

Table of Contents

Welcome To Spring 2016	1
2016 Commemoration	2
Planning for the 15th Anniversary	2
Photo Button Project	3
Madeline Amy Sweeney Award— Request for Nominations	3
Faces of Remembrance Project	3
Events	4
Holiday Pops	4
Turkey Drive and Christmas Gift Giving	4
Project Heart-To-Heart	5
Upcoming Events	6
The Massachusetts Military Heroes Fund Flag Planting	6
MassFund Sponsors Family Outing to Red Sox Game	6
FAC Corner	7
The Family Advisory Committee Needs You	7
Send Us Your Updated Information	7

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Welcome To Spring 2016

Spring is in the air and the Family Advisory Committee is busy planning events that include pure fun, service projects and, of course, the 15th Annual Commemoration. Please see page 2 for more details.

Gina Johnson, the portrait artist renowned for the Operation Home Ties project, is creating a sketch of each loved one for whom a photo is available. She is using video montage photos unless others are specifically provided. The gallery will grace our web site and possibly the commemoration. Please see *Faces of Remembrance Project* on page 3 for details. *The Photo Button Project* article on page 3 describes the photo button project being undertaken by our own Karin Charles.

The family-favorite Red Sox and Holiday Pops outings are in the works! The annual Thanksgiving and Christmas service projects, in collaboration with Catholic Charities, are also on our calendar. Read your newsletters and emails for notices of additional events as they are scheduled.

FAC members are pleased to volunteer their time on behalf of MA 9/11 families. We meet in Boston, generally monthly, between March and December. Our efforts include producing the three-times-yearly newsletters, organizing social and service events, and planning the Annual Commemoration. The committee work is an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Some remote participation is possible, as are special projects for those who would like to help out but cannot make the larger commitment. Please give this some consideration and contact Karin Charles (karin.charles@massfund.org) if you are interested.



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In Memoriam

Senator Edward M. Kennedy
Loretta W. Kowal

2016 Commemoration

Planning for the 15th Anniversary

The Family Advisory Committee is already hard at work putting together a respectful and dignified program for the 15th Commemoration being held at the Massachusetts State House. This is a milestone year and we are brainstorming some ways to pay tribute to that at this year's Commemoration. Stay tuned for new projects and events we will offer as we lead up to the 15th Commemoration.

We know this day is important to all of us in so many different ways, and we are trying to reach out to all of you for your thoughts and comments. Karin Charles, Vice Chair, will be coordinating family participation in the Commemoration. Below is a list of information we are seeking:

Photos of Your Loved Ones

Each year during the commemoration service at the MA State House, a beautiful video montage is projected on two large screens with pictures of our MA loved ones. Please get in touch with teresa.mathai@massfund.org if a photo of your loved one is not already included in our video montage.

Volunteer Name Readers, Bell Ringer and Master of Ceremonies

If you or another family member is interested in reading names during the commemoration, please send us your name and contact information. Children are welcome and encouraged to participate. Everyone is advised how to pronounce the names properly, and we are always looking to involve new people.

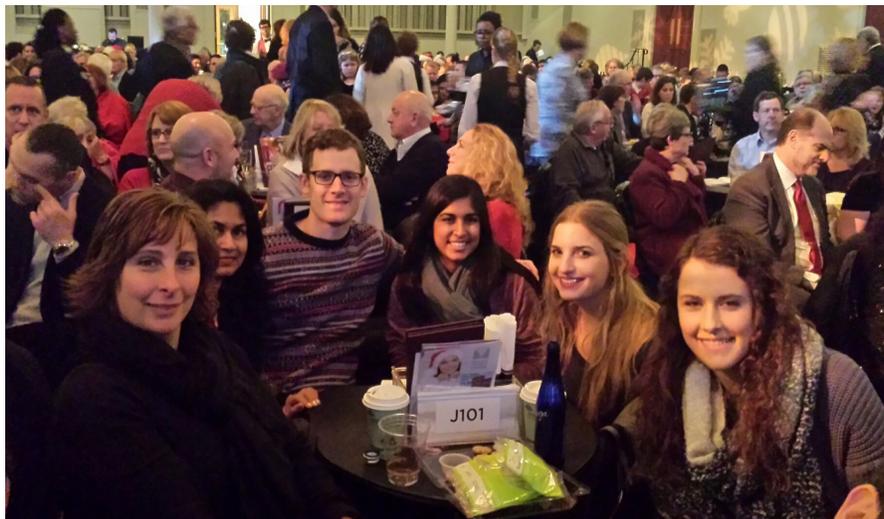
We also need someone to be the Bell Ringer, ringing the bell at the designated times, and a volunteer to be Master of Ceremonies at the State House. We will offer help with these roles.

Please send your information and comments to Karin at karin.charles@massfund.org.

The 2016 Commemoration invitations will be mailed out in early July. Please return your response cards promptly so that we can plan for everyone accordingly. We appreciate your being accurate with your responses as we are financially responsible even for those who do not attend. If you have recently moved, please make sure to send us your new address so your invitation reaches you.

Events

Holiday Pops



A number of families gathered for the always-popular holiday concert at Symphony Hall this past December, with conductor Keith Lockhart celebrating his 20th season with the orchestra. The Holiday Pops Concert left everyone in the Christmas spirit after a night of beautiful music, the traditional sing-a-long, and of course Santa.

L-R: Karin Charles, Teresa Mathai, Nick Van Niel, Michelle Mathai, Mijal Tenenbaum, Olivia Charles

Turkey Drive and Christmas Gift Giving

On Monday, November 23, 2015, seven family members and friends of the Mass 9/11 Fund helped to serve over 700 families full Thanksgiving meals in Brockton at Catholic Charities South under the direction of Beth Chambers. We worked from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm on a cold but beautiful and sunny day. In the afternoon we were moved inside due to the frigid weather. Those in attendance were Eileen West, Diane Hunt, Darlene McAleney and her friends Linda and Debbie, Sally White and her friend, Carol. Many thanks to those who attended. We hope it was a feel-good experience! Catholic Charities also offered our families the opportunity to join in another day of service in December to help with their holiday gift drive. We look forward to bringing these programs back every year.



Photo Button Project

In an effort to recognize this year's milestone 15th year anniversary, we will be making pinned photo buttons for family members of their loved ones to wear at the Commemoration. We will collect a photo of your loved one to use for the buttons. The buttons will be 3" in diameter. We will send an email with more details once this project kicks off, likely in April.

2016 Madeline Amy Sweeney Award—Request for Nominations

The Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery was created in February 2002 in memory of Amy Sweeney, an American Airlines Flight 11 flight attendant. 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 or those in imminent danger.

We are looking for nominations for this year's Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery. A completed nomination may be submitted using the online form on the website. [M.A. Sweeney Award Nomination Form](#). You may also download the form, print it, and mail it to: Madeline Amy Sweeney Award, c/o Executive Office of Public Safety, One Ashburton Place, Room 2133, Boston, MA 02108.

To be considered, the nomination must include: (1) evidence of Massachusetts residency; (2) names of two or more witnesses or individuals having personal knowledge of the facts surrounding the candidate's extraordinary endeavor; and (3) a detailed account of any public recognition the candidate has received for his or her endeavor, which includes recognition or awards from any local, civic, religious, or other organizations as well as any press coverage of the event in which the candidate displayed exceptional bravery performed between July 15, 2015 and June 15, 2016. Anyone can nominate a candidate and we encourage you to ensure your candidates' nomination by sending in your form.

Faces of Remembrance Project

Gina Johnson, a local talented artist who has been volunteering her time to create a portrait for each Gold star family, is now offering her time to sketch a portrait of each of our MA 9/11 loved ones. She takes over 2.5 hours to sketch each portrait and she hopes to complete this project by the 15th Anniversary.

Gina says the eyes, which she believes are the mirrors of the soul, have always been the focus of her portraits. She hopes that through the portraits, the images of our loved ones will be forever etched in the hearts and minds of all those who view them.

Please go to the website of Gina Johnson and her brother Paul Roth to see other sketches and to read their story. www.operationhometies.com They have already made several 8" by 10" sketches for veterans and Gold Star families who have lost loved ones after 9/11.

If you have not responded yet, please contact Gina by email: ginajohnson57@comcast.net, with any questions or to provide her with the following information: your name, your loved one's name, your connection to the loved one, your specific request, and if you would like to see a preview copy by email. If we find multiple requests from families, we will have to determine who the main contact is. Though we can only make one original sketch per family, you can make copies of these if you would like others in your family to get one.

We plan to archive an electronic copy of these sketches on our website and are also looking into the possibility of a 'Wall of Remembrance' display around the 15th Anniversary. Stay tuned!

Project Heart To Heart

Over the past 15 years, Tuesdays Children has been organizing programs to support children and families impacted by 9/11. They have since broadened their outreach to include families of first responders as well as military families who lost a loved one in post-9/11 conflict. One of the new programs called "Project Heart to Heart" enables 9/11 widows to help military widows recover and thrive for a lifetime.

The third such program was hosted in Jacksonville, Florida from January 31st to February 3rd. It brought together 14 amazing women from around the country - seven 9/11 widows, including Karin Charles and Teresa Mathai from MA, and seven military widows - for a three-day resiliency retreat. The women shared their stories and coping strategies and joined in healing and relaxation exercises. This began building lifelong friendships and support. The resilience of all of the participants was inspiring.

Tuesday's Children's facilitators, who are leaders in their field, nourished the group's hearts and minds, utilizing the evidence-based life skills program Creative Insight, as well as the Dignity Model created by Donna Hicks at the Harvard University Weatherhead Center for International Affairs

After the retreat, the women vowed to keep in touch. Here is some feedback from past participants.

"Thank you so much for giving me the chance to see I can get stronger every day."

"I came away from this program with new, life-long friendships and renewed resilience. I appreciate all that Tuesday's Children provides, and especially appreciate their opening the doors to a new sisterhood that I will cherish forever!"

If you are registered with Tuesday's Children and wish to participate in one of their programs for children or adults, you can visit their website www.tuesdayschildren.org for details regarding their ongoing programs or answer their emails sent to registered 9/11 family members.



Upcoming Events

The Massachusetts Military Heroes Fund Flag Planting

The Massachusetts Military Heroes Fund (MMHF) will be planting its signature Flag Garden for Memorial Day again this year, and MassFund Family members and friends are invited to participate.

The 37,000 flags on Boston Common at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument represent every Massachusetts service member who gave his or her life defending the country since the Revolutionary War. Without the participation of hundreds of volunteers, MMHF would not be able to provide its families and the public with this breathtaking tribute to the true meaning of Memorial Day. MMHF needs volunteers to help plant the flags and stand watch over them throughout Memorial Day weekend. This is a wonderful opportunity for MassFund families to work together in community service and help honor and remember the fallen service members and their families.

Please go to [MMHF Flag Planting Facebook page](#) for details on how you can help. Flag planting begins on Wednesday, May 25th at 1 pm. Volunteers may stay however long their schedule permits.

To pre-register for any of the volunteer efforts, please send an email to volunteers@massmilitaryheroes.org. Companies interested in sponsoring a team of volunteers should send an email to dnealon@massmilitaryheroes.org.



Nancy Bernard at work at the MMHF flag planting 2015



Flags planted on Boston Common at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument

MassFund Sponsors Family Outing to Red Sox Game

The Mass 9/11 Fund is pleased to sponsor a fun-filled day at Fenway for the families!

Join us to watch the Red Sox take on the Seattle Mariners, **Sunday, June 19th at 1:35 pm.**

We have 40 tickets available for purchase at **\$35 each**, which includes the game and a pre-game reception at Fenway Park. You may reserve up to 6 tickets per family. Should demand exceed our supply of tickets, we will do our best to add to our block of tickets.

Please email your reservation request to alyse.mazerolle@massfund.org **starting April 15th at 9 am**. To make it fair, early requests cannot be considered. Tickets will be issued on a first come, first served basis. We regret that refunds cannot be made for cancellations.

Family members meeting certain financial needs criteria may be eligible to purchase tickets at a lower cost. Please contact Alyse Mazerolle at [\(617\) 482-2911](tel:6174822911) for additional information.

Once you have been awarded your tickets, Alyse will send you an invoice which you can pay either by credit card or check payable to the MA 9/11 Fund, to the following address: MA 9/11 Fund, Attn: Alyse Mazerolle, 470 Atlantic Ave, 4th FL, Boston MA 02210.

We hope you will take this opportunity to attend this wonderful day at Fenway Park!

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 Tuesday 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.



Callery Pear Survivor Tree at the National September 11 Memorial, NY

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.