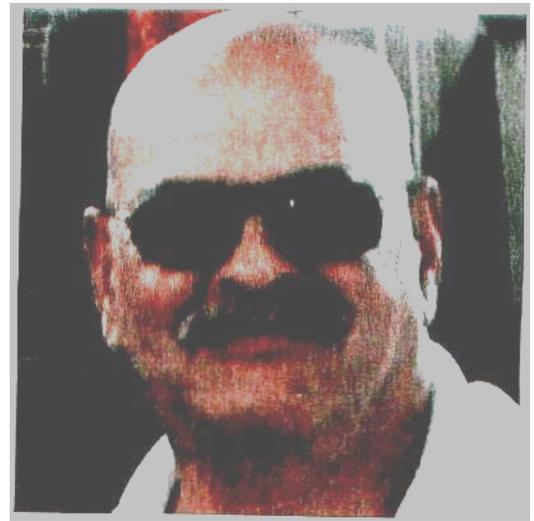


# Discover Waltham (/)



## OPINION: "CALL ME JOE" JUST ISN'T ENOUGH

*Submitted by Discover Waltham on Mon, 08/15/2016 - 8:13pm*

The skies were filled with giant moving clouds — nature's water balloons ready to pop without any warning. The lightning shows during the night were spectacular especially when they illuminated the dark bricked mansion in the distance. Yet in the middle of nature's calamity, there was stillness on the estate.

Simultaneous conversations were happening around him. It didn't stop him from scrolling through names, perhaps familiar, stopping every now and then to print out a record. For a while he was in his own world and those around him felt this was his time — which he needed to take time to reflect. Of course, unbeknownst to him many in that tent kept an eye. He had worked tirelessly for weeks to make these last few days come to life. He never surrendered. He never was discouraged. He was proceeding along with a gentle but firm determination.

Of course, he doesn't stand alone. Many people in this community worked tirelessly to make the event happen. They all deserve praise — the organizers, the volunteers, the Waltham Police and Fire Departments, local elected officials and the hundreds of veterans who came out to pay their solemn respects. All that being said, I walked away from that 4

hour shift realizing I had to share what I experienced from this gentleman I am writing about.

He has a firm handshake. He has a gentle demeanor. There is an air of humility about him. As I watched during the night, I would see him in the distance under the protection of a tent just looking out over the estate. When the lightning illuminated the grounds, there he was — a lone soldier — dignified, respectful and oh so patriotic. By now you must realize I am talking about the Moving Wall on Gore Estate these last few days.

When he arrived late that Saturday night, after being at Gore Place off and on for hours at a time in the last few days, he walked over. We shook hands, I greeted him as I always do, "How are you doing, Councilor?" "Call me Joe," he replied. "That's hard for me to do, sir, I have respect for your office and your service." I got a pat on the shoulder. No more words needed to be said.

"Call me Joe." Those three words cemented it for me. Yes, by virtue of his election as a Ward Councilor, he could be considered a "politician". "Call me Joe." Many of us who live in this City know how lucky we are to be part of this community. We are the city of endless possibilities. We are a city of diversity, history and hopes. Perhaps some of YOU remember when the remains of Sgt. Robert Dakin came home to Waltham. Remember the turnout? Remember the dignity in which we, as a community, welcomed him home? Some of that spirit comes through us thanks to public servants like Councillor Joe Giordano. In those short few hours this weekend, Councilor Giordano had a profound effect. He reminded me that hope trumps over despair. He reminded me that in gentle acts of kindness, great things can be accomplished. "Call me Joe." Just let me say it this one time, Councilor Giordano. Let me call you "hero". Thank you for everything you do to keep the American spirit alive and thriving in this old city nestled in the nucleus of the American Revolution.

-John Nalewski