

THE LYNN JOURNAL

Thursday, June 30, 2022

Our offices will be closed Monday, July 4
Advertising deadline is Friday at 12:00 noon



The Wyoma Little League Softball All-Stars display their District 16 championship banner following their victory over Peabody Tuesday at Lynn Woods Field. From left, are Reighlynn Comeau, Kelsey Kwiatek, Gwen Protz, Emma Pento, Gabby Doney, Bella Veilleux, Erin Furlong, Adyson Newhall, Jianny Bernabel, Kiley Schipilliti, Sienna White, Kaylee DiNicola, Lina Owumi, Coaches Becca Owumi, Coach Jay Newhall, Coach Stephanie Schipilliti, Head Coach Donny DiNicola, and Wyoma President Dan Veilleux.

Wyoma softball captures District 16 title

By Cary Shuman

The Wyoma Little League softball 12-year-old All-Star team completed a sweep of the District 16 Tournament with a 9-6 victory over Peabody Tuesday at Lynn Woods Field.

The potent duo of right-handed pitcher Adyson Newhall and

catcher Kaylee DiNicola helped Wyoma storm through the five-team field with a 4-0 record, besting Saugus, Winthrop, and Peabody twice.

Newhall, the younger sister of St. Mary's s All-Scholastic pitcher Lily Newhall, improved her record to 15-0 for the season while averaging 10 strikeouts per

game.

DiNicola has been a hitting machine all season, belting 11 home runs while posting an astronomical batting average above .700. The 5-foot-7-inch, right-handed cleanup hitter and AAU player had two hits and an

Please see WYOMA Page 5

Faessler's Fantastic Finale

Classical star named Agganis Game Softball MVP

By Cary Shuman

If this was the last-ever game of the softball career of Izzy Faessler as she now heads to UConn to study biomedical engineering – you couldn't have asked for a better ending.

Faessler, the Greater Boston League Co-MVP for the Lynn Classical softball team, put on a show in the annual Harry Agganis Softball Classic Sunday at Fraser Field.

Faessler belted a triple in a display of her power, speed, and

baserunning abilities. She also had a two-run single, scored two runs, and was flawless behind the plate on a 90-degree afternoon.

"It was hot," said Faessler, who caught for Everett pitcher

Please see FAESSLER Page 7

Softball tournament will honor the memory of Franki Galeazzi

By Cary Shuman

Jennifer Carter has announced that her annual women's softball tournament is being dedicated in memory of former Lynn Classical High School sports star Francesca "Franki" Galeazzi.

Twenty-three teams will compete in the slow-pitch tournament that is scheduled for Sept. 30-Oct. 2 at Harry Ball Field in Beverly. The tournament is in its ninth year.

"We usually pick a Beverly cause, but I felt it was really important that we give back to Lynn as well and we chose to honor Franki," said Carter.

Franki Galeazzi was an all-time great at Classical and continued her athletic career at Salve Regina University. Franki, who was admired by all, died on March 8, 2022, after a battle with mental health challenges. She was 25.

Carter said there will be a speaking program and special tribute to Galeazzi on the opening night of the tournament. A Lynn Classical alumni team will be one of the participants in the tournament.

Carter said the softball tournament will promote awareness of



Jennifer Carter
Tournament Director

mental health issues.

"After the tournament, we'd like to dedicate a bench in Franki's name in Lynn and present a scholarship in her memory," said Carter.

Harrington Trophy of Lynn is sponsoring the awards for the tournament.

Jennifer Carter is the mother of former St. Mary's state championship basketball standout Kayla Carter, who has played in the Beverly softball tournament in past years. Kayla played college basketball at Bridgewater State University.

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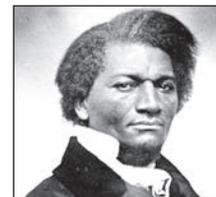
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“What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?...What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim,” Frederick Douglass, July 5, 1852, at Corinthian Hall in Rochester, New York



NSJA to host Reading Frederick Douglass Together event on July 3

By John Lynds

On September 29, 1841 while living in Lynn, famed abolitionist and orator Fredrick Douglass and his friend James N. Buffum entered first-class cars on a Eastern Railroad Company’s train that was heading from Lynn Central Square station to Newburyport.

The conductor of the train approached the two men and ordered them to leave the car. Refusing to do so, two brakemen tried to physically remove the men.

For several days the train did

not make the stop in Lynn knowing in the event that Douglass would come aboard again.

The event became one of the first protests against segregated transportation that would later inspire a whole new generation during the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

On Sunday, July 3 in honor of Douglass’ famed speech, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” North Shore Juneteenth Association (NSJA) will host a Reading Frederick Douglas event at Frederick Douglas Park on Exchange Street in Lynn.

The event will kick off at 6 pm and feature musical perfor-

mance, dance performance, vendors, that will culminate in the reading and discussion of Douglass’ 4th of July speech.

This will be the first year NSJA will have the honor of collaborating with Wendy Joseph to organize the community reading of Frederick Douglass’ speech. For years Joseph spearheaded Lynn’s annual reading of the speech.

Douglass escaped from slavery in 1838 and lived for many years in Massachusetts. He delivered the speech on July 5, 1852, in Rochester, New York, to the Rochester Ladies’ Anti-Slavery Society.

Using Indepedence Day as a backdrop, Douglass’ speech is widely known for its irony and bitter rhetoric critiquing the promises of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence and how those promises did not extend to the slave.

Funded in part through a grant from Mass Humanities, the Reading Frederick Douglass Together event will feature people gathering to read parts of Douglass’ “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” speech until they have completed it.

While Mass Humanities has hosted their own signature Reading Frederick Douglass Together

events for some time, the organization provides grants to organizations interested in hosting a program in their community like NSJA.

“Lynn was home to Douglass and his family during a pivotal period in his life, so this event is special to Mass Humanities,” said Mass Humanities Executive Director Brian Boyles. “We’re so glad to see the partnership between our friends at NSJA and Wendy Joseph, one of the great leaders of Reading Frederick Douglass Together for years.”

Seven economic development projects supporting job growth approved

The Commonwealth’s Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) approved seven projects for participation in the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) including Soliyarn, LLC of Lynn.

Soliyarn, LLC has a proprietary textile coating system that produces conductive and water-repellant coatings used to

create smart textiles and DWR (durable water repellent) fabric. The technology was originally developed out of a research lab at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and the company was formed in 2018 to commercialize the technology further. The project entails a 21,000-square-foot renovation of a building in Lynn for manufacturing and

R&D. Soliyarn will create 105 new full-time jobs, retain seven existing jobs, and make a private investment of \$7.75 million. The City of Lynn plans to approve a five-year TIF valued at approximately \$200,529. The EACC Board has approved EDIP investment tax credits in the amount of \$1,225,000.. These projects are expected to create 451 net new

jobs and retain 148 jobs throughout Massachusetts, while leveraging approximately \$209 million in private investment. Of the applicants this quarter, five are manufacturers and four are located in Gateway Cities. Additionally, three new Vacant Storefront Districts were approved.

The EACC has approved 320 economic development projects

since the beginning of the Baker-Polito Administration in January 2015. These projects will lead to the creation of 24,892 jobs, retention of 41,383 existing jobs, and will leverage almost \$8.1 billion in private investment. Additionally, the EACC has assisted 139 manufacturing companies and 144 companies in Gateway Cities during this period.

What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July?

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COUNCILOR-AT-LARGE BRIAN FIELD RECEPTION AT ROLLY'S

Councilor-at-Large Brian Field hosted a reception June 22 at Rolly's Tavern on the Square.



Councilor-at-Large Brian Field, with his parents, Stella Field and Howard Field.



Ward 3 Councilor Coco Alinsug, Ward 2 Councilor Rick Starbard, School Committee member Lorraine Gately, Mayor Jared Nicholson, School Committee member Donna Coppola, Councilor-at-Large Hong Net, Ward 5 Councilor Dianna Chakoutis, Ward 4 Councilor Richard Colucci, State Rep. Dan Cahill, Ward 6 Councilor Fred Hogan, and School Committee member Eric Dugan.



Joan Regan, Ann Marie Leonard, Councilor-at-Large Brian Field, Marie De Joie, and Anne Marie Jonah.



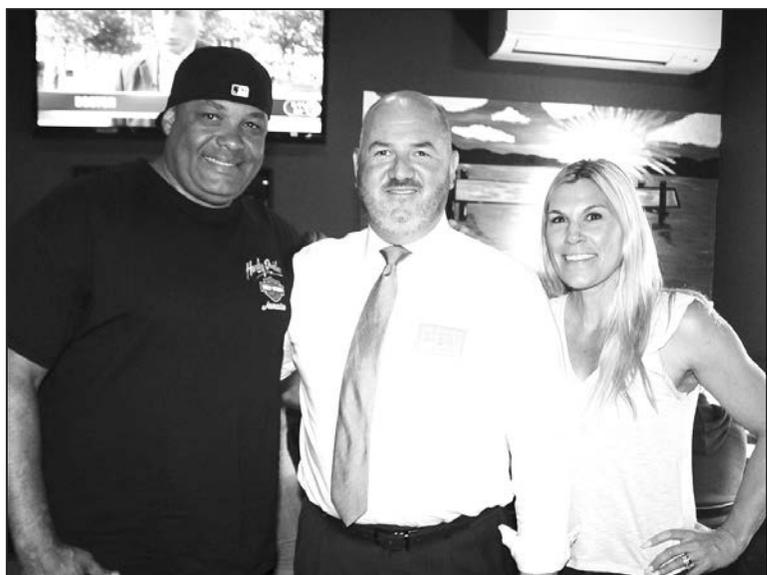
Councilor-at-Large Brian Field, with his wife, Stefani Field, and their daughters, Emma Field and Sydney Field.



Councilor-at-Large Brian Field and Rolly's Manager Kristen Colella.



Councilor-at-Large Brian Field, pictured with former St. Mary's basketball coach James Kefalas and Linda Kefalas.



Councilor-at-Large Brian Field recognized Mass. State Trooper Donald Brown for receiving a state award for heroism. Also pictured is Mr. Brown's wife, Jaime.



Lynn Mayor Jared Nicholson and Councilor-at-Large Brian Field.

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EDITORIAL

FOURTH OF JULY MEMORIES

This weekend brings the Fourth of July, the celebration of the birth of our nation and an opportunity for all of us to partake in summertime fun with friends and family.

The Fourth of July brings back fond recollections from our youth, when we celebrated the Fourth with cookouts at our grandmother's house at Yirrell Beach on Pt. Shirley in Winthrop.

Those happy summer memories of sparklers, smores, and bonfires on the beach with family members, many of whom are no longer with us, are etched indelibly in our mind's eye and always bring a smile to our face as if they were just yesterday, though they occurred decades ago.

However, the Fourth of July also brings back a sad memory of a friend, an athletic young man in his 20s who was one of our basketball buddies, who became intoxicated at a backyard barbecue. He fell off a small porch when he missed a step and fractured some vertebrae, leaving him a paraplegic and wheelchair-bound for the rest of his life.

That tragic event happened almost 30 years ago, but the shock of hearing of our friend's accident, and then seeing him for the first time in a wheelchair, is something we never will forget.

All of us should make it a priority to do what we can to ensure that our loved ones and others with whom we'll be spending the holiday do so in a safe and reasonable manner.

That is doubly true if any of our activities are water-related or if driving is involved. We should keep in mind that over-imbibing in alcohol always is an invitation for a tragic situation, even in our backyards.

In addition, the illegal use of dangerous fireworks will result in many trips to the emergency room by those who suffered eye injuries, severed fingers, and burns.

In the 1800s and early 1900s, the Fourth of July served as a convenient excuse for young men to go on a rampage throughout their communities, vandalizing public and private property. The term "a safe and sane Fourth" was introduced at the start of the last century to discourage such wanton acts of rowdiness.

Although we no longer celebrate the Fourth as recklessly as our ancestors did, nonetheless we all must do our part to make sure that we observe the Fourth's festivities safely and sanely, both for ourselves and our loved ones.

We wish all of our readers a happy, fun-filled, and safe Fourth of July.



GUEST OP-ED

MBTA crisis is an emergency for our region

By Joe Gravellese

When I ran for office two years ago, I did so because I was deeply concerned about the decaying of our transportation system. This crisis impacts the entire Greater Boston region, but is especially challenging to residents of Revere, Chelsea, East Boston, and other nearby communities.

Two years later, these problems have only gotten worse - and in the case of the MBTA, it's reached a boiling point, with a series of service disruptions and safety failures that have damaged the revival of Boston's downtown, contributed to the return of gridlock traffic to Greater Boston, and deeply inconvenienced people who rely on the T to get to work.

This year, I am not running for anything - I'm not asking for anyone's vote. I'm just pleading, as a resident, for our region's elected officials to make addressing this an urgent priority.

The state of the T threatens the future of our economy and contributes to our housing cost crisis. People who never set foot on the T - which includes an overwhelming majority of elected officials - need to understand how the state of the T greatly impacts *everyone's* future - not just

people who ride it.

Even with reduced ridership post-COVID, hundreds of thousands of trips are taken on the T every day. Imagine even just 30% of those trips being replaced by additional cars on the road. How much worse would that make traffic gridlock?

The ecosystem of research institutions, hospitals, biotech facilities, entertainment and cultural venues, financial services, and other industries that have made Boston an economic success, and make the quality of life in Greater Boston so high and in-demand, is supported by hundreds of thousands of service workers, many of whom take the T to work every day - and many of whom are our neighbors.

Nearly one in four Boston households do not have a car, including nearly half of low-income households.

A fraction of these households shifting to commuting by car makes the already-congested roads worse for everyone. For others, saving on the \$5,000+ a year in expenses of car ownership are what allow them to stay here in the first place. The cascading effect of T failures will price even more working people out of the area and contribute to worse sprawl and traffic, not to

mention worse quality of life for people forced into ever-longer commutes - and an even greater challenge for employers looking to hire workers or start small businesses.

The economic success of our region is based largely on legacy investments in public infrastructure and public services. People don't come to Boston for the nice weather or for the low taxes. They come for the vibrant local economy, public services, and culture - something that simply can't exist in its current form without the T.

The warning signs on the future of the T have been flashing red for a long time. In 2009, the D'Alessandro Report on the T said in its opening pages that "the outlook is bleak" and warned about the T's deferred maintenance and structural deficits. Problems like these don't magically go away with the passage of time - they only get worse.

The good news is that it is not too late to reverse course and address these problems. Already, there are promising signs that state legislative leadership is noticing this crisis. Last week investments to address the safety concerns cited by the federal

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THE LYNN JOURNAL

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Wyoma CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

RBI in the title-clincher against Peabody.

Newhall had two base hits and two RBIs in the game. Lina Owumi, sister of 13-year-old basketball phenom Bella Owumi of St. Mary's, had two hits and an RBI.

Trailing 3-1 early, Wyoma's offense broke through before Newhall had her fastball clicking in the late innings.

First baseman Kiley Schipillitti made the play of the game with a lunging stab in the seventh, taking a basehit away from Pea-

body. Second baseman Sienna White continued her stellar season-long defensive prowess in the game.

"I'm very proud of how we've played as a team this season," said Wyoma manager Donny DiNicola, a graduate of Lynn Tech where he was a baseball teammate of Detroit Tigers draft pick, Yuri Sanchez. "We're looking forward to continuing our season and having fun playing in the sectionals."



The Wyoma Little League Softball All-Stars' standout catcher Kaylee DiNicola and ace pitcher Adyson Newhall are pictured after helping the team capture the District 16 title and advance to the state sectionals in Woburn.



The Wyoma All-Star coaches and their daughters are pictured after winning the District 16 championship. From left, are Jay Newhall and Adyson Newhall, Donny DiNicola and Kaylee DiNicola, Becca Owumi and Lina Owumi, and Kiley Schipillitti and Stephanie Schipillitti.



Wyoma Little League President Dan Veilleux presents a championship souvenir pin to Emma Pento of the Wyoma Softball All-Star Team during the post-game ceremony.

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AGGANIS FOUNDATION AWARDS

An awards program was held Sunday at Manning Field, kicking off Harry Agganis Week and the lacrosse, softball, baseball, basketball, soccer, and football games that follow.

Lynn community leaders and media were honored for their outstanding contributions to the Agganis tradition and high school athletics.

Agganis Week Executive Director Paul Halloran served as master of ceremonies for the program.



Freelance Writer & Editor Matthew Roy – recipient of the David C. Weidner Media Award – with Executive Director Paul Halloran.



Manning and Fraser Field Facility Manager Rich Avery – recipient of the Harold O. Zimman Foundation Award – with Executive Director Paul Halloran.



Bishop Fenwick Football Coach and Athletic Director David Woods – recipient of the Dr. Elmo F. Benedetto Athletics Award – with Executive Director Paul Halloran



Lynn Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patrick Tutwiler – recipient of the Paul F. Cavanagh Community Award – with Executive Director Paul Halloran, Madeleine Tutwiler, daughter



*Matt Roy (David C. Weidner Media Award), *David Woods (Dr. Elmo F. Benedetto Athletic Award), Madeleine Tutwiler, daughter, of *Dr. Patrick Tutwiler (Paul Cavanagh Community Award), Mayor Jared Nicholson with his son, Henry, and *Rick Avery (Harold O. Zimman Foundation Award). *Agganis Foundation Hall of Fame.



2022 Agganis Scholarship and All-Star Athletes.

Faessler/ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Celeste Fucillo, the other GBL co-MVP. “I’m used to catching different pitchers from playing AAU.”

The only spoiler on Faessler’s perfect day was that the North team rallied in the seventh to tie the South at 9-9 and deny Izzy the honor of the game-winning RBI.

But it didn’t deter the media from selecting Faessler as the unanimous South Team MVP.

“It feels great [to be MVP] and I got to play softball with Reese [Classical teammate Reese Brinkler] – she’s my favorite,” said Faessler.

A graduate of Wyoma Little League and a seven-year player for the New England Storm AAU team, Faessler played third base for Classical in her freshman year. Faessler moved to catcher and became a two-time GBL All-Star.

She excelled for two head coaches, Erica Richard and first-year head coach Joe Morin.

“She [Richard] was such a good coach,” lauded Faessler. “She always made us work hard. She was someone to look up to, and you could always talk to her. And we had a great year with Coach Morin, who really helped us reach our potential.”

Joe Morin, who led the Rams to a 15-7 record and win over Medford in the State Tournament, said it was honor to coach in the Agganis Classic.

“It feels awesome to have one of your players win the MVP Award and have Reese playing very well, too,” said Morin. “They deserved this recognition.

They were outstanding all year. They were my two captains and great leaders and had excellent seasons.”

Izzy Faessler inherited a superstar-caliber athletic tradition from her father, Scott Faessler, who led Milford High to back-to-back Central Mass. Super Bowl titles and was recruited by Division 1 colleges before he became a record-setting football and baseball player at Framingham State University. He was inducted into the Milford High and Framingham State Halls of Fame and later played several seasons for the Lynn A’s in the North Shore Baseball League.

Izzy’s mother, Lee Faessler, recalled her daughter’s beginnings in the T-Ball Division of Wyoma Little League.

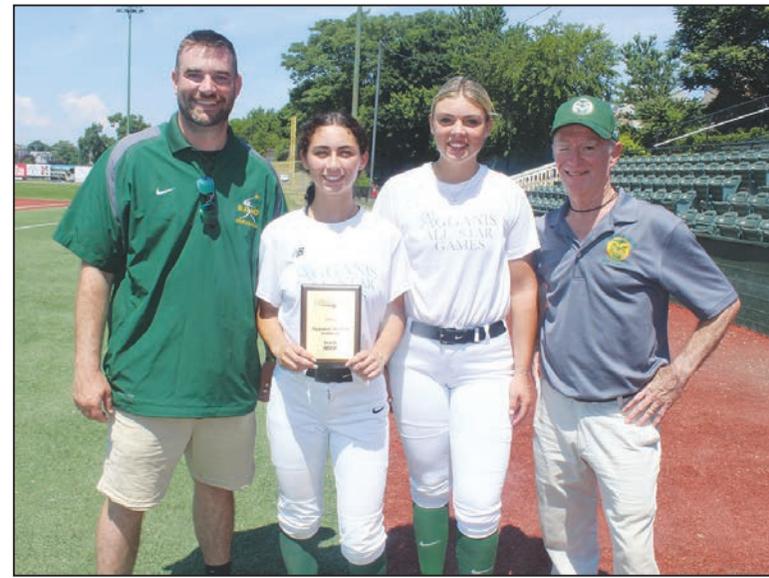
“I’m very proud of Isabella,” said Mrs. Faessler. “I’ve been following her since T-Ball at age five. She played travel softball for the Storm, and it’s come full circle, though. [Classical assistant] John Gambale was her coach for the Storm. It’s a good ending for Isabella to her softball career. And she’s a good role model for her brother (RJ Faessler, a two-sport athlete at Classical).”

Izzy’s academic career also ended with a major honor as she received one of the prestigious Harry Agganis Foundation Scholarships at the awards program Sunday morning.

“I had a great four years at Classical,” said Izzy Faessler, no doubt a future Hall of Famer like her proud dad.



Agganis Softball MVP award recipient Izzy Faessler of Lynn Classical, pictured with her mother, Lee Faessler.



North All-Star Coach Joe Morin of Lynn Classical, Agganis Softball All-Stars Izzy Faessler and Reese Brinkler, and Lynn Classical assistant softball coach John Gambale.



The Lynn English, Lynn Classical, Lynn Tech, and St. Mary’s baseball programs were well represented in the Agganis Baseball Classic Sunday at Fraser Field. The Lynn delegation included South All-Star Coach Esteban Paula, Lynn English players Yordy Contreras and Victor Calderon, and Ray Contreras, Jason Donohue, Zach Fisher, and Ryan Fraher of St. Mary’s, Ben Tartarini and Domenic Giordano of Lynn Tech, and Tyler Wilson of Lynn Classical.



North Team Softball MVP Natalie Aiello of Gloucester and South Team MVP of Lynn Classical, pictured after receiving their awards Sunday at Fraser Field.



Swampscott High baseball coach Joe Caponigro (left) and his former player, Lynn English baseball coach and alumnus Esteban Paula, were on opposite benches as the leaders of their respective teams in the Agganis Baseball Classic Sunday at Fraser Field.



Lynn Classical’s Izzy Faessler (second from left) is pictured with her New England Storm AAU teammates and Classical coaches John Gambale and Joe Morin following the Agganis Softball Classic Sunday at Fraser Field. John Gambale is coach of the Storm.



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*Have a Fantastic Fourth of July!
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LYNN ENGLISH 2022 RETIREES HONORED

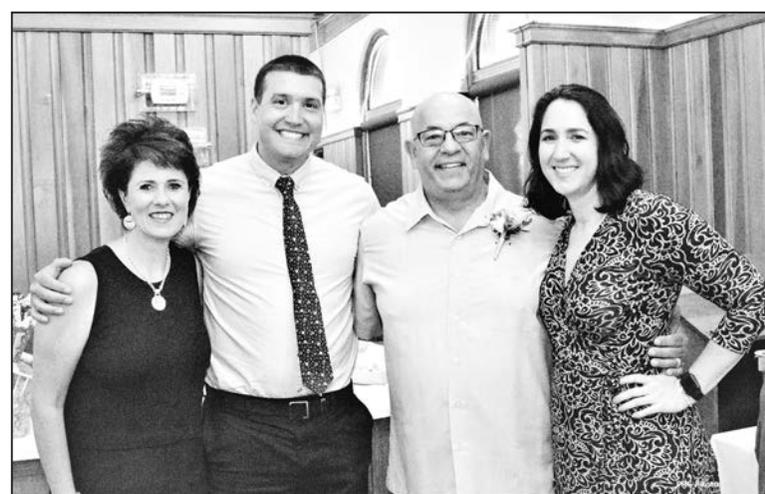
Lynn English Faculty honored three long-time dedicated teachers with a retirement celebration at Gannon Golf Course. Former Lynn English Football Coach, Athletic Director, and Vice-Principal, Gary Molea retired after a long career. He began coaching in 1979. During his first season as head coach with the Bulldogs, the team appeared in the Division 3 High School Superbowl. Later he was promoted as Athletic Director and soon appointed as Vice-Principal.

Gary worked with so many different students and he always gave students a helping hand toward success. Other retirees included Mathematics teacher Glenn Potter and Bio-Technology teacher Joan O'Connor.

Congratulations to Gary,



The Molea Family: Garrett, Pam, Gary, Madison, and Brett.



Lynn English High School Administration – VP Jennifer Mancaniello, Principal John Braga, Retiring VP Gary Molea, and VP Heather Fabiano.

Glenn, Joan who were outstanding educators at Lynn English High School.



Lynn Public Schools Vice Principals – Breed Mike Zimirowski, Heather Fabiano, Honoree Gary Molea, Jennifer Mancaniello, and Lynn Classical Anastasia Mower.



The O'Connor Family – Mary Carlson, Susan Buckley, Matt O'Connor, Honoree Joan O'Connor, Walter and Anne Blazewicz, and Margaret and Thea Koutoulas.



Lynn English Faculty member- Kris Johnson, Heather Fabano, Kathy Brinkler, Jennifer Carter, and Andrea Fila.



Former Lynn English Faculty members with retirees - Joan O'Connor, Glenn Potter, and Gary Molea.

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St. Mary's High School among recipients of 'Green Team' awards

State environmental officials recognized students from 27 schools across the Commonwealth for outstanding environmental actions as members of the "Green Team," including St.

Mary's High School teacher Stacy Director, teacher of Grades 6 through 12 with Garden Certificate.

The Green Team Award is a statewide environmental educa-

tion program sponsored by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Students of any age can participate in the Green Team program, an initiative composed of students that share the goals of reducing pollution and protecting the environment. 219 classes registered for the Green Team this school year, comprised of more than 40,000 students at 192 schools.

"The Baker-Polito Administration congratulates all of the Green Team teachers and students who showed outstanding leadership and initiative during the past school year to raise environmental awareness in their schools, homes, and communities," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Beth Card. "Students and teachers were able to accomplish excellent work while recycling, composting, gardening, and learning both at school and in the home. These schools set a tremendous example for both their peers and their communities."

Students took part in a range of activities, including:

- Expanding school recycling programs;
- Collecting textiles for donation and recycling;

- Starting a compost pile using organic waste from the school cafeteria and using the compost it generates to nourish a garden to grow fruits and vegetables;

- Planting trees and native wildflowers to attract pollinators and songbirds;

- Repurposing and reusing materials to make "new" items;

- Promoting water conservation;

- Making their school drive-ways "Idle-Free Zones;"

- Increasing energy efficiency in their schools and communities; and,

- Reducing their carbon footprint at school and at home.

These activities incorporated classroom disciplines from the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), reading, writing, art, and other non-classroom, interrelated projects. Participating teachers received either a digital or hard-copy Green Team Kit containing classroom posters, lesson plans, recycling tips, and access to a library of other resources. In addition, 21 schools received recycling and/or composting equipment from the Green Team to initiate or expand school recycling programs, and five schools received signs reading "Idle-Free Zone" from the Green Team that serve as a visual reminder to driv-

ers to turn off their engines while waiting in the schoolyard.

"Green Team students take the concept of environmental stewardship right into their own schools and communities with practical approaches to energy conservation, recycling, composting, and pollution prevention projects," said MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg. "This year, many students were able to see the fruit of their own labor as a number of projects involved planting seeds and using compost from their own cafeterias to create a school vegetable and fruit garden."

Participating classes entered in a drawing for prizes, and 27 classes received prizes for their efforts. Three schools won grand prizes for schoolwide participation in recycling and/or composting programs and will receive performances by environmental "edu-tainer" Jack Golden. Seven schools focused their efforts on composting and community gardens and received gift cards to local garden centers for trees and gardening supplies to further enhance their school or community garden. The other classes received prizes for their participating students such as pencils, wrist bands, key chains, seeded bookmarks, and coloring books.

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Op-Ed / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

investigation into the T were included in a bond bill, and House and Senate leadership have promised oversight hearings.

This is a good start. But it's only just that - a start.

What the T needs most is not funding for future capital expenses, but day-to-day operating funds for critical ongoing maintenance work. It needs to have its structural deficit addressed, and it needs to be unshackled from the Big Dig debt it was saddled with in the 1990s.

The T needs more active oversight from the Legislature to serve as the people's watchdog. A few days after the Feds released their investigation, the MBTA announced it was starting a hiring blitz to fill unfilled critical public safety positions. This is good news, but it could have happened sooner. It's clear that the existing MBTA board was either unaware of the issue or did not feel it necessary to share this information with the public.

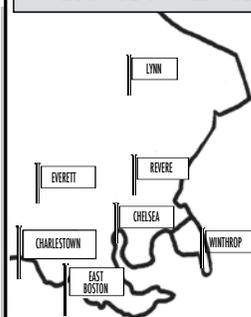
The funding and governance of the T also needs to be better integrated with the regional transit authorities of the rest of the

state. One of the biggest problems we face right now is regions being pitted against each other - with residents and elected officials outside of the Boston area not wanting to fund investments in Boston, and vice versa. This is counterproductive: the future of every region in Massachusetts is intertwined, and needs to be addressed with a commonality of purpose.

The crisis at the T is not just about the daily inconvenience and indignity to many of the service workers who power the local economy - many of whom are our neighbors who live along the Blue Line - though they feel the pinch first and most acutely. It's about the future of Boston's economy and quality of life. It demands urgent action and attention, even from people who never ride it. It's now or never, and the consequences of inaction will be dire.

Joe Gravellese is a former candidate for state representative and former City of Revere staff member. He currently works at a local non-profit.

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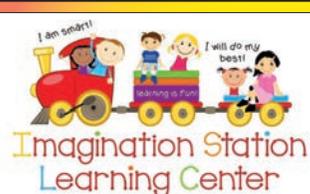
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