

East Boston

TIMES - FREE PRESS

Wednesday, December 18, 2019



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Maverick Square Burger King passes ISD inspection

By John Lynds

A day after a video surfaced on Facebook showing a mouse allegedly wandering around the dining area inside Burger King in Maverick Square, the popular burger chain passed an Inspection Services Department (ISD) inspection.

The video posted by Jamie Robin, who was walking by Burger King on Dec. 11, shows one mouse scurrying around the dining area and darting under tables.

The video comes after ISD last month shut down the Dunkin' Donuts in Maverick Square a few doors down for a host of violations including evidence

See BURGER KING Page 2



Mayor Martin Walsh signs Councilor Lydia Edwards and Councilor Kim Janey's Home Rule Petition to impose a real estate transfer fee of two percent on the purchase price of any private real estate sale over \$2 million and dedicate all revenues to affordable housing.

Councilor Edwards' affordable housing Home Rule Petition signed by Walsh

By John Lynds

It was a huge win for District 1 City Councilor Lydia Edwards, her colleague

Councilor Kim Janey and affordable housing advocates across the city.

On Monday, Mayor Martin Walsh signed Edwards

and Janey's Home Rule Petition to impose a real estate transfer fee of 2 percent on

See HOUSING Page 4

Pressley takes a tour of EBNHC department

By John Lynds

A week after leading a fight to secure strong investments in community health centers as part of the late Rep. Elijah Cummings's Lower Drug Costs Now Act in the U.S. House, U.S. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley decided to visit one community Health Center that has become a model for others across the nation.

On Monday Pressley toured East Boston Neighborhood Health Center's (EBNHC) emergency department and then participated in a roundtable discussion with heads of the Health Center's various departments.

Pressley, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, and Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) led 85 of their colleagues in sending a letter to Senate and House Leadership urging them to provide a five-year extension of the Community Health Center Fund (CHCF), the National Health



U.S. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley tours East Boston Neighborhood Health Center's (EBNHC) emergency department and then participated in a roundtable discussion with heads of the Health Center's various departments.

Service Corps (NHSC), and the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program.

EBNHC and the other 51 Community Health Centers in Massachusetts provide

See PRESSLEY Page 3

KO Pies signs lease to stay in Eastie through 2020

By John Lynds

In November 2018, the East Boston Times sat down with KO Pies owner Sam Jackson and the successful restaurateur stunned all foodies who live in East Boston when he announced he was looking to sell the business by the end of 2019.

However, Jackson announced this week that he has renewed his license to operate KO Pies through 2020.

"It's official," said Jackson in a statement. "We'll be back at it in 2020 sling-ing more meat pies, beer, cider and wine down at the shipyard. It's been 10 cracking years in Boston and we're pumped to do it all again."

The news was a relief to many in the neighborhood. The cozy haunt on Eastie's waterfront has become a destination for thousands craving Aussie meat pies, sandwiches and other funky offerings.

"This is awesome news," said Ross Klisart. "A great early Christmas present."

Jackson said while KO



KO Pies owner Sam Jackson with some of his famous Aussie Meat Pies. Jackson said KO Pies will stay in Eastie through 2020.

Pies isn't going anywhere, as of now, he will be taking almost a month off for the holidays starting Dec. 22.

"So if you need your fix you have until Dec. 22," said Jackson.

Jackson, who landed in

Boston from Australia a decade ago, started KO Pies out of thin air. The success of KO Pies elevated Jackson's profile in the community and he has enjoyed the reputation of someone that gives back to local schools, nonprofits and community groups since coming here.

While Jackson was bouncing around the idea of packing it in for warmer climates he said that he has yet to receive the right offer for KO Pies and has even expanded the business to include an Asian pop-up menu on Wednesday nights.

Jackson admitted there are many scenarios that could still play out as he

See KO PIES Page 2

LIVE NATIVITY SCENE



PHOTO BY MARIANNE SALZA

The East Boston Central Catholic eighth graders performing, 'Ave Maria' and a live Nativity scene during their annual Christmas show on Friday night, Dec. 13. Scores of children throughout all grades performed for a packed house of friends, family and staff at the school. See Page 12 for more photos.

TRASH

DELAY

Due to the Christmas Day Holiday on Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2019 Trash will be delayed by one day. Mon. 12/23 & Tues. 12/24 pick-ups are on schedule Capitol Waste Services, Inc.

HOLIDAY PUBLICATION SCHEDULE:

Newspaper will be published on Tuesday, Dec. 24 & Dec. 31

The Christmas Advertising Deadline IS FRIDAY, DEC. 20TH

The New Years Advertising Deadline IS FRIDAY, DEC. 27TH

The Office will be CLOSED Wednesday, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 in observation of Christmas and New Years holidays.



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12/18

Excel breaks ground on expansion of high school to include middle school

By John Lynds

Excel Academy Charter School Executive Director Owen Stearns announced that the school has broken ground on its expansion plan that includes adding a middle school to Excel’s high school on Bremen Street.

“This is exciting news,” said Stearns in a statement. “We have broken ground on our new ‘Excel Academy’ campus. This new building will be move in ready for the next (school) year, 2020/2021.”

The project includes building the new middle school facility over the current parking lot at Excel Academy High School. Most of the parking spaces in the lot, which is wedged between the school and the Bremen Street Branch Library, will remain and the

schools plans to lease additional off site spaces to accommodate for teacher and staff parking.

The expansion is part of Excel’s 2014 plan to accommodate the growing student population.

Excel Opened first middle school in Eastie in 2003, a second middle school in Chelsea in 2011, a third middle school in Orient Heights in 2012 and the neighborhood’s first charter high school on Bremen Street in 2016.

“Excel has educated approximately 2,000 students in Grades 5-12 since 2003,” said Stearns.

The expansion of the high school facility to include a middle school is Phase III of the school’s plan outlined in 2014.

This plan will increase the student population from 896 to 924 and increase the

school’s footprint on Bremen Street from 71,000 square feet to 79,500 square feet.

The Excel team also laid out a transportation and traffic management plan. The school plans to increase the number of staff managing flow of bus/auto queue. Increase number of staff to manage student pedestrian activity on both sides of Bremen Street. Cars will be assigned to specific pick-up and drop-off areas. Excel agrees to pay a fine for any parent blocking driveways and will ask BTD to supply meter maids as necessary. The school will Increase communication with parents on policies, install school zone signage and change to staggered arrival times if traffic becomes too much of an issue in the mornings.

The school will also im-

prove residential access to Excel parking lot when school is not in session. Lot signage will be revised to indicate available parking for library patrons and neighbors from 4 to 6 a.m .every day. However, any non-Excel car that remains past 6 a.m. may be towed.

On weekends and statewide holidays when public schools are closed, neighbors will be able to park in the lot during normal school hours.

During inclement weather no parking will be allowed in the lot when cars could impede snow removal.

Back in 2017 Excel expanded the footprint of the high school to give the senior class more classroom and flex space as they take electives and advanced placement classes.

The school added 2,500 sq. ft. on the back of the building near the East Boston Greenway, which resulted in roughly a 10 percent increase in the building’s overall size.



An artist rendering of Excel Academy Charter School expansion plans that includes adding a middle school to the current high school on Bremen Street.

The addition had no impact on the Greenway or Greenway access. There was some concerns of runoff from the building due to flooding problems along the Greenway closer to Jeffries Point and the school’s close proximity to the neighborhood park system. However, the school, which is LEED certified, uses a system of storm water storage with traps that slowly release storm water from the building after heavy rain.

Located at the former site of Paul’s Park and Fly on Bremen Street, the \$25 million Excel High School was built on a stretch of land that now includes a state-of-the-art library and the sprawling 18-acre Bremen Street Park,

The new two-acre campus includes the main building, community rooms, a cafeteria, gymnasium, office space, and support space. The school also includes a 30-car pick up and drop off area, a dedicated bus pull off area, a 50-space parking lot for faculty and visitors, and a 24,100 square foot outdoor student courtyard.

Burger King //CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

olations including evidence of mice infestation.

However, ISD sent inspectors down to Burger King on Dec. 12 found no violations at the Maverick Square location.

Comments on Robin’s Facebook post blamed the increase in construction in the Square, coupled with the fact that the restaurants that line Maverick Square’s business district are right above the MBTA’s Blue Line. Construction, especially excavation to lay foundations, has been known to disturb rodent nests. This leads mice and rats to find shelter elsewhere. Also, anyone who has ever taken the T knows there are mice and rats in the subway tunnels.

Pests are a frequent nuisance to virtually every restaurant in Boston, but controlling the problem is paramount and routinely ordered by ISD inspectors when evidence of mice or rats is found.

In the case of Burger King ISD inspectors found no evidence that the one mouse seen in the video was cause for alarm or an indication of an infestation.

The only other blemish

on Burger King’s record with the city was back in January when the location was shut down due to a raw sewage backup in the basement. ISD inspectors found a pipe was actively leaking into the basement area. Burger King was ordered to contact a plumber ASAP to repair pipe, which was done and the location reopened.

Last month the Dunkin’ Donuts in Maverick after video shot by Peter Wild surfaced on social media of a half dozen or so mice freeley scurrying around the inside of the coffee shop.

ISD then inspected the Dunkin’ Donuts location and found a whole host of health code violations.

D’Alelio Management Co., operating as RMG Donuts, operates the Dunkin’ Donuts in Maverick, as well as a second location on Bennington Street in Orient Heights.

During their inspection ISD inspectors found evidence of mice and roach infestations, as well as small flies present in the dining area.

ISD also found that the interior of ice machine had visible soils; the outside

alleyway area was full of debris, clothes and a blanket on the ground as well as excess leaves preventing full inspection of the exterior wall of the building; the grout on floors in the service were low, allowing for standing water and food debris to get trapped; weather stripping on the bottom of the back door was too high, allowing for gaps to the outdoors; and heavy soils built up and other debris was found on the floor behind equipment and under countertops.

A second inspection the next day showed RMG Donuts had not remedied the health code violations.

After the second ISD inspection Dunkin’ Donuts Corporate filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking to strip RMG Donuts of its franchises in Eastie. In the suit Dunkin’ Donuts Corporate argues that RMG Donuts is in violation of its franchise agreement, which requires clean shops.

According to Universal HUB, the suit asked a judge to order RMG Donuts to remove any connection the store in Maverick Square has to the national coffee shop chain.

OHNC members vote on Whitby Street project

By John Lynds

Orient Heights Neighborhood Council (OHNC) members voted 34 to 6 against the residential development project on Whitby Street at the group’s December meeting Monday night at the Ashley Street YMCA.

The project at 16 Whitby St. seeks to erect a three-story residential dwelling with eight residential units and 13 parking spaces.

Attorney Jeff Drago said his client had made several changes to the project since the last OHNC meeting in November.

Drago said the unit count has been reduced from 10 to 9 to 8 condo units. Drago said his client has also increased the number of off street parking spaces from 12 to 13 and eliminated the



Attorney Jeff Drago discusses his client’s project on Whitby Street with OHNC members.

fourth floor that was part of the original design.

“After several OHNC meetings and meetings with abutters we made several changes in response to the concerns we heard,” said Drago. “We feel this is a design that can not only work for the developer but for the residents living on Whitby Street.”

However, Whitby Street residents were still concerned that quiet dead end street would be severely impacted by the development project. Most concerns were regarding the increase in traffic on the small street.

Several residents voiced their opposition to the project and said building an eight unit condo building would have impacts on parking along the street.

Drago pointed out that there are already two pre-exsiting three-family homes on the street and that his client could build four units ‘as of right’ with three bedrooms each.

“We listened to these concerns and that is why we decreased the number of units and increased the parking,” said Drago.

Mystic Valley Elder Services holds toy and coat drive for those families in need

The holidays are synonymous with toys. It is a joyous time for most. But, for struggling families, it can be a time of stress and anxiety. Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) recently held a toy drive where employees would donate toys to charitable organizations. The nearly 100 donated toys were divided between ABCD and the Salvation Army in Chelsea.

As temperatures fall this holiday season, we can’t forget about those struggling to stay warm. MVES staff also donated new and gently used winter clothing (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) to Mission of Deeds.



Pat Hansen, RN, of Mystic Valley Elder Services donates some toys toward the agency’s Toy Drive. The toys went to ABCD and the Salvation Army in Chelsea.

Located in Malden, Mass., Mystic Valley Elder Services is a non-profit agency that provides essential home- and community-based care and resources to older adults, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers who reside in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North

Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winthrop. Agency services include coordination of home care, transportation, Meals on Wheels, and information, advice and referrals. For more information, please call (781) 324-7705 or visit www.mves.org.

KO Pies //CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

searches for the right investor. He is even open, if an investor agrees, to bounce around the warmer parts of the world during the winter months and come back and run KO Pies in the summers or even serve as a consultant.

But for now Jackson is comfortable riding out the rest of 2019 with new

Wednesday night offerings like cilantro noodles, Vietnamese-style chicken salad, and nasi goreng (fried rice).

Jackson said the Wednesday night menu additions at KO Pies, served alongside the famous meat pies, was inspired by Kaki Lima. Kaki Lima was an Indonesian pop-up that once offered a special menu on

Monday night’s at KO Pies. However, Kaki Lima chef Retno Pratiwi and her husband moved out of Eastie this year leaving an Asian food void at KO Pies.

The menu additions, Jackson said, are something he craves and looks forward to cooking and reminds him of his days a chef nack in Sydney.

Jackson said he is also planning on several special events from now until the end of 2019.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

LOCAL STUDENT RECEIVES BACHELOR’S DEGREES FROM UMASS AMHERST

Lilliana Tirado Arteaga of East Boston was among the 320 students who received bachelor’s degrees from the University of Massachusetts Amherst this September, 2019.

GRACE CHURCH FEDERATED ANNUAL FESTIVAL

Grace Church Federated will be hosting their sixth annual Festival of Lessons and Carols, on Saturday, December 21st, at 4 PM, at 760 Saratoga Street. This is a traditional Christmas celebration in scripture and song that features readings that tell the story of the Nativity, interspersed with choral pieces and singalong carols in which the audience is invited to join in. It takes place in the congregation’s historic shingle-style church, with seasonal decorations and candles. Admission is free to all. Reception will follow the service directly afterwards.

JPNA P AND Z MEETING AGENDA

Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association Planning & Zoning (P and Z) Agenda
Wednesday, December 18, 2019; 7 – 8:30 pm
East Boston Neighborhood Health Center: Training Building
250 Sumner Street
AGENDA (subject to change)
16 and18 Cottage Street – Add rear and 4th story additions & roof decks to both properties.

362 Sumner – Erect a 3-unit residential dwelling
159-165 Everett Street – Erect a 7-unit residential dwelling with parking
We thank the EBNHC for letting us use the space.
We MUST be out of the building by 8:30PM.
2019 Planning & Zoning Meeting dates are available at jeffriespoint.org
Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association Board of Directors:
Cindy Baxter | Rachel Blomerth | Mary Cole | Margaret Farmer | Andrew Pike.

EAST BOSTON SOCIAL CENTER'S SENIOR PROGRAM OFFERING SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

The Senior Program at the East Boston Social Centers is now offering Spanish Language Classes for adults over 60 years old. Classes are held every Wednesday at 10 a.m. in Room 209. All are welcome to attend. Class is taught by Mr. Montaro. No need to register, just come by on Wednesday at 10 a.m. for this fun class. The East Boston Social Centers is located at 68 Central Square.

LEARN ITALIAN FREE

The class will be held at Robert DeLeo Senior Center, 35 Harvard Street Winthrop for residents age 60 and above.
Whether you have Italian ancestry, or just want to learn one of the world’s most beautiful languages, join us at informal and friendly Italian language and culture classes. Wednesday afternoons from 1:15 to 2:45

p.m. For info call 617-846-8538.

EAST BOSTON SENIOR LUNCH PROGRAM

If you are 60+ years of age, the East Boston Social Centers at 68 Central Square in East Boston has a table and a meal waiting for you!
The Senior Lunch Program sponsored by ETHOS Congregate Meal Program provides a hot, nutritious lunch, along with wonderful socialization, Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. A suggested donation of \$2 is asked.
The East Boston Social Centers welcome seniors from our East Boston Community and surrounding areas.

GRACE CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS

Grace Church Federated is an Episcopal/United Church of Christ church located at 760 Saratoga Street in East Boston. All are welcome. Please join us for Sunday morning worship at 9:30 a.m., followed by a coffee hour. We also have a food pantry on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until noon in the church basement. There are a number of ways you can help us to serve East Boston. Volunteer at or contribute to the food pantry. Sing with the Festival of Lessons and Carols choir. Bring a dish to the monthly Sunday evening community suppers. Participate in the Sunday worship service. Help with SundaySchool. Visit the Grace Church web site at www.gracechurch-eastie.org or call the church at 617-569-5358 for more information.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Meetings

Harbor View Neighborhood Association First Monday of every month 6:30 p.m. at the Edward Brooke Charter School, 145 Byron St.	Bremen Street Friend of the East Boston Greenway Fourth Thursday of every month. 6:30 p.m. at the Anna DeFronzo Center, 395 Maverick St. All are welcome to attend.
Kiwanis Club of East Boston First and Third Tuesday of every month 6 p.m. at Spinelli’s Restaurant in Day Square. New members welcome	Maverick Central Neighborhood Association Third Wednesday of every month 7 p.m. at Paris Street Community Center, 112 Paris St.
Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association Second Monday of every month. 6:30 p.m. at the Jeffries Point Yacht Club, 565 Sumner St.	Gove Street Citizens Association Last Monday of every month 6:30 p.m. at the Noddle Island Community Room
Orient Heights Neighborhood Association Third Monday of every month. 6:30 p.m. at Ashley Street YMCA, 54 Ashley St.	Eagle Hill Civic Association Last Wednesday of every month 7 p.m. at East Boston High School Cafeteria, 86 White St.
Friends of The East Boston Library Second Thursday every month 6:30 p.m. at the branch library, 365	

DISTRICT SEVEN POLICE REPORT

Monday, November 25, 2019
No Arrests

Tuesday, November 26, 2019
No Arrests

Wednesday, November 27, 2019
No Arrests

Thursday, November 28, 2019
No Arrests

Friday, November 29, 2019
Around 1:35 a.m. in the area of Monmouth St., a 36-year-old male with an East Boston arrested was arrested for Assault and Battery and Indecent A/B on a child under 14.

Around 2:15 a.m. in the area of 683 Bennington St., a 29-year-old male with a Charlestown, MA address was arrested for Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol

Around 6:30 p.m. in the area of 2 Father Jacobe Rd., a 49-year-old male with an

East Boston address was arrested for Assault by Means of a Dangerous Weapon (knife)

Saturday, November 30, 2019
Around 5 p.m. in the area of 120 London St., a male Juvenile with an East Boston address was arrested for Armed Robbery

Sunday, December 1, 2019
Around 2:15 a.m. in the area of Moore St. and Saratoga St. a 24-year-old male with an East Boston address was arrested for Operating a M/V Without a License, Leaving the Scene Property Damage and Allowing Unlicensed to Operate a MV
Around 4:17 p.m. in the area of Chelsea St., a 13-year-old male with an East Boston address was arrested for Delinquent to wit; Assault and Battery (injuries)

Monday, December 2, 2019
No Arrests

Tuesday, December 3, 2019
No Arrests

Wednesday, December 4, 2019
Around 10:30 a.m. in the area of 15 Chelsea St., a 38-year-old male with an East Boston address was arrested for Distribution of Class A, Drugs

Thursday, December 5, 2019
No Arrests

Friday, December 6, 2019
No Arrests

Saturday, December 7, 2019
No Arrests

Sunday, December 8, 2019
Around 8:11 p.m. in the area of 1 Central Sq., a 58-year-old male with a Boston, MA address was arrested for Shoplifting \$50 to \$200

Pressley // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

life-saving, affordable, and patient-centered resources to over 300,000 children, people experiencing homelessness, immigrants and veterans.

Pressley, a longtime advocate for community-based health care programs and, member of the Congressional Community Health Centers Caucus, helped secure \$1.6 billion in funding for the Health Center program—including \$5 million to support school-based health centers earlier this year. EBNHC runs a school-based health center at East Boston High School for students that are most at risk of not having easy access to primary care and other health care needs.

“Less than two years ago, Congress voted overwhelmingly to extend and increase funding for these three public health programs as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 and Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018,” said Pressley and her colleagues in the letter. “Now that the deadline is upon us again, we must act to provide a five-year extension of the Community Health Center, Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education, and National Health Service Corps programs. We urge you to provide strong funding increases over time. This will afford our health centers the predictability and stability they need to train and recruit providers, purchase equipment, expand services available to patients, and plan strategically to meet the current and future needs of patients.”

During the tour Pressley said growing up in Chicago community health-center emergency rooms was the first point of access for low-income residents and people of color. Pressley highlighted the fact that it was this first contact with health care professionals that led many to begin seek-



U.S. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley and EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes participate in a roundtable discussion with heads of the Health Center's various departments Monday.



U.S. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley talks with EBNHC Chief Medical Officer Jackie Fantes.

ing and accessing health care on a regular basis.

EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes agreed and told Pressley that much of Eastie’s Latino population discover the Health Center through the emergency room.

“But once we get them through our doors after an emergency room visit we can put them in contact with a primary care physician and other health care services that we provide,” said Lopes. “So we want to make sure after that emergency room visit that there in follow up care and continuing care for those patients. We do a lot of outreach in the community because ultimately we don’t want that first contact to be an emergency room visit. We want residents to enroll as patients early so we can

prevent situations that land people in the emergency room.”

Pressley said community health centers like EBNHC deserve to have permanent funding.

“I appreciate what you all do,” said Pressley Monday. “If you go from Cambridge the Roxbury life expectancy drops by 30 years and that is something that can be prevented through quality health care provided by places like EBNHC. So I am very passionate for the work you all do. You are over utilized and, in my opinion, under funded. So to be able to create so many resources with limited resources is truly inspiring. EBNHC is truly the heart beat of East Boston so I just wanted to stop by and thank everyone for the work they do each and every day here.”

Piece for Peace: 2019 regional one day gun buyback

Mayor Martin J. Walsh and Boston Police Commissioner William Gross, in collaboration with physicians and medical professionals, announced a coordinated one-day gun buyback effort that took place in six locations across Boston on Saturday, December 14. The day marked a remembrance of the vic-

tims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, which happened seven years ago on December 14.

The ‘Piece for Peace’ program aims to bring attention to the devastating toll and impact that unneeded and unsecured guns can have on individuals and the public-at-large, and provided the opportunity for

people to turn in unwanted guns and ammunition, no questions asked.

Boston Police District Seven would like to thank Cargo Ventures located on McClellan Highway for the generous use of their office space during our one-day gun buy back.

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East Boston

Times-Free Press

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GUEST OP-ED

Christmas is still special

By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Make a mental decision that Christmas is going to be great. Our world exists in the space between our ears known as our brains. We can dread or hate something or just decide it's going to be wonderful.

Faking it is not always easy. We can fool people some of the time but we can't fool everyone all the time. The hardest person you actually have to fool is yourself. Sometimes we can fool ourselves for awhile and it's never fun fooling ourselves for a long period of time. Sometimes it's necessary to fool ourselves briefly if we need to convince ourselves of something in order to survive.

For example if you are going to be in a big gathering for Christmas there is probably going to be one or two obnoxious or ridiculous people in the crowd. You may already dread seeing them. Just convince yourself it is okay and that people are different and no one is perfect. Just decide to let ungratefulness, weird or negative comments roll off your back. You can override stupidity with Christmas cheer for a day. Just remember this is only for a day or two.

Also, this Christmas will not bring back any past

Christmases. There will be an empty chair or maybe several empty chairs. It may be tough and depressing when we think about how Christmas was a few years back. Christmas will never be the same for those of us missing loved ones and tears often come. Go ahead and cry but determine you won't spend all Christmas day crying. As you remember the past remember what it is about that person or Christmas you miss and hold tight to that joyful remembrance.

Keep in mind that this Christmas is still special because you are here in the world to celebrate the occasion. Whoever the people are in your life today hold them close and be merry together.

From the Old Testament the people of God were instructed by Joshua to "Hold tight to God, your God, just as you've done up to now." (Joshua 23:8) For all of us holding tight to our faith, our family, our friends and our life's values.

Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist – American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.

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The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151.

Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403.

We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to deb@reverejournal.com

Your opinions, please

The Times welcomes letters to the editor. Our mailing address is 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Our fax number is 781-485-1403.

Letters may also be e-mailed to editor@eastietimes.com.

Letters must be signed.

We reserve the right to edit for length and content.

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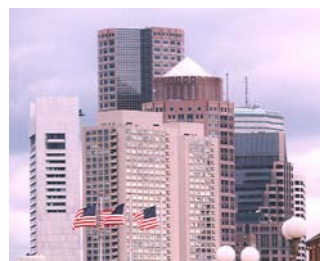
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THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS BEGINS AT SUNSET DEC. 22

Housing // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the purchase price of any private real estate sale over \$2 million and dedicate all revenues to affordable housing. The 2 percent fee will be used to generate additional funding to create and preserve affordable housing in Boston. The City Council approved the measure by a vote of 10-3.

The signing by Walsh now moves Edwards and Jayne's Home Rule Petition to the Massachusetts Legislature for approval. If approved by the state, the City would have the ability to determine the final rate for the fee, collection method and any exemptions that would exist.

"Housing is the biggest economic challenge facing the residents of Boston and people across our region," said Mayor Walsh. "That's why it's critically important that we do everything we can to support the creation of homes that are affordable, while also preserving our existing housing stock. I am proud to sign this Home Rule Petition that is a significant step forward in our work, by giving Boston the ability to impose a modest fee on the sale of private property, which will collectively do a world of good towards our efforts to make Boston a more affordable place to live."

According to the Home Rule Petition would authorize the City of Boston to impose a fee of up to 2 percent of the purchase price upon the transfer of property valued at over \$2 million, with 1 percent paid by the seller and one percent paid by the purchaser.

The funding generated would be dedicated to the

Neighborhood Housing Trust (NHT) or appropriated through the annual budget process to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing in the City. Since it was created by statute in 1987, the NHT has expended approximately \$197 million to finance housing and supported approximately 12,887 units. The real estate transfer fee would, within a matter of two or three years, enable the NHT to dedicate more resources to housing than it has done since its creation.

Councilor Edwards, who chairs the Council's Committee on Housing and Community Development, said those who generate wealth in our communities must be part of ensuring residents can remain in the neighborhoods they love.

"Today, Boston joins a growing coalition of municipalities asking the state for the power to ensure that the housing we build truly meets our residents' needs," she said.

This fall, the Walsh administration commissioned a study on the potential impact of transfer fees in the City of Boston and examine transfer fees across the country. The study found that "market actors do not appear to be fully incorporating the transaction costs.... Transfer taxes may have only muted impacts on real estate markets." It also noted that a separate study of real estate commissions, another "point of sale" fee, had minimal impacts on residential housing in the Boston or on the days a property was listed on the market.

Municipalities such as

Somerville, Concord and Nantucket have advanced home rule petitions to authorize a real estate transfer fee.

"It is absolutely imperative that we enact policies that will ensure our residents will have a safe and affordable home to live in for many generations," said Councilor Janey, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Housing and Community Development. "When passed by the state legislature, this home rule petition will help curb speculative real estate practices and stands to bring as much as \$169 million in revenue annually that can be invested in affordable housing."

According to an analysis conducted by PFM Group Consulting, real estate sales in Suffolk County have ranged from approximately \$3 billion to over \$12 billion in the last decade. The City of Boston accounts for 86 percent of the county's population and real estate activity. From 2009 through year-to-date, total private real estate sales have averaged \$8.4 billion. Based on average sales in Suffolk County, estimates show that a 1 percent fee on all private-market sales would have raised \$84 million per year over the last decade, and a two percent fee would have generated over \$168 million, a significant increase on the City's existing affordable housing investments.

"There is no question

that in Boston we need to do everything we can to support the creation of homes that are affordable, while also preserving our existing housing stock," said Walsh before signing the Home Rule Petition Monday.

Affordable Housing advocates, like NOAH's (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) Executive Director Phil Giffey, are elated by what they are calling a 'monumental' step in ensuring more affordable housing is built and preserved in neighborhoods like Eastie.

"This is monumental news for affordable and workforce housing for the City of Boston," said Giffey. "A big thank you to both the Mayor and to our City Councilor, Lydia Edwards, who championed this significant effort and brought a coalition together. Now we need to mobilize that coalition at the State House, where we know Rep Madaro and Senator Boncore will help lead the charge for passage. To the credit of the Mayor and Lydia, I appreciate they discussed implementation differences and worked to the middle for a workable alliance of interests. I also appreciate seeing leaders working together to solve problems that affect real people, and there are few issues as important to people and the economy as housing. NOAH's thanks for making this happen."

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MASSPORT’S WINTER COAT DRIVE

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) is pleased to announce a successful turnout for its Winter Coat Drive. Over 100 employees donated their time and money to purchase coats and deliver them to over 80 children in East Boston. “We are proud to see the outpouring of support and generosity from our employees. We are committed to helping our neighbors in East Boston,” said Massport Director of Community Relations and Government Affairs Alaina Coppola. “The coats we provided will help these children stay warm this winter, and their parents will have one less expense to worry about this holiday season.” Massport delivered coats for 48 children at East Boston Social Centers and 38 children at Crossroads Family Center in East Boston. The children range in age from newborn to 16 years old. “The families who participate in East Boston Social Centers programs, and our staff, raved about the great coats donated by the generous Massport staff,” said Justin Pasquariello, Executive Director of East Boston Social Centers. “These coats will keep our families warm throughout the winter and are bringing them a better holiday season. Thank you to the Massport team for making a big difference in many ways for our children, our families, and our community.” “We are thrilled to partner with Massport on the Winter Coat Drive,” said Shakira Floyd, Program Coordinator at Crossroads Family Center. “Massport has been a supporter of Crossroads for many years and we appreciate the generosity of its employees on projects like this one.”

Group pens open letter calling for “clean energy” alternative

By John Lynds

A local environmental justice organization and the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) recently teamed up to write an open letter to the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board calling for a “clean energy” alternative to the planned Eversource Substation in East Eagle Square.

Eversource has been planning to build a high-voltage electrical substation in East Boston for close to a decade.

However, members of GreenRoots and the UCS feel the company has failed to provide up-to-date, transparent information justifying the need for the substation that will cost ratepayers close to \$50 million.

“Of much concern to the community is the suggested location of the substation across the street from a heavily used playground, on city-owned land originally slated for a soccer field, and next to 8 million-gallons of jet fuel, in a densely populated residential neighborhood,” said GreenRoots in a statement. “Additionally, its proposed site on the banks of Chelsea Creek floods presently and will be at risk of chronic inundation before the end of this century due to sea-level rise.”

In their open letter, the group argues that new analysis by UNC has found that installing residential rooftop solar panels and battery storage systems in Eastie could be a more appropriate alternative to Eversource’s proposed substation. This clean energy alternative could help to meet possible increases in electricity demand in the area, cut customers’ electricity bills and reduce pollution, including global warming emissions.

“We are proud residents

and allies, of East Boston,” the open letter begins. “Some of us were born and raised here. Others of us chose to live here because it’s affordable and accessible to public transportation, and we appreciate the diversity of people and backgrounds. Whether we were born and raised here, or took a while to come to this community, we are all fortunate to call East Boston home. Like many residents, we were shocked to learn about Eversource’s proposal to locate a high-voltage electrical substation right in our neighborhood. The substation is proposed to be built about a football field (around 110 meters) away from an eight million-gallon holding tank of jet fuel, and right across the street from a playground where kids play year-round, in a densely populated neighborhood.”

The group argues in the letter that the quality of life and property value would suffer from having a power substation sited in our neighborhood deserve at minimum that the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) consider the many safer alternatives to meeting the energy needs of the region.

“UCS has laid out a clean-energy alternative that is forward-looking and would cost millions of dollars less than the proposed substation,” said the letter.

The letter also states that the EFSB should not make a decision on the substation until and unless Eversource provides: Clear, transparent, and sufficient up-to-date data supporting its necessity; A cost-benefit analysis of clean energy alternatives proving this substation is the most cost-competitive option; An infrastructure plan that shows the substation will be prepared to

withstand the worse-case scenarios of sea-level rise; and proof that East Boston was properly consulted and our concerns properly addressed.

The Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) will make a decision on Eversource’s proposed substation before the end of 2019.



Ramy Laribi, a Junior Captain is pictured here with Coach Dave Arinella and Asst Coach John Hall after breaking two records which he captured last season. He swam a 22.629 in the 50 freestyle and a 52.69 in the 100 freestyle. He is already qualified for the State Sectionals. East Boston HS is truly proud of Ramy!

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*Happy
Holidays
& Happy
New Year*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



May you all have a heartwarming holiday season ahead! From my family to yours.
- Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards



East Boston
Chamber of Commerce

The East Boston Chamber of Commerce wishes all its members and East Boston businesses a joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Jim Kearney
President

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Great Year in 2020**



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ADRIAN MADARO

JPNA ANNUAL HOLIDAY POT LUCK PARTY

Last Monday, the Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association held its Annual Holiday Pot Luck Party at the Jeffries Point Yacht Club.

The event included food, drinks, music and some holiday cheer.



Councilor Lydia Edwards and Karen Madalena.



Residents young and old enjoyed the festivities.



State Representative Adrian Madaro and City Councillor Lydia Edwards.



Kristen Veit and Matthew Walsh.



Chantelle Persac, Jackie Hopkinson and Ryan Persac.



J. Michael Here and Chris Morton.



Jason Ruggiero, Lina Tramelli and Ricardo Patron.




Families enjoy the annual JPNA holiday party.



Mary Cole, Lina Tramelli, Cindy Baxter and Margaret Farmer.




Chris Beebe, Jessie Purvis and Luke Rood.



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Excel Academy DESE Tiered Focused Monitoring 2019

During the week of January 6th the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM) will conduct a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review of Excel Academy Charter Schools. The Office of Public School Monitoring visits each district and charter school every three years to monitor compliance with federal and state special education and civil rights regulations. Areas of review related to special education include student assessments, determination of eligibility, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team process, and IEP development and implementation. Areas of review related to civil rights include bullying, student discipline, physical restraint, and equal access to school programs for all students.

In addition to the onsite visit, parent outreach is an important part of the review process. The review chairperson from the Office of Public School Monitoring will send all parents of students with disabilities an online survey that focuses on key areas of their child’s special education program. Survey results will contribute to the development of a report. During the onsite review, the Office of Public School Monitoring will interview the chairperson(s) of the district’s Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). Other onsite activities may include interviews of district staff and administrators, reviews of student records, and onsite observations. Parents and other individuals may call Moses Nduati, Public School Monitoring Chairperson, at (781) 338-3707 to request a telephone interview. If an individual requires an accommodation, such as translation, to participate in an interview, the Department will make the necessary arrangements.

Within approximately 60 business days after the onsite visit, the review chairperson will provide the Excel Academy Charter Schools with a report with information about areas in which the Excel Academy Charter Schools meets or exceeds regulatory requirements and areas in which the Excel Academy Charter Schools requires assistance to correct or improve practices. The public will be able to access the report at www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr/reports/.

Excel Academy DESE Monitoreo enfocado escalonado 2019

Durante la semana del 6 de enero, la Oficina de Monitoreo de Escuelas Públicas (PSM, por sus siglas en inglés) del Departamento de Educación Primaria y Secundaria llevará a cabo una Revisión de Monitoreo Enfocado por Niveles de Excel Academy Charter Schools. La Oficina de Monitoreo de Escuelas Públicas visitara cada distrito y escuela autónoma cada tres años para monitorear el cumplimiento de las regulaciones federales y estatales de educación especial y derechos civiles. Las áreas de revisión relacionadas con la educación especial incluyen evaluaciones de los estudiantes, determinación de elegibilidad, el proceso del Equipo del Programa de Educación Individualizada (IEP) y el desarrollo e implementación del IEP. Las áreas de revisión relacionadas con los derechos civiles incluyen acceso escolar, disciplina estudiantil, restricción física e igualdad de acceso a los programas escolares para todos los estudiantes. Además de la visita en el lugar, el alcance de los padres es una parte importante del proceso de revisión. El presidente de revisión de la Oficina de Monitoreo de Escuelas Públicas enviará a todos los padres de estudiantes con discapacidades una encuesta con enfoque en áreas clave del programa de educación especial de sus hijos. Los resultados de la encuesta contribuirán al desarrollo de un folleto? Durante la revisión en el lugar, la Oficina de Monitoreo de Escuelas Públicas entrevistará a los presidentes del Consejo Asesor de Padres de Educación Especial (SEPAC) del distrito. Otras actividades en el lugar pueden incluir entrevistas del personal y administradores del distrito, revisiones de los registros de los estudiantes y observaciones en el lugar.

Padres u otros individuos pueden llamar a Moses Nduati, Presidente de Monitoreo de Escuelas Públicas, al (781) 338-3707 para solicitar una entrevista telefónica. Si algun individuo requiere alguna adaptación, como traducción, para participar en una entrevista, el Departamento hará los arreglos necesarios.

Dentro de aproximadamente 60 días laborables después de la visita del lugar, el presidente de revisión proporcionará a la Excel Academy Charter Schools un folleto con información sobre las áreas en las que el Excel Academy Charter Schools cumple o supera los requisitos reglamentarios y las áreas en las que el Excel Academy Charter Schools requiere asistencia para corregir o mejorar las prácticas. El público tendra acceso al informe en.

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Learn about a proposed substation project in East Boston.

Eversource is in the process of finalizing the exterior design of the proposed East Eagle Substation, part of the Mystic - East Eagle - Chelsea Reliability Project. This project will improve the electric system in the Greater Boston area, so customers will continue to have reliable power to meet their growing energy needs. As an important part of the process, residents of the East Eagle community are invited to attend and offer aesthetic design feedback at an upcoming open house.

Open House:
Tuesday, January 14, 2020
Drop in between 5:30–7:30 p.m.
East Boston High School
86 White Street, East Boston, MA 02128

Keeping the lines of communication open is an important part of our work in the community. The open house is designed to give residents an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions about the next steps in the project.

For more information about this proposed project, please send an email to ProjectInfo@eversource.com, call 800-793-2202 or visit Eversource.com.

EVERSOURCE

OBITUARIES

Richard “Dick” Buonfiglio

Of Revere



Richard “Dick” Buonfiglio, 85, of Revere, died recently.

He was the son of the late Pasquale “Patsy” and Theresa (Dis-cenza) Buonfiglio, father of Laura J. Fitzpatrick and her husband, Rick and Lisa J. Oosterman and her husband, James; brother of the late Paul N. Buonfiglio and the late Dr. Ronald Buonfiglio and his surviving wife, Irma, Patricia Fiore and her husband, Ernest and Linda Villiotte and her husband, Richard; stepfather of Michael Shaw; grandfather of Sarah and Sean Fitzpatrick and step-grandfather of Ethan, Jeffrey and Stephen Shaw and brother-in-law of Marie (Tangusso) Buonfiglio. He is also survived by his former wife, Marilyn F. Clarke and by many, many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Per Dick’s request, there is no visitation. Arrangements by the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons ~ Bruno Funeral Home. Donations may be made in Dick’s memory to the Shriner’s Hospitals for Children or to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinsons Research. For guest book please visit www.Buonfiglio.com.

Guiseppe Amico

Hardworking member of Laborer’s Union
Local 22

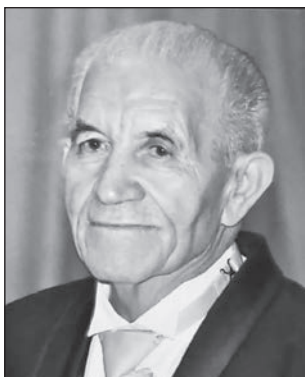
Giuseppe Amico of Revere, formerly of East Boston, passed away Dec. 12 at the age of 86.

Giuseppe came to the United States in August of 1971 with his family, residing in East Boston before settling in Revere in 1983. In 1978, he proudly became a U.S. citizen. He was a hard working laborer in the Local 22 Laborer’s Union.

Giuseppe was an avid gardener, always sharing his homegrown vegetables with friends and neighbors. He took great joy in helping raise his grandchildren. He enjoyed going for walks on the beach with his wife and spending time sharing stories with friends. His love for his wife of 56 years was immeasurable.

Born and raised in Sicily, Italy to the late Michael and Antonina (Natale), he was the beloved husband of Matilde (Giambra), cherished father of Antonella Cucuzza and her husband, Carmelo of Revere, Sal Amico of Revere and Joseph Amico and his wife, Elizabeth of Peabody; adored grandfather of An-gelo Cucuzza and his fiancé, Britney, Melissa Cucuzza and her fiancé, Paul, Joseph Cucuzza, Kathryn Amico and Joseph Amico and the dear brother of the late Grazia, Josephine, Michael, Antonio and Assunta Amico.

Funeral arrangements were by the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons ~ Bruno Funeral Home, Revere. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery. At the family’s request and in lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Giuseppe’s memory to the Alzheimer’s Association, 309 Waverley Oaks Rd, Waltham, MA 02452. To leave a message for the family in the guest book, please visit www.Buonfiglio.com.



James Alfred MacAbee

Grand Knight 4th Degree Bishop Chevrus
Assembly, AKA “Jim the Bus Driver” at the
East Boston Social Center

James Alfred MacAbee, of Saugus, formerly of East Boston, passed peacefully at Kaplan Family Hospice on Dec. 11.

Jim was a member of the Fitton Council 84 of the Knights of Columbus, Grand Knight 4th Degree of the Bishop Chevrus Assembly. Jim, also known as “Jim the bus driver” to everyone at the East Boston Social Center, was also former president of IBEW Local 294 at Avis Car Rental. He proudly served in the Merchant Marine and on Boston Tow Boats.

A graduate of East Boston High School, Class of 1963, he was the former owner of “Poor Man’s Bookkeeping” and a dedicated volunteer at Horizons House in Wakefield for 15 years.

He was the beloved husband of Mary A. (Culkeen) for over 55 years; loving father of Hope Lyons and her husband, Michael of Plymouth and Faith Wil-



son-Russo of Saugus and her late husband, John Russo; proud “Papa” of Walter and Jacqueline Wilson and Zachary Lyons.

Jim’s Funeral was held from Magrath Funeral Home on Monday, Dec. 16. His Funeral Mass was celebrated in Most Holy Redeemer Church followed by burial in Puritan Lawn Memorial Park. Donations in Jim’s memory to Kaplan Family Hospice, Danvers would be appreciated. MagrathFuneralHome.com.

Ronald Gallant

Chelsea Police Dept. retiree

Ronald Gallant, Ret. CPD, died on Dec. 11 at the age of 72.

Born in Everett on Jan. 15, 1947 to the late Paul and Gertrude (Spellman), he was the dear brother of the late Paul A. Gallant, cherished uncle of Paula Burns and her husband, Richard of Florida and is also survived by his loving great niece, Kelsi Burns of Florida.

Ron proudly served his country in the United States Army. He retired from the Chelsea Police Department after 29 years of service. He liked his trips to Florida and enjoyed playing cards. In his free time you would find him on the lake fishing or in the woods hunting. Ron was a member of the Beachmont VFW and the French Club.



Funeral arrangements were by the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons-Bruno Funeral Home, Revere. Interment was in Woodlawn cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Ron’s name to The ALS Association, Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 37022, Boone, IA 50037-0022. For guest book please visit www.Buonfiglio.com.

Albert Paul Laber

Of Revere

Albert Paul Laber of Revere on December 17, 2019 at the age of 93. Born in Boston on April 21, 1926 to the late George and Elizabeth (Thomas). Beloved husband of the late Marie “Wee Wee”(LaBella). Devoted father of Denise Letizia and her husband John “Bean” of Revere. Cherished grandfather of Denise Letizia and Anthony Letizia both of Revere. Adored great grandfather of A.J. and Dominic Letizia of Dracut, and Maura Letizia of Everett. Dear brother of the late Thelma Little, Maryann Ackerman, George Laber, and Althea Davis. Albert proudly served his country in the United States Navy. He fought in WWII and received the Asiatic-Pacific Medal with 1 Star, American Area Medal, Philippine Liberation Medal with 1 Star, World War II Victory Medal and Good Conduct



Medal. After his Honorable discharge in April of 1947 he would again see battle but this time in the Korean War in 1950. A visitation will be held at the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons-Bruno Funeral Home 128 Revere St, Revere on Friday, December 20, 2019 from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM followed by a 12:00 PM Mass at St. Mary of the Assumption Church. Interment Holy Cross Cemetery. For guest book please visit www.Buonfiglio.com.

Lawrence “Larry” Scannelli

Of Sturbridge

Lawrence “Larry” Scannelli, aged 63, of Sturbridge MA, escaped this mortal realm on December 12, 2019. He died at Brigham and Women’s Hospital from complications caused by a seizure. Although he lived all his childhood and adult life in an institution for the mentally disabled, Larry touched many lives, including that of his legal guardian, Mona Lisa, who became his angel on earth at Munson Hospital. She was responsible for securing him a permanent home through Venture Community Services where he was beloved by the various caregivers and four house residents who worked and lived at his group home in Sturbridge, MA. They were his true family.

But genetics is everything! Thus, Larry lives on through his brothers Richie, Ron and Steve, particularly through their uncanny resemblance to Larry. The brothers all share Larry’s appreciation for music, dancing, and good food. Larry also lives on through

his younger sister Lisa. Although Larry did not have the opportunity to have a family of his own, his siblings provided him with many nieces and nephews, who also love many of the things Larry appreciated. Larry has now been reunited with his parents, Rose and Alfonso Scannelli, and his older sister Joanne Silva Scannelli.

Lastly, Larry’s funeral and burial are made possible by his Aunt Philomena Mario who gave generously to assure that her nephew would be memorialized and buried with dignity. Services will be held at Buonfiglio Funeral Home in Revere, MA, on December 23, 2019. Visitation will be from 10:00-11:30 AM and the prayer service will begin at 11:30 AM. Larry will be laid to rest in St. Michael Cemetery in Roslindale MA. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Ventures Community Services <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/vcs> in Sturbridge, MA.



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PHOTOS BY MARIANNE SALZA

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Grade 3 singing 'Sleigh Ride.'



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Grades 1-3 and 8 singing 'Joy to the World.'



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