Promoting female graffiti artists

By Tayla Holman

REPORTER CORRESPONDENT
Jessica Pabón is obsessed; She has spent the last 11 years studying and writing about female graffiti artists. Her interest in the topic began with her thesis while she was studying at the University of Arizona, and has since morphed into her dissertation – “The Art of Getting Ovaries: Female Dissertations – ‘The Art of Since Morphed into her.” She has spent the last 11 years studying women’s research centers throughout history – about the contributions they largely have been marginalized. “Women’s contributions went unacknowledged. ‘Women are institutionalized that lack of knowledge was, I said ‘enough.’ ”

Politics of Presence in Graffiti Subculture.

As a 17-year-old freshman, Pabón was required to visit the women’s research center as part of a class assignment. There she learned about the contributions that women have made throughout history – and how often those contributions went unacknowledged. “It was like I had been blinded,” Pabón said in a recent interview. “I don’t remember ever learning much about what women did. Once I learned that they did stuff, and learned how institutionalized that lack of knowledge was, I said ‘enough.’ ”

From there, Pabón, now 23 and a PhD candidate in the Performance Studies Department at New York University, set a personal goal to enhance recognition of the accomplishments made by women in a subculture in which they largely have been marginalized. “Women’s contributions went unacknowledged. ‘Women are institutionalized that lack of knowledge was, I said ‘enough.’ ”

Assignment panel takes up three options for students

By Gintautas Dumeicis

NEWS EDITOR

The city’s school department is putting three plans in front of the student assignment overhaul. The options, all of which would eliminate the three-zone model that buses schoolchildren across the city, include a 10-zone model and two “home-based” plans. Under the 10-zone model, parents would see three to fourteen choices in top of citywide options. Dorchester and Mattapan, neighborhoods that are currently in the East Zone, would be split up between five zones. For example, Lee Academy on Talbot Avenue would share the same zone with schools in Jamaica Plain; the Mattahunt School would share the same zone with schools in Roslindale; and the Chittick School would be in the same zone as Hyde Park schools. Most of Dorchester and some of Mattapan, like the area around the Mildred Avenue School, would be in one zone.

The first “home-based” model creates a list of schools for each student based on the family’s (Continued on page 4)

The House on Hendry Street

Affidavit tells how gang worked

By Adam Gaffen

SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

A brazen gang that had brought drugs and violence to the Bowdoin/Geneva area for more than a decade wasn’t going to let a permanent police post near its headquarters stop its activities: Members kept right on using the three-family house on Hendry Street for selling drugs and storing guns. According to an affidavit filed in federal court, it was only when the city’s Inspectional Services Division boarded up the house for code violations on Aug. 27 that the gang finally moved elsewhere – to Woodward Avenue in Roxbury, where they set up shop with the Woodward Avenue Gang, with which it had long cooperated.

And according to the affidavit, written by Boston Police Detective Martin O’Malley, who specializes in anti-gang work, there was a reason police stationed a cruiser at the end of the dead-end street but didn’t make arrests: Police and federal agents were in the middle of a nearly 18-month investigation that culminated (Continued on page 9)

Three-decker rehab program deemed a success

By Gintautas Dumeicis

NEWS EDITOR

City officials are declaring a program focused on improving three-deckers a success, pointing to figures that show more homeowners than investors are purchasing the iconic houses. The three-decker market is stabilizing, Department of Neighborhood Development Sheila Dillon told the Reporter in noting that 51 percent of the homes had been bought by homeowners last year. Home values and sales prices have also increased, with three-deckers selling at a median price of $375,000 at the end of the 2012, up from a $350,000 price in 2011.

Boston boasts an estimated 9,000 three-deckers, a distinct type of home once popular across the city with lower-class residents, immigrants, and mill workers. The city’s improvement program, also known as the “3D Club,” currently has 280 members, Dillon said. Membership in the club offers entre to classes, hardware stores, and real-estate establishments. The program also provides funds for owners to fix (Continued on page 5)

Inside

A City Hall exhibit offers a gallery salute to the artistry of Allan Rohan Crite. Page 6

Your bank is headed in a new direction. Maybe it’s time you headed for the exits.

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Warren and Menino team up to push gun-control proposals

BY GINTAUTAS DUNCIS

News Editor

With Mayor Thomas Menino by her side, Dorchester Councillor Yancey offered her support last week for three gun control proposals that are likely to be filed in the Legislature next week: an assault weapons ban; the closing of loopholes in background checks on guns sold at gun shows and through private sellers; and a clear statement marking gun trafficking as a federal crime.

The newly elected Warren, in a press conference on Friday with Menino at the city-owned Parkman House, said 6,000 children have been lost to “gun violence” over the last two years, an average of eight children a day. “If eight children a day were dying from a mysterious virus, as a country we would bring all of our resources to bear to stop that,” she said. “We would say we need to determine found out everything we can about the causes of that virus and to do everything we can to remove its impact and to eliminate it. We are losing our children to a deadly scourge of gun violence.”

The mayor and the senator

The Cambridge Democrat, who was born and raised six blocks from a family that used guns and learned to shoot early, said “we don’t need military grade assault weapons and no one needs Remington-style high capacity magazines.”

Lawmakers at the state and federal levels have sought to tighten gun control measures after the December massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut where a gunman killed 26 people, including 20 children.

A longtime gun control advocate, Menino co-chairs the Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition with New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and has repeatedly called on President Obama to deploy political capital and at the state and federal levels to reform the background check system, to put a comprehensive quality school plan into action, to develop a long-term school safety plan, to increase dual language and inclusion options for our English language learners, and students with disabilities,” according to a statement from Menino.

On his first day as Boston’s mayor, Menino co-opted the “railroad suburb” talk, book launch

Missing 12-year-old found in Everett Square

A missing 12-year-old Dorchester boy triggered a citywide search on Tuesday when he was located that night after he called his mother from the KFC in Edward Everett Square. Leland Corning, a 12-year-old with Asperger’s who had been missing since 8:30 a.m. on Glenway Street, was taken home after an evaluation by EMTs.

A mysterious virus, as a country we would bring all of our resources to bear to stop that. We would say we need to determine found out everything we can about the causes of that virus and to do everything we can to remove its impact and to eliminate it. We are losing our children to a deadly scourge of gun violence.”

The mayor raised $3,550 in the first half of January, bringing his war chest to $650,145.24, according to the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance.

When asked how he will make the decision to make another run, Menino said, “I just want to make sure that I just have the drive to do it. I mean, you know, I’ve been through a lot in the last eight weeks and I just want to be out there. I’m dying to get back out in the streets.”

In the taped interview, which aired on Sunday, Keller asked the mayor if he needs to be mobile and keep keep in “maximum schedule” in order to be an effective mayor. “I don’t have to be that,” he said. “I know – my schedule is backwards really,” Menino said. “And everybody recognizes that. Do I have to do that still? You know, I would do it if I had to. I made a commitment to the people of Boston that I’d be out there working hard and maintaining my schedule really.”

“EDITOR’S NOTE: Updated from my updates to Boston’s political scene at The Lit Drop, located at dotnews.com/litdrop. Material from State House News Service was used in this report. Email us at newsseditor@dotnews.com and follow on Twitter at LitDrop and @gintautasd.

The Boston Fire Department reports firefighters responded to 50 Freeport St. on Monday for what turned out to be a three-alarm fire at the Logan Furniture Store and Warehouse. There were no injuries and damage was still under investigation.

About two hours later, 12 people were forced out of 16 Estella St. in Mattapan when a two-alarm fire broke out around 2 a.m. The Red Cross was called in to help residents find new loadings for the night. One firefighter suffered burns, the department says, adding that the fire caused an estimated $500,000 in damage and that its cause also remains under investigation.

On the Record

Early morning fires raze Mattapan three-decker.

Freeport street furniture warehouse...
A new sheriff checks in; Tompkins ‘right man at right time,’ says Patrick of Cabral’s successor

By Gintautas Dumcius
News Editor
Andrea Cabral’s top spokesman has taken over as the sheriff of Suffolk County. With Cabral signing on as Gov. Deval Patrick’s public safety and homeland security secretary, she and Steven Tompkins, chief of external relations at the Suffolk County sheriff’s office, were sworn into their offices at the State House on Tuesday by Gov. Deval Patrick, who called Tompkins the “right man at the right time.”

Tompkins said he grew up in Harlem in a family that was on public assistance. “I went through that school of hard knocks, and here I am standing with the governor being sworn as sheriff,” he said.

After Patrick administered the oath of office, Tompkins smiled broadly and bumped fists with his eldest son. He previously held communications jobs at Dimock Community Health Center, AT&T, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Suffolk sheriff, one of fourteen in Massachusetts, oversees the largest sheriff’s department in the state, which includes the County Jail, the County House of Correction, and the Civil Process Division, according to the office’s website.

Tompkins took a leave of absence from Cabral’s office in order to work on US Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s 2012 campaign as a senior adviser. He is also listed as the chair of Michelle Wu’s bid for a City Council At-Large seat. Wu attended the swearing-in, as did Roger Lau, a Warren campaign aide who was appointed her state director.

Tompkins will fill out the rest of Cabral’s term, with an election slated for 2014, when it is expected he will run for the office.

Patrick called Tompkins a “dedicated public servant. At the press conference that followed the swearing-in, the governor acknowledged the slot is a “political job.” He declined to delve into who else was considered and the candidates’ law enforcement background. “I think we have the right guy,” Patrick said.

Cabral was appointed in December, and Patrick administration officials were tightlipped about potential successors in the weeks between her appointment and her swearing-in.

In its announcement of Tompkins’s appointment, the administration included quotes from supporters, including Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis, Boston NAACP President Michael Curry, UMass Boston Chancellor Keith Motley, and District 6 Councillor Matt O’Malley. “I think that the transition will be seamless and I am looking forward to working with Sheriff Tompkins,” Davis said.

According to the Suffolk County sheriff’s website, Tompkins’s department created two programs, including an inmate re-entry program focused on vocation skills and “The Choice Program,” in which corrections officers volunteer to work with middle and high school students.

A graduate of Boston College, like Cabral, and holder of a master’s degree from UMass Boston, the new sheriff lives in Hyde Park with his wife and two children. He also serves on the board of trustees for Roxbury Community College.

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Assignment panel to get 3 options for school placements

(Continued from page 1) home address, according to the school department, and each student will have at least six choices. That will also include schools within a mile of the student’s home, along with city-wide options.

The second “home-based” model would similarly create a list of schools, providing each student with nine choices.

The 27-member education advisory committee, appointed by Mayor Thomas Menino last year, was expected to discuss the models last night at Suffolk University. A vote is likely to occur in early February, with Superintendent Carol Johnson taking the final plan to the seven-member School Committee.

Parents and others will get a chance to weigh in at a community meeting scheduled for Monday, Feb. 4, at 6 p.m. at Orchard Gardens K-8 School. The Albany Street school has recently served as a set piece for elected officials, including Gov. Deval Patrick, who sought to highlight gains the school has made in closing the achievement gap among its students.

The 57,000-student system has experienced a wave of change over the last four years, as school officials switched to a funding formula centered on students, closed nine schools they called low-performing and increased the number of K-8 schools to 25 from 14.

But the three zone setup has remained in place for over 20 years, and is a frequent source of frustration for parents. Under the new plans, two of which eliminate zones entirely, “sibling preference” will stay intact, according to the school department, and “younger siblings of current students will be able to select the school their older sibling already attends.” The changes that are approved will go into effect for students in the 2014-2015 school year, according to a department note blasted out to parents on Tuesday afternoon.

In all three proposals, Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School and UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester, formerly the Marshall School, and the Hernandez School in Roxbury, will become city-wide schools. High schools would remain city-wide, while middle schools will become “feeders” from elementary schools.

The process of overhauling the student assignment plan kicked off after Menino’s 2012 state of the city address, in which Menino said students should go to schools closer to home in order to build stronger community ties. The advisory committee, chaired by Boston University’s Dean Hardin Coleman and former School Committee member Helen Dajer, has met frequently but has made slow progress as school department officials have provided reams of data, academics have provided complex algorithms for assigning students, and elected officials and parents have offered their own designs. More information is available at the school department’s website: bostonschoolchoice.org.
Three-decker rehab program deemed a success by the city

(Continued from page 1)

up their properties or to buy a home. According to a DND map laying out its assis-
tance to homebuyers and owners, ten rehabilita-
tions had been completed in Dorchester as of this month, with more than 20 others under way. In Mattapan, six rehabas had been completed and ten more were being worked on. "In the last year we assisted 80 homeowners and city has put in a little over $1 million in this effort," Dillon said.

Gail Hoyte, who owns a Fairmount Street three-decker with her husband Frankie, is one of those homeowners. Her son stumbled onto the program online, and Hoyte, who owns the three-decker for sixteen years, decided to apply. "It was beginning to get a little run down," said the Accordianl native, who ended up getting the back porch fixed up, the roof replaced, and a splash of new paint on the property. She and her husband were first drawn to the house when they came to view a three-decker across the street from their current residence. "It just had to us" she said. "It's a corner house, an extra piece of land, and at-
ttracted us. It was old but we loved it when we saw it."

Hoyte said the work on her house was completed in six weeks during last August and September, adding that she has rec-

ommended the program to her friends. "My house looks beautiful on the street," she said.

Dillon said a mem-
bership survey will be released in the spring, so members can say what training they found useful and which retail establishments they want to receive discounts from. Dillon called the program the "brainchild" of Mayor Thomas Me-

nino. "It was a response to him driving around the neighborhood and not being pleased about how the triple-deckers looked," she said.

Volunteers Needed

January 24, 2013

The REPORTER

Page 5

A commitment of two hours per week for at least six months is required.

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For more information visit: www.charterschoolsboston.com
By Chris Harding
Special to the Reporter

The artist received his degree from the Massachusetts State Library, where he worked as a draftsman for 30 years. "He was the keeper of the flame, had the versatility of her work," said Jackie Cox-Crite, who will be displaying a selection of works by Allan Rohan Crite.

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph with John, Elizabeth and Zachariah" pencil drawing by Allan Rohan Crite.

"‘Jesus, Mary and Joseph with John, Elizabeth and Zachariah’ pencil drawing by Allan Rohan Crite."

"The exhibit also featured a range of works by Crite, who died in 2007, including an assortment of sculptures and paintings."

"Adams Street Branch"
Thursday, January 24, 3:30 p.m. – Homework Help; 4 p.m. – BTU Afterschool Homework Help.

"Codman Square Branch"
Thursday, January 24, 3:30 p.m. – Homework Help; 4 p.m. – BTU Afterschool Homework Help.

"Fields Corner Branch"
Thursday, January 24, 3:30 p.m. – Homework Help; 4 p.m. – BTU Afterschool Homework Help.

"Grove Hall Branch"
Thursday, January 24, 3:30 p.m. – Homework Help; 4:30 p.m. – Out-of-school Time: Music! Words! Opera! With the Boston Lyric Opera; 6:30 p.m. – Harlem Jazz Class.

"Mattapan Branch"
Thursday, January 24, 3:30 p.m. – Homework Help; 4:30 p.m. – BTU Afterschool Homework Help; 6 p.m. – Family Nurturing Center Baby Playgroup; 7 p.m. – Family Nurturing Center Family Night; 9 p.m. – Family Nurturing Center Family Movie Night.

"Uphams Corner"
Thursday, January 31, 3:30 p.m. – Homework Help; 4 p.m. – BTU Afterschool Homework Help; 6 p.m. – Laptop Classes.

Mayor’s Gallery offers salute to artistry of Allan Rohan Crite

By Chris Harding

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Representative Russell Holmes celebrates the FSS Graduation with one of his constituents, Lawanda Myrick of Dorchester.

On the evening of Thursday, January 17, at Merengue Restaurant in Roxbury, the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (MBHP) proudly honored and celebrated the 2012 graduates of its Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. Speaking at the event to honor the graduates was Representative Russell Holmes who heaped praise and advice on the 19 graduates of the FSS program, which connects families who are in a Public Housing Authority 8 Rental Assistance with resources and support services to help build assets, enhance educational and career opportunities, and move toward economic independence.

“I want to say congratulations to you all because I know how difficult it is to complete this program,” said Holmes. “What I can tell you is that everything in life is a step, and it’s great to have MBHP and the FSS program helping you to understand the steps toward success. Your success makes it so that other folks behind you believe that it’s possible.”

FSS program participants work with an MBHP staff member, who assists with needs such as credit repair, transportation, educational workshops, and job training. Participants who are employed have the opportunity to benefit from funds that are set aside in their escrow account based on the difference between their starting and increased incomes. Graduates from the program receive their escrow money, which most often is used toward home ownership or higher education. Currently there are 330 participants enrolled in the program. The average increase in yearly income for FSS participants is $13,362 and the average amount in participants’ escrow account is $8,972.

Lawanda Myrick, one of several graduates from Dorchester, has just completed the program after six years and is now looking towards buying a home. "At the time I started FSS, I was young and not really thinking about future goals," says Lawanda, "but I set goals and worked on them for the last six years and now I’m graduating, and I have more confidence now. If I didn’t have FSS, I never would have taken any credit repair trainings, or homeownership classes. I’m in a much better situation now." She plans on using the escrow money on a down payment for her first home.

Giving the keynote address of the evening was Geeta Pradhan, Associate Vice-President for Programs at The Boston Foundation. The Boston Foundation has become a valuable partner with MBHP in expanding the FSS program to families living in the neighborhoods along the Fairmount Corridor.

I’m sure many times over the course of this program you doubted yourself and thought of giving up” Ms. Pradhan told the graduates. “But you didn’t. You persisted. You bettered yourself through education, job training, and the goals you set for yourself. You’ve created a pathway for your children, your family members, your neighbors, and awoken in them the possibility of something they thought they could never do. The money you saved is wonderful, but the permanent thing you gained is the belief in yourself that you can do it. That’s what will last and will carry over.”
Tompkins best pick to fill Cabral's shoes

Andrea Cabral has been an outstanding Suffolk County Sheriff. The team that she built around her is one that promises to continue to impress now that she has moved on to a new role as Secretary of Public Safety for the Commonwealth.

This week, Gov. Deval Patrick chose Steve Tompkins, one of Cabral's longest aids, as her replacement. It is a wise and practical appointment and one that should ensure that the sheriff's depart- ment will continue to function smoothly without much, if any, disruption.

It should be noted that Tompkins is a savvy and well-connected political operative who was most recently instrumental in the Boston field operation for US Sen. Elizabeth Warren's winning campaign. Those alliances with top policy makers will serve the sheriff’s department well when Tompkins needs to press his case on budget and policy matters.

But, more importantly, he has also been a high level member of Cabral's executive team. As Day One and has a hand's-on understanding of the system's day-to-day operations that trumps any other candidate for the job. When Cabral was appointed to take over the department in 2002, Tompkins was her executive assistant and helped her navigate the tricky work of assembling a new cadre of talent to replace the troubled department. Tompkins and her team have brought a decade of stability to the county's prison system and Tompkins has been a full partner in that turn-around.

Tompkins will need to run for election on his own in 2014 to keep the position. We have every confidence that he will prove himself worthy to fill Cabral's shoes. – Bill Forry

A pageant for the ages

The inauguration of an American president is always an impressive and moving event, and this week's pageant, taking place as it did on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, added immeasurably to its histori- cal nature.

The scene showing the nation's first African American president passing under the Capitol rotunda for reflection before the bust of ML King was just one of many poignant moments. In the words of the civil rights leader and Congressman John Lewis, there's a "straight line" between Rev. King's 1963 "I have a dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and the inaugural of Barack Obama.

By CITY COUNCILLOR ROB CONSAVOLYO

Anyone has the right to own a pet. But everyone has a right to be safe, free from bites or other pet attacks that we experienced with vicious pit bulls wreaking havoc on our city streets.

Every year data collected from the city's animal control division shows that pit bull attacks happen mainly on the streets, that they are violent and result in injuries that are serious enough to require treatment or hospitalization.

Pit bulls are more likely to attack people and pets - intruders on the public safety, then it's up to city officials to make sure that their choices will all familiar ones.

The other options are based on an address-based system with no zones which tailors school choices for each individual student – ensuring every child has high quality choices, in his or her list, including schools that are live in travel for others too, a little farther away.

All these options are more fair and more predict- able than what we have today. Families would still have choices – but they would also be empowered to make choices on ‘danger dogs’

By Thomas M. Menino

With your support, in the coming weeks we will introduce legislation that allows the city to benefit an entire generation of students and the broader community. Today I am asking for your help to get this important work done.

For nearly 25 years we have split the city into three sprawling student assignment zones – North, West, and East. Each zone was faced with a bewildering set of options with no assurance they'll get what they asked for. Our schools are better than we deserve, but we don't have the funds to address every family's unique choices, but too often, children are sent to schools far from home because we couldn't give them what they wanted.

Many sources have already explored and paid for this kind of education reform.

The Boston Public School Department, working with the community, has come up with a new approach to student assignment that offers greater quality choices, predictability for families, and a smooth and seamless approach to how. The External Advisory Committee on School Choice, which I appointed nearly a year ago, has done incredible work to ensure broad and thoughtful community input, focus on a smart and honest look at school quality, and create a transparent process that has included lots of input from the community.

The EAC is now updating the public on the "best of the best" models it received this week, which I hope you will support. With lots of options, we are giving families the confidence that their choices will all familiar ones.

The other options are based on an address-based system with no zones which tailors school choices for each individual student – ensuring every child has high quality choices, in his or her list, including schools that are identified in travel for others too, a little farther away.

All these options are more fair and more predictable than what we have today. Families would still have choices – but they would also be empowered to learn more about their school options years in advance, enabling them to get involved, meet the principals and teachers, and “shop” with the school community before deciding which ones to pick.

The options would also help us build stronger community alliances with top policy makers. We will build on our vast three-zone system to adjust for changes in population. These sprawling zones also allowed us to place families in neighborhoods with unique specific types of disabilities or English Language Learners in buildings often far from where these students live. This way, we could better serve their needs.

Our schools should respond to what children need, and that's what these proposals would do.

Ultimately, our belief is that education is about quality – and the urgent need to make every public school a great choice. When they are, just 21 of four high school students earned a passing grade on statewide mathematics tests. Today, thanks to the Governor's work on schools, these numbers pass 80 percent on their first attempt. Perhaps most encouraging, 94 percent of today’s parents told us in a survey this spring that their school is a great place for their child to learn.

Superintendent Carol R. Johnson and the Boston School Committee have doubled the number of stu- dents participating in summer learning programs, trained thousands of teachers to help students learn English, and added music and 14,000 students, and created new tools for students to give feedback to their own teachers.

This week, Governor Patrick chose Steve Tompkins as an extra hand to help with this explosive situation. We fought hard for each and every reform and there were always voices asking us to do less or slow down. Over the last year and a half, the Boston Public School process has played out – and our students stand to benefit greatly from this shared effort. Today, I ask you to join us in supporting this process.

The External Advisory Committee on School Choice invites the community to an update on its work on Mon., Feb. 4, 6 p.m. at Orchard Gardens K-8 School, 906 Albany St., Roxbury. BPS will present the latest options and the EAC will invite public input. To learn more and to get involved, visit bostonschoolchoice.org.

Thomas M. Menino is the mayor of Boston.
THE HOUSE ON HENDRY STREET

(Continued from page 1)

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Dorchester, MA 02124

Beth Israel Deaconess HealthCare
welcomes Dr. Linh Huynh,
who is now accepting new patients.

Letter to the Editor

Status quo member makeup of school panel unacceptable

To the Editor:

Our children in the Boston Public Schools are not failing; the Boston Public School system is failing our children. Last week I filed a Home Rule Petition in an effort to change the City Charter and create an independent voice on the School Committee. The purpose of this petition is to create some much needed accountability and transparency on a board that for over two decades has been appointed by the executive branch of city government. The families of Boston need an elected, independent voice on the School Committee.

Boston is the only municipality in the commonwealth that has an all appointed School Committee, and the Chair of its cities and towns ranks in the hierarchy on almost all accounts. We have a world-class city and deserve to have world-class performing public schools.

I, and my twelve brothers and sisters (and now my own children), attended Boston’s public schools. We have felt the effects of a school system that has under-performed since the late 1970s.

Like the school committee, its assignment policy has been in place over 20 years. It is now being reconsidered and the people of Boston deserve a voice as to how our new school districts will be drawn. Several of the committee members and the assignment policy will impact our public school system and our city for many years to come. If we have unrepresentative representation on the School Committee, the people of Boston will be able to hold these members accountable for their decisions during important debates like these.

Critics of my proposal say that the current hand-picked school committee is neither controlled nor politically charged, and that the status quo is just fine. Our school system has operated the same way for years, and accord, we all fail our children year after year. Parents all over the city are crying out for change. We should listen. The status quo is unacceptable!

Frank Baker is the District 3 Boston City Councilor representing Dorchester and Mattapan. He is the Chair of the Council’s Post Audit & Oversight Committee.
**POPE’S HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN.**

Neighborhood E-Alert system; sign up at philip.carver@popehill.com giving your name, address, and e-mail address. PHNA meetings, usually the fourth Wed. of the month at the Leoby/Holloran Community Center at 7 p.m. The next meeting will be Wed., Jan. 23. Babysitting for members will now be provided during the meetings, thanks to Adrienne Kaszanek.

**CODMAN SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL.**
The Codman Square Neighborhood Council meets the first Wed. of each month, 7 to 8:30 p.m., in the Great Hall of the Codman Sq. Health Center, 6 Norfolk St. Info: call 617-343-5649.

**COLUMBIA-SAVIN HILL CIVIC ASSN.**
Meetings the first Mon. of each month, 7 p.m., at the Little House, 275 East Cottage St. For info: cumbadiassavinhillcivic.org.

**CUMMINS VALLEY ASSN.**
Cummins Valley Assn, meeting at the Mattahunt Community Center, 100 Hebron St., Mattapan, on Mondays 6:30 p.m., for those living on and near Cummins Highway. For info on dates, call 617-789-7359 or 617-202-1021.

**EASTMAN-ELDERS ASSN.**
The association meets the third Thurs. of each month, 7 p.m., at the Upham’s Corner Health Center, 536 Columbia Rd, across from the fire station.

**FREEPORT-ADAMS ASSN.**
The meetings will be held the second Wed. of the month, 6:30 p.m., at the Fields Corner CDC office (the old Dist. 11 police station). 1 Acordia St.

**GROOM/HUMPHREY’S NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN.**
The GHNA meets on the third Wed. of the month, 7 p.m., in the Kroc Salvation Army Community Center at 7 p.m., in the Kroc Salvation Army Community Center, 100 Hebron St., Mattapan.

**LOWER MILLS CIVIC ASSN.**
The monthly meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month (Feb. 19) in St. Gregory’s Auditorium, 650 Dudley St., Dor., 02125. For info, call 617-891-1072 or maxboxer@aol.com.

**HANCOCK ST. CIVIC ASSN.**
The next meeting is Feb. 21, 2013, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at a place to be announced. Info: hancockcivic@gmail.com (new e-mail address.) The next meetings are Mar. 21 and Apr. 18.

**MCCORMACK CIVIC ASSN.**
Meetings the third Tues. of the month (Feb. 19) at 7 p.m., in Blessed Mother Teresa Parish Hall, at 522 Norwood St. Norwood, MA. Please bring canned goods to the regular meetings for a local food bank. Info: civic@mccormackcivic.com or 617-710-0730.

**MEETINGHOUSE HILL CIVIC ASSN.**
The meetings are held at 7 p.m., at First Parish Church. Info contact, call 617-285-0749 or e-mail civic@firstparish.com. Info: 617-205-0749 or civic@firstparish.com.

**MELVILLE PARK ASSN.**
Clean-up of the MBTA Tunnel Cap (garden at Shawmut Station), the first Sat. of the month, from 10 a.m. to noon. The meetings are held at 6:30 p.m., at the Epiphany School, 154 Centre St., Dor.
The doctor will see you now.

Everything you need for high-quality health care is available close to home at your neighborhood health center. We provide you with:

- Fast, easy access to many of Boston's best doctors
- Doctors and staff who speak your language
- Urgent care services, and walk-ins welcome
- Access to the world-class health care at Boston Medical Center

Our doctors are ready to see you. Call us to make an appointment today.
I always hope that the coming year will bring happiness and good health to all. Our family, however, received some very unhappy news on Jan. 2. We learned, from Virginia, that Hubby’s older brother John had passed away unexpectedly.

John, known affectionately as “Scotty” by the members of his family, except for his sister Peg and his brothers Vinnie (“Hubby”) and Jerry, and their families, who still called him John. John joined the Marines at age 18 and served during the Korean War, in which he received a battlefield commission.

After serving proudly in the Marines for 24 years, he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. Following his military service, he worked for, and the years retired, from Dominion Power as a security supervisor at the Surry Nuclear Plant.

He was very family oriented and traveled all over the US with his wife of 59 years, Joe (named for her grandmother Ann). In recent years, John and Joe came to Boston often for family parties and celebrations. Both John and Joe also traveled to the many celebrations of their five children, their spouses, their seventeen loving grandchildren, and their two beautiful great-grandchildren. John and Joe would often warn us that they would be away from their home for a week or so, visiting their kids so we wouldn’t worry if we called and got no answer. John was also very proud of his Irish heritage. (His favorite college football team was, of course, Notre Dame’s Fighting Irish.)

When he first went in to the service, his fellow service men thought he was Scottish, thus the nickname “Scotty.”

Hubby and I were fortunate to have flown to Virginia for John’s 80th birthday celebration three weeks ago July. I will never forget John’s face as he drove into son Tom’s driveway. There were so many of his family there. It was the most wonderful party. We have such great photos from that time.

In recent months, John had to have dialysis. His wife, Joe Ann, a nurse, would call her sister Peg, who would, in turn, let us know how he was doing, which was a little better until he passed away suddenly on Jan. 2.

Peg, her daughter Terri, Terri’s son, Sgt. Jeffrey Williams, (US Army), John’s younger brother Jerry, his wife Joan, and their daughter Mary, and Hubby and I went to Portsmouth for his wake and funeral. We were amazed that the wake was only one and one-half hours long, unlike our four-hour wakes here in Boston. We were amazed that there was such a crowd during that hour and one-half.

John’s funeral Mass was celebrated at the Church of the Resurrection in Portsmouth. We then drove quite a distance to the Albert Horton Memorial Veterans’ Cemetery in Suffolk, VA. (Hubby lost count after seeing 30 cars behind us in the funeral procession.) The military honor’s ceremony was very impressive. There were 12 Marines in attendance, the highest in rank being a Lieutenant Colonel, John’s rank. As we sat under a portico, it was most meaningful to hear the ceremony on that beautiful Monday.

Our Boston family sends its deepest sympathy to Joe Ann, his wife of 59 years, and to his children: Beth Doloresco and husband Art, Doug and husband Chuck, John Jr., and wife Alice; Michael and Johanna; and Pat and her wife Cathy Lockwood. John’s whole family, including the grandchildren, couldn’t be more happy for his relatives from Massachusetts. We all know John/Scotty very much.

I must mention that daughter Sue gave me a new magnet for Christmas. It says: “Ship Me Up to Boston,” which reminds me of my wonderful Red Sox seasons performed so well by the Dropkick Murphys. I can feel my feet from dancing every time I hear that song.

I was so glad that I was able to have some time for daughter Sue to come out of CVS last Summer. Bermoro, Sue’s husban, and I heard Gino Cappelletti chatting with his former partner (from Santos on radio station 98.5 FM. (Gil and Gino had broadcast Santos’ games during their 28 years together.)

Gil retired from broadcasting after seeing 30 cars following the games at the end of the season so I was surprised to hear him once again. He was just paying a visit to Gil and left after the first quarter, citing the bitter cold and biting wind. I heard later that Gil is going to be induced into the Patriots’ Hall of Fame in 2013. Bravo, Gil. Unfortunately for us, his listeners, Gil has now retired, his 36 years of broadcasting UPI’s “Late Post” sympathy ended.

Hubby and I were so disappointed as we watched Sunday’s losing game against Baltimore. I must compliment the Browns, however, for their mostly memorable games this season. They certainly brightened our Sundays and Monday evenings. We hope that they have an even better record next season.

I want to thank Kathie Cheney for letting me know that her aunt Louise Cheney, had passed away on Jan. 3. Lou was married to her husband Stephen (at 69) who was a wonderful man. He had lived for many years in the Hollywood and Steve, whose CB radio name was “Miami,” was well known by Marv Paul, who was also an avid CB radio operator. I send my sympathy to the families of our whole family to Louce and Steve’s children: Marylou West, Eileen O’Shea, Steve, Terri Slink, and Jeannette Begley. She was a very well liked woman.

I was also very sad to read of the unexpected death of William Harty, at age of 83. William was the son of our Pope’s Hill friends Joe and Joan Harty. (He also went to St. Ann’s School with our daughter Susan.) I send my sympathy to William’s wife Janice and to his children Brittany and Jake. We also send our Pope’s Hill friends’ Janie and her god -parents, Joe and Mary “Mossy” Harty and to his brother Jerry and sister Jody.

For many years, Mary Fallows was my good friend. A resident of Whitten St., she and her husband Ray adopted our Pope’s Hill organization as their own. They loved to go to the police meetings and helped Mary with their neighborhood. She also loved plants and flowers. Mary passed away on Jan. 7. I send my sympathy to her son Ronald and to her god daughter, Elaine Lynch. I just happen to see Mary at an obit for an old friend, Stuart Manter, whose real estate firms/ insurance agency, A.M. Johnson (at 96 Naponset Ave.), sold our house to Stuart last year. Stuart’s prayer service was on Jan. 1. Over the years, we would see him when we went to pay our respects to our dear friends at his office. He was always such a gentleman and so nice to us, even when that was an hour and one-half ago.

I heard Gino Cappelletti Sunday afternoon when I came out of CVS last summer with the perfect thought: “God put me on earth like the perfect thought: vacation, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me on earth to enjoy vacations, this seemed like the perfect thought: “God put me 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GET MOVING IN THIS WEATHER! Tips for staying in shape this winter

Tips for staying in shape this winter

chronic diseases such as heart disease and stroke. Being physically active can help improve blood circulation and lower blood pressure. It is also important to maintain a healthy weight to reduce the risk of obesity-related conditions such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Being active can also help improve mental health and reduce stress.

To stay active during the winter, it is important to find enjoyable physical activities that can be done indoors. Some suggestions include:

- Swimming: Swimming is an excellent low-impact exercise that can help improve heart health and increase muscle strength.
- Yoga: Yoga is a gentle form of exercise that can help improve flexibility, strength, and balance.
- Walking: Walking is a simple and accessible exercise that can be done indoors or outdoors, depending on the weather. It is important to find a routine that you enjoy and that you can stick to.

It is also important to eat a healthy diet that includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. This can help support overall health and contribute to a healthy weight.

In conclusion, staying active and maintaining a healthy weight is important for overall health and well-being. By finding enjoyable physical activities and eating a healthy diet, you can continue to be active and healthy throughout the winter season.

For more information, visit us at www.dorchesterhouse.org
Members of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester competing in the Boys Low-Rim Basketball League. The Winter Basketball program offers 14 Intramural Teams, 2 Clinic programs and 4 All-Star Travel Teams.

Payless Shoes4Kids Program - The Club is pleased to announce that we have been selected as an official partner of Payless GivesTM Shoes 4 Kids, an annual giving program from Payless ShoeSource. We are among hundreds of charitable agencies representing all 50 states, as well as Canada, Puerto Rico and 11 Latin American countries. Our Club will be distributing merchandise certificates for children’s shoes to our families through trips to our local stores in January.

This is the fifth year of the Payless GivesTM Shoes 4 Kids program. Although studies show that properly fitting shoes are important for children’s health and development, a striking number of children don’t own a pair of shoes that fit. We are working to remedy that here in Massachusetts.

By helping families who may be struggling to provide their children with basic essentials on a daily basis, our Boys and Girls Club, in partnership with the Payless GiveSTM Shoes 4 Kids program, hopes to relieve some of the stress parents feel and bring joy to as many children as possible. Our thanks to the staff at the Upham’s Corner and Field’s Corner stores for their assistance during the promotion.

Teen Summer Jobs - Teen members are encouraged to register on the Boston Youth Fund website for the City’s Summer Jobs program during the month of February. For more information please contact Mike Joyce (mjoyce@bgcdorchester.org).

February School Vacation - From 2/19 to 2/22 we will be offering a special vacation week program from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for ages 5-12. Parents must pre-register their children to take part and there is a $20 fee for each child for the week. Breakfast and lunch will be served each day. Teen members will enjoy extended hours at no cost. For more information, or to register, please contact Kevin Vo (kvo@bgcdorchester.org).

Members of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester went on a field trip to Payless Shoes. The Club has partnered with Payless to offer Club members the opportunity to visit local stores to purchase new shoes.

Upcoming Special Event:

Marr-lin Swim Team at League Championships 1/27 & 2/3
at U-Mass Lowell

Swimmers in the 8&U, 14&U and 17&U age groups will swim on 1/27 while age 10&U and 12&U will swim on 2/3. Parents are invited to attend. Good Luck Marr-lins!!
Jan 24, 2013 THE REPORTER

Page 15

Does end of an era for Belichick, Brady & Co. leave us with the Age of Harbaugh upcoming?

Rockets are glaring all over the sporting map. When the Ravens suddenly stripped of the last pretenses of a fading dynasty, this is the ultimate indictment of Bill Belichick’s alleged genius: His team failed to win this one. In fact, he badly needed to win this one because the growing debate over his flawed legacy, which now includes his role in the dusky charade of Ray Lewis, the most renowned of his many savants signed to the team — his smugness, his profanity-laden tirades; that he would do so in the Ravens’ clubhouse, well aimed at answering the question Earl Weaver had asked. For God’s sake, he was also very smart. He knew I’d edit out any word that was so uninviting.

We was Ray Lewis’ highly particular. He was thereby high among the most delightful cusses I ever met in the world of fun and games; maybe out of it too. He was only 52 when he walked away from baseball, leaving it the poorer, and 82 when he died last week, on a cruise ship, no less.

How very like Earl. He once declared, “On my portion of this, I write,” the Sorest Loser Who ever lived.” I’d second that.

Gorgeous Gussie Moran. Which is how she was usually headlined when her tennis achievements were reported in the highly sexist sports pages of post-war America. It’s the fact that both of those figures, and many female athletes in those days, especially if they had a mind of their own and were a bit, shall we say, “brash,” never sure. Our conversations usually ended in the Orioles’ clubhouse with Earl denouncing my idiocy after my having asked him to question the Rolling Stones. He didn’t want to answer. That would do so in pro-portion laden tirades spouted into a TV camera illustrates how fearsome and less Earl could be. He was also very smart. He knew I’d edit out any word that was so uninviting.

Mrs. Jones’ Soul Food
2253 Dorchester Ave., Lower Mills

Special Daily Menu

Tuesday - Beef Brisket/Pigs Feet/Chittlins - Alternating
Wednesday - Meatloaf
Thursday - Oxtails
Friday - Fish & Grits
Saturday - Smoked Ham
Sunday - Deep Fried Turkey

Dinner Plates with two sides:

Pork Chops w/gravy .......... 11.95 BBQ Ribs St. Louis Style .......... 12.95
Fried Chicken Wings ......... 10.95 Rib & Chicken Combo ........ 13.95
BBQ Baby Back Ribs .......... 12.95 Ham Hocks (2) ............... 10.95
Half BBQ Chicken .......... 11.95 Smoked Turkey
BBQ Chicken Wings .......... 10.95 Wing or Leg .............. 11.00

Sides: Mashed, Corn on the Cob, Potato Salad, Collard Greens, Candied Yam, Mac & Cheese, Black Eyed Peas, Red or Pinto Beans, Cabbage, Cole Slaw, Corn Bread Stuffing, Soup, Cornbread/Bread.

Dine in and Carry-out

617-696-0180

Lunch and Dinner - Tuesdays through Thursdays 12 Noon - 8 PM
Closed Mondays

Take Out

617-696-0180

Dinner Plates with two sides:

Pork Chops w/gravy .......... 11.95 BBQ Ribs St. Louis Style .......... 12.95
Fried Chicken Wings ......... 10.95 Rib & Chicken Combo ........ 13.95
BBQ Baby Back Ribs .......... 12.95 Ham Hocks (2) ............... 10.95
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The DBOT welcomes new members;

Center, 15 Rita Rd., Dorchester, 02124. The IPC, of the celebration. Send check to the Irish Pastoral

p.m. Dinner is $12 pp, pre-paid, or $15 on the day

for the children. Mass at 5 p.m., with dinner at 6

IRISH PASTORAL CENTER

Call Janet at 617-296-2075 for info.


p.m., sponsored by Beth Israel Deaconess Med. Ctr,

12, Mar. 12, Apr. 9, May 14, and June 11), 6 to 8

speak honestly, the second Tues. of each month (Feb.

BowDOIN ST. HEALTH CENTER

St. Info: call 617-265-4189.

Hall of the Codman Sq. Health Center, 6 Norfolk

The next Senior Supper will be held on Wed., Mar. 13.

Support, Al-Anon, AA, and Overeaters Anonymous.

(Continued on page 18)
U Mass chief encouraged by Patrick’s funding push

By COLLEEN QUINN
State House
News Service

A major funding boost for public higher education - part of Gov. Deval Patrick’s sweeping spending and tax plans – has University of Massachusetts officials waiting to see how the budget unfolds before declaring whether they will keep their promise to freeze tuition rates and fees for two years if the state raises its contribution level to the school.

UMass President Robert Caret said he believes the governor “intends” to balance the state’s contribution with what students and their families pay to a 50-50 split - something university officials have pleaded with the Legislature to do for some time. If and when that will happen is not yet clear, Caret said.

But starting the conversation is heading in the right direction, he said. “We have to see at the end of the budget cycle,” Caret told the News Service in a phone interview. “If half of it is there in the next budget, then we will live up to our end of the budget in the fall of 2013.

We won’t know yet.” This fall the average in-state undergraduate cost of tuition and fees went up from $11,901 to $12,451, forcing the average UMass student to pay $550 more each year. When the UMass Board approved the hike last June, they took the unusual step of promising to lock in rates and fees for two years starting in the fall of 2013 if the Legislature restored state funding to cover half the university’s education budget within two years. The board approved the increases despite strong objections from the governor. “Just the fact he wants to get us there is a positive step. We will see how the budget unfolds,” Caret said.

Patrick’s plan to increase investments in higher education gets to an even split within four years, according to the administration. University budget writers estimate the school needs $89 million in additional state funding over the next two fiscal years to achieve the 50-50 divide.

The last time the state covered more than half the costs was five years ago. State funding to UMass was cut by roughly 15 percent from 2008 to 2010, during the height of the Great Recession, according to the Massachusetts Taxpayer’s Foundation. Since then it has remained flat. In 2008, the state covered 57 percent of the cost of university educational programs, while students paid 43 percent via tuition and fees, according to UMass spokesman Robert Connelly. In fiscal year 2013, the percentages are reversed with students providing 57 percent and the state contributing 43 percent of the $1.35 billion needed for educational programs. “We need help to keep the whole enterprise affordable,” said Caret, whose push for more university funding is echoed by myriad inter- ests seeking to recover from budget cuts during and since the recession.
CANTWELL, Gerald J. “Gerry” of Braintree, formerly of Dorchester, at the age of 73. Husband of Mary (V. Kennedy) Cantwell. Father of Theresa M. “Terrie” Hayward and her husband Joseph of West Roxbury, and Francianna Francis both of Stoughton. Son of the late Lawrence E. and Edna (Corrigan) Cantwell. Brother of Mary of Braintree, E. Baker of Braintree, and E. Cantwell. Gerry was born in Boston, grew up in Dorchester and has lived in Braintree for the past 50 years. He was a retired Supervisor at Verizon where he had worked for 47 years. While working at Verizon he invented the “911” emergency calling system as well as several other innovations. Should friends desire, memorial contributions may be made in his name to MSCP:Angell, 350 South Huntington Ave., Brookline MA 02135.

COLLINS, Irene A. (Clifford) of Norwood, formerly of Dorchester and Charlestown. Wife of the late Francis J. Collins. Mother of Irene A. and her husband George Hawley of Norwood, Daniel O. and his wife Ellen Collins of Abington. Step-mother of Michael and his wife Mary Collins of Dorchester and her husband George Evans of Dorchester, and the late Ann Walsh of Hull. Grandmother of Owen, Maura, Brendan, Michael, Matthew, and Conor. Sister of the late Francis Clifford, Margarette Graham, and Rita Clifford. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. Preceded in death by the Reveryt M. Hemmensies, a graduate of St. John’s Seminary in 1966. Kind, gentle, generous, holy, he devoted life to the Catholic Church and helped others. He enjoyed reading his brevity, watching loved sailing, boating and fishing. Rev. Kelley was an Air Force Chaplain, with the rank of Colonel, serving from 1942-1945. He traveled the world as a chaplain to give spiritual support and comfort to the military personnel and their families. He was a priest in residence at St. Peter’s, St. Matthews in Dorchester, St. Ann’s in Newbury, and St. Christine’s in Marshfield, as well as several other parishes. Please make a donation in Rev. Kelley’s honor to a charity of one’s choice.
Saturday, January 26

• Charter public school citywide showcase, 9 a.m. at 550 Huntington Avenue, Boston. Meet representatives from schools in the Boston area K-12. Charter schools are tuition-free public schools open to anyone in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Call 788-212-5007 or visit charterschoolsboston.com.

• Professional Women of Color Network, Inc. 2013 Membership Kick-Off, 10 a.m. 1350 Blue Hill Ave., Mattapan, MA 02120.

• Franklin Park Snow Festival, 1-4 p.m. at the GolfClubhouse. Come sledding, try snowshoes, track animal prints in the snow, or build a snowperson. Bring your own cross country skis for a gliding tour of the park at 1:30pm. If you have a sled or snowshoes feel free to bring them, we’ll have plenty to borrow. You can warm up with hot chocolate and board games in the clubhouse. Free, for all ages.

Sunday, January 27

• Dorchester Historical Society presents a special program, “Victorian Dorchester: The Ascent and Re-vival of the Railroad Suburb” at 2 p.m. New England Carpenters Training Center, 760 Dorchester Ave. Andrew Saxe has revised his popular talk. Enter main lobby from the street.

• Harvard Glee Club will sing Sunday Solemn High Mass at 10 a.m. at The Parish of All Saints – Ashmont, 209 Ashmont St. All are welcome to attend this special service, in which the two choirs will join forces in singing music by 20th century French composer Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986).

Thursday, January 31

• Mattapan Square Main Streets will host its annual meeting at 8 a.m. at the William E. Carter Post, #18, 1513 Blue Hill Ave. Continental breakfast. Free, donations of $10 p/person encouraged. All attendees will be entered into a drawing to win $25 gift cards to CVS. Keynote speaker is Reginald A. Nunnally, executive director of Massachusetts Supplier Diversity service.

Tuesday, February 12

• Community Peace Circle is a time and place where people who are affected by the violence in our community can come together and speak honestly about what’s going on for them. Meets on the second Tuesday of every month from 6:30 p.m. at the Bowdoin St. Health Center, 230 Bowdoin St. Call 617-288-2070.

Wednesday, February 13

• Dancing in Dudley, highlighting the golden era of Irish dance halls in Dudley Square, 7 p.m. Haley House Bakery Café, 12 Dade St. Roxbury. Susan Gedutis Lindsay, author of See You at the Hall will join forces in singing music by 20th century grandly restored Irish Dance Hall. Dancing in Dudley is the second event of the free Roxbury History Story Series. Dinner is available for sale from 5p.m. on. For more information call Haley House 617-445-0980 or visit discoverroxbury.org.
Her obsession: Hailing female graffiti artists

(Continued from page 21) have been erased, and I’ve made it my job to make sure those stories get told,” she said. Using the example of an artist named Ren One, whose work some people claimed was done by her boyfriend, Pabón acknowledged how difficult it is for females to be taken seriously in the world of graffiti. “All of these women have to undergo the same kind of oppressive situation in order to excel as artists,” Pabón said.

Over the years, Pabón has interacted with some 85 female graffiti artists. While each has her own motivation for why she does what she does, it’s the rush that drives these women to risk life and limb for the pursuit of art.

“It’s adrenaline and the self-satisfaction, knowing that you’ve gotten away with it and transgressed all of these conventions,” Pabón said. “It takes a lot of mental and physical risk taking.”

Of course, the women who turn to graffiti writing are well aware that they are breaking the law, straddling a fine line between being a citizen and being a vandal. But many have done it for so long that the rush outweighs the risks.

“By the time you’ve been doing it for 15 years, you can’t stop. It becomes part of their everyday lives,” Pabón said. Not only that, but the women are often out late at night or in inclement weather.

“Most of the time, while the rest of the world is sleeping, these women are out painting. It’s less risky that way,” Pabón said. “Some of them were out during Hurricane Sandy because there were less people on the street. They even go out in snowstorms.”

Too, there is often a cultural difference between female graffiti artists in the United States and artists in other countries.

“When I went to Chile and Brazil, these girls paint during the day,” Pabón said. “Large colorful productions. When you live in Rio, there are bigger problems in that city. The administrators don’t spend millions of dollars trying to clean it up.” Pabón said that she once saw someone ask one of the women she was interviewing to do graffiti on the side of their house.

Some of the women Pabón has dealt with have turned their graffiti experience into other ventures. “Most have somehow flipped what they’ve learned through graffiti into a business,” she said. “These are women who were constantly drawing as kids, always creating something. Their parents put them in a painting class, and maybe they went to school for graphic design, or ended up doing advertising campaigns for major corporations.”

Pabón, who is not a graffiti artist herself, recently spoke at TedxWomen about her work. Tedx talks are independently-organized events, but they also typically focus on a local community.

“When you’re an academic and you spend your life behind a computer or your nose in a book, you don’t expect people to care about what you’re writing about and the people you’re writing about,” Pabón said. “I felt kind of special and it was kind of weird. I don’t consider myself a fancy person and I feel like people who do Ted talks are fancy people. But it was a really humbling experience, to say the least, and it was really fun.”

Pabón said that one of the benefits of the Ted talk was being able to share her work with the women she has inter-viewed over the years. “It was nice to be able to send the women in my research a link,” Pabón said. “Some of them are waiting and asking when the book is coming out. It was nice to give them something immediate that they could show their people and put on the web and livestream to 15,000 people.

While Pabón will be defending her dissertation this spring — and is having “some kind of weird postpartum thing” now that the project is finally coming to an end — she isn’t done writing about women and their roles in subcultures. Her next project will be about human beatboxing, which is decidedly different from graffiti because it moves from visual to audio aspects.

Pabón said she also has another project — an account of being Puerto Rican and growing up in Dorchester, largely in the Lower Mills area. Ultimately, however, she is hoping to become a university professor so that she can provide others with the opportunities she has been given.

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