BIGELOW FORJ

FAMILIES ORGANIZING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2023
LISTEN, DO, READ, WATCH

Dear members of the Bigelow community,

Welcome to November!

November is **Native American Heritage Month**! Click here to learn more about how the month is celebrated.

Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) was celebrated on November 1st and 2nd. The holiday reunites the living and dead. Families create ofrendas (offerings) to honor their departed family. The offerings are believed to encourage visits from the land of the dead as the departed souls hear their prayers, smell their foods, and join in the celebration. To learn more about Dia de los Muertos, please click here.

Diwali (also called **Divali** or **Deepavali**) is on Sunday, November 12, 2023. It is a "festival of lights" that celebrates the triumph of light over dark and good over evil, and the blessings of victory, freedom, and enlightenment. It is celebrated in India over 5 days and is the biggest festival. It is also celebrated in other countries including Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Nepal, Mauritius and Fiji. The name comes from Sanksrit *dipavali*, meaning "row of lights." To learn more about Diwali, click here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Diwali & Día de Los Muertos Celebration at Burr!

When: Sunday, November 5th, 3-5 pm

Where: Burr Elementary School
171 Pine Street
Auburndale, MA
Price: FREE but please RSVP so event planners can prepare accordingly!



Please join the Newton community for a fun afternoon celebrating two wonderful cultural holidays! There will be performances of Ramleela play, dancing, music and storytelling as well as crafts, food, and a community Altar. In addition, you can learn basic steps of traditional Garba dance and perform with your friends! Rosalba from La Pinata will return to return who promises to bring another magical musical and storytelling performance. All are welcome and encouraged to join both celebrations so bring your dancing shoes!

What to bring:

- **Cash for delicious food & face painting.** We have an amazing lineup of both Indian and Mexican snacks and desserts including Tamales, Samosas, Mexican Sweet Bread (Pan de Muerto), Sugar and Chocolate Skulls (Calaveritas) and Indian sweet treats! Thirsty? Try some Traditional Mexican hot chocolate, Chai tea, or our delicious Mango Lassi!
- **A reusable water bottle.** Help us have a greener event by bringing your reusable water bottle for you and your family!
- **Photos of YOUR DECEASED loved ones**. Friends, family, or pets and any OFRENDA you would like to memorialize them on our beautiful COMMUNITY ALTAR. See photos below!

- **Festive Attire.** Dress in your best Diwali or Día de Los Muertos attire if you can and join our celebration! There will be calavera face painting available for cash and the best Calavera costume will be rewarded. A Diwali photo booth will also be available to memorialize our fun afternoon and attire!

Please scroll down for meaningful, educational, and entertaining experiences for you and your family to LISTEN, DO, READ, & WATCH.

Angela Brooks & Jeanne Choe-Arrieta
Co-Leads, Bigelow FORJ

LISTEN:

Click here for audio, video, images, stories, and history that educate and celebrate **Native American Heritage month**.

DO:

Take a drive to Charlestown, Rhode Island for a delicious, authentic Indigenous meal at the **Sly Fox Den Too**. Wampanoag Owner/Chef Sherry Pocknett shares her culinary gift of "Indigenous, healthy beautiful, delicious, and nutritious dishes." The drive is about 2 hours 15 minutes from Newton and well worth the drive!

Dine at **Comfort Kitchen**: this cozy Black-, immigrant- and woman-owned **restaurant** opened in January 2023 in Dorchester's Uphams Corner neighborhood. It was nearly a decade in the making and comes with its own dose of history: it's housed inside a 1912-built building that is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Inside the former bathroom, the chic 30-seat space has curved pale-pink banquettes that are an Instagram favourite. Cocktails feature Equiano, an Afro-Caribbean rum produced in Mauritius and Barbados, or pay tribute to Black engineering pioneer Lewis Latimer, who worked alongside Alexander Graham Bell to develop the telephone in Boston in the 1880s. (Non-alcoholic drinks include a take on Tootsie, a Ghanaian fermented beer or a baobab mocktail.) For dinner, munch on jackfruit sliders, jerk roasted duck or za'atar brown butter trout.

Website: ***https://www.comfortkitchenbos.com/***

READ:

To learn more about Native American history, click here. The Smithsonian Magazine website showcases articles on important Native American historical events and figures.

WATCH:

Blues America: A 2-part two-hour documentary on the history of Blues music in America. It was produced and diredted by Mick Gold and first aired on BBC Four in the UK on November 29, 2013. The first installment is entitled *Wake Up This Morning* and the second part is entitled *Bright Lights Big City*.

You can watch this educational and compelling documentary here.

FORJ is a group of diverse families helping our children learn about issues of power and inequality and how to stand up for racial justice. We seek to generate understanding and curiosity about the differences in our society, and to work together towards racial equity. We strive to achieve safe and welcoming environments that enhance the well-being of all people. We promote healing and connection between individuals and communities. We speak out against injustice, support our kids to be upstanders, and take action to address bias and inequity.
If you are interested in getting involved with Bigelow FORJ to help build an anti-racist community or if you'd like publicize any future events, recommend videos, movies, podcasts, or books, please email bigelowforj@gmail.com.

To receive the monthly, district-wide, FORJ email that includes information about lectures on race and diversity, discussion groups, community events, and Newton Public Schools updates, please email forjnewton@gmail.com.