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COURTESY PHOTO

National Grid Foundation officials present a \$1.3 million donation check to members of the United Way organizations that will share the donation.

National Grid Foundation donates \$1.3M to United Way

Special to the Times-Free Press

With food and fuel costs at an all-time high, community-based organizations have kept families afloat. Through a generous \$1.3 million donation

from the National Grid Foundation, thousands of families across the Commonwealth have found the help they need.

The donation, made to United Way of Massachusetts Bay, United Way of Central Massa-

chusetts and Cape and Islands United Way supports local families with emergency heating and financial assistance this winter, emergency food and

See DONATION Page 6

Coletta Zapata holds hearing on road safety ordinance

Special to the Times-Free Press

Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata (District 1) recently held a hearing as Chair of the Government Operations Committee to review

a road safety ordinance that would require food delivery apps to obtain a permit to operate in Boston and create regulations to address safety concerns.

“With the increasing pres-

ence of third-party food delivery platforms in Boston, it is essential to implement accountability measures that protect residents and improve safety

See HEARING Page 2

GSNA supports Percival Place/Orleans Street project

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

At last week’s Gove Street Neighborhood Association (GSNA) monthly meeting, attendees heard plans for a project at 1-4 Percival Place/108-110 Orleans Street and subsequently chose to support it.

As part of this project, which was initially presented to the GSNA in October, Attorney

Richard Lynds explained that they want to confirm the occupancy of six units at the Percival Place building and conduct interior work that includes life safety upgrades.

“This is currently occupied as six units. The record of occupancy is in doubt, and therefore, we are required to go

See GSNA Page 6

JETBLUE SHAMROCK SPLASH



MIKE MUROWCHICK PHOTO

Groups of Splashers at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash. See Pages 12 and 13 for more photos.



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Forum

MARCH IS THE CRUELEST MONTH

According to meteorologists, “meteorological spring” arrived last week on March 1. For those who prefer to mark the seasons astronomically, spring officially will arrive in two weeks on March 20 (at 5:01 AM), marking the vernal equinox.

But regardless of one’s preference, we always have viewed March as the ultimate tease.

The poet Emily Dickinson extolled the arrival of March (“Dear March—Come in— How glad I am—”). But Emily Dickinson lived in Amherst, far from the coast, where ocean breezes off the still-frigid Atlantic -- water temps are their coldest in March -- can lower the dreaded wind-chill factor by 10 degrees even on sunny days.

For those of us who have been lifelong residents of Eastern Mass., March is the month on the calendar that we long for with great anticipation after the harsh winter season. But it always disappoints, like an object of desire that fails to live up to our expectations.

Although this past winter was chillier than the past few, our recent winters have not been too tough to take, thanks to milder-than-normal temperatures and the lack of snow, which environmental scientists tell us is the beginning of a long-term trend of warmer winters because of climate change. Those milder winters have given us all the more reason to hope that March would be even more temperate compared to the past.

But our hopes regularly have been dashed by Mother Nature.

To be sure, the weather is getting warmer and the sun brighter. The crocuses and snowdrops have been pushing through the ground, especially in the areas of our gardens that are in full sun. But the cold weather and brisk winds that are forecast for the coming week, with below-freezing temperatures every night and in the early-morning, are anything but a harbinger of the coming spring season.

One of the earliest memories of our childhood was learning the aphorism, “March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.” Despite the onset of climate-change, that saying remains as true today as it was then.

THE REAL REASONS OUR NATURAL GAS HEATING BILLS ARE SO HIGH

Everybody is complaining about the high cost of heating our homes with natural gas this winter, but this year’s spike in our bills, which has been exacerbated by the colder-than-usual winter, has been completely predictable.

Massachusetts has had the 5th-highest natural gas prices in the U.S for many years for which there are two main reasons:

The first is that thanks to the Jones Act (which involves maritime shipping and unions and dates back to 1920), we have to import our liquefied natural gas (LNG), at far greater expense from Trinidad and other places outside the U.S., instead of from the LNG terminals along the U.S. Gulf Coast.

Second, and more significantly, we have been unable to take advantage of the abundant supply of natural gas from the nearby Marcellus Field in Pennsylvania because of environmental regulations and lawsuits that have prevented the construction of new pipelines to our area.

We are within just a few hundred miles of the largest natural gas-producing area in the country, but we are unable to access it, which has resulted in our need to import LNG via tankers from foreign sources.

So yes, we are spending more this winter to heat our homes because of the colder-than-normal weather. But our natural gas prices are greater than almost everywhere else in the country -- and will continue to be for the foreseeable future -- thanks to a combination of our nation’s antiquated maritime shipping laws and environmental lawsuits that have prevented new pipelines from coming to our region from the Marcellus field in nearby Pennsylvania.

Hearing // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on our streets. The proposed ordinance ensures that Boston implements these measures clearly and effectively. This is an iterative process, and I appreciate the collaboration of all involved in producing legislation that prioritizes safety with efficient and effective regulations. I look forward to continuing the conversation,” said Councilor Coletta Zapata.

During the hearing, Councilors heard from an administration panel including Jascha Franklin-Hodge, Chief of Streets for the Streets Cabinet, Nicholas Gove, Deputy Chief of Transportation, and Dan Humphreys, Deputy Superintendent of Field Services at the Boston Police Department. The panel shared that the unregulated growth of delivery services has exacerbated parking shortages, congestion, and reckless driving, frustrating residents and public officials. They emphasized that the proposed Ordinance would allow the City of Boston to implement common-sense regulations focused on registration, insur-

ance, and data sharing.

Under this Ordinance, large delivery platforms would be required to register with the City and obtain a permit to operate, a standard practice for all businesses impacting Boston’s streets. Additionally, the Ordinance provides requirements for insurance and data sharing. The insurance requirements would ensure that anyone injured in a crash involving a delivery driver has recourse, regardless of the type of vehicle used. Additionally, data-sharing provisions would give the city critical tools to address safety and congestion challenges more effectively.

Councilors emphasized the need for comprehensive regulations to address concerns regarding traffic

congestion, safety risks and accountability for delivery companies. They discussed potential amendments to the ordinance, including adding a fee to help cover enforcement costs, establishing a process for registration renewal and revocation, incorporating privacy protection language, and identifying specific public safety requirements.

A working session to review the current language in the ordinance will be scheduled in the upcoming weeks. A recording of the hearing can be found at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRawfJ-ddVI. For additional information please contact the Office of Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata by phone at (617) 635-3200 or by email at gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov.

The East Boston Times-Free Press reserves the right to edit letters for space, accuracy and clarity. We regret that we cannot publish unsigned letters. Please include your street and telephone number with your submission. The East Boston Times-Free Press publishes columns, viewpoints and letters to the editor as a forum for readers to express their opinions and to encourage debate. Please note that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The East Boston Times-Free Press. Text or attachments emailed to editor@eastietimes.com are preferred.

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Wu announces winning proposals of inaugural round of Participatory Budgeting Initiative for Boston

Special to the Times-Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Office of Participatory Budgeting (OPB) announced the winning projects of the first cycle of the Participatory Budgeting Initiative, “Ideas in Action.” The winning proposals included: Expand Access to Fresh Foods in Boston; Rat Prevention Initiatives in Dense Residential Areas; Programs to Support Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Youth; Rental Assistance for Boston Youth Ages 16-24; Support Community Gardens in Boston’s Neighborhoods with Limited Access to Affordable Food; and Install Benches at High-Ridership Public Transit Bus Stops in Boston.

As part of the participatory budgeting process, residents previously submitted 1,200 ideas for how the City should allocate \$2 million. Then, Boston residents helped shape and prioritize 14 project proposals for the voting phase. Following the collection of submissions, residents voted on their top five projects from January 15 through February 15, 2025. Determining the winning projects, 4,462 residents voted, with 4,449 Boston residents voting online and 13 residents voting in person at City Hall, resulting in the six winning proposals.

“Our inaugural participatory budgeting process was guided by the voices of 4,462 Bostonians directly shaping the future of our city,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “We’re grateful to all who helped drive projects that matter most to community members and look forward to implementing these investments throughout our neighborhoods.”

This initiative started as a community effort that led Boston voters to approve a ballot measure in the 2021 Municipal Election to create an Office of Participatory Budgeting. Mayor Wu and the City Council adopted the ordinance, establishing the Office in spring 2023. The \$2 million of the City budget will be invested in one-

time and non-recurrent, community-driven projects across the City. Voting was available and accessible in multiple languages, both online or in person at City Hall. Residents also could visit any Boston Public Library branch to receive assistance with voting. All Boston residents aged 11 and older, regardless of citizenship status, were eligible to vote.

“Our collaboration with community groups, guidance from the Office’s External Oversight Board, and intentional partnerships with City Departments helped our team create an inclusive and equitable participatory budgeting process during this inaugural year, and allowed for a positive experience for all residents,” said Renato Castelo, Director of the Office of Participatory Budgeting. “OPB looks forward to supporting the implementation of the winning projects and incorporating lessons learned into the second cycle of PB, which kicks off in July of 2025!”

Throughout the voting month, the Office of Participatory Budgeting (OPB) worked closely with community stakeholders to inform residents and actively engage them in the voting process. OPB also collaborated with the Office of Neighborhood Services to inform residents about the voting period in their monthly newsletters and social media. Additionally, office hours were hosted at Boston Public Library branches to engage with residents in voting. These took place at the East Boston, Roxbury, Dudley Square, Copley, Brighton, and Chinatown branches during the voting period.

“I’m thrilled by the success of Boston’s first-ever participatory budget process, which inspired innovative, community-driven proposals from across the city. Many of the winning projects—expanding fresh food access, rat prevention, and support for formerly incarcerated youth—align with the priorities of the Boston City

Details on each proposal:

Rank	Votes	Proposal	Funding	Lead Department
1	1834	Expand Access to Fresh Foods in Boston	\$400,000	Office of Food Justice
2	1761	Rat Prevention Initiatives in Dense Residential Areas	\$500,000	Inspectional Services
3	1707	Programs to Support Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Youth	\$250,000	Office of Returning Citizens
4	1638	Rental Assistance for Boston Youth Ages 16-24	\$200,000	Office of Housing Stability
5	1571	Support Community Gardens in Boston’s Neighborhoods with Limited Access to Affordable Food	\$500,000	GrowBoston
6	1505	Install Benches at High-Ridership Public Transit Bus Stops in Boston	\$150,000	Boston Transportation Department

Council and of my office. I’m excited and hopeful as we begin implementing these community-led solutions,” said City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune.

“It’s encouraging to see the democratic results of this participatory budgeting process. It really shows the power of the people,” said City Councilor Brian Worrell, chair of the Committee on Ways & Means. “The City Council aims to reflect the people’s voice in our budget amendments, and much of our advocacy reflects these same priorities as our residents, including housing, food insecurity, and quality of life issues.”

Each of the six winning proposals will receive dedicated funding, and relevant departments will oversee its implementation.

“The Boston Rodent Action Plan team is grateful to the people of Boston for pursuing innovative and effective rodent control solutions. Improving waste management in our densest residential areas and leveraging technology to measure effectiveness will result in tangible improvements and ultimately, better quality of life for residents,” said John Ulrich, Chair of the Boston Rodent Action Plan Working Group. “We stand ready to implement this project and report back to the community on its results.”

The Office of Participatory Budgeting will work with the

lead departments on next steps for implementation later this year.

The Office of Participatory Budgeting (OPB) provides an official point of entry for Boston residents to contribute to the city’s budget process. OPB continues to advance its

mission by furthering public engagement and direct democratic involvement, building collective capacity on issues of racial and social justice, and aligning with the City’s goal of achieving and embedding equity and inclusion into City practices.

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BOSTON SCORES HOLDS ANNUAL POETS' BANQUET

Photos & Story by Marianne Salza

Boston Scores, a Boston Public Schools afterschool youth enrichment provider, held its Annual Poets' Banquet on February 22. The event celebrated the voices, perspectives, and experiences of 19 Boston

Scores elementary students (10 representing East Boston) who were selected to recite original pieces, both comical and profound.

"Some of these topics they share are heavy, heart-breaking, and beautiful," said Rebecca Villatoro-Alvarez, Elementary

School Academic Coordinator, Boston Scores.

Attended by families and writing coaches, and hosted by Zumix, the gathering included a breakfast reception, games, and musical entertainment by Zumix's Marmalade Jazz Ensemble, comprised of Edwin

Duarte on piano, Nox Jornales on drums, and Danilo Perez on bass.

The 2025 Poet-Athlete of the Year will be selected by judges to receive a \$1,000 scholarship donated by the Ellen LaForge Memorial Poetry Foundation. Four runners-up will be pre-

sented \$250 awards.

"It's not easy to come up here, and say something from memory that's vulnerable, personal, and that has many lines and stanzas," admitted Villatoro-Alvarez. "It's a feat. We are so proud of them."



Kimberly Argueta, Patrick J. Kennedy School 4th grader, reciting "Be You."



Rebecca Villatoro-Alvarez, Elementary School Academic Coordinator, Boston Scores.



Christian Vasquez, Patrick J. Kennedy School 6th grader, reciting "Flowers Bring Peace."



Sofia Infante, Curtis Guild School 5th grader, reciting "The Small but Happy Days."



Eliana Ohiomobn, Bradley School 5th grader, reciting "A Poem for Grandma."



Zumix's Marmalade Jazz Ensemble, featuring, Edwin Duarte on piano, Danilo Perez on bass, and Nox Jornales on drums.



Genesis Perdido, Mario Umana Academy 6th grader, reciting "I Thought No One Loved Me."



Diego Villeda, Curtis Guild School 5th grader, reciting "You Can Achieve."



Gustavo Melgar, Mario Umana Academy 6th grader, reciting "Negligence."



Samuel Welch, Bradley School 3rd grader, reciting "Dinosaur Poem."



Sixth grade Mario Umana Academy students, Genesis Perdido and Gustavo Melgar, with Sheena Kovalovsky, writing coach.



Bradley School students: Eliana Ohiomobn, 5th grade, and Samuel Welch, 3rd grade.

BOSTON SCORES HOLDS ANNUAL POETS' BANQUET



Boston Scores Annual Poets' Banquet participants, gathered on the Zumix stage on February 22.



Diego Villeda, 5th grader at the Curtis Guild Elementary School, with his parents, Eduardo Villeda and Maria Granados, with Sofia Infante, 5th grader at the Curtis Guild Elementary School, and her writing coach, Beatriz Contreras, Family Liason, Curtis Guild Elementary School.



Jessica Argueta, Kimberly Argueta, 4th grader at the Patrick J. Kennedy School, and Ezequiel Argueta.

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- Human Resources Director
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- Maintenance Workers
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- Program Assistants
- Camp Joy Counselors, Supervisors and Nurses

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Pre-registration preferred but walk-ins welcome. Scan here to register

City of Boston residency required for all jobs except Lifeguards and Camp Joy

Boston.gov/BCYF

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Christian Vasquez, 6th grader at the Patrick J. Kennedy School, with Cynthia Grant-Carter, writing coach.



Tommy Welch, Regional School Superintendent, Boston Public Schools, with his children, Emi and Samuel Welch, 3rd grader at the Bradley School.

Donation // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

supplies and other basic needs. United Way of Massachusetts Bay will distribute the funds to 19 organizations in Lawrence, Lynn, Quincy, East Boston, Boston and Chelsea.

“This gift helps close out the Foundation’s 25th Anniversary and ring in the new year highlighting our core principle: Giving people the tools they need to build hope is an essential ingredient in the development of individuals, families and building stronger communities,” said Eileen Cohen, Board Chair, National Grid Foundation. “We also know that small amounts of emergency assistance in a time of financial crisis can prevent families from losing their homes, going without heat, experiencing food insecurity or going without other essential needs.”

The Foundation, representatives from the three United Ways, Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez, and other state and local elected officials gathered to announce the funding at The Neighborhood Developers facility in Chelsea on February 10, at 10 a.m. During the short speaking program, select community members spoke about the personal impact of the grant dollars on their family.

“We are honored to host this event and deeply grateful to the National Grid Foundation for its incredible generosity in awarding \$1.3 million to the United Way Family Fund,” said Rafael

Mares, Executive Director of The Neighborhood Developers. “This support has a tremendous impact—helping families across the Commonwealth keep their utilities on, avoid eviction, and put food on their tables. In 2024 alone, TND assisted nearly 300 families with over \$180,000 in utility assistance, and with this funding, we look forward to helping even more households in need.”

United Way of Massachusetts Bay has administered emergency assistance and flexible funds to households across the region since 1976. The funds are to assist individuals or families with an unanticipated emergency (e.g., job loss, health crisis) or to help individuals enrolled with a partner agency take steps toward financial stability.

“We know that rising housing costs, decreasing housing vacancies, skyrocketing food and consumer prices, inflation, and shifting labor markets can make it more challenging for families to meet their basic needs. This often forces families to fall behind on paying their utility bills,” said Daphne Principe Griffin, Interim CEO of United Way of Massachusetts Bay. “Through the generosity of the National Grid Foundation and the work of our partners we are helping communities not only survive winter, but thrive all year round through these funding programs and supports.”

Here in Massachusetts, 20%

of households reported they were unable to pay an energy bill or unable to pay the full bill amount at least once over the past year. That’s according to U.S. Census data. The state’s annual home heating forecast anticipated a colder winter compared to 2024, with moderately higher energy prices, including electricity, natural gas, and propane.

“Our mission in our office is helping those in need the most and this goes a long way to helping residents that I represent, particularly those who need a lift at this time during the winter months when getting fuel assistance is not an easy endeavor,” said Senator Sal DiDomenico. “We have a lot of folks that talk about helping people in our communities, but they don’t always step up to the plate and do it. And the fact that we have National Grid Foundation helping these families is really a big deal for us.

“This much-needed funding will have a significant impact on the Cape and Islands ensuring our neighbors in need don’t have to choose between heat or food – that’s the reality many living here year-round are facing,” said Mark Skala, president/CEO of the Cape and Islands United Way. “We are so grateful for this investment in the community by National Grid Foundation.”

“We are grateful for our relationship with the National

Grid Foundation. Their enormous support will provide substantial and immediate relief to thousands of residents in Central Massachusetts,” said Tim Garvin, Executive Director of United Way of Central Massachusetts. “We distributed the funds to Catholic Charities, Central Mass Housing Alliance, Elder Services, Project New Hope, Veterans Inc., and Worcester Community Action Council for energy assistance.”

President and CEO, Veteran’s Inc, Vincent J. Perrone continued by expressing his sincerest gratitude to the foundation, “this donation will help to provide over 6,000 of our veterans and their families with safe and stable housing services . . . a complex task, [that] we could not begin to achieve without the support of community partners like United Way of Central MA.”

The National Grid Foundation was created to enhance the quality of life across its grant making territory. The Foundation’s ongoing challenge is to create opportunities for solutions to educational and environmental issues. Its objective is based on the principle that giving people the tools to build hope is an essential ingredient in the development of individuals, families, and communities. Since its inception in December of 1998, has granted more than \$43 million to local community organizations. www.national-gridfoundation.com

www.national-gridfoundation.com

United Way of Massachusetts Bay exists to build more equitable communities, together. With over 85 years of local impact in eastern Massachusetts, we work with and for our communities to build economic prosperity and enable everyone—across races and ethnicities—to share in the knowledge, wealth and resources available. We believe that the key to unlocking opportunity is uniting people, and we bring together individuals, community leaders, corporate partners, legislators and organizations to build a powerful engine of change. Visit www.unitedwaymassbay.org for more information.

United Way of Central Massachusetts is dedicated to creating a healthier and more resilient community by fostering youth opportunities, enhancing financial security, and connecting people and resources to support those in need. Through the enormous support of our donors and volunteers we work every day to improve the community for everyone.

The Cape and Islands United Way leads social impact in the region. Partnering with donors, volunteers, and nonprofit organizations, our mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities to advance the common good on Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket.

GSNA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

through a process with the City of Boston to confirm that occupancy as a six-unit dwelling,” said Lynds.

Lynds also noted that there would be no changes at 108-110 Orleans Street. “There’s no expansion of these buildings being proposed. There’s no change in the exterior; all the existing conditions are going to remain,” he said.

Moreover, Lynds talked about plans for a lot subdivision. “The building behind this building sits to the rear of the lot; the building here at 108-110 Orleans is toward the front of the lot. We would simply incorporate—for lack of a better term—the imaginary line to divide the parcels so these aren’t two buildings on one lot,” he said.

It should also be noted that

there is an existing demolition plan for the 1-4 Percival Place building, and its headhouse will be removed.

Later, Lynds briefly outlined the zoning relief that would be necessary for the proposal but said, “The only relief that we would require is anything that would be triggered from the pre-existing conditions, but unlike a new development project, this doesn’t really impact or create any additional impacts to the neighborhood because all of the same conditions will remain.”

Eventually, attendees were able to ask questions and comment. One attendee wanted to ensure that the buildings would not be any higher. Lynds confirmed that would be the case and emphasized that the 1-4 Percival building would be

lower due to the aforementioned headhouse removal.

Another attendee asked if the buildings were currently occupied, to which Lynds said yes. However, he mentioned that the renovations at 1-4 Percival were not imminent due to the permitting hurdles that still needed to be cleared.

“This particular property owner owns a good amount of units in the area. We have no issue with assisting with relocation and finding places before any construction starts, and certainly, we will work with those tenants in doing that before we get underway with any of the renovations,” said Lynds.

Neel Batra, a member of the GSNA Board, followed up on the previous question and asked if the plan was for temporary relocation, where the

tenants would be able to move back in following renovations. Lynds indicated he was unsure about those plans but emphasized, “The concept is to not have any evictions in order to proceed with this renovation.”

Batra also wanted to clarify why two addresses were listed in this project. Lynds confirmed that it was because two properties currently occupy a single lot, which would be changed as part of the subdivision.

Lynds also highlighted the feedback from the abutters meeting regarding the project. He indicated that many questions were similar to those asked during this GSNA meeting and did not recall any opposition.

One resident asked if there were future plans for the Orleans Street building. Lynds said

it could change, but currently, there are no plans.

Finally, Batra wanted to know about the evidence that shows the 1-4 Percival building being six units because Lynds mentioned that there was evidence that dates back to the 1950s.

Lynds cited the property’s building jacket and conflicting references in the building permits. He also added that tenants would say the building has six units, six kitchens, and six bathrooms.

Ultimately, eligible voters elected to support the project 8-2 in an online poll that was open until last Wednesday.

For more information about the GSNA, visit its website at <https://www.govestreet.org/home>. The next GSNA meeting is scheduled for March 24.

NEWS IN BRIEF

EASTIE MAN FOUND GUILTY OF ASSAULT

A Suffolk County jury found Damien Knighton, 41, of East Boston guilty of six counts of indecent assault and battery on a person over 14.

Knighton will be sentenced Friday, March 14 at 10 a.m. before Judge Debra Squires-Lee in courtroom 907 in Suffolk Superior Court.

Knighton was charged with seven counts of indecent assault and battery on a person over 14 involving four victims during his time as a medical assistant at a Mass General Hospital health care center located at 388 Commonwealth Avenue.

The Commonwealth is represented by ADA Rita Muse. Knighton is represented by attorney Steven Sack.

“These incidents were egregious personal and ethical violations in a place of treatment and trust, and I thank the jury for recognizing them for what

See BRIEF Page 10

10 Year Anniversary



In Loving Memory of
Michael Jones
1985 – 2015

*My Dearest Nephew,
How constantly we think of you,
With hearts and eyes that fill,
The love in life we had for you,
In death grows stronger still.
Let the winds of love blow softly
And whisper for you to hear,
We love and miss you dearly,
As it dawns another year.*

Love, 
Aunt & Family

10 Year Anniversary



In Loving Memory of
Michael Jones
1985-2015

*We walked together, you and I.
A mother and her son.
We had hopes and dreams for
tomorrow,
But tomorrow didn't come.
We walked together, you and I.
We talked, we laughed, we loved.
We shared so many happy times
And for that, I thank God above.
We walked together, you and I.
But only for a short time.
For all too soon it ended
Leaving broken hearts behind.
And even though I miss you,
More than words can say,
I thank God that I got to walk
with you
Every moment of each day.*

Love Mom 

OBITUARIES

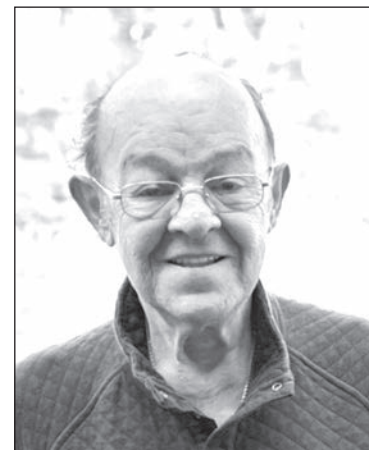
Anthony Fiorino

Retired Boston Emergency Medical Services
Lieutenant

A Funeral Mass was celebrated in Sacred Heart Church on Friday, February 28, for Anthony P. Fiorino, who passed away on February 23, at 85 years of age. Interment followed in St. Michael Cemetery, Boston.

Born and raised in East Boston, he was the son of Vincenzo and Giuseppa Fiorino. Anthony attended schools in East Boston and following his graduation from High School, he continued his education by taking several classes before obtaining a position with Boston's Emergency Medical Services. He enjoyed a very rewarding career with the company which spanned over 54 years until his retirement at the rank of Lieutenant. Anthony was well known and well respected throughout the company and the community due to his unparalleled commitment and devotion to his work.

The beloved husband of the late Dolores M. (Pasqualini) Fiorino, he was the loving father of Anna Maria Esposito and her husband, Guy of East Boston, Josephine Caruso and her husband, Amerigo of Waltham, Mary Anne Fiorino and Abe Benchalh of Danvers, Toni Anna Fiorino of East Boston, Theresa Fiorino of Lynn and the late Baby Dolores Fiorino, Teresa Fiorino and her late husband, James Toy, Jennifer Fiorino McDonough and



her husband, Shaun of Bridgewater and he is also survived by Anne Lynch, Dan and Doug Lannon and their children. He was the cherished grandfather of Riccardo, Anthony and Sophia Caruso, Gabriel and Amina Rose Benchalh, Christian and Alexis Luti, Isabella Fiorino, Matthew Fiorino, Nicholas Toy, Tristan, Isabella and Sophia McDonough; adored great grandfather of Luca, Sonny and Isabella and the dear brother of Charles Fiorino, Vincenzo Fiorino, Jennie Privatera, Josephine Cheffro and the late Phil and Joseph Fiorino. He is also survived by many cousins.

To send online condolences, please visit www.vertuciosmithvazza.com. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the care and direction of the Vertuccio Smith & Vazza, Beechwood Home for Funerals, Revere.



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March 2, 2024 - March 2, 2025

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Laughter, and see your Smiles.
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Large crowd attends campaign reception for Josh Kraft in East Boston

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

A large crowd attended a campaign reception for Boston mayoral candidate Josh Kraft last Wednesday at the Hilton Garden Inn, East Boston.

Approximately 200 supporters, mostly from the East Bos-

ton neighborhood, joined Kraft at the meet-and-greet event. It was the second campaign gathering of the week in which Kraft packed a room with supporters. The Boston Herald reported Sunday that Kraft hosted a well-attended fundraiser at Davio's Northern Italian Steak-

house in the Seaport District last week.

Gina Guange, catering manager at the hotel, provided the introductory remarks at the reception.

"I want to start by thanking all of you for coming to tonight's event," said Guange.

"I'm going to keep it brief because there are a lot of you here tonight and I know Josh wants to speak to each one of you.

I have known Josh Kraft for 25 years by working with the Boys and Girls Club of Chelsea. He has accomplished so

much since then which he will share with you tonight.

One of his best qualities is that he is someone who is humble - he genuinely cares and he listens to what people have to say.

See KRAFT Page 9



Josh Kraft greets long-time East Boston High School teacher Lorraine "Dreamie" Cioffi at the campaign reception.



Josh Kraft greets Debbie Marzano at the campaign reception held Feb. 26 at the Hilton Garden Inn.



Mayoral candidate Josh Kraft and Dr. Sherri Raftery.



Mayoral candidate Josh Kraft greets Jack Fabbo and Shirley Fabbo at the campaign reception.

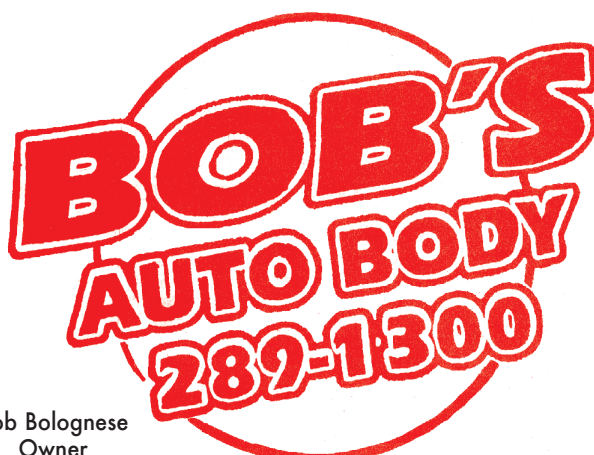


Josh Kraft thanks Lisa Capogreco Cappuccio and Gina Guange for helping to organize the meet-and-greet event.



Mayoral candidate Josh Kraft greets supporters, Ella Pizza and Bea Doran, at the meet-and-greet event.

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Kraft // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

When I found out that Josh was considering a run for Mayor of Boston, I could not think of a better person to bring this city together," said Guange.

Josh Kraft thanked the people in the function room for their support and then delivered a speech that highlighted his vision for Boston and addressed some of the key issues in the city of Boston.

Josh Kraft thanked the peo-



Paul Capurso, Dave Arinella, mayoral candidate Josh Kraft, and Yawkey Baseball League legend Steve Walsh.



Mayoral candidate Josh Kraft greets East Boston supporters Kathy Orlando, Mary Berninger, and Susan Luongo as they arrive for the campaign reception at Hilton Garden Inn Hotel.



East Boston's well-known Capogreco family shows its support for Josh Kraft (center). From left, are Pat Capogreco, Lisa Capogreco Cappuccio, Maria Capogreco, and Vincenzo Capogreco.

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CITY PAWS

License your dog

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

We have reminders on our calendar to license our dog in March. Typically, we receive email and snail mail reminders from the City of Boston. Massachusetts law requires all dogs to be licensed with their city or town by April 1st of each year.

There are many good reasons to license your dog. In addition to being a legal requirement, licensing dogs is a form of advocacy. Adding your residence to the list of homes with dogs supports organizations fighting for services for those who share their lives with companion animals.

It's easy for politicians to ignore the wishes of dog owners when setting funds for recreational space and services when the official number of dogs is

vastly decreased by those who don't get a license. In addition, dog walkers, kennels, dog parks, and some residential buildings require licensing.

Finally, the lack of a license says something about you should you ever face a legal situation regarding your dog. Something that might result in a warning could escalate to a fine when an enforcement official sees you as a scofflaw. In the case of a lawsuit or an insurance issue, your lack of a license could undermine your credibility.

Rabies Vaccination Required

You must have proof of a current rabies vaccination to license your dog. With rabies vaccinations, you don't have a choice since state law requires, "Each owner or keeper



We received our license at the well-organized Animal Rescue League Clinic last year.

of a dog, cat or ferret that is 6 months of age or older shall

cause such dog, cat or ferret to be vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian using a licensed vaccine ..."

However, Massachusetts is one state that allows medical exemptions for rabies vaccinations. There are precise guidelines that begin with your veterinarian explaining to the licensing agency why your dog should not be vaccinated at this time. Refer to Chapter 93 Section 145B of Massachusetts laws for details.

Below are the Low-cost Rabies Clinics scheduled in Boston. Your municipality may have a similar program. Non-residents can't license their dogs at these clinics. However, they can get a rabies vaccination for \$10.

RABIES VACCINE FEES

- for Cats and Dogs
- Boston residents: \$5
- Boston residents over the age of 70: \$2
- Non-residents: \$10

2025 Clinic Dates and Locations

- DORCHESTER | MARCH

- 1. BCYF Perkins Community Center | 155 Talbot Ave.
- WEST ROXBURY | MARCH 15. BCYF Roche Community Center | 1716 Centre St.
- SOUTH END | APRIL 5. Animal Rescue League of Boston | 10 Chandler St.
- DORCHESTER | MARCH 1. BCYF Perkins Community Center | 155 Talbot Ave.
- JAMAICA PLAIN | MAY 3. BCYF Curtis Hall Community Center | 20 South St.
- EAST BOSTON | MARCH 29. BCYF Pino Community Center | 86 Boardman St.
- CHARLESTOWN | APRIL 12. BCYF Charlestown Community Center | 255 Medford St.
- ROXBURY | MAY 31. BCYF Condon Community Center | 200 D St.
- SOUTH BOSTON | MAY 17. BCYF Condon Community Center | 200 D St.

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Briefs// CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

they were. I am grateful for the victims who bravely recounted Damien Knighton's actions, and I thank the prosecutor, victim witness advocate and

police investigators for their diligent work in bringing this defendant to justice," District Attorney Kevin Hayden said.

Coletta Zapata announces community budget town halls

Special to the Times-Free Press

Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata is hosting a series of Budget Town Halls across District One to engage directly with residents and gather input on budget priorities ahead of the City Council's annual budget review for fiscal year 2026-2027.

"Budget Town Halls provide a valuable opportunity to shape my advocacy efforts and ensure our district's priorities are reflected in the city's budget," said Councilor Coletta Zapata. "Last year, we successfully secured funding for trash containerization, expanded overtime for pest control inspectors, ESOL classes for parents, the right to counsel for residents, expanded city housing vouchers, and increased

youth employment opportunities. The budget process allows us to invest in essential services and address critical issues like housing affordability, education, and climate preparedness. I look forward to hearing from residents in the coming weeks!"

This marks the fourth year the Boston City Council has the authority to reject, reduce, amend, or approve line items in the city's operating budget. In April, the Mayor's Office will submit the initial proposals for the city's operating, capital, and Boston Public Schools budgets to the Council. Budget hearings, chaired by Councilor Brian Worrell (District 4), will begin shortly thereafter and continue through June. The Council is expected to vote on the finalized budget by the end of June, with approved mea-

sures taking effect on July 1, 2025.

Additionally, this budget cycle will feature the city's second participatory budgeting process, allowing residents to contribute ideas and recommendations. To learn more about how to get involved, visit boston.gov/departments/participatory-budgeting.

The Budget Town Halls will

be held on the following dates:

East Boston – Thursday, March 20 at 6:00 PM, East Boston Public Library, 365 Bremen Street

Charlestown – Thursday, April 3 at 6:00 PM, Judy Evers Community Room, Boston Police Station, 20 Vine Street

North End/Wharf District – Tuesday, April 8 at 6:30 PM, Nazzaro Community Center,

30 N. Bennet Street

Translation services, child-care, and food will be provided at all Budget Town Hall meetings.

For more information, please contact the Office of Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata at (617) 635-3200 or email gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov.

When you change your clocks, check your alarms

With daylight saving time beginning on March 9, Massachusetts fire officials are reminding residents to check their smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms when they change their clocks.

"Working smoke and CO alarms are your family's first line of defense against an emergency at home," said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. "As we spring forward this weekend, remember to check your alarms when you change your clocks. Be sure they're present on every level of your home and within their useful lifespan. And unless you have newer alarms with sealed, long-life batteries, this is a great time to replace the alkaline batteries in all your alarms."

"Smoke and CO alarms are like any other appliance – they don't last forever," said Foxborough Fire Chief Michael Kelleher, president of the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts. "An alarm's manufacturing date is printed on the back of the device. Smoke alarms need to be replaced after 10 years, and carbon monoxide alarms need to be replaced after 5, 7, or 10 years, depending on the make and model. If your alarm is out of date, or if there's no date at all, it's time to replace it."

Most Fire Deaths Take Place at Home Overnight

Of the 50 fire deaths in Massachusetts last year,[1] 80% took place in dwellings – and more than half of these took place between 8:00 pm and 7:00 am. Overall, DFS code compliance officers could only confirm that smoke alarms were present and operated at about 35% of the fatal fire scenes they inspected.

"Here in Massachusetts, most fire deaths take place at home and they're most common during the overnight hours when we're sleeping," State Fire Marshal Davine said. "Tragically, we see this fact pattern play out again and again, especially with seniors in homes without working smoke alarms."

Older Adults at Greatest Risk

More than half of last year's residential fire deaths involved adults aged 65 and older. State Fire Marshal Davine and Chief Kelleher asked residents to check in on older relatives, friends, and neighbors who may need help installing, testing, or replacing their alarms. Seniors can also contact their local fire department, council on aging, or senior center for assistance.

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HUNDREDS PARTICIPATE IN THE 15TH ANNUAL JETBLUE SHAMROCK SPLASH

Special to the Times-Free Press

On March 2, one of the coldest days of the year, 200 brave souls plunged into the icy 32-degree waters of Constitution Beach in East Boston for the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash. The water was cold, but the shore was colder at a crisp ten degrees. The shivering crowd was a medley of people decked out in bathing suits and silly costumes like sharks and flamingoes who screamed and cheered as they ran into Boston Harbor for the big splash a little after noon.

The Shamrock Splash is a fundraiser hosted by the non-profit Save the Harbor/Save the Bay in partnership with JetBlue for Save the Harbor's

Better Beaches Grant Program. The Better Beaches Grant Program awards small grants to individuals and organizations who produce free events in the summer on the Department of Conservation and Recreation's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

Chris Mancini, Save the Harbor's executive director said about the Better Beaches Grant Program, "The goal of the grant program is to support free public events that encourage people to get out on some of the country's cleanest urban beaches and enjoy our spectacular urban natural resources. The grants focus on breaking down barriers especially for people of color, people

See SPLASH Page 13



PHOTO BY MIKE MUROWCHICK

Groups of Splashers at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash.



KATY ROGERS PHOTO

A Splasher with a dog in the icy waters of Constitution Beach at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash.




PHOTO BY MIKE MUROWCHICK

Groups of Splashers at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash.




PHOTO BY MIKE MUROWCHICK

Kristen Barry taking a plunge in the icy waters of Constitution Beach at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash.


Ash Wednesday
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Splash // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

who don't speak English as a first language, and ADA-accessibility."

The Splash exceeded its \$50,000 goal by raising \$55,910. Each community raised the following amounts for their summer beach programming:

- East Boston \$9,138
- South Boston \$8,953
- Lynn & Nahant \$6,978
- Wollaston \$6,589
- Nantasket \$4,366
- Dorchester \$3,838
- Revere \$3,140

• Winthrop \$2,908

After the splash, participants warmed up in the FMC Ice Sports rink and snagged a hot bowl of clam chowder from The Daily Catch and warm empanadas and rice and beans from Bono. Refreshing beverages were provided by Downeast, Sam Adams, Dogfish Head, Topo Chico and Goldpeak. Volo Boston included beach games and a lively DJ set by Rilla Force kept people smiling and moving outside despite the wind chill.



KATY ROGERS PHOTO

Rep. Adrian Madaro, Matteo Madaro and Donnie Todd of East Boston with Chris Mancini at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash.



PHOTO BY MIKE MUROWCHICK

Donnie Todd of East Boston plunges in the icy waters of Constitution Beach.



PHOTO BY MIKE MUROWCHICK

Splasher in a flamingo costume taking a plunge in the icy waters of Constitution Beach during the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash.



KATY ROGERS PHOTO

Costume contest participants at the 15th Annual JetBlue Shamrock Splash on Constitution Beach.

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Boston Forging & Welding owner at home on the job

By Dan Murphy

Chip Giovanni, the third-generation owner of Boston Forging & Welding, has early childhood memories of accompanying his father to work, and even then, he said he felt right at home there.

“It never felt like work or a chore,” said Chip, who as the eldest of three siblings always diverged from his younger brother and younger sister in that unlike them, he always wanted to join the family business.

His paternal grandfather, Joseph Giovanni, started Boston Forging & Welding, around 70 years ago, setting up its operations on the Fish Pier in South Boston. For more 40 years, the business served exclusively the fishing fleet. But the company relocated to East Boston in 1998, amid new regulations on the fishing industry, which meant less work for them.

Chip’s father, Ronald Giovanni, went to Valley Forge Military Academy before grad-

uating from Northeastern University around 1970. He then went to work full time at Boston Forging & Welding before assuming the reins of the company when his father retired circa 1980.

Throughout high school and college, Chip worked for the business during summer and school vacations. He started working there full-time in 1989 upon earning a bachelor’s degree in industrial engineering from Clarkson University in Potsdam, N.Y.

Subsequently, Chip completed his AutoCAD training at Wentworth Institute of Technology. He has also earned a construction supervisor license, and is a licensed fire escape installer/inspector per the City of Boston.

When his father died in 2000, Chip assumed the company’s reins. Sales have since tripled, making it a profitable business again after previously being in the red for a number of years.

“Everyone, family members,



COURTESY PHOTO

Chip Giovanni, the third-generation owner of Boston Forging & Welding.

tell me their proud of me, and that my father would be proud of me,” said Chip.

Boston Forging and Welding Corp. today has the experience and credentials to respond to a wide range of commercial, marine or residential concerns, from fabrication to repair to fire escape inspections, and the company is fully insured/bonded.

Past customers have included U.S. Coast Guard-approved jobs, Mass Turnpike-approved jobs, City of Boston-approved jobs, and Boston Redevelop-

ment Authority jobs, and for Logan International Airport, and the company has also done work for the World Trade Center, Prudential Center, Au Bon Pain, and various property management companies.

The vast majority of the company’s residential work is in Boston and Cambridge, with the Back Bay and South End accounting for the bulk of that, Chip said.

And of the approximately 20 welding companies now operating in the City of Boston, Boston Forging & Welding has

distinguished itself with a stellar track record over the years, including not having a single customer complaint against them.

Chip points to this as perhaps the truest testament to Boston Forging & Welding’s unwavering reputation for quality work.

Boston Forging & Welding is located at 336 Border St. in East Boston. For more information, call Chip Giovanni at 617-567-2300 or email him at chippaggio@comcast.net, or visit the company’s website at bostonforgingandwelding.com.

Postal Inspectors remind to be alert for scams during National Consumer Protection Week

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is kicking off National Consumer Protection Week, March 2-8, 2025, with a warning about the dangers of imposter scams. Imposters are scammers who work very hard to convince consumers they are a friend or relative, or that they are from a legitimate source, such as a bank or government agency. These fraudsters then take personally identifiable in-

formation (PII) and use it to steal victims’ money.

“There are many types of imposter scams,” Inspector in Charge (INC) Eric Shen of the Criminal Investigations Group says. “But they all start with messages like, ‘I’m in trouble...,’ ‘I need...,’ ‘You’ve won!...,’ or ‘I have a great offer for you!’ These scammers lull consumers into a false sense of trust, gain access to privileged

information, and then drain financial accounts.”

“With a few simple tips, consumers can protect themselves from imposter scams,” INC Shen says:

- Take your time to make financial decisions. Whether it’s investments or unsolicited offers, like the lottery or sweepstakes, don’t rush into sending your money to someone you don’t know.

- Is it really a representative from your bank sending that email or text? To be certain, call your bank at the number you were given when you opened your account. Don’t call a number that you haven’t verified and never click on any links in an email or text.

- Grandparents: Before sending money to help a grandchild who says they’re in a desperate situation, make sure it’s really them! Call them or their parents at a number you recognize to confirm they sent you a message.

- If you meet someone over the internet who professes their love for you right away, but needs financial assistance to meet you, exit the conversation as quickly as you can.

- The Postal Service will NEVER send you an unso-

licited text. Any text or email claiming you have a USPS delivery problem is designed to steal your PII. Delete these messages, but before you do, send the bogus text or email to spam@uspis.gov.

- Put your phone number on the National Do Not Call Registry at 1-888-382-1222 or at www.donotcall.gov.



- If you are a victim of a scam or suspect fraud, report it: Submit an online report to the Inspection Service or call us at 877-876-2455.

Remembering these simple tips will help keep consumers’ personal information and finances safe.

For more information on how to spot an imposter, visit our website at www.uspis.gov/ncpw-2025.

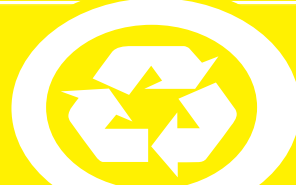
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THIS NEWS PAPER

CONGRATULATIONS, MARGUERITE WYNTER



CARY SHUMAN PHOTO

East Boston resident Marguerite Wynter (left), Director of Partnerships and Engagement at the Boston Public Art Triennial, received the Black Excellence on the Hill Award during an impressive ceremony in the Great Hall at the State House. Sen. Lydia Edwards (right) presented an official citation to Ms. Wynter "in recognition of your significant contributions to the Boston Public Art Triennial and your commitment to diversity and representation in the arts."

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CELEBRATION OF LIFE HELD FOR RICHIE DIMEO

By Times Staff

Friends and family convened at the Orient Heights Yacht Club for A Celebration of Life honoring longtime and popular East Boston resident and community leader Richie Dimeo.

Childhood friends, high school classmates, players and parents from the East Boston Girls Softball League (that was founded by Richie and Robyn DiMeo) joined in the memorial tribute to Mr. DiMeo at the event.



Katie DiMeo and Lorraine "Dreamie" Cioffi, whose daughter, Monica Cioffi, excelled in the East Boston Girls Softball League that was founded by Richie and Robyn DiMeo.



The proud children of Mr. Richie DiMeo - Carli DiMeo, Dennis DiMeo, Jeff DiMeo, and Katie DiMeo.



Suzanne Jardin (right) credited Richie DiMeo, her colleague in Suffolk County DA Ralph Martin's Office, for encouraging her to continue her studies in law school. Suzanne is pictured with her husband, Jay Jardin, at the Celebration of Life gathering in memory of Mr. DiMeo.

Mr. DiMeo's daughter, Katie DiMeo, told the capacity crowd the positive influence that her father, Richie, had on his family and so many others through his kindness, friendship, and generosity and the contributions he made to East Boston.

"Thank you for this large and boisterous showing," said Katie. "This is a testament to how many lives he touched, and how deep these connections went over a lifetime. He had deep friendships all across the board with so many of you. Some of the highlights in his life for me were that he worked

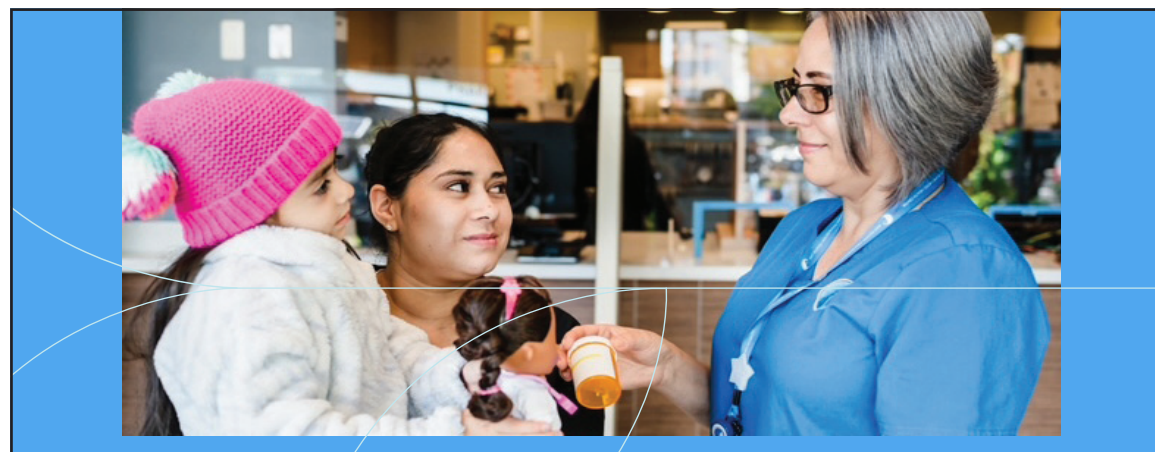
in the DA's office with so many of you for so long, again in his work as a private investigator, and the girls softball league in East Boston that he and my mom [Robyn] started - a lot of those girls went off to play in high school and college, and they coached and give back to their community. He really lived the life of giving back to his community, such as helping to open the Meridian House in East Boston that's has been doing a lot in drug outreach and addiction counseling for many years. He meant even more, I think, to his kids, his grandkids, and great-grandkids, and

his adopted family than you guys could ever know. We knew him as a dad, as a granddad, and a great-granddad, and it's so nice to touch base with all these different parts of his life. Thank you so much for being here."

Suzanne Jardin worked in the Suffolk County DA's office with Mr. DiMeo.

"I am an attorney today only because Richie made me do it," related Jardin, a graduate of Stonehill College and New En-

gland School of Law. "I was an investigator, and I was going to night school and I told Richie, 'I hate this.' He said, 'I don't care, you're going to finish this.' I was married with three small children at the time, and Richie so helped me and everyone in that office do what we should do. I am now practicing as a criminal defense attorney, and I thank Richie for everything. He's the best guy on the planet."



Katie DiMeo (left) and her sister, Carli DiMeo (right) welcome Suffolk County DA Kevin Hayden to the event celebrating the life of their father, Richie DiMeo.



Katie DiMeo, with Ronald Jordan Jr. and Ronald Jordan Sr., who, like Mr. DiMeo, helped young East Boston athletes develop their skills and an appreciation of baseball and softball.

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