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Senator Sal DiDomenico with advocates, and colleagues. (Left to right) Senator Sal DiDomenico, Representative Dave Rogers, Attorney General Andrea Campbell and on the far right is Amy Rosenthal, Executive Director of Health Care for All.

DIDOMENICO CHAMPIONS COVER ALL KIDS

Last week, Senator DiDomenico joined colleagues and advocates to highlight the importance of his Cover All Kids bill during the coalition's advocacy day at the State House. Approximately 40,000 children and young adults under age 21 who meet eligibility criteria for MassHealth currently lack coverage due to their immigration status. DiDomenico's bill, S.740, would remove this barrier and ensure all children in our state can

access health care, regardless of their immigration status.

Senator Sal DiDomenico spoke at the advocacy day to emphasize the critical need for this legislation, "We can't wait two more years to file this bill again because a whole group of children are not going to have access to health care, eyeglasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, or medication. In one of the richest states in the richest country, guaranteeing health coverage for every

single child should be non-negotiable."

The event was hosted by the organizers of the Cover All Kids' coalition, Health Care For All, and the speakers included Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell, the bill's House Sponsor, Rep. Dave Rogers, and countless coalition members who packed the State House to advocate for this urgently needed legislation.

Discussion continues on 425 Medford Street

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

On Tuesday evening, the Flatley Company, the proponents of a proposed development that would bring lab, residential, hotel space, and significant public realm upgrades to the site of the old Domino Sugar Refinery at 425 Medford Street, shared countless updates and community benefits

associated with the project during a public meeting hosted by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA).

As explained by John Roche, CEO of the Flatley Company, the organization owns 425 Medford Street and two adjacent properties in the area, the Schrafft's Center and 465 Medford Street.

Back in November of 2021, the

proponents filed a Planned Development Area (PDA) Master Plan, the subject of Tuesday's meeting, and Roche explained that significant changes have been made.

"We have had literally dozens of meetings in the last 26 months with the community, the BPDA, elected officials, abutters, other

(DISCUSSION Pg. 3)

Repairs to Sullivan Square Underpass are underway

Presentation made at CNC Committee meeting

By Cary Shuman

City Engineer Para M. Jayasinghe of the Boston Public Works Department made a presentation about the Sullivan Square Underpass project at the Jan. 18 Charlestown Neighborhood Council's Basic Committee meeting. Repairs to the underpass began on Jan. 2, 2024 and are expected to be completed by May 31, 2024.

CNC Basic Services Chair Phil-

ip Carr introduced Jayasinghe, who told the committee and the Charlestown residents in the audience that he has 25 years of experience in the Engineering Division and has enjoyed his previous visits to the CNC meetings.

Jayasinghe delivered a thorough 20-minute presentation on all aspects of the Sullivan Square Underpass Project. Using an effective

(CNC Pg. 11)

Councilor Coletta tapped to chair powerful committees

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta was named Chair of the Boston City Council's Government Operations and Environmental Justice, Resiliency, and Parks Committee at the Boston City Council meeting on Wednesday, January 24.

"I'm honored to serve as Chair of the Government Operations and the Environmental Justice, Resil-

(COLETTA Pg. 3)



COURTESY PHOTO

City Councilor Gabriela Coletta.

CNC MEETING DATES

CNC General Meeting, Tuesday, February 6, 2024, The Charlestown Neighborhood Council will hold an in-person, public meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 7-9 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 545 Medford Street, Charlestown. Please bring your questions and neighborhood concerns to the meeting or email us at cnc02129@gmail.com. Check CNC02129.org for calendar and updates.



Celebrate Catholic Schools Week,
Pages 6-7

EDITORIAL

HOW ARE THOSE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS GOING?

All of us, consciously or subconsciously, make some sort of New Year's resolution in the hope of improving our lives and those of our loved ones.

Without a doubt, the most common New Year's resolution is weight loss, which is not surprising, considering that 72 percent of all Americans -- an astounding number -- are either overweight or obese. Excess weight has been linked to just about every disease imaginable ---- cancer, diabetes, and heart disease being among the most prominent. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, excess weight greatly increased the risk of death or serious complications from COVID-19 across all age groups.

We strongly condemn discrimination of any form against those who are overweight. Maintaining a healthy body weight is difficult for just about everyone (almost three-quarters of us, apparently) in our hurry-hurry world where the convenience of fast-food makes it all-too-easy to indulge in an unhealthy diet on a regular basis.

In addition, we are deluged with advertisements from the fast-food industry, who give us those full-screen shots of triple-bacon-cheeseburgers-with-fries-and a soft drink -- a truly deadly combination that hits all of the "bad food" buttons for high calories, saturated fat, salt, and added sugar.

It is not a coincidence that the average American male today weighs 30 pounds more than the average American male did in 1960 and the average American female today weighs the same as that male in 1960 (and no, it's not because we're all taller than our grandparents) when you consider that in 1960, there were 248 locations of a certain fast-food franchise across America, but today there are 13,340 of them. (And that's just one fast-food company!)

However, we do not subscribe to the belief that being overweight is the result of a "disease" that somehow uniquely affects Americans, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender, compared to the rest of the world. (We rank as the most-overweight people among every industrialized nation.) To be sure, there are some individuals who genetically are pre-disposed to having an unhealthy body weight. But wherever American-style food is imported into countries across the globe, health issues that previously did not exist in those countries become epidemic.

There is no question that bad food can be addicting, whether it's those triple-cheeseburgers, infinite varieties of snack foods, etc., etc., etc. in a society where bad food is cheap, available everywhere, and pushed on us by Madison Avenue -- and where we associate overeating as a form of reward.

Our present overweight society increasingly makes the 2008 Disney sci-fi movie "Wall-E," in which the humans of the future are grossly overweight, look prescient -- except that the distant future already is here. The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health recently estimated that, based upon current trends, by 2030 86 percent of Americans will range from overweight to obese.

With the odds stacked against us to make our weight-loss New Year's resolutions stick -- which is why so few of us are successful -- it would appear that our only hope is for those new weight loss drugs to become readily-available and covered by insurance for all Americans. Societal weight-loss would be the best thing we could do to improve our collective health, both physically and emotionally. The drugs may be expensive, but if that's what it will take for Americans to shed our excess pounds, the upfront costs of those drugs will save us billions of dollars in health-care costs down the road.

BWSC OFFERS TIPS TO PREVENT FROZEN PIPES AS SUSTAINED COLD SPELL SETS IN

With the recent cold spell and more nighttime temperatures well below freezing to come this winter season, Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) is reminding people that there are proactive steps they can take to prevent interior pipes from freezing.

- Check for open windows, air vents, and wind drafts near water pipes
- Seal leaks in the basement foundation where cold air may enter; fill holes with insulation as a tiny opening can cause an exposed pipe to freeze
- Allow a slow trickle of water to flow through faucets connected to water pipes that run through unheated spaces (the constant drip minimizes any ice buildup in the pipe, which helps to prevent pipes from bursting)
- Keep sink cabinet doors open during cold spells to allow warm air to circulate around the pipes
- Insulate pipes in unheated spaces like garages, basements, and crawl spaces; inexpensive insulation can be bought at hardware and home supply stores
- Locate the water shut off valve and know how to shut off water; if a pipe bursts, shutting off the water promptly can help minimize the damage (shut off valve is usually located by the meter)
- If your pipes freeze, use a hair dryer to thaw the lines safely; thawing will not be fast, but it will be safe: Never use an open flame to thaw pipes

NEWS BRIEFS

If there is no water coming through any of your taps, there may be a problem in your street or yard. If so, call BWSC's 24-hour Emergency Assistance line at 617-989-7900.

ATTENTION: VENDED MEALS COMPANIES

Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston is soliciting invitations for bid for vended meals to their Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) program site(s). The Vendor would provide meal services according to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations and guidelines as well as Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Food and Nutrition Programs policies and guidelines.

Vendors and/or their representatives may submit bids to:

Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston
Attn: Gabrielle Witham
200 High St. Fl. 3
Boston, MA 02141

A bid packet will be available by email at gwitham@bgcb.org to all potential bidders.

Potential bidders should email questions to Gabrielle Witham at gwitham@bgcb.org by February 2, 2024. The institution will email its response to these questions by February 9, 2024. All questions will be answered in writing only and sent to everyone by February 9, 2024.


All bids must be submitted no later than 5:00pm on February 16, 2024.

All bids are subject to review by the Massachusetts Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Food and Nutrition Programs, 75 Pleasant Street Malden, MA 02148.

The public bid opening will be at 11:00am on February 20, 2024 at 200 High St. Fl. 3, 02110. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. About Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston Boys & Girls Club of Boston holds a prominent position as the leading and most impactful youth organization in Greater Boston. It serves to catalyze far-reaching opportunities and create more equitable futures for 6 to 18-year-olds across eight clubs and YouthConnect in Boston and Chelsea. Since 1893, BGCB has focused on making the city thrive and has played an essential role for young people eager to explore their passions, find their purpose, and prepare for a life of success and impact. In partnership with the public sector, private enterprise, related non-profits, donors and volunteers, BGCB is aligned behind investing in the region's urban talent pipeline and making a generational impact that expands beyond the walls of its buildings and deep into the communities it serves. Helping urban youth to navigate a fast-paced global climate steeped in change, the organization is recognized for fueling the future of the city and the Commonwealth through its innovative "readiness" programs centered on three outcome areas: Academic Success, Wellness and Workforce Readiness. It is an affiliate of the Atlanta-based Boys & Girls Clubs of America, with over 5,000 Clubs nationwide serving over 3.6 million young people.

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DISCUSSION (from pg. 1)

relevant stakeholders, and I tell you, we have made many significant, responsive changes,” said Roche.

As the meeting progressed, Jamie von Klemperer, President and Design Principal at KPF, the project’s lead architect, walked through changes to the proposal from previous iterations in 2022.

One significant change is that the parking, initially planned to be at surface level, has been moved underground. Further, two buildings combined in previous designs have been split with “an interior gallery walkway,” also called a paseo.

Additionally, updates have been made to the dimensions of different aspects of the project. Specifically, the hotel component has been narrowed and dropped in height from 198 feet to 160 feet, and the residential component’s height decreased from 228 feet to 140 feet.

One of the public ways that will be incorporated into the development, coined “Olmsted Way,” has been widened from 65 feet to 100 feet and “even at the mouths of the north and south 145 feet,” per von Klemperer.

Finally, von Klemperer also pointed out other aspects of the project when speaking about the current site plan, such as a community path, integrated resiliency, and multi-use along the waterfront.

COLETTA (from pg. 1)

incy, and Parks Committee,” said Coletta. “This is a unique opportunity to utilize my newfound leverage to advance policies that ensure a vibrant and equitable Boston for all residents. I have a deep respect for the City Council as a legislative body and its ability to produce better policy outcomes for my district and the city. I look forward to working collaboratively with my colleagues and the administration for a productive legislative term.”

The Government Operations Committee oversees all proposed ordinances and special laws, examines ordinances for validity, and reviews the efficiency and effectiveness of City programs. As Chair, Coletta will act as the lead negotiator and last check of accountability in the Council for new legislation before it is sent to

In addition to sharing updates about the proposal, the project team also shared many community benefits that would come with the development.

These community benefits comprised six categories: open space, waterfront access, resiliency, community programming, architectural character, and economics.

As for the open space category, community benefits include around 13 acres of “pedestrianized and programmed” public open space, about five acres of waterfront park, “seamless connectivity” to the waterfront and four public ways into the site, a community path, and much more.

In speaking about the public open space, von Klemperer said, “There’s a real specific attention and care given to smaller elements that are very important.” Specifically, he spoke about features such as a kayak launch, a fitness area, and much more.

Sanjukta Sen of Field Operations, the project’s landscape architect, went through a very detailed outline of the open space amenities, featuring renderings that can be viewed in the PowerPoint presentation and the meeting recording on the project’s webpage on the BPDA website.

Additionally, Sen spoke in depth about the waterfront access benefits, which include several ways to access the shoreline through activities like fishing and kayaking,

opportunities for enhanced ecology at the shoreline, and bringing back recreational activities at the shoreline.

Resiliency benefits were also detailed during the presentation. For example, the project is designed to respond to 2070 coastal flood risk and contains strategies to protect Charlestown beyond the property.

Regarding the community programming benefits, there are plans not only for a minimum of 10,000 square feet of community retail at “affordable rates” but also for 6,500 square feet at the site designated for community center space.

Finally, von Klemperer detailed benefits in terms of the architecture, which is slated to be inspired by the historic industrial character in the neighborhood, and the economic benefits, which include thousands of jobs created, 20% of the units at the site being affordable, and more.

“We imagine that without such a forward-looking development that really focuses on the betterment of Boston, we could be left with what we have today, which is not terrible, but it could be improved,” said von Klemperer.

“It’ll be a more usable, positive environment for everybody than the existing condition,” he added.

Following the detailed presentation, it was time for those in attendance to ask questions and provide comments. In all, the sen-

timent from those in attendance seemed to be mixed, with some folks complimenting the project and others voicing concerns with certain aspects.

A significant concern for multiple attendees was the height of the proposed buildings. Specifically, the height of the buildings in the site plan was noted to range from 120 feet at the lowest building to 160 feet at the tallest building, with others in between.

“They [the buildings] do stick out when you look at this view compared to a lot of the existing homes in Charlestown,” said an attendee.

Another attendee commented on the heights of the proposed buildings, saying, in part, “That’s just too much massing for the area. It’s too high; it’s going to have an adverse effect on people who are trying to enjoy Doherty Playground, and I know many residents, not just abutters, feel that way.”

Jennifer Schultz, a Partner at the law firm Sullivan & Worcester, commented on the height concerns, in part saying, “We’re doing our very best to strike the right balance; we are significantly lower than some of the other proj-

ects that have been approved in Charlestown.”

She also pointed out that the proposed buildings are shorter than the tallest point of the Schrafft’s building.

As the question and answer portion of the meeting progressed several other topics were touched on, such as accessibility, transportation, and much more.

Concerning the next steps, Sarah Peck of the BPDA explained that there has been consideration of bringing the project to the BPDA Board meeting in February for a scheduling vote.

“This vote would not be an approval of the project but would allow us to publish notice of a public hearing for the project, which could happen during the BPDA Board meeting at the earliest in March,” said Peck.

To view the recording of Tuesday’s meeting and the PowerPoint presentation, which goes into greater detail about the project, you can visit the project webpage at <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/425-medford-master-plan-pda> and to submit comments about the project email Sarah.Peck@boston.gov.

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 contact Thara Fuller,
 Executive Director
tfuller@kennedycenter.org
617-241-8866

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Biden-Harris Administration announces \$2.5 million grant for more electric-vehicle charging network

The Biden-Harris Administration last week announced a \$2.5 million grant to the Town of Deerfield, Massachusetts to fund two publicly accessible EV charging sites. The award is one of 47 projects in 22 states and Puerto Rico selected to receive a total of \$623 million in funding to help build out an electric vehicle (EV) charging network under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program. This means EV drivers in Massachusetts and across the country can charge their electric vehicles where they live, work, and shop.

The grants are a critical part of the Biden Administration's goal of

building out a convenient, affordable, reliable and made-in-America national network of EV chargers, including at least 500,000 publicly available chargers by 2030 ensuring that EV's are made in America with American workers.

Under President Biden's leadership, EV sales have more than quadrupled, the number of publicly available charging ports has grown by nearly 70 percent, and more than 4 million EV's are now on the road. Spurred by the President's historic investments, private companies have announced more than \$155 billion in the EV and battery supply chain under the Biden-Harris Administration. EV's are critical to our rapid and

equitable transition to clean transportation systems, producing zero tailpipe emissions, reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions – major contributors to climate change and key contributors to respiratory ailments.

"America led the arrival of the automotive era, and now we have a chance to lead the world in the EV revolution—securing jobs, savings, and benefits for Americans in the process," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "This funding will help ensure that EV chargers are accessible, reliable, and convenient for American drivers, while creating jobs in charger manufacturing, installation, and maintenance for American workers."

The grants being announced today are made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's \$2.5 billion Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program, a competitive funding program, that includes construction of approximately 7,500 EV charging ports. The CFI program complements the \$5 billion National Electric Vehicle (NEVI) Formula Program to build the "backbone" of high-speed EV chargers along our nation's highways. Thanks to the NEVI program, new charging stations in Ohio and New York have opened, and states like Pennsylvania and Maine have broken ground.

"Every community across the nation deserves access to convenient and reliable clean transportation," said U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer M. Granholm. "The Biden-Harris Administration

is bringing an accessible, made-in-America charging network into thousands of communities while cutting the carbon pollution that is driving the climate crisis."

In Massachusetts, the \$2.5 million grant will be used to fund two public access EV charging sites at the Leary Public Parking Lot and Town Hall Public Parking Lot. The sites are centrally located to the surrounding rural towns and will serve several disadvantaged communities.

"From my time working at the local level, I know that finding electric vehicle charging in a community is different from finding charging along highways," said U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg. "USDOT is proud to make an investment that will provide Americans with convenient, straightforward charging options in their communities."

"The Federal Highway Administration is pleased to announce this grant in Massachusetts that will bring EV charging to people and communities all across the nation," said Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt. "These investments through the CFI Program will grow our national EV charging network, support President Biden's goals of achieving net-zero emissions for the nation by 2050 and promote opportunity for all Americans to enjoy the benefits of EV charging."

As part of today's announcements, the Federal Highway Administration is awarding \$311 million in funding to 36 "community" projects, including two Indian Tribes in Alaska and Arizona. These projects invest in EV charging and hydrogen fueling infrastructure in urban and rural communities, including at convenient and high-use locations like schools, parks, libraries, multi-family housing, and more.

Another \$312 million in funding will go to 11 "corridor" recipients whose projects are located along roadways designated as Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs). These projects will fill gaps in the core national charging and alternative-fueling network.

The CFI Program advances President Biden's Justice40 Initiative, which set a goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. More than 70% of the CFI funding announced today will support project sites in disadvantaged communities.

To provide a consistent charging experience for users that ensures a convenient, affordable, and reliable national charging network, EV chargers constructed with CFI funds must adhere to the same minimum standards established for NEVI-funded chargers. FHWA is working closely with the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation, which provides technical assistance on planning and implementation of a national network of electric vehicle chargers and zero-emission fueling infrastructure.



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A HAPPY MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Several happy people have remarked about the changes in the music from the Carillon at St. Francis ringing throughout Bunker Hill.

In the interest of keeping everyone aware of such beautiful music and with thanks to the technological wizardry of Tim Leahy, we present the current lineup of music:

10 a.m. O Blessed Trinity

11 a.m. Abide in me

Noon Salve Regina

1 p.m. As with Gladness, Men of old

2 p.m. Hail to the Lord's Anointed

3 p.m. Love came down

4 p.m. I heard the voice of Jesus say

4:30 p.m. Flowers of the Forest (bag pipes)

5 p.m. How great Thou Art

5:30 p.m. Fur Elise

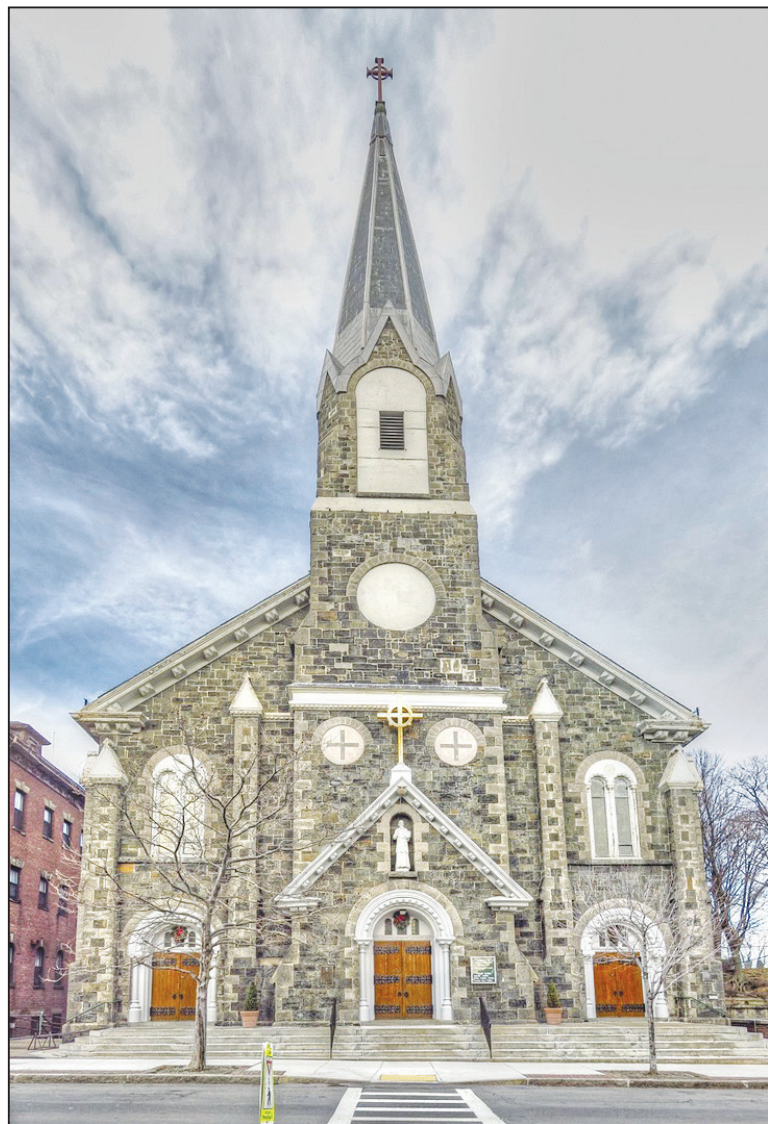
6 p.m. Hail Holy Queen Enthroned Above

6:30 p.m. Goin' Home (bag pipes)

7 p.m. Clair de Lune

7:30 p.m. Amazing Grace

8 p.m. Moonlight Sonata



Saint Francis de Sales on 303 Bunker Hill St.

Protecting individuals with dementia from wandering during the winter

To help families protect their loved ones with dementia from the potential dangers of wandering in cold winter areas, where frigid temperatures, snow, and ice create additional safety risks, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) is providing four tips dementia family caregivers can use to reduce the chances of wandering and be prepared to quickly respond to an emergency.

Wandering is a common and potentially dangerous behavior in individuals with dementia. Once the individual shows signs of wandering, they are at high-risk of wandering away or becoming lost. They can become disoriented, unable to remember how to get back home, or know how, or who, to call for help. They could leave the home without dressing appropriately.

"Wandering or getting lost can occur at any stage of Alzheimer's disease. So there are serious risk factors that dementia family caregivers need to be mindful of, especially now in cold, windier weather areas," said Jennifer Reeder, LCSW, AFA's Director of Educational and Social Services. "The disease can cause disorientation and confusion, which can lead to the person getting when they may be in search of something or someone or attempting to escape excessive stimuli. Taking steps to address the reasons why someone may leave their environment, while also having an emergency plan ready, are two major ways family caregivers can protect their loved one's wellbeing during the winter and throughout the year."

AFA offers these four tips to help families protect their loved ones with dementia:

Understand the causes of wandering. Walking outdoors can bring a feeling of purposefulness

and pleasure to someone living with dementia, especially if they have lived an active lifestyle and enjoyed the outdoors before the onset of dementia. Identify consistent and sustainable ways to support these experiences in a safe environment, such as creating walking paths around the home with visual cue; engaging the person in simple tasks; and providing stimulating and enjoyable activities (i.e., exercise, music, crafts).

Wandering can also be a response to excessive stimuli, triggered by the need to get away from noises and people, or an expression of an unmet need (i.e., hunger, thirst, a need to use the bathroom). Ensuring basic needs are met can reduce the chances of wandering.

Safeguard the home. Facilitate safe movement by avoiding clutter and eliminating tripping hazards. Be mindful of how objects like car keys, jackets, and purses might motivate the person to leave suddenly. Install electronic chimes or doorbells on doors so someone is alerted if the individual tries to exit. Consider utilizing a smart doorbell with an app that can notify you when someone is entering or exiting the home.

Be aware of your loved one's patterns. Know what times of the day may be more activating than others and provide activities during those periods. Encourage

healthy sleep habits to reduce the chances the person might leave in the middle of the night. If your loved one does wander, keep a record of their patterns (frequency, duration, time of day, etc.) to help guide you in the future.

Develop a safety plan. Keep a list of places the person may go (i.e., previous home or place of employment, favorite spots around town), a recent close-up photo, and medical information readily accessible to give to first responders if needed. Maintain a list of people to contact if the person goes missing and ask neighbors to call you if they see the person out alone. See if your community has a safety program for families affected by dementia, such as Project Lifesaver. These programs allow you to voluntarily enroll your loved one to receive locating technology. First responders can then activate the technology if the person goes missing. When possible, encourage and incorporate input from the person when developing the plan.

AFA's Helpline, staffed entirely by licensed social workers who are specifically trained in dementia care, can provide additional information about wandering prevention tips. The Helpline is available seven days a week by phone (866-232-8484), text message (646-586-5283), and web chat (www.alzfdn.org).

Harvest on Vine

Emergency Food Pantry

Monday, January 29 - 3 p.m. - Set-up

Tuesday, January 30 - 2 p.m. - Distribution

Volunteer to help at the Food Pantry

Contact Director, Tom MacDonald at 617-990-7314

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Curated by Sioux Gerow.

Exhibition Dates: March 22 - April 14, 2024

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Celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2024
January 28 - February 3
#CSW24

The Catholic Schools Week (CSW) 2023 – 2026 theme is “Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community.” Catholic schools have an irreplaceable role in the Church’s evangelizing mission. Building on the central goal of Catholic schools to form saints, Catholic schools teach and embrace the whole person, body, mind and spirit. The fact that all members of a Catholic school community share the Christian vision of faith that Christ is the foundation of Catholic education is what unites the school as a faith-filled community. While faith is the binding element in Catholic schools, the Church reiterates that parents are the first teachers of their children. Holding this tenet, Catholic school communities expand beyond the walls of school buildings to envelop the family as an integral part of the school community. Together teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents fuel the light of faith by integrating culture with faith and faith with living.

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We are proud of our partnership with the Lynch Foundation Early Childhood Initiative, an extraordinary project founded by

Carolyn and Peter Lynch, for our 3 and 4 year olds. The project supports an environment that nurtures the social and emotional well-being of students in order for robust learning to take place before the start of kindergarten.

St. John School offers student drop off starting at 7:30 a.m., after school care until 6 p.m., and an extensive summer adventure camp. (School hours are 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.) Boston residents may be eligible for free bus transpor-

tation.

Please join us on a Welcome Wednesday from 9-10 a.m. or reach out to Amy Fitzgerald at afitzgerald@sjsne.com or 617-227-3143.

Good Shepherd School has been serving Charlestown students well since 2009

Good Shepherd School, a non-profit Catholic pre-school in Charlestown, has been educating

children from two to five years old since its opening in 2009.

Good Shepherd School Director Jessica Briley said the school currently has a total enrollment of 53 students.

The pre-school has “four quite big and big bright classrooms,” according to Briley, who became the director in 2016. Two teachers work with students of a similar age in each classroom.

“The school day starts at 8 a.m. and the main program ends at noon, but a lot of families choose to stay for the full day,” noted Briley.

Students receive a well-rounded education that includes a weekly lesson in religion, a program led by Curriculum Director Abigail Cherry. The students also assemble twice a month in the chapel, expanding on the lessons taught in the classroom.

The curriculum allows students to focus on social-emotional learning, how to participate in a group setting, how to be a good friend, along with the writing, reading, and math skills.

Students also get to participate in athletic-oriented activities, Mini Movers dance, and an NEMPAC (North End) music class.

Good Shepherd has an excellent teacher-to-studio ratio and a staff of 15, including Briley, who is a graduate of Fitchburg State University and holds a master’s degree in Special Education from American International College.

Briley is proud of the school’s outstanding reputation and is optimistic about the future.

“The school is doing really well,” said Briley. “We think a pre-school program is great because it gets students ready for school, so they go into K-1 and kindergarten really prepared.”




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Catholic Schools
United in Faith and Community

Celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2024

January 28 - February 3
#CSW24

The Catholic Schools Week (CSW) 2023 – 2026 theme is “Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community.” Catholic schools have an irreplaceable role in the Church’s evangelizing mission. Building on the central goal of Catholic schools to form saints, Catholic schools teach and embrace the whole person, body, mind and spirit. The fact that all members of a Catholic school community share the Christian vision of faith that Christ is the foundation of Catholic education is what unites the school as a faith-filled community. While faith is the binding element in Catholic schools, the Church reiterates that parents are the first teachers of their children. Holding this tenet, Catholic school communities expand beyond the walls of school buildings to envelop the family as an integral part of the school community. Together teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents fuel the light of faith by integrating culture with faith and faith with living.

East Boston Central Catholic School celebrates Catholic Schools Week

By Cary Shuman

East Boston Central Catholic School will celebrate 50 years of excellence in Catholic education at its annual gala April 12 at Spinnelli’s, Lynnfield.

In advance of that milestone event, EBCCS will celebrate Schools Week beginning Jan. 28 with an exciting slate of activities for students and their families.

There is certainly a lot to celebrate.

EBCCS Principal Robert Casaletto reports that there is an enrollment of 189 students for the current school year, which is an increase of over 20-percent from the previous year.

Casaletto said one of the reasons for the surge in popularity was the school’s high retention

rate, proudly stating, “Our students and their parents who were here last year all loved it, so they all came back this year. We had a 95 percent retention rate.”

Another key to the success in attracting students to the school was its considerable outreach to different parishes in the area beyond East Boston. Casaletto credits new School Chaplain, the Rev. Dan Zinger, for helping to bring in more Catholic families.”

The hiring of an assistant principal, Gabriela Twaalfhoven, has also been instrumental in building enrollment. Twaalfhoven worked directly with new families on enrollment last summer.

Casaletto also noted the Catholic Schools Foundation providing of financial support to families in

need through its Building Minds Scholarship Fund.

Casaletto is in his seventh year

as principal and 30th year as a member of the EBCCS faculty. His leadership of the school during the

COVID-19 pandemic was extraordinary and in actuality, resulted in (EBCCS Pg. 8)



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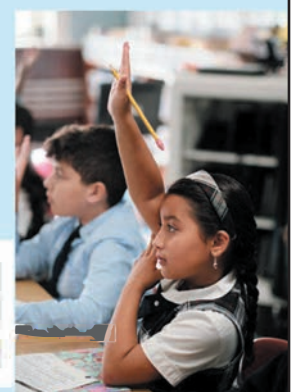
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ebccs.org



Students enjoying storytime in class at EBCCS.



EBCCS *(from pg. 7)*

an increase in enrollment when the school was allowed to reopen.

“The people affected by COVID-19 was high in East Boston, so the Health Department wouldn’t let us open,” said Casaletto. “We opened our pre-K only for a virtual learning program that our parents were just thrilled with, and because we did such a good job surviving the pandemic, we grew our enrollment coming out of it and it’s been going up since.”

Catholic Schools Week Activities Schedule

Special student activities have been planned throughout Catholic Schools’ Week to give parents an opportunity to “join” your child’s classroom.

EBCCS Parents are invited to

the following activities. Each activity will take place in your child’s classroom unless a different location is noted.

Sunday, January 28

Mass will be celebrated at St. Michael’s Parish - St. John’s Church in Winthrop at 10:00 a.m. to kick-off CSW. Our choir will sing and all families are encouraged to join.

Monday, January 29

- Kindergarten: Winter Art Project 8:45-9:30
- Cherubs, Kindergarten, 3, 4, & 5: Young Authors’ Presentation Auditorium (see Library Schedule)

Tuesday, January 30

- Grade 7: “Kahoots” Game

8:30-9:10

- Angels, 1, 2, 6, 7, & 8: Young Authors’ Auditorium (see Library Schedule)

Wednesday, Jan. 31

- Angels: Circle Time 8:30-9:00
- Cherubs: Morning Routine & Heggerty Phonemic Awareness 8:30-9:15
- Grade 3: Reader’s Theater Presentation 1:00-1:30
- Grade 1: Chicken Soup w/ Rice Activity 1:40-2:10.

Thursday, February 1

- Grade 6: Sarcophagus Design 8:30-9:10
- Grade 5: Math & Social Studies Super Bowl 9:30-10:30
- Middle School: Ice Skating Field Trip 1:00-4:00



Students engaging in group studying sessions.

- Grade 4: City of Snowdom Presentations 1:30-2:10

Friday, February 2

- Student Appreciation Casual Dress Day
- Grade 2: Groundhog Day Activities 9:00-9:30

- Grade 7 & 8: Science Fair 1:00-2:15 Auditorium

We ask all students and faculty to dress in something RED to honor all our troops who have deployed or will deploy for their active duty assignments.

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Emerald Necklace Conservancy to start a new tree-pruning cycle across entire park system

This month, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy is working with Bartlett Tree Experts to care for over 500 trees throughout Olmsted Park, beginning the second seven-year tree pruning cycle across the entire Emerald Necklace park system. The work will take place through March, while trees are dormant in the winter, and will improve their structure and overall health while also removing dead branches to keep park users safe. Images are attached.

The Emerald Necklace, designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, is one of only a few remaining intact linear parks in the U.S., and boasts more than 30,000 mature trees in its seven miles and 1,100 acres. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy's tree care program, the Olmsted Tree Society, was founded in 2013 to preserve and maintain the Necklace's tree canopy. Together with public partners Boston Parks and Recreation,



The Bartlett Tree Experts employees will be out to care for the trees throughout the park system.

Brookline Parks and Open Space and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Society preserves and maintains trees with pruning, soil enhancement, watering and more

year-round.

"This seven-year pruning cycle is a way to systematically invest back into the trees that provide so much for our communities all along the Emerald Necklace," shared Jack Schleifer, Field Operations Manager at the Emerald Necklace Conservancy. "Neighborhoods around the Emerald Necklace, such as Roxbury, Mattapan and Dorchester, have some of the poorest air quality and highest childhood asthma rates in the area, and these trees clean our air while also mitigating stormwater, sequestering carbon and reducing urban heat. There are ways that we can help the trees while they continue their unsung work, and this project is designed to do just that!"

"Healthy, beautiful trees are a vital component of thriving communities," said Jack Ingram, Division Manager of Bartlett Tree Experts' Central New England

Division. "Trees breathe life into our communities to keep the environment healthy and this philosophy has guided Bartlett Tree Experts for 117 years. Proper species-specific pruning is important to promote individual tree health and growth while protecting the trees from insect pests, disease and long-term damage. I applaud the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and its public partners for their visionary stewardship of the Emerald Necklace system's tree canopy. Amidst Boston's evolving landscape, their dedication to preserving their historic green spaces and enhancing the resilience of the urban forest significantly benefits our entire community. It's a privilege to support their impactful work within our urban environment.

Designated and cherished as a Historic Landmark with the City of Boston, the Emerald Necklace weaves in and out of the city streetscapes to connect more than 15 neighborhoods through shared space and urban nature. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy works with the public agencies to assess, inventory and prune all major trees throughout the 1,100-acre park network. All this work is conducted by certified arborists, and the data is collected in the Conservancy's digital records (an inventory which currently comprises over 10,000 trees) to conduct long-term assessments and follow up on projects.

Pruning trees is an important effort in keeping trees healthy and encouraging their longevity. The process helps them to develop

stronger structure and more aesthetic forms while allowing clearances to be maintained for roads, paths and park accessibility. Other benefits of pruning include reducing the occurrence of leaf disease by allowing better airflow through the canopy, preparing trees for winter storms and changing climate conditions and allowing trees to coexist more easily with understory plants.

This tree pruning project at Olmsted Park is made possible by the generous support of Liberty Mutual Insurance. To find out ways to support the Olmsted Tree Society, please visit: www.emeraldnecklace.org/olmsted-tree-society

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy is a non-profit organization founded in 1997 to steward and champion the Emerald Necklace, Boston's largest park system. The Conservancy protects, restores, helps maintain and promotes the Emerald Necklace's seven distinct parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, and comprises 1,100 acres of meadows, woodlands and paths. In collaboration with its public partners, the Conservancy provides maintenance of the parks and capital restoration projects, free cultural events, visitor services and environmental education. The parks serve as a respite from the city, a valuable commuting connector and a community convener for more than one million residents and tourists each year, and have taken on a special significance over the past year as a safe and socially distanced destination for local residents and regional visitors. www.emeraldnecklace.org

National Grid reminds customers to take advantage of available energy programs

As winter weather and colder temperatures persist, National Grid is reminding Massachusetts customers to take advantage of energy programs that can help them manage their energy bills.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), commonly referred to as Fuel Assistance, provides eligible households with help in paying a portion of winter heating bills. Enrollment for LIHEAP is free and open through April 30, 2024, and covers energy usage from November 1, 2023, to April 30, 2024.

LIHEAP is open to both homeowners and renters, including households whose cost of heat is included in rent, and eligibility is based on household size and the gross annual income of every household member 18 or older. Household income cannot exceed 60% of estimated state median income. The program provides assistance through a fixed benefit amount for the cost of the primary source of heat, which includes, but is not limited to: electricity, oil, natural gas, propane, kerosene, wood and coal.

"National Grid recognizes that energy bills can be a real challenge for many customers – especially in these colder winter months," said Helen Burt, Chief Customer Officer at National Grid. "The LIHEAP program can provide

much needed assistance for customers who are struggling to keep up with their energy costs. We also encourage customers to look at options in our Customer Savings Initiative, to consider a payment program, or see if they are eligible for rate discounts."

To apply for LIHEAP:

- Apply online at <https://www.toapply.org/MassLIHEAP>
- Visit and apply at an agency in your area.

For more information concerning LIHEAP:

- Visit <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap>.

- Customers may also call the Cold Relief Heatline at (800) 632-8175.

National Grid recognizes winter bills can pose challenges for customers. National Grid's Customer Savings Initiative is designed to help customers reduce their energy use and lower energy costs, manage their energy bills and payments, and help them secure available energy assistance.

Along with LIHEAP, National Grid has several programs dedicated to helping income-qualified families and customers needing special assistance meet their energy needs. Programs include but are not limited to:

- Discount Rates where qualifying income-eligible customers

may receive a discounted rate on electric and gas service, as well as no-cost energy efficiency upgrades.

- The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund is available to any Massachusetts residents who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is not eligible for state or federal energy assistance.

Several bill help options and payment plans are available for customers in need of assistance. Customers may enroll in programs such as the Budget Billing Plan, which spreads monthly payments out more evenly throughout the year to offset periods of high energy usage.

Customers can visit ngrid.com/heretohelp to learn more.

National Grid (NYSE: NGG) is an electricity, natural gas, and clean energy delivery company serving more than 20 million people through our networks in New York and Massachusetts. National Grid is focused on building a smarter, stronger, cleaner energy future — transforming our networks with more reliable and resilient energy solutions to meet state climate goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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Coastal Storm Team assesses recent storm damage

The Massachusetts Rapid Response Coastal Storm Damage Assessment Team (Storm Team) was activated for the January 10 and 13 storms. The Storm Team is a network of 58 state, federal, and local agency personnel—led by the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)—that covers the Massachusetts coast during and after storms to collect and relay information on storm damage. For the January 10 storm, the team documented widespread coastal erosion and flooding of low-lying areas within all regions, along with road and building damage in Edgartown, Falmouth, Salisbury, and Westport. For January 13, the team also found widespread erosion and flooding, with moderate coastal flooding extending further inland along the South Shore, Boston, and North Shore, along with structural damage.

“Thank you to the Storm Team members who went out in these recent storms to proactively check out the impacts to our coast,” said EEA Secretary Rebecca Tepper. “These reports are invaluable for assessing damage in real-time and for evaluating the long-term

impacts of climate change and sea level rise on our shoreline.”

“CZM has been leading the Storm Team for more than 30 years, working with partners on the ground to quickly and safely determine the impacts from coastal storms,” said CZM Director Lisa Berry Engler. “This information not only helps with emergency response and weather forecasting efforts but also allows us to better understand how to improve coastal resilience and prepare for future storms.”

When a storm approaches, CZM closely follows National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts and activates team members in areas where significant coastal flooding and erosion impacts are expected to document damages as quickly as possible. Working directly with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), the information can be used to inform emergency management decisions at the local, state, and federal levels during the storm. CZM also serves an emergency support function role within the State Emergency Operations Center at MEMA headquarters in the event it is activated in response to a storm involving potential

coastal impacts. Storm Team reports may be used following a storm during the damage assessment process, which can help determine the state’s potential eligibility for federal disaster assistance, and MassDEP uses this information to determine if emergency regulations are needed for storm recovery. Storm Team reports also have important long-term value, allowing NWS to fine-tune forecasting of future storm impacts and improving coastal floodplain management decision-making at the state and local levels.

The Storm Team reports are made through the StormReporter phone app or web tool, which allow members and volunteers to record observations and upload pictures in near-real time during coastal storm events, enabling the rapid delivery, sharing, and archiving of coastal storm damage data. In addition to official Storm Team members, volunteers can enter reports at any time with photos and observations of storm impacts by going to MyCoast.org/ma, signing up for an account, downloading the app, and entering the information. MyCoast.org/ma also has links to already recorded storm observations and other related online tools for contributing coastal data when observations can be made safely.

Specific documented impacts from these storms include:

- January 10 - The CZM Storm Team members assessed sites in 26 communities on the North Shore, South Shore, Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod, Martha’s Vine-



During the recent storms, floodwaters came up to street level from the Harbor. Shown above, Long Wharf roads and sidewalks are submerged.

yard, and Nantucket and submitted more than 180 reports. These reports documented widespread flooding of low-lying coastal roads and beach parking areas, eroded and overwashed beaches and dunes, and overwashed seawalls and other shore protection structures. Pondered flooding was also documented in low-lying developed areas in Barnstable, Dennis, Edgartown, Falmouth, Hull, Marshfield, Nantucket, Newbury, Newburyport, Salisbury, Saugus, Wareham, and Westport. Damage to roads was found in Edgartown and Falmouth and damage to buildings documented in Edgartown, Falmouth, Salisbury, and Westport.

- January 13 - The CZM Storm Team documented widespread beach, dune, and bank erosion, along with flooding of low-lying roads, parking areas, and neighborhoods in 39 communities along the Massachusetts coast, submitting 333 reports—including reports from 30 Storm Team members and 10 volunteers. Moderate coastal flooding was found to extend farther inland along the South Shore, Boston, and North Shore. Damage was also reported to docks and piers on Cape Cod and Nantucket, homes in Salisbury, and a seawall in Salem. In multiple locations, ponded water flow was documented around vehicles and buildings.

Photos of damage can be found on the MyCoast Storm Reporter page.

The Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management is the lead policy and planning agency on coastal and ocean issues within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Through planning, technical and grant assistance, and public information programs, CZM seeks to balance the impacts of human activity with the protection of coastal and marine resources. The agency’s work includes helping coastal communities address the challenges of storms, sea level rise, and other effects of climate change; working with state, regional, and federal partners to balance current and new uses of ocean waters while protecting ocean habitats and promoting sustainable economic development; and partnering with communities and other organizations to protect and restore coastal water quality and habitats.

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The Charlestown Neighborhood Council's Basic Services Committee listened to a Boston Public Works Department presentation about the Sullivan Square Underpass construction project at its Jan. 18 meeting. Pictured at the meeting at the Knights of Columbus are, from left, Boston Police Sgt. Zachary Crossen, Charlestown Community Liaison Sean Breen, CNC Board Member Elaine Donovan, CNC Basic Services Committee Chair Philip Carr III, CNC Chair Tom Cunha, Boston Police Capt. Sean Martin, Boston Police Officer Frank Ciampa, Boston Transportation Department Commissioner Nick Gove, and Boston Public Works Department City Engineer Para M. Jayasinghe.

CNC (from pg. 1)

tive slide presentation in coordination with Project Manager Joseph Fleury and Department Assistant Rachel Pierce, Jayasinghe noted the highlights of the project which include: the repair of the underpass wall and ceilings, the milling, paving, and striping of the roadway limits, the replacement of the median guardrail with a concrete barrier, the repair and cleaning of the drainage system, and replacing the lighting system.

"We have a presentation for you to basically let you know why the underpass is closed," began Jayasinghe, noting that the goal was to not have the underpass project conflict with the Sumner Tunnel repair project that will resume this summer.

"I will tell you why this system needs so much help. The water table is really high. The draining system doesn't work the best way. The roadway needs attention. Water, salt, concrete, and steel – they just don't get along, and we are desperately trying to make sure that the underpass [is repaired]."

Lack of notification draws ire of residents

Following the presentation, Carr opened the floor to ques-

tions for Jayasinghe. The overriding consensus was that the CNC Committee members and Charlestown residents in attendance were grateful to Jayasinghe for the extensive update and pleased that the long-neglected Sullivan Square Underpass would be getting its much-needed repairs.

However, CNC members and residents asked Jayasinghe why the Charlestown neighborhood wasn't notified of the project in advance and there were no public meetings with residents and local business owners.

Cunha expressed his dismay with the lack of notification about the project.

"The problem is they didn't work out any kind of mitigation – we really didn't get any kind of notice about the project other than an electric sign," said Cunha. "Our committee members and residents clearly made that point. We just didn't get any public notice, and we really would have liked to have had a public meeting where people can ask questions about the traffic and other issues."

Jayasinghe said he would take the comments back to his team, and using a baseball analogy, tell his colleagues that "we really

didn't the ball out of the ballpark with this one."

Nonetheless, Cunha is happy that the underpass is finally getting attention from the City of Boston. "This project needs to be done. I don't think anybody in the community is saying that it doesn't need to be done. It's just that we would have liked a little notice that it was going to happen, and we could work out some traffic patterns."

Cunha thanked the Boston Police officers for attending the meeting. Police Capt. Sean Martin told the audience that there will be police details in the area to help motorists and residents navigate the area and provide safe passage during the construction project.

OBITUARIES

Donald James McClair

Former "Townie Kid" and Corporate Communications Retiree

On the afternoon of June 21, 2021, Donald James McClair, age 87, took his final breath. He was at his Ramsey, NJ home, surrounded by those who loved him most, his son, Jay, his daughter, Lauren, and his wife of sixty-two incredible years, Patricia (Pat).

Donnie, as he was affectionately known in his youth, was born on June 13, 1934 in the blue-collar Boston neighborhood of Charlestown, Massachusetts. His father, Jim McClair, was a longshoreman. His mother, Margaret Shea, was a loving homemaker.

The first in his family to attend college, Donnie graduated from Boston University in 1956. Not long after, he was drafted into the US Army and served as a military journalist in France for over two years. Upon returning home, Don, as he was now called, married the love of his life, Pat Faison, in June of 1959. Over the span of many years, Don worked in corporate communications in the oil, automobile, home appliance, and employee benefits industries. During that time, he and Pat lived in Tulsa, Ok., Detroit, MI, Chicago, IL., Dallas, TX., and Ramsey, NJ.

Don was preceded in death by



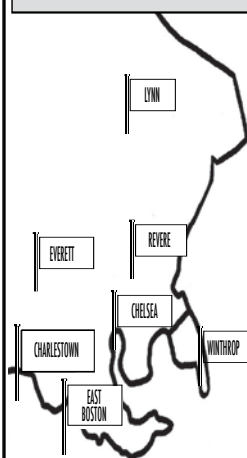
his eldest child, Bryan (brain cancer, 2019). He is survived by his wife, Pat, his daughter, Lauren Rotated, son-in-law, Todd Rotert, son, Jay, daughter-in-law Trish (Castiglione) McClair, eight grandchildren: Kevin, Margaret, Sean, Katie, Ryan, Marybeth, Paul, and Mark) and three great grandchildren: Landon, Gavin, and Natalie.

Time and time again, it was the joy of family, along with strong, enduring friendships that served as Don's compass, which guided him throughout his long, fruitful and fulfilling life.

Kindly consider a donation in memory of the former "townie kid" to: The Charlestown Boys and Girls Club, 15 Green Street, Charlestown, MA 02129.

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