

# A LION IN WINTER

## THE INCREDIBLE LIFE OF MEL KING

BY GARY BAILEY

Mel King passed away last Tuesday afternoon in his sleep at his home on Yarmouth St.

He was 94 years old.

I have lived in the South End for over 25 years and over the years had become used to what I referred to as "Mel King sightings" in the neighborhood.

It's important for me to let you know that Mel King was a hero of mine. I am a proud social worker who has spent a great deal of my career prior coming to academia in community organizing and social action throughout Boston. Mel King's work as a community organizer was legendary.

Currently in my role as the Asst. Dean for Community Engagement and Social Justice and Professor at Simmons Uni-

versity School of Social Work in my yearly course on macro social policy consistently one of my student's favorite lectures is on Mel King and his community organizing legacy. I share with my students how Mel and Joyce opened their home on Sundays for decades for people from across the city to break bread together and to build community.

Gov. Maura Healey following Mel's death told the *Dorchester News* that she first met Mel King when she was a first-time candidate running for attorney general and he invited her to one of his renowned Sunday Brunches.

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Image courtesy of the South End Historical Society



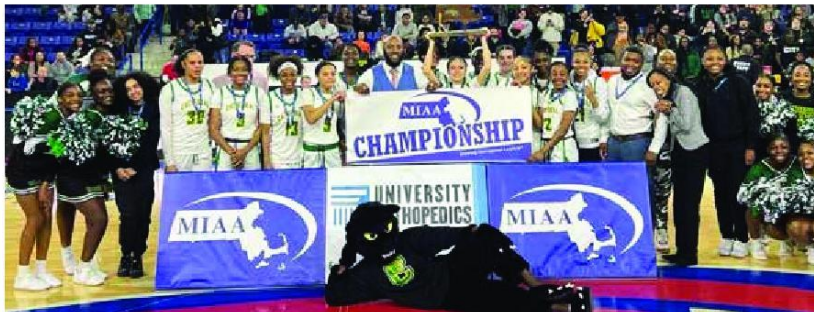
Mel King received a standing ovation while accepting an award for a lifetime of work on behalf of the Boston community at the 34th annual Action for Boston Community Development Community Award Dinner. Photo: Keiko Hiromi.



Governor Deval Patrick and Boston Women's Fund executive director Josefina Vazquez presented Mel King (left) with the Social Justice in Action Award at BWF's 'Men Take A Stand' event. "He has been a model for many communities," Vazquez said of King. Photo: Kate VanderWiede.



(Left) Singer Danielle Ruffen serenades King. (Top Right) Danielle Ruffen. (Right Center) King blows out the birthday candles. (Bottom Right) Mayor Walsh, Pamela King, Kim Janey. Photos by Michele Maniscalco



## Cathedral Girls Basketball Team

The Cathedral High School Girls Basketball team celebrate their Division 4 State Title Championship on Sunday, March 19 at the Tsongas Arena after beating Wahconah High School 75-53. The Panthers end the season with a record of 19-3.



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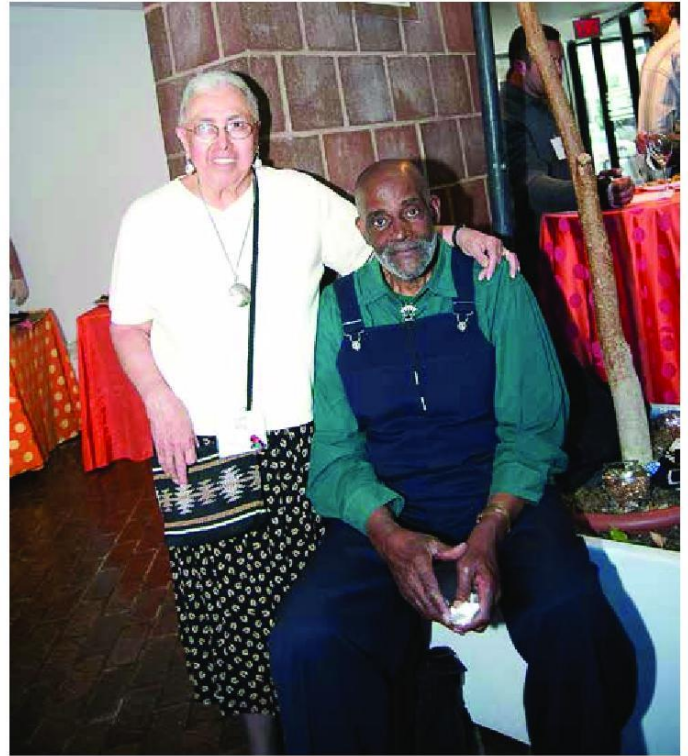
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USES celebrated the legacy of Joyce and Mel King on Tuesday night, June 2 by awarding the couple the inaugural Harriet Tubman Award for Community Building. Photo: Marlene Karas.

## King

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Mel King was a proud Black man who was invested in the well being of his community and was not afraid to speak truth to power.

Former Mayor Kim Janey said of Mel King when he received an honorary degree from Simmons University in 2022 that I had nominated him for said : “He [Mel King] is a Boston treasure,” who teaches us to “look at ourselves with the strength of who we are. Don’t let others define what is possible for us.”

I have such fond memories of walking along Columbus Avenue in the warmer weather and running into Mel sitting on the bench in front of the tech center that he developed, in his ubiquitous uniform of overalls and wearing a hat to protect his bald head from the sun. I always smiled and thought that Mel reminded me of an old majestic lion (a la the Lion King) who had seen and experienced much and was wiser for those experiences but whose social justice roar was still there, but who also enjoyed having the time to feel the warmth of the sun on his face .

Mel Herbert King, Sr was a proud lifelong South End resident.

His mother, Ursula, was born in Guyana , and his father, Watts King, in Barbados. They met and married in Nova Scotia and immigrated to Boston in the early 1920s. Mel was born in 1928 in the South End. He was one of eight children born to the Kings between 1918 and 1938. He graduated from Boston Technical High School in 1946 and from Claflin College in Orangeburg, South Carolina in 1950 with a B.S. degree in mathematics. In 1951, he received his M.A. degree

in education from Boston State College and then taught math, first at Boston Trade High School and at his alma mater, Boston Technical High School.

In 1953, he left the classroom to work with at-risk youth, first becoming the Director of Boy’s Work at Lincoln House, a settlement house in the South End. He continued his community work focusing with at-risk youth as Youth Director at United South End Settlements (USES). He also worked as a community activist and urban renewal and anti-poverty organizer. He was fired by USES leadership when he promoted and supported neighborhood control versus USES and government control over the urban renewal and federal funds to assist poor people. He was then rehired after huge protests from the community over his firing and was given the job as a community organizer. He then founded the Community Assembly for a United South End (C.A.U.S.E.), to give tenants and community residents a voice in their communities.

In 1967, Mel became the director of the New Urban League of Greater Boston He brought job training for the unemployed and organized the community around public school, employment, and human services delivery issues.

In 1968 he was already a veteran in fight to stop the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) policy of demolition without relocation, he helped organize a sit-in at the BRA office. Mel and other South End community activists learned that a parking garage was going to be built at the corner of Dartmouth Street and Columbus Avenue, on a site where housing

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# Boston Medical Center Opens New Child And Adolescent Psychiatry Clinic

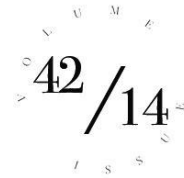
BY SOUTH END STAFF

A new clinic for mental health care for children and teens will open later this spring at Boston Medical Center. The clinic will be located on the 7th floor of the BMC Crosstown building at 801 Massachusetts Avenue, where patients and families can also access other medical and social services.

The clinic will serve a diverse and low-income population that often faces barriers to quality care. The Yawkey Foundation has given \$3 million to support this project, which aligns with their mission of helping people in need in Massachusetts and South Carolina.



Photo via Google Maps.



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# 9th Suffolk Candidate Forum

April 13, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Candidates for the Suffolk County District 9 State House seat will appear at a candidate forum on Thursday, April 13. The moderator is Cheryl Clyburn Crawford, Executive Director of MassVOTE.

Partners for this virtual event are MassVOTE, Reclaim Roxbury, Chinese Progressive Association, and Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA).

Important dates: May 2nd (special state primary) and May 30 (election day).

<https://bostonward4dems.org/event/9th-suffolk-candidate-forum/>



Photo via www.bostonward4dems.org.

**Letters to the editor:**

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sencalendar@southendnews.com

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# All Girls Sports and Wellness Festival returns

April 19 and 20

SUBMITTED BY MAYOR'S OFFICE

Mayor Michelle Wu, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, and Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) invite Boston girls ages 9 to 14 to join us during the April school vacation week for the annual All Girls Sports and Wellness Festival. Due to its popularity last year, the City is hosting the festival for two days.

The free event will take place on Wednesday, April 19, and Thursday, April 20, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the BCYF Leahy-Holloran Community Center, 1 Worell Street, Dorchester. The All Girls Sports and Wellness Festival will feature a variety of programming including sports, games, health and wellness speakers, self-defense tactic lessons, and aquatic activities.

Participants will find a variety of fun ways to exercise mind, body, and spirit, and try out a variety of sports with expert instructors including basketball, self-defense demon-

strations, fitness, rock climbing, swimming, ultimate frisbee, and more, with additional support from local non-profits and City of Boston agencies.

Pre-registration is required at [boston.gov/](http://boston.gov/) sports. Event check-in begins at 9:30 a.m. Participants must be Boston residents and should bring activity-appropriate clothing (including swimsuits and towels for those wanting to participate in aquatic activities). Free lunch will be provided. For more information please call (617) 961-3047 or email [jennifer.misiaszek@boston.gov](mailto:jennifer.misiaszek@boston.gov).

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**Letters policy**

To be considered for publication, letters must be no longer than 500 words; refrain from extreme personal attacks; be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Writers should refrain from making incorrect statements since they may be barred from future issues. Deadline is noon Tuesday for Thursday's paper. To send us letters: Mail to PO BOX E14, Boston, MA 02127; E-mail: [letters@southendnews.com](mailto:letters@southendnews.com)

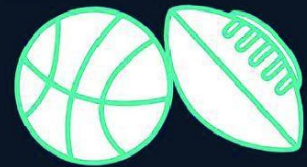
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# All Girls SPORTS AND WELLNESS FESTIVAL

For ages 9-14



### ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Health & Wellness workshops
- Sports & Fitness clinics
- Self-defense tutorials

### DETAILS

April 19 - 20, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
 BCYF Leahy Holloran  
 1 Worrell St., Dorchester

### PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!



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# King

Continued from page 2

had only recently been leveled to create a parking lot, they decided it was time for an intervention to bring greater attention to the issue of gentrification and community displacement. On a rainy Friday, Mel and a small group of activists arrived early in the morning at the parking lot and Mel proclaimed that the space as “This is a place for people.”

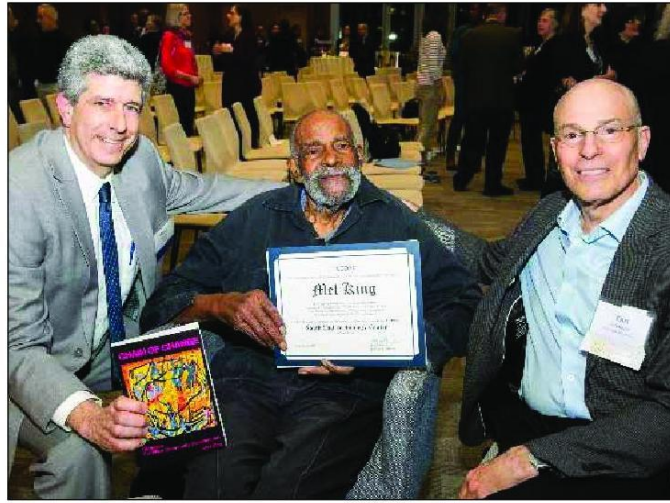
Despite police retaliation, for the next 3 days between 100 and 400 people lived on the lot. They built tents and wooden shanties and put up a large sign welcoming the media and visitors to “Tent City.” Thousands of people came. The music of guitars, bongo drums, and saxophones filled the South End. Some of the “residents” set up hibachis and grilled burgers. Others put up strings of lights. Celtic’s legend Bill Russell who owned a South End restaurant, provided food for the protestors.

The event was peaceful and festive; the story received extensive coverage in the local media.

In honor of the demonstration, when the housing complex was dedicated on April 30, 1988, it was named “Tent City.” Mel King told reporters that the key to the project was convincing ordinary Bostonians that they had to play a role in the development of their neighborhood.

Mel King ran three times for a seat on the Boston School Committee in 1961, 1963 and 1965 — being unsuccessful each time. However, his citywide political organizing for these campaigns paid off. In 1973, he was elected as a state representative for the 9<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District and served in the Mass legislature until 1982.

In 2003, he created The New Majority — an organization and program uniting Boston’s communities of color — Blacks, Hispanics,



(Left to Right) Roger Herzog, Mel King, and Carl Sussman. Photo courtesy of David Fox.

Asians and Native Americans — uniting them around candidates for elective office.

In 1983, when incumbent Mayor Kevin White’s withdrawal from contention after 16 years in office made the race wide open, Mel King went from whatsome in power described as an ‘obscure radical’ to serious contender for Mayor of Boston.

Despite Boston’s historical scars of racism, Mel’s grassroots activism culminated in political momentum that nearly defeated the favorite, Raymond Flynn. Flynn, an Irish-Catholic with roots in “Southie” (South Boston) area, would take the election despite a landmark showing by King.

Even with the defeat, the election and national attention was a historical turning point in the participation of African Americans in politics and urban policy.

In 1970, King created the Community

Fellows Program (CFP) in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. He served as an Adjunct Professor of Urban Studies and Planning and director of the Community Fellows Program for twenty-five years until 1996. CFP, a nine-month long program brought community organizers and leaders from across America to reflect, research and study urban community politics, economics, social life, education, housing and media.

Upon his retirement from MIT, he founded the South End Technology Center, a joint venture between MIT and the Tent City Corporation to improve community and youth access to technology. He retired as the director of that organization in 2019. Over the course of his career, King has been dedicated to engaging youth in STEM, providing access to professional education to citizens in underrepresented communities and citizens

returning from incarceration, and recording music with student mentors at Berklee College of Music.

He has authored three books: Chain of Change, Struggles for Black Community Development, which is used in many college curricula, Streets, a poem book about the streets he and others lived, worked, and played on, and Love is the Question & the Answer, a compilation of all the poems he has written

Mel was a community leader, a political activist, an author, a songwriter, a youth advocate, and a retired educator who had been an icon in the City of Boston for more than 60 years.

Mel is survived by his wife Joyce Kenion King and their six children: Melvin Jr., Pamela, Judith, Michael, Nancy, and Jomo.

When I heard of Mel’s passing on Tuesday this song immediately came to mind :

*“If I can help somebody, as I travel along  
If I can help somebody, with a word or song  
If I can help somebody, from doing wrong  
No, my living shall not be in vain  
No, my living shall not be in vain  
No, my living shall not be in vain  
If I can help somebody, as I’m singing the song  
You know, my living shall not be in vain”*

Yes, indeed you helped so many people as you passed along this way Mel King, now is your time to enjoy sitting in the sun .

There will be a two-part celebration of Mel King’s life .

A public viewing will be on Monday, April 10th (4-8pm); and the funeral on Tuesday, April 11th at 12n — both at Union United Methodist Church in the South End. Rest in Peace , Mel. Rest in Peace !

*If I Can Help Somebody* Alma B. Androzzo, lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group

# PRIDE IS BACK!

Boston Pride For The People is excited to announce the return of a Pride Month celebration in Boston on

**June 10th – 11th, 2023**

The celebration will include a parade, a festival, block parties, and more as this new organization creates a unified city Pride celebration.

Get more information at

**[www.bostonprideforthepeople.org](http://www.bostonprideforthepeople.org)**

## LEGAL NOTICES

<b>CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304</b>	Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Docket No. SU23P0477GD
In the matter of: <b>Randy Emmanuel Willis, Jr.</b> Of: <b>Boston, MA</b>	RESPONDENT Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by <b>Christine Ayoung of Boston, MA</b> in the above captioned matter alleging that <b>Randy Emmanuel Willis, Jr.</b> is in need of a Guardian and requesting that <b>Christine Ayoung of Boston, MA</b> (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve <b>Without Surety</b> on the bond.	Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street PO Box 9667 Boston, MA 02114
The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.	
You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 04/27/2023. This date is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.	
<b>IMPORTANT NOTICE</b> The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone who makes this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.	
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: March 06, 2023 <i>Vincent Procopio, Register of Probate</i>	

<b>CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME</b>	Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court
In the matter of: <b>Jana Beattie Eggers</b> Of: <b>Boston, MA</b>	
A Petition to Change Name of <b>Adult</b> has been filed by <b>Jana Beattie Eggers of Boston, MA</b> requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to <b>Jana Beattie Winslow</b>	Docket No. SU23C0126CA Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street PO Box 9667 Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at <b>Suffolk Probate and Family Court</b> before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/27/2023. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.	
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: March 21, 2023 <i>Vincent Procopio, Register of Probate</i>	

<b>CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION</b>	Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Docket No. SU23P0647EA
Estate of: <b>Beck Won Lew</b> Date of Death: <b>02/22/2023</b>	Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street PO Box 9667 Boston, MA 02114 (617)788-8300
To all interested persons: A Petition for <b>Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative</b> has been filed by: <b>William M Lew of Wellesley, MA</b> requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: <b>William M Lew of Wellesley, MA</b> be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve <b>Without Surety</b> on the bond in an <b>unsupervised administration</b> .	
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/19/2023.	
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.	
<b>UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC):</b> A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.	
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: March 22, 2023 <i>Vincent Procopio, Register of Probate</i>	

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The South End News welcomes letters to the editor.

All letters must be signed and accompanied by a mailing address and phone number.

Because of space limitations, letters should not be more than 200 words.

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