



MALDEN MUSINGS: Pete Trabucco, part of the greatest generation

Sunday

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By Peter Levine

It was always about family for the late Pete Trabucco. Smitten with his future wife, Jeanne (Mullen), as a senior at Malden High School in 1947, his love of family, friends and neighborhood would become a lifelong obsession for him. Former Malden Police Chief Eddie Trabucco's little brother passed away on July 25 at home, surrounded by his cherished daughter's, Jo-Ann, Toni and Paula Jean.

It was said that Pete's hobby was taking care of his family and that his large extended family would define who he became. That's quite an accomplishment considering the life this man led. Part of the "Greatest Generation," Pete served in the U.S. Marine Corps for two years during the Korean War, serving overseas for one year four months and six days, but we aren't certain exactly where. He was honorably discharged on Nov. 5, 1953.

Pete, like most Maldonians in those days, was born at home - 50 Malden St., second floor. The son of Italian immigrant parents, he went on to excel in sports at Malden High. He excelled enough to eventually be named to the MHS Sports Hall of Fame as a three-sport star. The (Carroll) Lowenstein - Peter Trabucco combination in 1946/47 was one of the most devastating offensive threats in the state for Coach Warren McGuirk's Golden Tornado football team. Both earned Boston Herald All Scholastic honors as seniors. In baseball he was a five tool guy. He was such a prolific power hitter that he was good enough to be drafted by the Chicago Cubs out of high school, while preparing to carry the ball in the backfield for the Boston College Eagles football squad that fall.

My memories of Pete go back to the old Highland Cafe days where he was a fixture behind the stick. Pete, Kevin Hanley, Jimmy Cahill, the late, great Paul Gennetti, Richie Morando, and owners Johnny Puleo and Dave Angelo were an all-star line up of bar tenders who created a "home away from home" atmosphere unmatched in Malden at the time (or since). When I first met Pete, he may not have been a big fan of my long hair at the time but that did not stop us from becoming fast friends soon after. I had heard the stories of Pete's athletic prowess growing up in Edgeworth. Whether this is an urban myth or not, I became a fan boy of Pete's when I heard that at one point in his minor league baseball career he was rated a better player than the "Say Hey Kid" Willie Mays!

Space limitations prevent me from going on and on about this legendary Maldonian (I will in the future). Each person I approached about Pete's passing spoke glowingly of him - every person! Donations in Pete's name can be made to the Jimmy Fund. Here is a snapshot of just one small moment in Pete's life:

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1947 Manning Bowl in Lynn - Pete & Carroll Lowenstein anchor a star studded Greater Boston All-Star football squad versus the Harry Agganis-led North Shore All Stars.

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On the eight yard line in front of 22,000 football fans, Lowenstein, hobbled by a leg injury, hurled a "straight spot pass" to Pete who "button-hooked" on the five and outraced the secondary for the only Boston score of the game.

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Highly touted Lynn Classical star (and future Boston Red Sox) Harry Agganis lived up to the advance media praise as he ran and passed the North Shore team to a 14-7 victory with two touchdowns, both to Charlie Ruddock of Lynn English.

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"Pistol" Pete Trabucco showed why he was a unanimous All-Scholastic choice as he "blocked and tackled beautifully" all afternoon.

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Pete, Chelsea's Mike Opolka, Agannis and Revere's Rocco Cerrone were voted the outstanding backs for the game. Pete even completed a pass on an option play.

Save the date! On Sept. 24, Kiss Forever will be invading Malden and taking control of the historic 900-seat Jenkins Auditorium for a night of rock and roll that Malden will be talking about for like, FOREVER. It's classic Kiss with all the power and theatrics of the real Kiss at their peak delivering a blistering set of some of the most iconic songs from that era. It's an all ages event with all profits benefiting the Malden Teen Enrichment Center (MTEC). Want to relive 1977 all over again? Thirty-two classic Kiss songs delivered by four Kiss die-hards, including Malden's own Rob Smith! So come on by and bear witness to this once in lifetime opportunity, a family event to bring the community and city together like never before - all to benefit MTEC. For Malden residents tickets will be available at MTEC, or at Malden High School or by contacting Rob Smith (ACE) at **Tattooedace91@yahoo.com**. For people interested in tickets from outside the Malden area, tickets can be purchased here: eventbrite.com/e/kiss-forever-malden-teen-enrichment-center-benefit-tickets-24677393749. See you Sept. 24!

Malden Musings presents some enlightening meanderings, loquacious diatribes with a touch of mishegas, while we anxiously await for the first night (TONIGHT!) of the 87th Annual Saint Rocco Feast...

â€¢ Been watching a lot of old episodes of "All In The Family" lately starring the iconic Archie Bunker portrayed by Carroll O'Connor.

â€¢ Happy belated birthday wishes (Aug. 5) go out to one of the sweetest kids I know, my step-daughter Nicole Hirtle. Generous, big-hearted with charisma to spare. Hope you had a great day, Nic!

â€¢ Larger than normal crowds have been turning out for the Malden Summer Concert Series this year. Adam Weldai, Karen Colon-Hayes, Kelli Collomb and her crack crew of high schoolers have created an event that has become one of the highlights of the summer. This past week (Aug. 9) was the last show, with the Brothers Walk Band, who brought the funk to the cozy confines of City Hall Plaza.

â€¢ Here's the plan for the Kiss Forever show: before-show appetizers at Mystic Station (fried pickles/nachos) and a Brooklyn Summer Ale. Show at 7 p.m. After-show dinner at All Season's Table including one of AST's legendary beef with black bean sauce pan fried dishes and a 'cosmo' nightcap. For the uninitiated, AST make THE best martini on the North Shore.

â€¢ Kudos to the knowledgeable and skilled crew at JRA Cycles on Salem Street in Medford for putting my Schwinn back on the road so quickly. Young Russ Campbell and aspiring rock star Anthony Connelly made my experience with a flat tire a pleasurable one. We had an awesome Shwinn dealership on Commercial Street many years ago and desperately need one now. JRA Cycles, come to Malden, we need you guys!

â€¢ Rumors, we've got rumors.....whispered on the streets of Edgeworth is the return of an iconic bakery to Highland Avenue. Stay tuned.

â€¢ Celebrity sighting in Malden: Regis Philbon was in Malden celebrating Piantedosi Baking Company's 100 years in our fab city! There is a cool picture on Facebook of Malden Media Guru, Paul Hammersley, and the iconic TV presenter, talk and game show host, actor, singer and author.

â€¢ Happy birthday to Malden's number one physical therapist (Aug. 14) - Kevin "Scoop" Larson's better half, Tricia. Have a great day Trish!

â€¢ Former MHS Principal Dana Brown received his best principal in the world award in late July. Here is his proud dad's Facebook post: "Back from the Cape. Didn't go for vacation. Attended the Mass Principals Convention for one day. We knew Dana was receiving the award but didn't know his daughter was going to present him! Her introductory remarks were wonderful. Best speech of the day! We are so proud of Dana and our grand daughter! Super Day!" Thanks for the update Fran.

â€¢ Reading the obituary of erstwhile Cambridge night club impresario, 98-year-old Jack Reilly, brought back many happy memories of nights spent at a club he co-owned on Mass. Avenue, Jacks. The Ellis Hall Band being one of the many bands that rocked my 20's.

â€¢ Speaking of the "ubiquitous media masseur, political talent agent and Democratic party kibitzer" Michael Goldman, shame on us all! The Malden High School Alumni Hall of Fame has had two (I believe) induction ceremonies and MHS Class of 1967 political power broker Michael Goldman isn't in yet. I will remedy that next year in case you haven't heard already!

â€¢ Rest in peace U.S. Army veteran Ralph Gasparello - Malden High School Class of 1945. Captain of the MHS football team and football star for Cornell U.

â€¢ Celebrity sighting in Malden: former Boston College Eagle great and former New England Patriots Mike Ruth with one of his besties, Billy "Tecker" O'Leary. Taking pictures and glad handing the crowd at the Italian American Citizen's Club on a recent warm Friday night. A Great sense of humor, killer personality and huge forearms I gotta say, Mike is one of the more approachable ex-pro athletes I have ever met.

â€¢ On Aug. 2 the Reminisants celebrated 25 years of performing at the Malden Summer Concert Series. During intermission they were presented with a certificate of appreciation from the City of Malden and Mayor Christenson for this historic event. Dom (Viscione) and Mike (Joyal) put the band together 43 years ago after their time in the U.S. Navy was up. An amazing group of musicians, they play out over 200 times a year opening for the Beach Boys, Grand Funk Railroad, Chubby Checker and hundreds of other well known national acts. We hope to have them at NEXT year's Saint Rocco Feast and of course, back at the Malden Summer Concert Series.

â€¢ Congrats to Mike who recently retired as a police officer in Weston Massachusetts.

â€¢ Happy birthday wishes to Steve Ultrino, Mary Brown Spadafora and Anna Cammarano Bouley (yesterday, Thursday). Brian Crowe, Laura Chopelas and John Adams (tonight, Friday). Phil Bynoe and Paul "Hoss" Condon (Sunday).

â€¢ Tonight is the first night of the 87th Annual Feast of Saint Rocco. It is guaranteed to be a weekend of merriment with plenty of wonderful home made food, great music, fabulous family fun and memories that will last a lifetime. Come renew old friendships or make some new ones on the streets of Edgeworth this amazing weekend.

â€¢ History is in the making. This past Tuesday night's Malden Summer Concert Series show with the Brothers Walk Band will be the last live music show to appear at this location. Sometime later this year "The Beast That Ate Pleasant Street" will become part of our collective memories when they tear that monstrosity down. So long and good riddance to that Square-killing eyesore.

â€¢ Count me in as a very enthusiastic supporter of Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian. The former house representative from Waltham is a bright, innovative public servant worthy of filling the very large shoes of his predecessor, the late Jimmy DiPaola.

By the way I will be nominating John Bionelli, Al Ruelle, Nornman Greenbaum and Michael Goldman next year for the MHS Alumni Hall of Fame.

Malden Musings remembers those who came before us:

â€¢ Paul "Quadzilla" DeMayo - bodybuilder, son, friend to many.

â€¢ Ptl. Warren H.J. Sullivan - World War II vet.

â€¢ Jack Bendell - Bendell's Kosher Meat Market.

â€¢ Lillian (Levine) Hershberg - fled Czarist Russia; Faulkner Mfg. founder along with husband Hyman.

â€¢ Joey "Murray" Marino - husband of Linda; grew up on the streets of Edgeworth.

As Peter Falk's iconic TV character, Columbo, would say, "Just one more thing sir." Speaking of the Malden Teen Enrichment Center - turns out the money raised for this (now) fixture in the Square was some of the best money that Malden has ever invested. MTEC has been a safe haven and a place for Malden's youth to gather in comfort and security since they opened their all welcoming doors. A very wise person explained MTEC to me this way: "As most people know young adults today face a lot of big decisions - from education and career choices to issues of gang violence, teenage pregnancy and drug/alcohol abuse. Along with these real-life issues comes another: society's unresolved stereotyping of teens. Teen centers are among our most important institutions helping reweave the social fabric, for all kids. The Malden Teen Enrichment Center links the center with the YMCA, YWCA and other volunteer organizations to offer these kids a sense of purpose and connection." A noble sentiment. Cathy MacMullin has done an exemplary job as director since being hired. Thank you Cathy for your dedication.

*-Peter Levine is a long-time Malden resident and a regular contributor to the Malden Observer. He can be reached at **PeteL39@aol.com** for comments, compliments, complaints, or criticisms.*

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