

## National RAB Heads to Washington

At 11pm on May 20th, 17 Boston residents boarded rented buses and drove through the night to Washington D.C. to join thousands more that had converged on the nation’s capital. At daybreak, the first rally organized by the fledgling National Residents Advisory Board was underway. They left Boston on the hottest day of the year thus far to face a full day of rain, yet stood shoulder-to-shoulder huddled under umbrellas on the Senate lawn to make their collective voices heard to their representatives.



*Undaunted by the rain, residents make their voices heard in front of Congress.*

Resident Advisory Boards (RAB) are a national model of tenant activism that advocate for public housing residents. Formed by mandate from the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (QHWRA), RABs assist in developing management plans to govern how their local agencies will operate (e.g. – policies on rent, pets, admissions and occupancy). There are currently about 3,050 Public Housing Agency jurisdictions throughout the country with more than 1.3 million households in public housing. In some parts of the country, as a way of increasing their organizing power, site-based resident councils have come together to form citywide and statewide resident councils. This system changed dramatically in February.

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## Residents’ Summit Coming to Boston

Public housing residents and Section 8 voucher holders from all over the country will come together in early September to attend the Third National Public Housing Residents’ Summit. Previously held in Baltimore, this will be the conference’s first appearance in Boston.

The Summit’s theme is “Empowering Residents to Meet the New Challenges in Public Housing: Maximizing Residents’ Knowledge, Services and Potential in Spite of Scarce Resources.” The conference agenda is chock full of workshops, networking opportunities and distinguished speakers. Workshops are expected to cover topics on the new faith based initiatives, the decentralization of public housing, the impact of PHAS (the Public Housing Assessment System) on the public housing program, public housing self-sufficiency programs, the HOPE VI program, what it means to block grant Section 8 vouchers, what residents should know about admissions and occupancy, legislative updates, how

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## Maverick Gardens Construction Commences

Official groundbreaking ceremonies were held on July 8<sup>th</sup> for the Maverick Gardens housing development in East Boston, with Mayor Thomas M. Menino officiating. "This redevelopment effort is yet another step in the City's efforts to make Boston affordable and livable for everyone," said Menino. "These new units will ensure the existence of quality affordable public housing along the East Boston waterfront for years to come."

The 60-year-old Maverick Gardens housing development in East Boston was picked for HOPE VI funding three years ago with a \$35 million grant from the federal government. Until recently it has occupied a detached northeast corner of East Boston, separating the community from the Maverick residents and slowly falling into disrepair.

"On behalf of the Maverick residents, we have worked hard to accomplish this HOPE VI dream," said Ruth Capone, chairperson of the Maverick Tenants Organization. "The opportunities for providing incentives for self-sufficiency and bridging gaps within our community's service system will improve the quality of life for all in East Boston."

The new housing units will consist of townhouse style units and two midrise apartment buildings, comprising 396 new apartments. About three-quarters of these will remain available for public housing residents, with the remainder being rented at market rate. Current Maverick Gardens residents have been offered their choice of temporary or permanent relocation to other public housing developments throughout the city, or a Section 8 voucher. Residents will receive supportive assistance throughout the relocation process. The project also includes the Citywide Homeownership Initiative that will provide

50 homeownership opportunities for public housing residents and other eligible applicants.

Developing the project with the BHA are Trinity East Boston Partners, which is a collaboration between Trinity Financial and the East Boston Community Development Corporation. The BHA chose Trinity East Boston Partners as its development team after a formal competitive process was initiated last year. Additional funding came from a number of public/private partners including the City of Boston

(Neighborhood Housing Trust and Department of Neighborhood Development), state funded low-income tax credit equity, the Boston Housing Authority, MassHousing and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The construction is divided into three phases, the first two occurring simultaneously and resulting in 230 apartments. Phase three, slated to begin in early 2005 and end in the summer 2006, will add an additional 166 apartments. In addition to the redevelopment, a Community and Supportive Services Program has been established to provide case management, employment and computer training, adult learning and youth

education and recreational programs to Maverick residents. The supportive services will be funded through the HOPE VI grants and collaborations with community service providers.

"We are very excited to be able to announce the redevelopment of Maverick Gardens," said BHA Administrator Sandra B. Henriquez. "The BHA is doing all it can to improve and preserve its existing housing stock for the future. This effort represents all we can accomplish when we put together a strong program of public/private partnership to keep the city affordable for those who need it."



*Ruth Capone, chairperson of the Maverick Tenant Organization, and Ellie Saraceni, Organization advisor, hold up bricks from the first phase of demolition at the Maverick Gardens development.*

## New Planet Walk Opens in South Boston

The Boston Housing Authority recently unveiled a new park to provide a fun and educational experience for children at a housing development within South Boston. Visitors and perambulators of the pathway between the Veterans' Park and Henry Sterling Square at the Mary Ellen McCormack public housing development are now greeted with an interactive model of the solar system.

The new Planet Walk, dedicated on June 27<sup>th</sup> by Mayor Thomas M. Menino and BHA Administrator Sandra Henriquez, is aimed at pushing young minds into the stars, as well as offering a creative revitalizing solution to what was an empty, unused courtyard. "This project is an exceptional example of our continuing efforts to leverage alternative funding sources to benefit the residents of our great city," said Menino. "This is especially important in this difficult economic climate."

The concept plan was for a hardscape park, emphasizing our solar system as a theme. The domed planets were constructed using color and texture to mimic recorded satellite images, with concrete rings intersecting each planet suggesting the orbit around the sun. Educational plaques are provided for each of the planets, sun, and asteroid belt for the curious, and

seating is provided along the pathway that follows between the structures. An interactive sundial was designed based on latitude and longitudinal coordinates, allowing a person's shadow to be placed over the current time. Walkways around the planets provide complete handicap accessibility.

Cer-Trom Construction served as the general contractor for the project, Moriece and Gary Landscape Architects were the architects, and Bill Guthro of Distinctive Concrete provided the finish and coloring for the concrete planets. Some of the work was done pro bono – Cer-Trom didn't charge for the extra work it incurred while digging up the foundation, and Gary Landscape Architects Paul and Colleen Simon produced the graphics for the informational plaques for free.

The Planet Walk was built with the contribution of a \$200,000 grant from the Edward Ingersoll Browne Fund. "We hope the Planet Walk will spark an interest in science and astronomy in many of the children and young adults who have a chance to explore it. This is a very exciting project and we should all thank the Browne Fund for its tremendous generosity," commented Henriquez.



## Capitol Flag Flies Over Archdale

On our Nation's Birthday, Archdale Housing Development in Roslindale received a very special American flag just in time for Independence Day celebrations. Prior to the raising, City Councilor Rob Consalvo said he received several concerned phone calls from residents wondering why the flagpole at a City building was barren. Consalvo said they could have simply bought a flag, but he had something special in mind.

As a former staff member of Senator Edward Kennedy, Consalvo knew that members of Congress can have a flag flown over the United States Capitol to honor a person or organization. Consalvo requested a flag be flown for Archdale, and was duly honored on

April 24<sup>th</sup>. On Friday, Consalvo presented the flag to Archdale manager Angel Lopez, who asked two of his employees who had served in the military to do the honors of raising the flag.

Supervisor Joe Perella served in the Army in between the Korean and Vietnam War, and was familiar with the importance and specifics of the ceremony. He was accompanied by fellow employee and Purple Heart recipient John Clements, who was stationed in Vietnam between 1966 and 1967. The flag will be illuminated at night and thus not require lowering, as per regulations: "when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness."



# Menino Leading the Way

It was almost three years ago when Mayor Thomas M. Menino committed himself to addressing Boston's growing housing problem with his *Leading the Way* initiative. Said Menino, "I launched *Leading the Way* because there was a housing crisis in our city. More and more families were struggling to keep a roof over their heads. Seniors were being priced out of their homes. And people who grew up in Boston were being forced into the suburbs by the staggering cost of housing." Some thought the goals he set for the city were unrealistic, proposing 7,500 new units in three years that have seen particularly parsimonious state budget decisions and skyrocketing property values.

On June 27<sup>th</sup> he proudly proclaimed the program a success, having surpassed its initial goal with 7,726 construction permits issued since October 2000, representing almost \$2 billion in public and private housing investments. Of those units, 4,372 were privately developed housing, 666 units were unoccupied, decaying public housing, and 2,688 units were with city-sponsored developments. The city also exceeded its goal for low- and middle-income affordable housing, creating 144 more units than the 2,100 anticipated.

"This initiative took teamwork, and together, we have made a real difference by increasing housing production, preserving affordable housing, and bringing vacant public housing back into productive use," said Menino. In addition to the permits for new housing, 3,100 federally subsidized "at-risk" apartments were saved, and 1,032 vacant units have been renovated, just shy of the 1,100 goal. The remaining 68 units are scheduled for renovation next year.

According to Citizens' Housing and Planning Association executive director Aaron Gornstein, "It is making a dent, and it does show that when people pull together and when there is strong political leadership and government funding, a lot can be accomplished. But it's not meeting all the needs, and everybody recognizes that."

Despite the success of the Mayor's plan, Boston houses are still almost twice the price of the median U.S. home, and rents are almost 70% higher than the national average. In his speech, Menino vowed to "continue to work together to build and preserve housing in Boston, and improve the lives of our residents." Following up on the success of the first program, plans are already in the works for a *Leading the Way II*. With the Governor tightening belts on spending, the Mayor is looking into new strategies for the next three-year program, such as having developers pay more to opt out of affordable housing rules as well as building new housing on foreclosed and city-owned parcels.



*Cathedral resident Anna Baez with Mayor Menino and two of her children, Liancy (left) and Kiannette. Anna spoke at the Leading the Way event about her experiences trying to find housing and finally being able to move into her new apartment at Cathedral with her three children.*

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## ***Summit, continued from page 1***

to create an efficient tenant council and resident advisory board and more. The conference schedule includes two full days of workshops that culminate in a dinner/dance for participants.

The conference kicks off on September 4 and runs through September 5 and 6, leaving September 7 open for participants to spend time in Boston and/or travel home. The conference will be held at the Hyatt Harborside at Logan International Airport. The event is being organized by the Resident

Advisory Board of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City in conjunction with the Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants. About 400 participants are expected to attend.

Conference attendance for residents costs \$200 per person and includes continental breakfast, Friday lunch and the banquet. All other registrants will be charged \$225 to attend. Limited scholarships may be available. Also, the conference cost is an acceptable use of each tenant organization's per unit funding allocation. Interested parties should contact Paulette Turner or Jack Cooper at the Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants at 617-825-9750. Email inquiries may be addressed to [rabs Summit03@habc.org](mailto:rabs Summit03@habc.org).

# RAB Election Results

Elections were recently held for Resident Advisory Board members at Roxbury Community College. Voting for Section 8 representatives took place on May 22, followed by Public Housing members on May 29. Representatives will hold their positions from 2003-2005.

The results for **Section 8 Representatives** are: Philip Askew, Marie Aurelien, Marcia Colon, Gayle Guilford, Dorothea Guild, Brenda King, Puro Martinez, Jose Mateo, Maria Miranda, Fany Pierre, Doris Robinson, Melvin Rodriguez, Ernestine Simmons, Mireille Tushiminina and Maria Viera.

The new **Public Housing Representatives for the elderly** are: Gary Griffin - Malone; Theodore Hampton - St. Botolph; Prince Haraway - Amory Street; Ruth Hardiman - Lower Mills; Theresa Johnson - Frederick Douglass; Joseph McGee - Hassan; Bernice Pattow - Patricia White; Marcus Payne - Holgate; Carl Purdy - Holgate; Mary Smith - St. Botolph; Mary Spalding - Lower Mills; Della Webb - Frederick Douglass; John Young - Franklin Field Elderly.

Finally, **Public Housing Representatives for the family** are: Dolly Battle - Whittier Street Apartments; Barbara Bowie - W. Newton Street; Mary Bragdon - Old Colony; Edna Bynoe - Orchard Gardens; Aramis Camps - Commonwealth; Phyllis Corbitt - Old Colony; Donna Criel - Faneuil; Remona Davis - Gallivan; Lisa D'Ambrosio - Mary Ellen McCormack; Jose Dominquez - Charlestown; Wanda Jusino - Commonwealth; Dorothy Lepore - Fairmount; Peggy Santos - Franklin Field; Barbara Wallace - Faneuil; Diane Williams - Alice Taylor.

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## Archdale/South Street Manager Gets Award

BHA manager Angel Lopez received a community service award from Mayor Thomas M. Menino during National Night Out on August 6 at a ceremony at Adams Park in Roslindale. Lopez has been active in crime prevention in and around the Archdale development and was co-sponsor of a candlelight vigil for victims of violence after a spate of murders, some related to domestic violence, occurred in Roslindale. In addition, Lopez has co-sponsored crime-watch meetings with the Healthy Roslindale coalition, helped sponsor a community forum on domestic violence, and worked on neighborhood clean-ups.

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## *RAB goes to D.C., continued from page 1*

"In February of this year we found out that HUD had somehow miscalculated distributing \$250 million to the residents of the United States of America. The Bush administration was not going to replace it, and 137,000 Section 8 vouchers that were to be distributed have been cut as a result," explains Philip Askew, the National RAB representative from Boston. "Also, they wanted to distribute all the public housing money to the governors of the US — in other words, they wanted to write 50 checks instead of 3000. Public housing would probably only get \$90 million out of every \$100 million because of administration overhead."

To address these issues, the National Resident Advisory Board was created; its first goal: to march on the capital. "We went to Washington D.C to petition Congress about this HUD money that they misappropriated and have yet to give anyone an explanation about. We got an opportunity to talk to Sen. Kennedy, Sen. Kerry & Rep. Capuano, showed them figures and stats and then tell them the human side of the story," explains Askew. With public housing under attack from House and Senate Republicans, the message from the Democratic Massachusetts public servants was: "We're trying to hold the line."

Part of the strategy for the NRAB to increase their bipartisan influence is public housing voter registration. Askew: "Our message to Kennedy and Kerry will be, 'Listen. We have our registered voters. Now, are you willing to change the law in regards to public housing?' Every politician I've talked to has told me 'I'd rather have a thousand votes than a thousand dollars.'" Long-term goals for the NRAB will include setting up a regional teleconferencing system to facilitate communication between regional RABs across the country, as well as increasing the lobbying efforts in Washington.

Under dark storm clouds, the mood at the rally remained optimistic throughout the day. Young people in their twenties intermingled with others in their seventies. Says Askew, "We had people who'd never left their home state before, and I'd like to thank everyone who made the trip for their courage. Public Housing was built for working people — not for black people, Spanish people, white people, Asian people — but for everyone. We've got to protect it."

# Job Well Done

**Rachel Goodman**, of CSD, thanks Family Services Program Manager **Greg Davis** for coordinating the first annual Ron Williams Health Conference.

Congrats to **Suzanne Forgione** and **Ruth Olsen**, of Leased Housing, for their award from the New England Regional Council. Leased Housing's **Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS)** was selected to receive the *NERC Regional Award of Excellence* and the *National NAHRO Award of Merit*.

**Kellie Dean**, Manager of the Charlestown Development, thanks all involved in achieving a passing PHAS score: **Sandi Henriquez**, **Bill McGonagle**, **Patrick Keane**, **Dan Casals**, **Debbie Berryman**, **Hugh Donovan**, **Chris Hansen**, **Jim Kinsherf**, **Harry Mathias**, **Roberto Figueroa**, **Jean-Raynald Fougy**, **Michael Arts**, **Fabian Ortega**, **Jimmy Moore**, **Ed Kelley**, **George McGrath**, **Antonio Hernandez**, **Pat Flaherty**, **Ramon Guzman**, **Warren Smith**, **Bob Pinchieri**, **Paul Parlon**, **Paul Parlon, Jr.**, **Chris Cafferky**, **Gerry Aughe**, **Chris Wiggins**, **Tom McGrath**, **Bob Burgess**, **Ed Curran**, **Jason Neff**, **Jorge Cartagena**, **Graylan Hart**, **Cruz Rodriguez**, **Gus Graffeo**, **Ed Daley**, **Jim Manning**, **Russell Chochrek**, **Charles Singleton**, **Chris Roche**, **Jim McCarthy**, **Francina Brown**, **John Frost**, **Kevin Davis**, **Fred Hodges**, **Yvette Rodriguez**, **Pam Ly**, **Michael Maher**, **Dan Sheldon**, **Donna McGhee**, **Peter Saulis**, **Paul Daly**, **Gordon Gillis**, **Jim Allen**, **Dan Tuttle**, **Paul Loisel**, **Louis Oliviera**, **Richie Rizzo**, **Robert Ahern**, **Steven Kineavey**, **Jimmy Goggin**, **Eddie Toomer**, **Ed LaSanta**, **Gerard Polito**, **Derric Peddy**, **Jose Cartagena**, **Felix Gonzales**, **Michael Lydon**, **Benny Nazario**, **Alfonzo Williams**, **Kevin Mullen**, **James Pasakarnis**, **Robert Woods**, and **Jackie Raymond**.

**Debra Brown** and **Christine Jean**, led a group of 13 residents in Project Bread's annual Walk for Hunger.

With the issuance of 3 building permits at Heath Street, the BHA has secured permits for 94% of the units included in its portion of Mayor Menino's "Leading the Way" housing plan. Thanks for this latest piece go to Director of Capital Construction **Shirley Ransom**, **Joe Spinelli** (project manager), **Phaldie Taliep** (senior project manager), **Brian McCaffrey** (CCD construction representative), and **Dan Helmes** (energy manager). Planning and Real Estate Development thank all that assisted in the successful completion of phase one relocation at Maverick Gardens, including: **Housing Opportunities Unlimited**, **Trish Barry**, **Rosa Morales**, **Michael**

**Derby**, **Teddy Joyce**, **John Quigley**, **Jesse Bent**, **David Sweatman**, **Gerald Lehan**, **Brian Coughlin**, **James Daley**, **Melvin Escobar**, **Mark Tuttle**, **Tom McGrath**, **Gene Volosevich**, **George Davis**, **Hollis Young**, **Caesar Cardoza**, **Marilyn O'Sullivan**, **Nancy Otero**, **Gloria Meneses**, **Daniqua Hamilton**, **Laureen Gopie**, **Armando Zapata**, **Carol McCaffrey**, **Lynda Cunningham**, **Angel Lopez**, **Kellie Dean**, **Mike McDonough**, **George McGrath**, **Chris Hansen**, **Wanda Roldan**, **Joanne Moore**, **Yvette Taramino**, **Nereida Sanchez-Tejada**, **Gus Graffeo**, **North Suffolk Mental Health Association**, **Maverick Tenants Organization**, particularly **Ruth Capone** and **Elly Saraceni**,

**Hugh Donovan** thanks **Linda Fahy**, **Lori Luce**, **Jim McCarthy**, **Bill Wuschke**, **Gene Volosevich**, **Jim LaCroix** and **Phil Greene** for getting together all the information for man-hours and materials used during the February 17 & 18 blizzard to send to FEMA, BHA will receive approximately \$100,000 due to their efforts.

Congrats to **Tom Santry** who was elected president of the National Leased Housing Association and to **Armando Zapata** who was re-elected to the Board of Directors for the same organization.

Administrator/CEO **Sandi Henriquez** congratulates **Marilyn O'Sullivan** on her promotion to the new position of **Chief Officer for Occupancy & Leased Housing Programs**. Congrats also go to **Gloria Meneses**, who has assumed the role of **Acting Director of Occupancy**.

**Denise Murphy**, **Bill Wuschke** and **Linda Fahy** congratulate **Bobby Burgess** and **Ed Curren**, Landscape Crew Leaders, for successfully passing the Pesticide Applicator's License Exam recently. Thanks goes to **Leo Murphy**, **Dana Dilworth**, **Linda Fahy**, **Gail Livingston**, **George McGrath** and the **Mary Ellen McCormack site staff** for all their hard work getting the site ready for the Planet Walk event!!

Thanks goes to **Joanne Moore** and especially to **Carmen Figueroa** for assisting our resident speaker (**Anna Baez** and her children) at the Leading the Way Event!! Carmen's help and Anna's attendance were invaluable and much appreciated!

**Linda Fahy**, **Denise Murphy**, **Billy Wuschke**, **Gail Livingston**, **Carol McCaffrey**, **Gene Volosevich**, **Jim McCarthy**, **Jim Reed**, **Lori Luce**, **Regina Dennis**, **Hugh Donovan** & **Gwen Friend** would like to recognize and congratulate the six Operations Staff Members who attended the **UMass Green School** 60-hour educational training program last October - December,

*Continued on page 7*



# Peace Drum Project Bridges Generations

Traditional arts have long been a common bridge between the young and old, and one group is using this power to strengthen the bonds of the urban community. The Peace Drum Project was created by the Cooperative Artists Institute (CAI) more than thirty years ago to bring together Boston teens and elders in an after-school arts program designed to educate through communication and interaction. Twenty teens chosen from Dorchester, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale and Roxbury worked with local artists to conduct oral history interviews of senior citizens.

Each teen works with members of Boston's elderly housing developments, including BHA developments, and chronicles their stories and histories. This year some of the teens worked with ten residents of the Amory Street development in Jamaica Plain. The core of the program centers on the construction of a Peace Drum, a hand crafted drum decorated with stories gathered from talks with the elderly participants. The teens interview the elders, then work with them to help them translate their story into visual images to be painted or collaged onto a personal Peace Drum for each elder participant. At the end of the school year, the crafts are exhibited to the public, and awards are presented to the students.

"It was wonderful...We were talking and laughing so much! It's nice that you've got kids inside instead of running around getting into trouble," said Amory resident Emma Jones, as she described her experience with the project.

Marie A. Watson, also a resident of Amory concurred: "Oh, it was fun — it gave me something to do. When you get old, you look for things to fill your day."

As part of the project, teens also visit museums, studios, and public art installations for

inspiration and education. Throughout the project, teens meet with fellow high school students from other neighborhoods. Out of this open exchange, CAI hopes that cultural stereotypes and intolerance can be crushed to the benefit of the community as a whole.

"This program is a way for me to interact with others outside the context of school, and has given us the opportunity to find our inner artists and get to try something new. The program leaves elders with something to remember that the teens help them do," explained Shaniqua Osgood, a student at English High School in Jamaica Plain.

The Peace Drum program resumes this September at English High School; Boston Public High School students who live in Roslindale, Dorchester, Roxbury, Jamaica Plain and Hyde Park are eligible to apply. Applications are available on CAI's website ([www.tribal-rhythms.org](http://www.tribal-rhythms.org)) or by calling Susan Porter at (617) 524-6378.



*Al Davis, BHA Program Director for Elderly/Disabled Resident Services, chats with Jaquina Pagan, an Amory Street resident who participated in the Peace Drum Project. Photo taken by Meredith Joy and courtesy of the Peace Drum Project.*

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## ***Job Well Done, continued from page 6***

**2002: Pat Flaherty, Bobby Burgess, Carvis Hollis, Jimmy LaCroix, Ed Kelley, and Lucius Graham.**

Thanks to **Roxie Rogers** (Senior Management Aide) for alerting staff that an elderly Franklin Hill tenant needed an immediate well-being check, to **Steven Craig** (Laborer) and **Albert Waters** (Stock Clerk) for gaining entry into the tenant's apartment and assisting him until emergency response teams arrived.

Jill A. Zellmer thanks **Carla Cabral** from Leased Housing for helping with a very elderly, confused, and lost woman. Many thanks to Carla for her excellent customer service and sleuthing skills!

Lydia Agro thanks all who assisted with making the Maverick groundbreaking event a success; **Carol McCaffrey, Kathy Carton, Kate Bennett, Deb Morse, Lee Marcotte, Debbie Berryman, Anel Mejia, Christine Capone, Jim Reed, Patricia Barry, Michael Derby, Rosa Morales, James Daley, Jessie Bent, Teddy Joyce, John Quigley, Melvin Escobar, David Sweatman, Jerome Barry, Patrick Flaherty and Jim McCarthy.** The site looked great!!

Carol McCaffrey thanks BHA Electricians who worked during summer power outages, **Paul Norton, Terry Foley Paul Parlon, Sr., Paul Parlon, Jr., Tom Malone and Chris Cafferky.**

Unity Days this year are being held at a number of developments throughout the city, including Alice Taylor in Mission Hill, top row, and Archdale in Roslindale, bottom row. Residents pictured include Clara Aaron (top, middle) president of the Alice Taylor Tenants Task Force, and Jennifer Lopez (bottom left and right), who won a beauty contest this year at the Puerto Rican festival.



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