering the highway, Back Bay residents would get an elevated ramp that would permanently preclude air rights development at the site. At a time when the Turnpike Authority is paying for the Big Dig and other projects, we should be wary of any proposal that deprives the MTA of needed funds; we should be equally wary of proposals that leave the highway's cut through our neighborhoods open to view.

The Convention Center Authority and other slingshot proponents note that Back Bay residents may benefit from the new ramp. These claims should raise suspicions: The ramp may be limited to taxis and shuttle buses, thereby preventing Back Bay residents from using it and confirming that it is intended to address only the needs of out-of-town visitors. In addition, the ramp will add vehicles to the intersection of Dartmouth and Stuart Streets, already a dangerous intersection for pedestrians to navigate. The slingshot study must carefully consider pedestrian safety.

The study must also evaluate the impact of the hundreds of cars and buses on Copley Square Park. Further, since one of the slingshot's proposed locations is directly in front of Fenway Studios, a national historic landmark, the study must carefully look at the elevated ramp's effect on the artists' studios.

The slingshot study is slated to begin this fall, so be sure to watch the monthly *Bulletin* and the next issue of *NABB News* for more information about public hearings and how to submit comment letters. NABB will continue to monitor this issue closely and keep you informed of any developments.

Survey Confirms Challenge of Parking in the Back Bay

As a result of increased traffic in the neighborhood and frequent complaints by residents that the resident parking program isn't working, NABB published a parking survey in the July and August issues of the *Bulletin*.

Of the 161 surveys turned in, 44% of the respondents park in an alley space, 31% in resident-permit space, 14% in rented space in a public garage, 3% at metered spaces, and 8% in a private space/garage.

Most respondents took the time to comment. The consensus is that parking is impossible to find at certain times of the day. Non-residents park in resident spaces and responders called lack of sufficient enforcement for resident parking their number-one issue. Vehicles without resident stickers and valet parking in resident spaces are two types of violations mentioned that reduce the number of spaces for residents and increase the traffic in the residential area.

Suggestions for improving the situation included:

- Reviewing handicapped-designated spaces annually to make sure they're still needed.
- Increasing enforcement in locations where people double park.
- Asking private schools to consider options that would reduce double parking.
- Considering whether parking permits should be reduced to one per household.
- Publishing the locations of parking garages and their rates.
- Initiating efforts to clean street gutters well after street-cleaning service ends and the trees have completely shed their leaves. The gutters should be clean for the first freeze and snowfall. This would also be an excellent rodent-control measure.
- Trying to reduce the number of “fake” stickers and those obtained through misleading methods by tightening up the requirements for a resident-parking permit.
- Rethinking the use of commercial plates that allow non-resident parking in resident spaces for both Newbury Street businesses and contractors on long-term assignments.
- Reducing the number of permits for dumpsters located in resident spaces. These are usually used for construction projects.
- Improving towing or developing another way to remove cars on street-cleaning days.

The survey responses have indicated areas of potential future action that will be evaluated by the NABB Board of Directors, with thought to providing recommendations to the City for revision of the existing Back Bay parking program.

Residents who were away for the summer and who wish to complete the survey may call (617-247-3961) or e-mail (nabb@worldnet.att.net) NABB for a copy.

PHOTO BY MANYA CHYLINSKI



Major Works Of Public Art Coming To Back Bay

BY MARGARET POKORNY

IN THE COMING MONTHS the Back Bay will welcome two new major new pieces of sculpture.

With church bells ringing and bagpipes playing, a larger-than-life bronze statue of **John Singleton Copley** will be unveiled on the Boylston Street side of Copley Square on October 23 at 2:00 p.m. Created by sculptor Lewis Cohen, the statue is a gift to the city from a group of generous donors and the Friends of Copley Square. The idea for the statue originated with Stella Trafford, who saw it as an appropriate “homecoming” for America's first great portrait artist, who left Boston for Europe in 1774. City officials had long called the space Art Square before changing it to Copley Square in 1883 in honor of the artist. It is the only urban square in the U.S. named after an artist.

The unveiling will kick off a week of events to celebrate the artist and the square. Highlights will include a 7:00 p.m. lecture on October 22 at the Boston Public Library by Theodore Stebbins, one of the foremost historians of Copley's life and work. Curator of American Art at the Fogg Museum, he is the author of *John Singleton Copley in America*. The library and the Friends of Copley Square will mount a month-long exhibit tracing Copley's life and times, as well as the evolution of the square. The Friends will also publish a commemorative book: *Copley Square, The Story of Boston's Art Square*. Walking tours of the square will be offered, and artists from the Copley Society will spend an afternoon working with children from the Cloud Foundation. A full schedule for the week can be obtained from the Friends of Copley Square, 617-536-2101.

Late next spring the **Boston Women's Memorial** will be dedicated in the Fairfield-to-Gloucester block of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. The memorial honors three important contributors to Boston's rich history—Abigail Adams, Lucy Stone, and Phyllis Wheatley. Each woman had progressive ideas that were ahead of her time; was committed to social change; and left a legacy through her writings that had a significant impact on history. Artist Meredith Gang Bergmann has sculpted these women in a manner that invites the observer to interact with them. Each woman is shown in a pose that reflects her use of language, and instead of standing on her pedestal, she is using it. The memorial combines symbols found in traditional sculptures in new and original ways. More details about the unveiling will be available at a later date. An informational brochure about the memorial can be obtained from the City of Boston Women's Commission, 617-635-4427.

Back Bay is home to the most important public art in the city of Boston. All NABB members are enthusiastically invited to help welcome our newest, and most permanent, neighbors.

An Introduction to the Charles River Basin Master Plan

BY JERYL ORISTAGLIO

THE FIRST MASTER PLAN IN 70 YEARS for the Charles River Basin was presented to the public on May 14 in a meeting at MIT. More than 200 people—representing environmental groups, historic preservation organizations, neighborhood organizations, friends' groups, and concerned individuals—applauded the release of *The Master Plan for the Charles River Basin—the Second Century* at the meeting, sponsored jointly by The Metropolitan District Commission and the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The plan offers comprehensive recommendations for the riverbanks, water sheet, and parkways that stretch from the Charles River Dam to Watertown Square.

The 196-page document addresses critical issues in more than 30 areas, beginning with an interesting history of the Basin's creation. An overview of uses and the interests of various user groups follows. The report's third section outlines recommendations for project areas, and the fourth section reviews management and implementation of the plan. The final section sets out detailed descriptions of goals and plans for key project areas.

At the end of its first 100 years of existence, the Charles River basin shows the signs of decades of deferred maintenance. "Hundred-year-old trees are dying," the report notes. "Granite steps and balustrades are deteriorating. Parkland turf is severely compacted and worn, historic bridges need structural work, paths and parts of the river are overcrowded, and invasive exotic plants have choked off river views and

compromised the habitat of banks and wetlands." Long-term underfunding of the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), the agency that maintains basin, has slashed park staffing and deprived the agency of the resources it needs to care for the parklands properly.

The master plan represents the first step toward preserving and revitalizing this important yet neglected "central court of honor" of the metropolitan park system. The plan is the result of a 30-month public process that began in 1997, and it reflects the contribution of more than 4,000 volunteer hours.

The Esplanade Association—an active friends' group—is committed to the master plan's vision of restoring and ensuring the future of the Esplanade. The organization is using the master plan as a foundation for its work on the Esplanade. Many of the plan's recommendations for the Esplanade grew out of the public planning process and advocacy by current members of the association's board.

Since its founding May of 2001, the Esplanade Association has replaced a derelict playground with the new Miriam and Sidney Stoneman Playground. It has also successfully advocated replacement of all of the

benches on the Esplanade; for creation of a bench-sponsorship program; and for the repair and repainting of five footbridges that lead from the Back Bay to the Esplanade over Storow Drive. Each of these initiatives appears on the master plan list of projects needed in this part of the basin

The master plan also recommends immediate attention for the granite structures on the Esplanade. Several granite outlooks are literally collapsing into the river. The report observes that the public docks are hazardous and should be repaired or replaced. It also calls for maintenance and enhancement of the Esplanade's landscape and long-neglected horticulture—all priority projects for the Esplanade Association over the next year.

The Esplanade Association's success shows that the public and private sectors can work together, using the master plan as a guide, to transform the threatened basin into a vibrant, well-maintained treasure for Bostonians and visitors to enjoy.

There is much to gain from the restoration and beautification of the entire Charles River Basin and much to lose if this resource is left to deteriorate. The basin's future will be secured for its second century when the public, decision-makers at the MDC, and government leaders make the basin's restoration a priority and work together to achieve the goals of the Charles River Basin master plan.



A Night for Unsung Heroes

Sue Prindle Receives the Paul Prindle Community Leadership Award

SUSAN PRINDLE received the Paul Prindle Community Leadership Award at NABB's Annual Meeting. The award recognizes important and sustained leadership in promoting residential interests in the Back Bay. The following is an excerpt of the remarks made by Peter Flynn, Chairman of NABB, when he presented the award to Sue:

The award is named for Sue's late husband, Paul Prindle, a legendary Back Bay neighborhood activist. Sue was the obvious choice for the award for two reasons. First, the Prindles worked as a powerful team fighting for residential interests in the Back Bay. The Prindles' community leadership dates back to the early '70s when they led efforts to downzone the residential district and stop the overdevelopment of the Back Bay. In addition, for many years the two devoted themselves to NABB and its work. In fact, there has long been an unofficial Prindle seat on the NABB Board of Directors. Sue and Paul would alternate terms on the Board, but each remained active with NABB during their "off" terms.



Second, Sue has provided important individual

leadership in the Back Bay. She helped lead the charge in establishing the Clarendon Street Playground. In addition, Sue was there from the beginning in the effort to create the Learning Project elementary school, and once the dream was realized became its director of admissions and assistant headmaster.

Sue also served as a member of the Back Bay Architectural Commission for eight years. She was a mayoral appointee on the commission, but was an important and effective advocate for residential interests during her terms. During that time, Sue worked to update the commission's residential guidelines, an important step in preserving the historic character of the Back Bay. At the end of her term, Sue became a long-serving member of NABB's Architecture Committee, bringing valuable expertise and insight to that body.

Perhaps the greatest example of Sue's leadership was her recent decision to accept the nomination to serve as NABB's president. Even after serving her neighbors for over 30 years, Sue agreed to take on the difficult task of president, equivalent to serving as NABB's chief operating officer—an often difficult and thankless job. As Elsie Frank noted in her nomination of Sue for this award, "in her quiet way, working alongside her husband Paul, and on her own, she has been a powerful force in influencing public policy and guiding innumerable projects, always concerned about the effect on our neighborhood." Elsie added, "in my opinion, no one can match Susan Prindle's efforts to enhance the livability of the Back Bay."

Anne Swanson Receives the Mary Natale Citizenship Award

LONG-TIME BACK BAY RESIDENT Anne Swanson received the Mary Natale Citizenship Award at NABB's Annual Meeting. The award recognizes significant and sustained dedication and service to the residential interests of the Back Bay. The following is an excerpt of remarks made by Martha M. Walz, President of NABB, when she presented the award to Anne:

Anne exemplifies the unselfish and unheralded commitment the Mary Natale Citizenship Award is intended to honor, so it is fitting that she is the first-ever recipient of the award. For more than 14 years, Anne devoted innumerable hours to creating more than 50 issues of NABB News, our quarterly newsletter. In her role as assignment editor, copy editor, and photographer, Anne left no detail unattended. Once she finished polishing text and selecting photographs, she turned into the layout department. Four weekends a year, Anne and her colleague, Gary Shellehamer, toiled until Anne's exacting standards were met and an elegant NABB News was created.

Anne did all this work as a volunteer, nights and weekends. In addition to her work on NABB News, Anne also helps to maintain the flowers and plants in the Public Garden. No doubt, many of you have seen her in the garden on Tuesday evenings, pruning shears in hand, ensuring that the Public Garden remains a beautiful oasis. As recently described in a Boston Globe article, Anne and others got their start many years ago, not pruning and weeding, but picking up garbage in the Public Garden when the City cut back on trash collection in our parks. In addition, Anne serves on the board of the Friends of the Public Garden and copy-edited both editions of the Friends' book Boston: The Public Garden.

Anne was nominated for the Mary Natale Citizenship Award by Mary's husband, Mark Yessian. As Mark wrote, Anne's work on NABB News "is tedious and much more demanding, and sometimes frustrating, than most realize. Anne did it issue after issue, and maintained a high standard of quality, both in presentation and content. She is most deserving of the Citizenship Award in Mary's name. I'm quite sure that Mary would agree."



NABB Elects New Officers

The following officers were elected at NABB's Annual Meeting, held on September 12 at the First and Second Church on Marlborough Street:

- Marianne Castellani, Chairman
- Sue Prindle, President
- Manya Chylinski, Vice Chairman
- Dan Hardenbergh, Vice President
- Karen Young, Secretary
- Nancy Hubek, Treasurer

Also elected at the meeting were three new Board members: Karen Carper, Jennifer Lowe, and Steve Sayers.

Congratulations to our new officers, award recipients, and new Board members!



Marty Walz and Peter Flynn (at right) hand the NABB reins to new President Sue Prindle (white dress) and new Chairman Marianne Castellani. Good luck to our new leaders!

Don't forget...
A Night in Old Havana
 Cuban cuisine and dancing
 Saturday, November 2,
 8:00 a.m.
 See story, page 4

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YFN TURNS TWO

The Young Friends and Neighbors group will mark its two-year anniversary this fall. Started by Back Bay'ers dedicated to forming a group with a younger feel and flair, YFN provides a community and social outlet to those living in the Back Bay who describe themselves as 20s, 30s, 40s or young at heart!

YFN holds regular monthly events, as well as other activities that occur based on interest and member availability. Past events have included a scavenger hunt, planned in conjunction with the Beacon Hill Young Friends and Neighbors. This was a fun (and competitive!) event that took participants through both the Back Bay and Beacon Hill neighborhoods following elusive clues with a finish line and prizes at Geoffrey's. YFN has also hosted dinners and happy hours at local establishments, as well as planned the Taste of the Back Bay After-Party and the Pre-Party for the annual fall NABB fundraiser. This year's event is A Night in Old Havana on November 2. Look for details soon about the pre-party event. YFN also participates in what is now turning into an annual event — the famous softball games against the Beacon Hill YFN!

The regular YFN events are the "Last Wednesday" event that takes place at Geoffrey's on Commonwealth Avenue on the last Wednesday of every month, beginning at 7:30 p.m. There is also a monthly planning meeting on the same night, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Both the Last Wednesday and the planning meeting are great ways to meet new people and become involved in the YFN community in the Back Bay. Upcoming YFN plans for this year include involvement in charity work, volunteer



opportunities, more dinners and a continued friendly rivalry with the Beacon Hill YFN.

We are fortunate to be welcoming a new YFN Co-Chair, as we sadly say goodbye to Manya Chylinski, who has been a Co-Chair for two years. Manya has provided strong leadership and enthusiasm for the group and will be taking her enthusiasm to the next

level—Vice-Chair for the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay. The new YFN Co-Chair is Dan Fickes, a member of the group since early April, and a nine-year Back Bay resident. Dan looks forward to getting more involved in the community and will certainly bring some great new ideas to the group!

YFN continues to grow, and we welcome new members! Please direct any questions to yfn_nabb@hotmail.com.

—BY KARIN ELLIOT

Gay and Lesbian Friends and Neighbors

The Gay & Lesbian Friends and Neighbors group meets every other month on the first Monday of the month. Events have featured speakers from groups such as BAGLY (Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth), GLAD (Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders), and the Freedom to Marry Coalition. In this way, members become familiar with these organizations and their work and can contribute to the work of these organizations and the Boston community.

In July the G&L group gathered at the home of a member for a party, and to enjoy the views of the city and the Charles River from the 16th floor. The guest speaker was Curt Rogers from the Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project.

He shared with the group the problems in the Boston area with domestic violence, and provided important information on how the community can help prevent it, and aid victims when it does occur.

For more information about the Gay & Lesbian Friends and Neighbors group and its activities, contact co-chairs Steve Loher (617-266-1406; sloher@aol.com) or Steve Sayers (617-627-6108; stevenm.sayers@worldnet.att.net)

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A Night in Old Havana

On Saturday, November 2, the seductive beats of the mambo, the rumba, and the cha-cha will pulse through the Back Bay when NABB hosts "A Night in Old Havana" from 8:00 pm until midnight at the Harvard Club. The festive black-tie fundraiser, co-chaired by Back Bay residents Martha Cox and Jack Gregg, will feature Latin music by the group "Balaton," as well as a light supper, dessert, coffee, and a cash bar.

After guests have sampled authentic Cuban dishes, a Latin dance troupe will lead them to the rhythm of the bongos, cuatro, and congos. At the bar, guests will sample *mojitos*, a Cuban cocktail said to be a favorite of Ernest Hemingway. Cigar aficionados will be able to purchase cigars for enjoyment in the Members' Lounge.

"This will be a great way for anyone who lives or works in the neighborhood to come celebrate all that the Back Bay has to offer," said co-chair Jack Gregg. "It will be a good time for a good cause."

Proceeds will support NABB's mission of protecting the residential character and beauty of one of Boston's premier neighborhoods. Corporate sponsors for the event include the Boston Marriott Copley Place, HN Gorin Inc., New England Financial, Street & Company, and the Back Bay Courant.

Reservations for "A Night in Old Havana" are \$75 in advance and \$85 at the door. Advance reservation can be made with a credit card by calling the NABB office at (617) 859-RSVP (7787).

¡LATIN BEATS AND CUBAN CUISINE COME TO THE BACK BAY!

CLARENDON STREET PLAYGROUND Halloween Party

- Your Halloween datebook won't be complete without these listings:
- *Clarendon Street Playground Halloween Party*
 Thursday, October 31, 4:00-5:30 p.m.
 Music and entertainment for tots too young to trick or treat
 - *Safe Trick or Treating*
 Thursday, October 31, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
 A list of these houses will be available at the playground.

The Teletubbies visited the playground on Halloween last year.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNE SWANSON