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Pops Holiday Family Event

Boston Pops Holiday Concert at Symphony Hall

We are once again offering subsidized tickets to family members for the Holiday Pops on Saturday, December 17 at 7:30 pm. The show will be preceded by a private reception at Symphony Hall, beginning at 6 pm. **The cost of \$75 per ticket, including food, is a great holiday value.**

For those who have already requested tickets, please make sure to send your payment to Alyse by December 9th. After this date, we expect to still have a few tickets available and are pleased to offer them without a household limit.

To request tickets, please contact Alyse Mazerolle by email only: alyse.mazerolle@massfund.org. Tickets will be distributed at the reception. If you cannot attend please let us know so we can make other arrangements.

10th Commemoration

Reflections

After a year's worth of planning, more than 500 family members came together at the Public Garden, State House Steps and Chambers, and the Ritz for the 10th Anniversary Commemoration of September 11. The Family Advisory Committee worked closely with Michael P. Wasserman, Inc. event planners, Mayor Menino's office and Governor Patrick's office to ensure the day was respectful and meaningful.

Because it was the "milestone" tenth year, there were additional opportunities for family members to come together to remember and reflect. Boston Cares, a city non-profit that acts as a clearing house for volunteers, sponsored, among other events, a community art project for the Mass 9/11 families with Sidewalk Sam, at City Hall Plaza on Saturday, September 10th. Over 50 family members enjoyed their time together creating art that was meaningful.

Uniformed first responders, members of the Boston Police and Fire departments and members of as many as 15 organizations participated in an honor guard from sun-up to sun-down, changing guard continuously throughout the day in a formal and awesome display of respect.

Following the annual reading of the names on the State House Steps, guest speakers, including Vicki Kennedy, Senators John Kerry and Scott Brown, and Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security, addressed the families. Mrs. Kennedy also accepted our invitation to the luncheon and visited with families there.

Family Advisory Committee

Teresa Mathai, Chair
 Christie Coombs, Co-Chair
 Iris Friedman
 Diane Hunt
 George Smith
 Judy Smith
 Sally White
 Cindy McGinty, Honorary

Honorary Board

Candy Altman
 Mary J. Kakas
 Senator John Kerry
 Roderick MacLeish, Jr.
 Chancellor Marty Meehan
 Molly Sherden
 Barry Tatelman
 Eliot Tatelman
 Faith Weiner

In Memoriam

Senator Edward M.
 Kennedy
 Loretta W. Kowal

Some families participated in various service projects, giving blood at the American Red Cross Drive to Remember at Fenway Park and helping to assemble 1,000 care packages for the troops with the Mass Military Heroes' Fund. Others attended their own town's ceremonies, dedications, service projects and musical tributes.

Overall the weekend's activities drew necessary attention to the anniversary, focusing on remembering those we lost 10 years ago and doing something good in their names.

The Mass 9/11 Fund is grateful to the City of Boston, the Governor's Office, Boston Cares and all the agencies and organizations who worked with us to make the events of this day especially respectful and deeply meaningful for our families.

As this 10th Commemoration year draws to a close, we are extremely grateful for the continued caring and support of our community and look forward to the years ahead. All of us at the Mass 9/11 Fund wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season with blessings of peace, hope and joy in the New Year.



September 10, 2011 – Over 50 family members gathered at City Hall Plaza for a community artwork project with Sidewalk Sam.

2011 Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery

The Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery is presented annually on September 11.

The recipient of the award must be a resident of Massachusetts and demonstrate exceptional bravery, without regard for personal safety, in an effort to save the life or lives of another or others in actual imminent danger.

The 2011 recipient Angelica Guerrero, a 39-year-old West Springfield mother, died during the June 1st tornado in Western Massachusetts.

Mrs. Guerrero, a mother of two daughters, died while shielding her 15-year-old daughter in the bath tub as her family's triple decker collapsed on top of them. It took firefighters more than two hours to reach Angelica and her daughter. Her daughter survived.

Americas Camp Shutting Its Doors

Americas Camp, a week-long camp in the Berkshires created 10 years ago for children directly affected by 9/11, is like an inside joke – it's hard to understand unless you're there. But one thing I can tell people on the "outside" is how life changing it is.

America's Camp [AC] gave children a carefree week in their summer to be who they want to be; a chance to not be a "9/11 kid." Every kid there lost one or two family members, and gained 300 more. The bonds made there are ones like no other. They're indescribable. At AC we had a chance to catch up and become closer with other Massachusetts 9/11 kids, and make lifelong friends from all over the country. It is so comforting to know that no matter what is wrong or where I am, I can call a friend from camp and talk to them. It's like a 24-hour, 7 days a week support system. Without America's camp, I don't think I would be where I am today.

The activities at camp included everything imaginable, from archery to water sports to woodshop and knitting. There was buddy central, where kids could go if they needed to talk to a counselor, or just release some pent up energy. There were daytrips to Six Flags and baseball games. We danced on the tables in the dining hall and learned songs that became standard for AC every year. Shy kids found a new self confidence there and let themselves open up like they never thought possible.

Ten years after it began, America's camp had to shut its doors due to funding and declining attendance because we're all growing up. Nobody knew what to expect on that last day of camp, and I have never seen so many tears in my life. At the time, we were crying because we were sad, but they were also tears of joy: Joy for the experience we were given, the friends we made, the laughs we shared. Hugs were abundant, and we were hesitant to let go. But once the doors to the buses closed and they pulled away, we had to accept the end of a really special place.

Although America's camp is over, the family is not broken. There are so many things keeping us together, and the reunions will continue; the friendships will become stronger. I think I speak for all 500 of us when I say that experiences like this are unique, and come along once in a lifetime. As I sit on the train writing this, I am headed to New York to visit a friend I met 9 years ago, on my first day at the happiest place on earth.

- A Camper's Perspective

Dropkick Murphys and Red Sox Donate to Mass 9/11 Fund

The popular Boston-based Dropkick Murphys band and the Red Sox collaborated on a September concert at Fenway Park and generously donated \$25,000 to the Mass 9/11 Fund from two nights of ticket sales. The Red Sox invited the MassFund to accept the check on stage during the concert, and gave 30 lucky family members complimentary tickets for each night of the concert.

Mary and Caroline Ogonowski accepted the check on Thursday night, and Teresa Mathai and Christie Coombs received the over-sized symbolic check from lead singer Ken Casey on Friday night.

The Red Sox also invited Mary Ogonowski to throw out the first pitch during a game on September 12.

4th Quarter Service Project

Thanksgiving Day of Service at Catholic Charities

On November 19th, 20 volunteers from the Mass 9/11 Fund and additional family friends helped out at the Thanksgiving Turkey Drive at Catholic Charities in Dorchester. Everyone was happy to have a beautiful sunny day for our fourth quarter service project since we were all stationed outside. Each of us was assigned a task, and everyone worked tirelessly between 8:30 am and 12:00 noon.

Beth Chambers from Catholic Charities said between 1,300 to 1,350 families received turkeys, vegetables, stuffing, and other foods for their tables.



In addition, many of the volunteers brought canned goods and boxed dry foods to help restock the food pantry. This was appreciated by Catholic Charities. To everyone who participated this year, thank you so much. All of us went home feeling good that we could help those in need.



**Diann Corcoran, Danielle Lemack and son Mason
at the Catholic Charities Turkey Drive.**

Report from the Mass 9/11 Fund Board

The Board of the MA 9/11 Fund held its annual meeting in June. An essential part of the annual meeting is to affirm the financial results for the year and review projections for the future. I am pleased to report that the three pillars of our mission are in reasonably good financial shape. We have identified a pool of funds to create an educational program to provide the ability for Massachusetts school systems to have a curriculum available to teach about 9/11. The fund to maintain our memorial in the Boston Public Garden is financed now so that the memorial can be maintained in perpetuity. As regards the ongoing commemoration observances, we have funds set aside and a strategy to maintain these into the near future, but will be working more with the FAC and the families themselves to identify the scope of upcoming commemorative observances into the longer term future so we can do what is best for all.

New Board Members. The Board elected its new officers: David Hastings, president; Eric Lowrey, first vice-president; Linda Gay, vice-president; Faith Arter, Treasurer; Linda Gay, acting clerk. Board members continuing to serve are John Curtis, Diann Corcoran, and Margaret Hatch, who will be joined by new Board member Rita DiGiovanni. We acknowledge the contributions of retiring Board members Sally White, Jim Fisher, and Peter Dimond.

As the incoming president, I am honored to accept the position and I will focus on continuing to work with the FAC and our families to strengthen the MA 9/11 Fund going forward, in its new configuration as an all-volunteer organization. We are continuing to work with talented professionals who provide specific services to us including Alyse Mazerolle for administrative work, Zareh Orchanian for financial management support, and the Wasserman Group for commemorative services.

All of the Board members look forward to addressing our responsibilities as active curators of the organization and to provide the structure, framework, and oversight necessary for it to serve our mission in support of the families. Commemorations, memorial preservation, and public education are what we support, and why the Mass 9/11 Fund exists.

- David Hastings, President