

POST-GAZETTE

(Formerly LA GAZZETTA del MASSACHUSETTS)

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Massachusetts Ballot Question 1 Still in Limbo

Question 1 on the Massachusetts state election ballot this past November 2024 received overwhelming support from voters (70%), which specifically granted the state auditor the authority to audit the legislature. So why is the State Legislature blocking State Auditor Diana DiZoglio from carrying out the wishes of the Massachusetts voters. The law took effect last week with DiZoglio making her first request for information. However, the 72-hour deadline to provide the requested material has come and gone.

According to DiZoglio, her request for information from the House of Representatives and Senate on "high risk areas, such as state contracting and

procurement procedures, the use of taxpayer funded non-disclosure agreements and a review of your balance forward line item — including a review of all relevant financial receipts and information," has continually been met with resistance and ignored.

While running for State Auditor, DiZoglio promised to audit the Legislature, but her efforts have been hindered by various lawmakers who do not believe she possesses the legal authority to do so. DiZoglio has indicated her next step may be to involve the Massachusetts Attorney General, Andrea Joy Campbell, with an appeal to force the legislature to follow the will of the Massachusetts voters and their constituents.

City of Boston Mayor Michelle Wu Seeks Round 2 of Tax Relief

by Patti Sartori

Mayor Wu is expected to head back up to Beacon Hill, appealing to Massachusetts legislators for the second time over the past ten months, seeking tax relief for Boston homeowners, or at least obtain approval to offer rebates. The mayor is set to announce a home rule petition requesting expanded tax relief to assist residents saddled with the largest increase in residential property tax since 2007. As an extra precaution this time around, she is offering rebates as a potential compromise, just in case a deal cannot be reached with the legislature.

Wu's previous home-rule petition was debated, approved by the house, tabled, reconsidered and ultimately defeated by the Senate just before the holidays. The point of contention was the larger tax shift onto commercial property owners who many believe are still struggling with vacancies since COVID.

The new proposal includes residential tax rebates as a backup in case the tax rate is not adjusted along with increased exemptions for seniors and smaller businesses. "For too many residents this sharp tax spike is a burden that makes it even harder to pay bills, and afford to stay in



the city they call home. I urge legislators and all stakeholders that held up passage of our negotiated compromise to look carefully at the serious impact on Boston residents and join us in delivering the balanced relief our community needs," said Mayor Wu in a statement.

The newly written home-rule petition would require a vote and approval by the Boston City Council before it is sent back up to the state legislature for consideration. Tax bills arrived in mailboxes a few weeks ago and it was shocking sight to most. According to Mayor Wu's office, Taxes for an average one family, including an owner-occupied exemption increased 10.4% or

\$575 for the year. When additional property types, including condos, multi-family buildings, town houses, without commercial components, the annual tax increased 14.9%, or \$833 for the year.

The council voted unanimously last month to set the residential tax rate at \$11.58 per \$1,000 and the commercial tax rate at \$25.96 per \$1,000, shifting the 175% burden, as allowed by state law, onto businesses. The average commercial property saw a 3.4% tax reduction or about \$7,745 than in past years. Office buildings

(Continued on Page 10)

News Briefs

by Sal Giarratani

Manchester Union Leader Saved at Last Minute

The Manchester Union Leader newspaper once was the most powerful newspaper in New Hampshire's conservative majority. It was also one of the most powerful voices in the nation when it was published by William Loeb. It printed more letters to the editor on a daily basis than any other newspaper in America. However, you had to be a resident of the Granite State in order to get your letter published in it. Back in the late '60s and into the '70s, I always read this newspaper and used to pick it up at the famous newsstand in Harvard Square.

Things changed after the Loeb family lost control of the newspaper and most recently, it almost ceased to be a newspaper at all. It has been purchased by two new owners who have vowed to keep it published, saying New Hampshire needed the *Union Leader*.

Another sign of the changes in the newspaper industry band in the way most people get their news today.

Free Naloxone Vending Machine in Jail

A new naloxone vending machine was installed at the Middlesex Jail and House of Correction in Billerica last month, offering free doses of overdose-reversing drugs to all visitors and staff according to Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian. This initiative is the latest effort by the sheriff's office to prevent overdose related deaths. Currently, 20-25 percent of inmates there are receiving an FDA-approved medication for opioid use.

The jail is the first in Massachusetts to install the overdose reversing machine and has already been used 24 times since it was installed on December 9th. The sheriff's office also distributes free naloxone to the families of the incarcerated individuals through their Families in Treatment in Training programs.

Flynn Won't Challenge Wu this Year

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn will not be challenging Mayor Michelle Wu this year and will instead run for re-election to his current District 2 council seat. He had been mulling a mayoral run but has now decided to seek re-election and now Josh Kraft, son of Robert Kraft, is still considering taking on Wu.

Meanwhile, Wu's neighborhood liaison in Flynn's South Boston, South End and Chinatown district,

(Continued on Page 11)

Massachusetts Attorney General Opposes Dissolution of DEI Initiatives

by Patti Sartori

Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell is urging Walmart, the largest retailer in the U.S. and worldwide as well as the largest employer in the U.S., not to dissolve their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) practices, and to maintain their strategies which she says "benefit both company and consumers." Walmart has joined a growing list of corporations that have terminated their DEI policies.

Attorney Generals from thirteen states have pleaded with Walmart President and CEO Doug McMillon to reconsider phasing out supplier diversity programs and equity training for staff and removing "diversity" and "DEI" from company documents and employee titles. "Recruiting diverse workforces and creating inclusive work environments benefit both companies and consumers," stated Campbell.

Walmart announced their intentions to cease its DEI not long after President-elect

Donald Trump's November victory spurring opponents to say it is all politically motivated and stems from conservative backlash. Other changes include not renewing a five-year commitment for an equity racial center established in 2020 after George Floyd's death. The company has also announced it won't be giving priority treatment to suppliers based on gender or race.

Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook and Instagram parent company META also announced its intention to dissolve its DEI program that includes training, hiring and choosing vendors. Other companies following suit are John Deere, McDonald's, Ford and Lowe's. Since the U.S. Supreme Court 2023 ruling ending affirmative action in college admissions, DEI has been on the downside including Federally, with Republicans pushing for a ban on all DEI programs within the government and to end those mandates in contracting and grants.

Democratic Congresswoman Ayanna Presley called the move "an utter disgrace."

Walmart has stated it plans to monitor third party marketplace items to ensure they do not feature sexual and transgender products geared toward minors. It will also review any grant applications or donations to Pride events to make sure they are not financially supporting sexualized content that may be unsuitable for young children. Walmart has stated that these policy changes have been in the works for quite some time, including phasing out the use of DEI in job titles and instead using the word "belonging." "We've been on a journey and know we aren't perfect, but every decision comes from a place of wanting to foster a sense of belonging, to open doors to opportunity for all our associates, customers and suppliers and to be a Walmart for everyone," the company spokesperson offered in a statement.

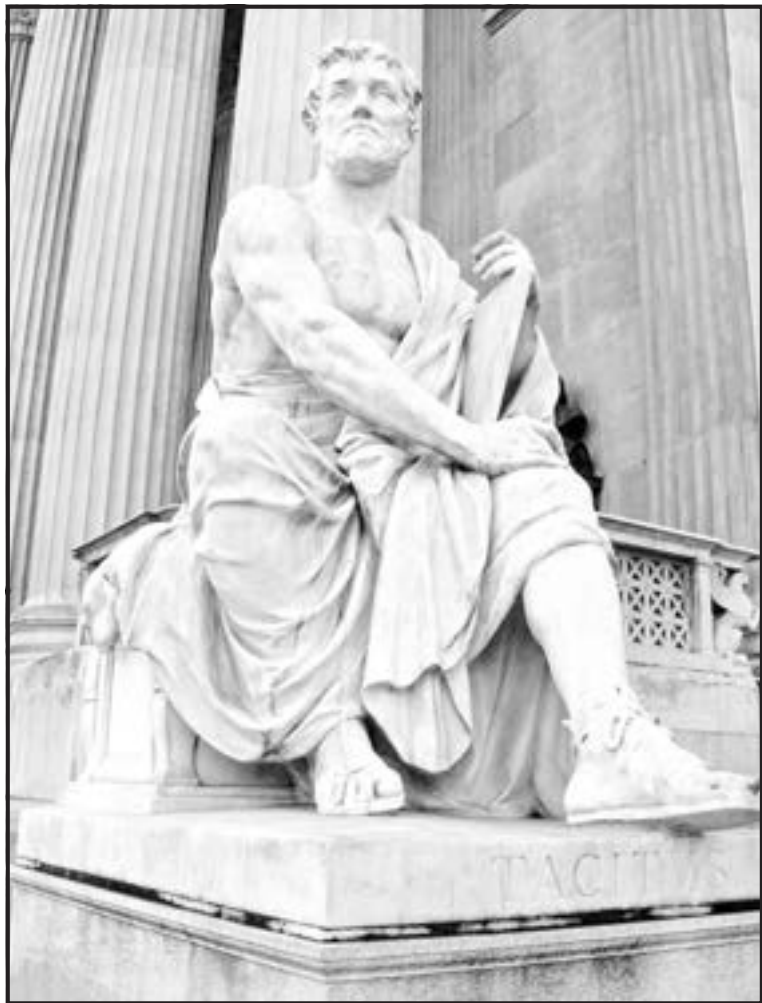
Stirpe Nostra

by Prof. Edmund Turiello

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



TACITUS



Modern statue representing Tacitus outside the Austrian Parliament Building

During past weeks, we've discussed the leading scholars in the Early and Golden Age of Latin literati. We examined the work of such greats as Andronicus, Scipio, Cato, Lucretius, Cicero, Sallust, Julius Caesar, Varro, Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Titus Livy, and Vitruvius.

This week, we enter the Silver Age, and our first scholarly Roman from this era is Tacitus, whose proper name is Publius Cornelius Tacitus. The time and place of his birth are not known, but are believed to

have been prior to 61 A.D., in Rome, and into an equestrian family. During his adult years he was appointed to the office of military tribune by the Emperor Vespasian, promoted to quaestor by Titus, and then to praetor by Domitian. The last 20 years of his life were devoted to his writing, but unfortunately only less than half of his work is available today.

Tacitus is considered to be one of the greatest of the writers of Roman history. His five major writings include:

(a) An excellent work entitled *Dialogues de Oritoribus*, which relates a conversation between many of the literarians during the reign of Vespasian, and in which they discuss the decay of oratory under the Empire.

(b) *Vita Agricolae*, a monumental biography written about his father-in-law, the famous Roman general named Agricola, an able military commander and administrator. It is said that the biography is a masterly portrayal which highlights the virtues of one of the most illustrious of the Romans.

(c) The *Germania*, an essay describing the Germanic nations, which contains geography, a political outline, religious history, and social customs.

(d) *Annales*, a multi-volume history which contains the chief events occurring during the reign of Tiberius, Claudius, Caligula, and Nero.

(e) *Historias*, a second multi-volume history written as a contemporary study encompassing the time frame from Galba to the death of Domitian.

It is claimed that Tacitus was a man of dignity and high moral standards, and that these characteristics are reflected in his literary work along with his integrity and his truthful nature. He possessed a good understanding of the human mind and the motives for human conduct. It is also said that he studied men instead of events. A critical analysis of his work indicated that his style was brief and usually went directly to the point. It also shows the absence of monotony or sameness, and lastly of course, it shows a picturesque quality or character.

NEXT ISSUE:
Juvenal

BOSTON LANDLORDS Facing Hefty Trash Fine Increase

Sitting on the desk of Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey, eagerly awaiting her signature, is a bill recently approved by Massachusetts Legislature allowing the City of Boston to increase fines for landlords who ignore local laws around property upkeep, improper trash disposal and rodent control.

Boston is set to increase the maximum fines for "scofflaw" landlords who blatantly disregard local laws around cleanliness and trash disposal for the first time in over 30 years, raising the current fine from \$300 to \$2,000 for each violation. The current fee has been in place since 1989. Proponents of this pending legislation hope

it will force landlords to clean up their property while others feel it is too much, too fast. The fine has only increased on two occasions since it was initially implemented in 1857 at \$50, going to \$200 in 1976 and then to \$300 in 1989.

The bill would also allow for additional increases to the fines based upon inflation, allowing Boston to make such adjustments every five years. Boston City Councilor Liz Breadon, who co-sponsored the bill in the council, was quite happy with its passage, "Fines of \$300 are just seen as the cost of doing business for some persistent scofflaws. Increasing the fines is another strategy to encourage compliance with sanitary codes as the city works to address rodent problems," Breadon stated.

Douglas Quattrocchi, Executive Director of MassLandlords, Inc., says the "fines are unfair and are equivalent to triple inflation." Governor Healey's office stated the bill is "under review."

U.S. Congressman Stephen Lynch Lone Vote on Laken Riley Act

The Laken Riley Act, a bill named after the 22-year-old Georgia nursing school student murdered last summer by an illegal immigrant, would require the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to issue detainers and take custody of illegal immigrants charged with theft and related crimes. The bill was approved by U.S. House of Representatives before advancing to the Senate.

Eight of Massachusetts nine congressional representatives denied the bill, while both Massachusetts U.S. Senators, Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey cast two of the nine senate rejections. Congressman Stephen Lynch, cast the lone Massachusetts vote in acceptance. "I believe we have lost control of the immigration process in this country. We no longer have the ability to regulate and discern who is allowed to enter our country. We also seem to be uncertain what the consequences will be when someone who is unlawfully present in our country breaks the law," offered Congressman Lynch in a statement.

The bill would change the federal law to require the U.S.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain and deport illegal immigrants who commit burglary, theft, and larceny. If it is approved, it will allow states to sue the federal government if they can demonstrate harm caused by immigrants who enter the country illegally. "The bill directly addresses one of the federal policy failures related to Laken Riley's murder. Her murderer, Jose Ibarra, is an illegal alien who had been previously cited for shoplifting by the Athens Georgia Police Department. If local law enforcement had called ICE, and ICE issued a detainer and picked him up, Laken would be alive today," said Speaker of the U.S. Mike Johnson.

MassGOP Chairwoman Amy Carnevale slammed the Massachusetts Democratic delegation in a statement for opposing this bill. "When you add this vote to recent revelations about crimes and misconduct in Massachusetts migrant shelters and the arrests of individuals there illegally who have committed despicable offenses, it becomes clear that Massachusetts Democrats are ignoring the real consequences of their policies."

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn Opts Out of Mayoral Race

Will Josh Kraft Opt In

Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn, District 2, has decided against challenging incumbent Mayor Michelle Wu in the upcoming 2025 mayoral race, leaving Josh Kraft as the lone potential challenger. Kraft is the son of Patriots owner Robert Kraft and serves as the president of the New England Patriots Foundation and is responsible for the Kraft family's many philanthropic initiatives. Kraft has kept his intentions to himself but has been spotted at various community meetings and neighborhood events over the past few months. For Flynn it came down to the realization that financing a mayoral campaign would be a monumental task and ultimately decided to run for reelection to his South Boston council seat instead.

This is where a Josh Kraft, who is well known in the Boston area, and his ability to fund raise and assemble a strong coalition of city-wide supporters could pose a serious threat to the first term mayor. Some political veterans believe with Flynn on the sidelines, it creates a friendlier environment and path to city hall for Kraft.

Taking out an incumbent mayor is no easy feat, so it would be a grueling endeavor



for Kraft, but Wu has faced some political foes on Beacon Hill last year losing the battle to hike commercial taxes when the legislature torpedoed her proposal. She is also facing heavy criticism for moving forward with a \$91 million dollar expenditure to develop White Stadium for a Women's professional soccer team despite a pending lawsuit and strong opposition from abutters and neighbors in the area.

Wu has maintained a relatively low profile since the holiday season, as she has just given birth to her third child. She is expected to make a more formal announcement once her maternity leave concludes.

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James V. Donnaruma 1896 to 1953 Caesar L. Donnaruma 1953 to 1971 Phyllis F. Donnaruma 1971 to 1990

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Friday, January 17, 2025

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

In Loving Memory of



Ralph "Taffy" Anna
 Ventola Ventola

March 31, 1925 - January 9, 1998 May 1, 1933 - January 25, 2020

*If Love could have saved you both
 You would have lived Forever
 Always in our hearts.
 Your Loving Family*

THE GREAT BRINKS HEIST (75th Anniversary)

Seventy-five years ago, one of the most audacious heists in American history occurred at 165 Prince Street, in Boston's North End neighborhood, the Great Brinks Robbery. This meticulously planned operation was carried out by an eleven-member group of men who made off with almost three million dollars in cash, checks and securities, crowning it the largest robbery in U.S. history. It was often referred to as "the perfect crime" and "the crime of the century."

The group, led by Tony Pino, spent over a year preparing for the heist. Using binoculars, they conducted detailed surveillance of the Brinks Armored Car Depot with painstaking patience from the roof top of neighboring buildings on Prince and Snow Hill Streets. On the evening of January 17, 1950, just before 7:30 p.m., employees of the Brinks security firm were closing the safe for the evening, five heavily disguised men entered the building wearing latex Halloween masks, gloves, pea coats, chauffer caps, rubber soled shoes, tied up the employees, and filled canvas bags with more than \$1.2 million in cash and another \$1.5 million in checks and other securities, leaving behind over a million dollars in coins due to their weight. The thieves barely spoke and moved with such precision the FBI believed the plan had been carefully practiced and rehearsed for quite some time. It took no more than half an hour to execute the job.

The robbers left minimal evidence behind, presenting a significant challenge to law enforcement. The FBI and Boston Police joined efforts and launched an extensive investigation, but remain stymied for close to six years. In the hours immediately following the robbery, local underworld figures were picked up and questioned by the police. Since the Brink's was located in a heavily populated neighborhood, many hours were spent interviewing and speaking to neighbors and North End persons who might possess valuable information. The breakthrough came when one of the members, Joseph "Specs" O'Keefe, felt betrayed by his accomplices, and decided to cooperate with the authorities. His testimony in January, 1956 led to the arrest of the ten remaining gang members, eight of which were convicted and given life sentences and two more who died before going to trial, just days before the statute-of-limitations expired. To this day only a fraction of the stolen money was ever recovered.

The Great Brinks Robbery has long been considered to be a symbol of criminal ingenuity and has been immortalized in numerous books and films over the past seventy-five years. In the end, the "perfect crime" had a perfect ending, for everyone but the robbers.

Julia (Porretta) Riccio

Julia (Porretta) Riccio, age 95 of Wareham formerly of Waltham, passed away January 12, 2025.

Beloved wife to the late Gennaro Riccio. Loving mother to Gerald Riccio and his wife Linda, David Riccio and his wife Gina, Julie Cox and her husband Richard, Paula Carme and her husband Larry, and Maria Matos and her husband Gary. Cherished "Nonni" to Jessica Swensen and her husband Garth, Amanda Baudanza and her late husband TJ, Gennaro Riccio, Kristina Riccio, Gianna Riccio and her fiancé Stephen Thomson, David Riccio, Christian Carme and his fiancée Emerson Bennett and Marissa Matos and her fiancé Drew Lorenzo; great-grandmother to Grant and Graham Swensen, TJ & Aubrey Baudanza, and Stephen Thomson. Dear sister of Betty Thiesing and her husband Bud, and the late Guido Porretta and his late wife Jean, and Flora Gemelli and her late husband John.

Julia's love for her family was immeasurable, and she dedicated her life to being a loving and devoted mother to her children, and a doting



grandmother to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was always there to make homemade meals, had a listening ear, a caring heart, and an open hand, offering support and guidance when needed. Her family meant everything to her, and she cherished every moment spent with them. She also truly enjoyed all the time she got to spend in her condo in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Julia was a devoted fan of the New England Patriots and a passionate poker enthusiast, two pursuits that brought immense joy to her life. Whether cheering on the Patriots from the comfort of their living room or enjoying the thrill of a poker hand with friends and family, Julia was a person who lived for the excitement of the game — both on and off the field.

Family and friends are welcome to come celebrate Julia's life by gathering for visiting hours in the Nardone Funeral Home, 373 Main Street, Watertown on Friday, January 17, 2025 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m., followed by an 11:00 a.m. Funeral Home Service. Burial to follow in Mt. Feake Cemetery in Waltham.

Julio "Sonny" Matarazzo

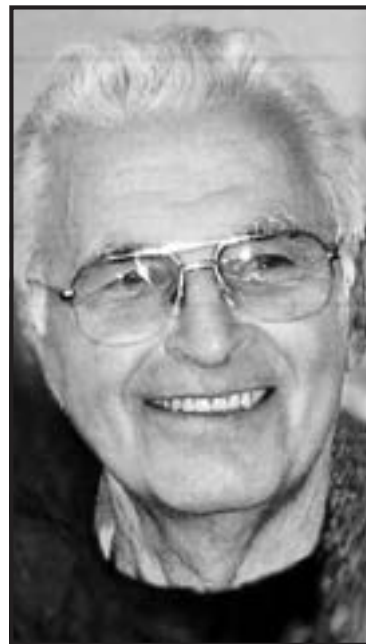
April 12, 1933 – January 7, 2025

Julio "Sonny" Matarazzo, 91, of Revere, passed away peacefully on January 7, 2025, surrounded by his loving family.

Born on April 12, 1933, to the late Emilio and Josephine (Cipoletta) Matarazzo, Sonny lived a full and vibrant life devoted to his family and his many passions.

Sonny is survived by his cherished wife, Teresa; his four devoted sons: Emilio Matarazzo, Julio Matarazzo, Mark Matarazzo, and Matthew Matarazzo; and his daughter-in-law, Jennifer Matarazzo. He also leaves behind many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews who adored him deeply.

For 69 years, Sonny was married to the love of his life, Teresa (Manni) Matarazzo. Together, they shared countless adventures, traveling the world with family and friends, creating a lifetime of cherished memories. Sonny was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and his love for his family was the cornerstone of his life.



Sonny left a lasting impact in Boston's North End, where he owned several businesses and became beloved for his restaurants. His passion for cooking, especially for his family during holidays like Christmas Eve, brought everyone together around his table. Sonny was also a skilled builder who loved working with his hands, whether creating something new or tending to his yard, always with his loyal dogs by his side.

Sonny's legacy is one of love, dedication, and warmth. His family finds solace in the beautiful memories he leaves behind and the lessons of hard work, family unity, and generosity he passed on.

Visiting hours were held on Monday, January 13, 2025 at St. Leonard Church, 320 Hanover Street, Boston, MA, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated. Burial took place immediately after the Mass at Saint Michael Cemetery, Boston.

Donations may be made to the MSPCA in Sonny's memory to honor his lifelong love for animals.

St. Theresa Society Hosts Veterans Clothing Drive to Support Local Heroes

The Saint Theresa Society of Boston and Father Michael Della Penna recently spent time giving back to Veterans in need. The society held a Veterans Winter Clothing Drive from November 22nd - December 15th. Over hundreds of brand-new winter clothing were collected from members of the St. Theresa Society and the North End Community.

On December 16th, Members of the St. Theresa Society and Father Michael Della Penna dropped off all the beautiful donations from the clothing drive to The New England Center and Home for Veterans on Court St. in Boston.

If anyone would like to donate to the New England Center and Home for Veterans, they are still accepting in-kind gifts of new clothing, toiletries, and new household goods. Questions regarding in-kind gifts can be directed to community.support@NECHV.org



(L-R): St. Theresa Society Trustee Anthony Boyd, Sr., Father Michael Della Penna, President Anthony Boyd Jr., New England Center and Home for Veterans Staff Member, Aidan Burns, and Mario Passanissi

The NECHV caters to both male and female Veterans. For all men's items, they are in a greater need of **larger sizes like XL-4XL.**

L'Anno Bello: A Year in Italian Folklore

The Wonder of a Winter Moon

by Ally Di Censo Symynkywicz



Every January, I look forward to a certain kind of dark and still night. During a night like this, a mystical hush infuses the air, as if the whole Earth stands holding its breath, interrupted only by quiet wafts of chilly wind. Gray clouds scuttle across the dusky sky, obscuring the stars. I hear the gurgling of melting snow as it rushes down the drainage system, a sound indicative of the frequent January thaws and the cyclical turning of the year. Indeed, the sensation of the coming spring permeates this night, as only short hours before the sky had been a jewel-like hue of deep blue. However, the sight which makes me shiver with the most awe on this night is the full moon suspended above me. She glows with a pearly white incandescence as she winks from behind the passing clouds, adding to the enigmatic mood of the evening. Seeing such a moon reminds me of all the reasons why this heavenly orb resonates so strongly with me: her mysterious beauty, her link to powerful femininity, the way her graceful silver light whispers promises of the changing seasons. The January moon has always been particularly meaningful for me, as she brims with the energy of the new year and forms an elegant and radiant counterpoint to the dark winter skies. She carries the anticipation of the spring, much in the same way as women-centered January holidays like St. Agnes's Day. In all of her manifestations and stages, the moon has captured the attention of societies worldwide, boasting her own slew of folklore and superstitions.

In part, my love from the moon appears woven into my DNA, a characteristic of my Italian heritage. When I was a child,

my dad would frequently sing a catchy pop hit he remembered from his Italian boyhood, whose lyrics intoned: "*La luna, la luna, ti porterá fortuna*" — meaning "the moon will bring you luck." Several Roman deities, the majority of them women, presided over the moon. Diana, the forest-dwelling huntress, was associated with the crescent moon, perhaps because it resembled the shape of her bow. The darker side of the moon belonged to the goddess Trivia, most commonly known by her Greek name Hecate, who ruled over witchcraft, crossroads, and all the spooky aspects of night. Finally, the goddess Luna served as the very personification of the moon, and her name lent itself to the Italian name for "moon." Contemporary Italians still include mentions of the moon in their folklore, especially in the realm of superstition. The most famous Italian moon-related superstition, also repeated frequently in the United States, declares that the full moon exerts an influence over human behavior, encouraging romance but also lunacy. In fact, the word "lunacy" shares the same root as "luna." Italians also whisper stories of the *lupo mannaro*, or werewolf, who changes into a frightening beast under the full moon. Sundry moon superstitions include cutting one's hair during a waxing moon, to ensure that it will grow back lusciously as the moon gets bigger, and that pointing at the moon is considered rude and unlucky. These pieces of lore speak to the moon's immense cultural significance.

One January holiday in particular boasts the same sense of magic and mystery I associate with the moon. January 21st is St. Agnes's Day, or *la Festa di*

Sant'Agnese in Italian, honoring a Roman virgin and martyr killed in the early fourth century. In Italy, this feast is linked to lambs, possibly because of the similarity between the name *Agnese* and the Italian word for lamb, *agnello*. Every year, the Pope blesses two lambs brought to Rome on January 21st specifically for the feast of St. Agnes. Significantly, sheep begin birthing lambs and commence the process of lactation around the middle of January. Therefore, *la Festa di Sant'Agnese* is one of those January holidays that looks ahead to the promise of spring, that honors rebirth and the new life blossoming under the winter snow. However, in addition to livestock, old St. Agnes's Day celebrations sparkled with enchantment and secrets. In the England of yore, the eve of St. Agnes's Day was set apart for romantic divination. Since St. Agnes is the patron of young women, girls would seize this opportunity to perform a plethora of charms in order to dream about their future spouse. These charms involved mysterious activities such as ranging from silently walking backwards to bed, baking a cake at night without uttering a word, or repeating a magical rhyme while throwing grain into the soil. The romantic, supernatural nature of St. Agnes's Day perfectly accentuates the frigid, moonlit nights of January, when the moon illuminates the shadowy skies and hints at the spring to come.

Though she is often eclipsed by the warm and fiery sun, the moon provides us with a unique blend of mystical beauty and starry-eyed magic. She is a prominent figure in folklore and mythology, having long amazed people with her changing faces and powerful nocturnal presence. Wielding the mighty ability to affect tides but gentle enough to form lacy patterns of moonlight through the bare winter tree branches, the moon continues to enjoy her place in superstition, as people still repeat tales of her influence on human behavior. I encourage everyone to take time out of their busy lives to glance at the moon in all her splendor — whether she stands as a full white orb, or a glimmering sliver in the sky, or shyly peeks behind slate-colored clouds. One of my favorite moon moments was years ago, when I was driving back home with my mother after visiting my grandmother. As we passed a lake whose waters gleamed like polished glass in the nighttime, we immediately noticed an enormous full moon suspended in the sky, sending her spangles of light flitting across the tranquil waters. This moment reminded me that there is still so much beauty, magic and mystery in our world, which will only continue to be revealed as the winter melts into the renewed life of spring.

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

THINKING OUT LOUD

by Sal Giarratani



American Workers for "America First"?

Lately, there has been a lot of publicity over whether or not the H-1B Visa Program for foreign skilled workers to legally immigrate to the United States in employment areas that they are perceived to be needed is helpful. Both Elon Musk and, to a lesser extent, Vivek Ramaswamy seem to have become targets of the MAGA Movement who oppose the massive increase in numbers for those seeking to come to America with their high skills. Both Musk and Ramaswamy are supporters of widening the numbers on H-1B Visas allowed annually into the country.

Many within the MAGA movement are questioning whether expanding H-1B visa program is a positive or negative thing, or whether these visas actually hurt American workers. Recently, Steve Bannon blasted the H-1B Visa Program as anti-American. Bannon was interviewed by an Italian media outlet in Rome and said lots of bad things about Musk, calling him an evil guy who apparently could personally benefit greatly by expanding H-1Bs. Bannon seems to be publicly lobbying President-elect Donald Trump to go against Musk and Vivek.

Jeff Kuhner clearly seemed to be siding with Bannon over Musk. It wasn't long ago Kuhner seemed to call Musk and Vivek the best thing since the invention of sliced bread.

Thank God several out there in Kuhnerland pointed out that the last thing needed was for MAGA starting to fight one another. Trump is about to become Number 47 and already seeds of internal fighting are sprouting

up. Liberal Democrats never do this kind of stuff. Look at the reaction thus far. Headlines in the liberal media blowing up the in-fighting. Democrats must all be smiling cheek to cheek. The MAGA Movement needs to get itself together and stop the in-fighting and name-calling. The electorate has spoken loud and clear this past Election Day and now is the time to move forward together with an agenda that works for all of us.

There was little reason for Bannon to bring up the fact that Musk is a white South Afrikaner by birth. Who is right on this argument? Is it Musk or is it Bannon? Or do we even need this fight in the first place.

This current in-fighting weakens the movement because it is wasting energy that could be better served fighting to make America better and stronger again.

As I said, the Democrats love it when MAGA and the Republicans form circular firing squads toward each other. The fake news media loves it too and will keep headlining this foolish food fight. This national story keeps reminding me of the foolishness right here in Massachusetts with the MassGOP where the in-fighting only generates political impotency

It is time for everyone to set aside their egos and do the job the needs to be done. Why can't we all just get along? Like the lyrics from that old hit song goes, "There ain't no good guys, there ain't no bad guys. There's just you and me and we both disagree." We need a Kumbaya moment here, don't we?

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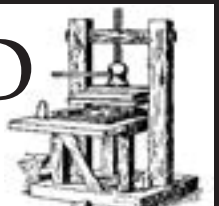
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Fitchburg State's Center for Italian Culture

Welcomes Valentine's Day Italian-Style with Jazz Singer Vanessa Racci

The Center for Italian Culture at Fitchburg State University invites you to celebrate Valentine's Day Italian Style with a performance by celebrated jazz singer Vanessa Racci. The concert will be given at 8:00 p.m. Friday, February 14th, in Weston Auditorium on the Fitchburg State campus.

Vanessa Racci is a professional vocalist and touring artist of Italian descent with a passion for retro jazz and music made famous by Italian Americans. She puts a fresh claim on classic pop and jazz tunes with intoxicating vocals and presence that leave every audience member feeling nostalgic, enchanted and like family.

Tickets are \$25 for the public; and \$15 for Fitchburg State students, faculty and staff with OneCard and may be purchased online at fitchburgstate.edu/cic.

Racci, who will perform with a three-piece band, has been acclaimed for her rich and enthusiastic voice in both English and Italian, reinterpreting classic songs with sass and swing.

Prepare for an unforgettable evening of fresh new arrangements of timeless classics and heartfelt passion in a tribute to music and love.

Learn more about the Center for Italian Culture at fitchburgstate.edu/cic.



Be a Weather Watching Gardener

by Melinda Myers

Each gardening season seems to offer new growing challenges. Our gardens are exposed to more drastic and variable weather with changing weather patterns. Floods, droughts, wind, temperature extremes, and unseasonable weather episodes can have immediate and long-term impacts on our plants.

Monitoring and noting these occurrences will help you diagnose immediate and future plant and garden problems. It also reminds us to adjust plant maintenance when these stressors occur and watch for potential insect, disease, and plant decline that may appear in the future.

Create your own weather station with a rain gauge, snow gauge, and high-low thermometer. These gauges monitor the conditions in your backyard as opposed to those reported for nearby locations. Having information from your yard allows you to make any needed adjustments to watering and care to help your plants thrive.

Record significant weather extremes that can negatively impact plant health and longevity. Check with local nature centers, botanical gardens, and extension services for gardening calendars. Many include information on significant weather events in your area. You can then add your observations for future reference. Refer to this information as needed in the future to help diagnose plant problems that may result from these extremes.

Large trees and other established plantings are often overlooked when weather extremes occur. Extended dry periods, temperature extremes, and flooding can stress and weaken these plants making them more susceptible to insect pests, diseases, and decline in the coming years.

Always select plants suited to the growing conditions and start watching for those that appear to be more tolerant of extremes. Visit local public gardens and consult with your University Extension specialists and other plant experts when selecting new plants for your gardens.

Adapt your landscape maintenance and design to reduce the negative impact of flooding, drought, and temperature extremes. Protect plant roots from temperature extremes with a layer of organic mulch. Incorporate organic matter into the soil to improve drainage and increase the water-holding ability of fast-draining soils. Cover the soil with plants and mulch to help protect the soil from compaction and erosion during heavy downpours. Healthy soil is the key to growing plants that are better able to tolerate environmental stresses.

Manage water that falls on your property. Check with your local municipality for any restrictions or support for these efforts. Create rain gardens to capture, clean and direct rainfall to groundwater to help manage water where it



Rain barrels can help manage the water on your property and provide water to use in your gardens.

(Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com)

falls. These also support pollinators and provide added beauty to your landscape. Enlist the help of rain barrels, if permitted, to capture rainwater to use on ornamental plantings and containers when needed.

Take this interest one step further and volunteer to be part of a network of volunteer weather watchers. The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) is a non-profit community-based network of volunteers that provides daily measurements of rain, hail, and snow that fall in their backyards.

The goal of the Network is to provide more localized weather information to scientists, researchers, resource managers, decision makers and more. The data is used for natural resource, educational and research applications.

Weather watching is a great project for the family or classroom. It helps boost gardening success while increasing our awareness and knowledge of what's happening around us.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, *Revised Edition*, and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series* and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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newra
NORTH END / WATERFRONT
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
Monthly Meeting

The first NEW/RA Meeting of 2025 was held last week at the Nazzaro Center. Boston Police Area A-1 Community Service Officer Frank Ciampa announced new A1 District Captain Driscoll will attend the next meeting to introduce himself to the community. Overall, the neighborhood had a safe holiday season, with no major issues to report from New Year's Eve. Officer Ciampa did urge the residents to report package theft, it often helpful to have it in a database and can assist with apprehending a repetitive offender. Currently there is no longer a beat cop on foot in the neighborhood, but there is a one officer assigned to a patrol car driving around and through the streets of the North End Waterfront community. He also reported a major drug bust in the area had taken place on January 8th allowing the drug unit to seize a large amount of fentanyl and cocaine. He wasn't able to release any further details at that time.

John Romano, Director of Operations for the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) spoke to the group, answering numerous questions regarding the State Street Project, traffic management, on street parking and bike lanes. He noted a recent study showed traffic congestion in Boston has dropped approximately 10% this past year and announced BTD is in need of parking enforcement officers and is

actively recruiting. Many residents expressed concern and frustration with the State Street area bike lanes and signalization. There was a suggestion by the Wharf District to relocate the bike lane to Milk Street. One resident asked for posted speed limit signs on Cross Street, from Atlantic to Hanover while another expressed frustration with Endicott Street becoming a by-pass street from North Washington Street. Everyone is upset over the blatant disregard of traffic regulations by operators of motorized bikes and scooters and are concerned about the Eliot School area, from Hull and Commercial to Prince and Commercial. Overall Romano listened patiently and engaged cooperatively with the group and promised to continue communicating with the neighborhood in which he resides with an open dialogue.

The last agenda items were The Daily Catch, 65 Atlantic Avenue, application to replace the existing Malt and Wines license with an All-Alcohol license, and DePasquale Ventures, 60-70 Cross Street, application to transfer an All-Alcohol license from 110 Canal Street to the newly proposed interior and roof top dining facility, the former Martignetti Liquors site. Both received NEWRA's support.

The next NEWRA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 13th, 6:30 p.m. at the Nazzaro Community Center, 30 North Bennet Street.

Ieri e Oggi

Yesterday & Today

A COLUMN OF PAST AND CURRENT EVENTS

by Bennett Molinari & Richard Molinari

Thaddeus Kościuszko

Thaddeus Kościuszko was born on February 4, 1746 in eastern Poland. His parents were Ludwik and Tekla Kościuszko — gentry, but not wealthy by the standards of high Polish nobility. However, they owned land and lived plainly but comfortably. Ludwik was fair to the serfs who worked his land, which made a great impression on the youngest of his four children: Thaddeus. Thaddeus would grow up to be a lover of liberty and an advocate for the equal rights of all people.

After his father's untimely death, Thaddeus began attending a prestigious Catholic high school run by Piarist Fathers in Lubieszow. When he was nineteen, he began attending the Royal Military Academy, located in Warsaw, where his diligence and work ethic caught the eye of the Polish monarch King Stanislaw. Thaddeus was granted a scholarship from the king to go study in France for several years, learning much about art, engineering, and military strategy, as well as the ideas and philosophies of the Enlightenment.

When the young Thaddeus returned to Poland in 1774, he was an educated and worldly man. Searching for a job, he started tutoring the young noblewoman Ludwika Sosnowski and fell in love with her. However, her father disapproved of their plans for marriage, Thaddeus left Poland to seek employment elsewhere. He found it in George Washington's Continental Army. In August 1776, Thaddeus stepped off a ship in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After making the acquaintance of Benjamin Franklin and proving his worth by designing blockades and fortresses along the Delaware River, Thaddeus was given the rank of colonel by Congress in October 1776. In December, he designed Fort Mercer in Red Bank, New Jersey. In the summer of 1777, he ordered the troops retreating from Ticonderoga to delay the British by felling trees and moving boulders onto the path, as well as diverting and damming streams to turn the woodland path into a swamp. In the autumn of 1777, Thaddeus structures and use of topography contributed to the American victory at Saratoga.

Finally leaving West Point late in the summer of 1780, the engineer traveled south to meet up with his friend and mentor, General Horatio Gates. Gates, however, was soon replaced by General Nathanael Greene, whom Thaddeus would serve for the rest of the war. As the British general Lord Cornwallis chased Greene's forces around the Carolinas, Thaddeus proved himself invaluable by leading the troops through shortcuts and building a fleet of small boats which could be used to transport supplies and soldiers across rivers. In early autumn 1782, Thaddeus was made a field commander. On November 14th,



Thaddeus led a skirmish outside Charleston, South Carolina, one of the last military skirmishes of the American Revolutionary War.

After nine years away from his homeland, Thaddeus returned to Poland in September 1784. For a few years, he lived simply and alone on his remote farm while Poland and other parts of Europe underwent significant political changes. Weary of Russian domination, and inspired by the American Revolution, Poland began to strengthen its army, and on May 3, 1791, it passed a new constitution. It is generally considered the second national constitution in history, the first being that of the United States.

Tensions eventually broke with the Russians, and Thaddeus, who had been given the title of major general in 1789, fought a year-long war for Poland's freedom. However, the Russian army was too strong, and in late July 1792, the Polish King Stanislaw surrendered to Czarina Catherine the Great. Thaddeus left Poland, as did many other leaders who fought against the Russians.

After spending over a year in western Europe, planning and gathering support, the revolutionaries re-entered Poland in March 1794, prepared to set off a fiery rebellion. Thaddeus was proclaimed commander in chief of Poland and chosen to lead the uprising. Leading his patchwork army — soldiers armed with guns and peasants armed with farming tools — the Polish army waged a battle with a Russian force near the village of Raclawice. The Polish army overpowered the unprepared Russian forces. The scythe-bearing peasants also brought an element of psychological warfare to the Polish army: with their long scythes and fierce war cries, they reminded the Czarina's troops of the mythical grim reaper from folktales. Soon, people in cities all over Poland rose up to force out the occupying Russian soldiers, pledging their allegiance to Thaddeus.

However, Poland's triumph was short-lived. An unexpected collaboration between the Russian and the Prussian armies defeated and demoralized the Polish army at the Battle of Szczekociny in June 1794.

On October 10, 1794 the Polish army engaged the Czarina's soldiers. Massively outnumbered, the Polish forces lost the battle.

Thaddeus himself was badly wounded and captured. He was taken to St. Petersburg where he was imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress on December 10, 1794.

On November 17, 1796, Catherine the Great died at the age of 67. Her son, Paul, became the new Czar and freed Thaddeus and other Polish prisoners on the condition that they would be loyal to Russia. Thaddeus, saddened by the loss of his homeland, resolved to travel across Europe, and ultimately back to America.

On the morning of December 19th, Thaddeus and a few of his comrades left St. Petersburg, bound for Sweden and England. On the afternoon of August 18, 1797 Thaddeus left England for his "second fatherland" aboard the *Adriana*. Upon docking in Philadelphia, he was greeted with cheers. Soon after his arrival, however, renowned physician Dr. Benjamin Rush beseeched Thaddeus to flee the city due to an outbreak of yellow fever in the city.

During his second stay in Philadelphia, Thaddeus became close friends with Vice President Thomas Jefferson. So close, in fact, that Thaddeus worked out his will with Jefferson's legal help. Ever true to his core beliefs, the general requested that following his death, his estate be used to free as many slaves as possible. Thaddeus trusted Jefferson so deeply, that when he made plans to slip out of the country unnoticed, the vice president was the only person he told. In the hours of the morning on May 5, 1798, Thaddeus Kościuszko boarded a ship in New Castle, Delaware, to return to Europe.

On June 28, 1798, a ship docked in the harbor of Bayonne, France, and General Thaddeus Kościuszko limped off the gangplank and onto European soil. Thaddeus was wary of French general Napoleon Bonaparte, but he believed that if anyone could still restore Poland, it would be Napoleon. However, as he passed months in Paris, the freedom fighter's faith in the French conqueror waned. On November 9, 1799, Napoleon overthrew the French government and declared himself the First Consul of the new regime. The dictator's actions displeased Thaddeus greatly.

During the next year, relations between the two men became even more strained after Thaddeus helped write and propagate a pamphlet that called the Polish people to begin an uprising. During the years in which Napoleon conquered much of Europe, Thaddeus became increasingly removed from politics, and moved to the countryside estate of Peter Joseph Zeltner, the Swiss ambassador to France.

During the last years of his life, Thaddeus corresponded with Jefferson, tutored the Zeltner children, and rode his horse through the hills and valleys of Switzerland. He died at the age of 71 at 10:00 p.m. on October 15, 1817.

Congratulations Mayor Wu and Family!



Mayor Michelle Wu's two sons, Blaise and Conor Pewarski with their new little sister Mira.

City of Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and her husband Conor Pewarski welcomed a beautiful baby girl, Mira Wu Pewarski, on January 13th, one day before the Mayor Wu celebrated her own birthday. Mira's two older brothers, Blaise and Cass, are overjoyed at her arrival. We extend Best Wishes to the Mayor and her family as they celebrate the newest addition to their family.

Cheers to Artù and the Frattaroli Family Celebration of La Befana



Thank you, Artù and the Frattaroli family!



The Age Strong Commission dropping by with calendars and to visit with seniors



The ABCD North End/West End Neighborhood Service Center (NE/WE NSC) welcomed the new year in true Italian style, with a heartwarming celebration of La Befana. Generously sponsored by Artù and the Frattaroli family, this beloved Italian tradition brought joy, delicious food, and a sense of togetherness to the neighborhood seniors.

La Befana marks the Feast of the Epiphany, celebrated on January 6th in Italy, honoring the 12th day of Christmas when the three Wise Men presented gifts to the Christ Child. As legend has it, La Befana — a kind-hearted witch riding her broom — refused to join the Wise Men on their journey. Later regretting her decision, she embarked on her own quest to find the baby Jesus, leaving gifts for children along the way. To this day, Italian children hang stockings or set out shoes on Epiphany Eve, hoping for sweets or gifts — and hoping to avoid coal for bad behavior!

At the NE/WE NSC, the celebration was nothing short of magical. There may not have been stockings or coal, but there was plenty of love, laughter, and an incredible Italian feast! Guests enjoyed a menu of salad, chicken parmigiana, a pasta with red sauce, and a creamy pasta with sausage and broccoli rabe. Staff from the office of City Councilor Gabriela "Gigi" Coletta Zapata stopped by with sweets, as well as friends from the Age Strong Commission, who brought calendars of upcoming exciting events in the City of Boston. The room was warm and cozy, filled with the spirit of community and the joy of shared traditions.

The NE/WE NSC is deeply grateful to Artù and the Frattaroli family for making this celebration possible. Your generosity brought smiles, full bellies, and warm hearts to the center's seniors — a truly wonderful way to kick off 2025!

Eagle Bank Makes Donation to the North End Christmas Fund Luncheon



Eagle Bank representatives Michael Gekas and Ross Barker presenting an annual donation to the North End Christmas Fund Luncheon. Pictured l to r: Eagle Bank's Sales and Service Associate Michael Gekas, Daniel Coakley North End Christmas Fund Luncheon Board Member, Robert "Ted" Tomasone Chairman North End Christmas Fund Luncheon, and Eagle Bank Sales and Service Manager Ross Barker.

Saint Robert of Molesme

by Bennett Molinari and Richard Molinari

Born at Molesme about the year 1029, at Champagne, France, Robert was of noble parents who bore the names of Thierry and Ermengade. When fifteen years of age, he commenced his novitiate in the Abbey of Montier-la-Celle, or St. Pierre-la-Celle, situated near Troyes, of which he became later prior. In 1068, he succeeded Hunaut II as Abbot of St. Michael de Tonnerre, in the Diocese of Langres.



About this time a band of seven anchorites (hermits) who lived in the forest of Collan, in the same diocese, sought to have Robert for their head, but the monks, despite their constant resistance to his authority, insisted on keeping Robert who enjoyed so great a reputation. Their intrigues led to Robert's resignation in 1071, he found refuge in the monastery of Montier — then sought refuge at la-Celle. The same year he was placed over the priory of St. Ayoul de Provins, which depended on Montier-la-Celle. Meantime two of the hermits of Collan went to Rome and besought Gregory VII to give them Robert for their superior. The pope granted their request. As the location at Collan was found unsuitable, Robert founded a monastery at Molesme in the valley of Langres at the close of 1075. To Molesme as a guest came the distinguished canon and doctor of Reims, Bruno, who, in 1082, placed himself under the direction of Robert, before founding the celebrated order of the Chartreux.

abbot, came laxity of discipline. Robert endeavored to restore the primitive strictness, but the monks showed so much resistance that he abdicated, and left the care of his community to his prior, Alberic, who retired in 1093. In the following year he returned with Robert to Molesme. On November 29, 1095, Urban II confirmed the institute of Molesme. In 1098 Robert, still unable to reform his rebellious monks, obtained from Hugues, Archbishop of Lyons and Legate of the Holy See, authority to found a new order on new lines. Twenty-one religious left Molesme and set out joyfully for a desert called Citeaux in the Diocese of Châlons, and the Abbey of Citeaux was founded on March 21, 1098.

Left to themselves, the monks of Molesme appealed to the Pope and Robert was restored to Molesme, which thereafter became an ardent center of monastic life. Robert passed away on April 17, 1111, and was buried with great pomp in the church of the abbey. Pope Honorius III authorized his Canonization in 1222. The Feast Day of Saint Robert of Molesme is on April 29th.

At this time the primitive discipline was still quite strict, and the religious lived by the labor of their hands. Soon, however, the monastery became wealthy through a number of donations, and with wealth, despite the vigilance of the

Marie Simboli Life Long North End Resident Honored for 25 Years as North End/Waterfront Neighborhood Council Member

Marie Simboli was elected to the North End/Waterfront Neighborhood Council 25 years ago, and for the past quarter century she has used her role to advocate for her beloved North End neighborhood. Marie was feted as the recent council meeting, with Representative Aaron Michlewitz and City Councilor Gabriela Coletta-Zapata personally presenting her with proclamations from the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Boston City Council.

Representative Michlewitz praised Marie for her tireless efforts on behalf of the North End community and said he was proud to have had the opportunity to serve as a council member with her many years ago. District-1 Councilor Gabriela Coletta-Zapata commended Marie for her 25 years of exemplary service, noting what a privi-



Elected Officials presenting Marie with Proclamations: L-R: State representative Aaron Michlewitz, Marie Simboli, and City Councilor Gabriela Coletta-Zapatta

lege it is to work with her on North End issues.

Mayor Michelle Wu was unable to attend in person, as she had just given birth to her beautiful baby girl, also sent a proclamation along with her best wishes and commented on how much she enjoyed

Marie's long-time column, "Freeway Says" in the Post-Gazette Newspaper.

A special thank you to Ellen Hume for coordinating this recognition with the members of the council and for providing the delicious cookies from Modern Pastry.



Elected Officials with Marie Simboli and members of the North End/Waterfront Neighborhood Council: Standing l to r: Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Councilor Gabriela Coletta-Zapatta, Marie Simboli, Seated l to r: Joe Faller, Adam Balsam, Kevin Fleming, Rory Harrington, Ellen Hume and Kristen Hoffman

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SMILE 2
(4K Ultra HD/
Blu-ray/Digital)
Paramount Home Ent.

SMILE 2 is now available in a 4K Ultra HD SteelBook, and on DVD. This terrifying release from Paramount Home Entertainment takes the definition of *shocking* up a notch, filled with terror and surprises. Writer/director Parker Finn adds the necessary ingredients that will take all its viewers on a rollercoaster ride that is impossible to get off of. About to embark on a new world tour, global pop sensation Skye Riley (Naomi Scott) begins experiencing increasingly terrifying and inexplicable events. Overwhelmed by the escalating horrors and the pressures of fame, Skye is forced to face her dark past to regain control of her life before it spirals out of control. Those who purchase the film on Digital or 4K Ultra HD will have access to over 40 minutes of heart-pounding bonus content. Hear from cast and filmmakers as they break down the film's most intense moments; go behind-the-scenes to see how the make-up, prosthetics, and visual effects bring the nightmare to life; check out deleted and extended scenes not seen in theatres, and more! *SMILE 2* is rated R for strong bloody violent content, grisly images, language throughout and drug use.

RUSS MEYER:
**VIXEN/SUPERVIXENS/
BENEATH THE VALLEY
OF THE ULTRAVIXENS**
(Blu-ray)
Severin Films

Severin Films has announced the full list of Special Features for their release of Russ Meyer's *Vixen*, *Supervixens* and *Beneath the Valley of the Ultravixens*. The nine hours of Severin-curated bonus materials shine a spotlight on each film's historic critical and commercial success, nationwide censorship battles and notoriety as landmark American independent films. **VIXEN** - Amid the cultural chaos of 1968 and armed with a budget of only \$70,000, producer/director/cinematographer Russ Meyer transcended exploitation with this film that discusses racism, communism, bush pilots, draft dodgers and a ferociously free-spirited wife named Vixen (Erica Gavin). Despite attempts at censorship that included one of the first-ever X ratings and 23 separate U.S. prosecutions for obscenity, it became one of the year's top-grossing movies, forever transformed independent film and remains the creative template for Meyer's unapologetic vision of American cinema. **VIXEN** is now scanned in 4K from the original negative restored by The Museum of Modern Art with 3+ hours of new and archival Special Features. **SUPERVIXENS** - Following the 'serious' features *The Seven Minutes* and *Black Snake*, this 1975 return to form written, photographed, edited, produced and directed by Russ Meyer remains perhaps his most over-the-top and savagely entertaining epic of all: When a

hot-blooded wife (Shari Eubank) and a psychotic cop (Charles Napier) come together, it will ignite a cross-country odyssey of violence, vengeance and relentless behavior. John Lazar, Uschi Digard and Haji co-star in Russ' "super-sexy live-action film, now restored by Severin Films. **BENEATH THE VALLEY OF THE ULTRAVIXENS** - The final feature produced, photographed, edited and directed by Russ Meyer is a wicked take on *Our Town*, co-written by Meyer and Pulitzer Prize winner Roger Ebert. Russ' latter-day muse Francesca 'Kitten' Natividad stars — along with Uschi Digard, Ann Marie, June Mack, Candy Samples and Russ himself — in this unwashed look at Small Town, U.S.A., complete with faith healers, war criminals, bosom buddies and the loin-girding quest for sexual salvation. Because the original elements for *Beneath the Valley of the Ultravixens* had been stored in less-than-optimal conditions, Severin Films devoted months to the painstaking restoration of its weather-damaged negative before scanning it in 4K and compiling 2+ hours of new and archival footage.

SHELF LIFE
(Blu-ray)
Liberation Hall

On November 22, 1963, Mr. and Mrs. St. Cloud hear about the tragic assassination of the President of the United States, John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Consumed with paranoia and believing that WWII is now inevitable, they take their small children Tina, Pam, and Scotty and hide with them in their fallout shelter, never to leave it again. By 1993, the parents had died but their three adult children still live in the nuclear bomb shelter alone without any human contact. They've developed their own rules and rituals based on their fading memories of the life above, their old records that still work and whatever they catch on TV, when some station's signal reaches them now and then, for a few moments. Most of their day is spent in play sessions, in which they act out various common activities like going to school, eating out or staging musical numbers. They love to dance, sing and on occasion wrestle. Sometimes they even play their parents and re-enact the parents' speeches to them. At one point, Tina and Scotty even pretend to be boyfriend and girlfriend but in a quite innocent manner. They play many other bizarre games that only make sense to them and tell each other stories that are amalgams of things they heard about like the Bible, Superman or the Pledge of Allegiance. Scotty even has a make-believe superhero alter ego — Supercar. The movie uses vignettes to tell the story but there's also a thin central plot that revolves around the fact that Mom and Dad gave the only key to the vault with food to Pam. The story is based on a stage play written by the three actors who play Tina, Pam, and Scotty.

The time has come, the walrus said,

TO TALK OF MANY THINGS

of shoes and ships and sealing wax of cabbages and kings

by Sal Giarratani

RANDOM ACTS OF VANDALISM

While walking back from Hanover Street in the North End toward the MBTA Blue Line station this past Saturday afternoon by the corner of Richmond and Commercial Streets, a young woman and I noticed someone on a bike yelling about immigrants who then stopped at a parked car, smashed the driver's side mirror and ripped the mirror frame apart before riding off apparently looking for the next mirror to break. She immediately called 911, but the biker vanished up ahead and, seemingly, into history.

I was a police officer for 28 years but had never seen something like this being done in broad daylight. This was a total random act but I believe he had destroyed several other mirrors before the one we witnessed. Several vehicles on Richmond Street had suffered the same fate at the hands of the same bike.

What kind of madness is this? How crazy are we living today? I immediately wondered if "voices" were at play here. The guy sounded definitely angry with his loud outbursts and I had to wonder how many mirrors this guy might have broken over time. God help our society.

FATHER DAVID OFF TO THE PERU MISSIONS AGAIN

Following Mass two weeks ago, Father David Costello announced that he was shortly scheduled to fly down to Peru in his capacity as the director of the Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle. Father Dave assured me he would be back in the spring in time to celebrate Easter Mass and he wouldn't really be that upset about missing another cold Boston winter either.

Father Dave is the rector of St. Stephen's Church and director of the missionary order created by Richard Cardinal Cushing in 1958 with St. Stephen's in Boston's North End as the order's headquarters.

LATEST MAIL FROM THE INBOX

"Congrats to Ed Flynn as he takes on the additional duties of being Chairman of the 2025 Evacuation Day Events on behalf of the South Boston Citizens Association (SBCA), the oldest in the country.

Meanwhile, Flynn's fellow City Councilor Erin Murphy has vowed to continue to oppose the city's deal with the new women's professional soccer team to take over the operation of the so-called "Schoolboy Stadium" best known as White Stadium in Franklin Park.

Originally estimated to be around a \$50M contribution from the City, Murphy says the cost is now \$90M. How she and other opponents plan to hold this project up is a mystery to me as all accounts indicate it is full steam ahead on the part of the Wu Administration."

— Paul Feeney
from West Roxbury

A NEW KIND OF FIRE EXCELERANT?

The other day, I read a small news story in the *NY Post* on a case of arson. Reportedly a woman had been arrested

and charged with the crime. According to the story, the culprit used a bag of Takis (hot chips) to start the house fire. This kid-favorite bag of chips apparently contains all the right ingredients to start a good grease fire. Remember young people love it and eat them up.

SIXTY-THREE YEARS AGO, COUNTRY HIT

Back on January 8, 1962, country music legend Marty Robbins hit #1 status with "Ruby Ann." I heard it the other evening driving home while listening to *Willie's Roadhouse* on Sirius XM Radio. If you love real country music, you gotta listen to Willie's Roadhouse.

QUINCY'S CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT RE-ELECTED TO SECOND TERM

During the first Quincy City Council meeting of 2025, Ward 3 city council member Ian Cain was unanimously re-elected as Council President for the year 2025. Cain was first elected in 2015 and is now in the middle of his fifth two-year term representing Ward 3 Quincy.

MONTHLY COMMUNITY DINNER

The next Sacred Heart Parish Monthly Dinners will be held on February 12th at 303 Paris Street in Eastie. Remember the dinners are always free; bring a friend, too. Everything starts at 5:00 p.m. and runs until 7:00 p.m. Get some pasta and friendship here. Don't miss it, it's the best price in town. Who turns down something when the price is FREE?

GAETZ EYEING RUN FOR GOVERNOR?

Matt Gaetz, the former Florida congressman who had to withdraw his name as President-elect Donald Trump's pick for U.S. Attorney General over ethics allegations, has now told folks that he "is starting to think about" running for governor in Florida. All I can say about that is some people don't understand when to hold 'em or fold 'em. Gaetz needs to fold it up. He's too badly damaged to think about running for governor or dog catcher after all the self-induced trouble he seemed to have gotten himself mixed up in. Sometimes the best thing to do is just go away. He's lucky he doesn't have a number on the back of an orange jumpsuit.

NEVER TOO EARLY TO THINK ABOUT VALENTINE'S DAY

The Department of Elder Affairs in Revere are planning a Senior Valentine's Party on Wednesday, February 19th from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Tickets will go on sale on January 23rd.

For more information, call 781-286-8156. Entertainment by Alan LaBella. Venue and food TBD.

ONE LAST THING ON EASTIE ELVES

I always attend the annual Eastie Elves Toy Drive Party. I and everyone else seem to have a great time at the Hyatt at the airport. The food was great and the band playing the dancing music was sensational. I was on the dance floor forever dancing to the "7 Day Weekend Band." These guys were great. It felt like the old days when they called me Disco Sal.

FOLK MUSIC LEGEND PETER YARROW DIES AT 86

Peter Yarrow, one-third of the folk music trio Peter, Paul and Mary (Paul Stookey and Mary Travers) recently passed away at 86. The cause of death was bladder cancer, which he battled for four long years. The trio released 13 albums from 1962 to 2004, winning five Grammys. With Lenny Lipton, he co-wrote the group's iconic song "Puff, the Magic Dragon" released in 1963.

A HISTORY OF HOWARD JOHNSON

You know when I was growing up in St. Philip's Parish in the South End/Lower Roxbury neighborhood, one of my favorite places to go was the old Howard Johnson down by Mass and Cass, now a McDonalds. I used to be able to name all 28 (or was that 26?) flavors but, as I got a bit older, it was the final stop on the way home on a Saturday night after hanging out with my brother and friends in town, maybe at the China Pearl for a piping hot bowl of brown rice. When I lived in Quincy I found out this orange roof chain started there.

On January 27th, Boston historian and author Anthony M. Sammarco will be over at the Kennedy Center in Quincy talking about this iconic food chain. Besides the ice cream cones, who could forget their "Tender sweet" clam strips, or grilled hot dogs? I don't think I ever ate in this place during daylight hours.

For more info on this event, you need to call 617-376-1506 and register for it and sign up to join the Kennedy Center, too. Great place for "O.G.s" to hang out.

THE MAYOR IS A NEW MOMMY

Congrats to Mayor Michelle Wu and her husband Conor Pawarski on the birth of their baby girl Mira, who was born this past Monday, January 13th, a day before Mayor Wu's own birthday the following day, January 14th.

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Nanna & Babbononno

by John Christoforo

A Nostalgic Remembrance



Last week, I mentioned that I sold out my half of Paradise Travel Agency to my partner within the year after he married a young lady from Texas that we had met in Hawaii while conducting a tour put together for us from our wholesale partners, Summit Tours of New England. My desire to sell to my partner was accelerated by the fact that the young lady, now his wife, tried to change his social status and elevate him into her concept of what Boston society was. It strained out friendship to the brink. Not only did I sell out to him, we disassociated ourselves from each other, permanently. Unfortunately, my ex-partner and his wife parted company not too long afterward. When I explained the happenings of the day to Babbononno he confessed that he was always leery of my friend. Babbononno's comment was, "Your paesano is a taker, not a giver. be very careful, because he also likes to control." I know now that my grandfather was quite intuitive, as my former partner went through several other businesses and a few more wives.

I was not unhappy for several reasons, I was still teaching in Boston, playing music nights in both Boston and New York, working on a master's degree and knocking on doors out in Hollywood. Hollywood came about accidentally. I've mentioned in past columns that in the early '60s, I was hired as a substitute bass player for the Bob Blasser Show. Bob and I graduated Boston State (now U. Mass Boston) the same year. The shows he was doing were for Cardinal Cushing. It seems that when a young man from one of his parishes was killed in Vietnam, the Cardinal would put a scholarship together at that parish under the fallen serviceman's name, and kick the whole thing off with a variety show headed by Bob Blasser. Before Blasser headed off to college, he was a seminarian and became friendly with the Cardinal.

After that first show, Bob told the music director to keep me with the band. A year later, Bob and the music director had a falling out and parted company. I was asked to take his place. The Cardinal made a few inroads for Bob and me in New York, as he was friendly with Candid Camera's Allen Funt, and Hollywood producer Otto Preminger. Ironically, the young lady I was dating at that point-in-time, had an uncle affiliated with Paramount Studios. This opened doors for me that were

difficult to pass through under most circumstances.

One day, while teaching a class at Hyde Park High School, I received a call from the main office stating that a Mr. Jacobs, from Paramount, was trying to reach me. When I called back, my lady friend's uncle told me that he had some work for me with several of the production companies that filmed at Paramount. The principal encouraged me to take some time off, and I headed to L.A. Arriving late afternoon gave me a free evening before I had to report to Mr. Jacobs the next day. I discovered that there was a concert at the Hollywood Bowl that evening that included Lou Rawls singing with Count Basie's Orchestra and the Cannonball Adderley Quintet. Seeing I was staying close by, I walked to the location and enjoyed the music.

During intermission, I headed for the closest refreshment stand for a Coke, and ran into one of the two partners that ran Summit Tours of New England. We hugged, shook hands and planned to head out for a late-night snack after the concert. Later that night, my friend explained the happenings that caused him and his partner to close their Boston wholesale travel operation. His partner's wife was the intermediary factor that caused the breakup of the business. I told him my story which paralleled his, and instead of both of us lamenting, we laughed.

The next day, I gave the guard at the Paramount Gate on Gower Street my name, and he had me on his list of people to let in. I met with Mr. Jacobs who took a couple of my press photos and checked my Screen Actors Card. He then told me he could include me in crowd scenes and walk-ons and character parts in several of the shows being filmed at Paramount. He next wrote the names of the people I should contact at each production location and they would take it from there. I WAS IN!!!

That night, I met with my friend Howard, from Summit Tours. He had a couple of businesses he was involved in and wanted to know if I was interested ... I was. One was a nightclub similar to the Sugar Shack which was one of the hot spots in Boston. I could get involved as a silent partner. The second was a set of four 24-hour breakfast restaurants, owned by an egg farmer who wanted to go back to just raising chickens and farming. We could have

the restaurants without paying a cent. The farmer would take X percent per month from our gross and we could keep the rest. It was a dream come true.

So, here I was operating on two coasts. In Boston I was teaching school, going to school, and playing music. In New York, occasionally playing music. In Los Angeles, I was acting, and involved in two businesses ... talk about spreading yourself out too thin.

Don't ask me how, but I managed to do it all. Dad and Babbononno thought I was crazy. Mom just prayed that I knew what I was doing. I think she even made a Novena when I wasn't looking. When I made the decision to stay in Boston for a few months, strange things began to happen. First, the nightclub, called The Bayou, burned down one night. Second, the four restaurants, each called the House of Omelets, closed one night and my partner was nowhere to be found ... he just disappeared. The fun days in Hollywood were over. Through Mr. Jacobs at Paramount and my old friend Bob Blasser, I did bit parts in *Mod Squad*, *Mission Impossible* and *Star Trek*, all at Paramount. Through Bob, I did the same thing on the *Jonathan Winter's Show*, the *Red Skelton Show* and the *Lucy Show* all broadcast from CBS in Hollywood.

What changed all of this was the summer of '73. I, for about 5 years, was going at top speed and the summer of '73 was going to be vacation time for me. Just before the 4th of July, Uncle Nick called me to say a Motown group was coming through Boston minus a bass guitar player ... was I interested. I said I was, and teamed up with the Uniques for the summer. I told the leader that I would have to leave around Labor Day as I was a teacher in Boston and had to go back to work in September. He was able to get a replacement out of New York before Labor Day and I came back to Boston and headed for Cape Cod for the holiday weekend. The next day, I met Dean Saluti. He was working on his doctorate at B.U. and convinced me to apply for entrance to one of their doctoral programs. I took the exams and became a doctoral candidate. It afforded me a new best friend, Dean. I also met a young female student in one of my classes that I became enamored with. Within a year and a half, we were married and my life changed again, with Hollywood being pushed to a back burner and music relegated to weekends. I was 38 and robbed the cradle (Loretta was 25) and we've been together now for 48 years. Believe me, it's a wonderful life.

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The twice-baked, golden biscuits known as biscotti have secured their place as a timeless treasure in Italy's culinary tradition. The first Biscotti di Prato, originating in Prato, Tuscany, were crafted with simplicity and elegance. Featuring almonds as their main ingredient, they offered a nutty richness and satisfying crunch that laid the foundation for the many variations enjoyed today.

Sifting through my Nonna's recipes often leads to incredible discoveries, and her 'Anise Toast Biscotti' is truly a hidden gem. Unlike traditional biscotti, Nonna made these by spreading an airy, delicate batter across a baking sheet, as if she was making a sheet cake. Once baked, this soft, tender cake-like layer was sliced and returned to the oven for a second bake. As the warm, fragrant aroma of anise filled the house, the slices transformed into perfectly crisp, light-as-air biscotti.

With their delicate crunch and subtle sweetness, Anise Toast Biscotti make the perfect companion to a steaming espresso — whether enjoyed at breakfast or as an afternoon treat. This recipe is a heartwarming reminder that, in an Italian Nonna's kitchen, even the simplest ingredients have the power to create extraordinary results!

ANISE TOAST BISCOTTI *Biscotti All'anice*



- 6 large eggs
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup vegetable or seed oil
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 ½ teaspoons pure anise extract or oil

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease and flour a 13 x 8 x 1-inch baking sheet, then set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs on high speed for 6–7 minutes, or until they are light and fluffy. Gradually add the sugar and oil, continuing to beat until well combined.

Sift the flour and baking powder into the egg mixture. Add the anise extract and mix until fully incorporated. Allow the batter to rest for a few minutes.

Spread the batter evenly into the prepared baking sheet and bake for 20–25 minutes, or until the top is golden and the center is set.

Remove from the oven and let the baked layer cool slightly. Slice into biscotti-sized pieces. Arrange the slices cut-side down on the baking sheet and return to the oven. Toast for 5 minutes, flip, and toast for another 5 minutes, or until both sides are golden.

Remove the toasted biscotti from the oven and let them cool on the baking sheet until crisp. Store in an airtight container or enjoy immediately!

Marianna Bisignano is a psychologist for the Boston Public Schools and can be reached at nonnasrecipebox@gmail.com

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GOVERNMENT GANGSTERS, THE DEEP STATE, the TRUTH, and the BATTLE for OUR DEMOCRACY

BY KASH PRAMOD PATEL

Book Review by John Joseph Fahey

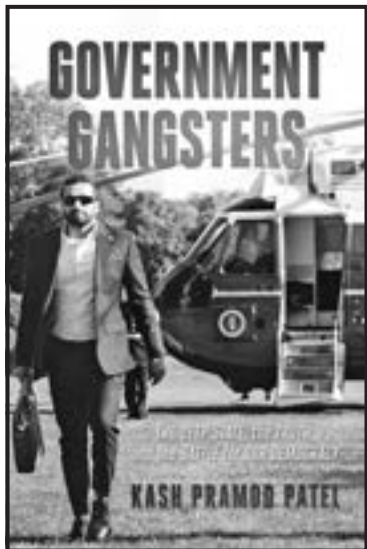
With a new presidential Administration about to get under way, it is appropriate that the 2023 publication *GOVERNMENT GANGSTERS, THE DEEP STATE, the TRUTH, and the BATTLE for our DEMOCRACY* by Kash Pramod Patel, and published by Post Hill Press, be reviewed.

Not only does this work allow its readers to get an understanding of what the term “Deep State,” refers respective to the United States federal bureaucracy, but permits one an awareness of how this concealed force operating within the confines of the US government has been effective to the point of obfuscating certain programs and objectives – mainly advocated and supported by a conservative Executive Office. Patel covers the time frame of just before the 2016 presidential election and concludes his book towards the concluding years of the Biden Administration. The crux of this narrative therefore take place within the First Trump Administration and several years after.

Not one to mince words, and to say that Patel is forthright would be an understatement; the author is candid and direct in his positions — positions incidentally that are backed up with several Appendices and copious amounts of evidence that well substantiates his argument.

The author, ready to assume leadership of the FBI with the incoming Administration, articulates that the Deep State has been responsible for undermining, or trying to undermine policies that the previous Trump Administration tried to enforce; and because those who comprise this invisible sector, and because of their Democrat leanings, have worked tirelessly in trying to achieve their objective.

Patel writes of the *Deep State* as those who are not only part of the government bureaucracy but are indeed, part of the Washington establishment itself. The author gives a well-reasoned definition of the challenges this postures for the republic: “The system was designed over a century ago in an attempt to prevent politicking within the federal government and the buying and selling



of government offices. However noble that goal was, the end result was to create a fourth branch of government effectively independent from elected leaders, a branch that can choose to follow or obstruct a president’s orders with minimal to no fear of repercussions. In effect, they have zero accountability, which leads directly to the type of gross politicization of the national security apparatus that we have seen time and time again.”

The book is not only an admonishment of the biased faction that this *Deep State* has become but an exposure of the government waste that needs to be curtailed. When reading this book, the reader will realize that government excess serves a purpose and that is to justify the *Deep States’* existence — something that the author has addressed and tried to remedy through his many years in working in government. Indeed, Patel is not a novice and has many years under his belt in service to the American public; in fact, Patel’s Curriculum Vitae is imposing to say the least.

Patel’s background includes federal prosecutor at the Department of Justice; Chief of Staff to the Acting Secretary of Defense, and senior advisor to the acting Director of National Intelligence among other titles and duties. He writes from experience and offers guidelines to help the government function efficiently without waste.

GOVERNMENT GANGSTERS ... is segmented in four parts. Part I discusses the Department of Justice; Part II, The Federal Bureau of Investigation and

Russia Gate; Part III, The National Security Council and the Intelligence Community; Part IV, The Department of Defense; and Part V, January 6th. The later chapters address the January 6th “Insurrection” with enough background information that the reader can ascertain what actually happened on that day. The former sections will also give insight on various department’s functions and how easily certain objectives can be adjusted or prevented due to those who advocate a particular political ideology. Certainly, as Patel points out, not in all cases will the *Deep State* win; Patel shares with reader’s his own experiences in making sure that the *Deep State* did not advance its cause.

Each section contains briefings and evidence that well articulates a review of various circumstances that gives authentication that an invisible group, albeit always present, is well positioned within the government infrastructure and is working to prevent, or at least thwart an agenda supported by a conservative Executive.

And, for those who have heard the term *Deep State* but were unsure of its definition or significance, then this book will dispel any uncertainties.

This work is 272 pages and is available at libraries and bookstores.

• Mayor Wu’s Round 2 of Tax Relief (Continued from Page 1)

saw an even larger decrease, a drop of 7%.

The new home rule petition, or round 2, asks to set the residential tax rate at \$11.03 per \$1,000 and the commercial tax rate at \$26.92 with permission to increase the maximum tax burden to 181.5%, beyond the currently 175% allowed by state law. The Wu administration is asking to increase the state limit for three years, with the burden decreasing to 180% the second year and to 178% in the third and final year.

During the first go-round, the Senate opposition suggested the city take a closer look at the 8% increase to the \$4.6

billion dollar budget and consider potential cuts prior to increasing the burden onto the commercial sector. The new proposal requests the adoption of the previous compromised plan, hiking the commercial tax increase to 181.5%, which was tossed out by business groups and Senate skeptics at the last minute. If there is no change in the tax shift by March, the city requests legal authority to offer tax rebates calculated by the Collector-Treasurer of the city and reviewed by the city council. If the compromise is adopted, confirm it for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027. It also calls for assisting low-income seniors by modifying eligibility criteria along with raising the exemption for small businesses on personal property to \$30,000, so a neighborhood business with less than that amount in personal property would not be taxed. Officials in Wu’s administration believe that will raise the exemption from 2,500 to 5,000 small businesses.

Wu is urging the city council to continuing standing with her to “assist their constituents across the city who have been shocked at the jump in taxes they owe, and work to provide immediate needed relief to residential tax payers this year, as tax bills are coming due. In a letter to the city council, Wu urged them to “deliver stability for all Boston taxpayers and excellent City services for all residents and stakeholders.”

LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000
Docket No. MI24C0967CA
In the Matter of
JOSHUA JAMES WALKER
CITATION ON
PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Joshua James Walker of Framingham, MA, requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to Michelle Andromeda Rae Cunningham.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Middlesex Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of February 03, 2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

Witness, HON. TERRI L. KLUG CAFAZZO,
First Justice of this Court
Date: January 02, 2025

Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate
Run Date: 01/17/2025

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Todisco Services, Inc., with its corporate office located at 171 Boston Street, Salem, MA 01970, under the provisions of Mass G.L. C. 255, Section 39A, will sell the following vehicles on or after February 10, 2025 by public or private sale to satisfy a lien for towing, storage, and all other fees due.

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VIN #1T7YR4E2191115307

2005 NISSAN FRONTIER
VIN #1N6AD07W25C432658

2009 FORD FOCUS
VIN #1FAHP32N99W168356

2002 BMW 525i
VIN #WBADT43412GZ99654

2018 TAOTAO TITAN
VIN #L9NTCBAC2J1010213

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Run dates: 01/17, 01/24, 01/31/2025

LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000
Docket No. MI25P0039EA
Estate of
MARY PAULINE TUCCI
Also Known As
MARY P. TUCCI
Date of Death: November 13, 2024
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by J. Steven Tucci of Winchester, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that J. Steven Tucci of Winchester, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of February 11, 2025.

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

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

Witness, HON. TERRI L. KLUG CAFAZZO,
First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 14, 2025

Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate
Run date: 01/17/2025

LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000
Docket No. MI24P6750EA
Estate of
JOAN KOURY
Date of Death: October 19, 2024
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Cheryl A. Horgan of Malden, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that Cheryl A. Horgan of Malden, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of February 05, 2025.

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

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

Witness, HON. TERRI L. KLUG CAFAZZO,
First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 08, 2025

Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate
Run date: 01/17/2025

LEGAL NOTICE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000
Docket No. MI24C1453CA
In the Matter of
AMAIA JEANNE ORTIZ
CITATION ON
PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by Amaia Jeanne Ortiz of Burlington, MA, requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to Amaia Jeanne Keith-Ortiz.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Middlesex Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of February 03, 2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

Witness, HON. TERRI L. KLUG CAFAZZO,
First Justice of this Court
Date: January 06, 2025

Tara E. DeCristofaro, Register of Probate
Run Date: 01/17/2025

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Joe Louis

It's been many years since a heavyweight title fight, or any fight, has been scheduled for fifteen rounds. The longest fights are set for today are twelve rounds. Younger and not so younger fans most likely don't have memories of the championship rounds, those going from the 12th to the 15th. Many a challenger for the crown would be in his first fight set to go for that distance on the night he stepped into the ring to face the champ. It was an extra pressure that had to be dealt with.

It seems like there must have been a lot of heavyweight title fights that lasted the full 15 rounds, but I couldn't come up with that any from memory. I decided to give a look and see just how many champions were taken the full fifteen and how many times. It's interesting what I found.

I took the period ending with Michael Spinks and went back to James J. Corbett. I am also only considering title fights, though I do note some instances where champions had been in bouts scheduled for the championship distance before or after they were champs.

Corbett, who had just 20 pro fights, never fought in a title fight scheduled for fifteen rounds. However, all his fights after losing the title were scheduled for more than fifteen rounds. None went the distance. His two challenges against Jim Jeffries were set for 25 and 20 rounds respectively.

Bob Fitzsimmons, James J. Jeffries, Jack Johnson, and Jess Willard also never engaged in title fights set for the 15-round limit. Though, as with Corbett, they did have fights scheduled for longer durations. Johnson's fights with Jeffries and Willard were put at 45 rounds each, though neither lasted the distance.

It was with the reign of Jack Dempsey that the fifteen round title fight became more common, though a number of Jack's championship fights were set for shorter distances.

His title winning fight with Willard was scheduled for 12 rounds. Three of his title defenses were set for fifteen rounds with only his bout with Tommy Gibbons going to a decision. As far as I can ascertain, this was the first heavyweight title fight that went to a fifteen-round decision.

It is notable that Jack's two fights with Gene Tunney were both set at ten rounds, while his fight with Jack Sharkey after losing the belt was scheduled for fifteen rounds.

Gene Tunney only defended the title twice after winning it from Dempsey. The first time against Dempsey over ten rounds. His final defense which was against Tom Heeney was set for 15, but ended in the 11th. Tunney did have a number of 15 round fights before becoming champion. Most notable among these were his battles with Harry Greb.

After Tunney retired, the fifteen championship fights became the norm. But how many actually went the full distance? Let's take a look.

From the time Max Schmeling won the title from Jack Sharkey via a disqualification, I was surprised by how few heavyweight title fights actually went the full distance.

Sharkey won the title in a return match with a 15-round decision, he went on to lose the title by knockout in his first defense against Primo Carnera.

Carnera would never win in a title defense by kayo, rather going the championship distance in his two successful title defenses, facing Paulino Uzcudun and Tommy Loughran. He then lost the belt to Max Baer by knockout.

Baer fought just one time as champion, losing by 15-round decision to James J. Braddock. This set the stage for a long run of heavyweight title fights being decided by knockout.

After Joe Louis won the title by stopping Braddock in the 8th round he was taken the 15-round distance by Tommy Farr in his first defense of the title.

Out of his 26 title defenses, only three went the full fifteen rounds, and two of these were his final two matches before retiring while still champion. Only Farr, Arturo Godoy, and Jersey Joe Walcott made it to the final bell with Louis. Both Godoy and Walcott were kayoed in return bouts with the champ. Farr never fought Louis again, so goes down as the only man to face Champion Joe Louis without having ever been knocked out by him.

After Louis retired, Ezzard Charles became the new champion after winning the title in an elimination bout with Jersey Joe Walcott. The fight went to a 15-round decision. Charles would successfully defend the title eight times. He went the full 15 rounds on three occasions. Once each against Joe Louis, Joey Maxim, and Jersey Joe Walcott. He lost the title to Walcott by knockout.

After winning the title from Charles, Walcott went the full fifteen rounds in a rematch with Ezzard before losing the title by kayo to Rocky Marciano. The string of heavyweight championship kayos would accelerate under Rocky who would go on to defend the title six times before retiring undefeated. The only man to make it to the final bell with Rocky was Ezzard Charles. Charles would be kayoed in a rematch.

Floyd Patterson was the next man to hold the belt having won it by knockout in an elimination bout against Archie Moore. Patterson's next ten fights would all be for the title either as challenger or champion. None would go the distance.

In his fifth defense, Floyd would be kayoed by Ingemar Johanson. They fight two more times with Patterson regaining and then defending the title from and against the Swede. The two-time champ would then lose the belt to Sonny Liston by kayo in one round and be knocked out again in the first round in a rematch.

Title fights have now gone from 1954 until 1961 without a single bout making it to the final bell. Next week, I will look at how much further this streak continued.

Patriots in Hot Pursuit of New Head Coach, Choosing Former Home Team Linebacker to Fill the Role



Welcome back Mike Vrabel — former Patriots linebacker and Hall of Famer is named the new head coach of the New England Patriots

Former linebacker of the New England Patriots Mike Vrabel, was in high demand by NFL teams. Not only did he interview with the New England Patriots last week, but he has also met with the New York Jets and Chicago Bears regarding their vacant head coaching positions. Vrabel was the third candidate to meet with the Pats and was considered to be the leading contender for the Patriot's job, prior to Sunday's announcement that Vrabel was coming back home to the Patriots organization as their newest Head Coach.

The team also met with former NFL coordinators Byron Leftwich and Pep Hamilton, who for all intents and purposes may have been held simply to satisfy the Rooney Rule, which states franchises with head coaching vacancies must conduct at least two in-person interviews with minority and/or female candidates, which the Patriots did by interviewing Leftwich and Hamilton.

According to NFL rules, the Patriots and Vrabel were able to reach an agreement because the team is in compliance with the Rooney Rule. Robert Kraft, owner of the Patriots had been hesitant to publicly discuss his interest in Vrabel, opting to hold his comments until after he had the opportunity to speak with all of the individuals interested in the Patriots head coaching position.

Vrabel is no stranger to the NFL, playing fourteen years in the league, eight of which were with the Patriots, including winning three Super Bown titles and was elected to the Patriots Hall of Fame last year. "I don't want you to take this organization for granted. I've been a lot of places. This is a special place with great leadership, great fans great direction, and great coaching. Enjoy it. It's not like this everywhere," he told the fans at a ceremony last year. As the former head coach of the Tennessee Titans, from 2018-2023, Vrabel finished with a 54-45 record. He guided the Titans to the playoffs three times, including 2019, as the Number 1 seed in the AFC Championship game. He returned to his home state of Ohio for the 2024 season and worked as a consultant for the Cleveland Browns. Prior to Tennessee, Vrabel was the Texans defensive coordinator in 2017, Houston's linebacker coach from 2014-2016 and a defensive assistant for three years at Ohio State.

The Patriots did have other interviews on their calendar, including a virtual meeting with Ben Johnson, the current Detroit Lions offensive coordinator. Johnson was prohibited from meeting with teams in person until three days after his season ends but is said to be holding zoom meetings with the Las Vegas Raiders, The Chicago Bears and the Jacksonville Jaguars. Johnson toyed with the idea of departing Detroit last year but ultimately decided to stay put. Under his leadership the Lions clinched the number 1 seed in the NFC. He began his coaching career at Boston College as a graduate assistant before joining the NFL in 2012 as a quarterbacks, wide receivers and tight ends coach in Miami before moving onto the Detroit Lions.

It was rumored that Vrabel expressed interest in rejoining the Pats at the end of last season when the team parted ways with long time head coach Bill Belichick. The Patriots opted to stick with their succession plan and elevate Jerod Mayo to the head coach position and was ultimately let go after just one season. With Vrabel still available, the Patriots seized the opportunity to lure him back into the organization.

Both Mayo and Vrabel are former Patriots defenders, but Vrabel comes with years of experience in assembling a solid staff and choosing top notch offensive and defensive coordinators. It would seem familiarity was an enticement in signing Vrabel given his long-time relationship with the Kraft's, and of course having an eager young quarterback in Drake Maye, the number 4 overall pick in the upcoming NFL draft and \$130 million in salary cap surely didn't hurt.

Vrabel must now prepare to hire his own inner circle, including the vital roles of offensive and defensive coordinators, with former Pats OC Josh McDaniels looking for work, he could easily glide back into his former position. After firing two head coaches over the past two seasons, it seems Kraft relied heavily on his instinct when choosing the new Head Coach of his beloved team, something he probably should have done at the end of last season.

College Football Championship Game Set for January 20th

The College Football National Championship game is scheduled for January 20, 2025, at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia. The matchup features the Ohio State Buckeyes facing the Notre Dame Fighting Irish. Ohio State secured their spot in the championship by defeating Texas 28-14 in the Cotton Bowl semifinal. A pivotal moment in the game was defensive end Jack Sawyer's 83-yard fumble return for a touchdown. Quarterback Will Howard was outstanding with 289 passing yards.

Notre Dame advanced to the title game with a 27-24 victory over Penn State in the Orange Bowl. The Fighting Irish overcame a fourth quarter deficit, with quarterback Sam Hartman leading a crucial touchdown drive, and kicker Mitch Kicker securing the win with a last-minute field goal.

The championship game marks the inaugural 12-team College Football Playoff format, which expanded from the previous four-team system.

The game will be broadcast live on ESPN with kickoff scheduled for 7:30 p.m. ET.