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ALLSTON BRIGHTON, WATERTOWN

Hundreds recall well-known Brighton store clerk fatally struck by tow truck while walking home from work

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Bubbly front counter clerk Maureen Driscoll and her boss John DePietro closed up shop together that Thursday like they always had. Walking out the back door, they said their usual goodbyes. She turned left to catch a bus home. The shop owner turned right to drive home.

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(Lehman, Reen, & McNamara Funeral Home)
Maureen F. Driscoll



DePietro said he was the last person to speak to Driscoll. Moments later, she was fatally struck by a tow truck while crossing a busy Brighton Center intersection several feet from

her usual ride home and just one block away from the place where she had worked for the past seven years.

During those years, the owner of Johnny D's Fruit and Produce said Driscoll had become a familiar, friendly face to hundreds of customers.

There was no more visible display of how beloved the 52-year-old lifelong neighborhood resident had become than when between 300 and 400 people visited her wake last week and another 100 to 150 attended a memorial service Saturday. Speeches and prayers were said, poems read and some of her favorite music was played at the gathering held directly across the street from the produce shop this past weekend, according to DePietro.

"She'd be the last one you'd see going out the door and she was the perfect person to greet you," he said. "She'd remember your name the first time she met you and she'd still know it three weeks later ... She's gone, but she won't be forgotten for a long time."

He estimated that, given she left behind a relatively small number of direct family members, about 80 percent of those who attended those commemorative services were people who had met and knew Driscoll from interacting with her at his shop.

Driscoll had one daughter, grandchild, a brother, boyfriend and a dog named Bandit, the business owner, who knew her well before she ever worked for him, said.

She succumbed to trauma injuries at the hospital in the early morning after the accident, which remains under investigation, on the evening of Feb. 16. No

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accident, which remains under investigation, on the evening of Feb. 16. No decision has been made on whether charges may be filed against the 24-year-old Watertown man who drove the tow truck owned by an Allston-based company, a spokesman for the Suffolk County District Attorney's office said today.

Since her death, customers have been pouring into the store in disbelief, some shedding tears, some consoling the staff and many doing a mixture of both, DePietro said.

"These are customers we're talking about. That's what kind of impression she had on people," he said. "She was just an amazing person. A heart of gold. What else can you say. She was our family here."

Driscoll's birthday fell on the Sunday prior to her death. The store's staff held a birthday party the day before her birthday at the Corrib Pub and Restaurant on Market Street.

DePietro remembered how the woman who was known for promptly trying new things, including any and all new products that hit his store's shelves, decided to try her first chocolate martini at her birthday festivities and "hated it."

"She was a little kid, just full of fun and love," he said. "She made such a dent in everyone she met. She was nonstop just thinking about what she could do for other people."

Earlier on that fateful Thursday, before they had closed shop, Driscoll gave a plaque to her boss that she'd ordered through a magazine. He said she'd likely used a coupon when she bought it – she was known for clipping and collecting them for herself and her customers.

The gift referred to a saying that the colleagues had often repeated to one another, especially as Driscoll had recently helped DePietro get through a tough time for him personally.

The plaque reads: "It is what it is."

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