



## DOT DAY WEEKEND 2024

### Parade starts Sunday at 1

The 118th Dorchester Day Parade will hit the street this Sunday, June 2 starting at the corner of Richmond Street and Dorchester Avenue at Lower Mills. Parade organizers say they have more than 60 entrants signed-up for this year's procession, which makes a 3.2 mile walk up Dot Ave to Columbia Road. Motorists should prepare for road closures and parking restrictions on Dorchester Ave. and Richmond Street and the Columbia Rd. ramp to I-93 is set to be closed around 2 p.m. for 2-3 hours.

Get the full roster of participants on Page 2B of our special Parade pull-out section.

#### INSIDE FEATURES

•The Kenny School Band, the only BPS middle school marching unit, tunes-up for parade day under the supervision of Mr. Jerry Chu. Page 1B

• DorchFest is Saturday, from noon to 5 p.m. Dorchester's version of "porchfest," now in its third year, returns to the Ashmont-Adams neighborhood on June 1. Get a preview of artists and locations in today's special section. Page 15B

• Meet the new Dot 'Mayor' Maeghan Driscoll (Page 1B) and Chief Marshal Jeff Buckley (Page 3B).

• Vietnam heroes recalled at Memorial Day ceremonies (Page 25B).



Mallory Powell of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester's baton team marched up Dorchester Avenue last year as part of the 2023 Dorchester Day Parade. *Chris Lovett photo*

### BGCD launches 50th anniversary this weekend

**BY BILL FORRY  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR**  
Look for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester to have a large presence in this Sunday's Dot Day Parade. The club will begin an observation of its 50th anniversary this weekend with an alumni reunion event at their Dorchester Ave.-Deer Street campus on Saturday afternoon from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Then, a large number of current members will march in Sunday's parade, led by a contingent of baton-twirlers who made their debut in last year's parade.

The weekend events are a sample of more to come as the BGCD commemorates the 1974 opening of the original clubhouse on Deer Steet near Savin Hill. The organization has grown over the last five decades to include two additional facilities—the Paul McLaughlin Teen Center on Dorchester Avenue and the Walter Denny center on Mt. Vernon Street. The milestone anniversary comes as the organization gears up to  
**(Continued on page 4)**



A rendering shows an exterior view of the Fieldhouse+, the \$70 million facility that will be built on Mount Vernon Street. The building will serve BPS students and members of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester.

*Image courtesy RODE Architects*

### FieldHouse dream comes into focus as major donors weigh in

**BY BILL FORRY  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

For six years now, it has existed as a dream project, but just beyond the grasp of the people who conjured it up in the first place. But now, the ambitious plan to build a \$70 million state-of-the-art indoor facility to house athletic fields, practice courts, and other programs for city kids and teens is finally within grasp, with hopes of an actual groundbreaking before the year's end.

This unique partnership between the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester (BGCD) and the Martin Richard Foundation has new funders and a new name, FieldHouse+, a nod to the

enhanced programs that will be housed in and around the 75,000 square foot building on Columbia Point.

Last month, the effort to raise the private dollars needed to finance the construction got its biggest boost to date, a \$9 million gift from Rob and Karen Hale, who had already promised \$1 million to the cause. Their \$10 million commitment not only put the BGCD-led capital campaign over the halfway mark, according to president and CEO Robert "Bob" Scannell, but it also unlocked the chance to bring in millions more in philanthropy that have been waiting for confirmation of the project's viability.  
**(Continued on page 4)**

### BPS abandons its plans to shutter school buildings 'We can't close our way out of' enrollment spiral

**BY CHRIS LOVETT  
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT**

Despite a decrease in student enrollment by 15.2 percent since 2014-15, officials have unveiled a long-term facilities vision for the Boston Public Schools (BPS) without identifying a single building that would close permanently. Instead of counting buildings and rooms, the presentation at the May 22 meeting of the Boston School Committee, led by BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper, repeatedly emphasized increasing the number of "quality seats."



Mary Skipper Briefs committee

The outline called for a phase-out of the Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School in Dorchester at the end of the 2024-25 year. The move had been announced in January, as part of a system-wide realignment that would group 7th and 8th grades with high schools.

At the meeting, BPS and city officials said the Frederick's current sixth graders would be transitioned over the next year to attend new schools in 2025-26, with a program for multi-lingual learners moving to Margarita Muñiz Academy, a dual language school in Jamaica Plain.

"We are committed to maintaining the name of

**(Continued on page 8)**

### OFD author retraces teen years in debut novel

"Days of Eight" by Michael Pallamary, now a California resident, follows 18-year-old Danny McSweeney as he attempts to navigate through the violence and racial tensions and overall turbulence that seem to be around every corner in Pallamary's fictionalized Dorchester in 1968. See Page 22B



### A talk about life after TV stardom

David and Stephen St. Russell—known as the "Renovation Husbands"—won the HGTV's "Battle on the Mountain" competition last year—but couldn't share their success with friends and neighbors until the show aired. What's next for Dorchester's most well-known DIY duo? Page 6B



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Police, Courts & Fire



Fire in Mattapan displaces 16 and sends 3 to hospital

A three-alarm fire on Walk Hill Street in Mattapan caused heavy damage to a three-decker and jumped to a second house and shed next door last Saturday (May 25). According to a Boston Fire Dept. account, "a quick command decision to order a second and third alarm" brought "additional companies to the fire and allowed them to rotate members, which was important on a hot day." Sixteen people were displaced, and three people were transported to the hospital, although no injuries were reported. The cause is under investigation. BFD photo

A 33-year-old man from Hyde Park was arrested by members of the Area B-3 Drug Control Unit last Thursday afternoon (May 23) for illegal gun possession after police detained him as part of an "ongoing drug investigation" in the area of River Street and Edgewater Drive. The suspect, Ruben Charles, was found to be carrying a loaded handgun at the time of his arrest, according to a BPD account. He has been charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, and ammunition. Police say he was also wanted for an outstanding warrant for breaking and entering during the daytime.

A 43-year-old Dorchester man is facing firearm and drug-related charges after his arrest by police near Uphams Corner last Thursday. Boston Police say Nygell Jones was arrested by officers assigned to the B-2 "anti-crime unit" who were on patrol near Hancock Street and Columbia Road around 6 p.m. when they saw a car blow through a stop sign. Police say they found a Glock 30 handgun with ten rounds in the magazine and two plastic bags with cocaine, fentanyl, and oxycontin pills in the car. Jones, the driver, was arrested and charged with "unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle," along with the gun and drug charges.

Martin Richard Challenger Baseball opens 2024 play

Play Ball! – The Martin Richard Challenger Baseball program opened its 2024 season this past Sunday (May 26) at the newly renovated McConnell playground in Savin Hill. The pre-game ceremony featured a rendition of the national anthem from Todd Angilly of Boston Bruins fame alongside Dorchester's own Sophia Rose McDonough (inset photo). The inclusive program teams up special needs players with volunteer "buddies" who accompany them on the field.



Todd Angilly with-Dorchester's own Sophia Rose McDonough The Challenger division offers year-round recreational programming through the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester. Photos courtesy Brendan McDonough

Rushing tapped to aid city's reparations panel

Byron Rushing, a former state rep and assistant House majority leader, has been tapped to serve on the Boston Reparations Task Force, which is researching the city's role in the transatlantic slave trade and exploring solutions for the descendants of enslaved people. "Byron Rushing is a

groundbreaking leader and legendary advocate for justice whose work has moved our city forward," Mayor Wu said in a statement. "Throughout his life, he has always fought for voices who have gone unheard and uplifted communities across the state." Task force members are community leaders

with backgrounds in law, academia, organizing and education. Rushing was first elected to the House in 1982 and served there through 2018. "The task of determining reparations is one of utmost importance in this moment as Boston and communities across the country take on helping people recon-

cile, move forward, and recover," Rushing said. "I'm thankful to Mayor Wu and look forward to working closely with every member of the task force and community to ensure that we center this work on equity and justice and truth." -STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

O'Malley joins BPDA board

Former Boston City Councillor Matt O'Malley is now a member of the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) board. O'Malley, who served six terms on the council until 2022, was appointed to the five-year-term by Gov. Maura Healey. He now works as chief sustainability officer for Vicinity Energy. His first BPDA Board meeting will be June 13.



Matt O'Malley: "I look forward to working with my fellow board members to ensure Boston's future is green."

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Dorchester Reporter (USPS 009-687) Published Weekly Periodical postage paid at Boston, MA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: 150 Mt. Vernon St., Suite 560, Dorchester, MA 02125 Mail subscription rates \$50 per year, payable in advance. Make checks and money orders payable to The Dorchester Reporter and mail to: 150 Mt. Vernon St., Suite 560, Dorchester, MA 02125 NEWS ROOM : (617) 436-1222 ADVERTISING: (617) 436-1222 FAX PHONE: (617) 825-5516 SUBSCRIPTIONS: (617) 436-1222

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MassDOT officials are planning a fourth meeting of the Morrissey Boulevard Commission via Zoom this Friday (May 31) at 9 a.m. See mass.gov/info-details/morrissey-boulevard-commission for more info. A different meeting billed by organizers as the Morrissey Commission's "3.5" meeting will be held on Mon., June 10, at 6 p.m. at Southline Boston, 135 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. A flyer from City Councillor John FitzGerald's office says that the meeting will be "an informal conversation regarding the Morrissey Boulevard Commission prior to the next MassDOT meeting." The commission was formed by an act of the Legislature for the purpose of planning infrastructure improvements to Morrissey Boulevard and Kosciuszko Circle. A meeting billed by organizers as the Morrissey Commission's "3.5" meeting will be held on Mon., June 10, 6 p.m.

at Southline Boston, 135 Morrissey Blvd., Dorchester. A flyer says that the meeting will be "an informal conversation regarding the Morrissey Boulevard Commission prior to the 4th MassDOT meeting." The commission was formed by an act of the Legislature for the purpose of planning infrastructure improvements to Morrissey Boulevard and Kosciuszko Circle. The commission has held three formal meetings and is expected to host a fourth in the coming weeks, although that meeting has not yet been announced. The 118th Dorchester Day Parade is set for Sun., June 2, at 1 p.m. (rain or shine) on Dorchester Avenue between Richmond Street and Columbia Road. Watch for road closures and no-parking restrictions starting Sunday around 9 a.m. on Dorchester Avenue and Richmond Street. MassDOT says the southbound exit on I-93 will close between 2-5 p.m. so

that the Massachusetts State Police can help support the Dorchester Day Parade. Appropriate signage, law enforcement details, and messaging will be in place to guide drivers through the work area." The Dot Day 5k road race will take place before the parade, starting at noon from the Blarney Stone, 1505 Dorchester Ave. The race is open to all. Go to dot-runners.org or bit.ly/dotday5k to register. DorchFest, Dorchester's version of "porchfest," returns for the third consecutive year on Sat., June 1, in the Ashmont-Adams neighborhood. See dorchfest.com for schedules and locations. Leahy Holloran Community Council hosts a \$10,000 raffle drawing at Landmark Public House on Wed., June 5, at 6 p.m. Tickets \$100 via Venmo @Leahy-Holloran. Dorchester Juneteenth observation at Town Field is Wed., June 19, from 1 p.m.

to 6 p.m., 1565 Dorchester Ave. with food truck, live music, local vendors, kids' activities. Red Line service will be suspended between Broadway and Braintree stations on the Braintree Branch during the weekends of June 8-9 and June 15-16. Free and accessible shuttle buses will make all stops between Broadway and Braintree. Express shuttle buses will operate directly between South Station and Braintree. Riders should note that regular Red Line train service will operate on the Ashmont Branch between JFK/UMass and Ashmont. The BPDA will host a virtual public meeting on Tues., June 11, at 6 p.m. to discuss a proposal for 21-29 Fernboro St. For more info see bit.ly/FernboroRegister1. SEND IN EVENT NOTICES TO NEWSEDITOR@DOTNEWS.COM

# MBTA will roll out tap-to-pay for subway, buses this summer

## Commuter rail upgrade due in 2006

By CHRIS LISINSKI  
STATE HOUSE  
NEWS SERVICE

Hopping aboard the MBTA is about to get a lot easier. A new fare collection system will launch this summer allowing subway and bus riders to pay by tapping a contactless credit card or mobile wallet on a smartphone, like Apple Pay, instead of the traditional CharlieCards and paper tickets.

The start of contactless payment – a feature in place in other major transit systems, including New York City’s subway – will mark a milestone in a delayed, over-budget project to modernize fare collection at the T.

MBTA board members last Thursday (May 23) unanimously approved a change to the agency’s contract with transportation technology firm Cubic and financier John Laing that will “resequence” the rollout, making the start earlier while pushing back the project’s end date.

Under the change, the new payment option will launch sometime this summer on subways, buses and above-ground Green Line trolleys. Riders will be able to pay their fares not just with a traditional pass, but also with a tap-enabled credit card, a mobile wallet like Apple Pay or Google Pay, and similarly enabled smart watches.

The system will also support a new reduced-price fare option for low-income riders, a long-



A Cubic fare reader in test mode stands on an MBTA fare gate at North Station on Feb. 12, 2024.  
*Chris Lisinski/SHNS photo*

sought program also set to launch this summer.

“We’re going to be leveraging technology that’s already largely in New York for applying reduced-fare credentials to contactless cards,” said Elizabeth Winters Ronaldson, the T’s acting deputy chief of fare revenue. “Your Visa doesn’t know that you’re a senior or a member of [the T’s] Youth Pass, so we’ll be launching a way for customers to attribute their reduced-fare credential, including the income-eligible reduced fare, to their contactless payment.”

By spring 2025, the MBTA will launch a new Charlie Card

system, a mobile app, and upgraded fare vending machines, according to plans. And a year later, by spring 2026, contactless payment will expand onto commuter rail trains with validators installed at stations and ferries, where workers will instead make use of handheld scanners, T officials say.

The Mattapan Line is not scheduled to get the new functionality until several months after the rest of the core rapid-transit system. Winters Ronaldson said a “power availability issue” prevents operation of the fare readers on board those trolleys.

Crews will instead install validators at Mattapan Line stations, which riders could use to tap a credit card or mobile device. Winters Ronaldson said that work will commence in the fall.

Traditional payment methods will still be available once the contactless payment is up and running, officials said.

The campaign to overhaul fare collection at the T has been rocky. The original \$723 million contract called for most features to launch in 2020, but the MBTA amended its agreement in a 2020 “reset” that pushed the total cost to \$967 million.

MBTA overseers agreed last week to delay the complete roll-out across all modes from May 2024 to June 2026, and to push the “longstop date” – by which every contract condition must be met – from August 2025 to June 2027.

Officials now expect the contract to come in at \$926 million, down about \$41 million. Cubic and John Laing can earn another \$11 million in incentives if the full system is successfully running in the spring of 2026, officials said.

“I am happy and excited to be in front of you today for two reasons. One, I’m not asking you for money, because usually I’m asking you for money,” MBTA Acting Chief Administrative Officer Jeff Cook told the board. “I’m excited to actually be in front of you, more importantly, to tell you that we are going to bring a modernized fare collection system forward and it’s coming this summer.” Cook said the T will not make any payments until “we feel the system is working” and accept its installation.

MBTA officials have said they expect contactless payments to make buses and Green Line trolleys smoother because riders will be able to use all doors to climb aboard instead of only the front door. Passengers will also be able to pay near-instantaneously with a credit card or mobile device instead of adding cash value at the fare box on board.



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## Are you already a BPS teacher who needs help with licensure?

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To access applications, scan the QR Code or visit us online at [www.teachboston.org](http://www.teachboston.org)  
You can also email us at [bpsteacherpipelines@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:bpsteacherpipelines@bostonpublicschools.org)



# FieldHouse dream comes into focus as major donors weigh in

(Continued from page 1)

“In terms of momentum, we’re in the best possible place right now and we’re trying to capitalize on that,” said Scannell. “Rob and Karen Hale’s donation is almost unheard of and it was spectacular. I can also say that it has already inspired millions in other commitments. We have more funders willing now to meet with us, because once we get halfway there, these funders are stepping and supporting us because then the project becomes real.”

The work to prepare for this breakthrough moment has been arduous and carefully thought out. The club and the foundation joined forces to secure a public bid to lease the Mount Vernon Street land from the city of Boston five years ago and won necessary approvals from the Boston Planning and Development Agency in March 2022. A contractor—Lee Kennedy Co., Inc.—has already been hired and RODE Architects, the Dorchester-rooted firm, has fully designed the building. Countless meetings with advisory groups from the surrounding community—including BGCD youth members—helped to inform their work.

Bill Richard, who is the co-founder along with his wife Denise of the Martin Richard Foundation named for their late son, credits those community voices with the project’s evolution.

“It’s made it more expensive and more challenging in terms of fundraising, but we’ve embraced that,” said Richard. “And the people donating have respected our decision to not scale back on the commitment we’ve made to the community. We stayed the course.”

Richard continues: “And the The FieldHouse+ name is a nod to Dorchester, to our desire to welcome people of



**Philanthropist Robert Hale, left, and his wife Karen donated \$10 million for the FieldHouse+ facility, a joint project by the BGCD and the Martin Richard Foundation. Hale is shown with Bob Scannell, the long-time CEO and president of BGCD.**  
*Photo courtesy WBZNews Radio*

all abilities, and that it’s more than just athletics. The wrap-around services, the family services that are hallmarks of the club are going to continue alongside team competition and team play, all under one roof. That is something we’re really looking forward to blending.”

Critical to the success and the overall mission is an agreement with the Boston Public Schools to maximize use of the new building for the students at the current McCormack School, which will soon be renamed for the late education and civil rights leader Ruth Batson. Scannell says the school, which will have as many as 1,000 students through a long-planned merger with Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA), will have use of the facility from 7 a.m. until dismissal for physical education and other programs. In reality, the student population will have full-use of the facility along with other members of the BGCD, because all McCormack-BCLA students will automatically be club members, free of charge.

During after-school hours, the facility will be “like a regular Boys & Girls

Club.” Except, as Scannell says, this brand new building will be a clubhouse “on steroids,” with indoor turf fields, basketball and racket courts, a theatre, kitchen space, and other programming options unlike anything else that exists in the city of Boston.

“We ultimately decided to call it Fieldhouse+ and we like it. And the feedback from the community has just been spectacular — and from across greater Boston, too. From our perspective, we can serve thousands more kids by building a fourth club.

This will accommodate so many teens based on the facilities we’re building, whether it’s the teaching kitchen or the theater, or the athletic spaces. So, we’ll make a real priority of serving more teens,” said Scannell.

Craig Welton, who is the BGCD’s chief development officer, notes that the facility will also be fully inclusive, fulfilling what’s already a core mission of the Dorchester clubs: serving kids and teens who are often left on the sidelines due to disabilities.

“Everything’s being purposely built to be fully accessible and fully inclusive,” says Welton. “We have very strong ‘everything’ programs here, but we could take the inclusion program here out of the club, stand it up on its own, and it’d be among the best in the state, by far. I think it’ll just be amplified in this new building. And the fact that we’re going to have this state-of-the-art facility for everybody, for all backgrounds, for all abilities, is really something that’s unique.”

After hours, the facility will open its doors for rentals to leagues and teams that crave indoor practice and competition spaces in the city. “It’s a model that’s going to work for us and

it’ll get used around the clock. So, we’re pretty excited about that. There’s really nothing like it in the city,” says Scannell. “The demand’s going to be off the charts, whether it’s for the turf field, the basketball courts. And since we started thinking about this project, all of a sudden pickleball becomes a thing. So, we’ll accommodate that as well.”

The demand is huge and will help finance ongoing operations without hindering access for the target audience: neighborhood kids. “We want to replicate what we’re already doing successfully, and we want to do it in a bigger and more meaningful way,” says Scannell. “This facility will be able to serve thousands of more kids. So, that’s the drill. Get more kids in our doors, serve them, give them the opportunities that any of our members have now.

“I think it’s something that we’ll try to share with as many people as possible, because we really are going to meet kids in their families with where they are. If a kid has behavioral issues, there’s going to be sensory rooms, because everybody needs a break sometimes. If a kid uses a wheelchair, we’ll have rims that will come down. We’ll have full access to every single floor.”

The BGCD team says they don’t need — or expect — to have the full \$70 million in the bank before they start work, ideally before next winter sets in. The Hale gift, they believe, will accelerate their timeline to get this facility underway.

“What we’re looking at now is at what point in time do we have the right cash to be able to start this and carry through X amount of months while we continue to fundraise?” said Scannell. We don’t need to have it all committed and, and in the bank.”

“I’d like to think that we could begin construction before this year ends. Maybe December, maybe sooner if we’re lucky. And then, it is scheduled to be a 17-month build. So once we get going, it’s a fairly quick and a pretty straightforward build. So, we’re anxious to get in the ground.”

Prior to this project, the BGCD, which will celebrate its 50th year in July (see related story in this edition) has never had an individual \$1 million donor. Through this project, they’ll soon have many, but Scannell notes that the goodwill of smaller supporters continues to be critical, too.

“It’s the person down the street who sends us a \$25 check, all the way up to \$10 million, and everything in between. Right now, our operating budget [for the existing clubhouses] in rough numbers is \$10 million to operate every year. So, we’ve got that going on with this, but we’ve made a lot of friends along the way.

“It has been a long haul, but there have been a million good stories along the way and plenty of challenges, too. We really want to be in a place where we’re a hundred percent comfortable. I see that it’s on the horizon.”



**Look for a large contingent of Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester members to march in Sunday’s Dorchester Day Parade as part of the observation of the club’s 50th anniversary this year. Above, a group of members in last year’s parade.**  
*Seth Daniel photo*

## BGCD launches 50th anniversary this weekend

(Continued from page 1)

build a fourth site—the Fieldhouse+, a 75,000-square-foot facility that will be constructed on what is now a playing field next to the McCormack School on Mt. Vernon Street. The observation of the 50th anniversary is expected to include a groundbreaking for the new fieldhouse later this year, but Dorchester Day serves as a perfect kick-off for the anniversary, according to Bob Scannell, the president and CEO of the club.

“I tend to think in decades and about the kids that were here over the years and what programs we were running and how much we’ve grown,” said Scannell in a recent interview with the Reporter. There were five full-time staff members when Scannell arrived to lead the organization in 1987. “Now we’re at almost 70 full-time people and 100 part-time. It seems that every other week, staff are coming up with a new program because they know what’s

going on in the community. They know what the needs are. That’s the way we’ve evolved and there’s just so much going on.”

Mike Joyce, the director of programming at BGCD, has been on staff for 45 years, a remarkable career devoted to the kids and teens of Dorchester. Joyce is rarely away from the club’s facilities — even on his “off-hours,” he’s engaged in working with neighborhood youth.

Joyce has observed tremendous changes in demographics and the origins of many waves of club members but he says that basically “kids are kids. I don’t think really they’ve changed that much. I think the opportunities to kind of take a right turn or a left turn have become more prevalent, but maybe in different forms,” he said. “But, you know, kids are generally the same. They’re a great judge of character. They absolutely know who’s really [working] on their behalf and who’s not.

He continued: “Bob and I will tell you, we were like disciplinarians, but yet they respected us. Because they watched, they observed, and they saw that ‘these people care about us. They’ll do what they can for us.’ And, I think that’s still the same today.”

When Joyce, a Dot native himself, started working at the Deer Street “Marr Club” club in 1979, he remembers that it “seemed massive. It was a big building, gym, pool, stuff that I hadn’t really seen before, but, as you look back now, it was a small staff, small budget. You just kind of made the most of what you had. I think the club in that time has kind of elevated its status.”

Joyce credits the staff of the club, who, he says, have always responded to the needs they saw in the community and “being more aware of surroundings, the neighbors, who’s here, who needs us, and why.”

Today’s club has a \$10 million annual

operations budget, 5,000-plus members who pay a nominal fee annually, and a deep reservoir of goodwill that Scannell says has become multi-generational.

“I can remember three-year-olds coming to my office and maybe they needed a time out or whatever. And now *their* kids have come here and gone through and are off to college and in the workforce. I’m like, ‘Oh my God.’ But that’s what we strive for actually, the continuity of care and generations of families to be involved with the club. That’s what’s really, really important to us.”

This weekend’s alumni event is open to the Dorchester community and will include the third annual Bruce Seals 3-on-3 basketball tournament, a memorial event for the beloved Seals, a longtime club staff leader who died in 2021. The event will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the outdoor court on the Deer Street campus and will include music, food, and raffles. Tickets are \$25.

# Joe Brodigan has been there from the start

By **BILL FORRY**  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester will mark its 50th anniversary this year. The organization's first clubhouse swung open its doors on Deer Street in July 1974, but the effort had begun four years earlier with a core group of volunteers led by the sons of the club's original namesake, Colonel Daniel F. Marr, the patriarch of a longtime Dorchester family who died in 1969. The concept was to memorialize the colonel by filling what the Marr family saw as a glaring hole in their home neighborhood—a youth facility that could serve the community they loved.

Of the core group who gathered in 1970 to organize the effort, only one is still alive: Joseph Brodigan, Sr., an attorney who helped to incorporate the non-profit that eventually became the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester. Brodigan, 81, is a Lower Mills native who still practices law and tries cases in Boston with his family-run firm — Brodigan & Gardiner. Three of his children are part of the firm and Joe Sr. remains the chief counsel to the BGCD today and is deeply engaged in the effort to build a fourth club facility, the \$70 million FieldHouse+ on Columbia Point.

The Reporter sat down with Brodigan this month to talk about his connection to this Dorchester institution that he has devoted his time to protecting, building, and fostering.

**Q. Where did you get your start?**

**A.** I grew up on Clearwater Drive, Lower Mills, St. Gregory's Parish in Dorchester with my brother Mike and my sisters Kathy and Maureen and we all went to St. Gregory's Grammar School. The girls went to St. Gregory's High School, so, we are straight St. Gregory's, through and through, which always calls you back, as you know. I went to Boston College High School, also in Dorchester. Then I went to Fairfield University and Boston University Law School. But I was educated in the primary schools and in the Catholic schools in Dorchester, so I have a big connection to Dorchester.

I loved it as a kid growing up. Gone today, but not forgotten. We had the Martin Street Woods, which bordered Clearwater Drive and Martin Street, and ran all the way up almost to the project, you know? It was about four or five acres of woods. We had great times there. We thought we were mountain climbing in the Alps. But, we had almost as much fun, probably more fun than the people who really do mountain climbing in the Alps. I still have friends, some of my dearest friends, the guys I grew up with in Dorchester... We all still see each other, and we all still enjoy each other's company.

**Q. What did you do after law school?**

**A.** I did work in the Dorchester Court as a summer project, which was very, very enjoyable. It was like a sleepy little country court. Everybody knew each other. The people that worked there, it just couldn't have got better people. They were concerned about everybody. They weren't out to hurt anybody. They were there to help. It was a community type court. I mean, they had some rough customers and, and, you know, occasionally some horrific crimes, but by and large, it was very enjoyable to work there. I wanted to try cases. After I graduated from law school, I was teaching, waiting for the bar results at the Patrick Campbell School, also in Dorchester. But after that I was employed by the largest trial firm in the city firm called Badger Parish.... It would not be unusual for me to try four [civil] cases a week. I left there and went to a firm called Langan Dempsey and stayed there. That firm ultimately became Brodigan & Gardiner, where I now practice, and we still do a lot of trial work and do a lot of work in the construction industry. We represent a lot of different types of businesses... I



Joe Brodigan during an interview at his downtown Boston office and, below, in the 1960 BC High Yearbook. *Bill Forry photo*

don't try four cases a week anymore. But I still, at 81, try cases.

**Q. How did you connect with the Marr family and the Boys & Girls Club effort?**

**A.** I originally connected with the family because their business was in South Boston and Dorchester. And my father was also in business in Dorchester, in Everett Edward Square, Broer Motors. He had a Cadillac dealership there for years... I was the only kid in Dorchester driven to school every day in a brand, new Cadillac [laughs]. ... I knew the Marr family a bit, especially in Scituate, where we went in the summer, and so did the Marrs. I remember their grandfather, Colonel Daniel Marr. When I landed in the firm of Langan and Dempsey, they were representing the Marrs. It was kind of a natural connection. They knew who I was, I knew who they were, and I began to represent them.

**Q. What do you remember about Colonel Marr?**

**A.** He was a big, burly man, but a very, very nice, guy.... He was very active in the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, and I would guess from that he attained his rank in the home guard. His son Bob was a general in the home guard. He had a higher rank, pretty impressive. And those were governor appointments.

**Q. Do you recall how the germ of this idea to start a club started?**

**A.** The Marr family were Savin Hill people, on the St. William side of the bridge. And the father had the business in South Boston. So, they were very attuned to the neighborhood there. And the oldest son, Jackie, was killed in the Korean War. It was a very sad thing. But they all grew up in the neighborhood and they were always very generous, always concerned about helping the disadvantaged, kids that didn't have quite what they thought they had. But not only kids that didn't have it; they were concerned that kids should get what they needed to grow. And there was no facility for that.

Dorchester was a terrific neighborhood because of the people. The people just cared about each other. You know, they watched out for each other, but there weren't a lot of facilities. Compared to today, when you see the kids wearing the same kind of jackets, emblemizing any program they happen to be in or anything of that nature for the city, we didn't have that. Bob Marr and Dan Marr Jr. — I think they recognized that lack of services to the kids. They wanted to do something. They wanted to provide some of those services for the kids.

**Q. You were in the room where it happened, so to speak. How did they go about it?**

**A.** They had the idea first, then searched for the site, and subsequently found the site on Deer Street. The original club was set up in 1970. When



JOSEPH J. BRODIGAN

67 Clearwater Dr. Dorchester

Joe, quiet and reserved, is a well-known figure on the campus and his blue '59 Bonnyville Pontiac has been admired by his many friends on the Boulevard . . . likes boats, guns and the Good Book . . . summers at Scituate . . . his cheerful attitude and friendliness make him an interesting companion . . . Fairfield U. is Joe's future college choice.

Debating 1.

I say set up, I mean, incorporated. And I have the names of those incorporators. One was Bob Marr, one was Dan Marr Jr. The colonel was gone by then. There was a gentleman named Mark Burke, who was friendly with the Marr family. James Langan, the judge whom I worked with in the early part of my career. Interestingly enough, Joseph Feeney was one of the founders. He had been the secretary to Speaker of the House John McCormack. Then he was a judge in the South Boston District Court, and then the Boston Municipal Court. And there was Ed Conley, a member of the Marr family. They found a site because that was the neighborhood they grew up in. They were sophisticated contractors. The Marr companies do a rather a large variety of construction services. I'm their attorney, too, and have been for 50 years. They had all kinds of talents in the construction industry and they used those talents to create what's out there now, you know?

**Q. You were there when the Deer Street building opened in 1974. What do you remember about that day?**

**A.** I'm trying to remember the politicians who were there and I'm having a hard time. I think the mayor was there, Kevin White. He was a proponent of it. There was a good crowd of neighbors there. All the original founders, of course, were there. It was a lot of noise, a lot of speeches. The pool was a big decision, because pools are problems. Going back 50 years now, there weren't many, if any, pools in Dorchester. It was a big,

big amenity... So that was something that they wanted to do right from the beginning: make sure that those kids had access to a swimming pool.

**Q. What do you recall about those first weeks and months when the doors were open and there was a place to go?**

**A.** It grew pretty fast. The gym and the pool were used all the time. Then you had the addition of some of the services... But it was the physical use of the gym and the pool that I remember originally as attracting everybody. And the way that they handled people. In all the years that I've been there, I don't remember any serious incidents of a violent nature.

**Q. One of the big moments in the club's history happened in 1988 with the arrival of Bob Scannell, now the CEO and president, to take a leadership role. Can you talk about that?**

**A.** That is definitely true. There were various other directors, and they were good. But Bob Scannell has been a superstar in doing what he's done here. He is absolutely belt and suspenders dedicated to the success of the Boys and Girls Club. All the long-time board members also have that same attitude. Jerry Morrissey, Dan Marr, Jeff Marr, they go to every meeting.

**Q. One of the most impressive things has been that continuity of leadership, yourself included. The club has a staff of core leadership that's been there for decades Bob Scannell, Mary Kinsella, Queenie Santos, Mike Joyce. Any thoughts on that?**

**A.** Mike Joyce is a Dorchester guy, and he has brought that great Dorchester attitude over into the club. Everybody remembers Mike Joyce, kids that were there, you know, 30 years ago, 40 years ago. One of the first words out of their mouths will be Mike Joyce. You can quote me on this one: Mike Joyce is going to Heaven.

**Q. You've invested a lot of your time personally in this club. Why?**

**A.** Dorchester gave me a lot. This was a small way for me to give something back... It is absolutely about the kids. If you go to a board of directors meeting, there's always a kid there. There's always one of the members there saying a couple of words. You go to a function, they're always there... All the kids today are the same as they were 50 years ago. Good kids. They just need a place to be, a little service, someplace good to go.

**Q. Looking back from your vantage point, how do you regard this institution and its growth over 50 years?**

**A.** I see it as an expanding progression right from the beginning to where it is today. And I see that progression in turn continuing. It started with a good idea, and a good, caring set of people have nurtured it since. ... I don't see any right turns or left turns. It's been straight ahead and growing all the time.

**Q. This latest project, the \$70 million FieldHouse, is obviously the biggest capital effort that the club has undertaken. What's your expectation for how this will come together over the next year or two?**

**A.** You know that expansion I was talking about? I see the beginning of that explosion right now. I think that contribution from Hale [the businessman/philanthropist Rob Hale and his wife Karen have donated \$10 million to the Fieldhouse project by way of \$1 million at the outset and an additional \$9 million earlier this month] and what's going to come from other long-time families and people associated with this is the beginning of this program coming to fruition.

It's going to happen. It's destined to happen. It is going to be a great contribution to Dorchester, and to the city as a whole. This [facility] will not only honor Martin Richard, but it will be getting the present administration of probably the best-run boys and girls club in the country. That's coming with the building. How do you beat that? Boy, what a start!"

# ‘Shark tank’ contest rewards help Asian American entrepreneurs gain traction with their new businesses

By **CASSIDY MCNEELEY**  
REPORTER STAFF

The VietAID community center in Fields Corner was the setting for a unique competition last week (May 21) as thirteen would-be entrepreneurs vied for prize money in an event aimed at boosting Asian-American businesses. The “shark tank”-styled forum was co-sponsored by VietAID, Boston Little Saigon, and ElevAsian, a Boston-based organization that offers technical assistance and counseling to emerging business owners.

ElevAsian’s founder, Andrew Goldberg, often recruits participants through pitch contests, like this one.

“People always wonder why a Jewish Caucasian guy is running a pitch contest for Asian business entrepreneurs,” says Goldberg. “My last full-time job was with the Asian American Civic Association in Chinatown; I was hired as their director of development.”

ElevAsian is focused on helping English-speaking entrepreneurs grow their business knowledge through a four-and-a-half month-long online program that includes strategies on early-stage revenue-gathering processes. Here, participants complete classes, work with mentors, and lead a final presentation about what they are up to.

“We aspire to do these pitch

contests in Asian communities around the state,” Goldberg said. “Dorchester was an obvious place to host with the Vietnamese community there.”

For three hours during the evening event at VietAID, the contestants were invited to pitch their products to a panel of four judges and an audience of community members. The jurors included Tran Le, the managing partner of Pho Le Restaurant in Dorchester; Tam Le, a restaurant owner and founding partner at Reign Hospitality Group; Diego Portillo Mazal, the director of the inner-city capital connections program; and Van Paul Le, a consultant and attorney.

The contest comprised two categories: the existing business track and the new venture track. Those with at least one year of operation competed on the existing business track while those who were pre-revenue participated in the new venture category. In each category, the winner earned \$5,000, second place took down \$2,500, and third place received \$1,000.

After sharing their ideas in four minutes, each contestant answered follow-up questions from the judges, who then privately convened and returned with the results.

Kanwar Singh, the chairman and co-founder of Hello Zora Nutrition – and an officer in the

National Guard – was awarded first place in the existing business category. Singh and his team have created an app that will help users maintain a healthy diet.

“We have built a computer version app that allows you to simply take a picture of the food around you and we can tell you what’s in the food, the macros and the micros, and help you get an understanding of how you can improve your nutrition,” said Singh. “We’re focused on the education side. The goal is that if you have a better sense of what you’re eating you’ll likely make better eating decisions.”

The Hello Zora app, named after Singh’s son and currently in a beta launch phase, aims to fill the role of nutritionist for \$10 a month. A beta phase means that only a small group of people can use the app as the team works to finalize the product. It can then use the feedback from these users and the funds from the first-place prize to perfect the product.

Second place went to Jia Li of Physcio X, followed by Michelle Zhang of X Style in third place.

While these three business owners have experience in their fields, those on the new venture track have just begun.

The winner in that category was Windy Pham, a Vietnamese-American mother and author who was born and raised



A panel of judges listened to contestants’ pitches during the ElevAsian competition held at the VietAID community center in Fields Corner on May 21.  
*Cassidy McNeely photo*

in Vietnam and moved to the US when she was 17 years old. After being mocked for her accent after the move, she felt like she had to hide her roots to fit in.

“That changed when I had my daughter,” said Pham. “I realized how important it is for me to celebrate and share my culture with her. I started looking into bilingual books and I discovered a huge gap there.” But instead of waiting for someone else to close the gap, Pham established a business called Little Ant World: Bilingual Vietnamese Books and closed it up herself by creating “bilingual literature to help kids and adults learn their language and culture and help promote diversity in the community.”

So far, she has published three books: “Eat the Rainbow,” “The ABCs of Vietnamese Food,” and “Vietnamese Animal Alphabet.”

Each includes Vietnamese and English alphabets and translations. They have been purchased across the country as well as in Canada and Australia.

While her business is off to a good start, Pham participated in the contest because she wants to do more, and with the help of the \$5,000 prize, she can produce and sell more books and expand her brand. She hopes to do so by creating interactive books, games, and activities, all of which would promote pride in diversity.

Rishi Narayan received the second place \$2,500 for Knocadia Labs, CreativeSync AI Platform, and Nana Qi, the founder of Keepin AI, secured the third place prize.

In addition, Vanessa and Luke Arcovio were awarded the \$500 audience prize for their business, Minando Entertainment.



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# Hundreds celebrate launch of Louverture Cultural Center

By **SETH DANIEL**  
NEWS EDITOR

At a time when Haitians and their American cousins find it hard to celebrate amid ongoing turmoil back home, a groundbreaking ceremony for Boston's Toussaint Louverture Cultural Center near North Station brought a welcome wind of pride and accomplishment that speakers said was felt throughout the diaspora.

Hundreds gathered under the warm evening sun on Mon., May 20, for a ceremony to mark the anticipated opening of a 2,000-square-foot space on Lovejoy Wharf, steps from the TD Garden and the Freedom Trail. It will be the first such center in New England and, perhaps, the nation, an accomplishment 25 years or so in the making, and one that was celebrated, from local founders Wilner and Marie Auguste to Haitians who have heard the news all the way in Port-au-Prince – not to forgot non-Haitian supporters like Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and cultural organizations representing other Caribbean cultures.

"This center is not going to be just great for Boston or for Haitians in Boston but a center that stands for all Haitians in the diaspora," said Elvire Beauchard, consulate general of Haiti in Boston. "Many have tried to stop Toussaint Louverture in the past...but what he stands for is what humanity stands for. We must be proud of being Haitian."

"We know what our country is going through now, but I feel something is in the air and something is about to happen very big. But we will all have to work together to make it happen," she continued, to applause.

Tears of joy, and sadness, were shed after the official toast to kick off the effort to raise money to build out the space.



Members of the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts, including Charlot Lucien, Evangeline Lucien, Mimi Desir, Joanne Buteau-Dumont, and Joseph Chery, inside the future TLCC. *Seth Daniel photos*

"This is a beautiful moment because this is a dream Wilner and Marie Auguste had even when I was a kid being dragged out to meetings with my dad for Haitian Americans United (HAU)," said Boston City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune. "The Haitian story is a Boston story, and we should be able to tell it in every neighborhood like other cultures do. This city deserves to really see us – not just in Hyde Park and Mattapan where we are – but in every neighborhood."

That sentiment was echoed by Dr. Aisha Miller, a Mattapan resident who was there representing the building owner, Related Beal, which made the space available through an arrangement with the city of Boston.

"You are here in the North End," she said. "People didn't think it was possible, but you are here and you're breaking down barriers. This is a milestone and very significant for Boston...Your culture is going to be present here."

The space was secured through a competitive process within the Boston

Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) and will act as both a cultural center and a tourist information office. The TLCC Executive Committee championed the effort as part of HAU and has received the backing of the Haitian Artist Assembly of Massachusetts – which will provide and curate work from the rich Haitian art and creative heritage, to include painting, sculpture, poetry, literature, and metalwork.

Remarks were coordinated by Joseph Chery, of the Artists Assembly, and several speakers led the crowd in thought.

Charlot Lucien, a long-time artist and cultural ambassador for Boston Haitians, pointed out there are four small towns in America named 'Haiti,' a cemetery in Tennessee bearing Toussaint Louverture's name, and schools named after Haitian heroes in Oklahoma and St. Louis. Numerous other attributes of the Haitian culture also are present in the United States and France as well, but he said they aren't widely acknowledged.

"There have been negative things



Wilner and Marie Auguste, left, City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, Nancy Accime, and Dr. Sheila Marcelus use a ceremonial shovel created by artist Mimi Desir to perform the ceremonial groundbreaking

that have been attached to Haiti for many years and the history of Haiti has been erased from the history of the US and the history of France," he said.

His hope is that the Boston center will reverse that erasure, and that it will also shine light on the injustices done to Haiti after it won its independence.

"We hope that they can clean up what has happened to us," he said, noting that that could include some form of reparations.

The event concluded with a ceremonial groundbreaking led by Wilner and Marie Auguste, and other members of HAU. The next step for is to raise money to complete a full buildout of the space, which has already been designed.

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# BPS abandons plan to shutter school buildings

(Continued from page 1)

Lilla G. Frederick for the building and continuing to use the building as the school to serve our younger people in Grove Hall and throughout the region,” Mayor Michelle Wu’s senior advisor for youth and schools, Rebecca Grainger, told the School Committee. The plan calls for any new school in the building to have community partnerships. Instead of being left vacant during a period of transition, the school building would continue to be used for community purposes.

The only other building change identified for 2025-26 was the consolidation of the West Zone Early Learning Center with the James W. Hennigan K-8 School in Jamaica Plain. Both schools currently share the same complex, which would be reconfigured to serve grades PreK-6. Officials say the ongoing realignment would reduce the number of potentially disruptive school transitions, as well as the over-capacity that typically resulted at K-8 schools when 7<sup>th</sup> graders left for exam schools or other options.

But, even before the presentation on facilities, Skipper drew attention to the overlap between under-enrollment, under-performance, and chronic absenteeism in the system’s open-enrollment high schools. She noted that most of these schools have also been identified by the state as needing assistance or intervention.

“What you see is that the multilingual learners and our special education students are really concentrated in our open enrollment schools. It is those open enrollment schools that are actually under-enrolled and under-utilized from a building perspective,” she explained. “However, we can’t just simply close or merge them without first developing a way for the students who are in them, who are the most fragile, who are our multilingual learners, and students with disabilities, to have seats in other places.” The response, outlined by BPS officials, was to expand inclusive learning, with programs for language learners and special education students. The vision also included more access to internships, advanced placement classes, and early college pathways—options that could also create more incentive for attendance. And, as Skipper insisted, any students displaced by a closing should transition to a school that serves their needs.

“We cannot close our way out of this,” she said “We have to do both. We have to develop the programming and the strong academics and remove



The Boston School Committee and BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper discussed the BPS Facilities plan during a public meeting at the Bolling building in Roxbury on May 22. *Chris Lovett photo*

the barriers, and we have to work on our buildings.”

The presentation listed eleven major capital projects underway, some initiated before the current city administration. These included a merger between the Shaw and Taylor Schools in Dorchester and Mattapan, and a funding application to the state for the Ruth Batson Academy in Dorchester. Skipper said the projects “represent more than we did in forty years,” adding, “These projects unlock high-quality seats at a faster rate than we have ever done, but we need to do them well.”

The changes for the Lillia G. Frederick Pilot Middle School and the Hennigan School complex are scheduled for a vote by the School Committee on June 17. After helping students make transitions over the coming year, Skipper said there would be annual review of data, engagement with communities, resulting in new proposals each year.

“I understand why some community members are asking for a specific year-by-year roadmap,” she said, “but this work is so intertwined with the core academic and structural changes we’re making from inclusive ed to the expansion of bilingual programs to the expansion of secondary school pathways. We have to move carefully reviewing the data each year and making adjustments to make sure we are continuing to put students first.”

During the meeting and after, the presentation was criticized for decisions made with little advance notice for school communities and for a lack of specification about needs and capacity. A long-time educational advocate,

John Mudd, called the limited number of short-term changes a “piecemeal” approach.

“Where is the overall master plan? Where are the proposals that meet the challenges of this moment?” he asked during the meeting. “I should also add that in none of these proposals was there any analysis of the impact on enrollment or the budget. But, critically important, the process used in presenting these proposals to the affected school communities does set a precedent for community engagement. And this precedent is totally inadequate.” The presentation was also criticized the day after the meeting by Will Austin, CEO of the Boston Schools Fund.

“What was released on Wednesday night is not a facilities plan. Nor is what was submitted to the state in January,” Austin wrote. “The City has communicated a set of values, ideas, and priorities and a commitment to name projects annually. Although that approach provides for flexibility and community input, it lacks the information and transparency about enrollment, potential projects, timeline, and budget that is typical in long-term facilities plans.” In 2011, after a 13 percent drop in BPS enrollment during his first four terms as mayor, Thomas M. Menino closed or merged 18 schools. Four years later, with fewer constraints on the budget, his successor, Marty Walsh, started work on a ten-year facilities plan that called for new buildings, renovations, and closings. Since 2015, the steepest fall-off in BPS enrollment has come with the pandemic, followed by increases after 2021, including an influx of

3,000 migrants, according to Skipper. During the presentation, the BPS Chief of Capital Planning, Lavern Stanislaus, cautioned that under-enrollment should be viewed, not just as space, but as a mismatch between students and needs. “It’s not that we have too many seats,” she told the School Committee. “It’s that we don’t have enough high-quality seats, particularly for students with particular learning needs. Closures will be a part of our long-term work, but we need to continue to invest in our schools for both in terms of high-quality instruction and in terms of facilities so that all students have access to great schools.” But Austin argued that moving more slowly also had a cost. “If done correctly, a capital budget unlocks funding that should go to classrooms, educators, and children,” he reasoned. “In the past five years, the city of Boston has spent nearly \$200 million on empty seats in school buildings. Those are dollars that could be addressing literacy, career and college readiness, the influx of migrants, and other pressing needs.”

School Committee member Brandon Cardet-Hernandez added the possibility that changes made by a rolling facilities plan could end up being unraveled by elimination of an estimated 8,000 unfilled seats. The changes would also take place amid expectations of growing pressure on the city budget and a full election year in 2025.

“We have to merge schools,” said Cardet-Hernandez. “Does it not become more difficult to unravel the pieces, or is it then just about performance and outcomes? I don’t know what comes after that, if that makes sense. If every seat is high-quality today, you would still have to merge schools.” The School Committee’s vice chair, Michael O’Neill, said he was expecting more closures or consolidations, but he praised the presentation as “a pretty clear roadmap” for the BPS decision process. “I have to applaud your thoughtfulness on this,” he told school officials, “and I do think you have thought through what hasn’t gone right in the past and what has been wrong to our students--and how can I do this the right way.” Also comparing the presentation to past decisions was the School Committee chair, Jeri Robinson.

“And the issue is how are we helping every community to understand that there will be impacts,” she said. “We say we want change. We know we need to change, but we can’t be afraid every time any change is proposed that everybody’s going to have an outcry.”

## State cites decline in number of chronically absent students

### Despite improvement, nearly 20 percent missed more than 10 Percent of school days

BY SAM DRYSDALE  
STATE HOUSE  
NEWS SERVICE

After skyrocketing during the pandemic, the number of students considered “chronically absent” from school is finally starting to drop, though still well above pre-Covid levels.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Acting Commissioner Russell Johnston announced during a state education board meeting on Tuesday this week that there was a 20 percent reduction in the number of students missing 18 or more days of school in the academic year that is winding down.

In March 2023, about 24.5 percent of students were considered chronically absent, or missing more than 10 percent of the 180-day school year. That dropped to 19.6 percent this March, representing about 45,000 students who missed significant school time last school year but did not this year.

Officials have warned that missing more than 10 percent of school can put students behind their peers, and students across the board are struggling

to make up for learning losses caused by the pandemic.

“Our definition of 10 percent of absenteeism is not random. There’s a reason for that, it’s because studies have pretty clearly shown that by the time you’ve missed 10 percent of your schooling you are going to experience academic impacts, in addition to all the other losses,” board member Michael Moriarty said last year. “Families could work very hard to get absences excused every chance they get, but that doesn’t lessen the academic outcome.”

On Tuesday, Johnston said, “We know that districts, families and students have been working together to improve attendance. And we’re pleased to see these numbers moving in the right direction. But by no means are we through by no means are we done.”

Prior to Covid-19 closing schools, about 13 percent of students used to be considered chronically absent.

Asked by board of education chair Katherine Craven what caused the change in attendance, Johnston replied that there has been a concerted effort to raise awareness with families.

“The way in which our districts and families have really worked together, in order to engage families more successfully, engage students more deliberately, and create a learning environment where students come to school and feel that sense of connection, that sense of being known and valued,” he said.

Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper said her district, which is the largest in the state, has also seen a decline in students facing significant absences.

She said the problem is worse in secondary schools. At the height of the problem in 2021, over 35 percent of high school students in Massachusetts were missing over 10 percent of school.

Officials have attributed these absences to illness from Covid or other viruses, the effects of Long Covid on young people, a rise in mental health issues in teenagers and children, as well as a changing culture with students and families around the necessity of kids being in school every day.

“Our young people who are in high school have the ability to vote with their feet, different than other grades

where a parent ensures a kid gets to school or has that voice,” Skipper said. “And I think our high school students, for a variety of reasons, post-pandemic had some of the same awakenings that adults did in wanting to make choices or see value in things that previously you just assumed they did.”

A lot of students got jobs during the pandemic and got accustomed to bringing money into their households or supporting themselves, she added. Because more kids are focused on working, Skipper said Boston is placing greater emphasis on creating pre-career opportunities.

“This is actually allowing them to get their skills, but it’s also allowing them to get internships, job shadows, mentorships,” Skipper said. “It’s really tapping, I think, into our young people’s need of that ‘why’ for them. Of, ‘why am I going to school? And not feeling like I’m going because learning is irrelevant, but actually learning is very relevant. And without it, I’m not going to be able to sustain a life living wherever I want to live.”



# Reporter's People

News about people in and around our Neighborhoods

## Joyce Linehan feted for her work on the MAXCourage essay contest

BY TAYLOR BROKESH  
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

Dorchester resident Joyce Linehan received the Champion of Courage Award last Thursday (May 23) at the annual Children's Celebration luncheon at Venezia in Neponset that was sponsored by the Boston nonprofit MAXCourage.

The event highlighted the work of many Boston and New England-area sixth graders with the publication of their essays as part of the Max Warburg Courage Curriculum's annual capstone essay contest, where students addressed the prompt "How have you experienced courage in your life?"

According to MAXCourage's executive director, Carrie Coughlin, another Dorchester resident, Linehan was "single handedly" responsible for recruiting dozens of new local judges for the essay contest over the past year, and that was a major reason why she will be receiving the award this year. The

Champion of Courage Award has gone out over the last decade to volunteers who have gone above and beyond for the organization, Coughlin said.

"She's a connector, but she's also a collaborator," Coughlin said. "She has had an incredible impact on our Essay Judging Day, recruiting volunteers with an intent to diversify the pool of those who read and judge the essays."

"I love this program and am in awe of what the Warburg family has built, and the work that Carrie has done to reach more communities and students," Linehan wrote to the *Reporter*. "One of my favorite annual events is Essay Judging Day. The student stories are touching, funny, and wise. I love recruiting people with diverse backgrounds to be essay readers, and everyone who has said yes has loved it."

Coughlin said it was important that judges represent the population of the students they're

judging in order to reduce bias. Linehan, who previously served as chief of policy for former Mayor Marty Walsh, now sits on MAXCourage's advisory board and uses her connections to recruit judges.

"Most important, besides the kids who write the essays, is who we recruit to judge them, and how we judge them," Coughlin said. "We judge them blindly, not based on grammar or semantics, but on how well they tell a story."

Named for the founders' son, who at age 11 in 1991 died from leukemia, the Max Warburg Courage Curriculum encourages middle-school-aged kids to appreciate the value of courage and how to navigate the world around them while increasing their proficiency in language arts. While mainly focused in the New England region, the curriculum has reached classrooms across the country and even across the globe, to places like Belize, Cambodia, Chi-



Joyce Linehan

na, Lebanon, Mongolia, Spain, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Yemen, and many others, according to its website.

The program doubled in size domestically from 2021 to 2023, Coughlin said, who estimated that since its inception, it has served more than 225,000 kids. She added that each year, they receive about 6,000 essays, but only about 2 percent of them are chosen for publication in their annual volume, "The Courage of Children: Boston and Beyond."

You can read this year's edition of "The Courage of Children: Boston and Beyond" at [bit.ly/Courage-of-Children](http://bit.ly/Courage-of-Children), and find out more information about MAXCourage and its curriculum at [maxcourage.org](http://maxcourage.org).

## Tracking Shelly Smith's odyssey to commencement at MassBay CC

To Shelly Smith of Dorchester, the path to earning her associate degree in general sciences from MassBay Community College was anything but straightforward. She first enrolled at MassBay Community College in 1994, fresh out of Madison Park High School in Boston, where she had been on the nursing assistant career track. Her initial plan was quickly alerted by life's challenges.

"I always dreamed of earning my degree and becoming a nurse, because I have a natural gift of caring for others," Shelly recalls. "But life got in the way – having a baby, going through two failed marriages, and juggling work at nights and on weekends. I kept pushing myself because I wanted to show my daughter the importance of education and perseverance."

"It has taken me almost 30 years, but I'm finally finishing what I started, and I have my associate degree. And I will be back at MassBay in the fall to pursue my degree in nursing, which is the ultimate goal."

The road to commencement was far from easy. Shelly faced academic struggles, particularly due to her dyslexia, which made reading and studying more challenging. "I felt unprepared for college after high school," she says. "I had to re-take math classes and often struggled with the foundational knowledge needed to succeed. But I never gave up. I kept pushing for myself and my daughter Shelby."

Shelly's journey included some pauses from classes, as well as a brief stint at Quincy College before she returned to MassBay, where she found a supportive and



Shelly Smith

nurturing environment. "The support at MassBay is incredible," she says. "The peer tutoring, the help from MassBay Advisors like Lori Cannizzaro and Aaron Ribeiro – it's unlike any other college. They genuinely care about the students' success."

Her determination and hard work have not gone unnoticed by those around her. "When my diploma arrived, my daughter and I cried together. She is currently studying biomedical engineering at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston and understands how badly I wanted to earn my degree, for the both of us. It was a journey we shared," said Smith, "filled with struggles and triumphs."

Shelly says her story is not just about earning a degree, "it's about breaking cycles and setting new standards for us and our children. People often ask, why has it taken me so long to earn my degree? I want people to know that failing a class doesn't make you dumb. We all have different paths, and it's important to recognize the effort behind the grades. We are creating our own story; mine has just taken a little longer."

With most of her prerequisites for the nursing program now complete, Shelly is preparing for the TEAS Test and Chemistry II, the final steps toward entering the MassBay nursing program.

## New England Revolution's Special Olympics Unified Soccer Team opens season

The New England Revolution's Unified soccer team, consisting of Special Olympics athletes and Unified partners from throughout Massachusetts – including Dorchester's Radley Theolien – traveled to New Jersey on May 11 to begin their 10th season with an away match against the New York Red Bulls' Unified team at Red Bull Arena.

Playing before the Revolution and New York squared off in Major League Soccer (MLS) action, the Unified teams celebrated the power of inclusion in sports during



Dorchester's Radley Theolien, of the New England Revolution Unified inclusion team, broke away during a match on May 11 in New York against the Unified Red Bulls, but was denied the winning goal by a terrific save from the Red Bulls' goaltender.

Photo courtesy New England Revolution

a 40-minute friendly match, which finished in a 1-1 draw.

In the second half,

Theolien, a veteran of the Revolution Unified team, nearly broke the deadlock with a shot on

target from close range, though an impressive stop from the Red Bulls' goalkeeper denied his attempt.

Made possible in part by the longstanding support of Arbella Insurance, the Revolution Unified Team's mission is to leverage the power of sports to promote an environment of inclusion and friendly competition. Featuring 19 players from Massachusetts both with and without intellectual disabilities, Revolution Unified team will play at Gillette Stadium on Sat., July 20, against FC Dallas' Unified squad.

## YESTERYEAR ARCHIVE

DORCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
131 Ashmont Street, Then and Now

The house at 131 Ashmont Street was built in 1876-1877 and has been altered over the years.

The first owner was Jennie Seaverns, a teacher at the Minot Primary School. Jennie's mother, Sarah, 77; and Martha A. Gilbert, 69, a teacher and boarder, lived at 131 Ashmont Street as well.

From 1882 to 1884, Alfred W. Burrill, a teller at the National Exchange Bank, rented the house. Burrill was followed by the Willcutt family, renting from 1885 through 1891. Other renters lived at the house until 1897, when William Wolff acquired the property. William was an actor



and theater manager at Castle Square Opera Company at the Castle Square Theater. His wife, Anne, was an actress and costume designer. They lived at 131 Ashmont Street until 1920.

These posts can be viewed on



the blog at [dorchesterhistorical-society.org](http://dorchesterhistorical-society.org). The Society's William Clapp and James Blake Houses are open to the public on the third Sunday of the month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## Student from Dot at Hofstra cited as 'Junior of the Year'

Dallas Jackson of Dorchester, a rising senior at Hofstra University majoring in journalism, was named "Junior of the Year" when the institution's student organizations, student leaders, and professional staff partners were honored with 2024 Student Leadership Awards for their efforts to positively impact the campus community at a gala on April 25.



Dallas Jackson

## Editorial

## Dot Day says a lot about us

Why do we still do Dot Day? For some, that's like asking why we put up Christmas lights in December or serve turkey and stuffing on the fourth Thursday in November.

But, fine. As we approach the first weekend in June and Sunday's parade, we'll allow it as a legitimate question worth pondering. Why, in 2024, do we still march, camp out on the curb with balloons and coolers, watch a band play on our neighbor's front porch, don a fading three-decker t-shirt, run a 5k, whatever it is that many of us will do this weekend?

People have their own rhymes or reasons, but here are a few thoughts from someone who's been an active participant for a half-century (plus one year).

Let's first recall that the early Dorchester Days—organized in the first decade of the 20th century—were at least in part an attempt at keeping Boston's city leaders focused on the wants and needs of what was then still a relatively new section of the city. Dorchester was its own town until 1870 when the voters here decided to approve annexation to the city of Boston. Historians tell us that the decision was made for practical reasons, like tapping into Boston's superior water supply and the larger tax base to fund schools and roads.

At the time, Dorchester was just starting to grow into its identity as a "streetcar suburb" replete with rows of brand-new three-decker buildings to house waves of immigrants. But when the first Dot Day was staged, the neighborhood was still a relatively pastoral setting with orchards and farms and hill-top estates and summer homes along the coast for Boston's well-to-do. For Cripes sakes, the early Dot Day celebrations included a sailing regatta, if that clues you in a bit on the demographics of the time.

The 1904 Dot Day events centered in large part around local efforts to get the city of Boston to designate Savin Hill Park as a city-owned and cared-for park. They succeeded in getting Boston Mayor John F. "HoneyFitz" Fitzgerald to come and commit to the plan. The future president's grandfather knew where his votes were increasingly being counted.

So, Dorchester Day has always been—and is today—a reminder to city leaders that *this place* and the voters who live here *matter*. That's why your 2024 parade roster (see today's special edition) includes a healthy complement of political hopefuls who'll march up the avenue and/or crisscross the afternoon's backyard barbecues. Think of Dorchester Day as a communal lobbying effort, a neighborhood-wide smoke signal to Government Center that the city's now largest and most populous enclave had best be at front of mind.

Over the decades, as the tradition took hold and the parade flared as the unofficial start of summer in the city, Dot Day became embedded in the local psyche. In a city of neighborhoods and enclaves that are very often weighted to more affluent, tourist-friendly, cobblestoned blocks in the city center, this is *our* day.

And in modern-day Dorchester, the interpretation of what the word "our" means has become the *best* reason to keep the Dot Day tradition alive and nurtured in the next generation. In ways that defy conventions and stereotypes, this sprawling neighborhood has truly embraced Boston's aspirations to be that "city on a hill" that welcomes – and celebrates – all comers. Long live Dot Day—and a special word of thanks to the volunteer men and women who make this weekend's festivities possible.

Enjoy!

–Bill Forry

## BPDA's rezoning effort needs more time – and ground-level engagement

By SARANYA SATHANANTHAN  
AND MIKE PROKOSCH  
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Squares+Streets has come to Dorchester. The Boston Planning and Development Agency's (BPDA) local planning process officially started in Fields Corner two weeks ago. Codman Square's kickoff was postponed when the city suddenly added Four Corners to the planning area. The BPDA wants to reschedule that kickoff in June.

What is Squares+Streets? It's a city-driven plan to relieve the housing crisis by putting up bigger, denser, higher buildings in "transit-rich" shopping districts like Fields Corner, Codman Square, and Four Corners. The BPDA hopes this will get people out of their cars, bring more customers to nearby stores, and improve our climate by cutting car pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

To make this happen, the city has already passed new zoning laws that allow housing developers to build "as of right" along the main streets. Developers can replace one-story buildings with new commercial/residential buildings of four to seven stories, depending on their location.

These are fundamental changes that will reshape our neighborhoods for the next several decades, and maybe not for the better. If done wrong, they could increase displacement, worsen traffic, and make Dorchester's heat islands even hotter. Those who will be most affected must lead the planning. Involving them will take time and local knowledge that only our community organizations can supply.

We are offering to work with the BPDA in a genuine partnership, and we hope they will say yes. Together we can create an effective engagement plan that reaches the hardest to reach – low-income, working three jobs, limited English, poor health, house-bound, young, old, small businesspeople, and more. Our block groups and local organizations know best how to find them and draw out solutions that will work for them.

It will take time. We want to take the summer – the best time for block parties, deep conversations on the streets, events that explore our communities' histories and challenges. Over three months we can develop a consensus about the neighborhoods we want and the city solutions we need. That can smooth and shorten the rest of the Squares+Streets process.

We need more than a survey. We need a community consensus. Without our help, we fear that the BPDA's current process will reach a population that doesn't represent Codman Square, Four Corners, or Fields Corner. Here's why:

Squares+Streets has been running all this year

in Roslindale. The BPDA has reached 27 Black residents, 42 Latinos, 21 Asian Americans, and 585 white residents, according to recent BPDA data. Roslindale is 47.4 percent white.

BPDA staff are working hard, but they are new to our neighborhoods. They cannot substitute for the scores of active residents and the decades of community relationships that we can contribute.

We know we're volunteering to sacrifice our summers on this process. Why are we signing up for three months of hard work?

We support the city's goals. We want more affordable housing, less traffic, more prosperous store owners, and cleaner air. But we fear it could all go wrong unless there's deep community engagement that brings in the people who will be most affected.

So, what could go wrong?

**Traffic.** New housing will bring, ideally, thousands of new neighbors. Who thinks they will give up their cars? Maybe we'll see worse traffic jams, more exhaust, heat, pollution, and more frustrated shoppers. Does the city have policies and tools to avoid the worst?

**Small businesses.** Most don't own their locations. When their landlords sell and their leases end, they'll have to relocate. Can they afford the higher rents in brand-new buildings? The city does not have programs that will make more than a tiny dent in this problem. **Displacement.** Tenants who live in modest-rent apartments will also face eviction when their buildings are sold. Where can they move? Under the city's current standards, four out of five new housing units can be market rate – affordable for incomes in the hundreds of thousands. And that fifth "affordable" unit will be affordable if you earn \$80,000 (for a family of three in 2023). That is not affordable for more than half of the people who live here now.

Whole neighborhoods must create solutions to these challenges. Those who might be hit hardest need to be the first to say what's needed.

We are not NIMBYs – we're not saying, "not in my back yard, nothing must change." We're not YIMBYs – "build, build, build." We are residents who are looking for solutions that fit our neighborhood, that add a lot more housing and will make it affordable for the people who live here.

We hope the BPDA will accept our offer.

*Saranya Sathananthan and Mike Prokosch are two members of Codman Square United, a growing network of residents, coordinated by the Codman Square Neighborhood Council and the Second Church in the square.*

## Yes, to the White Stadium plan, with conditions

To the Editor:

The revitalization of Franklin Park's White Stadium and the Playstead is a significant step toward enhancing the quality of life for the surrounding neighborhoods, the city, and visitors to Boston.

The rehabilitation of White Stadium into a state-of-the-art facility for Boston Public Schools (BPS) and residents and its potential to become Boston's home of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) are key aspects of this revitalization.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Franklin Park's architect, created an evolving landscape of openness that reflects an appreciation of nature and provides an escape from the harsh realities of urban life. His transcendentalist vision anticipated an area to accommodate 10,000 people, which is the projected number for the current stadium proposal. His vision is as relevant today as it was in the 19th century.

The current disconnect between municipal and private interests and the surrounding neighborhoods is not revolutionary. Olmsted expected, and welcomed, "political engagement." However, the current process reflects decades-old development pressures that steamroll residents with dramatic changes to the landscape, character, access, and affordability of Boston's traditional neighborhoods.

All is not lost, though. This project can create a local and regional economic engine with a new industry, women's professional soccer. Hosting the Boston Unity team is an honor for Boston and a beacon of the city's future. But the current process, renderings, and construction plans should lean a little more toward public interest for the long term. At this point, a temporary location for one season might be prudent until Boston Unity, like the BPS athletes, has a worthy sports and recreational complex.

The current proposal is analogous to being gifted a new car with just a few dents. You'll take the car but you'd prefer one without dents. Still, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our city, state, and

region. Designing a stadium that balances the needs of private investors and the community is vital to ensuring that White Stadium and the Playstead will remain viable regardless of Boston Unity's success. Boston Unity Soccer could outgrow the stadium before the expiration of the lease and, for financial reasons, be compelled to find another location with sufficient infrastructure.

The deterioration of 77-year-old White Stadium has been commensurate with the decades-long dearth of public investment, genuine engagement, and leadership. The current planners were wise to reschedule a May 22 Zoom meeting until May 30. In the interim, they might consider a face-to-face public hearing to address unanswered questions and concerns from stakeholders to seal the deal. The objective is to have as many "hands on deck" as possible before final adoption.

There are several outstanding issues that should be resolved before this proposal moves ahead. The practicality of opening a virtually new stadium without more on-site parking is utopian-like at best and absurd at worst. Expanding residential parking permits throughout the surrounding neighborhoods would go a long way toward establishing equity in protected parking city-wide. However, the city's planners have rejected any expansion at this time. There has been no design rendering that reflects the relocation of track-and-field events. Planners suggest these elements will be introduced before the final rendering.

Slowing this process before any final adoption would be a prudent move. This project should be pursued regardless of these public/private partnerships; only then can Boston ascend to higher heights, utilizing its assets, heritage, present, and future to become a revitalized global magnet for tourism, education, new growth industries, and a practical and comfortable urban life.

Barry Lawton  
Dorchester

### The Reporter

"The News & Values Around the Neighborhood"

A publication of Boston Neighborhood News Inc.

150 Mt. Vernon St., Dorchester, MA 02125

Worldwide at dotnews.com

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Mary Casey Forry, Publisher (1983-2004)

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Next Issue: Thursday, June 6, 2024

Next week's Deadline: Monday, June 3 at 12 p.m.

Published weekly on Thursday mornings

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# Steward case poses just the beginning of our community's health care woes

By **BILL WALCZAK**  
REPORTER COLUMNIST

The Massachusetts Legislature has tackled the bankruptcy of Steward Health Care by passing a fairly comprehensive package of regulations that may help avoid another meltdown at a major medical system.

But there's more to be done. Our health care system is a mess. We have allowed the marketplace to determine how health care is delivered, but the marketplace is about money, not health.

Our dollars are overwhelmingly spent on facilities, procedures, high-tech radiology, and miracle pharmaceutical cures, not on preventing the lifestyle choices that make them necessary. Massachusetts needs a comprehensive plan that will change how our health care dollars are spent while producing a healthier population.

Let's start with primary care. In countries that have better health outcomes than the US, access to primary care physicians (PCP) and investment in prevention strategies are core elements of their systems. In the US, primary care has been on life support for decades, despite acknowledgment that PCPs are essential to producing an excellent and efficient system that results in a healthy population. New physicians overwhelmingly choose specialty fields, with the number choosing primary care recently dropping below 30 percent.

In Massachusetts, primary care is only 8 percent of health care spending, an indicator that primary care provider time with patients, essential to help guide patients toward healthy behaviors, is not perceived as important. The Commonwealth needs to promote primary care by ensuring that PCPs are paid competitively to specialists, making all primary care visits free of co-payments and deductibles, ensuring that prevention is a major part of health care visits, and forcing insurance to pay for fitness and nutrition programs.

While primary care withers, the costliest part of the health care system continues to expand exponentially. Running a marketplace-based system has produced intense competition between the remaining teaching hospitals, with the resultant building frenzy creating new hospitals and wings costing billions of dollars. For example, Mass General Hospital, part of Mass General Brigham, is building a \$1.8 billion wing, while Dana Farber Cancer Institute, soon to join Beth Israel Lahey, is planning a new \$1.7 billion hospital.

This bricks-and-mortar war has also resulted in the building of new specialty centers in wealthy suburbs where those with private insurance reside. A recent study by the Rand Corporation indicated that private health insurance pays 254 percent more than Medicare for services, which would explain the teaching hospital systems building hospital feeders in places where the well-insured live while not growing in areas with higher numbers of patients with Medicaid and Medicare. Meanwhile, community hospitals, largely in working class communities like Dorchester, continue their decline.

Despite these new and luxurious health care centers, 40 percent of the residents of our Commonwealth delay medical care because of its cost, which is among the highest in the world and outpacing inflation nearly every year. The class and racial gap in health care and structural racism within the system continue unabated. A study by Blue Cross Blue Shield last year indicated that "health disparities experienced by communities of color cost Massachusetts \$5.9 billion a year," mainly because of avoidable healthcare spending from waiting too long for care and lost labor productivity.

While Massachusetts leads the US in percentage of population covered by health insurance, it doesn't mean that everyone has good health insurance or is

able to afford care. The Massachusetts Connector (the agency created by Romneycare that provides access to private insurance for people who cannot get health insurance from an employer) has Deductible and Out of Pocket Maximums (OOPM), i.e., the most you can spend out of pocket, at \$9,450 for an individual and \$18,900 for a family for 2024. This is for those who have Connector insurance.

No wonder medical care continues to be the number one cause of bankruptcy in the US.

A few years ago, when I was CEO of the South End Health Center, 97 staff members were covered by health center-provided insurance. In the previous year, there were three insurance-covered people (one staff member and two spouses of staff members) who had serious illnesses that required hospitalization. Our insurance company increased our premiums by 28 percent because insurance companies today calculate rates by the organization's annual health care cost (called "experience-rated") rather than sharing the cost among a large risk pool, called community rated, which would prevent a few cases from causing a dramatic increase in premiums.

We tried to get other insurance companies to bid, but none would, because of the size of our risk pool. The result was a decision by the health center to increase our deductible to \$3,000 and limit other care in an effort to reduce the increased premium.

In the US, 98 percent of businesses have fewer than 100 employees. Last year, a Massachusetts Health Policy Commission report indicated that employee premiums have increased by 295 percent since 2000, three times faster than household income and four times faster than inflation. Guiding insurance companies toward allowing larger risk pools made up of thousands of covered lives should be part of insurance reform, though ultimately a single payer system is the only real solution to the cost problem.

There are other issues that require our attention, including whether emerging "artificial intelligence" will be used to diagnose disease and deny care; the shortage of workers, especially nurses, that is getting worse as boomers retire; and the lack of regional ER coordination that has resulted in huge waits for care, and leaving some behavioral health patients to stay in emergency rooms, sometimes for weeks, because of problems with placing the patients in psychiatric hospitals.

I do not want to disparage the many parts of the system that work well, and the innovations that are helping to solve some of the issues I have identified. However, there are huge issues that need to be comprehensively tackled, and it's time for the Commonwealth to create a commission that can do that. It needs to be made up of people without the vested interests that seek to perpetuate the existing system.

We need a fresh view of how to solve the problems in how medical care is delivered. In 1991, Professor Nancy Kane of the Harvard School of Public Health provided a thorough analysis of the Massachusetts hospital system of that era, which prompted discussions how we use health care dollars. In a *Boston Globe* article by Richard Knox (2/3/1991), Kane said something that is still relevant today: "There's a tradeoff between how much we want to pay, how much high-tech plant and equipment we want, and whether we want these institutions to tackle social problems like infant mortality and drug abuse."

We need another independent and comprehensive review of the Massachusetts health care system, and a plan to create a system that produces more health and less cost. It's done elsewhere; it can be done here.

*Bill Walczak lives in Dorchester. His column appears regularly in the Reporter.*

## ZBA's latest decision on Savin Hill Ave. a travesty

To the Editor:

What an outrage! I attended the May 21 Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) zoom hearing on a development at 243D Savin Hill Ave. Against the opposition

of all the abutters directly affected, a thumb's-down by the Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association Planning Committee and general membership in 2019 and again in 2024 – not to mention a 40-signature petition, the ZBA, in all its unanimous arrogance, ignored this community of residents and property taxpayers and approved this development.

And for what? To construct an unsightly, oversized anomaly to the surrounding homes, leaving us with generations of ugly residue from this development.

This approval is an environmental disaster. It wipes out a cove of mature trees affecting the environment and air quality for decades. It will eliminate the abutting flood zone now guarded by these trees. It will inhibit the site's natural ability to control the storm water. It egregiously violates allowed minimum lot frontage, putting the front door of 243D Savin Hill

Ave. facing the backyards of the existing homes, encroaching on their private property and personal space. But all this means nothing to the ZBA.

Shame on the ZBA. We only have them to blame for the precedent-setting standards forever changing historic districts of old Victorian homes and open green space into ugly overdeveloped neighborhoods that will have everlasting environmental devastation.

This is not the first of their supercilious "who gives a damn" votes. We have seen many and it is expected now that there is no stopping them from destroying what's left of Boston's beautiful neighborhoods.

What do they care about and why do they vote the way they do? Taxpayers are paying for this sham of a board, and it should be abolished.

I ask our environmentally conscious mayor to stand with the voters and residents and not greedy developers and rid us of the ZBA..

Donna Blythe-McColgan  
Savin Hill Avenue  
Executive Board Member  
Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association



Every day is Mother's Day at St. Mary's Center, but this Mother's Day week was extra special! Thanks to our incredible team and community, St. Mary's Center held two special events to honor our amazing mothers.

Approaching Mother's Day, we gathered leaders and supporters for an intimate morning of conversation and learning, exploring Boston's complex housing landscape and celebrating the resilience and dedication of the mothers and families St. Mary's Center serves. The program featured four extraordinary panelists, State Representative Dan Hunt; St. Mary's Center President, Alexis Steel; Director of Young Parenting Living and Housing Programs, Mengee Khasu, and Director of Adult Family Shelter Program, Dorchester, Odalis Rull.



Additionally, we hosted a "Mommy & Me" Paint Night where moms at our Dorchester and East Boston campuses enjoyed delicious snacks, gift baskets and flowers, and got creative during a fun paint night with their kids! This event would not have been possible without the help of our outstanding network of supporters and volunteers: State Senator Lydia Edwards, The Boston Bruins Foundation, Sanofi US, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, The Chestnut Hill School, and Wild Flower Floral Design.



Mothers are the heart of St. Mary's Center. If you would like to help support the families of St. Mary's Center, please visit our website: <https://www.stmaryscenterma.org/>

# The Dave McKay story: “My Life in the Dugout”

## Dot baseball coaching legend takes his seat in Yawkey League Hall of Fame

By **SETH DANIEL**  
NEWS EDITOR

Dave McKay, then 13, sat in his math classroom decades ago at the former St. Marks School on Centre Street ditching his assignment to focus on calculating statistics for the neighborhood baseball team he was helping to coach. He took over coaching duties at age 15.

“My father worked 16-hour days and he couldn’t watch my brother’s games, so I went all the time,” McKay said. “The coach noticed me and said, ‘You’re here all the time, keep score for me.’ That’s how it began.”

Today, the formidable skipper of the legendary Yawkey League McKay Club Beacons is in his 56th year of coaching and his 40th year of leading the McKay Club amateur adult team. On May 19, at a banquet in Quincy, his lifelong devotion to baseball – and to the players themselves – was recognized with his induction into the League’s Hall of Fame.

To Dave McKay, coaching not only involves strategy on the diamond, but also lifetime bonds with young men who needed a chance to keep “playing ball” – even if at times that meant bailing them out of jail or keeping them out of jail.

“I don’t think I ever got any of that bail money back,” he joked in a recent interview, noting that the early days of the club were as much about keeping guys in the straight and narrow as winning. “It’s all being part of something and it’s great being part of some-



Dave McKay before a May 20 game at Garvey Park in Neponset.  
*Photo courtesy McKay Club*

thing meaningful,” said the 71-year-old McKay. “A lot of people my age are thrown aside like the rubbish. I always thought about what I would do with my life after retirement. I knew I always had baseball...The relationships you have with people are so important, and the players are my energy.”

That energy has often meant giving players second chances to excel after going through tough times. He recalled a friend asking if a guy who had just gotten out of jail and needed a positive outlet could get a spot on the team. McKay said he bristled, but then thought, “What would Jesus do? Would he throw the guy to the street and tell him to go to hell? No.

So, I gave the guy the ball and he pitched a no-hitter right there. He had been in jail and was more of a hockey player, but he stepped up and pitched a no-hitter. That’s what the McKay Club has done and it’s what we’re all about.”

A retired teacher and city employee who still lives in Adams Corner, McKay is now seen as an “elder statesman” who attends every game and provides key guidance to a league that has always kept fresh over the summer with blue-collar neighborhood legends. The name on the back of his jersey is ‘Uncle Buck,’ after the movie character played by the late John Candy. But it’s also speaks to the



Dave McKay with his nephew, Kyle McKay, who played for the McKay Club for several years – a time Dave described as a very special opportunity to coach a family member. *Photo by Kevin George*

family atmosphere he has created. “This is the way baseball was made to be played, not by professionals but amateurs that play hard and enjoy the game,” he quipped.

With no kids of his own, McKay has poured his life into baseball and into players like Dorchester’s Mike Kazmowski, his brother Danny, and their friends. Mike, now 58, began playing for McKay as a nine-year-old rookie in the former Mill Stream Little League, which was a thriving baseball community pulling players in central Dorchester’s Fields Corner from St. Mark, St. Ambrose, St. Peter, and St. Gregory parishes.

“It’s a story that starts in my childhood,” said Kazmowski, who ended

up playing for McKay over a 21-year span through Little League, Babe Ruth League, Jr. Park League, and finally for the McKay Club before retiring just a few years ago.

“The thing I appreciated the most is we all had regular jobs,” he said. “You may have had a tough day on the job, but you could look forward to the fact that you had a baseball game that night. I played on McKay Club with kids I grew up with – mostly Dorchester guys at first and then the Southie guys came in and Dave kept it together. That was something great to be able to play baseball as an adult with guys I had as friends my whole life. It was my second family.”

McKay’s love of baseball is no act; it’s a life pursuit, said Kazmowski. “A lot of kids and guys in Dorchester owe a lot to Dave because he always provided something for us to do. He really, really helped a lot of people here in keeping baseball around.”

South Boston’s Jack Owens, the athletic director for Boston Latin School (BLS), agrees wholeheartedly with Kazmowski. He came to the McKay Club after his freshman year of baseball at St. Michael’s College in Vermont. He wanted to keep “fresh and focused” in center-field over the summer, and McKay gave him the chance. After college, he was able to keep going – something that isn’t available without someone like McKay weighing in.

“It’s an opportunity for guys that love the game to continue playing at a high level,” Owens said. “It’s not beer league softball or slow pitch. It’s high-level ball...There isn’t anything beyond post-playing careers in baseball. The pickup sports don’t lend themselves to baseball, and the Yawkey League is unique. Dave has been a major part of keeping it alive all these years.”

Added Dorchester’s Kevin George, who was a rival player and coach with the South Boston Saints team, “He gave guys from Dorchester a chance to play. A lot of guys didn’t go on to college despite being college-level talent. They went on to the trades, but they still had the opportunity as top-notch players to play against college players. It was competition at a time when not everyone went off to college to play.”

McKay’s time in amateur baseball started when his core players got older and wanted to keep playing. They joined the Junior Park League in 1984 as the McKay Club within the Mill Stream organization. As the neighborhood changed, there were fewer kids and fewer schools in central Dorchester, and Mill Stream folded, but the McKay Club kept going. In 1990, McKay went independent, leaning on the Yawkey family – then the owners of the Red Sox – to sponsor them. That move spawned the Yawkey League.

Suddenly the league was top-tier and growing, said George. It eventually expanded the regular season to 33 games with 22 teams. One game a week was broadcast and replayed on Comcast Cable, crowds attended games, and box scores and standings were a daily staple in Boston

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newspapers. The teams played in various parks, including Town Field, Garvey Park, Clifford Park (The Prairie), Toohig Park, McConnell Park, and even Ronan Park. During the late Mayor Tom Menino's administration, the city and the McKay Club agreed to bring the games up to Ronan for positive, safe activity at night – a move that saw the field upgraded and the team “flourishing” with large crowds.

“Dave McKay thought big and is a larger-than-life character with big ideas and probably had a little P.T. Barnum in him – in a good way,” said George. “He brought Yawkey baseball somewhere that most of us wouldn't have imagined possible.”

One of those big ideas was to play Yawkey League All-Star games at Fenway Park, which the Red Sox agreed to for more than 10 years. It was a shining moment for most players, including Owens and Kazmowski.

Kazmowski said he played in Fenway, a treat made special when McKay let him play right field like his baseball idol Dwight Evans, the Red Sox outfielder in the 1970s and 1980s, as his young son Evan (for Dwight) watched from the dugout. “I had

a moment out there by myself,” he recalled. “Dewey had played right where I stood. That was my favorite moment with the McKay Club.”

Though they have never won a championship, the McKay Club has been a contender for decades, a

playoff team most years, and a championship series finalist a couple of times. For the core group of Dorchester and South Boston players, no matter what the record showed, leaving the team was never an option.

“I saw a great sense

of loyalty in playing for Dave,” said Owens, who retired in 2015. “He took me in and gave me a start and allowed me to be a part of it after college. There was never a doubt I would only play for the McKay Club... He's a great friend of mine to

this day.”

Earlier this month, on May 20, the McKay Club Beacons took the field at the new Garvey Park and McKay was there to start his 40th year coaching the team. He said there is a need to get the younger crowd back into the game

and to take over the reins, but that doesn't mean he's leaving the dugout any time soon.

“I'm not going to leave until I they take me over to Holy Cross Cemetery,” he said. “I'm a lifer... This is what I live for.”



From left, Ben Mendelson, Paul Grammer, Glenn Ducharme, Kevin George, Tim Dacey, Hall of Famer Jon Tenney, Dan Zakrewski, and Fran Strassmann. Photo courtesy Kevin George

## Southie pitcher Tenney to Yawkey Hall of Fame

One of the great pitchers of the Yawkey League from the South Boston Saints team was inducted into the Yawkey League Hall of Fame in a ceremony on May 19. Jon Tenney could take over any game, said his coach and fellow player, Kevin George,

who spotted him on a street in South Boston wearing a University of Vermont baseball shirt.

As it turned out, Tenney, a dominant Division 1 pitcher for Vermont, had moved to Boston to pursue his working career. He had no idea

that amateur baseball was flourishing in Boston at the time. After some strong sales work, George recruited him to play for the Saints.

“I told him that we played our All-Star games in Fenway Park and he perked up and

said maybe he might be interested,” said George with a laugh. It was the beginning of a 20-plus year relationship that blossomed into a Hall of Fame career for Tenney.

“He was the ultimate big-game pitcher,” said George. “He always came

up big in big games. He'd pitch the first game and then come back on three-days' rest to finish a series. He left it all out there when he took the mound.”

—SETH DANIEL

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# UMB graduate students lay out Dorchester's waterfront history

By TAYLOR BROKESH  
 REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

Five Graduate students at UMass Boston last week presented their ideas for new signage that would highlight local history to visitors along the Boston Harborwalk.

Students in the seminar "HIST 625 - Interpreting History in Public: Approaches to Public History Practice" with Professor Jane Becker interviewed residents and conducted their own research in collaboration with Friends of the Boston Harborwalk. The result of these endeavors is a set of "site-specific interpretive signs that interpret the histories (and the present) currently visible or once visible from the harborwalk."

The Harborwalk stretches a combined 43 miles from East Boston to the Neponset River and encircles Columbia Point, including the UMass Boston campus. The project focused on the Dorchester section of the Harborwalk, starting just south of Moakley Park and finishing at Commercial Point. The five students — Lauren Shirley, Sarah Jackson, Megan Reynolds, Nick Harrelson, and Seamus O'Hearne — each took a region of the Harborwalk and devised plans for a total of 27 wayside markers.



Back: Mike Manning (FBHW), Nick Harrelson, Megan Reynolds, Seamus O'Hearne; Front: Jane Becker, Liz Nelson Weaver (FBHW), Sarah Jackson, Lauren Shirley  
 Taylor Brokesh photo

The locations run the gamut from former sites or structures — like Reynolds's proposal for a sign about Camp McKay, the Italian POW site located on Columbia Point toward the end of World War II, or Shirley's idea for a sign about the storied history of the Bayside Mall, eventually the Bayside Expo Center — to spaces that are still present but have fascinating histories. O'Hearne's proposal for a sign focuses on the history of Corita Kent's iconic "rainbow swash" on the National Grid gas tank, while Harrelson's

sign details the story of the UMass campus. Other interesting fun facts would be incorporated on Jackson's proposal for a sign talking about the kinds of wildlife you might find in Boston Harbor, such as the bufflehead duck or harbor seals.

Over the course of their semester, the students said they dived into physical and digital archives, maps from the Leventhal Center, many books, news clippings, and photos, and even solicited community feedback about what sites should get particular attention.

"This project was a really cool chance to expand what we know about the area," Jackson said. "I'm pretty sure almost all of us are Dorchester transplants, so it was cool to learn more about where we live."

The two representatives of Friends of the Boston Harborwalk in attendance, chair Mike Manning and volunteer Liz Nelson Weaver, said the next step in the project will be an FBHW application for a grant in the fall so that these interpretive signs can be manufactured and placed along the Harborwalk.

"Your work really is just remarkable," Nelson Weaver said. "You've done so much work already that I think we can just leap forward."

With Boston's 400th anniversary coming up in 2030, Manning's hope is that the Harborwalk would have signs along its entire length. A project like that might take a little more time, Nelson Weaver said, but the students' work has put them closer to their goal.

"Dorchester was really our missing piece," she said. "We didn't have a single sign up here. So, this project will really make it possible to move forward."



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# Report: ‘Difficult to make sense of Wu tax shift plan’

By SAM DRYSDALE  
STATE HOUSE  
NEWS SERVICE

Mayor Wu’s proposal to shift a greater tax burden onto commercial property owners for a few years to limit increases on Boston residents is a temporary solution that may exacerbate the longer-term problem it is trying to solve, according to the author of a new report on the policy. The proposal needs the approval of the city council and the Legislature to take effect.

As the world has shifted in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, fewer and fewer companies have returned to downtown offices. Without a bustling workforce in downtown and other neighborhoods, small businesses such as restaurants and retail have also suffered, and commercial properties are likely to see a reduction in values in this year’s assessment.

State law allows municipalities to create separate tax rates for commercial and residential property, and to require commercial owners to pay as much as 175 percent of what the rate would have been without a split.

Wu’s proposal would allow the city to increase the maximum commercial shift to 200 percent if

business property values drop significantly, then gradually shift it back down a bit each year until it returns to 175 percent in year five. She says this shifting would safeguard residents from an unexpected and dramatic property tax increase, if they had to bear the weight of city budget growth without as much revenue coming in from commercial properties.

“In the short term, this is the legislative mechanism that is necessary,” she said last month, discussing her plans on WBUR. “In the long term, we need to recruit more businesses to Boston and [provide] more residential opportunities.”

In a report released on May 22, Ryan LLC, a tax firm that represents commercial and residential property owners, said the policy would increase the commercial tax rate by 14 percent, and the increased rate would further depress commercial values.

“It is difficult to make sense of a bill that looks to increase taxes on a class of property that is decreasing in market value while further subsidizing a class because of its appreciation in market value,” the report states. “It is extremely difficult to make sense of such a proposal when factoring

in that Boston already has the second highest level of disproportionality between commercial and residential taxpayers in the country.”

The report also notes that Boston has the third lowest property taxes out of major US cities for residential homeowners, and the 11th lowest for apartment owners.

“This bill would increase the already exorbitant tax burden on commercial owners who are desperately attempting to hold onto properties through financial stress and losses caused by record-high vacancies and increased interest rates,” the report said. “Boston should be reviewing ways to revive commercial properties through tax mitigation, not saddling them with additional disproportionate tax burden to reduce tax costs for a thriving class of property whose owners are continuing to increase their wealth.”

Under the current layout, businesses hold a third of Boston’s property value, while 66.7 percent is held by residential properties. Of property taxes, however, 58.3 percent is paid by businesses compared to 41.7 percent from residents. Wu’s proposal would shift even more of that weight onto commercial property owners.

The mayor has said the proposal is only temporary, to give homeowners protection and the real estate market time to stabilize. “As Boston invests in revitalizing our Downtown and commercial corridors in response to shifting market trends, we are working with all stakeholders to protect residents and homeowners against sudden and dramatic tax increases,” she said in a statement. “For our seniors on fixed incomes, for families with children, for front-line workers and all our community members, we must have the tools to address rising housing costs and keep residents in their homes.”

The report’s author, Daniel Swift of the Ryan firm, says increasing taxes on already-struggling commercial owners will make the vacancy issue even worse – further exacerbating declining property values.

“This problem is about a decline in commercial real estate. That’s what’s causing these negative consequences. And this policy by itself furthers the decline of commercial real estate from an assessment perspective,” Swift told the News Service. “Vacancy keeps increasing, and there’s not going to be, from my perspective, a quick bounce-back in

commercial real estate. So, if the policy itself is further depreciating value on the assessment side, the residential class is going to be left with a much larger portion of assessed value – and a greater tax levy at the end of the day.”

Wu has pointed to similarities between her proposal and a temporary tax policy former Mayor Thomas Menino was able to secure in 2004 as part of the city’s reaction to the dot-com bust’s impacts on the city’s real estate.

A Boston Municipal Research Bureau report analyzes Wu’s property tax classification compared to Menino’s 2004 tax shift. The report says the bill 20 years ago was meant to provide temporary relief while a market “anomaly” played out, but that in 2024 there’s no indication that commercial real estate will bounce back to pre-pandemic levels.

“What’s happening is not a traditional economic cycle,” said Marty Walz, interim president of the Research Bureau. “It’s more likely a structural change in how we live and work. The mayor’s proposal on property taxes is an approach that lasts only a few years, but the changes in the market may be long term changes. So, we need to think of

this not as a short term, cyclical economic cycle, but as a more permanent structural change in the market.”

The Research Bureau report includes recommendations that the city could consider as an alternative, including revenue diversification. Property taxes fund about 71 percent of the city budget – a high amount compared to other large US cities.

Meg Mainzer-Cohen, president and executive director of the Back Bay Association, said she is concerned about commercial property owners passing the tax hike onto tenants who are already struggling to maintain small businesses.

She said one of the members of the association who owns several restaurants in the Back Bay said it would take \$100,000 off their bottom line. “It’s hard for a business, without any warning, to incorporate a year over year increase of \$100,000,” she said. “For the properties that have been vacant, how those property owners are going to absorb an additional tax is very concerning. The broad sense is that the Back Bay has been a fairly dependable economic engine for the city, and we’re concerned about entering a cycle that hurts the neighborhood’s vitality.”

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# Project D.E.E.P. will offer expanded tutoring this fall

**By HARRIET GAYE**  
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER  
The Dorchester Education and Enrichment Program – or Project D.E.E.P. – is re-tooling its

programming this year after a reevaluation on how to improve student development following the pandemic. The revamped pro-

gram, dubbed Project D.E.E.P. Excel, will still offer free exam preps, tutoring, and private school placement through the Leahy-Holloran Community Center, but, said Brendan McDonough, who founded the program 27 years ago, the changing demands of Covid-era reforms within school districts and private schools called for new models for D.E.E.P. as well.

Students involved in the program now have the chance to earn academic points that can add up to a scholarship for a

summer camp of their choosing.

Some of McDonough's funders have changed their focus areas, leaving room for new financial supporters. Some of them include the Martin Richard Foundation, The Rodman Ride for Kids, and state Sen. Nick Collins.

"None of this would be possible without our financial supporters especially after Covid where we focused on serious change," said McDonough. "We were in a situation where we needed to go out and get some new supporters as well. We were very fortunate."

The pandemic and funders were not the

only changing variables. The Boston Latin Exam process was modified. It's now less about the exam and more so the grades.

"There's a new education process that folks have to learn," explained McDonough, who helped guide the revamp. Two years ago, D.E.E.P. graduates Ryan McCarthy and Michael McDonough joined the team. McCarthy is now the executive director and Michael McDonough is the head of recruitment.

"Their proactive outreach throughout the Dorchester community has really resulted in our student population, after Covid really in the last 18 months, increasing by 300 percent," McDonough said.

Project D.E.E.P. Excel is described as an extended program that starts in the fall and continues into the spring to focus on building the confidence of their students and continuing their academic improvements into the summer. This new program is set to begin in the fall 2024. Other programs will remain free, but the Excel

program will require a \$100 fee on a first-come, first-served basis.

Local teachers and teacher aides from the Richard J. Murphy School work with the project to ensure that what students are learning matches up with their curriculum. Their overall goal is to position students to succeed no matter where they are.

"We want to be working on things the kids are working on in school in the fall and then in the spring, so they get a jump on it," McDonough said. "That'll help them have higher success while they're in school."

Project D.E.E.P. planned an overview of the Excel program at their volunteer night on Wed. May 29, their first since before the pandemic. Students were to be recognized for their recent accomplishments, followed by a pizza party from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Leahy-Holloran Community Center. Fifty kids will be graduating from D.E.E.P. this year and McDonough is anticipating 75-80 will do so next year.



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Hudson Properties LLC	Lee, Kai L	27 Juliette St	05/08/24	1,550,000
Depina, Emanuel M	Reed Willie H Est	73 Mora St	05/08/24	660,000
Cormier, Ruth M	Encarnacion, Robert A	770 Cummins Hwy #2	05/10/24	280,000
C & I Properties LLC	Jean, Georges	55 Woolson St	05/09/24	910,000
Jean, Georges	Diaz, Javier	55 Woolson St	05/09/24	549,000
C & I Properties LLC	Jean, Georges	57 Woolson St	05/09/24	910,000
Jean, Georges	Diaz, Marina H	57 Woolson St	05/09/24	549,000
Mina, Eliza	910 Dorchester Ave Unit 5	1906-1918 Dorchester Ave #515	05/09/24	540,000
Mac, Khoa P	8 Oakhurst Realty LLC	8 Oakhurst St #2	05/07/24	499,900
Holbert, Victoria	19-23 Clapp St LLC	19-23 Clapp St #5	05/07/24	799,000
427 Quincy Street LLC	Fpg 17 Wensley LLC	427 Quincy St	05/07/24	607,500
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## Help with phones, food and housing

### How Commonwealth Care Alliance Massachusetts's Community Health Workers help members stay healthy and live well in their homes



For many of us, a home is more than shelter—it's a safe haven where family memories are made. Commonwealth Care Alliance Massachusetts (CCA) Community Health Worker Angelmina understood that when she first met Bonnie\*, a CCA member in her 70s. Struggling to replace her oil tank, Bonnie would soon be left without heat or hot water.

Since the home had been in Bonnie's family for many years, belongings had accumulated in the basement, blocking access to the tank, and the fire department could not approve a new tank until the old one was removed. With no family or friends nearby to help, Bonnie was losing hope. To help, Angelmina contacted local vendors to clear the basement. She also helped Bonnie apply for financial support for a new oil tank.

Housing issues such as these can have a significant impact on someone's health and wellbeing. That's why in recent years, CCA helped members receive more than 77,000 home modifications and supports, including helping members get air conditioners, homemaker services, ramp installations, and more.

CCA Community Health Worker Janette has seen the impact these issues can have on the members she supports, too. "Many people who struggle with issues at home also struggle with stress, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol," she said. "When you're anxious about paying your bills, keeping warm, or staying safe, you can't focus on your health."

Both Janette and Angelmina help members live safely at home, connecting people to food resources, transportation, or phones. It might also mean connecting them to a lawyer if they are facing eviction or helping them apply for housing.

"Community Health Workers provide the kind of support that a friend or family member would offer," Angelmina added. Recently, she helped a member apply for a phone and assisted him with getting a social security card, which was required for the phone application. "He had to have a lot of trust in me to give me his ID and get this done for him," she said.

While keeping members in their homes is an important goal for CCA, finding a new home is sometimes a better option. "I recently worked with a member who was living in a terrible environment," Janette said. "His home was infested. He thought that his living situation was the best that he could do. We collaborated as a team and with our community partners and we helped him move to a safer home."

CCA's Community Health Workers live in the communities they serve and understand the conditions that impact the health and wellness of their neighbors. With this knowledge, they help members close gaps to get access to the programs they need. Janette's number one goal is to be an advocate for her members, a role that requires trust and understanding. "I need to listen before I can talk. While housing might be their primary need, helping them fill out that application isn't always step one."



When asked what she loves most about her job, Angelmina said she was passionate about helping people. "I'm willing to go the extra mile to help support our members' needs," she said.

Janette agreed. "CCA's mission is to help people with the most significant needs stay healthy and live well. That's a mission I strongly believe in, and I'm proud to support it every day."

\*To protect the privacy of our member, this name is a pseudonym.

Commonwealth Care Alliance is a mission-driven healthcare services organization that supports older adults and individuals with the most significant needs. Visit: [ccama.org/health](http://ccama.org/health).



# 5 TIPS FOR DRONE SAFETY THIS SUMMER

STAY CLEAR OF CONTROLLED AIRSPACES AND KNOW THE RULES:

1

Register your drone

2

Never fly near any aircraft, airports or other controlled airspace

3

Keep your drone in sight at all times

4

Always fly below 400 feet

5

Learn the rules for Remote ID and flying over crowds

SCAN FOR MORE INFO ON DRONE SAFETY



Register your drone with the Federal Aviation Administration at [faadronezone.faa.gov](https://faadronezone.faa.gov)



# Home sales sprang to life in April

BY COLIN A. YOUNG  
STATE HOUSE  
NEWS SERVICE

There were 3,100 single-family homes sold in Massachusetts in April, and while that number alone may not mean much to those still looking for an affordable home here it may represent a glimmer of hope – it was the largest year-over-year increase in sales since June 2021.

Real estate market analysts at The Warren Group said April's sales volume represented a 6.8 percent climb over the 2,902 sales recorded in April 2023, adding that this was just the third time in nearly three years that home sales were up from the same month a year prior (following tiny increases in January and February of this year). Cassidy Norton, The Warren Group's associate publisher, called April's sales "a positive sign for both buyers and sellers" but highlighted how sales volume alone can't tell the whole story.

The median single-family home sale price rose 9.9 percent compared to April 2023 to hit \$610,000 last month, a new all-time high for the month and the first time the median home price has crossed the \$600,000 ceiling this year.

"The market has been exceedingly tight in recent years as mortgage rates and building costs rose. More sales didn't move the needle on home prices, however; the median single-family home sale price in April rose nearly 10 percent," she said, adding that last month's median price was not far off the record high of \$615,000 set in June 2023.

The sales and price increases were roughly the same when looking just at the 139 communities inside the Interstate 495 belt, The Warren Group said. Greater Boston sales were up 8.8 percent to 1,517 in April as the median price shot up 10.1 percent to \$760,000.

Through the first four months of 2024, 10,113 single-family homes have sold in Massachusetts – eight more homes than were sold in the same span of 2023, or a 0.1 percent increase. But compared to the first four months of 2023, the year-to-date median single-family home price here is now 9.5 percent higher, at \$575,000, The Warren Group said.

Home sales across Massachusetts sank to a 12-year low in 2023 and housing here is inaccessible or unaffordable for many residents. Gov.

Healey last year identified housing as "the number-one issue facing this state" and said there is a shortage of 200,000 units across the state.

The five-year, \$4.12 billion housing bond bill (H 4138) she filed in the fall seeking to kickstart production of new housing units has not surfaced in the House.

On Mon, May 20, Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll and Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Ed Augustus participated in a roundtable discussion with residents who recently purchased a home through a state-sponsored first-time homebuyer program.

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, MassHousing and the Mass. Affordable Housing Alliance, the event also promoted Healey's bill. The administration said the bill would authorize \$50 million for "MassDreams" to create first-time homebuyer opportunities, authorize \$100 million for the Commonwealth Builder Program to spur construction of affordable single-family homes in Gateway Cities and similar markets, and create a Homeownership Tax Credit for first-time homebuyers.

# Happy Dorchester Day!

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Learn more at [HHSI.US](https://HHSI.US)



# BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF DORCHESTER



**BGCD Members Attend Ron Burton Training Village Retreat Day:** See details below.



**BGCD Dance Team Shines at Step Up 2 Dance Competition:** See details below.

**CONNECT THE DOT:**

**BGCD Members Attend Ron Burton Training Village Retreat Day:** This past weekend, a group of 20 Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester members attended a Retreat Day event with the Ron Burton Training Village. Our members enjoyed the opportunity to explore communication and leadership skills, take part in a variety of interactive large group games and a chance to explore the campus for free time. The mission of the Ron Burton Training Village is to train youth to achieve their purpose, despite life's challenges, through education, leadership, physical wellness, social advancement and spiritual growth. Many thanks to the team at RBTV, a long time BGCD program partner, for their outstanding hospitality. We look forward to our next outing! To learn more about partnering with BGCD, please contact Mike Joyce at [mjoyce@bgcdorchester.org](mailto:mjoyce@bgcdorchester.org).

**FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE:**

**BGCD Dance Team Shines at Step Up 2 Dance Competition:** On Sunday May 26<sup>th</sup>, Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester's Dance Team took part in the "Step Up 2 Dance Competition" in Melrose. Step Up 2 Dance creates exciting, inspiring and fun dance competitions for all ages that educates and inspires dancers.

Our Dance Team took home 5<sup>th</sup> Place in their age group, the top prize in the Hip-Hop category and a Platinum score overall. Congratulations to our Dance Team members on their accomplishment! Next up for the Dance Program will be a Spring Recital for members, parents, friends and staff at our Denney Center site on Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. For more information on our BGCD Dance program, please contact Shannon Zarnoch at [szarnoch@bgcdorchester.org](mailto:szarnoch@bgcdorchester.org).

**DID YOU KNOW:**

**BGCD Alumni Reunion - THIS WEEKEND June 1<sup>st</sup>:** BGCD's Alumni Association is hosting a Reunion event this Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> to help celebrate the Club's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the community! The day will consist of food, raffles, our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bruce Seals 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament and other family fun activities. The reunion will take place from 11-3pm. Tickets for the Reunion are \$25 and can be purchased at [bit.ly/bgcdalum24](http://bit.ly/bgcdalum24) or via the QR Code under Upcoming Events.

We look forward to a great celebration and to reunite with our BGCD family. Our alumni are a vital group of supporters made up of past members, parents and staff who are dedicated to supporting the efforts and programming at BGCD. For more information, please contact Mike Joyce at [mjoyce@bgcdorchester.org](mailto:mjoyce@bgcdorchester.org).

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Spring Dance Program Recital  
May 31

Alumni Reunion  
June 1

\*Scan the QR Code for Tickets:



Dorchester Day Parade  
June 2

Juneteenth - BGCD Closed  
June 19

617.288.7120 | 1135 Dorchester Ave. | [www.bgcdorchester.org](http://www.bgcdorchester.org)

# NGƯỜI MẠNH MẼ CHIA SẺ CẢM XÚC CỦA HỌ

Cảm xúc là quan trọng. Hãy chia sẻ chúng.  
Bắt đầu tại [mass.gov/MoreToTheStory](http://mass.gov/MoreToTheStory).



# Haitian American Parade represents a call for 'unity and solidarity' amid celebration

By SETH DANIEL  
NEWS EDITOR

With the current state of chaos in Haiti at the forefront, the annual celebratory Boston Haitian American Unity Parade could not go on without serious thought and solidarity with those who suffer perilous conditions on the home island.

So, just as thousands of Haitian Americans and their Dorchester and Mattapan neighbors celebrated last Sunday (May 19) with the 22nd annual parade up Blue Hill Avenue – there was a concerted effort to reinforce this year's theme – Standing United in Solidarity with Haiti.

"It is my joy to be here on Blue Hill Avenue rain or shine and celebrating our flag," said Council President Ruthzee Louijeune as she launched the parade from Mattapan Square. "We look forward to this every year. We have the right to celebrate even as we work for a better Haiti and even as we work for

a better diaspora. We will celebrate our flag and our place in history, and we will march down Blue Hill Avenue."

Added Rev. Dieufort 'Keke' Fleurissaint: "Thanks to everyone for coming to support the Haitian community, but also coming to support Haiti. This year's theme...is unity and solidarity with Haiti. Despite what Haiti is going through, we stand with us, and we know Haiti will stand again on its feet because you care about Haiti."

The annual parade proceeds up Blue Hill Avenue from Mattapan Square to Harambee Park in Franklin Field. It is coordinated by Haitian Americans United (HAU) and celebrates Haitian Flag Day, which is May 19. Several community organizations, bands, and dance troupes enlivened the parade route, and there was food and performances in Harambee Park afterward.



Grand Marshal Donald Alexis, of the Caribbean Integration Community Development (CICD) organization.




A large crowd of folks from Immigrant Family Service Institute (IFSI) in Mattapan Square marched up ahead of a large American flag on Sunday.




The Pathfinders drum and bugle corps beat an outstanding cadence up and down Blue Hill Avenue.



Haitian American police officers Lt. Stanley Demesmin and Det. Serge Sanon. Demesmin was one of the first Haitian American lieutenants on the Boston Police.



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	21 1/4 x 36 1/4	23 1/4 x 36 1/4	27 1/4 x 36 1/4	30 1/4 x 36 1/4	33 1/4 x 36 1/4				
	21 1/4 x 40 1/4	23 1/4 x 40 1/4	27 1/4 x 40 1/4	30 1/4 x 40 1/4	33 1/4 x 40 1/4				
18 1/4 x 44 1/4	19 1/4 x 44 1/4	21 1/4 x 44 1/4	23 1/4 x 44 1/4	27 1/4 x 44 1/4	30 1/4 x 44 1/4	33 1/4 x 44 1/4	35 1/4 x 44 1/4		
	19 1/4 x 48 1/4	21 1/4 x 48 1/4	23 1/4 x 48 1/4	27 1/4 x 48 1/4	30 1/4 x 48 1/4	33 1/4 x 48 1/4	35 1/4 x 48 1/4		
18 1/4 x 52 1/4	19 1/4 x 52 1/4	21 1/4 x 52 1/4	23 1/4 x 52 1/4	27 1/4 x 52 1/4	30 1/4 x 52 1/4	33 1/4 x 52 1/4		39 1/4 x 52 1/4	
18 1/4 x 56 1/4		21 1/4 x 56 1/4	23 1/4 x 56 1/4	27 1/4 x 56 1/4	30 1/4 x 56 1/4	33 1/4 x 56 1/4	35 1/4 x 56 1/4	39 1/4 x 56 1/4	
18 1/4 x 60 1/4		21 1/4 x 60 1/4	23 1/4 x 60 1/4	27 1/4 x 60 1/4	30 1/4 x 60 1/4	31 1/4 x 60 1/4	33 1/4 x 60 1/4	35 1/4 x 60 1/4	39 1/4 x 60 1/4
18 1/4 x 64 1/4		21 1/4 x 64 1/4	23 1/4 x 64 1/4	27 1/4 x 64 1/4	30 1/4 x 64 1/4		33 1/4 x 64 1/4		39 1/4 x 64 1/4

41 Hallet Street, Dorchester (617) 282-6900



Markenley Mogelin played the role of Henri Christophe, a revolution leader and early president of Haiti.



Evangeline Lucien shows off her traditional fashions. Seth Daniel photos

# Boarding your pet? First, do your research

**DR. EDWARD SCETTINO**  
Did you know... there are no statewide regulations that govern boarding kennels and pet daycare facilities in Massachusetts? This means that, throughout the Commonwealth, not all boarding facilities are created equal. While many offer excellent accommodations and a nurturing environment, other kennels or daycares may not be on par with your expected standard of care.

In fact, the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) has, sadly, seen numerous instances where a dog was injured, and in some cases fatally, due to improper protocol or supervision during play groups.

Summer is upon us, so if you're planning a vacation, or simply looking for an opportunity to socialize your dog during the workday, ARL encourages pet owners to do their own research before leaving their dog or cat in the care of a boarding kennel or daycare facility.

Not sure where to start? ARL recommends taking these three steps to get set to board your pet:

- **Find out safety protocols and licensing.** What is the procedure in the event of a natural disaster or medical emergency? Are



Moment of Paws

**Make sure your summer vacation check-list keep proper care for pets like Akiro, pictured above, at the top of your to-do list.** *ARL Boston photo*

there vaccination requirements to ensure the health of all boarded animals? Does the facility have a current kennel license?

- **Ask for details about supervision and interaction.** What is the experience-level of the

person supervising your pet, and are they always on the premises? Are dogs allowed to interact with one another, and are they separated by size/temperament?

- **Download the Board Safely™ check-list at [arlboston.org](http://arlboston.org)**

**board-safely.** When researching potential boarding kennels or daycare facilities for your pet, ask all of the questions on this list and take notes.

While pet owners now have the tools to help them assess their own comfort level before they board their pet, there are bigger changes on the horizon. ARL, along with many other animal welfare organizations across the state, is actively seeking legislation that would establish regulations within the operation of boarding kennels and daycare facilities. These regulations would create statewide standards for emergency response training, facility accommodations, pet supervision, and more.

To learn how you can advocate for kennel regulations, visit [arlboston.org/board-safely](http://arlboston.org/board-safely).

*Dr. Edward Schettino is the president and CEO*

of the Animal Rescue League of Boston. He holds a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University,

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### LEGAL NOTICES

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THE TRIAL COURT  
PROBATE & FAMILY COURT  
SUFFOLK PROBATE & FAMILY COURT  
24 NEW CHARDON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02114  
617-788-8300  
Docket No. SU24W0392WD  
SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION  
MAIRENI C. MARTE  
ENCARNACION, PLAINTIFF(S)  
vs.  
JOSE R. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ,  
DEFENDANT(S)  
To the above-named Defendant(s):  
Jose R. Gonzalez Martinez; a complaint has been presented to this Court by the Plaintiff(s), Maireni C. Marte Encarnacion, seeking the Court to make such orders as it deems expedient concerning custody, support, and parenting time of Jasmairi Gonzalez Marte.  
You are required to serve upon Maireni C. Marte Encarnacion - whose address is 9 Boyd St., #1, Boston, MA 02124 your answer on or before **July 10, 2024**. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer in the office of the Register of this Court at 24 New Chardon Street, Boston, MA 02114.  
Witness, Hon. Brian Dunn, Esquire, First Justice of said Court at Suffolk, this 17th day of May 2024.  
Stephanie L. Everett, Esquire  
Register of Probate  
Published: May 30, 2024

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THE TRIAL COURT  
PROBATE & FAMILY COURT  
SUFFOLK PROBATE & FAMILY COURT  
24 NEW CHARDON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02114  
617-788-8300  
Docket No. SU23W1829WD  
SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION  
MARTHA F. GONCALVES,  
PLAINTIFF  
vs.  
JOSE A. TEIXEIRA, DEFENDANT  
To the above-named Defendant:  
Jose A. Teixeira; A Complaint has been presented to this Court by the Plaintiff, Martha F. Goncalves, seeking **Custody-Support-Parenting Time filed December 31, 2023**.  
You are required to serve upon Plaintiff, Martha F. Goncalves of 299 Norfolk Ave., Apt. 1, Boston, MA 02125, your answer on or before July 10th, 2024.  
If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer in the office of the Register of this Court at 24 New Chardon St., 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02114.  
Witness, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, Esquire, First Judge of said Court, this 10th day of May 2024.  
Stephanie L. Everett, Esquire  
Register of Probate  
Published: May 30, 2024

**The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority**  
is seeking bids for the following:

BID NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	TIME
S619 (Rebid)	Oxygen Generation Facility Maintenance Services at Deer Island Treatment Plant	06/24/24	2:00 p.m.

To access and bid on Event(s) please go to the MWRA Supplier Portal at <https://supplier.mwra.com>

**Virtual Public Meeting**

**Virtual Public Meeting**

## 21-29 Fernboro

**JUNE**  
**11**  
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

**Register:**  
[bit.ly/FernboroRegister1](https://bit.ly/FernboroRegister1)  
**Toll Free:** (833) 568 - 8864  
**Meeting ID:** 161 660 3964



### Project Description:

21-29 Fernboro Developer Presentation: Please join the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) for a virtual community meeting on June 11th, 2024 at 6:00pm EST regarding 21-29 Fernboro. The purpose of the meeting is to present and hear feedback regarding developer proposals for BPDA's disposition Request for Proposals (RFP).

To participate, please register in advance at: <https://bit.ly/FernboroRegister1>. Meeting ID: 161 660 3964. Toll-Free Call Number: 833 568 8864. To learn more about 21-29 Fernboro, please visit <https://bit.ly/Fernboro>. If you have any questions, contact Yoon Cha at [Yoon.Cha@boston.gov](mailto:Yoon.Cha@boston.gov) or 617 918 6234.

Mail to: **Yoon Cha**  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
Phone: 617.918.6234  
Email: [Yoon.cha@boston.gov](mailto:Yoon.cha@boston.gov)

Website:  
**[bit.ly/Fernboro](https://bit.ly/Fernboro)**  
Close of Public  
Comment Period:  
**07/11/24**

## 21-29 Fernboro

**JUNE**  
**11**  
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

**Register:**  
[bit.ly/FernboroRegister1](https://bit.ly/FernboroRegister1)  
**Toll Free:** (833) 568 - 8864  
**Meeting ID:** 161 660 3964



### Project Description:

Prezantasyon Devlopè 21-29 Fernboro yo: Tanpri vin patisipe avèk Ajans Planifikasyon ak Devlopman Boston an (Planning and Development Agency, BPDA) nan yon reyinyon kominotè vityèl konsènan 21-29 Fernboro k ap fèt nan dat 11 Jen 2024 la a 6è p.m. LÈ LÈS. Objektif reyinyon sa a se prezante epi tande fidbak yo konsènan pwopozisyon devlopè yo pou demann pwopozisyon (Request for Proposals, RFP) BPDA a.

Pou w patisipe, tanpri enskri alavans nan: [bit.ly/FernboroRegister1](https://bit.ly/FernboroRegister1). Idantifyan Reyinyon an: 161 660 3964. Nimewo pou Rele San Peye Okenn Frè: 833 568 8864. Pou w jwenn plis enfòmasyon konsènan 21-29 Fernboro, tanpri ale sou <https://bit.ly/Fernboro>. Si w gen nenpòt ki kesyon, kontakte Yoon Cha nan [Yoon.Cha@boston.gov](mailto:Yoon.Cha@boston.gov) oswa sou 617 918 6234.

Mail to: **Yoon Cha**  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
Phone: 617.918.6234  
Email: [Yoon.cha@boston.gov](mailto:Yoon.cha@boston.gov)

Website:  
**[bit.ly/Fernboro](https://bit.ly/Fernboro)**  
Close of Public  
Comment Period:  
**07/11/24**

# RECENT OBITUARIES



**ADONIS-BASILE, Marlène**, 72, originally of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She was the daughter of Geneviève Clermy Adonis and Trésius Adonis. As the fourth of seven siblings, including Carlo Clermy, Rosana Adonis, Rodolph Adonis, Emmanuel Adonis, Fleuriste Adonis, and Bernadette Adonis, Marlène's family bonds were very strong. For over two decades Marlène served as a Nursing Assistant at Jewish Memorial Hospital and Roscommon Mattapan

Extended Care Center. She obtained a Medical Assistant diploma from Lincoln Tech. She leaves her husband, Emmanuel Basile; her brother, Carlo Clermy; her sisters, Catherine Valet, Etenne Valet, and Bernadette Adonis; her children, Edner and Daphne Basile, along with their own children; her cousins, Elmina Adonis Myrthil and Christina Celiscar; and a host of nieces, nephews, brothers-in-law, and sisters-in-law who will continue to cherish her memory.

**INNELLO, Caroline E. (Murphy)**, 94, of Dorchester. Daughter of the late George E. and Mary (Craven) Murphy. Wife of the late John A. Innello. Mother of Sarah Vanderwerf of FL. Grandmother of 2. Great-grandmother of 4. Sister to Karen Trickett of



Billerica, Irene Wolfe of FL, and James Murphy of Quincy. She was predeceased by her siblings, the late William Murphy, Harold Murphy, Mary Farlin, Joe Murphy, John Murphy, Dorothy Hathaway, Kathleen Ponti, Lilian Silva and George Murphy. She leaves many nieces and nephews. Please consider making a donation in memory of Caroline to Autumn Hospice, 454 Washington St., Norwell, MA 02061 or at chafoundation.net.



**PERKINS, Michael C. A.**, 39, of Boston. Son of Denise and Michael Perkins. Brother of Jared and Jenna Perkins; and life partner of Jennifer Jones. Michael is also survived by his sister-in-law, Mauryn Perkins; his nephew and niece, Jared and Delaila Perkins; and aunts, uncles, and cousins. He was predeceased by his uncles, Richard Froempter and Paige Libby; and his grandmother, Beverly Perkins.

**RICARDO, Christopher**, 52, of Braintree, formerly of Dorches-

## Lucille E. (Vermette) Brett

Lucille E. (Vermette) Brett, 89, of Braintree, formerly of Dorchester. Daughter to the late Benjamin and Elizabeth (Mahoney) Vermette.



Wife of 63 years of Henry "Harry" Brett, and, together, they built a life filled with love and laughter. In addition to her husband; she is survived by her son, Harry Brett and his wife Jacqueline of Hanson; daughter Maryellen Brett of Braintree; son William Brett and his wife Stephanie of Braintree; and daughter Margaret Hastings and

her husband John of Norwood, and many nieces and nephews. Lucille was the dear sister-in-law of Margaret McCobb of Weymouth, William and Virginia Brett of Hingham, and James and Patricia Brett of Dorchester. She was predeceased by her sister Elizabeth (Betty) and brother-in-law Gill Vermette; brother-in-law Bill McCobb; sister-in-law Mary McCarthy; and brother-in-law Jack Brett.

Lucille's role as a grandmother was one she cherished deeply. She adored her 5 grandchildren. Her 2 great-grandchildren brought her immense joy and pride.

Visiting Hours Wednesday, May 29th, from 4-8 p.m., in the Cartwright-Venuti Funeral Home, 845 Washington Street, Braintree. A Funeral Mass will take place on May 30th, at 11 a.m., in the Saint Francis of Assisi Church, 856 Washington Street, Braintree. Burial to follow in Cedar Grove Cemetery, 920 Adams Street, Dorchester, MA. Memorials contributions may be made to Shriners' Children's Hospital, donate.lovetothers.org



## Cedar Grove Cemetery

With Memorial Day just ten days away, the staff at Cedar Grove Cemetery announces they are accepting orders to decorate individual lots and graves with geraniums and assorted colorful annuals. For details, call 617-825-1360.



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415 Neponset Avenue Dorchester, MA 02124 617-265-4100

Attorneys at Law  
www.tevnan.com

### LEGAL NOTICES

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE & FAMILY COURT SUFFOLK PROBATE & FAMILY COURT 24 NEW CHARDON STREET BOSTON, MA 02114 CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304 Docket No. SU24P0386GD IN THE MATTER OF: LIDIANY H. ALVES TEIXEIRA of BOSTON, MA RESPONDENT Alleged Incapacitated Person

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Laurinda C. Alves of Boston, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Lidianny H. Alves Teixeira is in need of a Guardian and requesting that Laurinda C. Alves of Boston, MA (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond.

The petition asks the Court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 08/06/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

Witness, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.

Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.  
Register of Probate

Date: May 8, 2024  
Published: May 30, 2024

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE & FAMILY COURT SUFFOLK PROBATE & FAMILY COURT 24 NEW CHARDON STREET BOSTON, MA 02114 CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONSERVATOR OR OTHER PROTECTIVE ORDER PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304 & §5-405 Docket No. SU24P0657PM IN THE MATTER OF: FRANCIS G. SMITH of DORCHESTER, MA RESPONDENT Person to be Protected/Minor

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by St. Joseph Rehabilitation and Nursing of Dorchester, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Francis G. Smith is in need of a Conservator or other protective order and requesting that Velma J. Brinson of Hyde Park, MA (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Conservator to serve Without Surety on the bond.

The petition asks the Court to determine that the Respondent is disabled, that a protective order or appointment of a Conservator is necessary, and that the proposed conservator is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 06/24/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

Witness, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.

Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.  
Register of Probate

Date: May 23, 2024  
Published: May 30, 2024



ter. Son of Kathleen M. (Wood) Ricardo of Braintree and the late Anthony Ricardo. Fiancé of Danielle Pare of Weymouth. Nephew of Joseph Ricardo, Catherine Ricardo, John Ricardo, Frank Ricardo, Rose Syrek, Debra Galipeau, James O'Donnell, and the late Michael Ricardo, Ellen Keough, Diana Galipeau, Martin O'Donnell, and Robert Galipeau. Chris is also survived by many cousins and dear friends.

sisters, Lois Collins of Weymouth, Joyce Brooks of Duxbury, Louis Campers of Chelsea and Robert Campers of Abington; several nephews and nieces. She was the sister of the late Donna O'Brien and Sheila Corbitt. Donations in her memory may be made to St. Margaret's Church, 141 Main St., Buzzards Bay, MA 02532.



**ROCK, Eulene Jeanette**, 72, of Dorchester. Eulene was born in Pool Land, St. John, Barbados, to the late Pearl Elaine Belgrave-Headley and George Frederick Headley. She was one of nine siblings: Olwyn, Norma, Henderson, Rosemary, Carl (deceased), Undine (deceased), Peter, and Elroy. Wife of Leibert E. Rock. Mother of Lawrence E. Rock of Dorchester, Dr. Valerie J. Rock of Seattle, and Sheron A. Johnson of Hyde Park. She is also survived by her grandson, Nicholas V. Johnson and many nieces, nephews, and cousins in the United States and Barbados. Throughout her career as a registered nurse, Eulene dedicated herself to the care and well-being of her patients across various healthcare facilities in Boston. Most notably, she served as a charge nurse at Lemuel Shattuck Hospital. Eulene supported the missions of many charities during her life, most notably the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and the March of Dimes. Memorial contributions may be made to those organizations, uncf.org or marchofdimes.org



**ROACHE, Barbara M. (Campers)**, 84, of Buzzards Bay, formerly of Dorchester. She was the wife of the late Francis M. "Mickey" Roache, former City of Boston Police Department Commissioner. The daughter of the late Louis J. Campers, II and Marveta (Richards) Campers. Survivors include her children, Barbara E. Sylva and her husband, John of Raynham, Donna A. McCarthy and her husband, David of Rockland, Paula M. Galizio and her husband, Keith of Buzzards Bay, Michael F. Roache and his girlfriend, Jeanie of Raynham and Lori J. Morrison and her husband, William of Bourne; her 11 grandchildren; her 6 great-grandchildren; her brothers and

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE Docket No. SU24P0989EA ESTATE OF: LYNNE MICHELLE HAYES a/k/a: LYNNE FOSTER-HAYES DATE OF DEATH: January 7, 2024 SUFFOLK DIVISION

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petitioner of Petitioner Gina Francis-Wilson of Springfield, MA. Gina Francis-Wilson of Springfield, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

Published: May 30, 2024

# DOLAN

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Honorees and hosts of the annual breakfast pause for a photo.

# Haitian Flag Day breakfast celebrates ‘young creatives’

BY SETH DANIEL  
NEWS EDITOR

The annual Haitian American breakfast and ceremonial flag raising to commemorate the May 18 Flag Day took place on City Hall Plaza last Friday (May 17) and was used as a vehicle to highlight young Haitian American artists and entertainers in the Boston area.

Hosted by City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, the breakfast was well-attended and held outside for the third straight year – with sunny skies and warm temperatures accompanying the Haitian *pate*, hot coffee, and other foods. Saxophonist Mike De-



**Mhyeseline Mentor flashes a smile at classmate Micale Achille, who shoots “that look” back her way, before they sang the Haitian National Anthem during the annual breakfast on Fri., May 17. Both are students at the Toussaint Louverture Academy at the Mattahunt Elementary School in Mattapan. Seth Daniel photos**

souvre, of Longy School of Music, stole the show with an outstanding instrumental performance



**Council President Ruthzee Louijeune and Reggie Colimon, the city’s deputy director of Global Affairs and Protocol, prepare to raise the Haitian flag for the 28th year in Boston.**

of “Ayiti Se” accompanied by keyboard. The song fo-

cuses on all the beautiful places, food, and aspects of the Haitian culture.

The Toussaint Louverture Academy at the Mattahunt School in Mattapan brought their children’s choir to the event, and the students sang the Haitian National Anthem in Haitian Kreyol, as well as some other traditional favorites.

Louijeune said it was important to highlight all the “young creatives” in the diaspora in and around Boston, as they often get overlooked but contribute so much.

Offering remarks were Jean Dolin, the founder of the Boston LGBTQ+ Museum of Art, History,

and Culture, and Fena Fenelon, founder of CEO of Sofenomenal Agency Group.

Those honored included: Elliana Arielle Grace Chery, Dolin, Desouvre, Obinna Ojima, Mothler ‘DeeJay Mot’ Dalexis, Daniel Francois, Fenelon, Alex Joachim, Alana Laforest, Therlande Louissaint, Kenny Mascary, Youveline Joseph, Nerlens Jean Michel, Skaina Saint Germain, Kenelly Cineus, Keyla Cineus Williams, Rebecca Zama, Ayide Sole, and Amos Jean.

The morning concluded with the ceremonial Haitian flag raising at the City Hall flagpoles.



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Keystone Apartments, Dorchester, MA



Harbor Point on the Bay, Dorchester, MA



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# DOT DAY '24



COMPLETE GUIDE TO SUNDAY'S PARADE JUNE 2 • 1 P.M.  
Along Dorchester Ave. from Richmond Street to Columbia Road



Members of the Kenny School marching band were pictured during the 2014 Dorchester Day Parade. This year's edition of the Kenny School band is gearing up for their turn to walk the avenue this weekend. *Chris Lovett photo*

## Kenny School band gets ready for its Dot Day close-up

BY CASSIDY MCNEELEY  
REPORTER STAFF

The only elementary school marching band in the Boston Public School district will bring its talents to this year's Dot Day Parade. Dorchester's Thomas J. Kenny School on Oakton Ave. educates students from kindergarten to sixth grade while offering special extracurricular activities, including a school marching band led by music teacher Jerry Chu.

While the student musicians can be seen performing on the streets of Boston, the real work begins inside the classroom. "We make sure across the board every student gets music starting through K1 to sixth grade," said Kenny principal Shereka King. "We treat our music special just like



any other academic class – with the same level of importance. Math is just as important as music is just as important as art is just as important as physical education."

Since students are taught music throughout their time at the Kenny, many ask to participate in the school band. Currently, the group is composed of students ranging from third to sixth grade who play various instruments, including the flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and percussion.

Chu, who has been teaching since 2005, turns each student he meets into a musician. "We as a school learn the same music theory across the board," he said. "If you go to a first or second-grade class, they know ABCDEFG, which comes from the theory of "do-re-mi." They all learn the same patterns.

(Continued on page 5B)

## Catching up with Dot mayor Maeghan Driscoll

BY CASSIDY MCNEELEY  
REPORTER STAFF

Maeghan Driscoll, 25, is this year's honorary mayor of Dorchester, a title she earned by raising the most money to support Sunday's parade. The contest is one of the primary ways that the parade committee finances the annual march up the avenue.

The manager and part-owner of Dot Tavern, Driscoll was encouraged to throw her hat in the ring by Dot Day Parade committee president Brienne Gore. She took off full steam ahead by filling her schedule with fundraisers across the neighborhood she has called home her entire life.

"I interpret OFD to mean that you understand that special experience and you are proud to have lived it," said Driscoll. "It also means that you spread that experience to wherever your life takes you to live."

The Reporter had the opportunity to

connect with Driscoll, who reflected on her childhood in Dot and what it has been like to run for honorary mayor.

**Q.** *What was growing up in Dorchester like for you?*

**A.** I had a wonderful childhood growing up here. There are many great things I can say about it, but I'd like to focus on the sense of community. There are too many times to count when I witnessed the neighborhood supporting local families in need who were facing a difficult situation. Having that example set by the community impacted who I have become as a person, and I credit growing up in a special place like Dorchester.

**Q.** *Now that you are an adult, what is living in the neighborhood like?*

**A.** I think the neighborhood is better than ever. I think we embrace change better yet try to maintain some of the unique features that make Dorchester unique.

**Q.** *What are your favorite activities, groups, or places in the neighborhood?*

**A.** I have to first give a shoutout to the St. Ann's Colorguard! I was part of a WGA world championship team in high school, and it was a very special experience with a great group of women. More recently I have had the chance to interact with passionate people in the small business community and in community groups. I really enjoy the discourse and problem-solving.

**Q.** *What was your fundraising strategy for this contest?*

**A.** I focused on having events where people could come and enjoy a small business for a good cause. I also have a great support network of people who I tapped into, and they responded generously.

**Q.** *What event was the most popular or successful?*

**A.** My event at the Harp and Bard with live music and brunch was a big



Mayor Driscoll: Fundraising champ  
*Courtesy photo*

hit and sent me on the right trajectory to raise a great total. But my events at the Banshee and the Dot Tavern were great as well!

(Continued on page 3B)

# DOT DAY 24



## COMPLETE GUIDE TO SUNDAY'S PARADE JUNE 2 • 1 P.M. Along Dorchester Ave. from Richmond Street to Columbia Road

### The Official Dorchester Day Parade Roster

(This list of parade participants is in alphabetical order; not in the order of procession.)

4 Star Dance Studio  
 Allepo Shriners  
 Bay Cove Human Services  
 Bethel Hispanic Seventh Day Adventist Church  
 Big Sister Association of Boston  
 Boston Bowl  
 Boston EMS  
 Boston Fire Department Honor Guard  
 Boston Liberation Center  
 Boston Little Saigon  
 Boston Police  
 Boston Raiders Youth Football  
 Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester  
 Brandy Fluker Oakley, State Representative  
 Brian Worrell, Boston City Councillor, District 4  
 Cape Verdean Association  
 Carney Hospital  
 Characters from Boston Party Solutions  
 Christopher Worrell, State Representative  
 Codman Health Center  
 Dan Hunt, State Representative  
 Dan Kelly for Congress  
 Dixieland Band  
 Dorchester Baseball  
 Dorchester Eagles  
 Dorchester Food Coop  
 Dorchester Not for Sale  
 DOT OUT  
 Erin Murphy, Candidate



### Presenting Dot's Little Miss and Young Miss for 2024

The Little Miss and Young Miss Dorchester contests were held last Saturday on May 25 at the Saint John Paul II Academy's Columbia Road campus, with participants speaking and answering questions from long-time coordinator Annessa Essaibi George.

The annual contest looks to build confidence, public speaking, and civic engagement in Dorchester girls in two age groups, 7-9 and 10-12. It has been a part of the Dorchester Day Parade festivities for decades and winners typically appear at various events in the neighborhood throughout the year.

This year, Little Miss Dorchester is Nicole Adkins. Young Miss Dorchester is Isabella Robbins.

In the accompanying photo, last year's winners, Roisin Dillon, second left, and Ryleigh Mahoney, far right, are shown transferring their crowns to the new Misses. Atkins and Robbins and all the other Saturday contestants have been invited to participate in the Dorchester Day Parade on June 2. *Courtesy photos*

- REPORTER STAFF

for Suffolk County Clerk of Supreme Judicial Court  
 Estrellas Tropicales  
 Excell High School  
 Fields Corner Main Streets  
 First Baptist Church  
 Floor and Décor  
 Henry Santana, Boston City Councillor, At Large  
 Hot Tamales Brass Band  
 Isabella Robbins, Young Miss Dorchester  
 Jeffrey Buckley, Chief Marshall  
 John FitzGerald, Boston City Councillor, District 3  
 John Powers,

Clerk of Civil Courts  
 Just Bookish  
 Kathy Gabriel for Clerk of Civil Courts  
 Kenny School Marching Band  
 Level GroundMixed Martial Arts  
 Maeghan Driscoll, Mayor of Dorchester  
 Mather School  
 Michelle Wu, Mayor of Boston  
 National Lancers  
 New England City Chic Modeling  
 Nick Collins, State Senator  
 Nicole Adkins,

Little Miss Dorchester  
 Quincy/North Quincy Band and Colorguard  
 Robert Kennedy for President Committee  
 Roberto Clemente Dancers  
 Roma Band  
 Ruthzee Louijeune, Boston City Councillor, At Large  
 Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy  
 St. Mark's Civic Association  
 Stajez Dance Company  
 Stephanie Everett, Suffolk County Register

of Suffolk County Probate and Family Court  
 Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Vehicles  
 Syria Temple  
 Tempo Rhythm and Steel Band  
 The New Liberty Jazz Band  
 Tony Barrie Band  
 Uncle Sam's Jazz Band  
 Uphams Community Care  
 VIET AID  
 Vietnamese American Community  
 Waltham American Legion Band  
 WindJammers  
 Work Inc.

### 117th Dorchester Day Parade Sun., June 2, 2024

Starts 1:00 pm from Dorchester Lower Mills along Dorchester Avenue to Columbia Road



### Happy Dorchester Day from the Dorchester Day Parade Committee

This year we honor as our Chief Marshal  
**Jeff Buckley, USMC (Ret.)**

We also congratulate our 2024 Mayor of Dorchester  
**Maeghan Driscoll**

Little Miss Dorchester - Nicole Adkins  
Young Miss Dorchester - Isabella Robbins

#### 2023 PARADE E-BOARD

President: Brianne Gore  
 Secretary: Rosalind Queen Wornum  
 Treasurer: Kelly Walsh  
 Judge Advocate: Karen MacNutt

#### PARADE COMMITTEE

Stacey Travers  
 Mike Szkolka  
 Annessa Essaibi George

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#### Bronze Sponsor

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#### Parade Sponsors:

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We want to thank all of those who work throughout the year to put the parade on the street. *Especially our parade sponsors.*

PARADE WEBSITE: [www.DotDayParade.com](http://www.DotDayParade.com)

# College Hype keeps parade crowd fitted in Dot Day fashion



Jessica Stevens, Kevin Benkart, Jack Doherty, Nolan Doherty, and Evan Doherty showing off this year's Dorchester Day t-shirt and the popular gas tank-themed shirt. *College Hype photo*

BY CASSIDY MCNEELEY  
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

Add to the 'hype' of the Dorchester Day Parade with College Hype's annual Dot Day t-shirt.

The custom print and embroidery business, founded by Jack Doherty in 1987, began in a dorm room at Westfield State University, but has now grown to have a production facility in Weymouth and a retail store and showroom on Gallivan Boulevard.

"I was at Westfield, and I was on the football team and a couple of the guys wanted to do some funny shirts poking at the security," said Doherty. "I did a shirt that said 'Eat, drink, and get written up.'"

That college student could have never predicted that the shirts he made for his teammates would lead to several more incarnations, including a spring break

and graduation shirt, and eventually an entire business.

In 1990, Doherty designed his first shirt for Dorchester Day and sold them for \$10. He has produced one each year since.

"We get together with the group, we talk about different themes. One of the themes we had one year was 'Lead, follow, or get out of the way, it's Dorchester Day.' We've had some really fun shirts and done a lot of stuff for the last 35 years. Now we keep it really traditional, and we just do Dorchester Day with the date," Doherty told the Reporter.

This year's shirt is vibrant blue with white details reading "Dorchester Day 2024 — The Tradition Continues."

Doherty added: "We're basically doing a throwback. It's a \$25 t-shirt but the first hundred we'll sell for ten bucks.

We're right back where we started, we didn't forget where we came from."

Shirts can be purchased in person at 540 Gallivan Blvd and online at [Dorchesterapparel.com](http://Dorchesterapparel.com).

Even after more than three decades, Doherty still gets excited when he sees parade goers enjoying the day in a College Hype tee. "It's a great feeling seeing people wearing stuff from 35 years ago. That's what keeps you going and why we keep doing these shirts," he said.

He credits his business' success to the team he has built, including his five children, all of whom work at the store. While he is proud of College Hype sales, he is most passionate about the business's commitment to working with local charities.

"One of the biggest is the Martin Richard Foundation and the Matt

Brown Foundation; those two are near and dear. To be involved not just printing the T, but doing stuff with them is a blast," Doherty said.

The business also raised money for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester with their white gas tank collection. But Doherty's personal favorite shirt is "the old parishes of Dorchester t-shirt."

In addition to Dorchester apparel, the company sells t-shirts, hoodies, hats, and accessories for the city of Boston and other neighborhoods. Current best sellers include the Swayman for President Tee for the Bruins' goalie, the Southie crewneck, and the gas tank rope hat.

Additional products and costume orders can be purchased at <https://mycitygear.com/>.

## A chat with Dot Day Parade Chief Marshall Jeff Buckley

A lifetime Dorchester resident, Marshall Buckley, now 48, attended Mt. Hope High School in Bristol, RI., and then enlisted in the US Marine Corps. Today, he is a union steward with Local 223 where he has worked for 25 years. He is married to Jaime Lynn Buckley, and they have three children. The Reporter recently had an opportunity to connect with him.

**Q. What was it like for you growing up in Dorchester?**

**A.** I think it was the best place in the world to grow up. I loved hanging out in the park. As a kid, you wake up and go to the park and everyone is playing sports. It's a great community.

**Q. What is it like raising your own family on your home turf?**

**A.** A lot is the same. A lot of the kids I grew up with, they're here and now they have kids. So, my kids are hanging out with their kids, and it's great.

**Q. What inspired you to enlist in the Marines?**

**A.** While deciding on going into the



2024 Dot Day Parade Chief Marshall Jeff Buckley with his daughter Make-na. *Photo courtesy Buckley family*

military, I looked at all of the options, and the Marines seemed like the hardest one to get into and the best one, so I chose to go with that.

**Q. What is it like to be a Marine?**

**A.** It was some of the best and worst times of my life, but I would make the same decision to join every day.

**Q. How have you been and continue to be involved in the Dorchester community?**

**A.** One of the contributions that I think is worth mentioning is I ran a fitness program for about fifteen years out of All Dorchester Sports League before Covid and that meant every day picking kids up at 4 a.m. before school and then they'd come back after school to exercise. Covid made that tough, so we began meeting up outside at the park and doing things like running hill sprints and other exercises like that. I think that really helped kids make better decisions— it helped the kids have a place to go. So many of them have gone on to do great things. It was

a great thing for them to always have a place to go to get them off the streets. I get letters still from them thanking me and telling me about their lives and being on the right path and that means a lot.

**Q. What does Dorchester mean to you?**

**A.** It means everything — it's my whole life. Watching the changes over the years, I just love it.

**Q. How have you celebrated Dorchester Day in the past?**

**A.** Growing up it was mostly going to the parade with my friends and now I go with my kids and obviously, it's a different kind of celebration when you're younger versus being a parent. But either way, it's always a great time. Now bringing the family, I get to see my kids enjoy it, and that's great.

**Q. What was it like to find out you were this year's Chief Marshal?**

**A.** I was shocked and kind of taken aback for a minute, but I was very excited, very happy, and very honored. It is cool - really cool.

## Catching up with Dot mayor Maeghan Driscoll

(Continued from page 1B)

**Q. What are you hoping to do with this new platform?**

**A.** I would like to encourage more women to get involved with small businesses. We provide a great perspective in terms of what the marketplace needs and how the void can be filled.

**Q. What impact have you had and hope to continue to have on the Dorchester community?**

**A.** I think I have shown that people from my generation have a great voice to add to the conversation and need to be involved more in community engagement.

**Q. What would you like to see for Dorchester in**

**the future?**

**A.** I would like to see Dorchester Ave become a "go-to" destination in Boston. From Lower Mills to the Polish Triangle, we have an amazing collection of traditional American, Irish, Vietnamese, Polish, Chinese, Indian, and many other restaurants that cannot be replicated elsewhere.

**Q. What has been your favorite part of running for honorary mayor?**

**A.** Getting to engage with people from Dorchester I had never met and introducing them to people I have known my whole life!

**Q. What was it like to find out you won?**

**A.** Shocking! My "opponent," Chris McCoy, was a strong candidate and has tremendous support. I was honored to compete with him. He raised a tremendous amount of money as well and should be lauded.

**Q. What are your plans for the parade?**

**A.** I am going to have a big street party by the Dot Tavern. Everyone is invited!!!! Country Western theme.

If you're interested in keeping up with the 2024 mayor, visit her on Instagram at [mayorofdot](https://mayorofdot.com).

# Happy Dorchester Day, and Congratulations to the UMass Boston Class of 2024



# Kenny School band gets ready for its Dot Day close-up

(Continued from page 1B)

That's music theory and music reading."

Luckily for his students, Chu is fluent in both band and orchestra instruments, meaning he can teach them just about any instrument that they want to learn. In sixth grader Ayumi's case, this meant the flute.

"I picked up the flute because when I was about four years old," she said. "I had this marching band book, and I admired the flute and really wanted to play it. I decided to pick it and make my dream come true."

In March, Ayumi and her bandmates performed in the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in South Boston. Their next performance will be right here in Dorchester next Sunday. "It's a lot of endurance, we're talking [3.2] miles, the drums are tough," said Chu.

Even though participating in the parade can take a physical toll on the students, marching in it "is a point of pride," said King, for students "going to a school that provides an opportunity for them to be creative. We operate under our core value, which is Kenny P.R.I.D.E and wearing those uniforms and playing in the band are all just points of that."

The acronym stands for Perseverance. Responsibility. Integrity. Dedication. Effort. Having pride in their performances takes a lot of practice, some of which is done in the schoolyard. In the weeks leading up to the Dot Day Parade, the band has been holding typical music rehearsals in the classroom while marching practice takes place outside of the school for all the neighbors to hear.

Not every student in the band plays an instrument. Some are responsible for carrying flags and banners. "I chose banner because I didn't want to take time learning a whole new instrument," said fourth grader

Amiko. "You just have to walk, and you get to be in the front where everyone sees you."

Another student who will be hard to miss in the parade is third grader Holden who, with Chu's help, is mastering an instrument larger than himself. He explained: "I picked the trombone because it seemed like not that many people were playing it."

Third graders like Holden are in their first year with the band, and the graduating sixth graders are in their last. King and Chu, however, are working to place them in schools where they can continue their music careers.

"There's a school preview day in Boston so what we'll do when we're there is we will ask other schools if they have a band. Not all schools have a marching band but there are other variations of that," said King. "We do that research internally and check and see what opportunities exist at other schools, especially for those students who show interest in continuing in music."

One sixth-grade student who has loved being a part of the band is Micah. "I play the drums. I like drums 'cause they are loud and obnoxious. I wanted to play them because drums are like the backbone of all bands," he said.

No matter what instrument his students choose, Chu sees music as a healthy outlet for the children. "It gives them more options to express themselves," he said.

Chu, King, and the students at the Kenny are all excited about their performance in June. "We could be wrapped up in so many other things," said the principal. "It's nice to be reminded that there are really good things happening, and they're happening right here."



Mr. Chu leads the rehearsal of the Kenny School band in a classroom. Cassidy McNeeley photo



Dominic and Julius



Freyansh, Michah, Alexander and Diana.



Holden on the trombone.



Nadine and Victoria.



An earlier edition of the Kenny School marching band on Dorchester Avenue, circa 2017. Chris Lovett photo



The Kenny School band gets set for a practice session in the Oakton Avenue schoolbuilding near Adams Corner. Cassidy McNeeley photo

# 'Renovation Husbands' recall how once upon a time they had to lie and talk about what they are up to now

By **CASSIDY MCNEELEY**  
REPORTER STAFF

Last year Dorchester's own David and Stephen St. Russell—known as the "Renovation Husbands"—starred on HGTV's show "Battle on the Mountain," but it wasn't until the end of February that they could finally share their success.

"Finding out at the moment was incredible. It was the most exciting feeling," Stephen said. "I'm so glad there were cameras there to capture our genuine reaction, jumping up and down. It was euphoric."

When the couple returned home, they had to conceal their accomplishment from everybody. "We knew we won the show," said David. "We literally lied to everyone we knew, and we lived the lie. We wanted everyone to experience it on their own, so we didn't tell anybody." Instead, the St. Russells told their family and friends that HGTV had all three of the teams filmed as though they had won and would not reveal the real winning team until the series finale.

When the last episode, "Champions on the Mountain," finally aired on Feb. 26, David and Stephen watched with close family and friends at Yellow Door Taqueria on Dot Ave.

"Taping the show was just a wild experience; it was such hard work," said the 33-year-old Stephen. "And then it didn't come out for a few months, so to relive it then again with all our family and friends was very cool."

While watching with loved ones was fun, it was also a bit scary, said David, 35. "It was nerve-wracking because you don't know until you see it how they are going to portray you on TV or how it's going to read. We had no insight into that before it went live."

Since the airing of the show, life has changed quite a bit for the two men. Not only have they received messages online and been recognized throughout the neighborhood, but they also had fans approach them in Louisville while they were attending the Kentucky Derby.

Their favorite recognitions, however, are the ones that talk about home. "I think the best comments we see are people being proud of us for being from Boston and Dorchester," said Stephen. "That's been really nice, those are the comments that hit home."

So, what comes after winning the show and the \$50,000 grand prize? The St. Russells aren't entirely sure themselves. "Every time we think



**It's been a big year for Dorchester's own David and Stephen St. Russell — known as the "Renovation Husbands" — whose triumphant star turn on HGTV's "Battle on the Mountain" put them in the national spotlight. Inset: The husbands take a break from a painting project. Photos courtesy Renovation Husbands**

about what we want to do, something happens," David said. "If you told us a year ago, we'd be filming and then winning an HGTV show, we would be like, that's wild. In six months, who knows where we'll be or what we'll be doing. We're just kind of going with the flow. We've always done that."

He added, "You can always be chasing something. So, kind of just being excited about where you're at is what we practice. Almost two years ago now, we decided to leave our jobs and that was not something we ever thought was possible. To do that and then be able to do these projects and to not have to go back to a corporate kind of job has been the wildest thing we've ever gone through."

The pair admit that they have discussed having a show of their own



but for now, they want to stay connected with the social media community

they have built. "We are really passionate about owning our own content

and creating our own content so we're really putting a lot of our energy

into potentially a YouTube series or something like that," Stephen said.

Having a TV series of their own would take the pair away from the people and neighborhood they love most," they say. There would be fewer trips to home. Instead, they would have a bakery and cafe for "surf" and "turf" bagel sandwiches and less time spent at the Bowery. More to the point, they wouldn't be allowed to freely share their renovation projects online as they are currently doing with their 1892 Victorian home in Dorchester.

The husband-husband team has dedicated almost seven years to this project. When they began renovations in 2017, they had full-time jobs, so home improvements were done on weekends. "We were doing work just Saturday, Sunday. If we had a three-day weekend, that was the best gift ever," joked David.

They are now renovating a cabin they own in midcoast Maine, creating a 70s vibe space with a green staircase, striped walls, checkered rugs, and pops of orange. Unlike their Dorchester home, this renovation project is being completed with short-term renters in mind.

"We've always kind of talked about what is the end goal with Renovation Husbands or what is the brand. We don't take on guest projects necessarily. We don't do interior design for other people. But we would love to renovate our own properties and then have them open to the public to rent," Stephen said. "We would get to showcase the renovation of that project on our social channels and then people from our social channels can go stay there."

David and Stephen spoke at a Dorchester Historical Society last Sunday at Boston Collegiate Charter School. They shared that they are not into renovation and historical pursuits but rather they are attempting to achieve character and historical relevance while keeping a sense of modern living. This is exactly what they are doing in Dorchester and Maine, they said.

They aren't starting any other projects in the neighborhood. "That could be a future thing," said David. "Right now, we're really just trying to wrap Boston up and spend more time in Maine this summer." Added Stephen: "Successes come from being happy and excited to pivot and taking new opportunities."

# Sunday's Dot Day parade follows historic trail

By Chris Lovett

SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

The first observance of Dorchester Day, in June of 1904, took place under a tent on Savin Hill. A celebration of local history and pride, it was also meant to protect an urban wild with a panoramic view from a frenzy of new development.

But by the beginning of the 20th century, the fast pace of change in Dorchester was hard to ignore. Over the fifty years after its annexation to Boston, in 1870, Dorchester's population would increase more than ten-fold. And, even by 1910, more than one-third of the growing population in all of Boston was made up of immigrants.

During this period, Dorchester, connected to the rest of Boston by public transportation and water and sewer lines, was filling up with multi-family housing. It was now easy to live in one part of the city and work in another. Too remote and spacious to be an extension of the Back Bay or the South End, but no longer a self-contained community, Dorchester had become the hybrid that would later seem oxymoronic—the “streetcar suburb.”

Despite all the growth, there were also signs of decline, or change of a different kind. As early as 1891, the Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society was down to only three members. In the same year, it would be succeeded by the lead organization behind the first Dorchester Day, the Dorchester Historical Society.

By 1910, even the mix of Boston's new arrivals had changed, with the Irish being outnumbered by Jewish and Italian immigrants. In 1914, a Unitarian minister in Grove Hall noticed fewer people at church. A local newspaper, the Dorchester Beacon, listed properties changing hands, moving from families with names like Brooker, Hutchins and Greenwood to those with names like Weiner, O'Loughlin, and Mugarichian. And, at a “mass meeting,” the Fields Corner Women's Temperance League rallied support for a cap on liquor licenses.

## A HILL WITH A SPECIAL LEGACY

For the Historical Society, the “long-neglected spot” known as Savin Hill had special meaning. It was the piece of “wilderness” where settlers who arrived from England in 1630 had built their first fort—and where an archival photograph would later show a “last Indian camp.” From the top of the hill, there was a view of Dorchester Bay from the Neponset Estuary to the Columbia Point Peninsula and, beyond, as if at the edge of a continent, to the Boston Harbor Islands. For neighbors, the hill later became a destination for underage drinking and a treacherous magnet for broken glass. But, as one account of the first celebration envisioned, the hill could even become “a new place of pilgrimage for the tourist whose steps are annually bent toward Massachusetts.”

In 1904, the preservation effort earned a campaign promise from a recent transplant to Dorchester, John F. Fitzgerald, a former congressman who a little more than three years later, as the city's first Irish Catholic mayor born in the United States, designated the hill as a park.

The 200 people who had “toiled up” the hill for the first Dorchester Day celebration were reminded that the old town was home to the nation's first free public school and that incubator of participatory democracy, the town meeting. Among the details of the day noted by a Boston Globe reporter: lemonade provided for women at the observance and, fluttering above the tent, a pennant attached to a kite that proclaimed, “Dorchester Day 1630-1904.”

From below the pennant, the reporter also heard state Rep. Guy A. Ham talk about the present day, lamenting that,



A crowd of teens and kids watched the Dorchester Day Parade in 1979.



A perch above Dorchester Avenue, 1983.

Chris Lovett photos

since Dorchester had become part of the city, “the district and the citizens as well had lost much of their identity, as well as their pride and interest in their home.”

Another speaker at the first celebration, Rev. Peter Ronan, the pastor of St. Peter's parish, was concerned about the spread of dense, transit-oriented housing. Three years later, at the 1907 Dorchester Day Banquet, he was applauded for warning about the spread of “three-apartment houses” and for asserting that local residents “did not want such things to mar the spot where the first settlers of the new great district landed.”

Accounts of the early celebrations contain no explicit references to changes in religion or ethnicity among Dorchester residents, nor to the hardships and persecution that were driving many of Boston's newest immigrants out of Europe. But, in his speech at the 1906 celebration, former Boston mayor Josiah Quincy acknowledged that the settlers of 1630 were fleeing tyranny and civil war. “The settlers of New England,” he explained, “were half colonists, half refugees.” Although he stopped short of any comparison with more recent immigrants, Quincy suggested that the hill should be the site of an “enduring monument,” a tower with a commanding view of the harbor that would embody a “loftiness of the historical outlook. “Whoever has absorbed its true spirit,” he said, “has escaped from the transient interests of the hour and regarded for a while those vaster issues and movements which sketch their shadows across the centuries.”

## CELEBRATION BECOMES EXTRAVAGANZA

In 1906, under Mayor Fitzgerald, the city spent \$2,000 on Dorchester Day activities—supporting everything from the main parade to horse racing, water sports, and fireworks. The first celebrations also included band concerts and a regatta, and a torchlight parade led by the Dorchester High School baseball team. Flags were displayed on verandas and housetops. In 1907, at

his home on Welles Avenue, Fitzgerald put up bunting and, between two large American flags, a “great Irish flag.”

With a cast of fortune-tellers, dodgers, and “fakirs” hawking balloons, popcorn, ice cream, and soft drinks, the celebrations were not immune to transient interests. Fitzgerald took part in carriage races organized at Franklin Field by the Dorchester Gentlemen's Driving Club, as did his rival and successor, James Michael Curley. In 1916, after rolling the first ball on a new bowling green, The Globe reported, Curley “said he knew no sport more constructive or healthful than horse racing, except baseball.”

During the first decade of reports on the Dorchester Day celebrations, there was no shortage of superlatives, from “biggest” to “best yet,” with as many as 75,000 people viewing the parade and as many as 20,000 watching the fireworks.

In 1911, there was landing of a Burgess-Wright biplane at Franklin Field, piloted all the way from Squantum by Harry Atwood, who had invited Mayor Fitzgerald to join him. The first try at landing had to be put off because of weather conditions. By the time Atwood touched down, at the center of the field, the last horse race was coming to an end, and the police details had already left the site. “The crowd swarmed around the machine, gazing upon and feeling it,” The Globe reported. “It was feared that the machine would be torn apart by souvenir hunters.”

## SHIFTING TIMES, SHIFTING FOCUSES

Over the years, Dorchester Day celebrations were consistently affected by more passing developments, some with their own place in history. In a 1917 celebration at the newly dedicated Ronan Park, the Shepard Women's Rifle Club recruited men for military service in WWI. In 1927, the featured speaker at the banquet was the next year's Democratic nominee for president, New York Governor Al Smith.

Not surprisingly, funding from the city was cut back during the Great Depression. In 1931, City Councillor

Israel Ruby provided free ice cream, athletics and entertainment at Franklin Field. But, by 1938, The Globe was reporting that there would be no support for Dorchester Day from the city “due to necessary economies.” In 1940 “Dorchester All-Together” raised funding at a banquet, selling tickets at \$10 apiece. And in 1942, with the country at war again, 200,000 people were on hand for a parade that included infantry from Fort Devens and a float that encouraged the reporting of enemy aircraft. “As evidence that gasoline rationing is being felt,” The Globe added, “several horses and buggies appeared in the parade.”

In one of the buggies was Frankie Kelly, the youngest lieutenant governor in Massachusetts history. The self-described father of the state lottery, Kelly was best known for filing bills 29 years in a row to establish a Massachusetts sweepstakes that promised a windfall in tax relief. Even after he drew the state's first lottery ticket in 1972, he continued to ride in the parade as one of its most enduring political curiosities.

## AFTER THE WAR, A MATTER OF ‘ROUTINE’

The parades resumed in 1948, after a hiatus during the later war years. As late as the 1960s, there were still reviewing stands for mayors and governors. But there was also an impression that the event had become more routine. As early as 1923, The Globe had mentioned “exercises” and field events while noting that “the occasion was at one time observed with great ceremony.”

There were also changes in the parade route. The earlier routes had included Codman Square, Uphams Corner, and a stretch of Dorchester Avenue, ending at Fields Corner, with marching units crossing or going parallel with the trolley tracks. By the late 1960s, the parade route was usually along the avenue, but going north to south, from Columbia Road to Pierce Square in Lower Mills. By the 1970s, the direction had been reversed, and parade units marched with the sun at their backs.

In 1967, despite an attempt to ban political signs, the first line of march comprised members of Boston's all-white school committee, at a time when the city was already embroiled over the racial divide in education. In 1968, the June 9 parade was “postponed indefinitely,” out of respect to Robert F. Kennedy, who had been assassinated three days earlier.

As late as the 1980s, the parade featured one other office-holder: the Dorchester Town Greeter. With his top hat, red jacket, white trousers, and two-toned shoes, “Boston Billy” Melchin presented himself as the affable gate-keeper to a Neverland as foreign to spectators along the avenue as it would have been to 17th-century settlers. If the parade came to one of its all-too-frequent stops, he would stand with one hand in a white glove holding a sceptre tipped with the town seal, and the other greeting an imaginary multitude, as restless kids swarmed the avenue or sped off on bikes and skateboards.

## THE PARADE AS A MESSAGE BOARD

Over the last 40 years, the parade has been used as a platform for messages of all kinds. In the 1980s, a trailer dramatized the long wait for badly-needed expansion of the Dorchester District Courthouse. In 2015, a parade unit promoted the designation of Boston as a host city for the 2024 Olympics. Over the last decade, another contingent, “Dorchester Not For Sale,” has been drawing attention to local residents being displaced by gentrification.

Joined by ranks of veterans for most of its history, the parade has also served as a platform for the anti-war message of Veterans for Peace, who would continue to march into the 21st

(Continued on page 18B)

# Animal Rescue League's Boston chapter is deeply rooted in Dot

By MIKE DeFINA

SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

At the turn of the 20th century, the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) was founded with the mission to care for the neglected and largely forgotten population of animals living on the streets. The idea for this historic organization was born and cultivated right here in Dorchester.

Anna Harris Smith (1843-1929) was a member of the prominent Clapp family, which had generational roots in Dorchester. She was born at 65 Pleasant Street, a home with a foundation dating back to the mid-1600. It still stands today due to a collaborative renovation project with the Dorchester Historical Society.

From an early age, compassion and empathy were the cornerstone of Anna's being. She showed great interest in all things involving nature, animals, and people; and it was her compassion that would guide her during her early professional life and later on in the founding of ARL.

At age seven, Anna recalled thinking, "When I'm grown up I'm going to turn my daddy's big barn into a nice, warm home for all the kitties and doggies in the world."

After completing her



Anna Harris Smith, circa 1920.

education in Boston, Anna was a social worker, specializing in the protection and education of children. It was during this time that she became acutely aware of issues pertaining to animals in the city of Boston. Day after day, she witnessed Boston's working horses subjected to grueling conditions and unspeakable cruelty. Additionally, she grew concerned with the hordes of homeless cats and dogs living on the city streets and in its alleyways.

While there were measures being taken to protect animals through cruelty statutes, there were no steps taken to physically help animals in need. A determined and innovative thinker, Anna saw the need as a



The Smith home at 65 Pleasant St. in Dorchester around the turn-of-the-20th century.

calling and was adamant about doing something to confront that issue.

In January 1899, Anna wrote a letter in the *Boston Evening Transcript* that advocated for a centrally located shelter for the rescue and care of homeless animals, asserting that "while getting dogs and cats off the street is worth doing, the teaching of thoughtful kindness is the work that changes families, communities, and a nation."

This letter led to the very first meeting of the Animal Rescue League of Boston on Feb. 7, 1899, at the Park Street Church in Boston that attracted 110 people.

Within its first year, the organization rescued more than 2,600 animals off the street, and the rest, as they say, is history. In 2023, ARL helped nearly 21,000 animals,

the most influential and respected leaders in animal welfare in her day. By 1915, she had helped organize seven Animal Rescue Leagues in Massachusetts, and in at least 10 other states and Washington, D.C.

When Anna died in 1929, ARL received an outpouring of sympathetic letters from around the country attesting to her importance.

While ARL's programs and services have widely expanded over the past 125 years, the organization's work is still rooted in Anna's vision and values and remains an invested community partner in Dorchester.

ARL continues to be on the forefront of innovation, recognizing the need to move beyond the brick-and-mortar shelter model to bring high-quality accessible pet services directly where they're most needed.

Pet ownership can bring challenging barriers, including the ever-increasing cost of care and supplies, along with limited access to services in many communities, including Dorchester.

Partnering with community members and human-based nonprofit organizations, such as Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) and Boston Se-

nior Homecare (BSHC), ARL has made a tireless effort to provide services to keep pets together with their families.

In 2019, ARL launched the Wellness Waggin', a mobile pet wellness clinic that makes weekly stops at ABCD's Dorchester location, as well as in surrounding communities. Since its inception, this program has helped well over 10,000 animals, making it easier for pet owners to access high-quality and low-cost pet wellness services. ARL also routinely visits BSHC facilities to provide pet food and basic care to senior pet owners.

Additionally, since 2020, ARL's Keep Pets S.A.F.E. (Supporting Animals and Families Everyday) program has delivered more than 200,000 pet meals and supplies to local pet owners, many of whom reside in Dorchester.

While there is always more work to be done, ARL is proud to continue the work of Anna Harris Smith and to incorporate her ideals in assisting both animals and people, and to live by the phrase that she coined in the early days of ARL— "Kindness uplifts the world."

Mike DeFina is the media relations manager for Animal Rescue League of Boston.



The Wellness Waggin' makes a stop locally.

All photos courtesy ARL Boston

and over the course of the organization's 125-year history, the local non-profit has helped well over 6.2 million animals in need.

As the president of ARL from 1901 to 1929, Anna acted upon a wide range of animal welfare and humane issues, such as the abandonment of pets, workhorse abuses, poor livestock transport methods, the abuse of animals in motion pictures, and the humane education of children.

She wrote and lectured extensively on humane topics and was one of

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# Mayor discusses her Vatican visit at McConnell Park coffee hour

By SETH DANIEL  
NEWS EDITOR

Fresh off meeting Pope Francis and participating in the Vatican Climate Change conference, Mayor Wu followed visited Savin Hill's McConnell Park on May 23

for the first in a series of planned coffee hours in Dorchester. Dozens of neighbors joined city officials stationed at booths representing everything from Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) to the

Boston Home Center to the Boston Fire Cadets. Students in the Boston Music Project at the Dever School on Columbia Point performed on the violin and cello, while students from Cristo Rey High School mingled

with officials. Residents collected a free potted plant and Dunkin' iced coffee as well.

Wu talked about her trip to the Vatican and noted that "Boston was the only American city represented at the

conference" on climate issues, motioning to the flood-prone waterfront and Morrissey Boulevard nearby. "They chose this city to show how it can happen. The eyes of the world are always on Boston."

A second Dorchester coffee hour will take place on Wed., June 26, to celebrate the opening of the renovated Mother's Rest Park on Washington Street.



Bobby Boykin and BWSC representative Adriana Cillo.



Auckland Street resident Maureen Bazzinotti with Councillor Erin Murphy.



Mayor Wu, fresh off a trip to the Vatican, greeted residents in McConnell Park on May 23.



Parks Commissioner Ryan Woods, right, with the newest Parks Department hire, Dorchester's Katie Nolan, a long-time youth sports coach in the neighborhood.



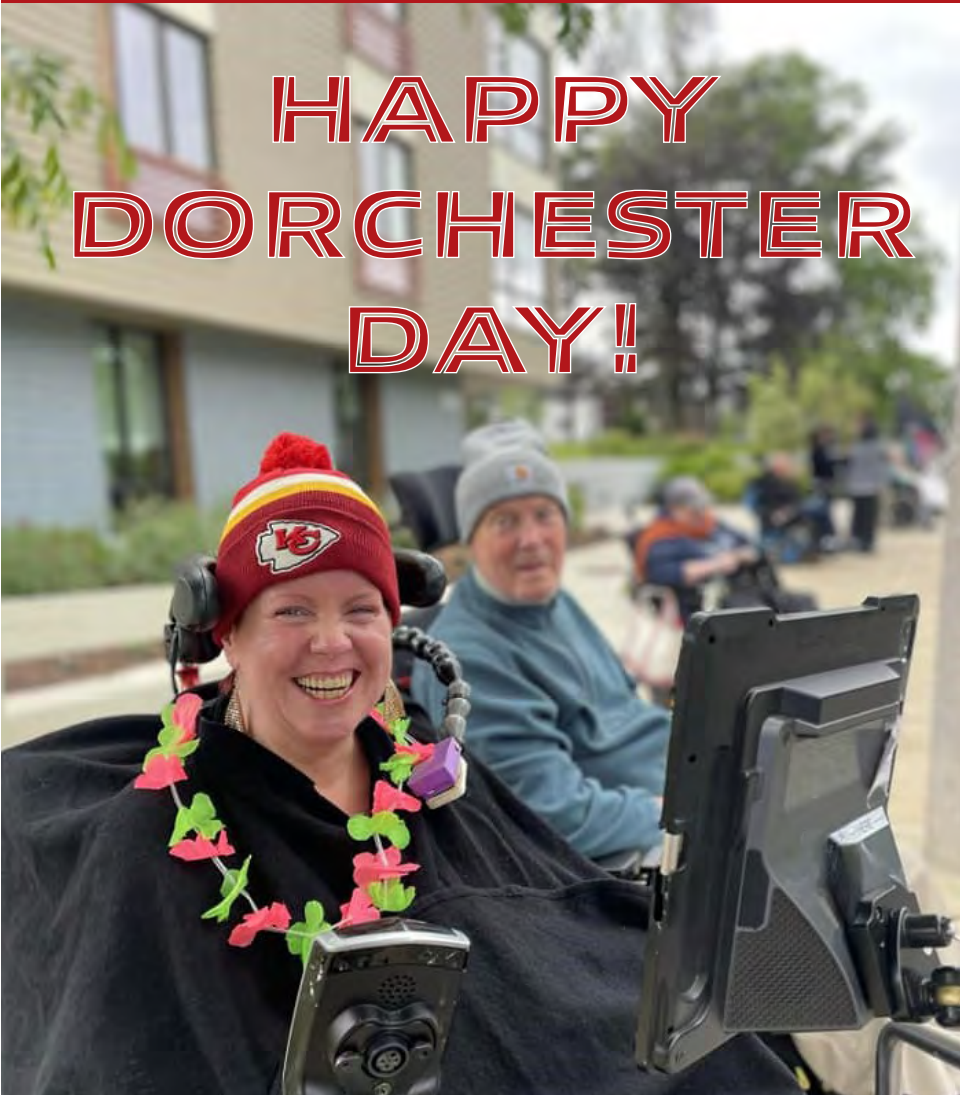
Cairo Valecilla, a first grader at Columbia Point's Dever School, played the cello at the Coffee Hour with other schoolmates. It was only the second-ever performance for the group.



Savin Hill residents Joe Santilli, Don Walsh, and Brendan Price.



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# Dorchfest returns to Ashmont-Adams on Saturday

By Cassidy McNeeley  
Reporter Staff

Dorchester's porch fest-style musical celebration, Dorchfest, will return to the Ashmont-Adams section of the neighborhood for a third time on Sat., June 1, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

More than two dozen porches, patios, parking lots, and yards will be transformed into stages for more than 40 bands of diverse musical genres. The now-annual celebration began in 2022 with the help of committee member and porch host, Rachel Felix.

"Three years ago, a couple of neighbors and I got together. We wanted to do the first porch fest in Dorchester and also highlight the diversity of Dorchester," said Felix. "It's a great way for all the people to come together and really feel the great sense of community that we have."

She moved to the neighborhood in 2021 from Brooklyn, where she spent years in the entertainment business. "Moving here from New York City, I chose Dorchester intentionally because of the different cultures that come together," said Felix, who is the chief marketing and growth officer at Boston Medical Center. "We really want to bring joy to our community and continue to highlight the richness and diversity of Dorchester."

But the roster of performers is not the only thing that makes Dorchfest unique. Unlike most such festivals, Dorchfest compensates musicians for their time, payments that could not be made without the generous donations of sponsors including Santander Bank, Boston Medical Center, MacKinnon & Co., and the restaurant Tavolo.

"We are very grateful that the sponsors allow us to pay the bands for their time. That was very important to our mission," Felix told the Reporter. "We're pumped to have our amazing



With sunny skies forecasted for Saturday, the DorchFest committee hopes to see crowds like those that attended the first event in 2022, shown above. *Reporter file photo*



MC Daniel Laurent will take the "stage" at 64 Van Winkle St. with DJ Jeff 2X. *Photo courtesy DorchFest*

bands back that have been with us for so long and also some new talent to the stage this year."

One of several returning artists, who will play with a full band, is OFD singer Richie Parsons, who now lives in Quincy but will return to his childhood home at 4 Westmoreland St. for his third Dorchfest performance.

"The couple who bought the house from us asked if I'd play in the first Dorchfest. They knew I'd been playing music my whole life," explained the 64-year-old Parsons, whose family lived in the home for 100

years, from 1916 to 2016. "Now, this will be the third year in a row and I'm very excited about it. They're wonderful hosts and it's fun."

While Parsons describes his current music as "more power pop," his first band in the 70s was punk rock and called Unnatural Axe. He has since gone on to perform with several bands, including Future Dads, Band 19, and The Gremies. With The Gremies he wrote and performed "No Surfin' in Dorchester Bay," which has a cult-like following among locals for its iconic picture sleeve.



Los Gallos Locos members performed Latin Roots music on a porch at the corner of Bushnell and Van Winkle Streets. *Seth Daniel photo*

While some of Parsons's songs celebrate the Dorchester he knew, he is happy to see the neighborhood continue to evolve.

"It's changed and it's way more diverse," he said, "and there's so much more going on in it. It's different now and it's better."

Another Boston-based artist performing next month in Ashmont-Adams is MC Daniel Laurent. The Hip Hop creative uses music to inspire conversations and make social commentary. Last year his short film, "Cry For Me," highlighted the dangers

of domestic violence and sexual abuse and was showered in awards from numerous film festivals.

At Dorchfest, Laurent will be performing with DJ Jeff 2X. "What Jeff and I are going to do is going to be a real set, infusing the art of DJ-ing mixed with MC-ing," said Laurent. "We want to be able to entertain but almost give a history lesson of where hip hop came from, where it went to, where it's at now, and where it's going to go."

Laurent compared the pair's finale to DJ Khaled's "God Did." He added, "I want to be the one that hopefully con-

verts some people who would not have listened to hip hop otherwise."

Laurent and Jeff DX will be performing at 64 Van Winkle St.

A few blocks away, at 6 Fairfax Street, attendees can leave behind the hip-hop scene and listen to "a cocktail of harmony-driven rock infused with soulful energy and emotion" with Three At Home, a trio made up of 39-year-old Mary Casiello, 47-year-old Dann Russo, and 51-year-old Kari Paisley-Flango.

Casiello and Russo have been performing together for quite some time, but it wasn't until a few years ago that Paisley-Flango joined the group.

"Just about three years ago I remember starting to rehearse for the first time and it was May and before we even rehearsed, I saw a post for Dorchfest. We made it our mission," said Paisley-Flango.

The first Dorchfest was also the trio's first time performing together. This year they will be returning for the third time.

"I think one of the most valuable things about these porch fest events, in general, is you start to recognize that music and musicians don't just live in a couple of spots in the world," Casiello told the Reporter. "They're everywhere and there's good music everywhere. It reminds the audience that Boston has a thriving music scene."

Russo added that while all porch fests can be fun, Dorchester's stands out. "The organizers are so good. They do such a good job of curating and getting people all different kinds of music," said Russo. "When people play porch fest, they except to volunteer their time, and Dorchfest actually pays. It's nice to have an organization that is able to level up the experience for musicians." For more information regarding performance times and locations check out <https://dorchfest.com>



Three at Home will return to Dorchfest for the third time this weekend playing original songs infused with soulful energy and emotion. *Photo courtesy DorchFest*



Robert Thackery will perform at 6 Rundel Park at 2:30 p.m. *Photo courtesy DorchFest*



Kera Washington of Zili Misik performed on Beaumont Street during last year's DorchFest. *Seth Daniel photo*

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LEE KENNEDY



# Seal of Approval: The Story Behind Dorchester's Town Seal

By PETER F. STEVENS  
REPORTER STAFF

In April 1865, Dorchester's Town Meeting gathered to consider an important civic measure - "to procure...a Corporate Seal of the town." Many modern residents of Dorchester are familiar with that seal, emblazoned with the words "Dorchester 1630" and the Latin motto "Pietate, Literis, Industria," but some may not realize the depth of thought that the men at that 1865 town meeting put into the enduring and proud symbol.

A range of political, historic, and civic considerations compelled Dorchester's leaders to seek a seal testifying to the town's unique history and sense of place in Massachusetts. With the Civil War coming to its savage end and with so many Dorchester families having lost fathers, sons, and brothers on the conflict's far-flung battlefields, local leaders wanted to extol the town's more than 250 years of contribution and sacrifice.

They sought to create a symbol of Dorchester's unique place in the nation's history: "The town of Dorchester... the mother of free public schools, whose patriotism and liberality have been so tried in the early wars

with the Indians, with the French in colonial days, in the War of the Revolution, in the Shay's Rebellion, in the last war with England, and in the dreadful war so lately gloriously closed."

A town seal, in the opinion of people from Neponset to Savin Hill, would help to "sacredly preserve the beautiful tribute of her citizens to the memory of sons, who, in obedience to early instructions, and inherited purpose in morality, patriotism, and humanity, have laid down their lives on the altar of their country."

Along with patriotism, a large band of Dorchester's residents hoped a local seal would reinforce their status as an individual town, for in 1865, the prospect of annexation by Boston was on the horizon. Many locals already lamented that in 1804, "that part of Dorchester's territory lying upon her northern border...including Dorchester Heights," had been appropriated by Boston. In the 1850s, Dorchester leaders had vainly struggled as "Washington Village was swallowed up by the city [Boston]."

With many residents still hoping to fend off further incursions by Boston, a who's who of prominent Dorchester



men - Edmund J. Baker, Edmund P. Tileston, Nathan W. Tileston, and others - formed a committee to design a town seal in April 1865. Joining the effort was Dorchester's Antiquarian and Historical Society.

The contingent described their purpose: "Your Committee have sought to emblazon upon the Town Seal such a device as would symbolize the acts which rendered the early settlers of this town a peculiar [particular] people, and objects of gratitude and veneration by their descendants for all time to come."

The centerpiece of the committee's design was a shield embossed near its base with the image of a rough-hewn, thatch-roofed church, without a chimney. In explanation of the church's significance in Dorchester's annals, the committeemen noted: "The early settlers of Dorchester organized themselves as a church at the New Hospital in

Plymouth, England, in March of 1630, prior to their embarkation for this country, which act was pre-eminently the cornerstone of the foundation of this town, although they did not arrive here until early in June of that year."

To the rear of the seal's church, another rude, thatched structure appeared on the shield. The second structure represented Dorchester's first school.

"The free school," Edmund Baker and his colleagues asserted, "the system of which has been

exerting a beneficial influence over the whole country, was established in this town in 1639, and is said to be the very first free school in the world. The foundation of this institution is recognized on the shield..."

In another image engraved upon the shield, the committee cited the portrait of a "rude mill, with its large wheel, which is seen upon the left bank of the Neponset River, the course of which river, from its source to its mouth, lay through the ancient territory of Dorchester."

Readers scrutinizing the impressive background of the shield will likely identify the scene's inspiration - the Blue Hills. "In the background will be recognized the Blue Hills, which served as a landmark to pilot the early settlers to the mouth of [the] Charles River, and from behind which the rising sun is shining upon a colony who left their homes in the mother country, not as adventurers in search of gold, as exiles, or for conquest, but the more precious boon of religious liberty."

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# Sunday's Dot Day parade follows historic trail

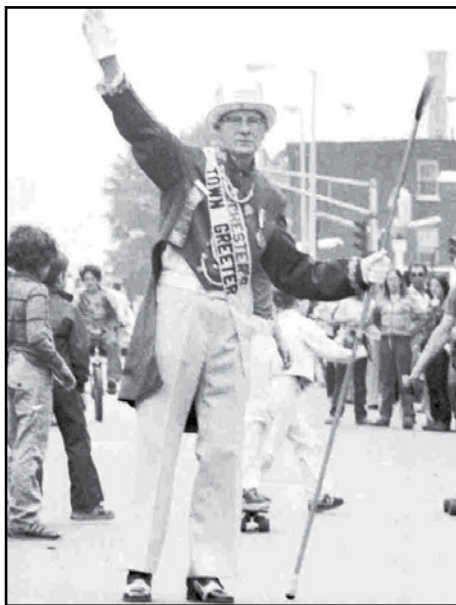
(Continued from page 7B)

century, after military engagements in Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

In the early 1990s, after racial diversity had become very noticeable in the avenue's storefronts, Boston City Councilor Albert "Dapper" O'Neil gained notoriety for taking exception to the influx of Vietnamese immigrants into Fields Corner. In 2008, he achieved the unique distinction for a politician of being represented in the parade posthumously - by a black 1967 Lincoln Town Car bearing his name in green and orange on a sign that said "The legend lives on." But "Dapper" was outlasted by the presence and investment along the avenue of Dorchester's Vietnamese-Americans.

Over the years, the parade has shown that change can lead to improvisations. Around 1980, a re-enactment of the arrival of settlers at Savin Hill Beach included a local Unitarian minister and a local family dressed as 17th-century "pilgrims"—along with a Catholic priest. As pastor of First Parish Church—established by Dorchester's first religious congregation, Rev. James K. Allen was known for his devotion to local history and support of local civic groups, but he also allowed his church to be used for gatherings by refugees who came to Dorchester from southeast Asia.

If uniforms and costumes are a constant in the parades, they also highlight changes, whether donned by veterans, active military units, Little Leaguers, Pop Warner players, or marching bands. The same goes for other contingents who have marched in recent years:



**Boston Billy Melchin, Dorchester's official town greeter, in the 1980 parade.**  
*Chris Lovett photo*

Estrellas Tropicales, the Roberto Clemente 21 Dancers, traditional Irish dancers, and Vietnamese-American contingents with lion dancers and martial arts displays. Others have previewed coming attractions on the calendar: the Caribbean American Carnival and, in floats changed every year by DotOut, the Boston Pride celebration. The common denominator has been the element of carnival—a stream of appearances, enacted once a year by people who are something else in everyday life.

As the parade has changed over time, so does its sense of history. Originating more than a century ago from a pursuit of a fixed identity in the past,

Dorchester Day's premier event has also reached in the other direction: a rolling identity that, while as local as ever, borders on the panoramic.

### HISTORY AS PREDICTOR OF THE FUTURE

The pursuit of the history of Dorchester Day can also point to the future. In 1914, when the Dorchester Beacon was already noticing that the celebrations had become less elaborate, the president of the Dorchester Historical Society, Frank D. Young, arrived on the scene after driving 3 hours and 70 miles in his car. It was a little too soon to imagine how the streetcar suburb of Dorchester would be transformed by the mass production of automobiles, federally funded highways, and federally guaranteed mortgages. But that year, barely three weeks before events leading to a world war, Young paid respect to the settlers of 1630 while warning about the dangers of anarchy and hailing his commute by vehicle that day as a sign of "swift moving progress."

Fast forward to another decade, and the celebrations overlap, rippling out from marchers to spectators crowding the avenue, tiered on porch decks, or regrouping for backyard cookouts. To walk down the avenue from south to north is to see what is new and what has disappeared. Some churches, stores, and restaurants no longer exist. Also missing are several no-frills bars, some notorious as magnets for spectators requiring intervention by police. And, as with the celebrations in many communities, the crowds are noticeably thinner.

To finish the walk on a Sunday in June

is to work up a sweat and feel thirsty, if not altogether fatigued. At the corner of East Cottage Street, you go inside Patty's Pantry and find it crammed with people buying cold soft drinks. Almost 40 years ago, on the other side of the avenue, you maybe dropped in for a beer at Vaughan's Tavern (now the Banshee), where a bust of Bobby Kennedy was flanked by a pair of rifles right behind the bartenders. Inside the bar, there's too much noise to hear what the veteran is saying to a teacher young enough to be his daughter as he points to the medals on his chest. They're surrounded by a crowd of people who live in Dorchester, people who used to live there, and people who could be somewhere else in a few years.

Outside, along a quiet avenue just swept and sprayed by street cleaners, there's no pennant attached to a kite, though another reporter in another year might have noticed an escaped balloon riding a breeze that, like the parade, goes from south to north. As it pulls away, its shadow skipping from one building to next, it gets smaller and smaller until there's nothing left but a speck reflected against the sunlight in a deep blue sky.

*The Dorchester Historical Society helped greatly with this report by providing access to news accounts of the parade's first decades.*

*Chris Lovett is a veteran Boston journalism and the anchor/news director of BNN-TV's Neighborhood Network News. Lovett is a frequent contributor to the Dorchester Reporter.*

*This story is reprinted from the May 30, 2019 Dorchester Reporter.*

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# Dot Day Parade 101: Tie on those Adidas and hit the Avenue

By **BILL FORRY AND LAUREN DEZENSKI**

*This beginner's guide to the Dot Day Parade was originally published in June 2015.*

Can you feel it? The sense of anticipation, joy, and wonder, reverberating up and down Dot Ave?

The parade brings together all the different ethnic groups that make up Boston's biggest and best neighborhood. You could spend a year going to all the different ethnic fests across Boston. Or just come to Dot Day and see them all in one two-hour extravaganza. Plus, we were gay friendly before it was a thing. There's something for everyone in this parade.

For the folks that grew up here (OFD), the day is a walk down memory lane (and a 3.2-mile parade route). For some, it's a time to return to one's roots and relive the glory days of a street corner youth. For others, it's celebrating local organizations and groups that march in the parade, not to mention the scores of kids and cousins marching in their little league uniforms.

Dot Day itself is steeped in tradition. Around for over 100 years now, the parade started as a way to mark the foundation of Dorchester as a Puritan

settlement back in May 1630.

And now to the brass tacks: The parade itself starts at 1 p.m. from Dot Ave and Richmond Street in Lower Mills and troops up Dot Ave all the way to the Polish Triangle at the border of Southie. The head of the parade will reach its end-point at Columbia Road more than an hour-and-a-half later.

The Dorchester Running Club hosts a 5K run beginning and ending at the Blarney Stone—the other sponsor—on Dot Avenue before the parade. Locals will tell you it's not a bad way to snag a prime and well-hydrated spot in the shade along the parade route.

Getting there: The MBTA is your friend today. Cars will be ticketed and towed along Dot Ave. and Richmond Street ahead of the parade, so if you typically park on the avenue, have a plan to move it a few hours ahead of time. Take the Red Line to Ashmont or Fields Corner. Both stations are right on Dot Ave. and just steps from big crowds.

Where to watch (and blend in with the big crowd)? Along the wall (and under the trees) at Dorchester Park in Lower Mills, south of



Chris Lovett captured the scene as a band made its way up Dorchester Avenue last June.

Carney Hospital; intersection of Dot Ave and Gallivan Boulevard; Peabody Square; in front of St. Mark's Church; the Blarney Stone; and the Savin Hill Ave. intersection.

If you like to watch the parade in a more intimate setting (e.g. small crowd), stick to the stretch between Freeport Street and Hecla Street. It's typically quite thin, albeit a bit of a hike from either the Savin Hill and Fields Corner T stops. Pro-tip: There's usually a raucous group watching from the side-lot at Peggy O'Neill's bar.

The glory of Dot Day is in its inherent ability to bring people together—

often over brews and hot dogs. It's a day to get to know your neighbors and, especially after this winter, spend some time outside.

And even when the street cleaners come through, Dot Day isn't over. Longtime families host post-parade BBQs, so get to know your fellow spectators along the route and you're likely to score an invite. City Councillor Frank Baker hosts a block party on Dot Ave north of Columbia Rd. with free food, music, and other entertainment.

If Sunday's a real scorcher (hot day), hoof it a few short blocks from Dot Ave. to Savin Hill beach

for a splash in Dorchester Bay. The stretch of beach on the other side of Morrissey Blvd. (careful now, use the crosswalk) is Malibu Beach, closer to the landmark gas tank. Be nice and maybe one of the jet skiers who weekend on Malibu will give you a lift back to Quincy or wherever you came from.

What to wear: You're going to be on your feet for hours if you do this right, so footwear is your most important decision of the day. If you want to blend in like an old-school Dot Rat, may we suggest a pair of mint-green or hot-blue Adidas Gazelles? Old-school sneaker heads break out these high school throwbacks and share notes on which variety store they copped them from in the 1980s.

Vendors along the route will be hawking Dot-themed t-shirts and tanks. Longtime Dot activist Lew Finfer breaks out his vintage three-decker tee for every parade. Notice we said three-decker, not triple-decker. Triple deckers are sandwiches. If you're a legit Dot "kid"—you know it's a three-decker.

Also, sunscreen. Lots and lots of sunscreen. (Unless it rains, of course, which it might this year, based on

the latest forecast.) A final note, from the department of your mother:

The absolute worst view of the parade route is from the Area C-11 jail block. Open containers are absolutely NOT allowed on the route and Boston Police have been serious about making this a far-less sudsy affair than the March parade in South Boston. There's zero tolerance on underage boozing in particular, so don't risk it.

Adult spectators may, however, enjoy their beverage of choice on private property or from one of the Dot Ave's favorite establishments including Ashmont Grill, Harp & Bard, and the Banshee.

The Blarney Stone is a very popular spot because its windows open up to the route and it has an amazing outdoor patio. It's usually a big crowd, especially among those who run in the pre-parade Dot Day 5k. Another popular spot is Blend, which has an awesome outdoor space along the avenue.

So dust off those Adidas Gazelles (or order them online STAT) and get ready to party like a Dot Rat this Sunday for the biggest day in Dorchester. See you on the Ave.



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# OFD author depicts a turbulent 1968 Dot in novel "Days of Eight"

By **CASSIDY MCNEELEY**  
**REPORTER STAFF**

Michael J. Pallamary lives in California, but he grew up in Dorchester and still visits a few times a year. With the recent publication of his first novel, "Days of Eight," he brings his readers back to his version of the old neighborhood. The 550-page book— set in 1968— follows 18-year-old Danny McSweeney, who is attempting to navigate through the violence and racial tensions that seem to be around every corner in Pallamary's fictionalized Dorchester.

"Everything in that book that I've written about are things I've seen and experienced," the author told The Reporter. "I learned so much growing up in Dorchester that I felt it's a story that needs to be told."

"This wasn't set yesterday. That period of bigotry, racism, and the introduction to the decline of the Catholic Church left a big impression on me. I felt a need to tell that story. As distasteful as a lot of it is, I felt it was a story worth telling."

Pallamary, born in 1954, says he was abandoned by his father and raised by his single



Michael J. Pallamary signed copies of his Dorchester-set novel "Days of Eight" at the Barnes & Noble store in Hingham last month.

Photo courtesy Michael Pallamary

mother. Life was far from easy for him and his siblings, but he has fond memories of hanging on street corners, riding the train, ditching school at Boston Tech to sneak into Dot High, and spending summer days on Malibu Beach.

In his book, Pallamary

explains that Dorchester Avenue "sees the flow of life."

"At every corner, there was a liquor store, church, or funeral home," he recalled. "I think that did a lot to define us and to define me. This is what it was like growing up there and we made do

with what we had."

It was not all great. As Pallamary grew older the dangers of the Vietnam War appeared closer than ever and the neighborhood was heavily defined by its roughness and racism. It wasn't until Pallamary became a father himself that he finally felt it was time to leave behind the only neighborhood he ever called home.

"At the time my wife and I, she was 16 and I was 19, had our first child I was really unhappy with the scene in Boston. There was a lot of violence and unnecessary racism, and it was such a terrible time. We, being as young as we were and then having two children, decided we weren't going to stay there," said the author.

In 1976, the family of four packed up all their belongings and drove cross-country until they reached California. Today Pallamary is a professional land surveyor and resides in San Diego with his wife of 51 years, Maureen.

Over 20 years ago Pallamary decided he would write a book reflecting the reality of Dorchester that he knew.

"I would just write," he put it simply. "If something comes to mind, I

would just capture it."

Two tactics worked especially well for the author during his writing process.

"I would go back to Dorchester and just sit around and listen to people talk and hear how they described things," said Pallamary. "I used to go sit in the Erie Pub and other places and pick up dialogue."

In addition to people-watching, Pallamary found Facebook a valuable tool to gather information and promote his novel.

"I would post an excerpt from whatever I was working on, and I would run it out there on Facebook and everyone was kind of guiding me. I vetted the book by Facebook feedback." While the social media platform helped him perfect his product, it stirred a sense of longing, too.

"A lot of the nostalgia might be ringing better with folks who are a little older. I don't know how a younger person will interpret the book," admitted Pallamary. "One of the common comments received is people telling me they can smell the urine in Fields Corner when I describe the opening scene. That's a flattering comment even as unattractive as it is.

I was trying to capture the sense and smell and feeling."

So far, he says, the book has been well-received.

"Everyone asks me: 'Was that me?' No, these are all composites; these are just made-up characters. Some of them have attributes."

Earlier this spring Pallamary hosted book signing events at the Barnes & Noble locations in Dedham and Hingham and plans on returning toward the end of the summer to host several more. He is also proud to share that a sequel is "already cooking."

Even more exciting is the potential to see his story come to life on the big screen after receiving an offer from ABC.

"My goal is to put Dorchester on the map in a positive way. Nothing would be more exciting than taking this thing to film or possibly a series," Pallamary said in an interview with the Reporter. "I think we could put a positive light on Dorchester. For years people were embarrassed to mention Dorchester but now I think a lot of people do it with pride."

Pallamary added: "I tell everybody it was the best place in the world to grow up. Old Dorchester."

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Vietnam veterans gather for a picture at the base of the Dorchester Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

## Veterans, families recall 80 from Dot who died in Vietnam

By SETH DANIEL  
NEWS EDITOR

A large crowd gathered on Memorial Day afternoon to observe the 37th annual Vietnam Veterans Memorial ceremonies at Dorchester's permanent park on Morrissey Boulevard to those killed in the war.

The event featured the annual reading of the 80 names of residents of Dorchester from all branches of the military who died during the conflict. Also in attendance were some South Vietnamese military veterans, almost all of whom now live in Dorchester, who come every year to show their respect for the fallen

American soldiers that they fought alongside 50 years ago.

Coordinator Ed Pimental noted that the exercises are focused on the names of the fallen, with other patriotic elements like the Pledge of Allegiance, the National Anthem, and the South Vietnamese National Anthem.

Tuan Tran, who operates Kimmy Pharmacy on Dorchester Avenue, served in the South Vietnamese military and was imprisoned after the war. He said that he and his fellow veterans attend the exercises every year out of "honor and gratitude" to the Americans who came to Vietnam

to fight. He added that he and other former soldiers who now live in Dorchester still feel there is more to do in their home country, which they hope to liberate from communist rule one day.

"We have unfinished business over there to bring American democracy to Vietnam, and one day Vietnam will be free like America," Tran said. "Communists must go away. We will continue until then."

During the ceremony, the fallen Dorchester soldiers' names were read, and flowers were placed by participants at the base of the memorial, per tradition.



Vincent Morrissey salutes a fallen soldier. Morrissey was the commander of the former American Legion Post 1758 in 1980-81.



John Vinh, a South Vietnamese Air Force captain, stops in solemn respect for a fallen Dorchester soldier.



Vietnam Veteran Willy Austin, of Dorchester, salutes after placing a flower for a fallen brother.



Z. Andy Warot, who served in Vietnam.



Do Anh Tuan salutes one of the fallen Dorchester soldiers.



Jackie McDonough salutes after placing a flower for a fallen soldier.



Caretakers of the monument include Lisa Zinck, Mia McCarthy, Diane Zinck, Taylor Crescenzi, Patty McMahon, and City Councillor John FitzGerald. *Seth Daniel photos*



Jordan Mitchell recites the 'Pledge of Allegiance' as event coordinator Ed Pimental, Rich Dobbyn (her grandfather), and Francis Cahill stand in salute. Dobbyn and Cahill have read the names of the fallen for all 37 years of the ceremony.



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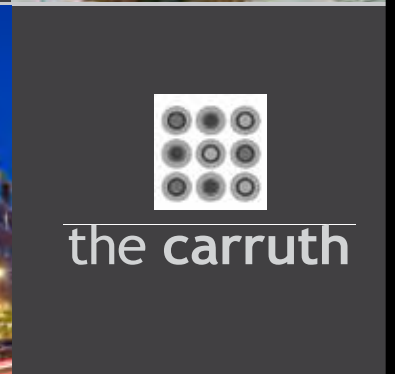
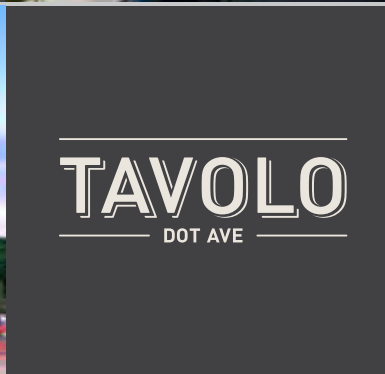
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