

## WERS Issues Programs List 2nd Quarter 2013



### **Public File**

Issues/Programs List for April, May, June 2013

Submitted to the public file July 10, 2013

### **Issues**

The following issues were of importance to the local community during the previous quarter, addressed by WERS.

1. Mayor Menino's Final Term
2. Boston Marathon Bombings
3. ShortDocs Challenge – Appetite
4. Odd Jobs in Boston
5. Social Media
6. Security and Our Future
7. Boston's Hierarchy of Needs
8. The Bottom of the Ballot: Local Politics

#### **1. Mayor Menino's Final Term**

**You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) April 7, 2013**

7am-8am

In this hour of You Are Here, we discuss an announcement made by Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino. That is, the announcement that he will not run for a sixth term. For the first time since 1993, Boston will have a new mayor. In his fifth and final term, we take a look at Mayor Menino's legacy in Boston and what the city can expect for the November mayoral elections. First, we asked people in the city what they would do if they were elected mayor, and listened to some interesting results. We then investigated the process of becoming a mayor, taking a look at how Mayor Thomas Menino did it two decades ago. For a different perspective, we took a trip to Boston's historic North End, to visit with Mayor Menino's barber and hear stories from the mayoral barber shop. Throughout the week, at the end of the school day, a group of Boston students make their way to City Hall. We discussed Mayor Menino's Youth Council, and its role in the city of Boston. In November, the name Thomas Menino will not appear on the mayoral ballot. We took a look at who might take over next term and what their leadership could mean for the city. And finally, We talk with Carly Burton, Deputy Director of MassEquality, about Mayor Menino's famous support of equal rights.

#### **2. Boston Marathon Bombings**

Mayor Menino's famous support of equal rights.

## **2. Boston Marathon Bombings**

**You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) April 21, 2013**

7am-8am

On Monday, April 15th, the 177th Boston Marathon was disrupted by an act of terror. Two explosions occurred near the finish line of the race on Boylston Street—prompting fear and confusion in runners, spectators, volunteers and the city of Boston as a whole. Following the explosions, later confirmed as intentional bombings, this week was one of fear, lock-downs, uncertainty, and healing. As a city we braced ourselves, waiting for peace to be restored to our city. In this hour we reflect on the Marathon Bombings and the week following. We review WERS' coverage of the Marathon Bombings, since the explosions, until the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. As horrific as the bombings were, there are many stories of pure human kindness that have come out of the attack. We met the two Emerson students behind one such act. While thousands of runners qualify for a spot in the Marathon with a speed, we'll hear from those who earned their number as part of a charity. Following the attack on Marathon Monday, much of the week was spent in fear. We discussed the Marathon Bombings, finding out what constitutes a terror attack, why the Boston Bombings qualified as such, and how to cope with the fear that comes with an act of this nature. We talked with runners who were there, who felt the blasts, who saw the smoke, and who found themselves running away from the finish line, instead of toward it. We spoke to the runners who told us their stories of before, after, and during the Boston Marathon we find out what was seen, heard, and felt that day. And finally, we spoke to Emerson College President Lee Pelton discusses where he was on Marathon Monday, and how he managed the college during a tragedy.

## **3. Short Docs Challenge - Appetite**

**You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) May 3, 2013**

7am-8am

You Are Here loves a challenge. In this week's show, five you are here reporters competed with other public radio stations, audio producers, and independent lovers of sound in the 2013 Third Coast ShortDocs Challenge. The Third Coast International audio festival collects stories and shares them from their home base in Chicago to listeners all around the world. The theme of the short-docs challenge this year was... Appetite. Whether literally or metaphorically, our stories this week focused on appetite. Our menu features a visit to the Gleaner's Kitchen, a restaurant serving free meals, dug out of the trash. We spoke with owners and employees of restaurants near the Boston marathon route, some who were working just yards away when bombs exploded and tragedy struck. We explore Guerilla Gardening, a form of social activism in the form of fresh food. We explore our taste in music, and we visit the Hare Krishna temple, a place that seeks to fulfill every craving of the body, mind, and soul. For dessert, we

air a package from a previous show on Boston's appetite, exploring the city's craving for seafood in a tough economic spot.

#### **4.Odd Jobs in Boston**

##### **You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) May 19, 2013**

7am-8am

In this hour of You Are Here, we look at some of the stranger jobs in the Boston area. The American job market has irrevocably changed since the recession, and people are finding work in stranger places than ever. We decided to find out what people are doing for a living, whether to pay the bills, by force of habit, or just to follow a passion that they have. We talked to Peer Gustafson, pen enthusiast. Calligraphy and cursive are dying arts, and we looked at why people decide to keep the handwritten word alive when digital typography is the norm.

The second profession we decided to look at was Cambridge Typewriter in Allston. Even more so than the pen, typewriters are obsolete. But a culture still exists around these antiquated machines, and, in fact, has begun catching on with a new generation. We spoke to the owner of Cambridge Typewriter, Tom Furrier, to find out why he still deals in the business, and who he markets to.

The third profession we decided to look at was that of street performing. Although street performers are an ubiquitous part of everyday life in the city, many of us pay them little attention in our everyday lives. We speak to Chad Dietz and Jermaine Carter, two street performers who work in front of Faneuil Hall, to understand what goes into being a street performer, and what some of the challenges can be.

The fourth profession we decided to look at was leatherworking. Most leather products today are mass-produced with machinery. Eric Heins started his own company, Corter Leather, which began with one wallet reverse-engineered from a Japanese product. It is now a successful business he runs entirely on his own. We talked to him about how he ended up in the business, and whether he has any plans for the future.

After that, we spoke to Kevin Cordis, an actor and playwright who did work on the tour boat Codzilla, as well as gigs as Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny, about why he decided to go into such an unusual niche of acting.

The final person we spoke to is Skunk, leader of the Somerville-area chopper gang SCUL. SCUL is a group that constructs impossible or absurd machines and rides them around the greater Boston area. Although he is also a bike designer and junk sculptor, SCUL is Skunk's primary job. We speak to him about how he got started with it, and where SCUL is going.

## **5.Social Media**

### **You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) May 26, 2013**

7am-8am

In this hour of You Are Here, we looked at issues and concerns surrounding social media. In just a few short years, it's gone on to become one of the most ubiquitous parts of our lives, influencing the way we live and act in financial, personal and even intimate spheres of life. To this end, we looked at the ways in which social media has outgrown its original purpose, and what the implications of that are- for better and for worse.

The social media startup is the success story of our age. If a college dropout like Mark Zuckerberg can go on to become a billionaire, why can't any given startup? But the glitzy face of social media entrepreneurship covers a world of hardship and difficulty. We speak to startup owners to find out what it takes to make it in the business.

Next, we look at how social media affects the news. In the wake of the Boston Marathon bombings, the city was stunned, but not silenced. Even in the wake of a phone shutdown, information and misinformation spread uncontrollably through websites like Twitter and Facebook. The FBI relied heavily on photos and video to identify the suspects, but a similar operation taking place on Reddit, led to several false accusations. We looked at what happens when social media doesn't just spread the news, but becomes the news.

After that, we look at the psychological effects of social media. As we become more and more interconnected, we find odd patterns and behaviours starting to emerge as a result of social media. We look at what the implications of this are for our mental wellbeing.

Next, we look at crowdfunding. raising money collectively over the internet has become immensely successful, having funded everything from historical preservation to scientific research to medical care. We talk to the Brattle Theatre, The Boston Festival of Indie Games, and crowdfunding expert Letitia Wright to find out what crowdfunding enables, and the dark underbelly of this new, unregulated field. After that, we look at the culture of Youtube and the unboxing video. An entire genre of video has sprung up that consists of nothing but people uploading short, shaky videos of themselves opening products. But it has grown in popularity, and savvy marketers have begun to take advantage of it- and the people behind the camera. We look at how it came into being, and how it became important enough to count as a legitimate marketing strategy.

Finally, we have an exclusive interview with crowdfunding entrepreneur Freeman White, in which we discuss the future of social media and crowdfunding.

## **6. Security and our Future**

## **You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) June 9, 2013**

7am-8am

In this hour of You Are Here, we dive into issues of security in our daily lives. News that the National Security Agency has clearance to monitor phone records and internet activity from American servers shook the nation this week, making people question just how accessible their communications information is. We look at the things people put their faith in, and ask what happens when they don't pan out. The first thing we look at is education, and specifically the college degree. We examine if this investment is still a valid one, considering rising tuition costs and federal loan rates in addition to a high unemployment rate for college grads. We then look at security in the wake of the Boston Marathon Bombings. We talk to residents of Boston and see how safe they feel, and we speak to business owners from the blast area. Despite investing in insurance, many still have not received a cent due to a technicality. Once secure in the safety of their city and the validity of their investments, we find that the people we talk to are let down. We see how they're working through that. The leaks were a reminder of how many things we trust in today, aren't even real. They exist in sound waves and bandwidth. This lack of actuality can make security hard to pin down. We look at a new type of currency, the Bitcoin. It only exists and is completely created on the computer, over the internet. It's value has been anything but stable. We look at it compared to the reliability of traditional currencies and consider their own instability. We ask what the real value is of money and try to figure out if we should be putting our trust in the Federal Reserve, or even in the internet dollar. Next, we dive deeper into economic security. We look at the job market in the midst of our recession recovery. The most recent jobs reports say we're adding thousands of jobs, but that unemployment and underemployment are still high. So what does this mean? Even if people are getting jobs it's not completely clear they are getting the job they are qualified for and even more, we're not staying employed in the same way we used to. We look at the change in workplace dynamics in the corporate world and then, we talk to an expert on the new England fishing industry. In the past year, fish yields have both decreased and been limited by the federal government. We talk to him about the situation for fisherman whose job security is in the hands of mother nature and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association. We again look at security as it relates to wiretapping, drawing on reporting from the past year. Finally, we speak with State Representative John Tierney. He has paired with state Senator Elizabeth Warren for a bill to keep interest rates low for students. With such a huge population in Boston, we talk to him about what this means for the future of our city.

## **7. Boston's Hierarchy of Needs**

**You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) June 16, 2013**

7am-8am

In this hour of You Are Here, we look at the different services at work everyday in our community. We assess them through the scope of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the theory that not all desires are equal. Some like hunger and shelter take precedence simply because our survival depends on them. There's a new trend in publicity and government accountability in Massachusetts, and it has to do with the SNAP program, instituted to replace the food stamps program. One of our reporters tells his personal story, when he took on the challenge of living on a grocery budget of \$30 per week. Next we at good health and investigate a reported glitch in the new health insurance act. Massachusetts launched a program to fill-in the gap left by the Act. We find out what exactly they did. We then look at shelter and making it affordable and accessible. We explore the world of affordable housing programs. We find out what the government provides for those in need of a roof, and what the private sector does to assist in these state goals. We discover that it's an overwhelmed system, and that the hardest part may be in finding a way to help everyone. We take glance into the world of veterans affairs. We again see what is being done both in the private and public sector and how they work together. We talk to people about the specific needs of veterans, in particular, in this region. Every case is different, which is why it can be so hard to address the needs of our veterans with sweeping policy. Finally, we revisit health in the mental health sector. We get the personal stories and opinions of social workers, those often spoken to without really speaking up. We talk to doctors from different realms of the social work field: an emergency room worker and researcher, a children's social-psychologist working in Boston schools and a woman working in one of the most violent and impoverished areas of the city. We find out that taking care of our mind can be a difficult step to take, but it doesn't mean we're crazy. In an exclusive interview, we speak with the CEO of the Red Cross of Eastern Massachusetts. Jarrett Barrios tells us about the challenges he faces in leading this iconic organization, and relates the work he does now to a long career in civic engagement, community building and even politics.

## **8. The Bottom of the Ballot**

**You Are Here (Public Affairs/Talk Show) June 30, 2013**

7am-8am

In this hour of You Are Here, we look at local politics. We put our theme in perspective by using examples from the the three elections taking place throughout this year. First, we look at polling. We talk the to people who put together influential polls from the special senate election on June 25, 2013, and ask what effect these statistics have on the voting population. We examine the idea that political ads are becoming increasingly more negative. We use examples from past elections and compare them to those from the week's special election. We meet the grassroots organizations, and individuals, who put so much time and money into this race, and find why they're doing it, what their goal is and what it takes to get a candidate noticed on a budget. To bring it all together we break down the impact a local vote in

Massachusetts. We consider the overwhelming number of politicians from our area who have made a national name for themselves, and we talk to local leaders about why their position is important and should be on the radar of voters. We talk to people hanging out around City Hall in Boston on the day of the special election, and create a narrative of that race and the anticipation of the mayoral race through their voices. Finally, we talk to Boston City Council President Stephen J. Murphy about his long career in local politics, the current state of the city and why he continues to serve in his municipal position.