



NEWS FROM THE

# FRIENDS

PUBLISHED BY THE FRIENDS OF CHEVALIER AUDITORIUM AND GENE MACK GYMNASIUM

## \$ Contribution\$ for the Medford Gene Mack Clubhouse

With funds raised by the Special Events Committee in 2003 combined with donations from individuals, a check for \$5000 was presented by President Lena DiGiantomaso for the Gene Mack Clubhouse. Gary Gartland,



President and CEO of the Middlesex County Boys & Girls Clubs accepted the donation with appreciation on behalf of the Medford Clubhouse.

Gartland spoke about the continuing funding cutbacks at the federal, state and local level, while at the same time more services are in demand. With this happening at all levels of government, the contribution by the FRIENDS will help support the educational programs at the Clubhouse.

For more information about the activities offered by the Boys & Girls Club at the Gene Mack Gymnasium, call the Clubhouse Director at 781-391-3619.

## A Vision for Medford—Will It Include Chevalier?

If you have been following the discussions taking place at the Visioning Workshops, you know the purpose of these meetings is to hear input from residents about their ideas for the future of Medford. The workshops are open to the public and are being presented by the City of Medford with assistance from The Cecil Group. They are funded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council under a \$30,000 grant to the city. This study was an initiative by the City of Medford. In conjunction with the workshops, a committee has been appointed by Mayor McGlynn.

To digest the three meetings held to date, the focus has been on development of the waterfront along the Mystic River in Medford Square, the natural resources and history of the city, improving traffic conditions and parking space, and building upon existing venues to offer an array of cultural activities.

The vision for the revitalization of Medford Square would include restaurants and shops, a river walk and public gathering space for community groups to hold events and

### FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE FRIENDS OF CHEVALIER  
AUDITORIUM AND GENE MACK GYMNASIUM  
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PRESIDENT: LENA DIGIANTOMASSO  
VICE PRESIDENT: PAUL DONATO  
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WINTER 2004

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festivals along the river. Improvements in traffic circulation, additional parking facilities, increasing the density of the Square with mixed property, and the city and the private sector working “together to build an organizational structure to program cultural activities” were defined as key components of Medford Square’s future in the draft Vision Statement. The question is will the Chevalier Theatre be incorporated in the new vision and revitalization plans for Medford Square?

About 125 or more Medford residents participated in the focus sessions at each of the three meetings. In these discussion groups, the potential of Chevalier as a “destination” in Medford Square was highlighted by several participants. The theater was referred to as an historic landmark and existing asset but unfortunately it has been underutilized by the city. It was definitely recognized as an important cultural asset in the community.

This is not the first time the revitalization of Medford Square has been discussed, reviewed, studied and talked about as a priority for the city. In all of these studies during the past decade, the Chevalier Theatre has

been cited as having the potential of drawing people to Medford Square and helping to stimulate business. This of course, can only happen if the theater becomes an integral part

of the overall vision and future plans for the revitalization of the downtown area. If Chevalier was operated on a full-time basis by professional theater management, it could not only generate revenue but it could play an important role in the economic development of Medford Square.

The Medford Community Development Plan Committee will report its recommendations at a public meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 11 at Medford City Hall at 6:30 pm.



**Members of the Friends present \$5000 check to Gary Gartland, President of the Boys and Girls Club for the Gene Mack Clubhouse.**

## Officers and Board Elected at Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting in October brought together about thirty-five members for an evening of dinner and the election of Officers and Board of Directors.

A buffet dinner in the Café Electra prepared by the Culinary Arts Department of the Medford Vocational Technical High School was generously hosted by Vice President Paul Donato. Thank you, Paul and also many thanks to Director William Mahoney and the students of the Culinary Arts Department for a delicious meal enjoyed by all.

President Lena DiGiantommaso sent her best wishes and praise for the good work being done by the FRIENDS. We are happy to report that Lena is on the road to recovery following surgery in November and will be actively involved as President in 2004.

Following the social hour and dinner, Robert O’Neil distributed the Annual Financial Report and discussed the improvement in our investments due to the gradual upward movement of the financial markets.

The Nomination Committee then presented the Election Ballot with the slate of candidates for the term 2003-2004. The following Officers and Board of Directors were elected unanimously.

- |                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>PRESIDENT</b> Lena DiGiantommaso | <b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b> |
| <b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> Paul Donato   | Rosemary Bagnell          |
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| <b>TREASURER</b> Robert O’Neil      | May Marquebreuck          |
|                                     | Richard Ober              |
|                                     | Russ Rossetti             |

The next General Meeting to which all members are invited will be on Thursday, February 26 at 7:00 pm in the Superintendent’s Conference Room at Medford High School.



# The Nutcracker

## A TRADITION AT CHEVALIER

**I**N ITS SEVENTH SEASON at the Chevalier Theatre, the Northeast Youth Ballet has brought innovative and professionally staged ballet to our city each December with its enchanting and beautiful production of *The Nutcracker*. What is truly amazing about this fairytale is its longevity and popularity. Although this lovely ballet is more than 100 years old, it is performed over and over in local schools, auditoriums, churches, theaters and is enjoyed by holiday audiences year after year. Performed by professional and amateur ballet companies alike from Boston to Los Angeles, *The Nutcracker* is a magical journey and for many young children it is their first exposure to ballet.

For the Northeast Youth Ballet, this seventh year at Chevalier was a special moment because some of the dancers performing in principal roles were in the original cast of 1997. They started in *The Nutcracker* as mice, party boys and girls, lambs, cookies and now danced the leading roles of Sugar Plum Fairy and the Snow Queen.

Denise Cecere, Artistic Director when interviewed by the *Boston Globe* and the *Medford Transcript* said “It’s both an educational and artistic experience for all the young dancers.” Northeast Youth Ballet has provided more than 350 young dancers an opportunity to fulfill their dream of dancing in *The Nutcracker*. As the Artistic Director, the production is designed and choreographed by Cecere with the child’s point of view in mind. This is why it is especially appealing to the hundreds of children who come each year with school groups from throughout the North Shore of Boston to attend the special daytime productions given for them.

Each year, Northeast Youth Ballet also is a partner with many social service agencies and offers a community service program. Through its STARS program, students, senior citizens and special needs individuals are invited to see *The Nutcracker* at Chevalier for free. The goal is to include, encourage and educate children and individuals of all ages who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend the ballet.

*The Nutcracker* is truly a wonderful tradition. We wish the Northeast Youth Ballet continued success in creating an environment for young people in which to pursue their dreams while enriching the cultural life of our community.

For more information about upcoming productions by the Northeast Youth Ballet, check their website at [www.northeastyouthballet.org](http://www.northeastyouthballet.org) for details.



### IN MEMORIAM

The FRIENDS are deeply saddened by the sudden loss on December 23, 2003 of our member and dear friend, Barbara Leary. Barbara was a caring and loving person who gave generously of her time volunteering for the Friends of Chevalier and Gene Mack Gym, the Gleason School, the Mystic Players, the PTO at the Andrews School and many other community organizations. We shall miss Barbara, her boundless energy and warm personality.



## Friends Meeting Schedule for 2004

General Meetings will be held in the Superintendent's Conference Room at Medford High School beginning at 7:00 PM, unless otherwise notified. Our meeting location is handicap accessible.

February 26

March 18

April 15

May 20

June 17

Meetings are open to all members and interested parties are also welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in our meetings. The Friends do not meet in the summer months of July and August, and the Annual Meeting will be announced at a later time.



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OF CHEVALIER  
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