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Mayor Walsh and the Yang Family Laying the Wreath

14th Commemoration

September 11, 2015, started off drearily, but the weather did not challenge our community or purpose. We gathered as always for the Wreath Laying, Reading of Names, Commemoration Observation, and the family reception at the Taj hotel. A novel event followed the reception.

A number of determined family members attended the Wreath Laying, umbrellas in hand. The Yang family, relatives of Karleton Douglas Bye Fyfe, laid the wreath with Mayor Walsh, who spoke briefly. Then we proceeded to hold the Reading of Names ceremony in the House Chambers. This was our only concession to the weather. Kudos to the our event planners for restaging the reading so deftly!

The Commemoration Observation was lovely and moving. Patrick Bavis (brother of Mark Bavis) spoke for all of us as Emcee. Of particular note is that the video montage is newly expanded thanks to outreach by the Family Advisory Committee. Presentation of the Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery is covered in a separate article on page 2.

Special attendees included Governor Charlie Baker, who was the keynote speaker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, Attorney General Maura Healy and other state dignitaries, as well as Mayor Marty Walsh. In addition to participating in the ceremonies, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor joined us at the luncheon and listened to our stories and concerns. We look forward to their ongoing participation.

The luncheon agenda included a call for participation by family members in our new 9/11 Education Program, which is launching in 2016 and covered in a separate article on page 4.

Following the reception, the Boston Police Gaelic Column of Pipes and Drums, led by Jim Barry and joined by compatriots from Seattle, held a small ceremony at the 9/11 Memorial in the Public Garden to honor police and other members of the public safety community, as well as victims of 9/11 and their families (By now it was sunny.) The program included a moment of silence, remarks, and exquisite music. It concluded with the two corps continuing to play as they marched across the garden, much to the surprise and delight of passersby.

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In Memoriam

Senator Edward M. Kennedy
 Loretta W. Kowal

2015 Madeline Amy Sweeney Award

Albeiro Gomez, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, Major General L. Scott Rice

The Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery was created in February 2002 in honor of Amy Sweeney, an American Airlines flight attendant who died on September 11, 2001. The award is presented annually on September 11, to citizens of the Commonwealth who have displayed extraordinary courage, bravery, and heroism without regard for personal safety, in an effort to save the life of another.

The 2015 recipient, Albeiro Gomez, is a livery driver from Worcester who thought he was simply driving a family of three to their destination. Only when the State Police pulled over his vehicle on the Mass Pike did Mr. Gomez realize the fare was anything but routine. Turning around when the police ordered the adult male passenger out of the back seat, Mr. Gomez saw a weapon and realized the man was holding the woman and child at gunpoint. Without concern for his own safety, Mr. Gomez lunged at the man, allowing the woman and child to run to safety.

Following remarks by Major General L. Scott Rice, and accompanied by the troopers who participated in the action, Mr. Gomez accepted the Sweeney Award to heartfelt and sustained applause. Mr. Gomez modestly asserted that he did what any good citizen would have done under the circumstances. It is inspirational that Mr. Gomez is an immigrant who works long hours to realize the dream of bringing his wife and daughters from Colombia to this country, in fact, he dedicated the award to his family. We wish the Gomez family all the best when they reunite later this year.



Board members Linda Gay and Laura Ogonowski flank the 2015 Sweeney Award winner Albeiro Gomez



Major General L. Scott Rice and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito with the Sweeney family, Mike, Anna and Jack

Events

Massfund Sponsors Family Outing to Red Sox Game

On June 14, 2015, 40 family members and friends of the Mass 9/11 Fund met up at Fenway Park to watch the Red Sox take on the Blue Jays. After a pre-game luncheon of ballpark favorites like hot dogs, sausages and peppers, chicken fingers, and salad, we watched batting practice from next to the press box. This location is usually inaccessible to fans and affords unique views!

Then came the game. Unfortunately, the Red Sox continued their losing ways and lost 13-5. However, everyone made the most of the day by enjoying the beautiful weather, catching up with old friends, and making new ones.

We enjoyed our Red Sox outing and as always, special thanks to Alyse for organizing the event.

Rory Hoban



Rory, Pat, Bob and Matthew Hoban

Pope Francis Visits Ground Zero

I was honored when my husband, Matt, was selected from the lottery to attend the Pope's visit to the 9/11 Memorial/Museum on Friday, September 25. Most people said, "How Wonderful!" I have been thinking this over seriously as my feelings are very mixed.

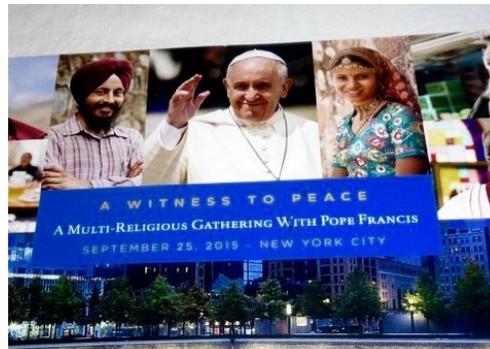
I work hard to make the memorial a spiritual place for me. I have tried to focus on how much our son, Matthew, loved the World Trade Center and his job at Cantor Fitzgerald. He couldn't wait to go to work every day. As time went on, I was able to feel some of his happy times at the WTC when I visited the reflecting pools—not just the painful memory of the attacks.

The memorial had a very different feel that day to me. It wasn't a place of quiet reflection. It again became a gathering of the 9/11 community at Ground Zero (a term many of us fought so hard to have dropped) and all of the initial grief and the carnage of the day came flooding back. Families were there holding photos of their loved ones, survivors still reeling from physical and mental disabilities shared their experiences, the press was in full force looking for families to interview, etc. It was a very public, orchestrated event.

Yet I am so glad his visit took place. The Holy Father's presence was powerful and strong and he was visibly moved by what he saw, especially down at the Slurry wall. Personally, there is never just one feeling connected with any 9/11 commemoration. Yes, I am grateful he was there to pray and bless the site yet so heartbroken that he even had to be there at all.

Loreen Sellitto

*Mother of Matthew,
23, WTC Tower One,
105th Floor*



Upcoming Service Events

We are looking for family members to volunteer their time for one of two Turkey Drives for Catholic Charities - or both! One will be held on Saturday, November 21 at 185 Columbia Road, Dorchester from 9 am to 12 pm. The other will be held on Monday, November 23 at Catholic Charities, 169 Court Street, Brockton from 10 am to 4 pm.

If you are able to attend please respond to FAC member, Sally White at saltwhite@aol.com

On Saturday, December 19, there will be a Toy and Gift Drive again at Catholic Charities, 169 Court Street, Brockton from 8 am to 2 pm. Please respond to FAC member, Diane Hunt at huntlarry278@comcast.net

Thank you for your interest in these special events!

MassFund Education Curriculum Committee Presents at Cardinal Spellman High School



Cardinal Spellman High School volunteers with Mayor Marty Walsh at the Boston 9/11 Memorial.

On October 23rd we met with 630 Students and Faculty at the Cardinal Spellman High School to present our Education Program. It was well received. Our first Education Program presentation, last summer, at Needham High School, was presented to two classes encompassing around 20 students. This time, it was a surprise, a good surprise, to have the attention of the whole school in one presentation. It was wonderful to see how much the school prepared for our visit. Candles were held by those students that participated at our Commemoration in the aisles while a student Carlie Brainard read a welcoming speech. (Excerpted below). Also included is a thank you from Joan Querzoli, who coordinated our visit.

We are looking forward to meeting with family members who have expressed interest in presenting. Alyse will contact those individuals once the Education Committee meets in the next couple of weeks.

Linda Gay
Chair, Board Education Curriculum Committee

Carlie Brainard: I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our honored guests who sacrificed their time to help educate, inform and inspire us at this 9/11 Memorial Assembly.

September 11th 2001

14 years ago some of us were barely walking and talking. 14 years ago some of us were not even born. Our generation has grown up in a post 9/11 world, with high surveillance and security as a normalcy. Part of being

generation has grown up in a post-9/11 world, with high surveillance and security as a normalcy. Part of being accustomed to these precautions causes us to forget why they began in the first place. Philosopher George Santayana once said, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

As a nation, we promised to never forget 9/11, and today, we are gathered to not only keep that promise, but breathe new life into it, so that we might not only educate ourselves and try to prevent tragedies like this in the future, but to also learn how to rise from the smoke and ashes, rebuild ourselves and our nation; with more strength and unity than ever before.

On September 11th of this year, a group of Spellman students were given the incredible opportunity to serve at the 9/11 Memorial Service Ceremony in Boston.

Sometimes when you are called upon to serve...
it's not necessarily to do something FOR someone
but rather to BE with them.

We had that privilege; to journey through this very difficult day beside those who had lost loved ones in the attacks of September 11th. What we soon discovered was that there was an abundance of love, peace, hope and a deep sense of community rising from the rain that day. With the help of our honored guests; Linda Gay, Sally White, Beth Chambers, and First Responders, Needham Firefighters, Shawn and Skip, we would like to share some of that experience with you today.

Joan Querzoli: THANK YOU! I am still at a loss for words to express my gratitude for what you have done for our entire school here at Spellman. From administration to faculty, staff and students...when you left the building the conversation continued. Teachers were wiping tears and sharing stories, administration was engaged in deep conversation about the necessity of 9/11 curriculum in our school and beyond and students were STILL milling about in small groups when I left at 4:30 discussing what you had said, what they had learned and the change that needs to take place in our world. I have NEVER experienced anything like it in my 16 years of teaching!!! If you ever wondered or doubted if God was using you to create change... don't!!! You have set in motion a ripple through this school, into our surrounding communities and out to the world. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! If there is anything I can ever do to help support your mission...please do not hesitate to call on me to help.

With a deep gratitude and an assurance of all my steady prayers.

Letter From The President

It is my privilege to return to the role of President of the MA 9/11 Fund and I would like to thank my fellow Board Members, Family Advisory Committee and Alyse Mazerolle, Operations Director, for the significant time and efforts contributed by all, over the last 14 years and most recently, I was honored to join so many family members at this year's 14th Commemoration services and luncheon.

As we discussed, there is a real need to educate our children about 9/11/01, our ongoing Remembrance efforts, and the lessons learned about 9/11. Linda Gay, our Board VP and family member, is spearheading our MA 9/11 Fund Education Curriculum Committee and will be reaching out to the many volunteers who offered to help with educating students over the next couple of months. Education will be a major focus of the Massachusetts 9/11 Fund in 2016 in addition to preparing for the Milestone 15th year anniversary. We want to have as many family members participating in these initiatives and greatly appreciate everyone who has signed up to participate on the Education Committee.

We welcome your input on ways that we can improve upon the Commemoration and build a meaningful Education program for our students. Please email Alyse.Mazerolle@Massfund.org if you have suggestions or want to get involved in planning for our 15th year Commemoration and Education Committee. We value your time and input and are here to serve our Massachusetts 9/11 Family needs.

Faith R. Arter
MA 9/11 Fund Board President

FAC Corner

The Family Advisory Committee Needs You!!

2016 will see a big upsurge in work at the FAC as we prepare for the 15th Annual commemoration of 9/11. The FAC represents you, the families, so we encourage you to become more involved. Our future meetings for the calendar year will start in March 2016, and will be on the second Tuesdays of each month, from noon to 2 pm at our office, located on the 4th floor of the Independence Wharf Building, at 470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston. We remain open to switching some of these meetings to a Sunday afternoon, if that is more convenient for you and we can increase membership to our meetings. In the past, some of you who work during the day have helped us in numerous ways, from your homes, without coming in for the meetings. If you are interested in joining our endeavors on behalf of the MA 9/11 community, we remain open to working with you to see what is convenient for your schedule. Your contributions and active participation in our work will bring to fruition the words "*We Will Never Forget*". Though it will soon be 15 years since that tragic day we lost of our loved ones, sometimes, it feels like it was only yesterday! As the years pass, we need to keep the message of 'remembrance and paying forward through service' going and we need your help to do so.

If you are interested in attending our meetings, calling in during our meetings, contributing from home, or discussing other options for participating in our working committee, please contact the FAC Chair, Teresa, via her email teresa.mathai@massfund.org or call her at 781-975-1248.

Family Newsletters

Going forward, the FAC will publish three newsletters during the calendar year, in May, August, and November. If you would like to help with the newsletter and can do so from home, please get in touch with us. We need help writing articles, editing, etc. If you wish to contribute a letter, article or news item for publication in an upcoming newsletter, please do so by emailing it to alyse.mazerolle@massfund.org. Each piece submitted will be reviewed and, if approved by the Family Advisory Committee, will be published in an upcoming newsletter.

Your submissions for the 2016 newsletter contributions should reach us by the deadlines of April 1st, July 1st, and October 1st. These newsletters go out by mail as well as electronically. Please email Alyse if you can help us save some trees by opting for 'electronic newsletters only'. Our newsletters are also posted on our website where you can see them or refer back to past issues or you can click on this direct link: [Mass 9/11 Fund Family Newsletters](#)

Send Us Your Updated Information

We are constantly updating our database to ensure Mass 9/11 Fund communication is reaching everyone. Please send any updates to your information to Alyse at alyse.mazerolle@massfund.org. If you feel you have not been receiving our electronic mail, please put info@massfund.org on your safe list to make sure your spam filter is not inadvertently rejecting mail from us. You always reserve the right to opt out of receiving communication from us.



9/11 Memorial, Boston Public Garden



Boston Gaelic Column of Pipes & Drums, 9/11 Memorial Police and Victim's Families Event, Boston Public Garden