

**Subject:** ECG Update 12.21.20

**Date:** Monday, December 21, 2020 at 8:14:10 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Esplanade Community Group

**To:** Bane, Mary Jo



Esplanade Community Group

# ECG Update 12.21.20

## ECG Holiday Get-Together 12.22.20



The ECG invites you and your Esplanade neighbors to a virtual **Holiday Get-Together on Tuesday December 22 at 5:00 PM**. Join us to Zoom with a drink and a snack if you'd like and we'll discuss ways to continue to build community and things we can do for each other. We'll spend some time chatting in small groups and end the time with a toast to the Holidays! Here's the new [Zoom link](#).

# The Neighborhood



## **Just Think of Cambridge as a Forest with Buildings\***

As I watched two new trees being planted in our next-door Front Park, I wondered: What kind are they? Who's planting them? At about the same time, I received an invitation to a Green Cambridge Zoom discussion of the Cambridge Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP). I had heard of the UFMP last year when I spoke with Gary Chan of the Cambridge Development Department about Triangle Park across the street. He had said that as a result of the year-long Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP), it was determined that East Cambridge had “less of a

tree canopy” than other areas of Cambridge and, as a result of this, the department took another look at the original plan for Triangle Park. [Read more](#) (by Jane Hilburt-Davis)

## Hunger Spikes Locally:

### Ways to Donate to Cambridge Food Pantries in this Holiday Season

“We’ve never seen anything like this kind of need,” say food pantries struggling to keep up with the devastating crisis of hunger and food insecurity with so many unemployed, sick, or otherwise in need as a result of the pandemic. A million people in Massachusetts do not have enough food, and one in eight is expected to experience food insecurity, worsening during the coming winter months. Our state has the highest percentage increase of residents facing hunger in the entire country, percentages which have continued to skyrocket. The child food-insecurity rate has also worsened, with one in five children in Massachusetts now living in food-insecure households, a 102 percent increase over pre-pandemic levels. [PLEASE READ MORE](#)

## Coming Event

On February 11, Karma Kitaj and Jeff Cooper will discuss Karma’s historical novel *Beguiled* (published in 2018 by Koehler Books) with a focus on immigration in early 20th century and now. *Beguiled* is about the Levine’s, a Jewish-Russian family who emigrated to the US in late 1800s, much like Karma’s

maternal grandparents. Penniless when they arrived, they thrived through hard work. [More info here](#)

## Meet Your Esplanade Neighbors

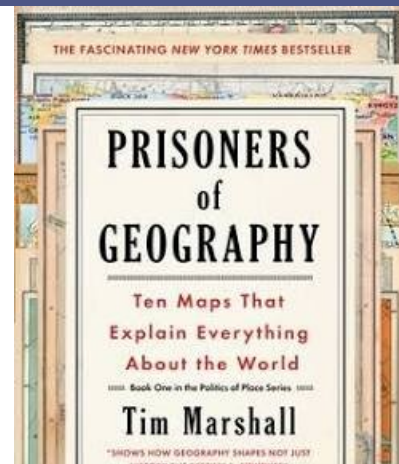
### Nancy Stiening



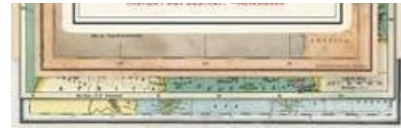
We'd like to introduce you to Nancy Stiening, our Esplanade neighbor and Secretary of the Board of Trustees. She and her husband Rae have been owners since January 2000. They had been living in Amherst where Rae was Professor of Physics and Astronomy at UMass and had wanted to return to city living and have loved Esplanade-living ever since! [Read more](#)

## Reading

***Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Explain Everything About the World***, by Tim Marshall, is ambitious in intent and expansive in scope. It endeavors to explain how geography has shaped the development

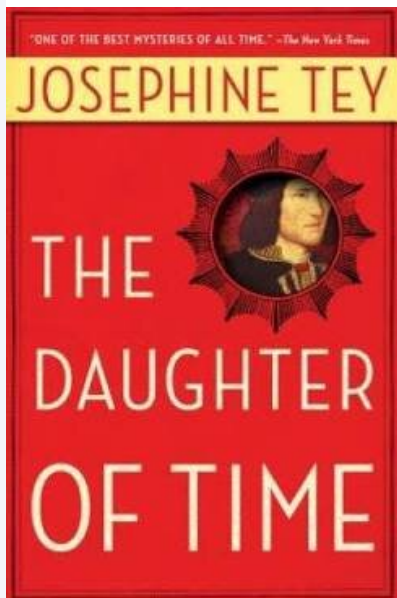


of the major regions of the world.



There are ten chapters, with three focused on specific countries—the United States, China, and Russia—and seven addressing broader groupings like Africa, Western Europe, and the Middle East. Marshall contends that the unique geographies of each of these areas have had a major determinative effect on their governance and economies. [Read more](#) (reviewed by Charles Glovsky)

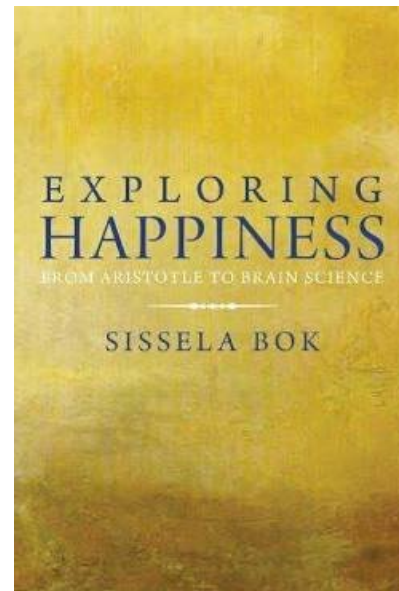
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***The Daughter of Time***, by Josephine Tey, has been called one of the greatest detective stories of all times. It tells the story of a bedridden London detective in the 1950s who decides to spend his hospital time investigating the deaths of the nephews of Richard III. He starts with the standard school text and the Shakespeare plays, then moves to their source, an account by Sir Thomas More. [Read more.](#)

Ever so relevant to our lives today, the

cover of Sissela Bok's *Exploring Happiness* is a painting by J.M.W. Turner called "Sunrise and Sea Monsters" (1845), a hazy yellow sunrise over a turbulent gray sea. To Bok, that was very important. "Yes, there is sunrise in everybody's life," Bok says, "but there are, indeed, also monsters of various kinds." [Read more](#) (reviewed by Jessie von Hippel)



## Dreading Winter Lockdown?

### **Learn to Love the Outdoors with a Winter Mindset and a Sense of Awe**

- "Dreading winter lockdown? Learn to love walking in the rain: With the right clothes and attitude, hiking in a downpour can reveal an exhilarating natural world."

Find [much more and lots of links here](#)

And this [lovely reflection from Linda Felter](#) on our local geese



## **Tempted to Feed the Birds? Please Don't**



We say this as bird lovers who treasure the birds we see in and around our city parks, the river and during their migrations fall and spring.



But feeding the birds in and around our building is not only unwise but can be unsafe. Generally, it's the pigeons, a non-native species, who get to the food first. They are here year round, multiply quickly and are bigger than most of the local birds.

And, according to the Massachusetts Audubon Society, “Pigeon droppings can contain molds and bacteria that cause pneumonia-like diseases called histoplasmosis and ornithosis (psittacosis).” Fortunately, contracting a pigeon-associated illness is unlikely. But why risk it?

And getting rid of pigeons in the area is relatively easy — get rid of the source of food. Another concern with bird feed on our decks is the rodents who love it. So, resist the urge; please don't feed the birds!

P.S. Mass Audubon also discourages buying plastic owls, hawks and other objects that are made to scare away pigeons.

“Unfortunately, these don't work; pigeons become comfortable with nonmoving objects very quickly.”

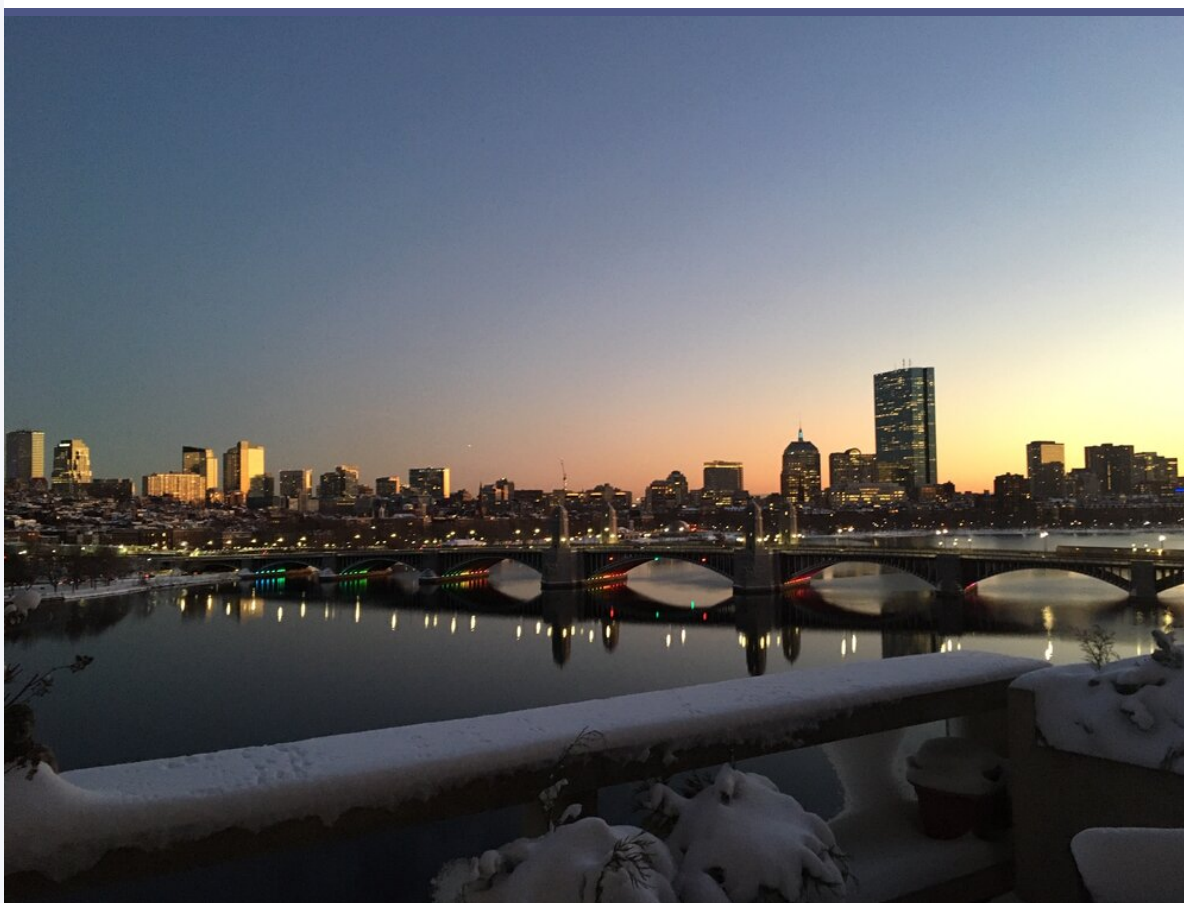


# Eats

For those craving “comfort food” as we endure what we hope will be the final phase of this dreadful pandemic, **Fran Putnoi** shares with **EATS** a family favorite, lovingly taught to her by her Turkish grandmother:

Craving a ridiculously easy, yet healthy dessert bar to cap off a meal? Try the following “yummy,” recommended by **Susan Barron**

[Find the recipes here.](#)



Sunset in winter, from Linda Felter

**VISIT OUR [WEBSITE](#)**

Have tickets you can't use? Need a dog sitter? Something to sell? Let us know and we'll list your items in the new **Beg, Borrow, Barter or Buy** column.

Have ideas for these newsletters and updates? Send them to [Jessie](#), [Mary Jo](#) or [Jane](#).

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