



THE NAVY YARD NEWS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD

Spring 2011

Friends in festive mood on occasion of 7th anniversary



Among those attending the March 10 celebration were: (from left) Boston City Councilor Sal LaMattina; Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard President Lois Siegelman; and Dave Whelan, a member of the FCNY and Charlestown Neighborhood Council boards.



Boston School Superintendent Carol Johnson, a Navy Yard resident, accepts her award from FCNY Chairman Michael Parker.

More than 100 people gathered under the soaring ceiling of Parris Landing on March 10 to celebrate the founding of the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard seven years ago and to hold their annual meeting.

Friends Chairman Michael Parker offered a figurative toast to the neighborhood organization, noting that it now boasts more than 200 individual members and 20 to 30 business members. (See accompanying story, Page 4.)

Two prominent Charlestown residents – Thomas Cunha, long time chairman of the Charlestown Neighborhood Council, and Carol Johnson, superintendent of the Boston public schools – were honored by the Friends with Commandant and Anchor awards, respectively.

Cunha, vacationing in Puerto Rico, was unable to attend the event, but Johnson was on hand and delivered a brief but eloquent acceptance speech.

Parker, presenting the award to Johnson, commended her for “her tireless work to provide Charlestown and the rest of Boston with a first-class school system.”

In response, Johnson, who resides at Flagship Wharf, acknowledged that “we still have some work to do as we try to transform Charlestown High, but we are moving forward.

“Your welcoming spirit,” she told the crowd, “is really very reinforcing.”

Following Johnson at the podium was Navy Yard Bistro owner John Moore, who was given a rousing welcome, complete with cheers and whistles, for his appearance at the event after a months-long convalescence from a serious illness.

Moore returned the compliment, telling the gathering that he was “so fortunate to have opened up a restaurant in one of the best neighborhoods in Boston.”

Moore also used the occasion to announce that he would be establishing a Nerves of Steel Foundation to benefit Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, where he had undergone intensive therapy during his recovery. He told *The Navy Yard News* he hopes to commit \$100,000 to the foundation over the next five years.

New Navy Yard superintendent preserving, making history

By BARBARA RABINOVITZ

You may have seen him striding through the Navy Yard in his National Park Service uniform – stiff-brimmed Stetson hat, gray shirt and green trousers.

He is Cassius M. Cash, the superintendent in charge of the Boston National Historical Park, whose eight historically famous sites include the Charlestown Navy Yard.

His responsibilities here are considerable. “Very much the property manager,” as he describes

himself, Cash has oversight over the preservation and rehabilitation of some of the nation’s most treasured properties, including Bunker Hill Monument, Dorchester Heights, Faneuil Hall, Old South Meeting House, the Old State House and the Paul Revere House, in addition to the Navy Yard.

A wildlife biologist by training and originally from Memphis, Tenn., Cash assumed his new post in February 2010,

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Cassius M. Cash sees himself as “very much the property manager” for the Charlestown Navy Yard.

New exec at Courageous center sees smooth sailing ahead

With inspiration in its name, Courageous Sailing dropped anchor on a Navy Yard pier nearly a quarter-century ago and went on to establish itself as a major teaching facility for Boston youngsters eager to sail a boat.

The name derives from a 12-meter sailboat that won the America's Cup twice, once skippered by Ted Turner of cable TV fame and once by Marblehead-based sail-maker Ted Hood.

But the driving force behind the center was a South Boston resident, Harry McDonough, who, in the words of Courageous Sailing Executive Director Amy VanDoren, "had a vision to bring kids from different areas and backgrounds in Boston" to a place like the center and "put them in a boat together."

McDonough's vision was formalized with the donation of the two-time America's Cup winning sailboat, Courageous, to the City of Boston.

When VanDoren took the helm of the center in December, she assumed responsibility for a sizable budget, a population of students exceeding 1,000 annually, a vast fleet of boats and an impressive fundraising operation. To support its \$1 million annual budget, the center offers sailing instruction to adult sailors for a fee.

At the core of the educational program are the 350 youngsters, ages 8 to 16, who participate in the summer sailing



"At least 50 percent of our instructors have gone through the program."

Amy VanDoren
Executive director
Courageous Sailing

lessons, not only at the center on Pier 4 but also at Jamaica Pond in Boston's Jamaica Plain (where city-owned boats

are used) and at Camp Harborview on Long Island, one of the Boston Harbor outer islands.

The instruction is offered on a sliding scale of tuition. Families who apply are chosen by a lottery, although a child who has already been in the program gets preference in the selection process.

The size of the staff swells to nearly 100 in the summer; the year-round staffers number only six, and they are primarily responsible for planning and directing Courageous' many programs, fundraising and the maintenance of the fleet.

"At least 50 percent of our instructors have gone through the program," VanDoren said, adding that 15- to 17-year-olds are instructors in training and then may qualify as full instructors.

The fleet consists of: 24 Rhodes19 keelboat sloops, which are the instructional boats for beginning sailors; nine 420 small (4.2 meters) performance sailboats; nine J22 larger sailboats; 12 Lasers, which are single-handed performance dinghies; five motorboats, used to monitor the youngsters in the sailboats during classes and races; five large cruising boats; and one large racing boat.

VanDoren acknowledged that mishaps do occur occasionally, and they underscore an important lesson for the students, she said: "There are consequences to what you do, and they are immediate." The improved condition of the water in the harbor has had a mitigating effect on those consequences, she noted.

Ongoing financial support for the center comes from several revenue sources: adult and community sailing memberships (discounted at 10 percent for Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard members, in addition to the \$100 discount offered Charlestown residents); fundraising events; and donations from corporations, foundations and "many, many individual donors," VanDoren said.

As for the challenges she faces in her new role, VanDoren, a lifelong sailor, says, "I will draw on the same skills and values that Courageous strives to instill, namely learning from all around me, the importance of teamwork to achieve goals, appreciation for the gifts a fair wind brings, and a healthy respect for the aspects of life that are outside the realm of personal control."

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For membership information, please visit the website or send an e-mail.

The organization is a 501(c)3 non-profit.

Café owner shows his style at restaurant management

This is the first in a d.b.a. (acronym for “doing business as”) series, which will feature local businesses in the Charlestown Navy Yard.

The proverbial American dream loomed large in the mind of Brazilian native Edenir Liz Jr. once he arrived on these shores 13 years ago.

Liz – or Junior, as he is known to close acquaintances – first came to Boston to visit his sister, who was already living here. He took such a liking to the city that he decided to make it his adopted home.

And then he set to work on realizing his dream.

“My dream since I was a kid was to open a coffee shop,” Liz, now 36, told *The Navy Yard News* in a recent interview. His mother, he explained, deferred to his father when it came to cooking meals for the family, and Liz learned at Edenir Liz Sr.’s side how to prepare food.

Not surprisingly then, he soon found a job with Biga Breads, in a customer service capacity, when that food vendor was located in the ground-floor retail space at Flagship Wharf.



About a year after Liz began working there, Biga Breads moved to another location, and Liz quickly found work two doors away, as manager of Tuttle Cleaners’ Flagship branch.

From that vantage point, he watched as, first, a lobster restaurant and, then, an office business came and went from Biga Breads’ former location.

When the space became vacant in early 2008, Liz made his move. He obtained the approval of the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard for the café he envisioned, and then he went about the arduous task of securing the required permits from the city of Boston’s health, fire and other departments.

One member or another of his family has been with Liz from the start – first his sister-in-law, Sania Araujo, and now his mother, Ana Liz. His mother, who



Style Café owner Edenir Liz Jr. at the counter with his mother, Ana Liz.

moved to Boston from Brazil five years ago and who has since developed her culinary skills, provided her son with the additional funds he needed to purchase the restaurant equipment and furnishings after he hit the limit on his line of credit.

By the summer of 2008, his restaurant was open for business.

The style of what would be Style Café was Liz’s alone. “That’s my talent,” he said of his flair for space planning and interior decoration. And so the appropriately stylish leather sofa, wicker bar stools, circular mirror and other furnishings were selected by Liz.

The name, too, is a reflection of his own tastes. “I didn’t want to stay with just coffee and pastries; I wanted something more,” he said.

On entering the café, a visitor is struck by the volume of offerings presented on the large chalk boards behind the counter: Panini, burritos, cold sandwiches, salads, soups (made by Liz’s mother) and omelets. There are no fried foods, so as to avoid the problem of cooking odors escaping into Flagship residences above the café.

Liz also takes pride in the fact that fresh ingredients are used liberally – in the smoothies made with fresh fruits, for

example. This summer he will be making frozen yogurt in a new machine and topping that favorite with fresh fruits and granola.

Apparently, Liz’s attention to freshness and wellness and stylishness is paying off. “Last year was our best,” he reported. “From April to December, we never stopped. I hope this year will be the same.”

His customers, as expected, come from Flagship Wharf, but also from the Parris Landing condominium development across Eighth Street and from as far as the Harborview apartments at the end of First Avenue. “We have a lot of tourists in the summer,” Liz noted.

The steady activity has led to an increase in the café staff, which numbers five during the peak season. “Everybody knows how to do everything,” said Liz, a resident of nearby Somerville who is on the premises every day.

Not only has Liz succeeded in fulfilling his dream of opening a restaurant, he is contemplating a second café, this one to be in the South End.

“I love what I’m doing,” a beaming Liz said, “and when you love what you’re doing, it’s a pleasure, not work.”

Volunteers befriend Friends at group's special event

By LOIS SIEGELMAN

I have been energized by the number of people not only joining the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard, but in the number of people volunteering to help on committees/events. For example, at our March 10 Winter Warm-up event and annual meeting, among the people in attendance were our volunteer greeters, who helped to register people and also set up for the event. Other volunteers helped with cleanup, publicity, getting

donations from local stores, coffee from the Style Café and flowers from the Bunker Hill Florist and Raspberry Bouquet.

I want to thank our volunteers and board member organizers – Karen Dempsey Carney, David Whelan and Karen Colombosian – for an outstanding event. A big thank-you goes to Gerry Charest, another volunteer, who spent the evening taking photos, which can be seen on our website www.friendscny.org.

I especially want to thank our sponsors – Janis Bellack, president of the MGH Institute of Health

Professions, and David Storto, president of the Spaulding Rehabilitation Network – for their generous donations that helped make that lovely evening possible.

If you missed this opportunity to volunteer and are interested in helping out in the future, we will be sponsoring a series of summer musical concerts as we have done in the past. We will need volunteers to organize each event and to help in setting up and cleaning up, greeting visitors, overseeing the new members table and handling publicity. We hope to work with local organi-

zations in and around the Navy Yard to increase participation in these events.

Please let us know, at info@fcnyc.org, if you are interested in volunteering; if you are part of an organization that would be interested in coordinating an event with the Friends to help increase participation; or if you are a corporation or organization that would be interested in co-sponsoring one of the concerts.

Lois Siegelman is president of the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard.



John Moore, owner of the Navy Yard Bistro, was among the speakers at the Friends' annual meeting.



The gathering in the lobby of Parris Landing.

Navy Yard has new superintendent with new perspective

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succeeding Flagship Wharf resident Terry Savage, who had retired six months earlier.

Cash is not new to federal government service. He spent nearly 20 years with the U.S. Forest Service, most recently in Medford, Ore., before he moved east with his family.

Only three of the sites (the Navy Yard, Dorchester Heights and the Bunker Hill Monument) are actually owned by the U.S. Department of the Interior, a cabinet-level agency overseeing the National Park Service, Cash explained in an interview with The Navy Yard News. But the other five sites have a congressionally legislated relationship with the Park Service that allows for sharing of resources.

The superintendent's office is located in the U.S. Marine Barracks – “the oldest ... in the country,” Cash noted – bordering Chelsea Street near the Gate 4 entrance to the Yard. From that office, Cash is currently coordinating several redevelopment projects, the most significant – in terms of visibility and usage – being a new Visitors Center to be located in Faneuil Hall, behind Boston City Hall.

With hundreds of thousands of people visiting that building and the surrounding

marketplace annually, the need to house such a center in that central tourist location was paramount for the National Park Service, Cash emphasized.

Another project that has Cash's attention these days is the repair of the U.S.S. Cassin Young, a World War II destroyer now in dry dock in the Navy Yard.

“We want to make her seaworthy again so that we and our dedicated volunteers can continue to operate the ship as a living memorial to the men and women who build, repaired and served on Navy ships throughout American history,” he said.

Yet another Yard property, Building 107, where the Boston National Historical Park law enforcement division is quartered, is undergoing repairs. Its dispatch center, offices and restrooms are being upgraded.

Perhaps the renovation project that resonates the most with Cash – the fourth superintendent of the park and the first African American to hold the title – is the \$4 million rehabilitation of the Museum of African American History's African Meeting House on Boston's Beacon Hill. The meeting house is the oldest standing African American church in the country and a social and political center in this community.

With \$4 million in federal stimulus funds, the Park Service has undertaken a major restoration of the African Meeting House on Joy Street, which also made history as a recruitment post for the soldiers who served in this state's black Civil War regiment.

While it may not qualify as a conventional restoration project, Cash has delved into a building effort of a far different sort. This one involves not historical sites but people, specifically the young people of Boston.

“I want to reach out to those communities that may have been overlooked,” he said, “and foster an understanding and appreciation for parks and the values of the park service.” More broadly, he continued, “I want to connect with individuals and communities that are meaningful in the context of diverse perspectives, interests and values that our communities represent and try to see that everyone who interacts with us feels welcomed, enlightened and inspired by their association with the National Park Service.”

Barbara Rabinovitz is senior reporter and editor of The Navy Yard News.