Harvard Neighbors’ office and meeting room will be closed during the University’s winter recess, between December 24, 2018 and January 1, 2019. Classes will resume on the second week of January. Please, check our website for the most updated information. For all of you who, plan to spend the holidays in Boston area, we have gathered information about a bunch of interesting places and events that are worth visiting.

Harvard Neighbors’ Winter Appeal

We couldn’t be Harvard Neighbors without your support! Your contributions support our mission: “to enrich the lives of members of the Harvard community through cultural programs and events.” Thanks to generous gifts from our members, we are able to bring to you varied events and activities with no charge for participation. This fall alone our members enjoyed Ice Cream, Social, Apple Social, Cranberry Social, Thanksgiving Demo and Celebration, Spring Celebration, Celtic Night, Tea and Talk at Harvard Faculty Club and a an awesome Holiday Party!

To our longer-term members, thanks for all you have done to make Harvard Neighbors a vibrant and welcoming community. To help sustain and expand our diverse programming at no (or very low) cost to participants, please consider continuing (or increasing) your current level of financial support.

To our new members, please consider supporting our mission with a tax-deductible donation of $10.00 or more. Click on this link to donate online. Checks are also gladly accepted!

Thank you for your support!
**First Night Celebration**
First Night Boston welcomes 2019 with a huge New Year’s Eve celebration and fireworks - the city’s biggest New Year’s Eve party! The festivities include bedtime-friendly (for those with young children) fireworks over Boston Common at 7pm, spectacular fireworks over Boston Harbor launched across from the North End Waterfront and Seaport at midnight, a dramatic pyrotechnic show at midnight in Copley Square, a huge People’s Procession parade down Boylston Street, lots of family-friendly activities, live musical performances, and spectacular ice sculptures by renowned artists. First Night Boston is the oldest New Year’s Eve event of this type in the U.S. and is celebrating its 41st anniversary this year. It has inspired dozens of similar events across the country. The celebration kicks off at Noon on December 31st with live performances in Copley Square, the Prudential Center and Copley Place. In the afternoon and evening, the ice sculptures light up and a large procession makes its way to Boston Common for the first fireworks show. Live music performances rock the hours until midnight when the countdown begins. The first day of the New Year will be celebrated on Copley Square from Noon to 4pm with activities for families and children. You can find details and schedule of all activities and free events by clicking here.

**Winter Recess Travel Ideas**

**Newport, Rhode Island Candlelight Tour**
Don’t miss this one evening only opportunity to join the 48th Annual Christmas in Newport Candlelight Tour of Historic Private Homes on Saturday, December 29, 2018. The tour is from 4pm to 7pm and costs $3 per home. Home tours are located on Historic Hill, payable at the door of each home. No advance reservations are necessary. Neighborhood parking is very limited, recommend parking at the Mary Street Parking Lot and a short walk up Church St. to the homes.

**Holiday Events at Springfield, MA**
Springfield Museums are offering interesting programs and exhibits for the whole family! This year the popular Gingerbread Wonderland competition and exhibit theme is Gingerbread: Pop Culture Edition. Pop! Icons of American Culture from the Smithsonian is another special exhibit that includes a variety of artifacts on loan from the extensive collections of the National Museum of American History, National Portrait Gallery, National Air and Space Museum, and National Museum of African American History and Culture. The Superman and Lois Lane costumes worn by Christopher Reeve and Margot Kidder take center stage in this exhibition. These pieces will be in good company alongside Marilyn Monroe’s fashionable white gloves, a soccer jersey worn by Mia Hamm at the 1996 Summer Olympics, Eddie Van Halen’s guitar, Julius Erving’s sneakers, the Star Trek tribbles and an original drawing of the Peanuts cartoon by Charles Schulz.

**Happening Around Harvard**

**Best Holiday Lights in Somerville**
The season for holiday magic is upon us and one of the best ways to share the wonder of winter with your family is by touring local lights’ displays in Somerville. Residents take the phrase “deck the halls” to heart by creating fabulous displays that include homemade wooden characters, lights linking multiple houses and life-sized nativity scenes. The City of Somerville goes all out too, decorating the major squares and City Hall Plaza with lights and trees. One of the best displays is at Somerville’s City Hall, where the building itself gets a big, beautiful wreath. On the lawn in front of City Hall is Somerville’s Christmas Tree and Menorah, which cast a warming glow all season long. Follow the twinkly white lights down Highland Avenue away from City Hall toward the library’s Central Branch for a cozy winter stroll. While the City of Somerville makes sure each square and major road has wreaths and kissing balls adorning it light poles, the best displays can be found in Davis Square, Union Square and Assembly Row. Twinkly lights, trees decked out from top to bottom and a special art display at Assembly light up the night. You can pick up a copy of the map the popular Illuminations Tour follows for both its West and East Somerville tours so you can see the lights on your own. The maps can be purchased for $3 at Blue Cloud Gallery in Ball Square or at Maggie in Davis Square. Should you decide to drive around greater Boston in search for more creative Holiday Lights’ displays, WBUR has a list of wonderful suggestions!