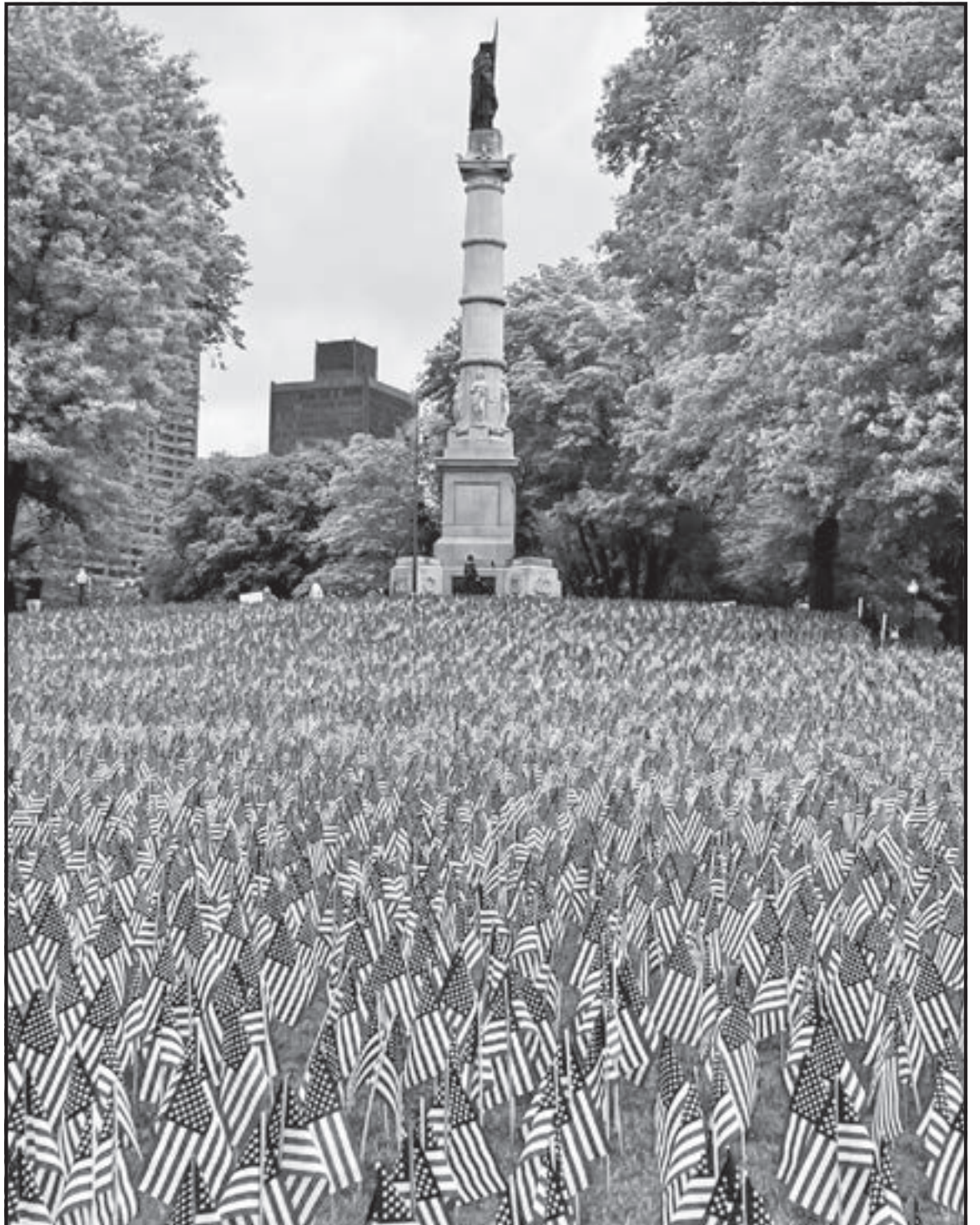


by Patti Sartori

Worrell's call to reject the budget ultimately failed in a 6-6 vote, as he needed the required two-thirds majority or nine votes to allow the matter to be taken up and discussed. To most sitting in the gallery, it looked like a split between the mayor's allies and the councilor's who tend to find themselves on the opposite side of the fence with Mayor Wu. Voting with Worrell to send the budget back to the Mayor were Councilors Miniard Culpepper, John Fitzgerald, Ed Flynn, Julia Mejia and Eric Murphy, while Council President Liz Breadon, Councilors Sharon Durkan, Ruthzee Louijeune, Enrique Pepen, and Henry Santana voted with Brian Weber and Mayor Wu. District 1 City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata was absent.



Hundreds of volunteers from Home Base, a Red Sox Foundation, Massachusetts General Hospital Programs and Military Families of makes this memorial so meaningful is that it's built by people showing up year after year to remember," stated Governor Healey.

by Sal Giarratani

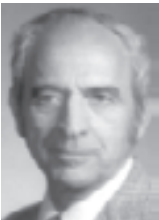
(Continued on Page 10)

save Massachusetts taxpayers \$1.5 billion over the next five years by replacing 3 out of every 4 positions that are vacated each year, excluding direct care and public safety. The institutes Massachusetts State Government workforce report also notes that Governor Healey instituted a hiring freeze in May 2025, resulting in a reduction in over 700 full-time positions.

Stirpe Nostra

by Prof. Edmund Turiello

A weekly column highlighting some of the more interesting aspects of our ancestry...our lineage...our roots.



THE SACRIFICIAL ALTAR



The practice of sacrificing to God before an altar is one of great antiquity, and it probably started prior to the time of Noah. In the case of other personalities out of the past, Homer (about 1100 B.C.) tells of the Greek leaders sacrificing before an altar prior to the start of the Trojan War, while others tell of Romulus and of Alexander the Great engaging in similar practices. We also note that the root of the word altar goes back to the Latin “ara, altare, altus,” and “altaria,” meaning height.

In the base of the sacrificial altar, the altus was of greater height than the area. The former being erected in honor of superior gods, and the latter to inferior gods. Sacrifices too the infernal (underground) gods were usually offered in trenches or cavities that were excavated in the ground. Altars that were constructed on the spur of the moment were generally made of earth, turf or stones. Otherwise, when time was not a factor, stone or brick masonry was used. The top of the altar usually contained a depression, pan, or brazier, upon which was burned the sacrificial fire.

One point of interest that bears mention at this time was the scholarly activity of

a writer, engineer, and architect, who served as a military engineer under Julius Caesar. His name was Marcus Vitruvius, and while in the twilight of his career, he composed his famous work entitled “Do Architecturea Libri X” (the Ten Books of Architecture), in which he detailed the orders of architecture and set down rules for temple design. He also directed that altars should never be set higher than the statues of the gods before which they were placed.

Another interesting point is that in time all of these ancient altars also became places of refuge. The refugee who prayed before such an altar was considered to have placed himself under the protection of the god or goddess to whom the altar was consecrated. Any violence toward the unfortunate refugee, even to slaves and criminals, under such circumstances, was generally regarded as violence toward that particular god.

The ancients also developed the practice of taking solemn oaths before these altars. During the oath, they took firm hold of the altar or the statue of the deity that it was dedicated to.

NEXT WEEK:
The Eternal Flame

City at Odds with State Over Street Closures for FIFA

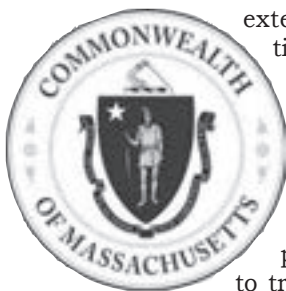
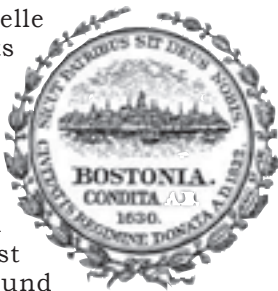
by Patti Sartori

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey look to be at odds over the state’s plan to shut-down Summer Street to vehicular traffic during the upcoming FIFA World Cup games, just as watch parties around Boston will be taking place. State Transportation Secretary Philip Eng provided written notice to Mayor Wu’s Chief of Streets Nicholas Love of the state’s plan to assume control of a section of Summer Street, near South Station, during the seven Boston FanFest events that will occur simultaneously as World Cup matches scheduled in June and July.

Eng noted that the city has already agreed to allow the state to shut the portion of Summer Street owned by Boston to vehicular traffic on two of the game days, June 13 and June 19, but has not come to terms or an agreement with the Wu administration for the remaining five dates, June 16, 23, 26, 29, and July 9. “The portion of Summer Street we are requesting access to

extends from its intersection with Atlantic Avenue to its intersection with Dorchester Avenue, including the sidewalk. We appreciate that the city has agreed to allow the MBTA to close this portion of Summer Street to traffic for the first match on June 13 and the Match on June 19, 2026. This letter will serve as notice that the MBTA intends to acquire the temporary right to occupy this portion of Summer Street ... for the purpose of accommodating public safety in connection with the upcoming World Cup matches, said Eng.

The state’s intention to close down traffic in that general area derives from the strong recommendation of the Massachusetts State Police, the MBTA’s public safety personnel, and other public safety organizations. Neither Mayor Wu’s office directly nor representatives from her administration have commented on whether the city supports the temporary takeover, by the state, of this specific part of Summer Street during the five FIFA matches.



Too Strict for a Parole Board Appointment

In a 4-3 vote last week, the Massachusetts Governor’s Council rejected Maura Healey’s nominee to the Parole Board due to his prosecutorial background. It seems Vincent DeMore, who has served 12 years as a prosecutor in the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, 7 years as a criminal defense attorney and currently serves as a Special Victims Counsel in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps, where he works with victims of crime and represents them in military court, is considered too strict for the Massachusetts Parole Board, a group that has released dozens of convicted violent criminals from prison, including the alleged Memorial Bridge shooter, Tyler Brown, from his sentence for shooting at police officers.

“While I am disappointed by the Governor’s Council decision, I remain deeply grateful to

Governor Healey for her confidence in me and for the opportunity to be considered for a position on the Parole Board. Healey, for her part in the process, advocated and touted DeMore’s prosecutorial experience as well as his current work as a victim’s advocate, saying the Parole Board is in need of a new member with his professional background.

Not all members agree with Governor Healey, including Governor’s Council member Christopher Iannella, who voted against appointing DeMore, explaining the board needs more members with backgrounds in social work and psychology. “We need people with social science backgrounds. Most of the people in prison today have drug issues and alcohol issues. We need more rehabilitation. We need more resources,” Iannella told the *Herald* in a statement.

Governor’s Council member Mara Dolan, said she voted against DeMore more out of fear that he may “go too far in ensuring public safety.” The reason that I didn’t vote for him lies with the nominee himself. He did not make the case that he would not go too far in ensuring Public safety, and that people would not be released on parole who should be released from jail,” Dolan told the *Herald*.

Healey did not hide her disappointment with the vote. “It’s very disappointing to me. I laid out why I thought this person and this candidate with these credentials was absolutely appropriate and needed for the Parole Board. I think it’s important to have on the Parole Board somebody who brings deep experience in the criminal justice system as a prosecutor and someone who has worked with survivors and victims, Healey said following the vote.

North End Waterfront Neighborhood Association Monthly Meeting

The monthly NEWRA meeting took place on Thursday, May 14 at the Nazzaro Community Center, 30 North Bennet Street. The first item on the agenda was the Boston Police Public Safety Update presented by Area A-1 Community Service Officer Michael Mustacchio, who noted there were more incidents than usual in the neighborhood this past month.

On April 22nd there was a report of a person entering a building, no signs of forced entry, but sneakers were stolen out of the hallway. Also on April 22, there were multiple reports of breaking and entering in local restaurants. Liquor, cash, gift cards and pre-signed checks were reported stolen, again no visible signs of forced entry were noted, and the person believed to be responsible has been taken into custody.

Corey Jordan, community engagement specialist from the City of Boston Office of Police Accountability & Transparency (OPAT) explained the function of the office, which came into existence through a Boston City Council Ordinance in 2020, following the death of George Floyd and Black Lives Matter issues with Police Officers across the country. OPAT investigates, mediates, and recommends discipline for civilian complaints of misconduct by members of the Boston Police Department, amongst other jurisdictional responsibilities.

The final agenda item was a very detailed and informative presentation by Kathryn Roosa and Chris Osgood of the City of Boston’s Office of Climate resiliency. The current North End/Waterfront climate resiliency plan covers Commercial Wharf to the Pilot House, in

partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, addresses rising sea levels and looks to be a quite necessary and extremely expensive, extensive effort. The full project will take ten plus years to complete, and is still years away from shovel in the ground. Community input is vital to this project moving forward. Please visit the website, BOSTON.GOV/USACE-STUDY. The public comment period runs from July 15 – September 15, 2026.

The next NEWRA meeting will be held on June 11, 6:30 p.m., at the Nazzaro Community Center, 30 North Bennet Street. On the agenda is State Senator Lydia Edwards, and tentatively an update on Sail250 street closures and impacts along with festival/ society security briefings. For any questions or further information, please e-mail newra.board@gmail.com



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Friday, May 29, 2026

OUR POLICY: *To help preserve the ideals and sacred traditions of this our adopted country the United States of America: To revere its laws and inspire others to respect and obey them: To strive unceasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty: In all ways to aid in making this country greater and better than we found it.*

Joseph A. Blazo, Sr. Honored During Massachusetts Military Appreciation Day



(L-R): State Representative Aaron Michlewitz presents Vietnam Veteran and lifelong North End resident Joseph Blazo, Sr., with a proclamation from the House of Representatives as part of Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey's 2nd Annual Military Appreciation Day in recognition for service to his country.

The second annual Massachusetts Military Appreciation Day, honoring service members, veterans, military families and advocates in Massachusetts was held on May 21, 2026 at the State House. Established in 2025 by the Healey-Driscoll Administration and Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS) in partnership with the Massachusetts Legislature, the event is held during National Military Appreciation Month and offers a special opportunity to honor the service, sacrifice, and continued contributions of the Commonwealth's veterans, service members, and military families.

One of this year's honorees was Joseph Anthony Blazo, Sr., a Vietnam Veteran and life-long North End resident. Joe, as he is affectionately known around the neighborhood, is the past Commander of VFW North End Post 144 and a current member of the North End Veterans Alliance, goes to great lengths to ensure his fellow veterans and their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Thank you to state Representative Aaron Michlewitz, who nominated Joe for this prestigious honor.

LETTERS POLICY

The Post-Gazette invites its readers to submit Letters to the Editor.

- Letters should be typed, double-spaced and must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Anonymous letters are not accepted for publication.
- Due to space considerations, we request that letters not exceed two double-spaced, type-written pages.
- This newspaper reserves the right to edit letters for style, grammar and taste and to limit the number of letters published from any one person or organization.
- Deadline for submission is 12:00 noon on the Monday prior to the Friday on which the writer wishes to have the material published. Submission by the deadline does not guarantee publication.

Send letter to: Pamela Donnaruma, Editor,
The Post-Gazette, P.O. Box 135, Boston, MA 02113

MOLINARI BROTHERS, North End Unsung Heroes of Sacred Heart Church and St. Leonard Parish



(L-R): Bennett and Richard Molinari, two dedicated and faithful volunteers and servants of Sacred Heart Church and St. Leonard Parish, were recently highlighted in the weekly bulletin for living the Franciscan spirit of humility, faith, and loving service.

The Franciscan Spirit of humility, faith, and loving service, are imbedded in the Molinari Brothers DNA. As the St. Leonard Parish bullet so aptly noted last week, these are two individuals, who quietly go above and beyond for the parish community, deserve special recognition and gratitude. Bennett and Richard Molinari were recognized as two unsung heroes in the parish community, for their incredible faith, dedication and loving service to both Sacred Heart Church and St. Leonard Parish.

As the San Marco Society they went all the way to Rome in their fight to retain possession of Sacred Heart Church, never wavering in their tenacity or advocacy. Their care for both churches throughout the years, has been extraordinary as they have assisted in every aspect of parish life, always willing to lend a hand or step into whichever role was needed, without ever expecting any recognition. They both serve on the Pastoral and Financial Council, and are a wealth of knowledge and information.

In 2020, Bennett and Richard completely renovated the St. Francis Gift Shop, abutting the entrance of St. Leonard Church, never hesitating to volunteer to serve the many customers and visitors. They happily oversee the day to day operations, purchasing inventory, organizing donations and offertory counting, and welcome all who enter the gift shop, making it a tremendous source of support and profit for the church. Their continued generosity, humility, and willingness to serve are truly examples of the Franciscan spirit in action. They are affectionately known to those around them as "the gentlemen" due to their infinite kindness. Thank you Bennett and Richard, for all you do for the parish family!

Community Comes Together for a Heartwarming Mother's Day Celebration at ABCD North End NSC



Maria Perez from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services; Julia Power, Director of the ABCD North End/West End NSC; and Sam Peracchi from the Office of City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata with North End seniors



North End/West End NSC Director Julia Power with her stepdad Tom and mom Debi

The ABCD North End Neighborhood Service Center (NSC) welcomed neighborhood seniors for a warm and festive Mother's Day celebration filled with delicious food, beautiful decorations, sweet treats, and community spirit.

ABCD North End/West End NSC Director Julia Power's mother Debi and stepfather Tom volunteered their time serving a homemade luncheon featuring chicken salad and turkey sandwiches. Seniors enjoyed gathering together for an afternoon of conversation, laughter, and celebration in the welcoming community atmosphere for which the North End NSC is known.

The celebration was made even more special through the generosity of many local supporters and community leaders. State Senator Lydia Edwards sent cookies and staff to join the festivities and spend time with attendees. North Street Grille owner Robin Sidell generously donated beautiful plants that brightened the room and added a festive spring touch to the celebration.

City Councilor Gabriela "Gigi" Coletta Zapata also contributed cookies for the event. Maria Perez from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services attended the celebration and spent time visiting with seniors and staff.

The joyful gathering highlighted the strong sense of community and partnership that continues to surround the ABCD North End NSC. Guests left with smiles, treats, and heartfelt appreciation for everyone who helped make the Mother's Day celebration so memorable.



Victor Pelatere, Office of Senator Lydia Edwards, chatting with seniors

L’Anno Bello: A Year in Italian Folklore

The Joy of June

by Ally Di Censo Symynkywicz



(Photo by Freepik)

Ah, June! No other month brings as much joy to the heart of this school teacher. June is inextricably linked to summer in my mind. It means eighty-plus degree days when I open every window, trying to catch a pleasant ruffle of a breeze. It is days spent walking by the seashore, inhaling the salty scent of the ocean and listening to the plaintive cries of the gulls. June means days of ice cream dripping down cones and strolls in the late-evening sunshine. Finally, June means the last school bell of the year, opening a summer full of possibility and hope. Yes, I truly love June, and so did my ancestors over in Italy. June in Italy, after all, boasts several holidays that revel in the summery nature and outdoorsy aspects of the month. In truth, June can be an overwhelming time to visit Italy, as that is when most of the tourists descend, combining crowds with hot temperatures. However, those who go outside of the well-beaten tourist path will greatly enjoy this beautiful month in Italy, especially because of these traditional and deeply significant festivities.

Pentecost (50 days after Easter; June 8th this year): This important Christian feast occurs on the seventh Sunday after Easter and honors the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus’s disciples. It also closes the fifty-deed Easter period — in fact, the name “Pentecost” derives from the Greek word for “fifty.” For Italians, Easter, or *Pasqua*, does not end on the Sunday of the holiday, but rather encompasses a fifty-day period peppered with many saints’ days and Easter-related festivities. In Italy, Pentecost is often referred to as *Pasqua Rossa*, or “Red Easter,” after the red vestments worn by clergy on this day. Many churches

scatter rose petals upon the congregation during services, symbolizing the descent of the Holy Spirit and incorporating a beautiful summertime flower into the celebration. The English, meanwhile, know Pentecost as Whitsunday. They mark the holiday with Whitsun Ales, or outdoor fairs that include folk dancing, decorating with flowers and garlands, and charitable contributions to the local parish and other causes. Europeans know that it is so wonderful to experience a holiday where spirituality, community and the love of summer seamlessly combine into an unforgettable celebration.

Festa della Repubblica (June 2nd): In the simplest terms, one can think of *la Festa della Repubblica*, or “Feast of the Republic,” as Italy’s Independence Day, a rough equivalent to our Fourth of July. This feast honors the date in 1946 when, after the turmoil of World War II, Italians voted on creating a republic rather than returning to a monarchy. Nearly everything — banks, stores, tourist sites, museums — is closed or operates on holiday hours. Instead, Italians celebrate by watching parades and attending outdoor parties or concerts. Expect to see the Italian tricolor flag, with its bright hues of red, white and green, adorning landmarks and waving from people’s homes. *La Festa della Repubblica* appropriately occurs in the summer, when people can take advantage of the lovely weather to go outdoors and show their communal pride in being Italian.

Festival of San Ranieri (June 16-17th): The feast of St. Rainerius, or *San Ranieri* as he is known to Italians, encompasses two days of merriment in the Tuscan city of Pisa.

The eve of the feast day, Pisa celebrates its patron saint by lighting up the city’s buildings with over 70,000 glass-encased candles. These *lumini* cast a warm, romantic glow against the meandering Arno River. A fireworks display caps off the night’s festivities. The next day, people gather to watch a regatta, or boat race. I find it interesting that this quaint and local holiday includes the two biggest hallmarks of solstice celebrations — fire and water — giving Italians cause to honor the sweet delights of midsummer.

St. John’s Day (June 24th): This is one of my favorite holidays. It commemorates St. John the Baptist, the major religious figure who baptized Jesus, though many traditions originated from the pre-Christian festivities celebrating the summer solstice. In Northern Europe, St. John’s Day is known as Midsummer since it falls so close to the summer solstice. People celebrate with rites honoring the sun (the summer solstice) and water (St. John the Baptist): building maypoles, floating garlands of flowers down streams, lighting bonfires. In Italy, this is *la Festa di San Giovanni Battista*. In the Lake Como region, people float hundreds of delicate lanterns on the lake and later continue the theme of light by enjoying a fireworks display. Florentines celebrate with a medieval tournament, while also holding a procession of rowboats carrying candles drifting serenely along the Arno River. These festivals perfectly capture the magic of the longest night of the year, harnessing the power of the sun and honoring the life-giving qualities of water.

Feast of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29th): Rome celebrates the feast day of two of the most important figures of early Christianity with great fanfare. The commemoration of St. Peter and St. Paul, or *San Pietro e San Paolo*, includes a special Mass from St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican (St. Peter was the first Pope). Many businesses in Rome are closed for the day as people admire elaborate flower carpets — a summer symbol — outside St. Peter’s Square. Like many summer holidays, the day ends with a fireworks display.

Of course, there are plenty of other ways to enjoy June in Italy. Lots of little festivals, known as *sagre*, dot the Italian landscape. These small holidays frequently devote their attention to a specific crop, and during the summer that can mean anything from peaches to strawberries to herbs. One of the best aspects of Italian holidays is that they connect to the rhythms of the Earth and encourage reflection in the present moment. So, no matter how you celebrate, make sure to give thanks for the wonderful month of June and all the delights it offers!

Happy June!

Ally Di Censo Symynkywicz is a high school history teacher. She appreciates any comments and suggestions about Italian holidays and folklore at adicenso89@gmail.com.

THINKING OUT LOUD

by Sal Giarratani



Sacrifices Made, Now Forgotten?

I just read the news that down on Cape Cod, the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates, a regional entity will no longer exclusively honor those currently serving our country in the armed forces but will instead also remember all civilian victims of war to open up its meetings during moments of silence. I am opposed to the change not because I do not mourn for civilians killed or wounded in wars but because I feel this is just another example of when politics gets thrown into the mix. Another example of politics being meshed with the solemnity and purpose of Memorial Day to honor the war dead, military sacrifice and our nation.

We have seen this before back over 50 years ago, when soldiers returning home after their deployments to Vietnam were met with anger and derision. The anti-war protesters turned those returning from that unpopular war into their enemies and called them baby killers. What an awful homecoming that was for so many.

I feel the action of this Cape Cod regional government demeans both those who are serving and especially all those who have died defending their country, yesterday, today and tomorrow.

By the way, this year marks the 60th anniversary of my enlistment into the United State Air Force. I had just graduated from Boston English High School and in November of that year I landed at Lackland Air Force Base. An 18-year-old kid with lots of other 18 year olders ready to serve their nation. This was a war that defined my generation. We were the offspring of the Greatest Generation who survived the Great Depression and took down Hitler.

I did my duty just as my Uncle Joe Harrington did when he enlisted within days of the attack on Pearl Harbor. We both survived and continued on with our lives. He ended up a U.S. Customs Agent and I ended up a DMH police officer for 28 years.

Over the years, I have been active in veteran services, belonging to a number of military posts and have been working with the Veterans Voice Network that serves the needs of veterans right here in Massachusetts.

Growing up I lived next door to an older man who served with Col. Teddy Roosevelt and went up with him at San Juan Hill and then a decade later enlisted into the U.S. Army during World War I. More current, I remain a good friend of Gen. Enoch “Woody” Woodhouse who served in the Army Air Corps during WWII as a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen unit. These two men from different generations both accept that one has a duty to do what is best for the country they love no matter how imperfect it might be and were willing to risk their lives too.

Is it really that difficult to take a moment of silence for all these heroes both living and dead? Mixing politics into such a kind gesture is so unbecoming and so unnecessary.

Never forget the sacrifices made for all of us. God Bless America!

North End

55+

Senior Social

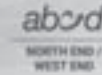
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Saint Godfried Cohart

by Bennett Molinari and Richard Molinari

Godfried Cohart was born in Melveren in the Duchy of Brabant (modern day Belgium) in 1512, and baptized in Holy Trinity Church.

After completing studies at the Franciscan college at Hertogenbosch, he was ordained a priest. He served as sacristan and confessor at the Franciscan friary in Gorinchem where he was very popular with the local people. He printed pictures of the saints that he distributed. He also was a gifted artist,

During the Dutch Revolt against Spanish rule, which eventually turned into the Eighty Years War, inhabitants of the northern Netherlands who were primarily Protestant began to turn against the Catholic priests and monastics present. On June 26, 1572, Father Nicolaes Pieck, guardian of the Franciscan monastery of Gorcum, gave permission to those who wished to do so to seek safer havens. Only two fathers did so. The next



day Protestant rebels, seized Gorinchem and captured eleven Franciscans, along with other religious. The clergy were especially targeted.

After ten days imprisonment, they were transferred to Brielle where they were offered their freedom in return for

denying Catholic teaching on the Eucharist and papal primacy. Four of the twenty-three captives did so.

Their fate was set. Despite a letter from the Prince of Orange, William the Silent, which enjoined all those in authority to leave priests and religious unmolested. They were subjected to a mock trial, and on July 9, 1572 hanged in a burned out monastery in nearby Rugge. With the rope around his neck, Friar Godfried forgave his killers. Their bodies were mutilated before or after death and buried in a ditch until they were transferred to the Franciscan church in Brussels in 1616.

Pope Clement X beatified him and his companions on November 24, 1675. Pope Pius IX officially canonized Godfried and the Martyrs of Gorkum on June 29, 1867.

The Feastday of Saint Godfried and the Martyrs of Gorcum is July 9th.

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District 1 Honors Fallen U.S. Service Members in Memorial Day Services



East Boston High School JROTC Program assembles with Italian American War Veterans, American Legion Post 60, veterans, families, and community, members at the East Boston Memorial Day exercises.



The East Boston Vietnam Veterans Memorial Stands as symbol to all the fallen service members who gave their life in defense of their country.



(L-R): Senior Instructor of the East Boston High School JROTC Lee Fife, State Representative Adrian Madaro, Boston Police Department Area A-7 representative, and Ellie Sanchez, Chief of Staff to District 1 City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata gather in East Boston for a Memorial Day service honoring service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Memorial Day Services took place throughout District 1, East Boston, North End and Charlestown, honoring fallen U.S. Service Members from these communities who gave their lives and made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

A deep appreciation to all who attended the services and continue to observe and remember, especially the North End Veteran's Alliance, East Boston High School JROTC Cadets, American War Veterans, American Legion Post 70, Charlestown Veterans History Project, American Legion JW Conway Post 26, Abraham Lincoln GAR Post 11 and the Veterans, families, and community members who came together again this year to honor and remember our fallen.



(L-R): Sasha Kulikoski holding the American Flag, Bob Venuti, Joseph Blazo, Sammy Viscione, Pastor of St. Leonard Church Fr. Michael Della Penna, Vivian Kulikoski holds the POW Flag, and Christian Kulikoski, kneeling front and center, during the North End Veteran's Alliance 2026 Memorial Day exercises in the Paul Revere Mall (Prado) on Hanover Street. (Photo by Gerri Palladino)



Friends, Romans, Countrymen!

by Laura Carlo

Every school kid who grew up in Boston, at least “back in the day,” had a class trip to follow the Freedom Trail. Stops along the way included the main Revolutionary War locations we read about in our U.S. history books, such as the Old North Church and Copp’s Hill Burying Ground, (where you can see some headstones with holes from musket balls). And no Freedom Trail daytrip was complete without a tour of the Paul Revere house, located in North Square in the North End.

School kids aren’t the only ones discovering the historic house. Tourists from around the world come to learn more about the man who inspired Longfellow’s famous poem that begins, “Listen my children and you shall hear, of the midnight ride of Paul Revere...”

So, it’s a big deal in whose care this historic house rests. Meet Nina Zannieri, the Executive Director of the Paul Revere House Memorial Association since 1986. Nina added a fun story about when she was introduced. She stopped at a local shop and the owner said aloud, “Finally, an Italian running the Revere House! I think the North End has always had ownership and pride in the Revere House, and it remains a warm relationship!”

I asked about her path to the neighborhood. “I was one of those kids who always loved history,” she told me. “My mother was a teacher and my grandmother loved to read so I was always eager to hear more interesting true stories. I was a history major at BC, followed by graduate school at Brown University in a combined Museum Studies and Anthropology program. That led to a job at the Rhode Island Historical Society, and eventually, the directorship of the Paul Revere House.”

I asked what challenges, if any, awaited her? “When I arrived, we knew we needed more space. In the 80s an attempt was made to improve the courtyard, and the Association acquired a Revere



Nina Zannieri, the Executive Director of the Paul Revere House Memorial Association

bell and other artifacts, but space was a major concern to accommodate comfortably both our collections and tourists. In 2007 we bought and rehabbed the building at 5 & 7 Lathrop Place. It’s our Education and Visitor Center now. It made the site wheelchair accessible because we installed an elevator there with direct access into the house. We have a gift shop and our offices there as well.”

“Besides space concerns, I also realized few people had a true understanding of Revere’s

each death affected him greatly. Yes, he’s a Revolutionary War hero and that’s why we know him, but he was also husband, father, businessman and a contributing member of Boston society. He becomes real when people hear these stories.”

I asked if the Reveres lived in only the house on the Freedom Trail? “No, after his ‘midnight ride’ when the war begins, people leave the war zone, those who remain are trying to find scraps of food to eat, trying to stay safe. He sends away his wife and children, except the 15-year-old, and it’s likely they abandoned their house and lived with his (Paul’s) sister. In 1776, after the British were evacuated, they came back to their house and found that it had been spared. They all moved back in.”

Of course, that was long before the North End waterfront became the first neighborhood for generations of immigrants, such as the Jews and Irish, before the Italians settled in the early part of the 20th century. Nina says the neighborhood

“vibe” is very family oriented, warm and appealing. I asked her about the Zannieri side of the family? “My mother’s side was Irish and German, but my 19-year-old paternal grandfather and his wife left their beautiful Foggia in southern Italy and settled in upstate New York. He was a barber, and my dad always shared stories about growing up Italian,

and making wine at home with him. Although my mom wasn’t Italian, she learned to cook Dad’s favorite dishes to recreate his favorite food memories. We lived closer to my mother’s side, but I have very warm memories of everyone on my dad’s side of the family.”

Special exhibits and learning programs have been introduced through the years, and in the USA’s 250th birthday year there are even more planned, including about crafts and Revere’s role in crafts, plus gravestone carving, lace making, gilding, Native American basketry, to name a few. Nina said they’re also presenting courses at the North Bennet Street Industrial School (vocational) also in the neighborhood.

“We love being stewards of this property, and we also love being part of this historic neighborhood. I consider myself fortunate to be part of this jewel of a historic site.”

And what about preparations as we get closer to the July 4th holiday? “Between the birthday, the Tall Ships coming here, the World Cup, we definitely expect a ‘bump’ in attendance this year! And we’re ready for it all!” And whether or not you can visit in person, Nina invites everyone to visit their website, paulreverehouse.org.

role in the Revolutionary War, and even less about the man himself. We brought out artifacts that showed those sides of the famous patriot. For me, the ‘light goes on’ when you focus on the human and not just the legend. For example, he had 16 children: 8 with his first wife, and after she died, 8 with his second, but only 11 survived to adulthood. And he was a devoted, loving father. We have a letter he wrote after the death of his 15th child, and he is bereft. Each child was wanted and loved as he demonstrates in another letter talking about his “little lambs.” He outlived both wives and 5 children, and



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2026
NORTH END
FESTIVAL DIRECTORY

JUNE

SANTA MARIA DI ANZANO

June 7

Italian Mass St. Leonard Church 10:30 am

Procession – Hanover – Prince Sts. 1 pm

SANTA ANTHONY of PADUA

Saturday, June 13

Procession – Hanover – Prince Sts. 1 pm

Mass St. Leonard Church 5 pm

ST. THERESA SOCIETY

June 28

Mass St. Leonard Church 10:30 am

Procession – Hanover – Prince Sts. 1 pm

JULY

MADONNA DEL GRAZIE

July 12

Mass St. Leonard Church 10:30 am

Procession – Hanover – Prince Sts. 2 pm

SAN ROCCO

July 19

Italian Mass St. Leonard Church 10:30 am

Procession – Hanover – Prince Sts. 1 pm

ST. JOSEPH

July 24, 25, 26

Sunday Procession – Hanover – Prince Sts. 1 pm

AUGUST

ST. AGRIPPINA

July 30, 31, August 1, 2

Hanover & Battery Sts. Opens 7 pm on Thursday

Sunday Procession 12 noon

MADONNA DELLA CAVA

August 7, 8, 9

Hanover & Battery Sts. Opens 7 pm on Friday

Sunday Procession 1 pm

MADONNA del SOCCORSO

August 13,14, 15, 16

North, Fleet & Lewis Sts. (Fisherman's)

Sunday Procession 1 pm - Flight of the Angel 8 pm

SANTA LUCIA

August 27

Thursday, Feast & Procession 5 pm

Thacher & Endicott Sts.

ST. ANTHONY’S FEAST

August 28, 29, 30

Endicott & Thacher, N. Margin Sts.

Sunday Procession 12 pm

SEPTEMBER

SAN GENNARO FEAST

TBA

Paul Revere Mall (Prado) Hanover St.

Sunday Procession 12 pm

ST. ROSALIA di PALERMO

TBA

Procession Only - North Square 1 pm

ADDITIONAL ITALIAN FESTIVALS

Gloucester, MA

SAINT PETER’S FIESTA

June 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

Sunday Mass 10 am (Outdoor) - Procession 12 pm

For more details visit: <http://stpetersfiesta.org/>

Newton, MA

ITALIAN AMERICAN FESTIVAL

July 15-19

St. Mary of Carmen Society

The Lake - Nonantum at Pelligrini Park

Malden, MA

SAINT ROCCO FESTIVAL

August 7, 8, 9

Pearl Street, Malden, MA

Sunday Procession 1 pm

Lawrence, MA

FEAST of the THREE SAINTS

August 28, 29, 30

Saints Alfio, Filadelfo and Cirino

Common & Union Streets, Lawrence

Sunday Procession 3 pm

Cambridge Festival

SS COSMAS AND DAMIAN

Sept. 10,11,12,13

Sunday Procession 1 pm

Warren and Cambridge St., Cambridge



by
**Marianna
Bisignano**

A Seat at the Table: LA FESTA DELLA MAMMA



The matriarch of the D'Amore family and Massimino's Restaurant, Virginia Cataldo D'Amore, prepares her traditional tomato canning.

Today I invite you to join me at the table at Massimino's Cucina Italiana in Boston's North End, a place rooted in the traditions, recipes, and culture carried here by Italian immigrants who arrived with very little yet brought with them everything that mattered most.

This series honors the mothers and grandmothers whose quiet influence shaped the tables, recipes, and families that continue to define the North End today; a legacy beautifully reflected through Mamma Virginia Cataldo D'Amore and Nonna Iolanda D'Amore at Massimino's.

I had the pleasure of sitting down with Chef Paolo D'Amore, who opened Massimino's alongside his mother and father in 1989. When I asked him where it all began, who first brought him into the kitchen, and what he remembered most from those early years, he immediately reflected back to the kitchen of Sorrento's, his father's former restaurant on Hanover Street.

"I was 13 years old and every weekend when Friday came, my dad would disappear. He would say, 'I'll be right back,' and then I became the guy... I was the guy in charge of the restaurant," Paolo recalled laughing. "At 14 and 15 and 16 years old, I was running the restaurant on the weekends. My dad would come in, prep everything, and then leave me there. That's how I learned... my career started by mistake."

From Sorrento's came Massimino's in 1989, opened by Paolo, his mother, and his father together on Endicott Street, where it remains today.

When I asked where his family originated, Paolo proudly shared, "We

came from a little town, Montefalcione, with a great history, in the province of Avellino in the Campania region of Italy. We came to America in 1971."

He went on to explain the deep connection between his hometown and Boston's North End traditions. "The St. Anthony's Feast... over 100 years ago, about ten guys from my town missed that feast back home, so here in the North End, they recreated it. It started as a very, very small gathering, and now it's the second largest Italian religious festival in the United States."

As our conversation continued, it became clear that although his father may have been the face of the restaurant, much of the heart, tradition, and soul behind the food quietly belonged to his mother.

"My mother cooked from Sorrento's to Massimino's," he told me. "I remember as a kid my mother would yell at my father, 'No, no, you have to do it like this.' The influence of my mother with the food was amazing, but it was so quiet. My father took all the credit, similar to me, where I'm the face of Massimino's, my father was the face of Sorrento's; but it was my mother. Half the dishes are hers... she created them."

Listening to him speak about Mamma Virginia, you could feel the love and admiration he still carries for her today, not only for the recipes she perfected, but for the wisdom she quietly passed down through everyday moments in the kitchen.

"She would say, 'No, we don't need butter ... too much salt ... do it this way.' If it wasn't for my mother... the tiramisu was hers... but again, we as the men took all the credit," he said with a smile.

Now 83 years old, Virginia remains at the center of many family traditions. "We still do a lot together," he shared. "We pick mushrooms in the fall, we make wine together, and at the end of the summer we make tomatoes together."

He described her as extraordinarily talented, recalling how she worked as a seamstress and even made his First Communion suit by hand. "To this day I still call my mother for cooking advice," he laughed.

Paolo also reflected on his childhood growing up in the North End on North Margin Street during a very different time in the neighborhood's history.

"When I grew up there were probably eight restaurants. My dad was one of the original restaurant owners," he said. "My father landed here, my mother, three children, and \$20 in his pocket. They had no place to live."

The family first shared a small apartment on Cleveland Place, then moved to North Margin where bathrooms were in the hallway and showers were

taken at the neighborhood bathhouse before indoor showers were eventually installed. "That was a luxury," he said.

Because both of his parents worked constantly, Paolo and his siblings' spent summers in Italy with their maternal grandparents on the family farm. Those summers left a lasting imprint on him.

"I would pick fresh eggs, milk the cow... I liked milking the cow because I got to drink the milk warm," he remembered.

When I asked if there was a dish that reminded him most of home, his answer came instantly.

"Pan-fried artichoke hearts," he said. "My mother, me, my grandmother Iolanda make them ... it's the one. Nothing else."

And then he began speaking about Nonna Iolanda D'Amore, the grandmother whose influence still lives on inside of the kitchen at Massimino's today.

"She taught me so much, so much" he said. "Anytime someone came over, she'd go pull out a few meatballs and drop them into the sauce. I could never figure out where they came from."

After she passed away, he discovered the answer, her freezer was filled with carefully prepared meatballs, always ready for family, friends, or unexpected guests. "She always had sauce and meatballs... always had sugo."

In Italian homes, food was never simply food. It was how love was expressed. It marked every moment, every emotion, every gathering. It was the quiet work of mammas and nonnas who nourished everyone around them, often without recognition, while shaping traditions that would live on long after them.

Today, those traditions continue through dishes like Nonna Iolanda's Meatballs at Massimino's, alongside many of the sauces and recipes passed down through generations of the D'Amore family.

As our conversation came to an end, Paolo summed up the spirit of Massimino's in a way that felt deeply reflective not only of the restaurant, but of the North End itself.

"When you come to the restaurant, you're coming into my home. I'm going to sit with you, I'm going to talk with you, just like I would if you were in my home. You're going to eat and leave happy..."

Maybe that is what makes places like Massimino's so special. Long after the meal is finished, the story remains in the sauce simmering on the stove, in the customs carried forward, and in the recipes passed from one generation to the next by the women who stood at the center of it all.

Today, Paolo shares one of those treasured family recipes from the D'Amore kitchen, where love is remembered, and tradition quietly lives on.



ARTICHOKE MARGARITA

COURTESY OF
OWNER/CHEF
PAOLO D'AMORE
MASSIMINO'S
CUCINA ITALIANA

Artichoke hearts
Flour
Eggs
Freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano
Fresh parsley
Black pepper
Olive oil for frying

Clean and slice the artichokes.

Lightly season the flour with black pepper. Dip the artichokes into the flour first, then transfer them into an egg wash.

Heat olive oil in a frying pan and carefully fry the artichokes until golden brown and crispy. Remove and drain on paper towels.

Finish with freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano and fresh parsley before serving.

**Visit [massiminosboston](#) on
Instagram
for the recipe video**

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Boston Public Schools and can be
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Favorite Candy of U.S. Presidents'

One thing that is a given in U.S. politics, is the fascination with what goes on in the White House, regardless of whether a Democrat or Republican is the current occupant. One topic that has popped up now and again, is what various presidents liked to eat or drink during their tenure. Throughout campaign season, headlines often feature what the candidates yearn for while out on the campaign trail or behind closed doors. This obsession with presidential foods is not new, and actually dates back much farther.

In the 1950s, the public was eager for recipes from the Eisenhower administration. From favorite desserts to preferred snacks, people have long been curious about what occupants of the White House prefer. Records of presidential candy choices prior to the 1900s are not readily available. While sweet treats did exist, it wasn't until the William Howard Taft "Taffy" administration took office in 1909 that candy preferences were documented.

It was Taft, who weighed in at more than 300 pounds, who was credited with indulging in too much taffy, contributing to his hefty weight. By the time Herbert Hoover took office in the 1929, that chocolate covered marshmallows became popular. Hoover particularly enjoyed them on top of a sweet potato casserole.

Dwight D. Eisenhower's favorite candy was one that was made popular throughout the country in the 1950s: First Lady Mamie Eisenhower's Million Dollar Fudge.



It is believed to be the President's favorite because it appears in a list of favorite foods on the Eisenhower Presidential Library website.

Lyndon Johnson had two favorite candies: peanut brittle, his favorite being the sticky, chewy, pecan filled confection as a first choice and the "Texas Chewie," but he is also known to have had quite the sweet tooth.

Jimmy Carter, the peanut farmer turned Governor, turned President, was also partial to peanut brittle, with his love of the peanuts extended into his time in the White House.

Most Americans are fairly familiar with Ronald Reagan's love of jelly beans, especially the Jelly Belly brand, with his favorite being licorice. He also kept a large jar on his desk in the Oval Office and smaller ones available for when he was in meetings. Barack Obama 's favorite candy was handmade milk chocolates, with his top pick Smoked Salt Caramels from Fran's Chocolates in Seattle, Washington. Joe Biden was not particular picky, as his campaign noted, "Snickers, Milky Ways, Peppermint Patties, he likes them all." Although, he personally leaned heavier on the Snickers.

Donald Trump is known to enjoy Starburst candies, according to White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt, "specifically the pink ones, and Tootsie Rolls," adding that he eats a lot of candy in general.



THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS – PCD & DOLL DOMINATION (Vinyl) UMe

The Pussycat Dolls are celebrating two decades as a pop force of nature with brand new reissues of their breakthrough debut album *PCD* and its fan favorite follow-up *Doll Domination*. *PCD* is available in multiple configurations, including limited-edition Vinyl, CD, and a special Digital Deluxe Expanded Edition. The standard 1LP Black Vinyl is available at retailers nationwide, with a 2LP “Hot Like Me” Tangerine Color Vinyl—complete with bonus tracks—available only at the group’s official D2C store. The new CD version of *PCD* lands in brick-and-mortar stores everywhere and through online partners today. *Doll Domination* is also available now on 2LP Black Vinyl for the first time, as well as on CD. In addition to featuring all of the original classics, *PCD* serves up a new perspective on some of the most irresistible and infectious pop anthems of the 21st century. The Digital Deluxe Edition of *PCD* entitled *PCD Forever* boasts eight brand-new remixes. Highlights include a modern tech house remix of “Beep” (featuring Will.i.am) by highly sought-after artist and producer Devault (Tate McRae, Sabrina Claudio), and a high-energy rework of “Don’t Cha” (featuring Busta Rhymes) by rising UK producer, songwriter and vocalist Charlotte Plank. The expanded set features new takes on “Buttons” (featuring Snoop Dogg) with Jason Nevins and Guddella, “I Don’t Need A Man” with SimOne, “Stickwitu” with J.Robb, and “Wait A Minute” with Mary Droppinz, alongside the official release of the viral “Don’t Cha” (Showmusik Remix), which gained traction online after Nicole Scherzinger shared a video using the audio and leaned into the trend. The Pussycat Dolls continue to make waves with their brand new single, “Club Song,” out now. The track marks the group’s first new recording since 2019’s “React.” Produced by Mike Sabath, and written by Nicole Scherzinger alongside Sabath, Caroline Ailin, and Solly, the release signals an exciting new chapter for the Dolls. Last year The Pussycat Dolls also dropped an Official Remix of “Don’t Cha” by history-making Canadian house music artist and DJ Blond:ish. Two Pussycat Dolls albums delivering a total of 43 tracks of pleasure.

THE SMASHING PUMPKINS (Vinyl) Capitol/UMe

Grammy-Award-winning iconic rock band The Smashing Pumpkins will celebrate the 35th anniversary of their seminal debut, *Gish*, with multiple new 35th Anniversary vinyl variants available on May 29, 2026. Frontman Billy Corgan’s Madame ZuZu’s and other independent record stores will carry a color vinyl housed in the original 1991 packaging, a limited-edition colorway evokes the classic cover pressed on striking gray vinyl, accented with pink

and purple splatter. A standard Black vinyl in the original 1991 packaging will also be available, honoring the legacy that helped shape an era. The Smashing Pumpkins notably recorded *Gish* with producer Butch Vig at Smart Studios in Madison, WI. The album channeled spirits of rock, metal, psychedelia, pop, and shoegaze into an alternative conjuration unlike anything before it — or after, for that matter. Released on May 28 1991, it went on to make history, becoming one of the most successful independently released albums of its era. The 10-track body of work eventually reached Platinum status, anchored by staples such as “I Am One,” “Siva,” “Rhinoceros,” and more. The influence of *Gish* continues to noticeably magnify from one generation to the next. *Gish* features 10 tracks — the powerful ‘Siva’ and ‘Tristessa’ to the crescendo build-up of lead single, ‘Rhinoceros’ — that displays the band’s driving ambition. Rounding out the track listing are: “Bury Me,” “Crush,” “Suffer,” “Snail,” “Window Paine,” and “Daydream.”

IZE TRIO - GLOBAL PRAYER (CD) Self Released

The Ize Trio’s stunning follow-up to their 2024 debut album *The Global Suites*, is at expansive in its sonic ambitions yet more meditative and introspective. ***Global Prayer***, is a prayer for a better world that gazes inward in a search for answers to universal dilemmas. Three musicians from diverse backgrounds, weave together traditions from jazz, Western classical music and maqam — the microtonal music that takes on various forms in Arab countries across the Middle East. San Diego-born pianist **Chase Morrin**, Cypriot percussionist **George Lernis** and Palestinian cellist **Naseem Alatrash** met while studying at the Berklee Global Jazz Institute. The trio is joined by: Grammy-winning bassist **John Patitucci**, saxophonist **Lihi Haruvi**; laouto player **Vasilis Kostas**; violinist **Layth Sidiq**; and bouzouki player **Yaniv Yacoby**. The album opens with “Flying,” trailed by “From the Stars,” inspired by saxophonist/composer Wayne Shorter’s otherworldly vision. Patitucci provides a direct link to Shorter’s legacy on the track, while Haruvi’s soaring soprano channels the legendary saxophonist’s searching essence. “Snaefellsjokull” is a majestic glacier-capped mountain in Iceland, the tune draws from Irish and Greek influences. The title track follows, the burden and hope of the trio’s “Global Prayer” evident in the fragile stillness of the achingly mesmerizing piece. The remainder of the album is made up of free improvisations — three brief explorations as well as the more wide-ranging “Jam for the End of the World.” Morrin concludes the album alone at the keyboard for the hushed reflection “Epilogue.” the remaining improvisations — reveal how deep and adventurous the trio’s chemistry has grown.

The time has come, the walrus said,
TO TALK OF MANY THINGS
of shoes and ships and sealing wax of cabbages and kings

by Sal Giarratani

TRUMP SAYS BIBI WILL DO “WHAT I TELL HIM”

A recent headline regarding the War in Iran strategy claims President Trump stated, “Bibi will do what I tell him.” This public rhetoric undermines the perception of Israel as an equal partner. Sometimes Trump needs to keep his thoughts inside his own head. Wonder what Bibi really thinks of him? Trump might not want to know.

USPS SAYS CHECK IS IN THE MAIL

A regional air service, owed nearly \$400,000 by the U.S. Postal Service, suspended mail deliveries for 24 hours until the USPS said it would start paying its outstanding balance which goes back to 2023.

THEY CAN’T AFFORD A PAY CUT OR THEY COULD TURN CROOKED?

City Councilor Sharon Durkan recently suggested that rescinding pay raises could increase corruption. She and eight others defeated a resolution by Councilors Ed Flynn and Erin Murphy clawing back raises for the mayor and council. Only Miniard Culpepper supported the resolution, while Julia Mejia abstained. Ben Weber’s alignment with the

mayor’s office on this issue is equally disappointing. Almost as bad as Durkan.

THE LAST FREE MAN
Preserving the Past: A recent *Murder, She Wrote* episode, “The Last Free Man”, featured a character justifying slavery to “preserve the culture.” History proves that longevity does not equate to virtue. We must grow from our past, preserving what is good while acknowledging that figures like Christopher Columbus were imperfect men rather than villains. He lived in the 15th century. He was good, he was bad just like all of us are today. He wore no halo. He died imperfect and we all share that fate. Judging yesterday is always easy today, isn’t it?

If you are a fan of *Murder, She Wrote*, you can catch it 24/7 on Xfinity Channel 4170 in Boston. Every day and all the time.

SOME GREAT OLD TUNES
Recently, Seventies on 7 was playing some great old music from mid-May 1978. Like “Dust in the Wind” by Kansas or Johnny Mathis and Deniece Williams singing “Too Much, Too Little, Too Late.”

EAST BOSTON’S ST. ANTHONY DINNER
This year’s St. Anthony Dinner will be held on Saturday,

June 13 starting at 6:00 p.m., in the lower hall of Sacred Heart Church.

SAVE THIS DATE
On Sunday, June 14 there will be a reception following the 12 noon Mass at St. Michael’s Church over in Winthrop to say bye and congrats to Father Chris O’Connor on his leaving as pastor and his appointment as rector of Holy Cross Cathedral.

GARFIELD IS MY HERO
Every morning I have to read my favorite comic strip *Garfield*. The latest bit of wisdom is superb. Jo is walking around sighing and then telling Garfield “We should talk about doing something” to which Garfield replies “As long as we only talk about it.”

THIS YEAR’S DOT DAY PARADE CHIEF MARSHAL

USMC Vietnam Veteran Richard Dobbyn Sr., has been named Chief Marshal of this year’s Dorchester Day Parade, which will be held on Sunday, June 7 starting at 1:00 p.m., in Lower Mills traveling down Dorchester Avenue to Columbia Road. The annual Chief Marshal’s Banquet will be held on Thursday, June 4 at Florian Hall.

North End Athletic Association Fall Soccer

Time for NEAA Soccer Registration, see all the information below. Spaces are filling fast!
Registration for NEAA 2026 Fall Soccer is now underway. Our program will begin on Saturday, September 12th and run through Saturday November 7th. There will be no games on Saturday, October 10th as part of Columbus Day Weekend.

The program will run as follows:
***The season will Start on 9/12 and end on 11/7.**

- Boys & Girls Ages 4/5 Year Olds** - Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
- Boys & Girls Ages 6 to 8 Year Olds** - Practice on Tuesdays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Games on Saturdays from 10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
- Boys & Girls Ages 9 to 12 Years Old** - Practice on Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Games on Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

****All ages are as of 9/1/26.**
Registration cost is \$65 per player, this includes Team Shirt, Soccer Socks and a new ball for those who need one — if you have last years’ please bring it. All new players will get a new ball or those moving up to the 9 to 12 group will get the larger size ball.
Space is limited, so sign up early.

The North End Athletic Association will never prevent a child from playing in our programs due to an inability to pay our registration fee. If you need assistance, please contact NEAA Sports Coordinator John Romano at 617-750-9749.

To Register go to: <https://neaasportsboston.sportngin.comx/neaasoccer>

2026 NEAA Mayor’s Cup Travel Team:

The NEAA is considering entering a couple of teams in the Mayor’s Cup Tournament this year. We are not exactly sure what ages yet but we know it will most likely be COED Teams playing in the Boys division. We don’t have all the exact specifics yet but are trying to gauge interest. It will mean an extra practice session on the weekend with the “tournament team” and the tournament will take place late in our season, likely early November. There is a specific checkbox to let us know that you are interested. This will be for ages 6 and up. Players must be registered as part of our regular 2026 Fall Soccer program to qualify.

DO NOT WAIT TO REGISTER AS WE HAVE LIMITED SPACE IN AGE GROUP!
Any questions, email John Romano at jromano45@gmail.com
or call/text at 617-750-9749

Nanna & Babbononno

by John Christoforo

A Nostalgic Remembrance



The 15th of the month began my 35th year writing for the *Post-Gazette*. As a result, I've gone back to relate the happenings that began the lives of the Contini/Christoforo family members in America. If you remember, Nanna had heard rumors at work that Babbononno had a wife and children back in Foggia. I learned later, that there were some men that immigrated here and left wives and children behind with the stipulation that when money was made, they would be sent for. The unscrupulous ones found women here and never sent for those waiting back in Italy. Babbononno was afraid that Nanna wouldn't marry him if she knew about his two children. When he confessed, she gave him the money to bring them to America. Not long after they arrived, my mother was born.

Angelina was soon followed by Nicola, Antonio and then Luigino. With Paul and Grace, the family included six kids. When he was about three, Antonio ambled over to the black iron stove and pulled down a large pan of scalding water, drenching himself. He was rushed to the nearest hospital, but didn't make it, succumbing to the burns covering his body. He would be the first of the family to be buried in America.

When she was 15, Grace married and was the next Contini to start her own family. Babbononno began to

prepare his kids for their adult lives at a young age. None of the boys were interested in Babbononno's day trade as a furniture maker, but they all inherited his love and talent for music. Both Uncles Paul and Nick were sent to school to study clarinet. Babbononno had visions of his sons becoming symphony musicians. Without my grandfather knowing it, both of them learned saxophone, Paul alto and Nick tenor. They wanted to play the music of the day, not what their father insisted on. When Uncle Gino was old enough, Babbononno taught him drums. The compromise was that his kids would join their father as members of the Italian Marine Band in America, Babbononno on drums and Paul and Nick on clarinets. My two uncles became professionals at a young age. Uncle Gino did a little playing, but was a lot younger than his older brothers and was part of another generation.

Education for Italian girls wasn't that important and my mother was forced to quit school in the 10th grade. It's too bad, as she was great with numbers and might have done well with her talent. Instead, she went to work in retail sales at Goldenberg's, an East Boston clothing store that was located near Central Square. She was paid a little better than some of the other workers because she understood and spoke several dialects of Italian. Her salary was given to Babbononno and she was given an allowance to buy personal things. My grandfather was old school Italian, and that's the way it was.

Uncle Paul was the first to marry. Eleanor was his childhood sweetheart and Babbononno carved out an apartment for them on the top floor of 70 Eutaw Street. They would eventually have two daughters, my cousins Paula and Ellie. Uncle Nick began dating my mother's best friend, Ada Giorgone, and he was the next Contini to marry.

Unfortunately, they never had any children and their marriage would become one of the casualties of WWII.

One day back in the early '30s, Nick and Paul had a double header, an afternoon job and a night job. The first was local and Nanna had lunch prepared for them before they headed out of town for the night job. The bass player from the first job would be with them for the night job and they brought him to Nanna's for lunch. His name was John DeCristoforo, but was known as Johnny Christie in the music business. He met Angelina, the Contini daughter on that day and they soon began dating. They dated for three years until Anne, as she preferred to be called, gave Johnny an ultimatum. Three years was long enough, "You know what, or get off the pot." They were married at the Sacred Heart Church in East Boston on October 25, 1936.

Following Uncle Nick and Aunt Ada, they rented an apartment

in a section of Boston called Musicians' Row, due to the fact that most of the people living in that area were the professional musicians of Boston. John and Anne lived on Brainard Road and Nick and Ada on Kelton Street, both within walking distance from each other.

Uncle Paul had studied the printing trade in high school and went into that business right after he graduated. Both Nick and my father went on the road with the big bands when they were done with high school and traveled extensively. When they were married, they settled for working with Boston bands and only traveled on occasion.

My mother had a miscarriage with her first and Dad moved her back to Nanna and Babbononno's home in East Boston as she needed a lot of care. A year later, I showed up on October the 21st, right after the famous hurricane of 1938. For the most part, Dad's traveling days were over, and he reconciled himself to the fact that Boston was going to be where he was destined to play music, but there was another problem, war clouds were looming and coming ever closer.

Finally it happened in late 1941. We were at war and it would only be a question of time until my father and uncles would be wearing military uniforms. My youngest uncle, Gino, had been working at the Chelsea Navy Yard and was the first to join, hooking up with the Army Air Corps. Uncle Nick, knowing he would be drafted, joined the Navy. Dad waited as he had a high lottery number and knew that, at some point, he would be called, but it would be down the road a bit. Uncle Gino wound up fighting in the Pacific as we advanced island by island toward Japan. He would be part of the first bomber raids on Tokyo. Uncle Nick auditioned for the navy's band and was assigned to fight the war playing at the Newport Naval Base with the Andre Kostelanetz Orchestra. Dad was never called to put on a uniform, but joined the OSS, the forerunner to today's CIA. They put him to work interrogating Italian war prisoners brought to island fortresses in Boston Harbor and the long-closed immigration station in East Boston. He hired Babbononno as his recording secretary. Dad's Italian was marginal, but of course, Babbononno was born in Italy and could handle the chore of translating for Dad. At the same time, Dad began teaching shop math and machine shop at his alma mater, East Boston High School. He even added in coaching football at the school. Let's see, teaching school, coaching after school, interrogating war prisoners a few afternoons a week and playing with a band six nights a week ... hmm. It's not the Yankee work ethic, folks, it should be called the Italian work ethic if you ask me. I think Dad rubbed off on me more than he knew.

GOD BLESS AMERICA

From Hanover Street to Abbey Road...



Stephen Scapicchio and avid Beatles fan sends, "Greetings from Abbey Road in London England" as he stands on the crosswalk made famous by the group with their 1969 album cover.

For a seasoned traveler and loyal Beatles fan, visiting the Abbey Road crosswalk, located in St. John's Wood, London, is an essential pilgrimage for any Beatles enthusiast. Originally made famous by the 1969 album cover, *Abbey Road* the site allows fans to recreate the iconic single file street walk.

Our good friend and "unofficial" Mayor of the North End" Stephen Scapicchio took the opportunity to join countless fans who flock to the street daily, dodging the famously annoyed local drivers. For a traditional photo, a companion, in this instance Stephen's lovely wife Sharon, would stand slightly elevated on the curb, near the adjacent Abbey Road studios, with a clear view down the road, to grab a successful photo.

However, as Stephen's photo clearly depicts, a traditional photo was definitely not a part of Stephen's thought process. In the days leading up to his trip, as he explained with sheer excitement, "When I get there, I am going to stand in the middle of the crosswalk and declare, 'I am here' " We see you made good on your promise Stephen. Maybe the bravado hails from all the years Stephen would stand in the middle of Hanover and other streets stopping traffic for the annual procession of St. Anthony...

Red Sox Hall of Fame 2026 Inductees

Three former Red Sox franchise greats were inducted into the Hall of Fame earlier this month. Right-handed pitcher Mike Timlin, outfielder Johnny Damon, and Left-hander Jon Lester, all agree on one thought and belief, Boston is a world apart compared to any other sports city of MLB franchise. "It's everything," said Lester of what Boston and the Red Sox mean to him.

Lester was drafted by the Sox in 2002, making his initial debut on June 6, 2006, when suddenly he was diagnosed with lymphoma. After receiving chemotherapy treatment, he was back on the active Red Sox roster, and was instrumental in pitching them to the 2007 World Championship, and a second trophy in 2013.

"To go through that kind of personal stuff in '06 and '07 and to stick with me, and treat my family the way they treated us. Two of my kids were born here. I mean this was home for us, and it meant a lot to us, the friendships we had. And you add Fenway Park and the Boston Red Sox to that equation, just makes everything kind of perfect," Lester reflected.

Timlin won four World Series Championships over his 18-year MLB career. The Red Sox were his final team, but the one for who he pitched the most innings. "When I won the first two in Toronto early in my career, I don't think I had the experience in the league to know what it meant to win a World Series. To win it here, and then at the time we did it, to end the 86-year drought, it was like a cherry on the top," he recalled.

The induction represented an entirely different meaning to Damon, who went from a beloved Red Sox player to a traitor in the eyes of the Sox most loyal fans, for signing with the New York Yankees following the 2005 season. Growing up in Florida, he had no concept of the rivalry's depth. "I get to Boston, and spring training games were a big deal against the Yankees and I just never saw it until I saw the passion and I loved it. I had four amazing years here that was topped by winning a World Series in 2004 and breaking the curse, being a part of history, changing the culture here," Damon said.

Then he found out what it was like to switch sides, and it was not pleasant. But he is back in the good graces of Boston fans once again, "Yeah, it feels good to be back. It was a tough departure. I loved playing for Boston. I love coming back here. I am going to spend more time here in the future. Both sides of the rivalry were fantastic, but everyone knows this was home, this, Boston had a very special place in my heart," Damon added.



LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000

Docket No. MI25P5455GD

NOTICE AND ORDER:
Petition for Appointment of
Guardian of a Minor

In the interests of
BENTLEY DANIEL BRIEN
of Lowell, MA
Minor

NOTICE TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

1. Hearing Date/Time: A hearing on a Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor filed on **10/16/2025** by **Sandra M. Brien** of Lowell, MA will be held **06/11/2026 08:30 AM Review Hearing** Located **370 Jackson St., Lowell, MA 01852 6th Floor, Courtroom 13**

2. Response to Petition: You may respond by filing a written response to the Petition or by appearing in person at the hearing. If you choose to file a written response, you need to:
File the original with the Court; and
Mail a copy to all interested parties at least five (5) business days before the hearing.

3. Counsel for the Minor: The minor (or an adult on behalf of the minor) has the right to request that counsel be appointed for the minor.

4. Counsel for Parents: If you are a parent of the minor child who is the subject of this proceeding you have a right to be represented by an attorney. If you want an attorney and cannot afford to pay for one and if you give proof that you are indigent, an attorney will be assigned to you. Your request for an attorney should be made immediately by filling out the Application of Appointment of Counsel form. Submit the application form in person or by mail at the court location where your case is going to be heard.

5. Presence of the Minor at Hearing: A minor over age 14 has the right to be present at any hearing, unless the Court finds that it is not in the minor's best interests.

Date: March 11, 2026
Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate
Run date: 05/29/2026

Ieri e Oggi

Yesterday & Today

A COLUMN OF PAST AND CURRENT EVENTS

by Bennett Molinari & Richard Molinari

The War of the Roses



The Wars of the Roses, from 1455 to 1487, known at the time and in following centuries as dynastic Civil Wars, were a series of armed confrontations, battles and campaigns fought for control of the English throne that preceded the strong government of the Tudors. The conflict was fought between supporters of the House of Lancaster (whose emblem was a red rose) and House of York (a white rose), two rival branches of the royal House of Plantagenet.

Between 1450 and 1460 Richard, 3rd duke of York, had become the head of a great baronial league, of which the foremost members were his kinsmen. Among his principal lieutenants was his nephew Richard Neville, the earl of Warwick, a powerful man in his own right. In 1453, when King Henry VI, a Lancastrian became incapacitated, a powerful baronial clique, backed by the earl of Warwick, installed York (Richard 3rd), as protector of the realm. When Henry VI recovered in 1455, he re-established his authority, forcing York (Richard 3rd) to take up arms for self-protection. The first battle of the wars, at St. Albans (May 22, 1455), resulted in a Yorkist victory and four years of uneasy truce.

From then on the struggle was bitter. Both parties laid aside their scruples and struck down their opponents without mercy. The coldblooded and calculating government that now entered English political life was in part a legacy of the lawless habits acquired by the nobility during the Hundred Years' War.

The conflict resulted in the end of Lancaster's male line in 1471, leaving the Tudor family (Yorkist), to inherit the Lancastrian claim to the throne. Conflict was largely brought to an end upon the union of the two houses through marriage, creating the Tudor dynasty that would subsequently rule England.

• News Briefs (Continued from Page 1)

The former mayor now says he will fight deportation. He was just re-elected in a landslide victory.

Taliban OKs Child Brides

The Taliban has formally legitimized child marriages under a new family law decree that sets out rules for marriages involving minors — treating them as saleable property. The price of a child bride

reportedly ranges between \$500 to \$3,000, report human rights groups.

End Quote

“I started realizing ... BLM has always been a scam, and the Democratic Party has always been the party of racism and violence.”

— *Black Lives Matter activist turned conservative influencer*
Xaviaer DuRousseau

Tips for Container Gardening Success

by Melinda Myers



Container gardens set in garden beds can add vertical interest and color or act as a screen.
(Photo credit: www.MelindaMyers.com)

plants for any signs of insects, their damage and disease. Early intervention makes it easier to manage the problem and helps minimize the damage.

Remove small populations of insects and discolored leaves by hand. Use a garden hose and apply a strong blast of water to help dislodge aphids and mites. Follow this up, if needed, with an organic light-weight horticulture oil like Summit Year-Round Spray Oil (SummitResponsibleSolutions.com). These products kill the insects they contact but won't harm beneficial insects that land on a plant that has been treated. It is also effective against powdery mildew and certain other diseases. As always, read and follow label directions for the most effective and safest control.

Adjust container garden designs and maintenance to boost their beauty with minimal effort. Then enjoy a growing season of benefits these planters provide.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* instant video series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by *Summit Responsible Solutions* for her expertise to write this article. Myers' website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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12-30p Music by Dj Alan Labella	2p Italian Performances by local school students
3p-7p 2 Live shows by the Reminisants	4p-7p Enjoy an unforgettable afternoon of classic Italian and American favorites performed live by New York artists Maria Venuto & Vinnie Medugno

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Todisco Services, Inc., with its corporate office located at 147A Summit Street, Peabody, MA 01960, under the provisions of Mass G.L.c.255, Section 39A, will sell the following vehicles on or after **June 22, 2026** by public or private sale to satisfy a lien for towing, storage, and all other fees due.

2008 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE
Vin #1J8GR48K08C147780

2015 RAM PROMASTER
Vin #3C6TRVAG4FE512640

2025 ZHILONG ST
Vin #HZ2TBCNF2S1013367

2025 ZHILONG ST
Vin #HZ2TBCNF5S1013220

2013 NISSAN SENTRA
Vin #3N1AB7AP7DL756195

2024 ZHILONG ST
Vin #HZ2TBCNF3R1010715

Vehicles may be seen by appointment only. Please email for specific information
info@todiscotowing.com

Run dates: 05/29, 06/05, 06/12/2026

LEGAL NOTICE

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Todisco Services, Inc., with its corporate office located at 147A Summit Street, Peabody, MA 01960, under the provisions of Mass G.L.c.255, Section 39A, will sell the following vehicles on or after **June 15, 2026** by public or private sale to satisfy a lien for towing, storage, and all other fees due.

2008 KIA SPECTRA
Vin #KNAFE122985565326

2010 FORD FUSION
Vin #3FAHP0HA7AR336618

2011 HYUNDAI SONATA
Vin #5NPEB4AC4BH096270

2004 HONDA PILOT
Vin #2HKYF18724H599596

2010 ACURA TSX
Vin #JH4CU2F67AC040745

2014 CHEVROLET CRUZE
Vin #1G1PG5SB6E7390907

2007 TOYOTA PRIUS
Vin #JTDKB20U377658236

Vehicles may be seen by appointment only. Please email for specific information
info@todiscotowing.com

Run dates: 05/22, 05/29, 06/05/2026

LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000

Docket No. MI26P2558EA

Estate of
CARL J. STAGLIANO, II
Date of Death: April 27, 2026
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:

A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Angela DiSisto of Medford, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Angela DiSisto of Medford, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/17/2026.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION
UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM
PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

Witness, HON. TERRI L. KLUG CAFAZZO,
First Justice of this Court.
Date: May 20, 2026

Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate

Run date: 05/29/2026

LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court

Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000

Docket No. MI26C0065CA

In the matter of:
ALLESSAH SKY PARISI
CITATION ON
PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Allessah Sky Parisi of Lowell, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Allessah Sky Buckley**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Middlesex Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of June 22, 2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

Witness, HON. TERRI L. KLUG CAFAZZO,
First Justice of this Court.

Date: May 22, 2026

Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate

Run Date: 05/29/2026

LEGAL NOTICE

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Todisco Services, Inc., with its corporate office located at 147A Summit Street, Peabody, MA 01960, under the provisions of Mass G.L.c.255, Section 39A, will sell the following vehicles on or after **June 08, 2026** by public or private sale to satisfy a lien for towing, storage, and all other fees due.

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Vin #JM1BK344881133161

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Vin #5NPDH4AE5DH159164

2014 NISSAN SENTRA
Vin #3N1AB7AP4EY204013

2013 FORD FUSION
Vin #3FA6P0HR1DR306788

2015 CHEVROLET EQUINOX
Vin #1GNFLFEK2FZ117119

2004 ACURA TL
Vin #19UUA66214A007079

2004 MERCEDES BENZ S-CLASS
Vin #WDBNG84J14A392486

2007 HYUNDAI SONATA
Vin #5NPET46C97H210731

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Run dates: 05/15, 05/22, 05/29/2026

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ATTORNEYS

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Attn: Legal Notices



EXTRA Innings

by Sal Giaratani



Home Weep Home
Sox Fall 8-17 at
Friendly??? Fenway

As of Memorial Day morning, the Sox are now 22-30, with a .423 win-loss percentage and 13 games back of first place Tampa Bay in the AL East with the last loss this past Sunday. They are now tying a season-low at eight games under .500 and next batters up are the Guardians and Braves, both holding on to first place in their respective divisions.

No Talk Yet of
Six-Man Rotation

This season has been pretty rough on Brayan Bello. A few times this season, Bello has looked a little good after a can-opener starts off his games but, overall, I am thinking he should be pitching for the Woo Sox,



Brayan Bello

but that's just me sounding off my frustration. With a 6.43 ERA through 10 games, and Connelly Early and Payton Tolle

both pitching well, Bello could be headed for long relief. How do people out there feel about Bello's usefulness in the starting rotation? We don't need six starters in the rotation. We also don't need can openers starting baseball games either.

Henry Receives
Prestigious Award

Red Sox principal owner John Henry just received the Lifetime Achievement Award at *Sports Business Journal's* 2026 Sports Business Award on Wednesday, May 20.

Any good that Henry accumulated as the Sox broke the Curse of the Bambino turned to dust in the wind as the rock band Kansas sang decades ago. Fans who once loved Henry now see him as Darth Vader. His recent award is a kick in the teeth.

State to Kick in Funding
FIFA Watch Parties



Rendering of City Hall Plaza during the FIFA Watch Parties

A \$1.2 million dollar grant has been awarded to the City of Boston, by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism's Sports and Entertainment Events Fund. The funds are earmarked to cover public safety costs for the FIFA World Cup watch parties and events the city has planned and will host this summer.

"This grant round was made available for public safety expenditures in communities hosting official FIFA activities, including World Cup games, Fan Fest, and team home bases, as well as other communities that border the stadium in Foxboro," documents state.

Boston is a host city and has previously received grant funding through an earlier pot of monies in the initial round in late spring. Boston is

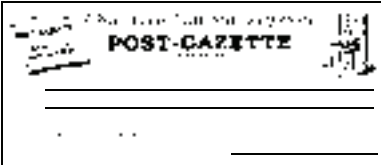
scheduled to host watch parties for matches in June and July, as part of Fan Fest celebrations that will take place on City Hall Plaza.



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Boxing

Ringside

WITH BOBBY FRANKLIN

IT'S BEEN A GREAT EXPERIENCE

and Now it's Time to Call it a Day

My first column for the *Boston Post-Gazette* appeared on November 29, 2013. My weekly musings on the sport was originally entitled *Bobby on Boxing*. Later on it became *Boxing Ringside with Bobby Franklin*. If my math is correct, and that's a big if, I have been with the paper for 651 weeks. If my memory serves me well, another big if, I have only missed two weeks in that period. That means (questionable math again) I have contributed 649 boxing columns.

In addition to my writings on the sweet science, I have also contributed a number of theatre reviews as well as book reviews and interviews. It has been quite the experience. More so when I consider I had no journalism experience starting. It was definitely on the job learning.

I don't know how many total pieces I have submitted to the *Gazette*, but with the non-boxing writings included it must be around a thousand or more. I never imagined I would be, or could be, that prolific.

It all started the day I helped to set up a boxing gym at the Gentle Giant Moving Company. I was working there as a consultant at the time. Former World Welterweight Champion Tony DeMarco made an appearance and copies of his then recently published autobiography were distributed to all the employees. It was great day.

I suggested to the folks at Gentle Giant that the *Post-Gazette* might be interested in running a brief story about the event. They submitted one and indeed it was published.

Not long after, I stopped by the Prince Street office of the paper to pick up some copies of the publication. Pam Donnaruma happened to be there that day and we got to talking. I told her how I used to visit the paper back in the early '70s and met her father. My boxing trainer at the time wrote a boxing column for them. Pam gave me some copies of the latest issue, and when I turned to the back page I noticed there was no boxing column. I asked what happened to it. Pam told me the last person writing had stopped contributing. Without taking a breath she asked me if I wanted to take it over. For some reason I agreed with the caveat that I had no experience. I was told to give it a try, and that was it.

I became fascinated with boxing at an early age. At first enjoying watching it on

television, and then I graduated to having some rather primitive backyard boxing matches with the neighborhood kids. At the age of fourteen I found my way to the New Garden Gym.

The knowledge I gained about boxing was both exciting and at times disturbing. I loved the training and what it can instill in a young man. The focus and self-discipline are valuable tools that well equip you for the challenges you will face in life. Learning that fear is not an absence of courage, but rather courage is learning how to move forward in spite of fear was one of the many lessons I learned.

I also saw the dark side. The mob figures that infested the game, the predators who hung around the gyms, the old fighters who were suffering severe brain trauma from have taken too many blows to the head. When I was young I didn't realize just how common the brain damage was in this violent sport. As the years have passed and I have learned about how widespread this is I began to question whether I could watch the sport any longer. Indeed, I eventually gave up tuning in to fights for this reason. As dangerous as boxing had been, it had turned into pure brain beating with little skill involved. I chose to only write about the history of boxing with the occasional column about the negative health impact it was having on the athletes.

The corruption and abuse of fighters has continued and might have even gotten worse. Over the decades so many great fighters have ended up destitute along with the brain injuries they had to live with. I think of what happened to men such as Mickey Walker and Jimmy Bivins. They are just two examples. Both men were top performing fighters. What about all the club fighters who never gained recognition or made any money. I have told a few of those stories, but there are thousands more. Truly tragic and brought on by people who could have done better by their meal tickets but just didn't care.

As time has gone on, boxing became something my conscience has had to struggle with. The great boxing writer Jack Newfield once described it as his "guilty pleasure." Jimmy Cannon called boxing the "red light district of sports." When a manager has a group of fighters they are called his "stable." The comparison to owning horses was never lost on me. I

think Budd Schulberg understood that as well. He once wrote, "Very few fighters get the consideration of racehorses, which are put out to pasture to grow old with dignity and comfort when they haven't got it anymore."

The toughest column I have written was about 18-year-old Jeanette Zacarias Zapata who was brutally killed in the ring in 2019. The circumstances leading to her death were sickening. At the time I thought of no longer writing about boxing but continued on. It was an emotional piece to write and struck me deeply. I hoped by shedding light on what was a situation akin to human trafficking people might be held accountable and the public might cry out. Things just went on as usual.

During my time writing this column I have learned a lot about the history of the fight game. Boxers are a unique breed among athletes. There are no timeouts, no taking a break and sitting on the bench, and no teammates to share the blame with if things go badly. Boxers stand alone. It's a fascinating profession, but deadly, corrupt, and life alternating, and not in a good way for the vast majority of those who take it up.

I'll never lose my fascination for boxing. I'll always be thankful for the way the training and fighting instilled strength of character in me. I will also always be thankful that I got out before I suffered damage.

Now it is time to hang up the pen and move on to exploring other topics.

I want to thank Joan at the *Gazette* office for all her help each week when I would submit a column. It has been a pleasure working with you.

My memories of Joanne who was an integral part of the *Gazette* team, and who passed away, will always bring a smile to my face.

Pam Donnaruma has done an incredible job of continuing her family's legacy in keeping the *Boston Post-Gazette* alive and thriving in this digital age. Thank you Pam for allowing me to be a part of that great journey that began over a hundred and thirty years ago.

Finally, thank you to all of my readers who have followed my column over the years. Despite my misgivings about the sport, I will always have fond memories of knowing at least a few people found what I have written interesting.

Take care everyone.

HOOPS and HOCKEY in the HUB

by Richard Preiss

As the Knicks prepare to play in the NBA Finals for the first time since 1999 all New York seems to be enthralled by the performance of their team following its sweep of the Cleveland Cavaliers in the Eastern Conference Finals.

After all, the Knicks are one of only two NBA teams — the other being the Celtics — that still play their home games in their original franchise city.

So, there is a long history in New York regarding the Knicks. But for all that history, the glory really belongs to the Celtics with their 18 banners flying high from the TD Garden rafters.

Down in New York there are only two — from 1970 and 1973. There were several additional trips to the NBA Finals — starting with three consecutive starting in 1950. All those saw the Knicks denied the ultimate prize — the Championship.

They also lost in the NBA Finals in 1994 and 1999. If the Knicks go on to win the NBA title, it will be the first time since 1973 that they will have accomplished the feat.

In other words when the Knicks won the 2026 Eastern Conference Finals, it was the first time in the 21st century that they did so. If they go on to win the 2026 NBA Championship it will be some 53 years since the trophy has graced Manhattan.

And yes, there is a Boston tale woven through this story of success for the Knicks. It encompasses several decades but leads up right where we are today — at the doorstep of the 2026 NBA Finals with a local angle to match.

All narratives have commencements and this one does as well. It begins with the birth of a boy who would go on to become a very successful high school basketball coach in both Boston and the suburbs.

He was an average basketball player while growing up in Medford but really began to show high potential while coaching the Salem High team.

An entire book entitled *The Assist* (by Neil Swidey) covers O'Brien during the years 2004-2008 while he was coaching the Charlestown High School team to several state championships.

It is a book we encourage followers of local high school basketball to read. By the time you finish the book, you will have a renewed insight into how local Boston government, the local judiciary and local educational boards really functioned in the first decade of the 21st century in Boston and some of its suburbs.

But early in the book, when O'Brien was still coaching in Salem, he received what the book describes "a gift."

Public school coaches are limited to recruiting city or town residents as potential candidates for their rosters. And, as good fortune would have it, the Brunson family moved from Syracuse, N.Y. to Salem. Their son Rick was playing basketball as a middle schooler. O'Brien, who scouted those lower age levels for up and coming talent, quickly took notice.

Rick Brunson wound up having a stellar high school career at Salem High, winning a state championship as well being named a McDonald's All-American. He went on to play for coach John Cheney at Temple University and met his future wife Sandra during his years there. He played all four years and later returned to complete his degree in 2005, keeping a promise to his mother.

Back during his senior season he put up good statistics (16.7 points, 5.9 rebounds and 4.1 assists) but they were not good enough to get him drafted. However, he would go forward to play with a total of eight NBA teams over the course of a nine-year journeyman career in the league. During that span he played for the Knicks, Portland, Chicago, Toronto, the Los Angeles Clippers, Seattle, Houston and (very briefly) right here in Boston.

That time in the Hub came very near what would turn out to be coach Rick Pitino's final days in the Hub. Rick Brunson was signed by the C's in early November of 2000 but only remained with the team for three weeks, seeing action in just seven games. While he was here he was close in a geographic way to his North Shore memories. The TD Garden is listed as being only 21 miles from Salem. Madison Square Garden (home of the Knicks) is listed as being 232 miles from Salem.

Pitino would not last that much longer, resigning on January 8, 2001.

But in a way, the high point of Rick Brunson's NBA career was yet to come. The Knicks picked him up and he was with the team when it won that 1999 Eastern Conference title and made it to the NBA Championship where they were defeated by San Antonio.

Like O'Brien, Rick Brunson's true strength may come from his leadership qualities as a coach. He served with several teams but then was available in 2022 when the Knicks and several other teams were making offers to his son who had entered free agency.

What did the Knicks do? They signed his father to a contract that saw him brought on as an assistant coach — a position he retains to this day. His son Jalen signed a four-year, \$104 million contract a month later. He later signed a four-year contract extension worth \$156.5 million that runs through the 2027-2028 season.

So, as the 2026 NBA Finals begin the first week of June, there are still some local items to ponder. We wonder how long the Brunson family remained in Salem after Rick went to play at Villanova? Do any of the people still living in Salem remember him? Has he ever been back? Jalen Brunson grew up in New Jersey and Illinois since his dad moved around a lot during his NBA career.

He won many local, region and national basketball awards during his high school years in Illinois.

He is presently the captain of the Knicks and will be looked to for leadership as the best-of-seven finals begin.

Enjoy this capstone event of the 2025-2026 NBA season with a touch of the North Shore and a bit of Boston thrown in for good measure.

Old habits are hard to break. Bobby Franklin and his weekly *Boxing Ringside* column was anything but a habit. In reality it has been pure joy for the past thirteen plus years. Each week Bobby would punctually e-mail his column, and always with an upbeat comment, inevitably bringing a smile to Joan's face. Just as most columns at the *Post-Gazette* began, rooted in a hobby or passion, along with a little push from the Editor and Publisher Pamela Donnaruma, Bobby began a journalistic journey that captivated his readers and loyal, old time boxing enthusiasts. His knowledge, honesty, and love of the sport shined through each and every column. The most recent e-mail from Bobby, the one accompanying this final weekly column, was bittersweet to say the least. Change is always challenging, especially at a 130-year-old newspaper like the *Post-Gazette*, where tradition and continuity are a given. But all good things come to an end, and for the *Post-Gazette* staff and readers, Bobby represents the Best of the Best. On behalf of Pamela Donnaruma, the staff at the *Post-Gazette* and most importantly its faithful readers and subscribers, we wish Bobby well as he rings the bell for a new start in life. We will Miss You!